THE WESTERN AUSTRALIAN PARLIAMENT
PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY PROJECT

and

THE LIBRARY BOARD OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA
J. S. BATTYE LIBRARY OF WEST AUSTRALIAN HISTORY
Oral History Programme

an interview with

MR JOCELYN (JOSS) BARTLETT

August - October 1986

PARLIAMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA, LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
MESSENGER, 1929
ASSISTANT CLERK OF RECORDS AND ACCOUNTS, 1931
CLERK OF RECORDS AND ACCOUNTS, 1947
CLERK ASSISTANT, 1966
CLERK, 1970-75

conducted by

Ronda Jamieson
Oral History Officer

Access - Open

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Verbatim transcript
(10 hours 30 minutes in 11 x 60 tapes)

NOTE TO READER

Readers of this oral history memoir should bear in mind that it is a verbatim transcript of the spoken word and reflects the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Parliament and the Battye Library are not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein; these are for the reader to judge.

Script type face indicates a difference between transcript and tape.

[ ] are used for insertions, not in the original tape.

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INTRODUCTION

This is an interview with Mr Jocelyn (Joss) Bartlett for the Parliamentary History Project and the Battye Library Oral History Programme.

Born in Canada in 1915, Mr Bartlett migrated with his family in 1923 and after periods in Karridale, Gabbin and Bunbury, the family moved to Perth where Mr Bartlett obtained a position as messenger for the Legislative Assembly at Parliament House in 1929.

In 1931 Mr Bartlett was promoted to Assistant Clerk of Records and Accounts, leaving the Parliament for service overseas in the RAF from 1940 until 1943 as a rear gunner for which he was decorated with a DFM "for outstanding service". He had married Winifred Torrance in 1937 and they have four children.

Mr Bartlett returned to his previous position at Parliament House after his discharge from the RAAF in 1945 and had to wait until 1966 for his next promotion to Clerk Assistant. In 1970, Mr Bartlett was promoted to Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, the position he held until his retirement in December, 1975.

The interviews covered the duties of each of the positions Mr Bartlett held, details of those he worked with both staff and Members of Parliament, and the changes he observed in relationships and the building during his long service with the Parliament. He was able to speak about Premiers and Speakers, of personalities and of the manner in which the Legislative Assembly was conducted. For 15 years Mr Bartlett was secretary of the Parliamentary Sports Committee and he gave details of its activities as well.

The interviews were conducted from August to October 1986 by Ronda Jamieson. There are eleven tapes.

Joss and Win Bartlett, 1987.

VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT

BARTLETT: Jocelyn Coyte, C O Y T E, Bartlett. Born in Canada, Saskatchewan, in 1915, on the 29th of November.

RJ Who were your parents?

BARTLETT: My father was Cedric Coyte Bartlett; my mother was Elizabeth Lupton. That was her surname, Lupton.

RJ And what did your father do?

BARTLETT: He was on the stock exchange in Blackpool, but then his health fell away a bit, and the doctor told him it would be wise to get out away from that type of atmosphere and suggested one of the colonies, and he chose Canada. He went out there first I think about 1909, and my mother followed later on, and that's where we were born, on the prairies

RJ What did he do there?

BARTLETT: Farming.

RJ What sort of farming?

BARTLETT: Wheat and beef. But I went back in 1963, to my father's property, and it's still known as the Bartlett section. But it's all wheat now. The fences have gone, the sheds have gone, the old home has gone and there's nothing. There's no beef at all. Within that area, nowhere within the area, did I see a fence or animal so it's all wheat - all cereal I would say, yes.

RJ How many in your family, how many brothers and sisters did you have?

BARTLETT: Well five brothers and a sister, but one died at birth, or within a few months of birth, it was a twin actually.

RJ Your twin or .....?

BARTLETT: No, my youngest brother's twin.

RJ So that left four boys and a girl did it.

BARTLETT: Four boys and a girl.

RJ And where did you fit into that?

BARTLETT: Well I was the third in the family in years.

RJ And how many years between the oldest and the youngest?

BARTLETT: Well there'd be probably about seven years [Laughs] spread for five. Yes, it would be roughly about [seven] maybe eight years spread for five. My brother has turned seventy-three this August, the 4th of this month. My sister would have been seventy-two now, and I'm [near] seventy-one, and there was that period of time you know, with not a great deal, probably ten months between the first three, but then there was a bit of a delay, and then the next two came along, and the last twins, and that was the finish of it apparently. Someone said, "No." [Laughs]

RJ When did the family come to Australia and why?

BARTLETT: Well again my father's health started to fail and they said, "Well take him out to a warmer climate," and the next place was Australia, a warmer climate. We landed in Fremantle eventually. We came through Melbourne but we stayed in Melbourne a short period of time and came to Fremantle and I'm not certain at this stage, I mean, whether we went direct to Karridale, or we

stayed in Perth probably. My mother had sisters in Bunbury. I think we stayed there with them, and then we went down to Karridale for this Group Settlement Scheme.

RJ When would that have been?

BARTLETT: That would be late 1923.

RJ Do you know why Western Australia was chosen?

BARTLETT: Oh I think because it was being advertised, land was being advertised: the Group Settlement Scheme which was a scheme started by Sir James Mitchell for the purpose of getting people on the land - opening up the country. There was government help to do this, provision of a home, or probably a type of home. It was a galvanised type too. [Laughs] But it was there at any rate. I think this was the main reason behind Western Australia. Oh in addition to that as I said, my mother had sisters in Bunbury. She had two sisters in Bunbury as a matter of fact. They had a chocolate-making lolly shop. That's probably the main reason why they came to Western Australia, plus this Group Settlement Scheme which was a government subsidised scheme for the purpose of opening up the land.

As you know Karridale - I don't know whether you'd know the area at all, and the big trees. Those days you had to ring-bark them, then burn them. You didn't have bulldozers and things like that. Using dynamite to blast them out. My father's health started to break down again. Maybe it would even if we'd stayed somewhere else. He wouldn't have lasted very much longer, but it broke down and he was put into the Bunbury Hospital. He remained there for probably three or four months, and during that time my mother had organised this Gabbin land which was available, again through the government, another scheme. My eldest brother and myself were sent up there to live with the clearing contractor and his wife, and we went to school up there. It was about six weeks or eight weeks after we'd been there, when my father died, so we returned to Bunbury and the land at Gabbin, or the

arrangements at Gabbin, the lease at Gabbin fell through because my father wasn't available to run it, and we were too young as boys to do anything about it, and it was then that we stayed in Bunbury, from then onwards, for our early schooling, till 1929. Early in 1929, that's when my mother said - I think I'd been at Bunbury High School about oh six months, that's right, it would have been about six months, about June or July in 1929 - my mother said, "There's no place, no work for my sons in this town, I'm going to Perth."

RJ How was your mother managing up to that time, from your father's death, because you would have been what, eight or nine, when he died?

BARTLETT: Yes, eight.

RJ So how was she.... you were eight when he died.

BARTLETT: She did have a little bit of capital, and she also got assistance under the Child Welfare Scheme, which amounted to nine shillings a week per child. But there was no supporting parent welfare fund those days, and she had to subsist on what she had, what little she had, plus that nine shillings a day. She was paying rent I think, of a pound a week, out of that. So all in all I think we had a lot of bread and dripping at times. [Laughs]

RJ What do you remember of your schooling, what sort of experience was it for you?

BARTLETT: Having a Canadian accent and kids being kids, the earlier part of my schooling was a little bit awkward, from that point, you know, mixing. Then once I started to play football and mixed with them and played their sports, then it became a different thing. I got into a few fights. Somehow I could handle myself pretty well in that sort of situation game too. It became quite good. From the schooling point of view, from the actual schooling point of view, my early days, my first two years were pretty difficult. I was eight years old. I had only been

to school in Canada for about three months. They started school at seven there. Probably about nine months I think. In a school, a big schoolroom, you know, all the children in the school were in the one room. In my earliest days at Bunbury, I went straight into second standard. That means I missed all that earlier schooling. It was a struggle and I had to knuckle down. Finally when I got to the sixth standard, (that's the standard before you went to high school) I'd picked up and picked up. Those days again you had to.... like Modern School here in Perth, you had to have a scholarship, or a special examination. Well I passed the special examination to go to Bunbury High School. That was the struggle in the lack of early training in schooling, like that first two years. They go at I think it's five now isn't it? It was six probably in those days. But that one year of discipline and schooling and learning classroom procedure and learning too, made a lot of difference; makes a lot of difference I should say. So it was a struggle. Then when we came to Perth, I went to Perth Boys'.

RJ Just before you get onto that, you say it was a struggle, but by the time you'd caught up were you good at school or not? How did you rate as far as academic achievement was concerned?

BARTLETT: Well according to your schoolteachers and your reports, you can only judge it on that, but I was holding my own with the rest of them at that stage.

RJ And were you forming any ideas as to what you wanted to do with your life?

BARTLETT: No. I assumed at that stage we might take up farming again, there might be the opportunity, but you know, you don't look that far forward when you're a kid of twelve or something like that. I didn't at any rate. Neither did my son at a later date. He went to Modern School. It wasn't till he was in his fourth year at Modern School that he finally decided what he wanted to do. He wanted to do something in the medical line, but

he came in one day and he said, "We've had a number of people at the school giving us an idea of what was available for our type of academic qualifications, and," he said, "I've decided to take up dentistry," and he's not very far up the road now. [Laughs]

RJ Would you have liked to have gone farming?

BARTLETT: I think yes. I've always had a feeling I should have, but more particularly when I came back from the war and they had these special schemes for servicemen. I did some travelling with the members of Parliament. We went by cars and things like that through these new scheme areas because there was quite a lot of problems associated with the developments of these areas, and I felt then that I should have been one of those people. I said to my wife on one occasion, "We could take up one of these properties," because I was married before the war and we had two children. She said, "Well you've always talked about keeping your children to school much longer than you stayed," she said. "If you take them into the country you're going to have a lot of problems with them that way." She wasn't country minded at any rate, so I didn't go on. But I loved going into the country areas. I loved going on farms. But it wasn't to be, and no one else wanted to take it up, although I think my son would have felt that at one stage that he'd like to buy a small property. I don't know whether it was a taxation thought that. [Laughs] But other than that.....[Pause]

RJ Growing up, were you aware of the fact that you were not as well off as other kids? You talked of there would have been hard times and bread and dripping.

BARTLETT: Probably no. In the case of some children, a penny - you know a penny was a lot of money those days. Well some children would come to school with threepence in their pocket, or a penny, and they'd go buy twenty lolly balls for a penny or something like [that] and threepence for something. I wouldn't have that, but it didn't seem to worry me a lot I didn't have it. Maybe I might have had more patches in my pants than they did.

RJ Did that worry you?

BARTLETT: It did worry me a little bit, yes, but it couldn't be avoided. I mean we didn't have shoes those days. I wasn't the only one. I mean the working people too were in the same situation. They couldn't afford shoes and things like that, or shoes to go to school at any rate, particularly in the summer time. I might have been envious, I'm not certain. There would have been times certainly when there was something on and I'd like to have gone to a show, the annual show at Bunbury (and they used to have a good one there too) when the animals - what do we call them? Show - where they brought the big tarpaulin.

RJ Oh the circus.

BARTLETT: The circus: couldn't think of the word. When that came we'd have to miss out on that unless someone gave us tickets or something like that, or paid our fare. Mother just couldn't afford to take [us]. One couldn't go without the others, so it was out for all of us. It was one of those problems. But I don't think it made that much difference as far as I was concerned, because those days I think the wages were so small, the general wages were so small that most of those people I was associated with.... Although I suppose my mother tried to keep us away from that type of .... She was an arrogant woman my mother. [Laughs] I shouldn't say this, but she was a haughty woman. She knew our problems. She was a beautiful woman too, and she'd throw that head back and she'd go up to the school you know. If there was any problem at the school or anything like that, particularly in the early stages, she'd tear a strip off the teacher. But she was a good woman too, the way she played with us, looked after us. She was the father to us and the football/ cricket player with us, and the football, you know, kicking the ball around. She was all those things, which was very good. She lived to the age of eighty-seven, so that wasn't bad. No I don't think I was envious. She got caught up with helping people (she had been a nurse) in Bunbury, which helped too, and she seemed to get involved with some of the doctor's wives and things like

that. Maybe she might have got some second hand clothing from them too. [Laughs] But generally we were friendly with all the .... I don't know whether you'd know George Roberts. He was an MLA for Bunbury at a stage there. His father owned Hayward's store in Bunbury those days. But we were involved with them, but we weren't envious of them. They just sort of took us under their wings. They knew us, and knew of us. They seemed to take us under their wings, the children. Maybe we were good boys, I don't know.

RJ Did you miss not having a father?

BARTLETT: That I couldn't answer. I don't remember my father much. When I say don't remember, I remember little episodes and things like that. Apparently I was bad tempered - not bad tempered, but food upset me quite a lot and things like that. He used to handle me a lot, then when I got a little bigger I'd go out on the [plough]. He'd take me out with him, sit on the horses, and play around. But those little things. No, no. I think mother took so much part in our lives that probably our father just slipped out of it.

RJ Without you sort of being aware really that there was something missing in your life?

BARTLETT: Mmm, mmm, mmm.

RJ Right, well you came to Perth. What happened then?

BARTLETT: Well we came to Perth....

RJ You said 1929 didn't you?

BARTLETT: '29, yes. Well we took up a place of residence at Subiaco, in Lawler Street, Subiaco I think it was. Then I went to school from there. My young brothers went to the Subiaco School and I went on to the Perth Boys' from there. That was a bit difficult. I had to have shoes. [Laughs] So I think it was

then my mother started to think about in terms of she'd have to look for employment, you know, for me too, otherwise these things, we wouldn't have anything to eat, money for food. So I went to Perth Boys' and I was doing alright there too. I think probably the Bunbury High School teaching was probably a little bit superior to Perth Boys'. Any rate it appeared to me that it was. But the stage came and mother said, "Look I just can't afford to let you go to school. You're wearing out your shoes and your clothes." I had to dress.... well I had to have tram fares too. So it became a struggle. That's why she spoke to the headmaster and he said, "Well why don't you take him...." explained the situation, "take him and see the Public Service Commissioner, because he can only go into the government at his age." So we went and saw the Public Service Commissioner. That's when they told me about this vacancy that was....

RJ What vacancy?

BARTLETT: As a messenger at Parliament House. He said, "Well he'll have to be employed. There's a messenger's job available at Parliament House. It will only be for the term of the session though, which is from July to about Christmas time" (then). He said, "There's no guarantee, but he'll come back to us and we'll send him on to some other department." So we went up to Parliament House. Do you want this stage do you?

RJ Yes please.

BARTLETT: We went up to Parliament House, and I was to meet the Clerk of Records and Accounts (it wasn't that name then - that became the position later on, they renamed it) a fellow named Islip. It was on the back verandah of the old building, the old galvanised building. Oh it was pulled down many years ago. He was standing there. He'd had word that I was coming from the Public Service Commission. He was standing there talking to the Premier, Phil Collier, and the leader of the opposition Jimmy Mitchell (as he was then). When my mother and I walked up onto the verandah, he recognised who we were, and he came over and

spoke to us, and Jimmy Mitchell and Phil Collier moved towards us and we were introduced to them. They kept us talking for a while, and it was at that stage that Jimmy Mitchell said, "Well if you work up here I'll call you Canada," which he did, and Phil Collier ....why I don't know, but they decided from the very first day I was employed there, that they were going to look after me. They made certain I went to school, night school, which I did. There were times when I couldn't go, because the House was sitting, but they did look after me.

I'll just tell you a little episode now about this Canada business. I was in the RAAF, I was decorated, and instead of having the decoration given to me in London, I asked whether it could be done in Western Australia. They did this. I was called up to Government House. Sir James Mitchell was Governor then, Lieutenant Governor. I stood in front of the dais where he was standing, and as I walked down he said, "Hello Canada." So I mean he just - he continued that way all his life. I've got a little photograph out of that (just diverting from what you want) a little photograph out there of my son and my daughter at that function. It was after the function, and Sir James said to Laurie, "Would you like a ginger ale?" "No," he said, "it makes me sick." [Laughs] The press were there at the time. They put "Ginger ale makes him sick." That's the Daily News. Any rate that's beside the point.

END OF TAPE ONE SIDE ONE

TAPE ONE SIDE TWO

BARTLETT: Reverting back to my first commencement of work, 10th of August, 1929, Parliament House. I was so small - they used to have a mail bag there, a canvas mail bag that we had to take to the post office and pick up all the mail on a bicycle. At times you had to just prop it on the seat of the bicycle, the handlebars, and walk all the way back with it. That bag: I could just about get in the bag and they could close the thing, [laughs] put it over my head. It was just one of those funny little things that took place. People were friendly towards me, probably because of my Canadian background I don't know, or my background. Probably because of my bringing up, and because my mother had been strict with us all in the way we spoke to people. For instance I never called a member of parliament by his Christian name, even when I was Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, because I considered the parliamentary system and the member of Parliament was a person of some (even in those, you know, in my latter days) standing in the community and should be treated that way. So I suppose by the way I treated them, and the things I did for them, probably I might have smiled a lot with it too. Even today there's fellows like, well Bert Hawke's gone, Jack Tonkin's the last of them that I can remember, and he's around. They come to you straight away. They all seemed to want to look after me for some reason or other. Maybe because I was so small, maybe because [laughs] of the way I reacted to their moods and requests and things like that.

RJ What sort of things did they want to do for you. You talked about Collier and Mitchell looking after you, in what way?

BARTLETT: Well they just made certain I wasn't getting in any trouble, I was keeping on the right track and not mixing with the wrong children. I don't think there was much fear of that at that stage, but maybe they thought there was. They'd call me in and have a talk and ask me how things were going. So much so, when the session was over (this is where they were looking after

me too, and Fred Islip was the other one too, who was the Clerk of Records and Accounts; they were apparently so satisfied with what I'd done, and they could see some future for me so long as I could educate myself a bit more, I was never put off. I was the first sessional messenger that hadn't been put off at the end of the session. I was kept on. They had a senior messenger and they used to have two sessional messengers, and those two sessional messengers would only last the session. But I wasn't, I was kept on. The senior messenger, he was rising seventeen at the time, and they thought it was too old to have someone of that age just being an ordinary messenger, running around the streets and that sort of thing. So they dismissed him and kept me on. I would think it was a mutual thing between Collier, Mitchell, the Clerk, and the members generally, even the Speaker of the time. So that was my lucky start to my parliamentary career.

RJ Who was the Speaker at the time?

BARTLETT: Tommy Walker.

RJ When you met Collier and Mitchell for the first time, when you went up to Parliament House that day, do you remember what impression you formed of them?

BARTLETT: My impressions of them both were that they were men of character. I suppose they were kings in a sense to me, those days. There was no higher structure in the world than the Premier of the State, or the parliamentary system and the Premier at the top, and the Leader of the Opposition. I didn't know much about the Leader of the Opposition at that stage, what part he played in it, except that I learnt later you know, developed. I looked up to them. I think probably it stood me in a great deal of stead right through my life, you know, the way I treated the parliamentary system. Those people that treated it the same way as I thought it should be, well I don't know, I reacted to the way they treated it. That's why the parliamentary system became a great system.... mentally to me, the parliamentary system was the greatest system you could have. Those people in,

particularly the ministry, I had a lot of time for, although some of them had probably had less education than I had had, but still it didn't matter. They'd gained that situation in life and they'd gained the confidence of the people, and they were in the system that I was really enjoying to work for.

RJ How much did you know about Parliament and how it operated before you started working there?

BARTLETT: Well how much would a child of thirteen, a boy of thirteen, except his scholastical, or during his schooling course - I think probably there was some parliamentary general .... not history so much. What would it be; what's the word for it? Discourse in the classrooms, through the teacher. We probably had a period once a week or something, on social life, which would include the .... I think at this stage there was a special term for this in schools, for this one class a week, and that's all we'd have of it. But I'm not clear on that side. I was more interested in the three 'Rs'.

RJ When you were offered that job in Parliament, what was your reaction to that?

BARTLETT: Well when I was told it was twenty-two and six a week, [laughs] my reaction was good. My mother's reaction was certainly very good. I don't think there was any fear about it at all. Because of my mother's problem, because of the financial problem I think that I was pretty elate.... I was going to use the wrong word then too. Pretty..... felt rather fine about it, that I was going to do some helping, and that it would relieve my mother of a lot of her problems. I know she got a pound of that twenty-two six. But I think that aspect of it probably entered my mind straight away, that it was going to give her a chance and was going to give my younger brothers a chance to stay at school a little bit longer, so long as I could keep in employment. My eldest brother was working at that stage too. It's hard to remember back, but I think meeting the people I did initially, that's Islip and Collier and Mitchell, on that back

verandah, did give me a feeling of confidence and did certainly aid me in my future career there at any rate. But as to my exact feeling I think probably, as I said, it was based on at least I'm going to help my mother at this stage now. The educational side of it: the difficulties there associated with it meant having to come into Perth to go to night school. That worried me too, you know the fares and things like that, and cramming that was necessary. I think the first year I worked and I took three subjects, English, maths, and bookkeeping was the other one, thinking along the lines that they would, basically they would be the things I'd require. I got ninety-nine in my .... I've still got the certificate there - ninety-nine in maths, and that upset me. I did well in English too, and I did well in the accountancy. I was always interested in the accountancy side too. When I came back from the war I did some more. But the maths, I couldn't understand why I could get ninety-nine.

RJ What, and not a hundred?

BARTLETT: And not a hundred. So I went to see the teacher afterwards. "Well," he said, "there's your workings Joss; it's there." He said, "You've got the answer up there, and it's right, and," he said, "you put it down here again, which wasn't necessary, and you put it down wrong." [Laughs] Any rate it didn't matter, but that was it. So I was prepared to go to school, and as I say I did those things. The help that they.... I come back to those two, those three, and there were others too. They gave me the incentive to carry on, and once I'd got over that session and got that senior messenger's position, it gave me more incentive to go to school and keep going to school. As I said, even after the war when I came back I went to 'Y' for bookkeeping to add to that, accountancy.

RJ How far did you go with schooling at night?

BARTLETT: I went till I was about seventeen. I was only taking a limited number of subjects, because I stuck to the same type of subject all the time. With accountancy it's an ongoing thing.

With maths, well it's an ongoing thing, but you don't want a computerised mind. You're not looking for the type of maths you want for engineering. So you come to a certain grading in maths, which you know you won't want to above, except associated with the accountancy. That's why I took it, continued on with it. But basically the same applies to English. Once you got the basic background, it's only a question of reading then and writing.

RJ What level would you have got to, would that have been matriculation level, or something of that equivalent?

BARTLETT: No, I don't think so.

RJ Junior level?

BARTLETT: Would be above Junior level. You couldn't matriculate at night school, not to my knowledge. You could take Junior level at night school. That's why the public service ran into some troubles. They had their special examination afterwards, after you take the year....When you left school at the Junior level, and went into the public service, then you had to take special examinations through the public service then to get in the higher duties situation. Or alternatively you had to matriculate at school. And then you wouldn't have to do those special examinations. I was quite happy about it. I'm sorry today - not today, it doesn't matter. I was sorry in my latter years, when I was Assistant Clerk of Records and Accounts, and Clerk of Records and Accounts, I was involved in legislation alright, very solidly, but I was also involved in the accountancy side. When I got to the position of Assistant Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, I often thought well I would have welcomed another two or three.... If I'd have known this situation was going to come, I'd have liked to have had another two or three years at school, in a special type of class, because when you get involved with legislation there's an awful lot of meaning to words. I remember there was one particular clause in a bill and it contained a hundred and forty-nine words. There was only one full stop. This is part of the drafting. The parliamentary

draftsmen (he was a nice bloke too) but he just had this type of way. Now Arthur Watts who was a lawyer and a lawyer of some standing (he was also deputy Premier) [and] John Tonkin who was a schoolteacher and pretty good ,they were in trouble over this particular clause, so they sat down and they parsed it, you know. [Laughs] They said, "Well there it is, in a few words, that's what he means." [interruption for phone call] But this was the problem with legislation. Just that little extra knowledge makes a lot of difference, and there were many times I thought well, you know, if I'd had that basic background, the same background as both Tonkin and Arthur Watts had, it would have been more helpful. Any rate it was alright.

RJ Do you remember what you thought of Parliament when you first saw the building, what impression it made on you?

BARTLETT: Well let me say this, I saw the back of the building. I hadn't seen the front of the building. I came up through the .... from your point of view you may remember the old Public Works Department, or where the present.... what is it, the frontage that was to the old Public Works? The entrance, it's right at the top of St George's Terrace there, well that was the Public Works Department. That was the entrance and we walked up through that, up this flight of steps to the back of Parliament House. There was this big galvanised structure I saw, of two storeys high, and we had to walk up a flight of steps to that. This long verandah, another verandah up top, just railings on them, and this galvanised structure. It didn't impress me very much I don't think. [Laughs]. The gardens were lovely, but the actual structure at that stage didn't .... but let me say that I was probably so scared [laughs] of what I was doing or what was going to happen to me. I don't know about scared, but I was probably in some trepidation about anything that might.... you know what am I going to do, what's happening, what am I going to meet? But no the building didn't impress me that way. The meaning of the building did, but not the building.

RJ Why was it a galvanised iron structure at the back?

BARTLETT: Well under the original plans, it was supposed to have been .... I think the original plan was drawn and it was to have two wings, a front wing, elongated wing, and the back one, but the government of the day ran out of money. Now it was easy to run out of money - well it's easy now, you know how governments do. They ran out of money to complete the building, and I think there was another recession on at that stage and there was an outcry from the public, so they just filled in this back area. The front of the building which faced Harvest Terrace, the two wings on each side of the *building*, they were partially completed. They had the galvanised strappings just hanging when I came there, still showing through the brickwork, just lying there ready to be connected up when they went on with the other job. But in the meantime they didn't go on with the other. In the meantime they filled in between the two wings with this big galvanised structure, and it was there I think about sixty years or something like that, under repair all the time and painting and things like that. But it wasn't impressive by any means.

RJ And who occupied that part of the building?

BARTLETT: On the verandah it was the Clerk of Records and Accounts, and the Assistant Clerk of Records and Accounts. There was a room for the messengers alongside that. The next was the telephone office and a paper room, and then the one typist for eighty members. The next room down: one typist for eighty members. Members didn't get much typing done, maybe because they couldn't at any rate with one. But if they wanted a special letter they went to her, and she was bashing that old typewriter day and hours and hours on end, into the night sometimes, just doing correspondence. But the top verandah was Hansard. They had six reporters there, and a girls room up there, a storage room too for their stuff, but that was all. It wasn't a very glamorous place, not when you consider the structure that's there today. I couldn't at this stage ..... I don't know whether I

have a photograph of it anywhere. But I certainly couldn't at this stage visualise another structure in Perth at the moment that looked like it, you know the same.

RJ What sort of furnishings did people have in that section that you speak of?

BARTLETT: Oh the ordinary wooden seat. You brought your own cushion if you wanted one. The solid office desk, and the solid seats, wooden seats. The members when I first went there, they had swivel seats. They were just solid too, with a little leather, a cushion on them, but nothing else. That's in the chamber, I mean. The members themselves had probably two rooms in the Legislative Assembly where they could sit down and do their own handwriting. There was always paper there, a couple of desks, and two or three chairs, probably a couple of lounge chairs too, the old leather type, where they could sit and talk. But they had no place where they could interview visitors except in the corridors, in the corridor between the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council. There were seats in there where they could talk. But there was no private place where they could interview their constituents at all. This was always a problem. There was always a bit of an outcry over it, the lack of room, the lack of space, but it took many years to overcome it. I think generally then because the members once they left Parliament House, particularly the country members (that was probably fifty per cent of the whole; probably a bit more than fifty per cent) once they went back to their home town then they didn't come back to Perth, they just lived there. Probably came down once a month or something like that, but it meant coming down by train and going back by train. It was awfully costly. They were only getting six hundred pounds a year, a member of Parliament those days. That by legislation in 1932, was reduced by twenty per cent and reduced to four eighty, so they didn't come into the city very much. It meant that they did not require the use of Parliament House, except when the House was sitting. I mentioned earlier, much earlier in here, that the members of Parliament researched their own legislation and that's where

they'd spend their time. By the same token too, particularly the country members, the people that they represented didn't come to the city to see them too. They'd either write to them or see them when they went home. So they didn't have many visitors to Parliament House, except probably the local people nearby. But I think generally the people, the ordinary run of person, treated a member of Parliament with a lot of respect those days, and didn't expect him to go and see the local policeman about something, or see the local health inspector. They did it themselves, and they didn't expect a member of Parliament [to do it]. It wasn't until, oh I would think about 1945, '47, that this doorknocking took place, members going into the streets and talking and handshaking with people and things like that. I think it was then that a different type of character of member came in and people started to treat a member of Parliament as just another person. It started there. But in my earlier days people didn't worry members of Parliament very much for the ordinary mundane thing, whereas today they've got their offices. If I have a little problem with the footpath out there I ring up the office, and the member of Parliament he comes and has a look at it. Well I don't think that's his position, but that's my way of thinking. But that's what's happening now. But those days people didn't call upon their member for, as I say, those mundane things, for help. They did it themselves.

END OF TAPE ONE SIDE TWO

TAPE TWO SIDE ONE

RJ This is the second interview with Mr Joss Bartlett, held in his home on the 18th of August 1986.

Mr Bartlett you were telling us last time how you became a messenger at Parliament House in 1929. Could you tell me precisely what your duties were when you started at Parliament House?

BARTLETT: Well it was mostly associated with a mail run. There was no pick up of mail from Parliament House by the postal people. There was no delivery to Parliament House by the postal people. So it was a question of having boys such as myself going down to the post office at least three times a day. We had a box there, and we also had a big mail basket where the bulk mail was put in, and the letter mail was in the box. We'd go down there and clear the box and clear the basket. Bulk mail: well bulk mail was bulk mail those days, and I think I mentioned earlier that the bag that we took to the post office, I could stand inside it, probably because I was so small. But in addition to that, many times it was so full that we had a little lock that we used to slip through eyelets at the top, and you'd have to walk back to Parliament House with the bag on the handlebars and on the seat. Then you'd bring it back and sort it out and deliver it to the members, although they had pigeon holes. Members had pigeon holes, so you'd put it in the pigeon holes. That's the same applied to their newspaper, or their bulk mail as well as their letter mail. Then there was renewing the ink. Those days there was no biro. There were the big bottles of black and blue ink, blue and black ink. Large size and .... I would try....That's no good on that. [Laughs. Showed size with hands and realized being tape recorded.]

RJ Well how large were they?

BARTLETT: I assume they'd be two pint bottles those days. Fill up the inkwells. Each desk where a member could write, or even the officers could write in those days, it was pen and the nib and dipping the nib into the ink, and these had to be checked every day. The blotting papers had to be changed. This applied to the chamber as well as the offices around the place, and the members' writing room, seeing that the nibs were in good order and that there were a number of pens there with a different variety of nibs. In the library, which was a big room those days, you'd have to put library books away in their right place. They were always marked on the back with labels. The duties were centred around running messages like that, within the House, to the various ministerial offices down town. All ministers had their office - well as they do today. They didn't have any offices at Parliament House at all then, so any deliveries from members had to be delivered to the ministerial office wherever they were, and they were well spread.

I remember, I think it was my first day or first week, I was asked to deliver a letter to the Under Treasurer, and such was my mentality I happened to have .... I'd been in the post office the day before doing something, moving around somewhere, and I had noticed a sign up Sub-Treasurer. I thought well that's the place I've got to take [the letter]: Under and Sub. [Laughs.] So I took it there, and I was at the wrong place of course. That was at the post office the Sub-Treasurer, and the Under Treasurer was on the corner of Barrack Street and St George's Terrace, the old Treasury Buildings. Any rate those little things occurred.

But this is the general running around on bicycles and occasionally they would get word from the post office (or someone had been down) there was a lot of bulk and they'd send you down by tram (a penny in the tram I think it was) and you'd carry this over your shoulder in the tram coming back, then up the hill to

Parliament House: well drag it. That was basically the duties of a sessional messenger. Well running messages from one office to another, or up to Hansard; taking stuff to Hansard.

We had to work at night time too. It wasn't just a nine to five job. We didn't go late into the night, as I did when I became Assistant Clerk of Records when you'd have to be there all night sometimes. But at that stage no, we finished at a reasonable time.

RJ Well what were your hours?

BARTLETT: At Parliament House those days there was no real hours set down. There was no forty hour week, particularly when the House was sitting. When the House was not sitting it was nine o'clock to four thirty. When the House was sitting it was a different kettle of fish as far as we were concerned. I think it was quarter past seven at night, when the House was sitting. Quarter past six was the time the House broke up for tea, the evening meal, dinner. We were given a meal too, at the same time. Then we could, following one or two little deliveries to be done in and around the House, go home.

RJ What time would you have started that day?

BARTLETT: Nine o'clock.

RJ Were you paid overtime for those hours?

BARTLETT: No. [Laughs] I don't know whether they do today or not, but certainly in my experience no overtime was paid. You were appointed to a position up there and you were appointed well knowing in advance the problems you might have to face up to as far as hours were concerned, and so you accepted it. I say later on, when I became Assistant Clerk of Records and the House might sit all night, as it did on a number of occasions. All day too, all night. There was one occasion I went to work on the Monday (this is diverting again from your original question I know

[laughs]) I went to work on the Monday and finished at five o'clock, or roughly four thirty, I think it was, and I went to work on the Tuesday. They sat Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, and this was the last week of the session. We started to sit at four thirty in the afternoon (I went to work at nine o'clock) and we went all night until three o'clock Wednesday afternoon. They adjourned for half an hour to start a new sitting at four thirty, and went till one o'clock. They recommenced it on Friday morning that would be, at about eleven o'clock, and went right through till six o'clock on Saturday. I was going with the wife at the time, but I rang her up or I got in touch with her somehow. No, I went out to her place and told her I was going home to bed and I'd meet her the next morning to go to the beach. Well I went to have a shave and collapsed (I think I was seventeen at the time) in the bathroom. That was only through tiredness. But I said that's the sort of situation. You got no overtime for it. You got meals. We did get additional leave each year, anything up to six weeks, which was some compensation. It was part of your duties. I suppose today if you were in a similar position today, I don't say at Parliament House, but outside, even those days, particularly today at any rate, it might have meant in pounds, or it might have meant a large number of pounds in the one week, in overtime, for that particular week itself it would have done, but we didn't get it. This is diverting again from your [question]. On the last day, after all the business was completed, the Leader of the Opposition and the Premier get up and make a few comments, thanking members and the staff for their cooperation and that sort of thing, and the Speaker at the time was Charlie North. The Speaker always came in last, and he stood up and he said (you've seen the situation with the Speaker in the Assembly, where he sits) "From this elevation," he said, "you look like a lot of dissipated roués, without the pleasant recollections." [Laughs.] I always remember it.

RJ Yes, I bet. To get back to being a messenger. When you joined the staff of Parliament House, did anyone approach you about joining a union?

BARTLETT: No. It was a thing that was never mentioned up there. There wasn't even any thought of joining the Civil Service Association as it was then. We were just a body on our own, with the presiding officer in each House being the controlling officer and dictating the terms of our employment, together with the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly. But there was no other conditions. It was just continuing on as it had been for twenty or thirty, fifty years in advance of that.

RJ Did that situation ever change? Did any union come in to work at Parliament House?

BARTLETT: Not during my term.

RJ Not even the Civil Service Association?

BARTLETT: No, no. But I noticed in the press in the recent weeks, where they're going to form their own association within Parliament House. I'm not certain whether it means all the staff, that is the clerical staff, like the senior men associated with Parliament House, or not. I'm not certain about that from what I read in the paper, but they are forming a union, a parliamentary union up there, for the purposes of going to the court for, I suppose, conditions. But I just can't see how it would apply to the Clerk Assistant and Clerk, because they're appointed by the Governor and they can only be dismissed (or they could those days and I assume still now) by a vote of the House. So I'm not certain how far this unionisation will go in Parliament House.

RJ At any stage of your working life - and I realise we're jumping ahead, but while we're on the subject - at any stage of your working life did you feel disadvantaged because you could not be represented by a union, or have conditions argued for you?

BARTLETT: No. Probably those days unions were just .... they didn't have a great deal of power, not like they have today. The senior officers, as I knew them, the Speakers too, which were

involved in it, you could go to them without any problem at all if you thought something was going wrong and the conditions were a bit harsh or something like that. They would either say, "Well it has been going on like this as far as we can remember, and you know what you can do if you don't want to standardise." No I don't think we were disadvantaged at all, except that probably a time came when the civil services were getting annual increments. Where we'd been on a level with the civil service in certain gradings, they started to go away and then that's where Frank Wise (he was Premier at the time) said, "Well I'm a bit dissatisfied with the situation as far as you boys are concerned." We had to rely on the Speaker saying, "Yes," or "No," all the time. He said, "Well we'll get the Public Service Commissioner himself to adjudicate, not on conditions, just on salaries," and that took place from then on. Every time the public service had a regrading - that's not the right word either - reclassification, then we, the parliamentary staff, had one at the same time. But that was only on salaries; no conditions there. Whereas the public service did have conditions under their award, we didn't, and there was no question of overtime in those conditions either, even under the public service ..... I think they may have taken that into consideration when they struck the new rate, but there was no question of being paid overtime as a separate thing from your ordinary working salary.

RJ Do you feel the staff at Parliament House were ever taken advantage of, because of their unique situation?

BARTLETT: I think the .... probably Speakers may have.... yes to some extent. Members of Parliament were on a salary of six hundred pounds, and they were always complaining about the senior public servants getting much in excess of them, those days. I mean it might be only two hundred pounds, but two hundred pounds was a lot of money. They kept the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly on the same grading as an ordinary member, and that probably led us to, you know, the lower ones down the line a little bit, to have some ..... I was going to say financial problems; that's not right, but difficulty at getting increases,

because it was always a time if you gave an increase to someone lower down you were bringing him too close to the top, without him having a chance of moving away, because of this restriction put on by the Speaker that the Clerk should be on the equivalent of a member and no more.

RJ You feel that was unfair do you?

BARTLETT: I do too, because the .... firstly let me tell you this, that I thought the members of Parliament were considerably underpaid those days. I'm not so happy about it today, but I think they were, because of the nature of their travelling, and their accommodation while they were in Perth. For instance the Member for Murchison, on six hundred pounds a year, would travel all the way from say (trying to think of a place on the goldfields, a town, right up on the Murchison) Wiluna. He'd travel all the way down from Wiluna by train to Perth, and when he got to Perth he couldn't go back to Wiluna. I know he had a gold pass, but he'd have to live in Perth during the rest of the session, and that was fairly costly. As a matter of fact he had a block of land out in .... oh in the back end of Belmont there, and he lived in a tent. He wore a white suit, a cream suit, quite often, but how he ironed it I don't know, but he did all his own washing out there, in buckets, or the galvanised iron.... no the old kerosene tin. I had to go out there and see him one day for something. I had to ride out there too, and through this bush track. But that's where he was. They were, in my opinion, they were well underpaid, because they had to live on that six hundred *pounds* when they were in Perth, and keep a home in say Wiluna. But he wasn't married at that stage. Well he had been, but the marriage had broken down. But he still had a home at Wiluna, and he had to live down here. Well this applied to all country members. It wasn't so bad if they lived .... the Member for York wasn't so badly placed, because he'd catch a train a couple of days a week, but those others, once they got to Perth, well they had to stay. Even if they came to Perth on the Monday,

those that had their electorates nearby, they still had to stay there for the four days. That meant finding accommodation out of that six hundred pounds.

RJ But now you were telling me about that in relation to the Clerk's salary.

BARTLETT: Yes, well that's right. The Clerk, he had to be there all the time, and he had a lot of responsibility, because he had all the pays, all the financial side of the Legislative Assembly, and including the Hansard staff those days. And the members' pays. So that was all involved in his situation as a senior officer. And when we finally did get an adjudication from the Public Service Commissioner, or a reclassification, he accepted that situation that the senior officer at least (and that went down the line a bit) held a situation that warranted a substantial increase, because of the responsibilities associated with the financial side alone, without being the Clerk and adviser to the Speaker in the House.

RJ So at that point did your salary go ahead of a member's salary?

BARTLETT: Oh not mine, but the Clerk did, and of course it followed that we did too.

RJ Do you remember how much difference there was then, between a member's salary and the Clerk's salary?

BARTLETT: I think initially when the members were on six hundred pounds and when the adjudication took place, I think the Clerk went up to I think about nine hundred and.... some odd figure between nine and a thousand. I think I was on two eighty-eight, and I went up to three hundred and twelve, or some other figure like that.

RJ So about when would that have occurred?

BARTLETT: Frank Wise. It would be after the war. Frank Wise was Premier between.....

RJ '45 and '47.

BARTLETT: Yes, '47, McLarty came in in '47, that's right. Be in that period, mmm, mmm.

RJ Who was the Member for Murchison you speak of, who lived in a tent?

BARTLETT: Bill Marshall, yes, Lavender Bill.

RJ What was his tent like, tell me?

BARTLETT: I suppose it would be about .... I don't know how big tents were those days. I suppose twelve by six, but I'm inclined to think it was a bit bigger than that.

RJ Twelve by eight is your standard ridge tent?

BARTLETT: Well that would have been twelve by eight then. I think he had a second one there too, but a smaller one. The big one was his office and his cooking place and the washing place, and the smaller one his bed.

RJ What was his bed like?

BARTLETT: I didn't go into that part, but he kept it very clean in and around the tent, and he had a wardrobe there. I don't know how long it lasted with the white ants, because I suppose they'd eat it [laughs]. But he was out there. He didn't always live like that. It was a period when his marriage broke up, and I think there was so much money involved in the break up, that he just didn't have anything left over to .... except that he had this block of land out there. But they had their problems.

RJ Do you know what he cooked on?

BARTLETT: Be wood.

RJ So it would be camp fire cooking?

BARTLETT: Mmm, mmm, mmm.

RJ Goodness. What era would this have been Joss?

BARTLETT: This would have been between ..... oh in the mid thirties, before the war.

RJ Was Marshall considered eccentric at all, or was that behaviour accepted?

BARTLETT: Oh no, he was a well liked fellow and not eccentric at all. I think the one thing was forced on him, and the other thing, he did love clothes. They called him Lavender Bill. You know bow ties, always wore a bow tie of a different grading each day, or colour. I think it was red with his cream suit. But it was just that he did, and they used to call him Lavender Bill, because of his nattiness from a dress point of view. But it was just one of those things he loved doing, loved dressing. He loved that cream suit of his and on one occasion (I think that might have been the end of the cream suit too because of the occasion I'm talking about) they had the cloakroom at Parliament House, which was part and parcel of the washbasin area and the toilet area. Those days they had a box with your various boot polishes there, and someone had used the clothes' brush to polish the [laughs].... the language was something awful [laughs]. He never got over that. [Laughs]

RJ So it was Lavender Bill who went to brush his clothes off was it?

BARTLETT: Yes, yes, a speck of dust there like that.

RJ Boot polish.

BARTLETT: Yes. It was a funny thing.

RJ Back to starting off as a messenger. When you first started as a messenger, did you take questions down to the Premier's Department?

BARTLETT: Yes, mmm. That was one of the things, to the minister, delivering documents to the ministers, and the questions that would be..... The first thing.... Oh, when the House was sitting we started at eight o'clock in the morning for the purpose of delivering the questions so they could be answered that afternoon, that's Tuesday. No wouldn't be any on Tuesday, it would be Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings, because the House sat on the Tuesday and they'd got the questions from the previous week. So we had to start at eight o'clock to deliver these to the various ministeries, these questions.

RJ You say ministeries, I understood that all questions went to the Premier's Department in those days.

BARTLETT: No. I think a certain type of question went to the Premier's Department, but there was a central delivery section, but there were certain ministers that were too far away and we used to deliver them to their office. Also we used to take stuff to the Government Print at that stage of the morning too, Hansard proof copy, at that stage of the morning too. The ministers, the Government Printer; that was the eight o'clock run I'm talking about.

RJ When it came to picking the questions up again, was there a set time you returned to get an answer, or were you advised when an answer was ready?

BARTLETT: No, the ministers they brought them up themselves. When they came to Parliament House when the sitting started, they brought the questions with them.

END OF SIDE ONE TAPE TWO

TAPE TWO SIDE TWO

RJ What sort of bike were you using in those days, when you started?

BARTLETT: It was a pretty heavy one. You mean the brand?

RJ Yes, well and type?

BARTLETT: Oh it was a solid frame. When I say a solid frame one, it wasn't a racing bike, that was too easily damaged, but it was a solid frame push bike of those days. I think it came from .... it would have been a Malvern Star I think, but again not the racing section, and the handlebars had to be of a more .... not racing handlebars, because of the nature [of use]. But it was a sturdy bike.

RJ Could you pedal up Parliament Hill?

BARTLETT: Yes. I could go down it very quickly too. You've got to remember those days there wasn't many cars on the road either, in those early days. The biggest danger was on the corner of Milligan Street and Hay Street where the trams used to go round the corner down Hay Street, and if on a wet day, you caught your tyre in one of the tramlines (they used to get very worn on that corner for some reason or other) you'd go head over heels.

RJ As the sessional messenger, were you entitled to tea breaks and cups of tea?

BARTLETT: No, not officially, but somehow the dining room staff said, "Well that little boy, he looks a bit hungry," and I know one or two or them, as I walked by delivering something, they would see me coming, and they always cooked their own block cake up there those days, the currant cake, the block, and periodically a little piece would come [laughs] my way. Or alternatively the kitchen staff which was down below - not the

kitchen staff, the cooking staff down below - they used to churn their own ice cream. If there was any left over after the day (it was only one day a week; might have been two days a week) the chief (it was a woman) cook, she would put a little bit aside for her boys. So then we'd get the word and duck down there. But nothing official, no.

RJ Right. What did you do about lunch?

BARTLETT: We had to supply our own lunch. The evening meal was given to us in those days. *When* we had to stay there till seven o'clock, until quarter past six, when the House adjourned for their own evening meal, the House supplied that. I think the Legislative Assembly was charged for our evening meal through the financial side of it. The dining room charged the Legislative Assembly one and threepence [laughs] for our evening meal. Later on, and I'd been promoted (this applied to the other clerks too) we'd have supper at eleven o'clock. That became official too. It was brought to your office. You had to come out of the chamber at eleven o'clock. It would be ham, a small plate of ham and some bread and butter and probably a piece of cake, and we used to be charged a shilling for that.

RJ You personally charged?

BARTLETT: No, no, no, the Legislative Assembly. It was from the dining room. And probably some pickles too with it. [Laughs] No there was an official lunch time, but even a lunch time depended on the circumstances, what was required. Anything delivered early or something like that, or quickly, then you'd forgo your lunch time but, you know, sneak it in when you had the opportunity.

RJ When you were able to have a lunch break what length was it?

BARTLETT: One hour.

RJ How did you find staff got on with each other? Was there any feeling of, "You're a messenger, and I'm a clerk," or anything like that?

BARTLETT: No, no, not at all. I thought you were going to ask between the two Houses.

RJ That was the next question. [Laughter]

BARTLETT: No, there was no feeling. It was amazing the nice blokes that I had as senior officers. There was no problem there existed that way at all. I don't know whether they were looking after me all the time, but they certainly took me under their wings. I had no problems that way. I got an awful lot of encouragement and a lot of thanks too, because I think I was a pretty willing worker and tried to consolidate myself too, you know, knowing my own background.

RJ Right, well what were relations like between the House of Assembly staff and the Legislative Council staff?

BARTLETT: Well I suppose there was always ..... they met easily, but there was always a little antagonism, why I don't know. The Council, in a sense they considered they were equivalent of the House of Lords, so that gave them a superior position in the House. But they realised that the Legislative Assembly was the working House. That sort of situation developed. We were the working House and they were the House of Lords, and there was sort of a bit of by-play, and you know quite often it seemed to just.... and a little bit of antagonism came into it occasionally, because certain things were taking place. Then there was a tendency for the Legislative Council to look upon May's Parliamentary Practice (which was a publication, a House of Commons' publication) as being - well something they could use to deal with certain types of legislation. You've got to remember this that Britain didn't have a constitution, it hadn't got a

constitution. All their parliamentary practices developed from rulings, that's in the House of Commons and the House of Lords, and they had one publication called May's Parliamentary Practice, whereas we had a constitution in this State, and when they used May's Parliamentary Practice of decisions of the House of Lords and the Commons to interpret a financial situation in this State, it became.... that's where the antagonism, well you know a little bit of antagonism came in. Because we had a constitution and it says the Council can't do certain things. They said, "Well it doesn't say we can't do them. We're not prepared to go to court though." And no one wanted to go to court either to get a decision on them, but it was said that they shouldn't use the practise of England to interpret our constitutional matters, financial constitutional matters, and they said they could, and so there was fights on. Not actually fights, but it was always an argument. It just developed over this financial portion of the [legislation]: taxation or appropriation money. That was where the problem was. But there was this tendency to, "We're the House of Lords." The President usually finished up with a knighthood, and things like that. It's a standing.... But that was all, it wasn't really .... I mean John Roberts and myself were good friends, but we had our arguments over this type of situation.

RJ But that's a legislative thing, and we'll get onto more of that later, but as far as actual staff relations were concerned?

BARTLETT: Oh pretty good, pretty good. Getting away from the parliamentary side of it, yes, good. I never ran in to any problems there. I don't think any of our staff did, between the two Houses. They'd meet at a given time, halfway down, let's say the corridor, and turn (depends on which way they were coming from) left or right into a little area there. That was the members' bar. Seemed to be the general tendency between the hours of twelve thirty and one o'clock, and they'd go into the dining room then and always sat at the same table in the dining

room. There was always some crack made about certain things taking place, but nothing in any angry manner, not to my knowledge at any rate. It was very friendly.

RJ Just describe for me - you've described the galvanised iron structure at the back, but just take me for a walk through Parliament House as you remember it when you first went there, what facilities were there for members, what the place was like.

BARTLETT: The main entrance of Parliament House was, of course, the back of the building which faces Harvest Terrace. So you knew that was the back of the building, but it was actually the front because, as I say, [it was] the only place you could *enter*, except a footpath that came up from Public Works Department to the galvanised iron section. But as you walked in the door, there was a little cubicle there where an attendant was, vetting visitors coming in and occasionally giving messages to members and things like that. Then just beyond there that entrance where the attendant was, there was a short length corridor with seats down both sides, and that was where members had to interview their guests, or electors at any rate, there. Then you came to the main corridor. *Part* is the Speaker's corridor, which led into the [main corridor] alongside the dining room, right through the Legislative Council. That was all stabilised, that. But beyond that corridor you came to another big entrance which was part of the main structure. But ten feet from there - oh no, on the edge of that, that started your galvanised iron building. I don't know whether you can visualise it at all.

RJ Try to put it into words for me, so I can do just that.

BARTLETT: [short pause] The side door, the main side door of the Legislative Assembly chamber, came with part of the wooden verandah at the back of the House. You had all this big beautiful stone structure and arches with their windows and everything, and suddenly that stopped and there was a wooden floor and this galvanised structure, with the galvanised straps for the continuation of the building just flapping in the breeze,

probably about a metre length or two feet in length, just flapping there. They were there all the time, because they were left there for the purpose of continuing the brickwork, but it never happened, not those days. But the same applied in the Legislative Council. You had your two beautiful chambers on each side, your main corridor of Parliament House, your two entrances, which were.... it should have been the back of the building, but it happened to be the front of the building those days. Jammed in between the two Houses was this big two storey galvanised structure. The members had to interview their people, the people that came to see them in this little corridor, or wander round the grounds. There was no room, no special room. Or they could take them up the library, which was upstairs too; there was seating up there. But there was no sit-down room for members to interview people. If they had something very personal to talk about I think they'd probably just wander about the grounds outside, if it wasn't raining of course. But they had no facilities for interviewing people. They did have, one for each House, a room something about twenty by sixteen, where there was four or five desks in it. This is where we had to replenish the ink and keep the blotting paper up to date, and the paper, the parliamentary paper there too. But that's all the facilities they had to do any writing, and one typist for eighty members, and the staff used the typist too.

RJ Where was she located?

BARTLETT: On the back verandah, in the galvanised structure there.

RJ Now besides what you've described, you've said there was a library. Where was it then?

BARTLETT: The library was over the dining room. The dining room was at the back [laughs] front of the building. [Laughs] The dining room was immediately alongside the Harvest Terrace, between the Harvest Terrace entrance of the Legislative Council and the Harvest Terrace entrance of the Assembly. The dining

room was in between there. As a matter of fact you could see part of the dining room as you walked into the Legislative Assembly, but you couldn't see it from the Legislative Council, because that end was the servery end and it had been blanked off. But the library was immediately above that. There was a balcony. On the second floor there was a balcony there, and the library was not part of the balcony. You walked out of the library onto that balcony for the purpose of looking down to Harvest Terrace and any vehicle or demonstration or whatever was taking place at the time.

RJ So you had the members' dining room. The staff dining room was where?

BARTLETT: Downstairs near the kitchen area, near the cooking area. There's a room underground there. The pantry was downstairs on what was I suppose below .... no not below ground level, but it was underneath the Legislative Council chamber. Underneath the Legislative Council chamber was the pantry area, and you had to go down steps to it. We, the staff had it [for meals] Hansard [too]. The two senior Clerks had their own meal in the main dining room. Later on it included the Clerk of Records and Accounts, but otherwise there was a little dining room down below for the Hansard staff, and also for the lesser lights of the Legislative Assembly staff and Council staff. Cold.

RJ Cold?

BARTLETT: Yes, down below.

RJ Did that process of the Clerks having their meals with the members and the other staff being separate cause any divisions; any feeling of them and us?

BARTLETT: No, I don't think it did with the officers. I think some of the attendants.... again let me say we were charged one and threepence.[1] The Assembly office was charged by the dining

[1]The cost of a staff meal was 1/9d which was not paid by the staff member but by the Legislative Assembly or Council. This entitled the person to soup, fish, a main course and sweets. Members paid according to the number of courses: 1/6d for a 3 course meal and 1/9d for 4 courses. (Information from J.B. Roberts, House Controller 1947-51).

room, one and threepence,[1] for the meal. But the staff that went down below (and that included one or two of our attendants as well as myself, one of the juniors around the place) we'd go down there. We had no menu. They'd say, "Well this is your meal tonight," and we'd have it. Then you'd hear someone say, "Gee that steak was good tonight," [laughs] or something else like that. They had a choice, and that's the only thing that caused any trouble I think. They had a choice, we didn't have a choice. We probably had the second best thing on the menu, the bulky thing on the menu as against, like a piece of steak or something like that, or a nice piece of fish. But that was the only problem; they had the variety, we didn't.

RJ What was one of your typical meals in those days?

BARTLETT: What down below?

RJ Yes.

BARTLETT: Irish stew. That was once a week. The rest would be probably a roast, some roast beef, and probably roast lamb. But it would be a roast, part of a roast of some type, but once a week it was Irish stew too, and I enjoyed Irish stew. Even today, properly cooked.

RJ Soup?

BARTLETT: Soup, yes.

RJ Sweets?

BARTLETT: And sweets, yes.

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[1]See footnote p. 38

RJ Bread and butter on the table?

BARTLETT: Yes.

RJ How did you find that sort of thing, because you'd come from a family not blessed with lots of money?

BARTLETT: Oh I enjoyed it. It was a good meal for me. [Laughs] I knew that probably I wouldn't get it at home. But it was good to have a meal like that from my point of view. But there were people in much better circumstances than me, and they were in a position to criticise the meal, the cooking of the meal, whereas I wasn't. [Laughs]

RJ Where was the members' bar?

BARTLETT: Near the Legislative Council end of the dining room, and there was also a servery there. They had a lift there. They brought the food up in this hand lift from the kitchen down below, and they used to serve it into the dining room from there. Alongside that and just between that lift and the servery and the wall of the Council corridor was the bar. But it only held - I suppose it would only hold about twenty people at the most. Most members, if they were having a drink, and had some visitors.... well they couldn't take the visitors into the bar at any rate, but they'd sit out in the corridor, and someone would serve them out there. Members didn't drink a great deal. There was a lot of whisky those days, not much beer. I think whisky was about nine shillings a bottle. [Laughs] Again in the pantry area there was always a forty-four [gallon] cask of Vat 69, and they used to bottle their own.

RJ Could staff get access to drink at all?

BARTLETT: The senior ones again. They were the only ones allowed in the bar area those days. It wasn't a question of your age, it was a question of your status.

RJ Did that cause problems between staff?

BARTLETT: No, no. It would these days, I'm certain it would, but those days it seemed to be that you went there with a knowledge that this is your grading, and so long as you kept your nose clean you knew you could make it, and you'd be having it there one day.

RJ Was there a billiard room then, for members?

BARTLETT: Yes, alongside the library upstairs, and two tables. I became quite proficient at billiards on that table, on those tables up there. I played for a number of years too, in the end. But initially we weren't allowed on them. Again that status symbol. It was only the two - the Clerk Assistant of the Council, the Clerk Assistant of the Assembly, and the Clerk, they could play on it, so long as they weren't stopping members from [playing] but other than that there were plenty of times out of session when there would be no one about and you could play around with it, use it.

RJ How well used was the billiard room by members?

BARTLETT: Not very much. I suppose at lunch time and the evening meal break, when they'd finished their meal and the same at lunch time, when they'd finished their [meal]. There'd be a period of time - lunch would be one to two o'clock, or you know when you finished. It was one o'clock at any rate, to start. Maybe half a dozen would go upstairs after they'd completed their lunch and play. Then the evening meal (this is where I used to go up and watch) the evening meal was quarter past six, and they'd be finished by say quarter to seven. The House didn't meet again until seven thirty, and you'd get another crowd up there playing and having a lot of fun and things like that. That's when I used to go up and watch it then, fill in my time.

RJ Right what have we missed? What else was there in that Parliament House building we're speaking of?

BARTLETT: [sotto voce] Oh billiard room, chambers....

RJ Any shower or bath facilities?

BARTLETT: Oh each House had one. It was all purpose, you know: shower, toilet, and bath. Each House had one upstairs, one either side of the library, or in the Assembly it was near the library entrance, specially built there. I mean it wasn't just a structure put up for the purpose. In the Legislative Council they had the billiard room.... oh let me put it this way. The billiard room was part of the library, but they'd put up a temporary structure, temporary wall, a sort of partition, but it was a full wall, but it was only I think, cellite. But they did have, both ends had a bath-cum-toilet-cum-shower area and that's all. That's all the facilities the members had. I can't think of any other, because I'm just visualising .... chambers [pause]. No, no that was about the lot. The library and the billiard room, the dining room, the bar. No, no, nothing....

END OF TAPE TWO SIDE TWO

TAPE THREE SIDE ONE

RJ There must have been a post office there or something at some stage, because I've been....?

BARTLETT: There was a post office. That was again on the lower floor of that galvanised iron structure. It was a post office and switchboard. It was a room that was probably ten by twelve. It had this switchboard in it, and the girl.... oh no, in those days they didn't have girls. They had a postmaster and a sessional.... well he wouldn't be a messenger, but sessional operator, and it was always a male because he still had to run messages too. He sold stamps there. He used to phone the telegrams through to the main post office, and then we used to have to take the copy down (it was part of our duties too) to give them the money at some stage. He made up a sheet of his telegrams, and also he had a limited amount of stamps which he could sell and he'd replenish those once a week. But it was mostly the telephoning and selling stamps to members.

RJ If a member wished to send a telegram, did he have to pay for that?

BARTLETT: Yes, yes. Although they did get a few stamps. We at the Legislative Assembly had (gee, I can't remember what the figure was now on our estimates) a sum for stamps for members. It came to a figure of about twelve pounds worth a month. We'd distribute them to members. We didn't give them to members, they'd come to us and say they'd want a few stamps. They could use that on a telegram, but once they'd used their quota, well that was the finish of it. But generally they paid for their telegrams. But these stamps were marked OS. They were perforated, OS on them. They couldn't use them for a great deal other than the postage and .... they couldn't sell them at any rate.

RJ What was the telephone set up? What access did a member have to a telephone?

BARTLETT: Well there was a booth in the switchboard area itself, and there was always a telephone in one of these spare rooms, in the Council room, probably about three telephones there. They had a loudspeaker too, of course, in the building, and he used to say, "Mr So-and-So, you're wanted on the telephone," and [the member] had to go and look for a telephone somewhere. That was the situation then. I think there was about four places where he could at least talk with reasonable privacy, but in general there was two or three stuck on the wall, you know, these little box things. They'd have to take them there, so there was no privacy and that type of thing. The only one would be the one in the telephone booth itself, and then there wouldn't be any privacy, because you can't close that type of door in the summer months. There wasn't any privacy. They didn't have any facilities at all. I mean, for the status of Parliament House they had nothing for private calls.

But digressing again. The postmaster was a '14-'18 war man, and he'd lost his leg. I think that's how he got the job. He could answer the phone alright, but when they gave him the post office as well and cheques became a thing that people started to use, he would never accept a cheque. Educationally he was much behind any .... my earlier days, and he would never accept a cheque. If he did, and he did at times, but he would go down to the nearest post office, which was on the corner of Milligan Street those days, and Hay Street, at lunch time, and take this cheque down there and cash it, and bring back the cash to put in his..... [Laughs] his little safe. I don't know why. Cheques weren't money, and never became money to him, but he got away with it.

RJ Was there ever anyone like a barber would come in during the House sitting?

BARTLETT: No, no.

RJ And you spoke of there being shoe cleaning facilities. A member had to do that for himself I assume?

BARTLETT: Yes, that's right, yes, uh huh. There was a box there with a footrest glued to it, or nailed to it, the shape of a foot, and you'd do your own, and a little drawer with the boot polish and the brushes and they did that themselves.

RJ Anything else that you can recall that we haven't covered, or that were facilities that were available to members?

BARTLETT: No, except the chambers. They could work in the chamber if they wanted to, as well, at their desk in the chamber. A lot of them did that too, if they wanted to write letters and things like that.

Oh as far as we were concerned, the staff, if the House went after eleven thirty then we could get a taxi home and charge it up. But if it was prior to eleven thirty then we were expected to race down town - I lived at Inglewood those days - and catch a tram. Sometimes it would be an awful rush to get down town to catch that last tram, which I think left about quarter to twelve. Members could get a taxi home too, if they didn't have their own vehicle. But generally it was just the staff. We used to charge it up to the Legislative Assembly. The dining room, members had to pay for their meals too, there.

They had no librarian in the library, although there was about five or six thousand books. They did have a librarian, but he was the Clerk Assistant of the Legislative Assembly, as well as librarian. He would spend a certain amount of time in the library for the purposes of indexing the books as they came in, and numbering them, putting them in their proper place. But members then had to browse themselves, or go to him and find out if whether there was any books coming in for any purpose. In my earlier days there was no fiction in the library. It was all history, legislation, financial, but no fiction. I don't know why, but it took a long time to persuade them to get fiction in the library.

RJ What sort of history, do you recall?

BARTLETT: Oh I think all history of the world of every country. It was segregated into its various countries as well. You know you get a history on.... the whole back wall might be, but it would be segregated into the various countries. Then you get all the financial stuff, and that would be segregated too. Many varieties of reading books, but no fiction. All the types of reading books you could get, but no fiction, and some of them were very old. I mean Pepys' diaries for instance, which I think there were nineteen volumes of that. They were very valuable too, stuck in the room like .... Then The Rise and Fall of the Roman Empire. I used to love reading that. [Laughs] Browsing - not reading. Browsing through it.

RJ Could members borrow books, or did they have to be read in the library?

BARTLETT: No,if they borrowed books they had to go to the librarian and fill in a .... not fill in a form, but he took the details of the book.

RJ So they could be borrowed, for how long a period?

BARTLETT: One week was the usual limit, but it depended on the circumstances too, and the type of book he was borrowing.

RJ Was there anything like the Times?

BARTLETT: Yes, great big green bound volumes.... oh no, no, the Illustrated London News, I'm sorry. The Times? No, not as a daily publication, no. But they had, oh a whole shelf - no shelves, and they stood about that high. The Illustrated London News, right back. Bound. Why, I don't know, but it must have come .... they probably brought them up when they had the parliamentary chambers were down in the Agricultural Department, which was in where the city offices are now. And the other was

in the Town Hall, the Assembly. No, the Council was in the Town Hall there and the other .... well it became the Department of Agriculture; it was City of Perth offices.

RJ What about newspapers like the Age and ....?

BARTLETT: No, no, no. They'd get all country newspapers, and they were filed in a room opposite the [post office]. This was part of the duties of the post office, to file these newspapers as they came, but it was the Daily News, the local papers here: the Daily News, the West, the Sunday Times, Smith's Weekly. One or two others. Then all the country papers, and the Eastern States, major Eastern States papers.

RJ So there would have been the Melbourne Herald and ....?

BARTLETT: Yes, uh huh.

RJ Right, these sort of papers.

BARTLETT: They were all filed there, but not in the library. In this big room associated with the post office, was a reading room there.

RJ Would that have had the London Times in it, or any overseas papers?

BARTLETT: No, no, no.

RJ So only Australian papers?

BARTLETT: Mmm, mmm. I don't remember seeing any London papers there at all. I think if you wanted to see something you'd have to go down to the public library, anything like that.

RJ You mentioned that members had to pay for their meals in the dining room. Your cost was one and threepence, what was their cost? [1]

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[1] See footnote, p. 38.

BARTLETT: A shilling.[1]

RJ And another small point from the meals. Were you waited on in the staff room, or was it self-serve?

BARTLETT: No, they had an attendant down there. We had to get our own sweets, but he brought in the main course, and the soup, but we had to get our own sweets. He was one of the attendant staff in the building.

RJ And I assume the members had waitresses or ....?

BARTLETT: Waiters.

RJ Waiters was it?

BARTLETT: Mmm.

RJ Uh huh. Could they have alcohol with their meals?

BARTLETT: Yes.

RJ Did they pay for that alcohol?

BARTLETT: Yes.

RJ What was the set up for any sort of medical service of any description? If there had been an accident or a member fell ill, were you geared to cope with that? Was anyone on the staff designated a first aid officer or....?

BARTLETT: No, no, but we had all - in my earlier days at any rate, and for many years, we had doctors as members. Dr Hislop, for instance, was a member of the Legislative Council a long time, and there were other doctors too. Well if they weren't in the building we were in trouble of course. There wasn't a trained operator there at all for any.... other than a sore thumb or something like that, a jammed thumb. But no, no, it was the

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[1] See footnote p. 38.

doctors themselves that were members of Parliament, that were called upon. But other than that it was a question of ringing up a doctor, and bring him to Parliament House.

RJ What there any particular doctor considered on call to Parliament House?

BARTLETT: Generally you got their own doctor. But no, Dr Hislop lived nearby and I think he got the brunt of it. But he lived up near Kings Park there, the entrance there somewhere, and he was on call all the time, and he was quite readily available.

In the reading room they had two or three ordinary wooden tables. I think most of them had, the ordinary wooden tables I'm talking about, had a blue .... what do you call it, it's a plas.... it wasn't plastic those days, sort of pasted on the woodwork, a blue.... not lino. Rather thin tapestry of some type at any rate, which was tacked on and glued on, to stop them cutting or marking the wood with their ink and that sort of thing. This could be washed comfortably. Wood soaks up ink, particlarly pine or anything near that lighter colour. But they had the writing tables in there, this type of table.

RJ And where was this reading room you're speaking of?

BARTLETT: It was in that galvanised structure, right opposite the post office. The postmaster used to file the papers in there.

RJ So the newspaper room was also a reading room, and writing tables.

BARTLETT: A writing room, mmm.

RJ Good. What were the grounds like when you first went to Parliament House?

BARTLETT: Well grassed, but not well gardened. They only had an elderly gardener, with a, probably a fourteen inch lawnmover, and he was expected.... they had a second one too, who was expected to (but they were both elderly people) keep the lawns done. They didn't have time to really..... they used to grow dahlias, a few dahlias, and poppies, you know the big.... They're barred in this country now, the big opium poppy. [Laughs] I think that's the one they .... but they used to grow a lot of those in the Harvest Terrace beds. But other than that they just didn't have the time or the money to spend on gardening. I think they used to grow their own seeds, or collect their own seeds from home and bring them there, whereas now, I think they go to the nurseries and get the lot. But their time was taken up cutting lawns, keeping the lawns in some sort of neat order at any rate. The leaves from the trees had to be raked up by hand.

RJ And burnt on site, the leaves?

BARTLETT: Yes, they had a big incinerator. That was behind a hedge of pine trees, those low.... I don't know what type of pine they would be, but they didn't grow much bigger than those type of street trees out there. Taller, but they spread them right out.

RJ About eight feet?

BARTLETT: Umm?

RJ About eight feet?

BARTLETT: Yes, probably twenty feet would be the maximum.

RJ Oh! [Laughs]

BARTLETT: And behind that was an incinerator, where all the stuff was burnt. But their time was taken up with lawn cutting, isolated gardens or flower beds, and raking.

RJ Were there tennis courts in those days?

BARTLETT: No.

RJ Was there a caretaker on site?

BARTLETT: Yes, the [House] Controller. He lived down below on the kitchen level, below ground there again, and it was a dampish sort of accommodation but they lived. I know John Roberts[1] was down there, and he soon got out of that because of the dampness and because he had young children. These people, to my knowledge, their children had grown up when I first went there. One of the gardeners lived down below. He had a room down there too. That's down below again. They were the only caretakers. It was their job to.... In those days you know, I don't know that you needed much caretaking; vandalism didn't seem to be on. I know I could walk into my house any time of the day or night and the key would be in the front door. That type of existence we lived in those earlier days. But they were there for the purpose of seeing nothing happened, and also because there was a lot of, not valuable stuff, but there were a lot of .... If someone got into the chamber and wanted to slash any of the seatings around, or cause a bit of trouble that way.

RJ Was a policeman or policemen ever allocated to be at the House?

BARTLETT: No, except when the House was sitting. The Legislative Assembly always had a policeman allocated during the time the House was sitting, and he would sit in the gallery upstairs. That was just purely for the spectators who came in, to keep them in order and to keep them from chattering, and remove them if they disobeyed the Speaker who might call out, "Order in the gallery there," and if they never took [any notice], well he'd march them out. That was all.

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[1]House Controller 1947-1951

RJ You say in the Assembly, did the same situation apply in the Council? Was there a policeman there in the public gallery?

BARTLETT: No.

RJ Why not?

BARTLETT: I don't know. There may have been on odd occasions, not on a permanent basis. When there was a particular piece of legislation going through I think they did, because of the problem, but the legislation came to the Assembly first. The Assembly was the place where this sort of problem developed all the time. Once it left the Assembly, the ordinary type of legislation went to the Council, I don't think they probably had anyone up there at all. But they certainly didn't have a permanent policeman on duty up there, like the Assembly did. But the Assembly always did for some reason or other, I suppose, because that's the House that generated all the legislation and caused all the problems.

RJ A further interview with Joss Bartlett, held in his home on the 25th of August, 1986.[1]

Mr Bartlett since our session last time you've remembered some points about questions and delivery of them, which I'd be grateful if you'd put on tape please?

BARTLETT: Well firstly the last remark I made there about the policeman. He did occasionally, when certain types of legislation had been passed by the Legislative Assembly, and was going to have some problems in the Legislative (public problems) in the Legislative Council, he did wander up there and check, and

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[1]A lawn mower was being used at the house opposite and is heard in the background throughout the interview (RJ).

probably stay in the gallery, that particular gallery for a time to see that everything's okay, and then he would return to the Assembly. That was one little comment I made.

RJ Thank you, and about the questions?

BARTLETT: Well the questions were delivered, three [copies of] questions were delivered to the Premier's Department, together with.... for the purpose of sending one I assume to the minister concerned, and the Premier kept the other, but the answers always came back through the Premier. In delivering those questions to the Premier's Department I had to deliver proof copies of their speeches made the day before, for the purpose of correction and returning to the House, I think by midday the next day, for printing in Hansard.

RJ I'm sorry, you just said to the Premier's Department you delivered Hansard, you meant to the minister's office I assume.

BARTLETT: Delivered the proof copy of Hansard to the minister's office, but the questions to the Premier's office, where they were distributed from there.

RJ So when you said last time you took questions to the minister's office, you were confused with Hansard?

BARTLETT: Hansard proofs.

RJ Right, good. Just how many questions can you remember going down in those early years when you started?

BARTLETT: I would say that probably would never more in excess of six, and invariably I think probably in three or four. The questions were treated very strictly those days as something that governments had to answer and answer immediately. They were treated as [urgent]. If a question came from the Leader of the Opposition particularly, it was treated by the Premier of the day

as a want of confidence in the government, and they returned their answer, and a properly constructed answer, to the House, and read it out to the House. I question whether they do it today, read the answers out, but they did those days and if necessary he might add some words to the answer, other than the written answer he had. But they did. It was treated as a want of confidence in the government those days. As against today questions are asked on every minor subject you can think of. But generally today a person will say to Bill Smith, some member, [Laughs] "What happened to that bin, rubbish bin, that was placed on the corner of such and such a street for the public use?" He would answer, probably verbally, "I don't know, but I'll find out for you." And he'd put a .... these days I mean, a question would go on the notice paper, to the Minister for Health or something of that.... Personally the members could find out themselves by making a phone call, but that doesn't impress the public. The written answer to a question has - for some reason or other, is considered as having got somewhere. To get a member of Parliament to ask a question regarding something you want to know about, however small, and get that answer sent back to you, or get a copy of Hansard sent back to you with that answer printed in it, seems to have some bearing on the prestige of the person concerned.

END OF SIDE ONE TAPE THREE

TAPE THREE SIDE TWO

RJ Mr Bartlett another small point from last time. You referred to Lavender Bill Marshall, the Member for Murchison, and his living in a tent out on a block, and I wondered how he got on for a water supply out there? Did you have reason to know that?

BARTLETT: I think from memory he wasn't very far from a small farm, and I would think he carried by bucket, or alternatively the farmer brought it over in a vehicle of some type, horse drawn vehicle. But I have a recollection of seeing the old kerosene tins there, and I assume that's where he kept his water, and he did his washing.

RJ And would he have sort of washed up back at the camp, or did he have his showers when he came to the House?

BARTLETT: Well I never remember him going to the shower room, and he was a very clean man, so I assumed he probably stood in a basin or a tub.

RJ I wondered as messenger, when you first started, who you were directly responsible to? Who allocated your duties?

BARTLETT: Well the Clerk of Records and Accounts was the immediate senior man. I was completely under his control, but quite a number of the things came from the top, and to him, and I was directed from.... Well let me say I was directed by him.

RJ Right. So someone else could not have then asked you to do something without going through him?

BARTLETT: That would be the general idea, yes. But let me say this that if the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly came along and saw me and he said, "Joss will you run this down to the so-and-so?" And I would say, "Yes," but I would let the Clerk of the Records and Accounts know I was off, and where I'd been

directed to go. It was just a question of working it that way, so everyone knew where we were. We weren't out playing. I mean we were only boys. [Laughs]

RJ Yes. When we were discussing working hours I didn't find out from you if you had a lunch hour, or a lunch half hour, or just catch as catch can? What was the arrangement?

BARTLETT: Well we had a lunch hour. It varied out of session, and in session. There were times when.... it was from one o'clock till two o'clock, that's the normal dining room time for the members, so that they were occupied with the dining room. That's when we normally had ours too. But there times of course you didn't get the full hour because of something required for the House, something required for a *minister* from his department. They didn't have cars those days, so it was a question of a messenger picking it up. It might be an answer that hadn't been given to him prior to leaving his office, to a question, or something like that, or a copy of his speech. But in general it was one to two.

RJ And where would you have eaten your lunch?

BARTLETT: Out in the grounds of Parliament House. You could eat them in the [office]. There was a little room there, a records room, and you could sit at the table. Generally in the summer time, the warmer weather at any rate we'd eat out in the grounds, because we took our own lunch there.

RJ Were you ever offered a tip by a member to carry out a job for him?

BARTLETT: Oh yes.

RJ And were you allowed to accept that tip?

BARTLETT: Yes. Laughs]

RJ Do you remember what sort of tips you got?

BARTLETT: I think probably the biggest one was a shilling. That was a lot of money. I mean when I say it was a lot of money, I shouldn't be saying, making this comment, but a bottle of beer was one and a penny, and of course that was a shilling and a penny. [Laughs] When you think of a shilling it was quite a lot of money those days. It was always welcome.

RJ How frequent would that have been?

BARTLETT: Oh mostly about Christmas time. One or two members always gave you a sixpence, but that wasn't general of course. Some of them were happy to pay. It just was part of their attitude towards employees. If they were asked to do something special, well they paid them. In addition to that I suppose I might have got a little bit better treatment than most. Probably a willing horse, but they knew my background and circumstances. Like at Christmas time I got a lot of tips from members. More than tips, Christmas greetings from members, but money involved. One member, he was a Speaker too, used to make Christmas puddings in the little linen bags, and he would make a hundred or so, and give them out there, and I used to get my share.

RJ Who was that?

BARTLETT: Sydney Stubbs. Yes I did, and I accepted it too.

RJ In all honesty were you ever guilty of looking for jobs from those that you knew tipped, as compared with those who didn't?

BARTLETT: I might have avoided those who didn't. [Laughter] I wouldn't say I looked for those that did, but I might have avoided those that didn't. [Laughs]

RJ As a messenger did you wear a uniform?

BARTLETT: Yes. It was a blue suit, but with the high collar. It wasn't a coat in the sense that we wear coats today, with the lapels on. It was one of those buttoned up to the neck with a band around. Yes, and gold buttons, and a little blue band around the sleeve, a lighter - it was a blue, but a different type of blue, round the sleeve, and no hat. They didn't give us a hat. But we were, we were in uniform.

RJ Any insignia?

BARTLETT: Oh just the Legislative Assembly crown on either side.[1]

RJ And how many of those were you issued with?

BARTLETT: One a year. Two pair of pants and one coat a year. [Laughs] And of course being a little boy too, I grew out of them. Not very much, but I did. But yes, and we had them made, tailor made, in Perth, and then the place was transferred to Subiaco. But that was only for messengers.

RJ Were you responsible for getting them cleaned yourself?

BARTLETT: Yes.

RJ What happened the day it had to be cleaned?

BARTLETT: Well I think you waited till out of session, [laughs] or during your holidays, unless there was something really wrong with it, and probably you didn't go to work. [Laughs] But it wasn't so bad in .... that was the first year of course, and

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[1]On either side of the collar (RJ).

probably the second year, but the third year, well you always had your old one that you could.... If you wanted your newest one to be cleaned, you always had your old one. It might not fit as well, but it was always available.

RJ You say blue, but there are many shades of blue?

BARTLETT: Well navy blue. That would be a woman talking that one. Blue. [Laughs] I just thought in terms of navy blue.

RJ Yes. Now you told me that you were appointed as a messenger and you were appointed originally just for the session. What happened at the end of the session?

BARTLETT: What happened? The other messengers, there was two sessional messengers at the time and a principal messenger, they went on leave, they took their month's leave, and they kept me on just to fill in while they were away. The other sessional messenger, he didn't come back at all. He didn't attempt to come back, he knew his time was up. In the meantime they'd spoken to me about getting rid of the *senior* messenger, as he was getting too old for that particular type of job and there was no future for him there, and they thought he would be wise if he got out at seventeen years of age to find some other employment. So that's how I was kept on.

RJ And at what stage did you become a senior messenger, or is that what you meant when you said that?

BARTLETT: Yes, that's what that meant.

RJ That's what you meant?

BARTLETT: Mmm. At that stage, I forget, it was probably about March or April, when all the leave had been taken and the sessional work cleaned up. I mean there was a lot of running to the Government Printer, even at that stage, from Hansard point of view, and I was doing Hansard running as well. They were getting

the proofs back for the annual volume. The Clerks were doing the legislation. The amendments were being printed in act form, and that was being checked too, and I was up and down to the Government Printer. When that was over, and the leave was over, and the running to the Government Printer and back was required, that was when they got rid of this senior messenger and said, "Well we think you're getting too old for this situation now, and it would be wise for you to get out and find some other employment." Even at that stage then, there was no guarantee that I wouldn't be in the same position in two or three years time. But I did have the opportunity of going to the public service, having come through the Public Service Commissioner, and subject to me passing certain examinations at school, night school, I had the right to go back to this, or try if I wished, to go back to the public service.

RJ Right, at any time during that period that you were a messenger did you contemplate looking for other work?

BARTLETT: No. I probably thought of it many times, but I didn't, because I think that Sir James Mitchell and Phil Collier, who I mentioned earlier, took me under their wings, plus the Clerk of Records and Accounts at the time, who was my 'godfather', although he hadn't known me before, I had a feeling that I was going to be looked after, if I didn't do anything wrong. No I don't think I did. If I did I was thinking in terms of going to the public service, transferring.

RJ I wondered what memories you had of any demonstrations and marches to Parliament House, this sort of thing, during the Depression?

BARTLETT: Well the Depression started I think officially in 1929, the world side of it. It hadn't had a great deal of bearing on the Australian side, but it was coming. It wasn't until 1931 that any real action took place in this. I would say '31. The prices were starting to fall and the world commodities weren't being well we couldn't sell, and there was oversupply right

throughout the world. There was no purchasing power right throughout the world. We were an agricultural State, purely well there wasn't much industry at all. When the government started to take action, to protect, through legislation, to protect the business people. There were two pieces of legislation in particular, the early ones, Mortgagees Rights Restriction was one. The other was the Tenants, Purchasers and Mortgagors Act. They were to protect business. They were also to protect homes from I suppose, takeover, being taken away from people. That was the sort of the beginning of it. That legislation was quite wise legislation at the time too.

Later on they started to bring in further financial legislation. One was the financial emergency tax. The other was the financial emergency.... I just can't think of its full title. One was a special rate of tax for certain things, and the other one was to reduce salaries by up to twenty per cent. Eighteen to twenty-two per cent I think. That one caused a lot of demonstration, for those people, you know the public servants and that sort of thing. They came into Parliament House, and they demonstrated against the Premier for what he was doing. But the main demonstrations came from the unemployed, which were developing fast, and there was no dole. They did develop a payment system for workers, (probably a good idea if they did it today too). I think it was nine shillings a day, and they could get two days a week or something, if they were a married man, a married person (a married man it would be - I don't think the women got involved in this at all) anyhow, and so many children. It depends on his marriage status at any rate, and the number of children involved, as to how many days he could get. Might only be two days a fortnight. They would demonstrate.

There was a demonstration I think involved about six hundred people at Parliament House, and then they went down and demonstrated in front of the Treasury Buildings, on the corner of St George's Terrace and Barrack Street, and it was there, at that stage, that if you .... if I can delve back into it, the demonstration was such that it became uncontrollable, and the

police used their batons on the crowd (I think there was a Sergeant Johnson involved in this too) and there was a lot of unhealthy scenes following that demonstration. People came to the gallery of Parliament House and made rude noises, had placards and things like that, into the gallery, and at some stages we had more than one policeman there to protect the gallery. There was another occasion, and I'm bit hazy about the year, but I know Kenneally so it must have been '34 or '35. Kenneally became Minister for Employment. Unemployment I think, Employment, Unemployment in '34, the change of government.[1] A fellow walked in the side door of the chamber, walked to the table of the House, the House was sitting at the time, walked to the table of the House, stood with his back to the mace, with his hand on the mace, you know the mace at the end of the table? Stood with his hand on the mace, and started to yell at Kenneally about work. He came from Mandurah this fellow, we found out after. The House, the debate was on at the time, the House stopped and I heard the Premier call out, "Throw him out." [Shouts.] The Speaker calling, "Order, order, get rid of that man." It's in the press. The Sergeant at Arms was an elderly fellow, and he was very hesitant, so I advanced at this fellow and he picked up the mace, but he didn't swing it, and we struggled with him out of the chamber. That's the first time (I don't think it ever happened before or afterwards) that a stranger had entered the House. I was playing rugby at that stage, so I must have been sixteen, seventeen, rising that age, before I was Assistant Clerk of Records I know. Now when I was Assistant? I might have been the Assistant Clerk then. '34 I would have been, yes. Yes and I'd have been in tails then. [Laughs] Any rate we got him out of the House, and the police took him away, but he was never charged. I think the Speaker took him into his room and had a talk to him.

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[1]The change of government occurred on April 24, 1933 when J. J. Kenneally became Minister for Employment, Child Welfare, and Industrial Development (RJ).

RJ How difficult was he to eject?

BARTLETT: Oh once we grappled with him, he struggled a little bit, but not excessively.

RJ You referred to people going into the gallery with placards. Was that permitted?

BARTLETT: No. But it's amazing what women can hide under skirts and men can hide under suits. [Laughs] Invariably they were some material type, although there would be cardboard as well, but that's easily hidden too. But where material signs were concerned, well it's so easy for, well both men and women to hide them and they're not searched before they enter. And that's generally what happened. They just drape them over the railings, or stand up with them, with both hands holding them out. It happened quite often.

RJ Once someone has done that, will they then be asked to leave?

BARTLETT: Yes, well the Speaker would order the gallery to be cleared. The House would go into a temporary recess, while the policeman.... Invariably there was extra policemen in the gallery when it was known anything like this was going to take place, because.... Well people would get the whisper. The members would get a whisper, and they'd let the Speaker know, and the Speaker would arrange with the Commissioner of Police to have further constables available, younger ones.

RJ Overall just how much more activity was there as far as the gallery was concerned? How much more did you notice in the size of crowds and the regularity?

BARTLETT: I think generally, in general terms you're talking about, for general listening, I think there was an awful lot of interest in Parliament, and the proceedings of Parliament. People would come there and sit there quite late in the evening

just listening, more particularly I suppose if they had some interest in the legislation. But in latter years that fell away, because you know Parliament is not considered a very bright place. That's not the right word either, but....

RJ Entertaining.

BARTLETT: Entertaining place these days, but those days when the press gave it so much news coverage, and people were interested in the Parliament as a Parliament, and not just the individual member, and the doings of Parliament and what Parliament meant to them. I think generally people looked up to the parliamentary system as it was then, much better than they do today. Much more interested in it than they are today.

RJ You spoke of demonstrators coming up to Parliament House. What actually happened? In what way did they demonstrate and how far did they get?

BARTLETT: Oh invariably they would march up as a body, the unemployed did. They'd meet at Trades Hall, and they'd march up in a body, that type of demonstration. You had the other type of demonstrators who were demonstrating against a piece of legislation, a particular piece of legislation, that would congregate at Parliament House, and meet there. They'd be told, they'd be addressed by.... in the grounds. The grounds were wide open, not railed or anything like that. They're not now today, but they were much bigger grounds those days. They'd hold their demonstration, invite members to come out and qualify what they're doing, and maybe the Premier would go out, or even on [the lawn]. The parliamentary steps that they've got today, there was nothing like that then. Normally they'd probably address just on the lawn there, between the old Public Works Department and the back end of the Parliament House. That's where the demonstrations mostly took place, although they did take place in Harvest Terrace too, but Harvest Terrace was a difficult entrance for demonstrators, because the doors could be closed and that was the finish of it. But the open grounds were

there, so it was much easier for them to demonstrate in the open grounds than stand on the roadway, where vehicular traffic was moving.

RJ In your experience did members usually go out and speak to a crowd like that?

BARTLETT: Well yes, I think probably the opposition went out more than the government members, because they were looking for political kudos, or votes. The government members were looking for votes, but if they couldn't see they could get any - have a reasonable case and get any from the crowd, that were demonstrating against their particular piece of legislation.... Most of the opposition members would take the opportunity of having a talk to them, and rousing them a little bit more if you like.

RJ Did you ever consider that a member or the Premier were frightened of the crowd?

BARTLETT: No, no, no. Again you've got to remember that those days members faced up to crowds of people all the time. When they electioneering it was done from soapboxes, if you like to use the term, and the backs of trucks, where they advertised that the member for the district would be appearing there that evening, between the hours of so-and-so, for the purpose of the election, and inviting the people to attend. So members those days were always surrounded, when they electioneering, by a lot of people. Assuming the people came along of course! [Laughs] But in general they did. I remember in East Perth for instance, in 1936 it would be, when Tom Hughes, when he was contesting the East Perth seat against J. J. Kenneally who was the minister I

mentioned earlier. There was a lot of ill feeling in that electoral district at that stage, because Tom Hughes had been a staunch Labor man, and did a lot for the Labor Party in his early days, but he had apparently dropped out, and he was contesting the seat against [J. J. Keneally], East Perth. Well there was some big gatherings down there, I think in excess of six hundred on one occasion, at the East Perth oval, just near the East Perth [Football] oval there. This [unclear] was the first time a minister I think had ever been defeated. But there were wild scenes down there, because of this breakaway man coming in and contesting the seat against the minister of the day. There was a lot of political ill feeling about the whole thing.

END OF SIDE TWO TAPE THREE

TAPE FOUR SIDE ONE

BARTLETT: That's the type of electioneering that went on. They used trucks for their stand, to speak from, and the loudspeaker system was only just developing too, at that stage, at the stage I'm talking about, '36, but they used their voices to speak from these areas to the gathering public, out in the open where there was noise and things like that. But they did very well. As a matter of fact I would say that by doing this the member became a much better speaker. He used his voice. He hesitated. Whereas in my latter years - I don't know whether you want me to go this far?

RJ Yes, please do.

BARTLETT: Well in my latter years members didn't appear to have learnt the art of speaking, public speaking, and you could put it down to the fact that they didn't go out to the public and speak to the public. They probably spoke in rooms with a microphone and things like that, but they didn't go out to throw their voice, and use their voice properly. You found that the emphasising a point for instance could be done purely by lifting or raising the voice, lifting or dropping the voice. It didn't appear in the latter years when this type of electioneering finished, to the public hall type of electioneering, with microphones, that a different type of speaker developed, a quieter speaker, probably people who lacked emphasis when he was making a point. The old days they were good days for political gatherings at any rate. In my experience the people were interested in going to those gatherings. They looked forward to their member coming into the district and speaking to them and mixing with them after the .... But it doesn't happen today.

RJ As far as the House is concerned when did that change that you've identified occur?

BARTLETT: Well I think it was starting to change a bit by 1936, but hadn't really got under way. I would say by 1945. During the war years there was a lot of things that developed very quickly in the loudspeaker system and other things, and halls became a thing to have your electioneering, your main electioneering in, and it was then that the door to door knocking started developing, where it hadn't before. People came to the member, to listen to the member; he didn't go to them. There again the member, in the latter years there, he'd lost that art of talking, or debating, or using his voice. But I would say during the war years when the technical things advanced.

RJ You made reference to the fact that the grounds in the days of which you are speaking at Parliament House were very much bigger. How much bigger, how far did they extend?

BARTLETT: Well the building was smaller, the building was much smaller. I think at the present moment there's a wing on each end of end of the House that wasn't there then. The front of the present building wasn't there. It went back another, probably another forty feet and there was the old galvanised structure that I spoke about. The fountain, or the lookout fountain area wasn't there. The grounds just sloped away to a flight of steps that went down, where the Barracks entrance is, where the Public Works Department.... The actual ground area I question whether it had been reduced, but the structures on the ground have been built up.

RJ Right, thankyou. What was the next step in your work experience at Parliament House?

BARTLETT: In 1931 I was appointed, because of a .... not a retirement. The Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, a fellow named A. R. Grant, he was finding it a little bit difficult with the long, late hours the Assembly sat, so the Clerk of the Legislative Council had died I think. So he decided to transfer to the Legislative Council, and that meant a promotion right through in the Legislative Assembly, a new Clerk and then down.

I happened to be the senior messenger at the time, and they invited me to accept the Assistant Clerk of Records position. I might say I was greatly pleased. [Laughs]

RJ You were still very young though, weren't you?

BARTLETT: I think I was sixteen. '31, fourteen, fifteen, yes I would be sixteen. Rising seventeen I think. I just forget in '31.

RJ The actual title was Assistant Clerk of Records and Accounts.

BARTLETT: That's right.

RJ What did that mean you now did?

BARTLETT: Well it meant that I could work on the salary sheets, the pays and that sort of thing, and ....

RJ You say work on, what do you mean?

BARTLETT The public service had big salary sheets. You'd write the name on, the gross figure, and any tax or anything that came out of it, although the taxes didn't come of it as they come out today but there were other things. This included members too, as well as staff and Hansard staff. It was a question with the staff you had to get them to sign for their pays on this, as they were delivered to them. But there was also all the other accounts dealing with the running of Parliament. The purchase of things, it all came through our office, and you had to keep your books of record for the purpose of the government auditor. It was just an office function that was all, where your records, your accounts, your pays, your receipts. Then that was the accounts side. The record side was all the parliamentary records, the helping of members to find things, acts, speeches, newspaper cuttings. Oh there was many other little things like that, that they required for their particular debate in the

House. It was all part and parcel of the duties. In session it was a big job. Out of session it was just sort of minor detail. A member might ask, "Look I made a speech such-and-such time ago," or "someone else made a speech, I'd like to have a look at it again." Or, "I'd like to have a look at what I said, because I've had an enquiry." That type of thing. You'd find it and give it to him. He might want to have a look at some particular piece of legislation, and you'd have a look at that piece of legislation, but you'd check through the index to see whether that particular section he wanted had been amended, and you'd get all the amendments (they're all in volume form) and take them to him, and he'd have to read through them himself then. But that was the type of activity you were doing all the time, and that type. But the clerical side, the accounts side, with the members involved, the fifty members, and all their commitments, and the staff side, including Hansard, there was quite a lot of work involved on pay sheets, and requisition sheets dealing with pays and things like that. And the banking. Very few members those days had their pays paid into banks, whereas it's just a norm these days. But mostly cheques and they came up to get them, or we alternatively would post the cheque to them if they were away in the country. That's what was involved generally.

RJ So you were paying by cheque and not by cash, the member?

BARTLETT: The members, yes. They could get cash.

RJ Right, if they asked for it?

BARTLETT: Mmm. That was generally the metropolitan member who wanted....

RJ How did your hours change with that new position?

BARTLETT: Well it meant that I had to be there all the time during the day and while the House was sitting. I mentioned very early in this piece about a particular week.[1] That was on all the time. The House might rise say at six o'clock in the morning. We wouldn't get away till about seven in the morning or something like that, cleaning up for the next sitting, before going home. Many times it was a question of going home and having breakfast and a shave (when I got to that stage [Laughs]) and a bath and changing my shirt and going back without any sleep. But yes, the hours were unlimited.

RJ Was it really necessary do you think for you to be there for the whole of the sitting, specially when they went onto the hours you've talked of?

BARTLETT: Well there was a demand for attention all night, all the time they were there, because again they were debating legislation - not all legislation, but motions and things like that. There was a continuous demand. I can remember going to sleep, I know, [Laughs] but in general there was a continuous demand for that type of service.

RJ How would the message be got to you that something was required by a member in the House?

BARTLETT: Well I had a little desk in the rear of the chamber, it was specially built in, had been there before I got the position, and there was a little indicator board alongside the desk, that had little flaps run by a [battery]. It was an ordinary battery, and the members had a button, and they'd press this button and this flap would fall and would show the cross bench, middle cross

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[1] A reference to the long sitting hours, see pp 22-23 this transcript (RJ).

bench on one side, or one side or the other. Someone wanted you, so you'd get up and walk over there, and the member would look up and say, "Oh Joss will you get me a ....."

RJ So you were then free to walk into the House?

BARTLETT: I was in the House all the time.

RJ Ah huh, that was actually inside?

BARTLETT: Yes in the chamber.

RJ Sorry I had a vision of it being outside.

BARTLETT: No, no, in the chamber. If you know Parliament House, some of the galleries there, the Speaker's gallery, which is at the back of the chamber, in that curved corner at the back of the chamber, the two curves there, just inside the public gallery, or the Speaker's gallery, there's a desk on each side, and there's an indicator there. That's where we used to sit.

RJ What did you wear when the House was sitting?

BARTLETT: At that stage I was Assistant Clerk of Records. Tails, a complete set of tails, white bow tie. The full dress suit. I didn't have to pay for the cleaning of those shirts, not at any stage. But in the summer time and in the hot nights, one of those starched collars with the wings you know, the winged collar, they'd get awfully - with perspiration they'd get awfully wet and crinkled up. I think I had three shirts, or three shirts to start with, and half a dozen collars. Then you accumulated them from year to year. So you probably finished up with half a dozen shirts and twenty odd collars. But they were picked up once a week, or once a fortnight and taken to a laundry.

RJ What about the dinner suit itself? Did you have to provide that, or was that provided?

BARTLETT: No, the Parliament supplied that. It was measured and fitted. I've got one in there now. I can still wear it too. That was my latter one. I had that made in '48, was the last time.

RJ If it required you to leave the House to get the information a member wanted, what then happened about your re-entry? Was there any formality about that or could you just come and go?

BARTLETT: I could come and go any time I liked, or any officer of the House could come and go, into the chamber and out of the chamber any time. I mean the Clerks might want me for a purpose, the Speaker might want me, a member might want me, so we were in and out all the time. As a matter of fact we had all the Hansards and the Acts of Parliament on the outside of the Chamber, but surrounding it. You could hear one of those flaps fall and just look into the doorway, open the door, look in and see which one, check and go out again. But I thought you were going to ask me if we were required to go somewhere else out of the building, what did we wear at that stage. I remember going down, with John Roberts, down to the West Australian Newspaper, (I think it was down at six o'clock in the morning) we were both unshaven, both dressed in tails, to get some newspapers and bring back to Parliament House for the members. That was a voluntary job I think. Oh no we probably were told to do it, or asked to do it.

RJ And how old would you have been?

BARTLETT: Oh I suppose I'd have been .... that particular one, oh it was after I was.... it was after the war. Yes I think it was after the war.

RJ So you were much older?

BARTLETT: Yes.

RJ What did you think as a sixteen, seventeen year old, wearing tails?

BARTLETT: Well I suppose I'd been there long enough to know that I'd have to, and I was vain enough to like it. [Laughs] Yes I think I really enjoyed it. Those days I could look up the gallery and if there was anything young up there.... [Laughs]

RJ Do you remember if your mother and the rest of your family were impressed or not?

BARTLETT: I think my mother was, very much so. My sister may have been. I don't think my brothers - my brothers never had my outlook as far as doing office work. They more thought in terms of trade. They took that up too, various trades. But I think they thought I was a bit of a sissy. [Laughs]

RJ When you first went into the House and had to sit through the sessions, what was your opinion of them?

BARTLETT: Well again I think I realised it was necessary. I built up to it as a sessional messenger and a senior messenger too, thinking in terms, well if I ever get to this position I've got to do this, and I've got to do.... No it didn't worry me at all. I think the first all night I had was probably the most enjoyable experience I'd ever had. Thinking in terms of.... when someone said, "It looks like an all-nighter Joss." I thought, "Well, gee, this is good." It didn't worry me. It didn't worry me in any way at all, and I think I enjoyed the experience.

RJ In what way?

BARTLETT: I think I'd been looking forward to it, an all-nighter.

RJ And was the reality in any way disappointing or....?

BARTLETT: I think it was at six o'clock in the morning [Laughs]. Getting a bit tired. No, it wasn't disappointing. The nature of debates those days were entirely different to the latter years. A lot of vigour, no personalities, and making points all the time, and emphasising points. They didn't vote on party lines like they do today. So we had a government front bencher, not front bencher, a government cross bencher (and I know two of them) who would be attacking their own minister. Course you had the opposition egging them on, and helping, but in all I enjoyed it I think. It was something I'd looked forward to. I was never disturbed by the all-nighters, and never unhappy that I....

RJ And never bored?

BARTLETT: I wouldn't say that, I wouldn't say that. I think more in the latter stages of my career. Probably I was getting a bit old then. [Laughs] But I think the type of debating had dropped, and it was more personal, and I don't like personalities. But the earlier type of debating when they were hitting hard, and they were debating points of legislation, and points on .... not necessarily on legislation. Points on how you could do something in the country, reconstruct the country, reconstruct the mining industry, reconstruct the port facilities. Everything that was going on, it was dealing with the point.

RJ You mentioned two who used to attack their own minister and their own party.

BARTLETT: Well two in particular, it wasn't only just two. For instance I can remember talking about an early stage, three Premiers, three people who became Premiers. They came in 1933. Bert Hawke, Frank Wise, and John Tonkin. Well they took the

opportunity whenever they felt like it, having a dig at their own ministers (they were sitting in the cross bench, and the ministers in front) and even their Premier. I remember Phil Collier saying, "Look I've started something I can't finish. I'm going out." He'd asked them to speak, and they were attacking him.... not him, but the general trend of the debate was against their own leader at this stage, and it was financial matters.

But the two I was talking about. Joe Sleeman, he had some very strong points about the Port of Fremantle. The minister at this stage was a fellow named Alec McCallum, who had the Public Works Department, so he had the Port of Fremantle under his control. He wasn't doing those things to the Port of Fremantle, and I think invariably every year, or every second year there'd be a motion in the House by Mr Sleeman decrying the efforts of the government and the minister for the work not done on the Port of Fremantle. Promised, but not done and things like that.

The other one was Billy Marshall, "Lavender Bill." Being a member for the goldfields, and living in the goldfields, there were many types of gold leases. I'm trying to think of a few of them. I could get a miner's right and peg a claim. Other people could peg what they call temporary reserves and there was certain commitment to a claim, a reserve, and there was another type of mining lease too. A lot of these mining leases were being taken up by people and de Bernales was one. People like [Claude] de Bernales. Do you know the name?

RJ Yes, yes.

BARTLETT: Taking up, and there was certain working conditions required, and these working conditions weren't being done. I think you had to employ a man or something, or something, and do a certain amount of work in a given period of time, in twelve months. The minister of the day, and probably the minister prior to him too, they were, by ministerial act, without the power to do it, without the real power to do it, were giving these men special concessions so that it wasn't required that they could

have to do this work, a certain amount of work. It was debarring [the prospecting of] the reserve by the ordinary miner, the ordinary - what do they call them? Fellow that goes down fossicking.

RJ Prospector.

BARTLETT: Prospector, thanks. The early prospector, or one who wanted to prospect, couldn't go onto some of these properties, and if he did go onto them and he found gold, I think it belonged to the person who held the reserve. This was having a big bearing in his own district by his own people, his vote, the voters. They just couldn't move where they wanted to, and they knew gold was there and they couldn't do it, but this other fellow, the company that was occupying it, but not working it - so this was the fight, was over that. Getting these reserves given back to the State for the purpose of the prospectors working them.

RJ In speaking to Bob Hetherington about the set up today in the House, he spoke of the futility of debate in a way, because people have made up their mind beforehand, in the party room whatever, in which way they're going to vote. In your day do you think debate could ever sway how someone voted when it came to legislation?

BARTLETT: Yes, yes. I'm glad you asked this question, because it's something I'd forgotten, and it's one that Hetherington would know a lot about, at present day. But in my days, in my early days, right from the very beginning in my working life at Parliament House, parties met once a month. There was no caucus as we know it today; that's the Labor Party. The opposition party, they just met there once a month, and in that monthly meeting it's a gathering of the party for a purpose, a special thing. They may have sometimes called a special meeting somewhere at some stage, but not to our knowledge very much, or a few members got together. But there was no caucus and no party meetings as they are today, once a week or twice a week.

END OF SIDE ONE TAPE FOUR

TAPE FOUR SIDE TWO

BARTLETT: So that a party member generally didn't know what was coming up into the House, or what was contained in legislation coming to the House. He wouldn't know until that piece of legislation had actually been in its printed form and presented to the chamber by the minister. So from then onwards, they may, if it was a real party matter, they may have a meeting of some of the members, but again I don't remember any special meetings. There may have been where the minister called in say a certain number of members into his office, and said, "Well this is the piece of legislation, this is what we've got to deal with. Now have a look at it and come up with any alterations you want." But Parliament did the work those days. It was done in the House, not in caucus. Now everything's done in caucus now. When I'm talking about caucus, I'm talking about both parties. But everything's thrashed out in the party room before it comes into the House. Those days if it was party policy it would come in and be brought, and the first thing the average member would know about, that's the party member of the ministerial party in power, the first they would know about it was when it was presented to the House as a piece of written legislation. So Hetherington would be right today, but what happened those days, that the debating took place in the House.

Let me say this I think the House is the poorer for it today. Members read the legislation, they studied the legislation, they came back into the House, and they would debate it on its merits, partywise, but certainly on its merits, and then when they went into committee and they spoke about it on each clause by clause, a member (when it happened, and it was happening every week, every day sometimes) an opposition member would get up, or even a government member would get up and say, "Mr Minister I think that the drafting of this particular clause, it doesn't read as you think it does. Now I would think you should take it back to the Crown Law Department and get it further looked at." The minister would say, "I'm a bit doubtful myself. Get one of your

....." because that fellow couldn't move the adjournment, the debate he's *spoken* on. "Get the member next door to you to move that the debate be adjourned." And that was done, and the next time the legislation would come before the House the minister would stand up and he'd say, "Mr Speaker I've had my officers look at this piece of legislation. They agree with what such and such a member said, that it doesn't completely cover the aspect that I spoke about, and they've suggested certain amendments." Now the minister wouldn't take the kudos by moving those amendments himself. He would say to the member concerned, "Now if you get the amendments drafted we'll let you move them at the next meeting, at the next time we deal with this piece of legislation." So it was a debating House and the legislation was fully covered. There may have been a lot of mistakes made in legislation those days too, but the legislation was debated in the House and not in the party room. As I've mentioned earlier, as far as I know the parties never met for the purpose of dealing with legislation. They met once a month. That was about the average during the session. The legislation or whatever was coming before the House, had to be dealt by the Parliament, came to the Parliament, and that was the first time the majority of members knew. The Cabinet would know about it, because it would go before Cabinet, the particular piece of legislation, but the members themselves, the general run of members, and that's where they debated it, and fought their ministers.

RJ So in your experience, could someone with a good argument and good logic have swayed the vote of another person?

BARTLETT: No, I don't think so. [Pause] I think the members were so well versed. Although educationally they might not have been, had the background of some of our present.... but I think they were so versed in reading legislation, and having a knowledge of the legislation because they studied it, that they would take it even to - take it to someone else, you know, probably someone in their own town, a lawyer in their own town, and ask him to have a look at it. But they may not rely on their own viewing of it, because, as I say, their lack of educational

background and the use of words. But in general I don't think a member, any particular member could sway another member, or another party member, if he had some doubts about it.

I remember Norbert Keenan, Sir Norbert Keenan, who was an Attorney General in the government at one stage, and he was probably one of the recognised senior lawyers at law in this State, he and Joe Sleeman [who] probably had less schooling than I had, he and Joe Sleeman used to fight over the wording of a piece of legislation. Norbert would say, "If the Member for Fremantle would like to come out for a while we'll have a talk about this." Quite often he'd come back and he'd say, "Look I've had a talk to the...." (you know when it came up again) "I've had a talk to the Member for Fremantle. We've agreed to disagree, but he's got a point, and I'm prepared to move to cover that point." This sort of thing happened. It's amazing to me the way party lines are played these days, against those days, when members could sit down and talk something over, leave the Chamber, two opposite numbers, for the purpose of discussing this particular piece of legislation, how they could read it, how they could view it, and what problems it would cause within their particular district, and then coming back in the House and debate it. But no, I suppose a person like Sir Norbert - Phil Collier may have. He wasn't a lawyer, but he had an appeal as a debater. He might have been able to convince members that it wasn't going to do the things they thought it was going to do. It was going to do the things the government wanted it to do, but not what they thought it might do. That might have happened; yes it probably did. Probably that's the reason why so many members would come up, suddenly find that the .... someone found a loophole by just the wording, and when this loophole was found, they'd bring an amendment up to adjust the situation. Probably the opposition member had been right in his reading of it, but he'd been convinced that it didn't go that way. But in general I think that they ironed out the legislation pretty well those days in the House.

RJ When you first went into the House in 1931 James Mitchell was Premier, and it was a .....

BARTLETT: Nationalist was it?

RJ Nationalist, yes, Nationalist Party government. Who stood out in your mind in the House. Who were the good speakers, the ones with the best arguments, or just the personalities?

BARTLETT: Well I'd say Phil Collier and Sir James Mitchell. Oh he wasn't Sir James.

RJ Why did they stand out?

BARTLETT: Well being the leader of their parties, they were, as far as I was concerned they were the leader of the parliamentary system. I had some personal feeling towards them both, because of my initial stages of meeting them, and I looked up to them. I suppose when you leave those two people out so many that ..... I'm just trying to think of individuals now. I mean Bill Marshall was one and Joe Sleeman was another. John Scaddan because he was an interesting member, and he was a big fellow, good voice, good speaker, and I think had been Premier at one stage earlier. Yes the Scaddan ministry. But he'd lost his seat, some reason or other, for a time, and he came back. He lost his seat and the person that won his seat.... no I think he failed to nominate. I'm not certain. The person that won the seat I think stood down because the government of the day, the new government of the day wanted Scaddan in the ministry. The person that won the seat, or some other seat the person resigned from so that Scaddan could contest it at a by-election, so they could get him into the ministry. But he was, he was an outstanding man too. He had been Premier at one stage. I suppose that probably swayed my thoughts towards him, but he was a nice bloke at the same [time]. And Sir Norbert Keenan because.... he was a gouty man. [Laughs] I remember I fell over his foot one night rushing around the chamber, and he didn't like me for twenty-four hours [Laughs], but he was always a

[gentleman]. He used to spend his time in my office. He'd come around and talk to [me]. He was an outstanding lawyer and a nice bloke too, but a fiery bloke in many ways. Didn't hit hard, but he was a tremendous debater too. Phil Collier, McCallum. No, of all the government members those days I suppose I would say that Michael Francis Troy was a.... he was a hard fellow to get to know, but again for some reason or other I never had any problems with him, but many other people did. He became Speaker afterwards, then became Agent General in London. I met him in London during the war (this is getting away again) and he made me most welcome. Apologised for little things that might have happened while he was Speaker, but it was during his ministerial term that I knew him best there. Oh as Speaker too, but his ministerial term.[1] He was a fiery little speaker. Wasn't a big fellow, but very fiery with it, and he used to pound the desk a lot, and move. When he got onto his feet to speak on a subject where he'd been hurt by debate, by criticism (he was easily hurt by criticism in debate) he would pound that table. The front bench was allocated to the ministers. The ministers would clear out from the front bench, and he'd be wandering up and down that ....[bangs table] [Laughs] thumping and talking.

RJ What wandering up and down the front bench?

BARTLETT: Yes. Used to have to clear out the road. [Laughs] The Speaker would call him to order and tell him he wasn't speaking from his place in the House. No, that's a few, and other than Mitchell.... T. A. L. Davy was in the opposition then. T. A. L. Davy, he was another lawyer, but he died I think about three or four years after this, after I got into the House, but he was looked upon as a strength of the Nationalist Party to come. Tal Davy, yes, but his initials were T. A. L. Davy. Oh I think he was in this ministry too.

RJ Was anything of Collier's drink problem showing up at that stage?

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[1] M. F. Troy was Speaker from 1912-1917 (RJ).

BARTLETT: Oh yes, yes. I think it had shown up long before that. I don't know whether the loneliness developed it. Certainly from my early days, from my beginning days at Parliament House he had this problem, occasional breakdown. I don't know what he was drinking. He used to drink a mixture of stout and beer at one stage, what they called.... oh they did have a name for it. But yes it was showing up.

RJ In what way?

BARTLETT: He kept it under control quite a bit, but he would.... I think he probably had his good supply down in the Premier's office, and certainly he had it in his room. His voice used to get very slurry. Oh and he'd anger quickly. But I think most of the problem would be outside the chamber, not in the chamber. I think he knew that he'd gone a little bit too far, like drinkwise, and so he left the chamber and went to his office. It was a pity that, because he was such a tremendous debater, tremendous thinker, and maybe - I shouldn't say this I suppose - maybe he was encouraged to, particularly in his office, to drink a little bit more than he should do. That's the office, the Premier's office.

RJ Who would have encouraged him there do you think?

BARTLETT: [Laughs] Well I wouldn't like to say names, but there was talk that quite a lot of papers were signed without his knowledge under certain circumstances. But I don't know. I think it was a shame to see him go the way he did, although he was able to keep it under control a lot. He was a big man, and he was able to keep it under control, but there were occasions when he just let loose a little bit. But it was with the knowledge of everyone associated with Parliament House that he was a heavy drinker.

RJ As we're on the subject let's just follow it through. He then of course became Premier in 1933 and then you've got his resignation in 1936 when Willcock took over. What did you notice about his state in the House?

BARTLETT: Well it probably wasn't registering very well by that stage. I think there was pressure being brought to, by his party members because of this problem - by the party members, for him to resign. He wasn't going to his office as often as he should and again the pressure would be brought to him. He was spending more time at home, and in spending time at home he was, I think, just drinking. In the end it became a little bit embarrassing, after 1936 that is. He used to ring me and as I say, again it came back to me, and he'd want to talk. He was at home and he'd just want to talk. I used to get caught in the situation that .... well John [Roberts] snapped at him on one occasion over the phone. He used to ring John for drink, to be delivered to his home. That was when John was the Controller there, and I think John snapped at him on one occasion, or was a bit abrupt when he spoke to him. I finally got the brunt of it from Collier. I had to sit on the phone there. It used to be nearly every second day just about for a period of time. "I waant-ta taalk ta Mr Baartlett. Mr Baarlett...." Then he would start. I used to just put the phone down. I'd carry on, and I'd say, "Yes, Mr Collier. Yes Mr Collier. No Mr Collier." [Laughs] He did, he got to that stage, as I say, became embarrassing. It was all done from home. Then he'd ring up. He'd read something in the morning's paper about some problem that had developed in the House, and then it would be the type of member that existed there, had come to the House, and their lack of knowledge of the procedures, and not willing to learn, and the parliamentary system was going wild. That type of thing.

Yes, it was a pity to see him go the way he did. I think that first he was getting sick, secondly he wasn't appearing at the office enough, thirdly he wasn't handling the situation well, and you'd like to say fourthly because he wasn't handling the situation well, he was also not handling the public well, or not

going over well with the public. So it had become noticeable that he was falling away, and yet in his good moments he was still capable of talking out the situation, the situation that could develop, or should develop if certain action was taken place.

RJ Did the opposition take advantage of his condition?

BARTLETT: No. There may have been individuals, but in general no. They appreciated him. They knew what he had done for the State. They knew what he was trying to do. They avoided him under those circumstances, but they didn't take advantage of him. Today I hate to think that a similar situation, but I think those days, I say people didn't attack a member from a personal point of view. They were all friendly. I think they appreciated him, as I mentioned, they appreciated what he'd done, they appreciated the fellow for what he was trying to do, and realising that we all have our failures, and he had one.

RJ You say there was pressure from his party to resign. Did you feel that pressure came from his immediate Cabinet colleagues?

BARTLETT: No, I think it would have been general from his party. The Cabinet colleagues might have, as individuals, might have spoken to their party members, and say, "Well look it's not much good me seeing Phil today about the matter you brought up, because he's not in the right condition." They may have influenced voting that way, to put extra pressure on them if the thing came to a head, as I suppose [unclear] where every member, or all members of that particular party were finding it difficult to get some reply, or get some conversation or something like that. They would say, "Well it's no good going to the poll with this man any more as our head if we want to win. People are no longer seeing Collier at his best, or seeing him at all." To face up to the public in electioneering, well they had a fear about that. I think that's where the pressure was brought to bear to stand down.

RJ But from his Cabinet, from whence a successor would come, with Willcock of course to the fore, did you ever get any feeling that they would have liked to have got rid of Collier?

BARTLETT: No, no, no, no.

RJ In other words were they loyal to Collier or not?

BARTLETT: Yes. Well they were loyal to him in the House and around the House, and I honestly think that if he hadn't have just fallen away that little bit more than he had say in '33, or in those earlier days, I would think he would have still been.... He was getting on in years too at that stage. I forget, he.... '36 he would have been about, must have been rising 1900 - '36. He got into Parliament in 1904. That's thirty-two years. [Pause] He must have been between sixty-five and seventy at that stage. He might have even said himself, "It's time I got out." But I know there was no real criticism of him in the House, like in the House itself, but there was this comment, "You can't see him today," this sort of business. I think they were looking forward to the opportunity, and I think maybe he realised too, because he was a big enough man to realise that he was going a little bit too far, and he wouldn't be any good as a leader any more. I think '36 was the election year wasn't it?

RJ Yes it was.

BARTLETT: Mmm, mmm.

RJ And Willcock took over.

BARTLETT: Yes, yes. Just.

RJ With the last period that he spent in the House as Premier no more, he has a reputation for not speaking except on two occasions, one of them very emotionally, in which it is said that he reflected on the lack of loyalty of his colleagues. What did you feel about his last years in Parliament?

BARTLETT: Well I suppose by that stage I'd more or less forgotten .... when I say more or less forgotten him, because he didn't put in an appearance in Parliament House very much at all. I'd forgotten that he'd spoken twice, in the three year term you mean. I was getting it back from his home all the time. I was upset, as far as I was concerned, upset with his general breakdown. He didn't put in an appearance in Parliament House. There was no apologies necessary. Maybe once a month, once a week. I'd like to see the records now, but I question whether he was at Parliament House much at all. Or whether he took his seat. He may have walked into the chamber sometimes, and that's all he had to do. He'd walk into the chamber in that door there, and walk out again, and he would be recorded, or just sit in his seat and then walk out, and that would be the finish. Be recorded as being there that day. I think in general he spent ninety per cent of his time at home.

END OF TAPE FOUR SIDE TWO

TAPE FIVE SIDE ONE

RJ A further interview with Mr Joss Bartlett held in his home on the 8th September 1986.

Mr Bartlett before we go on this morning, just a small point from your description of your work as a messenger. John Roberts referred to working on a Saturday morning as a messenger when he started at the House. Did you have to work Saturday mornings?

BARTLETT: Only on a rostered basis. It was purely for the purpose of picking up mail and taking mail to the post office, and any other messages that may be wanted, or taken down town. But it wasn't an enforced day for all of us on the staff.

RJ And when you did have to work Saturdays, do you remember what hours you worked?

BARTLETT: The normal starting time every day was nine thirty, and in this case we would finish about eleven o'clock, between eleven and twelve, depending on the things we had to do. I mean there were times when there wouldn't be anything to do.

RJ When you became Assistant Clerk of Records and Accounts in 1931 did you have to work Saturday mornings?

BARTLETT: Well again it was on a roster system. Like two or three of us were involved and it was just one of those things that you had to do on a Saturday morning. But again it wasn't a fixed every Saturday morning.

RJ What would it have worked out? Every second one, every third one?

BARTLETT: Oh every third one probably.

RJ When you became Assistant Clerk of Records and Accounts you referred to the fact that you used to help members find newspaper cuttings, and I wondered if that meant that there was any system of cutting out certain articles, or whether it was just a question of looking through a newspaper for them to find the article?

BARTLETT: No, we kept a cutting book of all parliamentary comments, including those that were parliamentary debates, although that wasn't always required because you had Hansard for anything that took place in the House, but anything special. Any comments made about it in the press then it was all cut out and pasted in a big volume. When I say volume there's a different .... I'm trying to think of the word for it. Brown paper, and we used to get them made up at the Government Printer. I think it stood thirty inches high and about fifteen inches wide, and it was all pasted in there on ..... Everything that was printed, certainly in the West Australian Newspaper, taken out of the West Australian Newspaper, and kept there. It was a constant record, and it was indexed too, so you had subject matter for the members to look at if they wanted to, and you had quite a ready reference index too. But that was a constant thing to keep.

RJ Who was responsible for doing that, keeping the cuttings?

BARTLETT: Myself when I was there. If I was on leave of course someone else took over, my senior officers. In some cases, out of session probably, where there wasn't so much involved, the senior messenger could do it. But it was my ..... I had to make certain it was done all the time and check it. But this was one of the things, a help for members, because those days we had no wireless or TV, and everything came through the press. But I don't think we involved the Sunday Times those days. The Sunday Times wasn't the Sunday Times as it is today, and the Smith's

Weekly and I think you probably know that type of paper, so we didn't bother with their cuttings, but certainly the West Australian and sometimes the Daily News.

RJ Country papers at all?

BARTLETT: No. But we had files of country papers. So that if you picked up the West Australian reference you'd roughly know the date it would appear in a country paper, because they were mostly weekly papers. For the benefit of a member this was satisfactory because if he knew the date was the 18th of August, something like that, he'd know when the publication would likely appear. They were filed in the reading room, each country paper produced in the State.

RJ You were talking about the demonstrations, the marches on Parliament House that occurred during the Depression, in our session last time. John Roberts referred to an episode when actual rocks were thrown through the windows of the dining room, and members got under tables etc. Were you present at that time?

BARTLETT: No I wasn't. I heard about it the following day. Oh, let me say at that stage I wasn't eating in the dining room. We were eating down below. John Roberts would only have got it second hand too, because I don't think at that stage he was eating in the dining room.

RJ No he wasn't.

BARTLETT: So it would only come from his senior officers, those who were eating in the dining room. But certainly they did throw bricks through. I mean windows were damaged by stones and they were found within the dining room itself, having come through the window. But yes, I was there at the time, but not in the room when it happened, in the dining room when it happened.

RJ So how did you find out about it? What was the first you knew of it?

BARTLETT: I think the first I knew of it was the following morning, if my memory's right. It must have been that I didn't stay for the evening meal that night. I think it must have been a Thursday, from memory, and I probably didn't stay for my evening meal. I probably went home and .... I think it was the next morning. I'm trying to think what year it was now, when I hesitated then. I certainly would have been married when it happened.[1]

RJ It was the end of 1930, I think.

BARTLETT: Yes. There must have been some reason for it, but I certainly didn't hear about it until the next day. I can't remember why. I would say that either I didn't stay for the evening meal, or alternatively for some reason I had been away that day.

RJ When you did hear of it, how big an episode was it described to you as being?

BARTLETT: Well I can't remember how many people might have been involved outside the building. It was a demonstration of course. They did say that once the stones started to come through the window that members, a few members either ducked under the table or ran for the doors of course. Some ducked under the table. There was probably a.... I wouldn't say a fear or anything like that, it was just a .... well I suppose scare would be .... of being hit by flying glass more then anything else. There were certain things said, and I just can't remember them now about certain individuals who took refuge under the tables very smartly. No, I couldn't answer much more than that, because at the time there were so many things taking place as far as this.... probably it hasn't registered that much as far as I was concerned; just one of those things.

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[1]Mr Bartlett was married in 1937.

RJ Do you remember how quickly the glass was repaired?

BARTLETT: Well I would say that probably within a week. I think it was boarded up initially, because the Public Works Department could do that, and to get that type of glass and that size of glass, cut and ready and fitted it would take I think a week. But I say again, it's just guessing, because once again I wasn't .... the dining room was out of my bounds.

RJ What was your pay as Assistant Clerk of Records and Accounts?

BARTLETT: I think it was eighty-nine pounds a week.

RJ Not a week.

BARTLETT: Oh no, no - a year, I'm sorry. [Laughter] Eighty-nine pounds a year. It was still based on an age, according to the Public Service rates plus something, to cover the .... well there was no over time being paid so they gave you that extra to cover the longer hours that you worked, and just a basic pay that was all. The weekly amount I couldn't.... eighty-nine. I think it was about thirty-seven shillings a week. I don't know how that works out on eighty-nine.

RJ Well a hundred is two pound a week, roughly, a hundred and four is two pound a week.

BARTLETT: So thirty-seven shillings.....

RJ Yes, I don't know what tax would have been taken out, etc.

BARTLETT: No tax those days.

RJ Oh. [Laughs]

BARTLETT: But I think the weekly.... it could have been around, I had in mind thirty-seven, but it could have been thirty-six something, you know, odd pence.[1]

RJ What about annual leave, what was the set up there?

BARTLETT: Well we were, right from the very beginning, it was understood on the ..... there was nothing official about it, but the Speaker granted six weeks annual leave, subject to sessional requirements of course. But we were given six weeks annual leave. Although I say there was nothing written down that we should have it, the Speaker on one occasion did.... well he did write down, "I would like to see six weeks leave granted to So-and-So, and if it could be passed down the line so much the better." It was left at that, and it worked very well. [Laughs]

RJ Was it usually passed down the line?

BARTLETT: Yes.

RJ Did you still get the evening meal when the House was sitting?

BARTLETT: Yes.

RJ Any other extras like that?

BARTLETT: Yes. At eleven o'clock each night supper would be brought to the office. It entailed having tea, or milk if you desired it, but there was always a small plate of ham, bread and butter and some fruit cake.

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[1]Eighty-nine pounds a year is very nearly 35 shillings per week (RJ).

RJ What about morning and afternoon tea now you were an office worker during the day?

BARTLETT: No. Not provided for. If you wanted something to eat you'd seek permission from your senior officer to run down to the local tuck shop probably. But that wasn't done as far as I was concerned, or most chaps were concerned. You had your lunch, as you normally would, took it to work, except when the House was sitting: the House provided your lunch. If it sat in the morning then they provided the midday meal for you. But other than that we provided ours, and there was no provision for morning and afternoon tea.

RJ Where did you have your lunch now you were a clerical officer?

BARTLETT: Still down below in the kitchen quarters. Going into the dining room didn't come into force until oh, a number of years later. But at that stage we had this .... I might say that too, you asked about afternoon tea. There was a certain day of the week, I think it was a Wednesday, when they made their own ice cream on the premises. The chef (it was a woman chef those days - a woman cook, she wasn't a chef) she made certain that she had a certain amount of ice cream left over for her little boys, and I was still included as a little boy [Laughs] and invited down to have some ice cream.

RJ Was long service leave in, in the 1930s?

BARTLETT: It didn't apply - the part that I did as a messenger, it didn't apply to, but as soon as I was appointed to a permanent position, yes, long service leave applied. It was three months every seven years, the same as the public service.

RJ Where was your office? What was your office like?

BARTLETT: Well I referred to, in the earlier part, about a big galvanised structure that was built between the two chambers, a two storey structure. We had the bottom floor, part of the bottom floor, near the Legislative Assembly present chamber. They were lined with .... it was corrugated, as I say, iron outside, and lined with cellite.... It wouldn't be cellite those days, they'd have another name for it. [Pause] Any rate it was lined, and with shelving all around to hold all the books and the statutes and publications, parliamentary publications. There'd be two desks and two chairs in one room the size of this room.

RJ Which would be what size?

BARTLETT: This is fourteen by twelve I think, and it would roughly about that size. I was lucky as far as that was concerned. I suppose all the time the senior officer took what was considered the dominant position in the room, and I was pushed in.... not pushed into a corner, but I had the desk near the window, which I thought was very good, because on a sunny day like this, I was getting the sun and he wasn't. He was in the centre of the room. [Laughs] So I rather thought I had the advantage over him that way, in summertime at any rate. But that was the size of the room and that was the situation. One desk each, and a chair. I didn't have a telephone, he did.

RJ Who was he?

BARTLETT: At that stage it was Fred Islip.

RJ And he was Clerk of Records and Accounts was he then?

BARTLETT: [Pause] Fred Islip went up to Clerk of Records and.... Yes, Fred Islip, yes, yes. Then when another death took place he went up higher and they brought a fellow named Len Hawley from the public service, because I think I referred to earlier that I

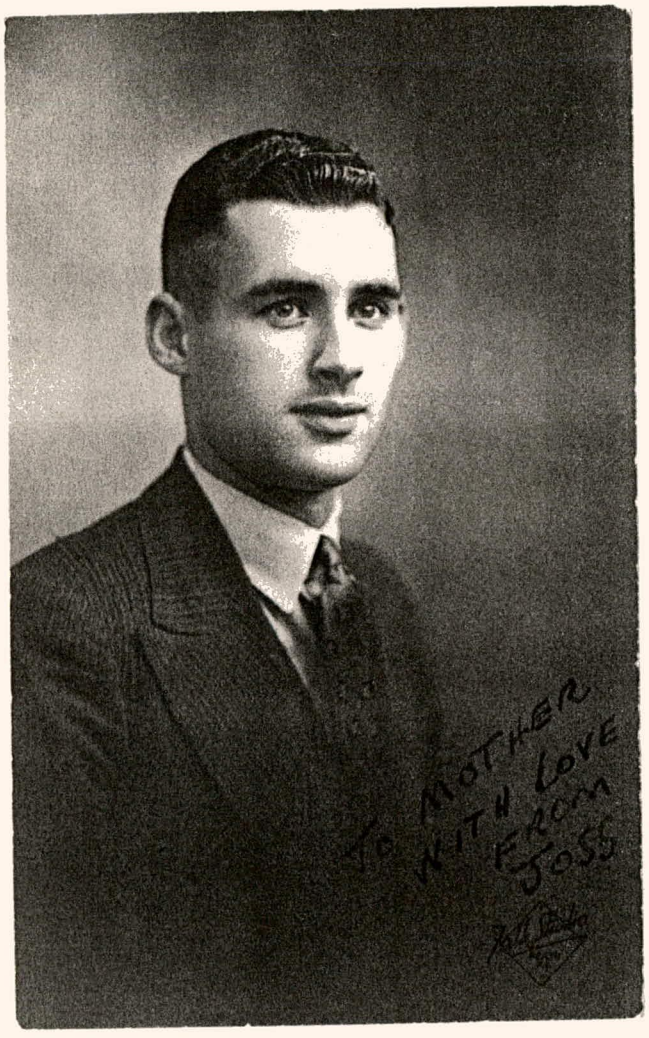
was too young to hold any higher position in the House. They brought someone else in. But Fred Islip went up to Clerk [Assistant].

RJ Actually you haven't referred to this on tape. What was the situation regarding Hawley, what happened?

BARTLETT: Well we're jumping to 1933 now, I think it was 1933. In '31 I was appointed Assistant Clerk of Records, Fred Islip was Clerk of Records, he went up to the Clerk of Records and Accounts. That remained until '33, when the Assistant Clerk of the Legislative Assembly - I'll name him, Norm Wilkinson, died, or he was on sick leave for a while and died. They promoted Fred Islip to his situation, but they wouldn't promote me to Fred Islip's position because of my youth. So they brought.... while Mr Wilkinson was sick they brought this fellow Hawley, Len Hawley from the Public Works Department, to sit in his situation, his place, as Assistant Clerk of Legislative Assembly while he was away. When Wilkinson did come back for a week or so, maybe a month or so, Hawley went back to the public service, Public Works Department. But when Wilkinson finally died late in '33, Fred Islip was appointed to the Assistant Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, and they invited Hawley to come back and take the Clerk of Records and Accounts position, because I had this problem regarding age.

RJ Did you mind that at the time?

BARTLETT: I could see their point of view and I knew the situation. I did mind. I mean you couldn't help but mind it, but I realised that it just had to be, because of my age. The only thing that I kept thinking, well if I'd only been two years older it wouldn't have happened, or three years older, it wouldn't have happened that way. It restricted my .... whether it was good or bad I don't know, restricted my progress, because Hawley was always in front of me, and he was making progress too, so he'd actually restricted my progress.



Joss Bartlett, 1934

RJ How old was Len Hawley when he started?

BARTLETT: I think thirty-three.

RJ Even though you were only eighteen at the time, do you think you could have done the job?

BARTLETT: No, I don't, I don't. I think I lacked experience. I lacked a lot of experience. Although Hawley lacked a lot of experience too, but he had the background of having been Assistant Clerk for a period. I think I probably realised the situation had to be developed the way it did do, but it rather irked me a little bit, it having happened. But he was a good fellow to work with, so it didn't matter that much.

RJ You referred to Frank Wise, Bert Hawke and John Tonkin taking their place in the House in 1933. Do you remember their maiden speeches at all, and the impact those men made?

BARTLETT: Yes. They made quite an impact on the House. They were quite good. They'd come in with quite.... Well I think most people [who] came in that had a good background, political background (and the three of them did) came to the House as fairly good debaters, but these, Wise, Hawke and Tonkin, they did create quite a bit of interest in the House, because they were all youngsters. Well not youngsters, but in their early thirties. They sat together. They became known as the three musketeers, because they did attack their own ministers in the front bench. They realised that they were, having had a look around the chamber, within their own party at any rate, that they had a good chance of being elevated to - because of their background, educational background and their knowledge, being elevated to the front rank in near years, in future years. They took every opportunity they could to speak on subjects they knew quite a bit about. Wise with agriculture mostly, finance a bit. Hawke was generally industrial. Tonkin, he generalised a lot more than the others did, because of his schoolteaching background, his movement in the country area. He had a sound

knowledge of the country area. He also had, having been born in Kalgoorlie, he had a fairly good knowledge of the goldfields' problems. So he generalised more than the others, but they were all sound debaters.

I think Frank Wise's first speech (I hope I am right here, that it was his first speech, it was certainly in his first year) and he spoke on finance in the North, and the difficulty of people with no banks, and the paying of people, by either bartering or exchanging goods. And he also spoke, and he showed some of them in the House, what he called shinplasters. They're pieces of paper - I don't know where they got the name shinplaster from, but I should have found out, or I probably did, and I've forgotten now. But they were just IOUs. If for instance, a pastoralist had some work done by a particular person, he gave them one of these IOUs. The business firms in the area had the confidence of this pastoralist. They accepted the IOU, gave the fellow what he wanted, the worker, what he wanted, and if they had cash they gave him change in cash. If they didn't have cash they gave him another IOU in the change. But it was a system of payment with no banks, built into a community in certain parts of the North West. It was a rather interesting debate. It was an unusual thing to think that people were honest enough to honour bits of paper without going through banks, and finally I assume, when they did finally finish up (and they would have to in some sort of banking system, but it would have to be in the North West) the bank managers accepted them, and either debited someone's account or credited someone's account, if they had an account.

RJ Which of those three men stood out as the better speaker, if at all?

BARTLETT: I think in the initial stages Frank Wise. As a more all round debater, yes. Tonkin lacked humour - still does - in debate. Bert Hawke probably spoilt some of his speeches by hitting hard, and maybe this was good as far as he was concerned - hitting hard and realising the situation was getting a little bit tense, or too tense, and would crack a joke, and double up with laughter himself. If the House went with him so much the better, but I can remember - it was later. I don't know whether you want me.... I can digress here. It was later on in his career. I think he was Leader of the Opposition then, and Ross McLarty was the Premier.

END OF SIDE ONE TAPE FIVE

TAPE FIVE SIDE TWO

BARTLETT: He used to take advantage of Sir Ross. Sir Ross was bald, didn't have a hair anywhere on his head, and of course when he was being attacked he used to get red in the face. Bert Hawke used to make reference to his baldness. [unclear] say, "Now don't pull your hair out like that, because of what I'm saying." I mean comments like that. Well one that always struck me and I think it was a real good one, the McLarty family had pastoral areas up in the north, and they shipped a lot of bulls down to Fremantle for the overseas market. Probably they were the greatest exporters of beef from this State, to the export market. Sir Ross was making some comment, some interjection to Bert Hawke when he was speaking, and Bert Hawke turned around to the House and he said, "I don't think the Honourable Members should take any notice of that interjection of our Premier, because he's known as the biggest bullshipper in the North West." [Laughs] That always struck me as one of those things that .... well Bert Hawke was at his best then, that type of speech.

RJ Did Hansard get that one right?

BARTLETT: Yes. [Laughs] When he said it he really doubled up himself. He'd been waiting for a long time to get this one in, [Laughs] and it came out just like that. He could hit hard, but he also, I think, he just had that right sense of timing, to say well now enough is enough. Then he would sort of break up the tension. But in general I think Frank Wise was the better overall speaker. He had a sense of humour with his, and he had a sense of .... you know good continuity, without having to ruffle people too much. But Bert Hawke could ruffle you and could be very hard hitting at times. Sometimes you know - that's why I gave Frank Wise the first point, because sometimes, particularly when it came to attacking one or two individuals in the House, he just, in my opinion went too far, for Bert Hawke.

RJ Can you be more specific? In what way did he go too far?

BARTLETT: Well I don't like using names, but I suppose I have to. I think he used to .... Bill Grayden, he used to attack Bill Grayden. I like Bill Grayden, everyone liked Bill Grayden, but Bill Grayden had one of those problems. It was not only associated with the drinking it was associated with the full moon. I think that - I don't know whether there was any personalities in this at all, whether there was something in bygone days that caused it, but Bert Hawke took a delight in attacking Grayden at certain times of the year and making reference to the full moon. I thought it was uncalled for and in my [opinion] unnecessary. So it sort of downgraded.... although he was a good speaker, it still downgraded in my mind, for having gone that far, gone as far as he did on occasions, when real bitterness came into it. It wasn't his usual approach to things.

RJ You referred to an earlier occasion to having a girlfriend. How did you find a courtship working in the House and working long hours and so on?

BARTLETT: Well the girlfriend is my wife.

RJ Yes. Well tell me about your courtship.

BARTLETT: Oh I think I was probably fifteen - fifteen I went to a party and we met there, and made arrangements to meet the next day. She worked in town and I worked in town. We used to meet at the post office, post office steps. She thought I was much older than fif[teen]. Then I think there was a bit of fear coming into her mind that I was so much older than she, that worried her. When she found out I was only twelve months older - well not twelve months, only six weeks: November, February - about three months, of course that made a lot of difference then. But no, we used to meet there and I would go out to her home on weekends. We'd go to the beach. You want to remember the House

was only sitting from July until the end of November, or middle of December at the most probably, and it was three days a week, so there was always Friday, Mondays and Fridays and weekends. I question those days at any rate whether anyone had enough money, fellows in my position, had enough money to go out every night with anyone, every night of the week. I suppose all courtships took that place, you know, with two or three days a week. Unless you had a bicycle of course, and they didn't live far away. But I lived in Subiaco, my girlfriend lived in Maylands, or Inglewood as it was those days. There was a tram one way and a tram the other way, and the twain didn't meet until you had to walk between the two. [Laughs]

RJ What was her name?

BARTLETT: Torrance. T O R R A N C E.

RJ And her first names?

BARTLETT: Winifred.

RJ And when did you marry?

BARTLETT: On the 5th of June 1937.

RJ By which time you were twenty-two.

BARTLETT: Yes.

RJ So in all that time did you have any other girlfriend?

BARTLETT: No. I had a lot, no not a lot, I had .... no I didn't have any girlfriends at all, but I used to meet a lot of girls through Win and also through Parliament House too, that would come up there, and some of them returned, but that was the finish of it.

RJ Did you have any children?

BARTLETT: Yes, Lawrence Graham, 1938. Jocelyn Faye, 1941. Kaye Elizabeth, 1948, and Pamela Jeanette, 1958. I might say that I would never call my son Jocelyn, although it was a family name. We gave it to my daughter. I'd had enough trouble with my name as Jocelyn during my Air Force days, when you were in camp, and having your name called out, and boys will be boys [Laughs] and comments made and when they called out, "Jocelyn Coyte Bartlett." [Laughs] So as I say it was one of those things. I never thought of giving my son my first name, but certainly my daughter.

RJ With the outbreak of war, how did it affect the staff at Parliament House?

BARTLETT: Well under .... I'm trying to think of the name of the Act now, which stopped certain persons in certain activities, being....

RJ Manpower Act?

BARTLETT: Manpower Act. I think there was one prior to that too, was another Act. At any rate it stopped parliamentary officers and other people from being taken into the services under any circumstances. So it didn't have a great bearing on the staff at Parliament House, except in my case and John Roberts. John Roberts had been in the Army before that, on a voluntary basis, in the cadets. I think he had some ranking in that too. I think he probably reached, at that stage, at the outbreak of war I think he'd probably reached the office ranking. He had some leverage there. In my case I had to write to the Manpower officer - you're right about that. I had to write to the Manpower Officer, indicating that my senior officers were agreeable to me joining the services, subject to his approval. The Chief Manpower Officer happened to be Brigadier-General Martin at the time, and Brigadier-General Martin was also Sergeant at Arms at Parliament House, so it wasn't a hard thing

to overcome. He got my letter, I spoke to him [Laughs]. I mean he knew what I was doing, but I still had to write, and that's how I joined the Air Force.

RJ Did you have your senior officers' permission?

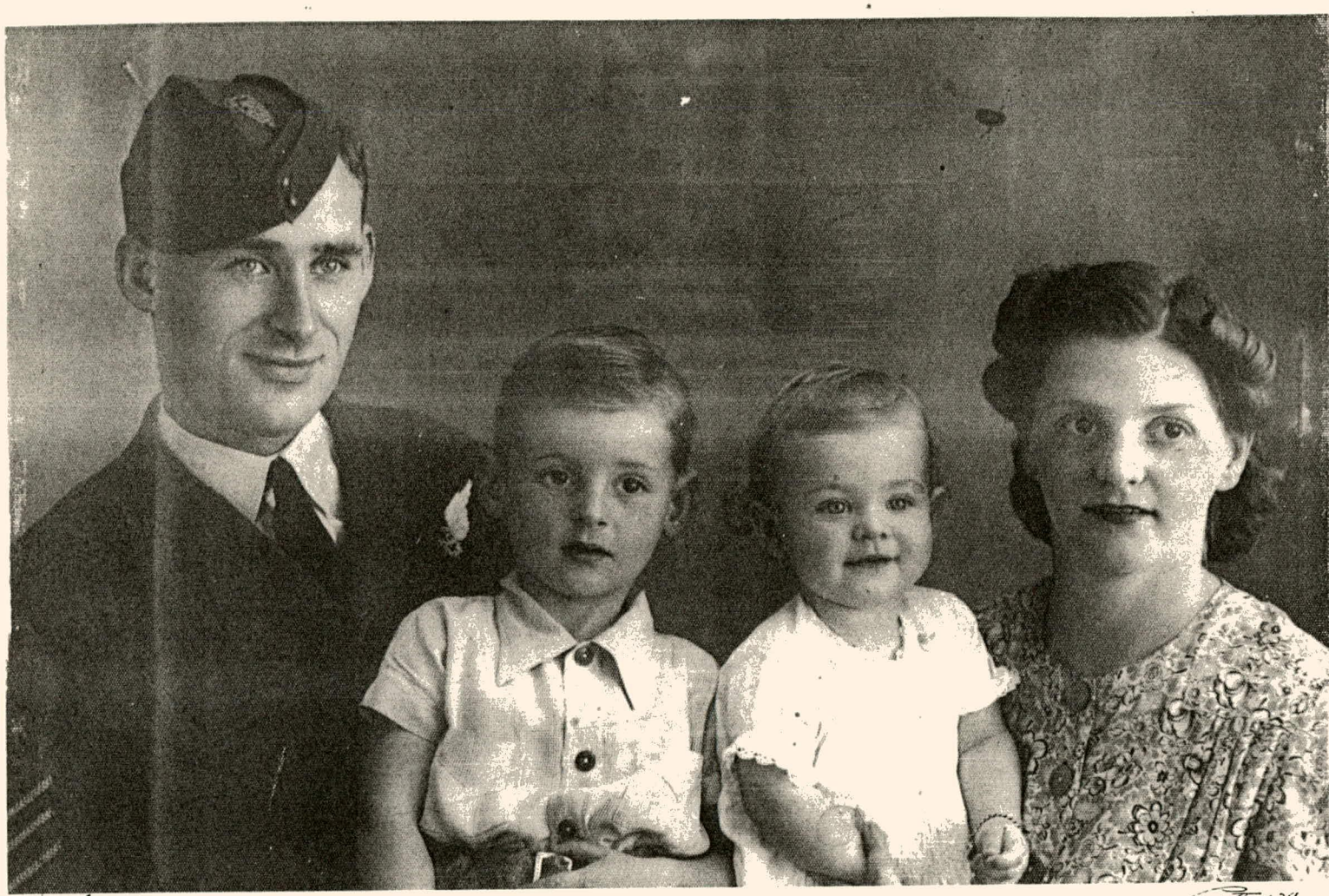
BARTLETT: Yes.

RJ You did.

BARTLETT: Yes. Yes, I made certain of that. They said, "Well if you want to go ahead Joss, well we won't stop you in any way. But you may lose certain privileges, but that remains to be seen." But legislation and well, they were the type of officer wouldn't do anything like that if they could help it. They did bring a man in during my absence, and there was trouble to find employment for him when I came back, but that was found, so that was alright. But there was that fear of course, and I had to deal with it. You remember under the Manpower Act at any rate they had to reinstate me, and they had to reinstate all people to their previous jobs and to probably any.... They didn't have to, but at least they had to give the person the opportunity of accepting a senior position to the one he'd left because of a death or a vacancy that had come in the meantime. So I went back without any trouble. I had some troubles. I think I mentioned earlier about the library.

RJ No, you didn't. But just before you skip to that, why were you so keen to join up?

BARTLETT: Well I think in those days, it's like .... Germany in my mind had a bad record, and I was still very British through my mother, and very much Australian too, because I joined up as an Australian, but it's just one of those things. You get the idea that you're going to be hurt if we don't take action against them, and what action can you take, except by joining the forces to defend your country. That's all. Just had that feeling. I was married at the time, and my wife objected, *did* object, but



Joss Bartlett, RAAF, 1940, and family.

she saw my argument and accepted it, unwillingly but accepted it. So no problem there, so I joined up. I made application for the RAAF. I also made application for the small boat, torpedo boat section of the Navy. I got a reply back from the RAAF before I got one from the Navy, so I took the RAAF exams and tests, and did very well in them, and so I was just taken into the RAAF.

RJ When?

BARTLETT: Probably late '39. I've got my first records there, outside there somewhere. It wasn't then. Yes it was. "Fit for a pilot, deficiency leg length." [Laughs]

RJ What height are you for the sake of a listener?

BARTLETT: About five foot five and a half, quarter, five and a half, or was then. Later on it didn't matter, but those days because of the type of aircraft, types of fittings in the aircraft, it needed a taller man. But later on it didn't matter with a different type of aircraft. The more movement in controls and things like that, it didn't matter, but that was the ....

RJ Comment.

BARTLETT: Yes.

RJ Just briefly what service did you have and where?

BARTLETT: Well I was called up at midnight one night. I received a telegram about midnight to report the next morning or phone, report to such-and-such a headquarters or phone by a given time. They were requiring some two or three extra men, people, to go to ..... The intake was a hundred each time, and they were short in numbers on the intake by two. I rang up the next morning and I explained my situation quickly that it came as a bit sudden. My wife was ready to go to hospital to have another baby. This is a long time afterwards. I'd been undergoing training in here earlier, but not in the Air Force. By the Air Force, but not in

the Air Force. She wasn't long before she had a baby. They said, "Oh that's alright we sent out a number of these, got a number of phone calls. We've got the two we want. We'll leave you stand by for a while." I would have been in probably number four course. I finished up in number fourteen because of that delay, not that it worried me very much. Then I went to Victor Harbour, as a civilian. Eighteen of us went from here, as civilians first class, to Victor Harbour in South Australia, where we did our initial training. That was part of the hundred intake over there, and another eighteen South Australians came over here to make the hundred intake at Pearce. I never did any time in Pearce at all. Then from Victor Harbour I went to Port Pirie. Ballarat first I'm sorry, then Port Pirie. Then home and back to Sydney and overseas. What I was going to say: I went across first class to *Victor Harbour*, I came back a sergeant, and travelled second class. [Laughs] Then we went to Sydney and picked up the Strathallen, and sixty of us went to England on that. I did all my flying in England.

RJ What position did you hold?

BARTLETT: Rear gunner. I went to a number of places with just training in England, and then went to the squadron, 142, a place called Walthall just outside of Grimsby. From then I was doing raids over Germany and that. Then later on we were the only crew coming back, or nearly the only crew coming back, and twelve would go out, six from A Flight, and six from B Flight, and invariably might [be] only two or three coming back. We would be the one. You'd be sitting up waiting for it. Any rate it got so bad at the station, the wipeouts, that they closed the station down for the purpose of getting new aircraft and new crews in. There was that fear developing and everyone that came onto the station, not us so much because we'd been through it time and time again, but there was that fear. They closed the station for six weeks while they got new aircraft in, brought in new crews, and then just at that stage.... probably it was the intention too ....at that stage (we were sent on leave of course, had six weeks) the first Army was landing in North Africa, and they sent

us out to North Africa, and we operated from North Africa into Italy that way, then we came back after the fall, after Cape Bonn, came back to England and completed operations there.

That's when I was.... I think it was September 1943 I completed [63 operations]. Oh I was still flying in bombers. I was with the RAF, not the RAAF. I was never in an RAAF squadron, I was always with the RAF. Suddenly got word from London that they wanted to see me, through the office of the station I was on. So I went up to London. I reported, and they said, "We have your records here, you've completed sixty-three operational flights, and that's far in excess of the norm. We'll take you off, and we've notified your station too that you're not to fly on operations again." So I said, "That's good I'll never fly again then." I said, "In addition to that you can send me home." "Oh," he said, "no, not that," he said, "not with your experience." He said, "First we're going to send you to schools, and you can become an instructor. Secondly," he said, "when that's finished you can stay here. There's a lot of fellows that are going home before you, that are required in the New Guinea area, up in that area, and," he said, "they'll go home first." He said, "You can stay here and have a bloody good time." They did too. They sent me all around England to various schools. Didn't matter whether I passed or not, they just kept me going. Then when it was time to come they notified me that I was going home.

But any rate I came home by boat. It took six weeks to come home by boat. We came through the Panama Canal on an old boat that had been a .....oh everything I think in its earlier days, but it did about six knots, and luckily enough there was no problem with the U boats then, at that stage. We came home, as I say. There were about eighty or ninety men on board, a few Canadian girls, wives. We finished up in Sydney, and when I got to Sydney they dispersed all the fellows as quickly as they could except me - oh not me, the West Australians. We had to stay in Sydney at the cricket ground for a whole week before we could come back here.

So I came home at any rate, came home by train and when I got here I was here for about six weeks, and I got notice that I was going to be transferred to a place called Tocumwal in New South Wales. Any rate I'd been in touch with Parliament House, oh I'd been up there a number of times, and I said, "I think I'll apply to the Manpower office and be released." I said, "I can't fly any more, I'm not going on operations any more. I'm just a nuisance. There's plenty of young fellows that haven't even been in the air," and there was too. I think there was six hundred at Tocumwal alone, that didn't look like getting an opportunity. The war was nearly over, and they were keeping me in. He said, "No," he said, "from your experience" (this is the letter that came back) "we think you would be an asset to the RAAF as it stands at the moment." I couldn't see it, but I went to Tocumwal, and I went from Tocumwal to West Sale, and I was only doing.... just wandering around the place. I was commissioned, and I'd be duty officer tonight, and off for the next week, and duty officer again the following week, maybe twice a week, and the same thing applied at West Sale. I had to go up to Melbourne on one occasion with some stuff from the station, and I was handed over to this clerk there, a very senior clerk, and talking to him, and he was asking me a lot of questions. I had my decoration on, including the brevy. He said, "What service have you done?" And I told him how many operations He said, "And you're still in the Air Force?" I said, "Yes." He said, "I'll write it out for you, you sign it," and I was out in a week. [Laughs]

RJ And when would that have been?

BARTLETT: Be '45, but I'm trying to think of the date. Probably about April or May '45.

RJ What rank were you at the end of your service?

BARTLETT: Flying Officer. If I'd have stayed in England I'd have been a Squadron Leader, but having left England I came back and ....

RJ You were awarded a Distinguished Flying Medal.

BARTLETT: Mmm.

RJ And the wording of it was, "for outstanding service." What was rated as the outstanding service?

BARTLETT: Well this is always a problem with me. I was in a crew that wanted to push home anything we were given, without being overzealous about it, but give everything a go, and to the best of our ability, without throwing our lives away completely, and you could so happen. Like fellows used to.... certain air crew I knew would say to us, "Well why are you going down looking after your aircraft for?" We would do this every day. We'd go down and talk to our groundsmen, ground crew I should say. We'd make suggestions, they'd ask questions, but this is particularly from the very early days, when we were returning. We were the only aircraft returning. But fellows, you know - and they were a type of person who would say, and this seemed to be general too, "But if you're numbers are on it Joss, you're going to get it." I didn't look at it that way. We didn't look at it that way. We thought if our equipment was right, all our equipment was right, and we had a fair knowledge of what the aircraft capabilities were, would stand up to so long as our equipment was right, it gave us a better chance than the fellows that said, "Well to hell with your equipment."

END OF TAPE FIVE SIDE TWO

TAPE SIX SIDE ONE

BARTLETT: So we had a better chance than the fellows that, "Why worry about it? If you are going to get it, you're going to get it." We didn't look at it that way. So that every time we were sent on an operation, we did what we were asked to do and we did it well, because we had confidence in each other. And when I was instructing I used to point this out so much that it was a necessary requirement for a crew to have confidence in each other, and I think this was probably the main stay of our staying alive. We pushed home our attacks and we pushed them home well. We had a good skipper for this and there was no outcry from any of the crew in whatever endeavour he wanted to take. At times we were caught in some positions that you can't see in advance and we were able to get out of it.

On one particular occasion, we were searching for an aerodrome and there was only six aircraft on this job. We were searching for an aerodrome - night time this was - with a lot of aircraft on it, well known, or known to be coming to it. We were lost, or more or less lost. It was a dark night. There were no easy pick up points, and suddenly a light came on the sky in front of us and my skipper made some comment and I said, "Well, just dive into it." The quickest way to get out of any trouble was to dive towards - if it was an opposing aircraft - to dive towards, because he's got to bring his guns to bear. I thought it would have been a fighter probably going into land, or he was coming in to attack. He was going away from us and as he got to a certain height, the lights came on on the ground and it was an aerodrome, the one we were looking for. The skipper said, "Well, what about it?" And we said, "Go." We went down underneath the aircraft concerned and we had sixteen 250 lb bombs on board. So we dived and we went straight down the runway and as the first bomb went so the flak started to come up, but the heavy flak guns couldn't be depressed, so we had a canopy of flak going this way, an umbrella of flak and we went straight down the centre and we dropped our sixteen 250s, we blew off our bomb doors - or buckled

them - I think I got rid of about 2000 or 3000 rounds of ammunition and we ducked over a haystack the other end. [Laughs.] I can always remember this. It had the lights on and I gave it a final burst (it was a haystack and it was part of a building too) and we went straight on home. We got caught like this once or twice.

But in general, we pressed home the attacks and they knew from talks in the squadron, talks with my crew, that they relied on me to keep them out of trouble from the rear end. That's where we didn't get into trouble. There were other things like this. This was one, the particular one, that I knew that my skipper and I - he got the DFM and I got the DFM, just the two of us. But that was one. With 63 operations there were a lot of things.

[Details of operations over Naples and Rome not transcribed.]

RJ When you returned to Parliament House in 1945 what changes did you notice if any?

BARTLETT: Oh undoubtedly a change in membership. There was still a lot of the old people there, but there was a very definite change in the members. I think probably some of the older members had gone that were around. Collier was still about. Of course he was not attending. Mitchell was Lieutenant Governor. They'd left and quite a number had retired and died in that time. But all those that knew me well, they were still there, or the majority that knew me well, and had treated me very well prior to, were still going to treat me well afterwards, and they did too. But I suppose the greatest change, it was a different type of debater that came into the House. Only one, that was East Perth - I had his name a moment ago, and I can't think of it now. I think probably a new type of debater had come into the House. Most of the other newer members too. Herb Graham, or Herbert Graham, the Member for East Perth. He had won a State championship as a University debater or.... I question whether he was a University debater, but was in that higher debating schools that they had. He'd won that. A very strong debater, very

strong, one that used a lot of force in his.... A little bit too loud at times, but he had a good vocabulary, a tremendous one, and had a good voice, but he was one of those pounding debaters that used to use his hands, his fists [pounds table] to make points by thumping. But he was, he was a change from many of the old ones. Although we had some very strong and good debaters, amongst the old crowd, because of their background of public speaking in the streets, but not with the same touch of voice construction as Graham had. He was a new type. Other than that I can't remember any very definite changes except in the way things had been shifted in the building, in the library and .....

RJ What, what had happened?

BARTLETT: Also changes as far as the dining room was concerned, as far as staff using the dining room, things like that.

RJ Well specify. What were these changes?

BARTLETT: Prior to going away I didn't have my meals, any meals in the dining room, except the supper of a night time, and yes, the evening meal. But later on we had the right - and it was after the war - we had the right to go into the dining room for lunch.

RJ That's the staff dining room?

BARTLETT: No, the parliamentary dining room.

RJ The members' one?

BARTLETT: The members' yes, mmm.

RJ What about the evening meal?

BARTLETT: And the evening meal too.

RJ When you say 'we', what level of staff did that go to?

BARTLETT: Well it started with my level, the Assistant Clerk of Records.

RJ Right, and then went all the way to the top?

BARTLETT: It went right through to the top, yes.

RJ What about Hansard staff?

BARTLETT: No. I'm trying to think whether.... even the latter days. They could come in for lunch, but not the evening meal. The evening meal for Hansard was still down below. They had a special dining room rebuilt down below, but I think the chief came in at lunchtime, was allowed in at lunchtime. But there was no room actually for him at the evening meal, no table available, but there was for the parliamentary.... like the Legislative Assembly, and the Legislative Council, and our senior staff members. I was classed as one in the end. No, there wasn't any great changes.

RJ Well you say there were physical changes. What were they?

BARTLETT: The library had changed. Len Hawley who'd become librarian, had changed it around, and helped to change it around, and get rid of a certain type of book, and fill them up with..... I think fiction came into the library too, which hadn't been there before. It was frowned upon bringing fiction into a library like that, but any rate it came in. There was a little shelving space. The library as a building, probably sixty feet long and forty feet wide, and probably had a shelf about twelve, fifteen feet long, about eight feet high (talking about feet, the old measurement) for fiction. Then in doing that they'd shifted other sections of the library around. I was lost for a while

trying to find out those things that I wanted. But other than that no, no great changes. No expenditure on the building because that was a wartime restriction.

RJ So the actual office set-up was the same that you returned to?

BARTLETT: Was the same, yes, mmm, mmm.

RJ Right. Were your duties any different on your return?

BARTLETT: No, no.

RJ Well now your next promotion was in 1947 when you became Clerk of Records and Accounts. How did that come about?

BARTLETT: Well Frank Steere, who was the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, decided to retire. He was sixty-six at the time. He decided to retire and there was a move up again. Fred Islip went to Clerk, Len Hawley went to Assistant Clerk, and I went to Clerk of Records and Accounts.

RJ How did your duties change?

BARTLETT: Well I became boss of the [Laughs] accounts' section, the attendents' section. I had to *write* the cheque. I could do all that side without any worries about whether I was under age or over age. I had the charge of the full financial section of the Legislative Assembly. The cheques, the Clerk signed those, but they were all written out by me, or my assistant. It depends on the things you're worried about and the time factor. But the whole of the financial records of the Legislative Assembly, which included the members of Parliament, the Legislative Assembly staff, the Hansard staff, the library, library and library staff, the payment of those people, the other expenses of running those departments, including Hansard. That was all involved in our records and our payments and our estimates for the year, and our business with the Treasury. That was the side of it. It was

just the manager of the accounts of the Parliament House that was all, or the Legislative Assembly. In the Legislative Council they had a similar set-up, but of course they only had the Legislative Council members. But we of the Legislative Assembly somehow got stuck with the library, Hansard, the members, and the staff too. Well I assume that from the very early days of the State, or the parliamentary system, the Legislative Assembly was the body that controlled the finance, with your Premier, and that's where we were involved in that.

RJ You seemed very pleased when you said you were in charge of staff. Did that give you pleasure?

BARTLETT: No. I suppose it did, but I was always [friendly with] the staff.... You know it's an amazing thing, even when I go back to Parliament House now, I always got on well with the staff, and I controlled them well, I looked after them as well as I could expect to be looked after myself, as I had been looked after myself. But I could walk up there today and Bruce Okely will call me "Mister." Lionel will call me Mr Bartlett. Ian Allnut calls me "Mister," David Green. They don't call me by my Christian name. I didn't call any members of Parliament, I didn't call my senior officers by their Christian name. I think that they, just because of my thinking on the matter, they called me, and they still do. I assume I had pretty good control. I took all the responsibilities. I accepted the responsibilities. If I said to them, "You do something," and they did it wrong, I'd talk to them, but if there were any repercussions I accepted it, and they knew that too. I accepted it all along. It was my fault for not checking. So yes, I probably enjoyed the position like that. But not because I was standing over people, but because I liked working with people, and again I was prepared to accept the full responsibility. By doing so I probably got more pushed on me than I should have done. Every time anything expanded in the building, "Give it to Joss. He'll fix it up, he'll do it. Give it to him to control." I didn't mind, but then it started, when the members started to get offices, allowed to have offices outside the district, and their staff, the

appointment of their staff was put under my control. They could select them and recommend them, but they were still under my control. I should have gone around to them to check up to see whether they were doing what they required to do. But fancy having to travel to Esperance and Kalgoorlie. No, I didn't like that, and I thought it was beyond the Treasury to say that I should be doing it, I should cover this aspect. I know they've got rid of it now, but it was getting beyond a joke, with fifty-two members having offices in every electoral district. So it was beyond a joke. But any rate that sort of thing was put onto me, and I accepted it, because it was there to be done.

RJ What were you paid as Clerk of Records and Accounts?

BARTLETT: You know [Laughs] this question of salary never worried me. I think three hundred and twelve I think it was. I think very soon after that it went up to three hundred and thirty eight.

RJ That was a very big jump from Assistant Clerk wasn't it? It's a very big jump from eighty-nine to three hundred and twelve.

BARTLETT: Oh well I'd been getting increments through. I mean I started at eighty-nine. I think when I finished at the top of my.... as Assistant Clerk of Records and Accounts, I think I was on two seventy eight [pounds per year]. I was getting annual increments. Then to three hundred and twelve. I think it went up to three hundred and thirty eight. We had to apply to the Speaker. There were fixed grades - not fixed grades, but there were grades. If the Clerk thought he was getting underpaid and using the public service as a grading point, on a comparable basis, he would apply to the Speaker and he would fly down the line, to have it all adjusted too, and it was left to the Speaker to make a decision. If he said, "Yes I think I go along with your thinking. I recommended this to the Premier." It would go to the Premier and the Premier would say, "Oh no." We never had anyone to go to. Frank Wise when he was Premier (and I'm ducking

back a bit here) said, "I'll make arrangments for the parliamentary staff to be brought under the public service." Not under public service to be controlled by the public service, but for the purpose of having their salaries adjudicated. "We've got to get away from this business of the Speaker and Premier. We've got to have a body that can look at it in a reasonable sort of way." That was agreed upon and I think it took about two years to come through. Other Premiers agreed to this same principle. It took two or three years to come through. So I think I was on two seventy eight, and that's why I said I went up to three hundred and twelve. But then the Public Service Commissioner was having an annual.... No, every five years I think, they had a regrading in the public service, a fully regraded public service. Everyone was dealt with. I think it came through that they tied us up with a certain grading in the public service, and when they got an annual increment, we got the same annual increment. I think I went from three hundred and twelve to three hundred and thirty eight. Then from then on, any time any increments came through, we got. There were odd occasions when we were able to persuade the Public Service Commissioner by a change in duties and things like that, expanding of duties, that we should be taken into another grading, and he just did that too at times. So you might get a sizeable jump.

RJ How did your duties in the House change as Clerk of Records and Accounts?

BARTLETT: Oh they didn't change at all.

RJ What from being Clerk Assistant?

BARTLETT: No, we were both - in the chamber, we were both of equal standing. The Assistant Clerk was on the opposition side of the chamber, and the Clerk was on the government side of the chamber. I just switched sides. [Laughs.] But the same sort of questions the same sort of demands, probably a little extra being the government, there was extra demands like because you were

dealing with government messages and things like that, and government procedure. Government problems as against the other side, were opposition problems. But that was all.

RJ And what about annual leave entitlement and so on, had any of that changed?

BARTLETT: No.

RJ Still the six weeks.

BARTLETT: Six weeks.

RJ I should have asked you when were discussing lunch, did you pay for lunch in the dining room?

BARTLETT: Yes, except when the House was sitting. If the House sat at say eleven o'clock in the morning our lunch was paid for, and our evening meal was paid for if we were still sitting in the evening. But if we just went into the dining room when the House wasn't sitting, well we paid for it ourselves.

RJ And what did you pay?

BARTLETT: It was one and threepence[1] back in ..... [Laughs] that would be 1937 I think. I think after the war it went up to two and six, and then it went up to three shillings. It varied in the time. It depends on cost of goods and the rising wages and that sort of thing. I think when I left work it was about eighty cents.

RJ When you had had meals in the staff dining room you had a limited menu. What was the situation on your return, after the war, when you were allowed to use the members' dining room? Did you have the same menu as they had?

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[1] See footnote, p. 38.

BARTLETT: Well we had a menu with probably three choices on it. They had a menu with one choice, [Laughs] if you call that a choice. They had one hot dish, and one cold dish. We had a choice of three hot dishes, or two hot dishes and a cold.

RJ So you're saying the staff had more choice than members?

BARTLETT: No the dining room had two hot dishes and a cold dish, but the staff down below had one hot dish and a cold. Normally the hot dish down below was the lesser of the two for the dining room.

RJ But when you actually were allowed to go into the members' dining room for your lunch, what was your menu like compared with a member?

BARTLETT: The same as a member, exactly the same.

END OF SIDE ONE TAPE SIX

Staff of the two Houses of Parliament, 1951.

L-R. Joss Bartlett, Clerk of Records, Legislative Assembly; Bevan Sparkes, Clerk of the Legislative Council; Charlie Johnson, Asst Clerk of Records, Legislative Assembly; Fred Islip, Clerk of the Legislative Assembly; Col. J.C.W. O'Connor, Sergeant-at-Arms; Len Hawley, Clerk Assistant of the Legislative Assembly; John Roberts, Usher of the Black Rod; Bill Browne, Clerk of Records, Legislative Council.

TAPE SIX SIDE TWO

RJ What about relations between staff after the war?

BARTLETT: It was still the same as prior to the war. There was no great difference, not to my knowledge. I think there was always that little bit of bickering went on between Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly regarding the rights of the Houses, the Upper House as against the Lower House. But other than that there was no problems. Friendship problems you're talking about? Just general mixing, no there wasn't. We'd sit together at the dining room, the lunch time, used to sit with John, and the others used to sit the same. I think a table took six, maybe seven. There'd be John [Roberts] and myself and Len Hawley, Bill Brown (he's gone now) and Les Hoft later. But no, there was just that little bit, and then probably a little bit.... There were things said on the side about certain things going on, and that sort of thing. But other than that no, I didn't see.... Friendshipwise no, not generally. Any difference was purely I think on the political side, you know the difference between the two Houses of doing something.

RJ And the various levels of staff, how well did they mix together?

BARTLETT: Very well, very well. I can't say that there was any problems in the staff, that is from Assistant Clerk of Records up between the two Houses, except I say when it came to some difference in opinion between the powers of one House as against the other.

RJ But not just between the Houses. Within the Legislative Assembly staff for instance, you've got your Clerk as your top position, and then you've got attendants and so on. Was there any feeling about a structure there?

BARTLETT: No, no. Unless it was lower down. But certainly not with my knowledge was there any problem associated with the structure of our House. Maybe you could individualise. I don't know whether anyone disliked me, I don't think so. Certainly my senior officer didn't because I wouldn't have got where I was. Certainly those under me I don't think so, because we were all friends. Maybe Len Hawley might have been out of step with the others. Len was the type of person that wanted to talk. When you got Len talking he became a bore. Other than that, no. If you got him on a certain subject and he got on his high horse, hopefully there's someone come along [Laughs] interrupt. But other than that, no. Members used to get caught and I would think well now I think I'd better do something about this. So I'd find something that I had to get him to sign or do, and I'd sidle up and [Laughs] .... "Look Joss if you want to see Mr Hawley I'll go." [Laughs] They'd come to me after, "Thanks very much." But other than that no. And he was a nice bloke Hawley, but he had that tendency.

RJ Did members and staff eat together?

BARTLETT: Yes.

RJ At the same table?

BARTLETT: Not at the same table. The staff had two tables, or one table and a part of another table, which they were expected to [use], but this would depend on certain circumstances. If the House was full and the dining room was full you stayed at your table, and went to your own table. The members didn't go to ours, and we didn't go to theirs. But there were many times when the House, particularly on a Thursday, when the House finished at say six o'clock, five thirty. The normal thing was on Thursday to finish before the evening meal was due, give members time to go home, have a meal at home. In that case where there were twenty or thirty members only in the dining room, I'd be there and John Roberts would there, and a member would come in and say, "How are you boys? Anyone sitting here?" "No the others have

gone home." They'd sit there. This happened on many occasions. Or alternatively I might be the only one that was going into the dining room, and a couple of members would be sitting at another.... "Come over and sit with us Joss." But that was the circumstance. The mixing around only took place when there was a small number in the dining room, but other than that we stuck to our tables.

RJ You said you could then use the members' dining room, could you use the members' bar?

BARTLETT: Yes.

RJ On your return from the war?

BARTLETT: Yes.

RJ Right. So that had opened up altogether?

BARTLETT: Yes, that had opened up. When did they make those big changes. It was when they pulled down the old galvanised building. I can't think of those days now.

RJ '64 wasn't it, when the new....?

BARTLETT: The bar area, we could go into the bar area, but there again (after the war this is) the old bar area that was at the end of the dining room, but I never went there. The senior officers, some of the senior.... but we'd only go there of a Friday or something like that, but it was too restrictive in size to bother, even think about going. But later on when they built the.... in 1964 you say it was, you could be right there too, when they built the new bar area, there was more room in it, although I didn't go in during the day, although it was only twenty-five yards from my office. Friday I'd drift down there about four o'clock.

RJ A further interview with Mr Joss Bartlett held in his home on the 15th of September, 1986.

Joss I understand that there was a time before your marriage when a gentleman considered that you were a very eligible match for his daughter, and he used to bring her to the public gallery. What was that episode about?

BARTLETT: Well I didn't know he was a member I don't think, but I knew the girl. I didn't know it was his daughter then. But she was brought to the gallery and introduced to me, and she did come up pretty frequently. I wasn't married then, so it didn't matter that much. I could make sheep's eyes too. [Laughs] I never got to the stage of inviting her out, or anything like that. I question whether I actually spoke to her, except in the introduction following that, because it would have meant sending someone up to the gallery, or alternatively myself going up to the gallery, and with the House sitting, and not knowing when it was going to finish, there was no reason why I should [Laughs] go up and talk to her. There may have been a reason why I should go and talk to her, but there was no opportunity of inviting her out at any rate, at that stage. So any rate it gradually fell through. I think that she got tired of waiting for an invitation and I wasn't in a position to give an invitation either. I could have been probably reaching the stage when I was thinking about getting engaged myself. So that was one of those things that happened to young fellows I suppose in certain positions in life. But there was no entanglement at all.

RJ Did you find sitting in the House that there were girls in the public gallery trying to attract your attention?

BARTLETT: Oh yes, yes. My wife knows that too. [Laughs] Yes, they did quite often. You'd be sitting there and looking around. Well I suppose that I took the opportunity too of looking around, and they may give a smile. I probably winked at them or something. [Laughs] I was a bit of a devil too you know. We all

are at certain stages. That was the nearest. I can't remember actually talking to anyone, or having any involvement with anyone other than just a passing..... either hello, or....

RJ Or a wink.

BARTLETT: Or a wink, yes.

RJ Right. I wondered what you could tell me about C.O. Barker, who was a member elected on the 18th of March, '39. This is going back from when we were speaking. He resigned on the 2nd of August '39. I believe he wasn't able to take his seat.

BARTLETT: Yes, I remember the person very well. I remember some factions of the .... But the actual reason that he couldn't take his seat I just can't remember now. But it was certainly constitutional disqualifications.

RJ I understood it was because he had a criminal record.

BARTLETT: Well that's right, as I say constitutional. There is a number listed of those things that bar you from being a member of Parliament in the constitution. Treason is one. There are certain criminal records that make, you know, others. As I say I couldn't tell you exactly what it was at the time, but under the constitution he wasn't eligible to take his seat in Parliament. If he did so, he was subject to a fine and I can't remember the exact figure, but there is a fine involved, for every day he took his seat. So I assume on legal advice, or in his own decision, he just occupied the public gallery to watch proceedings. I suppose hopefully that he'd find someone that would do something to either amend the constitution, or alternatively pardon him. That could have been done. But it wasn't in this case, because the record must have been so bad that no one would take action along that line. He was paid for the time he was elected, from the election day actually, to the time he resigned. When I say from election day, even today, but in those days more in particular, and the North West members, particularly again, it

might be three months before the actual vote was finally counted. There was no aircraft. I remember one member, Coverley his name was, said it took him three months to travel by mule across his electoral district. So that's an idea how long it would take to get ballot papers in under those conditions, by horse from certain outlying stations. So the Parliamentary Allowances Act stipulated that members shall be paid from the day of the election [date], not from the day he was declared elected. So he did receive his parliamentary allowance until that day of resignation. There was no way that Parliament would ask for it back, because he was an elected member, by the public, the people, but barred because of a constitutional matter.

RJ With your new position as Clerk of Records and Accounts, you've explained that you were responsible for the financial side of the Legislative Assembly. I wondered just how many of the salaries, both of the staff and the members, you could remember for the record?

BARTLETT: Well the members received six hundred pounds a year. Ministers received the six hundred pounds a year, plus I think as a minister, which wasn't paid from Parliament House, the ministerial salaries. The members of Parliament part of the salary was paid from the Legislative Assembly. The ministerial salary was paid from the Premier's Department, or Treasury. I think it was a thousand pounds a year for an ordinary minister, and there might have been one of two allowances, such as car and things like that. The Premier was in excess of that, and I can't think of that figure. But the parliamentary salary was six hundred pounds a year.

The Clerk of the Legislative Assembly got six hundred pounds a year, plus one hundred pounds as librarian. The Clerk Assistant got four hundred and fifty pounds, and of course the Clerk of Records and Accounts came down to the three hundred and twelve, I think I used to get. That was the basic salaries until probably about 1945. Certainly changes came after Wise's decision to have the public service to adjudicate on officers' salaries. There

was quite a bit of variation from that. But then they introduced a special Act of Parliament, and I can't think of the name of it now. A special Act of Parliament dealing with parliamentary salaries and senior public servants, where they had an outside person to adjudicate. That's where the members started to move away from that solid six hundred pounds they'd had previously. I think the first rise was somewhere up to around about eight hundred.

RJ Do you remember any of the staff's salary changes?

BARTLETT: No, I think the Clerk went up to about eight hundred, and some figure like that, plus some other allowance. But no, I don't remember.

RJ Right. By the end of the 1940s were members of Parliament getting any other allowances? There had been a stamp allowance in the early days, but was there anything else?

BARTLETT: No. I don't know what you'd call allowances then, as against today. He got his parliamentary paper, his envelopes. He had his gold pass. To my knowledge (and plus the stamps) that's the only salary plus he got. Fringe benefits, if you like to call it today.

RJ When did that change do you know?

BARTLETT: I think again it was somewhere in the vicinity of '45, '46, when this special legislation was passed to deal with setting up a tribunal to deal with parliamentary salaries and senior public service salaries. I think that a similar type of tribunal exists today, probably amended from time to time, but it's still .... maybe the original legislation is still there, but you know, amended from time to time. I feel it was somewhere round about 1946.

RJ About that time you feel other fringe benefits were added?

BARTLETT: Yes, well they brought into..... I think the stamp allowance became non-existent, but they brought in the *electorate* allowance in addition to their parliamentary allowance. That was to cover the stamps and accommodation, travelling expenses and things like that to a certain extent. That varied from metropolitan, near metropolitan, country and North West. I just couldn't tell you all the figures now, but there was a variation between metropolitan and North West, and there was two in between figures. There would be nothing else at that stage, other than the parliamentary allowances being increased, the *electorate* allowance being added. Well the stamps were taken away, because they could purchase those then under their *electorate* allowance. No I don't think so. I think it was purely a salaries piece of legislation, but with allowances.

RJ Up until the next promotion that you had, which was in July 1966, did your job as Clerk of Records and Accounts change at all?

BARTLETT: Well the workload did. Following the introduction of legislation to provide a tribunal for members of Parliament's salary and allowances, the members were able to stay in Perth, and come down to Perth much more often, so they were at Parliament House much more often and in larger numbers. They were looking at legislation. They wanted copies of things. They wanted copies of legislation. In addition to that they were of an enquiring nature. Those days the member had to do it himself. So they occupied a lot of your time by wanting legislation and parts of legislation. It did, the workload did increase considerably, following the introduction and members having more time - not more time on their hands, but more able to get to Parliament House and spend time in Perth. In addition to that I think it enabled some members to buy homes in Perth, so they would have two homes, one down here and one.... That enabled them to stay in the city and get on with their parliamentary duties.

RJ In 1958 you have the start of the new additions to Parliament House, which eventually led to the demolition of the galvanised iron structure, and these alterations were completed in 1964. In what way did that affect you? What was the change in your office accommodation?

BARTLETT: Well the wing behind the Legislative Assembly chamber, or the corridor behind the Legislative Assembly chamber, running right through to the Legislative Council was completed before the galvanised structure was pulled down. Before the structure was pulled down, we were able to move our office space into the corridor, behind the Legislative Assembly chamber. That's where it remains today, with the Leader of the Opposition one end of the corridor, Clerk of Records and Accounts, and an office for a typist. Members offices were developing then, two members to an office. They took up the main corridor area, including the Legislative Council end. So the space was good, the extra space was good. The conditions were much better. Panelled walls against painted galvanised walls. Shelving, proper shelving if you wanted it. Well I suppose the other would be open shelving in the old galvanised structure. But any rate generally a new office, with all the new facilities that were available then.

RJ Was there any sharing of offices as there had been before?

BARTLETT: Only again the Clerk of Records [and Accounts], and the Assistant Clerk of Records. But the actual sharing when we moved in the new corridor, was just a main entrance, but there was also a little room attached to the Clerk of Records [and Accounts] office, where the Assistant Clerk of Records used as an office too.

RJ Did members of the staff have any say in how those offices were furnished and equipped?

BARTLETT: Yes, yes, they were asked. It was all done by the Public Works Department. The Public Works' furniture officer came to Parliament House and invited us to make comment and indicate our requirements. So long as the requirements were satisfactory to the Public Works Department and to our senior officer of course, there was no problem.

RJ What sort of difference did that new working environment make from a working point of view?

BARTLETT: Well it was a much better outlook from the point of view of an office. But I don't [think] that it made any.... except the new equipment and the better equipment. It was closely aligned with the chamber, the same as the other office was. I don't think it made any difference as far as the work was concerned. It certainly made a difference as far as conditions were concerned in the summer time. Although even in the summer time it got very hot. There was no air conditioning at Parliament House and they did get hot. The ice cold galvanised iron, as against the hot stone structure, well I prefer the second. [Laughs]

RJ Were you still able to use fans in the new building?

BARTLETT: Yes.

RJ And heaters for winter?

BARTLETT: Yes, mmm.

RJ So you don't feel it made a marked difference to your outlook going to work in the new offices, as compared with the old?

BARTLETT: Oh well I think it made them much more pleasant as far as we were all concerned, and much more comfortable too, because of the new chairs and desks. You remember some of those desks had been up there for fifty odd years, and they were probably

second-hand when they came to Parliament House. People had a habit of using pen knives those days. But in general the working conditions were so much better, so much more congenial.

RJ You referred to members then having their own rooms, or sharing a room. Did they have more typing help by then?

BARTLETT: When the new structure.....?

RJ Yes, yes, by the 1960s.

BARTLETT: Well by that stage, when we shifted into the new part of the building, this applied to the Legislative Council too, there was office provision made for typing staff, and for members. Also each presiding officer had a typist allocated to him, and she had a room. Then at least three places within the corridor area, the new corridor area, there were typing pools. When I say typing pools, there were girls, either could be called by members to their office, or alternatively the members could go to the girls. But certainly the members were being treated much better in that type of conditions.

END OF TAPE SIX SIDE TWO

TAPE SEVEN SIDE ONE

RJ On the 1st of July 1966 you were appointed Clerk Assistant of the Legislative Assembly. How did that appointment come about?

BARTLETT: Fred Islip who was Clerk of the Legislative Assembly at the time decided to resign. He was, I think, somewhere about sixty-seven years of age, and he had been contemplating it for a while, but when he did resign Mr Hawley, who was Clerk Assistant went up to the Clerk's position, and I went to the Clerk Assistant's. It was on the recommendation of the Speaker of the time too: John Hearman I think it would be. It was recommended to the Governor. The Governor accepted the appointments.

RJ Does that mean you didn't actually apply, the job wasn't advertised?

BARTLETT: No.

RJ It wasn't.

BARTLETT: That's something new that has taken place in Parliament House. I always fear when they started that.... they started particularly in the .... I'm on?

RJ You are on, yes.

BARTLETT: Particularly in the Legislative Council. I don't know whether the President of the day decided that certain positions had to be applied for, or someone else in the Legislative Council made the decision. I fear that it might have been because a particular individual wasn't considered capable enough to be promoted, and to get over the situation, they called for outside applications. Up to that stage (and as I say it happened in the Legislative Council) to my knowledge there hadn't been any advertising. It was sort of an automatic promotion through the ranks. There was an occasion, and again started in the

Legislative Council - I can't remember the reason for it, except the one that they thought, you know the fellow may not have had the qualifications they required to go up - they did bring - and whether they advertised it I'm not certain, but certainly a fellow from outside - a well known family name too, Leake, he was brought to Parliament House, or accepted a position at Parliament House, as Clerk Assistant of the Legislative Council. Just from memory I would say that it never happened in the Legislative Assembly until my time, when I was passed over, initially because of my age. After that, in the Legislative Assembly we had our messengers up there. Like Bruce Okely was a messenger, and because of the lack of opportunity at Parliament House for him he went to the public service. When the first vacancy came in the Legislative Assembly, when the rises took place, when I went to Clerk of Records and Accounts, we invited Bruce Okely back to Parliament House. Because of his knowledge of the procedure and background he'd had up there, we thought it the best thing to do, and he's now Clerk of the Legislative Assembly. But other than that we didn't advertise. It would be an absolute necessity. But I notice in the paper now, and again I'm talking about the Legislative Council, where they advertised for Second Clerk Assistant I think. The Second Clerk Assistant resigned about, oh ten weeks ago now. I've noticed an advertisement in the paper asking for applicants to apply for the position. Whether it's been filled or not I don't know, or whether they filled it from one of the staff from Parliament House I wouldn't have an idea. But it wasn't general to call applications from outside.

RJ From the staff's point of view, which system do you advocate? Should positions be advertised outside and people have to compete, or should it be that promotional system that you were used to, virtually automatic?

BARTLETT: Well it depends on how long the people have been in the positions. It depends on how they'd used themselves. I mean [Pause] I think that probably in our earlier days, when the system was so much slower and the work was so much less, except for the parliamentary side, like the legislation side, I think

those days the system we had was a good one, where you had men of experience, well boys of experience, young men of experience coming through all the time. But these days with a wider variety of work required from the parliamentary staff, it may be a good thing, I don't know. But there seems to be this general tendency these days that you should apply, you should throw it open and let people apply. Then you give a number of people the right to work under the parliamentary conditions. I think there must be a considerable amount of delay in getting the .... depends on the situation you're talking about. If it's a Clerk of Records and Accounts, and things like that, there must be considerable years of delay before they get the full work out of that fellow, like legislation-wise, because he hasn't got the background. He's got to do a lot of researching himself before he can answer questions. But I could be wrong there too now.

There's an awful change taken place since I retired, with all members of Parliament having an office at Parliament House, three or four to an office at Parliament House, and in addition to that having an *electorate* office where they have clerical assistants. I think that with the clerical assistants they have in their *electorate* office, they can do a lot of the work that they used to do at Parliament House. So the calling on the parliamentary staff may not be the same as it was in the earlier days, when the parliamentary staff were the people they had to call on to get work done. So I say, I'm talking blind at the moment regarding conditions now. For instance all the time I receive any information or any postal brochures or letters or something like that, in my letter box, and it refers to members of Parliament, it doesn't refer to Parliament House, it refers enquiries at his electoral office. So I say I'm not certain which is the best way to go about it, whether outside staff is better. But this happens, now it's all outside staff, with the electoral office. They come in with no experience from the parliamentary point of view. How far they go I don't know. In some cases they might have legislation or might have Acts of Parliament shelved in their offices and they research that. Whether they ring up the Crown Law Department and have it researched there, or whether

they ring Parliament House, and have it researched there, I'm not certain. So I'm not certain just how far the electoral officers deal with - how they work within the parliamentary system now.

RJ You've had the appointment of Laurie Marquet as Clerk of the Council, being totally outside of the system. If that had happened in your day, if the Clerk of the Assembly had come from outside and not been the progression that you have described, what would have the staff's reaction been?

BARTLETT: Oh I think that there would have been some criticism, whether warranted or not I .... But I certainly would have been upset but always at the back of my mind is this could so happen to me. So I would have had that in my mind that I shouldn't have any reaction to the appointment, because it would be my own problem, because of my early background, and early educational background. So I often thought this could happen to me. It worried me at times, but not excessively. I just had that feeling that it could happen. I had the problems. If it didn't happen so much the better, and it didn't happen. It would have worried me, but it wouldn't have hurt me. He did come from a parliamentary background.

RJ Yes, yes, he did, in New Zealand.

Well with your new position as Clerk Assistant, Legislative Assembly, what were your duties?

BARTLETT: Well again looking after members. You've got to remember this that I'd been there so long and members had been so accustomed to coming to me for things, that just because I got an elevation it didn't stop them coming, and for the same purpose in a lot of cases. I was at the table of the House of course, when the House was sitting. My part of the duties in the House was the notice paper, keeping that, getting the questions, vetting the questions, having them typed. Then arranging them to go to the Government Printer, and the whole of the orders of the day, and that became part of my duties. I would also help the Clerk

if he found himself indisposed for a while and, you know, take his notes too. Then it was a question of going to the Government Printer the next morning, early next morning, eight o'clock too it used to be, and checking both the notice paper, the questions as printed, and the set out, and also the Votes and Proceedings, and anything else that was required. That used to take all morning you know, nearly all morning. You'd be waiting for a sheet at a time to come into you from the printers themselves and that took time. The Assembly work, the actual Assembly work, and the Speaker was involved too, was all controlled by the Speaker, the Clerk and the Clerk Assistant, when the House was sitting at any rate.

Outside the House sitting there was always the normal things to be done. The indexing of the Votes and Proceedings, which took a lot of doing. Then they had to be sent to the Government Printer and come back and recheck. This involved a lot of time to get this right and get your volume printed then of the Notice Paper and Votes and Proceedings and have it ready for the next session in the House. Well you didn't have to have it ready.

Then in addition to that while the House was sitting, the legislation came before the House, the minister gave notice of it. You had to check with the Government Printer when it was going to be available for the House, so the minister could deal with it. Any amendments to it had to be set at the House. When finally completed through the committee stage and third reading, that piece of legislation had to be sent to the Government Printer, to be printed in its proper form. So there was a lot of checking to be done, printing checking to be done. Handwriting, and then the Government Printer and then the stuff coming back for checking. So that was necessary so that you sent a clean print to the Legislative Council, as far as bills. There were many things involved. Those are the main features, but it's hard to pinpoint the other little things that came along all the time.

RJ What about your duties in the House?

BARTLETT: That was my duties in the House, dealing with the legislation and the notice paper, and the questions. When you got fifty or sixty questions coming in and some of those.... I'm not a good handwriter, but some people are dreadful. You had to check them, then send them out to be typed, then do a double check when they came back.

RJ So you were doing all that while the House was going on around you?

BARTLETT: Yes, yes.

RJ I see.

BARTLETT: You're doing your legislation, you've got your Act in front of you, or your bill in front of you at the same time, trying to get those amendments in, while you're trying to read questions.

RJ Well what was your day's routine when the House was not sitting?

BARTLETT: Well after Christmas, the first three months were involved in indexing, checking the .... like the handwritten index to start with. It was done on a card system. Forward it to the Government Printer for printing, and then the coming back. Then the return from the Government Printer for a further check on page numbers then, of the volume, the complete volume. But that was the major - and probably the first two or three months after the session, after Christmas, after the session was completed. Then it was just not a great deal, just enough to keep you occupied without being pushed in any way. We might take two hours for lunch.

RJ But what were you actually doing, what sort of work were you doing?

BARTLETT: Out of session?

RJ Yes, after you've got over that first period you spoke of, of getting indexes ready.

BARTLETT: When I was Clerk Assistant I was still doing a lot of research into rulings of the past. Finally (I'm just jumping ahead a little bit here) finally when I was Clerk, I retyped or reset the whole of the rulings that had been done since the inception of the .... because a lot of them had become obsolete through changes in Standing Orders and things like that, changes in legislation. That was one of the things. I was just using a bit of time to go back and check the pages numbers of Hansard, and see whether this applied today. Or checking the other things, the Standing Orders too for that matter, to see whether it would be applied today. As I say I finished up doing the whole lot again. But I understand it's in a printed form somewhere now, I'm not certain about that: rulings. It was only in a typewritten form when I left. That was the sort of thing, and in addition to that there was always the ordinary staff problems, and Hansard were always there. We had six weeks leave, that had to be taken if you wanted it, in the summer months. So I'd stand in for the Clerk during his leave. But it wasn't a hard time, let me put it that way.

RJ What hours would you have been working in the off part of the year?

BARTLETT: Oh nine thirty to four thirty.

RJ With sometimes a two hour lunch hour.

BARTLETT: Yes, yes.

RJ Right. Did you find the House was sitting longer or anything like that in this period, or was it still much the same?

BARTLETT: I think there was a tendency for the House to shorten its sitting hours, daily sitting hours, but they moved into that period when they decided that they'd have a summer session. They were trying to avoid these all-nighters, and this rush of getting legislation through in the last fortnight of the session. It was just sit during the day and sit in the night time, and sit on Fridays and things like that. So they decided to try a summer session. I think for six weeks initially, the first one was, and then they adjourned and recommenced in July again. Hopefully it was to cut down these long.... and this rush at the end of the session, of pushing legislation through, but it never did. The more days they sat, the more members talked. So it didn't prove very satisfactory, but they stayed with it. They still do now, have the two sessions. It may have done to a small extent, but they still seemed to have that crammed last part of the session. Why I don't know. Maybe it's certain types of legislation are held up deliberately and pushed through. But they do sit more days now, but the daily hours I think are less. They certainly were in the last period of my time there.

RJ You said previously that the Clerk Assistant of the Legislative Assembly was responsible for the library and at an earlier session you talked about him processing and indexing library books. By the time you became Clerk Assistant, what was the situation with the library?

BARTLETT: I was involved in the same indexing, and work in the library. Although by that stage we'd got .... that was '66. I think by that stage we'd got someone to help in the library. I forget whether it's afterwards or around about that stage. But their help involved just .... too many books were disappearing, and this was the main reason behind it, or being kept out for a longer period than the rules said. So that they've tried to avoid this. The library was on an honour system. I suppose members are forgetful as much as anyone else. They seemed to disappear or were away longer than they should. Any rate it was decided. But still the same thing, the main record and buying the books. I remember I used to go down to Alberts, and other

book companies, there was about three in Perth at the time. You'd do a bit of research down there, and pick those books that were well spoken of in the press, and a few others maybe. But I think most of it was developing in the fiction line by then. That wasn't hard. It was easy to get some bad books.

RJ What do you mean by that?

BARTLETT: Well I suppose badly written books, and a poor quality book to read. In addition to that .... well the bad ones were probably enjoyed by some - the other type of bad ones were probably enjoyed by some. Others thought it was the wrong place to have them, Parliament House, displayed on shelves as the public walked by. Those were the little criticisms, but....

RJ Were you guilty of buying any of those?

BARTLETT: Oh yes. [Laughter]

RJ Because I wondered what you meant by "bad." And you were criticised for that?

BARTLETT: Well there was the odd prude I suppose, you'd like to call, who thought that that type of book wasn't required at Parliament House.

RJ What's an example of a book that was objected to?

BARTLETT: Oh some of say Robbins' books. I don't know whether you've read any.

RJ No. Harold Robbins you mean?

BARTLETT: Yes, Harold Robbins, yes. You've heard of him?

RJ Yes, yes, and I wouldn't have thought they were too bad. [Laughs] But you had complaints about that?

BARTLETT: Yes, the odd complaint, but in general the members didn't worry. If they picked up a book and it was of no interest to them, they'd say, "Well that book's - you know, it's not worthwhile having in the library Joss, it's not readable; nothing in it." You'd sneak it out after a while and lose it.

RJ What sort of reference books were being bought when you were responsible for the library?

BARTLETT: Not a great deal. In the early stages....you've got to go right back. When I first went to Parliament House and went up to the library, there was an awful lot of biographies, autobiographies, travel books, shelves upon shelves of them. History. Oh just a general good library, where you browsed and sought information if you like, but I suppose the main ones, when you come back to my term, was fiction, and we spoke about that, but biographies, because there was a lot of well known people in the world. Autobiographies. You may buy another encyclopedia, because encyclopedias become dated now with the change in equipment these days. The specialised equipment that's used right throughout the world now. So to keep that type of thing up to date you had to renew your encyclopedias periodically.

END OF SIDE ONE TAPE SEVEN

TAPE SEVEN SIDE TWO

BARTLETT: I couldn't remember buying the history of the war, the '39/'45. They were coming out in volumes, one at a time, spread over twelve months or something like that. That type of thing would be purchased of course, particularly from the well known authors, the appointed people to write up the history at that time. But there was a great deal coming in otherwise, except that you had to start thinking in terms of not being a library for reading. You had to start thinking in terms of being a library for information. That's when they started to appoint librarians to sit there too for the purpose of gleaning information from the press, from overseas papers, setting it up in file form on many subjects. It became a library of information then, more than a reading library. The reading side became secondary. I understand it's even grown more and more today. Members are requiring information from the world, and they want it in a readable form, in a quick form. I assume that the press articles would be the quickest way you could get this type of information. So it's all filed away under headings, thousands of headings too, and indexed now, and then too. We were starting that way. I mean there was a new indexing clerk for the purpose of providing this information and filing it. So as I say it did become a library of information instead of a library for reading or relaxing.

RJ When you were responsible for the library were you the only person making the decision about what was purchased?

BARTLETT: Yes.

RJ And what happened about funds? Were you allocated a certain amount per year or did you apply for money as you needed it?

BARTLETT: The general estimates came out in each year, and the Legislative Assembly had a vote for particular purposes. Hansard had a vote for their purposes, printing and salaries. The library had a vote for the librarian, or later on other people, and also a vote for purchasing books. But very small to start with. I just couldn't remember the figure now. But it's increased considerably. The library was increasing considerably, because the nature of the studies the members wanted. To do this you required photocopying machines, and other types of equipment such as that. And of course they become costly and .... so generally the purchasing of things became .... the purchasing of books wasn't altogether necessary for the [State] library. In addition to that there was an understanding with the library - I just came in around about that period we're talking about - where they had this lending to libraries, or passing round to libraries, certain books in .... They had a borrowing section of the library, the public library, and they would say, send a thousand books to Parliament House, fiction. At the same time they would send a thousand to the Stirling Library, and those books would move around so again very little fiction was being bought in the end because of this movement between libraries, of books.

RJ So really the parliamentary library became part of the State Library Service?

BARTLETT: Yes, from the fiction point of view, yes. Whether it still does I don't know.

RJ On the 1st of July 1970, you became Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, and again how did that come about?

BARTLETT: Well again the Clerk retired and being next in line.... I had hesitations in my own mind, whether I could carry it. I think I probably expressed them to the wife. I may have expressed them to other people too. But it was entirely in the hands of the Speaker, and I would think he consulted with David Brand. I think it was David Brand at the time, yes.

Joss Bartlett on the stairs of Parliament House, 1970

RJ In '70 it would have been, yes.

BARTLETT: There didn't seem to be any objection at all. I mean I didn't hear of any. I know my name went forward and I know I got a letter from David Brand saying, "His Excellency would be pleased to appoint you to this situation." When he came up himself, when I saw him next, he couldn't express anything in the letter, because it was from [His Excellency]. "His Excellency would be pleased to accept me in the position" - but he was nice about it.

RJ In what way?

BARTLETT: Well he expressed his happiness that I had got it. Members did generally.

RJ What were your own doubts about the position?

BARTLETT: Well I think I expressed the same doubts as when I was appointed Clerk Assistant, that there could be at the back of the minds of some people that maybe they should be looking for someone outside. They may have had some doubt whether I was capable of doing it. I did have some doubts, I said that before, but I thought I was good enough to do it. Although there were occasions when I did need some help, and when I say help it was only a question of going to the Crown Law Department, or the parliamentary draftsmen, and saying, "You've got this. I read it this way, now come on." Then he would say, "Well this is parliamentary drafting. This is the form it takes, and it [means] you just have to go [along with it]. He was generally right. But I always had a very good parliamentary draftsman. Mostly young fellows who were keen to help me. I think probably I had a nature that led people to want to help me, and led people to want to .... not only help me, but enjoyed helping me, enjoyed seeing me in the position, and moving through the line like it.

I mean you couldn't get a better fellow than Sir David Brand to work for. I remember Sir Charles Court. Well I'll come back. Bert Hawke spoke to me on one occasion and said, "You're not

getting any promotion at Parliament House Joss, there's too much break before you'll get one," he said, "what about....?" He was minister then, he said, "What about leaving Parliament House and becoming my secretary?" That gave me a lot of confidence that a fellow like Bert Hawke and others were thinking about it in terms of taking me outside Parliament House myself. Sir Charles Court spoke to me on one occasion. He was in the gallery with a person, and he called me over and introduced me and he said, "Joss this fellow's a bank manager" (such and such a bank). He said, "He likes your approach to things, and he's wondering whether you would be interested in leaving Parliament House to ....." So again I was.... I always had that feeling that I was being looked after. Although I had doubts about myself, it appeared that other people didn't have the same doubts. Any rate I was appointed.

RJ What specifically were your doubts though?

BARTLETT: I think I mentioned this all the way through that that lack of educational background.

RJ Well, if that was a worry to you, why did you not do something about it during your career?

BARTLETT: Well, I did as I think I mentioned that I went to night school.

RJ Yes, you went to night school.

BARTLETT: You are limited at night school unless you could [not] go to a university. You must remember this, that I was working three days of the week in the evening, so that meant the days were out for schooling. The evening was out for schooling. I had to find some place to go on a Monday night or a Friday night if I wanted to go to higher education. So that was a difficulty. So I think I just studied myself. But that was my doubt, that was the doubt that I had in my mind.

RJ The public service does support people in taking University courses and gives them a limited amount of time off for study. Was that ever available to you?

BARTLETT: No. I think that's only been available in recent years. Probably 1950 onwards. No, it wasn't available. I suppose one could have got a tutor in English and visited his home, but again I think the time factor, the problem associated with days and nights working, and more particularly when they started to come to the period of sitting two sessions a year.

RJ Why did you not take up Bert Hawke's offer as his secretary?

BARLETT: I spoke to the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly at the time, and I mentioned what had taken place and he said, "Don't do it Joss." He said, "You're known here, you're liked here. You'll get the normal promotions that go along be they delayed or not, but you will get them. If Bert Hawke were to lose his ministerial portfolio at the Public Works, what would happen to you? You've got to think of that." He said, "The next minister might not feel so disposed as Bert Hawke towards you, and you could be pushed into the background and lost forever. Because," he said, "you're not a public servant. You're going into the public service taking someone's position. It is not going to be liked." And I spoke to Ralph Doig who was Public Service Commissioner at the time - I think he was Public Service Commissioner. I spoke to the Public Service Commissioner at any rate and he said a similar thing. He said, "Joss, you're coming into the service, you are taking a public service position. It is not going to be liked and if the new minister that takes over doesn't like you, and it could be a change of government and as you know it could be thought of as a political appointment...." That hadn't entered my mind, but when he said that, that was the finish as far as I was concerned. It could be said it was a political appointment and I would be in trouble, because I never played politics and I think that was one of my greatest assets

too - one of my assets at any rate, because I could treat each member in the same way. It didn't matter what his politics were.

As a matter of fact I was an advocate of the two Clerks being deleted from the roll. I used to talk about this. I thought that to stay out of politics and stay out of the thinking of politics, it would be a good idea if the two Clerks were.... [pause] - not deleted from the roll?

RJ Exempted from voting?

BARLETT: Exempted from voting.

RJ I'm a little bit confused as to when this would happen, this offer from Bert Hawke. It must have been during Willcock's time as Premier?

BARTLETT: No.

RJ Frank Wise?

BARTLETT: Bert Hawke became Premier between....

RJ 1953 and '59.

BARTLETT: It would be during the Frank Wise [period].

RJ So it would be sometime during '45 to '47.

BARTLETT: Yes.

RJ Well Ralph Doig was then in the Premier's Department.

BARTLETT: Yes, I hesitated about Ralph Doig. He wasn't Public Service Commissioner at the time.

RJ No, not until much later - 1965. What was the position that the friend of Charles Court was offering you, and why did you refuse that?

BARTLETT: I think it was a public relations' position.

RJ And why did you refuse it?

BARTLETT: Well, my senior officers were getting a little bit older, [laughs] drawing near retiring age. I knew where I was going and I wouldn't know where I was going with this other situation, so I just.... I don't know whether there was any certainty about it in any way. It was just a comment made, that was all.

RJ Throughout your working life, were there any other temptations to leave the Parliament?

BARTLETT: No.

RJ And you didn't consider yourself at any time applying for other positions?

BARTLETT: No.

RJ Right. You spoke of feeling that perhaps a further knowledge of English would have helped you as Clerk of the Legislative Assembly. What about a knowledge of law itself?

BARTLETT: Well, let me say this that Emil Nulsen said to me - that would be 19... He was minister between 1933 and '36.[1] I was only a youngster at the time. He must have been still minister when I returned back from overseas, because he said to me on one occasion.... These sort of things sort of boosted my ego considerably. He said to me, "Joss, why don't you sit for

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[1]Emil Nulsen's first appointment as a Minister was in March, 1939 (RJ).

the magisterial examination." He said, "It would be a piece of cake for you." That's the answer to your one about the knowledge of legislation.

RJ So you feel that the very process of working up through the ranks gives you that knowledge anyhow?

BARTLETT: That's right. It did me at any rate. It did me because I was interested. I was interested in helping members and I was interested in the legislation side of it. I was interested in reading the legislation. It is not very nice stuff to read, but a member would ask for something. "Get me such and such an Act, Joss, the part dealing with so and so." And I would search through it and pick up the part and I would read it. "I wonder what he wants this for?" So when I was given time and things like that on my own, I would go back to that piece of legislation and I would read it and look at all the cross references and read the cross references and I would take a mental note of it and when I saw some comments made in the House or outside, I would know what was taking place. But I always did this.

I suppose I would have had more knowledge of the legislation on the statute book, and there was hundreds of them, than anyone else in Western Australia at one stage. For a member to say, "I want to have a look at a piece of legislation." He said, "I understand there is a piece of legislation, I don't know what it is in, that deals with a ...." I'm trying to think of something. The rights of people to enter under a certain situation, and it would either be under the Police Act. It could be under the Transfer of Land Act. It could be under the Local Government Act. It could be under two or three or four or five Acts, and I'd start to think and, "I'll have a look at that one first, because I think that would apply to that more than what he was thinking about." So that's just how I did it.

But as I said, I think that I had more knowledge of the legislation than anyone else in Western Australia at the time. Like when I say - the Acts and what they involved. Maybe not the full coverage. I mean, the Local Government Act was a dreadful Act: 580 pages or something. But, I knew where I could find it and what they wanted if they wanted anything. It was one of my special efforts that I made because I had to help members, and I had to find what they wanted. There was no one else to do it, other than the parliamentary officer when I started, so that's just the way it came about.

RJ Well describe for me your duties as Clerk of the Legislative Assembly.

BARTLETT: Well first I was the boss. [Laughs.] Now he doesn't have many duties. He has an overriding authority. I was the Speaker's adviser to start with. I was the House adviser to start with. I was the keeper of the decisions of the House. I was the final say in the printing of the decisions of the House, and also the legislation of the House, although John Roberts of the Legislative Council did the final.... before going to the Governor for signature. But anything that left the Legislative Assembly for the Legislative Council. I was the signatory to all the cheques involving all the expenditure of the Legislative Assembly: that had reached thousands upon thousands of dollars. The library, the Hansard; all their expenditure. I said the Legislative Assembly. And the members of Parliament. The parliamentary offices had come into being then. Their appointments came through me, the various officers, although some of them I didn't sight, it was on recommendations.

RJ That's electorate officers you ....?

BARTLETT: *Electorate* officers, yes. The appointment and the incidental requirements of the *electorate* offices. The general supervising of staff, staff requirements, and that included the library, the Hansard and the Legislative Assembly staff. When I say staff requirements for Hansard, I was also secretary of the

Joint Printing Committee, which controlled Hansard and the problems of Hansard. This Joint Printing Committee and the Joint Library Committee, it was a requirement of the House each year to set up these committees on the first day of every session, and I was also involved in that.

RJ Were you secretary of the Joint Library Committee?

BARTLETT: No, I was secretary of the Joint Printing Committee. The Library Committee came under the Clerk Assistant. But they had their problems: they had their staff problems, they had their printing problems. The Chief Hansard Reporter would come down and talk. If necessary we'd call a meeting of the committee, deal with the matter. But other than that it was just general office work and the position I was in, being the boss, supervising.

RJ What were the incidentals that you were responsible for for electoral offices?

BARTLETT: Well typewriters, stationery, other office equipment. Not the furniture, that was the Public Works Department. A lot of the office equipment came from the Public Works Department. There was the supervising or telling that they couldn't - they were going too far, or they could go a little bit further. Members were inclined to get them to use Parliament House instead of.... like their staff, to use Parliament House, and it was involving some of my staff too much. So I just had to ring up and say, "Look while we're prepared to help you as much as possible, but you can't use the parliamentary staff for the purpose of one member. There's fifty of them, and they have equal rights to that." So in the end it was sort of stopped, because of the demand, because it was involving.... I mean when I say it was involving my staff in outside parliamentary work, and a lot of it was political. So I wouldn't have a bar of that side of it.

RJ What sort of things were your staff being asked to do?

BARTLETT: Well to find out information about a certain member, things like that, and certain people that had been recorded in the Hansard at some stage, and I didn't think that it was the right thing to be called to do. Once they started doing that, if it's their opposite number, or the opposite party number, then that became political, and I didn't want to involve my staff in any political matters, because it's so easy for a person to say, "Where did you get that?" He'd say, "Well it was supplied by the parliamentary staff to me." That wasn't on as far as I was concerned.

END OF SIDE TWO TAPE SEVEN

TAPE EIGHT SIDE ONE

RJ How well did members take your stopping this sort of thing?

BARTLETT: I think that the general run of member realised the problems that were arising, and it was easy. It was easy to go to the leader of the party too, and say, "This is the problem, and you know how I feel about party politics or being involved in party politics. Now I don't want my staff.... Can you have a talk to So-and-So?" So it was easy enough to get around, because Sir David Brand and then Sir Charles Court, Bert Hawke, and then Jack Tonkin. He was easy to talk to. I suppose all the leaders I had to speak to on this subject I think JT was probably the best to deal with. He immediately said, "Joss, it will cease immediately. If there's anything political, they've got to do it themselves." I said, "Thanks very much." So it was easy to get over that way and it stopped all this problem before it really developed. That's personalities that developed.

RJ Who were the staff you were then responsible for? You've outlined the staff when you first went into the Parliament, but by the time you became Clerk, what were the staff under you?

BARTLETT: Well there would have been the same sequence as before. We had attendants. We didn't have messengers any more. There was the Clerk Assistant, the Sergeant at Arms. We did get a Second Clerk Assistant. He was Second Clerk Assistant and Sergeant at Arms. The Clerk of Records and Accounts, the Assistant Clerk of Records, a typist. That was the immediate Assembly staff.

RJ How did you find relations between the staff when you were in charge?

BARTLETT: Very good, very good indeed. I was never a person to anger very easily. I was trying to keep it all on a friendly basis all the time. You mean between the staff of the two Houses, or my own staff?

RJ No, just talk about your own staff for a start.

BARTLETT: Very friendly, very friendly. I think I mentioned that I could go up to Parliament House now and they would approach me straight away and they always call me by "Mister". It was because of my attitude I think too, to them. I never called my senior officers, when I was coming through, by their Christian names, and they stuck to my principles. But very friendly, very friendly indeed. I don't think we ever had a real snag in the Legislative Assembly, anyone we had to talk to or give them an ultimatum; they toe the line or get out. So no, it was a very good staff.

RJ And what about as far as between the two Houses was concerned?

BARTLETT: Still very good. I had mentioned earlier, and the same sort of situation applied, that if there were any comments made about one member of the staff or another member of the staff, that's between two Houses, it all involved the legislation before the House: the attitude of one House as against the attitude of the other. Not the attitude of the staff, although the two Clerks were advising their [laughs].... I was advising our minister, or Premier, and he was advising the leader of the House up the other end. It depended on their standing orders, it depended on our standing [orders], on our point of view, depending on the Constitution Act of ours, and the way that it was interpreted. That would be the only thing that would be involved in the difference between the staff. I mean John and I had some great times together. I don't know whether you spoke to .... in our early days, and in our latter days for instance, because he calls me J C, and he still does. It was always not just J C, [lifts voice] "J C!"

RJ So even when you had conflict over interpreting your standing orders as against theirs and about legislation, there was never animosity involved in it?

BARTLETT: No, no, no, no. None at all. If there were, it would only be .... They had one fellow there, I think he was Clerk of Records and Accounts, or might have been Second Clerk of the Legislative Council, Second Clerk Assistant. There was never any real animosity, animosity, ...mosity, right? [sniffs] (I'm getting thick in the nose, and thick in the mouth) here with him, but he did have a tendency to cross the t's and dot the i's, and miss something big, where I'd forget about the i's and t's sometimes and look for the main problem. We'd come in conflict with this. I would have to point out, "Look you've forgotten all that. Now that's because you're getting involved with making certain that that t is crossed or the i is dotted, and you're not looking at the whole situation."

He did, on some occasions - on two occasions to my knowledge, went home without giving the full message. There were a large number of amendments made in the Legislative Council, and they were forwarded to the Assembly for dealing with, and I handed them to the minister and said, "You can have a browse through these for a while. I'll need them back in a few minutes because when the House finishes I've got to send them out to the Government Printer." He came to me and he said, "Look," he said, "I was down the House when this was passed and," he said, "some of the amendments are not shown in this message." So it was a question of getting in touch with this fellow, and he'd gone home, and we finally got him out of bed and come back and had to do them. But that was, you know, a little bit of anger more than any other problems, that he would do this. That's where I had some differences with him, because he was inclined to overlook the main things for the small things which didn't matter very much at all.

RJ A further interview with Mr Joss Bartlett, held in his home on the 22nd of September 1986.

Mr Bartlett you were telling me last time, when you were describing the staff under your control as Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, that there were no longer any messengers. What had happened to those chores of running down town to the printers and that sort of thing?

BARTLETT: Well the young fellows seemed to become a bit unreliable, and a decision was made that we should employ men of an older age at any rate, type of person. I think that following the war too there was a lot of unemployed for a while. And they decided that it would be wise to employ this type of person, the ex-servicemen if we could get them, as attendants. They took over the responsibility of the corridors, the entrances, and also the delivering and mail, and collecting mail. But at the same time we got a different type of vehicle, a car - yes, a small car at one stage. The men used to do that, so they weren't required to use a bicycle. But the main thing was to get some stability on the staff too, and men of some calibre, that would certainly take orders, but at the same time would be responsible. As you well know boys of fifteen and sixteen become a little bit irresponsible. That was the decision at any rate.

The arrangements were made at the same time, or roughly the same time, for the post office to deliver the mail, both letter mail and bulk mail, to Parliament House, and pick up mail from Parliament House. So this meant that our ordinary delivery service, postal service, we weren't required to have messengers doing that any more. The attendants were to go to the Government Printer taking Hansard stuff, or parliamentary stuff for printing, and picking it up there. In addition to that, if there were any deliveries down town, they had bays in some areas in town where they could pull into, particularly the Treasury, and deliver whatever matter they had to deliver. But that was a complete change then from the old messenger day to a new and a better system mind you, from the point of view of the postal

people, and the sorting of mail at Parliament House, and putting their quick sorting in Parliament House for the members' purposes. This was a great advantage when the members had started to get offices in Parliament House, in the new structure.

RJ In your time there had been that chain of progression, starting with messenger and then hopefully moving up to clerical positions and up through the ranks. With the introduction of attendants at the - well one would say the lowest level, could they anticipate following that same chain, or were they out of that chain?

BARTLETT: Well it was never thought in the first place when they were appointed they would be in the chain. But following my departure from Parliament House, one particular attendant, and rather a bright boy, did break the chain. Whether he'll go any further than he is now.... I think he might be Assistant Clerk of Records now, in that capacity. Whether he'll go any further I don't know, that remains for the people in the future. But he did break the chain, and that's the only one that I know of. The others didn't have the requirements or the interest to go beyond that. They loved their attendant's job, and that was the main thing.

RJ Any promotional opportunity at all for them? Was there any chief attendant or something like that?

BARTLETT: Well yes, there was a principal attendant, we called him. They may have an assistant principal, I don't know. But that would be as far as he would go normally. I think one or two, one in particular, was able to transfer from Parliament House to another government department where the same type of person was required, an attendant or a doorman. But no, there was no problem. No promotion beyond the principal attendant.

RJ If we could turn now to relations between the two Houses, which you have touched on before. I'm wondering about the application of section 46 of the Constitution Acts Amendment

Act, in your time, which of course provides for certain bills to come out of the Assembly, and requires that some are not amended by Council. Now Bruce Okely in writing about this says, "The application of section 46 of the Constitution Acts Amendment Act has created more disputes between the two Houses than any other single matter."[1] What was the case in your time?

BARTLETT: I would agree entirely with Bruce. It was probably the main single disagreement that took place between the two Houses. Some did take place not under the Constitution Act, on party decisions, party against party. But the Constitution Act was the main difference. I suppose most every year there was some time when reference was made to this particular Act, and the powers of the Legislative Council, and the powers of the Legislative Assembly. I would say that every year there was some problems associated with section 46, particularly in the years of a new Parliament. Taxation bills were being amended, and certain types of appropriation was being applied. It seemed to be the Legislative Council made life pretty tough for a Labor government to me, as against a Liberal government, because the Legislative Council is predominently a Liberal/Country Party, they had the majority. And that's where at least every year when a Labor government was in power this problem had developed. Not so much when a Liberal government was in power, because of the party feeling, but certainly every year a Labor government was in power. That's where it originated too. There wouldn't have been any problems under section 46, many problems at any rate, prior to 1921. But it started to develop more when the Collier government came. Was it '20.... '24 I'm sorry, '24 to '30. I think that's where it started to develop a little bit. But it really didn't have major problems until probably 1933 onwards. Well as you know, the Labor government was in from 1933 to about 1945.

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[1]PERVAN, R and SHARMAN, C, Essays on Western Australian Politics, Perth, Uni of WA, 1979, pp 31-32.

RJ '47

BARTLETT: '47. I don't know why I get mixed up with '47 and '45. Oh that was Frank Wise, that's right. That was the year of Frank Wise.

RJ Yes, yes, which was also Labor.

BARTLETT: That's when it really started to develop, and then it got worse and worse as the years progressed. The Council took advantage of [Section] 46, a big advantage of 46, by using May's Parliamentary Practice, the practices of the House of Commons and the House of Lords in dealing with financial matters, and their normal procedure regarding this. You know the House of Commons had to finally put a restriction on the House of Lords, they couldn't amend any legislation, financial legislation. But section 46 of our Act, to me prevented the Council from doing this type of thing, but they said, "No." There were certain practices in the Mother Parliament that should apply to State Parliament. I think it has happened also in the federal sphere, the same type of argument, the same type of fight took place, based on again, parliamentary practice and powers of the Senate, as against the House of Representatives, or Reps as against the Senate.

It remained a sore point from the Labor government point of view. And the Legislative Council used.... Once the Legislative Council got away with it once or twice, then they started to point out, "Well we had the right to do this last year, ten years ago. Now this is the practice of our House, you should agree to it." We would argue otherwise. It should never have happened in the first place. But then they'd come back with May's Parliamentary Practice, and the decision of their President on one occasion. It was a bugbear.

It was unreal at times, the atmosphere that developed over section 46 of the Constitution Act, which to my way of thinking should never have developed, because it just said the Council

can't amend appropriation bills for the ordinary annual services of the government. They couldn't amend taxation bills, in such a way they would create a .... what's the word? Not a debt on the community. Increase their liability, or increase the taxation on the community. I just forget the exact wording of it now. It meant that where the appropriation of revenue for an ordinary annual service of the government was concerned, and the taxation, well to me it didn't appear that they could amend it, but they insisted they could.

There was also a provision in the Constitution Act which said they may request an amendment, and sometimes they did just do that. Then when the Legislative Assembly said, "No, we're not going to agree to your request," they insisted upon it, the Council. I don't know how you can insist upon a request. If you've got a power to request something, can you insist upon when it's turned down.

Any rate that was the problem and Bruce is right it did to amount a tremendous problem between the two Houses. But mostly, as I mentioned earlier, that when a Labor government was in power in the Legislative Assembly.

RJ How were those disagreements resolved in your time?

BARTLETT: The same as they are now, by conference. I mean the Council would move an amendment. We'd get the amendments back and the Assembly would .... the Speaker would rule them out of order, beyond the powers of the Legislative Council to make. That was the general [practice]. They would have to go back, and they would insist upon their amendments. Then we would continue to disagree with their amendments and their power: the Speaker would. Then a conference would be called after a period of time, or alternatively the Council would relent and let it go through. But the final thing was always a conference between the two Houses. That was three members of each House, that went into a room and sat there. I think one went about nineteen hours once, and I understand what happened.... It had to be total agreement,

otherwise things were lost. I think one .... I understand this was so. One particular member went to that conference and he folded his arms, he said, "I'm going to sleep. When you come to my way of thinking then the conference will be over."

RJ Was he from the Council or the Assembly?

BARTLETT: Yes [from the Council].

RJ And what happened? They obviously weren't going to persuade him. What happened, do you know?

BARTLETT: I think in the end he, not actually relented, I think they compromised and came to an agreement that way. But he got his point to some extent. But the government also got somewhere.

But there was always a problem with section 46. I would like to have had a.... not a Supreme Court. You'd probably have to go to the Supreme Court first, but then you could appeal to the High Court on 46, but no one would do anything about it, get a decision, you know, apply to the court for a decision to be made on the powers of the Legislative Assembly under the Constitution Act only, on the basis of the way it was printed. If you went back through the records of the special conference that dealt with this before we had responsible government, I think you'd find that the people that were involved those days had that guideline of restricting the Legislative Council to ordinary legislation and not government finance.

RJ Did you find that conflicts like that between the Houses, also affected the relationship between the two Clerks, Clerk of the Assembly and Clerk of the Council?

BARTLETT: No, I don't think .... It may have done in some circumstances. Certainly not in the last ten years of my period up there. I wouldn't know unless, you know, it was spoken about at the table, and there were a few angry words said, at a lunch table, or an evening meal table. I think some of the lesser

lights probably in the two Houses.... when I say lesser lights, they'd probably have their own opinion as to powers, particularly those in the Legislative [Council]. I think all the officers of the Legislative Assembly sort of stuck with the constitution always. But there were one or two in the Legislative Council, just down the line a little bit, who would rush to point out things in May's Parliamentary Practice. When you pointed out to them that we were dealing with a constitutional act, and the British government, or the British Parliament didn't have a constitution, so how can one have a bearing on the other. The Parliamentary Practices should only be used where we were silent in our legislation or our rules. We had that problem. But to answer your question again: certainly I don't know of any big differences that took place, except some minor arguments on the basis of how can you interpret an Act of Parliament by practice of another Parliament? That was the basis of that, that was just fun talk.

END OF SIDE ONE TAPE EIGHT

TAPE EIGHT SIDE TWO

RJ You've described your duties as Clerk of the House when Parliament was sitting, and of course some of those duties obviously carried into when it was not sitting, the administration of staff and finance and so on. But what other sort of things did you do when the House was not sitting once you were Clerk?

BARTLETT: Well I took the opportunity of bringing the rules book up to date. For instance ever since the inception of the Legislative Assembly, a clerk had gathered together, following each session, rulings of the Speaker. I had commenced this when I was Clerk Assistant, but hadn't had the time I required to complete it. I'd made many notes of things that had to be deleted by following rulings, and the changes in standing orders, which I could remove. So when I became Clerk of the Legislative Assembly I was the one that had to make the decision, which of those rules would stand, because of changes in the standing orders, and which could be deleted and not recorded any more, just left in the old volume and left at that. I retyped the whole of the rulings. The volume I suppose then would have been a little bound volume of about ten inches by eight, and about three inches thick, loose-leafed.

Going through from right from the very beginning, I mentioned I'd noted that there was a lot of rulings showing there that were no longer required because of alterations to the standing orders. When I was Clerk Assistant I couldn't do anything about them, because I had a senior officer who would finally make the decision. But when I became Clerk I took the opportunity out of session to go through these, delete those that weren't required, recheck the page numbers and add other rulings that hadn't been noted previously. I think from memory I went from 1942 - well I started during the war. No, '39, I started from '39, because I was away in '40 to '45. I started in that period and I noticed a

number of rulings - they weren't rulings that had been ..... [pause] rulings that were objected to, but the Speaker in calling the House to order would point out certain things, and that would be printed in Hansard, and it wouldn't be recorded that it had been objected to, because it hadn't been objected to. So some of these rulings weren't in this little book, or rulings book. So I just noted those too, where the Speaker had given a decision, which could be called a ruling if any other Speaker was looking for a similar sort of situation. I noted all those and I just typed out new headings, and I made in this case, a lot of cross-references too, because some rulings had a bearing on two or three different standing orders. So I made cross-references. It was a time consuming job, and I enjoyed it too, because there were two or three things that I hadn't seen recorded anywhere before. It was good to note them for the House, for the future of the House. If anyone wanted to read through it, so much the better.

But I don't know what happened. I understand that finally they had them printed. It would be a tiring job for someone to have it printed, and then go through each page number referred to, of Hansard, the particular year, and just check up whether that page number was right and corrections for the printer. It would have been a time-consuming job, that alone. But any rate I enjoyed doing what I was doing. One thing I enjoyed deleting a number too.

RJ Was there any major revision of standing orders in your period as Clerk?

BARTLETT: Yes, I think the major one would be about 1948.[1] John Hearman would be Speaker then. There was quite a lot of standing orders that needed revising. No one wanted to get around to doing it. Now when was .... during Guthrie's term as Speaker, and he was authorised by the House to revise the standing orders. Just on the revising orders, I've just mentioned, I can't

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[1]Mr Bartlett was not Clerk at that time (RJ).

remember the exact year. I thought it was '48, but it may have been '68. That's a lot of difference. [Laughs.] They did it in a very good way. They printed the old standing order - it was in foolscap form - at the Government Printer, then they went through it, and they made their amendments to those standing orders, and then they redrafted the first reprint with the standing orders in their proper order, but as they went through in their proper order, with the suggested alterations in black type, heavy black type underneath. Then in addition to that I think they reset the standing order as it would appear. That's right they reset the standing order as it would appear, with the black type alterations. So that members, when they viewed the report, when it was taken to the House, they could read the old standing order with the suggested changes in it and see how it read that way. It was a very good idea.

Very few changes were made by the House to those new standing orders. I think the major change was in the power to expel.... not expel.

RJ Suspend?

BARTLETT: Suspend a member. It was for one day initially, but they decided, and the House decided this, not the committee, that they'd suspend in the first case for one day, the second case three days, and the third case nine days. It was automatic, the suspension. If he were named, and the House agreed to it, then he was suspended for one sitting day. If he was suspended again at some stage during that session, it was automatic: it was three days. And the same applied to the nine days too. I think that would have been the major alteration the House made. There were some minor ones. I thought it was '48. I haven't got a copy here.

RJ Don't worry, we'll be able to check on that.

BARTLETT: Anyhow check on it. It may have been '68. Eight is in my mind: '48 or '68.

RJ Right. Well just a small point. You talked as Clerk Assistant of having the occasional two hour lunch hour and having a briefer working day. What happened as Clerk?

BARTLETT: Well the same thing applied. I mean I was still playing .... yes I think when I was appointed Clerk I was in the last stages of my cricket days. I used to play with the parliamentary side. Then I was playing bowls too, and I was playing with the parliamentary side. But there was no problems for me to get leave, particularly out of session. I could make my own decisions. If I wanted to play bowls, or if I wanted to have a game of golf, it was okay so long as there was nothing that I had to do really, you know, have a meeting or something like that. I could make my own decisions. But not that I took advantage of it very much at all. I didn't even take leave sometimes, you know the normal leave I could have.

I always found that I could occupy myself. I didn't read very much. I think most of my time was taken up in - spare time, in checking these volumes. You've got to remember this too, that the index to the Votes and Proceedings, after the end of a session, was a big job too. I don't know whether you know what a galley is, a printing galley, well they'd probably run into two or three hundred galleys to be checked before the final print and binding of the volume. So there was always a time filling job to do. Not only time filling, it was a monotonous type of job. But it was required, and of course in addition to that the legislation.... Although John, when the final legislation was done by the Clerk of the [Parliament], when the final was finally passed and ready for the Government Printer, and also the Governor's signature, it was required that the Clerk of the Legislative Council do it. Clerk of the Parliaments, I'm sorry. But there were times when John happened to be away and it was my situation.

RJ I wondered about your opinion of each of the Premiers in their role as leader of the House, the House of Assembly. The first you would have experienced once you went into the House would have been Collier.

BARTLETT: Well Collier was a rather dominant figure, a big tall man. A man that had the full control of his party, in the House at any rate. Except that he allowed a.... He had full control when a decision had to be made, and he dominated the House with his - oh his size and his power of debate too. I was so young at the time, I suppose that he stands out, and he stands out as a very strong man as far as I was concerned. But he had a number of weaknesses too.

RJ As far as leader of the House was concerned?

BARTLETT: Well, I suppose it would apply there to a small extent too. I think we've made reference to a weakness he had early.

RJ Yes we did. You mean his alcohol problem?

BARTLETT: Yes, mmm, yes, mmm.

RJ You did. Is that what you were referring to?

BARTLETT: Yes, mmm. But other than that weakness there, he was a dominant figure in the House.

RJ What about James Mitchell?

BARTLETT: Sir James was a very quiet speaker, not a very forceful speaker; a stuttering speaker to some extent. He didn't seem to be such a clear thinker as Collier on his feet. It's amazing what some people can do when they're writing, and they can't do the same thing when they're on their feet. Mitchell probably could have probably written a speech better than Collier, but he couldn't produce the speech on his feet in the House. He didn't have that power that Collier had, of debate. He was more a

speaker than a debater. There wasn't much variation in his intonation, whereas Collier had that very good power, a lot of power in his speech. But Mitchell, no he wasn't a very good speaker at all.

RJ And how did he function as leader of the House?

BARTLETT: He seemed to have his party behind him. You've got to remember those days we're talking about an entirely different era. Members of Parliament didn't have the same - that's both sides I'm talking about - weren't controlled by the party machine as they are today. So there was a lot of debates taking place in the House that were in conflict with their leaders to some extent. Well not necessarily in conflict, but at variance at any rate. So this happened on both sides of the House. As it stood those days, as it stood, I would say that Mitchell had just as much control as Collier did under that type of party system, where it was loose. You've got to remember this too, that they might have had a caucus those days, in the party, but they only met once - I think it was once a month. The separate parties met once a month under their leader. It would probably only last half an hour, or an hour, whereas at the present time, and it was when I left, they would go into their meetings and they'd be there for hours and everything would be thrashed out in that meeting before they came into the House. Now I mean. Then you abide by the decision made at this meeting, and your comments will be in the same form. Now those days Collier was the dominant man in debate, Mitchell was the persuader, and both had control of their parties in the House. They were both friendly towards each other too.

RJ What about John Willcock?

BARTLETT: Willcock was a poor speaker, a poor debater. He was *more* a conversationalist as a debater. Never seemed to get angry, never seemed to raise his voice. Well thought of in his party, but never seemed to have the control.... Well control is

probably the wrong word, because Collier dominated his situation. Willcocks didn't have that power of debate or largeness about him that Collier had. He just had control by being gentle I think.

RJ But you think he had control?

BARTLETT: Yes. Yes, I do. I can't remember any outstanding episode where there was any problems associated with his premiership.

RJ Frank Wise as leader of the House.

BARTLETT: Frank Wise was a good debater, well liked. Steady. Didn't take advantage of anyone. I think he was probably the start of this of having a few more party meetings to come to the House with very definite .... Well more or less definite thoughts on a particular subject, particularly where industrial matters were concerned. But in general he had control of his members, and in general the same sort of .... a little bit of an allowance was made for members who wanted to stray from the narrow path in debate. The industrial side was becoming more predominant. This is where the caucus meetings, and on the other side too, the Liberal Party, Conservative Party I think it was, where they had their party meetings for the purpose of formulating their debate in opposition to a certain thing, so that they could have the full party strength behind them. The government were doing the same thing at the same time. But it only involved policy legislation, that sort of thing, those days. Frank Wise was a good Premier. He did a lot of good for the State the short period he was there, a lot of good ideas, particularly agriculturally at any rate.

RJ Ross McLarty.

BARTLETT: Yes. [Laughs.] I think Ross got thrown into the job. Well liked. I mean you couldn't get a nicer person than Sir Ross McLarty. Sir Ross McDonald, or Ross McDonald as he was then, died. He was sick, and had been sick for a while, and he stood

down. Ross McDonald was leader of the Liberal Party sitting in the crossbenches. The Country Party had the numbers in opposition. They were sitting in the main benches as the opposition. The leader of the opposition was a country party man, with Ross McDonald as leader of the Liberals on the crossbenches. Ross [McDonald] wasn't very well and decided to retire. They elected Ross McLarty, the Liberals, as their leader. That was just prior to an election. It was the session prior to the election at any rate. From a government point of view, and that was Frank Wise at the time, he was very confident there would be no failure as far as his government was concerned, in the following election, because Sir Ross was un ..... I don't know whether he was unknown. He was certainly unknown in the city. The Country Party weren't very well liked. Lo and behold Sir Ross went out with Lady McLarty, and met people, moved around the country. Frank Wise was so confident he was winning that I don't know whether there was any election meetings being held by the Labor Party. There may have been a few by the individuals. But there were these placards all over the place, "Be wise, vote Wise," and it was left more or less as that. Suddenly election day came, election count came, and Sir Ross McLarty's Premier. [Laughs.] He was thrown into it without any thought of ever being in that situation. It happened. People were probably tired of a long ..... It was after the war. The people were tired of having the Labor government, being in office so long, and grasped any straw. Sir Ross had a good appearance, he had a good name. Lady McLarty, or Mrs McLarty at this time, she was a good mixer. Together they ..... you know going places together, they were well thought of. I think their popularity spread so quickly through the State that people were voting for Sir Ross, and they won it, and so he had six years as Premier.

RJ How did he function as leader of the House?

BARTLETT: Well he had the good wishes of all the House, I think including the opposition too, but certainly his party. As I said earlier there, they were starting to have party meetings in about '45, about that stage, and they continued. I think they had more

and more party meetings. He had a good.... I think there were one or two men in his party that were critical of party decisions. They spoke about it in the House. But in general Sir Ross was such a likeable bloke that no one wanted to cross him, and he got on very well, with the House, and with the opposition. I suppose at that stage, those six years he had in government and the few years he had [as] leader of the opposition, that's when probably a little bit more humour came into the House, because of Bert Hawke and his general attitude of attacking Sir Ross. In a nice way at times, sometimes in a hard way, but in a jocular way at times. Sir Ross had a lot of money but was afraid to spend it. [Laughs.] There were a lot of comments made you know, and there was a lot of fun at that stage. But yes, he carried on, he carried on very well, and he was a very popular Premier right throughout the State.

RJ Bert Hawke?

BARTLETT: Well Bert Hawke was a good debater, tremendous debater. A strong industrial man. A leader who grasped his party very well, who took control of his party very well, who foresaw the situation that had developed following, that you had to have party control in the House. It had to be there in the House, and that's where, around that time, the caucus became the strength of the Labor Party, and the Liberals too in their - they didn't call it a caucus - party meeting. But their strength and their differences, the party differences were fought out in the caucus room or the party meeting room, and when they came to the House, they came to the House as one. So Hawke was in that situation where he had a strong following - well a complete following behind him, and the leader of the opposition had the same situation too, that they came into the House knowing they were going to be backed by their party whatever happened. As I say, this is when the party system really came into its own.

RJ David Brand?

BARTLETT: Well he was another nice bloke, well liked, very well liked. In the same mould as Sir Ross McLarty. Lady Brand was in the same mould as Lady McLarty. They could move around in districts, you know, in egg throwing districts, and move around together and talk to people in such a way that the eggs would be thrown the other way and the people would be talking to them. But they just had that happy knack of being able to mix, which was a good thing. Good sense of humour. Well liked by his party. Well liked by the opposition too. He was good; yes he was good. He improved in his debating as the time went on. He improved his capacity to control and he became quite a dominant figure in his own party.

END OF SIDE TWO TAPE EIGHT

TAPE NINE SIDE ONE

RJ John Tonkin?

BARTLETT: Well John Tonkin was a .... He lacked humour in debate. He still had control of his party. Again I come back to where this caucus came in, where they made their decisions in caucus, so a leader came to the House full of confidence. That's both sides. A question of what they wanted in the House, what they wanted to do in the House. Tonkin had that backing too. But he lacked humour in debate. He was a hard-hitting debater. Not a nasty debater, but a hard-hitting debater. He was inclined to, you know, thump his points home [hits table with fist repeatedly]. But he did lack the humour. To me at any rate, he so lacked it in humour, that although you knew he was a good speaker and he was speaking well, he so lacked humour that finally you got a bit tired of listening. He would reiterate his points too. On one occasion someone said to me when I was Clerk, I think I was Clerk Assistant at the time and he was leader of the Opposition. They said, "Joss, he's made that point twice now. He'll make it again and then he'll sit down." [Laughs.] But that was his type of debating. He emphasised. When he wanted to get something across, he pushed that point, and he pushed it to the extent so he repeated himself about three times and then decided.... I suppose he might have learned this from his school days as a teacher, that to get a child to grasp something, then you had to keep pushing at him all the time. He carried that on in his debate. But as I say, it became boring at times.

RJ Charles Court.

BARTLETT: He came with a reputation that I didn't know where he'd come from. I'd seen the name before. I didn't know his strength. I think we might go back to '53 here; that's when he came in. I didn't know his strength. Apparently the Labor Party knew his strength, because he sat in opposition first, and he sat behind

Sir Ross McLarty, in the backbench behind Sir Ross. Sir Ross quite often, right from the very beginning of the House, would turn around and comment to Sir Charles. This is when I started to think well this man must have a strong background somewhere that I don't know about, because I wasn't interested in party politics at all. I didn't worry about them at that stage or any stage in my parliamentary life. But then I could see a situation developing where the government (the Labor government was in power at the time) were, instead of sniping at Sir Ross were sniping at Sir Charles, and again made me think. It was from that stage - I think I mentioned earlier - that a big change came into the parliamentary system. Not by Sir Charles, and I'll emphasise that: not by Sir Charles, but because of Sir Charles. There were two or three members of the government who set out to get .... soil him, find out things of his background that they could use against him and destroy him. Then I started to realise because from his own debating power situation, when he started to speak too, there were all these interjections, I realised that we were going to have a powerful man in the House. I also realised that the Labor government had realised this a long time before I had, and that if they allowed Charlie Court to stay in Parliament long enough that he'd be the dominant figure for a number of years, which proved so. But they failed to destroy him and finally Charlie Court did become the dominant figure in the House; an overriding figure in the House.

I would say that probably the State made an awful lot of progress, just as much as progress during his term as it had done through any other term of a Premier, or Premiers. He was a dominant person in the House. He was a one man band too. He says he's not, but he was. He had the complete control over the individual in his party. Each individual. Any differences, and I question whether there would have been any differences, in the party room, they were certainly thrashed out there at any rate. He was a dominant figure in the House, yes. I can understand why the Labor Party set out to denigrate him right from the very beginning.

RJ Each one of those men, except for the case of John Willcock, served periods in the House as leader of the Opposition. Was any of them not effective as leader of the Opposition, where they had been effective as leaders of the House?

BARTLETT: I'd have to jump from 1933. Willcock wasn't in opposition at any stage, so you'd have to jump to Frank Wise from there. When he became leader of the Opposition, he didn't like the job, he liked the situation of Premier, but wasn't very happy with being leader of the Opposition. He resigned from the Parliament and became the Administrator (I think the title was) of the North West.

RJ Of the Northern Territory.

BARTLETT: Northern Territory, yes.

RJ Yes he did. But he still had a period as leader ....

BARTLETT: I think he probably had less than twelve months. I'm not certain about that. He didn't have a long period, because he was Premier to....

RJ Till '47 and he went to the Northern Territory in '51.

BARTLETT: Oh three years was it. Any rate I know he wasn't enjoying it, and I think he probably left it to .... He took part in debate alright, but I think he left it more or less to Bert Hawke and Herbie Graham and one or two others.

RJ So you just felt he lost interest at that point?

BARTLETT: He had lost interest, yes. He didn't like the situation at all. He wanted to be the dominant person. He was leader of his party, but he wasn't able to dominate the House.

He wanted control of government and that sort of thing. So no, he didn't like it, so he didn't show much force there. Not as much as he could have done.

RJ And the others?

BARTLETT: Well you come from ....

RJ McLarty and Hawke and all of them.

BARTLETT: Well McLarty seemed to be less dominant in opposition. I think he started to rely on Sir Charles Court too much, and he was allowing Charles Court and Dave Brand, to handle the situation that was developing in the House. He wasn't very happy in opposition too. He hadn't been very happy in government to this extent that he wasn't a strong debater. In opposition you need that strength of debate to get a point, if you could get points across, but he didn't have it, and I think he left it to David and certainly to Sir Charles after that, and one or two others. But Sir Ross didn't like the rough, bustle of politics and he didn't handle it very well. Except there were times when .... he had quite a good sense of humour too.

RJ Bert Hawke?

BARTLETT: Bert Hawke was the same type. He took charge of the debate in the Legislative Assembly, the same as he did when he was Premier, when he wanted to. Probably more ruthless in opposition than he was in government. Particularly where certain industrial legislation was involved in the House. I think in one case you had the difference between the two Houses as far as section 46 was concerned. In the other case in the Legislative Assembly, the Industrial Arbitration Act. Any amendments to the Industrial Arbitration Act proposed by the government, which was a Liberal Government were always soundly attacked, and they created some strong verbal fights, and that's where Hawke was at his best, on industrial stuff.

RJ David Brand.

BARTLETT: He was a good, well-liked opposition leader. He developed quite a good debater too, and he took his part. But again Sir Charles was the .... even at that stage, although Sir David was leader and controlled his party well, Sir Charles was the dominant debater in the party by then, but still under the thumbs of David.

RJ John Tonkin.

BARTLETT: I think John was better in opposition than he was as Premier. You've got more ..... as a Premier and you're particularly talking about finance and things like that, you've got to watch your step, your words. But as leader of the Opposition (and this is where I say he was probably better as the leader of the Opposition than he was as Premier) there's a lot of things you can say without worrying what you're saying. When I say that, particularly when it came to expenditure, you could spend an awful lot of money when you were in opposition, where you can't spend the same type of money when you're Premier or Treasurer. [Laughs.] And that was the change, the attitude.

RJ How did you observe the operation of independents. For instance Bill Grayden spent that period from '56 to '62 as independent Liberal. Was he truly independent?

BARTLETT: Grayden. Oh no, no, no, no. There were truly independent people in the House who were elected as independents. The last one would have been Read. He was an independent, elected for Victoria Park. He beat .... did he beat Raphael? No, Raphael died or something.[1] Any rate Read won the Victoria Park seat, the only time it's been won by other than a Labor man for years. But Read was the last, I would say he was elected.... I'm assuming he was truly an independent, because he was elected

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[1]H S Raphael died and William Read was elected as an independent for Victoria Park in 1945 (RJ).

as an independent. Grayden because of a problem with his party, or a problem he had with his party, resigned from the party. Whether you resign from the overall party I don't know, or just from the parliamentary party. But he was a Liberal through and through, but he sat in the crossbench, because of the difference. He'd pulled out of the party because of the difference, but he wasn't an independent, because as you well know he returned to the party and became a minister in the party. So he wasn't a true independent. Jim Mann of Beverley, he broke away from the party. He had his differences with Sir Ross McLarty and a few others at times because he didn't get into the ministry. He broke away, and he set up .... what's it today? The Conservative Party is it now, the government party?

RJ You mean the Country Party?

BARTLETT: No the.... oh the Liberal Party, the Liberal Party. It was the Conservative Party at one stage there.[1] He broke away and he sat in the crossbenches for a while, and he was nothing. He formed what he called the Liberal Party, started. You know became the forerunner of the Lib.... But he started it, he was the instigator of it, but it became the principal party in the end. But he had no .... it was just that the Conservative Party at the time realised that they weren't getting anywhere under the banner of Conservative, that they took over the banner of the Liberal Party. From then on they went ahead again. But Grayden wouldn't have been an independent by any means. Certainly Mann wasn't. One or two others in the early stages were. When I first got to the House there was a number of independents. When I say a number I think it makes about three that had won seats as independents, because party politics didn't play a big part in .... well it did play a big part but only in certain areas.

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[1]The Liberal and Country League is being referred to (RJ).

RJ Grayden speaks of crossing the floor to vote as he saw fit, when it came to legislation.[1] Did much of that go on, and did you see....?

BARTLETT: In the earlier days, yes. It happened both sides of the House, before party politics started to play a big part, when parties started to call their meetings weekly to make their decisions, what action they were going to take in the House. Before that there was a lot of crossing the floor. Well not a lot, it would happen two or three times a session on a particular subject. There was an awful lot of criticism from backbenchers of their ministers at times too. But Grayden, I can't think why he crossed the floor.

RJ Well he claimed it was when he disagreed with legislation put up....

BARTLETT: It was on aboriginals wasn't it? A question of aborigines?

RJ Well he didn't specify, but he spoke of crossing the floor at various times.

BARTLETT: Oh I think .... When you said various times, I question whether he did it more than twice. I think it would have .... one way of centralised about his thinking regarding the aboriginal question. There was another man later than he, or round about the same time. He was [the Labor] member for [South] Fremantle, Dick Lawrence. It was on an industrial matter that had a bearing on Fremantle. It was a Liberal Government in power at the time that this legislation was introduced, and Dick Lawrence walked across the chamber in the vote to support the government bill. He was reprimanded by his leader the next day, and he was also reprimanded by Trades Hall, strongly reprimanded by Trades Hall, for his action. He was a hurt man. A nice fellow, a very nice fellow. He and Sir Ross McLarty were good

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[1] W. L. Grayden, interview transcript, 1986.

friends. Sir Ross McLarty was a much older man - oh not a great deal older because I think they'd been in the same regiment or unit during the war, and they'd come to like each other then and worked well together. Any rate this reprimand really hurt Dick Lawrence, and he was never the same bright young boy after that. He took to the drink and he was dead within five or six years. It really hurt him, but he walked, for a principle, and it was something dealing with his own district, probably a waterside workers' question, because he had been a waterside worker. The decision he made upset his own party. He was strongly reprimanded, and as I say, it didn't do him any good. He was the last one that I know that walked across the House.

RJ I wondered about each of the Speakers that you saw operate over the years that you sat in the House, the way they conducted the House, the control they had of the House, the knowledge that they had of parliamentary procedures, that sort of thing. You've already commented on Walker before, what about Panton?

BARTLETT: Well Panton, he'd had a good experience in the House. I think he'd been Chairman of Committees for a while. He didn't have a very good voice. He was a big fellow; an uneducated type of voice. But he knew his standing orders. He knew that he was going to get good advice from his Clerk. He was a very good man to work for and he kept the House under control. There was no great problems in the House when he was Speaker.

RJ William Johnson, only a brief period?

BARTLETT: He only had a brief period as Speaker. I don't think he liked the job. Again I think it was just to pacify him that he got the position. He was one of those that were hopefully getting a ministerial portfolio, and he didn't get it. This happened quite a bit too at times. He got the lesser job in his opinion. But a very quiet Speaker, not a very dominant Speaker. Was able to control the House. You've got to remember that when

a Speaker is having a rough time, the House is having a rough time too. Probably industrial legislation, or other types of legislation. No, he had a fairly easy time as Speaker.

RJ What do you think of the position of Speaker being used to compensate someone for missing out on a ministerial post?

BARTLETT: Well ....

RJ Is it fair on the House in other words?

BARTLETT: Well if he's in the situation that his party thinks he's a capable of a ministerial portfolio, but they've got a number of people which they feel would be a little bit more better off, in those situations then the secondary situation is the speakership. The last best post after ministerial post is the speakership of the House, so they'd offer it to him, to the person concerned, and if he accepted, well so much the better. As far as he was concerned he had his office. But they would get the fellow that was just considered not good to hold a portfolio, or didn't have the background to hold any particular type of portfolio. Governments are always looking for.... If they want a Minister for Agriculture, they're looking for someone that at least had some background in agriculture. Which is better for the ministry concerned. If he hasn't got any background in that particular portfolio, then you have to start to learn. But no, I think it was probably a rather good thing that some of these fellows did get the speakership instead of being just pushed in the backbench and said, "You're no good," and a nice bloke picked in their place.

RJ Joseph Sleeman, who was mainly Speaker during your absence, but he stayed Speaker until 1947.

BARTLETT: Joe Sleeman was a good Speaker. He was a liked Speaker, a well liked Speaker. He was a good Speaker too. I'm not talking about speech making, I'm talking about as a Controller or Speaker of the House. He was well liked. He was a

man that had had a lot of experience in committee work. He was a man that studied his standing orders, and he would know without consulting the Clerk, whether the man was breaking the rules or not, or getting to the situation where the rules might be broken. He was quite capable of warning him straight away. He took this opportunity. Before the rule was broken he took the opportunity to warn the member that he was getting near the stage when he might have to be called upon by the Speaker to either stop that particular approach to the subject or be forced to sit down. So he was: he was a good Speaker, and a well liked Speaker, and a good boss.

RJ Charles North.

BARTLETT: Charles North was an ex-lawyer of course. A man that never practised. I think he got his law degree in Cambridge or Oxford. Oxford I think it was. Came back to Western Australia after the war, it would have been, the First War, and never practised. Entered Parliament for Cottesloe, a strong Liberal seat. Then became a sort of a nonentity. May have spoken once every year. Probably didn't even bother to get up then. When they were looking for a Speaker he got the job. Didn't appear in the House much out of session. Spent all his time down at Cottesloe, at his home, or wandering about the district talking to people, which he liked doing. But as a Speaker he didn't dominate the situation at all. I've told you the little comment

he made after an all night sitting, that's earlier. That's the only thing I can remember about him as a Speaker. Then when he was defeated he was lost again. Never bothered to contest a seat again. I understand from Ross Hutchinson, that he lived within his two-storey place and never moved out of it very much. But he lived a long time after he left Parliament. But he was one - I don't know, he just had something that people didn't .... I was going to say dislike, and that's not the right word. They didn't just want to mix with him. He was a likeable bloke, he was a nice fellow too, but he wasn't a fellow that could sit down and talk to you, or meet you in the corridor and talk to you. He just avoided people, that's in talking to people, just avoided them, never took the opportunity.

END OF SIDE ONE TAPE NINE

TAPE NINE SIDE TWO

RJ You make him sound a fairly ineffective Speaker; why would he have had as long a period as Speaker? He had a six year period.

BARTLETT: Yes, I think that .... He was able to control the House in his own quiet way, and he was of such a nature I think the members of the House didn't want to take advantage of him. He was the type of person - you've asked me a question: he was the type of person that I can't talk much about, because he was around the place, he was doing all the right things, but he was never a person that would stick in your mind. But, as you say, he was there for six years, and party elected. They were happy with him. The house wasn't very rough during his period. All in all he must have satisfied the House at any rate.

RJ Aloysius Rodoreda.

BARTLETT: He was a good Speaker. Again he'd been Chairman of Committees for a while. He was a very fair Speaker. One of those fellows that he would be watching the House all the time, but he wouldn't be [just] watching one side, he wouldn't be [only] pulling up opposition members. The same type of infringement that was being made by his own party or the opposition, he would step in straight away. He was a straight down the line man, an honest man. A very honest man, as far as the rulings were concerned, and he didn't care which side of the House it came from, he would use the same tone, the same decision, and he was a very fair man to the House generally. It was pity to my way of thinking, he died the way he did.

RJ What do you mean by that?

BARTLETT: He had gone to Melbourne for [a holiday]. I think it was Melbourne, it was Eastern States at any rate, we'll put it that way. He'd gone to bed. He was with his wife at the time.

He'd gone to bed and he decided to have a banana, before he went to sleep, and in the course of eating the banana he died. I don't know what ..... [Laughs.] It was just one of those things; had a heart attack apparently. But he was a good Speaker and it was a shame that he was lost to the position, because of his death. That's what I was getting at.

RJ No, I'm sorry, he lost the speakership two years before his death. He was Speaker between '53, and '56. He died in '58.

BARTLETT: Oh was it? Well he would have been Speaker again, when the change of.... It was always sad that, you know, would come back. That's where I had it mind. But he didn't....

RJ Yes, yes, he didn't get that opportunity. James Hegney.

BARTLETT: Oh Jim, I think he had three years.

RJ Yes, '56 to '59.

BARTLETT: Oh he was just a nice bloke. He didn't dominate the position very much. He didn't spend a great deal of time in the House other than in the Chair. He spent most of his time outside. He didn't come to Parliament House out of session very much. His brother was a minister in the government at this stage. When you're a Speaker, and you've got a strong front bench, it makes life easier for the Speaker. He had a fairly strong front bench there, and he had no problems. He had a been Chairman of Committees too. He relied on the Clerks a lot. No, he was not a dominant figure at all by any means.

RJ John Hearman.

BARTLETT: Well John was.... He was a big fellow. He had a very deep voice, and he had a good knowledge of standing orders too. Again he was one of those fellows that had the idea that he was bypassed for ministerial ranking, put into this position. I

think he took it out on the House, and took it out on his own party in the early stages, by just being a little bit over harsh. He settled down after a while, but I think he was harsh on his own party as against the opposition. But he was - he was a good Speaker. He was a type of Speaker who would stand up on his feet, and he would be towering up there, and that deep voice, that military voice of his would just bark, talk down the House, and everyone [hits table with fist] would sit down in the House, and become quiet. He'd make a decision and sit down. He probably was one of the best, one of the most dominant Speakers we'd had, although he upset a lot of people too, because of his .... Maybe jumped in a little bit too quickly at times. I think he might have had gout.

RJ Hugh Guthrie?

BARTLETT: Well I think the same thing was with Hugh Guthrie. He might have had gout too. Again he was a man who expected to be in the ministry and this was the secondary position. He had .... I suppose I could use this. The old expression S O L [laughs] came easily with him. He never seemed to be a happy bloke. He was liable to....he'd flare too quickly. Then, to my way of thinking at any rate, he would flare so quickly that he would lose his thoughts and he would start to stutter a bit in rather a loud way, and he would go red in the face. The only thing wrong with him, he would flare up so quickly and so strongly that he would lose his sense of proportion just for a moment, which wasn't good as far as the House was concerned. But he wasn't a well-liked person at all, not as Speaker, well not in any capacity in the House. It was just because of that nature of his, that way he was apt to talk and be offhanded with people.

RJ John Toms.

BARTLETT: Oh should never have been appointed to the position; not in the rough House that developed then. He was a nice bloke, he was a quiet bloke, a friendly bloke to all. Couldn't take the rough side of the Parliament, and it got very rough during his

term. I suppose he was apt to side with the Opposition a little bit because he didn't want to hurt anyone. Yes, side with the opposition because he didn't want to hurt anyone. In doing so he brought the wrath of his own members upon him. Not in the House, although Tonkin did question him one day in the House. I just can't think of the way he put it in the House now. I can't think of the words he used. I had remembered them a little while ago and it's slipped me now. But he really, in a way, in his non-humorous way, or in his harsher way, he took Toms to task in the House because Toms had sort of given a little bit more latitude to a member of the Opposition. I think Toms never recovered from that and he died within a short period after that. I think that's what really hurt him. He was trying to be a good Speaker, he was trying to be fair. His party objected to his trying to be fair, in lieu of being a little bit on their side. This caused a bit of trouble, but he should never have been....

The same with Danny Norton. Danny Norton was a similar person to Toms. It was quite a rough House at that stage and again he lacked the control. He lacked the dominance that he should have had. Didn't have it in [him] to dominate at any rate. Took an awful pounding because of the very rough attitude of the House to rules. Norton, two or three times he collapsed for the same reason that Toms died, that he was trying to be fair, he was trying to give the Opposition, not an advantage, but appear to be fair to them as well as being fair to his own side, and his own side took umbradge at what he was trying to do, keeping a straight line down the centre, when they thought they should have the advantage. He came in for some criticism from his own side and....well it nearly killed him too.

RJ Was that within the House?

BARTLETT: Yes. It was a shame because they were both nice fellows, but they just didn't have that.... Didn't have Rodoreda's style. They certainly didn't have Hearman's dominance, and they couldn't get control of the House as they should have had, but by trying to be fair.

RJ Ross Hutchinson.

BARTLETT: Ross was an ex-minister, and probably a little bit sour that he was an ex-minister. But he was a good Speaker, Ross. Didn't know much about the standing orders; relied on his Clerk a lot. As a minister in the House he wasn't a strong debater. I think I mentioned earlier in one of my other comments about Ross, he was a man that appeared to have swallowed a dictionary. He was always searching for the big words and mouthing them. The same with his Speaker, and, of course, he lost his control at times because of this. Instead of coming out and saying "No", or "Yes", or giving a good reason, he would lose his words, or use a word that some members didn't know what *he'd* [laughs] really mean by it. No, but he was still a good Speaker, and a good fellow to work with. I liked Ross. I think again he was a disappointed man that he wasn't in the ministry. He'd got the speakership in lieu. He was all right, yes, as a Speaker.

RJ A further interview with Mr Joss Bartlett, held in his home on the 13th of October, 1986.

Mr Bartlett I was wondering what you noticed over your long period of service in the Parliament as to the type of person who was a member, and change in the type of person who was a member.

BARTLETT: The earlier members that I met, I think they had an idea that they could promote the State, do something for the State. They entered Parliament for the purpose of giving the State something - their knowledge and their background. The people that voted for them knowing their background too, their knowledge of the particular subject they were going to talk on and do something about, or try and do something about. I think they were statesmen in a way that, to my way of thinking, they're not today. I think today there's more of a career. The parliamentary salary is a very attractive one today, and once they get in, they don't like losing their seat. But I think the early days that I'm thinking of, I think members weren't

attracted by the parliamentary salary because it wasn't very attractive for members living a long distance away, and they entered politics for the purpose of doing something for the State. Politics, or party politics, didn't play a big part in their thinking. They thought more in terms of doing something for the State, along their party policy of course, but actually party politics played a very little part in the ordinary member's thinking. But today, it's the essential today. Before you can even be nominated for Parliament by the party, then you must obey certain rules, and the rules are very stringent today regarding voting rights, whereas in the earlier days they were allowed a lot of latitude.

RJ Which is the better system do you think?

BARTLETT: Well I felt that once party politics took over, when they became party lined, and it meant a caucus decision.... When I say caucus I'm talking about both parties, although the Liberal Party didn't call theirs a caucus. But party meetings became the place where all legislation appears to be ironed out before it enters the House, and the decision is made there in the party meeting as to how they'll vote and that's the final thing. When they enter the House they vote as one. But in the earlier days there was quite a bit of latitude. Sometimes a member might point out some problems associated with a particular piece of legislation and indicate he was going to vote for it, or vote against it. If he was in opposition he would say he was going to vote against, but he would hope if it was passed that certain amendments would be made, if it were passed. If he were in government he would say, "Well I'm supporting this piece of legislation, but I'm hopeful the minister will do something about certain parts of it." But today that type of argument doesn't develop. From my reading and from my last few years in Parliament, it was very strictly party lines. You didn't give the Opposition any kudos whatsoever for making a suggestion; that's governments. Sometimes governments would just push a piece of legislation through. This is the latter years. Then get it into the Legislative Council, and have some amendments

moved there. But they wouldn't allow the opposition in the Legislative Assembly to get any publicity regarding a certain type of amendment that the government realisd would probably improve the bill. But by giving the Opposition a chance to move those amendments, with the publicity that went with it, it was not good for the government to have the press publicising the fact that a certain Opposition member had made an amendment to a particular type of bill and the government agreed to it. I liked the old system. Personally I think we had better legislation on account of it too.

RJ In what way?

BARTLETT: I think when you get two parties that have a line of action, a separate line of action, and when they can meet on common ground over a piece of legislation, then to my way of thinking, you get a better final piece, final Act. But when you've got two people completely at loggerheads, they're not going to agree on anything, then it's only a one-sided argument and a one-sided decision. That's where mistakes can be made.

RJ I wondered if you could throw any light on the suggestion that there was a member of Parliament who used to run an SP book at the House? Do you know anything about that one?

BARTLETT: Yes. I remember a few people betting with him. I may have even had one myself. [Laughs.] I've always been a small gambler. I've not a lively interest in racehorses, but I've always had an interest in racing and having a few bets, even in the earlier days of one and threepence each way. [Laughs.] But I remember Charlie Cross and his .... But it was stopped after a few years.

RJ When would he have operated, what era?

BARTLETT: Oh he started not long after he entered politics. He was the member for Victoria Park. I think that even prior to his entry into politics, I think he was operating as an illegal - no,

I don't think it was illegal. The police frowned upon it, but didn't take any action against SP bookmakers those days. Whether he actually operated a shop I'm not certain. I think he may have operated in an hotel, or something like that on a Saturday afternoon, took bets.

RJ So he didn't operate in the House?

BARTLETT: He did operate in the House too. That was prior to him becoming a member of Parliament. I think he probably took bets at the local hotel. I'm not certain whether he had a betting shop at all. But certainly when he came into Parliament, they knew they had knowledge of his taking bets, and he was prepared to accommodate those members that wanted to have a bet too, and he did just that. But it became a little bit too common. I think the Speaker spoke to him on one occasion and said, "Well now, look this is not done, and it's getting broadcast outside. Time you ceased."

RJ [Laughs.] How did it operate? Do you know the details of how he went about it in the House?

BARTLETT: Well I think there was a lot of trust in bookmakers those days, that type of bookmaker. It was a question of having a pencil and a sheet of paper, or even a card, little book, notebook, and just writing down the bet that.... [interruption for phone call]. Probably had a sheet of paper or a notebook, and he'd just jot down the bet, whatever it was, and put the name of the person and that was it. There wouldn't be many bets involved. That's the only way I could see it would operate in a place like that; as a matter of trust.

RJ And staff as far as you know, could use him as well?

BARTLETT: Well I know they did occasionally, particularly on Melbourne Cup or something like that, when everyone has a bet. It was easier for someone to have a bet with him, being on the premises than.... [pause].

RJ I wondered about women members, and how they were treated in the House, and how they fitted in. In your time you had Florence Cardell-Oliver between 1936 and 1956, and then just at the end of your period, June Craig came into the House in '74.

BARTLETT: There was May Holman too, prior to that.

RJ Yes, you have May Holman from 1925 to 1939, but, of course, at that stage you weren't operating so much in the House. But I wondered what you thought of those three women, their impact on the House.

BARTLETT: May Holman was well thought of on both sides of the House. She was quite a nice lady. She had a background of politics of course. She was a member of the Labor Party. She never made ministerial rank, but she was well listened to and well thought of, and she was a very nice person too, to deal with.

Dame Florence, she was rather a haughtier type than May Holman. Dressed rather flamboyantly. Used a lot of powder and....

RJ Make-up.

BARTLETT: Make-up. When I say make-up, scent and powder. Rather a quick walker. Made ministerial rank. Was inclined to irk the Opposition a bit. She did very well as a minister. She got quite a bit of legislation through from her own resources, or from her department, and handled them very well. But she did have a tendency to throw her head back and be a little bit arrogant at times. But quite a gentle woman.

END OF SIDE TWO TAPE NINE

TAPE TEN SIDE ONE

BARTLETT: June Craig was a very nice person. Quite down to earth, but a very nice person. She was a farmer's wife. She was apparently a busy person in her private life; tied up with many things. Learned very early in her life to think of both sides of a question before she gave an answer. But she was a likeable person, and well liked by all members. She gained a lot of help from both the staff and the members, and I would say from the public too, to carry on her career. I know she was finally beaten but there was problems associated with that. But she was, she was a very nice person, and a very helpful person, and a very genuine person. By appearance a well dressed person too. She became a minister, that's right.

RJ How well did these women fit into such a male dominated institution as Parliament is, both in terms of members and staff?

BARTLETT: May Holman fitted in well with the staff and with the members. Dame Florence didn't fit in with the general run of members as well, probably because of her.... well I suppose it would be haughtiness. She was inclined to flaunt her social side of life as against May Holman. But I think the other lass we were talking about.

RJ June Craig.

BARTLETT: June Craig. She was the type of person that, as I say, had lived on a farm and mixed with men, all ranks of men, when you work on a farm, with your shearers and your farm workers, and the people around. She had been associated with, as I mentioned earlier, a number of bodies, so she was a good mixer, and was a well liked person and never had any problems to my knowledge, of talking to people, and it didn't matter what party they belonged to either. No member to my knowledge would deliberately move the other way when she was coming, as they would with Dame Florence sometimes. May Holman, she mixed well with them all, even in the

House and outside the House. Periodically May would go into the bar, although she wasn't a drinker, and have a drink, with any party member. June Craig was a similar nature to that. She wouldn't have worried whether it was Opposition or not. If they were prepared to have a drink with her, she was quite happy and talked. But Dame Florence was probably a little bit more circumspect.

RJ Men sometimes complain about women coming into an all male domain because they've got to watch their language and that sort of thing. Did you get anything like that about these women?

BARTLETT: Oh I think the general run of member who was apt to use.... some members, and some people, not necessarily members of Parliament, can use words that might be out of place in certain.... They just use them, and they just come out, and they're part and parcel of their conversation. Well [laughs] I think under those circumstances the women did put a curb on them, inasmuch that the opposite number they were talking to at the time might say, "Oh just a minute, you remember someone else is present; she might object to that." It probably did put a little bit of a blanket on them, until they really got to know them well.

I think the biggest problem, associated with it all, from a man/woman point of view, was probably the lack of facilities for women, such as the bathroom, special toilet area, and a special room - their own room, as against mixing with men, like having a room with the men. I think that was probably where the biggest trouble came, when they were given a room on their own, as against say where four or five men had to occupy a room. Get one on their own, until another lady came in. Course when another lady member came in, you had to watch the political situation there. Labor Party, you didn't put her with a member of the Liberal Party, although they might be friendly. That was the major problem I think. There were other problems too, like small

problems. The men probably objected to not being to hold their general open conversation about sex, or whatever they [laughs] were talking about. [Laughs.]

RJ Did you notice any difference when a woman member was speaking, when it came to interjections or whatever in the House? Were they treated the same?

BARTLETT: They were treated the same. I think - again I come back to May Holman and the type of person May Holman was, and the type of person....I've forgotten again.

RJ June Craig.

BARTLETT: June Craig was. I can't remember members taking umbradge at comments they made, or being nasty by way of interjection on those two. Certainly they tried to take a rise out of Dame Florence, particularly certain members of the Opposition. Probably three or four of the Opposition, they tried to take the rise out of her. She was capable of handling it, but they did become offensive towards her at times. But I don't remember it happening to June Craig, and I don't remember it happening to May Holman. But certainly there were times when Dame Florence was probably taken advantage of, or they tried to take advantage of her. She was quite capable of handling herself. Course some of her own supporters would step into the fray too.

RJ How did you feel about the way Parliament was reported in the press initially, and of course other media later, radio, television and so on? And what change if any, did you see in the way Parliament was reported?

BARTLETT: I think in my earlier days the press, the West Australian particularly, gave a large coverage. I think on occasions, depending on the subject matter that was before the House, you might get two or three pages of - not full reporting, but of reporting. Each member who spoke on that particular

subject would get a coverage, a few lines, or a number of lines, depending on his case. In general the West Australian newspaper gave an enormous coverage. This was greatly felt and encouraged because of the country people involved, who had no other means of getting details of what was taking place in Parliament. There'd be no TV, no wireless in that sense that they have today, broadcasting. The Daily News gave the highlights sometimes, the headlines side of it, but the West Australian gave a great coverage. In addition to that they had certain weekend pars, columns, which gave the brighter side of the Parliament - the serious side and the brighter side of the parliamentary week. All in all I think the average member of Parliament was more before the public those days than they are today. With all the specialised coverage today, the average member doesn't get any publicity whatsoever. But certainly those days they did, and I think that was good for the member, and was good for the State too. But today I think the Premier and the ministers get coverage. It has to be something special for the Opposition to get coverage, an opposition member, or even a backbencher of the government, something very special. I do think the publicity is bad for a government today, compared with my earlier days, when members were exposed to the public much better than they are now; the average member I mean, exposed to the public much better than they are today.

I think the whole situation started to change when members started to deal with the public more closely. In dealing with the public more closely I'm saying they ran after their electors. Party politics came into it strongly too. The average member was more concerned on appeasing his electors and gaining their confidence, than he was in his parliamentary duties. It was left, because they suddenly realised - probably this is one of the things associated with it - they suddenly realised when party politics became so strong, that once Cabinet had made a decision, the caucus made a decision, there was no way of them altering it in the House or doing anything about it in the House. So all they were trying to do then was to save their seats. In the earlier days a member saved his seat by being read about. People

were interested, particularly in his electorate, in the particular subject he was on, and they would be interested in how he'd approached the subject in the House. That he had even approached it, and that the press were prepared to acknowledge that he'd approached in such a way by publicising it. That gave him more standing in the community in my way of thinking than the present day activities of a member. I think the members have brought a lot of criticism on theirselves by being too close to the people, too concerned with holding their seats by being messengers for the ordinary run of person, and all the minor little problems. Whereas in my earlier days that activity wasn't there.

RJ I wondered what you noticed over the long period of time you had in the House when it came to the public gallery. For instance was there any change in the numbers of people who came to listen, and their behaviour?

BARTLETT: I think in my earlier days there, except for the odd demonstration that took place during the Depression years by the unemployed, I think there was much more decorum in the gallery, much more politeness in the gallery, that people were inclined to walk into the gallery and walk on tiptoes for fear of making a noise. Parliament was a place where they wanted to be. They'd gone there for a purpose just to see Parliament. They were interested in the debate. I think the general run of person that went there had a very firm opinion of Parliament as a system. But later on, when the changes came in the approach of members I was talking about earlier, about them becoming more concerned in winning their seats, I think the people stopped coming to Parliament and started to lose their interest in Parliament and their interest in the individual member because they could see him any day of the week. I think actually the Parliament lost a lot. It may have lost a lot because of the TV coverage from Canberra. But I preferred the old days and the approach of people to their members and the approach of people to the Parliament, as against the thinking of people today. I listen to it every day, you know, comments made outside, and members of

Parliament are not held in very high esteem at the moment, whereas, as I say, in my earlier days because of the publicity through the paper and because of the attitude of members then, they were held in much higher esteem than they are today.

RJ When did the change occur that you've noted, do you think?

BARTLETT: I think the major changes started after the war, '39/45. I don't think in the earlier stages up at Parliament House you would have got a fellow like 'Popsy' [Stanley] Heal in, beating Ross McDonald for West Perth. Now he won it because of his football ability. He was just well known, he had a party ticket. Did he beat the....any rate he won West Perth. But it was that type of person that had come in. They were winning on party lines, not on personalities. 'Popsy' Heal had a popular following and also had a party following. There were others too, and that's the type of person that was coming in. To hold their seats they wanted to be out in the public all the time. The actual debating in Parliament didn't mean anything to them. But to get around in their district and find out what people wanted, however small it was, and they would do the running for it and checking. It was after the war, in those early '47 to '53 time, that the big change, I think, came in the type of member, or the approach of the member and the public took place.

RJ Any change in the numbers of people who came to the Parliament to sit in the public gallery?

BARTLETT: I think it fell away rather badly over my last ten years. As I say, with the exception of a particular piece of legislation, probably an industrial piece of legislation, the gallery could be packed by, well the Trades Hall, unions and their following - Trades Hall officers and that sort of thing. Or I suppose on another occasion, it would be the Liberal branches. But other than that it fell away very much so. If there was just the ordinary debate taking place, and it wouldn't matter what it was, taxation, or even with the budget, very few

people started to come, even to listen to the budget, worry about the budget. It was bad from that point of view. In my earlier days budget night was announced through the press and you'd get a lot of people coming up just to listen to the Premier. The members of the Legislative Council would come down and sit in the gallery or stand behind the Speaker's dais, listening, or sit in the Speaker's gallery. But that sort of thing's gone overboard.

RJ I wondered what you could tell me about how the Parliamentary Sports' Committee operated? I know you were secretary of it for fifteen years. What sort of sports were covered and so on? How were they organised?

BARTLETT: Initially, I suppose it would be '47, we got this influx of rather younger members, sporting minded. Ross Hutchinson was one, 'Popsy' Heal was another one, Clair Mattiske a bit later. There were a few others: Sir Ross McLarty, he was a good cricketer too. But always there had been, as far back as I can remember at my first entry into Parliament, there was an annual cricket match, Parliament versus the press. They were just a nice day and a lot of fun. When these younger people came in, they thought well, "Why can't we have more matches? We've got a youthful type of member now, who is reasonably interested in sport still, a type of cricket at any rate, or tennis." So they had a look around and they started to think in terms of who they might play. Incogniti was a club of older members, older cricketers. Then the schools were involved. They were approached, the schools. Leeuwin the.... [pause].

RJ Naval base.

BARTLETT: Naval base. The Army. It was realised that the parliamentary, if they could produce a team, a reasonable team, they could get half a dozen matches each year. So they formed the Parliamentary Sports' Club. I was involved in the sport too at the time. It didn't have to be members only. So we formed this. We were able to get these half a dozen games. The Premier in the first stage wasn't very happy about, because it cost the

Parliament a little bit of money, maybe twenty dollars, twenty-five dollars for afternoon tea, or something like that. But it became a part and parcel of the social life of members of Parliament, certain members of Parliament. It was quite a good thing. I enjoyed it. I think members of Parliament enjoyed it, when they realised they were getting to a different type of public all the time. Every time they played a match they were getting to the young people, be it Labor or Liberal. These people were seeing them in a different light. They started to enjoy it and I think the government started to realise it wasn't doing any harm for them to have members mixing as they are, mixing with the various bodies. It was quite a good atmosphere.

It went from there to, "What about getting in touch with South Australia and see whether they have a similar body, and whether we can arrange a trip there? Better try Victoria too." So we used to have a round. There would be South Australia, Victoria, and then they would come back to this State. We had some great games and some great social life. The wives could go and members of Parliament having their gold passes could travel for nothing, of course. But the Premier of the day said, "Well that's no good. We better find a gold pass for Joss each time." But they didn't, they paid for my fare. So that's right, and I went on all those trips. I've got a photograph out there now with Hugh Guthrie in it. I've got two or three of them out there.

RJ Were you the only member of staff involved or were there others?

BARTLETT: I think I was the only member, yes.

RJ And how could you get into the team?

BARTLETT: Only member of the staff I mean.

RJ Yes, yes. How could you get into the team if you were a member of Parliament?

Joss Bartlett in Parliamentary cricket team, Adelaide, 1950's.

BARTLETT: A member of the staff?

RJ No, I was meaning as a member of Parliament, how could they get into the team? Did they have to get a trial to see if....?

BARTLETT: Well members had some knowledge of the sporting life of most members, if they'd been reasonably good. Later on when it became more serious, the game, they put a cricket pitch in at Parliament House where the tennis court is now, in that area there, a grass one. We used to go out there in lunch time, afternoon, have cricket practice. But in the first place, it was just well, Sir Ross Hutchinson, we all knew that Ross Hutchinson was a good cricketer, a good footballer, and a good sportsman. 'Popsy' Heal, they knew some of his background. Sir Ross McLarty, they had some knowledge of his scholastic sports' days. There were many others too. It wasn't so hard to pick up a pretty good team. They might have been a bit rusty.

RJ Why were you the only staff member involved?

BARTLETT: Well I think I'd been the only staff member playing cricket before they formed this Parliamentary Sports' Club. Maybe I could field a little bit better than most people that were a bit older. I used to bowl a little bit. I think that it was finding eleven cricketers amongst the members and a couple of reserves was always fairly hard - they mightn't particularly want to travel - and I seemed to just sneak in all the time.

RJ When was the pitch that you spoke of for cricket, turned into the tennis courts?

BARTLETT: I don't know. It disappeared when they put down the new parking area at Parliament House. I don't know whether it's not, whether it's still there. It used to back up alongside the tennis court. It may even be still there, I don't know, along the fence line. It came quite good. Where we had a net behind it. To save the balls going into Malcolm Street and places like

that, we had a net there. Then when we put up the tennis court, they put it alongside the cricket pitch, and of course we had this wire mesh then on one side.

RJ When was the tennis court put in?

BARTLETT: When was Bert Hawke Premier?

RJ 1953 to '59.

BARTLETT: '59. Would have been about as far back as that.

RJ Round '59?

BARTLETT: Yes.

RJ Once that court was there did the Sports' Committee get involved with tennis at all, organising tennis?

BARTLETT: No. Ross Hutchinson did make a few arrangements, but we played them up at Kings Park. There was only about.... see Bert Hawke was a keen tennis player. The Controller then, he was really keen and he was prepared to play Mr Hawke, when Mr Hawke was available at any time. Colin Jamieson liked a game, and he was always playing at the weekend or at home. Ross Hutchinson liked a game. 'Popsy' Heal liked it. But in general when they had any competitions, they were just local, you know, ones against the police or something like that, as against we had cricket. But they didn't seem to have that popularity, like to get a competition going from outside bodies, or even travelling to the Eastern States just for the purpose of playing tennis.

END OF SIDE ONE TAPE TEN

TAPE TEN SIDE TWO

RJ Were staff members allowed to use those tennis courts once they were built?

BARTLETT: Yes. Any time there were no members on it, yes.

RJ So members took precedence?

BARTLETT: Yes.

RJ Right. And did members have to book the court, or was it just first come got the court?

BARTLETT: Oh I think in general it was first come, first served, unless it was a particularly busy day. It was always generally known about the House if someone was going to play tennis.

RJ Besides the sort of thing that you've spoken of, the members' bar and so on, what other social activities, if any, were organised by the Parliament, for members and for staff?

BARTLETT: There was the annual Christmas get-together.

RJ Which took what form?

BARTLETT: Oh in the dining room. A dinner in the dining room, and then afterwards socialising from the bar, particularly in the new Parliament House, or as it was rebuilt. Socialising outside with a band and dance. A little dance floor put in the....

RJ And who would be there?

BARTLETT: The wives of members, the wives of staff. The staff and their wives. There was no real limitation placed on that. The limitation placed on it would be on the numbers that could be catered for in the parliamentary dining room. That was the only

limitation. They were good nights too. Other than that the only one would be the opening of Parliament, the socialising at the opening of Parliament. The staff - not all the staff; the attendants didn't take part in that - but then we had the afternoon teas there. There were other special gatherings which the Clerks could easily get invited to, where visitors from the Eastern States or overseas came along; they were putting on a parliamentary luncheon for them. No, no other social life.

RJ There was a conference of presiding officers and Clerks for Australasia, and I wondered when they started and whether you attended any of them?

BARTLETT: Yes, I attended one in Darwin, one in Brisbane. I think that was the only two. They were every two years I think. For some reason or other I missed out on the first one after I became Clerk. Then being every two years it made it a little bit difficult. I could have stayed six months longer instead of retiring, and gone to Samoa, Western Samoa, to another one there. But that was my bad luck, and my decision too. But yes I went on them.

RJ How useful were they?

BARTLETT: I think from a parliamentary point of view, from Speaker's decisions, they were very useful. Remember this: the Speakers weren't very long in the chair, probably a maximum of six years, sometimes a little bit more than that, and they were always learning, and always looking for a situation where standing orders might be a bit clearer regarding a certain subject, or rulings might be made a little bit clearer. I think they gained a lot from it. I certainly did, meeting my parliamentary colleagues and just pointing out the disadvantages we had with a certain type of ruling, particularly if it wasn't a standing order but we were relying on May's Parliamentary Practice, as it happened, sometimes. All in all I think you came back with a clearer picture of how generally the Speakers were regarding that particular practice.

RJ Just to sort of sum up the staff and how they operated within the Parliament. How content do you think the staff were, how much job satisfaction were they getting out of their position in Parliament?

BARTLETT: Well I can never remember listening to a disgruntled parliamentary officer on the occupation he was doing. They seemed to be all imbued - and I suppose it started from the top all the time - imbued with the idea that they had a career, they had a good situation from an employment point of view. They weren't under public service control, so they had a bit of elasticity as far as thinking was concerned. I think in general this suited the parliamentary officers we had. The stereotype public servant who couldn't move outside certain guidelines was non-existent up there. I encouraged that myself as a matter of fact. If in that encouragement they made a mistake and I realised why that mistake had been made because they'd been allowed to go a little bit too far, or alternatively they'd misunderstood, or they were trying to do that little extra, they always knew that I would accept the responsibility. That's from my staff point of view. I had a very good staff and people that went out of their way to help. I went out of my way to help them too, let me put it that way. But in all it was generally a well run staff and a very happy one. When you get a happy staff, you don't have any problems.

RJ How much job satisfaction did you get out of your various positions?

BARTLETT: Very much. I was always keen. I suppose it was probably like the citation there.[1] [Laughs.] I always had that keenness to do a good job and to satisfy members. I could never remember, in any way, putting an obstacle in the way of a member, any member, because I didn't dislike anyone. I might have objected to one or two occasionally, but in general I didn't try

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[1]A reference to the citation given at the time of the awarding of the DFM in 1945, copy attached, p223(RJ).

to avoid members for helping them. I was always very happy to be asked to help. It enabled me to at least delve into Acts of Parliament and find out things that were helpful to me later in life, and even today, although my memory's not so good as it used to be, nowhere near as good. Even today someone will ask me about a particular piece of legislation and I can give them a comment about it - well not a comment, but if they ask me what it is covered under, or what piece of legislation, I can still think and remember. But getting back to your question, I was always happy to help and I enjoyed helping. The more I got involved in helping, the better I liked it.

RJ The staff members I have interviewed have all had long periods in the Parliament. Just how general was that. What was the turnover rate on average, of staff?

BARTLETT: Oh. I think Grant, who was Clerk in my House, talking about the Legislative Assembly, Grant came in somewhere before 1900, around 1900, and he was still Clerk in 19... He was Clerk Assistant, I'm sorry, and he became Clerk. He would have been there.... Then he went to the Legislative Council, that would be in 1931.

RJ I'm really thinking of all levels though. The Clerks are more understandable once they got in their position, to stay, but when came to attendants and typists and the lower clerical positions, did people usually stay, or was there a turnover of staff?

BARTLETT: No, no. You got a bad egg occasionally, in the attendants. You'd find it out in due time. That would be about the only turnover. I would say that ninety per cent of the people who were employed at Parliament House, wished to stay at Parliament House in the capacity they were appointed to, particularly attendants and that sort of thing. They knew from their own - the attendants I'm talking about now - they knew that their main chance was to get to the situation of principal attendant, and they worked for that. The rest of the staff, when

they were appointed to Parliament House, were looking forward to a career, and they realised there was a lot of time to wait sometimes, but time was good for them. They required time. That's the juniors coming up I mean.

I can only remember in the Legislative Assembly, I can only remember one appointed Clerk, or Assistant Clerk of Records, not staying the distance. He was a delightful young fellow too. He got married and unlike my wife, she strongly objected after a while to this night working. I think it was a case then of either he retire and left Parliament House and got another job, or he lost his wife, and he chose leaving Parliament House and getting another job. That was the only one in my time that I can remember. Even amongst the attendants, the only people that could be said that didn't stay there very long, were those I've said, the bad egg that turned up in the end, so we looked in the first place. There was no change, no great changes.

RJ What could you do in the situation where you had a bad egg?

BARTLETT: Oh it was just a question of calling them in and saying, "This is the problem." We had the right to hire and sack, hire and fire. That was all it was. Their permanency depended on themselves.

RJ Did you ever have occasion to fire anyone?

BARTLETT: No, I didn't, but the others did.

RJ When someone was fired, did they have any right of appeal to anybody?

BARTLETT: No, not at all.

RJ Right. When you were recruiting staff, was there anything in particular that you were looking for, or that you would not accept? For instance did you ask people what their political leanings were - or whether they were active in politics?

BARTLETT: No. No, we wouldn't. All we'd say to them, "Now look this is Parliament House. There are political parties here. If you have any leanings, keep them to yourself. That's all we require. Now all we require of you is that you're honest, you're pleasing in your manner, and that you're prepared to work the hours" (that we'd tell them). "If you're not prepared, we can't employ you, because these are the hours when Parliament sits, these are the things that you get out of session, when the House is out of session, the extra allowances to cover what you're doing in session. It's up to you to abide by it." I think probably they did too. There were no problems there either. Most of the attendants would go home - the maximum they'd stay was eleven o'clock at night at any rate and then the doors would be closed, the entrance doors. They weren't wanted in the chamber. But no, it was honesty in their approach and their general mannerism. It was mostly dishonesty that we found out in the end. I mean I know one fellow in the Legislative Council, employed in the Legislative Council (there was in our House too) that got light-fingered where the drinks were contained, in the Speaker or the President's office. Another fellow, cigarettes and things like that. Well once you show a little bit of dishonesty then you never know whether it's finished, so they were dismissed. But no great cry about it. They knew they were wrong. The other people knew they were wrong. That was the finish of it.

RJ I wondered if there was anyone that you would not employ. For instance would you employ on the staff someone who was related to a member of Parliament?

BARTLETT: No, no. There were occasions when approaches were made. "I have a nephew," or "I have something. If you're looking for an opportunity to fill the place." But we avoided it. The Speaker was always helpful where this is concerned. Hopefully it wasn't the Speaker too, and it never was. We were able to get over it without any trouble. But as I said, there were a couple of occasions when members did suggest - we were looking, they knew we were looking for, sometime in the future looking for someone - they'd like to give some consideration. But I think members generally knew that they'd run into trouble if a son or a daughter, or a nephew or someone like that was appointed to Parliament House, and they gave them special consideration, that they'd run into trouble.

RJ Anyone else that you were against employing?

BARTLETT: No, no. The question of religion never entered it.

RJ What about a known homosexual, if they were competent, the best candidate?

BARTLETT: Well let me say I knew the subject raised its head a couple of times, that one of my staff could have been. There wasn't any feeling about it. I mean the comments came from a certain type of member. The general comments - if there were any general comments, I didn't hear them, but I did hear a couple of comments from a certain type of member who was always looking for the dirtier side of life. The fellow concerned was a nice, gentlemanly lad. Could have been, but I don't know. I couldn't see exactly.... the situation that he was in, I didn't see him approaching people, I didn't see him talking to males within the parliamentary system, that could lead me to think otherwise. So it never bothered me. I suppose why you're bringing it up is the Clerk of the Legislative [Council]. He is, I think....I don't know him; I've never spoken to him. Yes I have, I was introduced to him once after I'd retired. I understand he has declared himself. I don't know, as I say. Well it wouldn't cause me to

avoid him. It wouldn't cause me to be nasty in any way to him, but maybe I would have.... To declare yourself like that, well it....

RJ Actually it wasn't him I was thinking of. I was thinking of the principle, but as you've raised it, would you have employed him as Clerk if you had known he was a homosexual?

BARTLETT: Well I wouldn't have been in a position.

RJ No, but a lower position say.

BARTLETT: I question whether I would have, again because you've got that type of member who would blazon it all over the House and make his rude comments and things like that. I think to avoid any trouble I wouldn't.

RJ Why has it taken so long for women to take a place in Parliament as far as staff's concerned? Because you've had for the first time recently the appointment of a female attendant, and also for the first time, an appointment of a Deputy Clerk, as a woman. Why has it taken so long for women to find a place amongst the staff, except as typists of course?

BARTLETT: Well I suppose it has been brought about mostly since the equal rights legislation [laughs] came in. They feel that they're now compelled to employ a certain number of people, and because of the expansion of Parliament House and the requirements of the women members. In addition to that members [are] requiring more and more help, and most of the help involves typing so they employ more women on the staff. I suppose in doing so you strike that competent woman who is looking for something extra to do. I think Miss Pick was one. She became a parliamentary officer before this one. After I left she did. Now she could fit into that capacity quite well as a parliamentary officer. How far she would have gone I don't know, but she was of the age that she couldn't go too far. I think it's probably all brought about by this equal rights.

RJ But were women ever considered before that legislation?

BARTLETT: Oh I don't think in our House, no.

RJ Why?

BARTLETT: Well I suppose we'd got an Assistant Clerk as a career officer, and if it had have been a woman then it was probably a different thing. But to bring a woman from outside.... I suppose she would have had to have been older than some of the senior staff. Well I don't say older.... I suppose dealing with the.... I don't quite know why, but it was never considered, let me put it this way. I can't remember it being considered. I suppose I had the same reason for not considering it too. Members preferred to have male attendants, male clerks around them.

RJ What position did Miss Pick hold, that you speak of?

BARTLETT: She was the Speaker's secretary and the Clerk's secretary. The last time I heard she was still those things, but I think they'd given her some promotion. In promoting her they had to find a new category. To increase her salary, they had to find a new category of employment. She was appointed..... She used to do all the questions too, you know. After they'd been vetted she'd type them, re-vet them herself too and then make suggestions if there appeared to be something wrong. So I think they gave her a title of parliamentary officer. Now I don't what that meant. I never bothered to enquire.

RJ When you were recruiting staff, did you run security checks on people at all?

BARTLETT: No.

RJ I wondered what mechanism there was for staff to bring forward any suggestions that they may have, or complaints that they may have.

BARTLETT: Let me revert back to what you said about employing staff. If we were looking for a junior clerk we had.... Why Scotch College was picked I don't know, but Len Hawley picked Scotch College in the first place. That's where Ian Allnut came from. He made one of the others too. He rang them and said, "Now we have a situation developing in this House, if you've got any.... it's getting near the examination period of time. If you can let it be known through the school that we require someone of an age who has a feeling that they might like a parliamentary career, like from a staff point of view, we'd be pleased to interview them." That was the way we did it. So we left it to the headmaster of the school to at least vouch for the lad concerned, which I think was a very good thing too, if he'd been long standing at the school. Now what was your last question?

RJ [Laughs.] Sorry. Well I was wondering what mechanism there was for staff to bring up suggestions or complaints.

BARTLETT: The only method was that if you had a friendly staff and they knew you could approach your senior officer on an equal footing, and then you had the right to come in any time you liked. But there was no set standard.

END OF SIDE TWO TAPE TEN

TAPE ELEVEN SIDE ONE

RJ What about a staff member feeling that he would like better pay or conditions? How could that be dealt with?

BARTLETT: Well I think I referred earlier to the right to approach the Public Service Commissioner for adjudication on salaries. Well at the same time, if a staff member came to us and said, "Look my duties have increased in such a way. I have to take in this amount of extra work, or a different category of work. Do you think it warrants a little bit of additional pay?" You would then say, "Well put it in a written form, together with all your other things you do, and we'll submit it in the normal way to the Public Service Commissioner for adjudication." That's the way we'd do it. The Clerk would make his recommendations too and say, "Well we feel that because of this man's increased duties because of certain things that have taken place at Parliament House, these duties are new duties, we think he should have an additional grading." That was it. Whether the Public Service Commissioner agreed, it was a different matter, but at least we tried.

RJ What if you didn't agree yourself, that there was no justification, but the staff member felt there was?

BARTLETT: Well if I disagreed myself I'd tell him, but I'd only disagree myself if I had done the same thing, same type of duties in the same type of capacity he was in. Then I'd say, "Well look it's been going on for a dozen years, and you've just been caught up in it. I was caught up in it." But if it was something new, and he was prepared to argue that it was something new. I might say, "Well let it ride, and we'll have a look at it later." If he disagreed with that, I'd say, "Well I'll put it up, but I won't make a recommendation, and let the adjudicator decide."

RJ Because of the way Parliament's geared, where you need so much more effort during the House sitting than you need when the House is not sitting, did you feel that led to under-utilisation of staff when the House was not sitting?

BARTLETT: Well you must remember this that we had six weeks holidays, and to save any overlapping - well too much overlapping of holidays.... We only had, in the latter years, we only had three months to get our holidays in. If you were to utilise only the summer holidays, and most people wanted the summer holidays, particularly those people with families. So there were people off on holidays quite a bit, and six weeks, when six weeks was involved, it means that if you have two people off together, there's only four people left to do the ..... and it's still a busy time to some extent, those three months, because of the indexing and things like that. Probably there was a little bit of latitude out of session, but not a great deal, except that you could go there at nine o'clock in the morning, you could knock off at four thirty. No, I never found a great deal of time on my hands. I don't think many of the others did either. Particularly, as I say, you had to look after your own side and someone else's side; and part of someone else's side, and someone else would look after the other part. So you always had these additional duties. It was also handy that you knew all what was going on. When you were coming up through the ranks you knew what was going on all over the place.

RJ You've described the traditional way of promotion through the ranks, when you came into the Parliament. With the appointment of Laurie Marquet as Clerk of the Council, that was the first break with that tradition, when someone from outside came in as Clerk. What did you think of that appointment?

BARTLETT: Well it happened after I'd left of course. [Pause.] In this particular case I felt that something should be done, that the fellow who was in the running for promotion, I didn't

think he'd make the grade. I'm certain he wouldn't make the grade, although he was very much upset and disappointed, I know all that. This particular one I agreed with, unless it meant *promoting* someone, one of the lesser staff, up in that, and I couldn't see that happening. There was too much age gap. This one, the person I don't know, so it doesn't matter, but I agree with what they did. Having had a parliamentary experience it made it so much the better as far as that was concerned. But I do agree with that one. I could have been caught up in the same place myself too, at one stage. It wasn't so. The fellow that he took over from, or he didn't actually take over from, but who would likely have got the position, was a nice bloke. He just lacked something that encouraged the people to think he wouldn't make the top job.

RJ You retired when you were aged sixty. You could have stayed till you were aged sixty-five.

BARTLETT: I could have stayed indefinitely.[1]

RJ [Laughs] Could you have?

BARTLETT: Mmm.

RJ You didn't have to leave at sixty-five even?

BARTLETT: No, no.

RJ Why did you choose to leave at sixty?

BARTLETT: Well I'd always said to myself I'd never stay more than forty-five years. That was long enough. Fred Islip, I think he had forty-seven years, and when he retired he said, "You can beat my record, Joss." I said, "Don't worry, I don't want to." I think I may not have mentioned to you on tape, but I loved the parliamentary system, I loved working for it. I loved the House, dealing in the House. It was always members seemed to be grateful to me. I was grateful for their approach to me. A

[1]Retiring age was also discussed with the Clerk of the Assembly, Bruce Okely, and it is helpful to read his comments on the procedure which applies. B.L. Okely, interview transcript, 1987, p 223 (RJ)

different type of member had come into the House, who disregarded the rules of the House, who had disdained the rules of the House, who thought the rules of the House were not required, that the Speaker was being.... that they restricted them too much. There was one or two little episodes took place, and I thought, "Oh well". Ross Hutchinson was Speaker at the time. I said, "We're going to have a little bit of trouble unless you take a very definite stand." Any rate something happened one night and it happened again another night. This particular member broke the rules, broke them. He was asked to withdraw it, he wouldn't. He was named. The vote was taken and he was directed to leave the House, because of the naming and the decision of the House. He wouldn't move. The Speaker walked out of the chair. Then he came back again, trying to find a way without having to use force. In the end the fellow just sat there. Course the House was in an uproar too. The Speaker couldn't gain control, and that's understandable too, with the situation when the rules were being broken as they were. So he, in the end, ordered the Sergeant at Arms and whatever help he could get, to remove this member from the chamber.

I came home that night. I suppose the episode could be likened to the turmoil that took place in 1916/17, when the Labor Party split up and the House was in an uproar night and day. You'd have to go back that far to find out what this type of episode. Any rate I went to bed; I don't know what time it was. Mrs Bartlett said to me the next morning, "You were swearing and cursing in your sleep last night. What happened?" I told her. She said, "You don't have to stay there." I said, "No, I'm resigning. I'm not going to put up with that type of member any more, that type of member that appears to have got into the House." So I just did that. I went to the House and said to the Speaker. He said, "I think I'll get out too," because of the same sort of situation. But it looked bad, it looked as though that was going to happen. You could see it happening, you could see it building up all the time. That was the reason.

But coming back to saying I could have stayed there as long as I liked. We had no retiring age. We did develop an understanding with the Public Service Commissioner and the Speaker of the Assembly and the President of the Legislative Council. The Clerks did develop an understanding that sixty-five was a reasonable age to get out. I think John [Roberts] got out about sixty-six, maybe sixty-seven, stayed there a bit longer.[1] But I made the decision, and that was the principal reason behind it.

RJ Did that ability to stay on apply to other staff people, or just the Clerks?

BARTLETT: No, only the Clerks. The other were appointed by the Speaker, but the Clerks were appointed by the Governor on the recommendation of the Speaker, by the House. That meant that they could only be dismissed by the Governor or the vote of the House.

RJ Who was involved with the episode that you speak of?

BARTLETT: A. R. Tonkin, the member for Mirrabooka, I think it was at the time.

RJ If that situation had not arisen would you have stayed?

BARTLETT: I think I would have. I wouldn't have given thought to retiring then. I was at that stage in life when I was thinking that well in a few years I'll be looking at that situation of retiring. But no, not at that stage I wouldn't have. But it just quickened it, my thinking, that was all.

RJ When did the change occur that you speak of, when this sort of member came in?

BARTLETT: Probably the last two elections prior to my retirement. We were getting an influx of the type of member that....a younger member. In most cases - not in most cases, but a lot of them were schoolteachers, ex-schoolteachers, who had a thought,

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[1]John Roberts retired in 1978, aged 65 (RJ).

because of their educational background, their knowledge was so much, that they could just walk into any ranking in government. They had had probably no restrictions before in their life, no restrictions on their activities at any rate. But they came into Parliament with the idea that they were going to do something in such a way that they could override the whole system: change the system - it was too slow and cumbersome. The rules were there and they'd been good rules, and they'd stood their time. They were basically the rules of all Parliaments in Australia, and the Mother of Parliament, and I would think probably the American Parliament too. Rules of debate that is, and rules of control. But they objected to them, or broke them, or attempted to break them. The Speaker was always watchful of this, and tried to stop it from happening. The continual warning didn't worry any of them at all. I think they probably took advantage of the warning too, at times, and deliberately broke the rules so they'd catch the eye of the Speaker and then they would be obstinate about withdrawing, or something like that, or moving. So it was just one of those things. It was the type of person that came in, that had a different concept to rules. I think probably it applies in general life today.

RJ On the occasion of your retirement, there were people who spoke in the House congratulating you on the work that you had done for the Parliament, and I will be attaching a copy of what was said, the copy of Hansard of that day, which is the thirteenth of November, '75, to this transcript.[1] But I noted that Sir Ross Hutchinson in his comments said, "We are all going to be very sorry to see him go, but I do not think any of us need have regrets on his behalf, because he will not be displeased at leaving us. I think he is looking forward to his retirement." Were you?

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[1]See pp 224 - 226.

BARTLETT: Yes, after that. After the episode.

RJ So really Hutchinson is specifically referring to....?

BARTLETT: That, yes, mmm. Because he knew, and I knew, the difficult times we were going to have with the type of person that was going to work in the House, unless they could change their mind. They were entirely a different person to J.T. Tonkin, who was a schoolteacher. He was disgusted with the situation himself. Let me tell you this too. We're on air are we?

RJ Yes we are.

BARTLETT: Let me tell you this, that even though Col Jamieson - I liked Col Jamieson - even though Col Jamieson tried to break the rules many times, and J.T. did. When I say tried, tried to bend the rules many times, and when they were pulled up they apologised. They might fight a little bit longer before they apologised, but they generally apologised. Invariably they came in the next day and said, "Well Joss, we knew we were wrong, and the Speaker was right, but we just wanted to test him, that was all." But in the case of this other episode, even Mr Jamieson - not in the House, because he had to show support for his members - but at a later date, or the next day, he felt that he'd been wrong in supporting them in the things that had finally happened. Oh not supporting them so much, but at least being on their side, because it was a party matter by then. But he realised that the rules had been broken and broken badly. I always admired him for that. He went, he'd go as far as he could, in bending the rules, and J.T. would too, sometimes. But they would come to heel when they realised that they were just going a little bit too far. But in this particular case you could see that these types, that person I.... a couple of persons. Bryce was another one. Mind you our Premier wasn't averse to trying to urge people to - that was in opposition - to have a go. I think in this particular case he was being very quiet in his urging to A.R. Tonkin to take his chances and stick it out. But Mr Tonkin did,

when he was approached by the Sergeant-at-Arms, and one other person, he did move out of the chamber then, but he'd held up the House for half an hour or more.

One of the things, as I mentioned earlier, that just hurried up my approach to retiring, that was all. I could see better things in life than working under those conditions, at that stage. I'd started to play bowls, and wanted a bit of time for fishing. A bit of time for holiday. It was always difficult to get a holiday even then, because I always tried to let the staff.... I had no children by then, and I always tried to let the staff off that had young children, so it meant I had to stay, and maybe I'd miss my holidays. The session would come and I hadn't had any, or if I only had a fortnight. Things like that.

RJ Charles Court, Sir Charles Court, wrote you a personal letter, when you retired, and you've made a copy of that available and I'll put that with your transcript as well.[1] He refers in that to the fact that your wife had been such a tower of strength to you. In what way?

BARTLETT: Well there'd been no problem as far as the late nights. This was the good thing. This is where problems arose with members and staff, the long nights and that sort of thing. I would come home and I wouldn't have to wake up my wife to get into the House (I didn't have a key) the key was always in the front door for me. It's a different type of life from today. You wouldn't leave keys in the front door. She looked after my welfare well. No problem in having, well changing every day, dressing, things like that. When we had to go places, if there was an invitation to both of us, she always attended. In all it was a very easy life as far as that was concerned. Which makes it fairly easy for yourself, for your situation, in any position. I don't know of.... There were a few, you know, that wives used

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[1]Charles Court to J C Barlett, November 25, 1975. Copy attached, p 227.

to worry and growl. The long, late nights, particularly when they had young children, was always an encumbrance, from a wife's point of view at any rate. But it didn't develop with me. It was known in advance this situation was going to develop, and the long nights and that sort of thing, and it was understood that it couldn't be avoided.

RJ When your children were growing up, there would be three nights a week in a row when you wouldn't have seen them.

BARTLETT: That's right.

RJ How did you find that?

BARTLETT: Well maybe only two nights in a row. The Thursday night was a different.... Thursday night the House would knock off about five thirty to allow members to go home, and I'd come home. I suppose my son would be up, my eldest daughter would be up at that stage, until seven o'clock, and at least I'd see them before they went to bed; invariably I would on a Thursday, so it would be two nights. Well [laughs], I think my wife had them under control. [Laughs.] I think you've got to have the right mentality too, as far as children are concerned, in the first place at any rate. I think both of us realised that discipline was good, but in the right way. Even to this extent of a promise. If you promised a child something, you gave it to them, whether it was a book or a toy or something, or whether it was a belting. So you let it go at this. I always treated, the boy in particular, a promise was a promise. He'd want something, and I'd say, "Well look give it another week and I'll have a think about it." In the other case where it was going to be a smacking, and something was done, and he'd do something, and I'd say, "Oh don't do that Laurie." He would do it again some day, and I'd say, "Now look I told you not to do that. Now you know what happens? I don't talk a third time." So that was the attitude. It was a promise then. I would do it too. I would do it. I really did it. We came to a great understanding about that. [Laughs.] Mrs Bartlett used to get upset, but she

realised too that the discipline was there, and it was required at times. The other thing is that she told me something that one of them had done, and I'd say, "Oh thanks very much." Then if I saw it happen.... I wouldn't do anything about that. When I saw it happen I'd say, "Now your mother told you about that the other day, and you took no notice. Now, you know what's happening." I mean it was just that way. There were no problems as far as.... Probably missed them a little bit, or if they were sick you'd be wondering what was wrong, whether they were all right, particularly when you were working all night. It was only two nights.

RJ Any regrets about your time in Parliament?

BARTLETT: No, no. No, I have no regrets at all. I couldn't think of a thing that I regretted doing. When you say any regrets, there was a time I thought I'd like to, after the war, it would have been all right going farming, but other than that, no. I had a very enjoyable life there. I had a very easy life. When I say that, I never had a rough time, really rough time. Everything seemed to click as far as I was concerned, with the various members of the staff, the various Speakers, the various Premiers. I never ran into a bad Premier. And the members. There were some members I didn't go along with, but I didn't regret that they were members of the House. I realised you've got to have a large number of different type of personalities. But the type of member I'm indicating was the type of member that had the real dirty mind. Just didn't interest me, the type of conversation. I mean I've got a dirty mind too, but there's limitations. [Laughs.]

No regrets.

END OF TAPE ELEVEN SIDE ONE

END OF INTERVIEW

Note: After the interview, Joss and Win Bartlett celebrated their golden wedding anniversary and a copy of the newspaper article about the occasion is attached, p 228.

GOVERNMENT HOUSE. PERTH.

Flight Sergeant (now Flying Officer) Jocelyn Coyte BARTLETT

D.F.M., R.A.A.F.

His Majesty the King has been graciously pleased to award the Distinguished Flying Medal to Flight Sergeant (now Flying Officer) Jocelyn Coyte Bartlett, Royal Australian Air Force, for gallantry and devotion to duty during Flying Operations against the enemy.

CITATION:

406801, Flight Sergeant Jocelyn Coyte Bartlett, R.A.A.F

AWARDED D.F.M.

Flight Sergeant BARTLETT has invariably displayed a very keen spirit and great eagerness to engage the enemy.

On completion of his first tour of duty he volunteered for further operations and has continued to display most commendable courage and determination.

His gallantry and devotion to duty have set an outstanding example to the Squadron.

Pairs	
Ayes	Noes
Mr H. D. Evans	Mr Ridge
Mr Harman	Mrs Craig
Mr McIver	Mr Laurance
Mr T. D. Evans	Mr Crane
Mr Carr	Mr Thompson
Mr Bryce	Mr Nanovich
Mr T. H. Jones	Mr Sodeman

Question thus negatived.

Motion defeated.

The SPEAKER: I advise the House that we have reached the stage where the business on the notice paper has been completed and we now await advice regarding messages and Bills from another place.

At this juncture I would ask the Premier if he would care to proceed with the formalistic style of procedure which could be followed now instead of at a later stage.

CLOSE OF SESSION

Complimentary Remarks

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier) [1.33 a.m.]: We have, as you have stated, Mr Speaker, completed the business on our notice paper and all we have to await are the fateful messages from another place.

I take this opportunity to convey to you our good wishes for the coming festive season. It is still a way off but time marches on very quickly. A few weeks will go by and we will be right in the middle of Christmas. I would like to thank you, Mr Speaker, on behalf of all those who sit with me on the way you have conducted the proceedings. It has not always been easy. You have conducted the proceedings with great dignity and firmness that is necessary in this very onerous task and you have done this at a time when parliamentary proceedings are very much under challenge; and as far as our side is concerned we are grateful that you have seen fit to conduct the proceedings as you have.

This session has been quite unusual in more ways than one, and one thing I would like to refer to on this occasion is the fact that Sir David Brand found it necessary, on account of ill health, to retire. We now have the situation where his successor in the seat of Greenough has joined us very late in the session, so he has not had a chance to make his maiden speech, but in due course we will have a chance formally to welcome him to this place. He follows after a man who has left his mark for all time in this place, both as a person and in respect of his performance.

On behalf of my colleagues I would also like to convey my thanks to the Clerks, to the Sergeant-at-Arms, to *Hansard*, and to our friend the policeman in the gallery who always seems to be on tap without making any noise about it, and also to our friends in the Press Gallery. They are all part of this institution.

This occasion, of course, has very special significance, because this is the last sitting of the Parliament when the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly (Joss Bartlett) will be in his position, as he is retiring soon. Joss Barlett was here long before I became a member. He looked a little more fresh-faced and youthful when I first arrived, but he has always had that grin, and I want to say a very big "Thank you" to him because he, like so many people before him, have served in that position as Clerk in a way that is quite remarkable—always with a degree of detachment—and regardless of whether one is in Government or in Opposition one always felt one could take one's procedural and other problems to him and obtain sound and impartial advice. I would like him to know that we all wish him well in retirement. He seems far too young to retire. I found myself referring to him as "Young Joss" and I realised I was getting older, but he always seems young to me.

Mr Bartlett, every good wish for the future, and thank you for all you have done in preserving the high dignity in the office you have fulfilled.

To Mr Edmondson, and his wife, and his staff we convey our thanks. They move about this place, make sure it is always in good order when we arrive, and make sure that what we need is always provided. They are often unsung and forgotten, and I would like them to know that we join in conveying our felicitations and thanks to them.

May I also refer to the fact that we have, of course, the Clerk Assistant (Mr Okely) and the Sergeant-at-Arms, and we will be able to say more about them next time we meet because of the changes that will take place; but in the meantime we would like them to accept our good wishes and our congratulations. I know they will fill their respective duties with the same dedication they have in the past and this will be to the betterment of this Parliament.

To my own Deputy Premier I extend my thanks for carrying more than his fair share of the burden right throughout the session, but he has carried it with cheerful loyalty. He must have the longest index of all time with the number of Bills he has had to handle. However, he does it very well and I say, "Thank you" to him for his support.

My thanks also go to the Leader of the Country Party, the Minister for Agriculture, and also to my colleagues, not forgetting the very loyal band of back benchers who, in having to sit behind a Government, have to suffer more than they would if they were in Opposition.

I extend to you, Mr Speaker, on behalf of all members our thanks, and our felicitations to you and to your family for the coming festive season and for 1976.

MR J. T. TONKIN (Melville—Leader of the Opposition) [1.38 a.m.]: We have reached the stage of the session which all members of Parliament, irrespective of the side on which they sit, are glad to reach, but I think it can be truly said that those on the Government side have more pleasure at having reached this stage, and although Christmas is still some little time off, on behalf of those I have the honour to lead on this side of the House I wish to express to you, Mr Speaker, our very best wishes for a merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

Also I want to say that I have no reason to withdraw or modify in any way what I said last year upon your appointment as Speaker, when I was speaking in similar circumstances. You have had some awkward situations with which to cope, and I felt that you showed a disposition to deal with those situations but not always to our satisfaction. I felt that you honestly tried to do what you considered was the right and proper thing in the circumstances, and no man can be expected to do more than that. Therefore I want to thank you for your efforts in that regard.

I would like, also, to express our thanks to the Clerk and his assistant, to the other members of the staff of the House, and to the Sergeant-at-Arms, all of whom have given attention to their duties with diligence and with a desire to help.

Mr Bartlett was here before I came, so that will indicate the length of time he has been here.

Mr O'Neil: He must have been a babe in arms!

Mr J. T. TONKIN: Right from the first day I had occasion to talk to him I found him most co-operative, and he is a very efficient officer. Although this will be the last time he will be seen in the position he now occupies—he will be vacating his position in a few days—I would like him to know that he has my very goodwill and esteem. It is not always that one is in a position to state quite frankly how one feels about a person, but this is an occasion when I have no inhibitions at all, and I can say to Mr Bartlett, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

I would also like to extend to Mr Edmondson and to his wife and to the staff of Parliament House our thanks for the way they carry out their duties. The constable in the gallery has a silent job, but he goes about it efficiently and effectively and does what is expected of him quite unostentatiously. The *Hansard* staff, I think, deserves special mention, because they have no say at all in the hours they are called upon to work. They have to work the hours the Premier decides they will have to be here and that is why they are here now. The Premier may have decided it is getting late and that we should come back next week. That would, perhaps, have lightened their burden. However, they perform their duties without complaint. That has always been my experience; that they are here to do the job which is expected of them, and although they may complain to one another or to others, never at any time have they complained to me.

I would like to express to the Premier and his Ministers my appreciation of the courtesies extended to me and the co-operation that has been available whenever I have sought it; and that is something that makes for the good working of the House. Although we can differ very strongly in our views and sometimes we are on the verge of losing our tempers, nevertheless I think we can appreciate those courtesies and that spirit of co-operation which we seek and which we get.

I would like to thank my Deputy Leader for his loyal and strong support in the work I have had to do and all my colleagues around him who have carried out any task I have entrusted to them. They have generally supported me in the attitude which I felt was necessary to adopt.

A special "Thank you" to the Whip, whose task is a difficult one. When a man has to deal with a number of members of Parliament of different temperaments his path is not smooth or easy.

It calls for quite an amount of diplomacy and sometimes for a little strength which must be exercised carefully, otherwise we could soon have a nice bit of trouble around our ears. I want to say to the Whip that I have appreciated the way he has been able to carry out the work he has had to do.

Although from time to time I have occasion to complain that members of the media are a bit biased in their treatment, nevertheless I realise that they do not have the final say in what ultimately appears in the paper or does not appear in the paper. They have a job to do. They spend long hours at their work which they do assiduously. On behalf of those who are with me I express to them thanks for their efforts, and I wish them a very merry festive season.

Mr Speaker, you will appreciate that most members are anxious to get away to bed, as indeed I am. Therefore, I do not propose to speak at any greater length. I am speaking on behalf of all members on this side of the House, including those with whom you might have had some differences. In the spirit of Christmas any heartburning which might have been experienced is forgotten and on their behalf and my own I wish you and your good wife a very merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

Several members: Hear, hear!

THE SPEAKER (Mr Hutchinson): I feel sorely tempted to take my full 45 minutes. I can imagine members writhing under the

punishment. However, I have thought about it and resolved not to do so.

I would like to thank the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition for their remarks. It is true that the session has been reasonably difficult and there have been incidents during it which have caused some heartburning but, by and large, one must expect something of that sort to occur. My only hope is that members will try to take the long view and try to refrain from locking horns too much each with the other and avoid any fierce clashes which sometimes can follow.

As Speaker I find myself in a lonely job. In many ways the position does not have a great deal to recommend it although it is one of trust and honour. I do the best I can and as fairly as I can.

I want to thank all the officers and staff of the Legislative Assembly and all those who work in association with us, including the Press; and I take the opportunity to wish them all the very best for the festive season.

I, too, want to comment on the retirement of Joss Bartlett as Clerk of this Legislative Assembly. As has been said, Joss Bartlett has been here for a long period—for almost 46 years. He came here as a messenger boy in, I think, August, 1929, and at that stage he was not quite 14. His father had died some three years previously and he and his mother and older brother had a great job to bring up a good family; and his whole life has been dedicated to his work at Parliament, and to looking after his family. He has done both jobs exceedingly well.

I have known him for many years; he has been a friend of mine. We were together, in RAAF Bomber Command although not in the same squadron, and his was a distinguished war service.

As a Clerk and Officer of Parliament he is a most knowledgeable man. His understanding of Standing Orders is wide and deep. He knows them almost like the back of his hand and fortunately he is on intimate terms with that learned gentleman, Sir Erskine May.

We are all going to be very sorry to see him go; but I do not think any of us need have regrets on his behalf because he will not be displeased at leaving us. I think he is looking forward to his retirement.

In any case, as Speaker of the House, I wish to convey to Mr Bartlett and his wife and family, the very best wishes of this House for a long and happy retired life.

Several members: Hear, hear!

The SPEAKER: Now we have only a few, I trust untrammelled, messages from another place with which to deal. Once again I thank members of the Government and the Opposition for the courtesies and kindnesses they have shown me during the past year.

Sitting suspended from 1.53 to 4.07 a.m.

BILLS (5): RETURNED

1. Appropriation Bill (Consolidated Revenue Fund).
2. Constitution Acts Amendment Bill (No. 3).
3. Appropriation Bill (General Loan Fund).
4. Reserves Bill.
5. Loan Bill.

Bills returned from the Council without amendment.

FAMILY COURT BILL

Council's Message

Message from the Council received and read notifying that it had agreed to the further amendment made by the Assembly.

ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE:

SPECIAL

SIR CHARLES COURT (Nedlands—Premier) [4.08 a.m.]: I move—

That the House at its rising adjourn until a date and time to be fixed by the Speaker.

Question put and passed.

House adjourned at 4.09 a.m. (Friday).

PREMIER OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA
PERTH
WESTERN AUSTRALIA 6000

25th November, 1975

Dear Joc.,

I take this opportunity of conveying to you the best wishes of Lady Court and myself for your retirement.

I also convey the best wishes of my Cabinet Ministers, as well as those of our Government Parliamentary colleagues.

You have served the Parliament of Western Australia with dedication, and you leave your present position with the goodwill of all Members who have had the privilege of knowing you.

You have their good wishes for your future health and happiness.

We would also like to convey our greetings to your wife who has been such a tower of strength to you.

It is only those who have been involved in a personal way in the affairs of a Parliament who thoroughly understand the machinery of Parliament and the strengths it derives from traditional, as well as statutory practices.

It is in the protection of these rights, privileges and responsibilities that the Parliamentary institution survives.

You have made a fine contribution and you can retire proud in the knowledge that you have always endeavoured to conduct yourself and render advice with impartiality and in the best interests of the system of Parliament.

No doubt the average man and woman in the street does not appreciate the significance of this but you, like those of us who are intimately involved, know that the very basis of guarding the democratic machinery starts in the protection of the Parliamentary institution.

Thanks for what you have done.

Kindest regards -

Yours sincerely,

Chamberlain

PREMIER

MR. J.C. BARTLETT, D.F.M., J.P.,
243 FLAMBOROUGH STREET,
DOUBLEVIEW. W.A. 6018

Their secret is being best friends

Doubleview couple Jocelyn and Winifred Bartlett celebrated their golden wedding anniversary on June 5.

By EVELYN DUFFY

Better known among locals as Joss and Win, they met at a party when they were 16 and were married at 21 in St Patrick's Church in Mt Lawley.

They made their first home in Inglewood and moved in to their present home in Flamborough Street in 1948.

They had been married for only a few years when Joss enlisted for active service in World War 11.

He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Medal for active service over Europe.

When the couple moved to Scarborough Joss transferred to the Scarborough RSL and has been secretary, president and State delegate.

He has been secretary of the Doubleview Bowling Club for the past 11 years. The club was developed by the RSL.

The RSL sold its Scarborough Hall and now holds its meetings at the bowling club.

In 1976 Joss retired from his job as Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, a position where he worked under many Premiers.

In 1949 Joss helped organise the Scarborough Cobbers Club Football team and Win has been a prominent organiser for the Scarborough Netball Club and the Scarborough Callisthenics Club.

Win has joined her husband in his efforts to assist the community in many ways.

She has served in the State body of the Callisthenics Association and now assists the Carine Club.

She has been a member of the RSL's Ladies Auxiliary, which raised money to pay off the hall, and she was a booking agent for the hall until it was sold.

"We are very active and busy people," Win said.

"We've shared all sport and community interests and that has brought us closer together."

Joss and Win have four children, 10 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

They celebrated their anniversary at a party held at their son Lawrence's home in Wembley Downs.

Win said one of the secrets to a long and happy marriage was to respect each other and share problems.

"You've got to share all your problems with your partner," Win said.

"You've got to respect and listen to each other.

"The thing about Joss and me is that we're the best of friends."

Stirling Times, June 16, 1987.