

**Sanford L. Fox Oral History Interview – 3/18/1965**  
Administrative Information

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**Biographical Note**

Fox, chief of the White House Social Entertainments Office (1961-1964), discusses Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy's aesthetic influence on White House social events, presidential citations, and the White House renovation, and Fox's work in preparing for John F. Kennedy's funeral, among other issues.

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Oral History Interview

with

Sanford Fox

March 18, 1965  
Washington D.C.

By Nancy Tuckerman

For the John F. Kennedy Library

TUCKERMAN: How long have you been in that position [chief of the Social Entertainments Office of the White House]?

FOX: I've been head of the office since 1961, January, and actually my first service there was with the last inaugural of President Roosevelt [Franklin D. Roosevelt]. And this, of course, entailed the serving of three presidents prior to President Kennedy [John F. Kennedy].

TUCKERMAN: What is your job exactly in the Social Entertainments Office?

FOX: We are, of course, responsible for protocol, the background essentials of such, the engraving, the printing, the general overall of seating and so forth for...

TUCKERMAN: You write the invitations?

FOX: ...state affairs. Yes, I have three people who perform the calligraphy

and the Bureau of Engraving and Printing does the engraving of the plates. They're hand-engraved as opposed to machine-engraved that is the usual way of engraving.

TUCKERMAN: It presents a much more beautiful appearance.

FOX: It does, and it's a much higher caliber of invitation.

TUCKERMAN: Have they always been done the same way or is...

FOX: Yes, they have. We have various examples of invitations that actually go back to the Grant [Ulysses S. Grant] administration. Once in a while you'll run into one that will show up here and there, possibly from a family that has acquired this as a thing that's been handed down through generations. And, of course, this type of thing is a memento and an heirloom for the family to keep. And many people have realized that the people who really receive these cherish them.

TUCKERMAN: So it makes your work all the more worthwhile, because you know you are making something which people will keep.

FOX: Very true.

TUCKERMAN: What was the very first occasion that you worked on for the Kennedys in the new administration? Do you recall? Was it... I know all the inauguration materials, invitations, were handled elsewhere, but did the Kennedys plan...

FOX: I believe...

TUCKERMAN: ...was it a luncheon or dinner?

FOX: ...it was a reception for the staff. And that was, I believe, the first actual entertainment as such, because I recall Caroline [Caroline Bouvier Kennedy] coming down and sitting on the steps.

TUCKERMAN: And watching you?

FOX: Yes.

TUCKERMAN: Was that for swearing in of the cabinet, perhaps, which was done in the East Room and then...

FOX: No, I think it was...

TUCKERMAN: ...I believe that was quite early in that first week.

FOX: Yes.

TUCKERMAN: Or perhaps the end of the week or the first weekend.

FOX: Yes, it was. I believe, it seems to me it was on a Sunday.

TUCKERMAN: On a Sunday, that's right.

FOX: Yes, Sunday.

TUCKERMAN: And then you became head of the Social Entertainments Office at the start of the Kennedy administration?

FOX: Yes. Actually, well it was January 1, 1961, twenty days before the President and Mrs. Kennedy [Jacqueline Bouvier Kennedy] came to the White House. My predecessor had been there for forty-five years. His first assignment to the White House was during the administration of President Woodrow Wilson. And, of course, the personnel who are there, that is to say, the people who are the civil service—we like to refer to them as the dedicated people to the presidency—are people who have been borrowed by the White House from other agencies, and, as such Mr. Tolley [Adrian B. Tolley], my predecessor, was more or less like “the man who came to dinner”...

TUCKERMAN: Yes and stayed on.

FOX: ...forty-five years, 1915. And actually, the work, of course, of our office is...

TUCKERMAN: It's something which must go on.

FOX: ...yes, and getting very fascinating.

TUCKERMAN: Yes. People who really have this still know the art of calligraphy...

FOX: It is true.

TUCKERMAN: I would think that....

FOX: You see, today it's a talent, and actually the finding of people, such as I do occasionally, actually has to be really sought out from art

schools, namely, Pratt Institute or the Art Center or Carnegie Tech. But it's a specialty and anyone who can draw or letter can certainly learn to do this type of script.

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TUCKERMAN: Did you find that Kennedys entertained more than other or....

FOX: Yes, yes they did considerably.

TUCKERMAN: That's one thing we're interested in is sort of the comparison in, whether you noted any particular change of pattern of....

FOX: I think much of this has to do with the youth of the Kennedys which was admired so much by so many. And, of course, again in all families, and certainly in administrations, each one person would have their ideas of doing things. And this again was an extremely interesting and refreshing approach, I felt.

TUCKERMAN: What things did you notice that were different from the beginning about their....

FOX: Well, right off hand, just....

TUCKERMAN: Well, the pace first of all. They gave more private parties, didn't they?

FOX: Yes.

TUCKERMAN: Did you deal directly with Mrs. Kennedy from the beginning or was it later on that she became more involved with your work and started direct?

FOX: It was after, I should say a year or so, maybe two years. And, of course, then it would be through the social secretary which we are directly connected and responsible to.

TUCKERMAN: Can you recall the very first time you actually had some personal contact with Mrs. Kennedy or knew that she was interested in your work or asked you to do something special for her?

FOX: No.

TUCKERMAN: Did she come around to your office occasionally or would you see her?

FOX: At first she came to visit us. I'm trying to think of the times.

TUCKERMAN: But wasn't it many communicating and memorandums or maybe through the social secretary?

FOX: Well, naturally it was originally through the social secretary, because of

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the various needs that would come along that she would make various requests, and then....

TUCKERMAN: I see you have some notes there on something, on the number of dinners, or what is it?

FOX: I was just looking over some of these things. 1961 to '63 I noted there were forty-one dinners, 115 luncheons, twenty musicals—I recall these concerts and so forth, youth concerts—fourteen receptions, which would entail the, actually the Congress, the diplomatic corps, the junior...

TUCKERMAN: Or the Alliance for Progress, something like that.

FOX: ...yes. Nice teas or tours as such and one breakfast and one brunch.

TUCKERMAN: That was during the time that President Kennedy was in office?

FOX: Yes, from 1961-'63.

TUCKERMAN: And how does that match up with previous administrations? Does that seem like a great deal more?

FOX: Well, actually the tendency, when you look back, is that each administration seems to step another step or two...

TUCKERMAN: It's a progression so that it becomes more....

FOX: ...more lively and it seems to progressively become busier and busier.

TUCKERMAN: Has your work increased, I mean the amount or sort of time that has to go into doing the place cards and the menus and the invitations?

FOX: It has very much. An unusual and new thing that was started in the Kennedy administration, which I think is a very fine way of doing it, is

the menus. Before, they were printed and, of course, not all on our stock as such, but we started having the menu lettered by one of my people and then reproduced on our stock, which, of course, gave the...

TUCKERMAN: Beautiful appearance.

FOX: ...fine appearance of handwork.

TUCKERMAN: Yes. And this was a direct request from Mr. Kennedy to make this

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change?

FOX: It may have been. I don't actually recall, but I believe it came from the social secretary in that respect and could well have been one of her thoughts because I did notice a time kind of, some of the things that she liked in.... Naturally, I would be a little more happy to feel this way that I suppose each of us in our assignments or our way of doing things would have a tendency to feel this way which I.... It's digressing, too. [Interruption]

TUCKERMAN: Did Mrs. Kennedy have very specific ideas about how she wanted things done, like pictures framed and....

FOX: Yes, for instance engravings to be framed she always liked, I noted, especially French mats. And the making of a French mat is quite an involved bit of drawing. It's the drafting of the lines and the wash tone that you must put around the edge. And, of course, the edge must always be kept wet, naturally, to avoid an appearance of over mat. But this was one type of thing she did like very much, I noticed.

TUCKERMAN: And when she wanted something done would she, how would she let you know? Would she send you a note or....

FOX: Yes, and she'd draw out little notations of sort of an idea that she would have, and I would take it from there. I'd send it back to her and one, in this respect, which I thoroughly enjoyed—this was one of the last, I guess one of the last things that we worked out—was the bookplate for the library, [unclear] Library. And it was by a series of six or eight examples of what I thought would be the most handsome type to use with a feeling that, the sort of thing she'd have. And we'd back and forth, I suppose, five or six times, with the little notations....

TUCKERMAN: You prepared the original drawings, too, or did she make an original for you to work up some variations?

FOX: I believe at first she stated some of the ideas she had, possibly using the President's seal, the type of stock. This is another thing that I...

TUCKERMAN: She was very particular, wasn't she?

FOX: ...always was so aware of, yes. And I like this very much, because naturally I think it's so important to use the proper stock and the proper style of type or lettering. These two things I think were extremely important.

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TUCKERMAN: So it must have made your job easier in a way to work for a first lady who had some creative ability and who could look at it from an artist's point of view and draw a sketch for you.

FOX: And you know, at first, I believe at first it was the.... Some of the things that she had in mind, I seemed to labor over, and I just sort of felt, well, this is rather difficult for me to understand. And then after doing, say, two or three different things for her, I could see so clearly that this is a really a wonderful woman, that she has such magnificent taste in so many things. Not only of her own appearance and fashion which I've always admired of her, but the historical parts of, and well, redoing and restoring the White House for the American people. Because I'm sure many people never looked at it in a way that this is really the house of the President and First Lady. It's something that should be looked upon as a wonderful, historic....

TUCKERMAN: Did your office come into that at all, phase of restoration?

FOX: No, only possibly just the little things like the china room, the redoing and doing the cards that would...

TUCKERMAN: Identify them.

FOX: ...yes, each administration's china.

TUCKERMAN: And then I think you did some.... At one point they had certain things in rooms that were marked. Or didn't you do the actual drawings of the rooms to show the key to the rooms at one point?

FOX: I don't recall that but doing of the plates identifying the paintings. There, of course, I was working with Mrs. Kennedy and for Mrs. Kennedy and the social secretary, the chief usher and the curator.

TUCKERMAN: Oh, so exciting.

FOX: And again it was. It seems like, well, it's actually working for the first family. Each person has his responsibilities, and there is much coordination to be done in many little things.

TUCKERMAN: Yes. Now in your job as head of the Social Entertainments Office you and one or two of your assistants would always be at every state dinner, state luncheon with the table plan and the seating cards, would you not?

FOX: That's true.

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TUCKERMAN: So you had an opportunity to see so much that was going on within the house. Can you recall what was the most memorable luncheon and dinner? Once your work had been finished and the cards placed on the table, what occasion impressed you or remains in your mind?

FOX: The greatest highlight of all to me was the evening at Mt. Vernon.

TUCKERMAN: Everybody has the same reaction to that.

FOX: Because this is something that had never been done before.

TUCKERMAN: Did you actually go to Mt. Vernon?

FOX: Yes. And the whole atmosphere of the evening, the entertainment before and after dinner was, just, everything seemed to come off just perfectly.

TUCKERMAN: How many people did they have to the dinner? Do you have any idea?

FOX: Yes, I think it was 137.

TUCKERMAN: And it was outside?

FOX: Yes, on the lawn. There was a tent constructed for the tables. And the food, of course, was brought from an adjoining area from the side of the house there. The evening's entertainment.... I should say the introduction of the program that went before, of the costumed old guard, the guests viewing the drilling on the west front of the lawn gave one the feeling that you were actually standing here by George and Martha Washington. It was as if the air of....

TUCKERMAN: That was the most spectacular one.

FOX: Yes. It really created an atmosphere that you felt as if you were there.

TUCKERMAN: Yes. Did you see the President at all when he came to the lunches?

FOX: Yes, I did occasionally and....

TUCKERMAN: Was he apt to be prompt or was he....

FOX: Well, this you see again varies because in his tremendous responsibility in office there are times when meetings, discussions tend to run over longer so, generally, yes he was. At first he was as prompt as....

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TUCKERMAN: And I remember when you had stag luncheons your just drew the names out of a hat. Wasn't that it? There wasn't any seating procedure.

FOX: Yes, we seat the places by using the protocol method. We'll say, starting from the President then working right, left, out from each side. Or if it's a....

TUCKERMAN: But I remember that [unclear] draw a number out of a hat and the number corresponded to the protocol seating.

FOX: Yes. And, of course, a person would draw.... Of course, if it was a table where you would have people facing each other, then the person who would draw number three would be on the President's right, you see.

TUCKERMAN: That's right. One of the things that I recall that President and Mrs. Kennedy had a deep interest in, and I know you were responsible for the work, was the changing of the presidential citations. Can you give a little bit of background on that and the steps that you took and what documents you followed?

FOX: Well, one evening Mrs. Kennedy called me from Camp David—she was there with the children—and she had been considering the redoing of the presidential citation. And here again is one of these things that I thought so much of her, because she had this interest of the redesigning of the citation. So Tish Baldrige [Letitia Baldrige] asked me if I would call her and talk with her about it, and I did. And she had mentioned that she'd had a few ideas that she would like to more or less have roughs worked up on, and something she could sort of get an idea of how this particular thing would go, and she would meet me the next day when she returned to the White House.

And when I met her the next day she had various examples of citations and so forth that she had accumulated from various people. And these were all to be incorporated into this one.

TUCKERMAN: And these were, some were very historic ones.

FOX: Yes, the one, the main one was the citation she had been loaned by a dealer of rare documents in New York signed by James Monroe. And this was, I must say, an interesting and fascinating challenge, a real challenge.

TUCKERMAN: Yes, because it involved so much operating.

FOX: And naturally this was to be engraved. And when you finally establish the design and draw it all, then the engraver takes it and engraves this by hand in steel, you see. This is a thing that many people think, well,

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it's printed or is it etched? Well, this is engraved, cut in steel, and then run off. Finally the end result came as a wonderful little warm note that she sent me, and I, of course, cherish that today.

TUCKERMAN: Do you remember what it said?

FOX: Well, in essence he said, "Dear Sandy, the citation you designed I sent to the President in Florida, and he called me saying that he was extremely impressed." And to me, when the President is extremely impressed this is the high point in your life, to anyone.

TUCKERMAN: Yes, I would think so, too.

FOX: And she said that, of course, actually she had liked it very much. And I know why, because she was mainly responsible for the various ideas of incorporating all these various citations into one. And ended it with a "Bravo, Jacqueline Kennedy."

TUCKERMAN: Ahh, how nice. Can you recall the first time the citation was used?

FOX: It was used for a name I shall never forget, because in the layout I made this many times, Florence Jaffray Hurst Harriman, a very wonderful and dedicated woman.

TUCKERMAN: Were there many citations given?

FOX: No, this was, this actually was the only one. It was the beginning,

before our terrible tragedy. And, we, this was the first one.

TUCKERMAN: The first one, I see.

FOX: And there were others, of course, from time to time to follow.

TUCKERMAN: Yes. And then did you work on the honorary citizenship which was given to Winston Churchill?

FOX: Yes, I did. I created that. I created that for the President.

TUCKERMAN: And was he extremely interested in this project?

FOX: Yes, he was.

TUCKERMAN: And did he ask to be kept abreast of all the steps?

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FOX: Well, actually he was [Interruption].

TUCKERMAN: We'll continue about the Winston Churchill citation, his honorary citizenship. You were going to tell us some things about them. [Interruption] Approximately how long would it take to prepare one of these citations?

FOX: Well, this one I would say approximately three days. They vary with lengths and all.

TUCKERMAN: Then you would take it to the President and show it to him before or to Mrs. Kennedy?

FOX: Yes. Well, actually took it over to Mrs. Lincoln [Evelyn N. Lincoln], I believe it was. And at the time the President had someone with him, and so I left it with her to show him.

TUCKERMAN: But he was very interested in seeing it beforehand.

FOX: Yes, yes.

TUCKERMAN: Were you first told that this would be in and asked to make up a mock-up or were you given the whole text of it and then told to proceed with that or how did it work?

FOX: No, you see, I was given the text that had been, it was the, we'll say

the proclamation that was proclaimed and in this respect I was to put it in an artistic form, so it really had been, yes, composed and signed by the President and the Secretary of State [Dean Rusk]. In other words, this particular document would be in the, the actual writing of the document would be in the files in the archives. This would be a hand, we'll say, painted one of the original....

TUCKERMAN: And then it was put in a leather case, as I recall.

FOX: It was mounted in a leather case with the presidential seal stamped on it. And then in a velvet-lined walnut box. It was very elaborately....

TUCKERMAN: Did you have to get all these extra trappings for it or was, did you then turn your finished art work over to somebody else, or did you have to get the case made and....

FOX: Yes, I had the cases made by the bindery in the government printing

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office. And we actually kept one or two on hand just for such occasions that would arise from time to time.

TUCKERMAN: And didn't you do some after the President's death? Didn't you do three citations? I guess I was confused, that's right. The Presidential Medal of Freedom was another project which he started working on in the Kennedy administration.

FOX: Pope John [Pope John XXIII] and then there was one that was composed and highlighted. It was present posthumously to President Kennedy.

TUCKERMAN: We all think of your job as involving so much art work, but it really was much more than that. Can you reexplain what the Social Entertainments Office is and what your particular function was as its head?

FOX: Well, as one of the officers, the coordination between the social secretary, the ushers office, the maitre d', the printing office where the menus, the overall coordination is, it's actually working as a team. And each person, each office has their responsibility and to perform various parts that will make up an evening or a luncheon that will run smoothly. Many times when things seem to go off in a very smooth manner, there's always a reason behind, because there has to be a great concern about so many things. So you always make your.... The important thing is to make the guests of the President and the First Lady always comfortable and never, there are many people who are extremely excited, never having, at times, ever been invited to the

White House, and they go through all lengths of excitement that when they actually arrive I'm sure sometimes they're in a state of frightness.

TUCKERMAN: Yes. So you really guide them in and give them their place cards.

FOX: With the social aides.

TUCKERMAN: Are there a lot of last minute changes that came up every dinner...

FOX: No, once in awhile.

TUCKERMAN: ...people that got sick?

FOX: Yes, you'll find that, that you have to....

TUCKERMAN: Then you would fill in or ask, invite people at the last moment.

FOX: Well, not actually. It's rather impossible to invite a person at the last

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moment on a formal occasion because you can imagine a lady having a gown all ready. It's just pretty much impossible at the last minute.

TUCKERMAN: So you have to remove...

FOX: It's a sort of a switching of places.

TUCKERMAN: ...the place or change the seating.

FOX: Yes, rearranging.

TUCKERMAN: Which would affect the protocol.

FOX: Yes. And once in a while a kind of case where there would be a foreign dignitary visiting, for instance. His lady would not be with him, and in the party, for instance, there would be, we'll say, the secretary for foreign affairs and the ambassador and the first secretary of the cabinet and so forth. We may have one lady, the ambassador's wife. Of course, she being the ranking one, would be seated on the President's right. And this evening the last minute the lady became ill, and so we had to bring the next person, which, of course, was our...

TUCKERMAN: An American.

FOX: ...in this case I think it was the chief justice's wife, Mrs. Warren [Nina

Warren].

TUCKERMAN: Can you recall which state dinner this was?

FOX: No, I really don't offhand. I don't recall this one.

TUCKERMAN: Could you tell me where you were at the time of the assassination?

FOX: I was in my office with the social secretary at the time. Miss Tuckerman [Nancy Tuckerman]. And we were seating the dinner to Chancellor.... No, I think this was....

TUCKERMAN: It was Chancellor Erhard [Ludwig Erhard].

FOX: Erhard, right.

TUCKERMAN: From Germany.

FOX: Very true.

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TUCKERMAN: And I remember we were just about finished seating it and Fred Holborn [Frederick L. Holborn] was in working with us. Do you remember that?

FOX: Yes. We were in the middle of the seating of the dinner, and the news came over the radio. And naturally we were all of us completely stunned to think that this just couldn't possibly be.

TUCKERMAN: Well, then after, who did you really contact and deal with during, to do the invitations with? Who did you work with about it?

FOX: Well, you see, this was the one difficult thing, I found, that in such a state that has everyone in shock that we were all in, it was, for me, it was difficult to obtain the information from the special assistants, for instance, who were naturally themselves meeting and on the west side to arrive at what procedures and so forth they would follow. They....

TUCKERMAN: Did Sargent Shriver [R. Sargent Shriver, Jr.], was he the one who was mainly in charge of that?

FOX: Well, he was, yes.

TUCKERMAN: And Ambassador Duke [Angier Biddle Duke].

FOX: This is going beyond this now. My concern, of course, at the time was to have started the printing which I, many people say the invitation, I call it the announcement of the funeral and to get someone in an official capacity to say, "This is what we'd like." It was rather difficult. And so I had, of course, in my office we have the records of past administrations, and I pulled out the record on President Roosevelt, and I used the same format that was used for President Roosevelt.

TUCKERMAN: Now, did you show that to Mrs. Kennedy or....

FOX: No. This was a time of, in fact I didn't communicate with Mrs. Kennedy at this time at all. I believe it was Mr. Ralph Dungan [Ralph A. Dungan] that I received the O.K. on.

TUCKERMAN: 'Cause it was an incredible job to do in a few days. And then who gave you the guide as to how many letters or how many invitations to have printed?

FOX: Well, I just sort of, well, I was making an estimate on my own. And that, of course, wasn't enough, because we had to have more and more printed until we practically ran out of stock. Because this sort of thing is....

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TUCKERMAN: And then the seating in the church, did you have to do that protocol or did the State Department?

FOX: The chief of protocol, the State Department, the chief of protocol of the United States, actually Ambassador Duke, whose office was responsible for the seating of the foreign dignitaries and the seating at the church.

TUCKERMAN: And there wasn't enough time to mail the invitations, so I remember they all had to be written out and then left downstairs to be picked up. So all the people had to be contacted.

FOX: And then it was getting these little tickets printed for the cathedral and various sections for the heads of state and the family, heads of state, the governors, the Congress, the military, the foreign ambassadors and all these various things had to be....

TUCKERMAN: You were doing all of this on a Saturday and Sunday. How did you get it done?

FOX: Day and night.

TUCKERMAN: Did you mobilize the government printing office?

FOX: Truly.

TUCKERMAN: They worked all night.

FOX: At this time the people are extremely understanding and cooperative and are ready and waiting with whatever you need. And also it is important to know where you can get things done. This is very important. When a person had knowledge at his fingertips that so and so can do this and so forth, it is a culmination of working with the engraving, Bureau of Engraving and Printing at the Government Printing Office, and a private engraver actually.

TUCKERMAN: So because of all of your past experience and dealings you were able to pull all of this together at a moment's notice in a real time of crisis?

FOX: That's true.

TUCKERMAN: Did you go home that night at all for two days or were you there continually?

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FOX: Well, yes, I did. I went home, I think, around, it must have been two or three o'clock and then came in the next morning late at nine, which was Sunday.

TUCKERMAN: Two or three in the morning.

FOX: Yes. And then came in on Sunday and started again about, with I don't recall right then just what it was.

TUCKERMAN: Could you tell me about the prayer cards that Mrs. Kennedy wanted printed?

FOX: This was the one thing that, as I look back on it, I don't know how we actually got it all put together and all. I called to the west side to Mr. Dungan's office to talk with a Dr. English who worked for Mr. Shriver. And we sat down on the couch there in the office, and the office was filled with people standing here and there and all and making plans of various sorts. I recall his saying to me, "Sandy, are you Catholic?" And I said, "No." And he said, "Well, this is a prayer card." And he gave me two prayer cards. One was of the President's brother and [Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr.] of his sister [Kathleen Kennedy Cavendish]. And he explained to me what the

prayer card entailed usually, and the wording on the back. Now he said, "Mr. Shriver wanted me to explain to you this. Consider the stock, consider the type and try to find the very best photos you can, so we can show these to Mrs. Kennedy." So at that moment I, well actually the wording, to go back, was first mentioned. Sargent Shriver says, "He always liked this prayer of St. Francis of Assisi, 'Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace.'" And I said, "I like that very much also." So this was again, it was just one of those things that you were, you're trying to think of something. And you must come up with something, and then it can always be changed.

TUCKERMAN: Right.

FOX: But just to not have an idea at all is something that makes it difficult for people like Mrs. Kennedy and people who have so many things to think of, that at least it might give them a little stimulus to [unclear] something else.

TUCKERMAN: Your job was to find pictures and prepare to send out.

FOX: I contacted Chief Knudsen [Robert C. Knudsen] and I knew that he had taken many photographs of the President. And I said, "Could you give me a certain picture of the President you may have taken from time to time that we could use on a prayer card?" And I arrived at a size that would be larger than the ones that were shown me, because during the talk I had with Dr. English, the minister of the...

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TUCKERMAN: St. Matthews?

FOX: Yes. I talked with a very wonderful man.

TUCKERMAN: Philip [unclear] Monsignor Cartwright [I. Mitchell Cartwright].

FOX: Right. Talked with me for awhile. I enjoyed him so very much. He's a really wonderful person. And he showed me some various examples of cards that he had, and it was at that time that I discovered that it didn't have to be of a real small nature, but it could have been larger, as long as it could fit in, say, a prayer book. And so in the meantime Chief Knudsen is looking for me some photographs. And I came up with, actually with three. And then I meet Dr. English and Mr. Shriver, as I recall the time. Mr. Robert Kennedy [Robert F. Kennedy] came, I believe, in at the same time. This was in the living quarters. [Interruption] Yes, in the living quarters.

TUCKERMAN: With Robert Kennedy and Mr. Shriver?

FOX: Well, actually, as I say, Robert Kennedy came in and, in with Mrs. Kennedy. And Sargent Shriver was with her also. So I sat on the divan and talked with Dr. English about various things that I had come up with and the printer and so forth, and I thought we could do this. And in a short time, as I recall, Ethel Kennedy [Ethel Skakel Kennedy] and Mrs. Shriver [Eunice Kennedy Shriver] and Mrs. Lawford [Patricia Kennedy Lawford] and all were around in the room. And they sat down, and everyone was, as I recall this, in this terrible state of shock, sadness. Mr. Shriver came out and brought the, had in his hand this large printing of the President's, the late President's inaugural address, and Mrs. Kennedy had marked around the three last paragraphs with the omission of the first half of the last paragraph. And that was to be the wording that she desired, which I thought was a really an excellent selection. With this introduction that she had thought of and had printed.

TUCKERMAN: She had taken a piece of White House stationery, hadn't she, and made two or three mock-ups of what the card would look like.

FOX: And it said "Dear God, please take care of your servant John Fitzgerald Kennedy." And this I took with me to the printer.

TUCKERMAN: Her own drawing of the card and....

FOX: No, this was just the wording. And the photograph she selected was one that Chief Knudsen had taken of President Kennedy when he was giving a talk to some, a group of people on mental retardation. And they had a little time, I believe it was either before the people gathered together, or some, it was, we'll say a time there of....

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TUCKERMAN: A break in the...?

FOX: Yes, and Chief Knudsen was taking various angles of pictures. And after he had them printed, he showed them to the President and he said, "Well, you know, Chief, I kind of like this one. Let's save this for a special occasion." This is the one that Mrs. Kennedy selected for this card, not even, of course, knowing this. And I thought, "Oh, my!"

TUCKERMAN: And the picture was never used until that moment when...

FOX: It was never used, correct.

TUCKERMAN: ...it was put on. That's...

FOX: That's the one time.

TUCKERMAN: ...a very interesting story. I didn't know that. Very interesting. That was the original picture then, 'cause there was....

FOX: That was the one that was used.

TUCKERMAN: They changed it once.

FOX: That was the one that was used.

TUCKERMAN: That was the one that was used at the mass.

FOX: At the mass. And so we then set the photographers in motion. All these photographs were actually printed photographs and then cut apart. Then I had them, the very, I think it was six o'clock on Sunday morning, the engraver. And they had the type set, ready to go, and printed them and delivered them to me at the White House at ten o'clock.

TUCKERMAN: That night.

FOX: Sunday morning.

TUCKERMAN: Sunday morning. They did it in four hours.

FOX: Yes.

TUCKERMAN: How extraordinary. Isn't that amazing? How many?

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FOX: Now, you see this was printed as opposed to engraving and on the back of this, it's a very heavy and fine matte photographic paper and, of course, ink would have absorbed in the back, and I remember I selected a type face, it was called Eve. And it had a quality that, it was a classic type of appearance of type. And again it had a dignity to it that was a manuscript type. Combination.

TUCKERMAN: Can you remember any little story or something that you might like to add?

FOX: Well, one of the, the last bit of entertainment at the White House, as such, was the judicial reception for the Supreme Court and all lower courts. And, of course, at that time some of the staff were invited.

TUCKERMAN: This was the night before they left for Texas.

FOX: It was, yes, on the twentieth.

TUCKERMAN: November twentieth.

FOX: November the twentieth. And my wife [Lucille Fox] came in, and went over to the reception and we were enjoying it so very, very much. We had given the judges their admit card. Well, actually we let them keep them; we did give them back to them as they were presented at the door, in the east wing, and asked them if they would present it at the door in the East Room because in the reception evidently some of the judges had complained that there were so many people who sort of get up and shake hands with President and Mrs. Kennedy and in all large groups like this there's always going to be some who don't get in and others who don't hesitate.

TUCKERMAN: And they hadn't gotten to really meet him at previous receptions.

FOX: They hadn't gotten to shake hands with them. So we thought this would be a very ideal way to do it.

TUCKERMAN: Separate the judges into one room.

FOX: Yes. So when my wife and I were walking around, as I have said earlier, and we walked into the East Room. And then it dawned on me that this was for the judges. So I said, "Lucille," I said, "this was supposed to be for the judges in here, so we'll just go out this door over here." So we started to walk out the, on the, at the north side, and in come J.B. West [J. Bernard West] and his assistants and their wives. And I said, "Well, good evening." And I said, "You want to shake hands with Mrs. Kennedy, I suppose." The ladies asked Mrs. Fox, "Would you join us three ladies there? I'm sure it would be perfectly all right." So I followed Bruce Hill a couple of

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steps. And General McHugh [Godfrey T. McHugh] was introducing Mrs. Kennedy to the various people, and the room hadn't started yet, you know, started to fill up. And he said, "Mrs. Kennedy, Mrs. Fox." And he said, "Mrs. Sandy Fox." And she shook hands, "Oh, how do you do, Mrs. Fox." And she smiled, "Oh, Sandy," she said, "I thought it was Judge Fox." [Laughter]

TUCKERMAN: Oh, that's nice.

FOX: Then as we left the room, we went out the center hall and General Clifton [Chester V. Clifton, Jr.] had the President, introducing him to various people around, and it was quite crowded at that time. And he said, General McHugh said, "Mr. President, I'd like you to meet Mrs. Fox over here." And he said, "Oh, hello, Mrs. Fox, so good to see you." And he said, "Sandy, I don't know what we'd do without you."

TUCKERMAN: Oh, isn't that nice. Very.

FOX: It gave me a real thrill.

TUCKERMAN: Very nice. It really is.

FOX: This just, to me, this wonderful man to show his feelings. It makes everything so worthwhile regardless of what you do and how much you knock yourself out. These are the wonderful rewards that, when you try to work as a dedicated person to the presidency and then have the President say this, this to me was....

TUCKERMAN: Makes it worthwhile. Very nice.

FOX: Truly wonderful.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

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