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Charles Marshall
March 22, 1971

Interview conducted by S. Herbert Evison
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EVISON INTERVIEW WITH CHARLES MARSHALL

Richmond, Virginia

March 22, 1971

CHARLES MARSHALL

An interview conducted by

S. Herbert Evison

March 22, 1971

for the

Oral History Project National Park Service

U.S. Department of the Interior

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[START OF TAPE 45 Side 1]

Herbert Evison: Today is March 22, 1971. I'm Herb Evison and I'm in Richmond, Virginia. And with me is Charlie Marshall, who until a few minutes ago I thought was an Assistant Regional Director in the Southeast Region, but I learned that he has the same title that I had a long while ago. He's Associate Regional Director. Charlie, let's get some of the basic facts in here. When were you born and where and tell me something about your family, and so on?

Charles Marshall: Herb, I was born December 2, 1912, in one of the smallest communities in the Commonwealth of Virginia known as The Plains, hill country of Fauquier County, where I lived until I finished high school. By that time the millionaires were coming in and us poor country folk were moving out, so I left.

Herbert Evison: Tell me something about your family.

Charles Marshall: My dad was born and grew up in that country as had most of his ancestors. My mother was from Pennsylvania and came down to Virginia as a 20-year-old girl and married my dad and stayed there. I was one of two sons and grew up on a farm. I came out of high school in the Depression and went to William and Mary in 1928. I got my undergraduate degree there with majors in history and political science. I took law and got my law degree at William and Mary in 1933, about the worst possible year in history to get out of law school I guess, Herb, I was then too young to start practicing, so I took a six-months' job with Park Service.

Herbert Evison: You took a six-months' job. Well, that's a long six-months, isn't it?

Charles Marshall: Yes.

Herbert Evison: That's fine. I never knew before that you had a law degree. You went to work for the Park Service then for six months and what was the job?

Charles Marshall: This was in the days when the CCC program was first getting started. They needed a bunch of historians in a hurry. Verne Chatelain you may remember was then the Chief Historian. He turned to Dr. Earl Swem, the librarian down at William and Mary, who incidentally is an uncle of our Ted Swem of today's date in the Park Service. Mr. Chatelain told Dr. Swem that he wanted a bunch of historians. There were about half-a-dozen of us who came in at that time together. Floyd Taylor and I are the only two that are still left out of that six. The next morning, after I graduated from law at William and Mary in June of '33, I went to Washington. Verne Chatelain told me I was to go to Shiloh. I asked him where that was. He said he wasn't quite sure, but he thought they could tell me at the bus station how to get there. So, I went to Shiloh. During that six-months' appointment I met a girl from Corinth, Mississippi, whose dad, after I had a few dates with her, wanted to know why in the world she was going with that damn Yankee from Virginia, but she kept on going with him. When

my six months were up, by that time I was married and I decided I still needed to make a living, so I stayed with the Park Service.

Herbert Evison: Is that all there is to your family?

Charles Marshall: You asked a while ago about children and grandchildren. I have two sons, one of them here in Richmond with DuPont, and the other one in Williamsburg, graduating from William and Mary in June. I have three grandchildren.

Herbert Evison: You're doing very well. Let's get back to this CCC employment. You went down to Shiloh. Do you remember what your title was? Were you historian foreman?

Charles Marshall: Miscellaneous foreman (historian) and as I remember the salary was something like $1,480 a year, big money in those days. I was the first CCC employee to get there, I recall, and this was in the days when the military parks were still under the War Department. So, I was the only Park Service man there. Ronnie Lee, interestingly enough, was the next one to come in. In due course we got a company of black veterans. Ronnie and I lived in a tent most of that summer. I stayed there from June of 1933, as I recall, until around November when I was transferred up to Colonial.

Herbert Evison: You know you are the first guy that I have taped - and I think you're the first one I ever met - who started his CCC duty on an area which was shortly to come under the National Park Service, but which at the time you reported was still under the War Department.

Charles Marshall: I would imagine that you have taped Herb Kahler. Herb and I had an identical situation in this regard. Herb was at Chick-Chatt, which was still under the War Department, at the same time that I was at Shiloh. And, of course, as I said, Ronnie Lee was at Shiloh.

Herbert Evison: I taped Herb several weeks ago. He didn't happen to mention that when he went to Chick-Chatt that it was still under the War Department.

Charles Marshall: And we were also under Horace Albright. I tell Horace now that I'm one of his few boys that are left. That tour of duty and Horace's I think overlapped for about 10 days, just enough so I can claim him as a kind of father.

Herbert Evison: He's the first Director of the National Park Service under whom you served, as was the case with me. What kind of jobs did you find yourself doing at Shiloh?

Charles Marshall: I really ended up almost as company clerk because pretty soon we got a camp superintendent. He found out that I could type a little bit - mighty little - and I was the only one in the outfit who was foolish enough to admit he could type. I remember the first payroll we turned in, Herb, I typed and sent it up three times before they would accept it. I believe I was there for seven or eight weeks before I got paid. Under the present setup

with the DIPS payroll, as we call it, that would still be pretty good, I guess.

Herbert Evison: You were on an area very shortly taken over by the Park Service, a place that Park Service people knew very little about and you were there as a historian. I'm sure you did something besides serve as clerk. Didn't you exercise your professional historian knowledge and skill?

Charles Marshall: Yes, to a limited degree. It was quite limited because certainly if there was ever a marginal historian in the Park Service - marginal in terms of his qualifications - it was me. Working alongside Ronnie Lee, who again was one of the best, certainly my professional abilities in history didn't shine very highly. I think at that time we terribly lacked guidelines as we do in some respects even today. But the problem there was to get this CCC camp going, get these men to work and get a little money in circulation. Ronnie and I did engage in historical research leading to worthwhile projects for the Corps enrollees, clearing of areas in the battlefield, the building of foot trails, and this sort of thing.

Herbert Evison: How long did you stay there?

Charles Marshall: I was at Shiloh from June until November, for five months approximately, and then I was transferred up to Colonial where I stayed for about three years.

Herbert Evison: In what capacity?

Charles Marshall: As a historian. At Colonial I was able to get a little bit closer into worthwhile research work, I think, because at that time, both in Yorktown and in Jamestown, we were getting into a study of the court records as they might relate to the communities and to an ultimate research and, eventually, interpretive program. So here my legal training did stand me in fairly good stead, and I felt that I was - on some days, at least - earning my pay.

Herbert Evison: You were there for three years. I'm sure you didn't spend that whole three years in research.

Charles Marshall: Not entirely but predominantly so, because in those days the historians - and especially under the CCC program - were not engaged very much in interpretation as we call it now.

Herbert Evison: Or in supervising actual field work either.

Charles Marshall: Very little of that.

Herbert Evison: Who was superintendent of Colonial when you went there, Flickinger?

Charles Marshall: Flickinger was superintendent and was still superintendent when I left.

Herbert Evison: I didn't realize that he had stayed there that long.

Charles Marshall: "Flick" was one of the many colorful characters that I've been privileged to work with in the Park Service.

Herbert Evison: In what respects was he colorful?

Charles Marshall: He had unbounded self-confidence, quite a bit of ability, too, maybe not quite up to his self-confidence. He liked, I suspect, to look on himself as being a dynamic, forceful superintendent, not always in sympathy with the views of the Department. You remember, Herb, we had a rather dynamic Secretary at that time too.

Herbert Evison: Yes, we did.

Charles Marshall: Of course, ultimately, they tangled, and "Flick" came off second best.

Herbert Evison: I didn't remember that the termination of his services was a result of a run-in with Mr. Ickes.

Charles Marshall: Yes, Flickinger was offered a transfer and a demotion, and he didn't take either. He quit.

Herbert Evison: But he was still superintendent when you left Colonial. Where did you go from there?

Charles Marshall: I went up to Morristown and began working for Elbert Cox, the beginning of a long and, for me, very interesting and very worthwhile association with one of the great guys of the Park Service. Elbert was the first superintendent of Morristown. I joined his staff as historian in 1936.

Herbert Evison: What can you tell me about that experience?

Charles Marshall: I stayed at Morristown for about six years through three superintendents, Elbert, Herb Kahler, and Fran Ronalds. I served in the CCC program there, set up and ran two ERA projects, as they were called, for two or three years, - one a research project and the other a construction job, where I again found I had an awful lot to learn when I started it. I had a lot of fun at it though.

Herbert Evison: What was the construction job?

Charles Marshall: We were doing various kinds of construction work. We built what ultimately became the permanent maintenance area for Morristown. We put in a lot of water lines and some road work, mostly buildings.

Herbert Evison: And you as a historian were the guy who supervised all that work?

Charles Marshall: I supervised the supervisors. I remember we had an old Irish gentleman who was the work foreman, and I learned an awful lot from him. He knew a lot about how to get work done, how to get work out of people. As long as I kept him out of trouble on the paperwork we had a pretty good partnership, I think. I learned a lot from him as I have from many other great people in the Service.

Herbert Evison: Your workers were local people who were on relief?

Charles Marshall: Local people off the relief rolls. At that time the WPA program, as it was known, was under a lot of criticism in New Jersey. We went to the WPA authorities, and we told them that we would give them a demonstration project which they could use for propaganda purposes, if they would let us do the firing. They did the hiring, and we did the firing. With the combination of that authority to fire and this old Irish foreman that I mentioned, I think we had a pretty good working program. We got some good publicity for the WPA in New Jersey.

Herbert Evison: I didn't realize that we ever had a hand in pulling the fat out of the fire for them. You were there for six years and that took you into the beginning of the war.

Charles Marshall: Yes. In May of 1942 I got my first Civil Service job after nine years in the Park Service. I went to the Statue of Liberty as the historian. This was the equivalent of a GS-7 job after nine years. I worked for George Palmer there for a year and went from there down to Guilford Courthouse, which is where you and I had that encounter that we were talking about a minute ago before we started taping.

Herbert Evison: At Guilford Courthouse you were the acting custodian?

Charles Marshall: I went there with the title of acting custodian. The man who was then the superintendent had gone into the armed forces in World War Two. I was technically “acting” pending his return from the military. He came back from the military and was transferred to another park. I was then appointed superintendent and stayed there for a couple of years.

Herbert Evison: You were there until after the war?

Charles Marshall: Yes. I left there in '45 and went back to the Statue of Liberty where I succeeded George Palmer as superintendent.

Herbert Evison: You know that statement interests me because, during the war, I spent several days up at the Statue of Liberty at a time when the employees were about as thoroughly disgruntled as any group of employees ever could be, not because, as far as I know, of any fault of George Palmer's, but because of the general situation there, of poor transportation between there and New York City and pretty low quality housing for the people who had to live on the Island. Did you live on the Island while you were there?

Charles Marshall: When I went back as superintendent I did live on the Island. You touched on a thing, Herb, that is very true, I think. The morale was low, but I would suspect that probably you were there in the winter. I found that in the winter when the employees had nothing to do in terms of workloads, visitation was off, the morale got low. And everybody sat around and griped. In the summer when they had to work - and they had to work about as hard in the summer as any people I've seen in the Service in 38 years -

their morale came back up. They had legitimate gripes. The boat service was miserable. We had a concessioner there whose name I won't put on this tape, but he was the nearest thing to nothing I ever saw. The housing was poor. There were lots of reasons why employees could have had legitimate gripes, but we never heard them in the summer when they were working hard. We only heard them in the winter when business was slack.

Herbert Evison: This was late in October when I was out there. I even sampled the evening transportation over to the Island and back on a tugboat.

Charles Marshall: I remember when we lived out there, my wife, if she went off in the evening, would come back on the water taxis that served merchant ships out in the harbor. If the tide was low, she'd climb up on top of the pilothouse on this little water taxi and the night watchman would reach down and help pull her up on to the pier. This was quite an experience, especially in view of the fact that our youngest child was born while we were living there. She was preparing for a visit to the maternity hospital when she had some of these experiences on these water taxis.

Herbert Evison: I'm sure she has very vivid memories of her stay at the Statue of Liberty.

Charles Marshall: Yes, she can tell you some tall tales on that score.

Herbert Evison: Were you at the Statue of Liberty when the rehabilitation of the Island started?

Charles Marshall: No, this was quite a bit earlier. I was at Morristown at the time. This must have been ‘37 or ‘38. I was there my first tour during the war years when we had no money for anything except custodial staff and minimum visitor services. Then when I went back as superintendent it was right at the end of the war and I think we got money for one construction job the whole time I was there, which was to fix up a pier that had been long overdue. You may remember it was just about to fall down when you were there.

Herbert Evison: That's the one at the now long abandoned site.

Charles Marshall: That is correct.

Herbert Evison: Have you been back to the Statue of Liberty since the Island was made over?

Charles Marshall: I was back there once about five or six years ago, after the new pier was completed, after the landscape work was done, but before the American Museum of Immigration was started. I have not seen any of that.

Herbert Evison: Well, I haven't seen any of that either, but I was up there to behold a pretty complete transformation in the outward appearance of the Island with the disappearance of those old houses.

Charles Marshall: It’s quite a far cry from the old days and I must say a distinct improvement.

Charles Marshall: I would say, Herb, that the thing I remember most from my tour of duty there when I was superintendent, was in the days when the troop ships were coming back from Europe. It was really something to see these big troop ships come into the harbor, especially in the evening, and these returning veterans saw the Statue of Liberty for the first time. They might be two or three miles away from us, but we heard from them very distinctly. I remember one night the Bremen was coming in. We got word that she was coming up the harbor just before dark. Normally the floodlights of the Statue came on by a timed switch, but this particular night we deactivated the time switch and we waited until the Bremen was just about opposite Bedloe's Island, as we then knew it. We turned the floodlights on manually and the cheering section that came off the decks of that ship just about rocked the old Statue. This is the one thing that I will not forget about that tour of duty.

Herbert Evison: I think that's a very interesting thing to remember. You stayed there until when?

Charles Marshall: I left there in November of '47 and went down to Colonial as Ed Hummel's assistant superintendent, another memorable tour of duty. Ed is a supervisor you don't readily forget.

Herbert Evison: How long were you there?

Charles Marshall: I stayed there with Ed for five years. Then in 1952 Clark Stratton and I activated the land acquisition office down at Cape Hatteras.

Herbert Evison: Oh, yes.

Charles Marshall: You see, I list only the great guys in the Park Service as my supervisors.

Herbert Evison: You have for a fact.

Charles Marshall: I've got one or two more still to mention before we get through.

Herbert Evison: I don't want you to get away from your experience under Hummel at Colonial though, although I certainly want some of the story of the Hatteras land acquisition. was this an eventless period, or do you remember any things there that you think are worth noting?

Charles Marshall: I think the most worthwhile thing to me was the training that I got from Ed Hummel. I think Ed taught me more in terms of efficiency and productivity than any of these great guys that I've worked for. I think perhaps the most memorable event around there was the preparation for the rebuilding of the Yorktown Monument. Oscar Hanson was the sculptor. Mr. Hanson and I had our differences of opinion which finally made the Congressional Record, but that too passed with time.

Herbert Evison: You know I happened to have been down at Yorktown before Oscar Hanson started his sculpture. I think he had the contract, but nothing had been done on it yet. I know that various interesting things developed from

that point on. If you remember any of them, I'd like to get them on the record.

Charles Marshall: You may want to clip this out of the tape, Herb, and I'll leave this totally to you. You leave it in or take it out as you see fit. I had the privilege, or whatever you may wish to call it, of a lot of the dealings with Mr. Hanson. I remember on one occasion he wrote and asked me for certain statistics regarding the size of the statue. We wrote back and I remember my opening sentence was to the effect, "I'm not exactly sure of all of these dimensions. They will be checked, and we will confirm later on." Then I proceeded to give him my best information. Later on, when he wanted additional money for the job he put that letter of mine into the Congressional Record, except he eliminated the word 'not' where I said, "I'm not exactly sure of all of these dimensions", so that my letter read, "I'm sure of all of these dimensions." Then he went on to prove that the figures I had given him were wrong and therefore he was entitled to additional money. You can leave that in your tape or take it out as you see fit.

Herbert Evison: You bet I'll leave that in the tape. I know that that was a stormy relationship between the Park Service and Oscar.

Charles Marshall: There were a few other items there, but I won't put them on the tape.

Herbert Evison: That's almost historic and I would be glad to have anything that you can tell me on the tape. I don't want you to put anything on there that you don't want though.

Charles Marshall: I think we better skip them, Herb.

[END OF TAPE 45 SIDE 1]

[START OF TAPE 45 SIDE 2]

Herbert Evison: Charlie, before we go on to Cape Hatteras, is there any other thing that you think of in your experience at Colonial that we ought to get on here?

Charles Marshall: No, really not, Herb, I don't think of anything else that particularly stands out.

Herbert Evison: You went from Colonial to act as right-hand man to Clark Stratton.

Charles Marshall: Well, the idea was, in this land acquisition office at Cape Hatteras, that Clark, because of his long-standing knowledge of that community and his reputation in that community, would be of great help to the Service in getting the project started. It was not intended, I think, that he would stay down there more than to just get the thing rolling and to get me a certain status in the community. He stayed their full time, as I recall, perhaps three or four months, and then commuted back and forth between the Regional Office in Richmond and Cape Hatteras for perhaps the next year. Once Clark got me started, I was on my own again.

Herbert Evison: In my book, of course, Clark Stratton is one of the great ones in the whole Park Service history. I wonder if there isn't something that you'd like to say about Clark before we get into the story.

Charles Marshall: I think, Herb, that I've been a very fortunate individual in the people that I've worked with in the Park Service. And as I think back, I would have to say, as you have intimated, that Clark is one of the great ones. I don't know that I've ever come in contact with a person who is more sensitive to the thinking of others, is more attuned to how others would react to a given situation. I learned an awful lot about human nature from Clark. Of course, he knew that country down there like a book and he loved it. I've never known a Park Service man who was any more dedicated to a given community than Clark was to the Outer Banks of North Carolina. He lived there many years, and he married his very attractive wife down there. It's very appropriate that Clark should be buried in the community for which he had such a very high regard.

Herbert Evison: You say he was there for about four months steady?

Charles Marshall: Yes.

Herbert Evison: What kind of a course of sprouts did he put you through in that four months?

Charles Marshall: During that period of time, we secured the land appraisers that were an integral part of the project. We got an attorney under contract to do our title work. Clark introduced me around the community. As I remember, he and I jointly negotiated our first purchase, first single tract of land that we bought. About that time, he left the project as a full-time operator, although he was always available to advise with me. And believe me, I took his advice, too. From there on I would get these land appraisals, get the title evidence, negotiate with the landowners and close the transaction, - hopefully close it.

Charles Marshall: Of course, one of the memorable fights in the Park Service was the litigation that Clark and I had with a guy named Worth. He was a land attorney in Elizabeth City, North Carolina, who had extensive land holdings. I think he loved to fight. He fought just for the fun of it. We got up as far as the Supreme Court of the United States with him. We had a lot of nice courtroom to-dos with him. He was a very colorful gentleman, a very courtly old gentleman of the old school who was no mean antagonist, but he was one of the most polite gentlemen that I ever came in contact with, despite his antagonism.

Herbert Evison: He could smile and be pleasant while he was sticking a $500,000 knife in your back.

Charles Marshall: You know, the amusing thing about that statement is that's almost verbatim what Clark Stratton said about Worth 15 or 18 years ago. You may have heard Clark talk about him.

Herbert Evison: I never did, but I knew the story.

Charles Marshall: Clark used that very point, of Worth calling you 'sir' while he stuck a knife in your back.

Herbert Evison: If you have some of the basic facts of that Worth case, and I would suspect that they cling to your memory, I think it would be nice to get them on here. First, as I remember it, right at the beginning a certain sum of money was entrusted to a bank or held in escrow. Wasn't that, right?

Charles Marshall: Of course, the funding for the project was put up half by the Mellon family and half by the State of North Carolina, and then we went into business. We felt that the acquisition of Mr. W. A. Worth's land was going to be one of the bench-mark actions of the whole project, so we went after him first. We got the land appraised. Based upon advice from an attorney for the Mellon family and the appraisals, we deposited as I recall $185,000 in court to condemn his 2,000 acres on Bodie Island. He was fighting the project tooth and nail and we were getting a great deal of assistance on the other side from Mr. D. Victor Meekins, who was the editor of the Coastal Times in Manteo, himself a very colorful individual who had a total aversion to Mr. W. A. Worth.

Charles Marshall: He began writing articles in his paper telling about how Mr. W. A. Worth had gotten the land. His stories were not particularly favorable to Mr. Worth. Victor Meekins stated that if Mr. Worth ever cared to sue him for libel because of the statements he was making about the history of this land he was welcome to do so. Mr. Worth never filed suit against Mr. Meekins. I don't know how Mr. Worth responded to these statements, although he seemed a little ill at ease when they were repeated when he was under cross-examination in the condemnation case, but he never admitted that any of them were true.

Charles Marshall: The case went on to a very heated trial before three commissioners. Whereas we had deposited some $185,000 in court, the commissioners gave him an award of $484,000. This set the pattern for what some of us thought were excessively high awards all the way through the Cape Hatteras case and led to the dragging on of that business from 1952 until about 1968 when we finally got the last cases paid off, - a long and sometimes interesting and often bitter, frustrating fight.

Herbert Evison: As I remember it too, Mr. Worth ended up with a very sizable amount in addition to that award.

Charles Marshall: Oh, yes, because he was drawing interest. The condemnation case dragged on, including the appeals up to the Supreme Court of the United States and we condemned his land as I remember it in the autumn of 1952, and he got paid off in about 1957. Mr. Worth was getting six percent interest on the deficiency, which was about $300,000, so his interest alone was a pretty respectable sum.

Herbert Evison: I think that's really one of the outstanding cases that the Park Service has ever been involved in and probably one of the most expensive. You were dealing with a rather unique group of people down there.

Charles Marshall: Indeed, they were, Herb. In fact, I dealt with two unique and quite contrasting groups. The citizens of Hatteras Island, which was the big island as you remember on the project, were a group of people who rather liked to fight. They were by nature somewhat suspicious. The citizens of one village were suspicious of the adjoining village and the island suspicious of other islands. But I found that with very few exceptions, these people on Hatteras treated me with courtesy. I rather liked them, although they were very spirited antagonists.

Charles Marshall: At Ocracoke it was quite a different situation. Ocracoke has one small village on it. It was quite isolated up until this time. There was no road. There was no bridge. These people had gone to sea, many of them. They were quite traveled people, but they were a very kindly, honest group. It was right hard to negotiate with one of these antagonists on Hatteras Island in the morning and then go see one of these kindly old gentlemen at Ocracoke in the afternoon.

Charles Marshall: I recall one of them. I made him an offer on his land. He was the first one at Ocracoke I'd ever seen. I came there from this history of fighting with the Hatteras islanders. I made him an offer and he said, “Is that a fair price?” I asked what he meant. He said, “Well, if you tell me it's a fair price, I'll sign it. If you don't think it's fair yourself, you shouldn't expect me to sign it.” This is like a batter going up against a pitcher with a change of pace, you know. You had to deal with the two groups entirely differently, but I liked them both. In those days Ocracoke was one of the wonderful places in this nation in my judgment. Building of a bridge and building of a road down there, Herb, has not improved it very much, however.

Herbert Evison: I wasn't aware that a bridge had been built in there.

Charles Marshall: Well, there's a bridge to Hatteras Island and then an improved ferry I should say from Hatteras to Ocracoke and a road. There is not a bridge to Ocracoke, but there is a greatly improved ferry and a paved road. And this has brought civilization and all the worst parts of civilization to Ocracoke.

Herbert Evison: I paid my first visit to Ocracoke with Miner R. Tillotson in the early winter of 1939, and I certainly have a very vivid remembrance of it as an out-of-this-world sort of place.

Charles Marshall: It isn't anymore, though.

Herbert Evison: No, I suppose it's not and that's probably the one thing that can be blamed on the establishment of a national seashore, because I doubt if all this hookup would have taken place even yet if it hadn't been for that. What do you think?

Charles Marhsall: I don't know. We went on for many years with our court cases on other tracts at Hatteras. And repeatedly I was told just the opposite by attorneys for the landowners, that if we'd just stayed out of there, they would have had much more civilization, much more prosperity, much more of everything and that we were their death knell. I think this was just said, however, to influence the court in giving them their awards because I don't think the public could have moved in much faster than they have. I think that the Service has saved a tremendous amount that is worthwhile on the Outer Banks, even if we have encouraged a few extra vehicles to come to Ocracoke. So, I think that the pluses probably exceed the minuses. I sincerely hope so.

Herbert Evison: There's one question I have had on my mind for a couple of years and I hope you can answer it, The last time that my wife and I were down there, which I think must have been about four or five years ago, I noticed a bunch of what looked like house building that was extending clear over to the Hatteras beach as though there were gaps in the federal ownership along there. Is that a fact?

Charles Marshall: Indeed, yes. The initial legislation for Cape Hatteras, which was introduced by Lindsay Warren, the Congressman from that district, provided that seven villages on Hatteras Island and one on Ocracoke were exempted from the national seashore. Clark Stratton and I drew the boundaries initially for the seashore. We provided in the initial boundary, as we drafted it, for acquisition of a 1,000-foot frontage along the ocean front of each of these eight villages.

Charles Marshall: This led to pretty extensive controversy and in October of 1952 Connie Wirth came down. He was then the Director, of course. He came down to the villages and held a series of public meetings, one in each village. Growing out of these meetings it was decided that we would acquire only 500 feet of ocean frontage in front of the villages, leaving the rest for development. Connie's purpose in acquiring this 500 feet was in order that we could provide beach protection to the villages. Of course, development took place right down to our boundary lines, especially at the village of Buxton.

Charles Marshall: Since that time, we've had quite a time trying to hold back the forces of the ocean. Some of our beach erosion techniques have not totally succeeded. And in recent years Congress has been tending to take a very close look at whether or not we have either a legal or a moral obligation to protect these villages, which Connie said in those public meetings in October ‘52 we were going to protect.

Charles Marshall: This is a controversial issue and one about which, as you may suspect from the fact that I'm telling the story, many of us have rather strong feelings.

Herbert Evison: Well, I'll have to admit that when I saw all that was being built down there I was very much chagrined and very disturbed because while I had expected in places the federal holdings would be rather pinched in because of the villages, I hadn't thought that they would be pinched in that much.

Charles Marshall: These villages are certainly no work of art. There is some of the weirdest architecture, if it can be called architecture, that you could see anywhere in the world. But these people did build on this land in accordance with the assurances that they had from the Director of the National Park Service. They thought the Service meant what we said when we said we were going to provide beach protection for them. I have to say that whether or not I like their architecture, or whether or not I like their community planning, I still sympathize with them very, very deeply today, when we run the risk that the next storm from the Northeast may take out their investments, their buildings, and their motels.

Herbert Evison: In these places has erosion control been carried on of the kind that Clark Stratton and his men instituted back there in the ‘30s? The same fencing?

Charles Marshall: The same fencing has essentially been the technique that has been followed. Now, in some instances, especially at the village of Buxton, erosion took place so very rapidly that we didn't have elbow room in which to build fences. And we had to go into other techniques that were not known during Clark's project of the '30's, such as beach nourishment, pumping in of beach sand with a hydraulic dredge, this type of thing. But essentially the technique that Clark devised in the '30's has been the main procedure which the Service has followed in strengthening the dune protection on Hatteras Island, the use of sand fences and the forces of nature, especially the wind, to do our work for us.

Herbert Evison: When did you leave Hatteras?

Charles Marshall: In 1955 the land acquisition work was pretty well coming to a close. "Mac" Gardner wanted an assistant superintendent down at Natchez Trace. Elbert Cox was then the Regional Director. So, we worked out an arrangement whereby I would move down to Natchez Trace as assistant superintendent but return to Cape Hatteras for court cases or anything else of particular note that was needed to finish up the project. So, in '55 I moved down to Natchez Trace where I was assistant superintendent to Mac Gardner for almost eight years.

Herbert Evison: Gee, I didn't realize you had that long a time down there. Did you have occasion to come back very often on Hatteras matters?

Charles Marshall: Yes, I came back five or six different terms of federal court. I said we would talk too much about Hatteras. One of the interesting things about it, and one of the things that made it so very difficult, was that it seemed that almost everybody on the project except myself died of old age before we got through with the court cases. Our appraisers died; two or three of the

other people. We had court commissioners appointed by the judge. In one case we had three commissioners and two of them died. I guess I was too mean, Herb, to finish up what everybody else left. But we finally finished all the court cases. We finally got them all paid off, thank God!

Herbert Evison: As I remember it, because of the Worth case it was necessary for the Park Service to go back for more money from the State and the Mellons.

Charles Marshall: We did that; and we finally went back to Congress for more money. The first time that I ever testified before a Congressional committee was before Senator Alan Bible and his committee, where we asked for money to pay off the judgments. One member of the Senate, maybe I should leave him nameless, took a pretty dim view of our project and was pretty rough with me. I began to realize, however, that Senator Bible was taking an interest in my case. The more this other gentleman rode me, the more Senator Bible came to my defense. So, he's high on my list of great gentlemen because he bailed me out of this one and we finally got the money through the Congress to pay off the last judgments. That day before Senator Bible's committee was one of the unpleasant experiences of my Park Service career because this one senator was riding me so very hard.

Herbert Evison: It's on the record who that senator was. Why not name him here?

Charles Marshall: His name was Clinton Anderson. One of the difficult things was Senator Anderson was getting to be in bad health. His speech was not very distinct. If he asked me a question and I answered the wrong question, it didn't seem to improve his mood a bit.

Herbert Evison: I hadn't realized that, but certainly since it is a matter of record there's no reason why his name shouldn't appear on here. Now you're in a completely different sort of job down on the Natchez Trace.

Charles Marshall: Down there, Herb, I was still able to use my legal training quite a little bit because we were working with all three states, Tennessee, Alabama and Mississippi, each of which was obligated to acquire land for us for parkway purposes. And much of my work was in dealing with the land acquisition agents from these three states, working with them on title evidence and on condemnation cases when it was necessary. So, I was still using this legal training. I think working with Malcolm Gardner was a very memorable thing in itself. I believe that if somebody were to ask me who was the best supervisor, I ever had in terms of training a subordinate, I would have to say it was Mac Gardner.

Charles Marshall: As I said a while ago, I learned an awful lot from Ed Hummel. I learned an awful lot from Mac Gardner too. The courses of instruction between the two men were entirely different. Their techniques were 180 degrees different. Their subjects of instruction were different, but I learned a great deal from each of them. And I think of all the trainers I've ever worked under I would put Mac Gardner at the top. He had very high standards of

quality. He liked to talk with and philosophize with his subordinates. When you got through working with Mac you had a pretty high standard for yourself. I'm very grateful to him along with all of these others for what they have done for me.

Herbert Evison: We were just talking, while I had this recorder off, about my experience with Mac and you offered a comment.

Charles Marshall: Mac had been an English major at the University of Virginia. He took tremendous pride in the quality of his written presentations. And he expected his subordinates to approach that quality; and when we didn't, he was very helpful in pointing out to us our shortcomings. If I write a decent letter today, or if I can express myself at all well on this tape, I think that I would have to give him more credit than anyone else for that quality.

Herbert Evison: Of course, my impression of you, though, is that you were never tongue-tied.

Charles Marshall: No, I've always talked too much.

Herbert Evison: No, but also that you've always expressed yourself very well. And one of the characteristics of this taping is the almost complete absence of uh, uh, uh, in anything that you've had to say. I think that a man has to think pretty clearly to be able to talk that way. [(I second that – twm) Thank you, too! (C.M.)]

Charles Marshall: Thank you, Herb.

Herbert Evison: You were talking about the advantage of your legal training in connection with the work down there at Natchez, but that certainly could not have been all that you were concerned with as assistant superintendent. And I wonder if there aren't certain things there, happenings, events, processes - whatever you want to call them - that we might get on the record, too.

Charles Marshall: I think that one of the recollections that I have most distinctly from the tour of duty there, other than the relationship with Gardner, which I've mentioned, was the fact that I was working at this time in the Deep South, in a part of the country where the fact that you were a Federal employee did not necessarily give you any great advantages. It was a constant problem of attempting to explain the viewpoints of the Federal government to the local citizens and explaining the viewpoints of the local citizens to the Federal government. Possibly because I looked on myself as being a bit of a Southerner, possibly because I had married a girl from that part of the country - though this had nothing to do with my being there - I think maybe I had some advantages over some of my other friends in being able to be a bridge between these two conflicting philosophies. And they certainly were conflicting then as they still are to a degree. I found this quite interesting, and I enjoyed my tour of duty at Natchez Trace.

Charles Marshall: This was the largest Park Service community that I had ever have today ever lived in. We had roughly 25 homes, as I remember, in the residential area there. We had a very pleasant social life and a wonderful staff. I enjoyed it. One thing that I think of in passing, Herb, is that having worked at Colonial and at Natchez Trace, I find that any place that you go in the East you can find one or more alumni of both parks. I think that Colonial and Natchez Trace in the East have been kind of like Yellowstone in the West in being a breeding ground for the park people.

Herbert Evison: I think I would name one other Eastern one, especially when it comes to giving rangers great training, and that would be the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Charles Marshall: Yes, there's always been a healthy kind of a competition between the two parkways. I think that each of them had tremendous values. I remember going to one school in Washington when I was at Natchez Trace and there were two or three guys from Blue Ridge there. I had a lot of fun referring to it as the "other" parkway. Certainly, the Blue Ridge has a great deal to offer, maybe more than any other; I won't say. I think both parkways have been wonderful training schools for young rangers.

Herbert Evison: Certainly, in the field of public contact, working with an awful lot of near neighbors, they're just about in a class by themselves.

Charles Marshall: Some people have said that they thought that the parkways provided the greatest challenge of any superintendency in the nation. I remember that Granville Liles, who has kicked around the country quite a bit and is now, of course, superintendent of Blue Ridge said that he thinks that being superintendent of a parkway is the most challenging superintendency of any in the National Park Service.

Herbert Evison: Yes. Of course, one reason is the point that I just made, that you have more near neighbors you have to get along with.

Charles Marshall: Indeed, you do.

Herbert Evison: And with whom it is very easy to have clashes over boundaries. That's one. The shape of the area I think is another that gives parkways a lot of problems that are peculiar to themselves.

Charles Marshall: Indeed. In this regard I would say especially at Natchez Trace, more than Blue Ridge, because Blue Ridge being right on the crest of the mountain you often passed between two farms. But in Natchez Trace we were down in a flat and almost always we seemed to split a farm wide open, half on one side and half on the other. If a neighbor can be difficult when he's on one side of you, he can be five times as difficult when he's on both sides of you, Herb.

Herbert Evison: That's a wonderful observation. Is there anything else in connection with the parkway?

Charles Marshall: I think not. I think that covers it pretty thoroughly.

Herbert Evison: You went from there to where next?

Charles Marshall: Then I moved into the Southeast Regional Office in Richmond. Since I've been here, I've had four different titles. It would seem that they're still trying to find something I can do. They haven't quite given up yet, but sometimes I think they're pretty close to it. And sometimes I feel like I'm pretty close to giving up, too.

Herbert Evison: Is your memory good enough so that you can remember each of those four titles?

Charles Marshall: Yes, I believe so. I came in as Public Affairs Officer in '63 under Elbert Cox and stayed I don't remember exactly how long in that job, maybe one and a half or two years. Then Ray Mulvany, who had been the Assistant Regional Director for Administration, transferred to the West Coast. And much to my surprise and still to my amazement, Elbert Cox moved me over into that job. I never knew why. I don't think anybody else did either.

Charles Marshall: I served in Administration for a couple of years. At that time "Granny" Liles was Assistant Regional Director for Operations. When he moved out and went to Blue Ridge Parkway, I moved from Administration over to Operations and served under Elbert Cox, under Jackson Price, and then Leonard Volz. And when Len was Regional Director, he became convinced that there should be an Associate Regional Director.

Charles Marshall: You and I talked before we started taping, about this title. Len felt that he was away so much that you shouldn't reach down into some other job and find a man to make him acting, but you should have a more or less permanent understudy. So, after two or three meetings with the Regional Directors, he finally told me that he had convinced the Director, Mr. Hartzog, that there should be an Associate Regional Director. I believe about that time, a year or so ago, each region got its associate director. It was my privilege to move into that job and work with Len and now for the past couple of months with Dave Thompson, our new Regional Director in Richmond.

Herbert Evison: You've served under quite a series of Regional Directors. I wouldn't ask you to say, "This is the best and this is the next best and this is the next best and this is the poorest", or whatever. But I would suspect that there might be one Regional Director in the group with whom you served who might stand out.

Charles Marshall: Yes, that's true, but I'm not sure that it's fair to the others. The one who stood out clearly, I think was Elbert Cox, who had been Regional Director for many, many years. But in drawing this comparison I'd like to point out some other things. Jackson Price moved down here as Regional Director late in his career. Jack knew more and taught us more than I'll ever learn from anybody else about Washington Office operations. Then he moved out and Len Volz moved in. Len was only here for about two years, and he

was transferred out just about the time as he says himself that he began to really understand the Regional Office. Dave Thompson moved in from superintendency of the Ozarks. He didn't know the region well. He had never served in a position approaching this one, I think it's fair to say. So, it's probably unfair to any one of these three men really to compare them with Elbert Cox. Let me simply say that I think I've been fortunate, and I've learned a lot from each one of them. They're quite different in every respect, four entirely different human beings, but each one of them people that I've learned from and that I've enjoyed working with.

Herbert Evison: During your period in these four jobs, I am wondering again if there were any events that you've observed, or in which you've been a participant, about which you'd like to say something on here.

Charles Marshall: This is difficult to do, Herb, I think because it's difficult to get into perspective. We can't help but think about the problems of today being the important ones and we certainly have our share of them today. I really am quite shook up, I guess I could say, about the problems of financing in the region today. We feel that with constantly increasing visitation, constantly increasing numbers of parks in the regions, up now in the middle 50's, the number of parks that we have responsibility for, and with actually less appropriation than we had a couple of years ago despite increased workloads and despite inflation, this is a condition that gives us an opportunity for an awful lot of self-pity. I realize also that this is not something that can be said in perspective because it's the battle we're fighting today.

Charles Marshall: When I first came into the region, going back to your question, I was handling public affairs. At that time, we were just getting around to completing and dedicating the various visitor centers and other facilities that grew out of Connie Wirth's MISSION 66 program. It was my privilege to handle a bunch of these dedications. They're experiences that I won't readily forget. A thing that I can't help but think about and I've held forth in bull sessions on, is the unpredictability of the kind of crowds you'd get for such dedications. We'd dedicate a visitor center at Horseshoe Bend, and we'd get 5,000 people. We'd dedicate one at Stones River, right out of Nashville, and we'd get 150 people. This was in the days of Parkinson's Law, so I came up with Marshall's Law, that the size of the audience was in inverse proportion to the population of the community. This has its comical value perhaps.

Herbert Evison: Now we're right up to today. You are the Associate Regional Director. I don't think of more questions to ask. If there's something you'd like to add on here though let's have it.

Charles Marshall: I think not, Herb. It's been a real pleasure to visit with you and to talk about the Service. I've enjoyed it all. I don't know how much longer I'm going to stay around, - not very much, I sometimes think. I have never regretted the fact that I took that six-months' job with the Park Service, or

that I renewed it at the end of the six months. So, thanks again for another very pleasant occasion to add to the many others in my career.

Charles Marshall: Thank you for those very pleasant words.

[END OF TAPE 45 SIDE 2]

[END OF INTERVIEW]