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Interview with Jane Gray Muskie by Don Nicoll

Summary Sheet and Transcript

Interviewee

Muskie, Jane Gray

Interviewer

Nicoll, Don

Date

December 4, 2000

Place

Bethesda, Maryland

ID Number

MOH 251

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Biographical Note

Jane (Gray) Muskie was born on February 12, 1927 to Myrtie (Jackson) and Millage Guy Gray. She grew up in the Waterville, Maine area, graduating from Waterville High School. Her father died when she was about 10 years old, so her mother supported the family. During the summers, Jane and her mother would travel to various resorts in Maine so her mother could cook. Jane's first job was dishwashing at one of these resorts. After graduating from high school, Jane worked in Downtown Waterville at clothing stores. At the age of eighteen, she met Ed Muskie, a Waterville lawyer. They dated for three years before marrying in 1948. In 1986, she and Abigail McCarthy wrote a book entitled One Woman Lost, which focused on being married to politicians. At the time of the interview, she lived in Bethesda, Maryland. Jane passed away on December 25, 2004.

Scope and Content Note

Interview includes discussions of: life in the Blaine House; social responsibilities of the governor's wife; Cathy Rines; Arthur Benoit; 1956 Maine State Convention; Muskie family; New England Governors meetings; hardships of a political career; benefits of a political career; move to Washington; and Muskie's Senate colleagues.

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Transcript

Don Nicoll: It is Monday, the 4th day of December, the year 2000. We are at 5217 West Bard Avenue in Bethesda, Maryland at the home of Jane and Martha Muskie, and Don Nicoll is interviewing Jane Muskie. Jane, when we concluded the first of our interviews for the project, we were talking about the 1954 election and the results when Senator Muskie was first elected governor, and you were getting ready to move to the Blaine House. Had you any idea what it was going to be like to live in the governor's mansion in Augusta?

JM: Well, I wouldn't have, Don, except that the governor's wife had invited me down to visit and she probably assumed, and rightly so, that I had never been there. And she was nice enough to invite me down and show me the house and tell me all the things that they had not been able to do that I might try to do while I lived there. And I thought it was going to be a great place for the kids, it was so big and rambling, and I just, it was a nice house and I recognized that it was a nice family house. So I was not too unhappy about leaving Waterville, and after all we were only eighteen miles away.

DN: And I take it that the Crosses were quite gracious in the transition.

JM: They certainly were. I remember her telling me that, how difficult it was to get things in and out of the attic, that it was like all old houses. It was pull down stairs and difficult once you got up there to carry anything down. And she said to be sure and remember that there was a house man, and that it wasn't like Waterville or where they used to live, that there was some help so to please use it, and to please try to be careful roaming around the attic because there were holes in the floor. Actually, when I moved in I found out there were holes everywhere. And I finally ended up going before the governor's council and telling them how badly the house needed to be fixed up, that it was not only dangerous for me when I was in, taking suitcases back and forth to the attic, but it was also very dangerous for the children. And eventually, after some time, they came forth with the money to repair some of the house.

And by the time we left the Blaine House we were able to do quite a few things actually. We had the roof repaired, or actually I think it was replaced, and we had the house painted. I don't remember whether it was completely or partially, but it was certainly in better condition when we left than when we arrived and, through no fault of Mr. and Mrs. Cross. And I notice now when we do drive by on our way to Waterville or anyplace north, that they've gone way beyond us now and the Blaine House is in super condition.

DN: It needed some substantial investments over the years. You were moving into the governor's mansion, which as you said is a very comfortable place, but it was a very different and very public environment for your two young children to face.

JM: Well, that's true, Don. They, it didn't bother them, it bothered me probably more, because they just continued to be children. And when I was giving a tea for the women's clubs of Maine all of a sudden I would look down and see two little faces under a bench or a little table that had been set up for tea or something, and there were the kids. And people actually did not seem to mind having them around. They were around just as much as they would have been in our home in, our little home in Waterville.

DN: How old were Steve and Ellen then?

JM: Steve was seven and Ellen was five.

DN: And where did they go to school?

JM: Fortunately there was a little school just at the end of the corner. And because the people at the Blaine House took good care of us, they did not want the kids to walk to school alone and there was always someone available to walk up to the corner with them, and to go up and meet them at noon time or whatever. But the kids liked all of that special attention, it didn't bother them at all.

DN: How did you go about staffing the Blaine House and your own program?

JM: Well the Blaine House was already staffed, they had a full time staff of ten, which of course was amazing to me who never had anybody in my house in Waterville. But it was very nice and very helpful, because those people knew what they were doing. I didn't particularly know what I was doing, although my mother had given me all kinds of books to read on how to run a house and so forth. But anyway, they were very nice people and very quickly became very fond of the children. They didn't, I'm not saying that they took care of the children or anything, but they were very fond of them.

And actually my mother came down shortly after we moved into the Blaine House to stay with us, because so many evenings I was out with Ed at some function, and she did not like the idea that the children were there by themselves. Not by themselves, but the staff quarters were separate from the family quarters, and she was afraid that they would get into mischief or into something, so she came down and stayed with us basically most of the time we lived there. And it was very, very helpful to have grandmother reading the stories at bed time and playing games with them and so forth. So, and she did enjoy living there, I must say. So that was one very nice aspect of being at the Blaine House, I was not only close to my children but I was close to my mother.

DN: And she had her own room there and -

JM: She did. There were, fortunately there were three rooms that ran right together, and she took the middle room because that way she could hear the kids if they got up in the night or cried or something. And it worked out very nicely, it saved me especially when Melinda was born, and later on when Martha was born. I was down at the other end of the hall and I would probably would not have been a very good mother at that point, having the babies to take care of. Although I have to tell you, my husband did love children but much more so than I realized, because quickly he realized that I couldn't be up, entertaining all day and up all night. So we took turns, at his suggestion, we took turns feeding the babies and he, these two little kids were only two years apart, and he would feed one in the middle of the night and I would feed the other one. So we had a pretty good system going there, except it was just as well that we didn't stay any longer or we would have had a much bigger tribe.

DN: Now, you had a social secretary.

JM: Yes, we did, and, Kathy Rines, and she was wonderful.

DN: How did you find Kathy?

JM: Well, Kathy found me really. She had helped, for a short time she had helped Mrs. Cross' social secretary when they needed extra help. And I think Mrs. Cross actually was the person who suggested to Kathy, both of them having come from Gardiner, and I think she suggested to Kathy that I might want, that she might want to speak with me because it might become a full time job, which it did. And it was, it was wonderful having her around and especially since she had had a lot more experience than I had had with the way things should be working at the Blaine House. It was a lot of work to invite five hundred people to lunch, and she didn't seem minding that at all. And certainly alone I would never have been able to handle it.

DN: Five hundred people for lunch. These were programs related to state issues, or state organizations?

JM: Well, it had been a custom for the governor's wife and the governor to invite the counties to lunch during the winter months, especially when most of the husbands were in Augusta anyway. The wives certainly did enjoy that, because it got them down into the social life which they probably didn't have where they lived. And so we continued doing that, and it was very popular, even with my husband who would walk across the street and have lunch with them every Tuesday.

And, oh there were lots of precedents that had already been set for that house. The, there were evening dinners, and there were all kinds of events that sort of just happened, like the Cancer Society would write and ask if we would like to entertain the ladies who worked so hard for the cancer drive. There were just lots of things that went on in a town, in a city like Augusta which was a lot more social than I was accustomed to. But even though it was work, it also was very nice because I became acquainted with all these people across the state, and so did my husband. It was really, it was a lot of fun. I remember Ed had, Arthur Benoit was his, oh, what did they call him?

DN: Military aide?

JM: Yes, he was a military aide, but he bordered onto the Navy rather than the Army, and he stood between us at the front door for hours and hours and hours introducing the people coming into the Blaine House. And I think probably why Ed's second election was so easy, because by then he had met everyone in Maine. But it was a very nice social life, and we didn't have to travel to other places nearly as much since we kind of had most of them there at the Blaine House.

DN: Now, Ed made some trips around the state in the course of that governorship. How did he take to having the state trooper drive him?

JM: Well, he liked that, as you can well imagine, he certainly would never have done that if he had been driving himself. And I, he and John became good friends and still are, but it was nice for him to be able to do it the easy way for a change. And it certainly was anything but, it just was not like campaigning and going around and really working. He really enjoyed going and seeing people and all of the different towns, some of whom he had already met on the campaign trail. But he really did, it was very rewarding to him to be able to sit in that nice big car and have a nap and have somebody else do all the driving. I can understand now why people run for president.

DN: Now, what was the name of the trooper, you referred to him as John?

JM: John, John, what was his last name. Well, I'm sorry, Don, I really can't remember his last name. Maybe it'll come to me.

DN: Okay, now in those early days, we've talked about Kathy Rines who was your social secretary. Who was in the governor's office staff at the time?

JM: Well, of course, let me see, who was there? Well you must have known who was in the office.

DN: Marjorie Hutchinson.

JM: Well Marjorie, since you had already mentioned Marjorie, I didn't. But Marjorie was there and certainly did a wonderful job of handling that office. So much so that Ed would never have considered coming down here unless Marjorie would come also. But unfortunately she had to go back to take care of her sick husband. But anyway, it was a wonderful group of people, and it was great for, were you on the staff then?

DN: No, we were volunteers at that point.

JM: You and Frank?

DN: And Frank. Marjorie and Elsie Bowen as I recall.

JM: Oh Elsie, I used to think about her every morning because she had such a long drive to come to work.

DN: Where was her home then?

JM: Way down near the ocean, and it was in one of those small towns that was where everybody went in the summer time. And poor Elsie would stay late at night in the office and then have to drive that long road to get home, and that long road to get back in the morning. She was very faithful.

DN: Joan Williams was, Joan Williams Arnold was the third one.

JM: Yes, she was there. And I don't remember, did she live in Waterville or did she live in Augusta?

DN: She was in Augusta I believe at the time. And the fourth one at some point was McPherson. Ann McPherson?

JM: Where was she from?

DN: I think she lived in Dresden or somewhere down that way. And Maury Williams was the administrative assistant, and Floyd, Tom, -

JM: Nute.

DN: Nute was press secretary.

JM: Floyd Nute, yes.

DN: That was an enormous office then. Very small compared with these days.

JM: Yes, I would say so.

DN: Were there many contacts between you and the family and the members of the staff?

JM: Oh sure, well I used to call them several times a day for some reason but, to see if Ed was coming home for lunch or whether we had to go out that evening, or. I don't remember which person was exactly in charge of the social schedule there, but whoever it was really ran that office very well. And I think Ed was very friendly with everybody. It was small enough to at least, you know, be like a family.

DN: I get the impression from your comments that those years were very comfortable years and happy years for you and for Ed.

JM: Well, they were, you know. We both like, love children and we had such a good time with the kids. After a while when we really did become comfortable, we used to do some terrible things, such as after the staff went up to their rooms at night we would go around the rest of the Blaine House and pull down all the window shades and hide and go seek with the children, and of course they loved that. They were just years when we were able to almost do what we pleased, instead of having everything be something that was designated by the office or something. But anyway, we, and also we invited the governor's council over to the Blaine House every week, and we not only played ping pong but, what was that show, that television show that was on, 64 Thousand Dollar Question?

DN: Oh, The 64 Thousand Dollar Question.

JM: They always stayed for that, and we would all have coffee or whatever they chose, and we would sit there and listen to that television show, which was very popular back in those days. It

was fun.

DN: Now the governor's council was a contentious political issue but I take it that the relationship between the governor and the members of that council were fairly relaxed.

JM: Well, they were because Ed made up his mind that he was not going to fight with that group of people the whole time he was governor. And he just decided he, that there was no reason why they couldn't be friends and that's exactly what happened. Much to their surprise, they liked him. And also, I don't think he really ever asked them something that annoyed them or bothered them. I think he always tried to stay on the good side of them and to be reasonable himself, and therefore they were very reasonable with us. Such as putting on the new roof and doing other things.

I don't know if you ever heard this story, but as I was saying there were a lot of things with the Blaine House physically. And I remember when Governor Baxter came and had lunch with us, he wanted to come and see the new baby, and he had lunch with us and we were walking around the Blaine House afterwards. And he asked me if everything was to my liking. And I said, "Not really," because there were a lot of things that should be taken care of. That since this house belonged to the people of the state of Maine, I certainly hoped that it would be in better shape when we left than when it was when we arrived. And he said, "Like what?" And I walked him around the house and showed him things.

And the next day, oh, Ed invited him to stay overnight at the Blaine House, which he did, and the next day he walked over to the capitol with Ed and asked him if he could go before the governor's council and speak to them. And of course Ed said he was sure that could be arranged, and Governor Baxter went before the governor's council and told them that they should be ashamed of themselves, having those little children in a house that was very dangerous.

So you see, in the end that house was in very good shape, and especially by comparison with what it was when we moved in. But it still was a consolation to leave the Blaine House and know that we had helped at least to help the state take care of that house. And I really think that the people in Augusta thought that it was nearly a miracle that all of that had been done in, of course it had been eight years, so. But I took some pride in that, and I think Ed did, too.

DN: Did you have similar, or did Ed have similar good working relations with the leadership of the house and the senate?

JM: I think so. I wasn't perhaps as aware of it as I was with his relationship with the governor's council, but I remember going over there when they had, well of course I was there when he was sworn in, and there were lots of other occasions when they held special meetings in the senate. I don't know whether you were there when the children were there, but they loved going over and Ed took them over there quite frequently. Actually, he took them over there every Saturday morning with him when I kept saying, oh, you shouldn't be going to work, you're supposed to take some time off for yourself. Oh well, I'll just take the kids over, they love to run in the corridors and look at the statues. And so off they would go every Saturday

morning and enjoy the State House. And also Ed used to take them down over the hill into the park, and I'm not even sure the park is still there but I hope it is, it was beautiful.

DN: It's still there.

JM: Good.

DN: Now, in '56 Ed was running for reelection. Was he terribly worried about that election, or did he think it was a reasonably, an easy one to win?

JM: Well, he worried about every election. He always said you can't take anything for granted and you just have to work as hard as you can and hope that you'll win. And by then he was so well known around the state, I think it had to have been easier for him. I was not able to go that year as much as I had been before because it was, unless it was some place where I could take the children, I, and my mother, I really tried not to be on the road all the time, and.

DN: You were also expecting that year.

JM: Probably, I usually was.

DN: That is the year that Melinda was born.

JM: Melinda was born.

DN: Do you remember the 1956 state convention in Brewer, attending that?

JM: Oh, yes.

DN: There were three of you who were pregnant at the time.

JM: Who were the three?

DN: The three were you and Hilda [Nicoll] and Mrs. [Rosemary] Baldacci.

JM: Oh, my goodness, how wonderful.

DN: And that was the year that John Baldacci was born, along with Melinda, and along with our Melissa. And do you recall the, or were you at the dinner the night that Scoop Jackson was supposed to appear but was snowed out and we had other entertainment from Bette Davis?

JM: Oh yes, I do remember that. That was really something, having her so interested in Maine politics all of a sudden. But it was, I think those were probably her happiest years, too, when she lived in Maine.

DN: That was a night of Herbert Ross Brown, Dick Dubord, Ed Muskie, Frank Coffin, and Bette Davis.

JM: Oh, yes.

DN: The campaign turned out not to be as difficult as some might have thought because Ed won reelection against Willis [Bill] Trafton, who was speaker of the house, and that -

JM: And had a lot more money.

DN: That's right. What, do you remember how Ed and Bill Trafton interacted when Bill was speaker, and also Bob Haskell who was the president of the senate? How were relations -?

JM: Well I remember, I remember Bill Trafton probably more than Bob Haskell because I didn't really get to know him as well as I knew the Traftons, having them sort of just down the road. And I really think that that campaign was sort of strange because I don't think Bill Trafton really wanted to run against Ed to begin with, but I'm sure his own party thought that he was the likely one to win. And I don't remember, but I don't think anybody that I ever talked with thought he was going to win, and, and it really wasn't even a close race, was it?

DN: No, no.

JM: But anyway, they're nice people and Ed had been friends with him before the campaign, and was afterwards. But I think one good lesson that Ed learned, and not that he probably didn't know it before but I think he really focused on it, was that it was a lot easier being friends with people than it was not being friends with them. And certainly the Maine legislature is a good example of that. I noticed, I noticed when sometimes in the last few years before Ed died when we went up to, when we were both in Augusta going to the legislature for, well they celebrated Ed's birthday and they did all kinds of nice things, giving him plaques and so forth. But I just, I kind of always felt when I was in that room that those men might, and women might have been in different parties, but after they had been there together for several years they were really good friends.

DN: We've talked about Ed and the relationships with people on the other side of the aisle, what about the collection of Democrats who kept coming the Blaine House for strategy sessions and work sessions with Ed? Dick McMahon, Dick Dubord and company, what were they like and how did they interact with Ed?

JM: Well, they were his pals and it was a terrible loss when he lost those two. But anyway, they were, they added a lot of fun to -

DN: Can you give us a description of the two Dicks?

JM: Well, I remember, and I'm sure that a lot of people who were around us then remember also about Dick McMahon driving Ed in the first campaign. And when they would get home at night it was usually nine or ten o'clock and I had Steve and Ellen already in bed and we would sit around and they would tell me everything that had happened all day along the route.

(Outside interruption.)

DN: You were telling us about Dick and Ed coming after, coming in at the end of a campaign day.

JM: Yes, and they were too funny. I was always so glad that I had the kids in bed so that I could sit and listen to all of their stories. The worst part of it was that they never had any money left. I don't, I, you know, I kept saying, "Now do you remember I gave you so much money this morning?" And, oh, because they would mention that if there was anything in the refrigerator they didn't mind having it. So I always ended up feeding them between ten and eleven o'clock at night. And I'd say, "What happened to all of that money?" "Oh well, Dick wanted a doughnut," or "I wanted some coffee," or something always happened to it. And they would tell me word for word about every single thing they had eaten all day.

And of course back then nobody really knew Ed terribly well, so they didn't have nice luncheons for them and dinners for them or anything. And they'd usually get back and say, "Well we only had five cents left from Newport down to Waterville," and so you can see that we were very careful with the money. Well I wasn't so sure, but anyway they always talked me into giving them a very late dinner ever night. So I was kind of happy when things got a little more prosperous so they could eat on the road.

DN: And they were less of a drain on you. What did Dick look like, Dick McMahon?

JM: Well, he was nice and roly-poly, and smoked too much. And I don't know, the one thing I do know about Dick was that he was a wonderful driver. I didn't have to worry about them crashing or getting into any kind of accident because he really, he really took his job seriously. He thought he was driving the president of the United States or someone. He was so thrilled to be driving a car and to be campaigning. I think when the campaign was all over he was the saddest one of all, because Ed was happy and all of us were happy but unfortunately Dick sort of lost his job. And of course he was still friends until he became sick later. But . . .

DN: Now, Ed appointed him later to the Maine Public Utilities Commission.

JM: Right.

DN: And that was controversial in some quarters at least. People raising questions about his qualifications. What was it that Ed saw in him, from your point of view, to take on that job as a member of the PUC?

JM: I don't know, Don. I think probably most of that arrangement was friendship. And I'm sure that if anyone had questioned it that Ed would have said, if your brother, if you wanted your brother near you or working with you or something that perhaps you would appoint them to a job. I don't think there was anything that really upset a lot of people. I think in politics people understand that you like to have your friends around you.

DN: Now Dick Dubord was also a good friend, but a very different personality from Dick

McMahon. What was he like?

JM: Oh, well he was fun. He and his wife and Ed and I used to party a little bit together, and of course it was Dick's father who really talked Ed into running for governor in the first place. And I think their whole family was bent toward politics, and if Dick had lived long enough I'm sure that he, too, would have run for something. He was a very nice man, and he was fun to be around. And I think he was a good influence on Ed in lots of ways because he, unlike my husband, he had had more time to play and he made things lighter. It always seemed to me like either we or Ed, depending on whether they were at a Rotary Club meeting or where they were, they always really had a good time.

DN: As the years moved on toward 1958, the question of what Ed would do after his second term became, as governor, became more intense. Do you recall any debates over whether he should run for the Senate in 1958?

JM: Well, to tell you the truth I probably like politics as much as Ed did, and even though I would have been a much smarter person if I had said, "You probably could practice law in Portland and have a much better living than you're having right here in the Blaine House." But I didn't really want to keep him from pursuing a further career in politics, but I have to admit that the thought of moving to Washington was a little scary. I'd never lived in a big city. I'd been to Washington a few times to governors' meetings and so forth, but the idea of moving here with our children was a little unnerving, or a lot unnerving. But there was also a side of it that I knew I would, and the children would really like, and that's that we would see more of Ed if we lived in one place and in one house and not entertaining all of the time. And when we actually -

End of Side A
Side B

DN: This is the second half of the December 4th, 2000 interview with Jane Muskie. And Jane, you were just talking about contemplating the possibility of going to Washington and the chance to have more of a private life with your family.

JM: Well, it turned out to be exactly that. The trip down itself was quite an experience because Ed still had ten days I believe to serve as governor of Maine. And he decided that the best idea would be for him to resign as governor so that we would be able to have a comfortable way for this transition with a growing large family. So he did resign as governor. And we were able to move down to Washington with the help of Larry and Louise Butler and, driving one car with some of the older children, and with my mother and Ed and me in another car with the new baby and the other youngest one. Anyway, we got down to Washington in, not in style perhaps, but very comfortably. And one of the, and what was the governor's name, the following governor who was -

DN: Immediately was Bob Haskell.

JM: Yes, Bob Haskell, was a very happy man because he then became governor for ten days and never forgot it, I don't think.

DN: Always referred to himself as governor.

JM: As governor, right. And that was a good experience for him, and a good experience for us. And we enjoyed coming into a small neighborhood type community that Ruth and Frank Coffin had helped us find, this nice house, and we lived in it for a long time. And it was a good family neighborhood and it was really in the long run a very good move for, I think maybe Ed would have died of boredom in Portland practicing law.

DN: Somehow the practice of law did not seem to be his great aim in life.

JM: No, I don't think so.

DN: I think we should note for the record here that when you moved to Washington your four children were Steve, who had been born in 1948, '9?

JM: And guess how old he is now?

DN: He's fifty.

JM: He's fifty years old.

DN: Fifty years old. So he was born in 1950 then. And Ellen, who had been born in 1952?

JM: No, Ellen is two years younger than Steve.

DN: Okay, so that would have been '52.

JM: Oh, is that '52?

DN: And Melinda had been born in 1956, and Martha just before you moved down here, when, she was born when in 1958, after the election or before?

JM: Well, Martha is forty-one.

DN: Yeah, but which month was she born in?

JM: Oh, born, she was born in December.

DN: December, so is that -

JM: December 17th.

DN: You didn't have much time between delivering her -

JM: And moving.

DN: - and moving.

JM: No, no. But that's what makes life exciting. We never had any much time for anything. And, but thank goodness Ed really enjoyed the children, and I do think that even our children have enjoyed the fact that their father was in politics. And basically it turned out to be the right choice for him, and also for the family because we all really enjoyed having him, not so much running all around. But it was, we always enjoyed the fact that he'd be coming home and telling them who he had seen who was exciting that day. It really had been, has been a good life and a good experience for our children. I wish I could say that one of them was bent toward politics but I really can't because the one thing they did learn was, they learned how hard that he worked particularly and how much it had included me, which they weren't too crazy about. But they really did enjoy the profession that their father had.

DN: I'd like to drop back for a minute and then pick up the beginnings of the Washington experience. You mentioned attending several of the governors' conferences and meeting governors. Were there governors that you met between 1955 and 1958 whom you got to know better or saw more of after you came to Washington ?

JM: Well there were. For one thing, I do remember meeting, it was a funny experience, too, because I remembered, one of my closest friends now is Virginia [Warren] Daly [wife of the late John Charles Daly]. And her mother and father were, her father was governor of California at the same time that Ed was governor of Maine, and she could not for the longest time -

DN: And he was, the governor in that case was, in California, was whom?

JM: He was the, he also became the chief justice. Now you tell me who?

DN: Earl Warren.

JM: Earl Warren. And they had a large family of children, and Mrs. Warren and I were friendly from the governors' meetings and they traveled a lot in the days when the trains were the easiest way to get around with a lot of kids. So that was their method of campaigning. Not that I ever saw them when they were campaigning, but I, from becoming friends later, in several later, years later. They would tell us stories about our past life, and we would do the same with them. Also, Frank and Ruth Coffin were still here when we moved down to Washington, and it was nice to know that there was somebody that we really knew very well. And, let me see, who else was here? Some of Ed's staff came down. Marjorie for a short time, and then there were a lot of other people, Joanne Hoffmann and lots of people who were good Maine girls. But by and large we really for a long time didn't know a lot of people in Washington except our neighbors. And fortunately we had wonderful neighbors who are still friendly, and I guess, I guess we were just lucky to be in this area.

DN: Now some of Ed's colleagues in the Senate had been governors and he'd known them. Senator Caleb Boggs for example, and do you recall others whom you had met who then served with him in the Senate? Was Senator Nelson governor of Wisconsin before?

JM: Yes, he was. (*Telephone interruption.*)

DN: I was asking you about colleagues of Ed's in the Senate who had been governors.

JM: Right. Well, there were a lot of them. It's funny how, well I guess it isn't very strange, it's sort of one job leads to another job kind of thing. But Ed knew the Pells, I guess mainly because, I'm not sure that he was ever governor but he was at a lot of the meetings that we went to down here before Ed became a Senator.

DN: He was, as I recall, Claiborne Pell was a staff assistant for the Democratic advisory council in the fifties. And this was one of the councils set up by Paul Butler as chairman of the Democratic National Committee. I think that's where he was involved.

JM: He's very ill.

DN: But there were a number of people I'm sure Ed would have met through those programs.

JM: Well especially when he went to the New England governors' meetings. He of course got to know all of the New England governors very well, but not all of those came down to Washington, so. But I think he, a lot of the past, his past companions in the Senate say now to me that how much they miss Ed in the Senate and how nice it was to have New Englanders.

DN: What was it about the New Englanders that appealed to him?

JM: Well, basically the ones who became his closest friends were the New Englanders. The senator from Vermont is still senator from Vermont, and -

DN: Senator Leahy?

JM: Mm-hmm, and he was always a very close friend of Ed's. And, oh I don't know, there's just something about New Englanders that's a little different, and I think they always felt as if they could call each other. And I know when Ed was sponsoring a bill and he needed support in the Senate he always, the first people he called were the New England senators. And, oh, there was just a lot of camaraderie in the Senate.

DN: Speaking of friends, you obviously developed, and did develop early on and maintained a strong friendship with Joanne Amcott Hoffmann, and with Gayle Fitzgerald Cory, both of whom were staff members for Ed. What was it about these two women in particular that made them such good friends of yours?

JM: Well, the main reason was that they were from Maine, and I always felt a camaraderie with them because they sort of could see my side of a situation that other people wouldn't necessarily have seen. Like, for instance if Ed really wanted me to go on a trip around the world or something, those two little ladies were right there, Johnny on the spot, ready to come out and stay with whoever was helping me around the house then. And they always went to work bright

and early in the morning and came home at six o'clock at night, but they were always right there to talk to me if I called them from Manilla or Hawaii or wherever it was. They were, "Don't worry, the children are fine. We're watching them and they're, they're having a wonderful time." And I, they were so friendly and so kind, and so wonderful with the children. Of course now that our kids are adults, they're still good friends, and of course we were all so sad when Gayle left us. But anyway, friendship means a lot when you come to a new place, just as it did with them, they had to make friends over again, too.

DN: In general you have maintained quite strong relationships with the folks who came to Washington with Ed, or came to work for him.

JM: Oh yes.

DN: And that, that seems to have been important to them and to you, and to your family.

JM: Well, I, it certainly has been important to us. Sometimes people do change jobs and, for one reason or another, and then it's amazing how quickly you sort of lose track of people. But basically, the people who have always worked for Ed in whichever office he was in, almost always stayed a good long time and became very fond of each other, too, as well as us being fond of them. But time does go by, and when Ed left the Senate to go to the State Department, some of them went with him. But as always, some of them didn't. So, but the friendships have always continued over long periods of time. I think it's our New England way of, I'm not sure about this because I'm sure people in other parts of the country value their friends, too. But I think really that perhaps it's not just us, it's coming from a small, a smaller state, and into a large area that was different to us. I think it was really probably very important for us to make friends and always to keep the friends. So, I know from the fact that we, I still see all of them on a pretty regular basis, but anyway, it's something nice that happens in one's life.

DN: This is good point to ask you about the ongoing relationship between Ed and you and the state of Maine. He seemed to emphasize the ties he had to Maine. How strong were those ties really?

JM: Oh, they were pretty strong. There was never a year that went by that he wasn't ready to move up to Maine for the summer in March. He really loved Maine, and of course I did and all of our children always have. I hope after I'm gone that there will still be some tie. One never knows.

DN: The, what was it about Maine that was so important to him, other than the fact that he came from Maine?

JM: Well probably the first thing that became very important to him was the fact that he was able, with the help of his family's, especially with his father's working so hard, he was the first one in his family to go to college. And the first influence in his life I think was the fact that he knew he had to do well in high school in order to get a scholarship to any college, and he worked very hard to do that. And he loved going to Bates College, he loved being there with the students, and he made lots of lifelong friends. And he knew what a sacrifice it was for his family

for him to go to college. But they were very proud of him and he made sure that he did well.

And it meant Maine to him in another way because after college, when he was able to go to Cornell Law School. He really felt that even though he had had lots of good experiences there he still wanted to come back to Maine, and he certainly didn't want to practice law in New York City. Even though he was a good scholar, he just didn't seem to gravitate to large cities, and I think he always knew that Maine was going to be his home forever, and it certainly was.

DN: As you, in the early days in the Senate, Ed had his troubles with Lyndon Johnson and wasn't entirely comfortable with the transition from being governor to being a member of the Senate.

JM: Well that was true. I remember one night when we were at the White House for dinner and, I guess it was more or less of a, just a social event. Ed said to me, "Now don't worry if I disappear, but I'm going to talk with that man about Frank Coffin one more time." And he did. I kept looking up to see if I could, if they had gone out of the room or where they were. And I saw them sitting out in a hall, just the two of them, and Ed was pounding on his knee asking the president if he could somehow see his way clear to name Frank Coffin to the, to be the, what was it, circuit court judge? And how relentlessly he went on time after time telling him that he thought he would regret it if he didn't, that he was a fine person and that he would do a good job for him. That, he was positive of.

And finally at the end of that little session, the president relented. And I think that Frank probably proved that he could do a good job. He's certainly one of the most respected and favorite people in Maine. He's another one who would probably never give up Maine for another place. And he was a great judge, and still is working hard.

DN: That's right. I'm going to suggest that we pause here and then pick up the story at another occasion when we can continue with the very vigorous years in the Senate, and then the campaign of 1968. I think this is a good break point.

JM: Good, wonderful.

End of Interview