

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
WITH
FRANCES M. SCHLICHENMAIER

AUGUST 28, 1989

INDEPENDENCE, MISSOURI

INTERVIEWED BY ANDREW DUNAR

ORAL HISTORY #1989-9

This transcript corresponds to audiotapes DAV-AR #3611-3613

HARRY S TRUMAN NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR



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Andrew Dunar and Jim Williams reviewed the draft of this transcript. Their corrections were incorporated into this final transcript by Perky Beisel in summer 2000. A grant from Eastern National Park and Monument Association funded the transcription and final editing of this interview.

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ABSTRACT

Frances M. Schlichenmaier was hired by Rose Conway in 1951 to serve as an assistant in President Truman's White House office. Schlichenmaier continued to work for Truman until shortly after his death in 1972. Schlichenmaier describes the development of the downtown Kansas City office and then the transfer to the Truman Library in Independence, Missouri. Schlichenmaier describes the volume and types of correspondence received by Truman after the presidency, visitors, other employees, and the subsequent operation of his personal office.

Persons mentioned: Dean Acheson, Gene Bailey, Mr. and Mrs. Jack Benny, Thomas Hart Benton, Dr. and Mrs. Philip Brooks, Rufus Burris, Winston Churchill, Donna Clark, Rose Conway, Dwight Eisenhower, Tom Evans, J.R. Fuchs, Tom Gavin, Robert Harris, Francis Heller, William Hillman, Shah of Iran, Harry Jobs, Lyndon Baines Johnson, Philip Lagerquist, Eddie McKim, Eddie Meisburger, Merle Miller, Henry Nicholson, Pat Nixon, David M. Noyes, Mrs. W. L. C. Palmer, Jim Pendergast, Milton Perry, General Pershing, Eleanor Roosevelt, Jim Rowley, Liz Safly, Frank Spina, Adlai Stevenson, Bill Story, Henry Talge, Curtis Tiernan, Bess Truman, Harry S Truman, Margaret Truman, Ralph Truman, Vivian Truman, Earl Warren, Mike Westwood, Benedict Zobrist.

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HSTR INTERVIEW #1989-9

[Begin #3612]

MICHAEL SHAVER: Okay, we were just talking about some of the files, and maybe if you could just repeat a little bit of what you said about how the files were handled, the files that were brought back from Washington.

FRANCES SCHLICHENMAIER: The filing we did in the office downtown, in the Federal Reserve Building, were only what came in after we got there. We had nothing to do with the previous files. They were stored, like you said, everywhere.

ANDREW DUNAR: Yes. Now, they would have to be consulted occasionally, though, I presume.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh yes, yes.

SHAVER: Did you ever have to run down there and chase down any files?

SCHLICHENMAIER: No, I didn't. They were used mostly for writing the memoirs.

DUNAR: And so Mr. Hillman and Mr. Noyes would be involved in that?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes.

DUNAR: And you mentioned Mr. Fuchs and Mr. Lagerquist. What were their responsibilities? Were they organizing the files for filing?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I think they organized the files.

DUNAR: Did they help to get documents out that were being used in

writing the memoirs?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I don't remember that they were there very often, but maybe once in a great while. Well, they had some researchers, too. I can't remember their names anymore, but they would more or less come and go, and they got the material out of the files. Then we had a big tall fellow, a professor from California. [Robert E. G. Harris] He did a lot of writing. I can't remember his name either.

DUNAR: Was it Francis Heller?

SCHLICHENMAIER: No, Heller did a lot, too.

DUNAR: He worked on the memoirs, too, yes.

SCHLICHENMAIER: It wasn't all Hillman and Noyes.

DUNAR: Right.

SCHLICHENMAIER: It was Heller, and it seems like this fellow's name was Harris, but I'm not sure.

DUNAR: Okay, I'm not sure about that. Did you work with the people that were working on the memoirs, other than to take what they had written out to retype that? Did you ever sit in on any of their meetings when they were going over the memoirs?

SCHLICHENMAIER: None, no. I was busy out there on the reception desk with these people that came in, and typing.

DUNAR: Oh, sure. I'm sure you were plenty busy, yes. Right, so you were the one that met the people that came in off the street?

SCHLICHENMAIER: That's right.

DUNAR: And you had to kind of screen them, too, I suppose, did you?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes. Oh, some were real, real far-out, you know. You'd keep walking toward the door and talking to them till you got them outside.

DUNAR: And then kind of close the door on them?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes. [chuckling]

DUNAR: Can you remember any instances of people that you were worried about, that maybe came and [unintelligible] a threat?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes. One time, it was at the lunch hour, everybody had gone to lunch but Rose [Conway], and she was sitting back at her desk. The door, of course, they could walk in. And this strange-looking man—she said he was tall, he had on a black overcoat—and he was sort of a fanatic of some kind. She was really frightened that time. He just kept coming in further, and she couldn't get him to, she couldn't maneuver him to the door. He wanted to see the President, and I can't remember too much about that case, but she did finally get him . . . I think she called downstairs to the Federal Reserve security and they came up and got him out. But after that, every time that she was there by herself, she locked the door. But I know that was quite an incident.

DUNAR: Oh, yes. You had to make the decision then as to whether this was somebody who should see the President or not, right? That was pretty much up to you and Miss Conway to make those decisions?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes. If it was something I couldn't handle, I would go back and

tell them to wait a minute and talk it over with her, and then the two of us would work together.

DUNAR: In most cases then, you and Miss Conway tried to handle whatever concern they had?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes. Yes.

DUNAR: But what type of people would you refer then to the President himself?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, just the general run of the public.

DUNAR: If somebody came in and wanted just to meet him, would they . . .

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, sure. If he was, lots of times he was gone, of course, and they would go; but as long as he was there, he met everybody.

DUNAR: Well, in the morning then he did correspondence. In the afternoon, did he work on the memoirs every day? Was that regular?

SCHLICHENMAIER: He went to lunch promptly at 12:00. He always went over to the Muehlebach [Hotel] or the Kansas City Club, met his friends for a while, and I think they played some cards. Then he came back and would work a while and then go home. He went home early.

DUNAR: Would he work on the memoirs in the afternoon, generally?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes.

DUNAR: Who were the people that he went to lunch with, do you remember?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, gee, just some people around Kansas City, some men, well-known like . . . some bankers and old friends of his.

DUNAR: People like Tom Evans?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, Tom Evans.

DUNAR: Do you remember Tom Evans?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, yes.

DUNAR: What was he like?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, he was, I think he started out with KCMO and he was a good friend of Mr. Truman's. He sort of had reddish-blond hair, medium height, came in quite a bit. Then there were the Soslinds, Jewish people. One, I think, was . . . I don't know, in a bank. It's [been] so long, I can't remember so many of them.

DUNAR: Do you remember any of the men from his battery?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, yes, the battery people came, too.

DUNAR: Were they asking for favors or just to see him and talk with him?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I think mostly just to see him. I doubt if very many of those asked for favors.

DUNAR: Yes? Do you remember any of them in particular?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, but I can't remember the names.

DUNAR: Eddie McKim? Did he come in at all?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, yes, he came, he came. He was a good friend of Rose's, too.

DUNAR: Well, they had known each other in Washington, so they were briefly in Washington, that's right.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, in Washington.

DUNAR: Eddie Meisburger, did he come in?

SCHLICHENMAIER: He came a lot, yes.

DUNAR: They came in then mostly just to chat or to go to lunch?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Just to chat. Well, I don't know whether they went to lunch much together.

DUNAR: Mostly just to meet him and to chat?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Just to chat.

DUNAR: Was he involved at all in . . .

SCHLICHENMAIER: Then this Mr. Talge, he came quite a bit.

DUNAR: Oh, yes, Henry Talge.

SCHLICHENMAIER: He usually came early in the morning, though, on his way to work. He made these little kitchen things, you know, ice crackers.
[chuckling]

DUNAR: He'd give them to Mr. Truman?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, I suppose he did. He gave me an ice crusher once.

DUNAR: Oh, yes? Were there any people that were involved in Kansas City politics or Jackson County politics that he was involved with at that time?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, there was Tom Gavin. Have you seen his name?

DUNAR: No, I don't think I have.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, he came quite often. He was a councilman or something—a Democrat, of course. And Jim Pendergast came once in a while, not very often. It seems they had a little falling-out after a while.

DUNAR: Right. Yes, they did after a while.

SCHLICHENMAIER: But Mr. Truman did go to his funeral.

DUNAR: Did you have any sense that Mr. Truman was concerned about

certain issues in the local or state level at that time? Or did he pretty much stay out of local and state politics?

SCHLICHENMAIER: He pretty much stayed out of it. He let his brother handle that.

DUNAR: Oh, so as just kind of a liaison?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes. Uh huh.

DUNAR: How often would Vivian [Truman] come in?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, I don't know, maybe once every two weeks or so, or maybe oftener, just when he wanted to. Then there was General Ralph Truman, the cousin. He came every once in a while.

DUNAR: On issues concerning the 35th Division? Was that his main concern, or just to visit?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, no, I think just to visit.

DUNAR: Do you know what he was doing at that time, Ralph Truman?

SCHLICHENMAIER: He was retired. I don't think he was doing much of anything.

DUNAR: So he didn't have another job?

SCHLICHENMAIER: [chuckling] Just like when you retire. He may have had a few little pet projects of his own, but I don't know what they were.

DUNAR: Do you remember the transition period when the library was opening, about how the office in effect was transferred from there up to here [the Truman Library]?

SCHLICHENMAIER: That was something, yes. We did a lot of work on that, too, getting everything together and the files all . . . everything filed and files locked, so the movers could take the files. That was quite an evening, too. I think we worked pretty late the night

before.

DUNAR: So it was all done in just a couple of days?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes.

DUNAR: When we came in, you mentioned that things were quite a bit different now than they were at the time back here. Could you describe the general layout here?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, it's much more elaborate. The comparison is that it was rather plain when we were here, and now these shiny floors.
[chuckling]

DUNAR: And all the paneling everywhere, yes.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Paneling and more furniture. In his office over there . . . what does he have on the floor, an Oriental rug?

DUNAR: Yes, I think so, right. That's not like it used to be.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, I was in that office.

DUNAR: Oh, is that the office you had? Directly across from the conference room here was your office?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes.

SHAVER: Dr. Zobrist's office.

DUNAR: Dr. Zobrist's office, yes.

SCHLICHENMAIER: For a long time I didn't even have a rug, not even wall-to-wall [carpeting]. Then they finally did put one down. [chuckling] I fussed about it. I said, "Everybody has a rug but me."

DUNAR: Then they got you one.

SCHLICHENMAIER: They found an old piece of rug someplace, so they had it put

down. It was nice. I mean, it wasn't used; some new piece, I guess, that was stored. They didn't go out and buy one, I know.

[chuckling]

DUNAR: Right. Where was Miss Conway's office then?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Where you first come in, to the right.

DUNAR: Okay, and President Truman's office was where it is now, where they have the display office?

SCHLICHENMAIER: In the middle, yes. That's all that has not been changed.

DUNAR: Everything else has been changed?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes.

SHAVER: Where did they keep . . . Miss Conway kept her files in a certain place. There was a certain room that . . .

SCHLICHENMAIER: What was that girl that talked to me? I should have known her but I couldn't think of her name.

DUNAR: Was that Donna Clark?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I guess so. Was that Donna Clark?

DUNAR: I think so.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, where she is, that was all enclosed, just a big room. It just looked like a junk room. Of course, a lot of file cabinets and then things that wouldn't go in a file cabinet were stacked in a corner, like flags.

DUNAR: Oh, yes. So a lot of the museum pieces then were pushed back here then, too, for the time, while they were . . . ?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, they weren't really museum pieces, just something that

came in, and for a short time maybe they would be stored there. Or maybe they would be museum pieces. I remember a painting that sat there a long time of General Pershing.

DUNAR: Oh, really?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes.

DUNAR: Was Mr. Truman concerned about the fact that it was kind of a Spartan office? Or did he feel totally comfortable with that?

SCHLICHENMAIER: He felt totally comfortable.

DUNAR: That didn't bother him?

SCHLICHENMAIER: No.

SHAVER: Well, his office had rugs on the floor and wood paneling.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, he had rugs on the floor. [laughter] I hope they don't put that in the . . .

DUNAR: How did his routine change once you had moved out to the library?

SCHLICHENMAIER: The same. He came early.

DUNAR: It was pretty much the same?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Went home about the same time. He drove downtown for lunch.

DUNAR: Downtown to Kansas City, or Independence?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes.

DUNAR: Did he? He went all the way to Kansas City for lunch?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Most of the time. Sometimes he just went home.

DUNAR: There must have been fewer people who just dropped in, I would imagine. Or did that keep up?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, they came out here, too. They found their way.

DUNAR: They came out here? [laughter] So you kept having people just dropping in just to see him?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, but there was a guard out there that interviewed . . . He always announced them.

DUNAR: So it was more controlled then?

SCHLICHENMAIER: More controlled, yes.

SHAVER: Did his personal staff get any bigger when they moved out here? I remember you talked about it, that you and Rose . . .

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, Mary Jo didn't work with us downtown. Who else was with her?

SHAVER: I remember a Miss. Smith was . . .

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, Miss. Smith wasn't either. No, just the two of us, Rose and I.

DUNAR: Downtown?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes.

DUNAR: They came back up here then?

SCHLICHENMAIER: It was after we were out here a while that they were hired. Mrs. Smith did a lot of filing, and Mary Jo, too, and opened mail.

DUNAR: Did they handle any of the correspondence?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, Mary Jo handled the autographing. Yes, she typed letters and filed.

DUNAR: And your responsibility and Miss Conway's remained very much as it had been downtown?

SCHLICHENMAIER: About the same, she ran the office.

DUNAR: Would he still take things home at night?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, he did.

DUNAR: So he was operating pretty much the same way that he did before?

SCHLICHENMAIER: The same, yes. But there wasn't as much to take home as when we first came out from Washington. I mean, things had simmered down somewhat.

DUNAR: Sure.

SCHLICHENMAIER: But he had plenty of mail.

DUNAR: Would he ever walk to the office, or did he usually drive?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I think he did a few times in the beginning, when he was younger, but mostly he rode. Mike Westwood would pick him up, for a long time. The Secret Service, when they got into the thing, sent a car for him, but he didn't like that. He called Westwood and he told the Secret Service to lay off. [laughter]

DUNAR: Was the Secret Service involved much down here?

SCHLICHENMAIER: They did for a while. We were here several years before that law was passed. That was during [President Lyndon B.] Johnson's administration. Before that, it was only the guard out there and some guards up in the front of the library, you know.

SHAVER: Mr. Bill Story, I guess.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, Story.

SHAVER: He was here a long time.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, he was here.

DUNAR: After the memoirs were completed, Mr. Hillman stayed around, didn't he, for a while?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, yes.

DUNAR: Did he work with you then after the memoirs were completed, more directly, or . . .

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, he just did what he would . . . Oh, there were some articles that Mr. Truman wrote. He would help on those.

DUNAR: In *Mr. Citizen*, too?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, and then the book *Mr. Citizen* came along.

DUNAR: So he continued to work mostly on polishing articles and writing articles rather than being involved in correspondence.

SCHLICHENMAIER: On those things, yes. Yes, that's right.

DUNAR: But there were some times when he became involved with some correspondence.

SCHLICHENMAIER: But they always met with Mr. Truman to find out what he thought about these things.

DUNAR: Right, sure. You said earlier that he had done some correspondence, like this example that I gave you before, too. So he did do some correspondence, too, right? Or was that only related to publications?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, it was only related to publications, I think, mostly.

DUNAR: Okay. Now, Mr. Truman's health began to decline in the sixties. At that point, especially after the accident in 1964, did he do less of the correspondence after that?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, every morning Mike Westwood would come over, and Rose would take the correspondence over to the house.

DUNAR: She'd go over to the house?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, there was a period of time that he didn't come to the office.

DUNAR: That was right after the accident?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I wonder, what was the accident?

SHAVER: He fell down in his bathroom at home.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, well, he came back for a while after that.

SHAVER: So probably another two years he was coming back on a regular basis then?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes.

SHAVER: What we can figure out, around December of 1966 he just literally quit coming to the office.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes. I think, I'm not sure, but I had heard—you know, I don't want to be the one to say—I believe he did have a light stroke. But I'm not too sure about that.

DUNAR: Did you ever take correspondence up to the house?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, I went two or three times probably.

DUNAR: What would he do then?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, we'd sit around the dining room table, and he would have the day before's correspondence he'd gone over and he would dictate the answers to letters.

SHAVER: Oh, so you did this in the dining room and not in his little study?

SCHLICHENMAIER: No, in the dining room, around the dining room table. More

room.

SHAVER: A lot of business got done around that dining room table.

[laughter]

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes.

DUNAR: So it would be just a matter then of going over the correspondence for the day.

SCHLICHENMAIER: That's right.

DUNAR: Then you'd bring it back down here and prepare it?

SCHLICHENMAIER: And type it. And then the next morning Rose would take it over and he would sign it and dictate from the previous day.

DUNAR: Sign from that day and then go over the new [unintelligible].

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, that's the way they worked.

DUNAR: At that point, personal correspondence was handled as it had been before along with the official as well?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, but it dropped off, you know, after he became ill. Oh, he still got plenty of it, and some we answered ourselves.

SHAVER: You screened it a little more heavily though, didn't you?

SCHLICHENMAIER: That's right, uh huh..

DUNAR: I'm curious also about when he really couldn't . . . when he was getting more ill and on in years and couldn't participate as much as he had before in the correspondence. Did you, even on personal correspondence, did you and Miss Conway draft out letters that he would simply sign more so or . . .

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, some of that was so routine we just knew what he would

say, so we did answer some ourselves.

DUNAR: Did he want to remain involved as much as possible?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I think he did. I think he did.

DUNAR: So, when he withdrew and when he stopped coming down here, that was just because he couldn't any longer?

SCHLICHENMAIER: That's right, yes.

DUNAR: And after he stopped coming down here, either you or Miss Conway continued to go up there, though, right, to meet with him?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, she most of the time.

DUNAR: And did that continue then right up until the end, until shortly before he died?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, I think there was probably a period of maybe a few months that he couldn't do anything. He'd be in the hospital, and you know how those cases go.

DUNAR: Sure. Sure. But otherwise he wanted to stay involved as much as he could?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, yes, he did. Yes, he did. I remember Nixon came out shortly after Mr. Truman wasn't too well and brought a piano, and the two of them came over here, Mrs. Truman and Mrs. Nixon, too. I think Nixon played a little tune on the piano. [chuckling]

DUNAR: Yes, I think so. Do you remember Mr. Truman's reaction to that?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, he took it in stride.

DUNAR: Even though he didn't think too much of Mr. Nixon. [chuckling]

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, that was my opinion. [chuckling] But they got along all right, you know, and the same with Eisenhower.

DUNAR: At least before the public. Do you remember the meeting with Eisenhower that they had in 1961, when they had kind of a reconciliation? Do you remember that?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I remember Eisenhower being out here.

SHAVER: He came out here several times to check on the library. Milt [Milton] Perry tells a real good story about Mr. Truman showing him the place, and then he had to run off to an appointment. And he said, "Milt, you show him the rest of the place, and count the silverware when he leaves." [laughter]

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, I didn't hear that.

DUNAR: He thought a good deal more of President Johnson.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, yes.

DUNAR: Do you remember any of Johnson's visits here?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, he came not too long before he died. It was when . . . It was that Medicare Bill . . .

DUNAR: Yes, that was signed here.

SCHLICHENMAIER: I believe that was his last visit. I'm not sure, time gets away, you know.

SHAVER: Did it surprise a lot of people just how much it looked like he had declined every time he came out?

SCHLICHENMAIER: President Truman?

SHAVER: Yes.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Some did make remarks, yes. Mr. Truman even remarked himself that he didn't look as good as he formerly did. He sort of hesitated to . . . You know, he stayed at home and he said he had failed. He knew, and he didn't like to get in the public too much.

DUNAR: He continued to make some statements on public policy matters in the late years. Were those things . . . well, I'm thinking of, for example, some statements that he made on Vietnam in 1965 and 1966. Yet, at that point, he was withdrawing in other matters from making statements. Was Vietnam, do you remember, something he felt very strongly about?

SCHLICHENMAIER: No, I sure don't. I don't.

DUNAR: Were there things, say, from the mid-sixties on, were there public policy issues that he did seem to really take a real involvement in?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I just don't remember.

SHAVER: From the time that Mr. Hillman died, it's always been kind of a foggy thing in my mind who did help him make his views known. He always seemed to have somebody there to help him so he wouldn't get himself in trouble. It seems to be kind of hard . . . I don't know if Mr. Noyes was still around at the time.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, he was around for a while, but he finally drifted out of the picture.

SHAVER: I was always kind of surprised that he really didn't have a number one man there next to him helping him out with this stuff in later years. But like Dr. Dunar was saying, he was still making some

sorts of policy pronouncements and what he saw the world as.
And I was always kind of surprised he was doing it by himself.

DUNAR: He received a lot of . . . well, requests from politicians to sort of get his endorsement.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, yes. They didn't know how poorly he had gotten; some didn't, some did.

DUNAR: Yes, and they kept kind of pressuring him to give them some support for their policies.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes. Well, I think maybe Noyes helped a little. But a lot of times there, I don't think there was much going on here for about four years.

DUNAR: In terms of monitoring public policy issues and so forth?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes.

DUNAR: That would be the four-year period, what, from . . . ?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Four years before he passed away.

DUNAR: Oh, yes, in the last years. No, I think most of them were probably earlier than that. But it seemed like, I don't know, just from what I've seen in the records so far, that there was a fairly noticeable decline shortly after that fall in the bathroom in 1964.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, [there] might have been, but he was still coming over after that.

DUNAR: Yes, and it wasn't till the end of 1966 that he really pretty much totally withdrew.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes.

DUNAR: During those years, did Mrs. Truman, do you think, become more protective of him? Or didn't their relationship, do you think, change too much?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, she never entered into his office work too much. She may have been a little protective, but she didn't write anything.

DUNAR: When you went over to the house, for example, to take dictation and deal with the correspondence, would Mrs. Truman sit in on those sessions?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, she was around, yes.

DUNAR: Was she involved at all, or would she sort of just . . .

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, once in a while she would speak up, but not too much. She just left it to him.

SHAVER: Did she speak up to keep him in line a little bit? Is that what she did?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, that was it.

SHAVER: Yes, "Don't say that," or "Be a little less brutal with the fellow," or something?

DUNAR: Would she soften some of what she said? Is that what she did?

SCHLICHENMAIER: [chuckling] Yes. Uh huh.

DUNAR: Do you think she had that influence earlier, too?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I think she probably went over some of the things, yes. I think he says in the memoirs that he relied on her quite a bit.

DUNAR: Right, yes, it does. Do you have a sense of how he relied on her, in terms of the things that you were involved in, the

correspondence and so forth?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, she probably read some of it over.

DUNAR: And made suggestions?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Made suggestions.

DUNAR: Was there any indication of that on the correspondence? In other words, when he took it home and it came back the next day, would you see any indications that she had had a hand in it?

SCHLICHENMAIER: No, she never wrote on anything.

DUNAR: She never did? It was all in his own writing?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes.

DUNAR: What are your fondest recollections of working for President Truman?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, it was all very pleasant. He was certainly a nice person to work for. He never seemed to get exasperated with either one of us. Rose was very protective of him. I just don't remember any certain thing. It seems like every day he was . . .

DUNAR: He was pleasant then?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Pleasant.

DUNAR: Would he invite you and Miss Conway over to the house for any social occasions?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Mrs. Truman, and the President, too, had us for dinner a few times in the evening, like on Saturday evening. I remember one Saturday I think we spent the whole afternoon getting dressed so we would look right. [laughter] It was a pleasant evening, very

nice, yes.

DUNAR: Just the two of you and Mr. and Mrs. Truman? Or were there others?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, I think there were . . . I believe, Gene Bailey that worked there then, and maybe Mr. Hillman, I think, and Mr. Noyes. I believe that that was it—five of us.

DUNAR: Was that something they'd do fairly regularly, maybe once a year or something?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Not very often, no. I think one Sunday evening, I remember we were working on the memoirs and she asked us to come . . .

[End #3612; Begin #3613]

SHAVER: . . . just witnessed it. I don't think he made it out.

SCHLICHENMAIER: I think he did, Mr. Truman's will, I don't know about Mrs. Truman's.

DUNAR: You mentioned that Rufus Burrus did do some of his legal work. What sort of legal work did he do, do you know?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I don't know.

DUNAR: Let me just ask you again about a few of the people that are shown here.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, he was in the battery.

DUNAR: Okay, Father Tiernan was one who was one of his army friends.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, well, these were two battery buddies, too. And Harry Jobs.

DUNAR: Harry Jobs also was from the regiment.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes. Who is this? I don't know her. Then there was a

schoolteacher—I've forgotten her name—[who] he was real fond of back in his early days.

DUNAR: Mrs. Palmer?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Mrs. Palmer. Oh, he thought she was great.

DUNAR: Did she come in at all?

SCHLICHENMAIER: No, and we heard a lot about him, the barber. Now, I never saw the barber much, but the President went to him to get his hair cut. Oh, Frank Spina, that's the barber.

DUNAR: Yes, he was the barber back in the battery, too.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes. What book is this? *Last of His Kind*.

DUNAR: Here's the storage, I think, down before they moved into the library. Is this in the Federal Building, is that right?

SHAVER: It's one of the Federal Buildings. It was known as the Fidelity Bank Building, I think, Fidelity Trust Building. It's down the hill from . . .

SCHLICHENMAIER: I couldn't keep track of where all that stuff was stored.
[chuckling]

SHAVER: He kept some in the courthouse and some in Memorial Hall.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, I remember the courthouse.

SHAVER: But you say the suite of offices that he had in the Federal Reserve Building, there were just simply, what, two rooms, or were there more than that?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Four rooms, a little office. I think that's where Gene Bailey was.

SHAVER: And if I would come in, I would come into your office, and then

whose office would I go through next?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, all three doors were there together. You could almost go in any one you wanted to.

SHAVER: Oh, so they all opened up into there.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Rose Conway's, I think, was really first.

DUNAR: So her office was a central . . . like a reception room? And then there were three offices off of it?

SHAVER: Your office was the reception . . .

SCHLICHENMAIER: My office was the reception room. That's the first one you came to. Then Rose was in the back. She had a big office about the size of this, I guess. And off of that was a little office where Gene had his office, and then a little hall back to the President's office, President Truman's office, Former President Truman.

DUNAR: So his door then, you had to go down a hall past Miss Conway's office and Gene Bailey's office?

SCHLICHENMAIER: No. No, you just left our section, went down this little hall.

DUNAR: Oh, it was separate. It was kind of removed?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, separate. He had a nice big office, and for a while he had an Oriental rug on the floor that the Shah of Iran brought. It's down in the library now hanging on the wall.

DUNAR: Right. Do you remember him referring to any world leaders in particular that he was particularly respectful of?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, he liked [Sir Winston] Churchill. Well, let's see, I can't think of any right offhand. But Churchill came a few times while Mr.

Truman was President.

DUNAR: In terms of the family itself, do you remember Margaret coming back here at all and any of his concerns about that, about Margaret?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, she came back a few times to visit. I don't think there was any concern, it was just to visit.

DUNAR: Right. He kept close to a few members of his administration. People like Dean Acheson was one that he remained pretty close to. Do you remember any of Dean Acheson's visits out here?

SCHLICHENMAIER: He may have been here for the dedication of the library, I'm not too sure.

DUNAR: Do you remember John Snyder coming at all back here?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, yes, he came. I'm sure he was at the dedication of the library. Mrs. Roosevelt was, too. And Earl Warren, I remember he came.

DUNAR: Were you involved in any way in the dedication?

SCHLICHENMAIER: No, I was just here, just attended the event.

SHAVER: The folks from the office, did he bring them down here to show them the library while it was under construction? Did you come through it?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, we came on a bus one day. Some of his buddies—I can't remember which ones now—and Rose and I came out here, and he took us all through. It was while it was being built, but it was pretty well finished by that time.

DUNAR: Somebody has remarked to us that it seemed that, depending

upon who he was talking to, that he would sort of move into a different manner. For example, with some of his old buddies he would act kind of differently.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, probably. I think like anybody . . .

DUNAR: Did you see that when people would come into the office? Did you see him sort of change, depending upon who it was and what his connection was?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I think so. I think everybody does that. It was how well he knew them and how friendly he was with them, you know, and how much he liked them.

DUNAR: Did he have a real good memory for people that he had met?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, yes, he had an excellent memory.

DUNAR: If he had met somebody one time, he'd never forget them? Was it that much?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I think it was almost like that.

DUNAR: Or did you kind of have to . . . Sometimes if somebody was waiting in the office, would you have to prompt him a bit?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, once in a while a little bit as he got older, but I'm sure he had a fantastic memory when he was young.

DUNAR: How long did he continue to meet people that just came in to see him? When did he stop doing that?

SCHLICHENMAIER: He stopped doing that when he stopped coming over here.

DUNAR: Oh, so he did it all the way up through 1966?

SCHLICHENMAIER: All the way up, that's right.

DUNAR: Were there still a fair number of people coming as late as 1965 and 1966?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Not as many as formerly, and it was according to how he was feeling, I think, whether they would let him. See, the people were screened by that time.

DUNAR: That's right, yes, with you people out there. Was it the Secret Service that was doing the screening? Or would it be just the guards to the library?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, the Secret Service came in pretty late in the game. It would be [Bill] Story out there, or whoever was on that desk. He would come and tell Miss Conway that so and so was here and would like to see Mr. Truman, so she would take the situation into consideration.

DUNAR: So she'd be the final . . . ?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, not exactly. She always told him [Mr. Truman], yes, and if he wanted to see them, why . . . Yes, she did.

DUNAR: She was kind of the gatekeeper, in terms of controlling who came in?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes.

DUNAR: And requests for appointments that came in by letter, would she handle all of that, too?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, that was her job.

DUNAR: Would she make the decisions in some cases, as the years went on, whether . . . In other words, would she just sometimes just

reply to them that he couldn't see them?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I think there may have been a few times that she made the decision, but not often. No, she took everything up with Mr. Truman.

DUNAR: And they'd do that in their morning meetings and they would discuss that, too?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, yes, or during the day sometime if she got a call, you know, and had to act on it. On her desk was a bell that rang Mr. Truman. And I don't know why she didn't have that thing taken off, because she never used it, she wouldn't buzz him. But once in a while she wouldn't be there, if she went on a little trip maybe, or . . . Not very often, though; she was on the job constantly. Then I would have to sit up there. And invariably my knee hit the [bell].
[laughter]

DUNAR: What would he do then?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, he'd come in. [chuckling] Then I'd have to stand up and apologize. [laughter]

DUNAR: What would he say?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, he laughed. It didn't make him mad. [chuckling] He probably thought I was kind of dumb.

DUNAR: Were there any times that he just didn't want to be disturbed, when he had people in or other times?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, there were a few times. Yes, maybe, but not often.

DUNAR: Otherwise he was pretty much open anytime during the day?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, and he wanted that door left open. I remember when we first moved out here, I thought he wanted to be in his private office and I would shut the door. He would immediately get up and open it.

DUNAR: Oh, the door to his office?

SCHLICHENMAIER: The one in the hall out here.

DUNAR: The main door at the end by the lobby, or the reception . . . ?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, that came into the hall. He wanted to see who came and went.

DUNAR: Yes, and he'd keep his office door open then, unless he had somebody in there he was talking to?

SCHLICHENMAIER: That's right.

SHAVER: Did he always get up when he heard . . . Something I've read, he would get up and say, "If there are any school groups coming through, I want to know about it"?

SCHLICHENMAIER: A lot of school groups came through, but they met out in the library. And he talked to them up until he got to where he couldn't come over anymore. You've seen those pictures, haven't you?

DUNAR: Yes, right, of him lecturing and talking to them.

SHAVER: Are there people that would come and visit him? Are there any particular dignitaries or important people that you can remember who came to visit him, that you may have had an encounter with, like when they filmed the "Jack Benny Show" out here? Anybody

that you can remember that impressed you?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, I remember Jack Benny being here, and he came back in our office across the hall. Mary Jo and I were in there, and his picture was on the wall. Somebody must have told him his picture was in there, so he came in to look at his picture. He wasn't a bit friendly. [chuckling]

DUNAR: Oh, he wasn't?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I didn't think, but maybe it wasn't a good day for him or something. Because, you know, seeing him on television, he was most friendly to people.

DUNAR: He seemed to be, yes. Well, they were here for about three days, weren't they, filming that?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I only saw him once.

DUNAR: He was just back here once?

SHAVER: The reason why I remember it, I watched the show, and it was rather unusual because what he did is he came in the north door here, and he talked to everybody as he came in. He talked to Sergeant Story, and then he went into Rose's office and said hello, and Mrs. Benny just . . . She said, "Go ahead on in, Mr. Benny." And then they walked right on in into his office, just like a normal person would.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Maybe by the time he got to Mary Jo and my office back here he was tired. [laughter]

DUNAR: Well, I think when they had it filmed, they had an actress play

Miss Conway, too, didn't they?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, they did. I think she could have handled it, but then . . .

DUNAR: Sure. I think so, too. [laughter]

SCHLICHENMAIER: She could handle anything.

DUNAR: Yes. Do you remember Merle Miller at all?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, I remember him.

DUNAR: Yes? What was he like?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I don't remember him too well. He wasn't here too much.

DUNAR: Did he do those interviews here or at the house? Where did he conduct those interviews?

SCHLICHENMAIER: That I can't remember. I just don't know.

SHAVER: I almost suspect he would have had to have done them here.

SCHLICHENMAIER: I think so, probably.

DUNAR: Yes. Do you remember Mr. Truman making any remarks about those interviews, about what he thought about them?

SCHLICHENMAIER: No, I don't remember.

DUNAR: How would they handle requests for the President to become involved in either publication or television appearances or films, anything of that sort?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, it seems by letter sometimes, or maybe by phone calls, and then I guess he took it up with somebody, you know. But that was a little beyond me.

DUNAR: I know in some cases he had contractual commitments whereby he simply could not accept other things. Was that the basis for a

decision?

SCHLICHENMAIER: That could have been the basis.

DUNAR: Or was he using that as sort of an excuse not to have to do too much, do you think? Because obviously there were so many requests that came in, he couldn't do everything.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, well, I really don't know. I think there was somebody—maybe it was Hillman and Noyes, I don't know—that would go over it with him.

DUNAR: They'd kind of screen things for [unintelligible].

SCHLICHENMAIER: He made up his mind whether he would.

DUNAR: Right.

SCHLICHENMAIER: But if there was something in the way, they would call it to his attention.

DUNAR: There are a number of things that clearly were priorities for him in the years back here: obviously, the memoirs and some of the publications he was working on in the library. What are other things that he was concerned with?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I just don't think of . . . Oh, just his regular daily routine. He didn't play golf, he didn't go fishing, he didn't do anything like that.

DUNAR: So work was his main pleasure?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I think he traveled quite a bit at the beginning. He went out and talked to groups, raised money for this library. He did a lot of that.

DUNAR: Did you help to plan any of his trips?

SCHLICHENMAIER: No, Rose always made his reservations, and she typed his speeches and I proofread them, or helped proofread them. Sometimes we'd be here rather late at night getting those out.

DUNAR: It sounds like there were an awful lot of times you worked overtime. Was that kind of routine, that you'd end up having to put in extra hours, or only at certain peak times?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Only certain times, not too much.

DUNAR: If you were getting something out that had to be . . .

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes.

DUNAR: Was he a demanding boss?

SCHLICHENMAIER: No, he wasn't. But he knew how much you could do, and he knew it would be done. It was done, too. You know, we tried to get it out on time. So he never did get mad at either one of us, I don't believe. He was never surly or anything like that.

DUNAR: Never in a bad mood?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Never in a bad mood. Oh, he might have been in a bad mood for some other reason, but not at us.

DUNAR: Sure. Right, but if he was in a bad mood, he could kind of put that aside and still greet people warmly and everything.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, yes. Yes, he didn't let that stop him. Oh, he got mad at a few newsmen, I think.

DUNAR: Sure. [laughter] More than a few maybe.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes.

DUNAR: Do you recall his involvement in politics in terms of . . . well, especially in 1956 and in 1960 in the Presidential campaigns, do you recall him discussing those at all?

SCHLICHENMAIER: No. I know he didn't go to the . . . what do you call it, the . . . ?

SHAVER: Convention?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Convention, when Eisenhower . . . Was it Eisenhower?

DUNAR: Adlai Stevenson in 1956, or in . . . ?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, that's when we campaigned for Stevenson. I rode that campaign train for a whole month.

DUNAR: Oh, you went on the train with him?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Went every bit of the way.

DUNAR: You made out the speeches then, typed out the speeches that he gave?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Rose typed the speeches, I proofread them. She had a certain way that she set those up, and she wouldn't let anybody else type those.

DUNAR: So you both went on the campaign train?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, we had two compartments that we put together, and we slept up above each one in our own compartment and worked down below. Each one of us had our own typewriter, took it along.

DUNAR: Oh, I see. So you each had like a Pullman cabin, sort of, that you each had?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes.

DUNAR: How many cars were there that were the Truman party?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, there were a lot: one for the newsmen, one for the Secret Service, that Ferdinand Magellan, and I don't know, they hooked the cars onto different railroad companies' cars.

DUNAR: Right. Who else was in the car that you had your Pullman rooms in?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, of course, Secret Service went.

DUNAR: Did they have the same kind of compartments where they had their own?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I never was in them, I don't know. [chuckling] But they were around all the time. It was kind of funny, those young fellows, people would want them to get the President's autograph, so they'd take them off someplace and sign them. [laughter]

SHAVER: Were there any of the agents that you remember in particular, any favorite ones that Mr. Truman had, or any of them that you might remember, like maybe Henry Nicholson or . . . ?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, he and Jim Rowley were two. They were two good fellows. Yes, I liked them both.

DUNAR: Did Mrs. Truman go along on that campaign trip?

SCHLICHENMAIER: No, she didn't go. Margaret went. Mrs. Truman's mother was ill at the time at the White House and Mrs. Truman couldn't leave, so Margaret went. And Margaret was very nice. She would get a little lonesome once in a while, you know, and come back and see us. We all got along fine. But, oh my, some nights the speech writers would write the speeches and give them to us rather late,

but they had to be ready by the next morning.

DUNAR: So you had to stay up then?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I tell you, a lot of nights we didn't get much sleep. Then we would get into a place, into an area where we thought we might get an extra hour or so, and the time [zone] would change.
[laughter]

SHAVER: Did you have to have a certain knack at typing up speeches on a moving train?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, Rose did most of the typing; I only typed if it was a rough draft. Yes, it was a little hard, but you get used to the swing, I think.

SHAVER: One of the ladies, she said that was one of the most fun things about the 1948 campaign, is every time she would type a speech and then they would turn a curve, the carriages would go all over the place.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, that's right, I had forgotten that. Then you'd have to pick it up off the floor. [laughter]

DUNAR: Do you have any particular memories about events on the campaign in 1952?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, out in the car I found yesterday, in looking through some old papers, I found our menus from the different railroads. If you want them, you can have them.

DUNAR: Sure, we'd like have those.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Where would they go? Here?

DUNAR: The Truman Library, I think, would probably be the most . . .

SHAVER: Yes, I think the library would be the appropriate place for them.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, and it gives you the Baltimore & Ohio and different railroad companies that our cars were hooked onto.

DUNAR: Yes, that would be interesting [unintelligible].

SHAVER: Speaking of the library, what do you remember of Dr. Brooks?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I rather liked Dr. Brooks and Mrs. Brooks. Of course, I didn't work with him, you know, just see him around here.

SHAVER: Was he always visiting with Mr. Truman? Was he coming in on a rather regular basis?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Not too much.

SHAVER: Or did they more or less just stay on . . .

SCHLICHENMAIER: I think if he had something to talk over he came in, but not on a regular basis or anything. I think he ran his side and Mr. Truman ran things over here.

SHAVER: Okay, what about the gals in each of the offices? Did they get together for lunch and things like that? Or were there really just two separate . . . ?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Two separate, I believe. Rose and I usually ate lunch here. You know, she had a serious operation somewhere along the line. She had to be very careful what she ate, she couldn't eat anything sweet, so we cooked our lunch here in the library most of the time. We'd bring something from home that was easy to prepare.

SHAVER: Well, you had a little kitchenette in the office, didn't you?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, that's where we cooked our lunch. We didn't actually cook, we just warmed things up. We ate sometimes at this table, I guess.

DUNAR: Is that right? Would Mr. Truman ever eat up here, or would he always go home for lunch?

SCHLICHENMAIER: No, he always went home.

DUNAR: In those days, Mike Westwood was driving him around, right?

SCHLICHENMAIER: A lot of the time. At first, for a long time he drove his own car, yes, and drove it downtown. But later, as he got older and not able to drive, Mike took him.

DUNAR: When Mike was driving him, how would Mr. Truman get a hold of Mike? Was Mike kind of on call for him all the time, or would he just know that he'd be coming back for lunch?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I think he more or less knew when he wanted to go and would tell Mike, "Pick me up at noon," or a certain time.

DUNAR: Mike wasn't necessarily on call then? It was just if he had maybe arranged something?

SCHLICHENMAIER: No, I don't think so. He was only on call of a morning, and to take him home. I think he would call Mike, or Rose would call him, when it was time, when Mr. Truman wanted to go home. But it was usually about the same time every day.

DUNAR: Was he working shorter days then in the mid-sixties?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I think it simmered off a little, you know, as time went on.

DUNAR: Can you remember toward the end, say, from 1964 to 1966, what

time he would come in and what time he'd go to lunch and what time he'd get back and what time he'd leave? Do you remember that at all?

SCHLICHENMAIER: He never varied. He was always here of a morning early.

DUNAR: He was still an early worker, yes. He'd get here at 8:30, is that right?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, he got here before that.

DUNAR: Before that? What time? Do you remember what time?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I would say at 8:00 or before.

DUNAR: At 8:00?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes. He was an early bird.

DUNAR: When would he go to lunch then?

SCHLICHENMAIER: At 12:00 or a little before.

DUNAR: And what time would he get back?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, maybe 1:00 or 2:00, 1:30 or 2:00.

DUNAR: So that would vary a bit then?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, vary.

DUNAR: And then how late would he work in the afternoon?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, it varied, too. If there was anything going on, of course, he would stay; otherwise, he'd go home at maybe 4:00 or 4:30.

DUNAR: So he was very regular and punctual in the morning, but then varied in the afternoon?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes.

DUNAR: That was more flexible in the afternoon?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes.

DUNAR: Was he still meeting with the school groups in the last few years?

SCHLICHENMAIER: He met with the school groups up until almost the last.

DUNAR: The last of his coming down here?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes.

DUNAR: Were there items in the library that he was particularly interested in, such as maybe the painting of the mural, or anything at all that he was very concerned with?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, he and . . . oh, what was that painter's name?

SHAVER: Benton?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Benton, Thomas Hart Benton. They were very good friends. Yes, he liked that painting.

DUNAR: And he would go spend some time out there when they were putting that in?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, when Benton was painting it he would go out there and watch him.

DUNAR: Did Benton ever come back into his office?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, yes, Benton was around here all the time. He was even in here painting a picture of Mr. Truman.

DUNAR: Oh, is that right?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes. Did he ever finish that?

SHAVER: No. I was reading a clipping about that, and he said that . . . Well, some New York newspaper writer was writing this article about it, and he said Miss Conway was always peeking over his

shoulder and giving him a hard time about the portrait. And I don't think he ever finished that one, but he did do one later at the house. Did you get in on that? Were you giving him some . . .

SCHLICHENMAIER: I would come in and look, too, but he didn't like that. He would kind of cover it up, like, "Get out of here!" [laughter] "I don't want you to see it," he said.

DUNAR: Yes. Do you have any other questions, Mike?

SHAVER: Oh, I was trying to think . . . After he quit coming here on a regular basis . . . I imagine you worked here until Miss. Conway died, or did you retire?

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, no, I retired about six months after Mr. Truman died. I retired. Miss Conway stayed on a while. She died several years later. I stayed until all the flowers and all of the condolences were sent out, then I retired.

SHAVER: Did they give you an opportunity to stay on here if you wanted to?

SCHLICHENMAIER: I think they would have, but I retired. You know, I didn't wait till they asked, because I was ready to retire by that time.

SHAVER: What about Miss. Conway? Was she ready to retire at that time? I got the impression she wasn't even coming in either.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, she came in. Yes, she did. She was here a while after I was, after I left. She said she didn't want to let Mrs. Truman down, that she thought she owed it to Mrs. Truman to stay and do her work. But then she didn't stay too long because her health wasn't

good and she just couldn't get here. She'd had an accident. She had fallen down the stairs and broke her leg, I believe. Yes, I think she broke a leg.

SHAVER: I always got the impression she ran a tight office.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Some people might have thought so, but I didn't. I got along real well with her.

SHAVER: Another thing I noticed, a lot of the people who work here now, they came in right after they graduated from college or right after they graduated from high school. Like Mary Jo, she wasn't terribly old when she worked here.

SCHLICHENMAIER: No, she was only about nineteen when she started.

SHAVER: It seems like she's got almost thirty years of service in. [laughter]

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes!

SHAVER: Was that the way the library worked, at least on the Truman side of it? It just seems like there were a lot of young folks . . .

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, Rose was the one that hired her.

SHAVER: Yes, I just wondered. Like Liz over there, she started when she wasn't terribly old, and she nearly has thirty years now.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Well, now, that's a different thing. She didn't work over on this side at all, she just worked over on the library side. They were like two separate operations.

SHAVER: You know, it just impressed me how many young folks are here who have essentially got their thirty years in already, and I just wondered if they were just really big into hiring young people at

the time, or it just happened to be . . .

SCHLICHENMAIER: Not that I know of. Oh, no, it just happened. Mr. Fuchs must be ready to retire.

DUNAR: He has retired.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Oh, he has?

DUNAR: Yes. Well, Mr. Lagerquist is still here, so there are a lot of people who have put in a lot of years here.

SCHLICHENMAIER: Yes, Lagerquist, he was young when he came in—I don't know what age—but he must be getting up to retirement . . .

END OF INTERVIEW