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Clifford, William H. oral history interview

Marisa Burnham-Bestor

Interview with William H. Clifford by Marisa Burnham-Bestor

Summary Sheet and Transcript

Interviewee
Clifford, William H.

Interviewer
Burnham-Bestor, Marisa

Date
May 11, 1999

Place
Lewiston, Maine

ID Number
MOH 089

Biographical Note

William Clifford was born in Lewiston, Maine in 1929. He attended Frye School, Lewiston Junior High School, Jordan Grammar School and Lewiston High School where he graduated in 1946. He then attended Bowdoin College. He served in the army for two years during the Korean War. He attended Boston University Law School under the G.I. Bill. He was the assistant County Attorney under Larry Raymond and then the County Attorney for six years. He served in the 105th Legislature. He also served in the Senate from 1970-1971. He practiced law with his father from 1956-72.

Scope and Content Note

Interview includes discussions of: the Maine legislature, 1946-49; 1954 Maine gubernatorial campaign; environmental protection (Clean Water Bill); Republican party in Maine; Democratic party in Maine; recollections of the Lewiston school system; Catholic influence of girls being sent to boarding high school; John D. Clifford; being teased about being wealthy; Grandmother's chauffer; Lewiston predominantly working class families (mills, farm families); no ethnic tensions; Irish/French in grade school; John D. Clifford, Jr. starting a law practice in 1914 and William Clifford, Sr. following a year later; judgeship appointments being political, rather than merit, based; his impression of Judge Albert Beliveau; Malenfant's use of "Clifford Clique" as

rich vs. poor political weapon, especially during the Malenfant/Lessard mayoral race; his impression of Louis Jalbert; an incident with Bates college affiliates backing McCarthy instead of Humphrey (1968 Maine Democratic Caucus); other legislators' impressions of him in Augusta; Muskie as not being personable; Maine in opposition to Midwest (Republican) and other Democratic states; and having an even playing field between Democrats and Republicans because of Muskie

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Transcript

Marisa Burnham-Bestor: The date is May 11th, 1999, we are at the Muskie Archives at Bates College, and this is session two with Bill Clifford. Present are Bill Clifford and Marisa Burnham-Bestor. I wanted to begin by backtracking a bit from the first interview and asking you some additional questions to fill in some gaps that I had. You mentioned that you attended the Frye School, Lewiston Junior High School, and then Lewiston High School. Could you describe some of your experiences in your early education?

Bill Clifford: I'm not sure you had it in the right order, the Frye School, and there was a, there's another school in between there, Jordan Grammar School. . . .

MB: Which one?

BC: Jordan Grammar and then the high school. And you want me to describe some of the early remembrances?

MB: Yeah, just your experiences, yeah.

BC: Hmm. . . .

MB: Anything that sticks out in your head.

BC: Well, I was, I was always younger than the rest of my classmates. I, I actually started school I think when I was about three years old. I went to kindergarten, and I think I did that because my mother had four children in five years and she was anxious to get us out of the house because she always seemed to always take care of a new baby. So that, my early remembrances are that I got picked on a lot because I was younger than the other kids, and I was always trying to be with the older kids, and they were always sort of putting me down. I mean, I don't know why I mention that except that that's one of my recollections. And I had gotten in a few fights in the school yard because of that I think, you know, I was trying to hang around with kids that were older than I was and usually getting beat up as a result of my immaturity.

But I can remember, on a more pleasant note, some of the teachers that I had were wonderful people. There was a Theresa Burns I think her name was; I think she was either my fifth grade or sixth grade teacher. She was an elderly Irish lady that, I believe she was single and she was just a devoted teacher, and I think I probably learned more in her class than any of the other levels that I was at. And I think it was the fifth grade if I'm not mistaken. And I liked her so much that I always, you know, studied harder for her and was, made sure that I was always prepared and did the homework that she wanted me to do, but, which was not always the case with my other teachers through the, growing up. And I, you know, she always sticks out in my mind as being the best teacher I had up until high school, and then I had some wonderful teachers there. One of them was Izzy Shapiro, who was my math teacher. He was a freshman in, I had him in my freshman year in high school, and I always got an A from him because there again I liked him, and I, and I was, that was the one subject I was pretty good at was algebra or math or whatever. And I always remembered a woman by the name of Miss Bellow. She was my geometry teacher, and that was sort of my favorite subject. There again, that was another math course, and I, she was also one of my, one of my more pleasant teachers. I can remember my Latin class was my least favorite; I'm not sure how I passed it, but I did, but it was not, it was by the skin of my teeth as I remember it.

MB: What subjects were studied?

BC: I think each year we had to have, in high school, we always had to have a math course, we had a French course, or I took the French course, I don't know if I, it was a, I think we had to

have a language, and then English, and history, and I think there was also a social studies course. And there was another gentleman that was, was also I thought a very pleasant teacher and a very, I did reasonably well with him, his name was Denny Davis and he taught social studies.

Those are the kind of things that sort of stand out in my mind, and I was very interested in athletics. And I can remember when I was, you know, in the grammar school age and a freshman in high school, I always, at the time the people who were three or four years ahead of me and seniors and juniors in high school were, they had a really good football team and a good baseball team, and I always went over and watched those games because I, I was at an age when I really looked up to the, you know, the older, the people who were a little older. Maybe that was, I guess that was my immaturity, but anyway, that's, those are my, couple of things that I remember.

MB: How far were the grade differences between you and your older siblings?

BC: My brother Jere was two and a half years older, and he was two years ahead of me, so he was kind of young for his class too. My sister was. . . .

MB: Constance?

BC: Constance, yeah, she was a year and three or four months older, she was born in July, and I was in October, but, and I guess this is a throwback to the, sort of the Catholic upbringing that I had. My mother, I think, was the one that was very adamant about her going away to high school. She did go to the local high school for the first two years I think it was, and then she went to Elmhurst Academy in Rhode Island, which she described as being a prison because they were very, it was a Catholic high school.

MB: Why would the girls be sent away to private school but not the boys in your family?

BC: Well, that was just, there were seven boys, so I suppose it was a question of economics.

MB: How did your family's place in the community and in political circles impact you growing up? Was that at all an issue?

BC: Well, to some extent it was. I, I, my grandfather, who was John D. Clifford the, he was John D. Clifford, and he was a contractor and very successful, he was retired when he was fifty years old. He died in 1941, so I don't remember him that well, but I can remember that my grandmother always had a chauffeur, and she, on rainy days she would send her chauffeur up to pick us up. I mean, I don't know whether it was me or just members of my family because she didn't want us to get wet. And I always used to try to hide, you know, duck out the back door so I wouldn't, because the kids used to, the other kids used to tease me about, you know, being a wealthy, from a wealthy family that sort of was given preferential treatment. And I really, I wanted to be one of the boys, and I really didn't want to be picked up on rainy days. So, in a way that, you know, other kids used to say, call us privileged or, or coming from a rich family and, and although it may have been true to some extent, I didn't really like it.

MB: What was the majority of the economic situation for the other students in Lewiston?

BC: Well, I think some of them were just as well off as I was, but I'd say, I guess now that I look back on it, I guess that I'd have to say that I was sort of middle-class. And I would say that probably, my father was always well looked upon, and he, you know, was a lawyer, and I think lawyers had, in those days, had more influence in the community than they do now. And so I think my family did have some social status, and, more so than the ordinary kid. And, I guess, I, you know, I was conscious of it.

MB: What were the, some of the, you spoke of the, how some of the people were on the same level economically as you were?

BC: Yeah, I mean, I went to school with, I can remember one individual, his father was a Bates professor, and he was very bright, and I think he probably had some money too. I mean, I think he was, he lived in a very nice house, which was, happened to be quite near the schools, one of the schools that we went to, and he was a pretty good friend of mine. He was quite tall and was a good basketball player, and that's how I, in my, that's how we became friends. So there were people like that, but I would say that there were, those were in the minority, that most of the people came from working-class families that, you know, maybe lived, that worked in the, the Bates Mill was a big employer at the time, or they lived on a farm. I went to, in my real low grades when I was like from first grade to fourth grade I went to Pettingill School. And, there was a lot of kids who came from farms, they were bussed in from outside of Lewiston, on the outskirts of Lewiston. So I'm sure that they were, their economic, their income was probably less than my family's, and I'm just guessing, you know, from talking about it.

MB: Did you also go to school with the Franco-American people in the community? Were they . . . .?

BC: Oh yeah, there was a lot of . . . .

MB: How was the relation between . . . .?

BC: I thought that, I thought it was pretty good. You know, when kids, when they're at a young age, they really aren't, they don't carry much prejudice. It's only after they get grown up it seems they, I never felt that they were, they had any prejudice against me because of my family or that. I don't think I had any against them. I don't think there was a great deal of prejudice in, in, you know, certainly in the lower grades. Kids are just kids, and you get teased or you get picked on for other things, other than, not so much the ethnic part of it as who you are and if you're a nerd or a jerk or, that's, you get, it's more your personality that counts.

MB: During your early years, what were your interests? You mentioned math as a talent.

BC: Yeah, well, I was good in, I was pretty good in math, much more so than the other stud-, the other classes. What was the . . . .?

MB: Your interests as far as what you were looking to do.

BC: Oh, well, sports was sort of an overriding interest, but, and, you mean in terms of what courses?

MB: Yeah, I'm thinking of in high school, what did you think you wanted to do with your life?

BC: I'm not sure I had any de-, burning ambitions at that point. I didn't want to be a doctor or a lawyer or anything else. I didn't decide to become a lawyer until a couple of years after I got out of college.

MB: Oh really?

BC: Yeah, and it was only because of, I only went to law school because of the G.I. Bill.

MB: Yeah, I remember you had mentioned that last time, that that was. . . .

BC: So I sort of didn't want to become a lawyer and, you know, except the more I thought about it, the more I thought it was a great education, and from talking with my father and, I, and when I went to law school, I still didn't think I would become a lawyer. I thought I'd get the law education because of its being practically free and then maybe using it in business or something like that, but it didn't turn out that way. No, I didn't really have any ambition to do anything specifically. I can remember that one time, because my, some of my grades were rather poor and my parents became quite concerned about it in, especially in the, like French, the French courses. I never had any interest in learning French and, but I took the courses I guess because they were being, they were required. And so they sent me down to Boston to take a, like a, not an aptitude test so much as a, to see what I, you know, what my interests were. And I, the results came back that I, that my interests were in agriculture and that I should become a farmer. So that was, and that was totally unacceptable to my mother, who was a little more class-conscious than my father, and so anyway that was. . . .

MB: Last time we did not discuss your uncle John Clifford, who was the judge. What was his relationship with your family? I know he was your uncle, but. . . .

BC: Well, he was my father's law partner, starting out in 1914. He started, actually he was one year older than my father, so he started the practice and then when my father graduated from law school, they became partners and they started practicing law. But it wasn't long after he, 1914, he was very much interested in politics, and he, I can't remember the dates on this, but he became the federal district attorney. And he, his, so he left the practice, and my father practiced alone. But I think this was like eight or ten years after they started, so they did practice law together for a period of time. And I think it was in the, somewhere in the 1920s that he became the federal district attorney. And he got the job because he was in politics, he was, you know, he backed, he backed other candidates, and it was sort of a reward for working hard for the party, for the Democratic Party.

And he was a very personable fellow and he was an excellent public speaker and he expressed himself very well, very articulate. And he became the, I think he, no, I'm not sure now. Might

have been when Roosevelt came in which was probably later than I just told you. Yeah, during the Depression it was Hoover, that was in 1928, so when Roosevelt was elected president, that's when I guess my uncle John became federal, the federal prosecutor, so that was '32. Then I guess he practiced longer with my father than I thought. But I know he got the job as a result of his work with, in the Democratic Party, you know, he was always backing candidates and promoting somebody for something.

I wasn't around, I mean I have no recollection of him personally except that through my family, you know, they talked about him, talked, how did he become the district attorney. Well he, that's how he did it was he worked for the party, and that was his reward. And he was the district attorney for a number of years, I think from '32 to '40, at least in the mid-forties, and that, and he became the federal judge in 1946 or '47. And, so that he was, you know, he practiced law with my father for a period of time. And then, it must have been more than I thought, fifteen years maybe, or even more than that, and then he went to, he got this district attorney's job. And then from that he got the federal judgeship. And he died ten years later in 1956, around that time.

MB: Were those appointed positions or elected positions?

BC: Those were appointed. Those, it usually, whoever was in power, whoever was the presidential, whoever, whatever party the president was, it went to one of those, somebody in the Democratic Party. Now usually it was up to the congressional delegation to name the person. For example, if an opening came up now, since Clinton is a Democrat it would be up to the Democratic. Like it would be up to [John] Baldacci or Tom Allen to pick the person in the state who they want to see, you know, who they thought would be, I think it's more on merit now than on, than it used to be. I think it was purely a political appointment. Now it's, I think they're very much conscious of who's qualified first of all and secondly who, you know, is he the right party and could he do the job and what not, and is he politically connected? But in those days it was all politics and that's how it went, that's how it was picked. But they, still it's the same, it's the same procedure.

MB: What drove him to be so politically active, to get active?

BC: Well, I think it was just that he was very much interested in politics, just like Muskie was, and just, I guess that was his interest.

MB: What are your recollections or impressions of Judge Albert Beliveau? Does that name ring a bell?

BC: Oh yeah, yeah, I know him very well, it's. . . .

MB: Is he still living?

BC: No, no. Came from Rumford, he was a superior court judge, he was also a Democrat, and he was on the bench for a number of years. And I don't know as I had an awful lot. When I first started the practice, I think he was on the bench, but I'm not sure I had any dealings with him.

But after he retired as the, as a superior court judge, and I think he might have become the, he might have gotten on the Supreme Court; I'm not sure about that. He went to work for [Louis J.] Brann & [Peter A.] Isaacson, which is a law firm that was local. And he was like of counsel, he was like an, you know, he didn't, he wasn't an every day lawyer, but he came in on occasion to lend prestige to the office and he, they put his name on the letterhead.

And I found him to be a very, very nice person. I think it was because he seemed to like me, but he had a lot of enemies, too. I mean, he was a very strong individual, and he had very strong opinions, and if he didn't like you, you were very apt not to like him. My father had, my father used to talk about times that he had cases with Judge Beliveau and that he thought he was very prejudiced against criminal defendants. My father used to represent a lot of, a number of people that were accused of a crime or drunk driving or bootlegging and that type of thing, and Judge Beliveau was very, didn't hide his feelings, didn't hide his prejudice against people that, you know, the lower-class people. And my father disliked that quite intensely and there were, he told a number of stories that, about Judge Beliveau being prejudiced against his clients, and it made him, it irritated him.

MB: Was he, was Judge Beliveau at all involved with your uncle?

BC: I can't tell you that. I know they knew each other, but other than that I don't remember.

MB: Were they on the same level in the court as far as judges?

BC: No, it was a different system, one was the federal system, and the other, Judge Beliveau was a state judge in the superior court. I don't know as he ever became a Supreme Court judge, I can't tell you that. Somebody else could, but I couldn't.

MB: I've heard that Ernest Malenfant used to call some people, which included some of the members of your family, the "Clifford clique?"

BC: Clifford. . . .

MB: The "Clifford clique?"

BC: Clique, C-L-I-Q-U-E, yeah.

MB: What was intended by that?

BC: I don't think it was a term of endearment. I think it was, I think he looked upon the "Clifford clique" as a, as a, sort of the enemy, somebody that was, had different outlook on life than he did and different philosophy, I guess, than he did. He had some good points, I think. I mean, he was a workingman, and he, you know, rose, he got elected mayor, and I think he tried to do a good job for the people in Lewiston. But I think he looked upon the "Clifford clique" so-called as someone that was, you know, the wealthy and they were looking out for the, sort of the middle class, and that they weren't looking out for the poor person that was working in the mill. And that, you know, their, the "Clifford clique" was, you know, sort of the upper crust that was

not of the same philosophy he was, political philosophy.

MB: Who were some of the people in the clique?

BC: Well, I think he looked upon Judge Tom Delahanty as one of those because there was, he was, Tom Delahanty was married to one of the Cliffords [Jeanne Clifford Delahante]. I think he looked upon my father as one of those "Clifford cliques", I think he looked upon Al Lessard as, because Al Lessard was friendly with my father. I think probably the legal community as a whole, he thought were all, I think Ernest Malenfant was a little bit paranoid and that, you know, he thought the world was against him. And, you know, the, I guess that's what, anybody that was well educated and had money was part of that clique. I'm not sure if it was just the Cliffords that he was, you know, trying to paint with that brush but anybody who wielded power outside of his circle of friends.

MB: How did the people who were referred to as the clique, how did they respond to it?

BC: I don't, I think they ignored him.

MB: Did the community respond to it, the middle class-community which he was insulting or the lower-class community which he was kind of basically rally against?

BC: Yeah, well, well, he certainly had a following, and he, I think he beat Al Lessard for the mayor job, and I think that's when that word surfaced. I think my father was backing, you know, contributing money to Mr. Lessard to get elected mayor. And I think that the whole legal community was probably, you know, the legal, the lawyers in the community were probably hopeful that Al Lessard would become mayor because it would be one of their boys in the, and I, as I remember it, I wasn't, I don't think I was practicing at the time. I know I wasn't, I think that was a, that "Clifford clique" expression came into being at that time because it was a derogatory, you know, it was, as far as Malenfant thought, it was a derogatory term, that the, you know, that the rich guys would take over and the poor people would be left out in the cold, not. . . .

MB: So it was kind of a campaign strategy for him?

BC: Yeah, I think it was, you know. And it was successful. He got elected.

MB: We had ended last time discussing the splits within the Democratic Party in Lewiston, and you had mentioned Louis Jalbert as being involved in those splits. And then after I had turned off the recorder as you were on your way out, you had an appointment, you gave a very vivid and honest description of him as a person.

BC: Did I?

MB: Yeah. And I was hoping that you would be willing to describe him on tape so we can have that.

BC: Oh, you didn't catch that on tape?

MB: No. I tried to recapture it but (*unintelligible phrase*).

BC: I can't remember what I said now. Well, he was, I'm going to refer to him as a, sort of like a full-time politician, and that's what he was. He really didn't have, he was in the legislature for twenty years or more, and he was very, I won't say sly, but he was somewhat of a conniver. He always, he knew how to get people to do what he wanted. He knew people's weaknesses and their strengths, and he knew how to press people's buttons so to speak. He could butter a person up, he could. . . . (*Telephone interruption*).

My relationship with Louis was actually quite cordial, and I frequently went along with whatever he asked me to do. And I think I probably did mostly because I liked him and he used to call me very frequently on the telephone and would sort of, you know, he courted me so to speak, and he did that to a lot of people. He spent a lot of time building up a good relationship with people by spending some time with them and flattering them. And he frequently flattered me, because he knew eventually somewhere along the line he would need me to do something for him or for a favor or to vote the way he did.

And I was in the legislature with him; I was only there one term, I was in the senate, he was in the house, but I knew that, I think when I became, when I got elected, he helped me get elected. He introduced me to a number of people in, he introduced me to a couple of firemen that were very instrumental in the fire department and who took me around to different clubs in the community, who took me down to the Montagnard Club, the Pastime Club. And, you know, this is where politics was, that's where politics sort of was talked about. This is what these, a lot of these clubs are all about was, and it was, I think it was because of Louis that I was first elected county attorney. And he helped me become, I was assistant first, but he helped me become, you know, the county attorney. And he helped me in my campaign, he told me what to do, what I had to do. He was very shrewd, he was, you know, I won't call him brilliant, but he certainly was, he knew what, how to get elected. He knew the people that were going to help me get elected, and he introduced me to them and helped me through the campaign, told me what I had to do, and I did it.

And it turned out that I did get elected. I beat a couple of, I beat a fellow, another lawyer by the name of Bill Rocheleau, who was quite well liked, but he didn't do any work. And I did, and I was, I did the work because of the advice I got from Louis. But he knew enough to build up a good relationship with people that he knew might be able to help him at some later date. And he helped me become county attorney, he helped me become elected to the senate. And then there was a couple of times when he wanted me to do things, you know, he asked me to vote a certain way and, most of the time I did it. There was one, there was a couple of times I didn't, and he got very upset with me, told me that he, you know, he helped me get elected and he could help unseat me just as quickly. And when, you know, he was a fairly strong individual, he'd tell you exactly how you stood with him.

But that's the way he operated, not only with me but with other, you know, he had a following. He was, I would say, very much in control of the delegation from Androscoggin County. He was sort of, he may not have been the elected leader of the delegation, but he certainly was the

person who controlled what was going on without any question, you know. He knew who he could trust and who he couldn't trust, and he, everything that he did wasn't, you know, it was more or less he was, he was looking out for himself first. But on the other hand I think he did a lot of good for the city of Lewiston, too. He got the third bridge built, and he did a lot of good for, like in the human resource field. I think he was very instrumental in getting that Pineland, that was a place where they put retarded people.

And you know, he did some good, and he did things that probably were more or less on the selfish. He, one of the things that used to bother me a little bit, he used to get, he was on the payroll for the Maine Central Railroad. And I thought there was an awful conflict of interest there because he voted, whenever the people from the Maine Central Railroad wanted some legislation, you know, put in the legislature or voted in a certain way, he was very much a company man. I mean, he was being paid by them, so, and he did nothing to warrant the income that he was getting from them. That was, they knew that he was a powerful voice in Augusta and a powerful vote and, so that in some sense he was probably not a hundred percent honest.

And he controlled the, he controlled the, the delega-, the local delegation, I mean, he had a lot to say or had a lot of influence, like in presidential elections. I can remember one time that the, I think there was a delegation from Bates College that was very much interested in Eugene McCarthy as a vice-president, as a presidential nominee, and I think at the time Louis Jalbert was backing Hubert Humphrey. This goes probably back before your time, and they had a vote at the, I think it was in Waterville. The Democratic convention was held in Waterville, and Louis got the Androscoggin delegation to back McCarthy, and the people who, from Bates College, who were backing McCarthy thought they were going to win, and they didn't. And it was because of Louis Jalbert's maneuvering, and he got people on the committee that he thought would, you know. That's the type of thing he did, he was very much of an influence peddler and, you know, if you were running for an office, you always went to see Louis and got his okay and his blessings. And it was somewhat of a game with him, but on the other hand he did influence a lot of, he had a lot of, had a lot to say, and that was his whole life was, you know, politics.

MB: How was he viewed by other politicians in Augusta?

BC: Well, they were somewhat leery of him, but they also had a lot of respect for him because they knew that he could, he could swing votes because he had a lot of I.O.U.s built up. And that's, whether you like it or not, that's the way politics works.

MB: And, I mean, he must have been relatively popular among the lay people, or the citizens?

BC: Yes, he was, but he came from a very, his district was quite limited, you know. There were six representatives at the time from Lewiston, and he represented one sixth of the city, and he did a lot of campaigning and a lot of, you know, he made sure that the people in his district knew who he was. And he did a lot of favors for them, and he was very responsive to their phone calls if they wanted something, wanted him to do something in Augusta, and he made very sure that he was reelected by a large majority every time he ran. But he worked hard at it, and it's like anything else, you know, if you put something into it, you're going to get something back in

return. He was smart enough to know that unless he got elected every year and elected by a pretty good margin that people would say, "Well I, can knock him off," you know, "I can beat him in an election." But that never happened because most of the time nobody ever ran against him because they knew that he was so well situated in his ward that the chances are that they were going to be unsuccessful if they tried to unseat him.

End of Side One
Side Two

MB: How were you or the members of your family connected with Muskie, Ed Muskie?

BC: Well, I had very little to do with him, but the person that had most to do with him was Tom Delahanty and Al Less-, not my fa-, Al Lessard was not of the family, but he was just a friend of the family. Tom Delahanty was in the legislature when Muskie was there, and they became very good friends. And Al Lessard, who is, I think we've mentioned him before, was Tom Delahanty's partner, and Al Lessard later became the state chairman of the Democratic Party. And I, and with Frank Coffin and Al Lessard and Tom Delahanty, I think they were sort of the people that got Muskie, I'm not saying they got him elected, I mean Muskie was a super politician, so he got himself elected. But I think they were, those three people probably had more to do with his election than any other three, any other people outside of that circle. And I can't remember why, how it happened, but, that, there was a Democratic vote that year, it must have been, who did Muskie run against?

MB: For?

BC: The first time he ran for governor.

MB: I don't remember.

BC: Okay, but he was in the legislature, he was from Rumford, and he was in the legislature and a very influential person, I mean, a very influential legislator from Rumford. I think he might have had a, some leadership position, so that that as a sort of a springboard to the next step up to congressional seats or the governorship or whatnot. And so, but personally I had very little to do with Muskie. I met him probably half a dozen times but not, I had no real, and by the time I met him he was, he was in the Senate or had, I think he had been governor. And he was just, it was only through the Delahan-, Tom Delahanty that I knew him at all.

MB: Had you heard any stories from Tom Delahanty?

BC: Not really, no. I mean, my, no, not, my own personal contact with him is that, you know he, he just, my, I guess he came to my home one time, and it was a, before I was married. And there was, my father, I think, was going to introduce him at some function, and so I met him on that occasion and, but, you know, I just, I just had little personal contact with him. I just happened to know a lot of the people that he was friendly with.

MB: What were your impressions of him as someone who didn't know him personally?

BC: Well, he was a wonderful public speaker, and he could, you know, he could mesmerize an audience. He had, something about the timing of his speeches, I mean, the way he talked he could, he had a little pause that allowed you to think about what he was saying, and then he would go on to the next thought, and I thought it was very effective. So that was, you know, the one thing that stands out in my mind.

My impression of him, you know, meeting him face-to-face was that he was not terribly personable. At least not to, you know, this is my own personal, I want to make that clear right now, I mean certainly people must have, must have liked him very much to have, you know, to have worked so hard to get him elected to these positions. And no connection but my personal opinion is that, my own personal contact with him is that, well I, he ignored me a number of times, and so, but I just took it as, you know, someone that was in the Senate, and he was beyond that point where he needed to talk to me about anything. That's, but that's, you know, that's just, I don't know whether it was, I think I introduced him one time at a Democratic luncheon at Stekino's Hotel in Lewiston, and I tried to engage him in conversation a couple times, and it just sort of didn't happen, you know? Whether he was talking to the person on the other side of me I don't know, but it was, I didn't get very far.

MB: How do you feel that he impacted the state of Maine, as a lawyer, how did he impact the legal field? Or did he have any change or anything that he (*unintelligible word*)?

BC: You mean what was his record as a governor?

MB: Well, yeah, just what kind of change did he, did he make in the field that you were working in, as a governor or as a senator?

BC: Yeah, well, I think he was, the piece of legislation that stands out in my mind mostly is the Clean Water Bill that he sponsored when he was in the Senate, state, in the federal, when he was the state *[sic]* senator from the state of Maine in Washington. So that that, you know, was an absolutely outstanding, and I think he's gotten a lot of credit for that, and I think he should have.

I don't remember him, any outstanding legislation as far as when he was in the governor's seat. But I think what he did that I thought was important was that, for years and years in this state the governor's office was occupied by a Republican, and I have nothing against the Republicans except that it was so one-sided that, you know, I think the Republicans almost felt as though they had the right to be, to have a Republican governor in the state of Maine. And one of the things he did was he sort of evened off the playing field, you know. He got elected, and he was a Democrat, and he was a very popular, wherever he went he was well received by people in the state. And as a result of that, you know, it's always been, ever since he was elected, he made it so that the Democratic Party always had at least an opportunity if they had a good candidate to elect a Democrat to the governor's chair, and there have been a number of Democrats since Muskie was elected. He was the first one that really, he was the one that broke the ice, so to speak, and, you know, there's been a number of Democrats since then. There's been Joe Brennan, it was, been, I guess that's. . . .

MB: Ben Berman?

CM: No, Ben Berman was a Republican. Kenneth Curtis, Ken Curtis, yeah, he was in for eight years, and so was Joe Brennan, so, and of course Muskie was elected in '55 *[sic '54]*. And Muskie was elected, I think, for two terms if I'm not mistaken so that that sort of made the Democratic, gave that Democratic Party a lift, which I think is an ex-, you know, if you have an equal, you know, if you, both parties are sort of on an equal footing, there's as many Democrats. And I think he, as a result of Muskie's election a lot of, the enrollment in the Democratic Party almost came up to or maybe exceeded the registered Republicans in this state.

And I think that was an, if he, if, that's the one great thing that he did, and he may have done other things, you know, I just, doesn't cross my mind, but, and I didn't follow his term as governor that closely that I could say, I could point to this piece of legislation or that piece of legislation, but I think that's what I remember most about him is that. That was the great thing about Muskie is that he made the playing field level for both Democrats and Republicans in the state. And it, you know, any state, you know, that, the Mid-west, they've got this reputation of being, electing a Republican term after term after term. Or the other states, you know, they elect Democrats year after year after year, and I just think that that's not a healthy political situation. And I think what Muskie did was he made it, he got the Democrats back on track and, which I thought was his greatest accomplishment.

MB: You had mentioned some of the people whom you were close to was Al Lessard and Tom Delahanty, who were closer to. . . .

BC: And Frank Coffin, Frank Coffin.

MB: . . . . and Frank Coffin, who were closer to Muskie. Was Muskie then considered a member of the "Clifford clique"?

BC: Oh no, no, see, that was a local, that was strictly local Lewiston politics. This, that was not on a state level at all.

MB: Oh, okay. Is there anything else that you would like to add about Muskie or yourself?

BC: No, I think you've covered.

MB: Thank you so much.

End of Interview