

about the night of the party, about a nigger woman . . . I guess he had read the story because it said the telephone, somebody phoned and tried to make a date with her. Some man, nigger man . . . and she said, "Oh, I'll be so happy to go with you, but who is this?" So when Mr. Compton tried to make a date with me I said, "Oh, I'd be so happy to go to the show tonight with you, but who is this please?"

Burroughs: I expect he appreciated your sense of humor.

Compton: So Angie . . . He said, "Could I make a date with your sister and have a blind date?" And I said, "Yes, do." Because of Miss Eva had her beau, you see. So he got an old widower and Angie had to sit with him and dressed up in a black dress, a basque, an old-fashioned dress and put her hair up so tight and make a lariat and put glasses on her. And she went to the show and when he'd talk to her she'd hold her ear. Mr. Compton and Miss Eva and her beau, they just died laughing about it, but Angie was indistinct.

Burroughs: She was pretending to be old?

Compton: Yes, indistinct, he never did make a date with her anymore.

Burroughs: Well, will you tell me something about your husband's law practice? That with his brother.

Compton: Well, I don't know when he started practicing, however, they were practicing, you know, when I came here. And then I . . . I can't tell you anything about that hardly. However, I've

got lots of material at the house. I don't think he ever destroyed anything, the court proceedings . . . I could blackmail some people here . . . [laughter]

Burroughs: I'll bet you could, too.

Compton: All the court proceedings and everything, you see, he kept piled up out there in the little storage room. I have everything. I have millions of stamps and the stamp club asked me not to destroy any of them. I feel sorry for Charles and Betty, though, after I'm gone.

Burroughs: Were those stamps on letters?

Compton: Uh huh. They said not destroy anything because . . . [indistinct] . . . Then he was elected after we married . . . he was elected District Attorney and . . . I forgot what year that was. I guess it was after '20 because I went to the first convention, I told you, you see, after the . . .

Burroughs: The democratic convention.

Compton: After the women had the right to vote.

Burroughs: That was after 1921, I believe.

Compton: It was somewhere along there.

Burroughs: Can you recount some of your experiences going to this convention?

Compton: Well, we and the Longs [?] went together, you see. Mr. Long was superintendent of the school here and his wife was [indistinct]. Stewart had already gone to school, but I told her the other day . . . [indistinct] . . . wear dresses . . . [indistinct].

And we . . . I think we stayed overnight somewhere going over to Las Vegas.

Burroughs: Las Vegas, New Mexico.

Compton: Uh huh. We had a Ford Coupe . . . A Ford touring car is what they called it. And we didn't know what to do at the convention. So I . . . They came and asked me if I'd respond to the welcome address, and I said . . . well, I could see the [indistinct], so I asked Mrs. Long, and she said yes, she'd be happy to respond. So she did.

Burroughs: You told me something about your son, Charles.

Compton: Oh, Charles wanted to nominate Mr. Bratton for . . .

Burroughs: Is that Sam Bratton?

Compton: Uh huh. For United States Senator, and his daddy said, "Oh, keep quiet. You'll discourage people." And Judge Hewitt came around told me I was ruining Charles. I was to turn him loose. "Just let him go ahead and do what he wants to do." So Charles began moving down to the end of the bench. I'd look around there once in a while, he'd move a little bit, stop, and then move a little bit. I never noticed he had a hat in his hand. Then he got to the end of the bench and up to the top of the house [?] and said, "Vote for Sam G. Bratton!" So, the polls [?] people then came around and gave him a handfull of candy or this, that, and the other, you know . . .

Burroughs: Well, was that a formal nomination, or was that just to get his name . . .

Compton: No, it was [indistinct]. And Charles said he and Co Howard [?] started Sam Bratton out for United States Senator. He and Charles said the other day, "Well, I think we really did." Because he was the start of the very next convention, you see.

Burroughs: That must have been about 1924 or 26?

Compton: I guess so. But there isn't a single person living that I can think of that went to that convention from Portales or Elida, either. Because Mr. Perylynn [?], and Judge Reese, and Co Howard . . . Mrs. Arthur didn't go, because I asked her if she wanted to go and she said, "Why, no, of course not."

Burroughs: But she went later.

Compton: All the time, she doesn't like me to tell that, I don't think.

Burroughs: I know that you mentioned a few minutes ago that your husband was District Attorney. When was his brother, Cleeve, elected District Attorney also?

Compton: You know, I can't remember what year that was.

Burroughs: But it was after your husband.

Compton: Oh, yes, years later. He moved to Clovis, you know, after he was elected.

Burroughs: I see.

Compton: Because that was in the understanding. [?] He would move up

to Clovis, and Mr. Compton was assistant, I believe, under Cleveland then. Cleveland was also assistant District Attorney under Mr. Compton.

Burroughs: I see. So the brothers just helped each other out.

Compton: And Mr. Compton was always terrible, you know. He took quite a bit of interest in the Democratic party until he had his wreck. After that, he wasn't able to do very much. That is, physically, he wasn't..

Burroughs: But Cleeve and his wife, Bessie, lived in Clovis, then, until he was appointed to the State Supreme Court.

Compton: And that was under Johnny Miles, I believe, Governor Miles.

Burroughs: Now, he was District Judge, though, when he was appointed, wasn't he? He had been elected judge . . .

Compton: Well, he was appointed District Judge by Johnny the first time, and then he run for . . . I'm nearly sure it was that way, and I don't know who . . . someone died, I suppose, and then he was appointed, and after that he run for Judge.

Burroughs: But your husband didn't participate too much, then, after . . .

Compton: Not too much. You see, he was physically . . . oh, not disabled entirely, of course, but he . . . [tape ends]

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Burroughs: You mentioned a little earlier that your husband did some work under John Miles during the Second World War. What was his capacity then?

Compton: Well, he had charge of the rationing here, and it was quite

a job, you see, because he put in all his time there. He didn't have time to practice. And he and his secretary, Freida Derkins, did all that.

Burroughs: What did they ration during that war period?

Compton: Well, it was I particularly remember the sugar, and I suppose . . .

Burroughs: All rubber products.

Compton: . . . we had to use . . . what were those things called?

Burroughs: Ration books? Stamps?

Compton: Yes, stamps. I have some of those things yet.

Burroughs: Gasoline was rationed, too.

Compton: Yes, gasoline and coffee, I suppose, wasn't it? Meat and oil was rationed.

Burroughs: Meat was rationed.

Compton: Because we had meat on certain days. I remember on Tuesdays we could get meat. But we observed everything. Sugar and everything because we were just as strict I know how happy Charles would be, "Oh, we can get meat today!"

Burroughs: I remember that soap was rationed.

Compton: Yeah, everything I suppose was rationed.

Burroughs: Yes, all grocery items. It was difficult for me to get soap to wash the baby laundry.

Compton: And tires, and inner tubes were really rationed, you see.

Burroughs: And Mr. Compton had to see to all of that here in this county.

Compton: Had to see to all of that, and he barely practiced law during

the time because he had to put up . . . and that was so hard on him. His health began to break down. He had already had his car accident, but his health broke down during that time more than ever, and I just told him he had to get out of that. But I don't think he did.

Burroughs: Was he paid anything for this work?

Compton: No, that was perfectly free, and I had never thought about that, what he did during the war; and you can't imagine how that burdened, because people came here, somebody came here because he wasn't rationed an inner tube and he liked to bawl me out. And I told him, "Well, go right ahead, I was seeing how impatient you could get."

Burroughs: People were rather demanding, and, of course . . .

Compton: Yes.

Burroughs: There were hardships, too.

Compton: And they felt he was unfair, but he just had to ration a lot of things.

Burroughs: Well, now, after the war was over in 1945, did he have any other public office or serve in any capacity? His brother, by then, was . . .

Compton: Nothing, only, when District Attorney under Cleveland, you know, part of the time. He didn't . . . I don't know who . . . somebody else was at the beginning, and I think then Cleveland appointed [indistinct] for that term. Something happened, I don't know what.

Burroughs: Your son, Charles, never expressed the desire to be a lawyer.

Compton: Oh, no. He doesn't care anything about politics whatsoever. He'll go vote and that's all.

Burroughs: After he made his first splurge at the convention when he was a child.

Compton: He went with us several times afterwards, you know, when he could get out of school, but usually . . . then it got so I didn't go. I had too much sickness in the home. Mr. Compton still continued to go to the conventions even after he was crippled.

Burroughs: How long did he live?

Compton: Let me see. He had his car wreck in '38. He was as old as Charles, then. And then he died in

Burroughs: It hasn't been too long ago, has it? In the fifties?

Compton: The first day of the year in . . . '59, I believe. He died just after midnight.

Burroughs: So that was about 12 years ago.

Compton: About 12 or 13.

Burroughs: Your nephew, James Compton, Cleve's son, is still active in politics and is the new District Judge.

Compton: Yes, he's always been more or less interested in politics.

Burroughs: I think that when you lived in Elida, you mentioned a paper down there.

Compton: Yes, we had a . . . it was a literary society, you see, and we had debates. Also had a paper that we . . . we called it the

Hot Shot, or the Fog Horn. I've forgotton what the name of the paper was. And I had a real . . . he'd been a correspondent, a newspaper reporter for the Birmingham paper and for an Albuquerque paper. And he was my reporter, you see, and he stayed over there at the store.

Burroughs: Now, was that paper printed in Elida?

Compton: We didn't have it printed. It was just for the Literary Society, you see, it was in longhand. Sometimes I wrote the editorial, and I wrote an editorial about the tri-colored hatband. Then he got all the news for me, because he knew where to get it, you see. And then he'd bring it over to me. Of course, he'd have it already written up.

Burroughs: Then you'd read this at your meeting.

Compton: At the Literary Society. And we had some very good debates, and I think I said a speech or two for them.

Burroughs: What type of thing did you talk about?

Compton: Well, I've forgotton . . . I was trying to think this morning what they debated on. It was something about politics, I think. And Mr. . . . this man, I've forgotton his name, they had a debate . . . they had a beauty contest. My sister and Nanny Farmer were the contestants. I teased my sister about that two years ago, about Nanny coming out ahead.

Burroughs: But they weren't bathing beauty contests then, were they.

Compton: What?

Burroughs: They weren't bathing beauty contests.

Compton: Oh, no, oh, no. Just which was the most beautiful girl in the neighborhood. And, you know, you can't imagine how hard some of those old men . . . they spent money on it, you see, working out there. It was kind of a money contest, too, but I don't know what the money was for. And Nanny came out ahead. Clarence Greathouse brought Nanny over to see us one Sunday after that.

Burroughs: So they maybe had vote buying in order to win votes.

Compton: Uh huh. I imagine they were buying [indistinct]. Of course that's what they were doing. And I imagine Clarence Greathouse worked hard, you see, for Nanny.

Burroughs: That was his sister, then.

Compton: No, it was his girl!

Burroughs: Oh, his girl!

Compton: Nanny Farmer. She was a real pretty girl, like . . . my sister was pretty, too. Nanny had blue eyes like her, a real fair complexion. And I remember the boy that went with me, he worked for Angie, and Mr. Gripton [?]. Several others . . . some of the older men over there were buying votes for Angie, but Nanny came out ahead.

Burroughs: What was the name of this Literary Society that more or less sponsored most of this?

Compton: Well, I have an idea I don't know whether we particularly had any name for it, but it was the Benson Literary Society. Benson School House.

Burroughs: I see.

Compton: The schoolhouse was named for the Bensons, that used to live there. They owned property.

Burroughs: Then it looks as if young people can amuse themselves no matter where they are.

Compton: Well, you know, we had some real good debates that Mr. Clifton [?] They were all those people that debated were college people.

Burroughs: So they were knowledgeable.

Compton: I know Mr. Buck Cannon [?], he was a widower, I think, and he was a very bright man. I don't remember whether a Greathouse ever did come to the Literary Society, except Clarence, you see. I don't know whether he hardly remembers me or not.

Burroughs: Do you want to make some kind of concluding statement about your impressions as a young girl?

Compton: Well, I thought it was very civilized, and I didn't ever . . . well, I just couldn't imagine anybody being afraid, because it seemed really more civilized than where I came from.

Burroughs: And that was Burtburnet

Compton: No, it was Burnet, Texas

Burroughs: Burnet, Texas.

Compton: . . . on the other side of Austin. You see, there's Burtburnet, it's a little town where my people settled before Texas was a state, you see. But the Johnsons you see, settled down there. I mean President Johnson's family.

Burroughs: Yes, Lyndon Johnson.

Compton: And they settled down there before Texas was . . . had commenced statehood, when it was full of indians, you see.

Burroughs: So you were prepared, though, when you and your sister came out with your guns in your broken satchel. You were prepared.

Compton: Didn't know but maybe we'd find . . . well, we just didn't know what one time . . . well, it was yellow and it was something bright come up to the door and we just couldn't imagine what it was. And Angie said, "Oh, for heaven's sake, Allie, what is that out there?" And I said, "Well, I'll find out." And I took my pistol and went out, and it was a poor little old yearling calf. Stuck his head in a bucket, and couldn't get out. So we caught the yearling and took the bucket off his head.

Burroughs: Well, you had lots of adventures as a young girl. More than people do now, I think.

Compton: Well, I had because I always headed when we'd go up on the river fishing down home, I always was
One old lady said, "Allie won't let any of them get killed or drowned, I know that, but just as sure as anything, she'll have them down there with those half-nude professors from the University. But I wouldn't now, I was careful. I wouldn't let them get close to them. I wouldn't let the girls . . .

Burroughs: Do you release these statements for the Oral History classes at Eastern New Mexico University?

Compton: Now, what?

Burroughs: Will you release these statements, the things that you've told us so that people can listen to them?

Compton: Oh, yes. It's alright.

Burroughs: I think they'll enjoy them.

Compton: May not sound very brilliant, but maybe they can be of use sometime.

Burroughs: It gives a different picture of life, then, for a young lady from what they have now. Thank you, Mrs. Compton.