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Oral History Interview
with
WILLIAM WEAR, SR.

Springfield, Missouri
April 26, 1990

by Niel M. Johnson, Harry S. Truman Library

NOTICE

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JOHNSON: Let me begin, Mr. Wear, by asking you to tell us where and when you were born, and your parents' names.

WEAR: I was born in Springfield, Missouri, on January 27, 1915, to Sam M. Wear and Susan M. McClellan Wear, my mother.

JOHNSON: Your father's occupation was . . .

WEAR: He was a lawyer.

JOHNSON: And his father . . .

WEAR: Was a lawyer.

JOHNSON: Your grandfather, is he the one who immigrated into the area then?

WEAR: He came in here from northern Missouri; I don't know

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when. He came into Barry County, down by Cassville and Monett. He lived in Cassville, and I think that's where my father was born. When my father was about 5 years old they moved to Springfield.

JOHNSON: Your father took up the law here in Springfield then.

WEAR: Right.

JOHNSON: I am interested in your father's background. Since we don't have an oral history interview with him, I think I'll ask you some questions about your father. What was his education?

WEAR: He graduated from Drury College here in Springfield. He had gone to the Drury Academy, which was, I guess, equivalent now to Springfield High School. I don't really know about his high school education. But he graduated from Drury College and then he went to Cumberland University in Lebanon, Tennessee, where he got his law degree.

JOHNSON: So he didn't just read law; he actually went to law school.

WEAR: He actually went through law school. Back in those days most of them just read law.

JOHNSON: Did he start his career with his father, or by

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himself, or with another firm?

WEAR: I don't think he and his father were ever in partnership. He started with a law firm that I think was called Pepperdine & Farrington or something like that. I remember Judge [John S.] Farrington was one of the partners.

JOHNSON: Do you have any idea about what year that would have been?

WEAR: I think he graduated somewhere around 1902.

JOHNSON: So he started practicing in 1902 or '03.

WEAR: Yes. Of course, that was before I was here, so that's purely from what people have told me.

JOHNSON: Do you have any idea when he first got involved in politics, your father?

WEAR: Well, he was elected Prosecuting Attorney in 1912, here in Greene County. I think he was the only Democrat elected in this county that year. He was elected Prosecuting Attorney again in 1914. The Prosecuting Attorney then was a two-year term, and he served through 1916 and didn't run again.

JOHNSON: Was he in the service in World War I?

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WEAR: No, he wasn't. See, I was born in 1915, so he had three children. He was married, with three children, so I presume that's why he didn't really serve.

JOHNSON: Do you know when he was born, or how old he was when you were born?

WEAR: Let's see. Off the top of my head I can't remember. I know he was 85 when he died in 1965.

JOHNSON: So he was Prosecuting Attorney until 1916. Did he go back into private practice then?

WEAR: Yes.

JOHNSON: So he was already involved to some extent in county politics, no doubt.

WEAR: Oh, yes. He was always a real strong Democrat.

JOHNSON: How about the Democrat Central Committee of the County? Do you have any idea when he became an officer of that committee?

WEAR: I don't know when he became an officer of the Central Committee, but he was on the State Committee for a good many years, and he was Chairman of the Democratic State Committee twice. I think he was in 1940 when Truman had his big race for the Senate against [Lloyd C.] Stark and [Maurice] Milligan.

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JOHNSON: Do you remember the Dickey-Wear faction versus the Greenwade faction?

WEAR: Yes.

JOHNSON: That apparently was quite a controversy.

WEAR: I didn't know much detail about it, but they used to fight over the various offices in the committee.

JOHNSON: Apparently Champ Clark was not a friend of [C.W.] Greenwade.

WEAR: Greenwade was a part of this, and I remember at one time [Sam M.] Wear and [Charles W.] Dickey were on one side and then later it was Wear and Greenwade against Dickey. You know how those things go. The details of it I couldn't tell you.

JOHNSON: Did the Republicans have a strong county organization?

WEAR: Oh, yes. As a matter of fact Greene County has always been Republican, predominantly Republican.

JOHNSON: From the Civil War on?

WEAR: Yes.

JOHNSON: So you really had to work to win elections.

WEAR: You really had to get out and battle them if you were

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a Democrat in Greene County. When he [Sam Wear] was elected prosecutor the first time, he was the only Democrat on the whole ticket elected.

JOHNSON: I wonder what made him a Democrat?

WEAR: He was raised as such. My mother was a Democrat. Her father fought in the Civil War on the Confederate side. I think he was a bugler or something; he was only about 14 years old. That was her background.

JOHNSON: Your father or grandfather on your father's side, was that a Confederate background too?

WEAR: No. At least if he did I never had any knowledge of it. I never met my grandfather on my father's side. He died before I was born.

JOHNSON: Apparently, your father was Congressional District representative to the Democrat State Committee in 1932, the year that Roosevelt was elected.

WEAR: I think so.

JOHNSON: Did you have any knowledge of Truman yet in '34, in that senatorial campaign?

WEAR: Yes. Oh, yes.

JOHNSON: Do you remember your father's role at all in that '34 campaign?

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WEAR: I was pretty busy running after girls during those days. I wasn't paying a whole lot of attention to politics, but I would hear conversations or read some of the stuff in the papers.

JOHNSON: Then, in 1940, of course, comes the second Senatorial campaign for Harry Truman.

WEAR: I was very familiar with that campaign, because I was in law school then, and I was campaign manager for George Robb Ellison, whose picture is right above your head there. He was the last Supreme Court Judge who had to run statewide.

JOHNSON: A State Supreme Court Judge, and he had to run at-large?

WEAR: Right; it was in the 1940s when they adopted what they called the Missouri Court Plan, which is in effect now, but they no longer have to run except against their own record. But he had to run, and he had a race. He ran against a Republican opponent; he was a Democrat. Of course, I was in Sedalia when Truman kicked off his campaign. And that's when Truman just sort of introduced my father, and Dad made the speech. In those days Truman was not a speaker at all.

JOHNSON: So your dad was quite an orator apparently.

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WEAR: He was a very, very fine speaker.

JOHNSON: I notice that you attended a Democrat picnic near Cameron, Missouri in July of 1940, that was presided over by Father Wogan.

WEAR: Probably did; that was probably when I was with Judge Ellison.

JOHNSON: Yes, I think you were there with Judge Ellison for whom you were working. Do you happen to remember a Ted Sanders, who was running the Truman campaign up in Cameron?

WEAR: I don't.

JOHNSON: You don't remember that picnic in particular?

WEAR: No, I went to a lot of them. We campaigned the whole state of Missouri, but I was working for Ellison more than anything else during that campaign.

JOHNSON: So you weren't necessarily also speaking up for Truman?

WEAR: I was speaking up for Truman any opportunity I got.

JOHNSON: Your father was chairman of the State Democrat Committee. Wasn't he elected to that in 1940?

WEAR: I think so.

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JOHNSON: And he was one of the vice-chairmen of the Harry S. Truman for U.S. Senator renomination election committee according to one of the letterheads.

WEAR: Probably was.

JOHNSON: And as you mentioned, he was in charge of arrangements for the opening of Truman's campaign.

WEAR: That's right. I was in Sedalia; I was there.

JOHNSON: That was in June of 1940.

WEAR: Judge Ellison and I were both there.

JOHNSON: What are your recollections of that rally, or that opening there, in Sedalia in 1940?

WEAR: Well, I suppose I couldn't tell you what anyone said, but it was very interesting, especially since I was there working with Judge Ellison and my father was pretty much in charge of the meeting and gave the main address.

JOHNSON: Milligan and Stark were also candidates, and they were Democrats.

WEAR: That was the primary.

JOHNSON: Yes. What was your father's attitude towards Stark and Milligan?

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WEAR: Dad had been a colonel on Stark's staff when Stark was Governor. I think it was because he was just prominent in the Democratic Party. He never cared much for him.

JOHNSON: Your father didn't care that much for Stark?

WEAR: No, and he didn't care anything about Milligan, because Milligan, although he claimed credit for a lot of things, his associates and assistants are the ones who really prosecuted those things. He was a weak United States Attorney, frankly. At least that was my dad's opinion. I didn't know him well. But he didn't do much of the work himself.

JOHNSON: I see. Did your father have any grievances against Stark? Did your father ever comment about Stark?

WEAR: He just didn't care much about him.

JOHNSON: And he knew him very well.

WEAR: Oh, yes, he knew him.

JOHNSON: Did he have the same opinion as Truman had of Stark?

WEAR: Probably; he probably got it from Truman, because he and Truman were very close. They were very close.

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JOHNSON: Well, when did they get close? Was it in the '34 campaign?

WEAR: I imagine the '34 campaign. That's when I got acquainted with Mr. Truman. You see, I graduated from college in 1937, at Drury. As a matter of fact, I was going to the University of Missouri, but my father, through Truman's connection, had gotten jobs for two or three boys in Washington, so they could go to George Washington University. I told my father; I said, "Why don't I go to George Washington University? One law school is as good as another." And he said, "Well, I'll write the Senator and see what he says." Well, he wrote the Senator and the Senator instead of calling or writing, just sent a telegram; he used to always send telegrams. This is early summer, before school even started, and he told me to just come right up to Washington. I thought I had to get there in a hurry, so I did; I got ready and packed and on my way to Washington, and arrived there. I think I got to Washington the day the NRA was declared unconstitutional, and about 5,000 people were automatically, overnight, unemployed; and that was the job market that I hit.

JOHNSON: When was that?

WEAR: That was '37. I graduated in '37. It was '37

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because I went to George Washington in '37-'38.

JOHNSON: But when did you first meet Truman, actually meet him?

WEAR: Probably in '34.

JOHNSON: But you don't remember any details?

WEAR: I don't remember any specifics about it; he was just United States Senator.

JOHNSON: What was the next time that you met him then?

WEAR: Oh, I ran into him a lot. I saw him all the time in Washington.

JOHNSON: So, you went to Washington in '37.

WEAR: The summer of '37.

JOHNSON: The summer of '37 to go to law school.

WEAR: Right. But I didn't start in law school until the fall. He got me a job in the Treasury Department.

JOHNSON: So you worked in the Treasury Department as soon as you got there.

WEAR: Yes.

JOHNSON: Did you see him in his office?

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WEAR: Oh yes. As a matter of fact, I went up there, and since he had sent me a telegram I figured he had a job for me. I got up there and went out to his office. He called Vic Messall in and told Vic to get me a job. He didn't have a job in mind, whatsoever; he just told Vic to get me a job. So I sat up there for several weeks. I moved into the Sigma Nu house; I happened to be in Sigma Nu Fraternity, so I moved into the Sigma Nu house up there. I'd contact Vic, and Vic sent me to almost every department in Washington. I filled out the same application, and each one of them said, "We'll let you know." Finally after several weeks, I called my father. I said, "I thought that the Senator probably had a job for me." We both did, when he sent me a telegram to get right up there. I said, "I'm still not working; I'm not doing anything, just living here." Dad was sending me money to eat on. He said, "Well, heck, go out and see the Senator." So I went out to see him. He greeted me as he always did, very friendly; you know how Truman was. He greeted me and said, "Well, where are you working?" I said, "I'm not." "You're not?" I said, "No, I'm not. I've been going around and filling out the same application every place, but I haven't gotten a job yet." He screamed to Vic Messall. You could hear him all over that office, "Vic." Vic came in, and he said,

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"Why isn't this boy working?" Vic said, "Well, Senator, there are no jobs available." That's when I think it was recalled that the NRA had been declared unconstitutional. He said, "There are just no jobs available. I've done the best I can." The Senator said, "You don't do another thing, until this boy is working." The next day or two I got a call from Vic Messall to go to see the Treasurer of the United States. I went to see him, and he sent me up to the accounting

division, to the head man of the accounting division. He said, "What can you do?" I said, "I don't know; I just graduated from college with an AB degree in economics."

JOHNSON: So you were an economics major.

WEAR: Yes. But he said, "Well, what can you do with your hands? Can you type?" I said, "No." "Can you work an adding machine?" I said, "Well, I've never worked one, but I'm sure I can. I don't imagine it's too complicated." Anyway, he put me on a job in the examining section of the Accounting Division of the Treasury Department.

JOHNSON: And you were there how long?

WEAR: I was there two years. I went to George Washington two years. The reason I changed is that I got to be a

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pretty damn good student of the District of Columbia code. I got to thinking, "Hell, that's not going to do me any good for practicing law in Missouri." It turned out, of course, later that that was the Federal Code, so--but I talked to my father and said, "I think I'd better go back to the University of Missouri."

JOHNSON: Did you quit work at the Treasury Department after you went to school, or did you do both?

WEAR: I did both. I went to school in the evening, 5 to 7 every evening, and I worked at Treasury. That was a fulltime job. Oh, I'll tell you, they worked us overtime. Well, you can imagine. The part I worked in was just like a great big bank where all the checks cleared, and everything. Right after the 15th of the month, and the first of the month, we had more work than the personnel could handle, and we'd work overtime. Then later they'd try to, during the slack times, give you a little time off rather than pay you. They never paid us overtime; they'd just give us a little time off.

JOHNSON: Compensatory time.

WEAR: Anyway, that is rather interesting.

JOHNSON: Vic Messall--since you mentioned him--seems to have dropped out of the picture, you know, during that

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second term.

WEAR: Shortly thereafter, I think he did. I don't know. He was pretty much in the picture, or at least he made himself appear to be in the picture when Truman first became President, or maybe as Vice President.

JOHNSON: Well, perhaps up to that point. I think he became a lobbyist. Do you know anything more about Vic Messall?

WEAR: No.

JOHNSON: What kind of personality did he have, do you recall?

WEAR: Well, I liked him. He was very friendly with me. Of course, he naturally would be because Truman was friendly.

JOHNSON: Well, he was his campaign manager really there in '40 wasn't he?

WEAR: Yes, he was apparently very efficient. Very efficient.

JOHNSON: "Cap" Christ, in August 1940 wrote to Senator [Bennett] Clark asking his support for Sam Wear as chairman of the State Democratic Committee. He said at that time Greene County had only a slight Democratic

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majority, allowing a "certain shrewd individual to build up a small faction which he has consistently used to gain political power for himself and party patronage for his followers." Then he mentions the Jackson Day Dinner in January when Governor Stark made an attempt to launch a Senate nomination, but Truman did win the majority in the August primary in Greene County, apparently thanks in large part to your father. Do you have any idea who this shrewd individual might have been?

WEAR: "Dig" Chinn, Hiram Chinn. I'm sure that's who he has reference to.

JOHNSON: He was a longtime buddy though of Harry Truman, wasn't he?

WEAR: Oh, yes.

JOHNSON: A friend of Harry Truman's?

WEAR: Oh, yes. As a matter of fact, I believe he did spend the night in Lincoln's room in the White House afterward.

JOHNSON: Chinn?

WEAR: Chinn did. I know he was certainly invited. He's one of the three in this picture.

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JOHNSON: Yes. Well, according to this letter, the same minority joined the [Larry] McDaniel bandwagon and Wear, your father, out of resentment supported McReynolds. This Christ did not support McReynolds, but he still wanted Wear as State Chairman. They called him able and loyal.

WEAR: I supported, what was his name, the Senator from Carthage--not McDaniel, the other one.

JOHNSON: [Allen] McReynolds?

WEAR: McReynolds, I supported him.

JOHNSON: Was it Truman's influence largely that helped your father get the job as chairman of the State Democrat Committee?

WEAR: I have no idea. I wasn't on it then. I later was on the State Committee myself. I wasn't then, and I don't know. I'm sure that had something to do with it.

JOHNSON: In that 1940 campaign, you were largely occupied with Judge Ellison.

WEAR: I was occupied with Judge Ellison.

JOHNSON: Was he trying for reelection to the Supreme Court?

WEAR: Oh, yes, he was already on the Court.

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JOHNSON: And did he win that election?

WEAR: Yes, he sure did. You know, the funny thing--and this hasn't got anything to do with President Truman-- but every member of the Supreme Court was against that Missouri Court plan, but it passed.

JOHNSON: How often were they up for reelection?

WEAR: Every twelve years. Twelve year terms for the Supreme Court. They were all afraid that when you just voted "yes" or "no" vote, and the people wouldn't understand it--the general public--they would vote no. And most people when they don't understand something, do vote no. But it turned out to be the exact opposite. It created lifetime jobs for everyone on the Supreme Court.

JOHNSON: What do you recall of the split? Apparently there was a split between the farmers and labor in 1940. The election involved a controversy over Reuben Wood and the Republican Phil Bennett who won this congressional election.

WEAR: Yes, he did.

JOHNSON: The political problem for the Democrats, in large part, seemed to be that the farmers and labor unions didn't see eye-to-eye on wages, et cetera.

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WEAR: That's right, Reuben Wood was a big labor leader, and he was the Congressman. Bennett ran against him; that's all I know. I really don't know any of the details of why or wherefores or anything else.

JOHNSON: Was this one of your father's preoccupations, trying to heal this breach between the farmers and the farm bloc so to speak, the farm vote and labor?

WEAR: I'm sure what they were trying to do was elect Rube Wood back to Congress because he was a Democrat, and Phil Bennett was a Republican.

JOHNSON: But they'd have to get farmers to help do that, of course. The farm vote here was important.

WEAR: Yes, it was. That's why I presume the farm vote is what beat Rube.

JOHNSON: I imagine. I notice in October of '41 that Truman wrote your father that he was very anxious for him to be the Congressman of the 6th District, that is, your father. But he says, "I want the District to want you first." He said he thought it would be bad politics to begin writing letters to District people before your father announced his candidacy.

WEAR: That's right, I think it would.

JOHNSON: He said, "I want to do everything I can to help

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and nothing that will hurt." I think Truman probably visited Springfield in October of 1941.

WEAR: He could have.

JOHNSON: Where were you at that time?

WEAR: October of '41 I was in the Navy.

JOHNSON: When did you join the Navy?

WEAR: I graduated from law school in May of 1941.

JOHNSON: At Missouri?

WEAR: At the University of Missouri. I took the bar exam either in the latter part of May or early June, and I think I reported to what they called the elimination base at Lambert Field in St. Louis. I was an Aviation Cadet, in July of '41.

JOHNSON: So, you were training to fly Navy planes?

WEAR: Yes.

JOHNSON: Did you become a carrier pilot?

WEAR: Yes.

JOHNSON: You did?

WEAR: I flew off of the Wasp.

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JOHNSON: When it was in action over in the Pacific?

WEAR: In the Pacific. As a matter of fact, I was on the first naval carrier strike against Tokyo.

JOHNSON: You're not talking about '42.

WEAR: I'm not talking about the B-25s. I'm talking about the Navy--you know, when the Navy struck Tokyo, which was before the first A-bomb was dropped.

JOHNSON: Was the Wasp ever sunk?

WEAR: Not when I was on it. There were numerous Wasps, and one Wasp was sunk. I think there was one Wasp sunk at Midway, and then the new Wasp was the one I was on, after Midway.

JOHNSON: In November of '41, your father wrote Truman and mentioned that a Parker might run and that neither he, that is your father, nor Truman, liked him.

WEAR: I believe he was from Warrensburg, wasn't he?

JOHNSON: You don't know who this Parker was?

WEAR: I remember there was someone from Warrensburg, I think it was, that ran against my father for Congress and dad beat him in the primary.

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JOHNSON: Your dad said to Truman, "I intend to follow tactics you used, in your last campaign, and not mention him or anyone else that might be against me."

WEAR: Right.

JOHNSON: No negative campaigning apparently.

WEAR: No sir.

JOHNSON: Truman said that he should not interfere. This is in July of '42; but he did write a constituent. He said, "If I lived in that District, I think I would vote for Sam Wear." That's about as far as he would go.

WEAR: That's all he could do. He had to think about his own race.

JOHNSON: I notice that your father lost the '42 election for Congress, to Phil Bennett, and your father cited factors such as the Government order freezing wages, the 1942 tax bill requiring many working people to pay income taxes for the first time, and the drafting of farm boys, and rationing.

WEAR: The war itself, I think, was a big factor and Bennett happened to be in the majority party.

JOHNSON: And apparently your father was also short of money.

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WEAR: I'm sure that's true too.

JOHNSON: Just wasn't that much Democrat money to go around here?

WEAR: There sure as hell wasn't.

JOHNSON: How about the Republicans, did they have a better time of it?

WEAR: They always have.

JOHNSON: Because they can draw . . .

WEAR: The Republican Party is the party of the rich folks, always has been, always will be I guess. They don't have a bit of trouble raising money.

JOHNSON: Not even here in Greene County.

WEAR: Oh, God. As a matter of fact, I saw in the paper, I guess yesterday or the day before, where our present Congressman has a big war chest built up, I think over \$100,000 already, and he doesn't even run until '92. The Democrat who has announced had about \$13,000 raised.

JOHNSON: Who is your Congressman?

WEAR: It's Hancock, Mel Hancock, the author of the Hancock Amendment.

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JOHNSON: Your father lost that election in '42. . .

WEAR: He lost twice in the same year.

JOHNSON: Yes, I guess Bennett died soon thereafter.

WEAR: Bennett died, and then his son ran.

JOHNSON: So your father then ran against his son in January, 1943.

WEAR: That's right.

JOHNSON: And lost that one.

WEAR: And lost that. That was a special election. As he used to say, "I'm the only man that got beat twice for Congress in the same year."

JOHNSON: A dubious distinction. Of course, you were preoccupied with other things by this time weren't you?

WEAR: Yes, I was off fighting battles then.

JOHNSON: Do you remember what month and year you were sent off into the Pacific?

WEAR: I'd have to look at my log book. I have two log books; this is just one of them.

JOHNSON: You must have been in Pensacola in November of '42 because . . .

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WEAR: Right. I instructed down there for a year and a half.

JOHNSON: And your father visited you there.

WEAR: My father visited me down there after his defeat. I don't know whether it was his first or second or both.

JOHNSON: After that November election in '42 he went down.

WEAR: I went overseas in November of '44.

JOHNSON: In the meantime you were training pilots, you say, down in Pensacola?

WEAR: I was instructing pilots. I went through Corpus Christi, got my wings at Corpus Christi, and my commission. Then my first assignment was Pensacola, and I went through instructor's school. They kept me in instructor's school as an instructor in instructor's school, so I was really instructing people how to instruct.

JOHNSON: I imagine there was a bunch of close calls with that kind of training, wasn't there?

WEAR: Yes.

JOHNSON: Well, after your father's defeat in January of '43, Hiram Chinn asked Truman to consider Sam Wear for a Federal Judgeship, although it appeared Richard

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Duncan was going to get it, which he did. Your father apparently was an acquaintance of Richard Duncan.

WEAR: I don't think he was, but they got to be awfully close friends later.

JOHNSON: Yes, later.

WEAR: I think Truman told Dad, or told Chinn, or may have told them both, that Dad was too old; that if it wasn't for his age, he would be glad to appoint him, but he was just too old. Of course, they had to retire, I think at 70, or could.

JOHNSON: Truman replied to Chinn that he would like to be able to appoint your father. He said he couldn't promise, and he said, "I have about come to the conclusion that the Democrats are not going to have a Chinaman's chance in Missouri for some time to come, and I hate to admit that, too." This was in '43. So the Republicans were making up ground, I guess after the New Deal, although the war had sort of bailed out the economy.

WEAR: The war made a hell of a big difference. Of course, they were blaming the war on Roosevelt, or blaming Roosevelt for the war, and . . .

JOHNSON: But the war was bringing prosperity to farmers

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for the first time.

WEAR: By God, it was taking the kids over. That's what they were reacting to. You know, it was all right to take some of your neighbors kids, but not mine.

JOHNSON: Perhaps it is like a recession, that's when your neighbor's unemployed; but a depression is when you're unemployed.

WEAR: That's right. That's exactly right.

JOHNSON: Of course, Truman decided to go for Duncan for the judgeship. I noticed in 1944 your father was still chairman of the Democratic State Committee.

WEAR: That was the second time I guess that he was selected.

JOHNSON: And he was the master of ceremonies at Lamar in September of '44.

WEAR: Yes.

JOHNSON: Of course, you wouldn't have been there.

WEAR: I wasn't here.

JOHNSON: Did he ever talk to you about that, or write to you about it?

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WEAR: No, but I remember that he was at the time. I think my mother wrote me or maybe he wrote me, I don't remember. I was overseas then, over on the carrier.

JOHNSON: And I imagine that was one of the big events, of course, for him.

WEAR: Yes.

JOHNSON: In that period. When did you get out of the service?

WEAR: '45. I've forgotten when they announced the point system. I had come back and formed a new squadron--I was a torpedo bomber pilot--and I formed a new squadron in San Diego and we were training and getting ready to go back aboard another carrier. They announced the point system after Japan surrendered.

JOHNSON: That would have been after August 14, V-J Day.

WEAR: Right. Right after V-J Day they announced the point system and I had more than enough points. I was commanding officer of the torpedo squadron in San Diego. I called the Administrative Officer in and told him to find out how many in the squadron had enough points and wanted out. I told him to make a list of them and put my name at the head of the list and send it in to the naval district that we were in at that

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time. In two weeks I was on my way home.

JOHNSON: So that would be by the end of August.

WEAR: Maybe September.

JOHNSON: Were you flying torpedo planes off the Wasp?

WEAR: Yes.

JOHNSON: Those things were sitting ducks almost weren't they, for the Zeros? I remember that at the Battle of Midway almost every one was shot down. The torpedo plane was called the Avenger, wasn't it?

WEAR: Right. That was the biggest single-engine plane probably in the world at that time. But it was slow and we set the pace. When we'd go on strike, the dive-bombers flew immediately above us, the fighters above them, and they had to fly like this, while we flew in a straight line.

JOHNSON: In figure eights.

WEAR: Well, I'll tell you an interesting thing about it if you're interested. We used to get a pink sheet in the Navy every time you changed stations. You filled it out, and you set forth where you'd been and what you requested for your next duty. I always put in "fighters, transports, dive-bombers," and the last

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thing I put in was, "anything but torpedo bombers." And that's how the Navy worked. The day I arrived at Norfolk, Virginia on my way over to go into a squadron, they were assigning torpedo-bomber pilots. If I'd been there the day before I'd been in fighters, and if I'd been there the day after, I'd have been in dive-bombers. That's how much attention they pay to the damn pink sheet. But as it turned out, hell, I'm alive today, and if I'd gotten fighters I might not be, who knows.

JOHNSON: But you did have to go down kind of low on torpedo runs and face the anti-aircraft artillery.

WEAR: Slow and low. And straight; you were a sitting duck.

JOHNSON: Fortunately, I guess, we had air supremacy by that time.

WEAR: Yes, by the time we got out there. But those ships we were trying to sink didn't pay any attention to air supremacy. They were still shooting right at me.

JOHNSON: In May of '45 your father was appointed U.S. Attorney for Western District of Missouri, so by the time when you got home, he was District Attorney.

WEAR: He was District Attorney and I went into practice on my own.

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JOHNSON: Here in Springfield?

WEAR: Here in Springfield.

JOHNSON: Did your father move to Kansas City?

WEAR: Yes.

JOHNSON: So that was his residence?

WEAR: No, he stayed here; he didn't change his residence. My mother stayed here, and he came home on weekends. He really commuted more than anything else, but he was there all during the week. He'd come out, say, every fourth or fifth weekend; he'd come home.

JOHNSON: How long did he do that?

WEAR: Always. He served eight years up there. He first moved into the Phillips Hotel; he lived in the Phillips Hotel awhile and then he got an apartment out on Armour, and then he got one out on the Plaza. So he really had two residences.

JOHNSON: And he worked out of the Federal Building downtown.

WEAR: Yes, Eighth and Grand.

JOHNSON: I guess he had a home down here, and he just didn't want to sell and leave.

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WEAR: Yes. He had a home here that we were all raised in.

JOHNSON: It's still in the family?

WEAR: It's now a parking lot for SMS.

JOHNSON: It was razed. Then you got back into law practice. When did you get back into politics?

WEAR: In '45.

JOHNSON: At the same time?

WEAR: Yes. I spent several weeks doing nothing, just getting the war out of my system. Dad kept an office here. That's the office I moved into. Then, Arch Johnson called me at home and wanted me to come down and see him. He was a former circuit judge. He had something to talk to me about. So I went down and talked to him. He had some case he discussed with me, and I told him what I thought about it. He said, "Well, I'd like to have you come on that case with me." I think it was a put-up job to get me to start practicing law, because I wasn't ready. Anyway, I did. I started.

JOHNSON: He was a friend of your father's.

WEAR: Yes, very close.

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JOHNSON: And he had been in law practice here for how long?

WEAR: Forever. There's a picture of the old man over there.

JOHNSON: I always have a bias toward Johnsons.

WEAR: That's Arch Johnson. That's E.P. Mann, that's Judge Tatlow, Roscoe Patterson, Frank Williams--former probate judge, Judge Reeves--a federal judge in Kansas City.

JOHNSON: Albert Reeves?

WEAR: Yes. Albert Reeves. That's Harry Durst, who was the mayor, and that's Judge Blair who was on the Court of Appeals at that time--he was at one time on the Missouri Supreme Court. That's old Arch Johnson. This was on this man's 90th birthday, this particular picture.

JOHNSON: Oh, he was right next to Arch.

WEAR: Yes.

JOHNSON: So your father kept a law office here.

WEAR: Just kept the office.

JOHNSON: You didn't have a partner.

WEAR: No, just kept the office, and I just moved into it

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and started practicing.

JOHNSON: What was your first involvement in politics then?

WEAR: Mine?

JOHNSON: Yes.

WEAR: Oh, I probably ran for County Committeeman and my wife ran for Committeewoman. As a matter of fact, Hope Meyer, old lady Meyer, who was vice-chairman of the Greene County Central Committee was in our ward and my wife ran against her, and beat her. My wife had never been in politics in her life, and it really upset Mrs. Meyer. She was just an old--she was one of the old gals back in those feuding days.

JOHNSON: What is your wife's name, and when did you get married?

WEAR: Her name was Julia Ann Clark. We got married during the war, January 17, 1944. They were getting ready to send me off and we got married just before that.

JOHNSON: Did she get a taste for politics after that?

WEAR: Well, she was born in Alabama. She was raised in Florida. Her uncle, her father's brother, was a Circuit Judge in Birmingham. I have a son practicing law in Birmingham, my oldest. So, he sort of tied in

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with that side of the family. As a matter of fact, she told me that when she was just a kid she went to visit another uncle of hers in Ohio during the Landon campaign. She just was a kid. They had sunflowers and everything. Her uncle up there was a hell of a Republican. He was an uncle by marriage. The wife was on the Democrat side, but this uncle--I think he was head of Landon's campaign in Ohio. She had never seen a Republican before. Then she saw her uncle, and saw he was active in the Landon campaign. She went to her mother or father or both, and said, "Why, he seems like a nice man." She was looking for some guy with horns. That was her first Republican she had ever seen. So you can see her background was pretty Democratic too.

JOHNSON: Truman introduced his mother once to George Allen and told her that Allen had never even seen a Republican until he was twenty-one, or thereabouts, and she is reported to have said, "Well, he didn't miss much."

WEAR: Pretty good.

JOHNSON: So you're in the County Committee. Did you run for any elective office in the area.

WEAR: Not at that time; I later did. I was later on the State Committee. I served several terms on the State

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Committee. Buck [J.E.] Taylor appointed me as Assistant Attorney General. I practiced law here in Springfield, but I was what they called a special assistant. I used to have to brief at least one criminal case every Supreme Court session. I handled mostly sales taxes and state income tax matters and all, in Greene and Jasper Counties, and Joplin, and collecting some of that kind of stuff. Anything that came up in this area involving the Attorney General's office, I had.

JOHNSON: Attorney General.

WEAR: Attorney General of Missouri.

JOHNSON: And Ellison was now on the Supreme Court. He was still on the Supreme Court?

WEAR: Yes, he was still on the Supreme Court.

JOHNSON: What was your first involvement with Truman after you got out of the service, after you returned home?

WEAR: Well, actually after I got out of the service, he was President then, and I never had any real dealings with him.

JOHNSON: Your father was not allowed to be in partisan politics I suppose, as District Attorney, was he?

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WEAR: Well, allegedly. That was the Hatch Act.

JOHNSON: Yes.

WEAR: He was not supposed to, but he never quit his loyalty to the Democratic Party.

JOHNSON: Of course, in the '46 campaign, the Republicans win the Congress and I suppose the Republicans won this district here. Do you recall?

WEAR: Right.

JOHNSON: They won this district. And then Truman had someone to run against, the "Do-nothing, Good-for-nothing 80th Congress."

WEAR: That was in '48 and he tried to get me to run for Congress.

JOHNSON: In '48?

WEAR: In '48. I was like everybody else; I couldn't possibly see a Democratic victory. I didn't know that Truman was going to pull off what he did. Neither did anyone else except Truman.

JOHNSON: I should ask you what your recollections are of that. Was your father even skeptical of Truman winning?

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WEAR: Yes.

JOHNSON: He was pretty sure he wasn't going to win.

WEAR: He didn't think he was going to win. No one thought he was going to win except Truman. In fact, dad wrote him after he was elected and said, "You don't owe anything to anybody except yourself."

JOHNSON: Who was your Congressman, do you remember, at that time from this district?

WEAR: Exactly. Marion Bennett was the Congressman.

JOHNSON: Oh, this was the son of Phil Bennett, Marion Bennett.

WEAR: Yes, he was still there.

JOHNSON: He was still in Congress, and you were solicited to run against him.

WEAR: Well, among them. Bill Cullinson was asked to run; there was a whole bunch and we all turned it down. There was an old boy--as a matter of fact, I was at the meeting in Osceola when an old boy appeared up there named [George H.] Christopher. An old country boy. He made a pretty good talk, but he was strictly a farmer and old country boy, and he decided he'd run. We all encouraged him, "sacrifice the cow." And that old boy

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ran against Hoover, [former President] Herbert Hoover. [In a sense] he ran against Herbert Hoover in his whole campaign. It was all against policies reminiscent of Herbert Hoover. He made a real appeal to the farmers. And of course, with Truman leading the ticket and winning the Presidential race, it swept this guy in on his coattails, right into the Congress.

JOHNSON: You could have been elected if you had run.

WEAR: Sure, anybody, any Democrat would have been elected.

JOHNSON: So now Christopher is elected.

WEAR: No one thought they had a prayer. Now, that's the real truth.

JOHNSON: So, Christopher goes to Washington.

WEAR: He sure did.

JOHNSON: And you stay home.

WEAR: Well, I was busy practicing law anyway. I never had any real desire to be in Congress, never.

JOHNSON: Somebody played poker with the President.

WEAR: I did.

JOHNSON: All right, when was that?

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WEAR: That's when I was going to school at George Washington. He would have a party at one of the hotels--the one I remember specifically was at the Willard Hotel. He had a party for all the Missouri boys he'd gotten jobs for. Who were some of them? I remember there was one of them that blacked his lip here and his eyebrows and had a cigar; ran around like Groucho Marx. I can't think who in hell that guy was; he was funny as hell. And then there were other people who I had known and met up there through association with Truman's Senate office. We'd have dinner, a few drinks, and then we'd sit down to a poker game. It wasn't a big party. It was just sort of the Missouri contingent in Washington.

JOHNSON: Were you at the same table with Truman?

WEAR: Yes. He probably had four or five tables of poker, and I played in the table with Mr. Truman.

JOHNSON: What kind of poker player was he?

WEAR: Not very good. But he was smart.

JOHNSON: But it was low stakes.

WEAR: Oh yes. None of us had any money. He's the only one that had any, and he only made \$10,000 a year then.

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JOHNSON: Of course, that was a lot of money in those days.

WEAR: Oh, that was a hell of a lot of money for him. I get more in Social Security today in one month than I made in a whole year when I was working for the Treasury Department.

JOHNSON: Those '30s were something. Was that the only time you played poker with him?

WEAR: That's the only time I recall it. Now dad used to play poker with him a lot. He'd come down here and play out at Judge [Ernest H.] Scholten's. He was the Presiding Judge of the County Court. He had a big farm out here and he would play out there. Dig Chinn and Ed Barbour were there. Most of the people are dead.

JOHNSON: But this would have been the '30s?

WEAR: Had to have been in '38 probably. Between '37 and '38. You see, I went up there in '37 and I left in '39.

JOHNSON: But for a number of years he'd come down and play poker?

WEAR: Until he became President.

JOHNSON: He even referred to Springfield as his home town in a speech he gave here in '48.

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WEAR: Well, he probably felt that way; at least this was his poker hometown, because he had a lot of fun. He had a lot of friends here, and they used to play poker together.

JOHNSON: You know, he came down here twice in '48. Well, one was during the unveiling of the statue at Bolivar. They took the train here and they had to back all the way up, I guess, to Bolivar.

WEAR: I was on his train. Where did we board that? Neosho or someplace. I went aboard his train, my wife and I. He was stopped; that was when he was doing his whistlestops. He stopped in various places. Of course, he'd come into other cars on the train and visit with the people on it.

JOHNSON: So, what was the mood there? You talked to him briefly, I suppose, on the train.

WEAR: No one thought he had a chance.

JOHNSON: What did he tell you, do you recall, or what was the mood?

WEAR: Well, he was just a hell of a friendly fellow. We were always just good friends. I wasn't as good a friend as dad was, because dad knew him better. But he was always very friendly to me.

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JOHNSON: I think it was July 5 of '48 when he came to Bolivar, and then on September 29th he came through.

WEAR: This was when he actually had the presidential train, and he was doing his whistlestops.

JOHNSON: Okay, so that was his September 29th visit. And he stopped briefly at Monett.

WEAR: He stopped at all the little stations between. I think we got on at Neosho.

JOHNSON: Okay, and got off then at . . .

WEAR: We got off back here, at Springfield.

JOHNSON: And it was kind of late at night too. Do you remember that?

WEAR: Yes. A hell of a big crowd was down at the station here when he came in. He was attracting crowds.

JOHNSON: Later on it was said that apparently was a barometer of the election.

WEAR: But people still didn't think so.

JOHNSON: Well, I guess they kept it to themselves, if they were going to vote for Truman.

WEAR: Well, as dad wrote him, "You don't owe anything to anybody in this campaign. You were elected President

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of the United States through your own efforts and your own knowledge of what was going on."

JOHNSON: Were you on the Democratic County Committee in '48? What was your involvement in that '48 campaign?

WEAR: I may have been on the State Committee then, I don't remember. I just don't remember.

JOHNSON: Okay, you were elected to the State Committee. You were on the local committee through those years?

WEAR: Yes, you kept your local committee. My wife was doing the work in the county. She polled her ward thoroughly. She did a hell of a lot of work.

JOHNSON: She polled it not only for the local candidate, the Congressional candidate, but for Truman, I suppose.

WEAR: Oh, yes, for everybody.

JOHNSON: So, you're promoting Truman, but you weren't expecting him to win.

WEAR: We were strong for him, but I just didn't think he had a prayer.

JOHNSON: But that didn't mean that you didn't still campaign or canvas door-to-door.

WEAR: Oh, no. Lord no.

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JOHNSON: What kind of campaigning did they do in the precincts, or the wards?

WEAR: Oh, it's mostly local stuff. Get the vote out. Get them out for anything. And, of course, each Democrat gets the benefit of it.

JOHNSON: Was there a precinct captain for instance, who was directing the tactics?

WEAR: Each canvassing person in the ward in which they lived is responsible for polling and getting the names, telephone numbers, addresses, of all the Democrats in that ward. Then, on election day you had telephone committees that would get on the phone. Generally, the committee first appointed someone to work each polling place, and they would take the name of everybody as they voted, and when as the day wore on and they saw certain Democrats weren't voting, they'd get on the phone and offer them a ride, and urge them to get to the polls to vote. That's pretty much the function of the ward committeeman.

JOHNSON: In the general election.

WEAR: Yes. And the primary, both.

JOHNSON: In the primary you had . . .

WEAR: Just get out the vote. It didn't make any difference

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because the committeeman or woman was not supposed to take any sides in the primary. Just keep them interested in politics.

JOHNSON: Did they have to register though? They had to register as Democrats or Republicans?

WEAR: No, not in Missouri, never have. They would just register. They have to be registered to vote, but you don't register your party. As a matter of fact, there has always been in Missouri a big cross-over in the primary.

JOHNSON: That's what I was wondering; it is a cross-over primary.

WEAR: Oh, yes.

JOHNSON: So, you couldn't be sure which way they would go.

WEAR: I believe in people registering as Democrat or Republican, so you can tell what they are, but they never have in Missouri.

JOHNSON: Never have.

WEAR: In some places they do.

JOHNSON: In Nebraska they do. So, it is knocking on doors and distributing leaflets?

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WEAR: Definitely, the committee people go from door-to-door. That's the way they find out whether they are Democrats or Republicans or whatever--if they tell you. Some people won't tell you. And too many will say, "Oh, I'm an Independent." We always said, "An Independent is someone that, by God, is Republican but won't admit it."

JOHNSON: There's no Independent ticket on the ballot, that's the problem. So, at least in '48 you were doing your bit probably as a County Committeeman.

WEAR: And I was probably on the State Committee then too. I'm pretty sure I was.

JOHNSON: And your wife was doing that local nitty gritty work.

WEAR: I was working for Buck Taylor too, see. Buck Taylor was the Attorney General.

JOHNSON: Okay, so you were doing that on the side.

WEAR: He was running for Attorney General.

JOHNSON: That was in addition to your law practice.

WEAR: Right. Those political jobs never paid anything. If that's all you ever did, you'd starve to death.

JOHNSON: Apparently your mother was ill and so your father

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wasn't able to go to the Inaugural in January '49.

WEAR: Yes.

JOHNSON: Did you attend that?

WEAR: No.

JOHNSON: You met President Truman in September when he was coming back on that whistlestop. Do you know when you met him the next time, or what the occasion might have been?

WEAR: I doubt if I really personally ran into him after that.

JOHNSON: After '48, you're not sure that you actually did meet him.

WEAR: Yes, I did, too. When Buck Taylor, who was the Attorney General, ran for the United States Senate against Symington, Truman came here and endorsed him.

JOHNSON: Endorsed . . .

WEAR: Taylor.

JOHNSON: Taylor against Symington?

WEAR: Yes sir. He sure did. As a matter of fact, Symington went to Truman to try to get Truman's endorsement. He told him, "I'm going to run for the

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United States Senate." And the story was that Truman said, "Oh, Stuart, you are, from what state and what party?" But Truman came out--whatever year it was that Symington was elected--to Springfield on his plane, and endorsed Taylor for the United States Senate.

JOHNSON: I think it was 1952. That was when Symington was elected.

WEAR: I was real strong for Taylor because he was my boss.

JOHNSON: Do you think it was yours and your father's influence that caused him to endorse Taylor, because you know later on he became a very strong endorser of Symington.

WEAR: Well, that was after Symington was elected. Truman did not like Stuart Symington.

JOHNSON: Is that right?

WEAR: Even though he was appointed head of the Air Force under him, he did not like him personally. And that reaction of "Okay, Stuart, what state and what party," was his typical reaction to him. Later he may have been fine.

JOHNSON: You know, in 1960 he wanted Symington instead of Kennedy to run for President.

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WEAR: Could be. Could be. See, that's how politics change bedfellows.

JOHNSON: In '56 he turned against Adlai Stevenson. In '56 he was trying to get [W. Averell] Harriman endorsed in place of Adlai and didn't make it. Well, then, in '60 he wanted Symington instead of Kennedy.

WEAR: He wanted Taylor for the Senate instead of Symington. Now, what beat Taylor was that Forrest Smith ran for Governor and they were at crossed swords. Forrest Smith and Taylor hated each other's guts. So it was Forrest Smith's influence that overcame Truman's influence that elected Symington. After all, Forrest Smith had all the state employees, and he threw all that weight behind Symington; but it wasn't for Symington, it was against Taylor.

JOHNSON: Did you know what the reason was for that antagonism?

WEAR: I don't know. It was personal, personalities. They just didn't like each other. I liked them both. I worked for Taylor, and I supported Smith. Hell, I was a colonel on Forrest Smith's staff. I liked them both very much, but their hatred for each other was terrific.

JOHNSON: There was some lobbying, locally, even during the

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war, for a radio school, a VA Hospital, and so on. Did you see Truman when he was here in '52 at the 35th Division Reunion?

WEAR: Yes, I sure did.

JOHNSON: I believe that's when some of those Hollywood people were here.

WEAR: Ronald Reagan was here.

JOHNSON: That's right.

WEAR: Yes, as a matter of fact, I went down at the Shrine where Truman made his speech and talked to him after he had made the speech. I was backstage. Dad and I both were there. I also saw him down at Carruthersville while he was President. Got an occasion then to go down with dad and Dig Chinn.

JOHNSON: He used to go to the fair there. He seemed to go to the fair almost every year at Carruthersville.

WEAR: I remember we went down there and visited with him down there.

JOHNSON: Have you heard anything about that story of him and Ralph Truman? He and Ralph were discussing whether to invite the Reagans and the other Hollywood people to this reception or party, and according to John Hulston,

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they agreed they didn't need any Hollywood "riffraff" at their party.

WEAR: I wouldn't doubt it.

JOHNSON: Have you heard that story before?

WEAR: No, I haven't, but I wouldn't doubt it.

JOHNSON: Did you see Ronald Reagan when he was here then, premiering the movie in '52?

WEAR: I don't recall seeing him.

JOHNSON: But you didn't go to the movie.

WEAR: I've seen pictures of him since.

JOHNSON: I guess an issue in '52 was the closing of the O'Reilly VA Hospital. Many letters went to the White House on that one. Did you have anything to do with lobbying for the local area, lobbying the White House.

WEAR: No.

JOHNSON: You never wrote to the President on any issue, any local issue or state issue?

WEAR: No, never did.

JOHNSON: Your father, you say, was for eight years a District Attorney.

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WEAR: United States Attorney.

JOHNSON: That would have brought him up to '53, the year that Truman left office.

WEAR: Yes. Eisenhower appointed his successor.

JOHNSON: This was a political appointment. So when Truman left the White House, he left that job.

WEAR: Yes.

JOHNSON: What did he do after that?

WEAR: My father?

JOHNSON: Your father.

WEAR: He came back here and he and I practiced together for a while. Well, he had a couple of strokes and quit practicing law. He ended up in a nursing home.

JOHNSON: I see. Truman in '52 mentions in a marginal note on a letter, "The Springfield dailies are rabidly against us." The newspapers. Were they ever for him?

WEAR: Never.

JOHNSON: How about Roosevelt; were they ever for Roosevelt?

WEAR: No. There is only one paper really, the Springfield Leader and Press, which was pure Republican. Black

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Republican top to bottom.

JOHNSON: Never changed its tune?

WEAR: Never did. They are now in a chain with U.S.A. Today, the company that publishes it. They are a Gannett paper now. They bought out the old Republican paper.

JOHNSON: They just had that one major newspaper in town?

WEAR: That's all.

JOHNSON: I think labor once started a paper, but maybe it didn't last very long.

WEAR: The Press. They started the Springfield Press. There was the Springfield Leader and the Springfield Press and that went on for a while and if the Leader took one stand the Press took the other, and visa versa. Then finally they merged, and the Republican forces bought it out.

JOHNSON: The Leader bought them out. So in '52 you saw Truman when he was here for a 35th Division Reunion. Did you see him after that at all?

WEAR: I don't remember whether that Carruthersville trip was before or after.

JOHNSON: But that would have been the last time possibly.

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WEAR: One of those two was the last time I saw him.

JOHNSON: Did he come down here to visit your father at all after your father came back in '53?

WEAR: No. After he became President, hell, he didn't have time to do any of that stuff.

JOHNSON: Of course, he had a cousin here, Ralph Truman.

WEAR: Yes.

JOHNSON: What do you know about Ralph?

WEAR: I was the first World War II American Legion commander locally, and Ralph tried to get me to run for the state commandership, and I wouldn't do it. Of course, I had some relationship with Ralph in the Legion, and that's about all. Ralph and I were friends. As I say, he tried to get me to run for state commander, but I wouldn't do it. Hell, I was too busy trying to make a living. Then I had a wife and small children coming along, who by now are lawyers.

JOHNSON: How many children do you have?

WEAR: I've got two boys.

JOHNSON: Just the two boys. And their names are . . .

WEAR: Sam Burke is the oldest and William A. Wear, Jr.

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is the youngest. Bill, Jr. is here in this office with me. The other one, actually he was an electronics engineer and he was teaching in the medical school down in Birmingham on these electronic things they use to measure the heartbeat and all that kind of thing. He worked at the medical school, and then decided he'd go to law school. While he was doing this he went to law school and liked it, and so he's an electronics engineer and a lawyer, but he's practicing law.

JOHNSON: Truman came back for his cousin Ralph's funeral in '62 or '63.

WEAR: But I didn't see him then.

JOHNSON: So then you didn't really get to meet with him after he left the Presidency.

WEAR: Actually, after he became President it was hard as hell to get close to him for anything.

JOHNSON: Never got to play poker with him again.

WEAR: Not after he became President. This is when he was Senator. He was available for poker games when he was a Senator, but not as President.

JOHNSON: Well, okay, if there's nothing else you can add at the moment, I think we'll conclude.

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WEAR: I've got something in here you might be interested in. This is from the book, This Man Truman. The only thing I have is what my father wrote in here.

JOHNSON: He made some marginal notes?

WEAR: Yes. His writing is horrible, so I'll read it to you.

JOHNSON: He wrote right over that page. What page did he write that on?

WEAR: Page 89.

JOHNSON: What does he write?

WEAR: "I was in Washington in March 1944, and was told by some of then-Senator Truman's staff, that the Senator was going to be nominated for Vice-President. Later during the same day I had a very pleasant visit with him and he told me that he was happy being Senator from Missouri. Under no circumstances would he even consider the vice-presidency. I was a delegate to the Democratic National Convention in Chicago the following July (1944). Robert Hannegan gave a luncheon for the Missouri delegation and their friends. Dick Nacy came to me just before the luncheon and asked me if I would make a speech urging the delegation to line up for Senator Truman for Vice President. I told him while I would be for him, that the Senator did not want it. I saw the Senator a few minutes later and told him about my conversation with Nacy. He said, 'Sam, go ahead and make the speech. While

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I don't want to be Vice President, they have me over a barrel and I'm going to be nominated." Whatever that may be worth, there it is. He wrote that in here.

JOHNSON: I'd like to add that as an appendix. I appreciate your time and the information.

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