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Genevieve Osborn

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Elizabeth E. Nelson
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Nov. 15, 1994
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This is an interview with Miss Genevieve Osborn in January, 1973. The interviewer is Mrs. Shirley Wickman. The interview took place at Miss Osborn's home in Abilene, Kansas.

MRS. WICKMAN: All right, Miss Osborn, can you tell us something about yourself, when you were born and where, and something about your early life.

MISS OSBORN: I surely can. I was born in Chicago, Illinois, November 8th, 1901, and my father was going to MacPhillips Veterinarian College then and carrying mail to help defray his expenses and ours. So we were in Chicago clear up until the time that he graduated, shortly after in 1904. And then we moved to Chebanse, Illinois, and were there a year, and then we moved to Brook, Indiana. That was George Ade's old home town, and my father had the pleasure of helping take care of his cattle.

Q: My gracious.

MISS OSBORN: And whenever George would be home, and he would come to town ---. The last place we lived there in Brook why he would have to go past our house to come into town and to go home, so he oftentimes would stop and ask if we would like to go out with him for a while. And his home was on the Iroquois River.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: And we used to have a lot of fun going out hunting wild flowers in the groves. And playing, he had swings in his mammoth big trees. And it was out at George Ade's that McKinley came and gave a speech, one of his speeches, just before election

time. And I never will forget that day. I was just a little tot, but my mother was to go and help with the serving of meals, and so they left Genevieve at home with my younger sister and five other children.

Q: No baby sitters?

MISS OSBORN: I was the baby sitter.

Q: Then did you move to Kansas from Brook, Indiana?

MISS OSBORN: Well, no, we were in Chickasha, Oklahoma, one year, that was in 1918. That was the year the Armistice was signed.

Q: Yes, yes.

MISS OSBORN: And I never will forget that it was at the time of my birthday--

Q: Yes, in November.

MISS OSBORN: --and our first celebration was on our birthday, on my birthday. But come to find out the Armistice wasn't signed or anyway they were not ready for us to have the big celebration until two days later. And then Chickasha sure did celebrate!

Q: Now you came to Kansas in 1919--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --then from Chickasha then?

MISS OSBORN: From Chickasha.

Q: I see. And can you tell us about the circumstances of how you and your family came to Kansas?

MISS OSBORN: My father was as I said a government veterinarian, he went into the government work in 1917.

Q: He was a veterinarian in Oklahoma then? An army veterinarian then?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And in fact just the year before that he was in Sioux City, Iowa, and we were in Indiana.

Q: Oh yes.

MISS OSBORN: At that time I had some difficulty with my knee, and my sister was a tiny, wee baby, and my father thought rather than move us from place to place he would wait until he was situated--

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --permanently before we should come.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And my father was sent then to Chickasha from Sioux

City, Iowa.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And they had the hoof and mouth disease down there--

Q: Oh, dear.

MISS OSBORN: --that winter I never will forget. I had the flu, that was a terrible flu year.

Q: Yes, that was, yes, I remember.

MISS OSBORN: And I was the only one in the family that got it though. Or that had it.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: But I had it for all of them.

Q: Oh, dear.

MISS OSBORN: And then the next spring my father put in his application for Kansas, and he was sent to Abilene and with the permission to either locate in Abilene or Salina. My father came to Abilene, got acquainted, and Dr. Ralph Townsend who was the veterinarian here then told my father, he says, "If I were you I'd go over to Salina and look around before you make your choice." And so he did. But my father chose Abilene after looking Salina over several different times and getting

acquainted over there, he came back to Abilene. And my sister, my baby sister--

Q: And who is she?

MISS OSBORN: Mrs. Francis B. Nelson. I'll say they're still here, however, she is down at Council Grove now, just since a year ago. And we don't know just how long that will be.

Q: Can you tell us your father's whole name?

MISS OSBORN: Dr. Carlton, C-a-r-l-t-o-n, Ray Osborn.

Q: And how long did he practice in Abilene?

MISS OSBORN: Well, he passed away January 3, 1932.

Q: So it was from 1919 to 1932 that he was active in his profession--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --here in Abilene?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Was he working with the army at all then or was it all the local people?

MISS OSBORN: Well, it was what he did was go around to different places, different farms and test cattle.

Q: For hoof and mouth disease as well, and then other diseases also?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Right, yes. So he was a federal veterinarian.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Yes, all right. Now tell us about your professional life.

MISS OSBORN: Well, while I was in high school I worked evenings after school and on Saturdays in Dr. Miller's office here in Abilene.

Q: What did you do?

MISS OSBORN: I was a receptionist, and I also did a lot of his laboratory work, that's when we made dentures, made plates, made inlays and everything. And I surely did enjoy it. And in 1920 we had our big snow at Easter time, April the 3rd, 1920, and it started on Saturday. And Dr. Miller was down at the office, and we worked Saturday morning. He went home at noon but didn't come back in the afternoon. And so I was doing laboratory work there and around three o'clock Dr. Dieter, John Dieter, came and he said, "Well, Genevieve," he said, "I'm going home in about a half an hour" and at that time we lived right next door to him that's when he lived over on Sixth Street in the two hundred block.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: He says, "Now I'm going home in about a half an hour, and you wind things up and come and go with me."

I said, "O.K." and I was ready and went back to his office, and we left the building. And it was snowing so hard he could hardly see where he was going, and the snow was deep, and we got up and turned east on Sixth Street in the one hundred block and who should we meet or see coming from the north but George Harrison in Thayle McBride's plumbing truck.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And he turned west, well, when he turned we couldn't get out of the rut we were in and he couldn't either, so finally he backed up to the corner to Kuney and turned north and let us go by and then he went on his way.

Q: I see. Now what building were you coming from where Dr. Dieter's office was and where Dr. Miller's office was?

MISS OSBORN: Above the Abilene National Bank.

Q: I see. O.K.

MISS OSBORN: That's where Dr. Miller's office still is.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: Dr. Dieter's offices were in the front of the building. And that was in 1920 and in '23 was when I graduated from high school.

Q: From high school, yes. Did you go to college or professional school?

MISS OSBORN: No, I didn't. My sister younger than I, went to college. She went to Cottner College in Bethany, Nebraska. Cottner College is no longer affiliated with or is no longer in existence, I'll say.

Q: Well, then after you were out of high school then you were ready to work full time, what did you do then?

MISS OSBORN: I worked at the telephone office until September, and in September, well, I kept worrying about what I wanted to fit myself for. I wanted to do something so I could be of some benefit to humanity, and I finally decided it was nursing. And in that way I could earn my own way through my training years.

Q: Where were you trained in nursing?

MISS OSBORN: Well, I had the bright idea that if I had part of my training in a general hospital and part in a private institution I would have a wonderful training.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: God was with me in my choice. I chose General Hospital in Kansas City, Missouri to start my training. And I was there until after I had my OR, my operating work.

Q: Yes, and then where did you go?

MISS OSBORN: And then I went to Axtell Christian Hospital at Newton. But I still thank God that I started in Kansas City--

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --while there I had even a leper case which is one thing that the doctors and specialists there in Kansas City said they had never seen. I happened to be in isolation at the time, and they brought this man over to isolation between trains. They were taking him to the colony, to the leper colony. And as soon as the specialists got word of a leper patient being in isolation, we had a steady stream of doctors coming to see this patient.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: He was just there the one day.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: But all the time he was there he had visitors, and he was a Mexican.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: So he couldn't understand anything that we said and vice versa.

Q: Yes. Then you came back to Abilene after you finished your training in Newton.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Tell us about when you first knew Ida and David Eisenhower.

MISS OSBORN: Well, I got acquainted with the Eisenhower's way back in 1919.

Q: When you were first in Abilene?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Tell us about this.

MISS OSBORN: Well, we had what we called our Young People's Council, it was a county organization of the young folks of the different churches.

Q: I see, this was including all or as many churches that wanted--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --their young people involved in this sort of combined group.

MISS OSBORN: That's right.

Q: Yes. From the town and the county?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And we would oftentimes have just a monthly meeting here in Abilene, and we would have some of our young folks give some musical numbers, and one of them was Milton S. Eisenhower.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And he was a wonderful musician, he sure knew his music.

Q: Did he play the piano?

MISS OSBORN: He did.

Q: Yes. And I'll bet his mother had taught him.

MISS OSBORN: She did.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And that was when I first got acquainted with the family. But, of course, Milton was the only one of the boys at home then.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: The other boys were all gone.

Q: Already gone.

MISS OSBORN: Roy was a druggist over here at Junction City--

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --and was up until his death. And Arthur, of course, was in Kansas City in the Commerce Trust Company.

Q: I believe that's right.

MISS OSBORN: And Earl was in Seattle, Washington,--

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --no, I mean Edgar, Edgar was the one that--

Q: Yes, that's right.

MISS OSBORN: --lived in Seattle.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: Earl was the one that was in up close to Chicago.

Q: Yes. Had you met the General by that time?

MISS OSBORN: No, I hadn't, but Mrs. Price, Mrs. R.L. Price, who was our little Presbyterian minister's wife, that lived right across the street from Eisenhowers used to come over, and Mrs. Price and Mother Eisenhower used to sit and talk by the hour about when Dwight was home and things that he did and things that Mamie did and things that Johnny did and one thing and another.

Q: Were you ever there when they were talking?

MISS OSBORN: Oh, yes.

Q: Yes, do you remember some of these things that they used to talk about?

MISS OSBORN: Yes. One year, I don't remember just what year it was though but, Dwight and Johnny decided they were going to make sidewalks--

Q: I see, yes, that should have been about 1935 or somewhere in there.

MISS OSBORN: Was it '35?

Q: Somewhere in there, in the mid-30's.

MISS OSBORN: Well, anyway they got the sidewalk run around the porch, the east porch there.

Q: Yes, yes.

MISS OSBORN: And they also had one fixed that extended out toward the, it was then a garage--

Q: I see, in which direction now?

MISS OSBORN: North. And after they got that run, well, that joined the sidewalk they had going out from the house from the east porch to the garage, the old barn.

Q: The old barn, yes.

MISS OSBORN: It was a two-story barn, and it was still a two-story barn when I was down there. That was in 1945 when Mother Eisenhower fell down the basement steps, and I took care of her so many months.

Q: Yes, tell us about that, tell us about that whole period of time when Mrs. Eisenhower had fallen down the stairs.

MISS OSBORN: Well, Naomi Engle was then staying with Mother Eisenhower. It was after Father Eisenhower had passed away.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And Naomi and Mother Eisenhower had been to church, that was on Thursday, or Wednesday night, and at that time I was on special with Laura Bolton's mother.

Q: Did they live near the Eisenhowers?

MISS OSBORN: No, Laura lived up here where her sister still lives, up here on Kuney.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: Between Eighth and Ninth on Kuney.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And when Mother Eisenhower went home that night, when she and Naomi went home, why Naomi went in and turned on the fire in their little heater there by the north windows so it

would be warmer for them. Because this was in February. And we had more snow then, than we have now.

Q: And we've had a lot, haven't yet?

MISS OSBORN: We have had.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And it was cold and when Mother Eisenhower went to open the hall door to hang up her coat, she opened up the basement door, and down she went.

Q: Oh, dear.

MISS OSBORN: And it is a wonder she didn't break every bone in her body, but God sure was with her. And as Mother Eisenhower often said afterwards, she said, "I'll tell you, it was no Sunday School picnic." But Anna Engle, who was then our superintendent of nurses up at the hospital,--

Q: This was a relative of Naomi Engle?

MISS OSBORN: It was Naomi's sister.

Q: Sister, yes.

MISS OSBORN: --called and wanted to know if I knew just how long I'd be on my case. I told her, "No," I didn't, but I didn't think it would be long. And she said, "Well, please, call us

just as soon as you are released for we want you with Mother Eisenhower."

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: And so the following Friday night, Friday evening, Mrs. Bolton passed away. And I called the girls, and Anna answered, and she told me then just what she wanted and wanted to know if I would come down to take care of Mother Eisenhower.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: I told her, well, I'd do what I could.

Q: Was Mrs. Eisenhower ever in the hospital after her fall?

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: She wasn't.

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: She hadn't broken anything then--

MISS OSBORN: No--

Q: --nothing.

MISS OSBORN: --thanks to God.

Q: Yes. And so after she fell she was just taken upstairs and put to bed.

MISS OSBORN: Well, she--

(Interruption)

MISS OSBORN: Well, she always had the room downstairs for her bedroom, even when Dave was alive. And Mother Eisenhower's bed was always the one to the east, the one right by the window, they had the twin beds.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: And Dave had the other bed. So when I went down there the following Sunday, the Bolton girls asked me to stay with them clear up until after the mother's funeral services on Sunday, which I did. And then I went to Mother Eisenhower's--

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --and when she saw me, she says, "Well, how glad I am to see you." And she visited with me then for a while, and she wasn't able to only get up and sit in a chair.

Q: She could sit in a chair?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: For a short time.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: And when it was so that she could walk a little farther, and I would take her in the other part of the house. Why as we would go past the door going to the basement, I would say something about the door, did she ever see that before. And she would kind of laugh in her little old sweet laugh, and she would say, "And it certainly was no Sunday School picnic."

Q: Well, what was the extent of her injuries?

MISS OSBORN: Well, shock.

Q: Shock, bruises?

MISS OSBORN: Oh, yes.

Q: Abrasions?

MISS OSBORN: Yes, well, no abrasions.

Q: No abrasions.

MISS OSBORN: Thanks to God.

Q: She was, I'm sure, very stiff and sore.

MISS OSBORN: She was, but Dr. Edwards would have her get up and take a hold of each end of the foot of each of the beds and then kick as high as she could. And we would do that several different times. And then we would try to stoop over and do our exercises.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And that was the main thing that brought her out--

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: But it was quite a while before we were able to go in the other part of the house, but when she'd go to get up in the chair, I'd say, "Well, shall we tune in and see what Dwight's doing today?"

She'd say, "I'd love it."

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And we nearly always had a report of where Dwight was, or something about General Ike, which they nearly always just called him--

Q: Yes, and this is on the local radio station?

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: This would be from Kansas City or--

MISS OSBORN: Yes. Because you see he was in Europe at that time.

Q: Yes, this was, of course, in 1945.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Yes. As Mrs. Eisenhower felt better and was able to move around more, what was the routine of your day, how did you spend your time together?

MISS OSBORN: Well, of course, I was just there supposed to be nights, but Naomi often asked me to stay and even sleep, get my rest during the day.

Q: Yes, was she there then during the day, also?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: I see. And then often you were there, too?

MISS OSBORN: Well, yes.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: But when I would go to get my rest, they would say, "Well, Genevieve, you go upstairs and leave your door open, so if we need you, why, we can call you."

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: "And get what rest you can." Which I did. And come to find out that was the bed that Dwight and Edgar had.

Q: Which bedroom was that upstairs? Where was the bed in the house?

MISS OSBORN: The north bedroom upstairs, just at the head of the stairs.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And many sweet memories went with that bedroom. But all the time I was with Mother Eisenhower, I tried to find out if she had a favorite son.

Q: What did you find out?

MISS OSBORN: I found out that all of her boys were very dear to her, and each one had their own individual personality.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: Some excelled in one thing, and some another, but they all had their own individual personalities, and each one was just as dear as the other. And she says, I heard her say this so many times, "Daddy and I talked it over, and we decided that we should not interfere with anything that our children wanted to be because we might want them to be something that they had no inclination for whatsoever. And in so doing we might not only, you might say, ruin their life but those that they came in contact with too, just from our own selfish desires."

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: "So we decided we were not going to interfere with anything our boys wanted to be. We were going to help them in any way we could."

Q: You gave me a letter to take to the library addressed to "Dear Naomi," no, "Dear Mother and Naomi" from Mamie Doud Eisenhower. How did you happen to have the letter?

MISS OSBORN: Well, that was at the time of or shortly after Anna, Naomi's moth--, or sister passed away, and one day as I was ready to go home, Naomi says, "Oh, here, Genevieve, here's a letter I think you might like to read."

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: "We've had it for a while." And she had. It was from Mamie, and in the letter she told that Milton had told her of Anna's death, and she hoped it wouldn't affect the father too much. The father and Anna lived together--

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: --and Naomi lived there, too, but, of course, she was with Mother Eisenhower for several years. So she got so that she would call that home instead of up on Eighth and Olive, which was their original home.

Q: The letter that I saw was saying, how grateful Mamie was that Ida had not injured herself more than she had on the way down the stairs. This is the letter that's now over in the library.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Was this just turned over to you--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --just given to you by Naomi?

MISS OSBORN: Yes, because so many of the letters Naomi would just put in the wastebasket.

Q: I see. Did you ever rescue any from the wastebasket while you were there?

MISS OSBORN: No, I didn't.

Q: And some of them she didn't throw away?

MISS OSBORN: Well, there were a few that she didn't. But what was in them I couldn't say because I never read them.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: But that one in particular she, Naomi, gave to me as I went to go home that day.

Q: You commented to me that you were looking for other letters that you had.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Can you tell me something about what is in those letters?

MISS OSBORN: Well, at the time that I was with Mother Eisenhower, and when she was so she could be up in the other part

of the house and around, I asked her one day if she would like to make a scarf for Dwight--

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --oh, she would to, and so I got the yarn and started it for her, but every time we would go to work on it, she'd say, "Now, I want you to sit here by me and see that I don't make any mistakes because anything worth doing at all is worth doing right, and I want this nice for Dwight." So I would sit there by her and watch her to see that she didn't make any mistakes. Just before I left there we had her eyes tested again--

Q: When, what time of year was this?

MISS OSBORN: Well, that was in May.

Q: In May, you had been there since February?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And we found out that there was quite a little difference in her eyes--

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: --however, some of it could have been due to the fall. But that was one letter--

Q: Did you write back and forth about the scarf that you were making for Dwight?

MISS OSBORN: I didn't until after her death.

Q: I see. O.K., well, go on with your story about the scarf.

MISS OSBORN: Well, when I left there the scarf wasn't finished, so at the time of her death I asked Mrs. Robinson--

Q: Now, Mrs. who? Robinson?

MISS OSBORN: Well, the lady that was staying with Mother Eisenhower, you can find her full name in that one book of Dwight's.

Q: All right.

MISS OSBORN: And I asked her if the scarf was still there. She says, "The scarf is just as you left it." She said, "No one has touched it since. I guess," she said, "Mrs. Snyder," I believe it was, "didn't know how to knit," and she didn't either.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: So they hadn't done anything about it. And so I asked Milton and Arthur who were down at the home then, if they would like to have me finish it for Dwight. They thought it would be very nice if I would, so I did, and I have some pictures that I had my mother take of me finishing, putting the last

stitches in the scarf. And I sent it to Dwight, he was in Europe. And he thanked me for it, and I told him what his mother would say about me watching to see that she didn't make any mistakes. He said it sounded just like his dear old mother. And he sure appreciated the fact that I did finish it. And he said that scarf would be one that he would always keep and cherish.

Q: That's lovely. And this is in the letters that you--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --all about the scarf is in the letters that you wrote to him.

MISS OSBORN: And about different things his Mother did.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: He sure did appreciate hearing from his Mother.

Q: Did she write to him often?

MISS OSBORN: No, of course, she was in her eighties and Naomi said that she couldn't even sign her name, so I thought, well, that just didn't sound quite like Mother Eisenhower. So when our President Roosevelt, Franklin Roosevelt, passed away, I thought it would be nice for Mother Eisenhower to send Mrs. Roosevelt a card of sympathy. So I asked her if she would like to, and she said she sure would.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: She thought it was the only Christian way to be. And so I got the card and remember it was at Easter time.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And I also got a card to send to Dwight. So I thought, "Well now, Genevieve, you have your cards, now it's time to see if you are right or wrong." So at the top of the page I wrote, "Mother," and I thought, "Well, we'd sign Dwight's card first." And instead of "Mother" she wrote "Ida Stover Eisenhower."

Q: On her son's card.

MISS OSBORN: And so I asked her if she would like to write that name again. "Oh, I love to write my name," she said.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And so she did, and on that one piece of paper, I've forgotten now how many different signatures that she had. But one time when, well, it was when the boys were here with Dwight when he was launching his--

Q: Presidential campaign?

MISS OSBORN: Yes. Just before he, let's see that was in May, wasn't it?

Q: I'm not sure.

MISS OSBORN: Well, anyway, I asked Milton if he would like to have the signatures, and he said he sure would. So I gave him all but two--

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --and they were--I'm still on the piece of paper that I had had her write her name.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And I still have those, two signatures, I believe there is.

Q: These were on a separate sheet then?

MISS OSBORN: No, I cut them.

Q: You cut them off?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: I see. Did she write her name different ways?

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: It was always Ida Stover Eisenhower?

MISS OSBORN: Yes, or Ida S. Eisenhower.

Q: I see, yes. And how many times did Dwight come in those years before he became such a well-known national figure, how many times did you see him?

MISS OSBORN: Oh, well, just the once. That was the night that they came in from Kansas City on the special, and Ted Viola was down there with his drums, and they were wanting to get Mother Eisenhower off of the back of the train. Arthur was going to take her off the back of the train, and they were going to have a car there so they could go right on down home.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And so Dwight got off, oh, about half way down the train and right close to the band, and Ted was there with his drums. And on the picture that we have, it is of Dwight playing the drums, and Ted Viola still has some of the pictures. I know at the time this was, oh, maybe five or six years ago, I happened to be in there in the RHV Store, and Ted was in there, and I told him that I had one of the pictures that the--oh, Charles Stanley got them out, and he had a little verse on the back of it. And Ted says, "Do you have one now?"

I said, "I'm pretty sure I do." He wanted to know if I'd bring it down and let him see it. So I did and he wanted it. He had lost the copy that he had that had the verse on.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And he was wanting to get the verse so he could put it on the card again.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: And so I let him have it. And I believe that is the type of card that he's giving now is the one that they started with. I know Ted asked me where I got mine, and I said, "Well, Jona Callahan said that he had something for me one day," and he said it was a picture of an old friend of mine. And it was that one of Dwight and Ted.

Q: What year was this, do you remember?

MISS OSBORN: That was in 1946. 1945. I know it was the first time, yes, 1945, and the first time he was home after his mother fell down the stairs.

Q: Were you there when the reunion occurred between Dwight and his mother?

MISS OSBORN: No, that happened in Kansas City.

Q: In Kansas City.

MISS OSBORN: And then they all came out on the train.

Q: What were your impressions of him?

MISS OSBORN: He was a very thoughtful son. He was a boy that wanted the best for his mother. And he was willing to go to any

lengths to get what his mother needed for her benefit and welfare.

Q: Yes.

(Interruption)

MISS OSBORN: When Mr. Harger went down to tell Mother Eisenhower that she had been nominated the Kansas Mother of the Year, why Mother Eisenhower came up with the remark, "Why who wants to have an ugly old lady like I am as the Kansas Mother of the Year?"

I said, "Well, Mother Eisenhower, you know beauty is only skin deep." She stopped and you could tell by her eyes she was thinking just a minute, but she said, "I just never thought of it that way."

Q: This was after she had, when she was recovering from her fall.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. That was just about May 1st, 1945--

Q: 1945.

MISS OSBORN: --just, and then she passed away a year in September.

Q: Yes. I've forgotten when the nominations or when the announcement is made for Mother of the Year, do you remember when this was done on who has won the contest?

MISS OSBORN: Well, now I don't know when Mr. Harger got his notice, but it was, oh, in April--

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: --a little before the 15th, I believe.

Q: On our last tape you were talking about when Dwight came back to his home town the first time after the war was over, this was in June of 1945. Now can you tell me the chronology of that? Mrs. Eisenhower went, did she go to Kansas City?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: O.K. How, how did she get there?

MISS OSBORN: Well, she had Mrs. Sexton staying with her then.

Q: All right, when did you leave?

MISS OSBORN: I left, oh, it was shortly after May 1st--

Q: I see. O.K.

MISS OSBORN: --after her birthday.

Q: O.K.

MISS OSBORN: Mrs. Ollie Sexton was staying with Mother Eisenhower at that time, at the time that they went to Kansas City to meet Dwight, June 20 and 21, in 1945, and then Milton took them on in to Kansas City.

Q: Mrs. Sexton took Mrs. Eisenhower to Milton's home then?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: In Manhattan?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: And then he drove them on to the airport in Kansas City?

MISS OSBORN: And I don't know whether he drove them because you see after they met Dwight they all got on this, they called it Dwight's train, and came on in to Abilene.

Q: So Mrs. Eisenhower and Mrs. Sexton and Milton rode back to Abilene on the train with the General?

MISS OSBORN: Yes. There was Arthur and Earl, the boys were all there, and Edgar and, oh, they just had a wonderful time and that was when I was, I was telling you about the card that I had that--

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --Ted Viola had made and right now--. Oh, Charles Stanley was the boy that got it all together, and he had a bunch of the cards made. There was a picture on it of Dwight with Ted's drumsticks, and he was drumming on the drum. And the reason though that Dwight went down where Ted and the band was,

was they were wanting to get Mother Eisenhower off the train so there wouldn't be too many around.

Q: Yes, get her away from the crush of the people.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: I see, and back to her home.

MISS OSBORN: So that was why Dwight went out way down the train, the west end there.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And in the meantime Arthur had the car or he telephoned ahead and had a car waiting at the end of the train. So they could get Mother Eisenhower right off and into the car and home.

Q: You don't know if it's true that Mrs. Eisenhower was the first to greet the General when he got off the Sunflower in Kansas City do you?

MISS OSBORN: No, but I wouldn't be a bit surprised but what she was.

Q: Yes, I expect so.

MISS OSBORN: Because I can just see Dwight now picking out his mother to be the first one to greet. And the boys would see to it that she was.

Q: That must have been a glorious day for her.

MISS OSBORN: Oh, that paper, the Kansas City Star, or Times, had a picture of the family, and Mother Eisenhower was the only woman, but you could just tell she was in the height of her glory.

Q: I'm sure, yes. About six months prior to this reunion there was another one at Milton's house in Manhattan, just right after Christmas time. Can you tell us what happened, how this was arranged and all of that?

MISS OSBORN: Well, Milton kept writing to Naomi and Mother Eisenhower, and he wanted Naomi to have things prepared so just at a moment's notice she could leave and with Mother Eisenhower and go to Milton's.

And on Christmas day, it wouldn't have been Christmas without going down with some cookies for Mother Eisenhower and Mrs. Price and Mrs. Poland, and different ones down in that neighborhood. And so when I stopped at Mother Eisenhower's, she was in the dining room there, it was, oh, long about two or two-thirty in the afternoon, and I took the cookies in, and she said, "Oh, my, but the boys sure would love these."

Q: Oh.

MISS OSBORN: She was always remembering about the boys. And she pretty soon picked up the Topeka paper, and there was a picture

of Dwight on it. I don't remember any more what the article was about, but anyway, Dwight's picture was there. Mother Eisenhower saw it, she says, "Dwight isn't happy here, he has too much responsibility."

Q: Yes, he was in the thick of it then, wasn't he? Now he came home, he came to Manhattan very briefly--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --just after Christmas of 1944, and there was a quick family reunion in Milton's home--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --the president's home at Manhattan at Kansas State University.

MISS OSBORN: That's when Naomi had to have Mother Eisenhower ready so she could leave just as soon as Milton would get the call. And some of them would come after them.

Q: I see. O.K.

MISS OSBORN: Although Naomi has driven Mother Eisenhower's car to Manhattan several different times.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: But on this particular occasion, some of them were going to come after her.

Q: Do you know what went on at the reunion? Did Mrs. Eisenhower ever speak about this to you?

MISS OSBORN: Sure, she did. She would say, "Oh, was it ever a busy time with all the boys there, and their families and so little time," she'd say.

Q: Do you know how long they actually had for their reunion?

MISS OSBORN: No, just one day I believe, they were there all night, too.

Q: I see. Now Mrs. Dwight Eisenhower, Mamie, was not there.

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: No, and John was not, he was in Europe, I think, at that time.

MISS OSBORN: You know when John went overseas he sent Mother Eisenhower a V-mail letter, and the last I knew of the letter it was still there. And I kept it around or I tried to, so that I could pick it up every once in a while or put it around where she could pick it up and read it. She'd say, "That's Dwight's boy."

Q: Yes, her mental faculties were very good weren't they, even in this last year of her life?

MISS OSBORN: Well, they were getting better, it seemed like Naomi just didn't carry on much of a conversation with Mother

Eisenhower about anything but these books or these tracts that they would deliver.

(Interruption)

Q: Tell us about the tea towels and the other things you would have for Mrs. Eisenhower to do during the day.

MISS OSBORN: Well, as a rule before I'd go to bed after I'd get Mother Eisenhower settled at night, I'd oftentimes get up and start to hem a tea towel. And maybe you think there isn't some problems for a left-handed person to start something for a right-handed person.

Q: Oh, yes, O.K.

MISS OSBORN: But I'd start it for her, and then I'd leave it laying as a rule on the northwest corner of the table. And she would come out in the morning and when she'd see it, oh, her eyes would light up, "Here's something to do." And then she'd start telling about when she'd make clothes for the boys, or when she'd have to mend them or something. And our conversation would vary and drift from one thing to the other, but it included the family.

Q: She really enjoyed being active around her own home, didn't she?

MISS OSBORN: She did. That was her life.

Q: Yes. And she helped by wiping dishes after breakfast.

MISS OSBORN: She loved to wipe dishes, and she'd tell about when the boys used to help with the dishes. She said, "They broke a few but not nearly as many as I thought they could have."

Because she said, "It wasn't anything at all to see dishes flying in the air."

Q: Did they throw them at each other?

MISS OSBORN: Sure, they would--

Q: Oh.

MISS OSBORN: --they would toss them.

Q: Would the dish washer toss them to the dish dryer and then or what?

MISS OSBORN: And when the boys would be wiping why they always had their eyes on the other because they knew what the game as a rule was. But she said, when you only had one to help you didn't see so many dishes flying in the air.

Q: Did one boy wash and one boy wipe then or did Mrs. Eisenhower wash and then corral the boys--

MISS OSBORN: Mother Eisenhower as a rule would do the washing.

Q: Do the washing, yes. And then she would corral more than one boy to do the wiping?

MISS OSBORN: Well, sometimes, but she said when you got a crowd, she says, you got just what you could expect. That made me think when Mrs. Bill Huff called me one day and wanted to know if she could come over and visit with Mother Eisenhower a little while, and I told her, "Why sure." That was when Mother Eisenhower was able to get up in the other part of the house, and when we walked to the bathroom, walked past the table, I said, "And did you ever see this door again?"

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And she said, "Again," she said, "I always see it." And she said, "I always remember what happened on down the stairs."

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: But she said, "That sure was no Sunday School picnic."

Q: Yes. Now you were with Mrs. Eisenhower from February through part of May in 1945, and when you left to come to take care of your own mother how was she then? You said she was remembering a lot more and--

MISS OSBORN: She was but when Mrs. Sexton did come I happened to go down, be down in that neighborhood so, of course, I had to stop in to see Mother Eisenhower. And there was Mother

Eisenhower sitting in her chair looking out the west door, and she had a hot water bottle on her abdomen. In the kitchen Mrs. Sexton and Naomi were discussing something, just what I don't know, but it wasn't very pleasant to hear, and when Mother Eisenhower saw me, "Oh," she says, "you don't know how happy I am to see you."

And she took a hold of my hand and the tears started to come in her eyes, I said, "Well, Mother Eisenhower, we're always happy to see you, too." And even though I did notice the hot water bottle, "Why," I said, "and we're getting better and better each day."

"Well," she says, "we're trying to." And as a rule when she would be looking out the west windows especially in the afternoon after school would be out, and she would see some of the children playing on the lawn there, she would say, "I wonder where their mothers are." She said, "Why when our boys went to school they came home right after school and would change their clothes, get a bite to eat, and then do their chores. And then after their chores were done, then was the time to play." But she was so distressed to see those children out there on the playground after school in the evenings.

Q: Yes. The neighborhood that the Eisenhower home was in, the other homes around it, I get the idea that people cared for each other very much in that little community right around--

MISS OSBORN: They did.

Q: --Second Street there or Fourth Street. Is this right, that people checked on each other and were--

MISS OSBORN: Sure they did.

Q: --were friends.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. And Mr. & Mrs. Horner, they lived across the tracks just north of that little street right by the home there--

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --and Mr. Horner used to talk to me so much about when he was taking care of that lot now that the museum is on. He said, "Of course, when the boys were home that was their garden, and the boys had it to look after but then that was too much for Dave and Mother Eisenhower." And so one time he decided he was going to ask Dave about planting alfalfa over there, and so he did and Dave said, "Well, I'll talk it over with Mama and see what Mama says, and then I'll let you know." And so in a day or so here came Dave and Mama said it would be O.K.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And they had discussed it together, and they decided that that would be all right. So then Mr. Horner looked after it after that.

Q: Yes, and the neighbors just looked in on each other, didn't they?

MISS OSBORN: Oh, yes.

Q: And just stopped in for a few minutes sometimes.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. And they would call over the telephone, and it wasn't anything at all for Mother Eisenhower to say, "Well, I'll answer the phone." And she would answer and whoever it would be would start talking, and like one time Sadie, well, she was a nurse,--

Q: Well, we'll think of it. I'm sorry I don't know who it is.

MISS OSBORN: Well, I should, but anyway Sadie called and said, she just thought she would call and see how they were getting along and Mother Eisenhower said, "Well, thank you so much for thinking of us." "But," she says, "we're just doing fine now." And that was when she was remembering more. And so happy to do it.

Q: Yes. When was the last time you saw Mrs. Eisenhower?

MISS OSBORN: Oh, dear, I don't remember that. I saw her one time in Pinkham's store, and I never will forget that. Mrs. Sexton and Mrs. Sexton's friend were with her, and Mother Eisenhower just left them and came over toward me. I said, "Well, hello, there."

She said, "Well, when I saw you I knew I should know you."

And I said, "And you do."

And she says, "I sure miss you." And she says, "You still have that sweet smile though." And we visited a while there, and I knew that Mrs. Robinson didn't like it very well when Mother Eisenhower come over toward me that way. And so I terminated the conversation.

But Mother Eisenhower used to like to talk about when she and Naomi went to spend the winter with Edgar and his wife in Seattle. That was not too long before she passed away.

Q: What did she say about these trips? Did she enjoy them?

MISS OSBORN: Oh, she sure did. Well, now whether she took more than the one trip to Seattle, I don't know, but I know the one trip she took while Naomi was there and that was after Father Eisenhower's death.

Q: I see. So that would have had to be in 19-- , what, well, '42, '43, or '44 somewhere.

MISS OSBORN: Perhaps about, well, I know it wasn't at Christmas time in '43, Christmas of '43 was when that picture was taken.

Q: Yes, the picture you gave me--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --that's in the library now. Yes, that's when you took the cookies to her.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Yes. Do you know how long she spent with Edgar and his wife?

MISS OSBORN: Oh, several months. They went on a Union Pacific train and left here on the Union Pacific. And I suppose went--, however, changing trains never even came into the conversation. But Edgar had a little apartment fixed up for them over their garage.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: And they could be there and do as they wanted, and they sure enjoyed it.

Q: That's interesting because she's so much a part of her home. You think of her as being in her home or in the immediate community, and someone in her eighties by that time being able to adjust to a new environment and to enjoy it, it's very interesting.

MISS OSBORN: But she was with one of her boys. And so that was where the highlight came in.

Q: I see, that's why she went--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --to be with one of her sons. And she could adjust to anything else--

MISS OSBORN: Oh, yes.

Q: --along the way. Very good.

MISS OSBORN: She sure enjoyed her visits with her boys. Like Milton and Helen when they came to see her, that was in March toward the latter part of the month--

(Interruption)

Q: This was in March of 1945 when Milton and Helen came to see her, after the fall.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Yes. O.K.

MISS OSBORN: Mother Eisenhower came into the other room after dinner. Naomi was there in the afternoon or along toward evening when Milton and Helen came. They came for dinner that evening, and I didn't get there until around seven, but Mother Eisenhower sure was happy in having Milton there and Helen. And Helen was doing some embroidery work. And it was at that time I noticed Mother Eisenhower looking at her, looking longingly at the

embroidery work, and so afterwards I said to Mother Eisenhower, I said, "Would you like to knit a scarf for Dwight?"

And she said, "I sure would." And so I told her that I would get her the yarn, and I did.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And took it down and started it for her, and, oh, we had so many happy "sittings," you might call them.

Q: She was just learning to knit then at that time, in 1945?

MISS OSBORN: Well, oh, no, she had, you see when the boys--

Q: Oh, yes.

MISS OSBORN: --were little.

Q: Yes, yes, that's right.

MISS OSBORN: But then after so many years--

Q: Yes. She knit their mittens when they were young.

MISS OSBORN: Mittens and socks.

Q: Yes. What else did she do? You said she was looking at the embroidery longingly, did she also embroider?

MISS OSBORN: Oh, yes. And she would make buttonholes on shirts, and, oh, just anything that came along that way.

Q: And she crocheted?

MISS OSBORN: Well, she crocheted some but embroidered and knit mostly.

Q: I see. Yes, she made the pillow cover.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. But she was so happy when some of her boys could be there and when Arthur came down and had breakfast with us that morning--

Q: That was in, what May?

MISS OSBORN: No, that was in April.

Q: April, April, 1945.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. Why we had the chicken gravy and mush that was one of the boys' favorites.

Q: Oh, for breakfast?

MISS OSBORN: Yes. And the chicken gravy was made with the chicken all taken off of the bones and not much thickening in it. But it was made in a kind of a loaf and then cut off.

Q: It was hardened first.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: And then cut, I see.

MISS OSBORN: And Naomi was going to show me just how she made it, but we never got that done. I suppose I'll have to ask Edna Eisenhower sometime about that.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: Because she was here and helped fix it for the boys when they came on this trip in June.

Q: In June of '45.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Did Mrs. Eisenhower use recipes when she was an active cook, do you know?

MISS OSBORN: Oh, yes.

Q: She had written them down, she didn't just cook out of her head, she had them written down.

MISS OSBORN: Oh, she always had a book of recipes. But she always had recipes that she had memorized, too.

Q: I see. I've often wondered, you know, what she did cook on a day to day basis for her growing and large family.

MISS OSBORN: Well, Mother Eisenhower made this remark to me, she said, "We didn't always have the most expensive foods, but what we had was nourishing food and plenty of it."

Q: These must have been in the line of stews and simmered meats.

MISS OSBORN: Well, they always had their vegetables and go down in the basement and bring up a can of this and that and the other thing, and they would have a meal. And she said they didn't know what it was to sit down to the table alone, they always had visitors come in.

Q: When the boys were growing up also?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Their friends would--

MISS OSBORN: Well, theirs or Mother and Father Eisenhower's friends, too.

Q: Do you know I'm not sure I've ever seen a cookbook in the home, I wonder what happened to it.

MISS OSBORN: There were two, I know.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: I don't know.

Q: We'll have to look, won't we?

MISS OSBORN: I would love to. I do know a woman from one of the radio stations in Kansas City was here one time, and she found a cookbook because I know she was talking about a recipe, and I

don't even remember what the recipe was any more. But I know I wrote to her and, oh, she was so happy that I did. And she said that she sure did enjoy those moments in Mother Eisenhower's kitchen visualizing Mother Eisenhower there getting her meals, and she said every room in the house you could just see Mother Eisenhower there.

And Mother Eisenhower loved her flowers. And I'll never forget at Easter time, that was at the time of FDR's death, too, that the LaSalle Street Floral Shop in Chicago sent her the most beautiful bouquet of roses, oh, they were long stems and really gorgeous roses. And Mother Eisenhower would go out and put one in her hand, and she would say, "Oh, only God can make a rose, make a flower of any kind." And she says, "You just wonder at people," she said, "so many of them deny there is a God but who can deny God and see these beautiful roses."

(Interruption)

MISS OSBORN: Where do you want me to begin?

Q: Just before Mrs. Eisenhower's birthday in 1945 what did she tell you about her preferences, you know, when she got better.

MISS OSBORN: Oh, it happened the night that I asked her if she would like for me to read to her out of the Bible. And she said, "I sure would." And she says, "You know I don't approve of all that goes on up there in the hall," she said. "Would you take me to the church that daddy and I used to go to?" She says, "I know

I'm not so I can go now but as soon as I can I would love to go back to the church that daddy and I used to go to."

Q: And that would have been the Brethren in Christ Church?

MISS OSBORN: That's right.

Q: She wanted to go back there.

MISS OSBORN: Up here at Seventh and Buckeye.

Q: Yes.

This interview is conducted on 2-8-73 with Miss Genevieve Osborn and also present for the interview Mrs. Shirley Wickman and the interviewer Dr. Maclyn Burg of the Eisenhower Library staff in the family home where Miss Osborn took care of Ida Eisenhower in that period of time just after Mrs. Eisenhower had fallen and injured her hip.

DR. BURG: We're now back here in the pantry area of the house and I guess that it has been some time since you've seen any of this, Miss Osborn.

MISS OSBORN: Yes, I haven't been out here in the kitchen since her death.

Q: It's been that long.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Anything look different to you out here or all look pretty much the same.

MISS OSBORN: Well, of course, there were more pots and pans around.

Q: That you, presumably, had to work with while you were here.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: And Miss Osborn said that the refrigerator is the same, the old ice box.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Is that the same location or has it been moved?

MISS OSBORN: No, that's where it was.

Q: That's where it was.

MISS OSBORN: And the kitchen is exactly like it was except the bread box here.

Q: That's been moved from where it was when you were here.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Where was it kept before?

MISS OSBORN: It was in the pantry.

Q: Back here in the pantry.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: And the dry sink was there, too.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: I see. What was that sink used for while you were here--what kinds of things would you do there?

MISS OSBORN: Well, we just kept our pots and pans and things like that on it.

Q: On top of it?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: We didn't use it in particular--

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --only for storage.

Q: Yes, right.

MISS OSBORN: But Mother Eisenhower used to love to come and wipe dishes for me. She would stand here and she would say, "Oh, my," she'd say, "when the boys were little they used to wipe dishes too, but we never would know until they were through how many dishes we would have left." They would get to playing ball.

Q: Oh, yes. And the dishes would break in the process.

MISS OSBORN: Sometimes.

Q: Now, when, when was it that you came into the house? Was it in 1944?

MISS OSBORN: You mean when I came to take care of her?

Q: Yes, right.

MISS OSBORN: It was the latter part of February in 1945. And then the following May she was appointed the Kansas Mother of the Year.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: It amused me, Mr. Harger came down to tell us about it, and we were in the front room there or in the little sitting room there. She had me helping her knit a scarf for Dwight--

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: --and when Mr. Harger told us what he came for, why Mother Eisenhower says, "Oh, my," she says, "no one wants a homely little old lady like I am as Kansas Mother of the Year."

I said, "Well, Mother Eisenhower," I says, "you know beauty is only skin deep."

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And she kind of chuckled and after a minute's thought, and she said, "Well, I just never thought of that."

Q: Well, when you got here to take care of her had she broken her hip, Miss Osborn?

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: She had fallen and injured herself?

MISS OSBORN: She it was mostly shock.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: And we would get her up and stand her between the beds there and let her take a hold of each bed, and then she would kick. We would say, "Now, kick, and kick as high as you can."

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: And she would look at us and kind of laugh, she says, "Oh, my boys sure taught me how to kick." And she says, "I can still do it."

Q: Right. So she was not confined to bed when you got here.

MISS OSBORN: Well, she was in bed most of the time.

Q: I see, but after a while she was able to move around--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --in the house and so that's how she could come out here and help you.

MISS OSBORN: Oh, yes, it was a month or so before she was able to come out in here.

Q: Yes. And you stayed right here in the house with her.

MISS OSBORN: I was here at night mostly. Naomi Engle had been with her for quite some time, and she was here off and on, I'll say, until after her sister, Anna, passed away.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: Anna was the superintendent of nurses up here at our hospital at the time of her death. She had been down here at Mother Eisenhower's that afternoon and was on her way back to the

hospital, and she stopped in the post office. She said to someone, I don't know anymore just who it was, but she made the remark to someone that she sure was tired. But she got on home and had just taken her coat off, and she slumped over on her bed and that was it.

Q: Right. Now what time would you arrive here at the house?

MISS OSBORN: Oh, sometimes around seven, but as a rule between five and six.

Q: Now, Miss Osborn, was it you who then prepared Mrs. Eisenhower's supper?

MISS OSBORN: No, she would have her supper as a rule when I would get here.

Q: And then you would clean up and wash the dishes.

MISS OSBORN: Well, as a rule whoever got her meals did that.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: Her breakfast was the only meal, and her noon meal, too, that I was responsible for when Naomi wasn't here.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: But Naomi got so that we just wouldn't always know when she would be here and wouldn't.

Q: Right.

MISS OSBORN: So we just had to kind of look ahead.

Q: I see. Now of an evening after you got here would you usually find Mrs. Eisenhower in her own room?

MISS OSBORN: Well, at first I did and I would give her a little hot chocolate or a little something--hot milk. And rub her back real good and talk to her, and she as a rule would say, "Well, now let's see what Dwight's doing before we go to sleep." And so I'd turn on the radio and see what news we could get.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: And as a rule we got something about Dwight, or General Ike, as he was called. And then I would, oh, talk to her a while, and lots of times when she was kind of fidgety or unsettled, we would sing hymns.

Q: I see, I see.

MISS OSBORN: And she would say, "Oh, how I do love those old songs." And it was after she was able to come out in here that one evening Mrs. Price had been over, Mrs. Price was the little Presbyterian minister's wife, that lived across the street south.

Q: I see, yes.

MISS OSBORN: And they were frequent visitors, in fact I always called him "Old Faithful" because I knew there would never be a day but what he would come over, and he'd say, "Well, is there anything I can do for you folks today? Anything I can get you from town?" Or anything like that.

Q: Very good of him to do that.

MISS OSBORN: And when I'd hear him knock I always recognized his knock, too, at the door. And I would say, "Well, here comes 'Old Faithful'."

Q: Now did you ladies, did you ladies listen to the radio or did you just turn it on to get the news?

MISS OSBORN: Well, we would listen quite a little. Milton was on, oh, what were those kids, they weren't the Quiz Kids but some children that were on years ago.

Q: Quiz Kids would be the group I would think of, I don't remember another group.

MRS. WICKMAN: It wasn't Information Please, was it?

MISS OSBORN: No. But they would be on every Sunday.

Q: I see. And that was a favorite program, was it?

MISS OSBORN: Oh, yes, especially after Milton was on with them.

Q: Yes, yes.

MISS OSBORN: And then we were always getting the Quiz Kids, I was just trying to think of one of the names, it was a familiar name--well, when I don't want to think of it, I'll think of it.

Q: Do you remember other kinds of programs that were special favorites of Mrs. Eisenhower's?

MISS OSBORN: Well, she loved anything with religious music, with the old hymns, and she liked to hear, what was his name now that sent her some carnations one year, she was nominated from his program out in California, and his program was kind of like the one from Chicago?

MRS. WICKMAN: This was a religious singer?

MISS OSBORN: No, this one wasn't, this was where they would all come to his breakfast--kind of like at Sardy's.

Q: I know the one you mean.

MRS. WICKMAN: Oh, yes.

Q: I know the one you mean.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

Q: Not Queen for a day.

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: But they would come there, that's right.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: I know the one you mean.

MRS. WICKMAN: It wasn't Art Baker?

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: I want to say Tom--

MRS. WICKMAN: No.

Q: --not Linkletter, no, I want to say Tom--

MISS OSBORN: Breneman.

Q: --Tom Breneman--

MRS. WICKMAN: Breneman, yes.

Q: --of course, of course. How I retained Tom and didn't remember Breneman--that's the one, sure, sure.

MISS OSBORN: Thanks for saying Tom. [Laughter]

Q: Isn't that funny, it's been a long time since I even thought about that program.

MISS OSBORN: It's been quite a while since I thought of it, too.

MRS. WICKMAN: That's for sure.

MISS OSBORN: But she was nominated as one of their mothers or as one of their special guests one time, and he sent her some carnations.

MRS. WICKMAN: Was this while you were here?

MISS OSBORN: No.

MRS. WICKMAN: Oh.

MISS OSBORN: And so that was another program that we always used to try to get.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: And we would enjoy it, we'd say, "Well, we wonder who was going to get the carnations that day." And sometimes we'd happen to know some of his guests that he spoke of.

Q: I see, yes. We should get you out of this kitchen--

MISS OSBORN: No, that's all--

Q: --and see some more of the house.

MRS. WICKMAN: It's kind of cold out there.

Q: Sure.

MISS OSBORN: This door here--

Q: The door down to the basement?

MISS OSBORN: Yes. Always makes me think, Father Eisenhower, when he was here, he used to say, "Well, now we want to keep that pole across the door because we sure don't want anybody to fall down these steps." And that pole was there until, oh, not too long, maybe six weeks or so, before Mother Eisenhower did fall down the basement stairs. She and Naomi had been to church that night, and they came home. Naomi went over to turn up the little heater there so it would be warmer, and Mother Eisenhower was taking her coat off. And she thought she was going into this hall door, but she opened up that door and down to the bottom she went. And when Naomi saw what happened why, of course, she went right after her, but she said to me afterwards, she said, "You know, I didn't expect to see her alive."

I said, "Well, it is a miracle that she was alive."

Q: Yes. The pole had been removed.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. And so the next day Naomi called Mr. Horner. He was the gentlemen that lived over here just across the tracks. But he was a nice little old fellow. He would always come over and do things for them. But the day after he said the horse was stolen, why he put up that pole and it's been up since.

Q: Right. You were remarking a little earlier that you had eaten from these red and white plates--

MISS OSBORN: Oh, yes.

Q: --that are over here on the sideboard. That they were the every day dishes while you were here.

MISS OSBORN: We ate off of them every day, breakfast, dinner, and supper.

Q: Right.

MISS OSBORN: And those were the anniversary plates, wasn't it? That Dwight and Mamie got her from--may I see one of them please? I believe it's noted on the back--something. Yes, George Washington bicentennial memorial plate, 1732 to 1932, first in war, first in peace, first in the hearts of his countrymen.

Q: So they must have given those plates then sometime--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --shortly after 1932.

MISS OSBORN: They got them in England, too. How it happened that none of them were broken is a mystery to me, though.

Q: Now when Mrs. Eisenhower was able to get around the house more where would you ladies spend your evening, is there a particular room here in the house that you liked to sit in?

MISS OSBORN: Well--

Q: And visit?

MISS OSBORN: --while Mother Eisenhower was still in bed I asked her one day, I said, "Mother Eisenhower, would you like to knit a scarf for Dwight?"

And she said, "I would love it."

I said, "O.K., I'll get some yarn for you, and we'll start one." Which we did.

And we would oftentimes come in here, and she'd say, "Now I want you to sit here by me and see that I don't make any mistakes because anything worth doing at all is worth doing right, and I want this nice for Dwight."

Q: I see. And that would be in this room right here?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: This room just south of the dining room.

MISS OSBORN: Yes, she would come and sit on the little rocking chair close to the couch here, and I would sit here on the foot of the couch. And we would sit there until she would get kind of weary. I could always tell; she would make a mistake or two.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: And her eyes needed retested, too. And I'd say, "Well, Mother Eisenhower," I said, "shall we have a hymn or two, and then go in the other room for a little while?"

She'd say, "I'd love it." And sometimes Mrs. Price would come over, and she would sing with us.

Q: Did she play the piano?

MISS OSBORN: Well, she didn't since her fall. I, as a rule, would play the piano.

Q: I see.

MRS. WICKMAN: Where was the piano located, Miss Osborn?

MISS OSBORN: It was located on this east wall, that was before that door was put in there.

Q: So in 1945 there was no door there?

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: That's been put in since they started to remodel the house.

Q: Well, do you remember then, Miss Osborn, what was on this wall over here where the piano now is or was there anything there--I see a door there?

MISS OSBORN: I don't know where the door--oh--

MRS. WICKMAN: There's a closet there.

Q: Must be a closet, yes.

MISS OSBORN: I believe it is, because I believe that's where Milton and Helen, that's Milton's wife, hung their wraps--

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: --when they were here for the evening.

Q: Right. Now the rocking chair in this room is about where it was when you were here, Miss Osborn?

MISS OSBORN: Yes, we'd move it over there toward the foot of the couch.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: And then she would sit there and knit away and talk about when she used to knit socks for the boys or when she would do mending for them or such as that.

Q: And that radio is in the same location?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: That's the one that you would use to listen to the programs that--

MISS OSBORN: No, the radio we used mostly was a little radio that was in her bedroom.

Q: I see. Is that one still there, Shirley, in her room?

MRS WICKMAN: I think it is. There's a good thing about this rocker over here besides the--

MISS OSBORN: Mother Eisenhower, at night before I'd go to bed that was when Mother Eisenhower was able to come in this part of the house. Why I would start a tea towel, start to hem a tea towel, and then I'd put it on the corner of the table.

Q: On the dining room table here?

MISS OSBORN: Yes, and when she would come out in this part of the house the next morning she would see it--"Oh, here's something for me to work on, may I hem it?" she'd say. And I'd tell her, she surely could. And she would wait until after she had her breakfast, and then she'd come over and sit in the chair and start--

Q: In this rocking chair here in the dining room?

MISS OSBORN: Yes, and start hemming her tea towel and maybe you think it isn't a kind of a joke for a left-handed person to start to hem something for a right-handed person.

Q: You're left-handed?

MISS OSBORN: I am.

Q: Right, I see. And then as you'd get a little of it done and leave it there for her and then she'd do it, she'd take it over as a right-hander and finish the job.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. I still have a few, would you folks like to have them for the museum?

Q: I think they would be very delighted to have them, yes, indeed, they would.

MISS OSBORN: O.K.

Q: That would be very nice, indeed.

MISS OSBORN: I'll see to it that you get them, then.

Q: Now did she sit here, Miss Osborn, because of that gas fire there, because it was warm?

MISS OSBORN: Well, we didn't always have it on. But when we would have it on in real cold weather, why, she, as a rule sat there as a result of the heater.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And she'd say, "Oh, my, but this sure feels good."

Q: Yes, I'll bet, I'll bet it did, especially in the winter months here.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Now would she have her breakfast at this table usually?

MISS OSBORN: After she was able to come out here--

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: Before she was able to come out I'd always take her breakfast to her, and she'd have breakfast in bed, of course. And I'd give her her bath, and she would do her kicking, as I said before, and do her exercises, and then get back in bed or else sit up in the chair for a while. She enjoyed watching cars go by and watching for Mr. Price--

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --when he would start for town. And then it was, oh, a month, between a month or six weeks after her fall that we were able to bring her out in here every day.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: And she would kind of turn her chair around so she could see the children out at play at school. And evenings after school when she'd notice the children playing on the playground, she'd say, "Oh, my, I sure wonder where their mothers are?" She said, "Why my boys when they they were little, they always came right home from school and changed their clothes, and then they would have a bite of something to eat and then after that then their chores--"

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: "--and after their chores were done if there was time then that was play time but only after their chores were done."

Q: But in 1945 they were doing a little differently.

MISS OSBORN: Boy, I'll say they were! She couldn't, she couldn't understand why those children would be on the playground after school.

Q: Yes, yes. Was she amused though to watch them?

MISS OSBORN: Oh, yes, she always liked to watch them.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: One day one of the little tots fell, "Oh, my, I wonder if he's hurt bad," she said.

I said, "Shall I go see?" He was knocked out for a little bit. But before I got over there, he was up and ready to run on, so he wasn't evidently hurt too bad.

Q: Made a fast recovery.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. But that's one thing about children, they can be oh so terribly sick one--

Q: And recover.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. First, I started to say one day and then lots of times in less time than that they're playing around.

Q: Now, Shirley, did you get information about Mrs. Eisenhower's appetite and--

MRS. WICKMAN: No, we didn't talk about that.

Q: --or the diet. For example, what would be typical for her to have for breakfast while you were here?

MISS OSBORN: Oh, her cereal and fruit and toast and coffee.

Q: Now when you say cereal, Miss Osborn, would this be the kinds of dry cereal that we have today or would this have been oatmeal or something like that?

MISS OSBORN: Well, I never gave her the same kind of cereal two times in succession.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: I had oatmeal and, oh, three or four different kinds of breakfast food, there's cream of wheat to cook, and then we had some of the dry cereal, too.

Q: Right.

MISS OSBORN: But she always liked a cooked cereal the better.

Q: Yes. Would you say that her appetite was pretty good?

MISS OSBORN: Yes, for someone that was along in years and that was confined as she was. I didn't have to coax her to eat.

Q: I see. Could I ask you about what time would she have breakfast, that is after she was able to move around the house?

MISS OSBORN: Oh, we had breakfast as a rule around eight, well, anywhere from eight to nine.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: It would depend on if we had company, sometimes we did have company that early in the morning.

Q: That early? Who would come that early in the morning, would it be the minister from across the street or--?

MISS OSBORN: Oh, well, he nearly always was over by nine--

Q: By nine in the morning?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: And then he would go down town and do his shopping and then stop by with anything that we had asked him to get. And he was always so nice. And he was a quiet little old fellow, and Mother Eisenhower got so she'd call him "Old Faithful." She said, "Well, your name for him sure does suit him, just fine." She says, "In all these years that we have lived here neighbors, I can never say that he was unfaithful in any way."

Q: I'll be darned.

MRS. WICKMAN: When we came in the door, Miss Osborn, what did you think immediately when we came through?

MISS OSBORN: My first impression was, well, I should say, "Hi, Mother Eisenhower, how are you today?" That's one thing I always did.

Q: As you came in through the door?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: Does it look a lot like it was when you were coming?

MISS OSBORN: Well, the table, of course, was in the center of the room--

MRS. WICKMAN: Center, I see.

MISS OSBORN: --but other than that things were pretty much--

MRS. WICKMAN: I've been looking at some silverware that belongs in the drawer, I haven't found it.

MISS OSBORN: Well, maybe we won't because, well Mrs., what did I say her name was?

MRS. WICKMAN: Robinson.

MISS OSBORN: Robinson took so many things some place, where, we had no idea, we didn't ask her. I know Mr. Price and Mrs. Price

would sit over there and keep watching when they'd see her go with a number of suitcases or cartons or something why they'd say, "Well, there she goes again."

MRS. WICKMAN: I see. This was horn-handled tableware.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: Well, as far as I can see it's not here now. I wondered if there might be something else missing that you could--

MISS OSBORN: Well, there were doilies and fancy work of various types--

MRS. WICKMAN: They're in the drawers.

MISS OSBORN: --that she had in the drawers.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes, they are there.

MISS OSBORN: Oh, they are!

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes, would you like to see them?

MISS OSBORN: Well, sometime.

MRS. WICKMAN: Okay. They're over there.

MISS OSBORN: I won't take time now. But I'll bet it isn't all there, because those drawers were just full.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And Mother Eisenhower used to go out to get something out of the chest of drawers in the bathroom, and she would say, "Well, this time I won't get a baby." She used to put her babies in the drawers for their little cribs.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: When they were just real tiny.

Q: Yes. Did she have a favorite drawer that she used, did she tell you?

MISS OSBORN: The middle drawer.

Q: It was the middle one.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Second from the bottom?

MISS OSBORN: No, second from the top.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yeah, that's the one that's--

MISS OSBORN: I think there's

Q: Oh, yes, I see. Let me ask you, Miss Osborn, what was pretty typical for a noon meal with Mrs. Eisenhower?

MISS OSBORN: Oh, we would have meat and our vegetables and a salad and sometimes a dessert. But--

Q: Did she--pardon me.

MISS OSBORN: Go ahead.

Q: I was going to say did she have particular things that she loved to have you fix more than other things?

MISS OSBORN: Well, you know that was one thing nearly everything she would say, "Oh, my, isn't this good!" And she would say "I only hope and pray everybody else is as well off as we are."

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: She said, "Years ago the food they had wasn't always the most expensive," in fact it was just the opposite, but she said, "We had plenty of it and cooked in a good appetizing way," and she said that they seldom sat down to a meal alone, there would be someone come by. And they would always have an invitation, of course, to come and partake of the meal.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: Which they would. When Arthur was here and had breakfast with us, that was in April or the latter part of March, and he remarked about his Mother--. However, it was nothing unusual for her, but I asked her if she would like to return thanks for our meal before we started to eat, and she said, "Yes,

she would." So she did. And Arthur remarked afterward about his mother and the prayer. He said, "I just can't get over my Mother at her age being able to offer a daily prayer like that."

I said, "Well, Arthur," I said, "she's been doing it all these years." I said, "It is nothing unusual for her." And I said, "It is a part of her." And I said, "I only hope and pray it will continue to be a part of her." And there was for a while I don't believe they offered thanks for their meal but later on she did again. One thing we had for breakfast the morning that Arthur was here was chicken and mush, boy did the boys ever go for that chicken and mush! And I'm going to have to ask Edna, that's Roy's wife that lives at Junction City, for her recipe. Naomi was always going to show me but she never got to it.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: But that's what they had in '45 too, when in June, when the boys were all here.

MRS. WICKMAN: When the General returned from Europe?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: They cooked it then?

MISS OSBORN: Sure they did.

MRS. WICKMAN: Oh, my!

MISS OSBORN: Sure they couldn't have gotten together--

Q: I'll be darned.

MISS OSBORN: --and sat down to breakfast without their mush and chicken. Well, I was in here before. But don't you see where Mother Eisenhower used to have plants, only they don't have the bay window fixed the way it was.

MRS. WICKMAN: Oh, would you like to say something about that?

MISS OSBORN: Arthur, Earl, Edgar--

Q: There's Milton.

MISS OSBORN: --and Paul.

Q: And Paul.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes, and Dwight.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. They used to have boards across there--

Q: Across the bay window?

MISS OSBORN: Yes. And Mother Eisenhower used to say, "We would have, bring as many flowers in as we thought we could take care of for the winter."

MRS. WICKMAN: Plants, in the fall.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. And then she said, "Here would come daddy with another one. And we always found a place for it." But they had plants on chairs and upstairs in the hall there, and any

place where they could get a little sunshine for plants that loved sunshine. And she went on to say, "You know it's healthful to work in the dirt."

(Interruption)

MISS OSBORN: She said, "She," me and Naomi always read to her out of her book, the book they had for their Jehovah's Witnesses.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And it was that night she said to me, she said, "You know, I know I'm not able to go now but," she said, "sometime when I am able would you take me back to the church that daddy and I used to go to." She said, "I don't approve of all that goes on out at the hall."

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: And I said, "I would be delighted to."

Q: Well, what made it fall short, Miss Osborn, I mean what was there about it that just didn't measure up in her eyes?

MISS OSBORN: I don't know.

Q: She never mentioned that to you.

MISS OSBORN: No. And I never quizzed her.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: I thought I'd just let her tell me what she wanted to. That's the way I am with any of my patients.

MRS. WICKMAN: Naomi wasn't around very much by that time, was she?

MISS OSBORN: No.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes. It was just kind of you and Mrs. Eisenhower together.

MISS OSBORN: Well, Bert Cooley, she was an old friend of the family, and her father had been jeweler, he had a jewelry store.

MRS. WICKMAN: I see.

MISS OSBORN: And after his death why Bert still continued to live in the house over here on Enterprise Street.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes, on First Street then?

MISS OSBORN: Yes. And Bert would come over and help, lots of times, and she would stay until Naomi would come or else stay until I came.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes. She filled in then.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes, all right.

MISS OSBORN: But it was pathetic and Mother Eisenhower, finally, she says, "You know," she says, "you do more for me than anyone," and she says, "I mean anyone else." And she says, "I would like for you to stay with me," and she said, "she has the book," meaning the checkbook, Naomi did. And she said that she would have to get that, and so I thought, well, rather than let Mother Eisenhower go on that way, I would go and talk to Edna. So that's when I went to see Edna, that was, oh, just about the first of May.

MRS. WICKMAN: I see. Why did Naomi have the checkbook?

MISS OSBORN: Oh, she always had the checkbook, and she always said that Mother Eisenhower couldn't sign. Naomi said Mother Eisenhower couldn't sign her own name, and I told you about being here in April--

MRS. WICKMAN: At the time.

MISS OSBORN: --or at Easter time at the time that I had Mother Eisenhower sign a card for Mrs. Franklin Delano Roosevelt and also one for Dwight. And I put at the top of the page, I said, "Mother," and I wrote "Mother"--

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --and she signed it, "Ida Stover Eisenhower." So I said to myself, "Well, you can't tell me that she cannot sign her name,"--

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --because I knew she could.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And I had her sign her name several times and when the boys were here one time I called Milton and told him that I had several signatures of his Mother's and asked him if he would like to have them. He said, he sure would, so I kept two and the word, "Mother."

MRS. WICKMAN: You clipped the top of the page then?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: I see.

MISS OSBORN: And gave the rest to him.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And what he did with them I have no idea.

Q: So it was your feeling that she could have signed--

MISS OSBORN: Why I know she could.

Q: --and used that checkbook any time.

MISS OSBORN: I know she could.

Q: Had you gone over to Junction City to talk to Roy's wife?

MISS OSBORN: Not at that time but I did go shortly after, and I left Bert sitting right here in this rocking chair, and Mother Eisenhower was sitting in the sewing chair when I went out the door. And Bert was still here when I got back.

MRS. WICKMAN: Did you drive?

MISS OSBORN: No, I called and found out what time I could get a bus.

MRS. WICKMAN: I see. So you rode the bus both ways?

MISS OSBORN: Yes, yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: What did Edna say?

MISS OSBORN: She said, well, she thanked me for coming and just before I went, a day or so, we had had a letter from Mrs. . . . well, right now her name has slipped my mind but maybe in a minute or so I'll think of it, but so I thought Mother Eisenhower knew her, Mrs. Sexton--

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes, yes, all right, Mrs. Sexton took over after Naomi left for good, yes.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: And before Mrs. Robinson came?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And so we decided then that Edna would call Arthur and talk to him and see what he thought. And so she did and as a result of the call when Mrs. Sexton's train got in Kansas City, she was paged. Arthur had her paged and told her that he would like to see her and asked her if she would come over to the bank. And she said, "Yes." And so he asked her if she would come and stay with his Mother.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: And as a result of that Mrs. Sexton came.

MRS. WICKMAN: Did you get the checkbook back or did Mrs. Eisenhower have the checkbook?

MISS OSBORN: No, I don't know.

MRS. WICKMAN: You were gone by that time.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: You had had to go home and take care of your own mother.

MISS OSBORN: Well, I suppose that Naomi just handed it to Mrs. Sexton when she left. But I felt positive that Mother Eisenhower could sign her name. And that was just like when the Red Cross was going around for donations. I said, "Mother Eisenhower," and

I had heard a few things, but I said, "Mother Eisenhower, the Red Cross will soon be coming and asking for a donation."

"Oh, yes, I know it," and she says, "I want to be sure and give them some money." She said, "I always do." So that was something else, too, maybe she did when she knew it, but if Naomi had her way about it, maybe she didn't know it.

Q: You were the one who tried to clear up that situation.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: You don't know if she ever regained possession of--

MISS OSBORN: I doubt if she did.

MRS. WICKMAN: --her checkbook.

MISS OSBORN: Because I know she didn't when Mrs. Robinson was here.

MRS. WICKMAN: But you feel she could have been responsible for all of her--

MISS OSBORN: Sure she could.

MRS. WICKMAN: She was mentally capable of it.

MISS OSBORN: Sure she was.

MRS. WICKMAN: I see.

Q: Well, that was the thing I wanted to ask you about too--you were here for about three months?

MISS OSBORN: Yes, longer than that.

Q: Longer than three months.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: And here in the house every day--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --so you had plenty of opportunity to judge.

MISS OSBORN: Well, of course, I had known Mother Eisenhower ever since we came in 1919.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: Which is just a day or so back.

Q: Only a short period of time--that's right.

MISS OSBORN: And I knew Father Eisenhower . . . in fact when I first got acquainted with Father Eisenhower he was carrying a slip of a geranium, a red geranium, and I said, "Oh, so you like them too." He shook his head and smiled and he says, "I sure do. We all do," he said. And that coincided with the story Mother Eisenhower was telling about the plants, Father Eisenhower would

bring home a plant or a slip or something, and they always found room for it, and they did.

Q: Got it in here some place.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: There were boards across the window where they set the plants, and then they set them on other things around

MISS OSBORN: Well, they evidently had it built in so they could put the plants on them.

MRS. WICKMAN: How many rows were there?

MISS OSBORN: Oh, it would depend on the size of the pots.

MRS. WICKMAN: I meant how many rows of shelves were there?

MISS OSBORN: Oh, just the one big shelf.

MRS. WICKMAN: I see and nothing up above.

MISS OSBORN: Well, they had the hangers there and they would always have some in the windows and when it would be real cold Mother Eisenhower said, "We would always have to take the plants out of the windows so they wouldn't freeze." And they put papers in the windows to protect them, too.

Q: Do you remember, was that shelf built across here?

MISS OSBORN: Yes, it was clear out to the end there.

Q: Well, about how high, Miss Osborn?

MISS OSBORN: Well, right even with the windows.

Q: With the window ledge?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: One geranium that she always used to love to keep and did keep it for years was the pink ivy geranium.

MRS. WICKMAN: Pink Ivy.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. Oh, it was a beautiful thing, and she always had two or three of those around, and the last I saw there was one sitting on a straight chair right by the window there.

MRS. WICKMAN: Was this a rose geranium?

MISS OSBORN: No.

MRS. WICKMAN: A pink ivy geranium.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: O.K.

MISS OSBORN: The ivy you know leaf--

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --is different.

MRS. WICKMAN: Did it have a distinct, distinctly different odor from most geranium plants?

MISS OSBORN: Well, it wasn't as strong.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes, I think I know what you mean.

MISS OSBORN: I used to have it too, I used to have the pink, white, and red, but now I don't have hardly any.

Q: I had never heard of that, that kind of geranium.

MISS OSBORN: Oh. Well, that's an old one.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

Q: Is it?

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

Q: Well, I'm from another part of the country, and we just may not have had it out there.

MRS. WICKMAN: I first saw daylight in Chicago, so I'm really not from--

Q: From here either.

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: Would you like to see Mrs. Eisenhower's room?

MRS. WICKMAN: I sure would.

Q: Haven't been over that way.

MISS OSBORN: Well, that's the Bible--

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --that has the--

MRS. WICKMAN: Boy's names.

MISS OSBORN: --it has all their names in it.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: Now this used to be right over along the wall,
right there.

MRS. WICKMAN: In the hallway?

Q: This little round table in her room.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes, it would take, well, here's

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: --embossed on it.

Q: I thought that was inlaid.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes, yes. Who is this?

MISS OSBORN: Oh, yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: It's exactly

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And this is her chair, and there's her cap. She used to wear the caps on her head nearly all the time but got so the last couple of years she didn't so much.

Q: Oh, she didn't.

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: Was there some reason why she stopped wearing those, Miss Osborn?

MISS OSBORN: Not unless it was just because someone forgot to or didn't think to hand it to her.

Q: Could be.

MISS OSBORN: But for a while there Naomi said that Mother Eisenhower said her head would get so cold. Now whether that was just one of Naomi's ideas or not, I don't know. No, sir, I don't see the radio. It used to sit right on that drawer there.

Q: On the left-hand--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --side here of the chest of drawers?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: I don't see it.

MISS OSBORN: Oh, how she would get between the beds here, "Now, kick," I'd say, "kick high." And boy she'd get here and hang onto the beds, she'd say, "Well, leave it to me," she says, "if that's what I'm supposed to do, I'll do it." And she sure would. She slept in this bed, and I slept in this one.

Q: So she was in the right hand bed as you face this north wall?

MISS OSBORN: Yes. The one right by the window.

Q: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And we would sing songs at night when she was kind of restless or didn't feel very good, and she'd say, "Oh, I love those old songs." Her favorite was "What a Friend We Have in Jesus." But you know the last song I ever heard her play was "Nearer My God To Thee."

Q: You heard her play that,--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --Miss Osborn. Play it on the piano.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. She was playing the piano and by the way she had one of her caps on, and I came to the door, and I just said, no, I didn't even ask if Naomi was here because her father drove up right away, too.

Q: Whose father?

MISS OSBORN: Naomi's.

Q: Naomi's father.

MISS OSBORN: And he wanted to know if Naomi was here, and Mother Eisenhower said, "Well, no," she said, "I thought she went home."

And he said, "No, he hadn't seen her." And he supposed maybe she was still here, and he said, "Maybe she is out with some of the literature."

MRS. WICKMAN: Where was the literature?

MISS OSBORN: In the room right above this.

MRS. WICKMAN: In the tiny little room upstairs--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: --Milton's bedroom.

MISS OSBORN: The bed had been and all the furniture had been taken out, and there was box after box of literature of some sort. The way I happened to see it was they asked me to stay

different times to sleep, so if there was anything they needed me for I would be right here.

MRS. WICKMAN: Naomi would ask you.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. And so she'd say, "You go upstairs and get comfortable in some of the beds up there." And as a rule I'd sleep in the back bed, that's the one that Dwight and Edgar had.

MRS. WICKMAN: In the north--

Q: Northwest.

MRS. WICKMAN: --bedroom.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. And one day though I thought, "Well, good night, what's all those boxes," so I just went to see. Perhaps I shouldn't have, but I did.

MRS. WICKMAN: And they were Jehovah's Witnesses literature.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes. Well, when Naomi would take Mrs. Eisenhower out to canvass the streets this is where the literature came from, from upstairs in that tiny bedroom, is that right?

MISS OSBORN: Well, I couldn't say for sure, but I know there was a lot of literature there.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And I know they used to go out so much and canvass.

MRS. WICKMAN: I see.

MISS OSBORN: Mr. Harger said to me, he said, "They liked to go in the country so well, or Chapman, or Hope, or some of these small towns." And he says, "If Naomi don't get admittance to the home, it makes her kind of angry." And but he said, "She as a rule tells them, well, if they only knew who she had in the car with her they would welcome her." And sometimes they would ask who she had and sometimes they wouldn't, it was always Mother Eisenhower that would be with her, and she, Naomi, told different ones, she says, "Well, Mother Eisenhower's with us, but if Dwight was here, he'd be here, too."

Q: Oh, ho.

MISS OSBORN: Well, that wasn't so.

Q: I see. Would she ask Mrs. Eisenhower to come up to the door with her, Miss Osborn, or--

MISS OSBORN: If she was asked to come in, then sometimes she would ask Mother Eisenhower to come in with her.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: But not always. And I told you about the night down at the Abilene National Bank.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: The night it was raining--

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --and someone drove up and Naomi went out and got in the car with them and left Mother Eisenhower there in the vestibule alone. That was before it was enclosed like it is now.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And so Mother Eisenhower just, I don't know whether she even saw where Naomi went.

MRS. WICKMAN: You came along and talked to her, didn't you?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: You saw her standing there.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. And while I was standing there Naomi was still in the car, and how long she was there afterwards I have no idea though. But Mr. Harger was pretty much upset about the way things were going.

Q: Yes. Well, I can understand how he could be.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And he really was.

Q: Well, Miss Osborn, you mention that they would drive out to Hope or Enterprise or Chapman. Was Naomi also taking her around with her here in Abilene?

MISS OSBORN: Oh, yes.

Q: Doing it here, too.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes. Would Mrs. Eisenhower ever do any canvassing herself?

MISS OSBORN: No.

MRS. WICKMAN: She wouldn't.

MISS OSBORN: No.

MRS. WICKMAN: She'd ride along.

MISS OSBORN: Yes, yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: And sort of be brought in when Naomi thought it was advantageous to her cause?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: But while you were here, the only thing that Mrs. Eisenhower ever said was that she did want to go back, she wanted you to take her back to her old church.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: She never spoke of, of going door to door with Naomi, she never--

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: --never said that that had made her unhappy.

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: Just the remark that--

MISS OSBORN: She said that she didn't approve of all that went on up there at the Hall. And I know when the boys came and saw the steps that Mother Eisenhower would have to climb, they told Naomi never again.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: That was when they had Harris' Grocery Store right next to . . . , well, my brother-in-law had his cleaning establishment in that building--

MRS. WICKMAN: On Buckeye then?

MISS OSBORN: --for a number of years.

MRS. WICKMAN: Is this on Buckeye?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: That's the location of the Golden Belt Cleaners in about three hundred something North Buckeye.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. And that was before that building was built, that was the building that Dr. Townsend used to have his veterinarian office in. But the old Harris grocery was in a frame building, and it had first and second stories to it, and it had steps along the side--

Q: Oh, yes.

MISS OSBORN: --up to the second.

MRS. WICKMAN: Outside steps.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Sure.

MISS OSBORN: And the boys were very unhappy when they saw that.

MRS. WICKMAN: Now why would Mrs. Eisenhower go up those stairs?

MISS OSBORN: Well, that's where they had their--

MRS. WICKMAN: That was the Kingdom Hall?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: Oh.

Q: That's what I was--

MRS. WICKMAN: Oh.

Q: Yes, that's where they met, I see.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: I see.

Q: Right.

MISS OSBORN: And Naomi would take Mother Eisenhower up there to help clean, and everything like that.

MRS. WICKMAN: And that's where they were coming from the night that Mrs. Eisenhower fell down the stairs?

MISS OSBORN: Yes, yes, but oh, I remember the night real well, because I was over at Poland's. They lived over where the chapel now is.

MRS. WICKMAN: I see.

MISS OSBORN: And Mother and I were invited over there for lunch and spend the evening, and we saw Naomi and Mother Eisenhower start out. Oh, it was cold and deep snow, and Naomi had coats on Mother Eisenhower and had her shawl bonnet, but even then a

little old woman like that to go out on a night like that. Just kind of got me.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And I didn't know about the fall until the next day. I was taking care of Laura Bolton's mother, she was critically ill. And Naomi or Anna called me and asked me if I had any idea of how long I'd been on the case. I said, "Not so very long I don't believe."

And she said, "Well, as soon as you get off would you come down to Mother Eisenhower's?"

I said, "Oh, is Mother Eisenhower ill?"

She said, "No, but she had a bad fall."

I said, "I'd be glad to come down and do what I could." So as soon as Mrs. Bolton passed away, I believe it was the following Thursday, I called Anna and told her that the girls wanted me to stay with them until after the services, but then after that I would be free to come down. And so that's--

MRS. WICKMAN: This was a Wednesday night prayer service they had gone to, and so you were on Mrs. Bolton's case then for another week plus a day.

MISS OSBORN: No.

MRS. WICKMAN: Did Mrs. Bolton die the next day, all right and then the funeral was on the weekend--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: --and so you started in about--

MISS OSBORN: Sunday.

MRS. WICKMAN: You started in about four or five days after she fell.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. But Anna was coming down every day before that. Anna says, "Genevieve," she says, "you're the only one that I could see taking care of Mother Eisenhower."

I says, "Well, Annie, bless your heart. You know me," I said, "anybody and anybody's dog that needs some care is going to get it from me."

She says, "I know it."

MRS. WICKMAN: Oh, that's lovely. You want to go upstairs--it's a long flight of stairs.

MISS OSBORN: Oh, that isn't bad. But this room sure makes me-- when I came in here after rubbing Mother Eisenhower's back and getting her as comfortable as I possibly could, then I'd say, "Well, how about a song?"

"O.K., it sounds fine to me," she'd say.

And I'd say, "Any one in particular that you would like to sing?"

"Oh," she'd say, "any of them is all right with me." So I'd start in. You know that letter that I gave you--

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes, yes.

MISS OSBORN: The machine was here but that table wasn't, the machine was over here in the corner.

Q: Oh, the sewing machine.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: The sewing machine, yes.

Q: The corner by the door.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. And then there was a box, cardboard box sitting on the floor that had letters of different types in, but what was in the letters or what they were from I have no idea.

MRS. WICKMAN: We've talked about how Naomi would just throw the letters away after everyone had read them.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. But that one letter she handed to me, it was after Anna had passed away, and she handed it to me just as I was going out the door to go home. And she said, "Here, Genevieve, here's something I think you'd like to read."

I said, "Do you want it back?"

"No," she said. And it was, oh, the next day or so, I asked her again if she didn't want the letter. She said, "No, she didn't want it." So it was just luck.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes, that that one was saved?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes. This box on the floor was it filled with things that were just tossed in and was it

MISS OSBORN: Well, it looked like it.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes, and was it just left to accumulate or did it get thrown out every once in a while?

MISS OSBORN: Well, I couldn't say about that.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

Q: Did you see Naomi throw the letters away?

MISS OSBORN: Oh, yes, I've seen her throw several away.

Q: How did she dispose of them? Did she put them in a garbage sack or, or burn them in the stove.

MISS OSBORN: Burnt them.

Q: Burnt them in the stove.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: So you did see them being destroyed in some cases, anyway?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: Now what was in this box? There were letters--

MISS OSBORN: There were letters and, oh, I, I just didn't, didn't--

MRS. WICKMAN: You didn't go through it.

MISS OSBORN: No.

MRS. WICKMAN: Newspapers, perhaps?

MISS OSBORN: No, I don't think there were any newspapers, but it could have been, oh, small papers.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

Q: Magazines?

MISS OSBORN: Well, if it was magazines, it was something like their little books of their, --they had upstairs.

MRS. WICKMAN: Jehovah's Witnesses.

Q: Oh, yes.

MISS OSBORN: But Mother Eisenhower gave me a letter from Johnny. It was one of the V-mail letters.

Q: Oh, yes.

MISS OSBORN: And Johnny had written it on his way over, when he was going overseas.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: And Mother Eisenhower said, "That's Dwight's son."

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: So she knew.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes. Do you still have that V-mail letter somewhere? No.

Q: That's too bad.

MISS OSBORN: It is too bad because I would just give anything if I had it.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes. Did you return it or lose it or--

MISS OSBORN: No, it was with my letters when my sister and her husband went through things.

MRS. WICKMAN: And you don't know the disposition of it--I see.

MISS OSBORN: Only I know I haven't been able to find it.

MRS. WICKMAN: I see.

MISS OSBORN: And just like the letters that I had from Dwight, and Mamie, and Earl, and Roy, I, one letter in particular that I had from Roy, or not Roy, but Arthur. He said---and this was written right after he had been here to have breakfast with us, and he remarked about his mother's prayer. And Arthur said,

"Mother looked better this time, than I had seen her for a long, long time." For which I was mighty thankful. But when he was here, I told him, I said, "I give your mother snacks between meals, especially in the afternoon," and I said, "before we go to bed at night we have some hot milk or hot chocolate or a little fruit or something."

He said, "Well, you just go ahead and take care of our mother. That's all I have to say to you."

MRS. WICKMAN: Was there anything that she couldn't eat at all?

MISS OSBORN: I don't think of anything.

MRS. WICKMAN: She liked everything.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: And her digestion was good enough so that she could--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: --so there was no restrictions on her diet.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: That's remarkable.

MISS OSBORN: It was remarkable. Mother Eisenhower used to love to get out in the yard and pick dandelions.

MRS. WICKMAN: Oh, she did.

MISS OSBORN: Oh, yes. And she had two cats. Mother Eisenhower would be stooped down there on the ground picking, digging dandelions, and these cats would come up and run down or run up her back. And sometimes they would turn around and go back down or else just right on over her shoulder.

Q: They lived right here at the house, Miss Osborn?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Inside the house, too?

MISS OSBORN: Well, she kept the cats outside mostly. I know when I was here I had two cats that I used to have to see went out in the barn before I'd go to bed.

MRS. WICKMAN: I see. And they were just outside most of the time, they weren't in the house. And they would be put into the barn at night.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: If you could catch them.

MISS OSBORN: Well, they as a rule would come when I'd go out. I'd have something for them for eat, and I would put it down on the barn floor.

Q: Do you remember what she called them, Miss Osborn?

MISS OSBORN: No, she did have Buster that she had for quite a while though--he was a pretty calico cat.

Q: But these two were replacements for--

This interview is being taped with Miss Genevieve Osborn in the Eisenhower family home on the afternoon of March 16, 1973. The interviewer is Dr. Maclyn Burg of the Eisenhower Library staff. Also present for this interview is Mrs. Shirley Wickman and Mr. Dennis Medina of the Eisenhower Library Museum staff.

MEDINA: We just started talking about the wallpaper and trying to figure out when this was put up.

BURG: Pardon me, could you repeat that?

MEDINA: We were trying to figure out when this was put up, and we thought 1951, but we're not sure.

Q: The paper here in the--

MEDINA: Dining room.

Q: --in the dining room. You thought it was put up in 1951.

MEDINA: Well, it had to be put up sometime after the flood, so it must have been '51 when the house was cleaned out again.

Q: And how about Miss Osborn, does she remember?

MISS OSBORN: No, I don't remember when this was put on, but Grace Wilkie was here then, and they would--

MRS. WICKMAN: Now this was Grace Wilkie Endacott?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: And, Miss Osborn, you don't remember what kind of pattern the wallpaper was before?

MISS OSBORN: Not before this in particular, but for years they had

the tan background with flowers or leaves or something like that, but it wasn't any set pattern like this.

MEDINA: Sort of--

MRS. WICKMAN: Overall, just overall--

MEDINA: --sort of random.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MEDINA: But tan in color?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Now the leaves done in green?

MISS OSBORN: Some of them kind of a brownish cast to them.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: Brown and gold. And in the front room, they had paper such as that, too.

MEDINA: And not like what's up there now?

MISS OSBORN: No, no.

Q: So the paper in the dining room, and the paper in the living room you remember as being the same, the same paper or--?

MISS OSBORN: No, it wasn't the same paper, but it had the tan background and flowers, small flowers, or leaves, well, with the

flowers there'd be some leaves--

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --too. But I don't know where they got their idea for the paper they have now. I know Mrs--oh, what was her name, from Topeka that was here when Mother Eisenhower passed away?

MRS. WICKMAN: Robinson?

MISS OSBORN: Yes. Mrs. Robinson had it all redecorated and, oh, she had ideas galore.

MRS. WICKMAN: While she was here with Mrs. Eisenhower?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: I see.

MEDINA: What year would that have been?

MRS. WICKMAN: Well, it was the year Mrs. Eisenhower died.

Q: So, 1946.

MEDINA: 1946.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes. Now this center room between the front room and the dining room was that still the same color or was it a totally different color scheme or do you remember?

MISS OSBORN: It as a rule would be the tan background, too.

MRS. WICKMAN: Would the living room and this center room match, or the front room and center room?

MISS OSBORN: Sometimes, yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: I see. And then but the background color would be tan in all three rooms.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: I see.

Q: Is there a particular year that you're trying to restore the wallpaper to?

MEDINA: The only photograph that we could find is 1945, so we're just trying to base it around that, 1945.

Q: Around 1945.

MISS OSBORN: Well, I'll bet that was after Mrs. Robinson, because Mrs. Robinson was here a little over a year, if I remember that rightly.

MRS. WICKMAN: Was it that long?

Q: Had she come in 1945, Miss Osborn?

MISS OSBORN: No. After she came she had ideas galore which she also had for Mother Eisenhower. Mother Eisenhower should be a

lady--

JOHN WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --shouldn't get her hands dirty or anything like that.

JOHN WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: Well, Mother Eisenhower had different ideas. She loved to work, and she loved to do things and she would get pretty much disgusted with Mrs. Robinson sometimes.

JOHN WICKMAN: I see.

MISS OSBORN: Because she loved to do things. For instance, like those tea towels.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: She loved to sew, she loved to dig dandelions, and she just liked to be busy.

Q: Well, do you mean that Mrs. Robinson actually had those rooms repapered while she was here?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: She had it done?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: Arthur told her to use her own judgment, and so she went down and picked out the paper and everything like that.

Q: And she picked it out in one of the local stores?

MISS OSBORN: Wilson's I believe.

Q: Wilson's store. Now wouldn't it be interesting if one could check back against Wilson's stock--

MEDINA: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

Q: --at that time and the suppliers for Wilson's; you might be able to run it down through them.

MISS OSBORN: Well, Hazel, that's Melvin's wife, is living.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes, that's right, she has just recently sold the store.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: Right.

MISS OSBORN: And I believe maybe she might know.

Q: Or she might, she might have saved the records of the store. That's always possible too.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: So before you got here, Miss Osborn, it had been redone.

MISS OSBORN: Well, what do you mean before I got here?

Q: Well, you got here in '45. You came here to be with Mrs. Eisenhower in 1945--

MISS OSBORN: February.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

Q: --had it been done before you got here or was it done during that--

MISS OSBORN: No, it was done after because Mrs. Robinson, well, let's see, I was thinking Mrs. Robinson was here around a year, it was in February when I came to take care of Mother Eisenhower and I was here until May.

Q: Of 1945?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Then Mrs. Robinson came after you did?

MISS OSBORN: Mrs., what did I say her name was--

MRS. WICKMAN: Robinson?

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: No, the--

MISS OSBORN: That other lady.

MRS. WICKMAN: Ah, Engle?

MISS OSBORN: No, Mrs.--

MRS. WICKMAN: Oh, Grace Wilkie?

MISS OSBORN: No, that lady that Edna called, well, I just about had it on the tip of my tongue, ah, Ollie Sexton.

Q: She followed you?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: And then Mrs. Robinson later on.

MISS OSBORN: Came, yes.

Q: Well, then, Dennis, you, you have two choices evidently, you can find out from Miss Osborn what she remembers the paper to have been while she was here or what she recollects about what Mrs. Robinson did--now you, I guess we have Mrs. Robinson's--

MEDINA: Yes.

Q: --general scheme.

MEDINA: How often did Mrs. Eisenhower redecorate the house?

MISS OSBORN: Oh, just whenever it needed it.

MEDINA: It wasn't a yearly thing or--

MISS OSBORN: No, no.

MEDINA: --every year or every other year.

MISS OSBORN: No, sometimes it would be three or four years. And she had this dining room redecorated more and kitchen more than the other part of the house.

MEDINA: What about the hallway?

MISS OSBORN: I've been trying to, it had a tan background, too, and, oh, years ago it was flowers, but I believe the last pattern was leaves that I remember of.

Q: Was that after Mrs. Robinson or--

MISS OSBORN: No, that was before.

Q: --when you were, when you were here.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Was it, was it the same kind of thing that was in here?

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: A different kind of--

MISS OSBORN: A different pattern.

Q: --this one had flowers with it.

MISS OSBORN: Well--

Q: Flowers and leaves.

MISS OSBORN: --they were small.

Q: Small?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Small flowers.

MEDINA: I was wondering if I should have brought over a photograph?

MISS OSBORN: She used to sit in that chair so much I'd bring her out here after she'd have her, well, in the morning about ten o'clock or so, and she loved to watch the children playing.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And of an evening after school when there was still children playing on the playground, Mother Eisenhower used to say, "Well, where are their mothers?" She said, "When our children went to school they came home right after school, changed their clothes and had a snack to eat and did their chores, and after they had their chores done then if there was time to play then they would play."

Q: Yes. Shirley would you hold that, I'll just put this on the table--I want to take a look and see that picture that shows Mrs.

Eisenhower. I think she's reading a letter--

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

Q: --from the General, and I'm not sure whether any of the wallpaper shows.

MRS. WICKMAN: That's right.

MISS OSBORN: I sure wish I had that V-mail letter that Johnny sent her as he was going overseas--

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes. That would be great to have.

MISS OSBORN: The last I knew of it though it was in her bedroom there with the rest of those letters and things.

MRS. WICKMAN: Well, if they survived the house cleaning and all that then you know it's in the library, but it probably didn't.

Q: That picture shows very clearly a wall with a patterned wallpaper behind--I think she's sitting in this chair in the bedroom.

MRS. WICKMAN: Well, let's go look.

Q: The only other place that it might be would be here, it's hard to tell.

MRS. WICKMAN: Let's go look.

Q: Miss Osborn may be able to tell, right down the hall. Now, if

you'll look in there, isn't that--

MISS OSBORN: That, that was in here--that paper, see there's some of her plants.

Q: Yes. It looks to me like that's taken--

MISS OSBORN: Right--

Q: --right in there, isn't it?

MISS OSBORN: Yes, it is.

Q: So that's a shot of the living room with the--

MISS OSBORN: And that paper, that type of paper is some that they had for years. It wouldn't always be the same pattern, but you know some people dote on big figures.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: They didn't. But that is the typical paper and also like they had here in the hall.

Q: You think that this paper was also out in the hall, too?

MISS OSBORN: Well, it might have been a little different but that type.

Q: Do you remember this paper as for color, do you remember what color it was?

MISS OSBORN: Yes, it was a tan background, and the leaves were tan and brown, a few of them green, I believe.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: But there was a little streak of gold in it.

Q: Now was this wallpaper in the house when you were here?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: I see. The only thing is, Dennis, I'm not sure that this is the same room because notice this, just one of these typical protecting devices on a corner--

MEDINA: Yes.

Q: --but here you have a doorway there.

MEDINA: It might be in the back parlor. No, the rug is the same though.

MRS. WICKMAN: No, no, it's in this one then, Mac.

Q: Is it?

MRS. WICKMAN: It's in the front room.

MEDINA: Yes, the rug is the same.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes, the rug is the same, the chair is the same--

MEDINA: Unless it's the front window over here.

Q: Yes.

MEDINA: You wouldn't get that protecting, yes, there it is right here, right down at the bottom.

Q: Yes.

MEDINA: It's this corner over here.

MRS. WICKMAN: It's that corner there.

Q: Ah, yes, so it's turned this way.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Yes, I see, all right. So we're actually seeing the south wall.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: The south window of the front room. All right. That's, that fills us in quite a bit on the color scheme there.

MEDINA: This is the photograph I was mentioning in the dining room, I thought that might help.

MISS OSBORN: I believe that is some that they had after Mrs. Robinson came. The picture that she as a rule had up in the dining room there was the one where he was saluting and he had his uniform on.

MEDINA: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: But I believe that type paper was some that they had after Mrs. Robinson came, wasn't it?

Q: That's in the dining room.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

Q: So it is not, it's not the paper that you remember--

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: --having been on that wall in the dining room when you were here.

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: Now the one that you recollect was the tan background, very small flowers, leaves and sort of brown and gold.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: The flowers were not colored, they were in brown and gold too?

MISS OSBORN: No, there was some pink, and I don't remember whether it was lavender or blue.

Q: When you think back to those flowers, and just sort of think about them, do you recollect what type of flowers they were, do you think of them as buds or fully opened flowers.

MISS OSBORN: Some of them were buds, and some of them were fully opened.

Q: And would you think then--

MISS OSBORN: But not big.

Q: No. Would they be a rose for example--

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: --something like pinks?

MISS OSBORN: More like a cosmo.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

Q: Yes. Miss Osborn--

MRS. WICKMAN: A simple flower.

Q: --is a good one to ask about these because she knows flowers and loves them and knows many of them so if you can just bring back to mind as we have here, we got a fairly good chance of her remembering it as a flower type.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MEDINA: Mrs. Eisenhower must have based the wallpaper on the furniture because most of the furniture is brown. You never really, I never really thought about it before, looking at the living room now she had brown chairs or brownish gray and the carpet is goldish--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MEDINA: --with a little blue.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

Q: Now, when you were here, Miss Osborn, the back parlor, do you remember that it used this same kind of paper or was it different again from the front room--

MISS OSBORN: Well--

Q: --that's when you were in the house?

MISS OSBORN: --sometimes she would have both of these two rooms papered alike.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: Then again she would have them papered differently.

Q: I see. So, so you don't remember whether those two rooms were papered the same when you were here?

MISS OSBORN: Well, you mean the last time when I was taking care of her?

Q: Yes, I was thinking February through May in 1945.

MISS OSBORN: I believe that they were.

Q: You think they were the same?

MISS OSBORN: Yes. Now whether Naomi had those, that paper put on or not, I don't know. But Louise, that's Arthur's wife, she would know, or I feel sure she would. She's an interior decorator.

MRS. WICKMAN: Oh, yes.

Q: Well, there's another possibility.

MEDINA: Yes.

Q: Now you also mentioned a floral kind of pattern, a leaf pattern out here--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: And that's the way you remember it in that period, February to May of '45.

MISS OSBORN: Well, I don't believe there were any of the small flowers in that.

Q: More just leaves.

MISS OSBORN: I believe so.

Q: I see.

MISS OSBORN: But she oftentimes would have paper that combined the flowers and the leaves.

Q: That was a favorite--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --favorite kind of paper that she would be likely to use.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. But Louise, I don't remember when she was married to Arthur.

MEDINA: I don't remember that.

MRS. WICKMAN: I don't know either.

MISS OSBORN: I know that it was his second marriage, but Arthur thought no one knew as much about decorating as Louise, you know.

Q: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: I wonder if Edna Eisenhower might also have some kind of--

MISS OSBORN: Sure.

MRS. WICKMAN: --information for this.

MISS OSBORN: Sure, she might.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MEDINA: Miss Osborn, do you remember anything about this carpet, or what type of floor might have been in here?

MISS OSBORN: Yes, in fact I was thinking this perhaps was the same carpet, but it isn't, the same one that they had on the floor.

Q: Was it neutral in color like this?

MISS OSBORN: Yes, yes, it was.

Q: No figure in it at all, just a plain light tan or brownish woven carpet, eh?

MISS OSBORN: I don't remember any figure.

Q: Yes. How about the stair runner, was that the same kind of carpet?

MISS OSBORN: No, I believe they had some of the old-fashioned carpet on that had a little figure in, but the background was tan and brown, and it seemed like there was a little bit of black.

Q: A small figure though.

MISS OSBORN: Very small.

MRS. WICKMAN: Would you call it an Axminster pattern?

MISS OSBORN: Well, it was more like the Axminster--

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --Company put out.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes. Well, that's a good lead in the catalogs.

Q: So the stair runner didn't match the carpet in the hall here. Well, Dennis, you wanted to ask about, while we're in the hall, you wanted to ask about what was in this hall didn't you?

MEDINA: Mainly about the decorations, if these photographs and pictures were the same ones, and if they're placed in the right place.

MISS OSBORN: She didn't have any pictures--

MEDINA: It was empty?

MISS OSBORN: --she had a table, sewing table sitting over here--

MEDINA: This one that's in the bedroom?

MISS OSBORN: Maybe it was.

MEDINA: You can walk in here.

MISS OSBORN: But she had this sewing table--

MRS. WICKMAN: The sewing machine was in the corner, wasn't it?

MISS OSBORN: Right around here. And there was a hall tree that's where she went to hang up her coat the night she fell.

MEDINA: And where was that placed?

MISS OSBORN: Right along here.

MEDINA: Right along there?

Q: So the table was there and so was the hall tree?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: I see. And nothing in this corner where we are by the front door.

MISS OSBORN: I don't remember of anything, only the table and the hall tree, and they were right along this wall over here.

Q: They were on the west wall--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --between the two parlor doors.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Yes. And they picked--

MISS OSBORN: Well, there was only the one parlor door then.

Q: Yes, right.

MEDINA: I think that stuff has been moved into the bedroom, because there's a hall tree.

Q: Oh, yes, you might like to look, Miss Osborn.

MRS. WICKMAN: There is a hall tree in here.

MISS OSBORN: Boy, this old room sure brings--this is what was out in the hall.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: I slept in this bed, and Mother Eisenhower slept there, and we got a new mattress for her. And when Arthur came, well, Naomi kept trying to get me to take the mattress, why, I didn't feel like it was mine to take or anything like that. So I didn't, so we had it along the side of the wall in here, in the hall and when Arthur came in April, I believe it was, he asked me about the mattress. I said, "We got a new mattress for Mother Eisenhower."

"Oh," he said,--

[Interruption]

Q: Yes, you were saying--

MISS OSBORN: --he said, "If that was what it was that was perfectly all right," he said. "I'm glad you did." But he was kind of checking up.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

Q: Now you notice, Miss Osborn, you saw this--

MISS OSBORN: That was her yardstick.

Q: --and that made you think last time that this was the table that was out in the hall--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --and with it this hall tree.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Do you happen to remember the relative position of the two of them, for example, was the hall tree closer to the front door than the table?

MISS OSBORN: Well, I'll have to kind of look.

Q: Okay.

MISS OSBORN: Yes, it was. The table was closer to the dining room, closer to the north, and Mother Eisenhower went to hang up her coat after she came home from church that night--

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --and opened up the wrong door--

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --and went clear to the bottom of the steps. How she ever managed to not have broken bones is a mystery to all of us.

MRS. WICKMAN: How she lived at all. It's incredible.

Q: Did she keep anything on this table while it was out there in the hall?

MISS OSBORN: Yes, there was sewing.

Q: Kept her sewing, it was--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --maybe a sewing basket?

MISS OSBORN: And there was materials--

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --that she would have there. Yes, this was the table, I feel sure.

Q: Did you need to know about the pictures in this room?

MEDINA: Yes, and the wallpaper in this room, too.

Q: Yes.

MEDINA: Because this is relatively new paper in here.

MISS OSBORN: Yes, it is. This is more of an orchid, isn't it?

MEDINA: It does have some orchid in it.

Q: Yes. These are rather orchid color and then blue and--

MEDINA: And a real pale green.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. There was some yellow--

MEDINA: . . . sage.

MISS OSBORN: --I know in the flowers that she had in her room because every once in a while she'd say something about the pretty yellow flowers.

Q: Yes. Do you remember the background for that paper? Was it a cream or--

MISS OSBORN: I believe it was more a cream color than a tan.

Q: Notice how the figure here, Miss Osborn, is rather close--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --would you say that--

MISS OSBORN: Well, that's the way it was in the paper that she had in here.

Q: So the flowers were not widely separated they were--

MISS OSBORN: Oh, no.

Q: --more as we see them here.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. But I know every once in a while she'd say something about the pretty yellow flowers.

Q: She called them yellow flowers, she didn't say yellow daffodils or--

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: --jonquil or anything like that. So.--

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: --the flowers weren't something very obvious, they weren't tulips or daffodils.

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: The type of flower was, oh, it was, well, something like those.

Q: About that size, Miss Osborn?

MISS OSBORN: Well, they were different sizes.

Q: I see. Then could you show us about the size of the biggest one as you, as you think back on it.

MISS OSBORN: Oh, the largest one would be larger than any that I see here.

Q: As large, for example, as that or should--

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: --I come down some, maybe two inches across.

MISS OSBORN: Oh, not even two inches.

Q: Maybe, maybe an inch and a half say from--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --here out like that. Those were the larger ones.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: All right. Now how about the pictures that we have up here on the walls, are these the ones that you remember to have been in here?

MISS OSBORN: Well, we didn't have any pictures on the wall.

Q: There weren't any pictures on the wall in here.

MISS OSBORN: No.

MEDINA: Did Mrs. Eisenhower have pictures on the walls in any of the rooms?

MISS OSBORN: Yes, in the parlors but she sure didn't in here.

MRS. WICKMAN: I see.

MEDINA: Most of these photographs then were stored or had you seen these before in the house in maybe another like a trunk or something like this or a drawer?

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: What year is that calendar?

MEDINA: 1946, July.

Q: Did you usually have a calendar over there, Miss Osborn, when you were here?

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: I wonder if these things might have been brought out after Miss Osborn left--

MEDINA: May have.

Q: --and put up. These, these two items on the east wall were not up either.

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: Not a thing in here.

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: And that was the way it was when you got here.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. I really don't remember any pictures in here, even years ago when I used to come here.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: She just didn't have the pictures in her bedroom.

MRS. WICKMAN: I see.

MEDINA: In the hallway there's a picture that says, "Come again," that stands as--

MISS OSBORN: Oh, say, I believe, is that what this says over here?

MEDINA: Yes, that's it.

Q: It's hard to read but, "Call again."

MEDINA: "Call again."

MISS OSBORN: I believe she did have something like that here in the hall about in the place that that is.

MRS. WICKMAN: Well, it must have been over the table then.

MISS OSBORN: It was.

MRS. WICKMAN: Over the sewing table, right, okay.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. But she didn't call anyone's attention to it.

Q: It was just there.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: That looks really very old, doesn't it?

Q: Yes, I would say that's nineteenth century rather than more anywhere in the twentieth. Now this bookcase, Miss Osborn, to your left that was not there--

MISS OSBORN: I believe that was in the front room here, it was, the bookcase was along that wall.

Q: That would be on the north--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --on the north wall.

MISS OSBORN: The northeast.

Q: The northeast wall of the living room.

MISS OSBORN: And then she had a table with the Bible, and she had her window just full of plants.

Q: Well, was the table with the Bible on it, was that over on that--

MISS OSBORN: No, it was right along over here.

Q: So that it would be to the west of that bookcase.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. The bookcase was over closest to the wall to this--

Q: That east wall.

MISS OSBORN: --east wall.

Q: In the living room.

MEDINA: So that the books were facing, the glass was facing west. Is that right?

Q: No, I don't understand that at all, to me the glass in the bookcase is facing south.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: The bookcase is up against the north wall, but it's the northeast wall of the, of this room.

MEDINA: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: And then this table with the Bible is immediately to the west of that.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Also against the north wall.

MEDINA: Miss Osborn, why don't we walk in the room and look around at things in here. Be careful when you're walking, this rug is coming apart down here at the seam.

MISS OSBORN: Oh.

MEDINA: It just--

MISS OSBORN: Kind of like our own bodies. You know, these sure are good old rugs--

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --kind of like that one of mine in the front there.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: It was gotten in about 1906.

MRS. WICKMAN: Oh, dear.

Q: They stand up pretty well.

MRS. WICKMAN: Goodness.

Q: Well, Miss Osborn, do you recollect this standing there, this sort of tall secretary--

MISS OSBORN: Yes, I believe it was on this side, I was thinking something higher, no, well, I won't say for sure, but it seemed to me like it was right there in the corner. And then the table with the Bible. I have read out of that old Bible when Mrs., our minister's wife, that lived right across the street--Mr. and Mrs., I always used to call him 'Old Faithful.'

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

Q: Yes, you told us about that the last time.

MRS. WICKMAN: I forget his name.

Q: Well, we have it on--

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes, it's on the other tape.

Q: But you decided, Miss Osborn, that this, this tall secretary here was not over here, was not on this north wall or--

MISS OSBORN: I believe this was right in the corner along here, because I remember it was high.

Q: So you think that instead of this bookcase over here that this tall secretary may--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --may have stood in that same place.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: And facing this way, facing south.

MISS OSBORN: South.

Q: From this north wall.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: And the Bible table alongside.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: So do you happen to recollect where that bookcase might have been if it wasn't here? Or did it stand where the secretary now stands?

MISS OSBORN: I believe it did.

Q: Because you remember something much taller over against this north wall--

MISS OSBORN: Here in the corner.

Q: --in the corner.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MEDINA: Was this room sort of like a library then?

MISS OSBORN: Well, no, not in particular, they would come in here when they'd be just visiting with folks, or if they would want to look up something in the Bible; however, we had a Bible right along over here, just north of the piano.

MRS. WICKMAN: And the piano was on the wall where the door has been cut through--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: --and so where the round table is now that's where a Bible was also.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: In the parlor, the second parlor.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

Q: I think the last time we were here, Miss Osborn said that this second parlor was pretty much the way she had remembered it, except for the fact that the piano had been moved.

MISS OSBORN: Mother Eisenhower used to sit in that chair so much of an evening.

Q: The rocker?

MISS OSBORN: Yes. When she'd go to knit, and she'd say, "Now I want you to sit here by me and see that I don't make any mistakes because anything worth doing at all is worth doing right. And I want this nice for Dwight," she'd say.

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: So I'd sit there and watch her, and when I'd see that she had a double thread or anything like that why I'd say something about it. She'd thank me.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

Q: Now is there any other information that you--

MEDINA: Not that I can think of right now.

Q: --need to have in here. I think, Shirley, you had in mind that it might be nice if Miss Osborn could go upstairs and tell us something about that--

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: Okay.

Q: --if you feel up to the trip.

MISS OSBORN: Yes, yes.

Q: Okay.

MRS. WICKMAN: You know, Dennis, I think really we ought to get Genevieve over here to be straw boss if she's going to, going to--

MISS OSBORN: You folks want to go first, you can go faster than--

MRS. WICKMAN: All right, I'll go up.

MISS OSBORN: Go ahead.

Q: We just want you to go safely.

MISS OSBORN: Well, I'll go safely all right.

MEDINA: Okay.

MISS OSBORN: Boy, these steps sure are padded nice.

Q: Yes, they are.

MISS OSBORN: They're padded more than they used to be. This was Edgar and Dwight's room, they have the bed turned around.

Q: The bed has been turned around.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. It used to be the head of it was right up this way.

MEDINA: Blocking the doorway?

MISS OSBORN: No, it didn't block the, they have a bed in there now.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: Because when I slept in it my head was up this way.

Q: You're not thinking of the next room are you, Miss Osborn?

MISS OSBORN: No, it was this room and, no, it was this room, and the head of the bed was right over there. And we didn't have that door open at all.

MRS. WICKMAN: Was the doorway even there then?

MISS OSBORN: Well, I wouldn't say it wasn't, but it could have been.

MRS. WICKMAN: If it, if the head of the bed was on that wall, on the south wall, it would almost hide the whole door and frame and everything.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Would you remember it being over there where the chest of drawers or the chiffonier is would it have been angled out into the room from that southwest corner?

MISS OSBORN: It wasn't angled so much, it was just straight along the wall.

Q: So it closed off part of the window over there.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. But this is the room that Dwight had when he had his knee trouble.

MISS OSBORN: Yes, that's right.

MISS OSBORN: And Edgar stood sentry here at the door, he wasn't going to let anyone come in and cut off Dwight's leg.

Q: That's where that occurred?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Did Mrs. Eisenhower often speak of that as she was up here on the second floor and would--

MISS OSBORN: She only spoke of it once to me.

Q: I see. What was that occasion?

MISS OSBORN: That was when Dwight hurt his knee.

Q: No, I mean when was it that she spoke to you about it?

MISS OSBORN: Oh--

Q: Was there a particular thing that recalled it to her mind?

MISS OSBORN: Not in particular.

Q: She just told you about it.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. She just happened to think of it.

Q: Yes. Were you up here at the time, do you remember?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: You were up here on this floor.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. But that's the room that was filled with boxes. And Milton asked about the bed, well, I didn't say, but I could have. Naomi had her dad clean out the barn and in that was that big grindstone that the boys used to sit on and treadle with their feet. It was a big old thing. But that was one of the things that was sold, and I heard Mr. Snyder say, "Oh, we sold beds and everything."

MRS. WICKMAN: From the barn?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: So Milton's bed went with that, when that sale took place.

MISS OSBORN: I feel like that's--

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes. So the bed that's in there now--

MISS OSBORN: No.

MRS. WICKMAN: --well, may not even have been in the family. You want to come look at it with me?

MISS OSBORN: There wasn't any bed.

MRS. WICKMAN: It looks to be about the right age.

MISS OSBORN: And what the bed was like I have no idea.

MRS. WICKMAN: Milton would know.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: And this room was just stacked with boxes of literature.

MISS OSBORN: Yes, their Jehovah's Witnesses.

MRS. WICKMAN: Jehovah's Witnesses magazines and pamphlets and--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: --this kind of thing.

MISS OSBORN: But poor old Mother Eisenhower, I'll never forget that night she said, "Would you take me to the church that daddy and I used to go to?" She said, "I don't approve of all that goes on up at the hall."

MRS. WICKMAN: That's sad, isn't it?

MISS OSBORN: It sure is.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes, gracious. Now this bedroom here on the southwest, does this look changed to you?

MISS OSBORN: Well, to be right frank with you, I wasn't in this room.

MRS. WICKMAN: That doorway must have been closed then if you were sleeping in the next room, and you didn't see this room.

MISS OSBORN: Well, I don't remember of any door being there.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes, okay.

Q: But you could be right, Shirley, that could be because that bed covered up that door.

MRS. WICKMAN: It may have--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: --covered it up, or it may not have been there.

Q: Started using it.

MRS. WICKMAN: The woodwork looks to be the same color as the rest--

MEDINA: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: --of the woodwork around--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: --here and so, but that high headboard could have covered the whole thing.

Q: Yes. Dennis, did you need to know or to ask Miss Osborn about wallpaper and--

MEDINA: Not up here.

Q: --things like that.

MEDINA: No, not up here.

MISS OSBORN: Milton would be the one that could tell you about that.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

Q: We men are very poor at that. I--

MRS. WICKMAN: He would remember his bed, I bet.

Q: Well, he might, yes, he might remember that.

MRS. WICKMAN: He has a good memory.

Q: Out of all the places I've lived for a number of years I can only remember the wallpaper in one bedroom that I was in.

MRS. WICKMAN: Because you didn't like it.

Q: And I loved it, that's why I remember it. I told my wife, I said, "I don't think Miss Osborn has a chance at remembering back all those years to wallpaper."

MISS OSBORN: Oh, yes.

Q: And my wife said, "You don't know us women very well, a woman will be able to do that without any trouble at all, you men may not do it, but a woman can do it." And she was right, you can.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: That's really incredible to do this.

Q: Well, shall we--

MRS. WICKMAN: Did you need anything more, any more information--

MEDINA: Not up here.

MRS. WICKMAN: --about up here, Dennis?

MEDINA: No, the photographs on the wall--

MISS OSBORN: There were photographs on the, but not that many.

MEDINA: Not of all the sons?

MISS OSBORN: No, I don't even remember what the photographs were now because as a rule when I'd come up to go to bed, I'd be tired.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: I'd be heading for the bed.

Q: Yes, I can understand. But your recollection just isn't a group of photographs of the boys.

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: You don't have any--

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: --strong memory of that at all.

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: How about these other two items, the declaration, for example, was that there or is that a more recent--

MISS OSBORN: I believe that's more recent.

Q: I see.

MRS. WICKMAN: And is the other a diploma?

Q: I think it's an ICS--

MEDINA: It's a diploma for David J.--

MRS. WICKMAN: David Eisenhower.

MEDINA: --for his School of Engineering.

Q: Yes, International Correspondence School. I wonder if that was up here or--?

MISS OSBORN: I don't remember of it.

Q: Mainly, mainly, Miss Osborn, when you were up here, it was to sleep--?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --and then back downstairs and most of your, almost all your time was spent downstairs--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --and very little to do up here.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Except come up at night very tired and go to bed.

MRS. WICKMAN: No, it was during the day, Miss Osborn was up--

MISS OSBORN: Because--

Q: Oh.

MISS OSBORN: --I stayed with her at night.

MRS. WICKMAN: That's right. I remembered that.

MISS OSBORN: And one of my last things I'd do is see that the cats were in the garage. They, it was still a two-story barn then, but that's where Naomi kept the car.

MRS. WICKMAN: Oh.

MISS OSBORN: In the front part.

MRS. WICKMAN: I see, just drove in with the big doors open.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. And then she had chickens in the back in the east part and where the cats slept I don't--

[Interruption]

MISS OSBORN: (inaudible) Milton he was talking about the fun they had sliding down the bannister.

Q: Favorite sport of boys.

MISS OSBORN: For boys, yes. Well, I just think that's--

MISS OSBORN: . . . I miss the glider.

MEDINA: Out on the front porch.

MISS OSBORN: Yes. Mr. and Mrs. Price--

MRS. WICKMAN: That's who they were, that's right.

MISS OSBORN: Reverend and Mrs. R.L. Price--

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --used to live just across the street--

Q: Right.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --and, well, they both would come over real often. But she would come over and we would play the piano and sing old hymns. Every day of the world though he would come over in the

morning, knock on the door, and I'd say, "Well, there's Old Faithful," and at first I'd be giving Mrs. Eisenhower her bath then. And I'd go to the door, and I'd call, "Come in" and he'd come in, "Anything you want from town?" And if there was we would tell him--

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: --and he would drop it by.

Q: Yes.

MEDINA: That glider that you're mentioning I believe is on the side, in the back under the side porch.

MISS OSBORN: Oh.

MEDINA: I think it's still back there.

MISS OSBORN: Oh, is it? Well, it used to be right out here on the porch.

MRS. WICKMAN: Did Mrs. Eisenhower like to sit in it and--

MISS OSBORN: Oh, lands, yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: --on a warm evening.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: I see. She did that a lot then--?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: --out on the front porch.

MISS OSBORN: She would go out and dig dandelions and weeds and then come up and sit down and rest a while. She had two cats at the time, Buster was one of them and they would run up and down her back some--

Q: While she worked?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Or while she was sitting in the glider?

MISS OSBORN: No, while--

MRS. WICKMAN: While bent over digging dandelions.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: While she was out there working.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: That's a surprise the first time that happens.

MISS OSBORN: She used to have so many of the plants that have a pointed leaf and that little plants grow out from the--

MRS. WICKMAN: Oh, yes, the airplane plant.

MISS OSBORN: No--

MRS. WICKMAN: No, hen and chickens?

MISS OSBORN: No. Coleus, or some such name, and I can get some of those for you if you would like to have them.

MRS. WICKMAN: I think that would be lovely.

Q: I think they would.

MISS OSBORN: I did once when Grace was here.

MRS. WICKMAN: I see.

MISS OSBORN: But I don't know where they are.

MEDINA: Those look like geraniums.

MRS. WICKMAN: Those are geraniums and--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes, they're not any pointed plant.

MISS OSBORN: She used to have begonias; she loved ivy geraniums. She'd have the pink ivy geranium in particular. She had it sitting in a chair right by those windows there.

Q: The south windows?

MISS OSBORN: Yes. And as a rule she would have a smaller one or two there in her bay window.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: And she even sometimes would have them up there.

MRS. WICKMAN: By the south window.

MEDINA: Wherever there was available light.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Up at the head of the stairs--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: --at the east window.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: Dr. Conklin used to tell her and daddy that it was healthful to dig in the dirt and so that's what they did.

Q: And he was probably right.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: By any standards.

MISS OSBORN: You know, I believe this is what they did have here.

Q: The "Call Again" motto?

MISS OSBORN: Either that or something about God.

Q: I see.

MEDINA: There is one upstairs--

MRS. WICKMAN: There is one--

MEDINA: --I think something with God and Praise.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes, maybe.

Q: Thank you, Shirley, maybe if it can be detached from the wall you might bring it down for Miss Osborn to--

MEDINA: It's in this--

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes, in the first bedroom.

MEDINA: --in the first bedroom.

MRS. WICKMAN: I remember.

Q: If it's in the first bedroom she may remember it because it was there.

MRS. WICKMAN: Right.

MEDINA: Right.

MRS. WICKMAN: "Thy Will Be Done."

MISS OSBORN: "Thy Will Be Done?"

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: There.

MRS. WICKMAN: This is what was in the hallway?

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: "Thy Will Be Done."

MISS OSBORN: That was up here.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

Q: Can you place "Call Again" for us then, do you know where they might have had that?

MISS OSBORN: No, I don't.

Q: That almost implies being by a door.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: And I don't know whether they would, you don't recollect it being over here at the south end of the hall in the--

MISS OSBORN: No, I don't remember that at all.

Q: "Call Again"--

MRS. WICKMAN: Place that one down that way or this way.

Q: --you don't?

MISS OSBORN: No.

MRS. WICKMAN: I almost think this one was up here the first time I saw the home Now does that look right to you?

MISS OSBORN: That does. Yes, that's it.

MRS. WICKMAN: Up that high?

MISS OSBORN: Yes, and then the hall tree.

MRS. WICKMAN: Then the hall tree here and then the table--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: --underneath.

MEDINA: I'll try moving furniture around, and I'll bring that out, but I don't think we can ever do it.

MRS. WICKMAN: Well, it might crowd the hall.

MEDINA: Yes.

Q: Yes, I'd be afraid to do it, too, because of somebody stumbling over it or--

MEDINA: Yes, it probably--

Q: --striking it.

MEDINA: --I don't know how they ever got it in there. I would be afraid it would get scratched out here. That made a very narrow passage through here, didn't it?

MISS OSBORN: Yes, but we didn't often go down that way.

MEDINA: I see.

MISS OSBORN: Because they nearly always used the doors

MRS. WICKMAN: They never could get in this one--

Q: They were using the back door.

MRS. WICKMAN: That's right, they would use the doors, well, they'd use the doors between the rooms, they wouldn't come out in the hallway. Now does that look--

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: --right, yes.

MISS OSBORN: And that's where Mother Eisenhower went to hang her coat.

MRS. WICKMAN: I see. Well, you know what you're saying then is that there was a door on the north end of the hallway then--

MEDINA: Right here.

MRS. WICKMAN: --and that's why she--

MISS OSBORN: Right there.

MRS. WICKMAN: --confused the basement--

Q: Yes.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: --door with this coming in to hang up her coat, yes.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Right. And that door, I presume has been removed just to make it easier for tourists to come through.

MRS. WICKMAN: Tourists to come in, right, yes.

Q: So she just picked the wrong door of two identical doors, I would imagine.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes, right. So this--

MISS OSBORN: Father Eisenhower always used to have the rod there.

MRS. WICKMAN: I almost think this was here or somewhere.

Q: Yes, to stop people from doing that.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: This is how it was, I can kind of vaguely remember now the table--

MEDINA: It looks a lot more homey having things--

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

MEDINA: --out here than an empty hall, but the amount of people that come through it would just be kind of hard to do.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

Q: Yes.

MEDINA: A narrow hallway like this.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes, you couldn't, certainly in the summer, couldn't clutter the home.

Q: You'd pretty well have to get everything off that table too--

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

Q: --you wouldn't be able to leave it the way she had it.

MISS OSBORN: No, because she just had materials and such as that on it.

Q: Yes, baskets--

MRS. WICKMAN: In other words this hallway was, it was, since it wasn't used very much, it was just sort of storage space.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: And no door here into the second parlor--

MISS OSBORN: No.

Q: --so your route of travel is out of the Eisenhower's room, through the first--

MRS. WICKMAN: Through the first--

Q: --the front parlor, the back parlor--

MRS. WICKMAN: --the back parlor and then into the dining room.

Q: --into the dining room. Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: And this was like a great big storage area here in the front hall.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

Q: Yes, yes.

MISS OSBORN: And the boys used to go up here, they used to sail through and up the steps.

MRS. WICKMAN: Through the rooms--?

MISS OSBORN: No.

MRS. WICKMAN: --or through the hallway? They used the hallway.

MISS OSBORN: Yes.

MRS. WICKMAN: Well, of course, I bet they couldn't possibly run through those rooms if they were in a hurry they--

Q: Now you take the speediest way.

MRS. WICKMAN: Well, also, it's very disturbing for parents also to have kids running through.

Q: Yes. That's right.

MISS OSBORN: That was one of the covers that--was it Grandfather Eisenhower made?

Q: The one on the couch in here. I think you're right, Miss Osborn.

MRS. WICKMAN: Yes.

Q: I think so.

MISS OSBORN: As a rule we'd sit on this end of the couch and I was sitting there the night that Mr. Harger came up and told her that she had been nominated as the Kansas Mother of the Year. And she says, "Oh, no," she says, "no one wants an ugly old lady like I am."

I said, "Well, Mother Eisenhower," I says, "you know beauty is only skin deep."

And she looked a minute, she says, "Well, I guess that's right." And she kind of laughed about it then.

MEDINA: I was wondering about the little piece of paper up on the wall, I don't know exactly what it says, but I'll take it down, and we'll find out--do you remember it always being there? It says, "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation indivisible with liberty and justice for all." Do you recognize the handwriting?

MISS OSBORN: Oh, that was someone in Topeka, oh, that was Mrs. Robinson.

MEDINA: That's probably why it was up there.