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Women in Politics Oral History Project

Carolyn Wolfe

EDUCATING FOR CITIZENSHIP:

A CAREER IN COMMUNITY AFFAIRS AND THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY, 1906-1976

An Interview Conducted by  
Miriam Feingold Stein

Underwritten by a research grant from  
the Research Collection Program of the  
National Endowment for the Humanities.

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Carolyn Wolfe  
ca. 1973



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## PREFACE

The following interview is one of a series of tape-recorded memoirs in the California Women Political Leaders Oral History Project. The series has been designed to study the political activities of a representative group of California women who became active in politics during the years between the passage of the woman's suffrage amendment and the current feminist movement--roughly the years between 1920 and 1965. They represent a variety of views: conservative, moderate, liberal, and radical, although most of them worked within the Democratic and Republican parties. They include elected and appointed officials at national, state, and local governmental levels. For many the route to leadership was through the political party--primarily those divisions of the party reserved for women.

Regardless of the ultimate political level attained, these women have all worked in election campaigns on behalf of issues and candidates. They have raised funds, addressed envelopes, rung doorbells, watched polls, staffed offices, given speeches, planned media coverage, and when permitted, helped set policy. While they enjoyed many successes, a few also experienced defeat as candidates for public office.

Their different family and cultural backgrounds, their social attitudes, and their personalities indicate clearly that there is no typical woman political leader; their candid, first-hand observations and their insights about their experiences provide fresh source material for the social and political history of women in the past half century.

In a broader framework their memoirs provide valuable insights into the political process as a whole. The memoirists have thoughtfully discussed details of party organization and the work of the men and women who served the party. They have analysed the process of selecting party leaders and candidates, running campaigns, raising funds, and drafting party platforms, as well as the more subtle aspects of political life such as maintaining harmony and coping with fatigue, frustration, and defeat. Perceived through it all are the pleasures of friendships, struggles; and triumphs in a common cause.

The California Women Political Leaders Oral History Project has been financed by both an outright and a matching grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Matching funds were provided by the Rockefeller Foundation for the Helen Gahagan Douglas unit of the project, and by individuals who were interested in supporting memoirs of their friends and colleagues. In addition, funds from the California State Legislature-sponsored Knight-Brown Era Public Affairs Project made it possible to increase the research and broaden the scope of the interviews in which there was a meshing of the woman's political career with the topics being studied in the Knight-Brown project. Professors Judith Blake Davis, Albert



Lepawsky, and Walton Bean have served as principal investigators during the period July 1975-December 1977 that the project was underway. This series is the second phase of the Women in Politics Oral History Project, the first of which dealt with the experiences of eleven women who had been leaders and rank-and-file workers in the suffrage movement.

The Regional Oral History Office was established to tape record autobiographical interviews with persons significant in the history of the West and the nation. The Office is under the administrative supervision of James D. Hart, Director of The Bancroft Library. Interviews were conducted by Amelia R. Fry, Miriam Stein, Gabrielle Morris, Malca Chall, Fern Ingersoll, and Ingrid Scobie.

Malca Chall, Project Director  
Women in Politics Oral History Project

Willa Baum, Department Head  
Regional Oral History Office

23 August 1977  
Regional Oral History Office  
486 The Bancroft Library  
University of California at Berkeley



## CALIFORNIA WOMEN POLITICAL LEADERS ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

- March Fong Eu, *High Achieving Nonconformist in Local and State Government*. 1977
- Jean Wood Fuller, *Organizing Women: Careers in Volunteer Politics and Government Administration*. 1977
- Elizabeth R. Gatov, *Grassroots Party Organizer to United States Treasurer*. 1977
- Bernice Hubbard May, *A Native Daughter's Leadership in Public Affairs*. 1976
- Hulda Hoover McLean, *A Conservative Crusader for Good Government*. 1977
- Julia Porter, *Dedicated Democrat and City Planner*. 1977
- Vera Schultz, *Marin County Perspective on Ideals and Realities in State and Local Government*. 1977
- Clara Shirpser, *One Women's Role in Democratic Party Politics*. 1975
- Elizabeth Snyder, *California's First Woman State Party Chairman*. 1977
- Eleanor Wagner, *Independent Political Coalitions: Electoral, Legislative, and Community*. 1977
- Carolyn Wolfe, *Educating for Citizenship: A Career in Community Affairs and the Democratic Party, 1906-1976*. 1978

## Interviews in Process

Frances Albrier	La Rue McCormick
Marjorie Benedict	Emily Pike
Odessa Cox	Zita Remley
Pauline Davis	Wanda Sankary
Ann Eliaser	Hope Mendoza Schechter
Kimiko Fujii	Carmen Warschaw
Elinor R. Heller	Rosalind Wyman
Patricia R. Hitt	Mildred Younger
Lucile Hosmer	



Helen Gahagan Douglas Unit\*

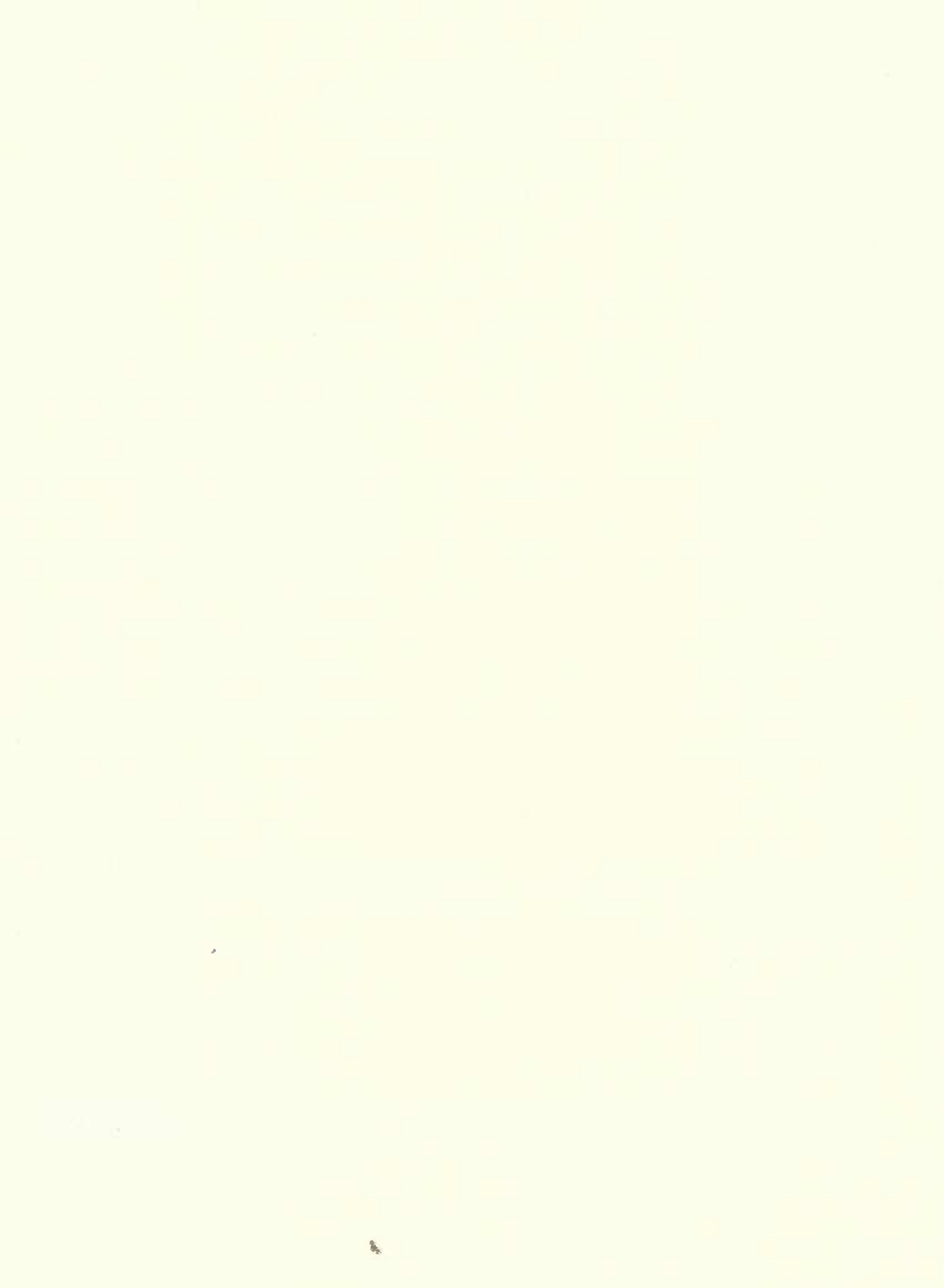
## Interviews in Process

Helen Gahagan Douglas	Kenneth Harding
Juanita Barbee	Charles Hogan
Rachel Bell	Chet Holifield
Fay Bennett	Mary Keyserling
Albert Cahn	Judge Byron Lindsley
Margery Cahn	Helen Lustig
Evelyn Chavoor	Alvin Meyers
Alis De Sola	William Malone
Tilford Dudley	Philip Noel-Baker
India Edwards	Cornelia Palms
Walter Gahagan	Walter Pick
Arthur Goldschmidt	Frank Rogers
Elizabeth Goldschmidt	Beatrice Stern
Leo Goodman	

The researcher is directed also to interviews in the Earl Warren Era Oral History Project and the Knight-Brown Era Public Affairs Project for additional material on California political history.

\*The Helen Gahagan Douglas unit was designed to complete one long biographical memoir with Mrs. Douglas and short interviews with persons who had worked with her in the theatre, in her campaigns, and in Congress.





## INTERVIEW HISTORY

The memoirs in the Women in Politics oral history project span the years from 1920 to about 1965, roughly the years between the passage of the woman's suffrage amendment and the current feminist movement. Remarkably, so too does the career of Carolyn Wolfe, who in 1922 was president of the Utah State League of Women Voters and today is still active in Democratic politics in Sonoma County, California.

We invited Mrs. Wolfe to become a memoirist, planning then briefly to tape record her recollections as head of the Women's Division of the Democratic National Committee during the second Roosevelt administration. But we were in for a surprise. Mrs. Wolfe's life and career spilled well beyond the boundaries of the women's division, encompassing a lifelong dedication to educating women for politics, both nonpartisan and Democratic. Her experiences ranged from growing up in Mormon-dominated Utah, to her involvement in Utah Democratic politics (she served as Utah Democratic National Committee-woman) and Utah women's groups, to her varied contributions to the growth of the Unitarian Church in Sonoma County. Our plans for the interview broadened instantly.

We held our first meeting on May 3, 1976 at Mrs. Wolfe's cool, vine-covered cottage on the outskirts of Sonoma. The household reflected a lifetime rich with intellectual and political curiosity. Books lined one living room wall and magazines and newspapers reflecting several current social concerns were piled neatly on table and desk tops. As the interviews developed, Mrs. Wolfe dug into her files of clippings, journals, and memorabilia, and illustrative material for the memoir soon joined other reading matter on the dining room sideboard.

Seven interview sessions followed, at more or less weekly intervals, during the spring and summer of 1976 (with a break of several weeks when Mrs. Wolfe joined friends for an annual outing to the Ashland, Oregon Shakespeare Festival). A pattern soon developed: we tape recorded for two hours in the morning, stopping at noon in time for Mrs. Wolfe to fix us both a tasty lunch. Our lunchtime conversations ranged from recollections of her early life to discussion of current topics: a local supervisorial race in which red-baiting had made an untimely appearance, speculations on the outcome of the 1976 election, the pros and cons of the current feminist movement.

At one session we were joined by Mrs. Wolfe's daughter, Katherine Wolfe Streeper, who was visiting from Santa Fe, New Mexico. Her insights as the daughter of a politically active mother add a valuable perspective to the memoir.



Mrs. Wolfe's thoughtful and incisive memory belied her eighty-six years, although she complained that painful attacks of arthritis in her hands prevented her from reading and writing as much as she wanted to. The arthritis also slowed down the editing process. Mrs. Wolfe, characteristically, was conscientious in checking references, clarifying ambiguities, and uncovering further material in her files, but she apologized that she no longer could accomplish such tasks swiftly.

Mrs. Wolfe's memoir describes vividly and with humor her involvement in local, state, and national politics organizing and educating women. She provides fresh information and insight, largely unavailable elsewhere, about how the women's division and other women's organizations, in the decade after suffrage, viewed and executed their role. She describes many of the women in the Roosevelt administration, and she discusses her perspective, forged during six decades of experience, on current feminist issues. Her recollections of growing up a Protestant in Mormon Utah, and her reflections on the role that women played in Utah life and politics, shed invaluable light on a little-understood aspect of the history of women in the American West. Throughout the memoir weaves the theme, ever-present in these interviews with active women, of balancing home and career, in this case raising five children and managing a large household with the loving support of her husband, Judge James Wolfe.

The memoir is illustrated with photographs loaned from Mrs. Wolfe's collection, and several of the documents and memorabilia from her files appear throughout the manuscript and in the appendices.

Mrs. Wolfe's contribution to the Women in Politics oral history project will provide scholars and other researchers with a valuable and unusual aid in understanding the complex issue of women in politics in the Twentieth Century.

Miriam Feingold Stein  
Interviewer-Editor

10 April 1978  
Regional Oral History Office  
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University of California at Berkeley



## List of Offices held by Mrs. Carolyn Wolfe from 1922 to 1942

. . . . .

- 1922 to 1924 inc. President, State League of Women Voters
- 1922 (approx.) Member, Board of Directors Ladies Literary Club  
Salt Lake City
- 1920 to 1922 inc. Chairman, Current Events Section do
- 1924 to 1926 inc. President, Unitarian Alliance, Salt Lake City
- 1927 to 1929 approx President, Utah Women's Legislative Council
- 1925 to 1934 " Member of Board and Vice President, Civic  
Center Association, Salt Lake City
- 1931 to 1932 " President, Lafayette Parent-Teacher Ass'n.,  
Salt Lake City, Utah
- 1930 to 1934 inc. State Vice Chairman, Democratic Committee
- 1933 to 1934 inc. Regional Advisor, National Democratic Women
- 1932 to 1934 inc. Member of Board, and Vice President, Salt  
Lake County Red Cross Chapter
- 1932 to 1934 inc. Member of Board, and Vice President, Unitarian  
Society
- May  
1934 to 1936 Washington, D. C.
- 1937 to 1940 inc. Regional Advisor, National Democratic Women
- 1939 to 1940 Member Governor's Fact Finding Committee on  
Education (Utah)
- 1940 to -- Democratic National Committeewoman (Utah)
- 1939 to 1940 Member, Advisory Board, Utah State Art Center,
- 1939 Chairman, membership drive, Utah State Institute  
of Fine Arts
- 1941 Chairman, Arrangements Committee, National Art  
Week, (Utah)
- 1941 -- 1943 Member Board of Trustees, Unitarian Society  
now serving as Vice President
- 1941 Member Advisory Committee, N. Y. A.

(I am not quite sure of the exactness of above dates, but they  
are approximately correct.)



Resume' Civic and Community Activities, Mrs. Carolyn Wolfe

In order to give you an idea of my background, I think perhaps I should tell you something of my work in the office of the Secretary of State, where I was employed for 10 years. During this period a great many of the activities of the state, which later were delegated to separate departments, were carried on by that office. The Secretary of State at the time I was in that office was charged with the duty of passing on corporation papers and filing them; with the collection of numerous excise taxes; with the registration of automobiles. He was ex-officio commissioner of insurance. The fact that I had the opportunity to work in all the different departments, as well as to serve as secretary-clerk to the State Board of Examiners, the State Board of Loan Commissioners, and the State Armory Board gave me a broad knowledge of state government. My various duties brought me in contact with every department of state. I audited all claims against the State before presentation to the Board of Examiners. I assisted in the organization of a state purchasing department, which later became a separate department.

I either wrote or assisted in writing several laws which affected the work in the office; took a great deal of responsibility in the publication of the session laws and reports of state departments. Through this work I gained a fairly comprehensive knowledge of municipal and public law, and the political code of the state.

For a number of years I had direct charge of the Corporation Department with the responsibility of passing on





in articles of/corporation, and hence gained some knowledge relating to the organization and operation of corporations.

I served in the Secretary's office under three different men, two Republicans and one Democrat, and on the Board of Examiners under three Governors, two Republicans and a Democrat.

I resigned my position in the Secretary of State's office to take a course in business administration at the University of Chicago. When I returned to Salt Lake about two years later, I was again offered a position in the office, but was unable to accept it.

Following my work at the University I was offered a position in the Department of Internal Revenue, but did not accept.

My first office in a civic organization was that of president of the State League of Women Voters, which I held for two or three years. During this period the League did a great deal of work on "Education for Citizenship". We arranged meetings at which candidates spoke, got out the vote and helped to register voters. In order to acquaint the women with a knowledge of primary elections, and to stimulate their interest therein, we held a "Mock City Election", complete in every detail. We also held other meetings to consider the various phases of the League Program. Miss Belle Sherwin, of Washington D. C., who was then president of the National League, is familiar with the work I did while president of this group.

The work I did while president of the Women's Legislative Council, an office I held for approximately four years, was along the same line. The Council was composed of delegates from women's organizations throughout the state. We studied and



campaigned for or against legislation which we considered desirable or undesirable, meeting once a week during the session of the legislature. During the period when the legislature was not in session, the group carried on a research and study program. During my term of office the Taxation Committee published a fine study on the taxation laws of Utah.

The Lafayette Parent Teachers Association, during my incumbency, organized on a room basis, and furnished clothing to all the children in the school who did not have sufficient to be presentable and comfortable. We also held a course in nutrition, which was attended over a period of ten weeks, by a number of the mothers.

As chairman of the Current Events Section of the Ladies Literary Club I presented Prof. George Emory Fellows of the University of Utah in a series of lectures on International Relations, which was well received by the members of the Club and the community.

While a member of the Board of Trustees of the First Unitarian Church I managed a series of book reviews, which was a great financial success. Also on behalf of this organization I presented a series of eight Town Hall Meetings touching upon local and state subjects, which was very well accepted by the community and the press. We had such speakers as Francis Perkins, Sanford Bates, Will Durant together with some of our local citizens. We had approximately 600 in attendance.

As Vice Chairman and a member of the Board of the Salt Lake County Chapter of the Red Cross, I was Chairman of the Home Service Committee, and of the Junior Red Cross Drive.

As Vice President and member of the Board of Trustees of the Civic Center, (an opportunity school and social center)



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I served as chairman of the committee which completely rebuilt the kitchen and renovated some of the meetingrooms. At this center we presented a number of classes in nutrition, sewing, English, cooking, for maids and waitresses, etc. some of which have been taken over by the W.P.A.

In 1927 I was a candidate for the office of City Commissioner, being the first woman to run for this office. While I failed to be among the first four to qualify, I came in fifth out of 14 candidates, having qualified in three of the five wards.

As state vice chairman of the Democratic State Committee I had the opportunity to organize the women of this state politically, visiting all of the important points in the state many times. During my term of office, we initiated an educational program for our members, which I understand was the reason for my appointment as Regional Advisor by the Women's Division of the Democratic National Committee, and later for my appointment as Director of the Women's Division.

While Director of the Women's Division, we contacted the women in every state; formulated finance, radio, publicity, speaking and educational programs. For several of the states, we drafted, <sup>proposed</sup> laws to give the women 50-50 recognition on party committees and assisted in having them passed. We took over the publication of the "Democratic Digest", which is still being published by the Women's Division. I am forwarding copies of the Digest containing articles written by me. ("Why the Digest?" and "Organization".) We instituted the holding of Regional Conferences in different sections of the United States. These



Conferences are still being carried on by the Women's Division. I am sending you copy of program presented at a Conference held in Utah after I returned from Washington, and which I arranged in conjunction with the National Women's Division while serving as Regional Advisor, an office I was invited to take after my resignation as Director of the Women's Division, and my return to Utah.

I have visited the mountain states several times in the last four years, assisting in organization and educational work. In 1940 I held precinct campaign schools in the state of Utah, Washington, Oregon and Idaho.

I was appointed by Governor Flood as a member of the Committee of Fifteen to study the Educational System of Utah. The report published by this Committee covered 464 pages. I am sending you briefer report, which will give you an idea of the scope of the work of the committee.

During the past year I have assisted Judge Wolfe in his work as referee of labor cases before the National Railway Adjustment Board, and as a Special Representative of the National Defense Mediation Board, doing research and statistics.

In all my work on civic and community projects I have of course had the able and enthusiastic assistance of fine committees.





Additional information to be attached to record of Mrs. Carolyn Wolfe, 273 East Capitol Street, Salt Lake City, Utah.

.....

At the age of 18 while I was still in High school, Charles S. Tinney, Secretary of State (Republican), urged me to take a business course and accept a position as stenographer in his office. I took a short course of three months and began my service with the State. Starting as stenographer I worked in every department in the office, and as secretary-clerk to the various executive boards of which the Secretary of State was a member. I have already spoken in some detail of my work in the Secretary's office in a former memorandum to the Civil Service Commission. I might add that the work I did during the last six years of my incumbency was of an executive nature. During four of the years I served, the Secretary spent approximately only one week a month at the office. I had the sole responsibility for the work in my departments. I checked and OK'd claims amounting to millions of dollars; checked land patents for thousands of acres of state land; checked and filed articles of incorporation; OK'd purchased for different departments of state, and took the final responsibility in a great many other activities in the office. While the salary I was receiving at the time I resigned seems small in comparison with today's salaries, it was the highest paid to any woman in the state service, and seemed commensurate with salary of the highest paid officials at that time.

I was the only person in the secretary's office to be retained under the three administrations. When I resigned my work was given to two people, a man who took over the Board work, with



a woman to assist him. The Secretary of State later informed me, when he asked me to return to the office, that in addition to the two people doing my work, he himself had to take over some of the responsibilities.

I was admitted to the University of Chicago without the usual entrance requirements. A special board felt that my maturity of mind and record of achievement merited exemption from the usual routine.

Following my work at the University I acquired civil service status (salary range from \$1800 to \$4000 I believe), and was offered several times a position in the Department of Internal Revenue. Also as I stated before when I returned to Salt Lake after a two year absence, I was asked to again serve in the Secretary of State's office. I did not accept any of the offers of employment, preferring to serve in some of the community and civic enterprises as a volunteer.

I have enumerated the organizations with which I worked -- League of Women Voters, Legislative Council, Parent Teachers, Red Cross and the Civic Center, but I would like to say that the latter organization provided an opportunity school for women where they could secure vocational training, and a Clinic for those unable to pay more than a nominal fee for professional services. Under the auspices of the Center a Community Clinic and Dispensary was organized, a Baby Clinic established; a Visiting Nurses Association, and a Social Welfare League and a Society for Mental Hygiene. The Center conducted classes in nutrition, cooking, sewing, English, etc. using teachers accredited by the State Board of Education. We established a class to train house maids and cooks before the U.P.A. took over this work. I note that my idea of a work experience house



for domestics, submitted to the Center many years ago, has since been put into operation in different parts of the country. Lewis R. Alderson, Acting Chief, Service Division, Specialist in Adult Education (Bureau of Education) and a member of a Committee appointed to survey education in Utah (1926), later connected with the adult education program of the W.P.A. told me when I was in Washington in 1934-36 that he considered the work done by the Civic Center as outstanding in Adult Education in this country.

I did not solicit the office of Vice-Chairman of the Democratic State Committee. This office was offered to me because of the record I had made in other organizations, and I went into the work not because I wanted political patronage, but because I felt that here was an opportunity to put into actual operation some of the teaching advocated by the League of Women Voters to raise our standard of citizenship and to make our Democracy function more intelligently. I immediately organized a course of study for the different groups, using my intimate and practical knowledge of state, county and local government gained while working for the State, in formulating the programs. It was because of my record in the political educational field, and not any pressure from political leaders, which prompted my call to Washington to assume the post of Acting Director and later of Director of the Women's Division of the Democratic Party.

My work in the Women's Division was devoted almost entirely to organization and to planning educational programs. The "Suggested Programs" on enclosed pages from the September, 1934 issue of the Democratic Digest were planned and the material assembled by me. It is only an evidence of the many things we did to encourage the women to become informed citizens.

In my opinion the opportunity afforded for experience in organization and adult educational work in the directorship of





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either of the two major political parties is unsurpassed. The attached statement shows a total of almost 100,000,000 pieces of literature sent out during the 1936 campaign alone, indicating three important facts - First, that a large and efficient organization must have been perfected to handle one hundred million pieces of literature in the field; second, that it required intelligence to prepare or to delegate authority to prepare such material; third, that it required executive ability to disseminate that amount of material to thousands of people in the short period of a campaign. I personally prepared some of the material, and assisted with some; had direct charge of its dissemination and in addition held the necessary conferences with the field workers and planned and supervised the material which went into the Democratic Digest at this time. While Director of the Women's Division my office force varied from six to fifty people. I have letters from every section of the country congratulating me on prompt, efficient and constructive service. I personally consider that I made a real contribution to our Democratic way of life through my political service.

During the past two months I have been commissioned by the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis to organize County Chapters in this State. I was offered a salary for such service, but am doing it on an expense basis only.





I FAMILY BACKGROUND AND CHILDHOOD  
(Interview 1, May 3, 1976)  
[begin tape 1, side 2]

Grandparents and the Break with Mormonism

Stein: Let's begin at the beginning. Could you tell me when and where you were born?

Wolfe: Yes. I was born in 1890, and I'll be eighty-six on the twenty-seventh of this month. I was born in a little town called Payson, Utah, which was and is a small village about sixty miles south of Salt Lake City, and predominantly Mormon or LDS [Latter Day Saints]. My grandfather was a Mormon and he was also a polygamist; he had three wives. But my mother was not a Mormon.

Stein: Your grandfather was a Mormon?

Wolfe: Yes, and my grandmother was too, on my mother's side. They came over with the early pioneers, and I think my grandmother actually was one of those that helped push the handcarts, you know, in the period when they had handcarts, so that they were really hard-working pioneers. My grandfather came from the upper New York and New England section, so that he was of a different background. He really became the leader of the little community down there, Payson [Utah], until he had the falling out with Brigham Young, which I suppose is interesting. It might go in here. It seems to be an authentic thing.

He had a herd of cattle, and I guess Brigham Young himself saw them and said, "Well, that's a good herd of cattle, Brother Simons. Would you like to sell them?" My grandfather said, "Yes." So, they agreed upon the price and everything, and that Brigham Young would send a man down and get them. The man came down, and my grandfather said, "Well, where's the money to pay for them?" And the man said, "We'll just credit your tithing." My grandfather said, "I've paid my tithing. I always pay my tithing. And if you pay for the cattle,



Wolfe: I will also pay the tithing on that. But you're not going to take these cattle and just use them to credit on my tithing." So my grandfather wouldn't let him take them.

Brigham Young didn't like that, and my grandfather didn't like it, so finally he left the church. I think my mother must have been at an impressionable age at that time, because she also left the church. I mean, she didn't want anything to do with it. She wouldn't even let them send her over to the Brigham Young University, which was and is in Provo.

At that time, I think, in Utah, there was an effort being made by the other religious denominations to send missionaries in to try to convert some of the people that were at least passing through Utah, to other denominations, or that those people who weren't satisfied with the Mormon church could avail themselves of those other groups.

The Mormon settlements in Utah were important way stations for people en route to Southern California through Southern Utah, and Northern California by way of the Donner Pass, with everybody going through Salt Lake City. Many traders stopped to trade with the Mormons, and an increasing number of "Gentiles" set up in business and became residents. There was a great movement of people to the West, not only Mormons, but people seeking a new country, gold in California. There was nothing static in the atmosphere, but rather an excitement and feeling of change taking place.

The Gentile strength increased, and for years a crusade against polygamy was carried on resulting in the passage of an anti-polygamy law in 1862, which was held valid by the Supreme Court, but which did not prove satisfactory in effecting the results desired by its backers. After a long period the Edmunds Bill of 1882 became law, and a still more stringent act called the Edmunds-Tucker Bill was enacted in 1887. Many Mormons were indicted and sent to prison under this act.

The Edmunds-Tucker Bill did prohibit women from voting. This right was regained when Utah became a state in 1896. The Mormons claimed that the elimination of polygamy was not the main reason for the crusade against polygamy, but that it was used to gain political power from the Mormon Church. Later bills were introduced to deny members of the Mormon Church the right to vote. After bitter fighting the whole matter was terminated when the president of the Mormon Church, Wilford Woodruff, issued his famous Manifesto stating that he would abide by the laws of the United States and urge his members to do likewise. This was in the autumn of 1890 at the conference meeting. Legal procedure to gain statehood was begun, and Utah was admitted January 4, 1896.



Wolfe: This may help you to understand why the Mormons did not become active in politics at an early date. They were too busy fighting the powerful groups trying to gain power in Utah.

Well, after my grandfather had this trouble with Brigham Young, he wanted to leave the church, and he joined the people who were helping with the other religious organizations, and business organizations.

At any rate, that got my background out of the Mormon background, as my mother then married a young man who had come out from Louisville, Kentucky. He was in what they called a harness shop, where they made saddles and harnesses for horses and equipment for wagons.

Stein: If I could just back up a brief moment, what was your grandfather's name?

Wolfe: Orwell Simons.

Stein: And he had three wives, you said?

Wolfe: Yes. My grandmother was the youngest one. When statehood came along, of course, they gave up polygamy, and each man could choose which wife he wanted. My grandfather thought that it was best to take the first wife, so he took the first wife, and the others went out into the community. They were just like single people again, but with a family.

At any rate, my grandmother (who had four children) married again and really seemed to be quite happy and satisfied all the rest of her life. There seemed to be no hard feelings between any members of this big family, except that our little part was the Gentile part, and the rest of them were all still in the Mormon church.

They are to this day, most of them, very good Mormons, but with some exceptions. One day I was sitting in our [Unitarian] Fellowship in Santa Rosa, and a man came up to me and said, "Do you happen to know James H. Wolfe in Salt Lake?" I said, "Yes. He's my son." He said, "Well, I'm Cal Simons. His wife is a cousin of mine." I said, "Well, if she's a cousin of yours, why, you're a cousin of mine, because she's a second cousin to Jimmy." [Laughter] Well, she's no Mormon either; at least she doesn't practice it. But it was really quite interesting to have one of my relatives come into the Unitarian Fellowship. He's become one of the leaders up there.

Stein: That's very interesting.



O. SIMONS.

Mr. O. Simons was born in Alexander, Grafton County, New Hampshire, April 21st, 1821. His early life was spent on the farm. He came to Utah in 1854,



locating at Payson in 1855. Since coming to Payson he has been engaged as a blacksmith, the owner of a grist mill, also engaged in farming and stock raising, and is one of the well-to-do business men of that section of Utah. He has recently deeded most of his property to his sons who are also successful business men. Mr. Simons still retains interest in the Z. C. M. I. of Salt Lake City also in the woolen factory at Provo and the Payson's saving bank, of which he is a director. He was Mayor of Payson at the time the land office was located there and served as select man of Utah county for eight years. He entered and received Government patent for most c





## Parents

Wolfe: So, that does that.

[Looking at outline topics.] Parents, their backgrounds. I think both my mother and my father worked in their shop, and the man who brought my father out left him the shop when he left Payson, so that, as a matter of fact, they inherited the shop. They later closed that out and started a mercantile establishment; it was a mini-department store.

They were a little bit different than the other people in the community because the rest of them were practically all Mormons. There were a few Gentiles, so-called. But my mother and father had outside contacts. They had friends in Chicago. Evidently, some of the families that had lived in Payson, had returned there. My parents used to go back there and buy their merchandise and things in Chicago and ship it out to Salt Lake. They could undersell the other people who got their stock through the ZCMI [Zion's Cooperative Mercantile Institution].

The Mormons used to preach in their services: "You shouldn't trade at the Williams' store because they are Gentiles, undercutting the Mormons." The poor Mormons wanted to get the best prices, so they used to come in the back door on Sundays. [Laughter]

You know, it's queer. I feel as if I've been in a minority group almost all of my life, in one way or another, as a non-Mormon in my early days in Utah and later as a Unitarian. There are so few Unitarians--there used to be about 60,000 in the 30s. And it has reached, approximately, a couple of hundred thousand in the '70s in the U.S. Even so they seem to have furnished lots of national leaders, but they really are a minority group as far as religious things are concerned. And certainly in Utah we were definitely known as Gentiles and non-Christians by the Protestants. It didn't make a lot of things too easy for you.

I think one of the things is that the Mormons always stuck pretty well together. They were wonderful friends and all this, that, and the other, until at some point there came the division. We got along beautifully, and they certainly seemed to like my husband, because they elected him time after time.

In fact, it wasn't for many years that the Mormons even had a Mormon on the Utah Supreme Court.



Stein: Could we get your parents' names? What was your mother's name, first of all?

Wolfe: Kate (Katherine) Williams.

Stein: And your father's name?

Wolfe: He was George W. Williams.

Stein: And what was his religious background?

Wolfe: Well, he was a Protestant. I can't tell you definitely, because the only thing we had down there to choose from was, at one time, the Methodists, and, at the other time, the Presbyterians. So, whichever one was there we went to. The "W" in his name is Wesley so his family might have been Methodists.

Stein: How much education had each of your parents had?

Wolfe: Well, they really hadn't had a great deal. As I say, my mother wouldn't go past the grade schools that she had been able to go to in Payson because of her feeling about the church, so that she certainly didn't have any education beyond the grade schools, and I don't think my father did either. In that day and age they seemed to be able to make their way, you know. And there is so much education you can get; I mean, you just sort of breathe it in, don't you?

Stein: Yes, especially on the frontier.

Wolfe: Yes! There are so many things that count when you're on the frontier--just stamina and grit and all that sort of thing. Well, they certainly had that, all the old pioneers. They were marvelous, I must say that for them.

Stein: Were either of your parents at all involved in politics or civic affairs of any kind?

Wolfe: Certainly not when they were down in Payson, because there was such a small group that they wouldn't have had any chance to do anything, except perhaps meet with people who had like feelings of their own, just for social purposes, but they strengthened the Gentile movement.

But, no, I can't say that either my mother or father--I think that, as I said, they were Republicans, because of the fact that later on, my folks had the mercantile store, and my father also was running sheep; (all the sheep men seemed to be Republicans). I think he bought sheep in the Cleveland administration for a dollar a head. [Laughter] Can you imagine that! I mean, when I came out here to



Wolfe: California and took over the ranch that they had, we paid fifty dollars a head for the sheep that we put on the ranch.

Stein: Whose ranch did you take over?

Wolfe: My folks' in Vineburg, California. They came down here and bought a ranch down here. When my mother died--my father had died before-- I came down and thought that I would restore the ranch and put some sheep on it. [Chuckle] I guess it's part of my heritage.

That just shows you the difference in the prices of sheep at that time. [Laughter]

Stein: Did you have any brothers and sisters?

Wolfe: Yes, I had a sister and I had a brother. My brother is quite well known in California. My parents came down here in 1917, so he went to the University of California. After he graduated, there were no jobs at that time, as I understand, and he really wanted training. He offered to go in the bank without any salary, just for the training. He might have gone in there for a short time, and whether they paid him or not, I don't know.

But then he went into the construction business, and he's been in that ever since and been very successful. He organized what is called Williams and Burroughs Company, which built a lot of the university, bridges, and things of that sort, hospitals, and housing.

Stein: What was his first name?

Wolfe: George.

And I have a sister who is about the same age as I am. She just got married last year again. [Laughter]

Stein: Goodness! You have a lively family.

Wolfe: Yes! She lives over in Napa, and her present name is Mrs. Nelle Longhurst.

My sister Nelle has an entirely different personality than mine. She was more outgoing, ambitious, charming, and tenacious. She talked about going to a private school in San Francisco, but instead took an office job which she held until she was married to a mining engineer, Frederick W. Varney. They moved around from one mining camp to another: Nevada, Mexico, Idaho, Colorado, Utah, and finally the Philippines (Mindanao).



Wolfe: She, her husband, and two others were taken prisoners in Mindinao during World War II, but were released. She was sent to Australia on a submarine and after medical treatment was sent back to San Francisco. Her husband remained to work with the U.S. and Philippine troops. He was an expert radio man. He remained until the end of the war.

She was married before our parents moved to San Francisco, and in between stints in the mining communities she came back to Salt Lake, and then to San Francisco, where she usually found some job, the last one with my father managing an apartment house he owned.

She worked with several charitable organizations: Children's Hospital Committee, garden societies, Antiquarians, etcetera, and of course mining engineers, Philippine societies, (especially those who returned after the war with Japan), yacht club, and the officers' club, her husband having served during the war with Japan. She had a distinguished group of friends. She and her husband entertained generously, both at their San Francisco home, and in Sonoma, where they had a second home.

In between all these things, she managed to make good investments in property (apartment houses) and stocks. Bought before the war, they paid for themselves when housing was scarce. She has been a very successful businesswoman. She had one daughter, married, and deceased.

Stein: So you had just one brother and one sister.

Wolfe: There are three of us, you see. I stayed in Utah the longest.

Stein: Is your brother younger than you or older?

Wolfe: He's younger, ten years.

Stein: You're the middle child, then.

Wolfe: Yes.





Education

Stein: You were then sent to a Methodist private school, as you said before we started recording.

Wolfe: I went to a Methodist day school in Payson, and then it may have changed to a Presbyterian school. I don't remember. But at any rate, I didn't get into public school until I got up in Salt Lake.

Stein: About how old were you then, or about what grade?

Wolfe: I was ten. I don't remember what grade.

Stein: You went to high school in Salt Lake?

Wolfe: In Salt Lake. I started there in the public school and I guess I was in my junior year at high school when the secretary of state of Utah said that he would give me a job in his office if I would take a business course. So I stopped the high school and took a business course, which took about three months, is my recollection. I immediately went into the secretary of state's office, and there I certainly did get training in government, right from the very bottom on up to the top.

Stein: At that point, how did you, or how did your parents, see your education? How far were they encouraging you to go?

Wolfe: I don't think that they thought so much about education for women. I'm not sure how they actually felt about that, but I think they encouraged me to take advantage of the opportunity when I had it to get the business education and go into the secretary of state's office. But, you know, sometimes it's the children themselves who have the aspiration for the higher education, and perhaps we, my sister and I, might have encouraged the thought that the brother should get a college education.

My sister married when she was about twenty-two, I guess, and she had worked some before she was married. Of course, I had worked for a long time. I must have been fifteen or sixteen when I went into the secretary of state's office. It was really just like a training school there, I suppose. It was really a good experience. I felt that I got a good education, although it might have been slightly narrow, you see. I certainly did get a lot of education in one segment.

But then my husband was a well-educated man. He graduated from Lehigh University, an engineer, and then he went back and took law.



Wolfe: Then he was always interested in reading and all sorts of things, so that, when you're living with a person like that your tastes change and you begin to get more and more education.

I had taken some separate courses when I was working, like taking courses in Spanish. I had to take some law courses and things like that, but nothing very definite.

Stein: And what about your career? Did your parents have an idea of what you should do?

Wolfe: No. They were quite permissive about that. You mean when I decided to go back to school or study at the university?

Stein: Or else when you were younger, when you were a child. I guess what I'm interested in is if they saw for you as a life plan that you would eventually get married and have children, or did they see for you that you should become educated and go into business, or what?

Wolfe: I think that at that time they must have anticipated that we would get married and raise our own families, because that was the accepted thing to do at that time, and there weren't so many women going out and making careers for themselves. As it turned out, the thing that I did by going into the state government, I had what amounted to a career, because I was the top person practically--the top woman--in the state government at that time, you see, while I was there. So, as far as a career was concerned, I had it.

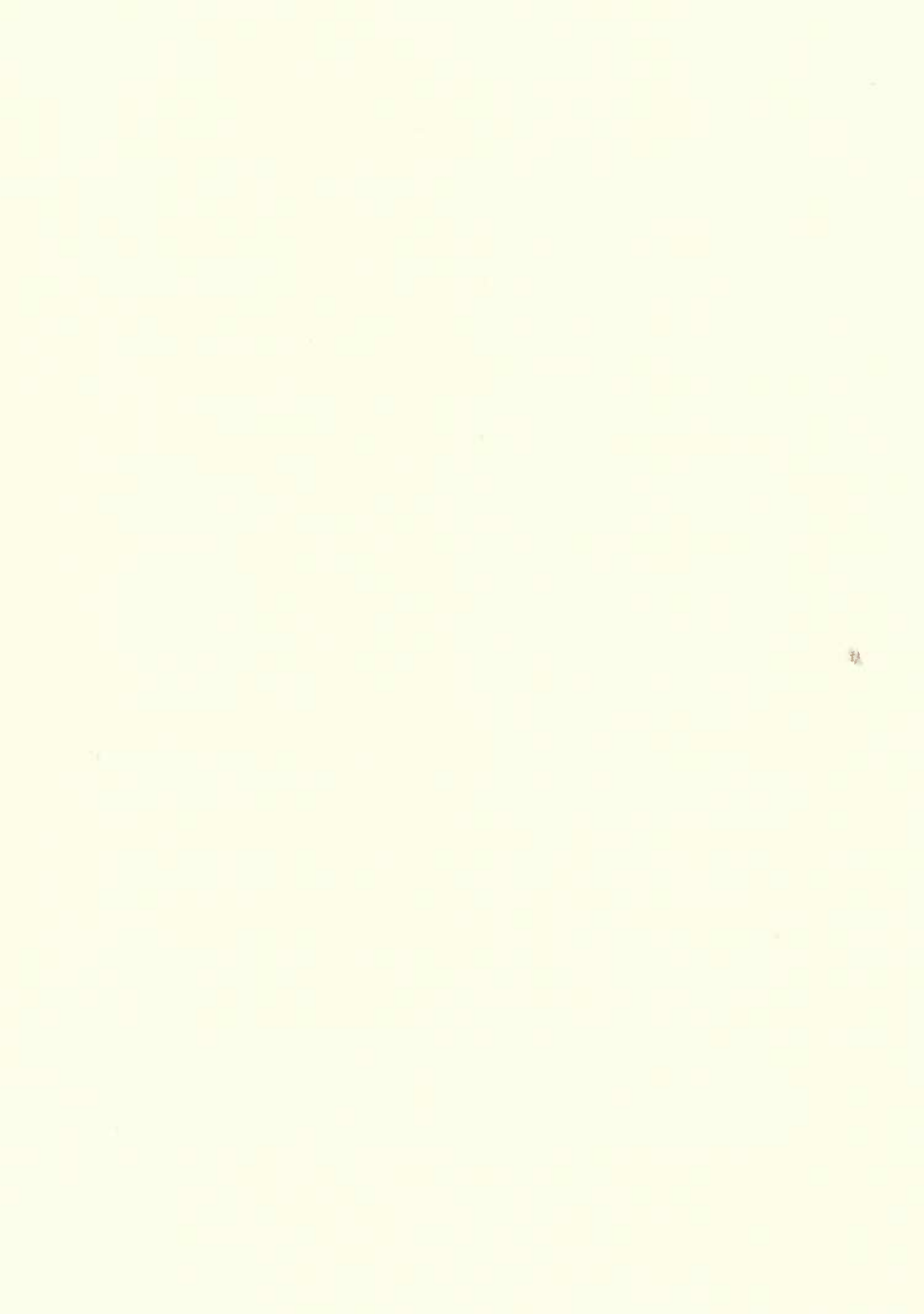
Then I decided I wanted to go back and take business management and perhaps see if I couldn't do something else besides that, in fact, thinking that if I got married and the rest of it that I would have some other things back of me.

Stein: I see. You mentioned before that the secretary of state said that you could have a job in his office if you took the business courses.

Wolfe: Yes.

Stein: How did you happen to know the secretary of state? That's quite a prestigious person.

Wolfe: Oh, yes. Well, at that time I think my mother--we had a big house--my mother seemed to be a very good financier and ambitious, you know. I think she's the one that ran the store and all the rest of it. And when she came up to Salt Lake and my father was away a great bit of the time because he had enlarged the sheep business and he had gone into partnerships with men in Salt Lake and they were running



Wolfe: thousands of sheep up on the Wyoming desert--so, he was away a great deal of the time.

We had this big house, and she took in boarders. You met some of the most interesting people, at least we did, because, for instance, at one time all of the people, the staff that built the Newhouse and the Boston Buildings (which were the first skyscrapers in Salt Lake) for Samuel Newhouse, they lived at our house. The architect and his assistants all lived there until the project was finished. It was wonderful. And we had the secretary of state. I can't remember them all. But just wonderful people, and they all turned out to be wonderful friends.

I often wonder why there are no boarding houses any more that offer such a life to people, because it was very interesting. I can't remember who else was there at the time that the secretary of state was there, but, at any rate, that was how I first met him.

Stein: I see. And that was before you were married, right?

Wolfe: Yes. I started in there when I was about--well, I guess I had just turned sixteen when I finished the business course.

Stein: Was there any sort of feeling of pressure against taking that kind of job as a woman?

Wolfe: Oh, no. I think that girls and women were eager to get such a job. They paid fairly good salaries, and it was a prestigious job.

Stein: How much did you get? Do you remember?

Wolfe: Well, I got \$50 a month, to start, which was really good back in those days (1906).

### Family Life

Stein: One of the things we're interested in getting at in some of these questions is that there's been a lot of interest currently among historians, as I'm sure you're aware, about the history of women and especially women in the early twentieth century, how they were raised and what sort of expectations their families and the community had for them. That's what I'm fishing around for here.



Wolfe: Yes, I know. A lot of my friends went on to the university, and I kept in touch with them. But I don't know. It's hard for me to explain because, you see, in Utah the women were accepted in the positions. They weren't discriminated against in any way.

I guess we weren't in what you'd call the social class that-- we didn't think anything about that. My folks might be considered as exponents, I guess, of the work ethic. They thought that everybody should have a job and be doing what they could, both for themselves and the community. I suppose that makes it more difficult for me to adjust to the permissive regimes that have been going on, but you have to adjust because with your grandchildren and all the rest, times certainly have changed! [Laughter]

Stein: Speaking of rules, were there fairly strict rules laid down as you were growing up?

Wolfe: Yes. We weren't permitted to stay out too late at night, and they must know whom you were out with, and all the rest of it.

Stein: Were you and your sister treated any differently than your brother? Were you aware of that?

Wolfe: Well, you see, he was ten years younger than I. So, you wouldn't feel it too much. By the time he got to the point where he wanted an education, why, we were wanting him to have it and to get it, you see. I think that my mother and father would have wanted him to have it, too. I think maybe that as for the men in the family they thought perhaps they ought to be better qualified than women. Perhaps I shouldn't say that.

Mother was wonderful, a wonderful cook, and a good companion. Of course, Father was away a great deal of the time, so we didn't see as much of him.

At any rate, you got the idea that you were expected to do your part, and even in the house, in housework and things of that sort, you always were expected to do your share of the work.

Stein: What sort of chores were your responsibility?

Wolfe: Oh, we helped with the cleaning and dusting and things of that sort, washing the dishes. No dishwashers. [Laughter]

Stein: I was just going to ask what sort of appliances you had, if there were any. I know the vacuum cleaner came in fairly early in the century, but I don't know when it made it out to the west coast.





Wolfe: I can't remember. We must have gotten one of the earliest vacuum cleaners, and certainly we had a washing machine. I remember, it seems to me, that I had one; when I first got married, I had an old-fashioned--it seems old-fashioned now--Maytag that was gas-fired, or something. The appliances were just beginning to come in, those beautiful appliances and everything. We had iceboxes, not refrigerators. The iceman had to come and put the ice in every day and things like that.

Stein: Did you have gas? Were the stoves gas by that time, or was it still wood-burning?

Wolfe: Well, it seems to me I can remember gas, but I can't be sure whether it was while I was a child. Of course, when I was a child, we would be burning either wood or coal. Down in Payson they didn't have anything of that sort, and I don't believe they even had telephones. They may have, but they weren't prominent enough so that I really realized that phones were available before I left Payson. Automobiles were just beginning to come in.

Stein: I was just going to ask you about automobiles.

Wolfe: Yes. That was one of the first things I bought. When I was working, I bought, I guess, a Steinway grand piano, the first thing I bought, and I took music lessons. We had a wonderful time.  
[end tape 1, side 2; begin tape 2, side 1]

Stein: You were saying that you bought a Steinway.

Wolfe: A Steinway grand piano, and took lessons from an old German musician. I had a friend, a girlfriend, who played the violin, so we used to practice together and really have lots of fun with that whole setup. I enjoyed my piano immensely. I brought it down to California with me. When I moved away from the ranch, which was over the hill over here, I gave it to my son, thinking that both he and his wife played the piano, and they took it back to Salt Lake with them. So, that was the end of the piano.

Stein: Did you have any other cultural lessons as a child?

Wolfe: Well, as I told you, I took Spanish and we were always doing something of that sort. I took some English and I did take courses in law while I was down at the courthouse. We were always taking courses of some kind, one or the other. It is hard to remember what they were now, but you just kept doing that all along



Wolfe: to keep up with different things. It seems to me that you do that all your life, don't you? I mean, at least I've either been giving them or taking them! [Laughter]

Stein: I'd like to back up a moment to your family. Had your parents planned to have only three children?

Wolfe: I haven't the remotest idea. I don't know. We never talked about it. You know, those are things you didn't talk about at that time. If you can imagine it! It would be something that I would never think of discussing with them, whether they should or shouldn't.

Stein: As far as you were concerned, it just happened that way.

Wolfe: As far as I was concerned, that's the way it happened. But I suppose they must have regulated their family, because I'm sure that my mother thought she had her hands full even so.

Stein: What was the age span?

Wolfe: There's twelve years between the oldest and the youngest. I remember that my mother wanted a boy. Their first son died in infancy.

You know, in spite of everything, my mother worked hard, and yet I think she had one of the most interesting lives of anybody that you can think of. In the little town of Payson, for instance, she was always one of the leaders because she somehow had initiative and drive, and she knew what she wanted to do, and she was good at doing things. She was a good horseback rider and even rode side-saddle. I never could understand that. I mean, whether women rode side-saddle at that time or not, I don't know, but it seemed queer to me that Mother would have this beautiful velvet gown made for side-saddle riding. Maybe it was some show or something of the sort, I don't know.

Stein: What sort of things did she take the leadership in?

Wolfe: My mother, you mean?

Stein: Yes.

Wolfe: Well, it's hard to put your finger on anything very definite, but she was always the leader in the group, you know. When they wanted to do something, she was the one that would have the ideas about doing them. She was a "partner" in the businesses she and my father operated.



Wolfe: After she more or less retired over at the ranch--I suppose it was in '33 that they bought the ranch and came over there--I think that she just more or less enjoyed herself. She found the people here very congenial. I discovered later that they were about my age, and I thought they were about her age [laughter], like the winemakers and some of the people who lived here in the early days. They were all good friends of hers, and they would have good times and go out and do interesting things.

And, of course, she took charge of working the ranch, which was about a 210-acre ranch, and they had pears and grapes and sheep and all sorts of things on it. So, she was kept quite busy.

Stein: Did she herself exercise the franchise? Did she vote?

Wolfe: Oh, yes.

Stein: Every time?

Wolfe: Yes. Yes, she was brought up on the voting. She always did that.

Stein: Had anyone in her family been active at all in the suffrage campaigns in Utah?

Wolfe: The rest of her family were Mormons, you see. She was the only one out of the whole family, and I don't know how many children altogether my grandfather had. It's hard to explain, except that perhaps she may have met some of the Gentile people who were in there proselytizing, or business people or ranchers who were settling in Payson; some of her friends might have met them. I can't think of any other thing, except it happened about the same time that the other religious denominations were sending missionaries into Utah, and the crusade against polygamy was in effect. My grandfather, of course, was out of the church, and so she may have had sympathy for him.

But those early days were really quite rigorous, you know. At that time they talked about all sorts of things that were going on. What am I trying to think of? The Wild West shows that we have nowadays. It really was that way. [Laughter] They were real at that time--the highwaymen and the robbers and the people of that sort.

I also remember--I don't remember until later--after I was married and we were living in Salt Lake, a wonderful man stopped to visit us. Everybody used to stop at our house from one end of the continent to the other, either because of my husband or me, whom



Wolfe: we'd met in our various and sundry works. But this man had been a Unitarian and he came out to Utah as a Unitarian missionary. Now, imagine that, that little handful of Unitarians sending missionaries out to Utah, which was an almost impossible situation.

It was in 1885, he told me, that he got here, and he went up to Brigham City, and he really organized a good group who were Unitarians. In fact, I think that they, he and others, did enough work so that a good strong church was organized in Salt Lake City in 1896, or prior to that, and they rented the Salt Lake Theater, where they held their services.

Someone asked Brigham Young if he wasn't afraid to have the Unitarians using the theater on Sunday. But no, he said he wasn't, that they needed the money. [Laughter] I mean, the Mormons needed the money, the cash money, at that time. That didn't somehow answer your question, did it? I just got off on a sidetrack.

The times were so different then. It's hard to ask about what they were doing in a small village. You know what the villages were like. No, you don't know what they were like, because in addition to highwaymen they had Indians, and they had lots of things they had to protect themselves against.

The thing they did was to build their community close together, and then their farms were out, so that it was almost like the thing we're trying to set up in planning now, like the planned economy or planned units, where you have the housing development and lots of open space. Well, there they built their whole little town, which is very compact, so that they'd sort of be safe together.

But each morning the men would have to get up and take their wagons or horses or whatever it was and ride out two or three miles to their ranches, where they really did the harvesting and ran their cattle. I don't know. I suppose they had to look after the cattle, or they'd be run off. But they grew hay and things of that sort.

So, the whole community life was so different in those days. Everybody was working hard and had to work hard. It's fun to sort of look back on it and see what happened.

Stein: Yes. Another question occurred to me, speaking of frontier life. Was there enough trade with the East at that point, so that things like ready-made clothing were available? Could you buy ready-made clothing, or did your mother make most of it?

Wolfe: I think my mother must have made most of it, because she was very good at things like that. But, as I told you, they started





Wolfe: running that store before--we moved up to Salt Lake in 1900, so they were operating the store before that. They went back to Chicago and bought most of the things that they sold. But I can't remember that they had ready-made dresses. They had lots of pants, overalls, and men's clothing. But I can remember that they had yardage where they sold material, and the people really made their own clothing. I would say most of the women made most of their own clothing.

Stein: Was there a distinctive Mormon dress, or were their dresses just like everybody else's?

Wolfe: Well, I think in a small community like that that we all pretty well dressed alike, but there may have been some difference in Salt Lake, where you had some of the Gentiles with more money, you see. They came in and they ran the big mercantile institutions and they really could afford to maybe buy the ready-made clothing, and you would notice the difference then. They kept pretty well to themselves, you know, as far as the social life was concerned in those early days in the city, I think. Of course, I can't speak definitely for it.

But the Mother Hubbard--do you know what a Mother Hubbard is?

Stein: Yes.

Wolfe: Well, it seems to me that that was an acceptable piece of clothing for a lot of the women, although I can't remember ever that in my life I had a Mother Hubbard. I can't remember that. I can't remember that my mother had, and I can't remember what my mother wore in those early days. That is strange, isn't it? I can't remember any pictures or anything of the sort. They must have worn long skirts and blouses, or something like that.

Stein: Yes. I'm trying to think if there were bustles.

Wolfe: Well, there wasn't as much fashion in the small community, and I think we'd passed beyond the bustle stage when we came to Salt Lake. I think things were getting more modern then.

Stein: I guess also that was a big city.

Wolfe: Yes, it was a big city! It seemed big. It was wonderful.



## II UTAH SECRETARY OF STATE'S OFFICE

Stein: Let me just ask you a little bit about your job with the secretary of state, and then we'll call it a day. What sort of responsibilities did you have? What was his name?

Wolfe: His name was Charles S. Tingey. I worked through two or three of them. [Laughter] But he was the first one; he gave me the job. He was a Republican and really quite a nice gentleman.

The politicians were really a little bit different in those early days. They maybe had had more experience, or could speak well, and so forth and so on.

You want to know what my experiences were there. Well, I started out, of course, doing secretarial work. There was an old man, a southerner, Colonel Squires, in the office, and he just took jurisdiction over me and really gave me excellent training, just wonderful training, in all sorts of things relating to business and government. A secretary of state's office in the early days included several departments that you see in the state, for instance corporations. We handled all the corporations, and when it first started out we handled the registration of automobiles.

For some reason or other, I was given the job of writing the first automobile regulations. So I sent out to Colorado and one or two other places and got copies of their laws and just made up a law that fit Utah, and it went to the legislature and was passed.

Stein: So you drafted the initial vehicle code of Utah.

Wolfe: So, you can see that it was very different then. Of course, the secretary of state's office was the registration point for a lot of other things, and they had the responsibility of keeping lots of records. Of course, keeping records was very much more difficult then. For instance, they used to have to copy the corporation



Wolfe: papers in a big book. They had enormous books that you'd open, and then somehow or other you could put the page on what amounted to a roller, and then you'd type the page. Lifting those heavy books! They used to bring them out and put them on the counter so that people could look things up, and if they'd ask you you'd have to bring those heavy books out so that they could look at them.

But, of course, the whole thing has changed so much now. The secretaries of state--I don't know, but I imagine that their official works are quite restricted now, like maybe elections and things of that sort.

But, at any rate, we organized the legislature, and we had somehow or other to see that the legislature kept going. When they got finished, we handled all the laws they had passed. First they went to the governor and got signed and then the secretary [of state] had to take care of them. They were filed, also got recorded, and they also had to be published in book form, and we did all of that. I seemed to be helping in all those things.

I can remember that some company--and I realize now that maybe this was unethical; I didn't have sense enough to know whether it was ethical or not then. But the Corporation Trust Company in New York wrote out and asked me to send them copies of all bills that were introduced into the legislature relating to corporations. Well, I did. You see, they paid me for the information and I did it along with my regular work, which the state paid me for.

Then the board of examiners. The board of examiners was composed of the governor, the state attorney general, and the secretary of state, who was also secretary of the board.. I served as clerk to the board.

The board passed on state policies, reviewed all state boards, departments, including the state university and the state prison, and passed on all claims including expense accounts. The board also had authority to issue bonds, etcetera. All claims for expenses were reviewed and passed by the board. It was my duty to prepare all this material, audit the claims, etcetera and take the minutes. Through this job I learned a great deal about the entire state government and its personnel.

So, all those things, you see, were in the secretary of state's office, and many more, perhaps, that I haven't recollected. But it was a large part of the state government at that time.

Stein: Who else worked in the office? Did you have people working under you?



Wolfe: Yes. We had, I guess, two or three other women in the office. I know that one of them had the responsibility of doing patents, and after she left, it seems that that also became my responsibility. When people filed on land, of course, they got a patent for it, and those were recorded and kept track of in the secretary of state's office. Just untold detail of all the record-keeping in the state went through the office.

There was a deputy secretary of state and one or two other men, I guess. There were lots of people coming to the counter, asking for things, and I had to help serve the people at the counter. I had dictation, which I typed and wrote the letters, and things of that sort.

Stein: I realize that I neglected to ask you this before: What sort of skills had you picked up in the business course you took?

Wolfe: I could do secretarial work and a certain amount--oh, not much--bookkeeping. Just actually stenography is the thing that I took.  
[end tape 2, side 1]





III JUDGE JAMES H. WOLFE  
(Interview 2, May 14, 1976)  
[begin tape 1, side 1]

Meeting and Marrying Mr. Wolfe

Stein: I think that we left off just before you got married. When we left off, you were--

Wolfe: In the secretary of state's office.

Stein: You were in the secretary of state's office, right. Maybe we should start with the story of how you met your husband.

Wolfe: Well, I met him in the office. He was a young attorney who came out from Pennsylvania. He was a mechanical engineer, I guess, before he became an attorney, and through his engineering work he had met a brother-in-law of George Dern, who later on became governor of Utah and, still later, secretary of war.

He [James Wolfe] decided to settle in the West because he had been out in the West and down in Mexico selling mining machinery, and he had met Governor Dern's brother-in-law, and he [Governor Dern's brother-in-law] suggested that Salt Lake City might be a good place for a young lawyer to settle down. So he came to Salt Lake and started a practice there. I can't remember what year he came. I suppose it was somewhere between 1910 and '12, or in there.

I was working in the secretary of state's office, and he came down as an attorney to look for some papers or something of that sort that were on file there. So we became acquainted.

Later on, the secretary of state's office was moved to the state capitol after that building was finished, and my husband, by that time, had been appointed as deputy attorney general of the state. So, of course, I saw quite a bit of him through the interplay



Wolfe: of the two departments.

Later on, I wanted to take a course in business management. I left and went to Chicago, the University of Chicago, for that. My husband in the meantime was in the National Guard. First they were positioned down on the Mexican border, and, I suppose, from all the stories they tell, had a great time because [Pancho] Villa was the target at that time. He has since become one of Mexico's heroes, but at that time he wasn't considered a hero as far as our National Guard was concerned.

After that, I suppose Jim was commissioned as a lieutenant and was sent back to one of the Eastern states for training. So, he came up to Chicago, and told me that at the end of the training period he was to be sent down to Americus, Georgia, and we decided that we would be married. After I had finished the work in school, I also went to Georgia. It was a wasted year in school as far as any appreciation of my status as a businesswoman was concerned, because I never did do anything after that.

When I finished that year at the university, they were just putting the income tax law into effect. The Bureau of Internal Revenue wanted to have me accept a job in that department, but I decided not to and went down to Georgia instead.

Stein: And got married?

Wolfe: Well, we were married before we went down. We were married at the University of Chicago by a Unitarian minister, on April 16, 1918.

One of the interesting things about that was I don't suppose I had mentioned anything about it to my parents. [Laughter] I had good friends in Chicago whom I saw every weekend and I spent a good deal of time with them. They were friends of my parents--a doctor, Dr. Greer, and his family.

But my husband came to Chicago to see me and--actually, there hadn't been much talk about marriage, perhaps none. In Chicago both persons, evidently, didn't have to go to the license bureau to get their license. He got the license without telling me anything about it, and then he brought it to school, and we discussed it, and we finally decided that we couldn't afford to waste the money that the license cost. [Laughter] But in the meantime, because he was deputy attorney general, some reporter picked it up in Chicago and relayed it on to the Salt Lake paper, and it came out in the Salt Lake paper that the license had been taken out for our marriage.



Wolfe: Immediately, I got a wire from my father, strictly on business line, and mentioning the fact, and then saying, "Please confirm."  
[Laughter] Of course, they were terribly upset, but had no real objection, you know. So, the marriage went through all right back there.

There was a Unitarian minister at the University of Chicago at the time, and so the service was performed in his study. That was the beginning of our married life.

Stein: How old were you by this time?

Wolfe: Twenty-seven, something like that.

Stein: And were you already a Unitarian by that time?

Wolfe: No. I hadn't thought much about religion. As children, we had gone to a Presbyterian church school, and I had difficulty accepting all the things that were taught in the Sunday school, and so I never did join the church. Of course, I suppose we went to church, or did something, just kept up the association, more for the friendships than anything else.

Then, after I married my husband, he was quite closely involved with the Unitarian Society in Salt Lake City, and so it was just like moving over from the Republican into the Democratic party, because after you'd been studying economics and everything else, it seemed the logical thing to do. Then, when I found out what the Unitarians stood for and their philosophy, it was very agreeable to me, and I have worked in that church ever since, very enthusiastically and very comfortably.

#### The Schwenkfelder Families

Stein: Just to back up a bit about your husband, I found the Who's Who\* entry about him, and I wanted to ask you some things about that. It mentions that he was from Pennsylvania originally.

Wolfe: Yes.

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\*See Appendix A



Stein: Is that where his family had been from?

Wolfe: Yes. His family is quite an old one. They originally came over from Silesia in Germany, and they were a part of the--I'll never be able to think of this name. I'll have to look at the book, I guess. [Searches for book.] They settled in this country as one of the early groups of settlers. [Finds name in book.] They were called the Schwenkfelder families. They actually kept a history of the whole movement while they were in this country. [Shows interviewer book.]\*

Stein: Isn't this interesting! [Looking through book.]

Wolfe: And our children are listed in it, some of them in pen and ink.

They evidently were a wonderful group of people, dedicated like the Mennonites and the rest of them, essentially, but I think perhaps a little bit different cultures. I recollect that a Count von Schwenkfelder was the leader of the group. Actually, it accounts for the fact that my husband was so interested in liberal religion, because, of course, they were liberal religionists.

Perhaps you might like to read that. [Referring to book.]

Stein: [Reading sections of book.] They came over in 1734. [Reading from book.] "The family and descendants of David Seibt, who came over from Berthelsdorf on the Elbe River, reaching Altona, Denmark on May 20, 1734, having embarked on April 18. Reached Plymouth on July 29. New World reached or sighted on September 22, 1734. Disembarked September 22, 1734. Passage made on ship St. Andrew, John Stedman master. David Seibt was number 57 on a list of emigrants. This was the third and main migration of the Schwenkfelder." Then we have to turn to page 36. [Resumes reading.] "The genealogy was brought down to include two of my five children, to wit Samuel and Emma Katherine. See page 904. After three children entered in ink on the same page."

His family dates, then, way before the Revolution.

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\*Geneological Record of the Schwenkfelder Families, edited by Samuel Kriebel Brecht, A.M., printed for the Board of Publication of the Schwenkfelder Church, New York: Rand McNally, 1923.





Wolfe: Yes. A very well known family. And, evidently, his grandfather was one of the leaders in the community, and, I guess, for the times, he left quite a fortune to the two children, which were my husband's mother and his uncle. Eventually, I suppose that most of the part my husband received was lost in the Great Depression in 1929.

But other than that, he had a very interesting history, because in Pennsylvania, of course, the population was predominantly Republican, but somewhere along in his career he became a Democrat. I think perhaps it was the association with his economics teacher, a man by the name of Stewart, who was quite close to [Gifford] Pinchot in Pennsylvania and also to people who were very much interested in some of the liberal things at that time, what might be considered liberal.

But, at any rate, my husband became a Democrat and this really wasn't considered a very nice thing to be, in Philadelphia especially, and his mother was somewhat--she was a very interesting person, but sort of couldn't understand why one of her sons wanted to be a Democrat. However, it turns out that her husband always had leanings [laughter] towards that party, and so it turned out to be a very happy affiliation as far as my husband was concerned. It became more respectable as time went on. And as far as the family was concerned, the mother was the only one that was worried about it.

Stein: Were they affiliated with any church? I noticed that there was a picture of a Schwenkfelder church in the genealogy.

Wolfe: Well, as far as I know, they never seemed to be affiliated, or, I mean, to go to church when I was there, when I knew them, except that one of the sons was a very good Episcopalian. Now, whether that was because on the Main Line most of the people were Episcopalians, I don't know. But I shouldn't say that, should I? [Chuckle]

Stein: Had he developed his interest in Unitarianism in Pennsylvania before he came out to Utah?

Wolfe: Actually, I don't believe so. I think that when he came out to Utah--I would have to think back about that history, but there were some very interesting people there at that time. Unitarianism, while it was a very small organization of people, had played quite an important part in developing some of the policies that the people believed in, and there was a really important small group of people that were interested in it. I think perhaps that's how my husband became interested at that time. I'm not sure about that, but I think that.



Wolfe: I know that he had been in and working very hard in the association when we were married and continued right up until almost his death, you know, a firm believer in Unitarian principles and the good effects that it seemed to be having.

### Entering the Legal Profession

Stein: Do you happen to know how he became interested in law?

Wolfe: Yes. He always said, and his brother said too--the brother who was next oldest than he. My husband was the youngest son, and he had taken this mechanical engineering course at Lehigh University. As I said, he was down in Mexico selling machinery and things of that sort.

Then the father, who was a doctor, wanted one of the sons to take up medicine, and I think that Russell, the middle son, said that actually he attempted it, but it just wasn't in his make-up. He just didn't like it and rebelled, and so he went into law.

Then I think perhaps my husband wasn't too enthusiastic about being a salesman and things of that sort, so when he found that Russell had taken up the law, he decided that he would go back and take law too, so he did. I think that he was very happy in that profession and perhaps would not have been happy in the other one, although two of his sons have become engineers, one an electronics engineer and the other a civil engineer.

Stein: Are they both happy in engineering?

Wolfe: Well, I think that Russell has been happy in it, but more or less as a creative outlet, because he's the one that has invented an instrument that has proved to be quite successful, an instrument that measures pressure, called a Baratron. Then they organized as a corporation, and the product is being sold in many parts of the world, mainly through universities and scientific groups, to be used for research and research problems.

Then he sold his interest in the company but has remained in an advisory capacity at the present time. But now he is working on a project to utilize windmills in the energy program.

So they're working hard, and they have ideas on creating energy farms and in some way serving whole small communities



Wolfe: or a condominium complex or something of that sort. Of course, the whole thing that they're trying to work out is how the energy could be conserved when they get more than they need, and then they have to get other energy when they don't have it. But I think they figured it has to be worked out with the power companies in some way. But they're working on that now and have gone through the process of perfecting blades and all sorts of things like that. They have several different windmills--one from Switzerland and one from someplace else--testing them out to see how the different products work.

Stein: That sounds fascinating.

Wolfe: Yes, it will be, if they ever get it done. [Laughter] But you know, somehow or other, furthering a company like that, or furthering an idea like that, is just full of all sorts of pitfalls and heartaches and all the rest of it, because, as he said, they haven't used any federal funds because most of the federal funds go to the big research outfits like NASA [National Aeronautics and Space Administration] and people of that sort, so the smaller person doesn't get much out of it. So they have to raise their own money, and they have to raise quite a bit, so that's what they're doing at the present moment.

Stein: Getting back to Mr. Wolfe for a moment, you mentioned that he became the deputy attorney general for Utah, and I wondered if he was appointed to that job, or if that was an elected position.

Wolfe: No, that's an appointed job.

Stein: What sort of responsibilities did he have in that office?

Wolfe: Well, I think that really he had great responsibility. He, I suppose you might say, had a very creative mind as far as the law was concerned, and he drafted a great many of the laws that were presented to the legislature. It's my recollection in that particular period--that must have been along about 1916 or '17--in that period, they somehow enacted more liberal legislation than in almost any other period, mostly laws affecting labor and the working people and things of that sort. They were a little bit ahead of the social security program in a lot of these things.

Stein: Was he already involved in the Democratic party by this time?

Wolfe: Yes, he was a Democrat. Yes, I think he must have been a Democrat, as I told you, as the result of this professor at Lehigh University.



- Stein: Who's Who mentions that in 1916 he was a delegate to the Democratic national convention.
- Wolfe: Yes, I guess that's right. I remember that he went to two or three of them. I remember we came down here in 1920 in San Francisco. I think--
- Stein: That's right, it was in San Francisco. So, you came with him for that one?
- Wolfe: In 1920, yes. Where was it in 1916?
- Stein: I don't know.
- Wolfe: Well, we can always look it up.

#### Judicial Service

- Stein: According to Who's Who, he was in the attorney general's office until 1921, and then in 1929 he was appointed judge of the third judicial district court.
- Wolfe: Oh, he was elected, I guess. What time does it say that he served in the attorney general's--well, he went away to war, you see.
- Stein: That's what takes up those missing years.
- Wolfe: Yes.
- Stein: It says that he was in the attorney general's office from 1917 to 1921. So, we have 1921 to 1929 unaccounted for in Who's Who.
- Wolfe: He practiced law privately with, I think, another man who had been in the attorney general's office, Delbert Draper. They had a partnership.

I think the Republican party was in power at the time, I can't remember. I haven't tried to place it just by dates. But, at any rate, that year [1929] he wasn't appointed; he was elected as judge of the third district court. The election was held in 1928. Democratic officials came around to some of the younger Democratic attorneys and asked them if they wouldn't let them put their name on the ballot, so that they'd have some good men. My husband didn't think he'd be elected, and so he said yes, they





- Wolfe: could, and, of course, he and the others were elected.  
[Laughter] And he was in the judiciary from that time on.
- Stein: How do you account for the fact that he was elected?
- Wolfe: Well, just that it was a Democratic year, at least as far as the judiciary was concerned. I can't remember what the conditions were. But it was just before the Depression; that was certainly about that time, wasn't it?
- Stein: That's true. That's 1929. That's just about the time of the crash.
- Wolfe: Well, at any rate, that was the thing that happened, I know that. He was elected from then on to the court and finally to the Utah Supreme Court. I think the last eighteen or so years he served on the supreme court. I've forgotten the dates.
- Stein: Yes. The dates in Who's Who are 1935 to 1955. He was chief justice from 1943 to '44, and again from 1951 to '55.
- Wolfe: Yes.
- Stein: Do you know why there was that break in there?
- Wolfe: Because they rotate. There are five judges on the supreme court and they usually rotate.

I was just going to say that while he was chief justice-- of course, they are responsible for the administration of the court, and at the time my husband took over they were quite far behind, about a couple years. He decided that they'd better do something about that, so they changed the rules so that each justice was assigned a case, and if he hadn't acted upon it within a certain number of months or something of the sort, the case was taken away and given to somebody else, so that that either forced them to really keep up on their work, or the cases were taken away.

There are always, I suppose, on the court, one or two men who are very slow, and on this court there happened to be a man who perhaps was just not constitutionally able to make a decision. His cases would be held up for years, and so this reform broke that deadlock. And before a couple years had gone by, the attorneys were clamoring for a little bit more time to prepare their cases because the supreme court was up to date. [Laughter]



Stein: He'd done his job too well.

Wolfe: Yes, he certainly did.

Stein: Were you involved in his campaign when he ran?

Wolfe: No, I was in Washington when he ran for the supreme court.

Stein: I mean when he ran for the judicial district court, the first time, in 1929.

Wolfe: Well, I suppose, as much as--I must have been, because I was involved in everything, it seemed to me. I can't remember exactly what he would have to do to--the third district took in four counties in Salt Lake, Tooele, Summit, and Daggett. At any rate, they had to go around to those four counties, so I helped in any way I could. I was most likely a member of the women's organization at the time in some way, the Democratic organization. My fifth child was born on December 28, so I was pregnant, which might have restricted me some during the campaign (October to November).

Stein: And what sort of things would that involve? Fund raising? Knocking on doors?

Wolfe: Well, you have to remember that back at that time, of course, they had suffrage all over in America at that time, but in Utah they'd had suffrage at least since 1896, the date of statehood. The women had a very strong and good organization. They used to meet regularly, and they were organized just like men. Actually, they were organized so that they had to have a chairman and vice-chairman of opposite sex in each of the district organizations, right on up to the top, so that you had a state chairman and a state vice-chairman of opposite sex, and then there's the national committeewoman and the national committeeman.

This women's group did meet separately in the afternoon, and they had their programs, and they worked on different things that they might have a special interest in. It was more like the program advocated later on by Miss [Mary] Dewson, you see. We already had it set up in Utah and, I suppose, in Colorado, because that's where a lot of the work was being done. Wyoming, of course, didn't have so many people, so I don't know what kind of an organization they had. But we certainly had a good strong women's group.



Community Involvement

Stein: I'll get back to that later because I want to hear more about that. I just want to ask a few more questions about Judge Wolfe.

I notice from Who's Who that he was very involved in a number of community projects, one of which was Governor Dern's Relief Committee of One Hundred, and I wondered what that was.

Wolfe: Well, that must have been during the Depression. Governor Dern was proposed for nomination by a group of twelve young lawyers; they may not have all been lawyers, but twelve young men. Afterwards, they were like a kitchen cabinet. Some of them were actually, I suppose, in different positions in the state.

So this Committee of One Hundred, as far as I can recollect at the present time, might have been a group that somehow or other was organized to see what they could do to help provide relief to the needy people during this period of Depression.

My husband did edit a little magazine, the Utah Educational Review or something. I ought to look that up and see. It most likely considered some of these subjects that he was still concerned with at that time.

Stein: I also notice that he wrote for Survey magazine.

Wolfe: That was it. Utah Survey.

Stein: Do you know what sort of things he wrote about when he wrote for Survey?

Wolfe: Well, he wrote about the sociological things. I remember one article that caused quite a bit of consternation was one that involved the Mormon Church, and I suppose it had to do with the period of Prohibition. They had Prohibition in Utah, and the article somehow or other involved the Mormon Church--in not taking any stand for Prohibition, that they actually helped it by selling them sugar, because the Mormon Church had a monopoly, I suppose, on the production of sugar, beet sugar.

Stein: I didn't know that.

Wolfe: I don't like to be definite about this thing, but I do remember that one article, and finally the Mormon Church did come out for



Wolfe: the Prohibition. There was a group meeting on that particular thing, too, and I think Governor Dern at that time was involved. I'm not sure though. But this would have been before the governor was elected, I suppose. I can't remember what time Prohibition was passed in Utah.

I've forgotten what I was going to say. Maybe it will come back.

Stein: We were talking about what he had written for Survey.

Wolfe: Well, I did talk about that article that he did write for the Survey, in which he criticized the Mormon Church for not coming out for Prohibition, when their whole religious tenet was the Word of Wisdom: you should not drink liquor, tea, or coffee, or do unreasonable things. So, it was a consistent article as far as he was concerned because if they're against liquor, they shouldn't be encouraging the production of liquor by selling the sugars.

Stein: Well, I think that's a very valid point.

Wolfe: At least they should come out and say so.

I remember I got involved with the Mormon Church too, and I've forgotten what issue it was. Maybe I'll think about that one later. That was rather interesting. I guess it was to abolish horse racing.

Stein: In Utah?

Wolfe: Yes. Well, at any rate, horse racing was going like mad in a great many states, and in Utah it seemed to be particularly bad because so many people were gambling on it and they were just losing everything they had. I think that was the day before parimutuel [betting].

So, they decided--I don't know exactly who was back of the original idea to sponsor an anti-racing bill, but somebody was, except that the Mormon Church never came out for it; I mean, the newspaper that was published by the Mormon Church.

I was down in California during some of that period, and I picked up the San Francisco Examiner, and it had a whole page against this type of racing that was going on. I took that back, and at the time, I guess, I was the chairman or something of the Women's Legislative Council. I took it down to the editor of the Deseret Evening News, which is the name of the





Wolfe: Mormon paper, and I just asked them; I said, "Why is it that you aren't doing something of this sort in Utah?" because according to the church principle, that was one of the things that they believed in. I brought enough copies of the Examiner home so I could put a copy on each desk in the legislature. [Chuckle]

That seemed to break the log jam, because the Deseret Evening News came out against the racing, and they did pass the bill that stopped it for a while. But then the racing board introduced parimutuel, and after that they started racing again, I guess, or rabbit racing or something. They have to do something.

Stein: Yes. Dog racing.

Wolfe: Just like Prohibition, it just wasn't satisfactory; it didn't do the job.

Stein: Yes. I'll have to remember to get the story of the Women's Legislative Council a little later also. I also noticed that your husband was director of the Family Services Society for twenty years. What sort of work was that?

Wolfe: Well, they still have the Family Services Society. At that time, they actually, I think, gave some help to the families in trying to make family adjustments, and if they needed help in clothing or food or things of that sort, they helped them. That was before the Social Security Act, I presume.

Then, after the Social Security Act came in, it became more of an advisory committee, so that they advised the people on how to meet their problems and things of that sort, and that's what they're doing at the present time.

Stein: I see. So it's a counseling agency, in essence.

Wolfe: Yes. But before the Social Security Act it was both a counseling agency and an assistant to the people themselves. They actually started a nursery school. I think perhaps some group of women started it, but they helped to sponsor it and to give them some help. That's a good story. I wish I knew more about it, but I can't remember at the moment. I used to know all about it.

Stein: You mean the society itself, or the nursery school?

Wolfe: The nursery. It was over on the west side of town where the laboring people needed a place for their children.



Stein: So it was like a child care center for working mothers.

Wolfe: Yes. And that was years and years and years ago.

Stein: It was quite ahead of its time.

Wolfe: Yes, they were.

Chairman of the Alien Enemy Hearing Board for Utah

Stein: I also noticed that your husband was chairman of the Alien Enemy Hearing Board for Utah, and a member of the Special Enemy Alien Hearings Board, which I assume had to do with the Japanese-American relocation.

Wolfe: Yes. He did some interesting work there. I was reading something the other day, an article about the group we had down at Topaz, Utah. They built barracks down there in the middle of the desert. You couldn't imagine putting anyone in a more desolate sort of place. But somehow or other the Japanese adjusted to it. And actually--I think maybe because of my husband--there was really quite a friendly feeling for the Japanese in Utah.

On the Alien Enemy Hearing Board: they used to bring in all the people that they thought were subversive or questionable, and they would have hearings. He was really wonderful in trying to judge whether or not there was any danger from these people, and they trusted him greatly. In the end, the board was sending him over to the Tule Lake Camp in California, where they had so much trouble, to see if he could do anything over there. He really did an awfully good job with the Japanese.

Stein: Was he able to help at Tule Lake?

Wolfe: I can't remember. I think there was so much publicity at the time that the people were beginning to get more enlightened. But we didn't have any trouble down at the Topaz Camp. The Japanese themselves, of course, were very creative about the things they did. They did all sorts of handwork. They had theaters and lectures and a good program going on all the time. We went down there several times for just their social events.

I think to this day that the Japanese have a very friendly feeling for Judge Wolfe.

[end tape 1, side 1; begin tape 1, side 2]



- Stein: Has your husband's work with the Japanese-Americans been written about anywhere?
- Wolfe: No.
- Stein: That's really too bad.
- Wolfe: It really is. There may be a family in Utah still who knows about the work that was done there, a Japanese family. It would be interesting to get in touch with them. I might try to do it.
- Stein: What's their name?
- Wolfe: I'd have to look it up. It starts with a "K". I'd have to find it. They were Unitarians, as a matter of fact, so I could get it through that group and find out who they were, because she knew a great deal about it and about what was going on, although she was a citizen and wasn't put in any concentration camp in Utah.\* We didn't do that there.
- Stein: That's a very important story.
- Wolfe: Yes, it is an interesting part of that whole thing. But there must be books on the work that was done on that.
- Stein: Yes, there have been quite a number of books recently on the relocation itself, and Dillon Myer wrote a book about the camps. There actually hasn't been very much written about the camps. There have been a couple of books now by Japanese-Americans themselves about their own personal experiences in the camps, and one of the books was turned into a movie for television.
- Wolfe: Well, there was an article that I read the other day, and I can't remember where, telling about the Utah camp, about the conditions in the Utah camp, and I thought, well, how true it was that they seemed to have no trouble or anything, maybe partly because of an understanding administration of them. I mean, the people who came before the Alien Hearing Board--well, I'll try to find out more about that if I can.
- Stein: That would be wonderful. Had your husband volunteered to be on this board? Had he been interested in helping out in this?

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\*During the editing process, Mrs. Wolfe remembered that the family's name was Kurmuda.



Wolfe: I don't know. He was acknowledged as one of the liberal leaders in the state, and I suppose he may have been appointed to it. But I don't think he made any application for it. As a matter of fact, I don't know whether it was a paying position even; probably not.

#### A Reform Activist

Stein: You mentioned that he was well known for his liberal views, and I think we talked a little bit last time about his work for Culbert Olson.

Wolfe: Yes. Culbert Olson was a member of that famous session of the Utah legislature that passed so much liberal legislation. He was really wonderful.

Stein: Had your husband been active in his campaign or worked for him at all?

Wolfe: Well, he most likely worked for him, but I can't remember the specifics. I know that he was very friendly to Culbert Olson, and they worked together. You know, without someone like Culbert Olson in the senate, who was interested in the bills that they were trying to get through, you never would have gotten the liberal legislation through. So, it was just this relationship between Culbert Olson and my husband and the other people who were working on that particular type of legislation.

There was a man there by the name of William Knerr, who later on was the head of the labor division of the state, the state labor board, or whatever it was called. He really was one of the leaders in that sort of thing, so that this group together managed to get this wonderful legislation through that particular session.

Stein: Who's Who also indicated that Judge Wolfe was a member of the National Lawyers Guild.

Wolfe: Yes. I guess he was vice-chairman of that at one time or another. I don't remember.

Stein: What was the reputation of that group in Utah?

Wolfe: It had about the same reputation out there as here [in California]. Utah is really--the Mormon leadership is quite conservative, and the Lawyers Guild was always--well, of course, they looked at them as an enemy of the American Bar Association when they first





Wolfe: started out. There was a rivalry between the two of them, and, of course, the American Bar Association didn't have much good to say of them, as I recollect, so that you were really on the liberal side when you belonged to that group.

Stein: Why did he choose that group rather than the American Civil Liberties Union?

Wolfe: Oh, he was a member of that too.

Stein: He was a member of that too?

Wolfe: Yes.

Stein: I see. New York is what I'm familiar with, and I know that in later years, the National Lawyers Guild was looked at as being even to the left of the ACLU.

Wolfe: Yes, that may have happened. I don't think it was at the beginning.

Stein: I see.

Wolfe: I'm not sure. I think it was more of a reform group that they thought was needed at that time. I personally don't know too much about it because those were in the days when I had those five children. [Laughter] I had a hard time keeping abreast with everything. But there were a number of Utah attorneys who were members of the organization.

Stein: You also mentioned that he was involved with some other labor and peace groups.

Wolfe: He was involved with peace groups, one sort after another, all the way through our married life.

Stein: Do you remember the names of any of them?

Wolfe: Well, there was a man by the name of Libby who was the head of the National Council for the Prevention of War. My husband organized the Utah Council for the Prevention of War. And, of course, he would have been interested in the social service worker mentioned in here [The Red Network], organizing one of the peace groups.

Stein: Jane Addams?

Wolfe: Yes.



Stein: It was the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom.

Wolfe: Yes. That organization for a while got very much tied up with the Communist groups, didn't it? Do you remember?

Stein: It was accused of that.

Wolfe: We had one experience that made us just a little bit doubtful about whether we should support it or not, but I think that it's changed now.

Stein: What was that experience?

Wolfe: Well, I guess the experience was that one of the people came out to Utah, and her associate, who arranged the meetings and who was sitting in on everything, was recognized as a Communist. But, then, I suppose that that doesn't necessarily imply that the group was tied up with anything more than the desire for peace. We still support it.

Stein: It's a good solid organization.

Wolfe: I think that we have a group at the church, at the Fellowship, who carry on with it. But this was in the very early days. I can't remember the date, but when they came out to Utah it must have been in a touchy period, at any rate, because some people got disturbed about it.

#### Target of Red-Baiting

Stein: You mentioned that he was also interested in groups for the working man.

Wolfe: Yes, he was.

Stein: Can you remember any of those that he was involved in?

Wolfe: Well, I think I did mention that one, and I never can remember the international group sponsoring civil liberties for the laboring men. What is that called?

Stein: International Labor Defense?

Wolfe: No, not that. International Civil Liberties for Labor, or something of that sort.



Stein: I'm sure we could find it.

Wolfe: Well, I could find it. It's in that Red Network.<sup>\*</sup> That's the reason they put him in The Red Network.

Stein: The Red Network? What's that?

Wolfe: Haven't you ever heard of that?

Stein: No.

Wolfe: [Laughter] [Goes to get book.] I think your education has been missing somewhere if you don't know about The Red Network. [Searching on shelf.] I hope I can put my hands on it now. We had it out looking at it not too long ago. It must be here somewhere.

Stein: What color is it? Is it red?

Wolfe: It's red. [Chuckle] It should be in here somewhere. I don't want to take too much of your time, but I can find it because I know I have it, and we were looking at it not so long ago. That book came out and caused such a stir in those days in the McCarthy period. [Pause while searching for book.]

Stein: [Finds book on shelf.] There it is! I've just found it. It's subtitled "A 'Who's Who' and Handbook of Radicalism for Patriots."

Wolfe: You look under "Wolfe" and you'll find--

Stein: And we'll find him. This is a who is who in radicalism. [Laughter]

Wolfe: Yes! [Laughter] And, I tell you, they used that book to persecute people for years.

Stein: [Reading from book.] "James H. Wolfe, national counsel of the LID."

Wolfe: League for Industrial Democracy.

Stein: League for Industrial Democracy. That's the group you're trying

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<sup>\*</sup>The Red Network, A "Who's Who" and Handbook of Radicalism for Patriots, by Elizabeth Dilling.



Stein: to think of.

Wolfe: Yes.

Stein: For Utah. [Continues reading] "Judge, district court, third Utah district."

Wolfe: I tell you, it certainly made it tough on people who really had any liberal ideas for the betterment of society.

Stein: Did you have a hard time yourself because of this? Did you get persecuted?

Wolfe: Well, yes. We talked about the Digest. I can tell you about one story in there that got me into trouble, but I think that it wasn't so much--it was just an excuse, you know, to find something.

Stein: Did any of the big guns of the Red hunts, the Dies Committee or HUAC [House Un-American Activities Committee], ever show any interest in Judge Wolfe?

Wolfe: Yes, I'm sure they did, because they really tried to--it was just a system of persecution that they adopted with every person that they wanted to get out of public office or something of that sort. I ought to write back and ask for his file, oughtn't I?

Stein: That's right. You can get that now.

Wolfe: Yes. You know, one of his clerks is now the senator from Utah.

Stein: Which one is that?

Wolfe: Frank Moss. "Ted" Moss, representing Utah.

Stein: You should write to him and he could probably help.

Wolfe: Yes. I just think he might be able to. I'd like to see both his file and mine.

Stein: Yes. I'm sure yours is just as juicy.

Wolfe: [Reading list of names from notes that had been filed in The Red Network.] Grace Abbott, Jane Addams, Newton D. Baker, Charles A. Beard, William E. Borah, Louis Brandeis, George Bernard Shaw, Mrs. Roosevelt, Henry A. Wallace. These must be people who are in here [i.e., people who are mentioned in The Red Network].





Wolfe: In my particular instance, I took it right to the Women's Democratic Club, when they were exercised about the whole thing. I went through the list and found the names of these people and told them that I thought that the association was more complimentary than-- [laughter]. The best people in the United States are in this book.

Stein: If you were associated with them, you couldn't be too bad.

Wolfe: Yes, that's right! That seemed to satisfy the Democratic Club.

Now, you've got some other questions.

### The Coming of World War II

Stein: There are a couple of things I noticed. One of the folders of clippings that you gave me was obviously clippings that were of interest to you; they weren't about you.

Wolfe: Yes.

Stein: And I noticed that a lot of them were from just prior to the American entry in World War II, and I couldn't quite tell why you were clipping them, what your concern was. It was during the period when there was a great deal of ferment about isolation, and Charles Lindbergh and the America First people were running around saying that the United States should stay out of the war.

Wolfe: Well, I don't know. My recollection is rather hazy about that period. What years were those, anyway?

Stein: I guess it's around 1940.

Wolfe: I think that I would have been interested because I was working in the war bonds committee at that time. I'd have to check up on the dates. But I was interested because of the fact that I was still working with the Roosevelt organization in one way or another. This, perhaps, was in opposition to the general view of Roosevelt's feeling about the war.

Stein: Yes. What confused me was I couldn't quite figure out where you stood on that issue. What was happening was that Roosevelt was taking an increasingly involved stance. At first he was saying that the United States would never enter the war, and then he was saying, "Well, we won't enter the war, but we'll give aid to Great Britain."



Wolfe: Yes.

Stein: It seemed to me there were a number of steps that he took that were bringing the country closer to becoming involved in the war, without actually declaring war. This was, of course, all before Pearl Harbor.

Wolfe: Yes.

Stein: And I wondered if you agreed with him on that, or if you were critical of his position.

Wolfe: I think perhaps I might have had an open mind. You see, at that time my children were of age to be called up in the draft; well, there wasn't a draft at the time. My oldest son--I can't remember the date, but they were calling for young men to take special training for the Air Service. Our army wasn't constituted at that time. The men were assigned to the British.

My son--I don't know what ever prompted him to, but he was over in Colorado at the time working for the Bureau of Reclamation in the Water Department, and he took this examination and was one of the three boys that passed. They sent him down to Cal Tech to work on the weather program, and then he was assigned to the [British] Royal Air Force in Ireland, and he worked with them. I suppose when the Americans came in then it was a part of the American force, but he was assigned to the British force at first.

That would account for any interest in the feeling of the people, but I can't remember definitely now.

#### Balancing Family and Career

Stein: Just one last question about Judge Wolfe. I'm interested in how he felt about your career and your working in politics.

Wolfe: Well, you know, he was very cooperative and felt that women should have recognition and that they were capable of doing things. But I think that, like all men, that was all right as long as you could somehow or other look after your own personal things at the same time; that is, the children. So, that, of course, was one of my big problems, trying to take care of the children and do this work at the same time. He really found it difficult when he had to take some of the responsibility for the children.



Wolfe: Now, as far as his philosophy of life was concerned, it was that women should have equal opportunity and that they should be able to do these things and be encouraged to do them, but somehow or other, the family relationship should be the same, that the mother still had the responsibility for all the things that she had had before.

Stein: In other words, he didn't enjoy having to fix dinner for five children.

Wolfe: No. I don't think he ever did either. [Laughter]

But that really was a big problem. Of course, it was all right at first--I think I told you this before. Until I decided whether I'd stay on [in Washington, D.C.] or not, I sent them over to my parents at the ranch [in Vineburg, California] and sent a cook and another woman down with them. She was supposed to look after them and take some of the burden off my mother. But the second woman didn't prove to work out very well. She'd been a former school teacher. The cook was wonderful and carried all of the responsibility, I suppose. She was a great help to Mother.

But then, when I decided to stay on, my husband then brought the children back to be with me. I think that they came from Vineberg over to Salt Lake on the bus, and then he brought them by car back to Washington, and that most likely was a terrible ordeal. He brought the cook, too. [Laughter] When they got there, I had the house all leased, and we went right into it.

But there really are problems because in that day, you know, there were very definite allocations of responsibilities, and the wife and mother certainly had a role cut out for her.

But I think he was very much better than most men in recognizing the fact that women should have an opportunity to take responsibility in other lines and to do things.

Stein: Even when you were still living in Salt Lake City, I know you were very involved in a number of things. Did you have household help?

Wolfe: Yes. We had quite a big house up on Capitol Hill, just below the capitol, and we had to have help. Of course, labor was very cheap in those days. You could have three people helping you for a month almost for what you have to pay for a day's labor nowadays. I mean, I remember that the girl who worked for me got six dollars a week, and she thought that was good, you see, with her room and



Wolfe: board. So, the help was not a problem then because there was just lots of it. You'd run an advertisement for a maid or a cook, and you might get a hundred responses,

You see, there was no Labor Relations Board or no employment service or anything of that sort. If you wanted help, you either got it from the YWCA or you ran an ad in the newspaper.

Stein: I see. So, you had a cook, then?

Wolfe: Well, we usually had a cook and a girl who helped with the children and did the upstairs work, waiting on the table, and then we had to have a part-time boy for the yard. So, you had to really have quite a bit of help in that house. It was a big house.

Stein: How large a house was it?

Wolfe: Well, they made eleven apartments out of it after we moved, and some of them were two-bedroom apartments. [Laughter]

Stein: Well, you did have your hands full!

Had he and you planned on having five children? Was that more or less the size of the family?

Wolfe: No, no. There was not much planning; I mean, as the size of the family was concerned. No one said they wanted four or five or six or whatnot, but we thought that five was plenty.

Stein: And they were all born in Salt Lake City?

Wolfe: No. The oldest one was born in Pennsylvania when I was still back there.

Stein: What did you do about educating them in Salt Lake?

Wolfe: Well, you know, in Utah there wasn't a great deal of difficulty about education. The schools were good, the public schools, and so you sent the children to the public schools. The university was there, and they all went to the state university. They got, I suppose, as good an education as one could most anywhere, and not much trouble.

They used to walk down the hill and take the trolley car up to the university; and for the elementary schools, they could walk to them.





Stein: Was there a lot of Mormon influence in the schools even though they were public schools?

Wolfe: No. The only religious matter that I remember--and I notice it came up here the other day--was that the Mormons wanted to carry on religious education for their children, but the way they did it was to build a seminary next to the high school, for instance, and then they asked for released time. But in Utah the Gentile faction put up so much opposition that they weren't able to get released time from school, but they did get permission to have the children--and this was after bus service started--remain for the religious education. But then the people used to complain about that because they said it held up the bus and their children didn't get home until after the Mormon kids had had their religious education. So, I don't know what they ever finally did about that.

But I noticed the other day in the paper here that they said that the Mormon Church had asked for released time for religious education, and it had been granted. There was some opposition, but I don't know what will be done about it. Now, whether that was in San Francisco or where it was--but, you know, in Santa Rosa they have a Mormon church. We have one here [in Sonoma], and there are more Mormons here in California than there are in Utah, I believe.

Stein: I know there's a big church in Oakland.

Wolfe: Yes, they have a temple over there.

Stein: One of the things I was also wondering about your children in relation to your career was whether they resented it, or what their feeling was about all your activity.

Wolfe: Well, I think maybe my daughter might have thought that I wasn't giving them enough attention, and yet when they discuss it now I think they feel that they got so much out of it, because I didn't get myself involved in many of the social things that most women do because I couldn't do the job and look after the family and do all those social things.

On Saturdays, the children--I seemed to have been working on Saturdays too--they came in at noontime, and then we all went out to lunch and did something interesting--museums, sightseeing--and I think I told you I used to take them for weekends over to



Wolfe: their uncle's in Philadelphia, so that they really had a very enjoyable time. They had a chance to visit Congress and, of course, Katherine had a chance to help with the [Democratic] National Committee meeting in Philadelphia and was entertained royally by a lot of the women over there, you know, who took an interest in her.

So, I think maybe they got a great deal out of it, and there never has been, as far as I can see, any feeling, except that Katherine, I suppose, being the lone girl, used to maybe get a little bit lonely at some time during the day maybe, although she was in school.



## III POLITICAL ACTIVITY IN UTAH: NON-PARTISAN AND DEMOCRATIC

Women and Mormonism

Stein: I'd like now to turn to your own involvement in politics.

As you were growing up and going to school, I wondered if you remember now any women who served as particular models for you, that had particular influence on the subsequent direction of your life.

Wolfe: [Pauses to think.] Well, evidently not. I evidently was named for a school teacher who must have had some influence maybe on my parents. [Laughter] I've known a lot of teachers and educators and have always felt very happy in the association. In fact, they've been my main associates. But any particular one who might have had great influence on me, like the man that I said had a great influence on my husband, Professor Stewart, I can't remember that anyone did, except perhaps my husband.

Stein: Last time I left with you a copy of the first chapter of a book by William Chafe, called The American Woman: Her Changing Economic, Social, and Political Role, 1920-1970. I wonder what your reactions were, reading it.

Wolfe: You know, I think the situation in Utah was so different from the way it was in other parts of the country.

Stein: Why was that?

Wolfe: It was because we had suffrage right from the very beginning of statehood, and they had had it many years before, in the early days, and then the women had a very responsible part in the settlement of Utah. I recollect that there were many strong women in the history of Utah; in the Mormon Church there were strong women.



Stein: Did the Mormon philosophy allow for a sort of equality of women?

Wolfe: Well, of course, you know that the Mormon Church was organized on the basis of polygamy, and whether or not--not talking about the religious connotation; I don't know anything about that. But it could have been a basis for getting a quick population, and they needed more people and things of that sort. I'm not saying that that--because I don't think the Mormons would agree with me--would be the main objective of encouraging polygamy. But what I read of the history, it seemed to be an excuse for Joseph Smith, the leader's, desires and experience. [Chuckle]

But, at any rate, the women did have a great deal to do with the success of the Mormon experiment, because in spite of all the things that you've read about polygamy--and I must say that I haven't seen too much of it--but the little that I have seen and discussed with my friends, they seem to think that it worked out all right. And certainly I never had any criticism of it from my own grandmother. I think I told you that she was the third wife and then, after statehood, or perhaps before that, they were put on their own.

Stein: Yes. She managed to find herself another husband, didn't she?

Wolfe: Yes, she did.

Stein: So there's a happy ending to that story.

Wolfe: Yes, it was a happy ending. But they all seemed to get along all right together, and the children all seemed to be assimilated somehow or other. I mean, we were a little bit different because we were a Gentile branch and we were off on one side, but somehow or other we had friendly relations with the children of the other parts of the family.

Stein: What would a child of one of the wives call one of the other wives? Aunt?

Wolfe: Aunt, yes. Aunt and uncle.

Stein: It's hard to imagine.

Wolfe: Well, I looked at a magazine the other day, and it talked about the different composition of families, the communal families and so forth and so on, which could easily be the same as the old Mormon families in the beginning.





Wolfe: But, at any rate, getting back to the question--what was it?  
About--

Stein: You were saying that things were really different in Utah.

Wolfe: Yes, they were different. There's absolutely no doubt about that, and I think the women had more rights. As I read the history of Utah--there is a Mormon history written by the Mormons, but it's more about the people themselves--the women had lots of ideas and suggestions to make about the government, and they were working with some of the suffragettes in other parts of the country, encouraging them and so forth and so on. So, it was just a different feeling altogether. You didn't have that opposition to whet your appetite.

Stein: Do you remember the names of any of the suffragists, the Utah women who were working in the suffrage campaign?

Wolfe: Yes. I knew one, and I think that she's in the Digest, the books that you have. There is a little--I can't think of the name at the moment. Names have just left me; I have a terrible time with names.

And Mrs. [Elise] Musser herself, I think, did some work in the suffragist movement outside of the state.

Stein: Elizabeth Hayward is a name I came across.

Wolfe: Yes, that was the one.

Stein: That was the name?

Wolfe: Yes. She was one, and there were a number of other women who might be categorized as feminists. And after that women didn't lose their positions of leadership. Some of them were doctors, you know. Two women were appointed to practice law in the 1870s. They got good educations.

I remember standing up on the university grounds one time as the promenade of the seniors was going through, and one professor who is a Mormon, a good staunch Mormon, said, "You know, it's amazing to look at all these young people and know what their parents have sacrificed in many instances so they could get a good education." He said that the early pioneers, when they came, that was one of the first things that they were interested in--education, and they were determined that their children would get good educations--that is, white-collar



Wolfe: educations--in spite of everything, and they really have done a good job on that, I think.

Stein: One of the points that Chafe makes and that is made by many people who write about the early years of women's suffrage, is that women tended to be looked on in politics at that time as a purifying force, that one of the reasons, in fact, advanced for extending suffrage was that women would clean up politics. It was argued that women were more concerned with the public good and that they would purify politics and they would purify the country. I was wondering if that was a prevalent idea in Utah among the women you knew.

Wolfe: Well, a lot of the women that I knew were working for the elimination of child labor. That was one of the things that I think the women came out more forcibly for than perhaps the men, and that was true in Utah as well as in other places. But, you see, so many of the things that the women were working for in other places, we didn't have to work for. I told you that when I came into the political party that the women's organization was set up so that they had chairman and vice-chairman of opposite sex.

Stein: That was already in practice then?

Wolfe: That was already in effect, and it was in effect in Colorado, too, so that those pioneer states really somehow or other gave the women the benefits of suffrage right from the very beginning.

I don't know when that act was passed that required the men to put women in the political parties, but I think that the example of those early states may have been one of the things that prompted Molly Dewson to try to begin to work it through the conventions by making it mandatory that they have women on the platform, and the different committees of the convention, which they do now. And that was the first time they'd ever, ever tried to do that--that first year, I guess, after I went back [to Washington, D.C.], the first convention. [1936]  
[end tape 1, side 2; begin tape 1, side 1]



Women in Politics in the 1920s  
(Interview 3, June 14, 1976)

Stein: Last time we left off when we were talking about your early years in politics, and I had been asking you some general questions about women in politics in the 1920s.

One of the ideas that I've come across a lot in my reading, and I think that it was even referred to in some of the Digests that you loaned me, was a notion that a lot of women at the time expressed, that women's involvement in politics was just a natural extension of their sphere of influence in the home, that their concern with hearth and home expanded naturally to include the well-being of the whole nation. Was that something you felt?

Wolfe: Yes, I'm sure that that was the feeling. There was nothing in regard to women's rights or anything--I mean, equal rights--because we were working for better working conditions for women and a lot of the things that they're now losing because of equal rights, you see. At that time, we were all working for better working conditions for women, cutting down the hours, and things of that sort, so that it was more that emphasis than on putting them in the equal position with men.

Stein: That's interesting. How do you feel about that now that things seem to be going in the other direction?

Wolfe: Well, I don't know. I don't know whether it's going to work out better than the old regime. I sometimes feel that it would be better, especially if we were raising families, that the woman should stay in the home during the early years of the children, because according to all my reading the child is much better off if it has the love and care and attention of the mother during its earliest years. So, I don't know how it will turn out.

I think perhaps women will get a little harder and so forth, and as far as their outlook is concerned, they have to in order to achieve their equal rights. I'm looking at it with interest, but I don't know. I don't think I'd call myself a women's libber.

Stein: I sometimes wonder if it wasn't a lot easier to live fifty years ago when everybody's role was a lot clearer.

Wolfe: Yes, I suppose it was. I don't know. It must be difficult for the young people to make the decisions, and whether or not to have a family if they decide to get married, or if they should decide not to get married. Of course, there isn't the usual old-time



- Wolfe: opposition that there used to be about non-marriage. But certainly they have a lot of decisions to make nowadays.
- Stein: Backing up to the "19-teens" and 1920s, were you already active in Democratic party politics at this time?
- Wolfe: No. As a matter of fact, I started out as working for a Republican. I suppose I worked through two administrations of Republicans, and then finally the Democrats came in. They wanted me to stay on. So, I worked for a year or two in the Democratic administration. My husband was a Democrat, and when I went back to the university and began studying economics and things of that sort, I decided that perhaps I'd better be a Democrat too.

You see, I was brought up as a Republican, beginning down in Payson, Utah, because my father was what they call a sheep man; he raised sheep. And usually those people, the cattle men and the sheep men, were all Republicans because they wanted a tariff on any importation of wool or things of that sort.

Well, at any rate, I became a Democrat at least after I married my husband. I didn't do any work, particularly, in the Democratic party at first. I did a great deal of work in the Unitarian Church, of which we were members.

- Stein: At that point, were you aware of Alice Paul and the National Woman's Party and their platform?
- Wolfe: We were aware of the work that the women were doing. They were at that time working for the vote. Of course, we already had the vote, and so we weren't involved in that particular campaign, except some of those, I suppose, that had worked in the women's suffrage movement in the period, in 1870s, when they took the voting rights away from the Utah women. You see, there was that period between 1870 and 1896 where they didn't have the vote. That's the generation of women in the book, the history of the Mormons.\*

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\*Orson F. Whitney, History of Utah, vol. III, Salt Lake City; George Q. Cannon & Sons Co., 1898.





Wolfe: Some of their descendants and the young people that were involved with them continued on with their interest in the women's movement.

Stein: I know one of the things that Alice Paul advocated was that in those states where women could vote by around 1916, I guess, or 1917--one of the things that she was urging was that the women who could vote, vote against the party in power, namely the Democrats and Wilson, because they had not given the women the vote. I wondered if you remembered that.

Wolfe: I don't remember that particularly. We weren't Democrats, and in 1916 I wasn't even married at that time. Besides, in 1916 and '17 I was in Chicago. Well, I don't remember that part of the campaign at all. I don't think I was involved in it to a large degree. I had been working in the secretary of state's office, and my recollection is at that time it was a Republican setup.

You see, I worked through three governors, starting with the second one elected after statehood. I was in the last year of Governor [John C.] Cutler's regime, and then I worked through Governor [William] Spry's regime. They were both Republicans. Then the next man was a Democrat.

Stein: When did he come in? Do you remember?

Wolfe: I was just trying to remember. I think that was Simon Bamberger, the Jew. [Pauses to think.] Yes, that's right.

Stein: There were some other names of women that were prominent in that period, or who were writing. One of them was a Mrs. Sophonisba Breckenridge. She wrote a book called Women in the Twentieth Century. She actually didn't write that until 1933.

Wolfe: I don't remember her myself, or anything about that.

#### Running for Local Office

Stein: In reading the Democratic Digests I came across a notation that you had been active in the League of Women Voters.

Wolfe: Yes.

Stein: Was that your debut into political activity?



Wolfe: Well, I'd already been interested in politics all the time while I was in the secretary of state's office because, of course, they were political offices. I remember that they encouraged me to run for county clerk, and I can't even remember what year that was, but I wasn't successful. I remembered afterwards how little experience I'd had in how politics works and what you have to do to get votes and things of that sort. I was just absolutely without knowledge along that line. [Chuckle]

Stein: Did anybody help you gain knowledge? Did anyone advise you in that campaign?

Wolfe: No. Actually, the man, the secretary of state, who encouraged me was a power, I guess, in politics, although I can't understand how he was supposed to be a power; he didn't deliver much. [Laughter] As I recollect afterwards, he really didn't do any work at all, the secretary of state; that was all delegated to the deputies and the people working in the office. So, it was one of those things.

At any rate, he went out of office. I think he only had one term. I'm not sure of that, but he wasn't a highly respected man, as far as the office was concerned, his management of the office.

Stein: What was his name? Do you remember?

Wolfe: I did until you asked me. Isn't that queer. Maybe it will come back.

Stein: It will come back.

Wolfe: Dave Mattson, I think, was his name.

Stein: I found this in your files, and I wanted to ask you about it. It's a brochure for your candidacy for city commissioner. [Hands brochure to Mrs. Wolfe.]\* Was that the campaign you're talking about?

Wolfe: No, this came later, after I was married. [Looking at brochure.]

Stein: Of course, yes, because it says that you are Mrs. James Wolfe.

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\*See Appendix B.



Wolfe: My husband helped me run this campaign. You had to qualify for the primary. This was for the primary. And I was just next to the man who qualified, the two men who qualified. So, that was pretty good, because women had never run for this office before. Well, that's interesting. I'd forgotten all about getting out these leaflets.

Stein: I'd like to hold on to that, if I could, and include it as an appendix in your interview.

Wolfe: All right.

Stein: I think it's an interesting little example of some early campaign literature.

Wolfe: I remember we talked about taxes a lot. I've always been interested in taxes! [Laughter]

Stein: What was your platform about taxes?

Wolfe: I think my platform must have been economy in government and lowering the taxes for the people.

Stein: Well, it sounds very current! [Laughter]

Wolfe: Yes, it certainly does, doesn't it? I still have the same platform. [Laughter] I was a hard worker, so I thought that we could do without a lot of people in government that were just political appointees and did nothing but round up the votes for elections.

#### The League of Women Voters and the Legislative Council

Stein: When did you become active in the League of Women Voters, or how did that happen?

Wolfe: Well, actually, it happened, I think, through one woman, Isabel Dame Bacon, and she was really quite a wonderful person. We were living next door to her, I guess, after I was married. She urged me to participate in that, and then later I became president of it, and we did a lot of political work while we were in the League.

And then I also was involved in what they called the Legislative Council.



Stein: Let's not skip ahead to that. I want first to get the story of the League. Do you remember what sort of activities you engaged in?

Wolfe: Well, we raised some funds, I know, for what amounts to what would be called a child care center now. Then we had a center down in that street that had a very bad reputation in the early days, of housing bordellos and things of that sort, but the city was trying to clean it up. We had our headquarters in one of the old buildings, and we raised enough money to remodel the whole inside of it and put in a new kitchen and make it available to groups, you know, who wanted to have a meeting place in the city.

Or perhaps this work on the child care center was done by the Civic Center Association, of which I was also a member. My memory is fuzzy on this question.

Of course, the League was interested in legislative matters and we would work for bills that we were in favor of in the legislature. It's hard for me to determine the ones that we worked for as a League and then those that we worked for as the Legislative Committee, but they sort of merged in together.

And then we were attempting to, of course, get more women interested in politics and to help them understand what it was all about and the education in political activities, and that was the reason we put on a mock election for city commissioners. We went right straight through the whole thing from beginning to end--the nominations of women, the election, speechmaking, and all the rest of it, even the balloting. We got a great deal of publicity in the papers for that, and I think that it encouraged women to take a more active part. The whole idea was to somehow or other get them participating independently, more independently than they had been.

I think that we did a lot for the women. I'm not sure, but I think the Legislative Council may still be going on.

Stein: Was the Legislative Council an independent organization, or was it part of the Democratic party?

Wolfe: No, it was an independent organization. My recollection of that is hazy, how that got started. It seems to me that we had representatives from different women's organizations who were appointed to the Legislative Council in the first place. Now, you'd think I'd remember that, because I was chairman of it for two or three terms, I guess, but I can't remember how it all came about.





Wolfe: I just know that we had a tremendous organization and that one year I put in a great deal of time trying to get the legislature to approve an appropriation for a dormitory, a women's dormitory, at the university. We didn't get it for several years, but finally it came through. You just have to persevere and work on it.

We were able to--and this I do know the League of Women Voters helped with--take women off the exempt list of people to serve on juries, so that this meant when they got off that exemption list, of course, they were eligible, you see. We put that through. There really was more opposition to that than you'd expect, for some reason or other. I guess my husband must have been on the court at that time, so that I was interested in juries and things of that sort. That was one of our projects.

We eliminated--and these all, I think, merged between the League and the Legislative Council, which met primarily at the time that the legislature was in session. We got racing eliminated from the state, for one thing.

Stein: Was that a difficult campaign?

Wolfe: Well, no. It was sort of an exciting campaign. Did I tell you about that before? I picked up something when I was down in California visiting my parents--I guess a copy of the San Francisco Examiner that had a big page advertisement showing what they were doing down here to try to eliminate it. I think they must have made some improvements in the way betting is done since then, but, at any rate, they were trying to break it up down here too [in California].

We felt that we weren't getting the support of the Mormon Church, who should have been against it. So, we took this advertisement down to their newspaper, the Deseret News, and asked them why they didn't give us more publicity and help on it. We thought that they should take the lead because most of the members of the legislature were Mormons.

Finally, I suppose, we convinced them, because they copied practically the same thing that the Examiner had put out down here [in California], and we got copies of the paper and we put one on the desk of every member of the legislature. The bill then went through without much difficulty then. But up to that time we couldn't get the paper to take a stand on it. The minute we did, you see, it was successful.

Stein: That's odd, isn't it, that the paper wouldn't take a stand,



Stein: because the Mormons wouldn't be in favor of horse racing.

Wolfe: Well, you would think they wouldn't be. But I'll let you take that little pamphlet home about Mormon-owned sugar and Prohibition, and you can see the difficulty that you had with the Mormon Church, because, after all, they were the business community also; they were one of the biggest--I suppose they had more money in the business community than any other organization or any other person in the state. They really were big, even at that time, having money invested in factories and things of that sort, and they didn't want to do anything to disrupt the economy.

You'll be interested in that little book\* when you read it, because the financial success of the Hotel Utah was all involved in it, too. Have you ever been to Salt Lake?

Stein: I drove through Salt Lake once.

Wolfe: But you didn't stop at the Hotel Utah?

Stein: No.

Wolfe: It was a magnificent hotel, right from the very beginning, and they were afraid if they didn't serve liquor, they might not get all of the salesmen and the conventions and things of that sort, that they needed to make it successful. Well, at any rate, you read that and you'll see why it was difficult to get the support of the Mormon Church, but they finally did.

Stein: I guess that's a classic conflict.

Wolfe: Yes, it is. And it's going on to this day, only more than ever. And you think about selling the war materials to the third world and the rest of it, or even the second or the first.

Stein: Even selling them nuclear energy at this point is dangerous.

Wolfe: Yes. The danger in it, of course, is the spin-off with the military weapons.

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\*Utah Survey of March and April 1916 carried an article by James Wolfe, tracing the seeming reluctance of Mormon business interests to denounce bootleg liquor. The Hotel Utah played a role in the story. [Ed. note]



Stein: Well, besides Mrs. Bacon, do you remember who any of the other women were who were important in the League and the Legislative Council?

Wolfe: There was a Mrs. Kipp, and she was a leader. Mrs. Bacon and Mrs. Kipp--now, my recollection of the League, the ones I think of at the moment were all Protestant. Isn't that queer? There was Mrs. Mary Hogle, whose husband was head of a stock brokerage firm there, J. A. Hogle & Company, and I suppose that they were one of the wealthiest families in the city, at least. She was greatly interested in the League of Women Voters and participated. Let's see. Who else. [Pauses to think.]

Well, I can't remember at the moment. But I know that Mrs. Kipp was one of the strongest leaders, and she would have been interested in the suffrage movement too. And Mary Hogle, more from the social--what you could do to help people from the social viewpoint.

Stein: Welfare measures.

Wolfe: Yes. Now, I guess Mrs. Burton Musser might have been on it. She was from a Mormon family, but not actually a Mormon. She had become a Unitarian. Mrs. Kipp was also a Unitarian. Mrs. Hogle was an Episcopalian, you see. Well, maybe I'll think of more of them later on, and I can give you their names. Mrs. Kipp became president later on, as did Mrs. William Knerr.

Stein: What sort of reception did these two organizations get in the legislature and among male politicians?

Wolfe: Well, as far as the legislature was concerned, I think that it took them quite seriously. There might have been a little levity, you know, about the women working and so forth, as there always is, but they actually realized that they were accomplishing something, and so both the newspapers and the politicians gave them at least lip service as to what they were doing.

Stein: Why do you think they were able to take the women seriously? Was it that they were a strong enough voting force?

Wolfe: I suppose that they were strong enough women so that they were a force in the community. I don't know that they actually were so much interested getting--the League was never so much interested in getting voters for any particular party as it was in educating the women as to the value of what could be done with the vote, and they were more interested in issues, it seemed to me, than in just



Wolfe: party politics.

In fact, I ran into it when I got back to Washington [working for the Women's Division of the Democratic National Committee]. I had picked up several women from the Virginia League of Women Voters to assist us. They said that we were robbing the League of all their good material, you see. And then I said, well, I thought that that's what we were trying to do, to educate them to be able to take part in politics. But, you see, there was a little jealousy there between the women participating as politicians or in a political party, rather than as a neutral party.

Stein: How did you yourself make that transition in moving into the Democratic party?

Wolfe: Well, I had been a Democrat before, you see, so I didn't have to--well, I suppose that I was invited to serve as vice-chairman of the state committee, and so I moved on to that.

Stein: Was that when you were still with the League?

Wolfe: I can't remember these dates. I ran across something that has a lot of dates on it. Maybe this might help. [Hands interviewer "List of Offices held by Mrs. Carolyn Wolfe from 1922 to 1942."]\* I was president of the League of Women Voters from 1922 to '24, it says. And I was president of the Women's Legislative Council from '27 to '29. And then from '25 to '34, a member of the board and vice-president of the Civic Center Association, which, I think, grew out of the League. Then in 1930 to '34, I came on as state vice-chairman [of the Democratic State Central Committee]. Then, '33 and '34, I was regional adviser for the National Democratic Women.

[Looking at list.] Then in May, '34, I went back to Washington and came home at the end of '36. Then, regional adviser for the National [Democratic] Women from '37 to '40. Political things.

I guess this must have been compiled as a part of the material I had to send through the Treasury Department to get

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\*See front of interview.





Wolfe: okayed when I became a regional staff officer of the war bond finance committee. So it does give a long list, which helps you remember the different dates. But, you see, I didn't go directly from the League of Women Voters, but went from a number of organizations in between.

Stein: [Looking at list.] This is an impressive list.

Wolfe: Well it looks impressive, but it just kept you busy during the period, just moving from one thing to another, which was interesting.

I think now, when I think of all the five kids, that they must have been quite young at that time.

Stein: When were your children born?

Wolfe: 1918, I think, or maybe 1919, the first one was born.

Stein: So you still had children running around in diapers when you were president of the League of Women Voters.

Wolfe: Yes. And I had five. They fortunately were out of diapers when I was back in Washington, and the oldest one was fourteen.

#### Vice-Chairman, State Democratic Committee

Stein: What I'm curious about is how you jumped right into the Democratic organization so high up.

Wolfe: I tell everybody I started at the top and I'm gradually working my way down. [Laughter] Well, I suppose this must have been the time that my husband had gone in as judge.

Stein: Yes, I can check that out.

Wolfe: If we looked in Who's Who, we could find out.

Stein: I xeroxed that entry in Who's Who. I have it right here.

Wolfe: You know, I was in Who's Who too.

Stein: You were?



- Wolfe: Oh, yes. We were both in. I got tired of filling out the forms that they send you every year. [Chuckle]
- Stein: So you dropped out?
- Wolfe: I dropped out. I couldn't take it. It seemed to me inconsequential anyway.
- Stein: Here we are. [Finds Who's Who entry for Judge Wolfe.] He became judge in 1929, of the third judicial district court, from '29 to '35.
- Wolfe: In '29, yes. Well, you see, he was in, and he immediately made a good record as judge. I mean, he was colorful and got lots of publicity and things of that sort, so that I suppose it occurred to them that--and we had friends in the people who were running the Democratic organization at that time. Then I think George Dern was elected governor in '32, it must have been. No, he must have been elected governor in '28, because he had already served one term and was in his second term when he was made secretary of war; at least that's my recollection. I'll have to look that up too.

But that's the reason, that the leaders of the party knew us, and they knew what I'd been doing through these other jobs that are listed there.

- Stein: Who were these leaders?
- Wolfe: Well, you had the state chairman from the state committee, you know. Whether I can get them right as to their years--Delbert Draper was state chairman, and Cal Rawlins was the national committeeman. Another attorney was the state chairman following Delbert Draper. Delbert, of course, had been my husband's law partner before he went into the court, and I think that Delbert was one of the men that persuaded him to go on the ticket so they'd have some good names on the ticket, and then they all got elected. [Laughter]

And then Mrs. Musser, maybe she'd been state chairman and was moving on to national committeewoman. This I can't remember, but in all probability she recommended me because she had worked with me on the Women's Legislative Council. Now, she may have been one that was on the League of Women Voters too; I can't remember.

- Stein: I see. I have notes on her that say that in 1922 she was the state chairwoman.



Wolfe: Yes.

Stein: And she was elected to the state senate and was a Democratic national committeewoman in 1934.

Wolfe: Yes. Well, then, she wasn't elected until 1934. But she had been the, as you say, state chairwoman. Now I think they call it state vice-chairman. I'm sure that she must have recommended me, and then all the men--they were involved in the legislature and all the rest of it, so that's how it came about.

That's how it always comes about in politics. You get somebody to--[laughter]. Isn't it? Even today, except with [California Governor] Jerry Brown, I understand that they were very conscientious about going into the records of the people whom they appoint.

Stein: What were your functions as committeewoman, or as vice chairman?

Wolfe: Well, of course, you had the voting privilege, voting on the state committee and the rest of it, and their function was to arrange for state conventions and see about elections and things of that sort. As far as the women's end of it was concerned, we immediately went into an educational program because we felt that the women needed more help on knowing how things were going.

Following in there in '31, you see, we immediately had the Roosevelt program coming on, which was very complicated with all the alphabetic agencies and things of that sort. So, we immediately started in with a really intensive program of trying to help them understand these different agencies and what the federal government was doing, what Roosevelt was standing for and attempting to do for the people.

#### The Reporter Plan

Stein: Was this when you inaugurated the Reporter Plan?

Wolfe: We didn't call it the Reporter Plan then, but it was the program which called the attention of Miss Dewson to me. She may have given it its name, Reporter Plan.

Stein: Could you describe that? I'm not really sure myself what exactly the Reporter Plan was.



Wolfe: Well, the Reporter Plan was simply a list of suggestions that we sent out together with material, as we could get it, from the national organization, for the women to study the different agencies. We suggested that each woman be assigned one agency, which they would bone up on and then report on. So, that was how it got the name "Reporter Plan."

Then the women would arrange programs to hear the women give their reports, and then the rest of them could ask questions of this woman if they wanted to.

Well, you see, you can extend that idea to practically all the political subjects that come to mind, or anything else that you want to, as far as that goes, of interest to community life. It was a very simple program, and it really worked out.

That was the thing that called their attention to me from the National Committee, the fact that we were trying to do this particular job of education.

All the time I was in office in the Washington office, we attempted to do the same thing. We just concentrated on trying to help the women understand politics and government better. The whole focus was on that, and we knew if we did that that it would enhance their interest in politics, and that we might get better government if somehow you could alert the women to the necessity for it.

Stein: Were you successful in involving many women?

Wolfe: Yes. I ran across something--I don't know whether I told you that before--in the Democratic Digest. We had about 30,000 subscribers to that, which wasn't bad for something that just came on the market nationally and was pushed through in two years. At the end of the two years we had about 30,000 subscribers. I don't know. It may have gone on. I never heard afterwards how the number was increased or what about it. Of course, they did keep on with it. I don't know what I ever did with the copies that came out after I left, but I don't seem to have any around.

Stein: I think you mentioned to me once that there was a young man, a graduate student, who was going to write a thesis on the Women's Division, or on you, and you gave him--

Wolfe: No, it seems to me that he was getting material on the Roosevelt administration and then also working on the Kennedy--well, that doesn't seem right, does it? There must have been two different





Wolfe: people getting material. I've also sent material to our present-day lobbyist, Ralph Nader--not on this particular thing, but on something else that came up on which we needed help to get a national campaign going. I was working on it in the [Sonoma County] planning commission and sent it back to Ralph Nader.

That issue surfaced after a while, and they really began delving into it; the issue was mobile homes. I think that they have really accomplished quite a bit on that, on getting better safety standards and so forth.

Stein: This was your recent term on the planning commission here?

Wolfe: Yes. I think it was about four or five years ago.

Stein: Was that the county planning commission, or the city?

Wolfe: County. But I guess that you always see the necessity of trying to keep the people informed and know what's going on. Sometimes you wonder if it isn't just a hopeless job. [Laughter] At least I get that feeling sometimes.

Stein: Well, I would imagine that you felt that with the Roosevelt administration, when suddenly government had mushroomed, and you had all these new agencies.

Wolfe: Oh, yes, because just think of them. Of course, we have so many more now, but people I don't think even try to keep up with them. I can't tell what the agencies are when I see them now. I can't remember back because there are so many more. Then I think we had about twenty-four, and we mastered them pretty well at the time.

Stein: I remember, as I went through the Digests, being enormously impressed at the extent of understanding that the women had to have to be an expert. For instance, on the agricultural agencies, they had to know all about price stabilization and crop controls.

Wolfe: Yes. We had some good women on that end of it too. I remember Mrs. Marie McGuire, from St. Paul, Minnesota, who was good, and then there was a Mrs. Annie Dickie Oleson, also from St. Paul, Minnesota. They're both in the Digest, their complete names. But Mrs. Oleson, particularly, was a magnificent speaker, so she did a lot of campaigning for the Women's Division.

But, you see, we used our women to talk about these things, rather than talk about the--they might incidentally mention the candidates, but they were talking about the issues and the program.



Stein: That's interesting. So even though you were within a partisan organization, you were still maintaining an educational emphasis.

Wolfe: Yes, we were.  
[end tape 1, side 1; begin tape 1, side 2]

### Two Women's Democratic Organizations

Stein: Getting back to the Utah party for a moment, I found references to a couple of different organizations in going through the Digests and the Utah Democratic magazine, the New Deal, that I was interested in, and I wondered if you worked through these groups. One was the Women's Democratic Club of Salt Lake City, and the other was the Democratic Women's Study Group.

Wolfe: Yes, we did. We worked through both of those. Of course, you know how the organization is set up, when the men handle-- although they may have had men's organizations too. But you started with the smallest voting unit, which was the district in Utah, and you elected a chairman and, as far as Utah was concerned, a vice-chairman of opposite sex. Then you had committee members.

Then these people met as members of a ward group, and there they would elect a chairman of the ward, a vice-chairman, and so forth, until you got up to your county organization, and they did the same thing. Then when you got all the county people together, they elected the state people.

So, it seems very democratic as far as that part is concerned because the people had to be elected by all the officials of the different political units.

Well, I guess from the earliest beginning, maybe, the Mormons had women's groups and men's groups. They were great on organization as far as the church was concerned. They had organizations for every age and sex in the church--the children and the Mutual Improvement Association, the young people and the women.

Well, the women had the study groups where they were carrying on. I don't remember when that was actually started, but they were doing a good job in their study groups.

The other one that you asked about was what?



Stein: The Women's Democratic Club of Salt Lake City, and that was Mrs. Elizabeth Hayward.

Wolfe: Yes, Mrs. Elizabeth Hayward. She was one of the old suffrage workers. She really was quite a wonderful person. She had steady hands, you know, and the women respected her, and she was very helpful in the whole organization.

The Salt Lake City Women's Club would have monthly meetings. They also had ward meetings in the political organization. But they somehow or other came to us for help on the programs, so that we would maybe present the program for the Women's Club in Salt Lake City, and then we'd invite all the ward people and district people in addition to the club members.

Now, as far as the national [Democratic] organization was concerned, they didn't like club setups because they thought that it wasn't democratic and that a few women got together in an organization and they didn't reach out into all the different sections so that they had representation from each voting district. And they wanted to try to get the organization strengthened so that it would represent these officials that were elected, and it would be a democratic thing that came from the grassroots.

But I found that the women in the clubs were very willing to cooperate. In fact, they were more than happy to because it augmented their organization. If you tried to avoid them or to carry on your program without their assistance, then you immediately antagonized them, and they really were a powerful group.

When we came down to California, the club group was much stronger than the political organization, as far as the women were concerned. They had what they called here the CDC, I guess.

Stein: The California Democratic Council, or Club.

Wolfe: And that really was strong. When I first came down here, it was a very strong group and endorsed candidates and practically could guarantee their election. Of course, it's lost a lot of its power now. But you can see what it meant, that if you didn't work through clubs in California, you got nowhere.

So, we encouraged the clubs to carry on, and also, as I told you before, we tried to get the law changed to make it mandatory that they have women in their political setup, in the political organization, by saying that they had to have a



Wolfe: chairman and vice-chairman of opposite sex.

Stein: That was the fifty-fifty plan?

Wolfe: Yes. Well, now, if you know anything about the California organization, it states that a candidate who has run for office, even if he didn't win, can choose part of the committee setup.

You know, I never hear about an election in a precinct. I guess that's the smallest unit here. I never hear of an election in a precinct. I think the precinct workers must be appointed in some way. I really should do more work on that, but I haven't become too involved in this end of it since I came out here.

But the clubs are quite strong and--well, depending on the leadership, I guess, so that we've used the clubs a lot to work for candidates.

Stein: But in Utah the party structure sounds more democratic than the California one.

Wolfe: Yes, it is. Yes. So, we were successful in getting it through a number of the states, just working with the people in the states, and they pushed it through the legislatures.

#### Leading Democratic Women

Stein: I came across some names of women in the clubs and I wondered if you remembered any of them: Mrs. Anna Meier.

Wolfe: Yes.

Stein: And Mrs. Isabella Kenner. Mrs. Anna T. Piercey.

Wolfe: Yes, I knew her quite well.

Stein: And Mrs. Frank Penrose.

Wolfe: Yes. She was, I think, county vice-chairman. I'm not sure. I think she's the one woman maybe that resented my being appointed. I can't remember the circumstances. She felt very badly about it afterward and wrote me a letter of apology.  
[Chuckle]





Stein: She thought she deserved the post?

Wolfe: Yes, I suppose she did.

Stein: What about these other ladies? Do you remember what they were like, or what they did?

Wolfe: Well, Mrs. Piercey I remember very well; and Mrs. Meier, I remember her name. But they were club members. There were other people who did much more in the club, and I can't think of their names. But they gave me this book one time when I went back, and it has a lot of names in it. [Shows interviewer flyleaf of book, on which the women who had given Mrs. Wolfe the book had inscribed their names.]

There is a Margaret McQuilkin. After Roosevelt got in, she got an appointment. I think it was in the Internal Revenue Service, collector of customs in Utah.

These names are more recent than those women that you mentioned. Alla Mulhall was elected to the legislature for a couple of terms and was quite an important person in it.

And Mrs. Scott P. Stuart. Now, she worked with me. I think when I got to be national committeewoman, and returned to Salt Lake and served as regional chairman, Mrs. Stuart was appointed, or elected, as the state vice-chairman. She was really a first class person, very good.

There are a lot of them down here. Mrs. G. S. Allmet, Mrs. J. C. Westwood, Mrs. J. Allen Crockett. Some of them were there as wives of important officials. I just wish I could see the women.

Mrs. Ivy V. Mitchell was a great worker in the club movement.

You know, some of them just have a feeling for organization. You put them in charge of something, and they do the whole thing. I can remember one woman. She would be interested in decorating the tables and just do a magnificent job of getting it done in an original way. It seems to me that she was one of the ward chairmen at the time. You'd have to go back through all those old political records, which I don't seem to have.



Wolfe: Some of the women in the clubs were also precinct officers.

But we've gotten a number of women in the Utah legislature. Women are well represented in the Utah legislature in practically every session, and, of course, in my day, Reva Beck Bosone got elected to Congress.

Stein: Yes, I want to ask you about her later on when we discuss your Washington years.

There were some other names I came across, and maybe these will help bring back this other name you want to think of. There was a Mrs. Weston Vernon.

Wolfe: Yes.

Stein: She was a national committeewoman.

Wolfe: And she came from Cache County. That was the county furthest north where the agricultural college is. I think that her husband must have been a professor at the college. Her son later became Utah state Democratic committee chairman. She was a strong personality and did great work out in that end of the state.

In the other end of the state, there was a Mrs. Lucile Greenwood, down south, and she was an excellent person. Now, down south, we depended more on our county vice-chairmen. But Mrs. Greenwood--we would focus our work through her as the county vice-chairman, and then somehow or other she would get the women in and get them interested. We, of course, pressured them to use their district women as much as possible, so you get the grassroots represented. Some of them did this through clubs, and some of them did it through the organization.

Have you any other names there?

Stein: Let's see. Well, Mrs. George Dern, the governor's wife.

Wolfe: Yes.

Stein: And Mrs. Elizabeth Cohen.

Wolfe: Now, Mrs. Elizabeth Cohen was one who was interested in national suffrage, I remember. She must have come from the East, you know, and knew what it was all about, not having the vote. I think that the people who were interested in suffrage were either the older women who had been deprived of the vote at an



Wolfe: earlier period, or those that hadn't yet gotten it. They thought they ought to have it and were willing to put in this extra work for it.

Stein: Yes. And Mrs. Harvey Allen?

Wolfe: I don't remember her name.

Stein: I've also come across the name Florence Allen, who was the judge.

Wolfe: Oh, Florence Allen was appointed by Roosevelt to a judgeship, not a district judge but the next tier, the next category. I've forgotten the name of the office. She was a wonderful person. It seems to me that she took a prominent part not so much in our League of Women Voters, but in the National League of Women Voters.

Stein: You were mentioning that in the southern part of the state you worked mostly through the county vice-chairmen. Were you suggesting you worked differently in the northern part of the state?

Wolfe: In Salt Lake City, I told you, we worked with the clubs and somehow or other tried to get our organization people consolidated or cooperating with the club groups, so we used the two together. In the counties closer to Salt Lake it was easier to work with the individual women, whether or not they held office. Many attended the Salt Lake meetings.

#### State Council of Democratic Women

Stein: In this issue of the New Deal--April 6, 1934--I noticed that there was a program of a State Council of Democratic Women that you were going to hold in April 1934. I wondered if you remembered that event.

Wolfe: I got out this magazine, so I certainly should have!  
[Laughter]

Stein: You were responsible for getting out the magazine?

Wolfe: Yes. I remember getting all these pages signed in the back, the signatures, and we made money on that because we charged



Wolfe: each person who signed.\*

Stein: I wondered about that.

Wolfe: Yes, it was interesting. I must have known that I was going back at this time because, you see, we had practically the Reporter Plan as a program--"Know Your New Deal," you see. The whole program was worked out on the thing that we followed out afterwards in Washington. [Reading conference program in New Deal.]

Mrs. W. H. Callahan. I don't remember where she came from now [Utah county vice-chairman].

Now, Mrs. J. R. Rawlins, I believe, was the Utah national committeewoman at the time. I'm not quite sure though.

Ellis R. Carter was a very devoted worker in this whole thing. I remember when she sent me a big birthday cake on my birthday in Washington. I don't know how they got it back there in such good shape. [Laughter]

And here's another woman from Logan [Utah]. That's where Mrs. Vernon came from. I suppose by this time Mrs. Vernon had done pretty well getting her organization in shape and they were ready to report on these things.

Well, this is an interesting thing.

Stein: Did you organize that conference of state Democratic women?

Wolfe: Yes. This Council thing, yes, I organized it.

Stein: Was that organized by women, or did you have men helping?

Wolfe: Oh, no. It was organized by the women. We didn't have to do much about the men. They would put in a good word, but we didn't make them--I noticed that we asked the state chairman to open up the meeting. I wonder who he was at the time.

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\*Several pages of the magazine were devoted to short statements in support of the State Council of Democratic Women, the statement itself surrounded by the signatures of prominent Utah Democrats.





Wolfe: [Laughter] Most likely that attorney whose name I can't remember.

But it really was lots of fun to work on these things. We did somewhat the same thing, as I recollect, used the same format and things of that sort, in the League of Women Voters, just informational and educational.

Stein: Had this magazine, the New Deal, been going on all the while, or was that something that you started?

Wolfe: I don't know. It must have been something that--you see, this says [reading from copy of the New Deal]: "The Midvale Journal is merged with this publication, an independent Democratic weekly newspaper." What we must have done was to get them at this paper to let us print this New Deal issue. I think this was just one issue of the Midvale Journal.

Stein: I see.

Wolfe: Because it says it's an independent Democratic weekly newspaper, and I think this is the only one that we got out, you see. And then they picked up the ads, but we got the money. Of course, I suppose we paid so much a page for it. I'm not quite sure. But we got the money for these [pages with signatures]. You see, what we did was just offset printing, I guess, and we had these things printed, and then we'd take them around and get the people to sign. I suppose if we looked through there we could find all the Democrats.

Stein: I'll bet you could, yes. They're right in there.

Wolfe: Yes. Well, here's that Mrs. Greenwood, who was such an enthusiastic worker. So, all these people who are chairmen would have been in here. That's a good source if you want to know who was serving at that time. Mrs. Rice, who was up in Davis County, was marvelous, and she was quite an influence in the Mormon Church. Most of these women were, you see, because it was predominantly Mormon outside of Salt Lake City. Salt Lake City has always been--they've been able to swing the Gentile vote there. But out in the state you had to depend on the Mormons. They really gave me awfully good support. You wouldn't think it, because here I was, a Gentile.

The only one I had opposition from was Mrs. Penrose, who was in Salt Lake City, and then she was sorry afterwards, you see.



Stein: I thought that the Mormons were predominantly Republican.

Wolfe: Well, my understanding is that when they decided--and it's in that book. I didn't read it. I just was leafing through the chapters, and before each chapter, it tells what is in each chapter. But old-timers tell me that they lined the people up, one on one side and one on the other, Democrats or Republicans; maybe they could choose sides. [Laughter] Or they had one big line and said, "You're a Democrat. You're a Republican." I mean, it was as simple as that.

But I noticed that some people--that Dr. Ellen B. Ferguson, whom I was really looking for, said that her husband had been a Democrat, so that they joined the Democratic side when the political parties were set up. You see, the Mormons didn't indulge in any politics before that, that is the two-party system. They were Mormons, and that was the whole thing with them. Then they decided that they had better begin participating in the political system in the country if they wanted to be recognized as a state. They had a lot of trouble because of the Mormon polygamous thing, getting recognized as a state.

Stein: Did you have much to do with the men's side of the party as the vice-chairman of the state committee?

Wolfe: Well, when they had meetings, of course, you were there, and you had a chance to speak, and, of course, you had a vote, so that any decisions that were made, unless they were made in a smoke-filled room [chuckle], you participated in them. It was so natural that you didn't think anything about it.

Stein: The men treated it as a natural thing also?

Wolfe: Oh, yes. Yes.

Stein: Did they assume, for instance, that you would serve the coffee or anything like that, that there were certain functions that you would perform because you were a woman?

Wolfe: Well, usually you met in a hotel conference room or something of that sort. But women always took the responsibility of serving the coffee or refreshments. I mean, if they were putting on something really big, they might ask the Democratic Club in Salt Lake if they would take charge of the refreshments, unless it was an ox roast or something of that sort when the men would do that end of it. But I think it was pretty



Wolfe: well accepted that the women would serve the coffee and cookies or cake or whatnot. Certainly if you were home and they met in your home, the women--there was just no thought of anything else.

I remember this one man who was a state vice-chairman, Delbert M. Draper. He was quite an interesting person. I told you he was my husband's partner, too. I most likely was the vice-chairman under him, so maybe that's the reason we all felt so free and easy and got all the attention that you thought you should get.

He came from Sanpete County, and in his early days he had been a shepherd. I suppose he went out working with the sheep as all the men did. But in those days they had what they called sheep wagons, and out of the sheep wagon developed the mobile home. While these things were pulled by horses, inside I remember they had a stove, and along the front half of the big wagon they had benches, but the benches turned up and they were bins. In the back was a bed.

So, there you had it. You had your cooking equipment. You had the bins to keep the flour and the potatoes and things of that sort, clothing, etcetera, and your sleeping quarters. Sanitary facilities were outside. And then you moved this thing along with the sheep.

Well, at that time, the men cooked sourdough bread and they kept the starter with them all the time. So they'd mix up a batch of bread and cook it. We used to go out on picnics with the Drapers. We were all about the same age. Delbert always used to make up a starter. They had to do this two or three weeks ahead of time, make up the starter for the sourdough bread. Then they would mix up the batch of sourdough, and they would take it on the picnic, and they would cook it in these big Dutch ovens. Then, to keep it hot, they would roll it up in newspapers and a blanket, while they were cooking the rest of the food.

You usually had lamb and fried potatoes, things of that sort--they'd cook in heavy cast iron Dutch ovens. His wife helped with the vegetables and things like that. But when they finished, you had this sourdough bread, which was simply marvelous, and this hot meal of lambchops and potatoes and all the rest of the things that they brought from home--the jelly and the pickles and things of that sort. Just marvelous!



Wolfe: You see, it was extraordinary to have this man participating in the cooking, but it was more like a cookout now. The men seemed to enjoy--even before women's lib, they enjoyed cooking out on the rotisseries and things of that sort, or whatever they call those things.

Stein: The barbecues.

Wolfe: Barbecues, yes.

Stein: That sounds delicious, those picnics.

Wolfe: Well, you know, the sheep wagons intrigued me because my father, of course, was a sheep man too, and I had intimate experience with the sheep wagons because we'd sometimes go out with him over a day or two. It was just fascinating to be able to move around in this thing.

Stein: How long would he be out in the wagon?

Wolfe: Well, sometimes they would stay out, especially in the winter time, weeks at a time. They ran our sheep up in Wyoming in the summer. Or was it the winter? No. They ran them there part of the time, and when they took them up there they would sometimes be away a month at a time. But when they were around the little town where we lived, Payson, they'd bring the sheep in closer for shearing or dipping or something of that sort. Then that's the time that he would take us up with them, and they'd be stationary for a while. They'd build big vats, and they'd run the sheep through some kind of sulphur concoction called "dip". Then the shearing would take place, you know. I can't remember if the shearing was before or after dipping. It was really a marvelous occasion.

I don't know how they do it now. I suppose they have electric shearers. In California, they bring them into the barns and shear them. I don't know how they do it. Maybe they hook the shearer onto a truck or something to get power for it.

Stein: He had manual shearers?

Wolfe: At that time, they had to use manual shearers, and practically everybody knew how to shear a sheep. Well, now one of the great difficulties is to find anyone who can shear a sheep, because it's an art, you know, nowadays. I only know one or two people who learned how to do it. I used to have to get





Wolfe: sheep shearers when I was over on the ranch and I raised a few sheep. I thought it seemed to be quite traditional in our family, so I had about a hundred sheep on the ranch. I had to get them sheared. I can't remember that we ever dipped them, though. They must have blown some powder or something on.

Stein: That was to keep the bugs off, that powder and the dipping?

Wolfe: Yes. You know, their fur was quite thick, and if you didn't dip them or do something, then the ticks and things of that sort could make them--I suppose they could just make it terribly bad for them. It might be fatal in some cases.

#### Some Prominent Male Politicians

Stein: Getting back to the state party, there are a couple more questions I have. I wondered if you knew George Dern at all. Was he active in the party?

Wolfe: Oh, yes. Very. Yes, I knew him. In fact, my husband was one of twelve young men who got together and persuaded him to run.

Stein: And did he hold party office then?

Wolfe: I can't remember that he did. I believe he was in the Utah senate.

Stein: And how about Elbert Thomas?

Wolfe: Yes, he was a U.S. Senator, and he was also professor of Oriental history at the University of Utah. I think as a Mormon missionary he perhaps had been to the East and was very much interested in the Asian countries. I don't think that he had ever been what you would call a politician. But he ran for the Senate, and he was quite a popular man at the university. I understood that all his students got out and worked hard for him, and he got the nomination on the Democratic ticket, of course, and won, and, I suppose, was a first-rate senator.

Then when he either retired or wasn't re-elected--I can't remember which--he was appointed--what do they call the people who have charge of Micronesia and all of those



Wolfe: foreign islands mandated to the U.S.?

Stein: Governors?

Wolfe: Well, at any rate, we have something in our foreign service where they appoint different people to take care and to look after those different islands, some of them, like the Philippines, of course. We were sort of a protectorate for them. But there was a big group of islands, Micronesia, out in the Pacific, where he served that purpose.

Stein: I see. I know that he served for a while on the La Follette Committee.

Wolfe: Did he? I didn't know that.

Stein: In something I read you were credited with defeating Senator Reed Smoot of Utah. Do you remember that, having anything to do with his campaign?

Wolfe: Not me personally. Was it personally, me?

Stein: I think so. Maybe it was just your part of the party.

Wolfe: Well, I certainly helped to defeat two or three people. [Chuckle] I might have done something that--sometimes there's just some little thing you publish or say or do that seems to be the thing that activates the opinion. I can't remember if I did something like that with Smoot. You'd think I'd remember that, wouldn't you?

Stein: He was certainly a big name in the Senate.

Wolfe: Of course, we were saying that the whole Depression was brought on by the fact that we put our tariffs so high that the foreign nations couldn't export, and when they couldn't export they couldn't buy from us, so that it cut down our export. The Smoot-Hawley Bill provided for tariffs. And it seems to me that we emphasized that issue in asking for the defeat of the Republicans at the time. Now, whether they had something of that sort in mind, I don't know, or whether it was something more personal.



Wolfe: think, either the national treasurer--

Stein: Was that Ivy Baker Priest?

Wolfe: Yes. And then later on she and her husband were divorced, and I don't know what happened to the family. But I remember that she was a member of the Legislative Council when I served in it.

Stein: What do you remember of her? Did you know her well?

Wolfe: Well, she wasn't a close friend, but I knew her, and I thought she was very capable, and she was a very attractive woman at the time. Evidently, then she came down to California to live, and she became state treasurer. So she came right on in politics, but she evidently was a strong person in order to get the backing of people down [in the] Los Angeles area.

The thing that interested me was that the Republicans would even go back to the same state to get a woman. Now, that--they certainly were very--what is the word? I mean that everything we did, then they would do the same thing; you know, like trying to get women participating on the committees in the convention. Then the Republicans would turn around and give them the same privileges that we had worked to get for them, so that I think that we did a great deal along that line to help the women's cause. We never went so far--and maybe some of those older women back in--maybe Molly--I imagine she might have been a women's lib[ber], Molly Dewson, and some of those women, but evidently not Frances Perkins. At least I think I read somewhere that she still thought a great deal that the woman had the responsibility for the family and the children.

Well, I just can't make up my mind that women aren't different from men. They are different because of the fact that they bear the children, and somehow or other it seems to me that they have a certain affinity for that and responsibility for the children, just as in the whole human and animal race. And sometimes I wonder why they want to do all the heavy work and stuff. I have one granddaughter who goes out and does construction [work].  
[end tape 1, side 2]



Ladies' Literary Club

(Interview 4, June 21, 1976)

[begin tape 1, side 1]

Stein: Last time we discussed your political activities in Utah, and I was reading over those resumes that you loaned me.\* There was one organization that we didn't touch on last week, the Ladies' Literary Club. You mentioned in the resume that you were the chairman of the current events section of the Ladies' Literary Club, and you arranged some book reviews. [Referring to resume.] You presented Professor George Emery Fellows of the University of Utah in a series of lectures on international relations.

I wondered if you could tell me a little bit about the club, who they were, and what sort of ladies belonged.

Wolfe: Yes. That was an interesting group. I don't know whether we talked about the percentages of Mormons and Gentiles in the state, but at that time the state was predominantly Mormon. But in Salt Lake City, the Gentiles might have had a majority. But there was rather a distinct cleavage in the social make-up of the city, and the Ladies' Literary Club was composed of, I'd say almost without doubt, 100% of Gentiles. It wasn't until sometime after that that they began taking Mormons in, so that now it is a representative club of both Mormons and the whole population.

Stein: So, it still exists?

Wolfe: It still exists, yes.

Stein: Who founded it? How did it originally get started?

Wolfe: I don't remember that. I think it was founded by some of the Protestant women with a rather high degree of culture. I know there were several groups like the Bayview Reading Club and groups of that sort who got together and who had like interests, and it may be true, that they were the beginning

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\* See "List of Offices held by Mrs. Carolyn Wolfe from 1922 to 1942," in front of interview.





Wolfe: of this big women's club. They must have had about three hundred or more members at that time.

Stein: Did it deliberately exclude Mormon women at the beginning?

Wolfe: Yes.

Stein: Why was that?

Wolfe: Well, maybe the Mormons excluded the Gentiles, you see, and so it was quite logical that if they were going to--well, it's just the way the whole thing operated at that time. Everything was mutually exclusive.

Stein: Separate but equal. [Laughter]



## V WOMEN'S DIVISION, DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE

Becoming Chairman and Settling Family Affairs

Stein: In about this same period, you became involved in the Women's Division of the Democratic party, and I just wanted to get some background on Mary [Molly] Dewson and the Women's Division. I wondered how you first got to know Miss Dewson.

Wolfe: That was the letter I was trying to find. I didn't know her.

Stein: Oh, you didn't?

Wolfe: I'd never heard of her, and I got this letter from her, telling about what she wanted to do for the Democratic women. She was in the Women's Division at the time, at the head of it, and I guess we must have sent our programs on to her. But, at any rate, she got hold of my program for the Democratic women in Utah, and she said it was the only educational program that she had seen in the entire country where anyone had attempted to put on a program that would try to help the women understand the Roosevelt program, which was really highly complicated, as far as the women were concerned, with all the alphabetical agencies and so forth and so on.

She wrote me this long letter, asking me if I would consider coming back to Washington and help to put the program



Wolfe: on in the Women's Division. I wrote back and told her that I didn't think I had the right personality for that, and so forth and so on, that I had a big family, five children and a husband, and all the rest of it.

That didn't seem to bother her so much, because I suppose she felt that she had all the contacts, you know, and could make all the contacts, and things of that sort. So, that particular part of it didn't bother her, if I would come back and just do the same sort of thing that I had been doing in Utah, and do it all across the continent.

She kept persevering, and she finally came out to Salt Lake. Well, first, I guess, Jim Farley [Chairman, Democratic National Committee] came out through there, and she had him talk to me, and then she came out herself later on and finally persuaded me to go back and do it. You know, I can't find her letter.

Stein: It will probably come up when you are looking for something else.

Wolfe: Yes, it might, but I've gone through my personal files, but I don't know where it could have been put. My memory is a complete blank as far as anything more is concerned. I just know that the letter came out---it seemed as though out of the blue sky.

I took it up with my husband. At the time, I remember that the Derns had moved to Washington, and we lived in quite a beautiful place up on Capitol Hill, just below the capitol. It was a big house, and it was quite lovely, and had a big view. Guggenheim's son came out, and he said that was the only house that he would live in in Salt Lake, and he just insisted that we rent it.

Well, of course, this was in the middle of the Depression, and everybody was hurting pretty badly, and so we decided that we would rent him the house and we would move up to the Derns' house. So, we moved to the governor's house, and it was while we were still in there, you see, that all this was taking place.

Stein: Goodness! So, you moved your whole family and the children and the servants?

Wolfe: Everything. I had just gotten them settled down up there in the governor's place [chuckle], and then that all had



Wolfe: to be terminated. From the time I went back to Washington, as I look back over it, and I don't see how I ever got through that whole period of moving, because after Guggenheim had been there a year, he decided that he didn't like Utah after all, and so he moved out. So, there was that big house that something had to be done with.

By that time I had all the children back in Washington. I can't remember what my husband did during that period, but I suppose he must have stayed on in the Dern place. But, at any rate, the other house then finally was rented to somebody else. But it was a big place, a big establishment to maintain, and they finally got tired. So, it was just a headache, that particular end of it, the entire time I was back there.

Stein: And when you came back to Utah did you move back into that house?

Wolfe: Yes.

#### The Utah Model

Stein: I see. Even before you went back, you were just mentioning a moment ago about the program you developed in Utah. I think we talked a little bit about it last week.

Wolfe: Yes, we did. They already had study groups there, and we extended it. In Salt Lake City there was the Salt Lake City Club. They had a club organization, but Miss Dewson didn't have much confidence in any club organization because it wasn't a grassroots organization, and she thought that in order to be effective you had to begin building up in the smallest political unit and have an organization there; otherwise you didn't reach all the people.

She hoped that somehow or other the clubs would just wither away--but, of course, they didn't [laughter]---and the other organization would grow up. Well, we had the other organization in Utah, and we did emphasize that and work on it. We put the national program through that group in addition to the women's clubs so that we had it working both ways. Where there were women's clubs, we used them and extended it to the precinct organization.





Wolfe: But the program that I had organized went to all the different counties in the state; it was a county-wide program. And I think that was the thing that impressed her, that we were really trying to do a grassroots organization, an educational program, in the entire state.

Stein: How did you go about setting it up out in the other counties?

Wolfe: Well, at that time I was state vice-chairman, and, as I recollect it, Delbert Draper was the state chairman. He had been a law partner of my husband's, so that the families knew each other pretty well. So, there was no trouble about me attending all the different meetings, because he was willing; if he was going to some meeting out in the state, he was glad to have me go along with him.

It was really a very amiable arrangement, and there was just no question about having the backing of the state committee to do this organizing; in fact, they encouraged it and were happy to encourage it, because he (Draper) was that kind of a man, and the rest of them seemed to be willing to do it too.

Stein: Did you already have women out in the other counties who you could work through to set up the study groups?

Wolfe: Yes, yes. You see, we did have fifty-fifty representation in Utah. We had chairman and vice-chairman of opposite sex in every single organization that we had. That was for the political organization itself, and we finally got that through in the primary elections too, I noticed in some of the stuff that I read later. So we had the organization, and especially we had good county vice-chairmen throughout; they were either county vice-chairmen or else they were the county chairmen.

So, when we'd go into a county, and I went along, we were always sure to have the women represented too, and then we would talk to them on the necessity of extending the thing down into the grassroots and really getting the people working. It turned out that it worked out very well.

Stein: It certainly sounds that way from the literature.

Wolfe: Yes, it did.

Stein: Did you have literature that you would send them, or educational material that they could use? Or what did they



Stein: use for that?

Wolfe: Well, we had material, I guess, coming out from the Roosevelt administration through [Jim] Farley at that time. As far as the national program was concerned, we were able to get what literature they had, and so we got that to our vice-chairmen.

Now, I don't know whether you are familiar with Jim Farley's organizational tactics or not, but he evidently was one of the first to realize that you had to be thorough and get the material right down to the bottom. Instead of sending out their material to the state chairmen, for instance, and then depending on them to distribute it throughout the state, they sent it, I know, at first to the county chairmen, and then later on, in the first campaign that we had, the material was sent out to the princinct chairmen, right down to the lowest chairmen.

Sometimes our mailing list was about 200,000. That was for the women. I don't know how much bigger it was for the men. But the idea was that we weren't going to have that material sitting around in headquarters and never distributed, and that it would be better just to send it right out directly to the district people, if you had their names.

So, we were able to get the federal material, because that would come out to us from the Washington office.

#### James Farley

Stein: I noticed just recently that Jim Farley died, and I wondered if you wanted to comment on him at all. I know you mentioned that you met him on a number of occasions, and he evidently came to Utah on Democratic National Committee business and interviewed you.

Wolfe: Well, yes. I suppose that one of the things that they liked about me was that I didn't bother the men running the men's organization. I didn't disturb them too much, because we were doing educational work in our group, and we just let them take care of the politics.

I met Jim not too often those first months that I worked in the Women's Division, and I suppose I told you that story about--well, to preface it, you remember that one of his accomplishments seemed to be having a wonderful memory so that



Wolfe: he never forgot a face and that he could always call a name and so forth and so on.

Well, not too long after I had gone to Washington, there was a dinner given in honor of the Pennsylvania people, and the governor of Pennsylvania was in attendance and all the people there. I was sitting at the head table next to the governor, I think, that night, and Jim Farley came along, speaking to all of us.

You could just tell the way he looked at me that he hadn't the remotest idea who I was, and so I said, "You don't know who I am, do you, Mr. Farley?" [Laughter] He said, "No. Someone from Pennsylvania?" I said, "No. I'm the head of your Women's Division." [Laughter] He said, "For God's sake, never tell anyone that I didn't know you!"

So, I decided that perhaps people with these remarkable memories weren't too good after all, that they must have some help in the background. [Laughter]

But he never forgot me after that. Years after I had come back home, I was down in Los Angeles. I don't know why I was down there, but I was sitting in one of the big hotels, in the lobby. This was after he had left headquarters too, but he was working for the Coca Cola Company. I remember him rushing through the corridor, his coattails blowing [chuckle], and all of a sudden he saw me sitting there, and he stopped. This time he did remember who I was and stopped to inquire and everything. [Chuckle]

We thought that Jim really was a marvelous person in the organizing of the Democratic constituency over the country. He was thorough, and he met people on their own level, and I think he was highly respected.

It was after the second-term election, I think, that perhaps he became ambitious himself, because he had a large following throughout the country, and he didn't want Roosevelt to run for the third term. I think he wanted to run himself. So, at that time he resigned, or was asked to resign--I don't know which--from the Democratic organization, and we began getting new people in.

There was, you know, just one chairman after another after that. During the rest of the period there must have been three or four different chairmen who came into the organization, but none seemed to have that same flair for organization, the same thoroughness, and sort of enjoyment in it that Jim Farley had.



Stein: He never went back into politics again, did he? I seem to remember reading his obituary--

Wolfe: As far as I recollect, he didn't. It seemed to me that he was known as "Mr. Coca Cola," or something of the sort. He kept his connection with the Coca Cola Company, and he traveled all over the world. He certainly didn't run for office.

Regional Adviser, Women's Division

Stein: Getting back to the Women's Division--

Wolfe: I remember now; I must have been appointed as the regional adviser. I seem to have held that office before I went back to Washington.

Stein: That's right.

Wolfe: I don't remember too much about that, except that I was working; I did put on that one regional conference or something before I left, and that's when we got out that little book [the New Deal]. But I must have had some connection. But Mrs. Blair, you see, was technically the head. No. Mrs. Blair at one time-- Nellie Tayloe Ross. Nellie Tayloe Ross went into the Treasury Department. Well, at any rate, I must have had some connection with the Women's Division. I can't remember how it came about; just because I was the vice-chairman, I guess.

Stein: What I got out of your notes there was that in 1934 you were appointed the regional adviser of the Rocky Mountain region of the Women's Division.

Wolfe: Yes.

Stein: Was that a paid job?

Wolfe: No.

Stein: You didn't get any salary at that?

Wolfe: No.

Stein: And you did mention that you traveled around. I was wondering how your family fared through all that.





Wolfe: Yes, I certainly, as I look back on it--[laughter]. I wonder too! I think it's remarkable that they came through it as well as they seem to have come through it. I don't know as I'd ever attempt any such thing again, but at that time, you see, I didn't have to be away, except a day or something of that sort, and so there wasn't so much difficulty, and I did have good help in the house at that time. It was after I went away that we seemed to have all the trouble, and after I came back, too, we seemed to have trouble with help and things of that sort. So, they seemed to survive that part of it all right.

But the summer that I went back there [to Washington, D.C.], because I didn't know whether I was going to stay--I really said I'd try it out on a trial basis to see whether I got along and whether they liked me or not. So, I sent the children over to my mother's ranch here, out in Vineberg [California], and I sent my cook down at the time.

Now, I had had her for two or three years, so she was good, and we got a school teacher, who was supposed to help along with management of the children and give as much assistance as she could down at the ranch. Well, the girl that was doing the cooking was wonderful and, I guess, took a large part of the load, but the other one turned out to be just not suited for the type of work that we expected her to do. Anyway, she didn't seem to be able to manage the children, so she left and came back to Salt Lake. That left the burden of the responsibility on the girl who was helping with the cooking.

Finally it became too much of a problem for my mother, so they came back to Salt Lake, I guess about September of that year, and then I arranged to take them back to Washington with me. I think by that time my husband must have been back in the other house too.

Stein: In your old house?

Wolfe: Yes.



Development of the Women's Division and the Role of the Women's National Democratic Club

Stein: If I could digress for a second, do you know much about the development or the history of the Women's Division itself before you became active in it?

Wolfe: I don't know too much, except that I don't think they had tried to do too much on a national scale of organization, of organizing the women; they had depended more on the clubs and had encouraged the women to organize Democratic clubs and things of that sort, so that there weren't the national connections with the Washington office. But I think that they didn't try to do much educational work or things of that sort. I think it was all along the political [lines], in the political field.

Now, I'm not quite sure about that, because I didn't begin working in the political office until '34, you see, and I was in the League of Women Voters up to that time. I went from the League of Women Voters to the other office.

But I know that Emily Newell Blair was in the office for a long time, and she was quite a power in the political end of it. Then Nellie Tayloe Ross was in the Women's Division. She had been the wife of the governor. I guess she was governor herself after her husband died, in the state of Wyoming, and then she came on to the Women's Division and then was appointed to either the Treasury Department or some place like that.

So, that's as much as I know about it. The Women's [National] Democratic Club in Washington was quite a powerful group.

Stein: Now who were they? I came across them in reading through the [Democratic] Digests.

Wolfe: I found some more material on the publicity end. I think it's new. I don't think you saw it before. [Goes to find material.] They were getting out a little booklet when--[searching through papers]. You can turn your tape off until I find it, but I'm sure I've got it. [Tape off briefly.]

These are some of the Bulletins that they got out. This was '31. [Holds up Bulletin.]

Stein: This is called The Democratic Bulletin, published by the Women's



Stein: National Democratic Club.

Wolfe: When Miss Dewson came in, she recognized the necessity of having a hand organ that would go out to the women throughout the country, so that we'd have a means of developing programs and things of that sort. She worked with the women of the Democratic Club in Washington to get them to cooperate and let the Women's Division take over The Democratic Bulletin and change the name.

The agreement was that they would keep a page in the Digest for the publicity for the Democratic Club, so that they had an interest in it from the beginning, and, of course, the Women's Division bore the expense of the publication. It seemed to be quite a good arrangement for everybody at the time, and they seemed to be very agreeable and cooperative. We worked right along with them and, you know, gave them an opportunity to help carry out our program, so that they didn't feel as if they were excluded from the national effort.

Stein: My impression from reading that page in the Democratic Digest was that these were women of means. Is that correct?

Wolfe: Yes. They were not only women of means, but women of importance in the Democratic organization. I remember that Mrs. [Blair] Bannister, I believe, was one of the editors of the Bulletin, and she was the sister of--isn't that awful; the name slips my mind at the moment--but one of the men from Virginia who was in the Senate. I remember; it was Carter Glass.

There's a note here [indicating note among materials] that the honorary vice-presidents of the board of governors included Mrs. Emily Newell Blair; and Mrs. Carter Glass, who is the wife of the Senator from Virginia; Mrs. Richard Townsend; and Mrs. Hugh Wallace. [Tape off during telephone interruption.] Yes, these really were very important women.

Of course, you see, you remember that John J. Raskob and Jouett Shouse came in to take over the Democratic national organization at the time that [Al] Smith was running--

Stein: When Al Smith ran for president in 1928.

Wolfe: And that Raskob, it seems to me, financed the whole thing, and they really put on the big national program that had never been instituted before because they'd never had the money, I presume, to do such a thing.



Wolfe: So, a lot of these people were, I think, more the conservative group who were supporting Mr. Raskob. That wasn't true of the complexion of the whole club, but perhaps that explains why there might have been some opposition to relinquishing the Bulletin. It was not very much, but that might have been the reason.

But as you go through the board of governors and all the rest of it, you can see that they really were either the important women in the country from the Democratic field, or that they were the wives of the important Democratic officials of the country. They really were the top people. As you say, I think that most of them really came from wealthy families.

Stein: The other impression that I had, which I wanted to ask you about, is that their page in the Digest seemed to be mostly social activities, like teas and receptions and things like this. Was that primarily their focus?

Wolfe: Well, they had some monthly meetings in which they put on a lecture or something of that sort that might be considered a political program, but I think that they recognized that [it was] a part of their function, having these teas and things, to give Democratic women an opportunity to participate in the social life, just as all during the Roosevelt administration they had these big functions, teas and afternoons at the White House, where literally thousands of women, and men, too, were invited and made special trips to Washington to attend them. I don't know whether they still do that or not. There doesn't seem to be the same publicity that there was. But, at any rate, it was a very important part of the whole setup, both the social end of it at the club and at the White House. It was really quite extraordinary.

Stein: Were they also involved in the educational program?

Wolfe: Only as they chose to operate within that scope. In some of their monthly meetings or something of that sort, if they wanted a speaker and someone coming from the National Women's Division or someone suggested by the National Women's Division, on the presidential program, of course, there was always cooperation there. There was really just the finest sort of cooperation between the two groups.

There was absolutely no feeling that--except that as far as Miss Dewson was concerned, she wasn't for perpetuation of the club movement throughout the United States because she didn't think it was the democratic way of doing it and that you couldn't be successful unless you really got down to the grassroots and





Wolfe: somehow or other made all the people realize that the program was for their benefit.

Stein: How successful was she in accomplishing that, do you think?

Wolfe: Well, I always thought that we did a great deal. Of course, you had Roosevelt in the office of the president, too, so that he was giving these fireside chats, and somehow or other the people had radios then, and it was just something sort of wonderful that was happening throughout the country. I think after Roosevelt that somehow or other that sort of communication between that office and the general public diminished to a certain extent.

Then [Harry] Truman came in, and I really had a great admiration for Truman, but I find from my correspondence with different people at that time that they really didn't have great confidence in his ability as a president. This was right after he took office after Roosevelt died, and I think it's only because the people had been just sort of associating the office of the president with Roosevelt and with all this communication that he had with the people and their confidence in him, that it just wasn't there when Harry Truman came in.

I must say that in a big batch of new publicity that I came across, I found that I was one that had criticized him in an open meeting when he asked what we all thought.

Stein: That was that famous meeting that Drew Pearson--

Wolfe: Yes. I don't find the Drew Pearson thing in this. But there was another column that somebody had written where it told about me being highly critical. I noticed that one of the things that I mentioned was that I didn't like the fact that he [Truman] had appointed so many military men to high positions, and thought that that was bad, and that somehow or other we ought to do something to bring down inflation. [Laughter] This seems like the same old story, doesn't it!

Stein: [Laughter] Yes.

Wolfe: I was very amused when I read that, because in the next term Harry really blossomed out, and I think he'll go down in history as being one of the good presidents that we have had, and some people say one of the great presidents. Now, I don't know. But I think I mentioned the fact that I didn't like his Russian policy either, which brought on the Cold War, and so forth and so on. So, it makes me think that the person who follows a man who's been highly successful in the president's office has a hard time



Wolfe: to establish that he is qualified to serve as president.

Stein: I think that's very true.

### The Democratic Digest

Stein: Getting back to the Digest for just a minute, there were several names from the editorial board that I wanted to ask you about. I believe that the editor was a woman named Helen Essary.

Wolfe: Yes.

Stein: And the associate editors were Isabel Kinnear Griffin and Virginia Rishel. I wondered what their backgrounds were, where they came from, and what sort of editorial training they had had, if any.

Wolfe: Helen Essary was the wife of quite a famous reporter on the Baltimore Sun, and I think that he may have had a column. I can't remember his first name at the present moment. But she evidently had had experience--I don't know that it was too much--in editorial work, and she must have had newspaper experience. She knew the Washington people, which was very helpful, and she knew her way around Washington.

Now, I must say at the moment that I can't remember Mrs. Griffin's background. I think we had an article on her in one of the early issues telling something about her. But Virginia Rishel, at the time, was a young woman that I took to Washington with me from Salt Lake City. I think she was a graduate from Columbia, and she had some work in journalism or publicity or something of that sort. She was a very gentle type of person and a hard worker and turned out to be very successful; I mean, in this field. I have her file, so that if you're interested you can look at some of her letters and things of that sort.

But after I left Washington, I guess Mrs. Essary continued on as the editor of the Digest with Virginia and Mrs. Griffin as the editorial assistants. I can't remember that Mrs. Griffin did too much, actually. But Virginia eventually became the editor of the Digest, and one of her letters told me that she wrote a history of UNRRA [United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration]. She went with UNRRA and she wrote a history of that organization.



Stein: The United Nations Relief and...

Wolfe: Yes. I've forgotten what it is.

Stein: UNRRA.

Wolfe: Yes. And then after she left UNRRA, I think Reya Beck Bosone was elected as congressman from Utah, and she went with Reya Beck Bosone as her assistant. When Reya didn't get re-elected, she went with some woman from North Dakota who was in Congress, and finally she went into the office of Frank Moss, who was elected as senator from Utah. He was, incidentally, my husband's law clerk at one time, so that we had a good relationship with that office.

She stayed with him for a number of years and has just recently retired, but she worked off and on in the Women's Division when they got in a jam, and she did stay in the Women's Division through, I guess, Gladys Tillett's term, and the other woman--what was her name?--from Michigan. Dorothy McAllister.

Stein: I noticed at one point in the Democratic Digest that you started having inserts for each state, or for several of the states, and I wondered how that idea had developed. It seemed to be a very novel thing.

Wolfe: Well, it seems novel now, doesn't it, but at that time it seemed to be very practical because if you were trying to get women interested in all these big programs that were going on, the idea was to show them how it was affecting their own district or state. We even got down as far as a county, giving them a summary of how it affected their particular county and city, and what was being done through different organizations. As you look back on it, it must have been a tremendous job to assemble all that material, but somehow or other we were able to do it because we had such fine relationships with all the different Washington departments.

Stein: I see. You all did the research yourselves?

Wolfe: No. We would simply tell them. For instance, if it were in the Agriculture Department, we would want to know what that Agriculture Department had done in a certain county in a certain state.

Stein: And they'd send the information?



Wolfe: They'd send the information. I think you could almost do that now, if you made the effort. But it really was quite fabulous, wasn't it?

Stein: Yes! I was very impressed with the scope of information and how much you were able to get in. How did you get women to subscribe to it?

Wolfe: Well, we had different ideas. One time we let the men talk us into a program. We were offering a television or a radio or something of that sort as a prize, and we got a number of subscriptions, I suppose, that way. But the way we got most of our subscriptions, I think, was to promise a state that we'd cover the expenses of a woman to a national--  
[end tape 1, side 1; begin tape 1, side 2]

Stein: You were saying that you would give women trips to the conventions if they--

Wolfe: I think maybe, as I recollect it now, it was not to a convention, but we had a national conference of Democratic women in Washington, and we offered to the different states a paid expense for one of their representatives to this conference if they sold the Digest to all the different counties in their state and their sub-divisions.

Well, we did get a great many subscriptions through that, and a great many women were able to come to the conference through that program.

So, it's just general PR work that you have to do to push a program of that sort, just good hard work.

Stein: I'm interested in how the Digest was paid for. We talked about this once, but it was off the tape. I noticed in every issue that there was always a charming full-page photograph of a fashionable Democratic lady all dressed up in an outfit from Jelleff's, and I wondered if you could tell me that story again of what that was all about.

Wolfe: Yes. It was an advertisement, and, of course, we had to get the models to go over to wear the clothes. Of course, we did try to get models who were well known throughout the United States. I presume they paid for the page, you see.

Stein: This was a department store, Jelleff's?





- Wolfe: Yes. Jelleff's was one of the fashionable department stores in Washington. It still is, I guess, to this day.
- Stein: I don't know. I've never lived in Washington.
- Wolfe: Well, if you do go down to Washington, see if you can find a Jelleff's store! [Laughter]
- Stein: I seem to remember that you were a model.
- Wolfe: Yes, but that was just because somebody couldn't come at the last minute. I remember it was August and hot as Hades, and I was modeling a fur coat, and in addition to that it was one of those heavy black astrakhans, as I recollect it. I thought I would melt before I got out of there! [Laughter]
- Stein: I'm sure they didn't have air-conditioning then. [Laughter]
- Wolfe: But, you know, you had to do everything, and in a last-minute emergency, you filled in, no matter what. [Chuckle]

#### Heading the Women's Division

##### Budget

- Stein: You went back to Washington in June of 1934; that's what your notes said.
- Wolfe: Yes.
- Stein: Was that a paid position?
- Wolfe: Yes. And the pay was for that period, I guess, considered tops. I think [it was] \$750 a month. The idea was that-- you read the history of Miss Dewson's work, that she was working for the women's end of it, and she thought that the women should get adequate pay for the work that they did. I don't know how much the men were getting in the Democratic organization at the time, but I know that this was, as far as the women were concerned, about as high as any of the women were getting in any of the organizations.
- Stein: The Democratic party put up the funds for this?



Wolfe: Yes. And actually we never made any attempt to raise any money for the Women's Division. It was just a part of the Democratic National Committee and the funds were allocated, or they weren't even allocated; we just sent in the bills. I mean, there didn't seem to be any--what do they call it? I can't think of the word now. They must have set up some kind of a budget, but certainly there was no budget within which we had to live. If we thought of a good program and it was considered valuable, why, then we just went ahead with it.

Stein: How wonderful!

Wolfe: Isn't that wonderful! [Chuckle] Of course, I was very economical, as I consider it, as I look back on it now, so that they didn't have much chance to criticize me. I was always criticizing the other departments for being so extravagant. [Laughter] Being a Westerner and not coming from a greatly affluent family, I had to economize; I was used to it. And we got awfully good work out of everybody who was in our division. There was no fooling around in that division! [Laughter]

#### Orientation

Stein: In our preliminary session you told me about your first few days in Washington: the meetings with the Roosevelts, and your orientation session with Miss Dewson. Could we get that on tape?

Wolfe: Well, first of all, I had an interview with the president to see if he thought that I would be the proper person or could do it or something of the sort. I thought of all the things that I might have to say to him, but I might just as well not have worried about that [laughter], because when I went in and sat down, he was very cordial and he found out how I was feeling and the social amenities. Then he began talking, and he talked the entire fifteen-minute period [laughter], telling me what his ideas were. I said, well, I thought they were good, you know, encouraging him all the way along. So, that interview turned out very nicely.

Well, I also was invited to have lunch at the White House with Mrs. Roosevelt, just more or less a rather close family luncheon. The secretary of the treasury and a few people like that might have been there, but it was very small. I remember that I found out afterwards that I had been seated on the side of Mrs. Roosevelt where she couldn't hear. [Laughter] Evidently,



Wolfe: she had a bad ear. So, I suppose it didn't make any difference whether I talked or not; she couldn't have heard what I said.  
[Laughter]

This luncheon was fascinating, because they talked about-- what is it? But, at any rate, that project that was going on up in Maine where they were trying to harness the tide.

Stein: I can't remember the name.

Wolfe: Well, I'd have to look up the name, but I can't say it at the present moment. I know what it is, but I can't say it.

But, you know, he [President Roosevelt] was so enthusiastic about it, and they were talking about the tides and the depth of the bay. It did seem like a marvelous thing that certainly we ought to be able to harness the tides and get some energy out of that. But afterwards they cut the appropriation off and just stopped it cold, Congress did. I suppose they thought they were wasting too much money and that it was an impossible project. But now I see that they're reviving the idea, and they're now trying to harness the tides up in that region somewhere, perhaps up in Newfoundland or along in there. But I certainly hope they do it,--they somehow manage to do it and justify the whole thing, because certainly Roosevelt was just so enthusiastic about it and had great, great confidence, you know, that if he could just do this, it would be marvelous for the country.

And we had a press conference with Jim Farley, which, I suppose, is not very exciting, or very thrilling, at least for the public. But some of the people in the press seemed to like me, perhaps because I was different from everybody back in Washington [laughter], all the socialites, and everything. So, they always gave me a pretty good press, and I didn't have any trouble along that line.

I've told you all about the interviews and everything. About the first day I got there, Miss Dewson was there to greet me and to get me acquainted with the office. So, she sat down and she said [chuckle], "Now I'll tell you all about the different states." So, she started out, and we went over the forty-eight states. She told me the names of all the women in them and the men and their characteristics and so forth and so on and what you could or couldn't do. We didn't have tape recorders in that day, and for three days I went through this. It took three days to get through the whole group of states, you know. I think by that time that I couldn't have remembered anything. I was just so filled with so many things. It's a



Wolfe: wonder I ever survived the three days!

I did remember that she said, "Now, whatever you do, don't try to do anything in Louisiana." [Laughter] And she said, "Because Huey Long won't let us in." There was also one other state that we shouldn't go in because the political bosses might not like the women and so forth. But later on we got an awfully good woman. I guess that was New Jersey. She was the vice-chairman then and later became chairman. She was marvelous. I can't think of her name now.

Stein: That wasn't Mary Norton, was it?

Wolfe: Yes, it was. She was really great. She worked with us and cooperated. She was really wonderful.

Then there also was Katherine White [national committee-woman] up there, who was good, and she helped us.

But, at any rate, those were just some of the general impressions you got.

#### Assistants and Advisers

Stein: You had an assistant director by the name of Mrs. June Fickel.

Wolfe: Yes.

Stein: Where was she from, and what was she like?

Wolfe: She was from Iowa, and she was from a farming community that represented one of the agricultural sections. She had a very pleasing personality and [was] a very good person. Especially in the rural areas, she was good, and we all liked her very much.

Stein: And then what was Mary Dewson's role in this whole thing? While you were director of the Women's Division, was she just an adviser at that point, or did she have an official position?

Wolfe: She was the vice-chairman of the Democratic National Committee, I believe, during that period or shortly after it. She was more than an adviser. I told you before, I think, that when I came on to Washington, I went down to the office and she went over the situations in the different states with me, and in





Wolfe: three days. I made these notes on everything that was going on, and then she left for the summer and didn't get back until fall. But certainly her mind was working on the problem all the time and she had ideas. I have quite a few letters from her, which would be interesting if anyone were looking for material on Molly.

But I noticed that she had a great many suggestions, evidently, when I was regional adviser, before I came on to Washington, and in the period after I left and came back as regional adviser for the Women's Division, after I came back home. And, of course, she was always on hand so that you could call up and ask her for advice.

She knew everybody, you know. She had been working in the social service end of it in New York for a great many years and was well known. She knew all the top people. She had worked in [Al] Smith's campaign and Governor [Herbert] Lehman's campaign. She just somehow or other was a top person in the whole organization, very close to Roosevelt and Mrs. Roosevelt. It's almost impossible to define the power that she had in the political organization, as you look back and see the things that an ordinary person never could have done without her connections and everything, like the numerous appointments that we got for women. They were absolutely fantastic during that period.

Stein: You mean in government?

Wolfe: In government positions. Things that had never happened before that we were able to get at that time, through her influence and through her knowledge of people, actually. There were a great many of the social service workers who got good appointments too, you know. I guess Frances Perkins came up through that line. She worked in the political section too; I mean, in the political campaigns also.

I must get the book, The American Woman.\* I thought they were very accurate in their summation of what Molly Dewson had accomplished.

Stein: Chafe had evidently looked at her papers in the Roosevelt papers at Hyde Park.

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\*William Henry Chafe, The American Woman.



Wolfe: Yes. I had a note from her, I noticed, in some of the letters that she had written me, that she had turned over her material to the library in Hyde Park, up to the year 1940. Now, I don't know what she did after that.

Stein: She may have given it later.

Wolfe: She may have. But there was nothing after 1940, I think, in his [Chafe's] chapter.

Stein: No, that's right. He was talking mostly about the '30s, I think.

Wolfe: Yes.

Stein: Do you know much about her background?

Wolfe: My memory is so poor, I can't--she had been working in the consumers' end of it, I believe. We could check that by the other material that we have on her. But her whole interest was in this effort to help people. Of course, she had been working in the suffrage movement also, in women's rights, and she was interested in the rights of women.

Stein: Do you know what motivated her to start working in the Democratic party?

Wolfe: I think it was in the Al Smith campaign that they thought they had an opportunity--I think you have to go back and think of the situation that existed then, the ghetto conditions under which the women were working, the seamstresses and the International Garment Workers' Union, and things of that sort. I think those are the things that stimulated her efforts along this line, just the terrible conditions under which the women were working.

I don't know a great deal about her early history. I remember that she said that she used to help on either the farm or something and that they cut asparagus. I'll never forget that, because sometimes I do it to my own asparagus now. You get it from the store and it might be slightly wilted and [you] put it in water. But she said, "We used to cut the asparagus, and we had to bunch it, and then we fit it in tubs in a certain amount of water, you know, so that somehow or other then it all was rejuvenated and made firm again and ready for market. But it had to have this treatment." She just talked about [the fact that] it was really a hard and difficult job to



Wolfe: cut the asparagus and get it ready.

She shared an apartment with Polly Porter, I think, who was a librarian, but I'm not too accurate about these things. Actually, she never was married, as far as I know. I'm sure she wasn't married. But she really was a great person to work with, and she had an excellent background. I don't even know which college she went to or anything of that sort. We must find that out somewhere.

Stein: I'm sure that's available somewhere.

Wolfe: Yes, it is.

Stein: If it's not in Chafe's book, it would be somewhere.

#### Helping Women Get Jobs

Stein: Speaking of her influence in getting women jobs in the government, I noticed in one of the files that you loaned me the other week that there was an article from one of the Utah papers, I think, shortly after you were appointed and you went back to Washington, saying that you were going to attempt to get women jobs in the new Housing Administration. I wondered if you yourself had any sort of political patronage that you were able to use.

Wolfe: Oh, yes. Yes, you could. In fact, our office almost daily got requests for help to get jobs and things of that sort, not only from Utah but from every other state in the nation, and sometimes you just felt sick that you couldn't give more people help because it was during the Depression, you see. There weren't any jobs to be had except government jobs, and we tried to hold the line, as far as the [Democratic National] Committee was concerned, to give only one job to a family. Sometimes two members of a family wanted a job, but we tried to keep it down to one job per family.

But I suppose that a lot of people from Utah did get jobs and a lot of lesser jobs, you know, the clerkships and things of that sort, as far as the women were concerned. But we were happy that we could have Mrs. Burton Musser appointed on the Inter-American Committee that went down, covered South America, and visited all those different countries to establish better relations between our country and theirs. She really was quite successful, and when she came back to this country, she was



Wolfe: invited to give just dozens and dozens of talks on the things that she had seen down there.

Her background was that she was--I guess you'd call it--an immigrant. At any rate, she was from a Swiss background, and she came to this country, maybe through the Mormon Church, because she was a Mormon in her early days. She had a fine background. She could speak both French and German, and, actually, she understood Portuguese, and maybe she spoke Italian; I don't know. But she was very fluent in all the languages, so that when she went down to South America she could speak the language of most of the countries, you see, that she was in.

But it was quite wonderful that we were able to put her in a position like that, and then that she was able to come back and be given the opportunity to talk to the people and tell them something about the different countries.

It was astonishing even at that time that we didn't realize, I guess, how much they were doing on health care and things of that sort in the South American countries; [they were] very much further advanced than we were in some of them. I suppose they still are, for that matter. I'm not sure. But they don't seem to have been making the same progress lately.

Some Resistance: North and South

Stein: You mentioned that first conference you had with Mary Dewson, the three-day crash course in how to run the Women's Division, and when we first talked about this a couple of months ago you mentioned that she warned you about Huey Long.

Wolfe: [Laughter] Yes. She just said that we would be welcome in any state except Louisiana, and we were told to keep out of Louisiana.

Stein: Why was that?

Wolfe: Well, I guess Huey Long didn't want us in there, and yet it is my recollection that--this must have been the first convention when Roosevelt was elected--actually we helped put Huey Long in as the head of the delegates from Louisiana, because at that time, I suppose, he was supporting Roosevelt. Now, I don't know why; maybe he just didn't want anyone coming in and mixing up things in his state. He was going to run them, and he did





Wolfe: run them. But, at any rate, that was a very interesting little comment, wasn't it?

Stein: Yes. And did she also say something to you about Mary Norton?

Wolfe: Yes. She said Mary Norton--who was the man? [Jersey City Mayor Frank] Hague? Was it Hague over in New Jersey, who was the head of the Democratic organization over there?

Stein: Yes.

Wolfe: [She said] that Mary Norton was very much--I have to think just exactly what the situation was there. As I understand it, [it was] that Mary Norton had worked with him on some of the things relating to women, or the welfare of people, and then he had suggested that she become a member of Congress. She wasn't too much interested in that, but he persuaded her, and she became a member of Congress. Then she was also the vice-chairman of the state committee.

I think that Molly felt that while Mrs. Norton would be cooperative, that Hague would really be the one that was calling the shots. But, as it turned out, Mary Norton was really excellent as far as the Women's Division was concerned and did just swell work in New Jersey for us, in spite of the political machine that was somewhat, I guess, like the Tammany machine that Roosevelt tried to break up in New York.

I think that was just a connection, that she [Mary Dewson] was afraid that men, perhaps, would not care to have us come in and do too much work in New Jersey.

Stein: Did you have any other resistance like that from Long or Hague?

Wolfe: Well, I think that there was no resistance that you could compare to them, because they didn't have organizations that were as strong as those two. Those two were just like dictatorships, I presume. Well, I suppose one in Chicago has been that way, too, for at least part of the time since then.

But I think there was some apprehension on the part of some of the leaders in the South, but there you had to overcome the feeling of the women, too, that they shouldn't be participating in politics. They had the Southern tradition about womanhood and all the rest of it. It was sort of hard to overcome, easier in the northern part of the South than in the southern part.



Wolfe: I can't remember that we ever did anything very much in Louisiana. I just can't remember anything about Louisiana. We did not go down there, but did go to Florida, Georgia, Virginia, and North and South Carolina, and finally there was a nice Southern young man who was sent up to Congress from South Carolina. I noticed as the years went by that he became more conservative. He may still be in there, for all I know.

But, anyway, we did do something in the South, but not nearly as much as we were able to do in the Midwest and the West. I think the West was more fertile soil than anywhere, because there was just a different spirit and a different feeling out in the West, and women in parts of the West had the vote long before the '20s.

Stein: How would you contrast that spirit?

Wolfe: I've been trying to think, because we were talking about something in the church the other day, and I felt, well, there was just a different feeling in certain parts of the country. It was harder to do things in one spot than in another, and I can't get over the feeling that the women in the West had taken more responsibility in the settlement of the country, you know, and [there was] more pioneer spirit in a great deal of the Western part of the United States, so that there was a different feeling, a different spirit about things, not nearly as conservative as some of the other parts of the country.

Stein: I think that may still be true to an extent.

Wolfe: Yes, I think it must be. I was thinking the other day about how terrible it must be to live in New York now. It's hard to explain how they could possibly get in the situation that they have gotten into as far as their finances are concerned, but I don't know. You compare it with a city like San Francisco, of course, which isn't nearly as large, or Los Angeles, which is larger--I think even Los Angeles would be better. Don't you?

Stein: Absolutely. Getting back to this conversation with Mary Dewson, she also mentioned Katherine White to you.

Wolfe: Yes. Katherine White was a daughter of the man who was our ambassador to--was it Persia at that time? It might have been Persia at that time. But it seems to me that it wasn't, that the country had changed. But, at any rate, she was the daughter of an ambassador, and she was really quite an attractive woman. I think she was maybe the national committee-



Wolfe: woman, or she had some high office in the political organization, and she was really quite excited about the educational program, so that she, with Mary Norton's assistance, did a lot of work in New Jersey on that.

#### Responsibilities

Stein: Once you took over the Women's Division, what were your major tasks? What did you spend most of your time doing?

Wolfe: Well, of course, we had a tremendous amount of mail that you had to answer, and I think I flabbergasted people by answering it about the same day I got it, or the day after. [Chuckle] They never could get over having such an expeditious reply.

Of course, I had to help work out the things on the Digest and make contacts for that. I also helped consider what we should have for that double-page spread, which we finally adopted as the best way to display the information on the different departments in the New Deal.

So, I did a great deal of work on the Digest. We had another woman who was really very good on the Digest, and her name was Ellis Meredith. I think at the time she must have been at least eighty years old. She came from Colorado and she was one of the old suffragettes, and a real suffragette. She did a lot of the small stories that went into the Digest.

I found that I really gave quite a bit of time, and so did Virginia, in helping Mrs. Essary get the stories. Of course, we did the stories on the local women who came in for the Digest. Of course, I had charge of the publication of the Digest, so I had to make the contacts with the printer and the things of that sort. I can't remember; we didn't have any advertisements, did we? We may have had some, but I--

Stein: I think you did. There was one--there's a copy of a Digest on the bottom of the pile that I brought back. I think there were some. On the back cover there's a whole bunch.

Wolfe: [Looking at back cover of Digest copy.] Oh, yes. Well, somebody must have gotten those.

So, we had to see about getting these women, you know, their biographical sketches. I guess Virginia did a lot of that. But we had just a constant stream of people coming



Wolfe: into the office that you had to have interviews with, either wanting jobs, or wanting help in their state. You can just imagine what it was like to take care of all that material. And then you had to think about constantly feeding your program to the outlying districts, so that you were constantly getting out a series of letters or bulletins or something to the people.

I found that I was working about fourteen hours a day, and the only way that I could get through the whole thing was that they put all the correspondence that came in one day in the folder, and I took it home and read it at night, because I'd never get time to do it. I didn't try to do much social activity, and I think that it would have been better--when Mrs. McAllister came in she did try to do more of the social thing. I did attend the meetings that were necessary, but I didn't try to undertake any social life at all. I don't see how I could have with five kids at home! [Laughter] I found the best thing to do was take the work home from the office, and then I could go over that and make my notes.

I had a very good stenographer-secretary, and she would come in, and in an hour I could dictate my correspondence, get that out of the way.

So, that's about the way it went: interviewing national committeemen, women, county vice-chairmen, chairmen, just other people who would come in, all day long, on things.

Stein: I was just curious as you were talking about that if you had a daily schedule that you tried to keep to, to keep some order in all this coming and going.

Wolfe: Well, there wasn't much you could do about that, because if you got your correspondence out of the way--that's the reason I took it home at night and read it and brought it and dictated it first thing in the morning, before the avalanche of people began. I suppose that any of the programs and things that I did I worked out either after hours or some time when I wasn't bothered with all the people.

Stein: I gathered from all the reading that I did in the Digests that one of the primary functions of the Women's Division as a whole, then, was educational.

Wolfe: Yes.





## Harriet Elliott and the Regional Conferences

Stein: And that you had quite a program, with the Reporter Plan and study groups and regional institutes.

Wolfe: Yes. We had those things going on all the time. After we got Harriet Elliott to come in there--I remember that after Miss Dewson came back in the fall, we discussed whether or not I wanted to stay on, and so forth and so on. She said, "You ought to have some kind of a program. What would you do if you stayed on?" I said, "Well, I think the only thing that you could do if you were going to promote this program is to put on and hold regional meetings or something of that sort, and send out speakers on the Reporter Plan." She said, "We don't have any speakers." I said, "But I know a woman, if we could get her, that would be swell," and that was Harriet Elliott, who was teaching political science down at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

She said, well, she thought that the regional meetings would be good, too, and that she would work to get Harriet Elliott. And that's how we got in touch with Mrs. Tillett and the other woman, May Evans, who filled in after I left. They had held a meeting down in Raleigh, and we went down. That's where I first heard Harriet Elliott and thought she was so good and just wonderful.

So, we did, through Molly's efforts, because she evidently knew Frank Graham, who was the president of the university, and he was very much a Roosevelt person, and so they gave Harriet a leave of absence, and Harriet said that she would do it. She came up to Washington and got immersed in the program.

Then we sent her out on a tour all the way around the United States, and she talked at regional meetings and at state meetings, and she really was just wonderful. I think if nothing else, getting her into the whole program was a great event in the educational work that we did.

So, after she made this [tour]--I guess it took almost a year to do this, maybe, by the time she got ready and everything was consummated--she came back, and Washington, of course, was just crazy about her. They thought she was marvelous. And the president appointed her on one of those big war board



Wolfe: commissions. The war was on then, evidently; or later on he appointed her to that. The war wasn't under way at that time.

Well, at any rate, that was one way the Reporter Plan got advertised and put into action.

Later on, after she got through with the work that we were doing, she was appointed to head up, I guess, the Women's Division of the finance group to sell bonds for the treasury, and she also was on that very important committee--I never can remember the name of it--where they had the chairman of General Motors, the Defense Committee or something of that sort, one of the big committees. Well, at any rate, it will show up if you look through the magazines exactly what it was.

But she did do all those things, and I remember her coming to Salt Lake once on one of these meetings. I had gone back, you see, at the end of the campaign. She came and she said that, oh, she felt awful, that she couldn't sleep, and she had insomnia, and, you know, she didn't know whether she could just go on with it or not. And, you know, she had a stroke not too long after that and died, so that I guess she really just pushed herself too far. But she really was good, an extraordinary person, just a wonderful person to get the message across to the people, and she believed in it so heartily. It was wonderful.

I guess we did our first regional meeting in the South too, down in Virginia somewhere, and while there weren't a great many women who came out for it, yet it really was a successful meeting. And as we got them going around the rest of the country, you know, they turned out just marvelously. The women were enthusiastic, and the Reporter Plan got off to a great bang, and Harriet achieved great acclaim for the work that she did. She really was an excellent speaker, and she had the background of all this political science and her teaching and all the rest of it. She was also a suffrage worker. She had helped some of the older women in the suffrage movement. So, she was just absolutely perfect for the job, explaining the Reporter Plan and how the women could help explain the president's program.

Stein: I gather that you went to a number of these regional conferences yourself. Is that right? You and Miss Dewson?

Wolfe: Yes, I did.

Stein: Did you go by train?



Wolfe: Well, we used the train or we used the planes. I seem to have used planes a lot. I tell you, it took a long time. I imagine it took me about thirteen hours--I can't remember whether that was from Utah or California--going back. It doesn't seem possible now, does it?

Stein: No.

Wolfe: But we used trains and planes, and in the Southern states we could make it by car sometimes, automobile.

Stein: About how many women would come to these regional conferences? Was it in the hundreds, or the tens?

Wolfe: It would all depend upon the state. In the regional conferences, of course, you should get in the hundreds, because the programs were excellent. You'd talk about the Reporter Plan, certainly, but then to illustrate it you'd have maybe a man, one of the heads of the agency, come out and speak, or two or three agencies would be represented, because you'd have morning meetings, afternoon meetings, evening meetings, dinners, lunches, breakfasts, the whole thing. It was quite a remarkable program, there's no doubt about it.

The caliber of the speakers was something that you get maybe in a big institute today where the whole organization is working on it; I mean, the government itself is producing it, instead of a women's political group. It was the same caliber thing, because we had access to the people who were tops in the program, [who] were doing it, actually doing the government work.

Stein: And what was your hope for what the participants in the conference would do after they went home from the conference?

Wolfe: The Reporter Plan.

Stein: That they would spread the word?

Wolfe: That was the whole thing, yes, that they would be stimulated to appoint the women who would acquaint themselves with the program, each woman would take a certain department and would get as much knowledge as she could about it, and that she would appoint other women to work with her as reporters, and they might break the thing up into sections so that you might have a number of them working on different sections of a big program. Then they would come together and have meetings on that particular one of the whole segment, you see.



Wolfe: So, if you really got it working and the women in it would come out for the meetings and everything, why, you could do the education work; you could get it done.

Stein: It sounds that way.

Wolfe: Well, it worked out that way in a great many instances, but, of course, the women had to have a certain background in order to understand the programs of that sort. The thing they did understand--when you came back down to Sanpete County--I remember that's one of the leaflets that we have there in that book [the Democratic Digest], that told what they were doing for Sanpete County, and there's soil conservation and all these other things, the CCC. Then you had the practical demonstration in addition to the Reporter Plan.

Stein: Were men at all involved in the Reporter Plan, or did they come to any of the meetings?

Wolfe: Oh, they would come to the meetings. We had lots of men who were speakers. Yes, the men used to come out especially for the evening meetings, no doubt about it, because the men weren't doing this sort of thing. [Laughter]

Stein: I wondered how they were supposed to learn about all these things. [Laughter]

Now, I also noticed that as part of the educational program there were a series of radio programs in the fall of 1935, and I wondered if you were at all involved in planning those.

Wolfe: Was that in Utah, or where?

Stein: No. It came out of the Women's Division in Washington.

Wolfe: Oh, yes. I remember. Yes, I did plan those, and I remember being there with Mrs. Woodward, who was head of the--I can't remember what she was head of now. [Pauses to think.] It could have been one of the relief associations. I hate to have such a poor memory, because she was one of our outstanding women. She was assistant director of the WPA [Works Progress Administration], in charge of women's work.

I remember a number of the radio programs. The reason I asked is because I also did a similar series when I came back to Utah. Some man in Utah gave me radio time that he paid for.





- Wolfe: He had a weekly program--he was an optician--and so he turned over the fifteen minutes to us, and we had a series of radio broadcasts on the work the Women's Division was doing.
- Stein: Did you write the scripts?
- Wolfe: I wrote some of the scripts, if I were involved. But what we usually had was some expert from one of the agencies, you see, so that they would write their own script, or if it were a question and answer thing, then we would have to write it beforehand. Then Virginia [Rishel] or somebody of that sort in the office would help with the script. I think a lot of them were question and answer things, too; we thought it would be easier for women to understand them that way.  
[end tape 1, side 2]

Family Affairs

(Interview 5, July 13, 1976)

[begin tape 1, side 1]

- Stein: We left off last time when you had gone to Washington to head up the Women's Division. One thing I meant to ask last time was how often you were able to see your husband during that period.
- Wolfe: Well, not too often. In the meantime more, because they weren't holding court. Of course, the whole thing was complicated because I didn't yet have the children back with me when I first went. I spent the summer in Washington at the Women's Democratic Club. They had housing quarters there. And I sent my children down to California--I think I told you that--to be with their grandmother.

Then they came back in the late summer. My husband brought them and the cook and all the other paraphernalia on back to Washington, and we took the house in Alexandria [Virginia].

But as far as my husband was concerned, he came back on several occasions. He evidently was associated with some group that made it possible for him to come back, so perhaps once a month he was able to get there, and sometimes he could stay for a week or two, depending on what time of year it was.

- Stein: Did you get back to Utah at all during that period?



Wolfe: Well, I may have gotten back once or twice, but I can't remember definitely. I didn't get back on the coast very often, back in the West.

Stein: I think last time we had started talking about the Reporter Plan. I came across a name, Mrs. Henry Goddard Leach, in one of the Digests, that she had headed up the Reporter Plan in 1935. Do you remember her?

Wolfe: Yes, I remember her, but she didn't head it up, except the state of New York.

Stein: Oh, I see.

Wolfe: She was the head of the Reporter Plan there. I didn't get to know her too well because Molly [Dewson] usually made the contacts in New York, which was her home base; she lived up there.

But Mrs. Leach was one of what they called the "B.C." workers; that is, she worked before the [1932] convention for Roosevelt. And, in addition, she had worked in the Al Smith campaigns. You see, she was interested in social service, according to the note here I made [she reads from notes she made while reading Democratic Digests]. She had been appointed by Smith on the New York Health Committee and the Administration of Justice.

She was a very interesting woman. I remember going up there, I guess, when she was maybe appointed. They had the ceremonies for the beginning of the Reporter Plan, and we had lunch at her house. I believe her husband was the editor of some prominent magazine at the time. They had a beautiful place in New York, as I recollect it. She was really a very accomplished and intelligent woman.

Stein: How long did she stay active? All through the time that you were there?

Wolfe: Yes.



"Democratic Victory"

Stein: I think it was last time or the time before that you showed me a pamphlet that was one of the pieces of literature that the Women's Division put out. I think you mentioned that Mary Dewson was responsible for it, and I wondered if we could get that story on tape.

Wolfe: Yes. Molly came down to the office one day all excited, and she showed us this little idea she had for the pamphlet. I can't remember at the time whether she had the idea for the illustrations. We may have gotten those later. But she had the material for the pamphlet itself, and she said that it all came to her while she was taking her shower. [Laughter] I think she thought of nothing else except the installation of the Reporter Plan and all the rest of it, getting the women interested, and so this idea came to her while she was taking her shower, and she jotted it down.

Then we went to the printer, the printer who did the Democratic Digest, and he was always very cooperative, very much interested in everything the women did. I think perhaps at that time the illustration of the little woman that was always dashing around and had a feather in her hat--I can't remember exactly how we came to use the feather, except that we thought that it was a good distinctive idea, if we could get all the women to wear a feather in their hat, the same kind of feather.

We actually bought thousands of feathers. They were all dyed different colors, but they were all the same kind. They looked like--I guess they were turkey feathers. We sent all these feathers around to the women who were reporters and got them to wear them in their hats. But it was a good PR thing, and we had lots of fun out of it.

I remember I still had feathers after the campaign was over, and I brought some of them home with me. Maybe I brought all of them, no one else being interested, and we used them for relay races for the kids [laughter] and at church programs and things of that sort. They were wonderful.

Stein: What was the theme of that pamphlet?

Wolfe: The theme was the organization of the districts, the women in the districts, and it was actually fifty-fifty representation, is my recollection. I'll get a copy of it.



Wolfe: [Gets copy of pamphlet.]

Stein: There it is. It's called "Democratic Victory."

Wolfe: Yes. And dedicated to "Mrs. County Leader." Of course, the whole idea was on galvanizing the precinct leaders and getting them to act. There's always a lot of dead wood in a political organization. People take the office because of the recognition, and then they don't do anything.

So, this pamphlet was really written with the idea to inspire the county leader to get out and to get the women in the organization to work and to get more of them into the organization.

I don't know how much you want to go into this, but she talked about getting the precinct leaders to take part, and she called attention to the fact that if you were county chairman the absent treatment didn't help any in getting the other people to work, that you had to have the intimate contact with them and to give them a little bit of inspiration.

She urged them to hold meetings, both county meetings and perhaps if they needed more inspiration to get two or three counties together, and with the whole idea, of course, to elect Roosevelt.

It's hard to bring back the inspiration that there was in the Roosevelt campaign, the enthusiasm, and the dedication. Actually, the people, both the men and the women, who worked for Roosevelt were so enthusiastic about him, so dedicated, that it often caused schisms in the families and in business and everything else. You found that they were either decidedly for or decidedly against. Fortunately, the majority was for.

But then she talked about the necessity for registering, which reminds me that at the [Sonoma County] Fair yesterday I stopped in the Democratic booth where they were registering women and men who passed by so they'd be prepared to vote in the coming election. One of the things that Molly talked about in this book was, first of all, that there were independent voters, and that there were, of course, the Democratic voters that had been born Democrats; they were Democrats because their parents had been Democrats. She said that was fine, but she thought that converting a person to be a Democrat or a Roosevelt supporter was essential, because those people actually seemed to have more enthusiasm than the born





Wolfe: Democrats, who took it more or less as just the run-of-the-mill thing.

So, she encouraged them to make contacts with the independent people who hadn't decided which way they wanted to vote, and to try to get the record out to them, and to get as many new people.

I remember when she went out to meetings, she always looked about the room, and then she would say, "Will all those people stand who have been Democrats all their life?" I suppose they thought they were going to be congratulated [laughter], and so they stood up. Then she said, "Now, will all those people stand up who have been converted to the Roosevelt program?" And when they stood up, they were the ones who got the congratulations. [Laughter] It really worked.

Now, the pamphlet also discussed that you had to stand on the record, and, of course, that meant they had to know what the record was during the Republican administration, and [we] tried to make them understand why we went into the collapse that we did.

I remember one of the simple statements of explaining it was the high tariff that we were charging on the imports of things, and that because we charged such high tariffs that people weren't buying our goods, you see, and that especially was related to the farmers. Because they couldn't sell their wheat and corn and things of that sort, it was all piling up. At that time, they blamed the Republicans, and I remember they blamed Mr. [Reed] Smoot, who was the Senator from Utah, as one of those who was sponsoring the high tariff, one of the Republican high tariff men, because the Republicans at that time believed thoroughly in a high tariff on farm products and on meat and things of that sort.

So, to go on with the little booklet, then she encouraged them, of course, to find out what the Roosevelt program was, the New Deal program, and that brought in the new idea of the ABC program, the alphabetic program that we then had, because everything was known by letters of the alphabet. In doing this, they used the rainbow fliers, and they are mentioned in the book, and the subjects of them, so that they were easy to identify because they told what things they applied to.



## Rainbow Fliers

Wolfe: The rainbow fliers were originally used in the Al Smith campaign, I believe. I'm not too sure about this, but I think they were originally used in Al Smith's campaign, and they must have been used, too, in Roosevelt's campaign for governor.

Mary Chamberlain, who lived in New York,--it's my recollection that she worked as an editor on the Pictorial Review--wrote the rainbow fliers. Both she and her husband were editors, so they were used to this type of work.

But Mary really took all the responsibility for collating the material and writing the fliers themselves. She had a knack of reducing pages of technical explanations, rules, and regulations to simple statements which ordinary people could understand, and she made them interesting. I imagine that she must have done it for the other administrations when they were used in New York.

She was a part of Molly's team, and Molly depended on her for the fliers without reservation. Mary had a severe heart attack from which she later died. Molly had sent her a telegram, and Mary wrote her the following letter which, as you will note, she sent copies of to the Washington office.\*

The reason I happen to know about that is that Louie Howe, who worked with the president and was really the one who was with him very closely all during his campaign for the governor and also for the president, was then living in the White House. It was just a week or two before he died that he called up and asked if we could find some flier that was used in the New York campaign. I didn't know anything about it, and he couldn't understand anyone working in the Democratic organization who didn't know anything about the fliers that were used in the New York campaign, because they were the forerunners of the rainbow fliers we were using in the national campaign.

Stein: So you did a quick job of studying up and you discovered what the rainbow fliers were?

Wolfe: Well, I knew what they were as far as those that we were using, because I worked with them all the time, and I had to

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\*See next page.



Polyclinic Hospital  
May 3rd, 1938

Dear old Molly:

I went right up to Heaven, got one foot in the door and then got kicked out. I suspect they were afraid of a Rainbow Flier:

Heavenly Scandals Heretofore

Millions of Angels Strum Harps 24 Hours a Day  
Cherubs (often mere babes) Toil Long Hours in Heavenly Choir

New Deal Brings Hope on High

8 Hour Day (a "sky ceiling") for Harpists  
Cherub Labor Barred. Only "changed" voices and adult (female)  
to go on air.  
Golden Gates Repaired by P.W.A. loan with W.P.A. labor.  
Recording Angel Transferred to Archives under Reorganization  
Plan.  
Etc., etc.

Anyway I didn't get in though I spent 8 days out of my mind in an oxygen tent at \$35.00 a day - just one little item - and now spend the rest of my time out of my mind at the thought of the bills!

However, I am very glad to be sitting in bed here clipping as per usual. I don't know how long I'll stay yet as the old heart is still lagging after the beating it got. But it got one swell stimulant and that was your grand telegram that made it feel all warm around its cockles - whatever they are. The telegram got me, but also for the letter, P.O. (all signed up and delivered said Mrs. Cothren before she sailed a week ago yesterday) and for The Nutmeg Tree with Julie (What a gel!) Thank you.

I think you're just a softy Mother Machree - you remember the song - at heart under your dignified New England air and Social Security Brains. I do love you.

Devotedly,

Mary



Wolfe: find the material for them and send it over to Mary [Chamberlain]. So, I certainly knew what the ones were that we were working with, but I didn't know how they originated and what an impact they had in the New York campaign.

I think that perhaps it might be a good idea in some of these campaigns that we put on nowadays if they had a brief explanation of what some of the big issues are, so that people could read them and understand them, because they were written with the idea that people who hadn't had experience in government or law or anything of the sort could understand what the things were about.

But also in the booklet she advocated radio parties. I guess we did have television at the time, didn't we. But she did advocate radio parties, because I suppose everybody didn't have a television at that time.

Stein: No, I think if television had been invented then, it was very, very new, so very few people would have had televisions. I know Roosevelt's big popularity was over radio.

Wolfe: Yes, I know it was. I've been trying to recollect something that happened. One time at our house we were having guests for dinner, and it was the night that--I suppose that Roosevelt was nominated at the convention in Texas, wasn't he? Or was that Al Smith, who was nominated and defeated? Where was Roosevelt nominated?

Stein: In '36, it was in Philadelphia.

Wolfe: No. He was nominated first in, it must have been, '32.

Stein: Yes. I don't know where that one was.

Wolfe: It's awful that I don't recollect it. I was there too. Now, where--maybe it was Chicago. I think that's where it was, in Chicago.

Stein: You were a delegate?

Wolfe: I was a delegate, yes. So, this must have been the Al Smith campaign that I'm referring back to in Texas, and something was coming over the radio. Now, I have the impression it was television, but I don't think we had television in 1928.

Stein: Probably not.





Wolfe: But the parades and everything. You got a very good idea of what was going on, the marching noise, and everything. One of the guests was Professor David S. Muzzey, who was a professor of history at Columbia University, and [with] all this noise going on, I got up and turned the instrument off. He said, "Oh, don't do that! Turn that back on! That's history in the making!" [Laughter]

Well, at any rate, we were using radio mostly in the Roosevelt administration, and then we followed up with--the last page in the book is about Democratic Digest, which we were then publishing, and I think which we've talked about before.

Stein: Yes. Just to back up a bit about the rainbow fliers, I gather that each flier talked about a specific issue.

Wolfe: Yes, it did, and in my recollection we had about thirteen of them. It may tell here in the book, if we can get the page. [Pages through pamphlet.] Here, for instance, there was one on the farmer, and it talked about, of course, what the Republican program had been and what the Roosevelt program was, what Roosevelt had recommended to correct the injustices and everything. Of course, we all remember the program which proved to be controversial right from the very start, especially when they began killing the pigs and things of that sort.

Then there was one on the housing, and, of course, all the social welfare programs--the social security program and things of that sort--were all taken up on the fliers. They were gone into so thoroughly during the campaign that it was possible to find out what the program, as initiated by Roosevelt, was doing for the people back in the individual counties in the states. The Women's Division made the attempt, and in many instances did get the information and made a flier to send back to be used in the individual counties, the small counties in the different states. These were ordered and paid for by the political parties in the state itself. The Women's Division didn't do that, but the Women's Division was responsible for the cost of all the fliers that we published relating to the different programs.

Stein: What did the word "rainbow" in the name refer to?

Wolfe: They were all different colors, which made it easier to distinguish them when you were mailing or something of that sort. You could pick them up, because then there were the blue, green, orange, yellow, pink, white.



Stein: That must have made quite a colorful display when they were all together.

Wolfe: Yes, it did. It was really quite spectacular, and some of the people made huge displays of it. When you went to the meetings, you'd find maybe a whole end of the hall set up with all sorts of demonstrations of how the fliers could be used and other material that we were getting out, and the other division too. The Men's Division got out just tons of material also, but I don't think theirs was nearly as colorful as ours. [Laughter]

Stein: There was a separate Men's Division then?

Wolfe: Well, I think that what you would say was that there was a Democratic Party Division, and there was a separate Women's Division.

Stein: I see.

Wolfe: That's the only way you can put it now.

Stein: And did they run an educational program of their own?

Wolfe: No, no. I think they depended upon us for the educational program. It's hard to say definitely that you cut off the education from the political end of it, because I think the political end of it does entail a great deal of education about how you do things and things of that sort. But we were definitely not interfering in any of the political activities of the National Committee. We really held to the educational program.

But we did, of course, try to organize along the political lines and encourage the women to participate in the political organization itself. We just wanted them fortified with information so that they would know what they were talking about and know what they were trying to accomplish.

Stein: It sounds like the women ended up knowing more than the men did!

Wolfe: Well, you'd be surprised, because the men, I think, read as many of our rainbow fliers as the women did. [Chuckle] They used to order them in huge quantities to send out in the regular mailings of the different states and things of that sort, so that they were popular as an educational device both with the Democratic Committee and with our Women's Division.



Wolfe: But, of course, we took the credit for them.

#### The Donkey Banks

Stein: You mentioned fund raising a minute ago and you showed me the donkey pin, and I want to ask you now on tape about the donkey banks, which was a fund-raising effort, I gather.

Wolfe: It was a fund-raising effort in that we hoped that it would help the women out in the outlying counties and election districts to raise just a little bit of money to help them get along. None of the money was taken by the National Committee. It was all to be used locally, and, in addition, the program was used as a good public relations gesture and to publicize the work that the women were doing. It really turned out pretty well.

Of course, I was only in the committee during the two years before and including the '36 election. Then I went home. So, I didn't keep track of it after that. But certainly it was very popular while I was back there, and we sold loads of donkeys, shipped donkeys out by the hundreds, so that it must have been potent in a great many respects, both as publicity and--as I read the material over now, I just can't imagine trying to raise money by having women put pennies in a bank. [Laughter]

Stein: [Laughter] It wouldn't go very far, no.

Wolfe: [Laughter] You can't imagine how you could expect to raise very much with pennies, but they went much further then. You recollect that eggs were only about eight or nine cents a dozen, and the prices were just way down in the doldrums, so that a penny was really something in those days.

Then we did print publicity on the donkey bank explaining exactly what it was, and then in order to get them to call the banks in and get the money and convert it to use in the campaign, we had what they called a donkey bank roundup. We sent out material for a little skit. I haven't run across a copy of that skit anywhere in my papers, but it was, as I recollect it, just a clever little thing that they could put on themselves and help the campaign along in some way, the discussions of the campaign.



Wolfe: To begin it, I think first of all we tried to get the president to make a short announcement or a brief talk before the meeting, because they were all supposed to be simultaneous across the country. But I think he suggested that Mrs. Roosevelt might be the better person to do it, and instead he wrote a letter, which we sent out to all of them. So, that's the way it worked out.

You know, I don't find, or at least I don't believe I have found, any record of how much they accumulated through that source, but I'm sure it must have helped a great deal.

Stein: You were mentioning that you had to change the date that you had set for the roundup of the banks.

Wolfe: Yes. I never was quite sure why they wanted us to change the date, whether it was just a conflict in dates that they were having a large dinner.

Stein: Who was?

Wolfe: The Democratic National Committee was arranging a fund-raising dinner. Then we had the donkey bank thing, and it evidently came along before their dinner, and they asked us if we would postpone it. Afterward it came out that they were going to have a simultaneous meeting also. So, I never knew whether they had thought up the idea of the simultaneous meeting before, or whether we had. It had the president [Roosevelt] speaking, but after that time it seemed to me that they had many such dinners and were able to get the president to speak over the radio for all the dinners at the same time, which really worked out quite wonderfully.

Stein: That's quite a feat. Did that mean that people in California were having to eat dinner three hours earlier than people in New York?

Wolfe: Well, I often wondered how they worked that out, but I suppose it wouldn't have been too difficult to arrange a meeting which would start at one time, and then the speech might come after the dinner, or something of that sort, so that maybe in the three-hour period it could be worked in there sometime, because they certainly worked it out in some way.

Now, whether at that time they were able to take the speech off and then reproduce it, or how it happened, I don't





Wolfe: know. But my recollection is that it was the actual speech that came over, and if they had it in New York, say, they would have it perhaps at the first part of the meeting, and if they had it in Utah, they'd have it at a later time in the meeting.

Stein: Yes, I see. I remember reading in the Digest that before the donkey bank campaign began, there was quite a debate about what form the banks should take. There was one lady who was arguing very vigorously for just having plain wooden boxes.

Wolfe: I looked at that article, and it was written by Ellis Meredith. According to the article, I think she may have suggested the use of donkey banks originally, and then someone else suggested the little cardboard boxes called mite boxes. I think that they were used in churches and that the money was used for missionary efforts. But all the people whom we consulted were in favor of the donkey banks, and especially, I noticed in one of the--I guess this is the article you were talking about [indicates article in Digest].

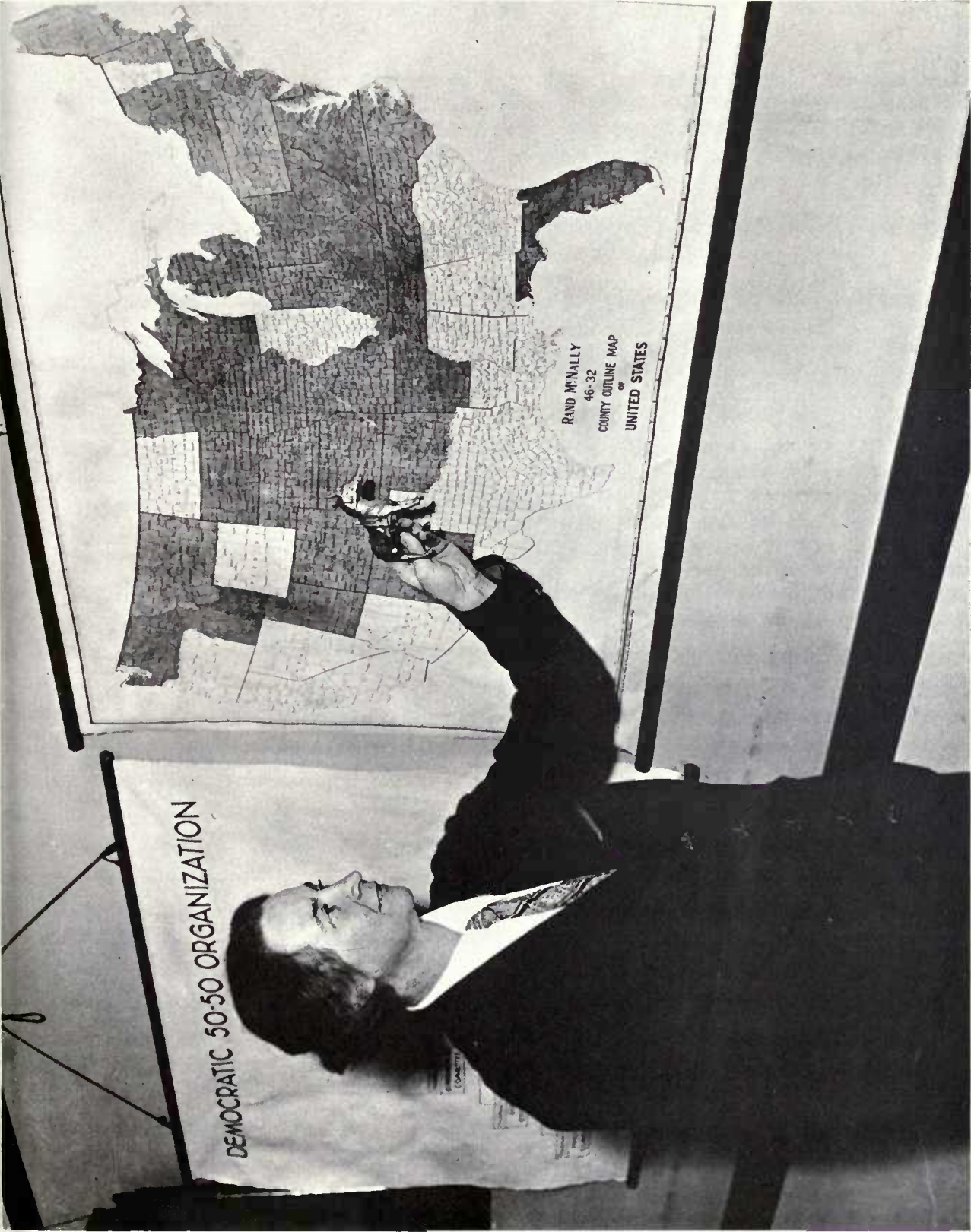
But Grace Bryan Hargraves, who was a sister of Ruth Bryan Owen --both were daughters of [William Jennings] Bryan-- and she came out very strongly for the donkey banks. I'll read what it says here [reading from Democratic Digest, August, 1935]: "Miss Grace Bryan Hargraves is decidedly on the side of the donkey. It may be an hereditary weakness she has for the little animal. At least one could easily draw that conclusion after seeing the miniature sterling silver donkey, the cherished possession of her illustrious father, William Jennings Bryan, which she displayed at the Women's Division one afternoon."

I don't know whether it was this remark that Mrs. Hargraves made, but, at any rate, it prompted the manufacture of lots of little miniature donkeys which went out at the time to accompany the public relations effort of the donkey banks. There were all sorts of things. Little donkey pins that you pinned on that had set-in rhinestones, and all sorts of things.

But it was a good publicity campaign, regardless of how much money they achieved, and I thought it was rather good that they were asking the people in the smallest districts to make contributions.

Of course, later on they began doing that and calling it "Dollars for Democrats Days," and in the last several campaigns they have urged the people to go out and contact all the people





Carolyn Wolfe, director of the Women's Division, Democratic National Committee, displays donkey bank, the key element in a nationwide fund-raising campaign, 1935.



Wolfe: in their districts and collect a dollar each. Perhaps that gives you an illustration of what the inflation has been like, and that was before inflation really took place [laughter]; I mean, collection of the dollar. They would have to collect two dollars now.

Stein: [Laughter] Right. Did the Women's Division engage in any other fund-raising activities?

Wolfe: Well, I can't remember as a big project that we did any fund-raising activities. I think we left that up to the Democratic Committee mostly. Of course, people did make contributions to the Women's Division, but it would all go into the Democratic Committee fund.

Actually, they were very generous as far as the expenses were concerned, but I think also that while we carried on a big program, we were very economical. I know that they never could understand how the women could get so much done and that it cost so comparatively little. I think it was because we had lots of volunteers and we were used to getting along on a shoestring, you know. I was especially economical, coming from the West. We didn't have the extravagant ideas that they had in the East. [Laughter]

We really got lots of input from the people who worked with us, whether they were paid or not paid, and most of them were from volunteers, which was marvelous.

#### Friends, Allies, and Troublemakers

Stein: There was a name that I came across who was listed as assistant administrator in charge of the Women's Division, a Mrs. Ellen Woodward.

Wolfe: No, she wasn't connected with the Women's Division. Ellen Woodward was one of the first people who worked in the social welfare program. She was responsible for helping women secure jobs and preparing them for jobs, and she was head of that division in the social welfare effort. I think later on she went on to work in the Social--I've forgotten their names. I'm sorry, I'm not very good at remembering. But the first thing that she worked in was the Federal Emergency Relief Administration, and there her job was to find work for women. Her title was Assistant Director, Works Progress Administration,





Wolfe: in charge of women's work.

She was quite a remarkable person. She was a good speaker, and she came from Mississippi, is my recollection, red-headed, and knew all the people down at Congress and on the hill, so that [she] had good relations with the congressmen and senators. She was one of those who was very helpful in that regard.

Also, in addition to our political work, we had to try to see that the legislative program was going on as far as possible in the House and Senate. Sometimes we had success, and sometimes not. But she had an important job because she had so many contacts throughout the United States and all over, you see, in that emergency relief work.

That was a stupendous job, trying to find jobs for the people and get them back to work in some way. I hope we never get back to a period like that, but they certainly tried to handle it. Of course, that brought on lots of criticism of the WPA and all the things that you did in its support. They called it "leaf-raking," you know, and all the rest of it. It seems to me it was better to have them leaf-raking at fifty dollars a month than not doing anything. Of course, they weren't getting relief because the states weren't in a position to give relief, and the federal government at that time, I guess, had not set up any program to give relief to the people who needed it. That was just one terrible situation.

Stein: I also want to get on tape that story that you told me last time when the tape was off about what turned out to be a very controversial article in the Digest in which--I can't remember now who was the author of it--spoke about the guillotine.

Wolfe: Oh, yes. That was Mrs. Meredith. She was about eighty or eighty-two at the time that I went back to Washington, and she had been an old suffrage worker and came from Colorado, where they had fifty-fifty organization from the beginning. The women took part in politics as just a matter of course.

But, at any rate, she came down to the office to see us and asked if she couldn't help with the Digest. I think she had helped with it up at the [Women's Democratic] Club. You see, the Digest was actually taken over from the Women's Democratic Club. They were publishing it, publishing a monthly magazine or a semi-monthly magazine, and we asked if we could take it over. She was one of the workers on that publication, and so we were happy to have her help us out,





Wolfe: and she wrote a great many of the articles. She was a good writer, and even at eighty-two she was excellent; she could outperform a lot of them.

But she wrote this little article. Do you think we ought to find it and see exactly what she said?

Stein: Do you remember where it was?

Wolfe: I think maybe I could find it. Do you want to turn that [tape recorder] off? [Tape off briefly.]

[The following is inserted from Interview 6, July 19, 1976, tape 1, side 1]

Wolfe: It's a very short paragraph, used more or less as filler, I presume, to fill up the little spaces.

Stein: Yes, I see. All she really says is that "... with American liberties at stake, it might not be inappropriate to buy that guillotine," referring to the guillotine from the French Revolution, "and set it up in front of the new judicial temple, which frowns across the park that separates it from the capitol."\*

Wolfe: Well, you know, at that time the Supreme Court was vetoing, or whatever they call it, a good many of the New Deal measures, and I think perhaps she had in mind that it might be a reminder of what people do when they get pressed beyond a certain point. You wouldn't expect a small thing like that to cause a furor, but it did.

[end of insert]

It was picked up by a number of people, and especially in my state, which was quite a conservative state. My husband had been, of course, very active in some of the more liberal movements. So, they used it to attack me, indicating that I was responsible for the publication of the article and that it

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\*Democratic Digest, March, 1936



- Wolfe: expressed my thoughts and so forth. They complained back at the National Committee, I think, called attention there, and actually there were some comments. Now, I don't know why my recollection is so fuzzy, because I know there were newspaper comments in the East on it and also many comments out West, enough so that one of the men--I think I showed you a letter that one of the men\* wrote to the president of the Mormon Church, Heber J. Grant, at the time.
- Stein: That's right.  
[end tape 1, side 1; begin tape 1, side 2]
- Stein: How did you finally overcome the opposition?
- Wolfe: Well, did I mention to you the fact that because of my husband's participation in some laboring group that his name is mentioned in The Red Network?
- Stein: Yes.
- Wolfe: So, when all this opposition, or all this publicity, was going on and the women were getting quite upset back in Utah-- I didn't hear anything from the other women in the other states --I just went to the meeting, and I had a copy of The Red Network. I told them that my husband's name was listed in it, and I told them that I wanted to read a number of other names that were in it. And, of course, the president, and Mrs. Roosevelt, and Miss Perkins, and practically the whole Democratic administration at that time were accused in The Red Network of being communists. [Chuckle]

So, I said, "As far as I'm concerned, I think it was a real honor that they included Judge Wolfe in The Red Network, because it indicates that he was liberal minded and had a feeling for the welfare of the people instead of for the more conservative policies of the Republican party."

And, you know, that seemed to just quiet everything down. It seemed to. We didn't hear anything more about it after that. Isn't that peculiar? It's just that one or two persons --one person especially was, and I remember that she wrote to

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\*labor leader Frank L. Jensen. Letter is on pages following.



Salt Lake City, Utah.  
November 6, 1936.

President Fober J. Grant  
47 East South Temple st.,  
Salt Lake City.

Dear President Grant:

As one victim to another I feel it my duty to commiserate with you on the impending destruction of the Constitution. Your efforts in behalf of that document were more or less unavailing, and my efforts to elect Bill Lenke in order to force Congress to live up to it likewise proved fruitless. So it appears that we are a couple of prophets who are not without honor save in our own state and in our own voting districts.

Even though we accept Senator Borah's idea that we can't out the constitution, I much prefer your stand that it has especial uses as an object of veneration and worship, because of its Divine origin. In this connection may I ask if the report is well founded that Joseph Smith's grandfather, through direct revelation, worked out the draft of the Constitution and submitted it to the Constitutional Convention? If such be the case I must plead for additional light on that part of the Constitution known as the Eighteenth Amendment. If that particular item was "inspired of the Lord" did He subsequently revoke Himself and inspire repeal also? Or, was the inspiration that initiated repeal, like that back of a number of quite recent events, from other sources?

Another aspect of the political holocaust, I believe, should have your attention----that guillotine business. Without doubt that misguided lady, Mrs Jim Wolfe, will, in the light of election returns, feel impelled to plant the original instrument right in the Supreme Court chamber. Can you not suggest that she restrain herself at least to the extent of substituting pictures of the guillotine? The pictures could be put in the individual chambers of the jurists to serve as constant reminders. If it be thought necessary two pictures could be put in George Sutherland's chamber.



If that suggestion be carried out it is possible the bloodthirsty  
New Dealers will be content to let the Supreme Court survive in a subdued and  
chastened form. But the Constitution----well, what cant be helped must  
be endured. If I can get the price I may drown my sorrows in a few holes  
of golf in the glorious sunshine of the Golden State.

Sincerely yours,

Frank L. Jensen





Wolfe: Jim Farley about it. Now, evidently she had made quite a big contribution to the Democratic National Committee, and so Farley had turned it [the protest] over to us in the Women's Division to handle, and we took it up with the state committee back in Utah.

But this woman actually wanted to be appointed as assistant in one of the National Committee offices, and finally Miss Dewson just said that actually we couldn't have a person of that kind, you know, who was just a trouble-maker, to work with us or on the committee. So, that was stopped off.

But there are always a lot of people who really want to take advantage of any misstep or any opportunity, you might say, to get into a position of power. They don't seem to have any scruples about what they do.

But, at any rate, that episode passed over without any lasting results, I guess.

Stein: Do you remember this lady's name?

Wolfe: Yes, but I don't think it's a good idea to mention names.

You always had something of the sort going on. You had somebody trying to work their way into an office, or they were trying to sabotage. You know, you just can't live in the public life without things of that sort going on, and so you try to do the best you can and get along with it.

I don't know. Maybe you haven't worked in any organization where such things happen, but they certainly do in political organizations, because everybody's striving for power one way or the other, and they don't care much what they do to get it. I found that out, and some of them are very unscrupulous.

Stein: Were you able to deal as effectively with some of the other people like that? It sounds like you did very well with this particular woman.

Wolfe: Well, yes. We didn't have too much trouble, but we had one or two episodes where the woman had become acquainted with Mrs. Roosevelt, and then she used that acquaintanceship to get a minor job in the Women's Division and then tried to undermine the activities that were going on there, you see. So, they had to let her know that she couldn't do things like



Wolfe: that, and she was finally eliminated. I shouldn't say "eliminated." [Laughter] I should have said "discharged."

But I think that you sort of have to expect things of that sort. I know even in the little local organizations the same thing is going on all the time. There's just that sabotage as far as the leaders are concerned, that they do everything they can to disrupt their effectiveness. It's hard at the period to go through, but I can see now that it's something that you really have to expect. It happens in society and everything else.

#### The 1936 Campaign

Stein: Well, maybe we should move forward here to the 1936 campaign itself. I got the feeling from reading about the campaign work in the Digest that the '36 campaign was a very important one for women in terms of the women's participation. Is this a correct assessment?

Wolfe: Yes. I think that our organization had been built up to the point when the '36 campaign began that the women were an effective organization to help win the battle. There's no doubt about it. We had a big group working, and a well trained group, and they were effective. There's no doubt about it. I think that was one of the biggest of the majorities, wasn't it, or did you notice?

Stein: Yes. The Digest mentioned that before the convention the Women's Division appointed a committee to make suggestions for the Democratic platform committee, and it was chaired by New York Congresswoman Carolyn O'Day, and other members of the committee were listed in the Digest. I didn't copy them out. Do you remember that committee?

Wolfe: Yes, I remember the committee. I attended, as I told you before, the first convention where they nominated Roosevelt, and that was in Chicago. I remember Miss Dewson there. Of course, Miss Dewson had been working in the Smith campaign, and they had really a powerful group of women then who were working in the Roosevelt campaign.

At that convention, it seemed to me, they were able to get a woman on the credentials committee. Now, that was the only place where they could get a woman who was



Wolfe: appointed to any of the committees that were functioning. But the '36 convention was in Philadelphia--

Stein: That's right.

Wolfe: And Carolyn O'Day was the congresswoman from New York, and there they made the effort to get someone on not only the platform committee, but on all the committees; in other words, on the fifty-fifty idea of chairman and vice-chairman of opposite sex.

I think they were successful in getting women on a great many of the committees, and later on I think it was written into the policy of the Democratic [National] Committee that they should have this idea. Strangely enough, or not strangely, but it seemed to be the custom that the Republicans in the following year did the very same thing; they opened their committee up to women also.

But it was considered to be a real achievement when they permitted the women to participate on the committees.

Stein: I noticed the Digest mentioned that women for the first time were allowed to sit as alternates on the platform committee itself. They were allowed the right to speak, but not to vote, unless the principal was absent.

Wolfe: Yes.

Stein: And the Digest also mentioned several times that this committee of the Women's Division to help with the platform suggested eight planks for the platform, seven of which were adopted. I wonder if you remember what they were about.

Wolfe: At the moment, I can't. I did refresh my mind in some of the earlier Digests by going through them, but I haven't been able to look at the last years' [Digests].

I was at the Democratic National Committee. In fact, we had to get things ready over there in Philadelphia for the convention. I was busy mostly with the more mundane affairs of trying to see that the arrangements were made so that we had space to operate in. We didn't have any rooms. They had to put curtains up and things of that sort, because they didn't have the extra space for us at the time. So, it was really quite complicated, and we were carrying on a lot of radio talks, which were put on by the women, and we were also having regional breakfasts, too, at that convention, for the



Wolfe: first time.

Molly was the one participating in trying to get the women working on the platform committee and on the other committees. We had been thinking about it and working on it during the year, but at the moment I don't recollect the planks, except they must have had to do with fifty-fifty [representation]; that might have been one of them. What the others were, I have no definite recollection.

Stein: I noticed in the Digest they mentioned that there were 219 women delegates and 302 women alternates, which was quite a sizable number.

Wolfe: Yes, that's pretty good, isn't it?

Stein: Yes. Do you remember how, in that period, delegates were chosen to the convention, on what basis they were chosen?

Wolfe: Well, all delegates had to be chosen by the states, you know. I would know in our own state, where we had fifty-fifty representation, that they would be elected at that time at the convention of the Democratic party and that they would be suggested by the different counties, and there would be more or less an allocation, maybe according to congressional districts or something of that sort, so that you'd have a representation from the entire state. Now, depending on the strength of your women's organization, you would have women suggested as well as men, but they would have to be elected.

I think somewhat the same system would be adopted in the other states that didn't have the fifty-fifty idea, you know. It's really the Democratic idea of organization.

Stein: I see. In terms of the women who would be selected delegates, at that time what was being elected a delegate a reward for? Hard work? Monetary contributions?

Wolfe: Well, if they made a large contribution to their state committee, they might be favored as a delegate, undoubtedly. And the women who had really put in the work--the county chairmen, the county vice-chairmen, people of that sort--would also be given preference as delegates and have the backing of their organization. If they had the backing of the organization, of course, that meant that they would get elected, and if they had been working in their county or in their district or something of that sort and were well known, of course, they would have that backing.





Wolfe: So, the delegates came from the states where the women had been doing work and really had built up good, strong organizations. I think they knew what they were doing and really were an asset in working on the problems in the convention and things of that sort.

Of course, the national convention is always preceded by all the state and local conventions, just as they're doing now, except that the whole thing is more concerned with primaries at the present time. But there weren't many states where they had primaries in those days, back in '36. It was practically all done by the convention system.

Stein: You mentioned the regional breakfasts that you organized. What was the purpose of the breakfasts?

Wolfe: Well, the purpose was, for one thing, getting all the women together of a separate region--I think we had about seven regions at that time--and putting on a program and letting the speakers choose subjects that were of interest to the particular region. For instance, if you were in an agricultural section, then you could have speakers on agriculture.

In all of them, I think, they would have been interested in whatever was being done for relief or the upbuilding of the economy, so that those were the subjects that you would choose to try to give them the present information and education on what was being done by the administration. As they used to say in the Al Smith campaign, "Let's look at the record," so that they would discuss the record that they had made in those particular counties, and it did give recognition to the women who came from the different parts of the country to a convention of this sort.

I don't know. There was a certain amount of prestige in being connected with a group of that sort, being interested in it and participating. They were very well attended and, I think great assets to the convention itself. I don't know whether they still do it or not.

Stein: I don't know either.

Wolfe: Have you heard anything in the present convention, whether they're doing anything of the sort, the women?

Stein: No. I don't think they are, in fact, or I would have read about it. I gather in the present convention, and in the party as a whole, that there is a shift now away from having separate



Stein: things for women.

Wolfe: Yes, that's right.

Stein: That women should be treated on a par with men.

Wolfe: Yes, that's absolutely right. So, we've passed this stage. I mean, this is a stage where we helped prepare the women for the equal rights thing that followed.

Stein: Right. And here we are at the next stage, when now the fifty-fifty demand is that half the delegates be women, not just chairmen and co-chairmen.

Wolfe: Yes, I know. My first reaction to that is that I would be against it, just as I feel that I'm against appointing people because they're women or men or black or yellow or red or green or anything. I think that somehow we're losing things, losing by not appointing people because they're qualified to do the job or that they have something to offer, rather than just an origin or something of that sort. I suppose you have to have a certain amount of that, but to go into it where you would actually select half and half of women and men to a convention, it doesn't seem to me that you get the best results that way. But, of course, that's just my immediate reaction to the thing. It might change after a while.

After hearing Barbara Jordan last night\* I thought, well, that's the sort of thing that you would approve of, somebody black or white, if they could talk the way she did and have the philosophy that she did. Then you think that somehow or other that's the thing that we ought to try to achieve: to prepare people to participate and to concern themselves as she evidently is concerned. I thought she was wonderful.

Stein: Of course, there's never any guarantee that the other women would be like her, or that the men would be like her, for that matter.

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\*Barbara Jordan, a black representative from Texas, delivered one of the keynote addresses on the opening night of the Democratic national convention, July 12, 1976, in Kansas City.



Wolfe: No, that's right. And I suppose if you gave the women the opportunity to serve that that in itself would make it necessary for them to be interested and want to serve. At any rate, it's all a new regime that's coming up.

Stein: Well, to back up to the '36 campaign, is there anything else that we should mention about the convention itself that we haven't?

Wolfe: Well, you know, it seems to me that the convention itself took place out in--I don't know. Some big place, a football stadium. My recollection is seeing Roosevelt come up to the stand, and, you know, with all the difficulty he had walking and with the assistance, he brought something with him that other people don't seem to have brought. They don't seem to have had that real--you can't describe it by saying "charm." His input was something much more than that. It was that quality to really stimulate and make the people come alive in the convention. I just remember that one occasion when he came on to make the acceptance speech. It was really a great event.

But Philadelphia was not a convention town. It didn't have the facilities for a big convention that, of course, New York or Chicago had at the time. I haven't been to any conventions in these later years, so I don't know what's happening.

One funny thing happened at that convention. We had arranged a radio broadcast. Perhaps I told you about this before. Nan Wood Honeyman, who was a congresswoman from Oregon, was really a very attractive and forceful woman, and she had a very distinctive voice. Well, at any rate, Dorothy Thompson was going to interview a number of the women for a radio program, and Nan Wood Honeyman was one of the people that she was going to interview.

We were all up there getting oriented and talking with Dorothy, and all of a sudden Nan said, "Oh, I had an appointment with Mr. Farley! I've got to run down and cancel it or see him." We said, "Well, you only have a few minutes. You'd better be back." But, you know, she didn't get back. [Laughter] And there we were, having to go on the air, and her part was written into the whole program, you see.

At that moment, Mrs. Raymond Graham Swing came into the room. Dorothy looked up at her and calling her by her first name, which I've forgotten, she said, "From this moment on,



Wolfe: you are Nan Wood Honeyman," and handed her the script.  
[Laughter]

Well, Mrs. Swing's voice was very much different from Nan Wood Honeyman's. Finally, when Nan got back and realized what had happened, she said, "What will the people in Oregon think of me, that my voice has changed to such an extent since I've been here!" [Laughter] But she was always very impetuous, you know, and you couldn't always hold her down to just a prosaic radio performance.

That struck me as being awfully funny, just her reaction, and it's not so bad having Mrs. Raymond Graham Swing. She was an expert, so she read her lines just perfectly beautifully. [Laughter] But the horrible reaction of Nan: What would her people think back in Oregon that her voice had changed to that extent? [Laughter]

Stein: [Laughter] It's good it wasn't television. Then the people really would have wondered what had happened to her.

Wolfe: [Laughter] Yes!

Well, at any rate, lots of funny things were always happening around the convention at that time.

I had my daughter there. In fact, I guess most of my family was there, because my husband's family lived in Philadelphia and his father was there at the time. So, we all went over, and I thought it was a wonderful experience for my children to participate in the convention and meet people.

I remember Mrs. Caspar Whitney took a great interest in my daughter and took her out to lunch. She had her daughter with her, and her daughter was slightly older, but Katherine enjoyed that a lot. They made a fuss over her.

Stein: Yes, I can imagine. That's nice company to go to lunch with.

Is there anything else we should say about the convention?

Wolfe: No. You see, it really was, I suppose, a cut and dried affair because they knew they were going to nominate Roosevelt. The only way you could make it interesting, of course, was that in their platform speeches and things of that sort they must have emphasized and talked about the accomplishments and just used it for that purpose. Roosevelt himself had the personality to make it interesting.





- Wolfe: I suppose that maybe the things that were newest about the convention were the participation of the women and the great number of real personalities who were there participating.
- Stein: Who were some of those women?
- Wolfe: Well, as I said before, Mrs. Caspar Whitney was there, and all the women, you know, who had participated in the campaign throughout the country were all there. It was just a galaxy of the finest of the Democratic women who came to Philadelphia at that time.
- Stein: I came across some names of women who were active during the campaign who were speakers. Mrs. Nan Wood Honeyman was one of them, and a Mrs. Picking from Washington state.
- Wolfe: Elsa Gardner Picking, yes. She was the regional adviser, I think, for that area.
- Stein: The regional adviser for the Women's Division?
- Wolfe: Yes. And that took in a number of states, the Northwest states.
- Stein: Did you know her?
- Wolfe: Yes.
- Stein: What was she like?
- Wolfe: Well, she was very attractive and very dedicated and very enthusiastic, and I think she did a very good job. She wasn't the personality that someone like Mrs. Honeyman or some of the other people [were], but she was really a dedicated working Democrat, and she really did a good job.
- Stein: Yes. And Izetta Jewel Miller.
- Wolfe: Oh, she was one of the glamorous women. [Chuckle] She had been an actress, I guess, or was really a good actress, well known, and had married and settled down. She took on some of the government projects, but on a dollar a year basis. I mean, she was appointed to some of the offices. I can't remember which one at the present moment.

But she was such an attractive person, such a good speaker, that she could help a lot to gain recognition for women. She was intelligent and used it. She used all her



Wolfe: practical experience as an actress to get things done.

Stein: She was in that tradition of actors and actresses being involved in politics.

Wolfe: Yes. We had Helen Gahagan Douglas, who really took a more serious part in politics. I mean, she seemed to be more serious in her dedication to politics, while Izetta Jewel Miller--it was sort of interesting and fun for her to do it.

Stein: A sort of dilettante?

Wolfe: Well, it may have been. I don't like to say that, because she did work hard, but she really had fun doing it. Just the difference in the temperament.

Helen was really dedicated and serious about it, and she came out and helped us campaign. She came over and stayed with me in Salt Lake for a day or two and talked to the women over there, and, of course, they loved her and made a great fuss about her.

I think she did a remarkable job, and it's just too bad that she was defeated by the practices that Richard Nixon used. He destroyed both her chances of being a U.S. senator, and he also, of course, defeated Jerry Voorhis by the same tactics, by calling him a communist and associated with communists. That's how he [Nixon] won his first congressional office. So, I always held that against Nixon that somehow or other he had defamed Helen Gahagan Douglas.

But she really was a great influence, I think, in the Women's Division and in the party as a whole too, because she worked in it regardless of whether it was women or men. She was a member of Congress, of course, so that she was really active on her own and for her own sake.

Stein: Was she involved in the '36 campaign?

Wolfe: Yes. I wonder, is she still with the--she was with one of the Jewish organizations for a long time.

Stein: I don't know.

Wolfe: I wish I could think of that. [Pauses to think of name.] Oh, dear! Well, at any rate, my husband belonged to it, and I guess that's the reason that I was interested in seeing her



Wolfe: name on the list of people. I think that she was active as an executive at one time. I'll have to look that up. Maybe I'm wrong. I can't tell.

Then, some of the other women--have you any other names there that you were particularly interested in?

Stein: Let's see. Margaret Durand.

Wolfe: Do you remember where she came from?

Stein: No. All I have here was that she was appointed director of organization for the Maine campaign headquarters.

Wolfe: Oh, in Maine. Yes, that's it. She was in Maine. That's the reason I didn't immediately recognize her, because I didn't have much contact with that particular region. Miss Dewson spent all her summers up in Maine at Castine. Every summer she went up and spent the whole summer. I imagine in the '36 campaign she might have--well, she could have been up there part of the time, couldn't she?

Stein: Yes.

Wolfe: But she took a very active part in the campaign once we got started over in New York.

Stein: Was there any particular reason for setting up the campaign headquarters in New York?

Wolfe: Well, I wondered. I was sorry to see them go over there, because it was very inconvenient for me to change everything. Actually, I sent my children back to Salt Lake before we went over to New York. But they told me that the facilities for mailing, for printing, for everything, were so much better in New York than in Washington that they felt they almost had to move over to New York for the campaign. So, that's the reason that they went over there. They had a headquarters in the Biltmore Hotel.

So, we had just a skeleton crew over in Washington. Virginia Rishel stayed over in Washington and looked after the Digest that we were getting out and made frequent trips over to New York.

I think a lot of them were sorry that they had to change the headquarters and move over there, because it was very upsetting.



Stein: Where did you stay? At the hotel?

Wolfe: I was over in New York. No, Mrs. Whitney asked me to stay with her at her home, and so I lived out there with Mrs. Whitney. She was on about 73rd Street, I think, and just off Park Avenue. She had a beautiful home there and it was quite delightful. I had no problem getting in and out. Each day I came in on the subway mostly. Sometimes I walked in, if the weather weren't too bad, too hot. It wasn't a bad walk. I guess the Biltmore was on 42nd.

The subway ride was very interesting to someone from the West [chuckle] who wasn't used to mass traffic. I sometimes wondered if I didn't keep standing up what would have happened, because, you know, in that terrible crush of people, you had to be sure to get in the right stream of traffic or you'd never make it. [Laughter]

#### The Decision to Return to Utah

Stein: When you sent the children back to Utah, did you think of that as permanent?

Wolfe: Yes.

Stein: What were your own plans?

Wolfe: My own plans were to come home, to go back home after the campaign.

Stein: How early had you decided that? When had you decided that you had had enough in Washington?

Wolfe: Well, I think I had never contemplated severing my connections with Utah. Actually, I went back there on a somewhat temporary basis, and although they said I could stay if I wanted to, even Molly thought that for the sake of the family and the continuity of family life and everything that it would be a mistake.

I noticed that the Republicans afterwards appointed Ivy Baker Priest from Utah as the executive in their campaign, and she evidently decided to remain on in politics. She accepted a job in government and later was divorced from her husband.





Wolfe: I think, where you're living in two states and there's a family involved, that it really is very difficult to maintain your family life and family relationships. And while my husband was able to come back there fairly often, I don't think that the marriage would have held up at all if I hadn't gone back at that time.

In fact, I think that the relationship was changed, too, by that whole period that I was away and the participation I had in the other so-called business or political world.

Stein: How so?

Wolfe: Well, I don't know. I suppose that you learn a great deal more about things, and you take more responsibility. I read with great amusement all of the stories about the sex [scandals]\* and the things that are going on in Washington at the present time, and I think how lucky I was to have had my family back there and that I had to be home at night with them, you know, and that they sort of held you to the line, because I think that some of the visiting men who came to town expected that you would be showing them around and showing them social favors and things of that sort, which I never really attempted to do in any way whatsoever. I was just fortunate that I did have a big family and a very good excuse for not participating in any of those activities.

But I can see how the involvement would be very difficult to work out if you were separated from your husband and trying to carry on a separate activity like that. I suppose if you're going to work, that you really should be in the same town, anyway, the same city, so that you can share your recreation with each other and your spare time.

As far as my husband was concerned, I think it was harder on him than on me, because he wasn't the sort of person that had been used to taking care of himself. He would never be able to cook a meal or do anything of that sort, so that he would depend on either living in a hotel or some other means

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\*In the winter and spring of 1975-1976, Washington, D.C. was rocked by a series of exposes of congressmen who had maintained mistresses on federal payroll, had accepted the solicitations of prostitutes, and the like. At least two congressmen ultimately resigned.



Wolfe: of eating out. So, I think it was much harder on him than it was on me.

Stein: So, he must have been very glad to have you back.

Wolfe: Yes, I think he must have been, because it was very difficult for him to take the responsibility, especially when the children came back. In fact, he did have a nervous breakdown, and that was along about in September, I guess, while the campaign was going on, and I had to go back home. The children were there then, you see, and the housekeeper wasn't too good. So, I got in a new housekeeper and people of that sort. My husband actually then went down to Long Beach and recuperated down there.

But, you see, you just can't do too much operating over such long distances. So, I had decided all along, you see, that I would come back at the end of the campaign, but it was really difficult those last few months of the campaign.

Stein: I can see that it must have been. How long did you stay back in New York then? Through the election?

Wolfe: Yes. We stayed in New York through the election and then came back to Washington. Then I worked to just clean up the things around the committee office, and then I went back home.

Well, it was an exciting experience. Then, of course, the nice thing about it was that when I went back home, you see, there was no break from the actual sort of work that I had been doing, because I kept on working in the local organization. Mrs. Musser was then our regional adviser out there, and she was busy out on speaking engagements, and so was glad to have me assisting there at home.

I think I told you about Mrs. Musser, who was the woman who was appointed to the Inter-American Committee and was so successful in her work there.

Stein: Yes.

Wolfe: So, then I took over as the regional adviser and kept right on working with all the women in the Western states.  
[end tape 1, side 2]



Mrs. Wolfe's Successors  
(Interview 6, July 19, 1976)  
[begin tape 1, side 1]

Stein: Well, let's start out again where we left off, which was when you left the Women's Division right after the '36 election. You mentioned who succeeded you, and I was wondering if you spent any time breaking her in.

Wolfe: Well, Mrs. [Gladys] Tillett came in as director of the Women's Division. I think it was a co-chairmen idea with May Thompson Evans, who lived in Washington at the time because her husband worked there. Gladys, I think, commuted from North Carolina, where she lived. But both those women had been working with us.

You remember I told you that we held a meeting down in North Carolina, and in all probability Mrs. Tillett arranged that meeting, and at it Harriet Elliott and a woman by the name of Alexander spoke. They were both in the Political Science Department at the university. It was there that I was enthusiastic about Miss Elliott and recommended her for a speaker for the Women's Division, which came about later.

But Mrs. Tillett was very well qualified because she had graduated from the university and Miss Elliott had been her teacher, and so she had some political science. She was in the League of Women Voters, and she also was chairman of the speakers bureau for the Women's Division during the campaign, so that she had a great deal of experience in the Women's Division. So, she and May Thompson Evans took over.

I can't remember the exact date, how long she stayed, but later on she was replaced by Dorothy McAllister, who really was working during the next campaign, the big election campaign. I've forgotten how long Gladys stayed on as director, but then Dorothy and May Thompson Evans were there as a team.

Now, whether or not May went on working as a director I do not remember, but she was with Dorothy at the beginning. Then I think that she retired from it, and Dorothy finished out her work by herself.



- Wolfe: But those girls, both of them, May Thompson Evans and Gladys, were very well qualified for the position and did a very thorough job, I'm sure, although everything lets down after the campaign, so that there isn't as much work. You don't have as much to work with because the women are tired and you can't somehow or other rouse their enthusiasm as you can when there's a campaign going on. So, it was more or less a holding process in there and educational work going on.
- Stein: Then Mrs. Tillett really had an advantage that you hadn't had, when she took over, in that she had already been working in Washington.
- Wolfe: Oh, yes. There's no doubt about that.
- Stein: Whereas you came in really out of the cold.
- Wolfe: I was just absolutely cold on the thing. She knew all the women, of course, because she would have gotten acquainted with them during the campaign as chairman of the speakers committee.







Wyn Wolfe as Director, Women's Division, Democratic National Committee, 1936.



Mary Dewson, Chairman, Women's Division, Democratic National Committee, 1932-1935.



Mr. and Mrs. James H. Wolfe, ca. 1945.



Mrs. Wolfe, second from right, observes her successor, Mrs. Janet Nicholas, being sworn in as a member of the Sonoma County Planning Commission, February 1973.



## VI UTAH DEMOCRATIC POLITICS AGAIN

Western Regional Adviser

Stein: So, you then returned to Utah. Did you continue your work in the Democratic party in Utah?

Wolfe: Yes. I can't remember just when I was appointed; well, I suppose I had by that time maybe been elected as national committeewoman from Utah. I began immediately to work with the state organization, and we began preparing for the future meetings and things of that sort. Mrs. Musser at that time was the regional adviser, and later on, when her term expired, I was appointed as regional adviser for the Western states. That came closer to the next convention, or the next election--perhaps two years, when they have the local elections, governors and things of that sort, U.S. senators and congressmen--so that I traveled all over the Western states trying to further the organization that we had begun before.

Stein: It sounds like you were hardly at home any more back in Utah than you were in Washington.

Wolfe: Well, except that I was home more, but I did have to leave. I was away on weekends and things like that, and perhaps taking a week's trip or something of the sort. But actually, of course, I was home much more as far as the family was concerned.

Stein: Was this a paid position, the regional adviser?

Wolfe: No. Well, after and along with the regional advisership, I was appointed, when the war began, as the women's director of the War Finance Division, U.S. Treasury Department, for the Western



Wolfe: region. There were eleven states in that, and so I traveled all over those eleven Western states during that war period and had many meetings back in Washington.

By that time Miss Elliott had gone on from the Women's Division. She had been appointed to some of the important boards and committees dealing with the war, and then later she worked directly with the Treasury Department as director of the Women's Division for the War Finance Committee. She appointed me, or asked me, to serve then as regional adviser.

At that time, they were paying salaries for the regional adviser, but I still felt that we weren't out of the Depression and things were still hard, and that as long as my husband was earning enough to support the family that I didn't want to take money for the service and I received pay only for the expenses when I went on the trips out of Salt Lake and things of that sort.

So, at the end of that period, I received a silver medal from the Treasury Department.

Stein: For the war bonds?

Wolfe: Yes. For the Finance Committee work.

Stein: Do you still have that silver medal?

Wolfe: Yes.

Stein: I'd love to look at it sometime.

Wolfe: Oh, yes. I'll show it to you.

#### Institutes of Government

Stein: I came across a series of clippings from the New York Times about something called the First National Institute of Government that was held in 1940, sponsored by the Women's Division and Mrs. McAllister. I wondered if you were at all involved in that. It was held in Washington.

Wolfe: Yes. As a matter of fact, I think I took a group of women back from Utah, and they came from some of the country districts. I know one woman came from Panguitch, Utah, which



Wolfe: is way down in southern Utah, and just a sparsely settled area. She had a marvelous time. We were able to go to all the meetings at the Institute of Government and things of that sort and visit the Congress, and they really had a marvelous time. It was a good education for them.

I've forgotten who the other women were who went with me. One woman was from Salt Lake, and I think there were four altogether. I drove my car back. I think we must have had more stamina than we do now! [Laughter]

Stein That's quite a trip!

Wolfe: Yes, from Utah.

Stein: With no interstate highways or anything.

Wolfe: No, it was my recollection that the highways were fairly good. There weren't as many cars on the road, is one thing. [Laughter] One thing for sure. We seemed to make it all right. I've forgotten how long it took us, but it was an interesting trip.

Stein: Did they meet Mrs. Roosevelt?

Wolfe: Oh, yes!

Stein: That must have been a real thrill for them.

Wolfe: I'm sure that it was. They got to go through the White House and to all the other big functions that they held at that time.

You know, the Digest must have had good information on these meetings, and yet somehow or other my file of the Digest has completely disappeared except for the ones that I kept while I was back in Washington. I don't know what's happened to them. Perhaps they may turn up somewhere around here.

Stein: Yes, when you're looking for something else.

One of the things that the Times noted about the institute was that many more people came than Mrs. McAllister had expected. She didn't think that it was going to be nearly as popular, and she evidently had a terrible time at the very end trying to rearrange everything to fit these 5,000 people who had suddenly come. The meetings had to be moved into the--





Wolfe: One of the big auditoriums, I think, which one of the big departments of government sometimes used.

Stein: Riverside Stadium, some of the sessions were switched to.

The Times mentioned a number of the people who spoke at the conference, which included Secretary of War [H. A.] Woodring and Secretary of the Navy [C.] Edison and Jim Farley. Then some of the women who spoke were Dr. Emily Hickman of New Jersey, representing the peace movement--

Wolfe: I have no recollection of that meeting--isn't that queer?--at all. But all through the whole Women's Division, all through the Roosevelt era, it seems to me, they were emphasizing the peace movement. As I ran through the articles that we had in the Digest, there were many women who were taking a prominent part in the peace movement, like Laura Puffer Morgan and the woman who was the head of the International League for Peace and Freedom.

Stein: Jane Addams?

Wolfe: Jane Addams, yes. And Lillian Wald. There were a great many of the women. I thought it would be interesting sometime. to maybe go through and just make a collection of all the work that they did do on the peace movement, because that was one of the big things that they were interested in seeing get in the platform, work to preserve peace in the world.

I know that my husband at that time was connected with the national organization--I suppose it wasn't international--to outlaw war, the League or the Institution to Outlaw War. I believe that's what Laura Puffer Morgan was, the head of the women's end of that.

So, we personally were terrifically interested in the peace movement and had participated in it right from the very beginning, you know. I was interested in it, and I know that Molly [Dewson] was too.

Stein: Do you feel that you were successful in getting that concern adopted by the rest of the party?

Wolfe: Well, I don't know how much effect we had on the party itself. I think on the administration--of course, if the administration was backing the peace movement, then--but then we got in the war anyway, you see. So I don't know about that. But I think



Wolfe: that where the peace movements had their effect was on the population as a whole, that somehow or other they were alerted to the idea that we had to do something to preserve peace. The interest has, of course, mounted. There's no doubt about it that without those organizations, perhaps we'd just be going along accepting war. Undoubtedly we would have.

I think you have to have that education work going on all the time, whether it's through the political parties or through other institutions.

Stein: Do you remember any of the other women who were active in the peace movement that should be mentioned?

Wolfe: Well, you know, I have to admit that as far as names are concerned, I can't remember names any more, and so I'm very much handicapped. All I know is that we were working in the peace movements of various and sundry kinds from the very beginning that they started here, at least during the time that we were contemporary, and I certainly have met a lot of them, entertained many of them in my own home.

It would be surprising to find that a great many of the women who were appointed to office, like--of course, Molly was very much interested in peace, and so was Frances Perkins. There were so many of the women who were interested in social welfare who were appointed to office that again you will notice, if you look through the appointees made in the Roosevelt administration, that a great many of the women had real concern for the peace movement, for the civil liberties movement in that time too, because Mrs. Roosevelt was, I suppose, one of the forerunners among the leaders in talking about civil liberties in the White House, from the White House.

That, I think, is one of the interesting things about the whole Roosevelt administration: this real concern about the welfare and privileges and liberties of the people as a whole. I think his appointments, especially of the women-- I haven't paid too much attention to the men, but certainly the women, I think, indicated that.

Stein: I'd like to discuss that a little bit later. I drew up a list of some of Roosevelt's appointments.

One of the other people who addressed that National Institute of Government was a Mrs. Verda Barnes, who was vice-president of the Young Democratic Clubs of America.



Stein: Do you remember her?

Wolfe: Yes. At least I think I do. I think I see a very pleasant appearing young woman with reddish hair. She was very nice, and we all liked her, and I think she was doing a pretty good job.

Stein: Do you know where she was from? Can you remember?

Wolfe: No, I can't remember. Undoubtedly there was something in the Digest about her. We could find out.

#### National Democratic Leadership

Stein: I guess that same year, 1940, was the year that Jim Farley resigned as head of the Democratic party.

Wolfe: Yes, I suppose it was, because he was ambitious to run for the presidency himself. When Roosevelt decided to run for a third term, of course, it eliminated him, and he was very much upset. He felt that Roosevelt shouldn't try for a third term and resigned on that account, or perhaps Roosevelt found that he wouldn't be compatible in running his campaign.

Stein: According to the Times, he was replaced by Edward Flynn.

Wolfe: Well, he was an oldtime worker, I think, and the important person in the Democratic organization--I don't remember so much about Mr. Flynn. I'm thinking of a young man who came in. That must have been later, though. It was later. He was the one who was working at the time we had the Marshall Plan.

Stein: I don't know who that would be. The only other name I have of anyone as head of the party was Robert Hannegan of Missouri, who in 1944 was elected chairman of the Democratic National Committee.

Wolfe: Yes, I remember Mr. Hannegan too. Well, I wouldn't know so much about the national chairman from my post in Utah. What concerns I had with the committee would be taken up with the Women's Division at that time.

I think Mr. Hannegan might be described as a good chairman, politically speaking, but I can't remember that he was



- Wolfe: **outstanding** for any work that he did toward some of the civil rights movements or things of that sort.
- Stein: One thing that I gather is that after Farley resigned from the party, there seemed to be a problem in the leadership, because it seemed to be changing much more frequently than it had before that. Did you get that feeling at the time?
- Wolfe: Yes, I certainly did. I know that the office of the chairman of the party changed. Flynn wasn't in there too long until someone else took over, and then somebody else took over from that, so that there wasn't the continuity that we'd had during the first two terms of the Roosevelt administration.
- Stein: Did that reflect turmoil in the party as a whole?
- Wolfe: Well, I don't know that it was turmoil so much in the party as it was that there seemed to be more of a division as to whether or not they were on the very liberal side or on the more conservative side, whether they had arrived at the point where they thought they wanted to gather together and try to go on a more conservative bent. Of course, that was the division in the party at the time that Roosevelt took over, that the conservatives were then in control of it. The man-- [John] Raskob, I guess it was--had put the Democratic committee on a national, four-year basis, an all-year basis, and had provided the funds for it prior to the Roosevelt campaign. And that developed into just a regular party movement that was antagonistic to Roosevelt.
- Stein: Who was this man?
- Wolfe: Raskob is my recollection of his name. They were always a force in the party because they were the people that had the money, large contributors and people of that sort. This process, of course, is going on all the time in a political party. For the sake of briefness, just call it the conservative element versus the liberal element. I'm sure that manifested itself in some of the appointments.

I know that they really seemed to have a difficult time in the Women's Division, too. During the war I was involved with the War Finance Committee and was not in as close touch with the Women's Division. They had had several directors of the Women's Division taking charge of the activities. Some of them were just very unacceptable.





Democratic National Committeewoman

Stein: One of my notes from the Times indicates that in 1944 you were elected to the Democratic National Committee, you and Stuart Dobbs.

Wolfe: I wasn't elected until 1944?

Stein: Well, you may have been elected before that, but it didn't--

Wolfe: Well, we went back there, I know. We went back to Washington. But I thought that was during Truman's [administration]. It was during Truman's administration.

Stein: That was later.

Wolfe: That was later, yes. Well, I can't remember the dates.

Stein: Well, at any rate, during that period did you go to any of the national conventions?

Wolfe: I remember going to one in Chicago, but I thought that was in 1940, but I'm not sure of that. But I think that's the only one that I went to, the one that was held in 1940 in Chicago. There they were having the regional meetings for the women again, and they had some very good ones. It seems to me at that time that Dorothy McAllister was still in the Women's Division. We really had a first class convention.

As you read the record of the increase in the number of delegates, women interested in politics, and the participation, you can see that the whole campaign really paid off. You get the equal representation, and you get the interest of the women, because they just increased by leaps and bounds. And now they want to be fifty-fifty. As many women as men.

Stein: Yes. Although I noticed that they lost out on that one.

Wolfe: Yes.

Stein: At least for the moment.

I'm not sure that we have on tape the story of that time that you went back during the Truman administration, so maybe we should get that one here. That was the time that Drew Pearson wrote about you.



By DREW PEARSON  
(Copyright by the Bell Syndicate)

WASHINGTON—With housing the No. 1 need of the nation, the real estate-building-and-loan lobbies continue to be more active than ever to block any kind of public housing. Here is a sample of how the backstage boys operate.

Last November, the Republicans elected a new congressman from San Diego, Calif.—Charles Fletcher, who is also president of the Home Federal Savings and Loan association. Immediately following his election, Morton Bodfish, ace-lobbyist for the building and loan associations, skillfully contrived to get Fletcher appointed to the banking and currency committee.

Ordinarily, no freshman congressman rates this key committee, but Bodfish, with long experience in pulling the right wires in Washington, managed it just the same. And having been put in this pivotal place, here is how Fletcher is reaping dividends for his building-and-loaners.

Chat Paterson of the American Veterans Committee was testifying before the banking and currency committee against the "Bodfish-inspired" legislation whereby emergency war housing built by the government would be sold largely for cash and to the big real estate operators. Paterson proposed instead the cities and veterans' groups be able to buy this war housing for low-income tenants. This brought an immediate objection from building-and-loan executive Congressman Fletcher.

"Socialized housing!" he exclaimed, adding that he was against Senator Taft's idea that the government should help low-cost housing because private enterprise has failed.

"I resent the statement that private enterprise has not done the job," continued Fletcher. "It has not had a chance to do the job. The president has not turned loose the controls. This committee is even now working on legislation."

**ORGY OF RACETRACKS**  
"But the bill you are proposing," interrupted AVC's Paterson, "would allow a new orgy of racetracks and commercial construction at a time when controls to channel scarce housing are desperately needed."

"Most of the controls on housing were removed last year," he added. "We were promised that private enterprise could do the job. Instead we find housing starts reaching new lows."

"I remember, too, that just a year ago, when I appeared before this committee in support of OPA, members of the committee were confident that private enterprise could bring down the cost of living if price controls were removed—and look what's happened since."

"It is the rankest sort of propaganda to say that private enterprise has been given a chance to succeed," retorted Fletcher, hotly.

Paterson then invited the San Diego banker-congressman to visit some of the slums near the capitol.

"A rank idea of how well private enterprise has succeeded would be given by a trip to the slum areas of the United States which were built without government control."

sion of publicly-owned housing for those who cannot afford decent, sanitary and safe housing. We support Senator Taft's views on that."

"Well, I don't agree with Senator Taft," snapped the gentleman from San Diego.

★ ★ ★  
**WESTERN DEMOCRATS TELL TRUMAN**

President Truman heard some frank talk about his domestic and foreign policies during the latest "thought clinic" held at the White House with Democratic party bigwigs from Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming.

Bluntest of the group was Mrs. James H. Wolfe, national committeewoman from Utah, who told the president that many voters were against the Truman doctrine and that some people were worried because military men are getting high posts in government.

In general, western Democratic leaders gave their blessing to the Truman doctrine, but emphasized that one of the most effective ways of fighting communism was by a liberal democracy at home.

"We've got to lead the world in this," spoke up Colorado State Chairman Eugene Cervi. "If we have a dynamic and liberal democracy here at home, that is the best possible antidote to the spread of communism, Mr. President. Our own economy must be a blazing beacon if you expect to make the principles you have espoused a living thing in other nations."

Cervi said he saw no reason why the Democratic party could not have a "left wing," provided it was not a "Communist left wing," but was composed of progressive elements who are "true liberals."

Truman said he agreed, but asked:

"That brings up the old question—what is a liberal?"

He said he had always considered himself a liberal, adding:

"Nobody objects to true liberalism, but communism is not liberal in any sense of the word. It is strictly totalitarianism."

There were laughs when Cervi quickly responded: "I know you are not trying to put me in the position of defending communism, Mr. President. I am equally opposed to it."

★ ★ ★  
**WITCH-HUNT FOR LIBERALS**

Both Cervi and Mrs. Wolfe of Utah expressed concern over the prospect of a witch-hunt which would discourage liberals from serving in the government.

"We are not going to have a witch-hunt," replied the president. "The liberals won't get hurt so long as I'm around. Remember that communists are not liberals. They are very conservative people serving conservative masters."

This caused New Mexico's ex-Governor Jack Dempsey to remark:

"Do you remember how the Republicans called us Communists when we introduced old-age pensions and social insurance?"

"I sure do," replied the president. "And when they weren't call-

Republicans on that committee vote against the bill. But now they're all for it."

Dempsey told Truman that the people of New Mexico were for his foreign policy 100 per cent.

"Last year," he said, "the folks thought you were doing a good job carrying out someone else's program. Now that they know you're carrying out your own program, they're even more pleased."

"We can't go along with Governor Dempsey that the people of Colorado are for your foreign policy 100 per cent," said Colorado National Committeeman Barney Whitley. "But the great majority feel you're on the right track and you can count on Colorado supporting you for re-election in 1948."

This was obvious bait to get Truman to admit his candidacy for re-election. But the president ducked.

"I'm interested in the country," he replied, "and I'm interested in doing the job I've got to do now."

He then made a final plea for foreign-policy support.

"If we had spent just one billion dollars after the first world war on preventive medicine," Truman said, "we could have saved some 250,000 lives and from \$250,000,000,000 to \$350,000,000,000."

## Times Books

BY BOB ROGERS

"JUST TELL THE TRUTH," by John L. Strohm (Scribner's; \$3.50).

A Republican, a Baptist, and president of the American Agricultural Editors' association, this author set out with notebook and camera and, bearing a passport which top Moscow officials visaed on the understanding he would "just tell the truth," traveled 4,000 miles in the Soviet Union.

Not interfered with in any way, he visited ruined cities, collective farms, watched boys and girls play mumble-peg, hopscotch and marbles, visited private homes, talked to barefoot workers, investigated the high cost of living, noted the tragic scarcity of consumer goods.

Everywhere he went he seems to have found the people friendly to him, admirers of America, grateful for supplies sent during the war and for UNRRA aid . . . though he remarks that UNRRA allotted to Byelorussia and the Ukraine half the food allotted to ex-enemy Italy.

Time and again he quotes men and women to this effect: "Anyone who says the Soviet union wants war is crazy" . . . "Those people who call for a third war should be put in the crazy house immediately" . . . "America and the Soviet union must always stand together for peace."

**WORLD AFLAME: THE RUSSIAN-AMERICAN WAR of 1950,** by Leonard Engel and Emanuel S. Piller (Dial; \$2).





Wolfe: Well, that must have been after the war too.

Stein: Yes.

Wolfe: But we went back. We were called back. In fact, the organization was called back in regional groups, the National Committee people, to discuss policies and conditions in the country. I remember that we, of course, were the Western states.

They called on all the men first--I don't know, maybe I was the only woman there--and asked them what they thought about the conditions that were in the country, and they all gave glowing accounts of what was happening. When it came to me, I said that I must not have lived in the same area [chuckle], because I didn't see it that way, and I just wrote a list of the things that I thought were going wrong.

So, the man, Gael Sullivan--he was the young man who was chairman of the committee at that time. He's since died, but he really was very perceptive and, I thought, looking toward the future, and had the welfare of the people at heart. He said, "Well, would you be willing to tell the president what you think?" And I said, "Yes."

So, the meeting was arranged for the whole group to meet the president the next day. When we went, I didn't feel like going into all the detail and just suggested that perhaps the chairman might tell him what had happened. But I went on to tell about some of the other things that I thought were going wrong, including the fact that we thought that too many military men were being appointed to offices in the civil government by Truman. I mentioned that.

Then the man from Colorado, Eugene Cervi, said that he thought that some of the other points that I had brought up ought to be mentioned too, so he did mention them, some of the things that I had brought up in the other meeting. The whole thing was supposed to be a confidential meeting, but it was picked up by Drew Pearson and somehow or other got published around the country. You wonder how things like that happen, but I guess there are always leaks when they want them to leak.

But, at any rate, the chairman of the committee [Gael Sullivan] said to me afterwards, "What would you think about this program?" And he outlined the Marshall Plan. It wasn't very long after that that Marshall outlined the plan that they



Wolfe: were going to carry on to try to help the countries in Europe.

I think what they were trying to do was to get public opinion that would prepare the people for this huge program of reconstruction that they were going to do in Europe. But it's always very interesting the way that it worked out and the fact that all the men that were in our group were so lyrical about how well everything was going. At that time we had price controls and all sorts of things, and I was the only one then that said I thought that they ought to be eliminated and that we ought to bring some of the men home from Europe, and things of that sort.

But it was interesting to have the whole thing picked up that way.

Stein: Was there any reaction? I presume that the Drew Pearson article was published in the Utah papers, and I was wondering if there was any reaction back at home?

Wolfe: No. I think that perhaps they weren't surprised that I would have a viewpoint like that, because both my husband and I were well established as liberals in the Democratic party. But we always got good publicity in the Utah papers, because I think they had confidence that we weren't crackpots or nuts, and our views on these things perhaps should be publicized. We did have a lot of favorable press all the time we were in Utah. My husband always did.

Stein: That's quite remarkable that through all those years--

Wolfe: Yes, it really is remarkable, but it was true. But, you know, when you read some of the things that he did, you can understand why the people might be back of him, and, of course, on the papers there were thoughtful people who were running [them], especially in Salt Lake, where you had the Salt Lake Tribune.

The Tribune was the large paper which had the circulation --it carried more business news, so it appealed to maybe more people than the Deseret News, which might have had a larger circulation over the entire state, but that was run and operated by the Mormon Church. But the Tribune was more controlled by the Catholics. I mean, the man who was at the head of it was a Catholic. Now, inasmuch as we were Unitarians [laughter], it is strange that we did get a good press, isn't it?





Stein: Yes.

Wolfe: From either paper, but we did.

Stein: And you must have really retained their faith and their confidence.

Wolfe: Well, I think that they did hold my husband in high esteem. He was called on to do labor arbitration in some of the local things before he was appointed on the national board. But both the industry and labor respected that he would give an honest opinion, and when they'd call for a neutral arbitrator, he was usually the one that was chosen, so that they did have confidence in his fairness, I think, and that accounted for it largely.

#### Democratic Women

Stein: I know we've mentioned quite a few of the women from Utah that you worked with, and I wondered if there were any that we've overlooked, some of the other women who were important with you after you came back to Utah.

Wolfe: Well, there were really just dozens of good, active women working throughout the entire state. A number of them were elected to the legislature. I think we're recollected that Mrs. Musser was in the senate, and Reva Beck Bosone had been elected to the legislature in Utah and then later was elected to Congress. There were a number of other women there. Some of the older women had been elected to the legislature even before the Roosevelt regime, and it seems to me that they represented a liberal viewpoint, too, the women who got elected to the legislature at that time. Perhaps it is because the Mormon women themselves were interested in politics and were very helpful in getting the women elected.

I don't know how to account for it, but we had maybe more in our legislature than--at certain periods, you know. It did seem to run in cycles.

Stein: Were some of the women in the state legislature Mormon women?

Wolfe: Oh, yes.



Stein: Somewhere I picked up the names of several women who had been in the Utah legislature. Mrs. Emily Carlisle was one. Does that name ring a bell?

Wolfe: I think maybe practically all of them were Mormons. Have you any other names there?

Stein: Mrs. Bertha Purser, Anna T. Piercey, and Grace A. Cooper. Those are the only names I have.

Wolfe: Well, I would suspect that they all were Mormons. I knew Mrs. Piercey, and she was a very interesting woman, interested in the labor movement, is my recollection. I knew Mrs. Carlisle, but I can't remember so much about her.

Some of them came from--I don't know whether or not Mrs. Cooper came from Carbon County, which was where the coal mining was done, the coal industry, and the women there were, it seems to me, quite alert to not only women's rights, but also the rights in labor and industry and things of that sort. I believe that Reva Beck Bosone might originally have had some experience in Carbon County. I can't remember whether she came from Carbon County or not. But they seemed to be very alert to the necessity for bettering the conditions of labor.

Stein: What sort of roles did these women play in the party? Some of them, as we were just saying, were in the legislature. But did these women you're talking about mostly hold party office? County co-chairmanships?

Wolfe: I think Mrs. Carlisle had a county office. I can't remember that Mrs. Piercey did. She was in the women's club and was strong in that group. Of course, Reva Beck Bosone--I can't remember that she had any political office before she was elected to the legislature. She most likely took a prominent part in politics, but she didn't have any high political office at the time.

Stein: Do you remember any of the important men in the Democratic party at that time in Utah?

Wolfe: You mean while I was working in politics?

Stein: Yes, while you were working in the party.

Wolfe: Well, I remember that there were twelve young men--and I couldn't possibly remember their names--who worked as a group



Wolfe: to further the nomination and election of George Dern as governor. He was elected for two terms, but resigned during the second term to go back to Washington to serve as secretary of war.  
[end tape 1, side 1; begin tape 1, side 2]

Wolfe: I was trying to think of who some of these young men were. I can remember one was Harold M. Stephens, also a Utah district judge. A great many of them were lawyers. Stephens later was appointed to one of the federal courts, the circuit court of appeals, I believe. Oh, it's almost impossible for me to think of the names now, but they were rising young lawyers and turned out to be very successful in the end, perhaps because they got their candidate elected [laughter], and that always helps, you know.

There was a man by the name of Beverly Clendenning. They were largely non-Mormon, I presume, although there must have been some Mormons in because they helped elect Dern.

Stein: It sounds as though more women Mormons were active and at least in political office than men, at least in the Democratic party.

Wolfe: I don't know that more were elected. We've just talked about the women. But the men were very active politically, and I think they held most of the top positions in the party. A few might have been what were called "Jack" Mormons; that is, they weren't very active in the church, but they always retained their membership in the church. Now, whether or not they paid their tithing, I can't tell. But the ones who resigned from the church, you found, left the state because they had a rather difficult time to make headway, to compete with the people who remained faithful in the church.

I remember one man who was the son-in-law of an LDS\* president. Whether or not he had been a Mormon, I don't know. But, at any rate, he married the president's daughter, and he finally left the state because he found the climate not too good for his business success. It seems to me he was an attorney too.

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\*Latter Day Saints, another name for Mormons.



Wolfe: But, no, the men were [active in politics too]. Mr. "Cal" Rawlins, who was the national committeeman before Mr. Brown, I guess, or after, I can't remember which; Mr. Parnel Black; and practically all of them that I can remember were Mormons. They were just as active--more active, of course, than the women, because they had the power and the office.

### Women's Role in Politics

Stein: What sort of role were women able to play in the party in terms of how they interacted with the men? I know that you described an earlier period where you said that they seemed to be accepted pretty much as equals, when you were working with the Legislative Council, and I wondered if that continued to remain the case.

Wolfe: I think that it all depends upon the relationship between the people who are in control at the time. Now, I happened to be there when Dern had been elected to office. That may have been one reason why they asked me to accept the office of state chairman, because I had been active in the League of Women Voters before and hadn't participated to any great extent in the political office. But I was invited to step from that into the chairmanship of the women's end of it, vice-chairman of the state committee, and at that time Delbert Draper, I think, was the chairman. He was one of the young lawyers who had helped elect Dern.

Now, his wife was a very intelligent woman, but she didn't take any real part in the organization of the Democratic women. She didn't seem to care about holding office or anything of that sort.

But, well, I've forgotten what point I was trying to make.

Stein: What I was trying to get at was what sort of influence the women had in the party in Utah, if they continued to have influence.

Wolfe: Well, you know, it all depends upon personalities. If you have a strong personality, and you know what you want, and you know how to work for it, you get it. And if you aren't informed, and if you don't know, then you don't have an important part to play. You really have to know what you're





Wolfe: about, whether you're a man or a woman, to get anywhere.

That's the reason that I'm just a little bit lukewarm on saying that we should put women on just because they're women. I'm all for women, but I want them to know what they're doing and what they're about. I think our job is to help them to get the proper education and the proper training. Of course, that's easy now because the universities have been opened and everything; it's much easier for them to do it than it was in the good old days.

Then they had such large families, in Utah especially. Women, especially the Mormon women, I think, were encouraged to have large families because they thought that the larger the family, the more help you had. Especially if you were in agriculture, you needed people to help work on the farm, and so forth and so on. So actually, the large families were encouraged, especially when the Mormons came out there; they had to reproduce themselves, and that was one way of doing it.

The women didn't have too much time. I'm surprised that some of those early women pioneers had the influence that they did. As you read the biographies and the sketches, if you look through that Mormon history that we looked at the other day,\* and read the biographical sketches of some of those women in the early days, you're amazed at what they were able to do and the influence they were able to bring on both what you might call the government and perhaps-- I don't know so much about the church rules and regulations, but certainly they ran what you might call the relief society, which was giving lots of help to the people.

Stein: Well, in that period, then, between 1936, when you came back to Utah, and 1950, when you left again, were there, aside from you, other strong women in the party who were able to make some waves or have their weight felt?

Wolfe: Yes. Yes, there were. I think Mrs. Bosone was a very strong personality, and through her elective offices, you see, she had a great deal of influence.

Then there were a number of the county chairmen.

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\*Orson Ferguson Whitney, The History of Utah, 4 vols., Salt Lake City, 1892-1904.



Wolfe: A woman up in Weber County, I think, who later on became state vice-chairman, was a strong personality, and I think that she had real influence.

Mrs. Musser continued to have great influence right up to practically the period shortly before her death, because she had such wide contacts with the different ethnic groups, and warm contacts, and then she was so much interested in the social welfare structure and the civil liberties, civil rights, and things of that sort.

Now, her husband, I think I told you before, was the son of the man who was secretary to Brigham Young. But while I don't think that Burton Musser had left the church yet, he was one of the most critical of some of the practices of the church.

Let's see. We're trying to think of other women who were influential. There was a Mrs. Ballif who was interested in the Women's Division. Her husband also, I think, was the county chairman down in Utah County, and she may have been county vice-chairman at one time or another. But she was the sister of Esther Peterson.\* Do you remember Esther?

Stein: Yes.

Wolfe: Well, Esther's interest in the political party came about through her association with the CIO. That doesn't sound right now.

Stein: The labor organization?

Wolfe: Yes, the labor organization.

Stein: It's the CIO.

Wolfe: Yes. At the time I first met her, she was the chairman of the women's section of the CIO. I've forgotten what year this was, but she had a desk in our campaign headquarters, in the Women's Division campaign headquarters, and worked right out of that. So, she was very much interested in the program

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\*Esther Peterson later served as Director of Consumer Affairs under Presidents Lyndon Johnson and Jimmy Carter.



Wolfe: for the Democratic women, trying to get them [the labor group] interested in the Democratic party. Her record indicates that she was a good strong personality and that she made lots of headway.

Mrs. [Lottie] Dern, as the wife of the governor, also was very influential in helping the women to get more liberties, rights, positions, and things of that sort.

Did I ever tell you that when Dern was in office he was very favorable to appointing women to state positions?

Stein: No. You hadn't mentioned that.

Wolfe: And he appointed--I know that I had recommended someone for the Board of Regents at the university, and he said, "If you'd like to advise Mrs. [Estelle] Shields that she will be appointed to the Board of Regents, I'd be glad to have you do it." So, he let me tell her that she had been appointed, which was very nice. But she was a very intelligent person and made a real contribution on the Board of Regents.

Now, I didn't know the women who were high up in the Mormon Church, except just by name and maybe by casual acquaintance and meeting them at different places, but they certainly were very important in the whole organization, the women who were heading up the relief society and working in that group, because they had the personal contact with the people themselves, because the people who needed help or who brought contributions in for the relief work would go through those women. That really made a difference in their influence in the community because of their knowledge of these things.

A woman like Mrs. Carlisle, for instance, might have had this connection. I don't say she did, because I can't remember. It just occurs to me sort of back in my mind that she was important in the church group and in some of the church work.

So the whole thing gets tied up one way or the other in whether or not you have influence and can get things done in the political organization. But first of all, I think that you really have to know what the situation is; you have to know what's going on and what the rules are. You can't expect women to just have the influence because they're women, unless you want them to operate on the basis that they seem to be operating on in Congress--I mean, the employees--



Wolfe: at the present time.\* [Laughter] I don't think they operate so much in Utah on that basis, although I couldn't say for sure! [Laughter]

But the women were really intelligent and had been trained to take responsibility. So the leaders you found really had some influence.

There was a woman up in Cache County. Her name was [Mrs.] Vernon. Her son later became a state chairman of the Democratic organization in Utah. But she was a powerful woman, and whether or not she was a teacher at the Agricultural State College--if she wasn't, her husband was, but I think that both of them may have been. She was very influential up in what they call Cache County.

You'd have to take time to really think about it, but you can be sure that there were many women in Utah who really had a great deal of influence one way or the other, through their office or just their contacts. I think they had more interest in politics, in what the man stood for, and in what he might be willing to do in office, and things like that. That's just my general impression. Otherwise, I can't understand how so many Gentiles got elected. [Laughter]

Stein: I was just going to ask you if you think that the same policies or the same people would have been elected in Utah if women hadn't been active in the party.

Wolfe: You mean if they hadn't had the vote?

Stein: Well, not so much if they hadn't had the vote, but if there hadn't been these strong women in party offices. Would the party have adopted the same sort of policies, do you think?

Wolfe: Well, you have to think that they really had a strong men's organization who were interested in the liberal things too. Now, from Dern and the man who later became governor down here in California--he was in our state senate, and his name

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\*See footnote, page 140.





Wolfe: escapes me at the moment.\* But people like that and the man from Utah who later became the chairman of the Public Works Administration in Washington--all these people we could count on to try to further these things; I mean, the liberal program.

If you look back in the history of Utah, you'll find that it was one of the first states, one of the foremost states, to begin liberal labor legislation, like workmen's compensation act and things of that sort. So I would say that maybe the men would have been strong enough to put that program over, but certainly the women helped, and having the vote was very helpful to them.

I ran across one article that we had written on the influence of the vote of women. We decided, according to the article that was in the Digest, that up to that point the women hadn't been too effective because the vote hadn't been increased enough. I think now that they're very much more effective than they were even then.

We were just a leavening influence, it seemed to me. We could create enthusiasm, we could put on finance things, and things of that sort. But it was a small group: the League of Women Voters, women of that character, who were interested in social programs. I think certainly they helped a lot, but I wouldn't say that the liberal laws wouldn't have passed without the women, because I think that at that period the men who were working on these things were strong enough that they could have pushed them through.

Now when Reva Beck Bosone got in, she was just as strong as any man in the legislature in passing reform legislation as far as labor was concerned and things of that sort. She was backed by the labor organizations.

But you had to really have the personality and the information and the knowledge in order to do it. I feel very strongly that women will have the same power as men, if they just have the information and the knowledge and the personality, because all men don't make it. I mean, there are just certain men who seem to have it also, and so you can't expect all the women to have it.

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\*Culbert Olson.



Stein: Well, one of the things that is said about women in politics to bolster the argument that women will never amount to as much in politics as men, one of the arguments that people make along that line, is that women generally are less tolerant of the stress and the conflict and just the rough-and-tumble of political life than men are. Has that been your experience?

Wolfe: I think that as they begin to indulge in it on the same basis as men that they'll overcome all of that. You have to. I mean, you have to be more pragmatic and practical, in the present situation, anyway.

If you followed closely the [Democratic national] convention last week, I think that you come to the conclusion that the whole campaign that [Jimmy] Carter [the Democratic presidential nominee] carried on and everything was a pragmatic campaign, and that actually, as you read about the conferences they had and what they anticipated doing, they followed their program out pretty well. They weren't concerned much about the issues, and being clear on issues, and things of that sort; they were stressing this other thing, the feeling of the people, and their discontent with government, and so forth and so on.

So, I think that women as well as men will see all those points if they want to be successful in politics.

We've had two recalls up here on our [Sonoma County Board of] Supervisors. It's very difficult for the people who were recalled to accept the fact that here they were working hard, you know, for the environmental causes and things of that sort, and that the people themselves recalled them because I think that they [the electorate] felt the taxes were getting too high, and that they were being circumscribed in what they were able to do with their property, and things of that sort. So, it came down to the issue of their personal feelings.

You see, the whole idea is that you have to know people, and you have to operate with people, and so you have to be a good judge of human nature and what's in the wind.



Wolfe: Now, that doesn't sound very nice of me to say things like that, but I think that it is practical, and that your real job is to do the educational work to show them what a better program will do for them and how it will help the people. So, my idea is that this educational work must constantly be done in order to make things acceptable.



## VII CALIFORNIA

Local Politics

Stein: Is that the same sort of work, then, that you've carried on in California since you've been here?

Wolfe: Well, I was on the [Sonoma County] Planning Commission, and, of course, I certainly was voting all the time trying to carry out the planning ideas to make the environment better, and yet trying to be practical along with it.

Of course, the one thing that maybe illustrates it is that after one of the big developers got a project through out on the Russian River, on the part of the coast that ran up into the Russian River, he said, "Mrs. Wolfe, we appreciate getting the project through. But, you know, you haven't left us one single foot of property on the coast or on the river itself." We had asked for a big park and all the rest of it, which we got. And so I said to him, "Well, but you have access to it." So, he said, "Yes, we have access."

Well, this man has just now been appointed to the Planning Commission to take the place of one of the women who was very much interested in the environment and was asked to resign by the men who came in on the recall.

So, I often think of that. Here this man went through all this thing with the Planning Commission and was hampered in a great many instances on what he wanted to do and could do. They never did finish the project out on the Russian River and the ocean, maybe because they felt it wouldn't pay after they really got the permit, or perhaps too many other environmental protests discouraged them.

But, at any rate, I did what I could, as far as I could





Wolfe: see that it was practical to do it, to get as much as I could for the environmental concerns and for the good of the county as I saw it. I seemed to be quite successful and the other people went along with me, because I think I tried to be reasonable. I think you can go to limits, you know, that do more to harm your cause than help in the long run.

So, as long as you're doing the educational work and things of that sort, I think that it will turn out all right.

Stein: Were you appointed to the board, or is that an elective position?

Wolfe: No, I was appointed.

Stein: When was that that you were first appointed?

Wolfe: Let me see. [Pauses to think.] It must have been about '64 or '65, somewhere along in there. I resigned two or three years ago.

Stein: And you must have been active in some sort of activities before that, so that your name was known to be appointed.

Wolfe: Well, I had taken just a casual interest in politics. That is, if a man came along that I thought was good, like Clem Miller, who was running for Congress, I did some work for him and had some entertainments or coffees or something over at my ranch house when I lived on the ranch. And I worked for Senator Joseph A. Rattigan, who later got elected to the state senate, and then was made a superior court judge.

I also did some work for Mr. "Ig" [Ignacio] Vella, because I thought the man that was up there was pretty bad, you know, and I wanted to see him defeated. I did what I could for Mr. Vella and I became very interested in him, because he had a great deal of knowledge, and he had an interest in finding out what was going on in the county, and he seemed to know where he was going. He'd done the research work, and he knew about a great many things that I considered necessary. So I did work for him.

Then later on, I guess I must have been about--I was just wondering how old I was when he [Vella] appointed me. I must have been at least seventy-five, I guess, and I went on and served for the eight years after that. That would bring it out about right.



Wolfe: But he was up for recall too, because he had approved the budget. But, now, he was very much interested in the planning work and the new ideas regarding planning, the environment, preserving the environment, and yet he had an abrasive personality. He turned people off, and I think that was too bad, because I thought he was the best man on the whole board of supervisors. But he resigned before the campaign got underway and took a job as the head of the Sonoma County State Fair so he didn't have to go through that recall process, and I'm glad he didn't, because the way the public was voting, against taxation and things like that, I guess that he might have been recalled too.

#### Unitarian Fellowship

Wolfe: At the same time I was working on the ranch, you know. I had that big ranch out there [Vineburg, California], and I was working quite hard on that. So, I didn't spend a great deal of time on outside activities. Then, after my husband died, I sold the ranch and moved to Sonoma from Vineburg and became interested in the Unitarian Fellowship, located in Santa Rosa. The district director of the Unitarian Association called me up to Santa Rosa and asked if I would help. There were about five of us, I guess, all together in a committee, and they asked if I wouldn't take the chairmanship pro tem and really see what we could do to reviv[e] a liberal religious organization we had worked in.

I had been going up there to meetings, and you know how these things go along, and then there isn't a proper program, so everything just drops to pieces. I agreed to the chairmanship and for five years I spent just practically all my spare time working on the Unitarian Fellowship, and we did get that revived.

We bought a building, and we even tried to get through a project for low-income housing and had it practically all ready to go when [President Richard] Nixon impounded the funds and cut us off. But we still have a beautiful piece of property in Cotati, which is quite near the Sonoma State College, which I was able to get very reasonably from a man who lived there in Cotati for years. He was rapidly becoming senile, and somebody had offered him \$100 a month during the rest of his life for the property. I said, "Well, the church would do that too for you," and so he decided to let the



Wolfe: church have it for that money.

While at that time the property didn't have any big value, since that time it has become quite a valuable piece of property, two acres right on Cotati Avenue, on the road up to the college.

But we never were able to get the low-cost housing project through, which would have entailed about, I guess, over \$800,000 in costs; because the money was impounded for those particular projects, we never did get it through.

Stein: I'm a little bit confused about that. The Unitarian Church was going to sponsor this housing project, but it would have been paid for with federal funds?

Wolfe: No. We sponsored it, and under section 236 in the HUD [Housing and Urban Development] organization, the government would pay the interest on a loan for housing down to 1%. All you had to pay was 1% of the interest rate, and they would somehow or other guarantee a loan to the fellowship for the cost of the project; subsidizing certain rentals, etcetera.

So, we put up our land as our part of it and did all the work. The other thing is that it's very costly to get one of those projects through and entails a lot of work. I figure it cost in the neighborhood of \$10,000, maybe more than that, and it was all contributed by people who might have had something to gain if the project had gone through, such as architects who drew all the plans that were necessary for the application without cost, and the contractor who did all the estimates and things, and that came without cost.

We had to get a man down in San Francisco to actually arrange to prepare all the applications and things of that sort, and that was on a contingency basis, you see, so that we were able to get this project underway without any cost to the fellowship except that we turned over our land, and some of us put in considerable time.

The members were very much interested in the proposed project. Of course, we had remodeled the old schoolhouse we bought, and that was a good thing to help get people in and to get them started.

At any rate, now it's [the fellowship] been going about fifteen years, I guess, and it is really quite a flourishing fellowship. We have church status with the Unitarian-



Wolfe: Universalist Association. We've tried having a minister two or three times, but the members liked the fellowship idea better.

The difference between the fellowship idea and the church idea is that in a church you have a minister and the minister somehow or other takes over a lot of the responsibility for running things, but in the fellowship the people themselves have all of the responsibility and they work through committees.

You have a program committee that sets up the program and invites people in to talk to the fellowship, or a series of things, and puts on the lectures and things of that sort.

So, they liked that better because they had the personal participation in the whole thing. I think they must have about 160 members now, contributing members.

We ran a church school, and we didn't have any money, of course, at all, when we first started out. There was absolutely no money.

One woman saw the Chapel of the Chimes management and they were willing to let us have the Chapel of the Chimes free on Sundays for a service with the use of the organ. The man who was the caretaker played the organ, and so every once in a while he'd play some music for us.

Well, then, usually you like a coffee hour or something of that sort. There was no place for coffee there, but across the street was the big El Rancho Motel. So, a woman went over there and asked if we could have coffee over there, and they said yes, they would be glad to have us. And, you know, they gave it to us free. And it was run by a Mormon!  
[Laughter]

Stein: Well, there you are, coming full circle!

Wolfe: Yes, coming full circle! And I said, "Well, I think this is wonderful, but how can you afford to give it to us free?" He said, "Well, we're new and we like the advertisement." So, we'd go over there, and we'd have this beautiful setup of coffee in their dining room, or a room close to the dining room, and for two years they gave that to us, until we moved away.





Wolfe: Then another woman said that she thought the Teamsters organization would let us use their rooms for a Sunday school, church school. So, we used that for a year until the women who were the teachers--honestly, they said, "We just can't endure it any longer. Those men come in here on Saturday nights and they have their meetings, and the place simply reeks with cigar smoke and all the rest of it, and we can't get it out, and we think if we're going to have a church school that you should buy a church or something and get another building."

Well then we began to look for another building, and finally we found one we thought we'd like. We paid a down payment on it, but subject to passing all the zoning laws and things of that sort, and the city turned us down, so we got our money back on that.

Then the old Todd schoolhouse came up for sale. That had been vacated because it was declared to be not earthquake proof, and so not having much sense, not realizing that a church would have to make it earthquake proof too [laughter], we bought that at auction. I think we paid about \$8,500 for it, four acres of land and the 6,000-square-foot building that had been put together with old buildings which had been moved one up against another, you know, like they do in schools.

But, at any rate, the windows were broken out, and we certainly did a lot of repair work. Then I went through all that with the planning commission--I mean the building commission. I think maybe that's the reason I got put on the planning commission. The building commission and the building inspector said, "You can't go into that building until you do all these things, even making it earthquake proof." But then we said, "Well, how much will it cost?" and found that it would have cost the school \$90,000 to make it earthquake proof, many years ago.

But, at any rate, we started out by putting in the windows and things like that and getting it cleaned up. Then I found a little asterisk in the building code that said the building could be occupied if necessary during the remodeling. [Chuckle] So, I remember meeting after meeting I had; I think we had at least three meetings with the building commission, the appeals commission, where we appealed from the building department to commission.

I felt so guilty, because I could see all those men getting paid up there, and here we were, incurring all this expense to make them meet and hear our case. But they seemed



Wolfe: to be very friendly and willing to offer advice and all sorts of things, and I think they were glad when I found the asterisk. [Laughter]

Stein: And they could get rid of your case.

Wolfe: And, so, they said, "Okay, but you have to do all these things about making it earthquake proof and all the rest of it."

So then we began getting bids on that thing and what had to be done. Funny things certainly do happen. We had one architect come down there to look at it, and he told us what had to be done. He said, "You have to take the roof off and put plywood on, put a new roof on." Well, now, if we had done that, it would have been fine, because we did it afterwards. But I thought, "Gee, that certainly does sound expensive." I've forgotten how much it would have cost-- quite a bit. So, we decided that maybe we'd better not try to do that and get some other information.

Well, in the meantime, that man had evidently been having trouble with his wife, and there were some men--I don't know whether somebody tried to kill him or not, but he left town. He was the nicest, quietest man. He was a Catholic.

Well, at any rate, then we got an engineer to look at it, and he said something about putting a truss across the whole top and then tying it in. That seemed to be less costly, so we decided to do that, and we went ahead. We did that with borrowed money from the Unitarian Association.

We got, I guess, about \$10,000 from the Unitarian Association to help with the remodeling. In the meantime, we raised what money we could ourselves.

We now have the building, which is earthquake proof, but then they finally had to put a new roof on, and they had to do what the other man had recommended to us in the first place [laughter], take all the shingles off, and put plywood on and then put shingles back on. They had to borrow \$20,000 to do that, which included stuccoing the outside and other things.

Well, now I understand that that loan, everything, will be paid off this summer, so that now we have a double earthquaked building at one-third the cost proposed for the Board of Education. But we did most of the work ourselves.  
[end tape 1, side 2; begin tape 2, side 1]



Stein: You were saying that you're just now paying off the \$20,000 loan. [1976]

Wolfe: Yes, we will pay that off this year. But what we did all along--they had to put new wallboards on the inside of the whole church. You know what that is.

Stein: Yes.

Wolfe: And all the taping, and painting, and they had to replace a lot of the woodwork and the windows, and shore up the foundation, and do over the restrooms, and things of that sort. We didn't keep track of the man-hours that the people put in it. They used to come up there by the dozen, you know, working on the carpentry work, and the taping, and the painting, and all the rest of it. So, we'd do all this during the week, and then we'd clean up one room so that we could have a meeting on Sunday. We did that for the whole period that we were renovating that church.

All the time we employed one carpenter, I think, who did some of the detailed work that we couldn't do and he sort of tied things together. But he contributed a lot of time himself, and his wife was very much interested in working in the church school.

So that whole venture, I think, has been a worthwhile thing that we did up there. The thing appealed to teachers, so that a large percentage of our membership came from the teachers in the area. It's supposed to be a county-wide thing, so that we get people from Healdsburg, and Cloverdale, and over on the coast, and Penngrrove, Sebastopol, Santa Rosa, Sonoma, Petaluma. We get people from all over the county who come in there.

We get speakers, many of them of national repute. If they happen to be going through and we know about it, they're willing to come up and talk to us, so that we really have carried on a worthwhile project there, and the programs we put on, I think, have been wonderful.

One of the most interesting, to my mind, is one where the speaker was [S. I.] Hayakawa, who is now [1976] running for U. S. Senator on the Republican ticket. We had had one of the assembly meetings. The Unitarian-Universalist Association has an assembly every year, and the year that I'm speaking of it was in San Francisco. The Laymen's League invited Hayakawa as



Wolfe: a speaker. He gave such a marvelous talk on the Negro situation, the history of the Negroes in this country, and why they acted the way they did. We were having a lot of trouble in the university at that time.

It was really quite a remarkable speech, and it was so good that we invited him to come up and give the same speech at our fellowship. It cost us quite a bit of money, but I thought it was worthwhile, and so we did it.

It was shortly after that that he was appointed as head of the San Francisco State College. He ran into all that trouble with the students, you know. If you were here, you remember the terrible situation they had out there and his reaction.\*

Stein: Oh, yes!

Wolfe: He kept becoming more and more conservative. [Laughter] He resigned from the Democratic party and became a Republican, you know, and now he's running on the Republican ticket. But, you know, one of the things that I read about--of course, we pushed all his books on semantics. He really did do some excellent work along that line.

But I was very much interested and just somehow disappointed in the way he handled it out there [San Francisco State University]. It may have been a good way to handle it. I don't want to be too critical about it. But with all his understanding of why they did the things they did and knowing their history so well--you know, I liked his speech so well that I had it taped and I let them use it in the Social Welfare Department over at the college [Sonoma State College] and up at a social welfare department in Oregon. I knew the man who was head of that department, and they thought it was wonderful too. It was just what we needed

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\*S.I. Hayakawa had been appointed acting president of San Francisco State University in the midst of a turbulent student strike during the winter of 1968-1969. Shortly after assuming office, he attempted to restore order to the campus by banning unauthorized sound equipment, and, in one instance, actually pulling the wires from a loudspeaker system that was defying the ban. The strike finally ended in March, 1969, after months of bloody demonstrations and many arrests. [Ed. note]





Wolfe: in that period to give us some understanding of why the Negro reacted in the way he did.

But, at any rate, I suppose I've become conservative along with Mr. Hayakawa, but not to the extent that I would want to join the Republican party! [Laughter]

Stein: I guess he was very good at explaining what happened until it happened on his doorstep, and then it was a different matter.

Wolfe: Yes, I suppose so. And then he had to work out a formula that would really control it, because it had to be controlled.

But I read somewhere about why he wore the tam o'shanter. There really was a point in it: to take the idea, the attention, off the seriousness of the whole situation and focus it on this more or less trivial part of his apparel, which, after all, is a very good idea, isn't it?

Stein: Yes.

Wolfe: Because a lot was made of that and it brought a little bit of humor into the whole situation.

Well, at any rate, the fellowship goes on, and it's still doing good things.

Stein: About how long did it take to get this schoolhouse transformed into the church? It sounds like it took a number of years.

Wolfe: Well, it did take several years; I can't remember, but it must have been three or four. I know the inside was all done by the time that I retired. I was chairman for the first five years and then turned it over to somebody else. But I held onto it while all the early financing and all this other stuff was going on.

I wasn't there when they put the new roof on. The chairman who came in after me had to borrow the money to put the new roof on and do that. They borrowed it from the bank and didn't get any more from the Unitarian Association; they had run out of money. But the interest rate fortunately was quite cheap then, 6%, so they haven't had to pay that excessive amount of interest on the loan.

Of course, the Unitarian Association gave very good rates for their money that they loaned out; half of it was



Wolfe: free and the other half about 5%, so it amounted only to about 2 1/2% or something like that.

It really was a wonderful thing. But just getting the people together and having them work together, it seemed to me, was one of the best things that we could have done at the time.

They haven't done too much with the four acres yet, although we use it for parking. But, you know, it really has possibilities, out there right out in the farming community on the corner of Stony Point and Todd Roads.

But I noticed they're building something big across the street from it now, and I don't know what it is. I don't know what they'll do with the property eventually, because as far as the planning's concerned, they're trying to hold that section in agricultural land; that is, south of the church. Maybe they'll let some industry or housing into the section north of Todd Road. It's within the Santa Rosa designated limits of expansion.

Stein: One thing that I didn't understand before and was unclear about in your distinction between a fellowship and a church is: Who leads the services on Sunday, or what happens on Sunday?

Wolfe: On Sunday, the format is quite informal, and usually the chairman takes the responsibility of leading the service, but often designating members to take charge. When I was there, I tried to follow throughout somewhat the format that we'd had in some of our other churches; that is, a reading, which would set the tone for whatever the speaker was going to speak about. We've always had a hard time getting them to sing [chuckle] because there was always this opposition, you know, that the hymns were too theistic or things of that sort. So, we were never able to develop a big choir.

I can't recollect that we ever had a prayer service. Perhaps some minister who came might have taken a few minutes to give a prayer or a devotional or something of that sort, but as a usual run, they don't have the prayer, but they do have the reading, or rarely a meditation.

Then they have announcements or something of that sort where all the people are permitted to stand up and make their own announcements.



Wolfe: Then they have the speaker, and sometimes they arrange to have a discussion after the speaker, questions to the speaker, if it's a subject that lends itself to that and they most usually do. Then after that they have coffee in the green room, so called, which is a large room that's used for multi-purpose and sometimes for church school rooms.

We have had the Head Start school\* up there for the last three or four years. They use about three or four rooms on one end of the building. Then we use the same rooms for Sunday school on Sunday.

So, the building has been used to a large extent all the time that we've been in, which makes me very happy because I can't stand to see a huge building stand there for a whole week without anyone using it.

Stein: After all that effort had gone into it.

Wolfe: Yes. And before the Head Start we had another school, which was for mentally handicapped children, or mentally disturbed children, so that there's always been something going on there during the whole week, which, I think, helped the community itself.

#### The Ranch at Vineburg

Stein: I'd like to back up a moment. I never really made the transition in your moving from Utah to California. Could you just tell me briefly when that happened and how you came to move and where you moved to?

Wolfe: Well, I think actually it came about when my mother died. My father had died some time before, and then my mother died. She owned a ranch out east of Sonoma in Vineburg. It was pretty well run down, and there was a question of selling it or not selling it.

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\*A federally-funded pre-school program.



Wolfe: We had a very large house in Salt Lake, which had been converted during the war by the federal government into apartments for executive class [of officers]. So we were living in an apartment in the building, remodeled to our specifications. All the children had moved away, married or something.

I decided that maybe it would be better to come down and restore the ranch, and then my husband, when he retired, could come down. So that was really what precipitated it.

We sold the apartment house in Salt Lake, and I moved everything, our furniture and stuff, down here, down to the ranch house, which is about three miles out of Sonoma. And that's about it.

Then my husband continued on the Utah Supreme Court until he was taken ill, and he came down here, and finally we decided that he'd better retire from it altogether. So, he came down here and remained the rest of his life.

Stein: I see. You once mentioned that you had sheep on the ranch.

Wolfe: Yes, we did put sheep on the ranch, my son and I. We started out with fifty sheep, and then when we'd get the lambs, you know, we'd have about a hundred or so. It was really quite interesting.

Stein: Was there any other livestock?

Wolfe: No, nothing to speak of. Oh, chickens. We did try chickens. We had about a couple of thousand chickens that we ran in cages and had a brooder house where we had to raise the little chickens that we operated with.

But most of the ranch was a fruit ranch and had pears on it. It had beautiful pears. Some of it was in pasture, which was the thing that made us think about getting the sheep, and we could raise hay, you see, too. We could raise hay, and we had the pears, but I leased all the fruit out to Mr. [Herbert] Batto, who farmed almost everything in this community. He was an old Italian who really was a hard worker and a great money-maker. [Laughter]

My youngest son came down with me, and he helped operate the ranch while he finished school. Then he got married and went to American Airlines, where he's been ever since, now in Los Angeles.





- Stein: When did you leave the ranch and come to Sonoma?
- Wolfe: That was after my husband died. I decided that I'd sell the ranch. That was in '58.
- Stein: So you've been here ever since.  
[end of tape 2, side 1]

The Wolfe Children

[the following is inserted from Interview 1, May 3, 1976,  
tape 1, side 1]

- Stein: You mentioned that by the time you moved down to the ranch, your children were pretty much grown. But when you went back to Washington, they were still pretty young, weren't they?
- Wolfe: They were from five to fifteen when I went back there. So, it really was a tremendous operation trying to get them organized and settled in school. I didn't know much about the educational system in the East, and I guess I didn't talk to anybody about it. I put the two older boys not in a private school, but in the public school in Virginia. [Laughter] Can you imagine anyone not knowing any better than that in those days? [Laughter] I know that's what they thought of me. But three of them, the girl and the third and fourth boys, went to a girls' school--  
[end of tape 1, side 1; begin tape 1, side 2]
- Wolfe: Then I was living out in Virginia, but I moved back up into Washington, thinking it would be easier, and they all went to the public school in Washington. I think they got a lot out of it. Maybe by that time the oldest boy, who had graduated from the high school, had gone to Swarthmore for the--
- Stein: Did he go to Swarthmore?
- Wolfe: Yes. He had his first year there, and then he came back and went to the University of Utah. They all went to the University of Utah. We were fortunate in having a good public education system in Utah.

Now one of the boys, Jimmy, is a professor of mathematics there. He somehow or other wanted to come back to Utah. He graduated from Harvard. He was back there during the war



Wolfe: where they really, you know--he couldn't go on with his education because they needed help so badly with the training of the recruits and all that. He was pressed into teaching recruits. He was working for his doctor's degree, and he just had to pitch in and help with all the teaching and everything before he could go on with the necessary research that it entailed. But he finally graduated from there. Harvard had said that he could go anywhere in the world that he wanted to, and he decided he just wanted to come back to Utah.

The first one, Sam, came back to Utah and graduated as a civil engineer, and about the time he got through, the Second World War was beginning to come on, you know.

So, he answered some advertisement. He had finished school and was then working in the reclamation department over in Denver. He answered an advertisement in regard to recruits that they wanted to take training in the Air Service, and they would be members of the Royal Expeditionary Air Force. He took the examination and was one of the three that passed. Then they sent him down to Cal Tech, and he was there for a year studying weather. He certainly hates weather now!  
[ Laughter ]

Then they sent him to Ireland, and there he worked with the Royal Air Force. He said it was the most horrible situation, because they'd try to chart the weather and everything. They'd send the men out. He said sometimes none of them would come back; sometimes half of them would come back. It was very seldom that they got their whole crew back. I guess he got terribly depressed and despondent, because I can imagine that in Ireland the weather was bad and it was so dark so much of the time, I guess during the winter months; it's so far north.

Well, he then began clamoring. He said, "When I get out, I want a ranch." [Laughter] To get out on a ranch. So, finally that's what he did. He bought a ranch when he got out, and he's now up in Montana, and at this late date is a member of the legislature. He only ran last year! I was greatly amused at that, because none of the children followed in the footsteps of their father, you know, and studied law.

Stein: That's interesting.

Wolfe: It is interesting. And none of their grandfather's children followed in his footsteps and studied medicine. Now, he really was an awfully good doctor, and yet he had three boys, and



Wolfe: none of them would take up medicine. And then none of my five children would take up law.

Stein: Did any of the rest of them go into politics?

Wolfe: Well, the only one that might be interested is my daughter, and she took a great interest in the League of Women Voters. She lives down in Santa Fe and has worked on the planning commissions and things of that sort. She was offered a position on the planning commission, but she felt that she couldn't take it. She's the one that's most interested, I think, and follows it most closely.  
[end of insert]



## VIII LIFE IN WASHINGTON, D.C. AND AFTER

Katherine Wolfe Streeper

(Interview 7, July 28, 1976)

[begin tape 1, side 1]

[Mrs. Wolfe and the interviewer are joined in this session by Mrs. Wolfe's daughter, Mrs. Katherine Streeper]

Stein: How old were you when you lived back in Washington?

Streeper: Well, I was thirteen, thirteen and fourteen, in the years before Mother sent us back home again. As I say, I don't think that girls of that age particularly think; they just sort of feel. I think I felt a combination of being very stimulated by having been removed from hometown to the big city and all the exciting things that were going on in connection with Washington. Whether you admit it to your friends or not, you probably feel that you're hot stuff a little bit if your mother is in public life. But also I remember feeling very bewildered by all the newness.

I believe that I was in four different schools in four years, so that I had kind of an anxiety complex all the time about whether I could meet this new challenge that was coming up. I was not one, at that time, who made friends easily, so that I would just barely feel I had made my place in a certain school, and the next year I'd be in another school. So, it was challenging in that way for me.

But also I remember that Mother took me to the [1936 Democratic national] convention in Philadelphia. That's what you were talking about. That was really exciting. But for some reason or other, Mother was busy, and so she sent me to meet Mrs. [Caspar] Whitney and her daughter, Faith Wing; I even remember the names.





- Streeper: I felt completely ill at ease with these very what I thought must be important rich people, and here I was, a small-town girl. I couldn't think of anything to say to them, and so finally I started to tell them about the pelicans on Bird Island in Great Salt Lake. [Chuckle] I don't quite know how it came up, but I remember telling them about how the pelicans ate all the fish they could, and they would come and disgorge their fish from their pouch for their young and then go back and fill up again. How did they get those fish?
- Wolfe: They had long bills.
- Streeper: They couldn't have gotten them in Salt Lake.
- Wolfe: They used to get the fresh water fish down at Utah Lake.
- Streeper: Oh, that's how it happened. But then I remember I must have been telling this to the younger daughter, and she was about your coloring [brunette], a very attractive young woman. Her mother came in, and she said something about, "Katherine has been telling us all about the fascinating life of the pelicans," or something like that. And I didn't dare look up at them for fear there was a wink being exchanged or something like that. [Laughter]

But I remember being impressed with the fact that this girl had that day bought a whole new set of golf clubs, plus they had rented a chateau on Bermuda for the summer [laughter], and I began to feel as if I hardly would dare pick up my fork, you see, for fear I'd do something wrong.

But that was a very exciting week, going to the convention.

- Wolfe: Well, I should have told Katherine that Mrs. Whitney--the recollection that I have of her--was a native of Nevada. So, she was a western woman. I think that her father might have been a mining man from Nevada, so that perhaps she felt a closer association with someone from the West than you realized.
- Streeper: Probably so. But, you know, at thirteen, you just aren't--. And Mother wasn't there. I think that was another thing I wasn't used to, making conversation with strangers, and all of a sudden, here I was.

But I remember another thing about the convention: trying to make a short cut through some seats and getting up in front of an arc light and nearly being melted down instantaneously.



Streeper: But I remember that there was a commentator there, and H. V. Kaltenborn, of course, was there. This man's name was Boat Carter, and he had, it seems to me, a delivery something like [radio commentator] Paul Harvey, that very mannered delivery. Because we couldn't see what was going on at one point, why, someone stood us all up on top of Boat Carter's desk, and I remember thinking that was very nice to be able to do. We were in a box sitting behind [Congressman] Hamilton Fish at one point.

But that was quite a week there, and then you had planned to send us home with Uncle Russell [Wolfe]. That was probably the most exciting week we spent in the East, I would say.

Stein: When you were in Washington, I understand that your mother took you around and showed you the sights of Washington.

Streeper: Yes.

Stein: Do you remember much of that?

Streeper: Very much of it. I remember that that was a very stimulating thing. I'm glad that she didn't want to leave us home in Salt Lake City and just hire a housekeeper, which she could have done. I remember going to the Mint; and the Bureau of Archives, I think; the Smithsonian; walking up the Washington Monument steps; and all of the lovely buildings that there were there. What else did we do?

Wolfe: You must have gone to the White House.

Streeper: I think George [her brother] went to the White House to a birthday party for the Roosevelt grandchildren. I remember going through the White House. It seems to me that we were invited to a musicale there, or something like that.

And then once you took me to the Mayflower Hotel to a reception for--was it Secretary Woodring, the secretary of war after Dern died?

Stein: Yes, I think that was his name.

Wolfe: Yes.

Streeper: And I saw people walking out of the Mayflower Hotel, and I thought I had never seen such gorgeously dressed people in all my life, such glamorous people.



Streeper: But the other thing I remember is about Jimmy having chickens. Do you remember that?

Wolfe: Yes.

Streeper: We had one of these houses--the second year we lived on Porter Street, which is not too far from the MacLean House. But it had three stories, didn't it; I mean, narrow, but it had three stories. My brother's bedroom was on the top floor.

We had a Negro housekeeper, and apparently Jimmy, my younger brother, had fifty baby chicks up there, that Mother didn't know about. They were in his bureau drawer, and Mother kept saying, "My, the birds are so loud at this time." [Laughter] He must have made some kind of a vow of silence between whoever cleaned up there and himself, and I think finally the secret came out when she refused to clean up any more chicken dung. Then the chickens, which were Plymouth Rocks, those gray and white striped ones, went out into the back yard. By this time they were moulting already. And remember, they got out of the house. Apparently you [addressing Mrs. Wolfe] felt responsible by this time, and you had to chase them down almost to wherever Vice-President [Henry] Wallace, who was then Secretary of Agriculture--what hotel was that, on Rock Creek Park?

Wolfe: Well, I don't know. I can't remember anything except the Mayflower. Oh, no. There was a great big one up further out, I guess.

Streeper: That's where so many of the--

Wolfe: Well, my recollection of the end of the chickens was that the neighbors complained about them crowing in the mornings. [Chuckle] So, we had the milkman pick them up and take them out, and they were converted to fryers and stewers. [Laughter]

Streeper: You had one brought back, and we all refused to eat it.

But I remember you chasing those chickens down the street trying to catch them. I think it was Wardman Park Hotel.

Wolfe: Wardman Park Hotel must have been its name. I'm glad I wasn't there to see that. [Laughter]

Streeper: I thought you were the one who had to chase them.

Wolfe: Oh, no. I don't recollect that at all. My recollection is



- Wolfe: there weren't fifty, but just about six or eight, which makes it more plausible.
- Streeper: Well, he started out, I thought, with fifty.
- Wolfe: Maybe he started out with more, but by the time--
- Stein: Maybe the troops had been reduced to fewer. [Laughter]
- Wolfe: To fewer. But, you know, the Wallaces had boys that kept snakes in the bathtub. So, all these things got written up about the same time. It was good PR, you know, families that loved animals, and things of that sort. Here was I, as director of the Women's Division, with a son raising chickens in the bedroom, his bedroom drawers, and the Wallace kids raising snakes in the bathtub. [Laughter]
- Streeper: Children keep right on being children.
- Wolfe: Yes, they do.
- Streeper: It must be difficult in hotels and things.
- Stein: Were you aware of your mother being gone a lot, or did she manage to be home when you got home from school and on weekends?
- Streeper: No, I was aware of her being gone a lot, and I think I was also aware of decisions sort of happening to all of us with very little notice, and that we felt almost as if our lives were--I did; I don't know about the brothers--that edicts from above, you know, were about to fall on us at any time, which, of course, had to be.

But we were sent hither to the grandparents for one summer, and back to Salt Lake, and we never really knew too much ahead of time--probably Mother didn't either--what was going to happen. Maybe we would be equated with army children in that way, just during those few years.

But I remember feeling that I wished sometimes Mother had been there, because the authority was in the hands of a housekeeper, and in the case when we were first there, it was a young maid that we had had with us for a long time in Salt Lake City. She was in her twenties and very romantically inclined, and it seemed to me that her decisions would often be very arbitrary, and we didn't get along with her too well. In fact, Mother says we drove her into marriage. [Laughter]





Stein: I was also wondering what it must have been like in the schools back in Washington. Were there other children of government officials in school with you?

Streeper: Yes. First of all I was in St. Agnes School for Girls in Alexandria, Virginia, and that was a very new sort of atmosphere for me. Many Virginia children were very aware of their background, their family line, and their family tree, and this sort of thing, which I had never been aware of at all.

Stein: The FFV's [first families of Virginia].

Streeper: Yes. And the DAR's [Daughters of the American Revolution] and the CAR's, the Children of the American Revolution families. I felt I was a revolutionary type among them. In fact, I remember they passed around a notebook where everybody wrote secret opinions of everybody else. And apparently I came out as the most different girl there that whole year. I don't know. It didn't elaborate, but it shook me up.

Stein: As an adolescent, you must have been crushed by that.

Streeper: Yes. Then the next year I went to probably the best school I have ever been in, Wilson High School in Washington D.C. They were just finishing it. I remember we crawled through some of the pipes they were putting in during the summer. It was a million-dollar school, which, in those days, meant a very wonderful school. There was a young principal there that looked like not William Powell, but the other Powell, Dick Powell, the movie actor, but he really had wonderful ideas about education.

I've never had such good teachers, and he had things like vocational conferences where you signed up for whatever vocation you thought you might want to go into, and then they would disband school every Friday morning, and you would go to a meeting in the school of people that talked to you on that profession. In those days, I think that was a rather new sort of thing to be done. So, that was a very good school.

Wolfe: This was a public school.



Streeper: Yes, it was. We had to walk through two alphabets, I think, to get there; well, through Porter Street and then another alphabet to get there.\*

But I liked that school very much, and in it were what they called the "Brain Trust" children, so that whereas I had been a good student in other schools, except for mathematics, I remember being dazzled by the knowledge of these children, their grasp of civic affairs, and so forth, which I thought I had a good grasp of, but which compared to them I didn't at all. Then I was one year there, and then we went back home again.

Stein: Did any of that political education, so to speak, rub off on your later career? Were you yourself involved in politics at all later on?

Streeper: I think that for a while I may have reacted against it all, but, yes, I've always been interested in politics, and I'm a member of the League of Women Voters, of course.

I was just telling Mother that I'm an independent, and that I wish that I had been able to vote in the primary this spring. But in New Mexico they make you wait six months before you can change your party affiliation. You can register if you're there three months, but to change your party affiliation they make you wait six.

But when I moved to Albuquerque, I met a very dedicated young woman who became a close friend of mine, and she was the Democratic county chairwoman for a while. But immediately under her enthusiasm we were working for Adlai Stevenson, of course, but later on, doing a favor for her, I became a block captain, which, I guess, is the lowest echelon. I found myself going around and converting, or trying to get people to vote for the Democratic candidate for governor in New Mexico.

Then I went up to Sante Fe to the La Fonda Inn to lunch, and I was waiting for my friends, and this candidate came in and began talking to cronies near me. Of course, I knew who he was, and I could hear everything he said, and I just had the feeling he was such a poor person and a very bad candidate for governor.

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\*Several series of streets in Washington, D.C. are named in alphabetical order.



Streeper: So, even though I had gotten several people on the block-- Republicans even--to say they would vote for this man, I found myself sneaking off and voting for the Republican candidate. I felt so bad about that that I refused to take part again.

Then, because the Democratic party in New Mexico seemed to have maybe a higher level of shenanigans than the Republican party at the time, I decided I would be an independent for a while. Actually, this is not a good rationale at all [chuckle], but I think I was just a little lazy about it all for a good number of years, about taking part in party politics, although I have really vigorously campaigned for a favorite candidate, and usually it was a Democrat.

Wolfe: I think you have to be quite pragmatic about working in politics and realize that you take a lot of the so-called shenanigans along with the bigger issues that are back of the party lines.

Streeper: And especially now.

Wolfe: Getting right back down to conservative and liberal.

Streeper: You now have to tell the younger generation that even more vigorously. You know, they all say, "Oh, a plague to both your houses," sort of thing. Well, it's now going to be their party, their parties.

#### Civic Work

Stein: [To Mrs. Wolfe.] I think maybe we could start talking about what you've been doing since you left Washington, and then if you [to Mrs. Streeper] have some comments to throw in, please do, from your own recollections and your own experience.

I think where we had stopped last time we had already discussed the Women's Division and the campaign of '36 and come back to Utah and discussed your activities in the party in Utah.

One of the things I was wondering about that I don't think I asked was if you had ever considered running for public office again after those first two very early attempts.

Wolfe: No, I don't think I ever did because, you see, my husband had a political office, an elective office, and it just didn't seem



Wolfe: that we even thought of it, running two people out of one family. The women's lib hadn't gotten that far along!  
[Laughter]

Stein: So, it was quite enough for you to stay active just in party politics.

Wolfe: Yes. Yes, that's true. And I did do a great deal in civic work and things of that sort, in addition to working in the political organization. We were particularly active in the peace movement. They were really quite effective in Utah right along in those years.

Stein: With any particular organizations?

Wolfe: Well, yes, there were a number of organizations. I think that we were involved in the National Council for the Prevention of War, and that is one that was active over a long period of time. Then, of course, you had the branches in the different states, and our branch was always a very active one because it had a number of prominent people who were backing it, and especially the women were active in the peace movement.

It's hard to realize, but we also were working for the abolishment of child labor in those days, either before or after. I can't remember just when that took place, but I remember we did quite a bit of work along that line, and it was difficult in Utah because the young people worked in the beet farms. Actually, the school system was set up--either it didn't start until after the beets were harvested, or they had a vacation for the beet harvest, and the children, a great many of them, worked in the beet fields. So, the agricultural sections weren't too much back of the so-called child labor act of the time, because it's my recollection--I've forgotten, but it must have taken in children up to fourteen anyway.

At that time also there was a campaign going on for Prohibition--I suppose this was before I went back to Washington--that we were working in there. That was an interesting one because they got Prohibition with the state control, so that everybody, if they wanted to buy any alcohol at all, had to get a state permit, you see. I think you could buy wines or things of that sort.

I suppose maybe that system came in after the complete Prohibition when they came to the conclusion that Prohibition hadn't worked in Utah as in other places, and that maybe is when





Wolfe: they then adopted the state control act. But we were active in both the act to get Prohibition and the act to abolish it and to get the other control.

I personally worked hard to try to get a women's dormitory at the University of Utah and worked through two or three different sessions of the legislature.

Streeper: Now, that I didn't know. This is interesting.

Wolfe: But we finally got that.

I think I told you that the governor let me announce the choosing of the woman to the Board of Regents.

Stein: I don't think you told me about that in detail.

Wolfe: I didn't? I thought perhaps I had. When Governor Dern was governor, and perhaps I was state vice-chairman [of the Democratic party] at the time--I'm sure I was--I had suggested that we appoint a woman to the Board of Regents. He asked me for a name, which I gave him, a very excellent appointee. He said, "Now, that's perfectly agreeable to me, and if you would like to notify her that she's been appointed, I'd be glad to let you do that." So, I did.

Stein: What was this woman's name?

Wolfe: Mrs. Estelle Shields. She was the wife of the attorney general, I believe, at the time.

Streeper: Oh, Dan Shields.

Wolfe: Yes. I guess her mother came from a Mormon family, but she had broken away from it and was one of the people who established the Unitarian Church in Salt Lake City in the early days. So, we had become well acquainted with them through the church organization and knew that they had good background and good ideas on education. She turned out to be a very excellent member of the Board of Regents.

We did get as many women in office as we could. I've forgotten, but there were a number of appointments in the state at that time.

Stein: And this is when Governor Dern was still governor?

Wolfe: Yes.



Political Influence

Stein: Were you able to exert that sort of influence after you came back from Washington when there was another governor?

Wolfe: With Governor [Henry H.] Blood we had a great deal of influence. He was one of the excellent Democratic governors that we had in the state. But then we had another man, who also was a Democrat, but our group of women didn't have any influence with [him]. But there was a separate group of women who did have influence with him. You know, it always works out that way, I think, that some people have more influence than others.

I think you kept asking that question off and on all the way through: Do you think that other people could have gotten the same results, or that you could have gotten the same results if women hadn't had the vote? And things of that sort.

Well, of course, I think the vote counted for a lot in the recognition we got, because they needed our vote to help get elected. But you also had to be somewhat sympathetic and compatible with their aims and aspirations in government too. That's the thing, I think, that helped me get appointments when I was working in the thing.

Managing Family Life and Politics

Stein: We were just talking about the '36 campaign and all those other things you were involved in. I wondered if you had a family secret or some way that you particularly coped with the stress of a campaign, with the stress of whatever it was that you were working on when things really got very active right up there at the deadline.

Wolfe: Well, I don't know. There certainly was a lot of stress and strain. My husband only had to campaign after he got on the Supreme Court every ten years, so he wasn't campaigning much. He was out of politics, being on the court. When I came back, he was elected to the Supreme Court in '34, so he wouldn't



Wolfe: have to run again until '44, and then again in '54, you see.

But I was out campaigning all the time. I think that one of the hard things to do is to try to keep competent help in the house so that you could be available to do things on demand and things of that sort.

I remember one of my sons had a physical condition that required him to take shots; he was anemic and needed to take liver shots. The other one needed to have a different kind of shot given him. Well, he was the youngest one, and I remember when I went on these regional trips that I took out around the state that I turned it over to Katherine to try to give George the shot, and you [Katherine] had a rather difficult time, I think.

Streeper: I don't think I ever did it.

Wolfe: You didn't?

Streeper: He must have flat refused. [Laughter]

Wolfe: Well, maybe one of the other boys gave it to him then, I don't know, because I think he got it. They seemed to think that it was really an important thing, you know, that he should get those shots. But I know he hated to take them.

But then I did try to make the children more responsible for things as the campaigns came along and I had to be away from the family. It is difficult for women where they have a large family and responsibilities for keeping everything running smoothly to just move out and turn it over to somebody else or to hope that they'll be able to cope while you're away or not there.

I can't remember that we had any special secret that would enable us to do it. [Chuckle] In fact, you never had time to really recover from one thing before the next thing poured in on you.

Stein: Well, that's what I was wondering about. Were you able to get along on four hours of sleep, or few meals? I'm always amazed, when you tell me all the things that you did, where you found time to eat or sleep.

Wolfe: Well, I think I grew to be quite efficient as far as getting things done was concerned, so that as one girl--I was on the board of directors of the women's section of the National



Wolfe: Unitarian Organization, and she came out, and her description-- I couldn't see how she got it--she said, "You just make me think of relaxed efficiency." So, I thought, well, maybe that's it, that you didn't get too tense about doing things, but you went ahead and did them; the main thing was to get them done without getting upset about it.

So, we were carrying all these additional things in addition to politics. We were very active in the church and things of that sort. We did all those things too. I have no secret about it.

Streeper: Mother, it seems to me even then I remember that you were considered one of the people that could work well with men because you didn't get hysterical about things, and that even if you had a varying opinion from theirs that it wasn't pushed to an emotional sort of crisis; even then I remember thinking that that was your reputation.

Wolfe: Well, perhaps, and to this day I would rather work with--I find it more interesting to work with men than with women. I mean, I'd rather discuss economics with men than with women or problems of the day, because somehow or other it seems to me that the ones that I know--of course, the younger generation is different, but in the older generation you can occasionally find men who are very well versed on different subjects and [it is] a pleasure to talk to them about it. But it isn't so often that you run across women in the different fields. The younger women are coming along so that nowadays you find the varied interests.

Now, I think that Mrs. Nyswander, whom we discussed once in a while, was one of the women who was very interesting to talk to. She had a wonderful background and, you know, just an enthusiastic interest in a great many things. Of course, she was appointed to assist on one of the government projects, and she did a really good job, but I think that may have helped give her a national reputation, I think, which she had at the time.

Katherine tells me that Jacob Trapp, who was our Unitarian minister at the time, was quite a thoughtful person and expressed himself very well; that he and Mrs. Nyswander were friends, and he talks about her still. When he passes through this area--she lives down in Berkeley--they stop off to see her. He's said to me many times, "You should get in touch with Mrs. Nyswander." I've forgotten her first name.

Streeper: Dorothy.





Wolfe: Dorothy. Because he said, "You'd enjoy her just as much now as we all did in the early days." So, I thought, well, sometime I would look her up, but I understand that either she has a problem with eyesight or hearing or something that makes it difficult for her to get around by herself. I suppose it must be eyesight. But you might check up and see if you can find her down there.

Stein: That's right in our back yard.

Wolfe: Yes, it certainly is.

Streeper: I think Jacob Trapp thinks she's one of the best minds he's ever encountered. Her daughter, as I recall, is a psychiatrist on the east coast and has spent a great deal of time on the rehabilitation of drug addiction and that sort of thing.

Politics and Civic Affairs: An Education for the Family

Wolfe: As far as the family is concerned, I should think that they would find one of the most interesting things, or one of the most interesting side benefits, that came to our family, both from their father's and my involvement in politics and in civic affairs, was the people that we came to know from one end of the country to the other. There we were, sitting in Salt Lake City, and we had a big house, and as people came through from one end of the continent to the other, they would stop off there. Either they were stopping off to see my husband, or they stopped off to see me. I always thought it was really quite a wonderful education for the children to get to know these people.

My husband was on the Board of Regents of the University of Utah for a while, and they put on these programs where they have speakers come through and talk; extension programs I think they called them. Well, a great many of those people we entertained at the house for dinner and things of that sort.

When the people who were interested in the peace program came through, they would stop at our house, and I can think of several of them. As I ran through the Digests, I think that I was the one that kept hammering away on trying to get stories on peace and what was happening in the peace movement.

Then there really were very interesting people connected



Wolfe: with the Unitarian Association, so that, for instance, the president of the Unitarian Association, whoever might happen to be in office, would stop off there, or with the treasurer or something of that sort.

I remember one thing that I was quite delighted with, and that was when a man by the name of Theodore Schroeder stopped off. He was eighty-five years old, I think, at the time, and he was a wonderful looking man, you know, with white hair and a Vandyke beard, if I recollect properly. He had come out as some kind of a representative of the Laymen's League, and I think he spent about a week with us.

He said that he had been a missionary to Utah from the Unitarian Association in the 1880's. I said, "I didn't think they had missionaries." "Well, they did at that time," he said. "At that time," he said, "all the churches were sending missionaries to Utah to help convert the Mormons, or to at least get the new people who stopped off in Utah." He said that he was up in Brigham City, worked up in Brigham City, and that he had organized a group there. Of course, the Unitarian Church was first organized in Salt Lake City; one of the oldest churches, I guess, was there, and it was flourishing in the 1890s.

So, I was always very much interested in his story. He said that when he went back he wrote some articles on polygamy and things of that sort, just the casual everyday life of the Mormons. It was published. When he died, in his will he left his fortune to a couple of people, and they were to edit his writings and see that they got published. He gave them carte blanche to edit them and publish them.

The will was contested by some of the man's relatives, in one of the Northeast states, saying that the writings were obscene. It was taken up before one of the judges, and, I presume, a Catholic judge, who might be more interested in the religious end of it than maybe the others. The will was broken because they held that the writing was obscene, and all it was was a description of the polygamous life that was carried on in Utah at the time.

Well, you know, I suppose that religion really had much more effect on the community, on the mores and everything, than we realize. But that was really quite an interesting experience to hear this man talk about his experiences.

Actually, how I happened to know about the will--I went



Wolfe: to the dentist [in Petaluma] one day, and he said, "You're a Unitarian. Have you ever read this little pamphlet?" He handed me a pamphlet, and it was called "The Will of Theodore Schroeder," and it told all about this thing that happened. Here this man was a member of the American Philosophical Society and of excellent standing and things like that.

Well, that's away from the Democratic party, of course, but it is somewhat indicative of the democratic system.  
[Chuckle]

Stein: Just as a postscript to that story, did his writings ever get published?

Wolfe: As far as I know, they didn't, except what came out through the American Philosophical Society. But the niece and nephew, I suppose, inherited what was left of his fortune after the attorneys got through with it. [Chuckle]

Well, let's see. Then I remember one time that Scott Nearing came through. He spent a week with us, and it was wonderful to hear a man like that talk. He was a classmate of my husband's.

Stein: Back East?

Wolfe: Yes, in high school, the Claghorn High School in Philadelphia. So, they had kept up their friendship over all the years, and, of course, he read a lot of Scott Nearing's publications because he wrote just hundreds of pamphlets and numerous books and treatises and things of that sort. He was wonderful. They're still publishing, and he's past ninety now, but they're concentrating more on the good life.

Streeper: He was ahead of his time, wasn't he?

Wolfe: Yes!

And the politicians. Of course, I think I told you before that Helen Gahagan Douglas was there, and we found her quite charming, and Frances Perkins, and Lavinia Engle, and Helen Essary, and the woman who did our Reporter Plan, Harriet Elliott.

Streeper: Oh, yes. Wasn't she a dean later at Chapel Hill?

Wolfe: She may have been. She was a professor of political science, of course, at Chapel Hill.



Wolfe: Just any number of the women as they passed through--Molly Dewson and people of that character, you see. So, the children really had a chance to--

Streeper: Remember who I remember from my point of view as being a very attractive person? Mary Kelly.

Wolfe: Oh, yes. That's one thing I noticed too as I read through the Digests. I remembered really what a wonderful press we had, and especially I think that I must have had an awfully good press without realizing it, coming there as an unknown person and stepping into something like that and not having the backing of all the social leaders or things of that sort.  
[end tape 1, side 1]

#### Women Reporters

[begin tape 1, side 2]

Stein: Who was Mary Kelly?

Wolfe: Her husband was back in Washington. He had some post in the government. Now, whether or not I told you this before, later on, after they came back home, he was elected as a congressman, and evidently he was a lawyer, and he also was elected as judge at one time or another. They had three children, and each one of those children became a judge of one sort or another at the same time that their father was. So, there were four judges in the family, and they were invited to come back East and participate on a radio program.

But to get back to Mary herself, while her husband was working on his job, and I've forgotten what it was, she became a free-lance reporter. She came down to see me, and we talked. She was very friendly and very outgoing.

She wrote a story, and I guess it was published by the Washington Post, if I recollect right, just one of those things about personalities and things.

Through her, I became very well acquainted with Malvina Lindsay, who was one of the well known reporters in Washington. Then Bess Ferman was another very good reporter, and I think that she was a very good friend of Molly's too, so that we became acquainted with her, and she was very helpful to the Women's Division.





Wolfe: There was a woman by the name of Genevieve Forbes Herrick, and the president [Roosevelt] liked her very well. So, whenever we had anything that we wanted written about the president, we would have her go to the president and get an interview with him. She would then write it, and if he wanted to write a greeting or something for the Women's Division, sometimes he'd say, "Well, have this girl do it."

She was a friend of Mrs. [Harold] Ickes, and, of course, Mrs. Ickes was very much involved with work for the Indians. Katherine, I don't know whether you knew that or not. Did you? It hasn't shown up in any of the things you've read about the Indians? Katherine is with the Navaho Museum, a hostess down there [Santa Fe].

So, Genevieve was very much a part of the whole inner circle there as far as the top echelon was concerned, because she was so friendly with Mrs. Ickes.

But we did stories on a lot of the women reporters, you see, in the Digest, and we had an awfully good press as far as Washington was concerned. I don't think we could complain about the whole press over the whole country. We had a good press at that time. I suppose that just the influence of Roosevelt did a great deal of it.

Streeper: And Eleanor.

Wolfe: Yes, and Eleanor. There's no doubt about that.

Streeper: Mary Kelly was Mrs. Ed Kelly, wasn't it?

Wolfe: Yes.

Streeper: Of Oregon.

Wolfe: And she was devoted to Mrs. Roosevelt too and did stories on her. When Mrs. Roosevelt was traveling out West and up in Oregon one time, Mary invited her to stay at her house, and she came over and stayed with her. Of course, Mary was just delighted to think that she would do that, just loved her about it, and she's written many intimate little articles that have been published about Mrs. Roosevelt. Mary was an amazing woman, and I shall see her when I go up to the Shakespearean Festival [at Ashland, Oregon].

Stein: She still lives in Oregon?



- Wolfe: She still lives in Oregon.
- Streeper: In Medford, is it?
- Wolfe: At Medford, yes, and I usually have lunch with her or something of the sort when I go up. She's still active, although her husband is dead.
- Stein: I came across the name of another woman reporter who evidently later became an assistant in the Women's Division, Lorena Hickok.
- Wolfe: She was a devoted friend of Mrs. Roosevelt.
- Streeper: Well, Lorena Hickok was head of the Women's Division during the last Roosevelt campaign too.
- Wolfe: Yes, she was.
- Streeper: Because I went to New York--by then I was married--where my husband was interning, and I got a job in the campaign headquarters there under her.
- Wolfe: Well, I've had interesting letters from Virginia [Rishel] on the same subject, too, because she wrote me--I think that she left the Women's Division a few years after I did and went to work for UNRRA [United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration]. When Lorena Hickok came back as director of the Women's Division, she called and asked Virginia if she wouldn't come back and help her out, and Virginia did. She said that after all the hecticness working in the Women's Division with the new people that came in after the original ones, she said that it was just heaven, because everything went so smoothly and beautifully. There was no stress or strain, and she just thoroughly enjoyed it. So, the woman must have been very efficient.
- Streeper: Lorena Hickok?
- Wolfe: Yes.
- Streeper: Oh, yes.
- Wolfe: Now, tell me. What did she look like?
- Streeper: She was kind of masculine, with kind of gruff manners, but I think everyone seemed to like her. Kind of heavysset.



Wolfe: Yes, I know. Yes, that's right. Lorena really was a friend of Mrs. Roosevelt and had worked with her at the school where they made the furniture and things of that sort up on the Roosevelt estate, Hyde Park. Mrs. Roosevelt had this cottage, so-called, and I think later on it was used for a school. But Lorena Hickok was one of the woman that worked very closely with Mrs. Roosevelt.

Streeper: Could I tell you a little bit of a humorous incident that happened during that last campaign for Roosevelt?

Stein: Yes.

Streeper: His health was failing, I think, and there were doubts arising about his fourth term. Now, one of my jobs--I didn't have a name for myself, but I would describe it as being sort of a quartermaster of material. Whenever anyone needed material on a certain subject, I was to obtain that for them.

Wolfe: She was working for the government at the time.

Streeper: No, I was working for Lorena Hickok in the Democratic Committee. This was just from September through the election. And then I was to mail out all kinds of material all over the country, get it mailed out, whoever needed it, immediately.

But someone came in and wanted some information about the vice-president, Harry Truman. And we said, "The vice-president!", you know, practically slapping our legs. [Chuckle] Well! And then someone said, "Well, go over and see if Paul Porter has any." He was the Men's Division chairman then.

In Paul Porter's office there was very little visible work going on, and he did the same thing; "Well, by crackey, the vice-president!" and slapped his leg. "Well, I guess we could find something," he said. Finally, of course, they did find some material about Harry Truman. But that was pretty much the way the vice-president was regarded, that office, in those days.

Stein: And then, of course, a short time later there he was as president.

Wolfe: As president, yes. Now they say he'll go down in history as one of the important presidents, doing important things.



## IX LEADING DEMOCRATIC WOMEN IN THE ROOSEVELT ERA

Congresswomen

- Stein: Well, maybe this would be a good time to run through the list of some of the other women's names.\* We've already discussed Reva Bosone quite thoroughly, I think. I don't know if any of these other ladies you even knew. I chose them because they were all Democrats in Congress at the same time you were in Washington, or else just a little before, perhaps. Have you found the list?
- Wolfe: Yes, I have the list. Of course, Ruth Bryan Owen, we've discussed her. She was appointed as an ambassador. Then she came back to campaign for us in '36. She was a magnificent woman. By this time she had married a native of the country she was in. What country was it now?
- Streeper: It was Denmark.
- Wolfe: Denmark, or Holland?
- Streeper: Denmark.
- Wolfe: Denmark. Well, at any rate, they came back. I remember trying to telephone her when she was on shipboard, and I kept following her all the way across the country. I think I told you that.

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\*See Appendix C





Stein: Yes.

Wolfe: And finally she broke her leg. By this time they had gotten a trailer and were traveling with a trailer, and she broke her leg, and then we caught up with her. But we had arranged all these speeches and were trying to keep track of her, you know.

Streeper: Was it Ruth Bryan Owen Rohde? It was something like that.

Wolfe: Yes, that's it. Ruth Bryan Owen Rohde. But she was a marvelous speaker, and I suppose she inherited that from her father [William Jennings Bryan].

Now, I don't remember Mrs. [Effigene] Wingo from Arkansas. Of course, Hattie Caraway, who was the first senator, was, of course, appointed because her husband died; she was appointed to fill out his term. She was a very modest and moderate woman, but she did satisfy the people in Arkansas, and they re-elected her. That's my recollection about her.

Stein: They must have re-elected her because she served for twelve years.

Wolfe: Yes. But she was really very well thought of, and I think that it's always a surprise when they put the wife in and then she really makes good. I thought of that when I listened to the woman who was chairman of the National Committee, this last National Committee. Do you remember the woman whose husband had an office in Congress? [Mrs. Lindy Boggs.]

Stein: No.

Wolfe: Well, at any rate, then they appointed his wife to take his place when he was killed in an automobile accident.

Streeper: In Congress?

Wolfe: In Congress, yes. This wasn't too long ago.

Streeper: And she's doing well, as I understand.

Wolfe: And then she was appointed as the permanent chairman of the Democratic convention that just passed. You don't remember her name?



- Streeper: No. I was thinking of the woman who was appointed to Congress.
- Wolfe: No. Well, at any rate, you could tell from the way she handled the national convention that she knew what she was doing, and she was a fairly effective speaker, but she knew the rules, and she did an excellent job, I thought.
- Streeper: I did too.
- Wolfe: And I thought, well, here's a woman who was appointed. You know, she was a good-looking woman and, I suppose, a very sociable person, and so they just gave her the appointment after her husband was killed or died. I think he was in some automobile or some airplane accident. But she has turned out to be very effective in Congress.
- Stein: This same thing was evidently true of Mrs. Caraway.
- Wolfe: Well, not to the same extent. I think that Mrs. Caraway was maybe a quieter and maybe an efficient person, but evidently this other woman--I wish I could think of her name now--was really a good director, a good leader, and I think maybe she has demonstrated leadership qualities in Congress.
- Well, I didn't know Kathryn O'Loughlin McCarthy either, who came from Kansas, although in all probability I met her. And Isabella Greenway, I think, was known as a charming person, an acceptable congressman, and a staunch supporter of F.D.R.
- Streeper: Her step-son, by the way, Harry King, is chairman of the board of governors of Navaho Museum now. I see him twice a day.
- Wolfe: Oh, you do?
- Streeper: He said, "Well, you should talk to my mother and review some memories." She is still living.
- Wolfe: Oh, is she? And he lives there in Santa Fe?
- Streeper: Yes.
- Stein: Where is she?
- Streeper: In Arizona.



Stein: She lives in Arizona?

Streeper: Yes.

Wolfe: Well, Isabella Greenway was a real help to the women because she was a sort of a glamorous person, you know, and people were just charmed to be able to meet her and to go see her and to hear her and things of that sort.

Caroline O'Day was from New York, and she was a really dedicated worker in the Women's Division and, I imagine, in the Democratic party itself. She had worked, as I understand it, through the Al Smith campaign too, and was a long-time important person in the Democratic organization.

Stein: It seems to me it was either she or Isabella Greenway who was an old almost childhood friend of Mrs. Roosevelt's.

Wolfe: Well, Isabella Greenway was a bridesmaid of Mrs. Roosevelt's, and I shouldn't be surprised but what Caroline O'Day, living in New York, had known the Roosevelts for a good long time.

I'm not sure about the Al Smith thing, but I think that her association came at least through the term when Roosevelt was governor of New York.

Now, Nan Wood Honeyman. I notice here [on the list of congresswomen] you had "daughter of Charles Erskine Scott Wood."\* Now, Nan, of course, to me, was one of the most interesting of all the women, because she was unpredictable and she was independent. She was a good speaker, she had a good voice, and she was charming and attractive.

Streeper: She had a sense of fun and a great sense of humor.

Wolfe: Yes!

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\*Charles Erskine Scott Wood, army man, lawyer, and poet, achieved renown in poems championing humanitarian ideals and decrying injustice, and in his 1927 book, Heavenly Discourse, a series of 40 dialogs between God, Satan, Jesus, and others, satirizing inhumanity, political abuses, oppression, and human folly. [Ed. note]



- Stein: It sounds like she's her father's daughter.
- Wolfe: Well, have you ever read anything about her father?
- Stein: A little bit. I've read the book he wrote, Heavenly Discourse.
- Wolfe: Yes, I have that. Heavenly Discourse, yes.
- Streeper: Oh, that's who it was.
- Wolfe: Yes.
- Stein: One of the things I'm not sure about--he married Sara Bard Field, but I gather that was later, that Sara Bard Field wasn't Nan's mother.\*
- Wolfe: Oh, no. No. That, I think, was his second wife, and they lived down in California here somewhere, and they had really quite a delightful place with sculpture.
- Stein: That's right. It was a place in Los Gatos, and they had two great big cats, sculptured cats, at the gate of the estate.
- Wolfe: Well, Nan used to tell great stories about her father. The one I remember for some reason or other, maybe because I like a good bed, was that he never slept on a mattress; he just slept on a pallet. [Laughter] I don't know exactly what the pallet was, but I took it that it didn't have much of anything soft, though. [Laughter]

She also told me that he had a beautiful brass, or I don't know if it's a bronze, sculpture made in honor of his--there must have been three daughters. I'd better not go into this, because I don't have a firm enough recollection of it. But I've met one of her sisters, and I don't know

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\*Sara Bard Field was a California poet and patron of the arts, and also played a role in the campaign for woman suffrage. See Sara Bard Field Wood, Poet Suffragist, Regional Oral History Office, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. In process.





Wolfe: whether there was another one or not. But he had a--it's a special sundial or something like that sculpted for them, a bronze thing that she was very much delighted with.

But Nan stayed with us for a while in Utah, and then I saw a great deal more of her here, because her sister lived up in Agua Caliente, along in there somewhere. So, when she'd come down to see them, we'd go up to see her, and then, of course, we stayed with her up in Portland, my husband and I and all the children.

Streeper: Is Nan still living?

Wolfe: No, no. She died. She had a stroke, and her sister died too.

Did I tell you about Nan Wood Honeyman getting the trailer for us?

Stein: Oh, I think so, that collapsible--

Wolfe: Yes, the Kozy Kamp.

Stein: Yes, I'm just trying to remember if we got that on tape. I think you told me that story at lunch last week. Maybe we'd just better briefly get it on tape.

Wolfe: Well, at any rate, one time in her conversation she told me about a trailer that they had, that her husband and son used when they went out fishing. As in her description, it just collapsed down to nothing, and when it opened out it had two double beds and a stove and tables and folding steps and a screen door and windows and everything else, when you got it uncollapsed. It's supposed to take a minute and a half to uncollapse it.

Streeper: Ha, ha! [Laughter]

Wolfe: [Laughter] We thought that would be just wonderful if we could have something like that, and then we could go on trips with the children.

During the war, they had stopped making them; they were custom made. But Nan thought that her husband could find a second-hand one for us, which he did, so he let us know and we went to Portland and picked it up.

We went on this Kozy Kamp trip, and I think we had--



Wolfe: did we have two or three of the children with us?

Streeper: I think there were three of us.

Wolfe: So that someone in a sleeping bag slept outside, but if it was raining they slept underneath, I guess. But this collapsible--

Streeper: And we slept outside if it was raining too, in those sleeping bags! [Laughter] I'd never been so cold in all my life. There were no down bags at that time.

Wolfe: But we went all the way up to the Campbell River on Vancouver Island and back again, and we camped on the Pacific Coast. It really was wonderful.

But they just did everything for us, the Honeymans, getting us started off on this trip.

Streeper: You can still see some of those campers. I saw one the other day in New Mexico. It was the same funny looking thing. When they're closed up, they look like a baggage trailer, you know, a small one, maybe five feet long by three feet wide. Does that sound right?

Wolfe: No. A little bit bigger than that.

Streeper: And then they blossom out with this ridiculous looking-- when they're spread out. But there's a tent that comes out.

Wolfe: It's cantilevered out.

Streeper: Yes. It does. The bed parts seem to cantilever out on both sides, and then the part that was the baggage would be the area where you walk and prepare food and that sort of thing. They're just as funny looking as ever and probably just as good.

Wolfe: Yes. Well, Higgins took them over and made them in the war. I mean, he must have gotten his idea from these Kozy Kamp things.

Streeper: Was it Honeyman's company that had invented them and were doing them?

Wolfe: No, no. It was some old man, and it was the woman who had the same name as one of the prominent prize fighters,



- Wolfe: Mrs. Corbett. I think the prize fighter was her uncle, but she was the one who really devised it. The first one didn't have the cantilevered beds out; it simply went straight up in the air. We camped with her at Lake Quinault, and she had that magnificent canvas and made a huge living room outside, and she had a rug or something that she put down and the latest magazines, you know, absolutely the latest latest in this wilderness [laughter], this deluxe camping outfit.
- Streeper: And, as I recall it, there was one phrase, which has already been used, but all campers and I guess backpackers now use it; the phrase: "It folds into nothing." It was the most often used phrase.
- Wolfe: Yes. It folded down right into nothing, flat down to nothing. [Laughter]
- But she really devised and drew the plans for the first one.
- Stein: And the part of it that cantilevered out to hold the bed was above the ground and supported the weight of a bed?
- Wolfe: Oh, yes.
- Streeper: Well, imagine that these two lids that folded down on the camper, probably when they flapped out they supported--was it double beds? I think, wasn't it?
- Wolfe: Yes, two double beds.
- Streeper: So, here was this great tent sticking up in the air there, roosting on this little frame of a baggage trailer, and it had a little stove in it.
- Wolfe: I think the thing was bigger than you said. It must have been about 7'x 5', or at least it was as wide as the automobile.
- Streeper: Yes, it would have had to have been wider to support the length of the bed, but it did seem smaller than it was.
- Stein: That's really remarkable.
- Wolfe: They were really quite wonderful.



State Legislators

- Wolfe: Then, Helen [Gahagan Douglas]--we've talked about her.
- Stein: We've talked about Helen, and we've talked about the ladies in the Utah legislature. You mentioned Mrs. Lavinia Engle.
- Wolfe: Yes. There's someone in your notes. You talk about Reva Beck Bosone being the first member of the Utah legislature.
- Stein: Yes. That is what the book that I read said, but that didn't make sense, if all these other ladies--
- Wolfe: No, because she isn't. She might be the first congresswoman from Utah.
- Stein: Could she have been the first woman elected to the state legislature, as opposed to women who succeeded husbands who died?
- Wolfe: Well, I don't know. Some of these women, I think, didn't have a husband. [Laughter] Anna T. Piercey, for instance. I can't connect a husband with Anna T. Piercey, and yet she was Mrs. Anna T. Piercey. She was so independent. I think they must have got there on their own. Mrs. [Emily] Carlisle's husband may have been a senator, but these other women, I think they were a part of that independent women's movement, you know, that we had a branch of out in Utah.
- Stein: What was that?
- Wolfe: I mean that some of the women who came out from New England were still interested in the campaign that the women in other parts of the country were putting on for women's suffrage. See, they didn't get it until 1920, and these women were elected in 1929. I think that there was a certain small group there who kept alive a sympathetic organization working for women's suffrage. That was going along in there, and I think these women were all--at least I know Mrs. Piercey was, and some of these other women.

In Maryland I knew Lavinia Engle. She was the first woman legislator in Maryland and executive secretary to





- Wolfe: the Maryland League of Women Voters. Well, [to Mrs. Streeper] do you remember Lavinia Engle?
- Streeper: No. But I remember everybody talking about her.
- Wolfe: Yes. Well, she really was an extraordinary person, conscientious and intelligent, but didn't have what you might call the charisma of Ruth Bryan Owen. She really was very capable and right top-notch in everything that she did. We depended upon her a lot and enjoyed her a lot.

Josephine Roche

- Stein: You mentioned Josephine Roche before as someone I had left off the list, so maybe we should add her in right now.
- Wolfe: Yes. Well, I think that she was one of the most important women in the Democratic setup at the time, because my recollection--I think there was an article on her, a biographical sketch. There is one on Mary Anderson, who was on your list somewhere, I believe.
- Stein: Yes.
- Wolfe: But Josephine Roche, I first met her at a dinner at her apartment--maybe not first met her, but where we had any real conversation. She invited my husband and me to dinner, and on that night for dinner she had the man who was the head of the coal workers' union.
- Stein: John L. Lewis?
- Wolfe: Yes. It was really just an exciting evening because Josephine Roche knew a great deal about all these things. It seems to me that as I read this--I don't know whether this tells much about her background or not, or just the things that she had done. But I think that she owned a coal mine or had inherited it or something of the sort, so that she knew what the status of the workers was. Somehow I have the recollection that she had very good labor relations with her employees and things of that sort. I suppose that she was very friendly with John L. Lewis, and they worked together trying to get better working conditions for the coal miners.



- Stein: What position did she hold?
- Wolfe: [Pauses to think.] Let's see here. There were twelve state divisions of industrial hygiene that were set up under the public health service.
- Stein: So, she must have had something to do with the public--
- Wolfe: I think she must have had something to do with the public health service.
- Streeper: It's a very familiar name.
- Wolfe: [Looking through Democratic Digest.] You'd think that I could see that, wouldn't you, but--
- Stein: What issue of the Democratic Digest is that? Is there a date on the bottom of the page there?
- Wolfe: Yes, it's July, '36.
- Stein: July, '36. Okay. We can just refer people to that issue of the Digest.
- Streeper: [Reads caption on photograph of Josephine Roche.] "Josephine Roche, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury."
- Wolfe: Well, I have that, but she was also something in these things too. Well, at any rate, I thought this was the important field. Of course, she made a great contribution in the health and welfare of the workers in the coal mines. But there must have been some other biographical sketch, because this doesn't give too much that--
- Streeper: No, that's by her, rather than about her, isn't it?
- Stein: Yes.
- Streeper: She's writing about the necessity for having this industrial health.
- Wolfe: Oh, here. [Reads from article.] "Miss Josephine Roche, chairman of the president's inter-departmental committee to coordinate health and welfare activities."
- Streeper: An early HEW [Department of Health, Education, and Welfare].
- Wolfe: That was the thing that I was thinking of. She was



Wolfe: Assistant Secretary of the Treasury. But it seems to me those positions are honorary positions that they give for recognition, but that this is something that she really was tremendously interested in working at, and [she was] very helpful in that regard.

Were there any others that we had to--?

Democratic National and State Committeewomen

Stein: Well, let's see. There were some ladies on the next page [of the interview outline]. I think we've discussed all the women on the National Committee. Mrs. J. Borden Harriman, and Mrs. Miller.

Streeper: Emma Guffey Miller?

Stein: Yes. Do you remember her?

Streeper: Yes. She's one that stood out to teenagers because she was so colorful. I remember we went to a garden party where she was the belle of the ball.

Wolfe: She was the belle of the ball wherever she was!  
[Laughter]

Streeper: And, by golly, I remember years later [Chet] Huntley and [David] Brinkley [news commentators] seeking her out and interviewing her at a convention, so she must have kept right in there.

Wolfe: Oh, yes. She was really very important in the whole political setup. She had just as much power as the men, maybe more, because her brother was Joe Guffey, was it?

Streeper: Senator Guffey from Pennsylvania?

Wolfe: Senator Guffey, and he had tremendous power too.

Stein: What was colorful about her?

Streeper: I think that she just was that sort of personality. I remember seeing her. She had a big garden hat on. She wasn't young at that time either.

Wolfe: No, she wasn't.



- Streeper: But she had this sort of grande dame plus coquettish ability.
- Wolfe: She was a good speaker, very fluent.
- Streeper: Yes. And I had the feeling that maybe she was a mischief-maker at times too. I don't know.
- Wolfe: Yes, she could be.
- Streeper: It was my feeling about her, as a teenager, that she could be a handful of trouble sometimes.
- Wolfe: Well, I mean, she was a real politician, and she operated as a politician, so that put it on that basis, I think; she had real political power.
- Stein: She had been active in the suffrage movement, hadn't she?
- Wolfe: Yes. And we had Mrs. Lucretia Del Valle Grady. You must remember her too. Do you, Katherine, remember her?
- Streeper: No, but that name is familiar.
- Wolfe: You may not have been home when they visited with us. But her husband was like the man in the Nixon administration who held so many different offices.
- Streeper: Elliott Richardson.
- Wolfe: Henry Grady was always doing the circuit as ambassador to some different country, and she once told me that each one of her children had been born in a different country. [Chuckle] I think they had four, as I recollect it, and they each were born in a different country where he had been working or was ambassador.
- Of course, she came back to California and was a power in the politics here.
- Stein: Was she?
- Wolfe: Yes. She was a grande dame here in politics.
- Stein: In the Democratic party, or in public office?
- Wolfe: In the Democratic party. I don't recollect that she ever





Wolfe: had a big public office. But I don't think she would consider it, perhaps, with the positions that her husband held at that time. She was a very attractive woman and very attractive as far as the men were concerned too. She got along very well and could wheedle them into doing things. [Laughter] She may have been national committee-woman.

Stein: Is she still alive, do you know?

Wolfe: No, I don't believe so. I think she died not too long ago.

Then Mrs. Samuel Ralston. I didn't know her very well. Helen Hanson, as I told you, I didn't know her, or Mrs. [Douglas] Brown, or Mrs. [Ann] Streubel, any more than just having met them, and I don't remember anything about them.

But when you come to Mrs. Frank Johnesse, who was out in Idaho, there you have a very strong character and a woman who had a great deal of influence in the political party. She was state chairman and she held some state political office also; it might have been state treasurer or something of that sort.

The story is told of her that when she suggested that they have fifty-fifty representation in Idaho, they just said, "Well, if Mrs. Johnesse thinks that's the proper thing that would help the women, then we should give it to her."

Streeper: Quite a person!

Stein: That's power!

Wolfe: And she looked like a pioneer woman. She wasn't one of the soft, dainty, beautiful women, as some of them were, but she was just a strong, fine, and definite character. There's no doubt about it, she was wonderful.

Now, Mrs. Dorothy Vredenburgh Bush was one of the younger women, and she was appointed in 1944 as secretary of the Democratic National Committee, as a representative of the National Youth Association in the party.

Now, Minnie Fisher Cunningham. I must tell you that I don't know a great deal about Texas. Texas is one of the



Wolfe: states that I didn't do any work in, to tell you the truth of the matter. Maybe we didn't need to do any work in Texas, or something. [Chuckle]

Streeper: Well, you had Sam Rayburn down there; it was sewed up for sure.

Wolfe: Yes, he would be able to take care of things. But from what I read about her, she really must have been a wonderful woman.

#### Roosevelt Appointees

Wolfe: Florence E. Allen I have on my list, who was appointed to the Circuit Court of Appeals in the early days. It was considered to be quite an important appointment for women, because it was the first time that they had gotten an appointment to a high court such as that.

Now, I shouldn't be surprised to see one get on the [U.S.] Supreme Court in the near future. Would you?

Stein: No, I wouldn't. Florence Allen was from Utah, wasn't she?

Wolfe: Yes, she was originally from Utah.

Stein: Had you known her in Utah?

Wolfe: I didn't know her personally, but the family was well known because they came there and they were part of the-- I don't know whether their ancestors were part of the early Gentile, so-called, missionaries who came to Utah, but it's my recollection that they might have had something to do with the setting up of the Presbyterian schools that still exist in Utah. Maybe he might have been a teacher or something of that sort. I shouldn't say this without checking on the facts. But at least the family was well known and part of the Presbyterian group that lived in our state.

Stein: I added a name on my list: Josephine Schain, who was chairman of the National Committee on the Causes and Cures of War. I thought you might have come across her in your work in the peace movement.



Wolfe: No, I can't say that I remember the name.

I'll tell you somebody who you didn't put on your list that I think should have gone on.

Stein: Who is that?

Wolfe: That's Hallie Ferguson Flanagan.

Stein: Who was she?

Wolfe: She was head of the theater group. You know, in the WPA they had the arts section and the theater section and the writers section.

Stein: Yes.

Wolfe: Well, she was head of the theater section, and she did just absolutely marvelous work. While we were over in New York attending the convention, I went to several of the plays that they put on, and they were fabulous, there's no doubt about it. I think that the whole theatrical movement got a tremendous lift in that period when the government supported the production of plays.

There were a number of plays relating to labor that were produced at that time, and I think that it must have given a great push to the labor movement even to have those things go on.

I remember that one of the things that impressed me-- of course, I came from Salt Lake, and that was a good theatrical town, because the plays then used to make tours across the continent, and Salt Lake was one of the places where all the plays stopped, and they were presented in the Salt Lake Theater, so we got all the good plays there. So I did have a chance to see them.

But one of the things that impressed me was the stage direction and the stage management, just as when we went to Europe and I went to the [Shakespeare] festival at Stratford-on-Avon, the production there impressed me. It was so different, and so--it was something that I had never seen before.

Well, it was the same thing way back in those early days, these WPA things; they were innovative and they did things that you hadn't seen before. I thought it was



Wolfe: wonderful, that and the art section too, and I don't know who was head of that, but that really was good, and also the writers section.

Then another woman who it seemed always impressed me was Mrs. Blair Bannister. She was appointed as Assistant Treasurer of the United States, but she had been the editor of the little magazine at the Women's Democratic Club, which stimulated Molly into wanting a house organ, and she persuaded them to turn it over into the Democratic Digest. But I know that Mrs. Bannister was called upon to take over as editor of the Digest in one of the emergencies, which she did, exceedingly well. She was really a very capable fine person.

I think we did talk about Meta Fay, who was a friend of Mrs. Roosevelt.

Stein: Could you tell me a little bit more about Dr. [Dorothy] Nyswander? All I know about her was that she had served as director of Region 5 of the WPA's Division of Women's and Professional Projects. Was she a medical doctor?

Wolfe: No. Well, I suppose she was, but she was a psychiatrist. She taught at the University of Utah. Was she teaching there when you were there, or not?

Steeper: Not that I know of, but then I may not just have been interested in that branch. She could have been.

Wolfe: Well, perhaps she came in [later].  
[end tape 1, side 2; begin tape 2, side 1]

Stein: Is there anything else we need to say about her?

Wolfe: Well, she was a professor at the University of Utah. I mean, she taught there, and I think she had the status either as associate or professor in that department. She really did good work in her appointment in the government, and everybody, I'm sure, liked her there.

Now, I knew her more meeting her socially. I didn't know so much about her work then, at that time; I met her socially at a number of meetings. We had one discussion group in which we took up various topics and got speakers to come in for them and then discussed them. It originally started out as a men's group, and then as the wives became interested, they were invited also,





Wolfe: without much opposition. I don't know whether the name changed at that time to the Nut Club or not. [Laughter]

Stein: [Laughter] The Nut Club?

Wolfe: [Laughter] Well, at any rate, I remember that Mrs. Nyswander was occasionally invited as a guest, and she may have been a member at one time, I don't know. But I know that at one time or another she did speak and introduce a subject so that there would be a discussion following that.

She always was a challenge, I think, to anyone who met her, to really explore deeper and get more information, because she was acknowledged as someone who knew her field.

Stein: Was this the only time that she served in government, was in the Roosevelt administration?

Wolfe: Now, I really don't know that. She's been in public life one way or the other ever since I've heard of her, and I don't know what she did when she came down to California, you see. She may have come down to be connected with Berkeley in some way.

Stein: I'll see what I can find out.

Wolfe: I suspect that she may have been in that capacity, maybe teaching.

Stein: There's just one more name on the list here: Mrs. Marie Proctor. Did you know her?

Wolfe: Yes, I've met her, and she was from the state of Washington. She was a pro in the political field, and I think that there you can say that her appointment really recognized the contribution that she had made in politics. She really had done excellent work there.

Well, I think that you can't help but appreciate what the Roosevelt administration, through the efforts of both the president and Mrs. Roosevelt--and Molly Dewson--did to give recognition to women throughout the country, and not only to the political workers, but also to competent people. If they found someone who they thought was competent to do the job or might bring something to it that no one else could, they didn't hesitate to invite



Wolfe: them to enter government.

My recollection is that Roosevelt, I guess, is one of the first that made the Department of State, or tried to make it, non-political.

I think that one interesting idea along that line is that in reporting some of the things that happened in Congress, I noticed that we gave some publicity to one of the senators who was a peace advocate, Senator [Arthur] Vandenberg, I believe, from Michigan. Every once in a while we threw something in about Vandenberg's idea on peace.

Finally they called me in and said, "Do you think it's necessary, really, to give so much importance to this Republican senator?" [Laughter] I said, "Well, we just appreciate the work he's doing for peace. We have no desire to promote the Republican party, but we feel that we should give him some recognition." They just laughed and said, "Well, just put the brakes on," or something of the sort. [Laughter]

But, at any rate, Roosevelt didn't hesitate to really bring in the Republicans when he thought that they could help with the international situation. Later on that might have been, because this was in the early period, his early period.

But, to go back again, I sometimes just marvel at the courage they had in opening up the whole field of government to women. Really, as we've gone over the list, we've seen that the women really received important assignments, and I've always felt grateful to our administration for doing that.

Stein: Would it also be correct to say that women were appointed to positions that weren't typically women's sphere?

Wolfe: Yes, that's right, because at that time you wouldn't think of a woman as being a mathematician or trained in the field of the treasurer's office, and yet we had an assistant treasurer. And, of course, Director of the Mint, I suppose that was more of an executive job, but certainly they appointed a woman there. But any number of the appointments were really first-class, starting with Frances Perkins, of course, [who] was Secretary of



Wolfe: Labor. Now, that really was an innovation. And right on down the line. He also appointed three women to the Board of Veterans' Appeals: Lucy S. Howorth, Carroll L. Stewart, and Laura S. Brown. Mrs. Stewart was from California. But the women were all competent, they were intelligent women, and they could do the job.

And then, I think, the ambassadors--we started sending the women as ambassadors, didn't we? Ruth Bryan Owen, for one. And the other woman that was always so delightful. [Chuckle] Well, both of them [were]. Ruth Bryan Owen was too, but, oh, who was the woman? I told you about her. When she received us, she was in her bed with the leopard skin coverlet over her. [Laughter] She was in one of those small countries in Europe.

Streeper: You don't mean Perle Mesta?

Wolfe: No, no. She came in the Truman administration, I think.

Streeper: Perle did. Perle came in the Truman administration, didn't she? I think so.

Stein: Yes.

Streeper: There's another one?

Wolfe: Well, this woman was a very important name.

Streeper: Maybe I'm wrong. Maybe it wasn't Perle Mesta.

Wolfe: Mrs. J. Borden Harriman, Daisy Harriman.

Stein: Daisy Harriman?

Wolfe: Her friends called her Daisy, but her name was Mrs. J. Borden Harriman.

Streeper: Who was the Harriman that was always the ambassador for so long, that was sort of a troubleshooter for all administrations?

Stein: Averell. He was governor of New York.

Wolfe: Yes.

Stein: I assume that she was from the same family. That's an old New York family.



Wolfe: Perhaps, and a very wealthy family too, I think.

Stein: Yes.

Wolfe: But she was a charmer [laughter] and very lively and alert. I don't know what her background was personally, but she certainly did have charm. She had a long record of social service--prison reform, women in industry, Red Cross Motor Corps in World War I, minister to Norway in 1937. I remember Molly [Dewson] going through a long list of accomplishments when she took me to see her.





X ASSESSMENT OF A LIFE IN POLITICS  
(Interview 8, August 30, 1976)  
[begin tape 1, side 1]

Stein: I think what I'd like to do today is just ask you a few questions to wrap things up that perhaps we've mentioned before, but I think now would be a good time to round out the picture.

I know that you've talked a little bit before about how you feel about your career now, looking back on it, and I wondered if you could just comment on that a little bit in light of all the talk nowadays about women having careers and women going into politics and that sort of thing.

Wolfe: Well, of course, I think presently the men have a slightly different viewpoint, especially about younger women going into politics or having careers, because it's generally accepted [about] a young married couple that both might have careers and that they work out sharing the problems and things of that sort.

But at my time, it was the exception, I think, rather than the rule, as it is now, if a woman tried to undertake a career at the time that she had a large family, and that's the thing that happened as far as I was concerned. I have absolutely no regrets about doing it, except that I do realize that it was very difficult for my husband to adjust, not because he wasn't in sympathy with me doing the work; in fact, he encouraged me. But he just hadn't been accustomed to fend for himself in the domestic field. So, he found it very difficult that when he was in Salt Lake and I was in Washington he either had to eat out or if he were in an apartment he had to fend for himself. He just wasn't accustomed to it, and it was very difficult.



Wolfe: Then I think perhaps he had--you know, living with a big family and everything that went with that, and then suddenly to be abandoned by them and be all by himself, it must have been rather lonely too. So, I think perhaps it was more difficult for him to adjust to the whole thing than it was for me, even though I had the responsibility of the children and running a house and trying to do a job that actually I hadn't been trained for but just took on because, I suppose, of the happenstance that I was the state vice chairman of the Utah [Democratic State Central] Committee and had been conducting a program that they liked.

But that's about the only comment I have to make on that, I would do it again under the same circumstances. But I wouldn't--you see, I was invited to stay on after the two years. I had to make up my mind whether I would or wouldn't stay on, and I decided I would go home, because I could see that the whole family was breaking up without somebody there looking after the children and everything. It was difficult to keep housekeepers after I sent the children to Salt Lake in the summer of 1936.

But I think the experience was wonderful, and the people I met and the things I learned really have meant a great deal to me.

I sort of dropped the whole thing as soon as I got home and went into other things. I never tried to trade on the position that I had had. I just went into other things, and I think very few people, after I came to California, knew much about the work that I'd done in Washington.

Stein: Is that still the case?

Wolfe: Yes, because I had an entirely new life down here, and it never occurred to me to mention it. Usually I don't talk a great deal about myself. I was working on a ranch and interested in the ranch. I was still interested in politics, and I lamented that there was no organized Democratic party here. It took me a long time before I found people working and interested, and they were up in Santa Rosa. So a great deal of my time was spent after that working in Santa Rosa, both with the Unitarian Fellowship and with Democratic friends up there.



Stein: What sort of work did that include? I don't think that we've mentioned this before.

Wolfe: No. Well, actually, it just included working--I think I did say before that I started at the top and worked down to the bottom. [Laughter]

Stein: Yes.

Wolfe: So, most of the work I did was in the precincts. Then there were people here whom I found afterwards and we all were organized into a Democratic club. We really tried to do the local work, the precinct work, getting people out and trying to interest them in different things.

Stein: That included door-to-door canvassing?

Wolfe: Yes.

Stein: Meetings and that sort of thing?

Wolfe: Yes, meetings, and going out and trying to get a dollar from the people in the precincts to carry on the work of the Democratic party and things of that sort.

Stein: Were those the Dollar Days that you were telling me about?

Wolfe: Yes. I mean, we didn't start the Dollar Days. I think that was started later by someone else, but I don't know just exactly what you're referring to now. But recently they've been trying to get people to contribute a dollar to the Democratic party; at the present moment it's fifteen. [Laughter] They would like them to contribute to the Democratic National Committee to help them carry on their work. It's really a membership idea.

Stein: You have really been involved in politics, then, over quite a span of years.

Wolfe: Yes.

Stein: And you've probably seen a lot of changes. Just talking about the period from the mid-30s to 1960, what sort of changes did you see in that period in women's involvement in politics?



Wolfe: Well, you see, I came down here in 1950, and I found that what might be generally called the election laws, which included political organization, were entirely different from the laws that we had worked for when I was back in Washington and that we had in Utah, which was a democratic organization where they elected people in the precincts as the chairmen of the precincts, and then those people got together in the wards and elected the ward chairman, then in the county, and elected the county chairman. Then those people got together in a convention and elected the state chairman and vice chairman of opposite sex, you see. That was the thing we had in Utah, quite democratic, started at the bottom and went up to the top.

Well, here they had an entirely different thing, although I think I've told you I did get the governor to help get a bill through the legislature which made it possible to have chairmen of opposite sexes. But they didn't have the same setup.

They still don't have the same precinct setup. There's nothing very democratic about the whole thing as far as the organization is concerned, because the state committee, for instance, is--now, I'm not familiar enough with it to want to be quoted as accurate on this. But the state senators and legislators have the opportunity to name some, and even the defeated candidates for office have a chance to nominate people for the committees, and, of course, the elected officials all have an opportunity to do this.

So, you see, instead of being elected by the people at large, the committees are elected or named by candidates, by officials, and people of that sort. Now, there must be some place where the nominees are made by the people, such as at the present time when they elect the presidential nominees. Then, of course, they're on the ballot and get elected by the people.

But as far as I know, their total election law hasn't been changed to any large extent as far as the constitution of the different committees is concerned.

So, it's difficult to say just exactly how things have changed. I think perhaps they've become more proficient in working out ways to acquaint the people with issues. As you know, television arrived at about the same time. I remember our first television; we acquired





Wolfe: it when we came down here, and that was then sort of a handmade thing by a couple of young men who were proficient in it. You could buy them, but very few people had them.

Well, when you think of the publicity that you could get to the people by way of television and, of course, by radio, because everybody had a radio at that time, it makes a great difference.

Then, in addition to that, the thing that has happened is that more and more people have gone under civil service, so that while politicians still have a great deal of power, they don't have that power of putting as many of their own people into office as they used to have, because you could almost change a whole department or something of that sort when somebody went out of office and a new man came in. But, of course, now you can't, because it's all under civil service. So there aren't so many people that the so-called politicians have a chance to put into office. On the committees, yes, and things of that sort, they still have a great deal of power, but not the power that they used to have in the good old days.

So I think that just the changes that have gone on, the legislative changes, the laws, and things of that sort, have made a great deal of difference in the way you operate. I think perhaps the greatest difference I see is the power that different organizations have; for instance, the senior citizens, for one, because I have worked more in that recently. They're becoming an increasing power in the political field because there are so many of them and they really are well organized at the present time. And any other group that's organized like that has tremendous pressure to bring on.

At one time I was interested in changing the tax on mobile homes while I was on the [Sonoma County] planning commission, so that they would be more in line with the taxes that other people were paying on homes instead of being taxed like automobiles, because they don't participate in any of the taxes for hospitals or the local district and property taxes.

I found that the mobile home construction people, the ones that made the mobile homes, and mobile home owners, plus the mobile park developers and owners,



Wolfe: had tremendous power, you see, because the people who were running for office--all these people could meet together very conveniently if they were in parks and determine one way or the other what they wanted to do.

That's just an indication of the different ways in which politics works now than it did before. I suppose that maybe it's responsible for some of these things that I'm complaining about, like the excesses in many fields. Of course, the welfare recipients, you know, really have power too in the elections, because they certainly are a big group. If they aren't taken care of, they have enough power, I think, to really defeat a person.

Stein: In all these changes, what sort of changes did you see specifically in the role of women in politics, in participation and office-holding?

Wolfe: Well, down here, after I really became involved in political work, I found that a great many people, the women, were interested and they were powers in the political organization itself. But they didn't have such great expectations of getting jobs or things of that sort as they have recently, since there's been so much publicity on the equal rights of women.

I think that it has been that campaign on the part of the people who are interested in equal rights for women that is responsible, of course, for the jobs that women have gotten, except in the Roosevelt administration that was not true. They weren't especially thinking of a political organization of women as they were just somehow or other recognizing the abilities and the rights of women to give their services to the public, or to be paid for their services.

So, there's been a tremendous change in that, and you'll notice that just in the number of delegates that go to the convention, it's almost half and half, I think. Wasn't it almost half in the Republican--even the Republican--convention?

Stein: Yes.



Wolfe: In that, of course, I think we have to give credit to the women who have been really diligent in working for women's rights. Now, personally I haven't been involved in that particular campaign, although I hope they get their rights, but I'm also afraid that they're going to lose something, too, when they get them, because we had worked hard before to give them a certain amount of protection in industry, along with children. So, they may lose something.

I still think that there's a lot of room for women in the home, if you have a family.

Stein: I think that you mentioned in one of our previous conversations--I guess it was at about the time of the Democratic convention--there was quite a bit of to-do at the convention because some of the women there wanted the Democrats to adopt a rule that there should be an equal number of women delegates to men delegates. I think it was something like that. Do you remember that?

Wolfe: Yes. Yes, I do. Somehow or other, I think that if you go onto a quota system like that that you don't recognize the abilities of the people or what they might offer to the political organization, that it's just sort of a numbers game. While you undoubtedly would get many excellent women, because they're interested, perhaps you'd get that excellency without making it mandatory to have as many women as men.

I feel the same way about a lot of the things that we've done for minority groups, that it is really inequality in a way to recognize a person who has nothing to offer in the field on an equal basis with somebody who has, and that's the thing that worries me about it. I think that women should be recognized, and they will be recognized, if they have something to offer. I suppose it will turn out that way in the end.

Stein: Let's hope so, anyway!

When I was preparing for this project, I read through a number of different articles about women in politics, and there is one here that was a study done in



Stein: 1947 by Kathryn Stone, who wrote in the Annals of the Academy of Political and Social Science.<sup>\*</sup> She had a series of conclusions and I wondered what your thoughts were about this one.

This is in 1947 that she's writing, and I think that she was a little bit distressed that women were not more active in politics and she said that [reading from article]; "There is every reason to believe that women who are not wage earners will participate in increasing numbers, and seriously, in public affairs, if two things are done. First, they need attractive and popular ways of meeting and acting together, with short, brightly written pamphlets, provocative visual aids, and specific channels for action. Brisk, purposeful meetings aimed toward effective action are satisfying experiences. No little part of the homemaker's dilemma rises out of the disorganized, meandering character of her days. When all women learn to organize and make a program for their time, to drive a car, use a typewriter, and crank a mimeographing machine, to accept and discharge community responsibilities without making excuses, they will be happier women, as well as better citizens.

"Second, women need the support of the mores. Civic action must become the right thing to do. Irrational though they know it to be, many women carry on civic work with a sense of uneasiness--even a sense of guilt," because they think they should be tending to their family responsibilities. I wondered what you thought of that.

Wolfe: Well, I think that she's absolutely right there, and some women I know who have done all those things--I mean, the mimeograph machine and--

[telephone interruption]

Wolfe: Let's see, where did we get?

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<sup>\*</sup>Kathryn Stone, "Women as Citizens," Annals of the Academy of Political and Social Science, vol. 25, May, 1947, pp 79-86. Quote is at p. 85.





Stein; You had just begun to say that you agree with her.

Wolfe; That I agree with her, yes, and that I knew a woman who did all these things. I thought that she got real fulfillment of her life through these things and that there were compensations in the work that she did in the civic way that maybe helped her with some of the distressing things that she had to combat as far as children and grandchildren are concerned.

So, I think it's wonderful if women do that. It seems to me that I read somewhere that they advocated that they would get more people out if they had sort of glamorous and well known women at the head of the organizations and things of that sort. I think that maybe that's true as far as attracting a certain class of women who are sort of ambitious socially and things of that sort. But I think if you want to reach the masses of people, and they're the ones that we really do have to reach as far as this whole program of politics is concerned, that you have to have somebody who understands what their problems are and knows how to work with them and talk with them and meet them more or less on their own level.

So, I've found that some of the best political workers come from the less advantaged classes who are interested in civic affairs and things of that sort. Some of the Mexican women I've met are really wonderful and, of course, they are making great strides in what they're doing for the Latinos, both in the farm work and in other labor.

But I think that she's right, and certainly I think that the mores of the times have a great deal to do with it. I think that in my day, somehow or other, if you came out especially for liberal politics, you were immediately tarred with the red stick and put in the communist column because they really didn't understand what you were talking about. But now I think that's all different.

I think the League of Women Voters has had a tremendous influence in making political action by women a thoroughly respectable thing.

Stein; One of the things that I was interested in in reading this was that it reminded me very much of the work that you



Stein: did in the Women's Division, talking about "brightly written pamphlets" and "provocative visual aids."

Wolfe: Yes, that's right.

Stein: It sounded just like those little pamphlets you put out and the rainbow fliers.

Wolfe: Yes. And I think that a lot of people, college graduates and people of that sort, have a tendency to put out literature that the lower classes, those that haven't had such good education, can't understand. You have to write it simply and put the issues simply if you want to have the masses of the people know what you're talking about.

But I think today people are so interested in psychology and the rest that they certainly know how to write all kinds of literature to get the people to do what they want. It's becoming more and more so. Don't you think so?

Stein: I think so, yes.

Wolfe: I mean, the PR people have demonstrated how you can get the people to buy. There's no doubt about that. And, as they say, they can sell a politician just as well as a bar of soap, and they certainly use the simple language with the psychology back of it.

Stein: There was another study done the same year by a woman named Marguerite J. Fisher.\* She conducted a survey of Democratic and Republican national committeewomen, and she asked the committee women the question: "Do women have a genuine influence as members of the national committees, and if so, along what lines?"

[Reading from article based on this study.]  
 "The majority of the women," she reports, "felt encouraged by the progress made by their sex, so far as

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\*Marguerite J. Fisher, "Women in the Political Parties," Annals of the Academy of Political and Social Science, vol. 25, May, 1947, pp 87-93. Quote is at p. 88.



Stein: participation in policy making was concerned. On the other hand, approximately a third of the committeewomen expressed a contrary opinion in rather vigorous terms. To quote them in their own words: (It doesn't say whether they're Democratic or Republican.) Some of their remarks were;

"We are known mostly for our nuisance value."

"There are some women who have influence, but they have to be pretty big women."

Wolfe: Well, that's true of the men too. I mean, all of the men aren't men that have the influence. There are certain ones in the committees, whether they're men or women, who dominate. Now, that's my idea.

It was [my idea] at the time you had an Emma Guffey Miller, who was national committeewoman from Pennsylvania, and she had tremendous power in the national committee. I notice now that we have a woman as chairman of the Republican national committee. Isn't that so?

Stein: Yes.

Wolfe: Well, I don't know whether they elected her to be a figurehead, or whether she really has a lot of power. I would imagine that she would have considerable power, no matter what the reason for electing her.

But I think that it's rather difficult to expect that women will vote as a unit. I mean, is that what we want, or do we want them to use their intelligence and try to vote for the best thing, whether it's with the men or against the men? I would say that we aren't trying to develop a political organization of women that will just vote as women and stick with the women no matter what happens. I think that we're trying to develop citizens who do the best thing they can for the whole citizenry.

As far as I know, when I left the committee, the men certainly had more power because they knew more about it. They had more contacts. They could raise more money. You know, all those things have to be taken into consideration. But the women who were intelligent and who knew what they were doing certainly were listened to,



Wolfe; and their views were given consideration, and many times they were adopted.

I think that we have to acknowledge that women really have made a real contribution. Certainly they've taken the decisions out of the smoke-filled rooms, to a large extent. [Chuckle] And I expect them to go on doing more and more, but I hope they won't do it just as a women's group, but will do it, you know, whether men or women.

Stein: With the emphasis on the issues rather than being women?

Wolfe; Yes.

Stein: That pretty much wraps it up for what I wanted to cover. I'd like to thank you for all the time and valuable information you've given us.

Transcriber: Marilyn White

Final Typist: Marie Herold





## APPENDIX A

From Who's Who, 1954-1955

**WOLFE, James H.**, judge; b. Shippenville, Pa., Apr. 26, 1891; s. Samuel and Emma Jane (Script) W.; student Central Manual Training Sch., Phila., 1899-1901; M.E., Lehigh U., Bethlehem, Pa., 1905; LL.B., U. of Pa., 1910; m. Carolyn S. Williams, Apr. 16, 1913; children—Samuel, Emma Katherine, James H., Russell, George. Began as engr., 1903; admitted to Utah bar, 1910, and later to practice before Supreme Court of United States, also admitted to Pennsylvania bar; 1st assistant atty. general of Utah, 1917-21; judge of 2d Jud. Dist. Court, 1929-35; Justice Supreme Court of Utah since January 11, 1935, chief justice, 1943-44, 1951-55. Served as private, Nat. Guard, Mexican border, 1916; major judge advocate National Guard, Utah, 1917; lt. Air Service, U.S. Army, World War, 1918. Served on Gov. Dem's Relief Com. of 100, and as Advisory Com. of Distribution of R.F.C. Funds; v. chmn. Advisory Com. to draft state liquor control legislation; dir. Credit Union Nat. Assn.; mem. council Nat. Municipal League, 1915-16; regent U. of Utah, 1925-29; rep. State of Utah, Valley Forge Utah Day, 1945; dir. Family Service Soc., Salt Lake City, 20 yrs. Served as referee member Nat. Railroad Adjustment Board and Express Adjustment Bd. No. 1; appointed to National Railway Labor Panel and several Railroad Emergency Boards; member Non-Ferrous Metals Fact Finding Board; chmn. Alien Enemy Hearings Board for Utah; mem. Special Enemy Alien Hearings Bd. (nat.); mem. bd. of appeals for leave clearance, War Relocation Authority. Chmn. Utah com. selection candidates Root-Tilden Scholarships, N.Y.U. Law School. Member council Conference of Chief Justices. Charter mem. Nat. Acad. Arbitration, Indus. Relations Research Assn.; mem. Am., Utah State and Salt Lake County bar associations, American Law Institute, National Lawyers Guild (v.p.), Am. Legion, Sigma Chi, Phi Delta Phi, Unitarian (regional v.p. Am. Assn. 1931-33), Democrat (del. to Dem. Nat. Conv., 1916). Editor Utah Survey, 1914-16, and frequent contrib. to the Survey. Mem. bd. editors Nat. Guild Quarterly. Contributor to The Humanist, Rocky Mountain Law Review, Columbia Law Journal. Home: 273 E. Capitol St. Address: The Capitol, Salt Lake City, Utah.



On deposit in The Bancroft Library

## In Memoriam

HONORABLE JAMES H. WOLFE

1884—1958

PROCEEDINGS  
IN THE  
SUPREME COURT  
OF THE  
STATE OF UTAH

October 13, 1958



# Mrs. James H. Wolfe

(Carolyn W.)

FIRST WOMAN CANDIDATE FOR  
CITY COMMISSIONER



Place on the City Commission the combination of a trained analytical mind with a woman's idealism.



*Elections are won or lost at the Primary.*  
GO TO THE PRIMARY  
OCTOBER 25th.

This is not the usual Party Primary, but a Non-Partisan Primary, provided by law, for the selection of the highest four candidates for Commissioner, whose names will appear on the final ballot of November 8th, and two of whom will be elected.



*For history and record of  
Mrs. Wolfe see*  
OVER





MRS. JAMES H. (Carolyn Williams) WOLFE was born at Payson, Utah. Her mother, Katherine Simons, was from a pioneer family. Mrs. Wolfe came, with her parents, to Salt Lake in 1900 where she attended the grade and high schools until 1907. She then entered the office of the Secretary of State and served there under three administrations, both Republican and Democratic, for a period of ten years. In 1917 she resigned and went to the University of Chicago, where she took courses in finance and accounting together with certain cultural subjects.

While in the office of the Secretary of State she served as the actual Secretary of State Board of Examiners, Board of Loan Commissioners, Armory and various other boards and commissions. For ten years she personally audited all claims against the State (except State road claims) over \$15,000,000 of them. She thus gained a knowledge of the general business of all State institutions and departments, perhaps never surpassed by any other person who served the State. During this time she got out all the State bond issues, including those for the Capitol and the roads, started the first purchasing department for, and was the first purchasing agent of, the State of Utah, issued all patents for State lands, assisted in the preparation and indexing of the Session Laws and performed numerous other responsible executive duties. She was, in fact, the office manager for the Secretary of State. After her course in the University of Chicago she passed the civil service examinations as an auditor for the Income Tax Division of the Internal Revenue Department in the class paying up to \$4,000.00 salary annually. She was twice offered positions in that department but was unable at that time to accept them.

She has since held various executive positions of responsibility, having been president of the local branch of the League of Women Voters and chairman of the Women's State Legislative Committee, a committee representing women's organizations in this State with a membership totalling approximately 75,000. During her entire civic activities she has worked for progressive social legislation both state and federal. She has had as much practical, executive training in governmental work as any candidate who ever ran for the City Commission.

Election of Mrs. James H. Wolfe would place on the Commission, at one stroke, a woman who is honest, intelligent and able to analyze financial and administrative problems and at the same time contribute to our civic government a woman's idealism and viewpoint, perhaps especially desirable at this time.

She does not ask for your support because she is a woman or as a representative of woman (justifiable as it may seem for half of an electorate to be represented in kind) but for the exact opposite reason, viz: That an able and understanding woman should not be discriminated against if she is otherwise satisfactory. Let the electorate have the benefit of the choice of ability from the whole of itself rather than from the half of itself.

## VOTE FOR MRS. JAMES H. WOLFE





## Excerpt from Interview Outline

## IV. Democratic women to comment on:

Charlotte Perkins Gilman

*Josephine Roche*  
The Woman Citizen (magazine)

## A. Congresswomen

Reva Beck Bosone, D. from Utah, 1948-1952

1933 - elected to Utah state legis. First to head major committee. First to become floor leader.

1936 - elected municipal judge, Salt Lake City

BA, U.C.-Berkeley, 1920. Law school - Univ. of Utah.

Humanitarian issues: minimum wage and hour law for women and children; unemployment insurance; ratification of federal const. amendment on child labor. Also backed outlawing poll tax and lynching, legislation to guarantee fair employment practices, to promote peace, ensure good housing, control inflation, and conserve natural resources. Wanted reclamation, flour control, and soil conservation.

1950 - defeated Ivy Baker Priest. Was Mrs. Wolfe active in campaigns?

Ruth Bryan Owen, D. of Fla. 1928-1932 (daughter of Wm. Jennings Bryan)

Effigene L. Wingo, D. of Arkansas 1931-1933

Hattie W. Caraway, D. of Arkansas 1932-1944. First woman in the Senate

Virginia E. Jenckes, D. of Indiana 1932-1938

Kathryn O'Loughlin McCarthy, D. of Kansas 1932-1934

Isabella Gree<sup>n</sup>way, D. of Arizona 1933-1936. Staunch support of FDR.

Caroline O'Day, D. of New York 1934-1942

Nan Wood Honeyman, D. of Oregon 1936-1938. Daughter of Charles Erskine Scott Wood

Helen Cahagan Douglas, D. of California

## B. State legislatures

Utah: women in the 1929 state legis: Mts. Emily M. Carlisle, Mrs. Bertha Purser, Mrs. Anna T. Piercey, Mrs. Grace A. Cooper.

Maryland: Mrs. Lavinia Engle. 1st woman legis. in Md. and exec. secy of Md. League of Women Voters.



*finding of recent study that F more often called on to serve as sacrificial lambs when party has little chance of succeeding.*

### C. Democratic party

1936 - vice chairmen of national committee:

Mary Dewson

Mrs. J. Borden Harriman

Mrs. Emma Guffey Miller

Mrs. Lucretia DelValle Grady (Calif.)

Mrs. Samuel Ralston (Indiana)

Helen Hanson (Maine)

Mrs. Douglas Brown (West Virginia)

Mrs. Ann Streubel (South Dakota)

Mrs. Frank Johnesse - Democratic state chairman of Idaho 1932, '34, '35.

Mrs. Dorothy Vredenburgh Bush, Alabama - appointed in 1944 as secretary of Democratic National Committee

Minnie Fisher Cunningham, Texas - power in Democratic reform politics for 40 years.

*Miss Josephine Pichain, N.Y., chairman, Natl. Comm. on Causes + Cures of War*

### D. FDR appointments

Dr. Dorothy B. Nyswander of Utah - appointed director of Region 5 of WPA's Div. of Women's and Professional Projects

Mrs. Marie Proctor - appointed Commissioner of Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization for district of Oregon, Western Washington, and Alaska. Rewarded by FDR for her work during campaign.

Mrs. Meta Fay - assis. director of speakers bureau of Federal Housing Administration (1935). From New York State. Close to Mrs. FDR.

Mary Anderson - Director, Women's Bureau.



## APPENDIX D

Correspondence with Virginia Rishel re: Women in Politics, 1948

Feb. 2, 1948

Dear Mrs. Wolfe:

I wish you were here so I could talk with you, because I know you could help me with a magazine story I'm trying to put together. I'm having a hard time to get the material, both because there isn't as much of it as there should be, and because what there is has never been written down anywhere.

I want to try to show -- in this hundredth year since the Seneca Falls Convention -- what and how women have contributed to better government. I want to do it by specific examples of how women have brought about some civic or state reform -- what the problem was, and how they went about getting a bad man out of office, or putting a good one in, or getting some slums cleared, or working on juvenile delinquency with some definite, specific result -- or something like that. I know that in many cases reforms have been the result of the combined efforts of men and women, but I know that in many of those cases the women were the "yeast", ~~the~~ and in other cases they were the main factors, in some specific accomplishment.

Can you offhand think of any ~~specific~~ examples in Utah or in any of the surrounding states that might fit into what I'm trying to do. What about getting a primary law enacted in Utah. Didn't the women do a lot in that campaign? What were the techniques they used? Did they have any slogans? Did they do anything unusual, or colorful? Who said what and why? With anecdotes, anecdotes, anecdotes ....



Judge Florence Allen did a very subdued and straightforward story along these lines in the ANNALS of Political And Social Science last May. I have it, and have talked to her. But she doesn't have enough color material in it for a popular magazine piece.

There has been so much criticism recently in the magazines about women -- how they haven't gotten themselves elected to public office, how they haven't cleaned up politics, how they are inaffective through ~~the~~ their organizations, all of which has some truth in it. However, Nobody has taken the trouble to point out what they have done, and given enough of the technique on how they've done it so that other women who don't know how might pick up the techniques and have a try themselves.

This is a natural year for such a story -- a campaign year, 28 years of national suffrage, 100 years since Seneca Falls, and WITH THE WOMEN HAVING ALMOST TWO MILLION MORE ELIGIBLE VOTERS THAN THE MEN. They could run the country if they wanted to.

If you feel equal to it, would you sit down behind your typewriter and tell me what you think about it all, and what your convictions are and tell me any tales you can remember which would give me some color. Stories about cleaning up a political situation -- or electing a good man over a poor one -- or by the use of their ballot in a systematic, organized way doing something important are what I'm after.

I'm sure by now you are sorry you ever knew me. But The Ladies Home Journal says they will read the story if I will write it. And it might do some good. You can catch a lot more flies with honey ..... etc.

Affectionately,

*Vergara*





February 10 - 1948

Dear Virginia:

I have your letter of the 2nd, and since receiving it have been trying to think of some way of helping you to get the material you need. I can think of a number of things which happened twenty years ago, but it is a little more difficult for me to put my hands on recent events, probably because I am not as active as I once was. Perhaps if there are not as many colorful events as there were 20 or 25 years ago, you might demonstrate that the whole women's movement has developed into more of an educational program - for instance: The Women's Action Committee, the Women's Legislative Council which are growing apace, as indicated by the national convention which was held here last year, and the increased participation of women in formulating party policies, as illustrated by the women on convention committees. It is rather interesting to trace the participation of women in conventions (Democratic) from 1932 up to the present time.

or more

For specific examples of women's influence 20 years ago I suggest that you look up the record of Bertha K. Landis, who was elected mayor of Seattle right after suffrage. I understand that she did quite a job in cleaning up Seattle at that time. You might compare her direct action in Seattle with the indirect influence say of Anna Boettinger as assistant editor of the Post Intelligencer, and as Editor of the paper in Phoenix. I have forgotten the name. At any rate what I am trying to say is if women had not been given the ballot, they would not be in the positions of authority both in politics and business that they are today. The influence of women thru the organized groups plus the P.T.A. which of course is supposed to be a mixed group, but is essentially a women's group must be tremendous, if you consider that they serve only as a "brake." In reality they do much more as I know from experience in my own state. For instance the P.T.A. groups here organized summer play grounds, which they sponsored, and which were very successful. I had a talk with Lucile Greenwood, former vice-chairman of the Democratic organization in Richfield. She is now the chairman of the Conservation Committee of the State Federation and has a wonderful program of study and action worked out. I am dropping her a note asking her to send you a copy. She is going to organize groups thruout the state (citizens) to visit the various areas in this region where the conservation work is being carried on. The Altursa Club at the present moment is whipping up an organization to build a Civic Auditorium here in Salt Lake City. They have invited all the men's service Clubs and the Women's Organization to participate in this project.

Yesterday I talked with Roxie Romney of St. George. She is the present Democratic Vice Chairman of Washington County. She has been a joy an inspiration to us for many years. She is a New Dealer, a member of the Mormon Church, a typical Utah woman. She was left a widow with four children, the youngest 1 year and the oldest 10. She has had quite a history. She was elected a member of the City Commission in St. George, and evidently did some good things, among which was to plan for a swimming pool, which is among the best if not the best in the state. She is now a member of the Board of Regents of the University of Utah, and incidentally makes her living as Librarian of the St. George Library. Serving in both capacities she ~~xxxxxx~~ organized a World Affairs Conference for Southern Utah, and had leading men and women from the University come down there to participate on the program. She said that 1100 people attended the meetings, in spite of the worst weather they had had in that warm section of the state in years, coming from Cedar City, Kane county and the other surrounding territory. I asked Mrs. Romney to write briefly some of the things that she had done, and to send them to me.



I also talked to Judge Reva Beck Bosone this morning, and she has promised to job down a few of the things that she has been able to accomplish while serving as Judge. She has made quite a record in the handling of traffic cases. She has quite severe, and has given what might be considered high fines for traffic violations. There was no criticism of favoritism while she was on the Traffic Court. She also is doing a great deal of work with Alcoholics and is working with ~~Alcohol~~ Alcohol Anonymous. She is very much interested in the problems of the adolescents, and has had a radio program for some time, which she devotes to the three subjects is "majoring" in.

It might be interesting to ferret out exactly what Frances Perkins did while Secretary of Labor. I understand she did a masterly job. Also I think the educational work Harriet Elliot did in giving to her students, and to the public with whom she came in contact, an intelligent idea of government, and her stimulation in awakening interest in political problems certainly should be mentioned.

Of course Mrs. Roosevelt is the outstanding example of women's influence along almost every line, and certainly she would not have had it, if women had not been given the ballot.

Plodding along most unspectacularly I can see that I have had some influence in my state - first as State President of the League of Women Voters (which we no longer have in this state unfortunately) which put me in line for the Presidency of the Utah Legislative Council of Women. We weren't too large a group in those days, but we managed to accomplish quite a bit, the most notable examples are the repeal of the Act which permitted Pari-mutuel Betting and the amendment of the Jury Act to permit women to serve as jurors. I have talked with many judges, and they all tell me that women make excellent jurors. Off the record they say that they get a higher class of women than men because practically all the professional men - teachers, engineers, doctors, lawyers, etc. - are exempt. They tell me that they are no more emotional than the men, perhaps less so in the case where a pretty woman is involved.

I can think of the wonderful work that Mrs. Musser has done, which you know as well as I. Mrs. Beck (article in last digest) of Colorado must have some splendid accomplishments to show for her life's devotion to public service - mostly in the international field.

Kolly Dewson as a back of the scenes worker, with her idea of informing the masses on the program of the New Deal, started something which will carry on forever I hope.

You asked about our work in the primary act, but I did not bring there except to see that women were given a 50-50 deal. Actually I was against the primary system as they set it up, and tried to have a bill passed to provide for a combination convention-primary, but was unsuccessful, largely because of the influence of Maw. This year, however, after 10 years of two primaries we are going back to a combination convention-primary system.

I believe however, that the Democratic Women's Division was responsible for the stimulation of the interest by women's organizations, which has given women 10-50 representation in so many of the states. You remember how we used to pour over the laws of the various states where we thought we had a chance, and we actually drafted proposed amendments, etc., for them in many cases. I look back upon that as one of my major accomplishments. It is almost impossible to measure women's influence in the party committees, but my own experience would lead me to believe that it is considerable. Campaigning is now on a different basis - largely I think because of the fact that the woman voter must be considered.





The rainbow Fliers marked a change in campaigning. Get Molly to give you a brief history of Mary Chamberlain. I understand that she worked right along with some of the women in one of the trades, I can't remember which, in order to get material for one of the campaigns - perhaps Al Smith's.

It is my idea that we have passed the time when we can expect a woman, or women enmasse to take over and clean up a city or state. Those things will be done when the people are aroused, and it will be done by a man or woman with a will. Women are constructive - they are more interested in building than in fighting or tearing down. Look for their influence in the way of increased recreational areas; parks and playgrounds; better medical facilities, etc. etc.

Put a plug in for changing the attitude toward people who participate in politics. Because we have had corruption and boss rule in the larger cities, is no reason why every decent citizen who is willing to participate in politics should be tarred with the bosses' stick. Everybody does ~~xxxxxxx~~ it - teachers, preachers, newspapers. It is a wonder that we have anybody who is willing to have their name associated with a political party, yet the party system is the basis of our Democratic government. Millions of people stay away from the poles, but that number is multiplied many times by those who fail to participate in party primaries, and the mass meetings where the people are chosen who do the work of the party. I found that our Unitarian Minister, who is very liberal, -incidentally served several years in a Chicago church, ~~xxxxxxx~~ - without intending to lumped all the officers of political parties in the class of "politicians" in the worst sense of the word. Finally I called his attention to it, and he said that he did it without thinking, and had only in mind his experience in Chicago where they found such a deplorable situation in connection with the educational system, being mixed up in politics. When I explained to him how such allusions discouraged people from participating in politics, and helped aggravate the trouble, he asked what he could do about it. The very next Sunday he brought the subject into one of his sermons, and last Sunday night at our forum, we had Delbert M. Draper give a talk on this subject. ~~xxxxxxx~~ Only a few of those present had ever attended a party organization meeting, but many after the meeting said they would participate.

I hope you can make sense out of this letter. I haven't tried to be very systematic, and you can see that it is not well organized. When I get the other material I will send it on. I am also trying to get information of the Women's Legislative Councils.

-Love,



VIRGINIA RISHEL  
2141 Eye Street  
Washington 7, D. C.

Saturday, March 13. [1948]

Dear Mrs. Wolfe:

Thanks for your thoughtful and detailed letter. I've been having trouble making my ideas jell into an article because I was trying to find a number of specific incidents showing how women enmasse had cleaned up a city or improved some civic situation. I know there are some stores like that -- such as the school teachers in Boston who last fall got out and elected a school board to their liking -- but I am agreed with you that such stories are by no means the nub of women's contributions as citizens made through the ballot. I am sure you are right that much more is accomplished through action and legislative committees. And through the leadership of women like Mrs. Roosevelt and Frances Perkins who get into positions where they can use their influence and push better government.

I'm going to try some of the approaches you suggest and see what I come up with. I'm afraid my original idea is not as good as I thought it was. And my most dramatic example, (women in Louisiana who had such a great part in ousting the Huey Long Machine in 1940) has been made obsolete by the fact that the Long machine is now back in power. Also, one other good example I have been requested not to use. Both of which were body blows.

I received material from both Reva Beck Bosone and from Mrs. Romney. I can see how to weave Reva into the story, but Mrs. Romney sent me mainly a biographical sketch, rather





than an account of what she has done -- no doubt out of modesty. I'm going to hold her material for awhile ( she has asked me to return it) and see how the article shapes up. I shall write both of them to thank them. And thanks very much to you for promoting the material.

My big problem now is to get time to try to put something down on paper. Magazines plan months ahead, you know, and the time for placement is passing. I'm in a bad spot as I have so little free time right now. When I first started getting material together for the story my job at UNRRA was ending, and I felt sure I would have at least a couple of months to myself before anything else opened for me. Then at about the same time I was asked to stay on at UNRRA part time to finish an important writing job I had started and put a lot of time into, and I was also offered a job writing a cancer control manual for the National Cancer Institute. The latter had to be taken at once or not at all , for there was an impending deadline. It is a good job, and opens a new and non-controversial, non-political field to me. So I thought I ought to take it. As a result I'm now carrying two jobs -- but will be out of UNRRA soon. But the cancer job is hard in that the research for the manual is being done in Buffalo, and the printing will be done in Albany. The Cancer Institute is in Bethesda, and I'm in Washington. I spend every moment I'm not down behind a typewriter, or at UNRRA, enroute to one of the above spots. A week or so in Buffalo and Albany and I come home so exhausted I have to stay in bed a couple of days before I can get going again. Oh, to have more energy and staying power!



VIRGINIA RISHEL  
2141 Eye Street  
Washington 7, D. C.

However, I'm terribly anxious to write the women's story, and I'm going to make every effort to do so within the next month or so. Particularly inasmuch as I have a market that will consider it.

I wish I could see you and talk with you about our Democratic Party. I feel the outlook is very bleak, don't you? Poor Truman. I just can't feel he is the man who should be President right now. I don't think he knows what it is all about. Nor do the people around him. Or maybe they do, and he is not smart enough to realize how bad their advice is.

The Committee asked me to come back for the Campaign, but I couldn't put my heart into it.

I'm sorry I have been delayed in thanking you for the fruits of your thinking on the subject of women and the ballot, but I've been overwhelmed. But I do appreciate it, and I'm going to try my best to make good use of it.

My regards to all of your family. When are you coming East again? I should love to see you. And to talk to you. You have certainly helped clear up my thinking on one subject -- I'd like you to work on some other angles.

My love to all of the family,

Virginia



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Miriam Feingold Stein

B.A., Swarthmore College, 1963, with major in history  
M.A., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1966, in American  
history; research assistant - Civil War and Reconstruc-  
tion.

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.











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