

Oral History Interview

With

Anthony A. Buford

Admitted Missouri State Bar Association, 1929; secretary, Missouri Ozark Chamber of Commerce; publicity director, Louisiana-Missouri-Illinois Bridge Company; practicing attorney in St. Louis, Missouri.

Caledonia, Missouri

September 21, 1978

By James R. Fuchs

Harry S. Truman Library

Independence, Missouri

November, 1979

NOTICE

This is a transcript of a tape-recorded interview conducted for the Harry S. Truman Library. A draft of this transcript was edited by the interviewee but only minor emendations were made; therefore, the reader should remember that this is essentially a transcript of the spoken, rather than the written word.

RESTRICTIONS

This oral history transcript may be read, quoted from, cited, and reproduced for purposes of research. It may not be published in full except by permission of the Harry S. Truman Library.

Oral History Interview

With

ANTHONY A. BUFORD

Caledonia, Missouri

September 21, 1978

by James R. Fuchs, Harry S. Truman Library

[1]

FUCHS: Mr. Buford would you give a little of your background? Tell us when and where you were born and about some of your experiences until you met Mr. Truman, and how you met Mr. Truman.

BUFORD: Well, I was born in Centerville, Missouri which is in Reynolds County, on December 28, 1901. I went to grade school at Ellington, attended Missouri Military Academy at Mexico one year, and then later finished high school at Jefferson City. I graduated from the University of Missouri and then I became a lawyer and practiced law at Ellington.

[2]

FUCHS: You studied law at the University of Missouri?

BUFORD: No, I didn't study law. At that time I didn't think I was going to be a lawyer, but after I got out of the University I started studying in different law offices. I guess I got it the hard way -- or maybe a better way, I don't know.

FUCHS: It's called reading law?

BUFORD: That's right.

FUCHS: What town was that in, did you say?

BUFORD: Well, that was in Ellington also. I studied law at that time and then I took the bar exam and passed it, I think in 1927. At that time about half of Missouri's citizens were for good roads and about half of them were not.

FUCHS: Were you in St. Louis by this time then?

BUFORD: No. We wanted to advertise the Ozarks.

[3]

We got about eleven counties together and organized what was known then as the Missouri Ozark Chamber of Commerce, and they elected me secretary. I traveled over these eleven counties. We put out pamphlets, and booklets and so forth telling how great this country was -- what we called the Big Springs country, the Missouri Ozarks down here near Van Buren. Three miles from Van Buren is the Big Springs; that's one of the largest springs in the world, and millions of gallons come out of that spring.

Well, anyway, I got a great deal of publicity about it. The national people at that time were building a lot of toll bridges over the United States. I was happy at home and reading law and practicing law, and serving as secretary of this Missouri Ozark Chamber of Commerce. However, they came down and made an offer so attractive that I resigned from the Missouri Ozark Chamber of Commerce. I was still single at that time.

FUCHS: Now, who was this that came down?

[4]

BUFORD: Lloyd Stark came down, the president of Stark Nurseries. He was then president of the Louisiana-Missouri-Illinois Bridge Company, which was building a bridge across the Missouri River at Louisiana. He said that he represented all these brokerage firms that were selling these bonds to build bridges, and they wanted a public relations man. I said, "I'm not a public relations man, I'm a lawyer."

But they said, "You've been doing such a good job advertising the Ozarks, why, we'd like to...." Well, the offer was attractive and I took the job. The first bridge that we gave a lot of publicity to was the Louisiana bridge over the Mississippi at Louisiana, Missouri.

A funny story happened in connection with the dedication of that bridge. At that time a fellow by the name of Beech was Mayor of Kansas City, and "Big Bill" Thompson was the Mayor of Chicago. I told the people who I represented

[5]

that I thought it would be great to have those two Mayors, as well as the two Governors, as guests at the dedication.

Well, to make a long story short, I went up to Chicago after getting acceptances from Mayor Beech and Missouri Governor Baker, as well as Governor Small of Illinois. I went up to Chicago, and "Big Bill" Thompson at first couldn't understand. I had a letter from Governor Baker introducing me, and after I got through talking with Mayor Thompson, he said, "I'll not only come, I'll bring a special train with a band." And actually he did come, and he had two special trains, and two or three bands.

FUCHS: Now would this have been in the late twenties?

BUFORD: This was 1928. We also had a contest to name the bridge. The winner suggested naming it after Speaker of the House Champ Clark. It is known all over the country as the Champ Clark Bridge.

[6]

Well, from there I went on to become public relations man for a lot of bridges being built. One of the bridges that was being built was across the Missouri River between Independence and Liberty.

FUCHS: Who hired you for that job?

BUFORD: Well, the National Toll Bridge Company. Jack Sverdrup was the president of that company, and he was an oldtime acquaintance of mine. He was in the Missouri Highway Department when I was in Jefferson City. While we were getting ready to have the dedication, I got acquainted with Judge Truman, Presiding Judge of Jackson County.

FUCHS: At that time he was Presiding Judge.

BUFORD: At that time he was Presiding Judge of the County Court of Jackson County. Later, we became very, very great friends.

FUCHS: What was your initial impression of Truman?

[7]

BUFORD: The first impression I had was, this is a great man. This was just a man that is bound to go someplace.

FUCHS: You were aware then, of course, of Pendergast and his...

BUFORD: Well, I knew Mr. Pendergast. I knew Jim Aylward and Jim Pendergast. But I knew that nobody was going to have any undue influence with Mr. Truman if it wasn't the correct thing to do.

FUCHS: Did he seem like a forceful individual to you?

BUFORD: Yes, very much so. So, that led to our acquaintanceship, and when he decided to run for United States Senator way back in 1934 I immediately said I was going to support him. I lived in St. Louis then, and it was very unpopular to support Truman, because they had a very popular candidate by the name of Jack [John J.] Cochran.

[8]

He was a Congressman and all of the St. Louis committeemen at that time, including Mayor Dickmann, were for Cochran. John Snyder was then in the First National Bank, and he was for Truman. But there were very few of us in St. Louis that was for Truman. Truman finally won, as you know, by a little less than 8,000.

FUCHS: Were you acquainted with the candidate "Tuck" [Jacob L.] Milligan by that time?

BUFORD: Yes, and he was also the Congressman from across the river, at Liberty. I knew Tuck well. I knew Tuck Milligan well, and I knew Cochran well. But the friendship that I had with Mr. Truman, beginning there at the bridge in '28, just kept going on all the time.

FUCHS: How was that friendship fostered over those years? I mean, once the bridge was dedicated...

BUFORD: Because being in the bridge business, I

[9]

became a "good-road" enthusiast and he was also. He was for building roads in Jackson County, and we went to "good-road" meetings and we corresponded and so forth and so on.

FUCHS: Were you a member of the National Old Trails Association? He was involved in that.

BUFORD: No. I think he was involved in that, but I had some involvement because of the toll bridge business. On this subject I should mention a fellow named Theodore Gary; he was chairman of the Missouri Highway Commission. Earlier, he had sold his telephone patent to the Bell Telephone Company, for which he got millions of dollars, and therefore he was a very wealthy man. He was from Macon, Missouri, I believe. Anyway, he wanted to have the Missouri highways built on a pay-as-you-go system. In other words, increase the gasoline tax and don't spend any money for roads unless there's money in the state treasury to pay for it.

[10]

However, the Automobile Club of Missouri came out for a \$120 million bond issue. At that time Roy Britton was president, and John Malang was the "good-roads" man for them. Of course, some of the papers were for it and some of the papers were against it. Anyway, it became a great argument. In the paper somebody in an editorial suggested that Governor Baker appoint a commission of six to try to work out a compromise. Even though I was a very young man, Governor Baker appointed me as one of the six to serve on such a commission. We met in Jefferson City. After a certain length of time, we recommended a \$75 million bond issue. Then the committee thought that we ought to recommend somebody to be chairman of a citizen's committee to advertise this and get the signatures to put it on the ballot. So everybody had suggestions on who should be chair-man. They couldn't agree on anybody, and I kept my mouth shut for a while. At that time I was in

[11]

Louisiana directing the public relations to build this bridge, and getting ready for this dedication. Finally, I said, "Why not Lloyd Stark?"

Well, they all agreed that Stark would be a wonderful chairman, because of the Stark Nursery and the fact that farmers all over the country knew the Stark name.

So, they called Stark up and asked if he would accept. He said, "I'll accept it on one condition, that you talk Buford into being the secretary of it, and let him do the work."

So, I was secretary of the \$75 million road bond issue, and it passed. I think the vote was only about 520,000 yes, and about 420,000 no. It's amazing that that many people were not "good-road" minded at that time.

FUCHS: Now, what year was that?

BUFORD: 1928.

FUCHS: Do you recall Mr. Truman being involved in

[12]

that in any way?

BUFORD: Oh, yes.

I'd like to amend my statement. I just looked it up. I was just giving you those figures from memory. The vote on the \$75 million bond issue on November the 6th, 1928, was 670,000 yes, and 503,000 no. So that's the actual vote.

FUCHS: You mentioned Jim Aylward, and that you were a friend of his. In 1934, as you know it was up for consideration as to whom Tom Pendergast would select for the candidate. It's been written that James Aylward -- and I believe Shannon, and perhaps several others -- but Aylward

was one that was offered the chance to run before Mr. Truman was asked, and they declined. One of the stories has it that they didn't want to be associated with the Pendergast machine. Do you know anything about that?

[13]

BUFORD: No, I don't.

FUCHS: You never heard Jim Aylward say anything about whether he had the opportunity...

BUFORD: No. I have my doubts about that.

FUCHS: You do?

BUFORD: Yes, I do. There's a lot of rumors you know in politics. There was tremendous pressure by the St. Louis people to get the Kansas City people behind Cochran. Then there was Tuck Milligan who was almost in the suburbs of Kansas City. I think that it was probably Aylward's idea and Jim Pendergast's idea to select Harry Truman, and they probably sold it to Tom Pendergast.

FUCHS: Did you say you were acquainted with Mr. Pendergast?

BUFORD: Oh, yes.

[14]

FUCHS: What are your reflections about him?

BUFORD: Well, I was just in his office once or twice or three times. I never really had any business dealings with him at all, but I knew his son. He and another gentleman, Phil McClary, I believe, had the Anheuser-Busch distributorship for Kansas City, and they also had a liquor business. I knew them in that way.

FUCHS: Were you acquainted with Tom Evans?

BUFORD: Oh, yes, I knew Tom Evans, very well. After Truman was elected we kept up our correspondence, and I was in Washington often. I was a part owner of the St. Louis Browns and when during World War II the Browns and the Cardinals were champions of the leagues and they had the World Series, Senator Truman came to the baseball games as my guest. Then we just continued to have this relationship all through his senatorial career and later when he got to be Vice President and

[15]

when he got to be President.

FUCHS: Well, let's come down to the 1940 senatorial campaign when there was a feeling that Mr. Truman might not even run again. As you know, Maurice Milligan was running and then

Lloyd Stark came into the contest. That was considered a crucial election. Mr. Truman at one time, it was felt, didn't have too much of a chance. What do you recall about that?

BUFORD: I was right up to my ears in that. Of course, I had worked for Lloyd Stark and had a very close personal relationship with him. I didn't know Maurice Milligan very well. The Buford's got a tradition that when you start out with a friend, you don't leave him. So we supported Mr. Truman all the way.

FUCHS: You felt he was a closer friend than Stark?

BUFORD: And he made a wonderful Senator. I was very close to Senator Kinney and Senator Brogan; I tried to get their support, but of course, they went for Lloyd Stark.

FUCHS: Who was the last one you named?

BUFORD: Joe Brogan and Senator Mike Kinney.

[16]

FUCHS: They were State senators?

BUFORD: Yes, they were State senators. But Robert Hannegan at that time was chairman of the St. Louis City Democratic Committee and he came out for Truman, and so did, as I remember, Mayor Dickmann.

FUCHS: Did you ever talk with Mr. Truman about the entry of Milligan into that race?

BUFORD: No, I never did.

FUCHS: There is a story that he actually fostered it and he denied it for a long time. But since then it has been corroborated by him and Tom Evans that they wanted Milligan in the race to sort of siphon off...

BUFORD: Well, the votes in the western part of Missouri. That might be true, I don't know.

FUCHS: Well, now, in '34 -- just to go back a minute --

[17]

it occurs to me that your father, Carter Buford, was very much for Mr. Truman. What fostered that; why did he go so far as to even decline to run again for the State senate so he could spend more time working for Mr. Truman in his first senatorial race?

BUFORD: Well, my father was very close to Senator Mike Casey, who was a State senator from Kansas City, in the Missouri Senate. My father also knew of my close friendship with Mr. Truman, and then my father knew Mr. Truman. My father was a Mason, and of course Truman was a Mason; and then I think Senator Casey had quite a bit of influence. Anyway, he just thought Truman was a great man, and he had been in the senate so long anyway. He just said,

"I'm going to devote all my time in the primary to Senator Truman. I'm not going to run anymore." Which he didn't.

FUCHS: What did he do, just go around and campaign?

[18]

BUFORD: Went around all over the Ozark counties, on his own hook, and paid his own expenses. Of course, with my brother being Fish and Game Commissioner...

FUCHS: That was Wilbur?

BUFORD: Wilbur, that was my brother. He was four years younger than I.

FUCHS: How did he happen to come into that position?

BUFORD: Well, earlier, Roy McKittrick was Attorney General, and my brother was Assistant Attorney General. When Guy Park became Governor, he asked my brother if he would accept the commissionership of Fish and Game, which Wilbur did. At that time, they had a lot of Fish and Game deputies, and they also had a lot of honorary deputies, Fish and Game deputies. They at that time let you wear some kind of small badge, you know. I'm sure that my brother used his

[19]

influence with all of his employees, the Deputy Fish and Game Commissioners and Honorary Commissioners, to do what they could for Truman. I'm sure of that.

FUCHS: He was able to appoint these more or less at his pleasure?

BUFORD: Yes, that's right. Well, you know, a lot of people like to have an honorary this, or an honorary that; he could do that himself. But as far as the actual Deputy Fish and Game Commissioners, I think they didn't pay much salary at that time. As I remember, it was about three dollars a day; it was a question of the budget. I think that he used his influence with all these people that had connections with to be for Truman.

FUCHS: Was your brother acquainted with Mr. Truman?

BUFORD: Oh, yes, very much acquainted with him.

FUCHS: Is he still living?

[20]

BUFORD: No, he died. I had another brother named John, who was still eight years younger. They are both dead.

FUCHS: In the '40 campaign there were certain individuals involved who were quite active, as you know, in Missouri politics, and I wonder if you can comment about some of them. One of them was J. V. Conran.

BUFORD: J.V. and I were fraternity brothers at the University. He was a Kappa Alpha and so was I. I went to summer school up there one summer and J.V. did, too, and we were very close, being fraternity brothers.

FUCHS: What was his political base; how did he get into power to start?

BUFORD: He was Prosecuting Attorney of New Madrid County.

FUCHS: He was quite a power down there, wasn't he?

[21]

BUFORD: Tremendous power.

FUCHS: There was another person. Did you know .Phil Graves of Neosho?

BUFORD: I didn't know him very well. See, that's over in the other part of the state, the western part.

FUCHS: Well, what about Dr. Brandon of Poplar Bluff?

BUFORD: I knew him well, very well.

FUCHS: He was on Mr. Truman's renomination committee.

BUFFORD: Yes, that's right. I knew him well. I knew Dr. Brandon well because that's when we had the Missouri Ozark Chamber of Commerce. Butler County was one of the members and Dwight Brown was, I think, second or the third president of the Missouri Ozark Chamber of Commerce, and Meredith was from Poplar Bluff too. He's the father of our present Federal judge in St. Louis.

[22]

FUCHS: Meredith?

BUFORD: Meredith, yes.

FUCHS: Are you acquainted with Roy Harper?

BUFORD: Roy Harper is a very close and dear friend, and I think one of the greatest judges that Missouri has ever had.

FUCHS: How did he get so close to Mr. Truman?

BUFORD: Well, I don't know the details. I know that Roy was very close to him all of his life and supported him very actively, especially in 1940. I think Roy is so great that he should have been on the Supreme Court of the United States. I think he's a very, very astute judge.

FUCHS: He was appointed by Mr. Truman?

BUFORD: I know he was appointed by Mr. Truman.

FUCHS: You attended quite a few events with Mr.

[23]

Truman. Do you have any anecdotes which would help to illustrate his character, things he said in regard to certain things?

BUFORD: Truman was a man that, with his very close friends, would tell you what he thought of certain people. I can remember a lot of those things from various occasions, and I'd rather not put them on tape.

Truman was a man that if he gave you his word or told you that's the way it's going to be, that's the way it was. You could count on Truman 100 percent at all times, and I think he's one of the greatest Senators we've ever had, too, besides going down in history as one of our great Presidents. He was a great Senator.

FUCHS: Of course, in his first term he was more or less termed by the big city newspapers as a stooge of Pendergast, or what did they call him: "Pendergast's office boy."

[24]

BUFORD: Yes, I know. Pendergast supported him and was the cause of his election, of course.

FUCHS: You never had the feeling that he was just doing everything that...

BUFORD: I never had the feeling one iota that Truman was in any way an office boy for him. And I don't think history can prove that in any way. I think it's going to be just the reverse.

FUCHS: Now, Stark was a good friend of yours.

BUFORD: Very good.

FUCHS: And yet Truman didn't think too much of Stark, especially after Stark in '40 had been in his office and, as Mr. Truman tells it, said that he was going to support Truman. Then when he left, Truman, I believe, went into Vic Messall's office and said, "That s.o.b.'s going to run against me." Did you ever hear that story?

[25]

BUFORD: No. No, I didn't. Well, at that time as I remember, Stark was hoping to be the vice-presidential candidate.

FUCHS: He wanted to run for about everything.

BUFORD: He wanted to be Vice President. I never did have a falling out with Stark at all in any way; I was just for Truman. I don't know how Stark came to decide to run against Truman. I presume that Stark having been Governor thought, "Well, if I'm going to run for something, why, now is the time to run." But it didn't faze the Buford family one iota; we supported Truman all the way.

FUCHS: Well, I noticed in letters in our files that all through the years, he would say, I hope we can get together, there are things we've got to talk over, hash out; or you'd want to see him, even when he was in the White House. This was both as Senator and as President. What did that

[26]
usually involve? Was it mostly amenities?

BUFORD: Oh, we'd talk Missouri politics.

FUCHS: Were you kind of the sounding board for him?

BUFORD: Well, I hope I was. I hope I was. I can remember during World War II, Mr. August A. Busch, Jr. wanted to get in the Army although he had been married, and had children and so forth. He talked to Mr. Truman about it. The President said to me, "Well, it's a great thing for Mr. Busch to want to go into the Army, but why doesn't he put that beer factory to making something useful for the war?"

And I said, "Well, the truth about the matter is, the GI's got to have something to drink, you know."

Well, anyway, Mr. Busch went ahead and became a major, I think in the Ordnance Department.

But I was very happy to be at the dedication of the *Missouri*, the battleship *Missouri*. And

[27]
when I got into the pure-bred cattle business I named one of my champion bulls "Big Mo," and then I named one of my running quarter horses "Big Mo" after the battleship *Missouri*.

FUCHS: Does he have a pretty good record?

BUFORD: Yes, very good. I also named one "Mr. Sam" for Mr. Sam Rayburn who visited us once a year up here. Lyndon Johnson came up here one time to visit and I said, "That's Mr. Sam over there."

And he said, "Look, I'm going to take him home."

I said, "All right, I certainly wouldn't sell him, under any circumstances, in my reverence and respect to Speaker Rayburn, but I'll give him to you." So I gave Mr. Sam to Lyndon. He took him down to his LBJ ranch.

FUCHS: One of the things about the '40 campaign was that the St. Louis crowd, at least Dickmann and Hannegan, for a while was not going to go for Mr.

[28]

Truman, and at the last moment...

BUFORD: Not until the last week of the campaign.

FUCHS: Do you know anything about that? It's never been clearly defined why they switched; why did they at the very last?

BUFORD: Well, I was very close to Hannegan, one of my closest friends, and I'm not taking any credit whatsoever, but I did my part in influencing Hannegan to go to Truman. I knew Dickmann very well, but Hannegan is the one that got Dickmann, in my opinion, to go. And I kept on telling Hannegan, "Now, you missed on Truman six years ago; you better get on him this time, because he's going to win." As I remember, they finally announced about a week beforehand. That kind of split the vote in St. Louis, you know Gene Gualdoni was for Truman then, too.

FUCHS: He did come out for Truman.

[29]

How would you characterize Dickmann?

BUFORD: I think Dickmann was a great Mayor, a great man, and...

FUCHS: He was Postmaster for a while, wasn't he?

BUFORD: Well, after he was Mayor, he became Postmaster. Bernie Dickmann was a fine man.

FUCHS: Now, coming down to '44, Mr. Truman, of course, has always had his story about that convention and campaign. What are your reflections about the election, the nomination, the convention?

BUFORD: Well, I had talked with Senator Truman, a lot. We had two or three suites up there in Chicago that I had gotten and, to tell the truth about the matter, I thought he was going to stay in one of the suites; but he wanted another suite someplace in some other hotel for Mrs. Truman and Margaret. Of course, I kept talking to

[30]

Hannegan all the time, and I knew pretty well what was going on. That was a great day that he was nominated for Vice President.

FUCHS: Do you think that he was sincere in that he didn't have aspirations to be Vice President until Roosevelt really forced it on him?

BUFORD: I think he was sincere about wanting to still be Senator, but I think when the time came and when Hannegan was able to talk to the President about it and so forth, I think when the time came he said, "Well, okay."

FUCHS: Ed Pauley was very active, of course, in that with Hannegan.

BUFORD: Ed Pauley was very, very active.

FUCHS: Did you ever discuss that with Pauley?

BUFORD: No, I never did. I was close to Pauley and visited his home near Honolulu; he's got an

[31]

island over there. I spent one whole day there. He wasn't there; his wife was. My family and I were over there on a week's vacation, and I've got tremendous movies of it. I think one of the great honors that I had after Mr. Truman became President, was that Mrs. Buford and I were invited to a dinner at the White House. He had the full Cabinet there, and I was told that that was the first dinner that he had given. Of course, we were right in a world war, you know. This was his first Cabinet dinner, and we were highly honored to be guests. I'll always remember that.

Another thing sticks out in my memory. It's all personal. Along in December before he was going to leave the White House in January, he called me and said, "Now, look, you've got two children and they might not have an opportunity to see the White House like I can have them shown it." My son had had an accident and was on crutches. But we went over and he had somebody in the White House spend the day with my daughter

[32]

and my son. My son went all over the White House on a pair of crutches.

And then, after he came back we were still corresponding and one weekend we went to Kansas City and attended a ballgame, a spring series game. The Cardinals were playing up there. I don't know who they were playing, but anyway we went up and had a very pleasant day and night.

FUCHS: Recently a man came out to Kansas City who claimed to be a confidant of Mr. Truman. I guess that's neither here nor there, but he was a free-lance writer in Washington, named Leib. He was interviewed, and part of it involved a letter Leib received from Senator Truman in 1938 after Truman had given his speech condemning the reappointment of Milligan that Roosevelt had sent down. The speech was received rather badly in the press. Mr. Truman had written this Leib, according to him, that he was definitely not

[33]

going to run again for Senator; do you know anything of that?

BUFORD: No, I do not.

FUCHS: Do you think that sounds like Truman as early as 1938? Would he have been that discouraged?

BUFORD: That's hard for me to believe. I talked to Truman over the phone quite often and was in Washington quite a lot, and I never dreamed that he had that in his mind. If he did, he certainly kept it from me.

FUCHS: In 1940 he did call a lot of his friends, something like twenty-five -- and I don't know how many showed up. He called them together before deciding whether he would file again or not. Were you at that meeting, which I believe was at the Statler in St. Louis?

BUFORD: No. I must have been out of town. But that might have been part of a policy to find

[34]

out who in St. Louis was going to support him, and around over the state. And, of course, it is good politics to call your friends in and say, "Look, do you think we can do this again? Or do you think we shouldn't?" I think it's very good politics.

FUCHS: I think the story was that not many of them there thought he had a chance. I can't remember who backed him, Snyder and someone else. One story is that Truman was crying when he left there. And Vic Messall decided that he had nothing to lose, if he filed, and he went down to file for him, in Jeff City.

BUFORD: Well, I know Vic Messall well.

FUCHS: What do you think the reason was that Messall left him right after he became reelected?

BUFORD: I really don't know; didn't he have an offer to do something else?

[35]

FUCHS: Well, he set up a public relations firm.

BUFORD: A public relations firm.

FUCHS: He became known as a five percenter.

BUFORD: Yes.

FUCHS: You never talked with Vic about that?

BUFORD: I never did, no.

FUCHS: Vic, when Mr. Truman was inaugurated Vice President, gave a party for him, so apparently they weren't on the outs.

BUFORD: We were out there and I'm sure I went to the party.

FUCHS: Did you know Hugh Fulton, Mr. Truman's chief counsel for the Truman Committee?

BUFORD: I met him, but I never did have any business with him in any way and didn't know him personally.

[36]

FUCHS: I guess you never would have had any business with the Truman Committee. There weren't any firms you were representing holding Government contracts?

BUFORD: No, we had no Government contracts.

FUCHS: Did you really feel confident in '40 that he could defeat Stark and Milligan?

BUFORD: I thought so. It was a pretty close race at that, though.

FUCHS: Yes, it was.

BUFORD: But the '34 race was a close race. I mean, if you ever give up confidence, then you lose your law.

FUCHS: How did you feel in '48?

BUFORD: Well, I thought that was absolutely great. I can remember the night before the election I walked into the Missouri Athletic Club. A lot of

[37]

fellows were there and they said, "Oh, Dewey's going to beat your friend Truman." One of them said, "Now, Tony, I'll bet you \$100 to \$10; I think it's ten to one odds."

I said, "Well, I'll just take that." And I said, "Just for memorandum sake, write it down." And I have that in my library at the farm here now.

FUCHS: That's one of the bets that I've seen proof of. You hear about a lot of them, but not about too many of them where you know they actually got the odds.

BUFORD: Well, this was actually one.

FUCHS: Did you do that out of pure loyalty, or did you feel that you had a good bet there? Of course the odds were good.

BUFORD: The odds were too good, and of course I thought he was going to win. But everybody that you talked

[38]

to said it was going to be Dewey, Dewey, Dewey, you know. And this particular group was in the Missouri Athletic Club lobby, and I guess they were all Republicans anyway.

FUCHS: I guess you did some celebrating?

BUFORD: Well, I think this was the night before the election, when I just came in to get a haircut or something.

FUCHS: When he finally did win, I imagine you stayed up all night?

BUFORD: Yes. I was at the station the day after he came back. Of course, we were all very happy about it. And isn't it a great thing for the world that he did win? There's no question about him being one of the great Presidents of all times. He's so natural, and he didn't put on, and he did what he thought was right. Now just look down history's path, even with MacArthur and so forth; he did what he thought was right.

[39]

That's the reason he's so great.

FUCHS: You had a lot of wonderful memories.

BUFORD: I appreciate your coming down and allowing me to say these few things about a person whom I think is one of the greatest Presidents in my lifetime, without any question.

There is one more anecdote, I should add, that may be of interest.

Vice President-elect Truman called me about two or three weeks after the election and said that he should resign a few days before his term as Senator ended so that the new Senator would be in a better position for committees. I called Governor Donnelly and he said that was a good idea and if I could find out when Senator Truman was coming to Missouri we could meet and he would have his intended appointee with him. Senator Truman and I drove to Columbia and met Governor Donnelly and State Senator Frank Briggs at the Daniel

[40]

Boone Tavern Hotel. Governor Donnelly had wanted Senator Truman to be the first to know who was to be his successor.

FUCHS: Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

[41]

INDEX

Automobile Club of Missouri, 10
Aylward, James, 7, 12-13

Baker, Sam A., 5, 10

Beach, Albert I., 4-5
Bell Telephone Company, 9
Big Springs, Missouri, 13
Brandon, W.L., 21
Briggs, Frank P. 39
Britton, Roy, 10
Brogan, Joseph, 15
Brown, Dwight H., 21
Buford, Anthony A., background, 1-3
Buford, Carter, 17-18
Buford, Wilbur, 18-19
Busch, August A., Jr., 26

Casey, Mike, 17
Centerville, Missouri, 1
Champ Clark Bridge, Louisiana, Missouri, 4-5
Chicago, Illinois, 4-5
Cochran, John J., 7-8, 13
Conran, J.V., 20

Democratic National Convention, 1944, Vice Presidential nomination, 29-30
Dickmann, Bernard F., 8, 16, 27-28, 29
Donnelly, Philip, 39-40

Ellington, Missouri, 1, 2
Evans, Tom L., 14, 16

Fulton, Hugh A., 35.

Gary, Theodore, 9
Graves, Philip, 21
Gualdoni, Louis J. (Gene), 28

Hannegan, Robert E., 16, 27-28, 30
Harper, Roy, 22

Johnson, Lyndon B., 27

Kansas City, Missouri, 4-5, 13, 32
Kinney, Mike, 15

Louisiana, Missouri, 4
Louisiana, Missouri-Illinois Bridge Company, 4

McClary, Philip, 14
McKittrick, Roy, 18

Malang, John, 10
Messall, Victor R.; 34-35
Milligan, Jacob L. (Tuck), 8, 13
Milligan, Maurice, 15, 16, 32
Missouri Athletic Club, St. Louis, Missouri, 36-37, 38
Missouri Highway Commission, 9
Missouri Military Academy, Mexico, Missouri, 1
Missouri Ozark Chamber of Commerce, 3, 21
Missouri, road construction in, 9-12

National Toll Bridge Company, 6

Ozarks region, Missouri, 2-3, 4

Park, Guy B., 18
Pauley, Edwin W., 30-31
Pendergast, James M., 7, 13
Pendergast, Tom, 13-14, 23-24
Presidential campaign, outcome of 1948, 36-38

Rayburn, Sam, 27
Roosevelt, Franklin D., 30, 32

St. Louis Browns, 14
St. Louis, Missouri, 7-8, 13, 16
Senate campaign, U.S., Missouri, 1934, 7-8, 12-13
Senate campaign, U.S., Missouri, 1940, 15-16, 20-21, 24-25, 27-28, 33-34
Snyder, John W., 8
Stark, Lloyd C., 4, 11, 15, 24-25
Sverdrup, Jack, 6

Thompson, William (Big Bill), 4-5

Truman, Harry S.:

- Buford, Anthony A., relationship with, 25-26, 31-32
- evaluation of as a person, 6-7, 23-24, 38-39
- Presidential campaign, 1948, odds on outcome, 36-38
- Senate, U.S. candidate for, 1934, 7-8, 12-13
- Senate, U.S. candidate for reelection to, 1940, 15-16, 20-21 24-25, 27-38, 33-34
- Vice-President, candidate for, 1944, 29-30

University of Missouri, 1, 2

Van Buren, Missouri, 3