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## **Ardys M. Cox with Kenneth E. Cox and Jeannette S. Cox (August 16, 1972)**

C. Richard Arena

ABSTRACT  
Oral History Interview

with

MR. KENNETH E. COX  
MRS. JEANNETTE S. COX  
MISS ARDYS M. COX

August 16, 1972  
Whittier, California

By Dr. C. Richard Arena

For the Richard Nixon Oral History Project

Mr. and Mrs. Cox and Miss Cox are long-time residents of the Whittier area. They are acquaintances of the Nixon family.

The interview began by establishing that Kenneth Cox was born in Whittier in 1904 and educated at Whittier public schools and Whittier College. The following verbatim dialogue then took place:

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ARENA: And in general terms, and then we can go into this in detail later, but in general terms what has your first-hand contact with President Nixon been, him first and secondly, his immediate family. I'm thinking of his parents. Did you shop in the Nixon grocery, for example? Did you know his brother, Donald [Francis Donald Nixon]? Again, only in summary fashion, so we have an overall picture and we can ask detailed questions later on.

K. COX: Well, I guess my first information about Richard Nixon himself was in high school, about his debating. I read articles in the paper about that and I, of course, being quite a bit older, I wasn't associated with him in any way so I just usually picked those things up from the newspaper. And then later on when he started his political career, why that's when I first knew him, met him at a dinner when he had been interviewed by Herman Perry to run for Congress. And that's the earliest time. I was at a breakfast down south here a ways in the Downey [California] area, and I had a chance to meet him down there. And from there on he started his political career at that time.

ARENA: To be sure, you don't recall coming into contact with him, say, in connection with any of the clubs such as 20-30 Club or hearing him speak at Rotary [Club] or any of those local service clubs?

K. COX: No.

ARENA: Or in his function as a lawyer, did you come into contact with him?

K. COX: No, I had no contact at all. He was working here and he was part of the legal setup here in Whittier [California].

ARENA: Did you know him from the standpoint of knowing him by sight? You could recognize him through all these years?

K. COX: Yes.

ARENA: For example, his debating. You may or may not have attended the debates, but you knew what he looked like either through pictures or someone pointing him out?

K. COX: Yes.

ARENA: Fine. How about the immediate family? Had you ever gone to the Nixon grocery store yourself?

K. COX: No. We had never gone to the grocery store itself. I met his mother in later years through church functions. Of course, she attended the East Whittier Friends, and then on some occasions she would come to the local church here in Whittier. And in fact I got to know her, well she knew my mother, whom I don't remember, of course, being gone when I was a baby, so I was very much interested in talking to her about that.

ARENA: For the record, what was your mother's full name?

K. COX: Her maiden name, or . . .

ARENA: Lillian May Porter was her maiden name and, of course, Lillian Porter Cox. And by the way, you mentioned, of course, being born in 1904. The President's grandfather died around 1919. I think that's the exact year, but 1919 would be Franklin Milhous' death. Do you recall seeing him, we'll say, in that First Friends Church which, would I be correct in assuming, was your own church, the First Friends of Whittier?

K. COX: Yes.

ARENA: You did not attend on a regular basis the East Whittier Friends. Well, how about that, do you recall the President there?

K. COX: I couldn't say. I may have seen him, undoubtedly did, maybe, at the Annual Yearly Meeting time, when they were assembled in our church here. The Yearly Meeting of the Friends church was held in our church every year, so a lot of people would come from all the other outlying district churches to our church here, so I saw a lot of people that I couldn't say that I actually saw him, but I probably had seen him, but I wouldn't remember.

ARENA: How about the wife, Mrs. Almira [Burdg Milhous]? Does she stand out in your mind, because she did live considerably longer, living long enough, at least, to attend his law school graduation. I think we're getting some signals here. Do you want to add something? Feel free to add something at any time now.

A. COX: Don't you remember, Kenneth, she wore the little white cap and she sat up in front?

K. COX: Oh, I remember a lady that sat up there, yes.

A. COX: That was Almira Milhous.

K. COX: Well, I guess I did.

A. COX: And she sat up in the front pew.

K. COX: I didn't make the acquaintance of these people, of course, but I saw them.

A. COX: I can see her now. She had the most beautiful face, and the little white cap; she always wore the Quaker bonnet.

K. COX: Yes.

ARENA: Would you mind stating, so that the secretary will identify your voice on this tape, because she does not have the advantage I have. Would you mind stating your own name? This way she will identify your voice as we go on.

A. COX: Ardys Cox.

ARENA: You are Ardys Cox. Thank you. And so there will be no confusion, will you identify your name?

J. COX: Jeannette Cox. I am Jeannette Cox.

ARENA: Thank you. May I ask you, while we're on that subject, Miss Cox, what do you recall about Mrs. Almira Milhous and Mr. Franklin Milhous himself; and if it isn't too personal, would you want to give the date of your birth and place?

- A. COX: I was born in Whittier in 1906, June 3. My father came to Whittier in 1890 when there were just thirty families in the city of Whittier.
- ARENA: Just excuse me. For relative historical purposes here, the community was founded in 1888 by Quakers, and the Milhouses, Franklin, first came in 1897, so you were here before the first Milhouses settled, your family.
- A. COX: Yes.
- K. COX: 1887.
- ARENA: 1897, I beg your pardon.
- K. COX: 1887.
- ARENA: 1887 was the founding of Whittier. I believe I said 1888. We have to give them that year. That's right. I stand corrected.
- K. COX: I've been here all but seventeen years of that time.
- ARENA: Uh huh, which makes you, really, a pioneer and this very much a pioneer community in a sense.
- A. COX: Now my father came to Whittier because my uncle, who had the first drug store, was the one who was instrumental in getting him to come. He lived on a farm in the East and, therefore, as a farm boy he wasn't too happy there. He was glad to get off the farm routine, so he came to Whittier and worked in the drug store. And the First Friends Church at that time was down on College [Street] and Wardman [Avenue]--Comstock [Avenue], I beg your pardon.
- ARENA: Comstock.
- A. COX: Comstock and Wardman. The first contact we had with the Milhouses was in the second Friends church on the corner of Washington [Avenue] and Philadelphia [Street].
- ARENA: Just to be sure, that is the one that's referred to as the First Friends Church now, but it was the second from the standpoint of the building, physical building.
- A. COX: Yes, it was built in 1902.
- ARENA: Thank you.
- A. COX: And this was where we knew Grandmother Milhous. I don't remember Grandfather Milhous, but I can see her now. She was a beautiful character.

ARENA: Please describe her as much as you can, from the standpoint of physical appearance. Do you recall seeing her in any committees? Do you recall seeing her, we'll say, in her own home? Again, her religious interest, especially when she possibly took a role during the Yearly Meetings, if you recall anything along those lines.

A. COX: Well, I can't because I was small. I was a child, but I do remember her in the capacity of sitting in the front of the meeting and wearing the Quaker bonnet.

ARENA: Now, actually there were two elderly such women; one was Franklin Milhous' own wife, Almira [Burdg Milhous]. But his own mother came, Elizabeth [Price Griffith Milhous]. I was just wondering if you were aware that she was around. And I'm not sure when she died, but certainly it was Almira who lived at least until the President's law school year of graduation, which was 1937. You're sure that this was Almira who was wearing the bonnet and not this Grandmother, Elizabeth, who did come out and lived with Franklin and Almira for a while?

A. COX: The one I'm thinking of is the one. . . . I think Miss [H. Esther] Williams talked about her this morning. She and I are talking about the same individual.

ARENA: She did recall this elderly Elizabeth?

A. COX: Well, now, maybe this was Elizabeth rather than Almira, but they always referred to her as Grandmother Milhous. The reason I remember her is because we didn't have too many that wore the Quaker bonnets, and so this stood out in my memory as a child.

ARENA: May I ask you also to state whether or not you attended all the schools immediately in Whittier and what they were?

A. COX: I just repeated his routine. I started at Penn Street School in 1913 and then I went to Jonathan Bailey, Bailey Street School. I graduated from Whittier High School in 1925 and graduated from Whittier College in 1929. I had a teaching degree and I went into. . . . My first years of teaching, fifteen years, were in the Bellflower School District and Pat [Patricia Ryan] Nixon was a senior in high school and, of course, she was known as Thelma Ryan. She lived in Artesia [California].

ARENA: Have you had her as a student by any chance?

A. COX: No.

ARENA: But you recall seeing her.

A. COX: Yes. We used to give all our school operettas at the high school, and the high school functions when I taught over there and the grammar school functions were closely connected. And the teachers that she had, the dramatics teacher and the music teacher and, I think it was the PE teacher are friends of mine.

ARENA: Excuse me. And PE would be physical education?

A. COX: Physical education, right.

ARENA: Thank you.

A. COX: And then the assistant superintendent who had her as a student was a very close friend of mine. She was at Excelsior High School and then she came to Whittier as the superintendent at Whittier High School.

ARENA: This sounds like Mrs. Marian Wilson Hodge.

A. COX: Hodge, right.

ARENA: I've had the pleasure of meeting her. Thank you.

A. COX: Well, she and I were very close friends, both in Bellflower and in Whittier. And so, of course, she had Pat as a teacher under her at Whittier.

ARENA: Do you recall the period when the President was debating, yourself? I understand he visited some of these different schools including Excelsior [High School], and while Pat was a student. I'm just wondering if that comes to mind in any way?

A. COX: No.

ARENA: I know Mrs. Hodge referred to that.

A. COX: She would because she was connected with the school, but I was in the Bellflower District so I had no connection with her.

ARENA: Do you recall his coming to the high school there, if there was one in Bellflower where he also debated? You wouldn't know anything about that?

A. COX: No. I had more connection with the family. Of course, teaching in the East Whittier School, I had Don's [Francis Donald Nixon] daughter, Lawrence [Nixon] in physical education. And when we dedicated the annual at East Whittier School to Richard Nixon, why I had Mrs. Nixon in my home for dinner the evening that she accepted the annual at the commencement.

ARENA: And by Mrs. Nixon, would this be Mrs. Hannah Nixon?

A. COX: Hannah Nixon, right.

ARENA: Thank you.

A. COX: She was a wonderful person.

ARENA: Do you recall the year, possibly, of that dedication, when the annual was dedicated? Was he Vice President, for example, at the time?

A. COX: No, he was President, because we took our annual staff out to see Mrs. Nixon. She was so gracious . . .

ARENA: Excuse me. You do not mean President. Unfortunately she did not live to see that great event.

A. COX: No, Vice President.

ARENA: It would have been the period '52 through '60, and then of course he ran in 1960. I knew you knew that, but I wanted to be sure that it got onto the record.

A. COX: And she brought out all the souvenirs. She let the children stand on the rug on which he took the oath.

ARENA: The children in your class, because you brought . . .

A. COX: The annual staff.

ARENA: Oh, I see.

A. COX: And the flag that flew over the Capitol building the day of the inauguration. And she let them see the Bible on which he took the oath. And, oh, there were so many things, and the children were just intrigued by them.

ARENA: Do you recall that she possibly may have discussed with them or answered any questions about the young Richard? Did any of the students, or maybe even yourself, ask how he was as a youngster in school?

A. COX: No, because the time was limited. We just had so much time. It was a morning interview and there were so many things to look at and so many things to see that actually we didn't go into that.

ARENA: If it isn't too personal, would you mind reflecting on her own personality from the standpoint of being at ease with the children in the house. Did she seem to enjoy them, or did she seem to be losing patience to be frank? How was her overall attitude during this period?



A. COX: She was just elated to have them come, and we went two years. We sat in a circle and they were very much at home, and she was very much at home with them. There were lots of questions asked and she was very, very good in communicating.

ARENA: Would this be the home that is now the Swedish . . .

A. COX: Beach Boulevard.

ARENA: The Beach Boulevard home, which is now a restaurant. Thank you very much. Is there any other personal contact you may have had with the President or these immediate members of his family that you can think of at this point?

A. COX: Well, I have a first cousin and her husband who lived next door to the family in Yorba Linda [California].

ARENA: Would you mind giving the name of that first cousin?

A. COX: Lucille Doan Williams. And her husband was the motorman on the little red streetcar that went from Yorba Linda to Los Angeles, and Mr. [Francis Anthony] Nixon was the conductor. Now, I can't tell you how long they were in this capacity but several years. Lucille and Hannah were very close friends and were in the Academy at Whittier College together at the same time. So they were friends before they lived in Yorba Linda.

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The interview continued with a discussion of Mrs. Cox's background. She was born in Indiana in 1906 and moved to California in 1925 to attend Whittier College where she was a music major. The participants then recounted their recollections of Dr. Paul Smith, a history professor and, later, president of Whittier College, who is said to have had a considerable influence on the President.

Then the following discussion concerning relatives of Richard Nixon ended the interview:

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ARENA: As you know, of course, the President had been trained musically. One of his teachers was his Aunt Jane Beeson, who was a Milhous, of course. He also was taught in part by another relative and you may know him, Mr. Griffith Milhous, who was a half-brother of Jane Beeson. And to complete the picture from my own knowledge, and then I'd like to ask you to comment on this at will, but the other person whom I've met who was also his teacher was Miss Margaretha Lohman. And I'd like to ask you to comment at will on the President's music musical experiences, if you had any

firsthand contact from the standpoint of hearing him play, and whatever you do know about these individuals I've mentioned. I do happen to know that he was also, for a while, at John Muir Junior High. I have interviewed people who had him there. So this would be something in addition to the John Muir Junior High School that you know about.

J. COX: No, it was in John Muir School that I knew Griffith Milhous and I had my practice teaching there.

ARENA: Were you in any way under his authority, or did he just happen to be there while you were doing your practice teaching?

J. COX: He just happened to be there while I was under Jennie Skelton, was my teacher for . . .

A. COX: He conducted our church orchestra, and I played the piano for that orchestra.

ARENA: And YOU were under him and you recall him. May I ask both of you to recapitulate whatever experiences in the way of a physical description of the man, what idiosyncrasies or habits he had that come to mind, and particularly if he had any particular instruments that he concentrated on in the way of teaching, any particular method of teaching--the President's uncle, Griffith Milhous.

A. COX: Well, no. He was very enthusiastic about it and everybody worked hard. It's too bad that Olive is not here today. I have a friend, Olive Williams, who played clarinet in that orchestra. It was not a large group, but he was very enthusiastic about it and real upset if everybody didn't show up. But he was very even tempered. I can't remember of ever having him lose his temper or get upset because we played a sour note now and then.

J. COX: Wasn't his instrument the piano?

A. COX: Well, he was quite interested in strings.

J. COX: He played the piano very well.

A. COX: Yes, and didn't he have a daughter who was a music major, Margaret Milhous, married Leonidas Dodson?

ARENA: I believe that was Esther . . .

A. COX: Esther, yes, Esther not Margaret.

ARENA: . . . whom I've had the pleasure of meeting.

A. COX: Right. And then she had a brother, Carleton, who played violin in this orchestra.

ARENA: That would be W. Carleton Milhous, whom I've also had the pleasure of meeting. They're both living in Arizona now. And unfortunately, of course, I did not have the pleasure of meeting Mr. Griffith Milhous, but since he was the teacher for a while of President Nixon, whatever you have to say about him, of course, would be very interesting to future historians.

J. COX: I knew Carl. Carl Milhous was in school when . . .

A. COX: Carleton.

J. COX: Yes.

ARENA: W. Carleton Milhous. I believe they called him Carl. I believe that was his common nickname.

J. COX: And Jane Beeson--both Kenneth and I were in a men's and girls' glee club at Whittier College, and when we'd go to Lindsay [California] . . .

K. COX: Yes.

J. COX: . . . why we'd stay over night at Jane Beeson's.

ARENA: It so happens that when I had the pleasure of interviewing Mrs. Beeson, she lives now in the community. I am wondering if she was living outside the community in the ranch house when you visited her. Do you recall? Was she outside of the city proper? It was in Lindsay. Across from her now is a Friends church, which I'm sure was not across from her when she was out in the country. That might be one guide. I was just wondering if you recall.

J. COX: Well, it just seems to me that it was on the ranch where we stayed.

ARENA: Because her house would be right in a city block, so to speak, right now. You would not get the impression. . . .

J. COX: It could be in the city, because we'd sing at the Friends church, wouldn't we?

K. COX: I think, well, I think when I stayed it was on the ranch.

ARENA: About when was this? That could help too. About what year?

K. COX: About 1925, '26, along through there.

ARENA: That's around the time when President Nixon left the Whittier area. He was in East Whittier, of course, at the time, and lived with the Beesons for six months, where he concentrated on the piano and, of course, then went back and returned to his schooling. You do not recall his being there while you were there by any chance?

K. COX: No.

ARENA: But in the interview she made that very clear. He was there for six months and taking lessons daily from her. And if you have not seen her recently--maybe you have. She was at the last Friends Annual Meeting here in Whittier.

A. COX: She was here for the [Edith Milhous] Timberlake service this last year. They all gathered at Oscar and Olive's [Marshburn] and she played the piano.

K. COX: One thing I'd like to mention, going back to President Nixon as a student of Dr. Paul Smith. The first examination paper that Paul Smith got from Richard Nixon, when he first saw it, looked at it, it was very sparse, he said he kind of wondered what the trouble was. But after he read his paper, he said he didn't need to write volumes, he came right to the heart of the subject without writing page after page. He really hit the nail on the head. That was the one thing that he noticed right away about his work, in anything that he did. He always came to the heart without going around and around and around to get to the heart, the kernel, of the problem.

ARENA: Was this account given to you by Dr. Smith directly?

K. COX: Dr. Smith.

ARENA: Thank you. I wonder if there is anything else concerning the President's uncle, Griffith Milhous, that I have not brought up or asked that may come to your mind? For instance, I do recall, or I got the impression that he was not as you, Mrs. Cox, a full-time teacher in the sense of devoting his life to it. I got the impression that he owned citrus groves and did not remain very long in the school system, formally. He did take on students. Correct me if I'm wrong, that he was not an on-going, full-time school teacher in music. Was that your impression?

J. COX: I think that when he was teaching the church orchestra, he was not teaching in the school.

ARENA: Is that your impression, Miss Cox?

A. COX: Yes. I think this was a later venture but, of course, I didn't know him when he was doing the school teaching at all.

ARENA: Mrs. Cox, are you just not sure one way or the other?

J. COX: How long was practice teaching?

A. COX: One year.

J. COX: One semester.

A. COX: One semester in the lower and one semester in the . . .

J. COX: Well, all I remember is that he was there at John Muir when I was.

ARENA: I see. Does this sound familiar in any way: One of the persons I've interviewed who studied under him recalls that he gave her an assignment, and she thought it was unusual and that's why she brought it up, in which she was to do historical research on a musician. I'm wondering if you came across that idea, that he did that with anyone else. She thought that was unusual and she remembered him for doing that, that he had given her a kind of musical history assignment. You don't recall that he had that policy, or you don't recall any other student who was ever given an assignment like that? It might have been just for a particular student.

J. COX: No.

ARENA: By the way, I do recall also the fact that Mrs. Beeson received her degree in Indianapolis, Indiana. I believe she said the Indianapolis Music Conservatory. And someone said--one of her sisters, frankly--that she did some work, or lived or helped in a school where there were blacks. I don't recall for sure whether they were orphans, whether they were poor or just what. But I was wondering if you have any knowledge of that particular subject? I'm sure that this would be in Indianapolis.

J. COX: No. I do know that Indianapolis had a lot of negroes, a lot of negroes.

ARENA: Getting on with your firsthand contact with the immediate members of the President's family, shall we concentrate on his mother again? I realize you have given some recollections. Is there anything we have not mentioned about her that comes to mind? I'm thinking, for example, of her working in the store, if you ever witnessed her in that capacity, making or selling pies, or even buying some of the pies that she was famous for? Has that been any of your experience? May I ask you this, since you've all said "No" by shaking your heads, which the recorder can't record. I want to be sure that that's noted here. The answer to that question was "No." Had you contact with the grocery store itself, or was that inconvenient and, therefore, you folks did not shop there?

A. COX: We shopped there sometimes after it became a restaurant. The grocery at Santa Gertrudes [Avenue] and Whittier Boulevard in the beginning was just a grocery store, and a restaurant was added to this grocery store, and we ate there quite frequently.

K. COX: Are you thinking of Don's [Francis Donald Nixon]?

A. COX: No, I'm thinking of the original . . .

K. COX: They had one and then, of course, later on Don had one.

A. COX: . . . Don had something to do with it, but it was on the same site as the grocery store, and the restaurant were all on the same location.

K. COX: We never ate there.

J. COX: Living in Whittier, immediate Whittier, occasionally we'd have occasion to go out there but not very often, so for that reason it was usually shopping in immediate Whittier.

ARENA: As a matter of fact, either in East Whittier Friends Church or First Friends Church of Whittier, did you ever have the occasion to witness the President either playing the piano or appearing in a choir, which I understand he did even while he was a lawyer, he practiced, and also appeared in or conducted Sunday school? I was just wondering if you had any firsthand contact with him in any of those capacities?

J. COX: No, we were older so we didn't come in contact. Most of my association is with his relatives, his mother, Olive and Oscar Marshburn, and Griffith Milhous, and Jane Beeson and Martha Gibbons.

ARENA: And Martha Gibbons--correct me if I'm wrong--was a nurse.

J. COX: Yes, but she quite often would bring Hannah to our First Friends Church, the one that's there now.

ARENA: I see. This was while Hannah Nixon was living in East Whittier, but she would come with her sister, Martha Gibbons, to visit.

J. COX: It was Martha Gibbons' home that I stayed in one time in Lindsay. They had the orange orchard, the citrus grove.

ARENA: As a matter of fact, for a brief period Frank Nixon and Hannah, the President's parents, lived in Lindsay. Just for the record, was there ever any contact between you and them while they were living there?

J. COX: No.

ARENA: I wonder if I could ask you to summarize at will what you think the overall influence--this is obviously a philosophical question, but people like you could answer it from firsthand knowledge and practical knowledge rather than theory--what was the influence on the President's family? And by family I mean, obviously his immediate parents, his uncle, Oscar Marshburn, his Aunt Olive, these various relatives with whom he came into contact, the opportunity to meet with ALL of the relatives, say through the Milhous family reunions at the Franklin Milhous home while his grandmother, Almira, was there. But how would you assess the value, the influence of the Milhouses, so to speak, on Richard Nixon himself while he was growing up over the years?

K. COX: I think they must have been a close-knit family.

J. COX: VERY close-knit.

K. COX: And, of course, the influence of his mother, I think, was probably one of the greatest things on his life, more so I would say than his father. Of course, not having been associated with them or knowing much about them at that time, why, I couldn't say.

J. COX: Olive and Oscar Marshburn were pillars of our church, of the First Friends Church. They had a GREAT influence on our church.

ARENA: Would you want to give some examples? How would you say they served as influences? And by the way, for the record, Olive Marshburn is the President's mother's sister, Rose Olive Milhous Marshburn, yes.

J. COX: Olive and Oscar always were willing to give their time and their money. Oscar was clerk of monthly meeting for years, and you could ALWAYS count on them for everything. When Olive and Oscar went to Africa as missionaries this last time . . .

ARENA: About what year was that, if I may ask?

J. COX: About nine years ago, ten years ago.

J. COX: No, nine, because Joellen and Paul were just married. They wanted someone to stay in their home for two years while they were gone.

ARENA: To be sure we get those names correct, you mentioned a Joellen?

- J. COX: Joellen Cox and her husband, Paul Partington, Mr. and Mrs. Partington.
- ARENA: And how would you tie them in with the Marshburns and Africa?
- J. COX: The Marshburns went to Nairobi for two years in the hospital, I think, to work, and they wanted somebody to stay in their beautiful home out on La Sierra.
- ARENA: Which is in Friendly Hills, a section of Whittier.
- J. COX: And Joellen and Paul were very active in the Friends Church, First Friends, at that time. The Marshburns had a great influence on them, and they asked them to stay. Paul and Joellen had a Quaker ceremony in our First Friends Church.
- ARENA: And by the Quaker ceremony, are you referring to their marriage ceremony?
- J. COX: Yes, marriage ceremony. And I think Olive and Oscar were one of the couples . . .
- K. COX: Yes, they signed . . .
- J. COX: We were married the same way. We said our own ceremony and got the wedding certificate from Philadelphia, the Quaker certificate, along with the one from California and said our own ceremony, and they had the same kind.
- ARENA: Is that still permitted?
- J. COX: Yes.
- ARENA: Right now?
- J. COX: Yes.
- ARENA: And while we're on the question of Quaker marriages, we were discussing off the tape the question of the white bearskin rug which, I understand, was customarily the standing position for married couples, and I want to ask you the question clearly: Do you recall or had you heard that the President's parents stood on that white bearskin rug themselves? Had you ever heard that before?
- J. COX: I had not heard it before, but we stood on that same bear rug.



ARENA: Would you describe it? Was it really pure white in the sense that it wasn't gray, but it was white?

K. COX: It was a polar bear rug, is what it was.

J. COX: You could tell it had been used for years; it was a little yellowish.

ARENA: Would you know anything about its history, as to whether or not that had come from outside of Whittier? Was it used at just the Friends church in Whittier, or could it have been borrowed for an East Whittier ceremony?

K. COX: I couldn't say.

ARENA: But you do recall that. How about its dimensions from the standpoint of width and length?

J. COX: I would say . . .

A. COX: About like that coffee table.

J. COX: Yes, a little longer and maybe a little wider, but not much.

K. COX: A little wider.

ARENA: What would you say the dimensions are? You look like you would be a better estimate of distance than I.

J. COX: About five feet by three, or two and a half.

K. COX: Three; that's close enough.

ARENA: Five by about three feet, and do you recall . . .

J. COX: It had a head.

ARENA: Oh, the head was attached.

K. COX: Well, no. I think the head was gone.

J. COX: Oh, yes; it was flat, but it had the legs, I think.

K. COX: I suppose so.

J. COX: Yes.

ARENA: May I also ask this: Was it the custom to sign the rug?

J. COX: Yes. Every couple had signed underneath, and it was well signed.

ARENA: On the question of missionary activity, the President has mentioned in his book Six Crises, and again I think this is mentioned in the chapter on the campaign of 1960, that his mother had hopes that he would some day be a missionary in Central America. I'm wondering if you ever heard anything to that effect in your contact over the years with his mother? Did she bring that up with you or did you ever hear anything like that from anyone, his aunt or his uncle, that that was her hope?

J. COX: No.

K. COX: I can't say that I have.

ARENA: Can I ask you this. From your direct contact with the President's mother over the years, did she have an interest in missionary activity as obviously her sister, Olive Milhous Marshburn, who went off to Africa recently? Was this ever expressed through maybe her participation in a particular committee with the Friends Yearly Meeting or the church?

J. COX: Not that I know of, because Hannah belonged to the East Whittier Friends Church and that would have been the interest in THAT church, rather than in First Friends.

A. COX: The sister of Forest Palmer probably could give you that information, Harriet Hudspeth.

ARENA: Thank you very much.

A. COX: She was a member of East Whittier Friends.

ARENA: Fortunately I have met her and have interviewed her about maybe eight months ago, and we concentrated on Richard at the time, and I don't believe I raised that question with her. And as you know, she is not living in this area any more, but she does visit her relatives and friends from time to time.

Is there any question or any subject that I have not brought up at this point, dealing with the President or his immediate family that you would like to raise at this point? Oh, excuse me. I did raise a question and Mr. Cox was kind enough to give his reaction to it, the influence of the President's immediate family and the relatives with whom he had immediate contact such as his Aunt Olive. Would you ladies like to add anything to what Mr. Cox has said regarding your ideas on the influence of his relatives, his immediate family on shaping the character, the personality of the President?

A. COX: Well, I don't know. I do know that the Marshburns in our church activities, sometimes when things got a little heated or a little rough, their calming influence. . . . They seemed to be always able to bring order out of chaos.

ARENA: And you would say that was a particular quality of the Marshburns?

K. COX: Yes, very much so. I've never seen Oscar Marshburn . . .

BEGIN SIDE I TAPE II

ARENA: And I believe our last tape was running out when you were making your personal observations on the character and personality of the [Oscar O.] Marshburns and tying it in with the President himself, Ardys, if I may say Ardys, to be sure that the secretary does differentiate between Ardys and Jeannette.

A. COX: Well, I am sure that Richard Nixon certainly looked up to Olive and Oscar as people who had the most admirable qualities, as Quakers, as people who lived according to every letter of the law in Quaker doctrine. They were people that were truly admired and respected, and they have greatly influenced MY life, and I think there are many people in our church who feel the same, that they are a couple who will long be remembered and respected for their integrity and for their true Quaker living.

ARENA: Thank you very much. Did you want to add something, Mrs. Cox?

J. COX: Well, Olive and Oscar, according to my thinking, are the greatest examples that I've seen in our church of the Quaker inner light, this inner light of the Quakers that we speak about there. It's that part of God in every man, and they certainly have influenced everybody in our church.

ARENA: I realize it would be hard to make human comparisons, and you certainly don't have to if you don't want to, but how would you compare their influence, we'll say, with those of all the people you have known in your lifetime, and especially in this community? How would you rate them in that sense, when you say that they have been outstanding, in comparing them with ALL the people you've known, how would you rate them, if such a thing could be done?

J. COX: Well, they would be rated very close to the top of the people that I have seen that have had this Quaker inner peace and influence, and I don't see how they could have helped in their association with Richard Nixon to influence his life.

ARENA: And this might sound too blunt maybe, and not even fair, but as a historian I should put it to you. Would you say that you have felt this way long before there was a Richard Nixon, or before Richard Nixon became Vice President and now as President?

J. COX: Yes. Yes, very much so.

ARENA: Your opinions are based on a lifetime of firsthand contact with Oscar and Olive?

J. COX: Yes.

ARENA: Thank you very much for answering ALL of my questions, ALL of you, so frankly and fully, and future historians, as this one, will be in your debt. Thank you very much.