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Earl Warren Oral History Project

Irving and Jean Stone
EARL WARREN'S FRIEND AND BIOGRAPHER

An Interview Conducted by
Amelia R. Fry
Miriam Feingold

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Irving and Jean Stone

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INTERVIEW HISTORY

Date of Interview: 2 April 1970

Place of Interview: The Claremont Hotel, Berkeley, California

Those Present: Irving Stone and Jean Stone; interviewers Amelia Fry and Miriam Feingold

Irving Stone, with the assistance of his wife, Jean, produced the first biography of Earl Warren.* Here the Stones tell about their whirl-wind of research, interviewing the Warrens and close associates, and writing during the warm-up for the 1948 presidential campaign in which Warren was to become the running mate of Thomas E. Dewey. Selected anecdotes such as Governor Warren's unexpected switch from a presidential hopeful to a vice presidential candidate, and the Warrens and the world of art, are also included.

For this interview the Stones did not have the luxury of our usual forewarning--a letter and a proposed interview outline. They did have a telephone call minutes before the session began. It is a tribute to their open hospitality and patience that, facing a heavy schedule that day as a key honoree in the University of California's centennial celebrations, Mr. Stone did not challenge us for our calloused presumptuousness nor slam down the receiver because he had yet to eat breakfast. Instead, he asked only that we allow him a few minutes to wake up thoroughly, finish his coffee, and then grant him our forbearance if he and his wife should not be quite dressed for the day.

In exactly twenty-five minutes the robed-and-slippered Stones ushered us into their suite in Berkeley's hillside Claremont Hotel. In addition to their natural social grace, it was their loyalty to the University of California and their admiration for Earl Warren that made the taped conversation an easy one. It required little preparation for the relevant stories and insights the university would want to preserve about Earl Warren, for he knew them well. After a short discussion about the Stone papers we had seen in the UCLA Department of Special Collections, he plunged into the taped reminiscences.

It is no secret that oral history transcripts, when sent to seasoned authors for review and approval, frequently come back rewritten into the style of prose that the author has spent years

*Stone, Irving, Earl Warren: A Great American Story. New York, Prentice-Hall, 1948.

of his life developing. Not so Irving Stone. Nor Jean Stone, although she has been his "board of editors" ever since his 1934 Lust for Life. They recognized the importance of the spontaneous flow of conversation embodying their on-the-spot nuances and personality, and restrained their combined literary hands. In a cover letter when he returned the manuscript, April 2, 1975, Mr. Stone wrote, "I have made a few corrections and additions. As you say, it is very informal, but that was implicit in the nature of our discussion."

So this transcript, then, is a jewel of an interview in which we, the interviewers, broke all our own rules before breakfast, and the Stones' own perceptiveness produced exactly what was sought.

Amelia R. Fry
Interviewer-Editor

18 February 1976
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I. THE 1948 REPUBLICAN CAMPAIGN FOR VICE-PRESIDENT
(Date of Interview: 2 April 1970)

Pre-Convention Media Interest

Fry: What we'd like to ask you about is the background to the book you wrote about Warren.* We've taken a lot of material for our project from the notes of your interviews with people around Warren--your files in the UCLA Department of Special Collections.

Stone: Did you get to my notes on Warren himself?

Fry: No. How much time did you spend interviewing Warren?

Stone: Oh, we spent the better part of a week with them up in Sacramento.

Mrs. Stone: There should also be my notes from the interviews I did with Nina in Santa Barbara.

Fry: Are those notes with Governor and Mrs. Warren open?

Stone: Of course. If there's anything closed in Earl Warren's life, I don't know what it is.

Would you like me to tell you a little about the book?

Fry: Yes, I'd like you to.

Stone: That was 1948--the vice-presidency race.

It goes back a little way, and I won't go back into our friendship with the Warren family at the moment, because that would take me too far

*Irving Stone, Earl Warren, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1948.

Stone: back, but I'll tell this particular story.

Life magazine ran a series in 1948 about who the Republicans should nominate. They chose Dewey, Stassen, Vandenberg, Warren--and I've forgotten--you check it. You'll find this in the Life magazine files.*

I gather that the person who suggested that I do the Earl Warren manuscript was Palmer Hoyt, who was owner-publisher and editor of the Denver Post. (I am not certain; you can check that very easily.) How it came about: Warren was in Denver, I gather, on his way out West, and told Palmer Hoyt that Life was going to do this series. This was the kick-off series, really, for shaping up the four or five hopefuls for the Republican nomination.

Warren and Palmer Hoyt were discussing who should do his chapter for Life. This was a very delicate matter, you know, because if you are a Republican and a liberal one, you don't want somebody to the right doing your chapter. That harms you before they look at a page. On the other hand, if you are going to get a liberal, you don't want him too far to the left because that is worse!

So, for their own reasons (and I wasn't at the interview), Palmer Hoyt suggested to Warren that I do his chapter. Warren very heartily agreed; Warren may have asked. Palmer Hoyt takes the credit for it. In any event, the editor of Life magazine called me at my home in Beverly Hills and told me what they were doing--the series--and asked if I would do the one on Earl Warren.

Now, it just so happened that only the evening before, I had read the one on Harold Stassen.** I thought that the author and the magazine had used that article to whip up the Republican cause. So I said to the editor, "I have to make sure of one thing. If you think you are going to use me to

---

*The series, which runs in Life in the issues of February 9, March 1, March 22, and May 10, 1948, features Robert A. Taft, Harold Stassen, Thomas E. Dewey, and Earl Warren, respectively.

**Roscoe Drummond, "Case for Stassen," Life, March 1, 1948.

Stone: help the Republican party in the election, you are wrong. If you think you are going to get a partisan piece, you are wrong again. If I do a piece about Earl Warren, I am going to do an objective piece with no idea that it is going to help the Republican party per se in the election, because Earl Warren is as good a liberal as any Democrat, and most of the Democrats in California voted for him anyway. This is going to come out to be a Republican-Democratic-liberal whole piece and it isn't going to serve your purposes."

So the editor said, "Well, we know there is a bit of that in the Stassen, but we didn't intend it. That is not in our minds. We want an objective piece and everything that's good about the liberal movement and Republican or Democrat." He said, "You do your own piece. We won't interfere with you. You have absolute freedom to do exactly what you want."

I said, "Under those circumstances, yes." I said, "Oh, I have to make sure that the governor wants me to do the piece."

He said, "The governor has already said he wants you." I said, "Well, I have to confirm that, so I'll call you in a couple of hours."

So I called up to Sacramento and told the governor what had transpired and asked him if he would like me to do the piece. He said he'd be delighted; he had discussed it prior to that.

So with that condition in mind, I was in the middle of a book, but I took off time. I had learned that the Stassen piece had been written by a Washington journalist. He'd left his office early of a Friday afternoon, like maybe two o'clock, and by Sunday night the piece was finished. But we came up to Sacramento and had a long talk. [To Mrs. Stone] At that time we spent just a day or two?

Mrs. Stone: Just about two days. But you forgot that we had already done the Town Hall broadcast.*

Stone: The interesting thing was that I finished the

*Speech in Irving Stone papers, Department of Special Collections, UCLA.

Stone: article, I sent it in, the editors were highly pleased, and then--nothing!

The weeks went by. I wondered what in the world! The articles were supposed to follow each other in two-week periods, or perhaps three, and nothing came out!

So I got in touch with somebody at Life and found out that they had just about decided that they were going to abandon the series. [To Mrs. Stone] Had there been one other piece at the time? The Dewey piece?

Mrs. Stone: I think there had been one other piece.

Stone: [To Mrs. Fry] Would you check the Life magazine series? I am not sure, but maybe the piece on Dewey had come, and then they decided they were going to abandon the series. There was no problem of pay; they had sent me the check immediately.

So I called the governor and I told him this; I told him that they were in the process of abandoning the project. It was the only time in my life I had ever heard the governor mad.

He said, "That's awful. I wouldn't do that to a dog!" This was his exact expression.

So I said, "You can't do anything about this because you are involved. Let me call Life magazine again. Let me pull up my stiffest protest about this."

Mrs. Stone: I think they had run three of them already.

Stone: Anyway, they stopped short. He wasn't the last; I think there was one besides him. But he was outraged and rightly so, because he had been announced in the magazine.

But anyway, I called back and I made it very plain that although they may not have intended this series to be political in the beginning, they were now turning it into the worst kind of politics: the American public would assume that either they couldn't get a good enough piece or the man wasn't

Stone: important enough to have a piece published about him, and that they couldn't do this.

Mrs. Stone: Or that the Republicans shouldn't have him in mind to nominate at all.

Stone: Or that the Republicans should drop Warren and whoever the last one was, in terms of their own position on the American scene. In addition was the fact that I hate like hell to waste my time on unpublished stuff.

And they said, "We see your point of view and we'll talk it over." The next day they called back and said, "Okay, we're running the next article or two." And it did run.*

Then, Town Hall of the Air--remember that radio program?

Fry: Yes.

Stone: They called me and asked me if I would come up to--I think it was Phoenix--and do a panel show.

So I went on the air for Earl Warren and with the four representatives of the other four candidates. I remember that the Dewey man was enormously effective. He was a professional politician out of the East, but without any of the unfortunate connotations. He was very smooth, very knowledgeable, very practiced in radio. The Taft man was very good. I don't know how I was, but we did get coverage on the whole thing.

Mrs. Stone: I'll tell you what one side thought. The electrician up in the booth, the one who mixes to send it out. He was evidently for Earl Warren. Whenever the applause came through, as you were talking, he would hike it up for Earl Warren!

Stone: And he would turn it down for the others. [Laughter]

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*Irving Stone, "Case for Warren," Life, May 10, 1948.

Mrs. Stone: So you see, there's lots of people who could influence!

Stone: Then I was to give a two-week class at the University of Indiana that summer. I was still in the middle of my book. We had our bags packed. We had a big red convertible and I think the bags were already in the back of the red convertible when the phone rang from an old friend of mine at Prentice-Hall, publishers in New York, by the name of Ken Giniger. He said, "Irving, . . ."

Warren's Decision to Run

Stone: This was after the nomination. Let me go back to the convention. Was that in Philadelphia in 1948?

Fry: Yes, right.

Stone: We had dinner at Santa Monica with the Warrens. The Warrens I think were visiting in that big, log wood cabin that was often loaned to them, and we went out there. They invited us to dinner. We had a drink.

Then we went down to what had been Marion Davies' home. It was then a private restaurant club and the Warrens took us to dinner. We talked about the coming convention and his chances, how things would line up.

Then he said to me, "One thing I want to assure you is that I will not, under no circumstances will I, take the vice-presidential nomination."

I said, "Well, I don't think you ought to either. I don't think you ought to be second man in any of these contests. I think you can afford to wait another four years, if that's the best they have to offer you."

So we parted on that assurance.

I was listening very closely to the radio to the Republican convention. I was up on the Russian

Stone: River with some friends on a ranch and I was glued to that radio. And, lo and behold, Dewey gets nominated, and Earl Warren is nominated for the vice-presidency and takes it! Which absolutely floored me!

I might be a little naive about people in the heat of political battle. I remember sending a telegram. I can remember the telegram pretty well. It read:

"Having finally managed to drag my battered carcass up from the pavement, I want to congratulate you on the vice-presidency." [Laughter]

Mrs. Stone: Or "A streetcar ran over me," I think you put it.

Stone: Or "A streetcar ran over me, I am now able to send congratulations," and he knew damn well what I meant by that!

Mrs. Stone: He said a streetcar ran over him, too.

Stone: Yes, he said the same thing to us when he came back and we were in Sacramento to work on the book.

Well, anyway, as soon as we got there, Warren picked us up in the car (we got there about noon, I guess) and took us out to a rather large, impersonal restaurant on the outskirts of town where nobody would pay any attention to us. There he told me why he took the vice-presidency. I think I can reproduce this better at home, but I'll give you an indication of this. It's something that you ought to follow through, because it is urgent.

He told me that prior to the convention, he went into New York and had a conference with the money-raisers for the Republican party on Wall Street. (Sounds like today.) And he came out of there aghast, because what these Wall Street bankers and lawyers were saying was that, and I quote him accurately, "What this country needs is a little unemployment. The labor unions are getting too uppity and the wages are rising too fast, and we can't control them and we need to put a damper on unions and labor and to hold down this whole economy, so that we can control it."

Stone: Warren looked around him and he saw that Dewey, whom he considered a conservative Republican, whom I considered a conservative Republican, would be the President: the speakers of the two houses, who would have been, I think, Halleck and Green (but I'll ask you to check this), were both ultra-conservatives.*

Warren said, "When I looked at the idea that the President would be a conservative, and that the Speaker of the House and the Senate would be conservatives, and that all this influence would be exerted from Wall Street, all of which was ultra-conservative, and there would be no voice there to speak for any liberal idea or anything for all the things that I fought for all of my life, I decided I could do a better job inside the administration than outside. I decided that I had to be in Washington, I had to take the nomination, and I had to go through with it."

And that was his explanation.

Mrs. Stone: What really scared him were those two Speakers. He said, "At least if I am Vice-President, I may have a chance to break a vote."

And we've seen it happen so often!

Stone: Well, didn't that happen on the ABMs? [Anti-ballistic missiles]

Mrs. Stone: That's right. It did happen on the ABMs. It has happened very often. Nixon broke one or two votes.

But nobody has this story--NOBODY.

Stone: No, we never told it. We've never written any part of it.

Writing the Campaign Biography

Stone: Now, let's go back to the book, and this is Ken Giniger on the phone from New York, saying, "Irving,

*Speaker of the Senate was Arthur H. Vandenberg; House, Joseph W. Martin, Jr.

Stone: we've decided to put out a campaign biography on Governor Warren for the vice-presidency."

I said, "Oh, well, there is very rarely a campaign biography for the vice-presidency." You're puzzled, what are you puzzled about?

Fry: I was puzzled because Prentice-Hall wanted to put out a campaign biography. I had supposed all along that this had been organized by Sweigert and all these people around Warren helping him with his campaign.

Stone: Nobody.

Fry: You mean the idea came from the publisher?

Stone: Now who Prentice-Hall was talking to in the East about it I don't know, because I wasn't there.

Fry: It could be Dewey, I suppose.

Stone: So, he said, anyway, "We have determined to put out a biography. We want to do a big job on it. We've talked around and everybody decided that you're the one who ought to do it."

I said, "Oh, come on. I can't. I've got my suitcases in the car. Jean and I are going to the University of Indiana for two weeks. I am giving a course there. We'll drive there and back." And you know, the usual.

And he said, "Oh, come on, cut it out. You've gone so far with Warren, you can't get off the bandwagon. Now you've <u>got</u> to do the book."

So I talked it over with my wife, and she said okay. Then we realized that she would have to stay here, because I only had a month to write the book--thirty days! Now that is absolutely impossible.

So Mrs. Stone stayed here and worked with Nina and several children (I've forgotten which ones) and also got into the newspaper files and the magazine files at UCLA and did all this research stuff, while I took a plane back to Indiana. I would get up at five in the morning and write on the Warren book until eight. My class, unfortunately, was from

Stone: eight to twelve--the union doesn't allow things like that any more [laughing].

Then at twelve, I would have a swim and a quick lunch. Then I would write until six o'clock, when I would have a very light supper and go back and write until eleven, twelve--as long as I could keep my eyes open--because I had to get this book at least half finished by the time I left Indiana.

Then I came back, and that's when we drove up to Sacramento.

Mrs. Stone: I had it all ready to go.

Stone: Jean had shaped it up. It was one of these three-day weekends--Friday, Saturday, Sunday. We drove up and there was nobody home. Nina and the children had gone. So we had the whole three days in that old-fashioned mansion.

Mrs. Stone: All I know is, I got into the newspaper morgue and they locked me in and forgot to get me out. This was up in Sacramento, I went down to a newspaper morgue--it was very quiet--Irving was going to pick me up at four o'clock and at six o'clock I was still there!

Stone: Then we spent these days with him. We were there about a week. The family came home. We spent as much of the day as he could afford from his office duties. Then we'd have dinner always, and I'd spend the evening with him until he tried to suppress his first yawn. He was very polite, very much a gentleman, and he would do his best to get that yawn not to come until about eleven, because he was up at six and worked straight through all day.

The minute I saw the first yawn I said, "Good night, Mr. Governor, thank you."

But I took some notes, and those I didn't take I dictated from memory when I got back to my studio.

It was a very revealing time. After working with him that closely, my admiration for him was greater than ever.

Stone: The one thing he said which I've always remembered and which is a key to his life, I think, is this: We were talking about the governorship and he said, "The ability to govern a state, an American state, is the ability to balance the varying pressures that are constantly being exerted upon you." To balance the various pressures--I didn't fully understand it then, but I do now. That was part of his task, to balance the varying pressures.

In any event, I came on down to my home and my editor, Ken Giniger, had met me in Chicago when I came back from Indiana and he lived with us. Mrs. Stone was editing behind me, and Giniger was editing and copy editing behind her, because we had another maybe seven or eight days and the printer was waiting for it. Finally when we finished it, Earl Warren came in very early in the morning to my studio and read the manuscript and made a few suggestions and, inevitably, a couple of corrections of fact. And then we had a great big lunch with everybody sitting around, Giniger and my secretary and Mrs. Stone.

Mrs. Stone: And his people from up north.

Stone: Oh, that's right, he had two of his--

Fry: He must have had Sweigert with him?

Mrs. Stone: Sweigert was with him. A dark-haired fellow.

Fry: Yes. How about Verne Scoggins, his press secretary?

Stone: I think he had one or two men with him who were reading either ahead or behind him, looking for things that might be wrong.

By six o'clock in the afternoon, he had completed the manuscript. He said, "All is well. I like it. Thank you very much."

Then we tucked it under the arm of Ken Giniger and sped him out to the airport. We put him on the plane. Monday morning it went to press in New Jersey and the book* was out within a week or ten days.

*Earl Warren: A Great American Story, Prentice-Hall, Inc., New York, 1948.

Stone: Today they want an eight month lead time on books. Well, anyway, you wanted Warren stories, so there is one.

Mrs. Stone: That's the first time it was ever known that Nina Warren had been married before. Their own children didn't know. I spent a whole morning with Nina up in Santa Barbara, telling her that the time had come. They would have to know. That the presidential spotlight was enormous, and that it would come out. It would be much better for her to tell the children herself than to let it come out in this story.

And we got along. She told me a great many stories, most of those we don't have time for now, but I'm sure that I have records of them in the file. Now the only one who has used that file before you is the fellow who just did a book on Earl Warren.

Fry: John Weaver.

Mrs. Stone: John Weaver, yes, and he went to the files.

Stone: Who is the other one? There are two biographies.

Feingold: Katcher, Leo Katcher.

Stone: I think it was Katcher, rather than Weaver.

Mrs. Stone: No, it was Weaver.

Fry: Because Weaver was the one who sent me to UCLA.

Mrs. Stone: But that particular story, that may still be in shorthand down there. So if you don't find your material, then you just get in touch with me.

Stone: Nina finally decided that she had better let it be said.

Mrs. Stone: We called Virginia in, and told her first. She asked Virginia to tell the other children. They had never known.

Stone: You see, the oldest boy is her son by a former marriage.

Fry: Oh, they didn't know this?

Stone: Oh, no, no. No one.

Mrs. Stone: The children didn't know this. Nobody knew it. It had never been in the newspaper or anything.

Stone: Speaking of Virginia, after the book was out and just as the campaign was about to get into high speed, we went out again to pick up the Warrens and we went out to dinner somewhere, the four of us. Virginia took me aside and said, "You know, I've learned things from your book about my father that I never knew! It is amazing, isn't it?"

On the night of the election, when it was clear that Dewey and Warren had been defeated, I called Warren in San Francisco, and asked how he felt. He replied: "As though a hundred-pound sack of potatoes has been lifted off my back."

II. INTRODUCING WARREN TO MODERN ART

Mrs. Stone: One little story, about the pictures: Earl Warren knew nothing about art, was not interested in it, and there were some pictures hanging . . .

Stone: You have to give the background for it. There was a great collection in Los Angeles, the Arensberg Collection--one of the two or three greatest private collections in America. Arensberg and I were close friends and he was in the process of giving the collection away.

Oh, this was fantastic. He had the Nude Descending a Staircase, and he had endless Picassos and Klees. It was worth millions and brought millions and millions of dollars.

I persuaded him, finally succeeded in persuading him that he should give them to UCLA, because the collection had been in Southern California ever since they moved it out from Philadelphia, which had been, what?--thirty years before? At least thirty years before.

I thought, you know, that we had squatters' rights down there, and I did convince him. He said, "Well, I can't get UCLA to ask me for it properly." I said, "I'm having dinner with the governor tomorrow night. Suppose the governor asked you, would that be proper?"

He said, "If Governor Warren asked me to give this to UCLA, I will give the collection to UCLA."

Great!

So we go to dinner and we are talking politics mostly, and then as a change of pace, I told him this story and described the collection to him as best as I could.

Stone: But unfortunately, because of the enormity of his task and the singleness of his purpose, Earl Warren had never taken the time to learn about modern art. (When I am talking about modern art, I am not talking about the Impressionists or the Post-Impressionists. I am starting with Les Fauves and the Cubists, from there on up.) And this is not an easy route to understand. You sort of have to be raised in it and spend enormous amounts of time to be sympathetic to it, and he'd never seen any of it.

Mrs. Stone: He never looked at paintings at that time.

Stone: He wasn't interested in painting. It wasn't in his realm just as Sigmund Freud in the book that I am doing now was not. He was not interested in music, either. The other arts, yes--music, nothing. It happens.

So anyway, we had dinner in the main dining room. We came out into what had been the former Marion Davies' home drawing room. There were three or four pictures on the wall which were quite conservative. He said, "Now, tell me about these pictures in relation to what you call modern art."

So I explained, "Well, these are representational pictures, and what I am talking about--" and I won't reproduce the dialogue, but it didn't, couldn't make any sense. How do you explain it to a man who has never seen one?

Fry: Especially when you don't have the picture there.

Stone: Oh, with the picture I could have made sense.

So finally he said, "Irving, I don't understand what this is all about. It is outside my training, and while I could take your word for it and ask for the collection, it doesn't seem proper to me. I am asking for something that I've never seen, and that I don't understand.

"You tell me that it is worth millions of dollars, and I trust your judgment, but I don't know this."

So I said, "I got an idea." This was a Sunday night. "Tomorrow morning, very early, I'll go down

Stone: to a Beverly Hills book store and I'll pick up the best book on what we call 'modern art' that I can find, with the best color illustrations, and I'll send it out to you by special messenger.

"But you have to make me one promise."

He said, "What's that?"

I said, "That you'll start at the back, not the front. I want you to see the most extreme forms and work your way backward where they're not all that extreme. I think the sense of shock through this thing will work." So I did that. I sent the book out to him.

He didn't send a direct letter to the Arensbergs, but he did get in touch with the chancellor of UCLA and told him that I had made this presentation, and that he hadn't seen the collection and didn't understand modern art and couldn't commit himself in a letter to Arensberg, but on my judgment, the chancellor should comply with Arensberg's demands and gather what I had said was this enormously valuable private collection.

He had no idea how valuable this thing was, and not only from a money point of view!

The chancellor turned it over to the art people, the art people approached Arensberg. He had a couple of pretty wild demands. One was that a special building be built--and it deserved a special building, really, and that eighty percent of the collection be on display at all times, which is pretty rough for a museum! But it is a big collection.

When UCLA got the demands, they said, "We can't comply with these."

"Well, " I said, "there are ways of doing this, for heaven's sakes. Let's try to raise some money and get a start on the building, so Mr. Arensberg will see that we are on our way.

"As far as eighty percent on the walls, you can have eighty percent on the walls for a year or two or three. Mr. Arensberg is approaching eighty.

Stone: After he is dead, whose ghost is going to come in and say, 'Oh, you've only got seventy-nine percent on the wall!' Who cares, you know?"

But in the end, we never got them together, and the collection went on to the Philadelphia Museum of Fine Art.

Mrs. Stone: Where it is now valued at $160 million! And they gave him everything he asked for, and the people here are kicking themselves! We have nothing, absolutely nothing.

Stone: So anyway, that was my art-exhibit work!

Well, how else can I help you?

III. EARLY ACQUAINTANCE

Fry: I'd like to know the dates when you first began knowing him.

Stone: I'll have to check them at home.

Fry: Was he DA or AG?

Stone: No, he was already governor, I think.

We met this way. I lectured to the Sacramento Women's Club--that may not be the exact title, it may be the Sacramento University Club, I don't know.

After the lecture, Nina came up to me and introduced herself and said the governor couldn't spring himself from the office for the two hours, and that he regretted it, but would I come back to the mansion for a cup of coffee with the governor?

Fry: What did you lecture on? I mean, was it the subject of your lecture or did she just want you to meet Earl Warren?

Stone: That's all. It wasn't the subject of the lecture. The governor just wanted--

Mrs. Stone: The usual thing on writing, "Writing in America"--whatever Irving Stone talks about.

Stone: So I went back to the mansion and had an hour or two with the governor. I liked him and apparently we liked each other.

Not too long after that we had a preview in our house of a collection of art that was donated to us by artists and interested people for the International Relief and Rescue Committee. The money was

Stone: being used to get refugee artists out of Europe and out of Cuba and places like that.

I was talking to the governor about something or other. I said, "You know, I hate to use you, but this is what this cause is about, and if you are going to be down South or can possibly get the whole press." The next night the art was moving to a big room in the Beverly Wilshire Hotel, where we were going to auction it all off.

I said, "If you could possibly come down and appear at this reception in our home it would do us an enormous amount of good." I named some of the writers and artists we had rescued from Europe and other countries through this kind of effort.

So he said, "I certainly will."

Very shortly after the reception opened, a car drew up and out came Earl Warren and Nina and they came in and mingled with the guests for a couple of hours. Of course, I had notified the press, and the press was there taking pictures and we got marvelous publicity. The next night we had an auction and sold it out. He was willing to do things like that, which was wonderful of him.

Fry: Was that during the war or after the war?

Stone: I have a manuscript on this. This was written up by a man in Los Angeles for a magazine which then folded, called Script or something like that; Bob Wagner's magazine down South. I've forgotten the name of it. Just a year ago or so, the writer (the magazine folded before the piece could be printed) sent me the manuscript, which I have there at UCLA, and it tells about Earl Warren and the group that was there.

Fry: As Earl Warren knew you and your friendship ripened, did he get to know any more about art, through osmosis?

Stone: I think he left the subject alone. [Laughs]

Mrs. Stone: Oh, he used to roam the house because we have many, many paintings.

Stone: Oh, yes, he used to roam our house and ask me "What does this mean," and "Why hasn't this got a head?"

Stone: (a piece of sculpture), things like that. I explained it to him--Nina, too. But I never brought the subject up again; I thought it indelicate.

Mrs. Stone: Let me tell you an amusing story. The first time we went to visit for dinner at the governor's mansion in Sacramento, we were there about three minutes early. You know that house: it has a frightful number of flights of stairs.

We went into the first little living room (they had a series of them), and of course all the furniture had been made in the prison. It was boxy and it wasn't a very attractive place. However, on one wall they had a pair of beautiful, beautiful old people--

Stone: Portraits.

Mrs. Stone: Portraits, yes. Irving and I looked at them and we said, "Well, isn't it wonderful to have your ancestors--to have pictures of your ancestors, to be able to go back that far!"

So when Nina came in with the governor, we said we'd been looking at the furniture. Of course they laughed and explained how it was all made at the prisons. Then they told us about the problems of housekeeping and the four flights of stairs with five kids.

Then we said, "We admired so much these two portraits of your ancestors," and Nina turned around and said, "I bought them at Gumps last month." [Laughter]

Stone: That was one of the most delightful and amazing things about both of them!

Mrs. Stone: Our first time in there, and they were absolutely honest!

Stone: They were totally honest.

I've always loved Earl Warren, but there's always a tendency, in the human mind, to exaggerate the closeness of your relationship and perhaps the importance of it. I would like to be on my guard against that, and I would like you to be on your guard against it.

Stone: In fact, you might be on your guard against it with everybody, because it is a human failing.

Fry: Yes, everyone feels that he was very close to Earl Warren.

Stone: Right. That was Warren's genius.

IV. ENCOURAGING WARREN TO WRITE HIS MEMOIRS

Stone: The only corroboration I can offer you is something that happened recently. I've been urging Warren, since he finished his governorship, to write a book called Governing an American State. It has never been done. To tell the whole story of everything that goes on. How long had it been, ten years?

Fry: That's right, just about ten years that he was governor.

Stone: Everything that went on showed the mechanics of how this democracy works. He kept saying, "I can't do it, there are too many people alive that I can't tell stories about." Too many people alive who were involved.

So finally while he was on the Supreme Court, and we were living in Florence writing The Agony and the Ecstacy, and I came back here to lecture to the Library of Congress in Washington, and Doubleday Publishing Company gave a dinner party for me. Douglas Black, the president, Ken McCormack--still my editor--came down, put on a beautiful dinner party to which Earl Warren and Justice William O. Douglas came.

And at that time I suggested that in the summers or when he had leisure he ought to think about this book, Governing an American State, again because it was getting farther away and perhaps, you know--

He said he couldn't do that or anything else while he was on the bench.

So when he announced his retirement, Ken McCormack (I wrote the note) said, "How about the book?"

Stone: My editor, Ken McCormack wrote to him and asked him if he could see him and talk to him, because they had met at my dinner, prior to the Library of Congress lecture.

Ken McCormack went down and talked to him. Warren wasn't sure he wanted to write the book, though he did want to write it, but wasn't sure he could, and didn't know what kind of book. He had had a vast lifetime of work.

So we let it drop at that. It so happened that Earl and Nina were going across to Europe on a ship. I have this letter at home, so you can find out about it, and one of the younger editors, Sam Vaughan, editor for Eisenhower and Truman, was on board ship and they crossed together. They chatted several times but the Doubleday editor felt he ought not bring up the subject of the new concept about a book, one which would cover the important issues in Warren's life.* He did drop one gentle hint, but he didn't want to force it on Warren.

So the afternoon of the last night out, the Warrens phone him and asked him if he would come in for a drink. They talked about the book and they figured out a way to do it.

Earl Warren said that he wanted to write it for his older son, who apparently is deep in politics now. They figured out a kind of modus operandi for it. In any event (and you can have a copy of this, I am sure) then came the last paragraph, in which this editor, whose name is Sam Vaughan (brilliant editor) said, "I think that if the Chief Justice will write a book, we will have it, because he has talked to you about it and he is not the kind to go and take an agent or a lawyer and get the highest price: that is not Earl Warren's way.

"Another reason that I am quite sure we'll get it is his very high esteem for Jean and Irving." (That is what he called us: Jean and Irving.) So that was a very nice vote of confidence.

Fry: I certainly hope he will write the book. We have

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*Now ready for the press at Doubleday to be published in 1975 or 1976.

Fry: suggested he might want to come and use our files.

V. PAULA STONE AND THE UC SCHOOL OF CRIMINOLOGY

Mrs. Stone: One brief story, because this we wouldn't think of down South.

When my daughter was graduated from Berkeley, in Criminology in 1960, she became a parole officer. At that time I think she was working with juvenile delinquents. The University decided that they would abandon that department, that there weren't enough students registered for it, not enough people interested in it. There were only four schools in the United States that had a first-rate course in criminology.

Paula, of course, was heartbroken, because she saw the work that these new young people were doing, coming into the field, no longer the social worker being transferred into correction work.

Stone: She wrote us from Florida--a six page letter.

Mrs. Stone: She wrote us a very long letter and told us that this was a terrible thing to happen. Could she have permission to write Earl Warren, and as an alumnus of the University and having been very, very close to it, she was sure that in his present position, particularly, he would know how important that school was, and that he could do something about seeing that UC continued it.

Stone: May I add one thing?

This six page letter was the most eloquent and convincing plea as to why the school should be preserved that I ever read in my life about anything.

Mrs. Stone: She said, "After all, I have known him for so many years of my life," while she was growing up, all these particular years, "I think it wouldn't be too

Mrs. Stone: much if I wrote to him."

Stone: I took the letter and I sent it to Earl Warren himself.

Mrs. Stone: She also wrote him a letter.

Stone: She wrote him too, but I said, "Dear Governor, I think you ought to read this."

Mrs. Stone: In any event, as the result of the pressure and the plea on the part of Chief Justice Warren, Berkeley retained the School of Criminology.

Fry: He wrote back, then, to the administration? That's interesting.

You have a heavy schedule of activities sheduled today around the campus. I think we should let you get about your business. It was most gracious of you to work us into your early morning schedule this way.

End of Interview

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