CATES: This is--what's today, Thursday, isn't it?

RUSSELL: Thursday--

CATES: Yes, yes. This is September 5, 1974, Thursday. We had a holiday Monday and so it's kind of thrown me off, but this is Thursday, September 5, 1974, and this is Tape 65, Side 2. I have with me today Dr. Fielding Russell, who is one of the brothers of the late Senator Richard Brevard Russell and he is from Statesboro, Georgia. He is on the faculty of Georgia Southern College. He is in Atlanta to attend a meeting in the morning, and he has taken time this Thursday afternoon to be interviewed concerning his illustrious brother. Fielding, I might just start out by saying one thing about you to kind of set the stage. You did have a twin brother Bill, and I'm sorry to say I cannot remember in what sequence you and Bill were born as far as the fifteen children were concerned but you were--

RUSSELL: Bill was number eleven and I was number twelve.

CATES: And then there were?

RUSSELL: Three after that.

CATES: Three after that. Of course, Bill passed away a few months I think after Senator Russell passed away.

CATES: And you were just telling me at lunch that your birthday was August 21, and that you were sixty-seven years old at that time. You are going to continue teaching this fiscal year at Georgia Southern and then your plans are indefinite after that. I might just start the interview by asking you, if you would, to maybe recall your first recollection of Senator Russell. You called him Dick, I believe.

RUSSELL: Yes. Of course, you know in his early days he was called "R.B." for a right long number of years, his--with Dick. I suppose my first recollection of Dick was when we were living in the Jackson house. I don't remember just the year we moved into the so-called Jackson house. It was across the railroad from where we are living in the old home place now. Dick and Rob, of course, were older brothers and looked up to with some awe--maybe not enough respect--and some fear. But we had a very good family life, family relationship. I remember the--I suppose the earliest recollection was when Dick and Rob killing a black snake in the yard there. And then, you know how we are, we sometimes confuse what older people tell us, and we associate that in our own memories. But I remember that Dick and Rob in a struggle over a shotgun on their bed--the shotgun discharged and blew a hole in the ceiling. And I know my
mother was greatly frightened at the time. I remember the hole although I can't say definitely that I remember the incident that is the firing of the gun, the detonation, the report of the gun. Then I suppose next I remember his going off to Gordon Military School and more the resplendent military uniform that he wore. It was my privilege to fall heir to one of the coats that I wore for a while a little later, long after Dick finished at Gordon. But it was--we thought it was a great occasion. Of course, Rob, too, went to Gordon. He had his uniform. But then I suppose I remember when Dick had pneumonia and the great concern that was shown with the loss of a large part of his year at the University and his ultimate return there to complete his degree in law. Thereafter, why, it was always associated with Dick's being in law practice in Winder and then the incidents become more numerous with respect to our relationship and all, though I do remember in the beginning how he used to come home and switch us sometimes for--I don't know that he did this more than once and he wouldn't have done it had Mother been there, I'm sure; but he was exercising his seniority and his parental control. We would steal sugar out of the sugar dish on the dining room table and we would spill the sugar on the floor and Dick would come in and step on sugar which makes, you know, a very unnerving noise, and I'd--that was one of the earlier things after we had moved into the house where we are living now. It just goes on. While he was at the University, of course, he went into the naval unit there with the outbreak of World War I. Rob, also, was over there and he was in the military. And they would have great heated arguments about which branch of the service was most important, which was more important of the two.

CATES: Rob was in the Army?

RUSSELL: He was in the Army. Rob was about seventeen or eighteen and Dick was about nineteen and a half or twenty. But he was stationed, I remember, in Peabody Hall. I don't remember where Rob was stationed. But they did have quite a time with the flu epidemic during this time. And I remember their visits home. We have some photographs, I remember, taken. Pictures were taken when they were home in their uniforms. They were great advisers to a club that my brother Walter and I and my brother Bill--we didn't engage in it too much, but Jeb and Alex, who, by the way, was called Dick, I believe, for a number of years.

CATES: Alex was called Dick?

RUSSELL: Yes, when he was a small boy. And we had what was known as the "Russell Bulldog Snipers." We fought the world war--World War I--there in the backyard down in the woods digging trenches and throwing up barricades and things, and we'd always try to win the praise of Dick and Rob for what we had done, if they came home. They didn't come home too often, but at Christmas. Then another thing I remember was the digging of clay. My father was a great mover of clay. I suppose he was the champion of the world. I believed he moved more clay with a wheelbarrow than any other one man living for not being a professional dirt mover or ditch digger. He was always moving clay, lowering the hill, filling in a low place and most often with a wheelbarrow. Sometimes he'd get the hands on the place, and he'd use the one-horse or two-horse wagon, but all of us boys would reminisce about making our spending money by getting Dad to mark off an area of clay, and we'd pick it up and haul it off in a wheelbarrow to a designated spot. But, of course, Rob and Dick would always say, "Well, we had to work harder
than you all did and didn't get as much money" and, but we all worked at clay, I mean hauling clay. It was very--

CATES: He just had a thing about clay or landscaping or what?

RUSSELL: Well, he--one of the most amazing--my brother Walter and I figured out one time that Dad, since he was on the Court, had in his earlier days, committed some great crime and some benevolent judge had made his sentence so he could continue with his usual work in the law and the Courts, but that he was doomed to dig and work on that road the rest of his life. Walter and I figured that out one day when we were digging clay. That's the only reason possible that Dad could be so immersed in digging clay. We've dug with him out there until one o'clock in the morning.

CATES: That's amazing.

RUSSELL: Till midnight, on one occasion his wheelbarrow was hit by a car. It was on the Bankhead Highway sometimes. He was digging out in the road, and he jumped out of the way and the car hit the wheelbarrow.

CATES: But R.B. had participated in the clay digging?

RUSSELL: He had dug clay. In fact he had started when my twin brother and I were babies. We lived over in a different part of Russell as it later became--it was incorporated as a little town--and the house was right almost back to the railroad track and some of my earliest pictures--I don't remember anything there because we were so young, but I have pictures of William and me in the wheelbarrow and standing by the wheelbarrow because we moved about the time we started walking, over to the Jackson house I mentioned earlier. But Dad was filled with digging clay there, and I think Dick probably started digging clay over there. That house--Alex still owns that house in which five or six of us were born. I think it started with possibly Pat--Patience--born there and then Walter in between us and Edward and Alex. However, Carolyn was born in the present house. She was the only child born in the present house.

CATES: The only child.

RUSSELL: But then that dirt that was just a common every day occasion. Now Dad, of course, was on the bench, or sitting on the bench, he was in Atlanta but he came home; he would get out and dig clay and all of us boys dug clay to make spending money. If I wanted to make five dollars I'd say, "Dad, I need five dollars." And he would go out and mark with his heel a spot there and by the time you picked it up it amounted to fifty or a hundred wheelbarrows that you carried off. Of course money was worth much more then. Then the, I suppose, the other occasions would be, coming down would be the Christmas celebrations when we had for the one yearly period there the dried raisins and the Brazil nuts or "nigger toes" as we called them then arid almonds and English walnuts and fireworks and shooting off the shotgun. That's another thing I remember about Dick. He was the prime firer of the shotgun on Christmas morning and, of course, he engaged with all of us with respect to seeing who could get "Christmas gift!" first. We tried to creep into somebody's room and yell "Christmas gift!" and he would engage in that.
Also, he somewhat marshalled in a way. I suppose my sister Billie who was the eldest child was primarily involved, too, but--the marching into the dining room to see what Santa Claus had brought. We went in--that's the only time in the year that the younger members of the family came first. The youngest member marched in first, the oldest last on Christmas day, a practice that I have carried on in my own family.

CATES: At what time, or what was the hour that this took place, wee hours of the morning?

RUSSELL: Wee hours of the morning. Mother would get up and I'm sure, though I didn't realize at the time--that was before I learned the identity of Santa Claus--that somebody went down and lighted the fire in the fireplace in the dining room and in the living room and usually the fire was built in the kitchen stove, wood stove. And then we'd all gather on the stairs and we'd--the youngest would go in, and there were so many of us we couldn't put up stockings. We had boxes. I've used a shoebox many a time for candies and nuts. We got oranges, one time out of the year, Christmas--bananas, apples, and particularly chocolate drops and peppermint candy. It was a great time.

CATES: Could you recall maybe some of the gifts? Did your gifts consist just of fruit or did they consist of other things? I don't think--

RUSSELL: Most often the gifts beyond the candy, fruit, would be involved with clothing. My father had quite a time clothing all of us. However, we would get certain things that would be remembered. I remember my twin brother and I had to share a tricycle together--and not enough money to have a tricycle for each of us, but we got a tricycle together--and we had a lot of trouble with the younger brothers and even between us as to who was going to ride, at times, but Mother usually worked that out. he was born in November of 1897.

CATES: Can you recall any special gift that R.B. received? How much older was he than you?

CATES: So when you were six he was sixteen, right?

RUSSELL: He was sixteen. Well, I think I can remember knives, pocket knives, and things of that nature. I don't remember any guns particularly, because so far as any more expensive items were concerned it was rather difficult to--when times got a little better, I remember my baby sister received a bicycle for Christmas. Santa Claus brought her a bicycle. But, we all had a very good time, and excellent dinner, turkey, and we'd gather in the living room afterwards and my father would always make a little talk, a very sentimental talk that would make us all cry. My father was a very--the most unusual man I've ever known but he liked to--and then Dick acquired this or got it--the closeness of the family--and my father always held before him a very short span of existence. He'd say, "I may not be here next Christmas," and it'd make us all feel extremely bad. He was that way.

CATES: Let me ask you this. I don't think anyone has mentioned before the firing of the shotgun. Actually I don't believe any brother or sister has described as you have done a typical
Christmas at the Russell household. Where does this, or where did the tradition of firing the shotgun come from?

RUSSELL: I don't know unless it goes back to—plain fact, I don't know. But I remember probably the most explosive Christmas we had was when my oldest sister after her marriage to Gordon Green, who is the possessor of a number of pistols—and we'd shoot off pistols on Christmas Eve—fireworks, sky rockets—and it was really a noisy time, Christmas Eve and during Christmas morning. Sometimes we would have—I don't know if you've ever heard of fantastic riding. It goes back, I later discovered when I was studying English history and English literature, it goes back to the old practice of what the British called "mumming" when they would have on certain—some nights—sometimes be on All Hollow's Eve or might be the Christmas season—Thomas Hardy has a good picture of mumming in his *Return of the Native*—but in our country men would dress up in women's clothes. And they would get a two-horse wagon and put hay in the body and the girls would sit in the hay in the body and anybody who had a horse or a mule could ride along, and in fact everybody did have a mule or a horse, add they'd go around the country from neighborhood to neighborhood and expect cake and candy. Most often it was just cake or cookies, homemade candy out of syrup and syrup pudding. And the older folks sometimes would go out to the smokehouse and taste the corn drippings as they said. But they'd have a big time. I never will forget as long as I live the first experience and I was later engaged in it myself some on several occasions. My father, my sister Patience, and I—I'm talking I feel too much about this.

CATES: Oh, no, no. This is good.

RUSSELL: Well, Dad agreed to take us up to Winder in the surrey. We had an old surrey and we kept a horse at that time in the stable of an aunt of mine went—two sisters of my mother—who lived across the road and we went over to town in the surrey and came back with the fireworks, and just after we had gotten the horse in the stable this terrible yelling took place over at the house and my father, who was most often very serious but he could be full of fun when he wanted to. He said, "Oh, my, they are killing your mother and all the children." And my twin brother and I were about five and a half or six years old at the time just let out screeches and yells and he had to calm us tell us he was just joking. But we got over to the house and there were these huge men—the Thomas brothers particularly we recognized—in their mother's old Mother Hubbard dresses and bonnets, the field bonnet that they wore and their bodies puffed out with pillows and stuffed with pillows. It was a great, great spirit.

CATES: Was this Halloween or Christmas?

RUSSELL: It was Christmas Eve.

CATES: Christmas Eve?

RUSSELL: Christmas Eve.

CATES: I don't think I've ever heard of that.
RUSSELL: They called it "fantastic riding."

CATES: Did R.B ever participate in that, you think?

RUSSELL: I'm sure he must have. But you see with that ten year span at that time, my closest experiences with Dick were those at home when he--and though he was very kind, considerate and later he was parental in many instances with me. When he was sixteen, or eighteen, or nineteen, you know how boys that age look on brothers six or eight years old. I remember how exasperated he used to get when friends of his from the university would sometimes drive up in the yard in their automobiles, and of course, we didn't see very many automobiles, so all the children would rush out and jump on the running boards and try to look under the hood and examine the lights, and Dick would go storming into Mother and ask her if she couldn't get the children out of the way.

CATES: I don't mean to embarrass you by what I am about to say, but I know last night I was talking to your older sister, Mrs. Ina Stacey, and of course, she celebrated her eightieth anniversary back in June, I know, at the time of the dedication of the Russell Building. And she was telling me something, and it kind of fits in with what you are saying about him taking a parental attitude towards you, and that is that she said that she didn't mean to imply that Dick loved you more than he loved his other brothers and sisters but that in her opinion, he admired you more, or maybe, maybe your accomplishments. She didn't elaborate, but she did make that statement. She also made this statement that he had something to do in helping you to get your Ph. D. by making certain papers available. I know you, I was talking to you at lunch and you indicated that you had gotten your Ph. D. at Georgetown University in Washington--

RUSSELL: George Washington.

CATES: The George Washington University, the George Washington University. And Senator Russell had something to do at that time in making certain papers or in some way he did help you. Could you comment about that?

RUSSELL: Well, that was primarily with respect to certain Photostats. That was--when I was taking my degree, it was before the great expansion of microfilming and the usual practice was to get Photostats of the things. So Dick did help me financially get Photostats of the plays of Aaron Hill, the English dramatist on whom I was doing my dissertation. But he was a great inspiration. I always--I called Dick "Sir Richard” because he was a great believer in the term noblesse oblige, and I've never known anybody who was more concerned with a man fulfilling his duties and obligations unless it were my father. Now I think probably Dick got it from Dad. Dad, I know Dad used to tell me, "I hope you won't leave Georgia. You owe Georgia too much. Georgia has educated you. Georgia has nurtured you. Too many of her sons have left her, gone to New York, or gone to other places. Now I hope you, I hope none of my children will,” he would say.

CATES: None of them did?
RUSSELL: No, none did. And Dick certainly carried that on to a degree, but more than anything where I am personally involved--from the time I was in high school until I finished college Dick did take a great deal of interest in me. I went out for basketball and football in high school and Dick would take time off and go with the teams. I could hear him yelling, "Come on, Fee." He called me Fee. He would--I remember one particular game over at Commerce when he was just yelling his head off because it seemed that Commerce was going to beat us. And it was a very rough field--pebbles all over the field and when you ran with the ball and hit the line and your elbows hit the ground, it would just bring knots up on your arms. I don't know whether you ever experienced that or not, but it would just cause kind of a Charlie horse or something, you know. From--in football and basketball and even trying to advance my social accomplishments, I did not care too much about dancing and I think I was extremely timid--and I know I was--and bashful. Dick without my knowledge promised a friend of mine--one of my close friends in high school, one of my classmates--ten dollars if he would get me to go to one of the dances they were having in Winder; and without telling me what he had been promised, he did prevail upon me to go to the dance.

CATES: Did he collect? I guess he did.

RUSSELL: Yes, I'm sure he collected. But in college I went out for basketball my freshman year and I was very small and I weighed 125 pounds, 5'7". I wouldn't even be allowed to come out in uniform today but I did make the freshman team, not the first team, I did make a numeral, that's what the freshman got as a sweater. And then for three years I boxed, and my last year I was captain of the University boxing team. But Dick--this is where he comes in--on two occasions he went to the Southern Conference Boxing Tournament in Charlottesville, Virginia, and he was right behind me. And the only tragic thing about it was that I happened to win the championship the year he didn't go. But I still have the telegram that he and Bob sent me. I received just before the last fight in the finals. Begin Cassette #51, Side 2 And one of the things that, well, most clearly shows--and he did this I am sure for others in slightly different ways--but my freshman year when I went off to the University, my brother Walter, who had been there a year or two before--he had not completed his studies at the University--told me--he said, "Fielding," said, "if you ever get hungry and feel like you just can't wait for the next meal," said, "you go over to old Nick Diakides." He had a fruit stand and candy store and a hot dog stand across from the Athens YMCA. And Walter said, "You tell Nick that you are my brother." Said, "He'll let you have stuff on credit." I was certainly short on money, and so at the end of the year, I owed Nick Diakides about thirteen dollars, I think it was. But I went by to see him and told him I was going home, and I was going to work during the summer and I would get the money to him. Well, he must have given up hope because one day Dick came home from the office--he was practicing law in Winder--and said, "Fee, I want to see you out on the front porch a minute." And I went out and he had this letter that had been sent to Mr. Richard B. Russell. It was intended for my father, but it had come to Dick because my father was in Atlanta on the Supreme Court at the time; and Dick had opened it thinking it was his letter and could see that it was addressed to my father, so he said he just wanted to let me know that I had better not let Dad know what I had done, and I agreed with him, and I said, "Well, I'm going to make the money." And he said, "Well, I think you ought to and the sooner you get it over there the better it will be." Well, I went to my mother and engaged my services to her in the garden, the yard, and I made the money and took her--we went over to Athens together, and I went by to see Nick to pay him
and he said, "It's already been paid." And so without even letting me know Dick paid the bill, and when I tried to give him the money he wouldn't take it. He said, "You can use that for something else."

CATES: But he still let you go ahead and earn it.

RUSSELL: Yes. He still gave me a time about it.

CATES: I think, I'm looking at a note that I made last night when I was talking to Miss Ina and I have down here, "Fielding exerted influence." I take it from that you also exerted an influence on R.B., Senator Russell. Would you comment about that?

RUSSELL: Well, I don't know that I could; I like to think that I did. I'm not sure that I could take any credit for any marked influence. There, again, I think the span of years that separated us--but now he may have, and I would be greatly complimented to think that he may have admired my attempts to excel in athletics and he certainly could not have admired my attempts to excel academically, I'd have to say, to be honest. But it would be, I don't know, something that would maybe run with what you said earlier about his probably feeling good at least that I have persevered through the doctorate, and I think he knew that I did have or I tried to have--I didn't follow them always by any means--high ideals. I'm indebted to my mother for that more than anybody else. But I was not any; I was not any model for anybody.

CATES: I think it might fit in at this point. You were telling me at lunch about a little incident whereby your father took you back over to the University of Georgia and this was in your sophomore year and I believe the Dean of Men or one of the deans--

RUSSELL: The Registrar.

CATES: The Registrar was an old schoolmate of his and in his presence he told you that he was expecting you to pass, otherwise you weren't going to go back over there which you indicated by saying that you weren't that good a student, but in the same breath you were saying that he had told R.B. that he expected him not to be lower than fourth in his class--

RUSSELL: No, I'm sorry, my father was told that by his father.

CATES: Oh, I misunderstood. I see.

RUSSELL: Yes, yes.

CATES: Well, what did he expect from and of R.B?

RUSSELL: Well, he wanted--the thing I--what I have to go there on--in other words, I never heard a conversation between my father and Dick regarding his work at the University, nor between my father and any other child--his work at the University. But Dad would always tell me, and I'm sure he told the others, and in his talks he would say that you have a--you want to do your best, that's the thing. And I remember I don't know how many times I heard Dad quote from
Longfellow's "Ladder of St. Augustine": "The heights by great men reached and kept/were not attained by sudden flight./But they while their companions slept/were toiling upward in the night." And I don't know how many times I heard him say that. And I'm sure he must have said it to each one though I was not present to hear it, but I know he said it to me. I can remember it well. We were going over to Athens to see about my rooming arrangements my freshman year in an old T model Ford, he quoted those lines. I had heard them before but he quoted them that day when we were going over there.

CATES: You had mentioned something earlier about trying to get the approval of Rob and Dick, the younger brothers and digging the trenches and this concerned World War I. I know in talking to other persons that Senator Russell was a Civil War buff. Did you ever discuss that with him or did you do any refighting the War Between the States and get his approval of that?

RUSSELL: No, no. We didn't--

CATES: One story I might just relate to you here and I'm sure you've heard it before is that when young Dick was a young boy he was out in the front yard there in Winder and it seemed that he was fighting the War Between the States--

RUSSELL: In the cotton patch, yes.

CATES: Re-enacting it and some elderly gentleman reported to your father that he had a son that was a little touched in the head. I guess it seemed to run in the family, the refighting of wars, I guess.

RUSSELL: That was the Civil War or the Russo-Japanese War. Dick was an avid reader of history and we had an uncle, Rob---my father's brother--who had finished at Annapolis and was present--he was one of the aides to the Admiral who represented the United States--at the coronation of the czar. It must have been the--I don't know--Nicholas--which one, but the one that was murdered in the Revolution. But it could have been his father. But I heard Uncle Rob tell that story and Dick took a--I know he had a book there at the house on the Russo-Japanese War, and I remember well the picture of Theodore Roosevelt sitting with the Japanese and Russian emissaries at the peace conference that he was responsible for at the naval base at New Hampshire there. What is the name of the naval base? Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

CATES: Yes, yes.

RUSSELL: That's where the treaty was signed, Roosevelt's. And I remember seeing that picture and I'm sure now that I read the book although I don't remember too much about it now, but I'm sure that Dick had read it with a great deal of interest.

CATES: So actually that now famous story about him re-enacting the fighting of a war might have been the Russo-Japanese instead of the Civil War.

RUSSELL: I could have, could have. But it could have been the Civil War, because he--Dick really knew the battles of the Civil War. He knew the--I never will forget how he was when on
one occasion—a very complimentary to me on one of those trips that we took to the boxing tournament. It was in 1928, I believe. Hoover was inaugurated in 1928 and, or was it 1927?

CATES: I'm not sure. You know, the crash was in 1929 so it had to be 1928 or, probably 1928. One of those Washington days that the weather just goes to your bones, and Dick and I had gone up to Washington from Charlottesville and he was paying my freight and everything. I was a college student I didn't have any money, and he was paying all of this. I know we stayed out with my sister Mrs. Green out in Cherrydale, Virginia. And Uncle Rob at that time was living in Washington. He had retired and was on "R" Street, and we made arrangements to go to the inauguration when Dick and I and Billie and Gordon went out to Uncle Rob's the evening before. And they got to talking about the Civil War and I had just finished reading Stephen Vincent Benet's "John Brown's Body". I had learned for the first time that one of the Custis-Washingtons, one of the Washington's descendants was involved in John Brown's raid. And I happened to mention that fact and Dick told me later, he said, "I was awfully proud of you to know that you knew that." He knew it all along, but I didn't know it.

CATES: My goodness. I studied that in college and I don't recall, was that in there?

RUSSELL: Yes, it was in "John Brown's Body". In fact, I believe, now I'll have to check on that because I haven't read "John Brown's Body" since—I went into English literature, so I haven't read it since 1928 or so when it came out. But I believe he was in charge of Harper's Ferry, the Arsenal, I believe it was. But Washington had no children so it had to be—but his name was Washington--Parks Custis Washington, I believe—or it may have been that his last name was Custis. I shouldn't even mention it--

CATES: No, that's all right; I think it illustrates a point and that is that He admired anyone who could remember facts and figures like that pertaining to American history.

RUSSELL: And he would often tell about things that happened. In fact, I learned quite a bit of Civil War history from Dick, his talking about it.

CATES: Let me ask you this while we are on the subject. You did go to the inauguration of Herbert Hoover, did you?

RUSSELL: Yes.

CATES: Do you recall anything specifically that relates to Senator Russell then?

RUSSELL: No. Dick was Speaker of the House at that time but this I was referring to a moment ago at Uncle Rob's house. Dick and Uncle Rob decided that they would go together, and Uncle Rob was going to take Dick to the restaurant which was at that time in the Library of Congress, had a very fancy Congressional restaurant there, I think it was. And Ina and I would be together and so they left us. We separated and the next day we met, but Dick went with Uncle Rob. And Ina and I went over and stood for a while in this terrible weather until she said, "Let's go
downtown and go to the movies and we'll see pictures of the inaugural parade and the swearing in better than we can see it here." We were very far back from the inaugural stand.

CATES: But you don't know where Dick and your Uncle Rob were?

RUSSELL: Don't know where they were.

CATES: So you weren't actually--

RUSSELL: Uncle Rob may have had some tickets. He had been Judge Advocate General of the Navy.

CATES: He was?

RUSSELL: So he may have been given tickets. But that would mean he had only two so that left his wife out if Dick went with him, and Dick was with him, of course.

CATES: Let me ask you this. Did you have any other conversations of an intellectual nature with your brother Dick? I know you are the only brother I believe, or sister, who is a college professor—

BEGIN CASSETTE #52 Side 3

This is Thursday, September 5, 1974. It is a continuation of an interview with Dr. Fielding Russell, one of the brothers of the late Senator Richard Brevard Russell. When Tape 65 ended on Side 2, we were discussing whether or not Senator Russell had had any significant intellectual type conversations with Fielding Russell since he is the only member of the Russell family who was, of is, a college professor, and Fielding was about to answer the question when we ran out of tape. Do you recall any such conversations?

RUSSELL: We had numerous conversations, many of which I am sure I won't recall. But I remember Dick was very fond of reading Walter Scott, and we talked particularly on one occasion about Ivanhoe and Talisman, two novels of Scott's that went back to the older period of English history and, of course, one--both of these concerned the way Richard the Lion-hearted and--of course, there, even though we didn't discuss that particular matter, Dick had the same name. So it did come to me--I had studied Old English, of course--the word Richard was made up of two words Rice and Weard "Guardian of the Kingdom", just as Edward is "Guardian of Property", for example. Ward is still used as a word meaning protector or guardian. Then we discussed Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe on occasion, and then Shakespeare, on more than one occasion, with respect to the appeal there that Shakespeare had, of course, for his quotability. Not that we had any long or abstruse discussions that I can recall, but Dick was interested in literature though he was primarily bound to history. He read novels and I am trying to think now of a novel he recommended to me that was a diary--kept in the form of a diary---about Napoleon and the girl who became the wife of the King of Sweden, a man who was one of Napoleon's staff officers. To save my life I am confusing it now with Daedre, the girl in the Irish legends. It's
almost like that, but it isn't exactly. A very interesting novel it was. He recommended that to me on one occasion and I was visiting there at home and I sat down and read it overnight and part of the next day, though to save my life right now I can't--

CATES: What impressed you the most about these conversations with him?

RUSSELL: Well, most of all his interest and his ability to see that here was a segment of life though in a--the form of fiction though I do recall, too, Dick enjoyed reading. He had purchased, I believe, the two volumes of Everyman's Edition of Samuel Pepys' Diary. Of course, Pepys' Diary is in many volumes but this was a condensation, and he specially enjoyed there the salty nature of Pepys' interest---his many flirtations and his knowledge of the English Navy. And I know he was aware of the fact that Pepys was Secretary to the Admiralty during the 1660's and that he had written a history of the English Navy. I know he was aware of that. Also, of course in the earlier days, the house was filled with the Henty books bought particularly for Dick and then Rob and then the younger members. I used to read the Henty books. He was pro-British and that used to arouse some discussion. You could--particularly some heroes in the Canada--the French and Indian War--and the Revolutionary War and also the--I inherited, we inherited, the younger boys-- the Tom Swift novels that Dick and Rob had, and then there were a whole series of works called histories but they were adapted. I remember there was a two-volume edition of King Arthur and the Knights, and Dick recommended those to me, and I read and reread them. They almost thwarted my normalcy. I read them so, so many times. But he liked to read and he--we had got the--I can't recall, well, I do recall another time we had a discussion. I was driving down to Georgia and I was studying on my doctorate and he was making a talk in Atlanta. Well, it was on an occasion in which all the former governors still living came together out at the chapel on the Emory campus-- Wes--oh, what is the name of that church?

CATES: Haygood Methodist Church?

RUSSELL: Haygood Memorial?

CATES: Memorial, yes Methodist church was Emory's Law Day or something of that nature. Anyhow the Time magazine had come out with--I think it was the time maybe that Bernard Shaw was supervising the production of--

CATES: Pygmalion?

RUSSELL: Pygmalion out in Hollywood and, or it could have been that. Now I don't remember, it could have been Shaw's birthday. And he got me to read. He was driving out of Washington, and I read to him the Time article on Shaw, and we had many a good laugh on that.

CATES: That was very interesting. You said something a few minutes ago while we were changing tapes about your first long pants. I think you inherited those from R.B.

RUSSELL: Well, we had many, of course, hand-me-downs in the family. I mentioned earlier about wearing the old military coat that Dick had at Gordon. I did not wear this to school. That
would have been a little too promiscuous, but I would wear it there at home and out on the farm and out to milk. I remember one summer Dick came down and asked me if I would like to have a long suit. I had never had any long pants before. And it was a nice blue suit, lightweight--first lightweight suit I had ever had for summer--and I'd--I was proud to get that suit, though the coat was somewhat too long. The pants then, because they were what we called the shotgun-barreled pants, you know, very close-fitting pants. They were not too long because they would--that close-fitting that would come down. I wore that suit I know for a good while there when I was in high school--

CATES: And this was his suit that he gave you?

RUSSELL: His suit, his suit. And after that, after Dick had gone to the Senate, he would turn over suits to me and to Jeb and William. I know the three of us benefited from suits that he did not wear and we would take them to Athens and have them altered. Dick had gained quite a bit of weight over his years of the twenties, in the twenties, and we'd have to have the waist taken up and we'd have to have the coats altered. But there were two black tailors--the Cobb brothers--in Athens and, oh, I think they charged us at that time maybe five dollars to alter the suits and it may have been--it had been a quite expensive suit at the time, and so we were continuing I suppose that hand-me-down that--

CATES: You made another interesting comment which I am sure has had some bearing on how Senator Russell viewed things and how you view things and that is that your father was about five or six years old when the Reconstruction started in the South. Would you comment about that?

RUSSELL: Yes. My father was born in 1861, April the 27th, a short time after Fort Sumter. And he had to refugee--he and his mother and father from Marietta when Sherman came through. They went down through Sparta, Hancock County, where they--one of his brothers died--he was younger. And I believe it was Governor [Henry Dickerson] McDaniel, former Governor McDaniel, who gave a drawer out of his chifforobe to bury the infant in. A coffin, nothing was available, and they were trying to get back over into South Carolina to my grandmother's people--her people had been there in South Carolina. So my father never did talk too much about it except that the rigors of economy; he would occasionally mention that my grandfather had to move to Athens and become manager of the cord factory out at Princeton. It was from there that my father went to the University. And so Dad was always--well, sometimes my sisters and mother thought over-frugal--he didn't buy clothes, he wouldn't buy shoes unless they made him and he was, I suppose, one of the greatest sacrificers I have ever known for his children. Anybody who is able to accumulate from nothing a thousand acres of land at his death. Of course, he lived to benefit from none of it, but it was interesting--it was a--

CATES: Would you say that some of those characteristics carried over to Senator Russell?

RUSSELL: Without a doubt. Dick was not parsimonious, he was not stingy, but I know I've ridden to Washington with him many a time and he did not believe in stopping and going into a restaurant and spending a lot for a lunch. We'd buy hamburgers and a milkshake. One of my sons
was the benefactor of Dick's largesse in respect to living in Washington with him for a while and he tells a rather interesting story of one occasion when he went downtown with Dick to look into buying a hat and some clothes in preparation for his going to Europe on one of the Senate committees. And he said that Dick said, "Well, you know, I'd like to have a pair of binoculars to take with me, but they are just too expensive." And my son William said, "Well, Uncle Dick, what are you saving your money for?" He said, "Well, for my damn nieces and nephews, I guess."

CATES: So he never did get the binoculars?

RUSSELL: He finally got some binoculars later but--

CATES: Well, I'm glad you touched on that because some others had spoken of him being a very frugal person--

RUSSELL: He was very frugal--

CATES: Not stingy--

RUSSELL: Not stingy. He was economical and he was never ostentatious. Now he had his--in his younger years he had his ice cream pants, I remember. But he was never a spendthrift. It was amazing. Of course, he didn't have to, being a bachelor he didn't necessarily have to you know save, but he did. He did not--he couldn't stand waste of any kind. I think he acquired some of those traits from my father.

CATES: Do you think this carried over to governmental spending with him being the chairman of the Appropriations Committee?

RUSSELL: I think it did, even when he was governor of Georgia or Speaker of the House. But particularly when he was governor of Georgia during the depression, and he cut his own salary and made every effort to save the state money, and the federal spending he looked at the same way.

CATES: Getting back to childhood memories, you were saying something at lunch about you never will forget your father buying, I think it was 165 tickets, round trip tickets between Winder--

RUSSELL: 156.

CATES: 156 between Winder and Atlanta. Would you comment about that now?

RUSSELL: Well, that was a conversation piece for the family particularly. There were thirteen of us. My father was commuting to Atlanta while he was on the Court of Appeals and while he was Chief Justice and when he was practicing law in Atlanta, the three years or so that he practiced law. And he would go daily in the earlier years now, and the last two or three years he
would stay up there during the week and come home on the weekend; but back in the twenties, he would, well, and before, he commuted to Atlanta at a time that I remember not, at least seventy years ago or seventy-five years ago he was commuting to Atlanta. But the Seaboard Railway had a ticket book, we called it, that contained 156 single trips and in the back of the book were lines for the names of those who would use the ticket book. And, of course, my mother and father headed the list and then the other children. There were spaces for only twelve children. My twin brother and I would alternate our names as a new book was purchased. Of course that did not bar the other one from riding on in. We didn't go to Atlanta too often. I'd flag the train out in front of the house. That was my daily chore in the wintertime to run down with the lantern or light a newspaper and flag the train. In the summertime, wave my handkerchief. And my father was, as I mentioned about his clay digging—he would stay out, and my mother would send one child after another out to tell him that his breakfast was ready and he was going to miss the train, and he would finally come in. And many a morning he went running down the walk with one child carrying a cup of coffee, and another child carrying his coat, his vest, and his tie and dressing himself on the way down to the train.

CATES: Did he ever miss the train? Which is not there now because my father moved it away in the clay, and that is actually the truth that we used to get under a cut? You know where the walk is there at the house. Well, about seventy-five feet to the left of the walk, the cut began. Now it is entirely moved on this side because we moved it with a wheelbarrow or with the wagon. We did making spending money. Sometimes the train would—my father would get there just in time to wave at the engineer as he went by and he would slow down and back up. Many a time I've seen the train gets up into the cut and back up to let Dad on. We heard later that it cost a tremendous sum, no telling what it would cost today, the tremendous sum of five dollars every time the train stopped out there. We heard somebody that said that. And yet we could ride if we wanted to, we rarely ever did it, and except after the grandchildren started coming to the house, and you could ride from our station into Winder for a dime.

CATES: For a dime.

RUSSELL: All you had to do was flag the train and the train was flagged with passengers taking the train down to New Timothy, Statham, Bogart, and Athens or up to Winder or Carl or Atlanta. It was not allowed to use flag stops.

CATES: Another notation I made on my envelope last night when I was talking to Miss Ina, and I don't want to forget this although this might not be the most appropriate time to mention it, but she said that she really wished that you could remember the toast that Dick made to you in Washington when he was in Walter Reed Hospital. She said that she recalls that an army general brought a bottle of champagne and you and Virginia and Miss Ina were there and Dick was in the bed and I don't know if this was his final illness or not--

RUSSELL: Yes, it was his final illness.

CATES: And he made an outstanding, eloquent toast to you. Do you recall what he said?
RUSSELL: Well, it was a very touching thing. He--I don't remember the exact words, but it was something like to them--and I never will forget it--To the kindest hearted man I have ever known. I mean that was the--

CATES: That was the gist.

RUSSELL: That was the gist of it; and I don't know that I deserve that but I did--of course I was greatly concerned, and I was privileged because of the schedule of the academic life where you have days there before each quarter begins and I'd had in between sixteen days, and so I was allowed as no other brother was--now the sisters went up to go up with Dick, and so I was there with him for about twelve days in September before his death in January. Then I happened to go back to--the South Atlantic Modern Language Association was meeting in Washington and Dick was in Winder. He had flown down to Winder and the day I got to Washington, I just happened to call the office to see how things were and was told that Dick had flown in and entered Walter Reed and so neither of my sisters was available at the time, so though I had driven my car up with three of my colleagues to the meeting, I let them drive the car back and I stayed there and missed two days of school until one of my sisters could fly in to be with him and then as soon as the Christmas holidays came I flew to Washington. He was still in Walter Reed, back in Walter Reed because he went back to his apartment before I left there that November that was in November my language association was meeting. And I flew up during the Christmas holidays and I couldn't stand the thought of Dick spending Christmas day alone by himself in the hospital so I called Virginia, my wife, and our children except for one son were married and had their families though we tried to get together on Christmas. So our son Dick joined us in Washington and we spent Christmas with Dick. The hospital staff was awfully nice--

CATES: This was Christmas of 1970?

RUSSELL: Christmas day of 1970. That's right. He died January 22nd, I believe.


RUSSELL: Yes, 1971. And so they arranged a very nice Christmas day dinner in the dining room there in the wing in which he was. I think it was called the presidential wing, I'm not sure. So it was those last days were very painful because he was not, you could tell, he was not regaining any strength and right before we went to the dining room and we thought he ate a very good meal, or relatively speaking, more than he had done before but he didn't stay, he wanted to get back in bed almost as soon as the meal was over, but he did have the champagne in his room before we went down to the dining room meal.

CATES: And was that with the army general? I think Ina had it--I think it was a Major of Nurses now really to be honest about it. Now many a general came in there, many a senator came in there while I was there. In fact, on one occasion while I was there Nixon and Kissinger came, and we went into the sitting room and I remember my--the President said that he wanted Kissinger to brief--Kissinger had just come back from Vietnam and he wanted Kissinger to brief Dick on what had happened in Vietnam and so I said, "Mr. President, if you would like for me to do so I'll retire." And the President looked at Kissinger and said, "Do you think he ought to?"
And he shook his head a little. And so I sat in on that and I don't remember exactly all that was--but I didn't say anything about what was said or not and I don't remember what. It was primarily a mentioning of the moving of troops and the disposition of certain war materiel and efforts that were being made to contain the North Vietnamese and that I was not up on enough, I wouldn't make a very good spy. Of course, I never mentioned it to anybody anything that happened--was briefing. But it was a rather memorable affair for me to be there and interestingly enough I was struck by the memory of Mr. Kissinger when he came down with the President to the State Capitol when Dick was lying in state. He remembered me immediately, came over to me and said, "You're Senator Russell's brother who was with us in Walter Reed Hospital." I was amazed because I didn't have any idea he'd remember.

**CATES:** My goodness. I'm sure that President Nixon did this as a courtesy to Senator Russell although he probably well knew he would never be back in the Senate, don't you think?

**RUSSELL:** I think possibly, in fact, that one occasion after we left the hospital in November I may have been a little too insistent. My words to Dick were that he ought to try to exercise. He ought to bestir himself. If he stayed in bed too long and it makes it that much more difficult for him to get up

**CATES:** This is Side 2 of Tape 66 and we were just discussing with Fielding Russell the time that he was in the Senate Gallery and he had urged Senator Russell to get back on his feet and stir around and so when he came back into the Senate chamber there was a standing ovation for him, and he was saying while I was changing the tape that he thinks this was the last time Senator Russell spoke on the floor of the Senate. Do you recall what he said?

**RUSSELL:** No, I do not. It was some matter I suppose, of no, not of any high impact or interest. It may have been the last time he appeared on the Senate floor. That could be checked because I had to leave in November and then when I went back, of course, he was in Walter Reed, and then he didn't leave Walter Reed. He went back I don't know whether it was in December but he did not leave Walter Reed again. But he was there I believe continuously until--now I could be wrong about that because I was there with him through the 26th of December, and we flew back to Savannah on the 26th, could have been the 27th. And then the next thing I knew was when /Barboura G./ Babs Raesly called me to say that Dick had died and that was on the 22nd.

**CATES:** How did he view his pending death? Did he ever discuss that with you?

**RUSSELL:** Well, not to any great extent. We didn't--I suppose it was a natural thing that we didn't, you know; you don't usually. Though we did discuss I remember on one occasion he said that he had discussed with our nephew Richard the form of his tombstone; and he said "I want to tell you about it so that you will--if Richard should forget," but Richard didn't forget as far as I know.

**CATES:** When did you first become aware of the fact that he, and this is going back some years, and I don't mean, you know, like say 1970, that he had a serious difficulty with emphysema?
RUSSELL: Well, I learned it indirectly, not directly. Dick went into the hospital you know, very serious, had a very serious time several years before his death. And then when he would come down, you see, I would miss seeing him. Occasionally I might be able to run up there during the Christmas holidays and see him when he was at home because he was always on schedule to leave for Washington soon after Christmas--he was back in his office. And so that serious illness--I did not see him--I did not go to Washington during that time--and then the first time I became aware of the seriousness of his condition was at the family reunion in 1970.

CATES: Not until then?

RUSSELL: When--because as I say, I did not see him often, you see, and there up on the hill we were having the ceremony--Dick didn't stand up a single time. And so afterwards he came down and didn't come out to the barbecue and went up to his room and got in his bed. And I went up to initially to twit him in a way and say, you know, "Look here, what's going on here?" And I told him, I said, "You know you didn't even stand up this morning to say anything?" And the way he looked at me, I could see that he felt that maybe I was doing him an injustice that I didn't realize, and I gave him a rough time. It was a great shock to me. So then I told him, I said, "Well, now, I wish I were able just to stay with you." And he was kind enough to say, "Well, I wish you were too. I wish you could stay." In fact we discussed that at one time. And I could not very well in June give up a place that I had already signed a contract for in September, but it didn't go too far in that respect. But then that September my twin brother and I went up to see him, and we went up really to get Ina, or my twin brother did because he was working and using part of his vacation and he stayed for, oh, I guess we were there together two or three days, and then he and Ina came back, and I stayed with Dick for almost three weeks until my school, until I had to come back to school. That was in September of 1970 and then as I have already repeated I saw him in November and in December and, of course, I didn't see him after that.

CATES: Last Thursday night I interviewed /William C./ Bill Harris and you will remember he was Congressman Hugh Peterson, Sr.'s executive aide, and one of the things he said toward the end of his interview, which lasted for about two and a half hours, was he first became aware of Senator Russell's problem when he /Bill Harris/ was attending the reception for Hugh Peterson, Jr.'s wedding down in Ailey, Georgia. Were you there?

RUSSELL: No.

CATES: Were you there? You weren't there?

CATES: When did Hugh Peterson, Jr., get married? Do you recall the year, about how many years ago?

RUSSELL: Well, that was about the time--

CATES: About 1970?

RUSSELL: No, he married about 1967 or 1968. They have two children now.
CATES: The reason I mentioned it--

RUSSELL: That was the time he had that serious illness. It was after he had had the serious illness and discovered it was emphysema and finally, you know, there was some tumor in the lung, and they thought they had removed that with the cobalt treatment and so that was about the same time, you see, that--so I realized it. You see he became very active after that so far as his senatorial duties were concerned as far as I, you see, as I say, I did not see him. I did not go to that reception. I did go to Hugh's wedding but Dick did not come to the wedding. And so I didn't see him although I'm only seventy miles from Ailey, sometimes I had another engagement, a talk maybe, or a meeting or something and I just couldn't. I was invited I know but--

CATES: Well, what I was going to say was that Bill Harris happened to come by where Senator Russell was talking to somebody and anyway he whispered to Bill and said, "You got to get me out of this room." And so Bill came back a few minutes later and said, "You've got a very important telephone call and you've got to come get it." And so he went outside or went in the other room, and I didn't know what Bill was doing, it was almost midnight last Thursday, he jumped up off the couch and he sucked his breath in and then let it out. He said that Senator Russell told him he just had to get out of that place because he couldn't let the air out of his lungs.

RUSSELL: That's right that was the trouble.

CATES: Yes. He could not let the air out of his lungs and so he said that was that first time that he was really aware that he had a problem, a serious problem.

RUSSELL: Well, I knew it before that but as I said only indirectly, you see, from being told by the members of the family. Now I think possibly, of course, Dick was a rather inveterate smoker for a long number of years. Of course, he had that pneumonia I mentioned, and I think that had some effect and then I don't know of a Russell who hadn't had some respiratory trouble. It just runs in the family.

CATES: Do you have that trouble?

RUSSELL: No, I have sinus trouble. I have--I had a very serious illness with my respiratory system when I was a junior in high school--and asthma runs in the family, although most of us escaped it. Ina's was the most severe. Rob had terrific hay fever. My two older children, when children, just ran us crazy with asthma. Of course, well, like I know our great-great grandfather, Richard Trapier Brumby had to give up his position at the University of South Carolina--he taught there in geology in the fifties-- and he finally had to give that up because it was called--they called it bronchial trouble, they didn't call it emphysema, but I'm sure it must have been about the same thing, because people have emphysema even if they don't smoke. Of course, smoking aggravates it.

CATES: You might be interested to know that I was talking to some of the private physicians there at Walter Reed Hospital and talked to them specifically about the autopsy, etc., and they
found that in one or both of his lungs that he had absolutely no elasticity, absolutely no elasticity in one of the lungs, I think. And they were surprised that he could breathe as long as he did. I think it was Dr. Pearson, his personal physician that was saying he tried his best to get Senator Russell to take one of these portable inhalers with him but he wouldn't do it because he had so much dignity and pride that he wouldn't do it. From the Senate floor he would have to come down to his office to get treated, you know, with that air machine.

RUSSELL: He did have one in his apartment.

CATES: He did?

RUSSELL: Yes. The kind that would go anywhere he put it. He needed it particularly to relieve his trachea. I suppose, because they put some medication in the inhaler to relieve his trachea of the inhalation of phlegm. It was terrible. And--

CATES: Excuse me.

RUSSELL: That's all right. He had an inhalator or some machine that I had to rig it up many a time, every day in fact.

CATES: Was it a very complicated machine to operate?

RUSSELL: No, well it was for me because I'm not much of a dealer with machines, and Proctor Jones could rig it up just like that, and I think sometimes Dick probably lost his patience with me because I couldn't. He knew more about it than I did.

CATES: Don't you guess that one of the reasons he lost his patience was because he couldn't breathe?

RUSSELL: Of course.

CATES: And he needed that.

RUSSELL: Yes. It was--and he felt much better after using it and--but he was constantly trying to rid himself of phlegm in those last days. [At this point, a time seal was placed on a portion of this interview. That portion will be released at the proper time. Following the time seal, the interview continues.]

CATES: Along the same line, would you comment about any other girl friends that your brother R.B. or Dick might have had over a period of time, any time period?

RUSSELL: I don't know how serious, how serious, you see. There again that ten year gap comes in. Well, Dick was a very social person, and he went with the girls. He had dates with innumerable girls, and if he were ever serious with one of them to the point of coming to a
Marriage or thinking about marriage, I don't know. And I'd seen girls there in Winder that he took to dances, Mary Louise Johns--

CATES: Mary Louise Johns?

RUSSELL: Rounette Woodruff, who's a wife today. Ruby Woodruff, her younger sister, too. But Rounette Woodruff was the wife of Clair Harris, who was a big industrialist.

CATES: Let's see and he dated--

RUSSELL: He was over at, he was a--how they would have prom parties and dances, so I heard him tell. Now I had prom parties when I was in school, high school. I didn't go to many dances because I, as I told you. But Dick was a very, I remember a girl who was Ina's roommate. She could tell you more about that than I could. But I know he dated her, went with her when he was in Athens, a Hazelton girl, Dot Hazelton. And the girls used to have house parties there at the house and Dick would date then. They'd dance, go swimming, picnic, play tennis. Now whether he was--as I said, there was ten years difference there, I don't know.

CATES: There was some talk that he was linked romantically with the daughter of a governor, a former governor of Georgia. I think it was the governor just prior to his becoming governor.

RUSSELL: Hardman?

CATES: Hardman. Do you recall that?

RUSSELL: I never heard that.

CATES: I see.

RUSSELL: That's, I was in school with [Lamartine] Lam Hardman, Governor Hardman's--must have been much younger son, and I think he was a freshman my sophomore year. I saw Lam recently last October, but that was the first time I had seen him since we left college, but now I never heard of that. I didn't even know that Hardman, I don't know her name.

CATES: I don't, yes, I don't recall it either.

RUSSELL: I think he did have an older sister, but I don't know her name and I didn't know anything there.

CATES: Okay. Jumping much farther in time and more recent times but yet not in the immediate past, did you ever know about a girlfriend he had in North Carolina, who now lives in North Carolina?

RUSSELL: There was a--well, I don't know who she was, but, there again, I think it comes down to the Georgia Society. I don't, I don't know of anybody by name.
CATES: Yes, but did you hear of that?

RUSSELL: I've heard it, yes.

CATES: Excuse me just a minute. This is September 5, 1974. This is Tape 67, Side 1, a continuation of my interview with Dr. Fielding Russell. We were talking about the various girl friends of Senator Russell, and Fielding had said that he was aware of the fact that there was a girl or lady, who now did move to North Carolina, and he didn't know exactly how deep the relationship was or anything like that in that really the only one that he has any knowledge and that's limited is with Patricia Collins. He does recall, however, thought that at one time R.B. or Dick dated some of your teachers?

RUSSELL: Some of my schoolteachers as he did the girls in Winder. He took them to dances. I remember on one occasion he was very, oh, I don't mean, I mean to say friendly--I remember on one occasion a first cousin of mine brought a girl out, her roommate out from Agnes Scott and Dick--they were staying there at the house, and he took her over to Athens for dinner, I believe, one night, but I don't know exactly how close he got with anybody except, as I said, Patricia Collins. I don't have any knowledge. Of course, after, you see, when I left, well, when Dick was in the governor's mansion, now, whether he had what are social acquaintances and relationships or whatever, I don't know. I was in the governor's mansion two or three times during the time that he was in the, in there.

CATES: Did he ever talk to you one way or the other or express any regrets at having not married?

RUSSELL: Yes. When I married he said, "I should have married about your age." And I think possibly he could have well been thinking of Rob or Walter--we all married about the same age, the three of us, and Jeb was older, Jeb was twenty-seven or twenty-nine, but Walter, Rob, and I were not twenty-five when we married. And I remember his saying that. We had, Virginia and me--that's one of the few occasions I went to the governor's mansion, the summer we were married. I took her over there one Sunday afternoon from Duluth, and I believe it was on that occasion--of course, the announcement had already been made and we were to be married within a month or two. It had to be within a month or two because he was inaugurated as governor then, you know, in June, and so he hadn't been in the governor's-- and we married August 3rd, so it was sometime in between the two but I remember that statement.

CATES: Was he your best man? Did he attend your wedding?

RUSSELL: No. Yes. He came down from Atlanta, but my twin brother was my best man, and I didn't ask Dick or Rob to be in my wedding and I probably should have. I've worried about it. I didn't ask Walter. But Alex and Jeb and William, we were all the same age and I felt that that was--in fact, I thought it might have been an imposition on Dick particularly if I had said--Now, that's not always, Jeb wanted Dick as his best man when he married. Of course, then Dick was United States Senator in 1938 and he was Rob's best man, I'm sure. But I always felt that they're children the same age, and there again that ten year gap was something with respect to something
like that, you know. So it wasn't any attempt to consciously eliminate Dick and Rob, but they were separated from us, you see, by some eight or ten years in all.

CATES: I know we have only got probably another five or ten minutes because you've got somewhere you've got to go here in Atlanta, and it's almost fast approaching five o'clock and the traffic, etc. One question I'd like to ask you is do you think that Senator Russell was really aware of the important person that he really was, aware of the importance of the office that he held and the tenure in the Senate, etc?

RUSSELL: Yes. I don't see how any man could be unconscious of it. But I'll have to say that he was the most unassuming, I'll phrase it this way, the most unassuming important man, really important in national life that I have ever known. But I think that was also a characteristic; nobody--I'm going back to my father again. But nobody would ever have known just meeting him that my father was Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Now he had the most brilliant mind I've known. But he was--he dressed--now if one of the daughters got married, or if Dad would take Mother off to the American Bar Association, he'd take along his tuxedo and his dress suit, his evening wear. But otherwise, you just wouldn't know, just to see him, because he was really a, almost a slovenly dresser, because he wouldn't buy, he wouldn't spend money for clothes. Now Dick dressed well, but not lavishly, not, he was a spendthrift as we mentioned, but he was always well-tailored and well-dressed. But he was, he was unassuming. And I admired him for that. That's one of the things--I'm not, you've probably been able to tell that my chief relationship with Dick is as a brother whom I loved and revered, not that I disregarded his public accomplishments, but I just didn't keep up with those, and I was proud of him, what he did, but I--he ought to have been president. I believe he would have made a darn good president.

CATES: That leads to the question do you think in 1952 Senator Russell really thought that he had a chance of becoming president?

RUSSELL: He never discussed that with me, but I think, there again, that you know, in 1948, wasn't it, he received almost as many votes without even seeking them, as he did, and if I were equating that on my feelings I would have felt that yes, I have a chance. Here without any solicitation, who knows that things might change so far as the national attitude is concerned? And yet I, I'd have to say at the same time it's possible that in the back of his head he could have said, "Well, now, it just can't go." But I don't feel that he would have gone into it had he not felt that he had a reasonable chance. Now that sounds strange I know, and I'm no political commentator.

CATES: No, what you're saying is that you don't think that he would have tried to receive the nomination if he didn't really think there was a possibility that he would get it.

RUSSELL: That's right, that's right. And I really feel that. And yet, when you look at it you see what in a calmly objective way and particularly with the words of Harry Truman, saying you know, "Were it not for the fact that this man was born where he was, why, he possibly could have been president." Along that--I just feel that he felt, well, now, you can't tell, you know. They could have gotten into a knock-down drag-out fight as they did with twenty-four votes for Underwood, you know, in the 1928 convention when Al Smith was nominated, but I'm sure, if I
remember my history correctly that nobody thought anything about Al Smith's being nominated at that convention, you know. It did come up and there are the incidences, of course, with the choice of a nominee that nobody thought had a chance, but it's a difficult, that's a difficult question to say, well, now, and yet I think that Dick felt--I know I got, when I listened, I didn't go to Chicago--there again I was held down by my schoolwork, I was teaching summer school. Well, I listened, and I got so angry at the way things were going I called Dick up long distance, and I said, "Why don't you come home? Don't take all of that." And he says, "Why, Fee, you just can't afford it in public life, you can't, you got to take the blows and all."

CATES: You have to be tough-skinned.

RUSSELL: And I'm not tough-skinned, I never have been with that respect insofar as, but I really think that he felt that he, that it could happen.

CATES: Let me ask you this, now. This might sound a little strange in asking it, but I've spoken and I've asked you if you thought he realized the important position he held within the American system of government. Did his family realize how important a person and position he had while he was alive? I meant everybody has certain knowledge and you know it, but then finally it sinks in to you that something really is more important than it really was at the time.

RUSSELL: Well, I think that would be experienced by all of us. You know, how, it's like you don't realize the worth of your father--until it's almost too late, you know. You look back and you say, well, now, why in the world didn't I see what the man was doing and what he was. I didn't fully, and I think it happened somewhat like that, that I knew that with respect to the positions he held, you know, the committee chairmanships, the MacArthur trial, and all of that that came about and that he was highly regarded, and I'd read newspaper clippings sometimes that Mother would cut out particularly or he would send to Mother and his speeches, some of his speeches we'd kept. I didn't, I wasn't a regular receiver of the Congressional Record, though some of my brothers, and some of my brothers-in-law got it every day, but it was this old thing there of too much familiarity, you see, lessens the stature. That was like Mrs. Ford doesn't see the same stature that somebody else is going to see, and certainly Mrs. Lincoln didn't from what we read about her problems and all. But, now he was, I thought he was, of course, I still think he's great.

CATES: How do you think he would eventually rank in American History as to his importance?

RUSSELL: That's difficult, that's difficult to say. I think there will be enough stones to build a rather unusual monument--the REA, children's lunch program, the various things that could be mentioned, his military, his concern, interest in the military strength and preparedness of America, things that will, in which he will have to be taken into account. He's going to be always, as any other figure; he's going to be always overshadowed by this president or that president with respect to it because it just runs that way.

CATES: Let's see, I had a question right on the tip of my tongue that I wanted to ask you and it's momentarily slipped my mind. Maybe I'll recall it before we end the interview, but what would you say was the most outstanding characteristic of Senator Russell, in your opinion?
RUSSELL: Well, his ability to realize in a world of reality, certainly his ideals of what government ought to be and what people ought to be. Now he had his flaws, the flaws with respect to--and I listened to some of them when I was working the--what do you call it, delayed tactics they call them in the North and we say they're legitimate?

CATES: Filibuster.

RUSSELL: But, in the eyes of others, that's going to be one of his great accomplishments, because there's no doubt about it, he was one of the most skillful fencers in debate you've ever seen and I could tell that. Now insofar as? Paul Douglas, Senator Douglas getting up, you know and saying, "Even as I rise, my knees tremble." Well, of course, he was overdoing it somewhat but it was, it was the truth, and his acute knowledge of parliamentary procedure, his ability to compromise, which is naturally a necessary ingredient that they have. I don't know, it's difficult to say just what--

CATES: The question I recall that I wanted to ask you--and this is just in the realm of speculation--how do you think he would have viewed what has happened in the last month or so regarding the resignation of the President of the United States?

RUSSELL: I think he would have been absolutely stunned.

CATES: How do you think--

RUSSELL: He would have been the man who, as others did, certain others, who would have unquestionably, as I did, not the same stature and all that, believed the President when he said, "I am not involved." And then for him to--it disillusioned me; now, I'm frank to confess.

CATES: How do you--

RUSSELL: I still think that Nixon did a lot of good things as president.

CATES: How do you think he would have counseled Nixon, if Nixon had asked for his counsel at any time?

RUSSELL: I think he would have said, "You'd better put this on the board, on the table right away, right now." And I feel that if Nixon had done that--myself, you see, see I'm intruding myself in the talk--in the beginning, now, this doesn't belong on tape, but if Nixon had said, "Yes, mea culpa. I did do this and I'm sorry." I believe the people would have responded in an entirely different way. It was his attempt to withhold it, and I don't blame him too much for that because that's just a natural, human action as anything in the world.

CATES: I don't want to intrude on your time and it's almost five o'clock so before we end this tape and I might just inject this one personal note, this very well could be the last tape that I will be participating in as far as the oral history is concerned. I don't know, might have somebody else to add later, but is there anything else you would like to put on this tape, considering the fact that we are talking about your deceased brother, Senator Richard Brevard Russell, and the fact
that these tapes are going to be used by future historians to evaluate him as a person and the office that he held in the time in which he lived? Is there anything else you'd like to put on this tape?

RUSSELL: That's a difficult task, Hugh. I'd just like to say that any future historians, of course, that the true spirit of the historian will say, "Here is a human being with his flaws, yet withal one who tried to the best of his capabilities to perform persistently, service to his country." Now that's one thing I think that Dick--nobody knows how he went to the office, how he gave up things and stayed in the office--that was his life. Now that has been remarked on, too, but of course it's true, and yet he is the human, he was a human being. He got angry, he may have been at times selfish, but the greater part of him was nobility, I think in the truest sense.

CATES: I think that was probably an inherited quality from what I've been able to see.

RUSSELL: Well, it could be due more to his parents that are right.

CATES: Okay, well, thank you very much.