

Leonard Ballard

Inspector, United States Capitol Police (1947-1984)

Interview #1

(Thursday, August 18, 1983)
Interviewed by Richard A. Baker

BAKER: I would like to know about your early life. Where and when were you born?

BALLARD:: I was born in a little town in southern West Virginia, Alderson, West Virginia, on October 11, 1908. My father was a buyer for the New River and Pocahontas Consolidated Coal Company. He bought for company stores. You know, they had a company store in every town. He started out working for them as a clerk in a company store, then he worked up to manager, and eventually to buyer.

I attended high school in Alderson, and then I enrolled in Alderson Baptist College and spent two years there. It is now Alderson-Broadus at Philippi, West Virginia. During the Depression, the Baptist Church couldn't afford the two schools. Broadus was in better financial condition, so they closed Alderson and consolidated them. It is now Alderson-Broadus.

There is an organization in West Virginia known as the "University of Hard Knocks." The idea came from Jim Comstock, the publisher of a paper called *Hillbilly*. He had a partner who was always bemoaning the fact that he did not have a college degree. So the publisher designed a diploma for him--and there it is (pointing to the wall).

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The official seal is a bandaid. Now they have 3,000 members. They use the Alderson-Broadus College campus where they have their own room and have their graduation there. Senator Barry Goldwater is an honorary graduate and so is Senator Jennings Randolph.

When I finished the two years there, I enrolled in Concord State School, which is nearby. I was supposed to report in September, but the president of the bank went up to the swimming hole, put a couple of bricks in his pockets, and didn't come back up. The bank didn't open on Monday morning.

BAKER: What year was that?

BALLARD:: I graduated from ABA in 1929, so that was 1931.

BAKER: That was a bad year.

BALLARD: Yes. The bank didn't open, so I couldn't go to school, because the only money any person in town had was what they had in their pockets. As I mentioned earlier, my father was a buyer for company stores. When I was in high school, I was the best dressed fellow in town. I used to go with my father on trips to Baltimore to buy clothes, and of course, the salesmen always gave me a suit right off

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the rack. We went to Lynchburg, Virginia to buy shoes and to Cincinnati. He retired in 1934, but we had no money to spare, so I couldn't go on to school. So, I went to see a small contractor [P.C. Beatty] and asked him for a job. He said, "Well, you've never worked a day in your life, but I think you will--and I'll give you a job at thirty cents an hour." Well, at the end of the week he said, "You're doing pretty well and I'm going to give you forty instead of thirty." He was a graduate of Stetson University in De Land, Florida. He had developed stucco. He'd patented it. I stayed with him and he's the only man I ever worked for until I got inducted into the Army in 1942. The only man. He died while I was in the Army. When I was inducted, I was making \$125.00 a week, which a good salary in those days.

I did everything when I first went to work for him. I cleaned the lumber, I carried the lumber, I mixed mortar. I did borrow some books that he had and I began to study those at night and I got to the point where I could help him estimate, and I kept his books and at first I didn't get anything for it--a small payroll, you know. I suppose I made myself --well --handy, and he held on to me. As he grew, I grew and he would take me along. We eventually ended up on the West Coast. That's where I was inducted into the Army. Now in those days I didn't know what a lobbyist was, but we must have had one in

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Washington, because during the Depression we were getting government contracts for buildings. We built a post office in Alta Vista, Virginia; one in Martinsville, Virginia; one in Delhi, the seat of Delaware County, New York. We were never without work. In 1935, my boss called me and said, "Many years ago, I worked for Mason Hanger Company, one of the five biggest contractors. They've approached me to come back with them and I'm going, but I'm going to take you with me." He was from Kentucky. He said, "I'll go home and you go home and when I get word of where they've located, I'll call you and you meet me there." Well, he called in three or four days, and I was to meet him in Radford, Virginia. Well, it was only eighty miles from home, but I'd never been in that direction. I went over to Radford and we set up a temporary office. What it was was the first powder plant.

Now we were preparing for something--in 1935!--because we built a \$35 million powder plant there. Why at one time we had 25,000 employees. Of course, around home things were still rough. Every person around my home town who wanted a job I took over there. A lot of them still remember that I pulled them

out of a slump. Then we went to Louisiana and built a powder plant there, and finished that and went to Baraboo, Wisconsin. We built a \$95 million powder plant there--a big one. We got a lot of flack from the locals at Baraboo. That was a German settlement and the government went in there and took over some plush farming sections those German farmers had

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developed, and boy you talk about bitter, they were bitter. Of course it didn't do any good. Well, we were there about a year and a half. We were working under the Corps of Engineers and they notified us that war construction was ninety-five percent complete.

BAKER: This was in late 1941 or early 1942?

BALLARD:: Yes. We were in Louisiana when Pearl Harbor hit. Then we moved up. These places had deferments for government work. We were following the deferment. So we finished up there. Well our general superintendent said, "I'm going to Washington to find out what's up." He came back and said we had a contract to put the wood in fifty baby aircraft carriers for Kaiser. Well I thought, "My God, the wood? Well you can whip that out with a knife." Well, I found out otherwise. We all met in Chicago, caught a train to Seattle and down to Vancouver, Washington. There was a lot more wood in those ships than I'd thought. The flight deck was all fir and that's 534 feet long and 65 feet wide. I've handled that material all my life. As soon as I got there, they had a school. At that time that was an unusual ship because it was fast, I think thirty knots. So I went to school to learn the superstructure of the ship, so I would know where the wood went. We were there a year and we did put in the superstructures of the fifty. Well, they didn't say anything, but I went into the hotel one evening and found a notice in my mailbox to report for induction in

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my home county in West Virginia--the induction was two days before I got my notice! So, I went to the office to talk to Edgar Kaiser, the son of the old man, and he made a long distance call and found out that they had lifted the deferment on the yard. Of course they didn't notify me!

BAKER: When in 1942 did that take place?

BALLARD:: It was November. I went down to the local draft board and asked the lady if I was in trouble and she said, "No, you are in no trouble. Do you want to take the physical here or in West Virginia?" Well, there's where I made my first mistake, trying to outfigure the Army. All the boys who were being inducted on the West Coast were being sent to North Carolina for basic training. Well, some fellas from home (in West Virginia) were sent to Camp Roberts, California. So I said, "I'll get 'em. I'll take my examination here and they'll send me to North Carolina." No way! They sent me to Texas! (Laughter)

BAKER: Where were you in Texas?

BALLARD:: The infantry replacement center near Tyler--Camp Fannon. It was just a temporary post and was torn down after the war. I finished basic and went home and then reported to Fort Meade [Maryland] and then to New York to an embarkation point.

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BAKER: You must have been quite concerned at that point. You were trained as an infantryman and you were headed out.

BALLARD:: Yes, and I knew where I was going. Now when we were at Fort Meade, we lined up for issue of uniforms. If you got khakis, you were going to the Far East, to Japan. If you got OD's [olive drab], you were going to Europe.

BAKER: And that was the first time you knew your destination.

BALLARD:: That's right. And I got OD's.

When I was in basic training, there was a lieutenant there that I had partied with in my home. The first time I walked down the company street, I passed him. I knew who he was, but as a trainee you weren't supposed to talk to officers. In fact, you were supposed to salute PFC's! So, I didn't say a word to him. Well, we were out on a little march to just break us in gently, you know, and I was at the tail end of my platoon. We were taking a little break on the back there, and he said to me, "If you hadn't come with a West Coast outfit, I'd swear you were a fella that I used to know in West Virginia." And I said, "Lieutenant, I recognized you the first day I was in the company street." He said, "I'd recognize you as a fella by the name of Ballard that I knew in West Virginia." I said, "That's me. I recognized you in the first day here, but I wasn't supposed to speak to you, and I didn't." You see I was thirty-six

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years old. I was in the same company with boys who were born the year I graduated from high school. I got a commendation and I was older by four years than any other man that finished the training cycle. But the lieutenant kept telling me, "Fall out on your face. I'll okay it and they will send you to headquarters." I would tell him, "I can't do it, I'm just not made that way." Now if he was supervising a problem exercise and there was a soft spot and my platoon was involved, he would give me that. Like the position of "sniper." I would sit up in the tree all day and throw down bags of flour on the "enemy"--"You're dead," you know. But he told me the day we came off bivouac, the final day, "the shipping list is arranged alphabetically."

BAKER: That meant you would be among the first people to be shipped out? What happened to the others?

BALLARD: They eventually went. I was in camp with a fella--an old movie star by the name of Frankie Albertson--he was a dickens of a nice fella--he didn't ask for anything (preferential treatment). But one night we were unloading an ammo box--somebody pushed it off and he was taking it and it fell and broke his instep. When we left for Europe he was in the hospital. It was a coincidence. When we got to England a short time later, we went to a movie, "As The Angels Sing," with Frankie Albertson!

BAKER: That really is a coincidence.

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BALLARD: Yes. Before he was inducted, he had made training films for pay. We would go in the hall for the training films and there's a fella up there, on film, showing you how to clean your rifle--that's Frankie. And here's Frankie sitting down here in the audience with us (Laughter) and we're giving him the business, because Frankie didn't know a bit more about cleaning the rifle than we did. I was hit twice. I was with the Ninth Infantry Division and incidentally, I had a good friend here in the Senate, he was from Montana, he had a drinking problem
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BAKER: A member of the Senate? Lee Metcalf?

BALLARD: Metcalf. He was in the Ninth Infantry Division. We found each other one day out there in the lobby. He opened up the Senate [served as presiding officer in the early portions of each day's session] a lot. We got to reminiscing. Now when he would get drunk, I was about the only one who could handle him. I'd get a call from someone to come up. I could get him to his office, or to his hideaway [office in the Capitol]. No problem. I always liked him, regardless of his drinking problem.

Well, I got hit twice and finally on December 12, 1944 I got the one that I was hunting--the million-dollar job, the one where they had to send you back. There was a million-dollar one and a ten

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thousand-dollar one. The ten thousand-dollar you stayed there; the million-dollar one, you'd get back home. So I was hospitalized in England and then sent back to Stanton, Virginia Orthopedic Hospital. Then I went to a rehabilitation center at Camp Pickett, Virginia and I ran into *another* movie star, Red Skelton. Now, you talk about a character. We used to drink beer. Red loved beer. He joined us and held get a check every Friday for a thousand dollars from Raleigh Tobacco Company and he bought the beer. We had a tap down at the end of the beer garden, and we would take these Coca-Cola crates and put the V-shaped cups in them and take them down and fill them up.

In the meantime, I had gotten married. I had met a woman who was classification secretary at the Women's Federal Reformatory in my home town. She came over

to see me at Camp Pickett. I didn't tell her that Red was there. I don't know why. But I brought her down, we were going out to the camp, and Red came out of the kitchen. There was no liquor store in town, so you bought your booze from the cook. He was a bootlegger. Red had come out with a couple of bottles wrapped up in his newspapers, and I said to my wife, "By the way, Marie, I want you to meet Red Skelton." She said, "Well, I will say, it looks an awful lot like him." (Laughter) I said, "Look, hell it is Red."

Red was a gentleman. We'd be sitting there drinking beer--he was a private--and he said, "I'm the only man from Hollywood who came

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into service as a private, who will be leaving as a private." We'd be sitting there drinking beer and officers would see him. They'd say, "Red if you're not doing anything, who don't you come by the [officer's] club tonight." He'd tell me, "Now they don't want me, they want Red Skelton." He said, "He didn't ask you did he, Ballard?" And, (Laughter) I said, "No, he didn't ask me." Red never would go.

BAKER: Tell me about your wounds.

BALLARD:: A Jerry [German soldier] shot me down through this leg, right below my knee. We went into a German sugar beet factory and cleaned it out. A little trolley where they pushed the sugar beets across . . . Well, we thought it was clear. I was a sergeant and I had a couple of men with me. As we went in, there was an office and I told one of the boys to clear out the office and the other one to go around to this section here, and I'll go up the stairs. I was up about four steps when it just seemed like if you were asleep and somebody would get your foot and start out of the house with it . . . and I went right down on my knee. And Tito [one of the privates] ran out when he heard the gunfire and he ran by me just tossing hand grenades as he went up. I hollered at him, "Tito, don't tear 'em up too much. If any of them have any shaving gear,

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throw it down to me because I'm gonna need it." So he got 'em and threw me down a blue zipper bag that had a Gillette-type razor made in Austria and a shaving stick.

Of course, I was evacuated. When I got back to the command post, they brought in an ambulance--it was a steel-covered half track--and only two of us came out. And that was a Jerry lieutenant. He was a paratrooper. They had dropped paratroopers in on us and they cut us all to Hell.

BAKER: Now, where was this?

BALLARD:: This was in Durn, Germany, right on the Ruhr River. They picked him up. I had a luger in my pocket, a German luger. Now, I used to sell them for one hundred dollars. The fellas who would bring our chow up on the jeep they'd give you a hundred dollars and not bat an eye. I'd have the money sent

back home. They put the German lieutenant in on a stretcher, but I had walked up into the ambulance and sat down. The ambulance driver said to me, "What was that you had in your pocket." And I said, "A luger." Everybody wanted them. He said, "I can't evacuate you with a luger. You turn it over to me with your name and your company and then I'll mail it to you."

I said, "Let me tell you something, fella. I walked up here, and I can walk back. I think I can drive this truck. And if they

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find you over the bank tomorrow with a couple of Jerry luger shells in you, they're going to say, 'Good God! Jerry got him.' So let's just keep" Well, the German could speak English and he asked for a cigarette. He had attended Oxford University, and I said, "Why sure." Whoever had shot him had shot him full of holes--he couldn't lift either hand, so I lighted him a cigarette and put it down in his lips and let him inhale and took it out.

The ambulance driver looked around and said, "You people are crazy as hell. Five minutes ago, you were trying to kill each other down in that little old town, and now you are sitting there giving him cigarettes." I said, "If I were in his condition, I'd appreciate someone doing it for me." I said, "Now I don't think he started this damn thing, and I know I didn't. I think it's over for both of us, so we might as well just make the best of it."

So then the lieutenant said, "Are we going to a Catholic or a Protestant Hospital?" I said, "Well, fella where we're going there's Catholics, Protestants, Jewish, blacks--there's everything." He said, "Well, I'd like to have a priest." And I said, "I'll see if I can arrange it." So they pulled us into an aid station and a couple guys came out and took him in and I got out and sat down by a coke stove. They put him on a rack in there and started clipping him for souvenirs. Well, now we rolled dead, but we didn't roll wounded.

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Now he had a switch blade knife that was worth a couple hundred dollars. I know it was silver, but I didn't touch it. They took that.

A doctor came in. I told him to look at the lieutenant first because he was shot all to hell. He said, "I can't help that. You're the American and I have to take care of you first." I said this fellow over here want a priest. The doc asked me what I had in my pocket and I said, a luger. He said, "God damn, they'll be trying to get that from you all the way back." I said, "I know that, they already tried that. Had to nearly shoot an ambulance driver to get this far." So he went back in to call for a priest and he brought a blood plasma box out. He told me to put the pistol and my blue zipper bag in there for protection. I said all right.

So, here came the priest. The priest could speak Jerry [German] and he spoke to the fella in Jerry. The soldier said something to him and he looked up and said, "Which one of you fellas took that watch off of him?" And one of them spoke up and said, "Yeah, I've got it." The priest said, "Well give it back to him, its an

heirloom from his grandfather." So they did. I don't know whatever happened to him.

BAKER: So you were evacuated back to Camp Pickett?

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BALLARD:: Yes. I was in the hospital in England ninety days and then I was flown back to New York. Now there was an Army hospital at White Sulphur Springs, West Virginia, and when they tagged me, they tagged me Stanton, Virginia for the Woodrow Wilson Orthopedic Hospital. I said, "Well, that's close enough, I can make it from there." Then I went to Camp Pickett for convalescence and then back to Fort Meade and was discharged there.

BAKER: When were you discharged?

BALLARD:: I was discharged in March 1947. And in the meantime, my wife had come to Washington.

BAKER: When were you married?

BALLARD:: In 1935. My wife was originally from Kansas. She took a civil service exam and passed it and they sent her to work at the Federal Reformatory at Alderson. Now, they had very famous inmates. They had Axis Sally, and Tokyo Rose. Machine Gun Kelley's wife, Katherine, and her mother served their sentences there. After I came to Washington to live, we'd drive down to visit. We'd go for a meal with some of the old staff members. I'd drive through. I had District of Columbia tags then, and you should have heard the applause as I drove by the cottages. All the women from Washington recognized the tags.

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Well when I got discharged from Meade, I went back home and then we decided--she was living in Washington--we'd go back home. Well, she was working in the HOLC Building down at First and Indiana Avenue. The Bureau of Prisons had the fifth floor there. I walked down the street with her from 116 C Street and passed the Senate Office Building. I asked her, "What is this building?" And she said, "The Senate Office Building." And I said, well I'll walk down to work with you and when I come back I'll go in there. I know a senator. And I did. I know I crossed the park and went in the Delaware Avenue door and went up to the office and went in. The senator was in, about 9:30. We went back and visited. He was glad to see me.

BAKER: Who was the senator?

BALLARD:: Chapman Revercomb of West Virginia. He asked me what I was going to do. I said we were going back home.

BAKER: How had you come to know him?

BALLARD: Well now, when I was a youngster, I was active in Republican politics down home. An old friend of my father's who was sort of a political king-maker. In other words, if you wanted to run for public office, you'd better come by and see him. If you didn't, the word was out on you. Now when I was a youngster, I used to write letters for him. He owned a hotel there at home, he was a postmaster

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and a political wheel. I got acquainted with all these politicians through him. The vice chairman of the Republican National Committee for many years was from home.

BAKER: Was that a Republican county?

BALLARD: Oh, no! No, you had to wake up people to open up a polling place on election day. All Democratic. Postively Democratic. There were very few Republicans, very few. As I say, it was hard to hold an election. You couldn't get enough Republicans to staff the polls. Of course, my father was a Republican, and I just got associated with them. Now, Senator Revercomb had been elected in 1942. There was a senator by the name of Matt Neely here for many, many years [1923-29, 1931-41]. He went back [in 1940] and he ran for governor so he could keep his political machine together. He got elected governor and then he ran for the Senate [in 1948] again. Well, I don't know. The people, the powers, didn't want it. They wanted him to serve his term as governor. They got Revercomb to run for the Senate. They told him it wouldn't cost him a penny just to fill the ticket. The day of the election [in 1942], he went to bed--he had no idea of being elected, he was just a stalking horse. His wife got up the next day to fix breakfast and turned on the radio and got the election results and went back to the bed and shook him and said, "Wake up, senator." He still couldn't believe it, he was a senator!

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He asked me what we were going to do and I told him we were going home. He asked what Marie was going to do. And I said, "She's going back." He said, "Well it'll take thirty days to get a transfer through, I'll help her, but in the meantime you'd better stay here. We talked a while and he called Louis Reed, his administrative assistant, who came and got me. He took me through the building, over to the Capitol. I didn't know what I was doing--didn't question it. I went to one room--held up my hand, signed my name here, you know. Over to the Disbursing Office, and so forth. You see, I didn't plan to be here more than a few days anyhow, so I didn't care what it was. I took that attitude.

We went down to the basement, down the corridor, and here's a sign "Capitol Police." Of course, naturally, I said, "What are we going to do in here Mr. Reed, get fingerprinted?" I figured everybody who goes to work for the government gets fingerprinted. And he said, "No, no you're going to join the Capitol Police Force." Well, I had a *cane*! (Laughter) I hadn't been out of the Army hospital . . . I said,

"Capitol Police! Now I'll tell you, that senator's known me since I was six years old, and I have no police experience. I don't want to get into anything that would embarrass him. Also, to tell you the truth, Mr. Reed, all my experience has been on the other side of the law, not with 'em." And he said, "Yeah, he knows. He's not afraid of the embarrassment because he said to put you on the Capitol Police Force. Now it's up to you.

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You can go in here with me, or you can go out that door. I can't take you back to the office. Make up your mind." I said, "Well, let's go in." At three o'clock that afternoon I was standing roll call in a uniform over here!

BAKER: Now this was May 16, 1947.

BALLARD:: That's right. The lieutenant called me out for "North Park." Well, you know I didn't say anything. There were only five of us. But when we walked outside the building, I asked him where North Park was. And he motioned down toward Union Station and he said, "That's it down there. That was my first post. So I just walked.

BAKER: That was the only briefing you had?

BALLARD:: That was *it!* Now this was three or four o'clock in the afternoon. Twelve o'clock [midnight] came. I was at the corner down by the side of Union Station waiting on a relief. Well, nobody came. About 12:30, here came the squad car. Midnight lieutenant. "Where in the hell have you been?" "I've just been here waiting on a relief." You know in the Army, when you're on guard duty you don't leave your post. He said, "Didn't they tell you you wouldn't be relieved?" I said, "No." The next day the lieutenant told me, "Regardless of where you are, at quarter of twelve, walk toward this building." So, I didn't get stuck anymore.

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You had no training; nothing. They would introduce you to the rest of the men. But, I enjoyed it. I tried to apply myself. There were things to be done, and I'd do them. I didn't hesitate to offer myself. And I soon learned the system, "take care of the employees." Take care of the senators and the employees. Of course, in those days, it was small, just one building, there weren't many employees. Senator Harry Byrd of Virginia had five in his office. You got acquainted with them. You helped them out any way that you could. Well, of course, all of the men did.

BAKER: At that time, were there separate House and Senate details?

BALLARD:: Oh, strictly.

BAKER: And you were on the Senate detail.

BALLARD: Yes. Now, in the Capitol Building, you had House and Senate. But prior to World War II, it was strictly Senate and House. For instance, if you were assigned to the Senate Office Building prior to World War II, and you got inducted into the service, you got paid for your accumulated leave. You didn't if you were assigned to the Capitol Building. You didn't if you were assigned to the House Office Building. But there was an old lieutenant in charge of the detail, by the name of James. His father was a member of Congress. They were from Danville, Virginia. They owned Dan River Mills. He

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ran this relief and he got Byrd of Virginia to put through a resolution that any person assigned to the Senate Office Building and inducted into the Army, got paid for their leave. Whether they had any or not! James would fill out a letter, send them to the Disbursing Office, and they would get paid.

BAKER: Would they get the maximum?

BALLARD: They'd get everything that James let 'em have! Maybe they didn't have two days leave. James would sign them up for thirty days leave. Now he later went blind.

He and Senator Harry Truman were buddy buddies. They were poker players. They used to play in the guard room here in the Senate Office Building. And they had their bottle. Now, as I say, James was from a very wealthy family and his mother finally had to take his money and put it in trust. He would get drunk and decide to go to Canada. The only way you traveled in those days was by train. Now, he didn't just go down to Union Station and buy a ticket. He went down to Union Station and chartered a Pullman car! He used to tell about he and Truman and some more of them--they'd be drinking. Now a fellow by the name of Royal Copeland--a senator from New York--was chairman of the Rules Committee. He had a rule passed by the Rules Committee that there would be no drinking in the guard room!

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BAKER: Specifically because he knew what was going on with Truman?

BALLARD: That's right! So they would be playing poker and needed a drink and Truman would say, well, let's go up to my office, Copeland has nothing to do with it. So they'd go up and get their booze and come back and play. Now, the day that Truman went to the White House and cleaned out his office--he had Room 200--he stopped by the old Senate guardroom, had a bottle in his hand, put it on the desk, and said, "Boys, I'd like to stop and help you with this, but they won't let me." There were two Secret Service agents behind him.

Of course, I wasn't here then, but James used to tell it. James went blind. He died as a lieutenant. He'd come to work in a cab. We'd meet him at the cab. And in the evening when he got ready to leave we'd take him out and put him in a cab and

send him home. But he knew what was going on. There was no way to fool him. He had a telephone, and he had his system. He knew every turn. A student asked me one time, "Why are you trying to tell me that that lieutenant is blind, because I know he's not and the rest of us know he's not." I said, "Well, I don't know how you found out; he is. He is stone blind." If he thought a fellow was sneaking off a post, he'd call the post.

BAKER: At that time, how many lieutenants were there?
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BALLARD:: Just three.

BAKER: One for each shift?

BALLARD:: One for each detail. House, Capitol, and Senate details. Now, as I say, on the Capitol detail, third shift, we had eight men. That's all we had. Nowadays, we have eight in the Guard Room. Of course, after the riots in 1968, that's when they built up the force. Back then we got along pretty well. If an administrative assistant to a senator wanted a bottle at night, we knew where to get it. All he had to do was to call down and say, "I've got something going and can't turn a trick without it. Do you know where I can get a bottle?"

BAKER: And you'd get the bottle and take it up to him?

BALLARD:: Oh, yeah. On the outside of the door. Knock on the door, leave the bottle and go. The next day he'd come by the Guard Room. "Who brought the bottle up?" "So and so." "Here, give him this." He'd leave a twenty dollar bill and go on about his business.

We had an officer who always carried a bottle with him. He was working the C Street door one Sunday. Senator John Sherman Cooper of Kentucky had had a long sick spell. He came back one Sunday to his office to pick up a few odds and ends and he came down from his

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office to that door and he asked Dempsey, "Do you mind if I sit down here for a few minutes, I feel kind of woozy." And of course, Dempsey said he didn't mind. But he said, "If the phone rings, senator, tell 'em I'll be right back." He went out to his car, he got a bottle, he brought it in, he had some paper cups in the desk, and he poured some out and said, "Try this, senator." The senator took a nice big slug and said well he'd better try another one now. So he fixed him up with another healthy one.

BAKER: Hopefully good Kentucky bourbon.

BALLARD: That's right! The senator said a while later, "I feel pretty good now. If you'll be kind enough to go out there and see if you can stop me a cab, I'll go home. They got him a cab. At that time I was a sergeant. Well, Monday I was at the door

BAKER: When was this? When did you become a sergeant?

BALLARD:: In 1954. Senator Cooper came in on Monday morning looking for the officer who had helped him. I told him he was on the subway [post]. So later in the day, making my rounds, I stopped by the subway, and I asked, "Did Senator Cooper find you?" He said, "Yes." He reached and he popped out a \$20 bill. I said, "What!" And he told me the whole story. "He wanted to pay me back and he came by today and gave me a \$20 bill." And I said, "Well, that's all

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right." You weren't afraid of senators; they weren't afraid of you. Anything you could do to help them, you did it. It was a family affair.

Senator Joseph McCarthy. I'll bet when McCarthy died [1957] that the Capitol Police--they force was composed of all students then--I'll bet they owed him a thousand or fifteen hundred dollars. Of course, he was a soft touch.

BAKER: They wouldn't hesitate to go to him?

BALLARD:: Oh, no. "Can you let me have ten until payday, senator?" "Well, go up and see Mary." And they would go up to see Mary and she'd give them a check for fifteen or twenty dollars. And, of course, a lot of times they paid him back and a lot of times they didn't. He never carried money with him. We'd be standing on the street and a cab would let him out. The senator would turn around and say, "Would you pay the cab and come up and see Mary?" You were always glad to do it, because you always got a dollar more. And a dollar was pretty good sized then, because we weren't making much money. You took care of them all.

BAKER: Did you have favorites? Were there senators, particularly in those early years, from the time you started up through the time you became a sergeant in 1954, that were special favorites of yours?

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BALLARD: Well, I'll tell you, one thing I learned that I wished everybody could have had the advantage of was I came here a rabid Republican, naturally, because I'd been fighting a Democratic district all my life. But, you know, it didn't take me long to change. There were good ones and bad ones in both parties. There were some that I thought just as much of that were Democrats as I did Republicans.

Senator Bob Taft--now he would walk down the corridor and he never spoke to you. He never spoke to another senator. He was always preoccupied. But when he got on crutches, you remember he got cancer, he would come down to the door

and wait for his car--he would sit there at the desk--I'd be there. And he said to me, "It's a shame that I didn't get on these things a long time ago. I'm seeing so many nice people that I never recognized before." I liked Taft, his office was awful nice--a good staff.

You know a lot of times you could tell whether a member was likely to be reelected by the quality of his office staff. I've seen people come out of [Senator Millard] Tydings' office nearly in tears. You knew they were going to defeat him. They'd set their teeth when they came out of there and they were going back there to work against him. And, of course, he was so near, representing Maryland, he had so many visitors. He had a woman in there--she was terrible. Now

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[Senator J. Glenn] Beall, Sr.'s office [also of Maryland] was exactly opposite. You could go to Beall's office and get anything.

BAKER: Why were people going out of Tydings' office in tears?

BALLARD:: Because his aide had ripped them up for even coming by with a problem like that. They'd come out and say, "I never got such treatment in my life as I did from that woman." You could nearly judge the office by the visitors when they came out.

BAKER: There were not that many on the force during that immediate post-war period.

BALLARD:: No. When I came here there were only 157 on the Capitol Police roll. Now there were only about 100 of them working! About 50 of them never came to town. They were on the roll. Now, I know a lieutenant who was a lieutenant for 18 years. I saw him twice. He operated a restaurant in Biloxi, Mississippi. He was under Senator Jim Eastland. Now he came here a couple of times and brought us some shrimp, but . . .

BAKER: He never put on a uniform?

BALLARD:: Oh, no!

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I went to the captain's office. I had something that a lot of them didn't have--I could type. I don't know how many jobs I've got on the Capitol Police Force because I could type. The Democrats took over in the 81st Congress, in 1949, and had a new captain--of course, captains changed with the administration.

BAKER: Did the lieutenants also change?

BALLARD: Oh, yes, because they were prime jobs. In other words a member would bring his appointee down and ask him, "What job do you want?" "Well, I like that one with the gold braid." "Okay."

BAKER: How far down did it go?

BALLARD: It went down to sergeants. The reason that I stayed on the third relief of the night shift was because the new appointments didn't want night work. They wanted day work and you were pretty safe in night work.

BAKER: And you recognized the job security of night work from the beginning?

BALLARD: You're darn right, and I stayed there until the Democrats took over [in 1949] and they appointed a new captain. He interviewed some people for his office. He interviewed me and took

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me over there. Well, I had no patronage. You see my member, Revercomb, got defeated in November 1948. I knew he couldn't win, not from West Virginia as a Republican.

The captain, Olin Cavness, who was appointed was from Arkansas, under Senator J. William Fulbright. And he got me over there on a trial basis--he told me that, and I was over there several weeks and he told me he'd like to keep me here. "Who's your patronage?" And I said, "Well, captain, I don't have any." And he said, "Well how'd you stay here all this time without patronage?" I said, "Well, nobody said anything about going, and I like it." He asked me if I couldn't get one to the West Virginia senators. I said, "No, each one of them has a man on the police force," and I named them. "If I went up and asked them for patronage, they'd toss me out the window," which would be right and I wouldn't dare do it. A couple or three weeks later he went up to the Sergeant-atArms, who was Joe Duke, to see if Duke would let him keep me here. He came back down and he said, "Duke said he didn't care. if I wanted you in the office, it was all right with him." Then, in the last year he was captain, he and Duke fell out over . . . They got to throwing Senator Carl Hayden against Fulbright and that didn't work out.

BAKER: In what way did they throw one senator against the other?

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BALLARD: Duke was a demanding person. He would call Cavness and demand something. So one day Cavness bucked him. So Duke said, "Well, I'm going to have to call this to Mr. Hayden's attention." Well, Cavness was a tough cookie himself and he said, "Well, don't call me anymore, call J. William Fulbright." That did it! From then on, their dealings in the office were with me. I was the Senate police clerk. We had a House clerk and I was the Senate clerk.

Well, I went back to the captain and said, "Mr. Duke seems to be calling me." He said, "I don't give a damn as long as he doesn't call me." Well, Duke took a liking to me. I don't know why. The Republicans took over in the 83rd Congress [1953-54]. I made sergeant. I was in the Senate Office Building and Duke worked me up. I had no sponsor. I got the lieutenantcy. I was in the Capitol Building.

BAKER: What year did you make lieutenant?

BALLARD:: It must have been in '58 or '59, and of course, we had captains from downtown by then, because Duke did not want any more Senate-appointed captains, that he would have to buck a senator. He went downtown [to the Metropolitan Washington Police Department] and brought them up. Then the last captain from downtown died unexpectedly.

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Now Duke was a tough cookie. He demanded perfection. Well, I demanded that on the police force, because that's what he wanted and that's what I gave him.

BAKER: You were really running the entire Senate detail as clerk.

BALLARD:: Yes. Well, some of the boys--the students --decided that business as usual was over. So they played with a newspaperman by the name of John Lindsay and they parked John right at the Senate steps to the Capitol so he didn't have to park out in the press section. If John would write a story about me and my tough attitude. I got a tip one day to watch for the Washington Post Metro section the next morning. I did. Not by name . . . it wasn't me by name, but it reported that I demanded that Capitol police officers go in certain entrances and I demanded that they wear certain uniforms. Well, of course, Joe Duke read it. He called John in the Senate Press Gallery. "I want to know who that was about, John." Well, of course, John told him. Well he called the chief, a fellow named Sullivan who was a pretty rough cookie himself. He said, "I want you to go to all details and notify them that we want discipline." A few days later Mr. Duke called me upstairs and said, "I am tired of these captains coming in here, working five years, getting another retirement, and we are going to start promoting captains from the ranks and you are the first captain.

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BAKER: Now in what year was that?

BALLARD:: That was in 1962. And, of course, I couldn't believe my ears, because they'd always brought them in. It was a choice job. He said, "Here's the badges."

BAKER: How many captains were there on the force at that time?

BALLARD:: There were none. I was it.

BAKER: I see. There was a chief and one captain.

BALLARD:: Right. I worked under a captain from Arkansas, one from Pennsylvania, he was a retired state trooper. As I say, after they brought in a chief from downtown, he brought captains from downtown, and the last one died, and that's when the first captain was made from the ranks of the Capitol Police Force. And that was me. And then, from then on, as it grew, of course other captains were made, but I was the first one. I was proud of that.

[End of Interview #1]

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