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Cabot, Jane Fenderson oral history interview

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Interview with Jane Fenderson Cabot by Don Nicoll

Summary Sheet and Transcript

Interviewee
Cabot, Jane Fenderson

Interviewer
Nicoll, Don

Date
February 5, 2000

Place
Brooklyn, New York

ID Number
MOH 178

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Biographical Note

Jane Fenderson Cabot was born on April 30, 1943 in Biddeford, Maine. Her parents were Janet (Hazelton) and Charles Fenderson. Her mother was a homemaker, and her father was a store superintendent at the Porteous, Mitchell and Braun Department Store in Portland, Maine. Jane lived in Biddeford until her family moved to Saco, Maine, in the late 1940s. Her family was fairly political, influenced by her uncle Paul Hazelton, who was a Bowdoin College professor, and a campaign manager for Ed Muskie. Cabot graduated from Thornton Academy in 1960. She then attended Mount Holyoke College, graduating in 1964. During her last two summers at Mount Holyoke, she worked as an intern in Ed Muskie's Senate office. After her graduation from college, she returned to Washington to work in Senator Muskie's office. Her positions included Secretary, Research Assistant, and Special Assistant. At the time of this interview, she was Executive Vice President of the public issues practice at the M. Booth Company.

Scope and Content Note

Interview includes discussions of: family background; Paul Hazelton; 1956 Pemaquid clambake; John F. Kennedy in Lewiston; Brown v. Board of Education; college in the early 1960s; assassination of JFK; interning for Muskie in the summers of 1963 and 1964; senatorial campaign vs. Cliff McIntire; the Senate office in 1964; Kennedy visit to Maine in 1963;

Passamaquoddy Tidal Power Project; Dickey-Lincoln School; Roosevelt-Campobello International Park Commission [RCIPC] formation; Campobello administration; television growing up; the Cold War in college; and the Cuban missile crisis.

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Transcript

Don Nicoll: It is Saturday, the 5th day of February in the year 2000, we are at 32 Schermerhorn Place in Brooklyn, New York, interviewing Jane Fenderson Cabot. The interviewer is Don Nicoll. Jane, could you tell us your full name and your date of birth?

Jane Fenderson Cabot: My name is Jane Fenderson Cabot, and I was born April 30th, 1943.

DN: And where were you born?

JC: Biddeford, Maine.

DN: In Biddeford, Maine. And your parents' names were?

JC: Charles and Janet Hazelton Fenderson.

DN: Did both your parents grow up in Biddeford?

JC: Saco. Yes, my father, my father was born in Portland and lived maybe the first ten or twelve years in Portland, then moved to Saco. But they both have lived in Saco ever since.

DN: And were they about the same age?

JC: Exactly.

DN: Exactly the same age. And what was your father's occupation?

JC: He was, when I was growing up he was the store superintendent of Porteous, Mitchell & Braun in Portland. Later he was both a school administrator, and then later even, a court mediator.

DN: And did your mother work outside the home?

JC: She did when she, before she was married, but after marriage no.

DN: And did your father have brothers and sisters?

JC: No.

DN: He was an only child.

JC: He's an only child, yeah.

DN: And your mother?

JC: She had two brothers and a sister. She's the oldest.

DN: And did you have many contacts with your mother's family?

JC: Yes.

DN: Now, you were growing up in Saco starting 1943, and where did you go to school?

JC: I went through, I started school in Biddeford because we were living, when my father came back from the service in WWII, housing was very short and they couldn't find a place to live. They were, the place that my mother and I were, was a rental property. And in common with so many other people at the time, the son of the family that owned the house was coming back and they needed that house for his family, so we took up temporary residence in a house in Biddeford that was owned and hadn't actually been lived in for many years, but owned by a close friend of my mother's. So we lived there three years. When I was seven I think, we moved back to Saco and I went through Saco public schools from then on, and then went to Thornton Academy from which I graduated in 1961.

DN: What was it like growing up in Saco in those days?

JC: It was still a pretty small town. I think the population was, actually in common with a lot of mill towns in Maine in the '50s. We lost population as many mills moved south, but I think it was around ten thousand in those days. It was a good town to grow up. You knew your neighbors, you knew just about everybody in your class. You walked downtown and knew people in the stores and along the way. I spent a lot of time in the library, that was always a great place to go.

DN: What fascinated you about the library?

JC: I was a reader, from the time I was very little. So when I read just about every book in the children's division, I couldn't take books out of the adult section of the library without my parents. And then I remember one time the librarian came to me very excited, and I was with my dad returning some books, and I think I was in the eighth grade at the time. And she said, "Oh, I'm so glad to see you Jane," she said, "we have a new section for accelerated readers like you."

DN: And what books interested you, particularly in your high school years?

JC: I was always interested in history from the time I was quite young. But like any kid I read sort of anything that came along. I read mystery stories, I read Nancy Drew and all of those things, and then graduated on to more serious things. I can't remember specifi-, I remember reading Gone With the Wind when I was probably in eighth grade, spending an entire spring vacation holed up reading it.

DN: History interested you. Did politics?

JC: Sure.

DN: Was politics part of your family?

JC: Politics was part of the family always. My family, unlike many others in town, were Democrats and had been, lifelong, I think influenced by my great grandfather who had been a newspaper editor in Biddeford. He was the editor of the old *Biddeford Record*. And he, it was, the family lore was that he was totally ambidextrous, and this was back before they used typewriters much, and so he would write first with his right hand and then when he got tired he'd switch to his left hand and do that. He was known as, his name was George, but he was known as Toy Sands.

DN: Toy Sands?

JC: Toy Sands, yeah, T-O-Y, Toy, I don't know where it came from but that was his name.

DN: And his family name was Sand?

JC: Sands, with an S.

DN: S-A-N-D-S.

JC: Yeah, and his older daughter married a man by the name of Charlie Hazelton, who was from a big Irish family in Biddeford. And that was at a time when intermarriage between old Yankees, who were the Sands', and relatively new Irish, the Hazeltons, even though it's an English name they were Irish, it was quite a, it was quite unusual, so that my mother's family had an interesting background. On the one side of the family they represented old New England, and on the other side of the family they were recent Irish immigrants. They got along very well,

but it was always an interesting heritage that sort of plays down through the family through my generation as well.

DN: Now, your great-grandfather was a newspaper editor, and the *Brunswick Record*, you indicate -

JC: The *Biddeford Record*.

DN: *Biddeford Record*, excuse me.

JC: No, that's okay.

DN: The *Biddeford Record* was a Democratic paper?

JC: Yes, I think it must have been because he was a Democrat.

DN: And were the Hazeltons members of the Catholic Church, or?

JC: Yes, they were, but my mother's family were not raised as Catholics. They were, in fact, they were baptized, the children apparently were baptized as Catholics, they were raised as Unitarians. My grandfather, whose name was also Charles, both my grandfathers' names were Charles and my father's name is Charles, so there were a lot of Charles' in the family. My grandfather Hazelton was sort of a fallen Catholic, he did not attend Mass regularly.

DN: And so was the Sands family Unitarian?

JC: To the extent they had any religion, yes, I guess.

DN: Was religion very important in your family?

JC: No, not at all.

DN: But politics was.

JC: Yeah, from the very early days, from earliest days, I remember listening to my, you asked earlier if our family was close and it is and was. And the Hazelton children sat and talked politics and that was one of the staples of family conversation. And in 1956, my Uncle Paul, who was at Bowdoin then and for many years thereafter, became Ed Muskie's, I guess was it his campaign manager or chairman in the 1956 election -

DN: Campaign manager.

JC: Manager, yeah. But that was just sort of a culmination of his involvement as a sort of volunteer in politics back in the early days of the Maine Democratic Party.

DN: Had you paid much attention to state politics before 1956?

JC: I was sort of young. I think that was my, that was the first, no, actually let me take that back. I remember the first political experience I ever had was my grandfather Charlie Hazelton taking me to a rally in Saco in August, it must have been 1952, to see Richard Nixon come through town. He said, I remember he was retired and living in our house, and he grabbed my hand and said, "Let's go down and see this guy Nixon. He's running for vice president and I can't stand him, but let's hear him." So I do remember going and seeing Nixon come through in a big open car.

DN: And do you remember, was the crowd curious or?

JC: You know, it's so long ago I just don't remember much about it. I just remember seeing a car, and going there, but I don't remember much more than that.

DN: By the way, you've talked about your mother's family and their involvement in politics. You also indicated that your father was a Democrat.

JC: He is a Democrat now, and in fact the most outspoken one in the family. He came from a Republican background. His grandfather, his father's family, the Fendersons, were old Saco as well. And his grandfather James Fenderson was one time mayor of Saco, Republican mayor of Saco, so he married into this wild family of Democrats. By the time that, I guess by the time he was an adult his family was not particularly politically active, but they were very definitely Republicans.

DN: Did, do you remember what his reactions were in '52, '54, '56?

JC: No, I don't really remember. He was much less outspoken then than my mother and her family. Actually, I said my first political memory was 1952. Actually I remember waking up on the morning of, in November 1948 hearing my mother running around saying, "Truman won! Truman won!" because they had gone to bed of course thinking that [Thomas E.] Dewey had won and then waking up the next morning and hearing the radio. That's my first political memory. But anyway, no, Dad was not in those days, in fact I have a sneaking suspicion he may have voted for Eisenhower in 1952. He was a veteran, he had served in Normandy in the D-Day campaign and I suspect, he won't admit it, but I think he voted for Eisenhower. Not in '56 I don't think, but in '52. Because by '56 when Paul had become so active, he would have out of family loyalty, I think, voted Democrat at that point.

DN: Did your father talk much about his war experiences?

JC: Not then. I was aware of the fact that he had served and was a, not just a veteran but a combat veteran, which was surprisingly rare. All of my uncles, Paul included, had been in the Army. No one had seen active combat except my dad. He was drafted the day I was born, and he managed to hold off for about three months before he was actually inducted. He had been trying to get a commission into the Navy, and for some reason his papers from Boston University where he had graduated were lost, and therefore the Naval commission had, was held up. He then got the draft notice for the Army and decided to go ahead and join the Army, which he did.

And he went off in early August of 1943 and eventually ended up landing in Normandy on D-hour plus fifty minutes on June 6th, 1944. And he spent the next however many months from June '44 through the spring of '45 in combat through France, in the Norman campaign through France into Belgium where he was wounded and evacuated to England for a few weeks. Then he rejoined his unit after the Battle of the Bulge, so he missed that. They had been in it, completely in it, but by the time he rejoined them they were moving into Germany. And he ended up somewhere between Bonn, in the Bonn area, in the Bonn sector, I'm not exactly sure where. I know the name, I can pull it out somewhere but I can't give it off the top of my head.

DN: But the one influence on his political attitudes, at least in the early years that you're aware of, was the possibility that he felt loyal to Eisenhower.

JC: Yeah, I think so, I think so. As I say, I accused him recently, I said, "Did you vote for Eisenhower?" He said "No," but I do think he did. That was certainly what we thought at the time.

DN: Now, your uncle became campaign manager in the 1956 campaign for Ed Muskie. Do you remember any conversations around the family table about the fact that Paul Hazelton was going to be managing the governor's reelection campaign?

JC: Oh sure, we talked about it a lot. And Paul was, Paul used to come, he would, they lived in Brunswick, we lived in Saco, he would always stop by the house whenever he was anywhere in the general vicinity of York county. And sometimes he'd come rolling in at eleven o'clock and sleep on the couch or, you know, just because he was very, just on the road all the time in those days. And I was very excited about it, I thought it was very glamorous and so I followed the campaign carefully. I don't remember anything about it in terms of the issues, but I do remember the excitement of being, you know, drawn into it. And Muskie obviously was the incumbent. He had already made a good record as governor, and it was not a difficult campaign as I recall.

DN: Do you remember what Paul's mood was during the campaign?

JC: Tired. No, I mean, I know, I mean I do remember he was tired a lot because they were, he was not used to working the crazy hours of a campaign. He was, after all, from an academic setting. I do remember he had a very funny story about going back to Bowdoin for his first faculty meeting after the campaign and sitting around the table listening to an endless discussion about maybe ordering pencils or something like that, some very minor issue, and it might have been parking. And finally he threw his hands on the table and said, "God damn it, make a decision."

DN: There's a, I'll give you another piece of that story which may be appropriate here. During the campaign I was executive secretary of the state committee, and Paul would come to the party headquarters every so often for sessions where we dealt with the details of the campaign. And fairly early in the campaign we had to make decisions on purchasing bumper stickers and also campaign literature. And Paul, as an academic, looked at the question and said, "What colors

should we use?" And he had carefully done some research and found some psychological study that suggested certain colors being more appropriate for attracting or repelling or catching peoples' attention. And I remember being in the office and having phone calls coming in and a stack of calls to return and other things, and Paul saying, "On the one hand, this color and this color are appropriate, but on the other hand this will have an adverse effect on the voters." And I would say to him, "It doesn't make any difference, Paul. God damn it, just make a decision." And we went through the campaign on a variety of detailed discussions of that sort.

After the campaign, he came to the office and we were working on the campaign financial reports. And by then he was back teaching and I asked him how it was to be back on the campus and he told me the story of the faculty meeting and, as I recall the story, they had their meeting and they spent the first half hour or so debating when the next meeting -

JC: The next meeting, yes, yes.

DN: - should be and what they would serve for refreshments.

JC: I think that's right, yeah.

DN: And then he said, I didn't realize what you'd done to me in this campaign until that moment.

JC: That's right, that's very funny. I'd forgotten, that's exactly what the issue was.

DN: What kind of a person was Paul?

JC: Oh, he was wonderful. He was the light of our lives in many, many ways. He was a wonderful listener, a great talker, I mean you could spend endless hours, but he was probably the best listener of anybody I've ever known. And that was certainly something that we came to appreciate as we were older.

When I was a little girl I just loved being with him, and he introduced me to all sorts of fun things to do. He took me to the Boston Museum the first time to see, I saw the first, my first impressionist with him. He loved Maine and he loved all sorts of Maine stories and landscapes and poets. He loved, we loved to go to Alna to see where Edward Arlington Robinson grew up, and to just sort of, it's a very small town on a lovely little river, the Sheepscot or whatever it is up there, Head Tide. And we just, exploring Maine with him was a great joy.

And of course he, after the '56 campaign he'd explored Maine I suspect even more than he had done before and he knew nooks and crannies that nobody else knew anything about, or stories about places that no one else knew, or people. And he would pass a house and he'd talk about someone he knew that lived, either lived in at the time or used to live in that house. He always would, he would walk in with books, books, books, books. I have a lot of his books here, we inherited some. I had a lot of his art books downstairs, sketch books, he was an amateur artist.

DN: There was a pause there for a telephone call. We'll resume; Jane has been describing her

uncle Paul Hazelton. What was Paul's field at Bowdoin?

JC: He came back to Bowdoin after the war, he had gone there as a student, in the admissions office and he worked as an admissions officer for several years. And then, I'm not even sure if he taught English part-time or not but he eventually was asked to start the education department and that he did, and he was the education department for the rest of his career at Bowdoin. I think he retired in 1995 perhaps, or thereabouts, '94, I'm not sure exactly what year. But anyway, he taught education.

His particular interest was vocational education and he spent two long sabbaticals in England looking at various forms of English education and how, and obviously the very stratified, at that time, system of English education and how it would be possible to educate those less privileged or less fortunate in society. And that was something that he thought about a lot in American education. I think he also was, particularly as he grew, became more and more interested in the teaching of teachers and how classroom teaching can be made more relevant, and all the things that are sort of, we hear in education reform today. I think those are issues he'd been thinking about and teaching for a long time.

DN: Your uncle had been a boxer in college, as I recall.

JC: I don't know about the boxing. He certainly was a football player. Was he a boxer? I didn't even know that, that's interesting. He was a football player. In fact there's a wonderful story. He didn't make it to my mother and father's wedding because of a football game at Bow-, that he was in and they, he and some of the rather bloody team mates arrived in time for the reception, but not the wedding.

DN: Was he a very combative person?

JC: No, not at all, that was what's so funny. He was a very gentle person.

DN: Your uncle was involved in the '56 campaign . . . .

JC: Yeah.

DN: Was that the first time you'd met Ed Muskie?

JC: I'm trying to, I was trying to remember whether I met him first in 1956 or a little bit earlier. I have two distinct recollections of my first two meetings with him. One was at the Democratic clambake at Pemaquid in the summer of 1956 when Adlai Stevenson was running for the second time and he was the guest speaker. And I went and saw and heard and met both of them.

And then there was another time that my class went up to Augusta to watch the legislature in session, and it was either the same year or the year before, I'm not exactly sure if it's '56 or '57. And we went up and I walked through the corridor of the Capitol and there was the governor, standing, leaning against the wall. I have a very strong recollection of him, he was tall and

skinny and just sort of had an elbow against the wall, and I'm sure he had a bow tie on, and talking to some either reporter or legislator, I don't know. And I, for some reason, I was not a very forward person but I screwed up my courage and went over and introduced myself and told him, I said, "I'm Janie Fenderson and I'm Paul Hazelton's niece." It surprised everybody in the family.

DN: Now, what do you remember about the Pemaquid event in 1956?

JC: Well, I was excited. I remember being, you know, there were a lot of people there. But the thing I do remember is Jim Oliver getting up, he was a congressman at the time, and he introduced Stevenson and he was sort of going on and, or I don't know if he was actually introducing or just speaking before Stevenson spoke. But he was working himself up and he said, "And come November, we're going to have another Republican in the White House!" Do you remember that? He had been a Republican and he'd switched to being a Democrat but he hadn't quite made the transition in his overblown oratory. And I remember thinking that was the funniest thing I'd heard in a long time.

I also was thrilled because my Uncle Paul took me over to Ed Muskie and whispered to him and Muskie then came over and introduced me to Adlai Stevenson. And Stevenson, who had wonderful blue eyes that were a little bit startling when you, because he didn't, he wasn't particularly colorful but he had beautiful blue eyes and he looked right at me and said, "I'm very glad, always glad when I see young people interested in politics, Jane. I hope you'll stay interested," or something like that, stay involved. I was thrilled, and then I, that I got their autographs too.

DN: Now, that interest in politics continued when you went to college. Where did you go to college?

JC: I went to Mt. Holyoke College and, yes, I had, by that time was totally interested in politics. My Uncle Paul's wife, Jane, took me and some friends and my mother, my mother and me and friends, to Lewiston to see John Kennedy when he came through a couple of nights before his election in 1960. And obviously, by that, I was a senior in high school at that point, I was already bitten by the bug. And when I went to college I majored in American history, or majored in history with a concentration in American history, but I was really interested in going to Washington specifically to work with Ed Muskie, that's what I wanted to do.

DN: And you knew that when you went as a freshman?

JC: I did, I had made up my mind I wanted to do that practically from the time I was twelve years old.

DN: Do you remember anything about that Kennedy appearance in Lewiston?

JC: Oh yes. He was very late, as I recall he was about four hours late coming in. That was the end of the campaign and the crowd in Lewiston was thrilling. It was a very large crowd sort of strung out over the streets all around the park that I believe is now called Kennedy Park. And

Muskie and Coffin, Frank Coffin was running for governor, and Muskie and, oh, I don't know, Louis Jalbert was there I'm sure, and all sorts of Democratic politicians were trying to keep the crowd warmed up and there, because it was just going on and on and on and obviously later and later and later, and it was getting pretty cold, too. And I remember at one point Muskie was keeping the crowd going by just saying anything that came into his head and they were leading cheers. And he looked up and he said, "Who invented the light bulb? Give me an E." He was just trying to, he'd do anything to keep people going. And then they'd get hoarse and another speaker would take over.

And then finally Kennedy came and it was very exciting and most of the crowd had stayed. And I remember we weren't at all close but we were within good eye sight distance and fortunately the loud speaker system was good. And I just remember that wonderful impression of youth and vitality that he projected. And he went, he drove right by us so we did get to see him very closely.

DN: During that period were there any public policy issues that caught your attention particularly?

JC: What period are you talking about?

DN: In the period that you were in high school, up through your high school years to the Kennedy election.

JC: Okay. Yeah, I think there were, there were issues surrounding the Cold War that we were certainly aware of, and I remember having to write a paper in high school about [Nikita Sergievich] Kruschev's visit to the United States. That must have been 1959 maybe, '58, something like that when he went on the famous trip out to the Iowa hog farm. And I remember the U-2 crisis of 19-whatever year that was, '59 or '60. It seems like, I do, oh I do remember very much the Brown vs. Board of Education decision in 1954. That was something. We got the *New York Times* at home, it didn't come to the house, we picked it up every, it was a day late by the time we got it in those days. And I remember to this day the huge headline on the front of the *New York Times* when the Supreme Court voted in the Brown case.

DN: Did your family talk about that decision?

JC: Yeah, yeah, we always talked issues and politics and great events at home. And obviously Maine, because of the terrible depression that we went through in the '50s, we were very personally affected by the economic downturn. Less, obviously, effected by some of the great social events that were going on like the early desegregation movement. That was something that really I was much more personally involved with when I got to college.

DN: Now in college, who were the great influences at the college on you?

JC: I would have to say one particular professor who took great interest in me, she became my advisor, she was an American History professor. And although she wasn't a dynamic teacher, she was solid and good and well grounded and really encouraged students who had an interest in

the subject. Her particular interest was women and social movements of the nineteenth century, which didn't particularly interest me at all, I was not at that time interested in social history. I was much more interested in political and diplomatic history and ultimately chose to concentrate on the Federalist era, on which I wrote a thesis my senior year. But anyway, her name was Mary Benson and I stayed in touch with her until she died.

And then, I would say the other great influences were friends. I made an astonishing number, especially now, thirty-five years later, an astonishing number of lifelong friends while I was in college, many of whom I am still in either daily touch with or very frequent touch with. I had dinner with a college classmate last night. You know, it's just, it's astonishing to me, those ties and how they have been maintained.

DN: Have any of those friends been part of your professional life, or at all related to your professional life?

JC: No, not particularly, no. My professional friends are a different, I mean they're equally good friends but not, they're, I don't really have any college friends that I've been particularly involved with professionally.

DN: You said that when you went to college, your intention was ultimately to go to work for Ed Muskie. When did that opportunity present itself?

JC: Well, in my sophomore year. I'm trying to think, I'm trying to remember the whole sequence of events. I talked to Paul, Paul got in touch with you, or no, Paul at some point had spoken to Muskie personally I think, and said that he had his niece who was interested. And Muskie, needless to say just said, "Well when she's ready," I think I was probably fifteen at the time, "let me know."

So when I was, twenty at this point, I talked my parents into letting me go to Washington for the summer. And through Paul got in touch with you, and heard back from this Mr. Nicoll that there was an opening in the office for someone who could do sort of all sorts of chores, including clipping newspapers that had been backing up for a long time. And, 'Oh, incidentally, we have an extra spare room in our basement and if you would like to come and in exchange for washing a few dishes and looking after some children occasionally, we'd be glad to have you stay with us,' which I did.

DN: And that was the summer of '63.

JC: Sixty-three, yeah, yeah.

DN: What, do you remember any incidents of that summer?

JC: Oh, let's see, incidents.

DN: Incidents, events, or patterns.

JC: No, no, I'm just trying to think what happened that summer. Well, let's see, I remember the second summer even more. Well, I remember a lot of things that summer. We went to the, the interns were all invited to the White House and so I went with about three thousand other people of my age to see President Kennedy. That was the summer of some of the terrible bombings in the South. And I remember sitting with you and Hilda and children watching some, watching I think Kennedy talk after one of the bombings, and I don't remember if it was the bombing of Birmingham or what, but I definitely remember that. It was also, was that the summer that he went to Berlin?

DN: Yes.

JC: Yes, that was the summer he went to Berlin. So that was on everybody's mind, too, but I think, I think it was the bombings and the growing movement in the South that I remember most, in a political sense, that summer. I don't, I can't honestly say I remember much about what was going on in the Senate office, except I think I remember hearing a lot about something called the Passamaquoddy Tidal Project and the Dickey Lincoln dam. And I can't remember whether that was that summer or the next summer that we really spent, I mean I guess it was beginning then.

And I remember a lot more, I came back the next year, a second year as an intern. And that summer, it was the summer of '64, we were gearing up for a reelection campaign and so I did a lot of research on Clifford McIntire's voting record that summer. We also had, George Mitchell had us update the senator's mailing list. And it was those, it was when everything was on metal addressograph plates and we were going from something like ten thousand to sixty thousand names, all of which had to be hand sorted into these long metal trays. And each, we took turns, the interns had to do it, and we had to take turns going down to the Senate, the bowels of the Senate basement spending day after day with these addressograph plates sorting them, you know, seeing a name and putting it into the Ls, it was a lot of fun. But at least we got to do the research on the off days.

DN: Who were some of the people in the Senate office that you got to meet both in '63 and '64?

JC: In '63 the first person I met was Gayle, then her name was Fitzgerald, later Cory. She had been, I remember very well, Gayle came bounding in in a yellow dress the first day I was there and I remember I liked her instantly. She'd been on vacation and was full of stories about her vacation and she just came bounding, and I think then she was the receptionist. Joanne Amnott, later Hoffmann, was the senator's secretary in 1963, personal secretary in 1963. Other people on staff, obviously including you, Don, who at the time was administrative assistant, were George Mitchell who was the executive assistant, and Chip, was Chip there that year, Chip Stockford?

DN: Sixty-three, yeah.

JC: Sixty-three, yeah, Chip was there. And Virginia Pitts was a case worker, Carol Ann Obliskey who was another case worker. Carol Ann was not from Maine, the others mostly were, although Chip I don't know, was he from Maine?

DN: Well, one minor correction, Carol Ann was from Maine, she was -

JC: I'm sorry, Carol Ann Obliskey was from Maine, and Carol Ann Hecht was not from Maine. Yeah, Carol Ann Obliskey worked for you, Carol Ann Hecht worked with Virginia and George, that's right, I'm sorry, I was picturing her, yeah. Who else there that summer? Those are the names that jump right out at me from '63, and I know I'm missing a lot of people but those are the ones I remember. In '64, again it was George and still Chip and you, Gayle and Joanne and Virginia, and that summer I think Nancy O'Mara [Ezold] was another intern, was she an intern that summer? And there were, let me see who were the other interns I remember. I can't remember their names, I can remember their faces. Nancy and I are the ones that I remember.

DN: And what did you do in '64?

JC: In '64 I did the research, a lot of research on Cliff McIntire and all the odd chores of updating the mailing list and doing this horrible job with the addressograph plates. In '63 I literally clipped newspapers all summer and ran errands.

DN: And those experiences didn't turn you off?

JC: No, I had fun because I sat outside your office and I listened to everything. In those days there was no such thing as a private office except for the senator's. And we, you know, they had partitions that went about three quarters of the way up and, or half up, and you could hear everything and I was just strategically located outside your desk and I heard everything that went on, I loved it.

DN: Do you remember anything -

JC: It was the beginning of a life long habit of, you know, discretion.

DN: Do you remember some of the things you learned, or the things that seemed to be on our minds?

JC: Well, I remember some very late night calls you had with, what was that woman's name who was a political person up in Lincoln? Oh, what was her name, do you remember?

DN: Jones, in Lincoln?

JC: No.

DN: Oh, oh, I know, Broderick.

JC: No, that doesn't sound right.

DN: In Lincoln?

JC: I think it was Lincoln, but I may be wrong.

DN: Or you're thinking of Peggy Murray.

JC: It might have been Peggy Murray, that was probably, where was she?

DN: Late at night it would have been Peggy Murray in Hancock County.

JC: Yeah, Hancock, okay, I'm sorry, I thought it was Lincoln, anyway. I remember being sort of struck by the range of issues that you had to deal with, from the most minutely sort of personal problems of constituents, either personal friends or not, just plain constituents, to the great issues of war and peace that were obviously any senator's responsibility. And you could, in the space of ten minutes be dealing with one or the other and you'd have to sort of change gears very suddenly. And the demands, the phone calls, the expectations of people in Maine that, of accessibility and being able to get to Senator Muskie, or to you, without any wait or without any, you know, without any delay. And then being, you know, surprised that you might be tied up with something else.

I think that in those early days certainly, we were preoccupied with Maine issues more as, than as the years went on when there were other political demands and a larger view. I think Muskie was just coming into his own in '63 and '64 in the Senate, he was still a fairly junior senator. He, at that time, was chairman of the intergovernmental relations subcommittee, and I believe the pollution, air and water pollution control subcommittee then. And that reminds me of another person, Dave Walker, who was then chairman of the intergovernent-, not chairman, staff director of the intergovernmental relations subcommittee. Leon didn't come actually I think until '65, Leon Billings. I remember he and I were, came about the same time, when I came back. He'd been a lobbyist before that with the American Public Power Association?

DN: Right.

JC: Yeah. Anyway, this is a parenthetical, I just heard about Dave Walker. He's at the University of Connecticut, isn't that interesting?

DN: Still teaching?

JC: Yes. I, someone I met at a dinner party this fall is teaching at the University of Connecticut in political science and we were chatting about my, you know, we just, it was a, we'd never met each other. And when I mentioned Muskie he said, "Oh my goodness," he said, "do you know Dave Walker?" I said, "Yes, very well. I haven't seen him for years."

DN: I'm going to stop the tape on this side and turn it over and we will continue.

JC: It's funny, I haven't really thought about all these things, Don, and I can't remember what was going on that summer.

End of Side A, Tape One, Session One

Side B, Tape One, Session One

DN: This is the second side of the first tape interviewing Jane Fenderson Cabot on the 5th of February, the year 2000. Jane, we were talking about your experiences in 1963 and 1964 in the Muskie office, and just beginning to talk about the president's visit in 1964, or 1963 rather. And I'd like you to go back to 1963 and remember what you can, both about President Kennedy's trip to Maine and about the discussions that went on around the, two areas of interest here are pollution control, the start up of the subcommittee on air and water pollution, and the Passamaquoddy Tidal Power project and the upper St. John.

JC: I was just going to say, two words that just came back to me from 1963, or the two thoughts. One was that President Kennedy went to Maine that summer on a brief weekend trip, vacation really, and Muskie went with him as I recall. Did he fly up in Air Force One or? Yeah, to Bangor. And there's a wonderful, he then went sailing with President Kennedy and took a wonderful picture of the president lying, reading a book on this sailboat. And the other persons that I remember being in it one of them is, he was Ben Smith who was, I think, the interim senator who had replaced Kennedy, holding the seat for Teddy in Massachusetts. And I wasn't particularly involved in any of that. I remember there was a lot of flurry of excitement in the office, telephone calls and arrangements but I wasn't in any way involved. I just remember hearing about it and being excited about it.

And, of course, the big difference between 1963 and 1964 obviously was the assassination in November of 1963. And then Johnson's assumption of the presidency which resulted in some of the greatest legislative output, certainly on a domestic side, in this century, or in the last century. I was thinking about 1964 when I was, came back, it was during some of the great civil rights debates and some of the great, I think the Public Accommodations Bill was being debated that summer. And I remember Hubert Humphrey being very much involved in the filibusters that were going on, on the Senate floor that summer.

You also asked me to talk about what I remember about the Passamaquoddy Tidal power project, that was something, as a down Mainer, as a southern, south, from the south of Maine, I didn't really know anything about Passamaquoddy. I never, I don't think I could even spell it when I first went there. But anyway, I certainly had never seen it, but I certainly got to know a lot about it that summer. It was a proposal very much favored by Muskie and I think with the active backing of the Interior Department, Stu Udall I remember being very much involved, to harness the enormous tides on Passamaquoddy Bay to create more power for eastern Maine and New Brunswick. And it was very controversial.

It was tied in with harnessing, I think, the upper St. John or the lower St. John, upper St. John River between Maine and Canada. And on the one hand, advocates of economic development thought it was a terrific idea. And there was a lot of opposition that developed over time, and at the time, on the environmental impact. I don't know if we used 'environmental impact' as a term the way it's used now, but certainly people were concerned about the St. John and what dams, especially the Dickey dam, the proposed dam at Dickey-Lincoln School, what that would mean to that river and that part of northern Maine which was quite pristine, and still is.

In the summer of 1964, partly, after the, I guess, I'm not even sure, it had started before President Kennedy's assassination. There was talk of the Hammer family which had taken over the, President Roosevelt's cottage at Campobello, had bought it from the Roosevelt family. There was talk of their donating it to the governments of the United States and Canada for an international park, and Senator Muskie was very much involved in this. I think he introduced the legislation that ultimately made it possible in the Senate. And that, and I truly don't remember when it passed, but by the summer of 1964 it was reality.

And there was a great celebration of the opening I guess, the official opening or the seating of the papers or whatever of the Roosevelt Campobello International Park. And, was it President and Mrs. Johnson? Yeah, President and Mrs. [Lady Bird] Johnson and at least one of their daughters. I know Linda Bird was there, I don't remember if Luci [Baines Turpin] was there or not, flew up to Maine and drove to Campobello for this occasion. And it was of course part of the 1964 election campaign as well. It was also an international occasion. I believe Prime Minister [Lester Bowles] Pearson of Canada was there. And at the time, by this time an international commission, the Roosevelt Campobello International Commission was established to administer this international park. Although there was the Peace Park between North Dakota and Canada, it was a much different thing. I think this was really, maybe still is, a unique undertaking between two countries.

Under the terms of the legislation that Muskie wrote, the park would be administered jointly by the two countries under a commission whose chairmanship would rotate I believe every other year between the United States and Canada. There were six members and six alternates from each country. Muskie was the first chairman, I believe the other two American representatives in the beginning were Franklin Roosevelt, Jr. and, was it Sam Rosenman, was he a commissioner? No, I can't -

DN: Sumner Pike.

JC: Oh Sumner, oh yes, of course, Sumner Pike. And then three, the three alternates were, hmm, well I can't, I know Grace Tully was one and Sam Rosenman was another one.

DN: For a very short time.

JC: Yeah, then he got off.

DN: And Larry Stuart.

JC: Was he one of the originals? Or did he come later?

DN: Oh no, Harry Umphrey, Harry Umphrey from Aroostook County.

JC: Yes, yes, I was going to say Larry came later. And he of course at the time was the commissioner of the Maine Parks and Recreation Department and a good friend of us all. Anyway, that started a really lifelong, what turned out to be a lifelong commitment by Senator Muskie and a lot of the rest of us, in this park. And in the development of this unique, what

became a uniquely interesting, not just a historic monument which it originally started out to be, but turning into a preserve of very interesting ecology and natural, the natural setting of Campobello. I've sort of lost track of it now, but the last time I was there it had been developed into very interesting nature walks and bogs that had, you could go out and walk, you know, these peat bogs over on side, on wooden platforms going out over the bogs, and really a very, very interesting ecology.

DN: Do you remember in 1963 at the time that the environmental subcommittee there, and water pollution subcommittee had been formed, much of the talk around the work of that committee or the management of the committee?

JC: No, I know that the senator spent, was, you know, very much involved in it and I suspect there were hearings going on then, but I don't really remember a lot then. I remember a lot more later.

DN: That was the year of your newspaper clipping.

JC: That was when I was clipping newspapers, right, as I say I wasn't terribly involved in legislation, it was just sort of going on.

DN: You were at college, I believe, when President Kennedy was assassinated.

JC: Yes.

DN: Do you remember what you were doing?

JC: Absolutely, as clear as if it were yesterday. I had just finished lunch, I had gone back to my dormitory room. It was a Friday, first of all it was Friday afternoon. It was a beautiful day in Massachusetts as it was in most of the rest of the country. And a friend of mine came running through my door with a very odd expression on her face and she said, "Jane," she said, "the president's been shot. It just came over the radio." And I thought to myself, my first reaction was "Who, or why in heaven's name would anybody want to shoot President [Richard Glenn] Gettell?" who was the president of our college. And then it, you know, that was my initial thought and then, of course, as soon as I went through this ridiculous thought, it dawned on me what she was talking about. And I said, "Oh my God," and we both ran to a radio then.

One has to realize how different life is. We had one television set in the dormitory and it was down in a public room, and it was a black and white set, and other than that we relied on radio for our news. And within just a very few minutes it was clear that the news was very bad and I don't remember, shortly thereafter we heard that he had, in fact, died. And it was just, it was such a blow, it was like, it's hard to believe now how affected we all were, but especially those of us who were committed to government and to politics and to, who had been so thoroughly captivated by the best ideals of the new frontier. It was a devastating blow. I was, I remember crying for days and not knowing what to do.

And everybody just was sort of in a state of shock and it went on, different people reacted in

different ways. Some people went to church. Some professors canceled all their classes, others didn't. And we were very angry with the ones who didn't, because the last thing any of us wanted to do was go to class. Because it was a weekend, things sort of slowed down and everybody lived by the television set, so that any time you would go into the television room there would be thirty, forty, fifty people sitting around watching it, and it was twenty-four hours of nonstop coverage all weekend.

I remember we were just going in to Sunday dinner, Sunday dinner at college was a fairly elaborate affair in those days, we had to dress up and it was a much more formal meal than most others. And I was in my heels, in my dress, walking through, by the television room. And somebody looked up and said, "Oswald has just been shot." And that was literally at lunch time as we were going in on that Sunday. So we lived by the television and, of course, that did transform that whole, looking back on it you can see the beginning of how television news and the moving image that it created transformed so much of the way we got our information. That really was the beginning of the modern coverage, I think, of minute-to-minute television news.

DN: This takes, coming back to less dramatic events, but during the 1950s, did you have television at home?

JC: Yes. I'm trying to think when we first got it. It wasn't, we weren't the first people in town to have it by any matter of means, but I would imagine we got it in the mid 1950s sometime. And I do remember when I was a fairly young girl watching the Today Show every day, I loved the Today Show when, with Dave Garroway. And so I would say probably '56, '57, something like that is when we got our first television.

DN: Do you remember watching political campaigns during that period up through 1960?

JC: I remember listening to political conventions. I remember, I was at camp even when I heard a Democrat-, I heard the Democratic convention where John Kennedy almost got the vice presidential nomination, that was '56. I remember listening to that, I was at camp, that's how early I was interested in politics. I'm trying to think of -

DN: That was on radio.

JC: It was on radio, yes, yeah, and that would be '56. I remember very clearly the 1960 convention and watching that, or watching, I don't remember watching the Republican convention. It must have been on, I'm sure it was on because my parents would have been watching it. I think one of the things I remember most clearly watching on television, although not in our house but in somebody else's house, were the Army-McCarthy hearings back in the early '50s. And then I also remember my mother listening to them on the radio every day.

DN: And during that period in the '50s, there was, well, no, I'm misremembering. Take us up to the 1960s, the Cuban missile crisis, now you were in college at that time.

JC: I was.

DN: And what kind of an effect did that have on you?

JC: Oh, that had a huge effect on us, because we were sitting in western Massachusetts adjacent to Westover Air Force Base, which had B-52s. And rumor had it, and I think rumor is true because I think I later had it confirmed, there were missile silos around us in western Massachusetts in some of the mountains. We don't know where, but we always thought they were right underneath us. So in the time of the Cuban missile crisis I remember very distinctly hearing these B-52 bombers flying right over us and it was scary. Obviously, remember watching President Kennedy's famous speech to the nation, and we were scared, we were genuinely scared. It dawned on us that we were possibly coming to some sort of nuclear confrontation for the first time, or some sort of confrontation with the Soviets. College students were scared. I'm sure the whole country was, but we were.

DN: How did your experience in this period, nineteen-roughly, sixty-one through the summer of '64. So we're talking about your exposure to the civil rights movement, your exposure to the missile crisis, your experience in Washington in the two summers, and of course the assassination of President Kennedy. How did this affect that long standing interest of yours in politics?

JC: It made me even more determined that that's where I wanted my life to go and that I wanted to be involved in great, in the great issues of our time and affecting them in some way. In those days, it was not common for young women to think about going into political office themselves. Some did, but it was rare. That really never, I never was attracted to political office myself. I was very attracted to the making of public policy, influencing legislation, doing good, because in those days we thought we could have a positive effect in the concept of public service, which I am sad to say has suffered greatly in the last generation or two. The concept of public service when I was a young woman was really the best thing, the best place for you to go, the best and the brightest. And that phrase has been maligned but it was true, the best and the brightest of my generation was attracted to public service.

DN: What were your impressions of Senator Muskie in terms of his attitudes toward politics and government at that period?

JC: I thought then, and it never changed, that he saw politics as an honorable calling that could summon up the best of people, and that's what he talked about. And at his best, when he was most persuasive and most inspirational, he conveyed that to the rest of us.

DN: How much did he have to do with you as an intern?

JC: Not much, he didn't have much, then or ever, to do with his interns or his junior staff. But he was around. I didn't, I mean he was sort of a little big God-like, except when he would explode. But he, I didn't feel particularly, he didn't, it wasn't, he was not particularly remote to me, as I did see him coming and going a lot, partly because his office was next to mine and I did see him, I was aware of his coming and going a lot. I had nothing to say to him or do to him other than say, "Hello, how are you?" those summers.

DN: I'm going to stop the interview now because you have to go.

JC: Remind me to tell you my Paul Douglass story.

DN: Okay, we'll note that down for the next round.

JC: Okay.

DN: Thank you very much.

JC: You're welcome. We didn't get too far.

End of Interview