

Hattie Bratzel-Kremen

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BRETZEL-KREMEN: Hattie Bratzel-Kremen

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Tape 1, Side 1

1995 April 22

SG: This is an interview of Hattie Bratzel Kremen taken on April 22, 1995, at her home in Salem. The interviewer is Susan Glen. I guess first I'd like you to just tell me your full name and when you were born.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: My full name is Hattie Selma Joanne Bratzel - - Kremen, since I got married [laughter]. Is that as full as you wanted?

SG: That's full enough.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: [Laughter] I've never admitted to Selma because I disliked somebody with the name of Selma once a long time ago, so I hated to admit I had that name.

SG: [Laughter].

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And if somebody would ask me what "S" stood for, I'd say, "Secret."

SG: [Laughter] Do you know why you ended up with that name?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, my mother's friends - - she had friends that she liked and she named me after three of them.

SG: Three of them!

BRATZEL-KREMEN: [Laughter]

SG: When and where were you born?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: In Hebron, North Dakota. November 8, 1908.

SG: I understand that you moved around a bit when you were very young.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, we moved up to Gresham, Oregon when I was a year old. My grand - - paternal grandparents were living there in retirement, and my father had recurrent bouts of pneumonia in the cold weather in North Dakota, so we moved up here and we stayed there for a period of five or six years, and then moved to Mulino where my dad had bought a farm and peach orchard.

SG: Mulino, Oregon?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Mm-hmm, and we lived there for a number - - probably until I was about 11, and then we moved to Silverton for a year, and when my father and another man who were in the building business moved to Idaho, we were there a year and came back to Salem and have been here ever since.

SG: What had your father done in North Dakota? What was his occupation?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: He and his - - well, plus his family ranch - - he and his brother and a brother-in-law started a flour mill and grain elevator business, which they operated for quite awhile and continued to operate after he left there.

SG: Do you know why he chose to come to Gresham?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, probably because his parents lived there.

SG: Oh, I see.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: [Laughter]

SG: [Chuckling] I missed that. How did he end up in North Dakota in the first place then?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, his father and mother and some children - - I think they had two children at the time - - were influenced by a minister who went over to Germany and assured them what a great country North Dakota was - - should have been sued for damages!

SG: [Hearty laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: He said they could raise potatoes as big as pumpkins, and that it was just wonderfully productive, and also they had the homestead act, so he talked these German people into moving over to Hebron, North Dakota, and my paternal grandfather and his brother, Wendell Bratzel and their family came to Hebron and took out homesteads. When they arrived, my grandfather stayed with the cattle and household goods at the depot and my uncle and his wife and my grandmother went to

the hotel and people said, "Oh, here comes a Mormon with two wives and a bunch of children," and they wouldn't let him in" [Laughter] So I think they had to stay in the stable or something . . . [Laughter]

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: . . . like Mary and Joseph in the good 'ol days, but they soon took out their homesteads and built sod houses and Mrs. Wendell Bratzel had a baby in the winter time and they leaned a wagon bed over the bed on which she laid to keep the snow off that sifted through the cracks in the walls off of her while she gave birth.

SG: Wow!

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I visited the cemetery down there, and there's a surprising number of women with babies that were buried in that cemetery that just didn't survive the cold weather, I guess.

SG: Hm-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Also, the lack of medical attention.

SG: Did you have brothers and sisters?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I had a sister who died about 1976, I guess, and a brother who died shortly after birth from poor medical attention.

SG: What do you remember about growing up in Gresham?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, relatively little. We had some good friends there, and I started school there, and our neighbor was Judge George Washington Stapleton of the Circuit Court in Portland, and he had a daughter, Georgia, who was our playmate. I liked her very much, and years later when I was elected District Attorney, she read about it in the paper and wrote me a letter. Unfortunately, we didn't get together again. I would have liked to have seen more of her, but didn't - - I think she was in Astoria at the time she wrote to me.

SG: Did she go to school with you then?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yes, she went to school with my sister and me. My sister was three years older than I.

SG: Did you two get along well?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Tolerably I think - - just like sisters. [Laughter]

SG: What was school like? Grammar school?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: It was fine. I enjoyed it. Had good teachers. My problem when I first started was that I was very nearsighted and nobody realized it at the time, and I went to school - - I couldn't see anything the teacher wrote on the blackboard. I think my sister copied some of it for me.

SG: H-m-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I got up to the fourth grade, I think it was, before they found out I couldn't see [chuckle] - - so it's an amazing - -

SG: [Chuckle] Big revelation there!

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So then, my aunt took me - - it was during the first world war, and the children in Mulino were mostly descendants of English people, so they persecuted us because we were German, [chuckle] threw rocks at us and stuff, so I can appreciate the underclass around here!

SG: I see.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: My family sent us to Gresham to stay with my grandmother, and she had two daughters who were both college students and so we studied with them and stuff - - got along pretty well, and one aunt was going to Reed College, and the other one, strangely enough, went to college first and then to high school.

SG: I don't understand how that could happen. [Chuckle]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I don't know. [Chuckle] She went to George Fox High School. I guess probably she had been studying at home or something, but there were subjects she wanted to have, so she went to high school to pick them up.

SG: Huh! Were they studying to be anything in particular?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, musical.

SG: Hm-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: When my aunt - - the one that went to Reed College went to the Chicago Musical College and got her degrees there, and then worked there in the library for about seven years as I recall and ultimately, she went down to Ashland to teach and

to be the organist or something in the church there, which I assume was the Lutheran church and ultimately got married there at about age 40, I guess, and had one daughter that she was determined to make into a concert pianist - -

SG: [Giggle]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - but the daughter didn't agree [laughter].

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - eloped and got married, and she's still married and happily apparently.

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: They're living back east.

SG: Was your family very religious when you were young?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I think so. Yes. My grandmother always had a little service every morning at breakfast, read from the bible and prayed and we memorized passages from the bible and went to Sunday School every Sunday [vehemently], whether we sick or not!

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: [Laughter] - - no excuses! - - and we also went to a school that was run by the minister who taught us to read and write German.

SG: Oh?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And the German script and so forth, which was sort of interesting.

SG: So you and your sister and a lot of the other German kids?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yes.

SG: -- learned German?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yes. It was quite a group. I don't remember just how many, but several others, so that was good practice, and then when I was 11 -- well, all the time my sister and I had sung duets. I sang soprano and she sang alto and had a -- she had a very good voice. I don't know whether mine was so good, but -- because I didn't like singing -- it was hard enough -- [Chuckle]

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: -- [kind of . . . ?] -- you're singing alto. In any event, we sang in the choir from the time I was 11.

SG: Huh!

BRATZEL-KREMEN: -- until I was 22, when I quit.

SG: You said you sang duets. Did you sing at other events --

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Oh, yes -- at funerals, and weddings, and we also -- well, we sang special numbers at the church. People were a lot more tolerant in those days than they would be now [laughter]!

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: But we sang with the regular choir, which didn't do my sister's voice any good, I don't think, because she practiced with all of them because she was the only one in the choir that could really read notes [chuckle], so she would practice with the baritones, the tenors, the altos and the sopranos until everybody had the music down firm.

SG: Oh! [chuckle]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: It was kind of hard on her voice, I think.

SG: Was it a big deal when your family decided to move from there?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: From Gresham?

SG: Mm-hmm.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: To Mulino? I don't think so. I think we had a \$5,000 mortgage on the property, which sort of sounded like the international war debt at that time [laughter].

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And we tried to sell peaches to make money - - my dad worked at a farm over there and also for a logging company, in addition to his night work at the flour mill and stuff.

SG: Did you help out in the orchard and - -

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, yes, of course, I helped pick peaches. It wasn't a very good crop because when it was good crop, they were .50 cents a bushel and when it was a poor crop, they were \$2.50 a bushel, so ultimately it was not particularly profitable, and we finally sold the farm and moved to Silverton where my father was working for the Fisher Flour Mill as a night flour man or whatever they called it, I don't know what - - sort of a night supervisor or something.

SG: And how did you like - -

BRATZEL-KREMEN: He was good with it, but his lungs wouldn't stand that fine flour dust.

SG: Oh.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So he had to quit it, and then he went into carpentry and when he came to Salem, he ultimately started building houses and there are several houses still standing here that he built - -

SG: Huh!

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - which were nice homes.

SG: What was he like?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Nice. [Laughter] He was a good man. He was about 5' 11" and he had black curly hair and hazel eyes. My sister took after him. She had black hair and hazel eyes. I took after my mother I guess because I had golden brown hair and blue eyes, or whatever. I don't think they're true blue. I think they're sort of hazel, too. Dad was firm and stern, but full of fun, and we had nice times. He liked to go camping and we

would take our horse and buggy or horse and wagon and go to places like - - there's a soda springs up there, not too far from Molalla and we'd go over there and camp overnight. Later, when we got a car, we'd go over to the beach and at that time, there were not a lot of motels or anything, so you camped out over there.

SG: H-m-m!

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And dad liked to make the coffee, so I have a mental picture of him with a big coffee pot on the fire - -

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - drinking coffee - - so we had a very nice childhood, I think. Thank God neither of my parents drank or had any vices that affected us children at all, so - - and they didn't quarrel with each other. If my mother didn't agree with something dad was doing, she would just softly say, "Fred?" and he would stop whatever he was doing and if they had any discussions, it was night in their room, which we didn't hear 'em - - you never heard any argument, which was a blessing. I think I - - I look back on them and consider them very excellent parents. I wish everybody had parents like that.

SG: Were they very political?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: They voted, but it wasn't a matter of discussing politics all the time, or anything like that. Politics didn't intrude on your life as much as it does now - -

SG: H-m-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - I don't think.

SG: How did your mother spend her time?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Working - - out in the field. She ran the farm basically.

SG: Ah-huh.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: She would plow and harrow and everything with the horses, and she liked horses and horses liked her, and dad liked cows and cows liked him.

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I have a picture someplace of the two of them with the family cow and family horse, and the horse is leaning against mother, and the cow is leaning against dad - -

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - which is very symbolic [Laughter]

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Dad would go out and milk the cow and come in with his hair all soaking wet where the cow had been licking his head while he milked her [Laughter]

SG: [Laughter] Did he - -

BRATZEL-KREMEN: We had a dog. I think he was probably a pit bull, but he was a darling. He just loved us and we loved him, and the neighbors would call up and tell us they wanted to come over, and would we please chain up our dog, which we thought

was ridiculous, because he was not really dangerous. He probably looked dangerous because he'd come walking out with the hair standing up on the back of his neck and a low growl, but I don't think he ever attacked - - I know he never attacked a person. He attacked a bull one time that had my grandfather pinned behind a peach tree and was pawing the ground and threatening to take on the peach tree and my grandfather both, and my mother yelled for Tag. "Go, sic'em." Tag went down and grabbed hold of the bull's ear and wouldn't let go, no matter how much he tossed his head, and the neighbor was very annoyed because his bull's ear was torn up like that - -

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - but we're lucky he didn't kill my grandfather, which she should've been happy about.

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So somebody poisoned him, finally. The first time they gave him salmon and he was very ill, but mother treated him and he got better, but the next time they gave him meat with ground glass in it - -

SG: Huh!

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Which did him, which was a dirty trick I think.

SG: Did you have a lot of neighbors or - - on the farm were you out on the - -

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, there was a farm adjoining - - the Ashbys owned it and Frederick Ashby was our friend. We'd walk to school together and stuff, but the other

places - - there was a railroad track across our property, which was built after we moved there, which sort of cut us off from people downtown.

SG: Hm-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Although the town was not too far away from our farm. It was a pretty farm. I felt lonesome for it one time, so after I got married, my husband suggested going to Silver Creek Falls, and I said, "Do you know what I'd like to do? I'd like to go over to Mulino and see the 'ol farm, so we drove over there and looked for it, and it took me quite awhile, and just as we were about ready to leave, I saw the farm house and we went over and told the people that were there that I had lived there as a child, so they very nicely invited us in and showed us around, and it was unchanged. It was one of those big square white ones with a porch around two sides of it and it had a glass in the front door that had an etched [_____] bear or something on it, which I loved, and which was still there, which was pretty good considering I was about 50 some at the time - - and had moved away from there when I was younger, and that satisfied me. I haven't had any great yearning to go back, but at that time, I really wanted to see it.

SG: Huh!

BRATZEL-KREMEN: [Chuckle] Well, you can discard all of that!

SG: Not at all.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: [Laughter]

SG: I think I remember you saying that you moved to Idaho, but your mother didn't like it very well there?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yes. She didn't like it at all because she was allergic to mosquitoes and they loved her!

SG: Oh!

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So we always had to have a smudge in the yard if she wanted to go outdoors, and also there were a lot of toads or frogs. I don't know what I know, my dad stepped on one and it made him almost sick to his stomach, so we were kind of glad to get away from there and come back to Salem again, and the work wasn't what they had expected either, so - -

SG: Why's that?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - they were going build houses, but it didn't work out particularly, so we came back.

SG: Oh, and you chose to come to Salem after that - -

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Right.

SG: - - instead of back to the area where you'd been living before?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And we lived out in South Salem for awhile, and then dad bought a five acre tract on Lancaster, which was probably a pretty good purchase, because I kept it. I figured after he and my mother died that I would always have a place to pitch a tent if things got tough.

SG: [Laughter] Having that experience with tend to [laughter] [_____] cope!

BRATZEL-KREMEN: [Laughter] I think I'd like it.

SG: Was it the construction opportunity that brought him down to Salem?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Pardon?

SG: Was it the construction work opportunity that brought the family down to Salem?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I think so. Hm-hmm. I don't remember how that developed. I think dad started doing small jobs. I know he built some mountain cabins for some doctors and he built a house for Dr. [Mott?] and he built for the Browning brothers who had the circus. They were out on the intersection there where you go up to Bell Crest, one on one side, and the one on the other, but I think they're both torn down now because of other construction there, but they were standing up until a few years ago.

SG: They ran a circus here in Salem?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Pardon?

SG: They ran a circus here in Salem?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yeah, well, it traveled around. They had quite a business I guess.

SG: So you started school in Salem then.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yes. I went to grade school up in - - a little white school and it was up there in South Salem near our place, and it was sort of a one-room school, which was very educational because I could listen to the 8th graders recite and all away from the

4th grade up, I guess. I don't know just what grade I entered there. I think the 5th and I think that we went there to the 7th grade and then went to McKinley.

SG: H-m-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: It might've been the 7th and 8th at McKinley, but regardless, we had a spelling contest and I spelled down the whole school, and then I was supposed to go to a spelling bee, and I deliberately misspelled a word because I didn't want to do that.

SG: [Laughter] Why?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I was shy. Can you believe it?

SG: After growing up singing in front of church?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yes. Hon, I was very bashful. I went through a phase, I guess.

SG: Huh! Did you like school in general?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Pardon?

SG: Did you like school generally?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Oh, yes. I usually skipped class when I was supposed to give an oral report and handed it in written.

SG: Hard to believe.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: [Laughter] Isn't that terrible?

SG: Did you have particular pastimes outside of school that you belonged to?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Oh, yes. We belonged to the Luther League and engaged in various activities with the family and others. My dad wouldn't let us date until we were 18.

SG: Was that unusual?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I don't know. I don't think it was too unusual at the time - - it depended on the family, I suppose, but certainly there was no dating at 11 and 12 like they do nowadays - -

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - which is ridiculous, I think. When did you start dating?

SG: Around 15?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: [Laughter]. We would go out with groups, like with the Luther League and other groups or several people, but not on a single date, and unfortunately, I had to accompany my sister when she went out on dates, which didn't make us too loving for a time. [Laughter]

SG: [Laughter] Where would you and sister typically go on dates?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, I don't know. I think those days you went to movies or something like that, or to parties, and those were chaperoned parties, not open-ended.

SG: You said I think that you took some commercial law courses in high school?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yes. One of the reasons was because of the problems that my family had with - - like my mother's father died and left her some property, and the lawyers dragged out the probate for three or four years, and whenever she didn't [_____] out was coming, they would send her a bill and said they had to increase their bond because she showed a lack of confidence in them, and I sort of wanted to see why this could happen, and then my father also, in the business he was in, there had been some money taken in his name, which he never received with the result that we had a lawsuit, but we couldn't get the books from the company for seven years, which was kind of ridiculous, too. So I just was interested and then I took commercial law and became interested and when I graduated from high school, they had apprenticeship jobs in different businesses for the students that had taken commercial law and I was an apprentice to an attorney, and so he employed me as a result of my working on his files and figuring out what the business was all about and being able to turn out the work, so I started working for him at the munificent sum of \$10 a week.

SG: [Chuckle] What kinds of things were you doing for that attorney?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, he was selling insurance, so I would prepare the insurance policies and then all the pleadings that he turned out on the cases, and he had another lawyer who was sort of learning the business there, too, and I did his work, and then he moved to another building and he had four men in the office and I did the work for all of them, so then I asked for a raise, and he said, "Well, no" - - he didn't think I was worth \$15 a week," but he would give me \$12.50. So I accepted the \$12.50 and found myself another job for \$15 [Laughter] and that was working for an attorney - - he was the city attorney at that time and had ran for district attorney, and so I did the work for the city attorney. I did the work for the city, drawing up ordinances and stuff, which he dictated or supervised, and I also worked for two or three other lawyers in the office, all for the \$60 a month that the city paid, and then when he became district attorney, I don't

remember whether I got \$60 a month or \$50 a month with the city attorney, and so then I - - he farmed me out to a company that sold dried fruit overseas and I worked for them for a month while their secretary was on vacation or sick or something, and they paid me, so when I came back, I said, I would like some extra pay, and about that time my father died, so they - - the two attorneys agreed to pay \$15 a month toward my salary plus the \$60 a month I was getting, so I was getting \$90 a month, which was more than most school teachers were getting at the time. I think their top salary was about \$85. Then I started court reporting on a part-time basis and got paid for that and took the time off from the office.

SG: Did that pay more?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, the court reporting paid pretty well. I got \$10 - -

[End of Tape 1, Side 1]

Tape 1, Side 2

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SG: All right. Let's go back. You were apprenticing "during" high school or after high school?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, it was the last two weeks of high school.

SG: About two weeks?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Mm-hmm

SG: Oh. What were your sister and your girlfriends doing at this time. Were they taking similar kinds of jobs?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, my sister graduated at the same time I did. She sort of flunked out until I caught up with her.

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I dragged her along with me on our homework and stuff.

SG: Was she uninterested?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, she didn't have a very good attention span, I guess. She was more flirtatious and interested in boys [Chuckle]. We graduated and then she took some post-graduate work while I was working and, ultimately she ended up as a dental assistant. She really wanted to be a nurse and my family thought that maybe she wanted to be a nurse because she wanted to see men - - [Laughter]

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - so they didn't agree with that, which was too bad, because she went along through life and raised her kids and then got trained as a licensed practical nurse and worked on that until she had a stroke - -

SG: Hm-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: But she really apparently loved nursing, and probably should have gone to nursing school right out of high school. She would have been able to earn a better living.

SG: Did your parents give you a lot of direction about what you should go into?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, they kind of wanted me to be a teacher, or the family did. My aunts were - - my maiden aunts - - they all said "You should be a teacher," and I said, "I don't want to be a teacher," which wasn't very nice of me, so that's why I got to be a secretary. At that time, there were three fields open to women - - secretary, nurse or teacher, and that was just about all that was available, so I don't know what I would have been. If there'd been more opportunities available, I probably would have been an attorney, but I liked the secretarial work and I liked working in a law office, and I enjoyed being a court reporter. I've always liked my work, which was nice, because if you're going to have to work for a living, it's a good thing if you like it, and I had an aptitude for it. I started out on this part-time court reporting to aid the court reporter who was working here in Marion County, and I did a lot of part-time work over in Dallas, where the court reporter was sort of sick, especially if there was a rape case.

SG: [Chuckle].

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And there were a lot of rape cases over in Polk County. We said it was the air, the climate and the water, which was their [ebb?]. [Laughter]

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - They were in Polk County and they said that! [Laughter] and they had the climate and the water. You better not quote me. They might - -

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So I finally got a job as an official court reporter over there, but I still helped out in Salem and I would go to Eugene and Portland and Albany and Corvallis, taking reporting cases if I had the time, and then finally the court reporter here decided to retire and get married, so I got the job here in Marion County, and before that I'd been in Polk and Yamhill County, for about nine years, I guess, and then I was in Marion County from that time - - I think it was in '43, that I got to be the official court reporter here, and I worked until I went over to Germany in '47. I was over there for two years as - - first as the confidential secretary to Judge Brand, who was ultimately the Presiding Judge of Tribunal No. 3, and in that case I read the evidence and picked out salient parts that applied to certain defendants and also read all the exhibits and picked out the important events that applied to particular defendants and made a bibliography or something - - I made just about a two sentence statement about what the testimony on the exhibits contained so the judge could look at it and not have to read the whole thing all the time, just an abbreviated very short statement, and then finally, he started dictating the judgment so I gave that work up to two men who took over, who proceeded not to get anything done for about six weeks and they'd come in, "Hattie, can you show us what you want us to do one of these days," and I said, "I've showed you over and over!"

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: They were a couple of men interested in alcohol and stuff I'm afraid.

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: They didn't get anything and it was very aggravating, and then another judge had one secretary. She would come down at 11:00 o'clock, do her fingernails and then his car would come and pick her up and take her out to the house for lunch.

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And sometimes they had company in the afternoon and they would party all afternoon and evening, and she finally, after about six or eight weeks came in with a one-page statement of the part of the judgment that he had prepared.

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I was so mad because I think we had done about 180 pages by then and I walked over to the judge's desk and "slapped" this down on his desk and I said, "The mountain struggled mightily and brought forth a mouse!" [Laughter]

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: We had a great life! Don't quote me on that!

SG: [Laughter] I'll think about this in a minute. I want to know a little bit more about your court reporting here around Oregon. Were you living at home at that time? And did you have a car that you traveled around in?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, over in McMinnville I had an apartment with some other gals, but I didn't stay over there all the time. I'd come back because my mother was living here in our home on Lancaster and I would come and stay with her over weekends and stuff like that, and so I traveled back and forth a lot.

SG: What did she do after your father died?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, nothing. She was really not trained to do any official work, and I didn't want her to do any hard work or anything like that - - I was able to support her.

SG: H-m-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: She was a sweet little lady, She was fifty-three I think when my father died. He was fifty-four, but at that time, I didn't think she was capable of working. [Chuckle]

SG: Uh-huh.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: When I got to be 53, I had a secretary who told me that her mother was too old to work, that she was fat and had this and that and the other thing about - - recited a bunch of problems, and I said, "Well, I'm fifty-three," and she said "E-r-r-r-awk!" [screaming squawk]! [Laughter]

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: It just depends on how you feel, I guess. [Laughter]

SG: Did you find anything about court reporting difficult?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Difficult?

SG: Yes.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, taking down testimony, anywhere from 150 to 300 minutes can be a little difficult, and then I had to get out transcripts and so I would be working almost every night on transcripts until about 12:00 o'clock and be in court at 9:00 the next morning. It was strenuous. Every once in awhile I would get physically so run down that I'd go over to my doctor and he'd give me some shots of B12 until I brightened up again.
[Laughter]

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And then I - - I worked like a dog, frankly.

SG: Did the lawyers put a lot of pressure on you?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Sure. They all wanted their transcripts yesterday. No, it was hard work.

SG: What kind of trials did you like doing best - - or - -

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, I didn't like property disputes because I didn't like all the measurements and stuff because writing figures is slower and we had one case involving Portland General Electric where one of their officers got on the stand and reeled off million dollar figures, like snow - -

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: That was difficult, and one time I had - - there was a lawyer here in town that spoke very fast and repeated himself a lot and so I had this case and he had called an Italian witness who talked in a stream, and real fast, and very - - had quite an accent, and so I said, "You gentlemen are going to have to talk a little slower," and the lawyer said, "Well, you mean him don't you, you don't mean me - - you mean him, don't you?" and I said, "I mean you." [Laughter]

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And so all I got out of that was the jurors all leaned forward to look over my shoulder and see how I was going, and they were talking just as fast as they had before. I was sorry I'd mentioned it. [Laughter]

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: But I enjoyed court reporting. It was fun, but then I was getting tired of it. It was really strenuous, and so I decided to go to law school. One of the fellows that was going to night school in Portland came in and said, "Well, we went up and registered for law school again," and I said, "I'm going to do that one of these days," and he said, "Oh, you've been saying that for twenty years, and you'll be saying it twenty years from now," and I said, "I will not," and I went up the next Friday night and registered.

SG: And this was at Lewis & Clark?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Mm-hmm. So then we started going up there. That made court reporting pretty strenuous because then I had to do some studying but the interesting thing was that being that the first semester the - - John - whatever his name was - - he

was in charge - - - said, "Well, you've got the highest grade, Ms. Bratzel," and I said, "Well, thank you," and he said, "I don't think you understand," he said, "You got the highest grade in the school [Laughter]!"

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Because that was just because I could write legal things easily, I guess. I'm sorry my dog has all his toys around.

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: But you can step on 'em.

SG: Very playful dog - - need lots of toys. So what year would that have been that you were starting law school?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: When I started law school? Well, I guess it was '45, because I'd put in one year before I went to Germany, and then the next year, I didn't go because I didn't have the transportation at the time and I didn't feel like I could drive up there three nights a week by myself, so I - - and also, I was going to get married, and my husband to be didn't want me to go to law school.

SG: Why?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Masculine, I guess. So I stayed home one semester and then the next semester, I thought, well - - shucks, I can go over to Germany and he can wait until I get back, so I did, and I was only going to be there six months, but I got over there and enjoyed the work and besides our case lasted eight months, and then I had ordered a car, and it didn't get there until November and we were supposed to leave in November,

so I decided I will stay over there and use that car next summer, so that's what I did, so that lost the boyfriend. [Laughter] He married a nice girl - - much better suited to him than I.

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So that's the way that happened.

SG: So you did find time to have a social life while you were doing this strenuous court reporting schedule.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Sure.

SG: And going to school?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yes. I have friends even now who say they can't keep up with me [Laughter]!

SG: I don't doubt it.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So.

SG: How was the teaching up at Lewis & Clark that year?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Pardon?

SG: Do you remember any of your teachers up at Lewis & Clark particularly?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yes. Particularly, there was - - gee! We had judges. William Dougherty was teaching evidence, I guess, and we had a fellow with an Italian name, Turo[sp.?] or something like that who was teaching taxation, and he was an accountant, or tax attorney, and then we had a judge, and it's terrible I can't think of his name right now, who taught us - - they had practicing lawyers who taught - -

SG: H-m-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - and I thought it was very beneficial because they knew exactly what they were talking about, and they taught us from the practice standpoint instead of something they had read in a book and didn't understand fully which was what was happening at Willamette. The fellow that was teaching evidence here had I think tried one case in association with another attorney. He just didn't know from nothing about it, if you pardon the expression. If I don't give you his name, you can't tell him what I said. He's probably dead anyway.

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I've survived all of them! [Laughter] - - One advantage!

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I liked Lewis & Clark very much and these friends just thought Willamette was a better school and they insisted on my going here, and then I would take depositions and sometimes take a case in court from a court reporter, but I was really going to Willamette, which should have been full time, but I felt like I was in a desert when I went back to Northwestern. It was like going into an oasis and finding intelligent commentaries.

SG: Oh! [Chuckle]

HK It was really a lot better, but that was right after the war. We had a few good teachers here. I know there was one that liked to be very sarcastic with me and when I started practicing law, I was in an office by myself and he came up to see me three times without an appointment and I didn't have time to talk to him because I was so busy, which floored him - -

SG: [Chuckle]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - because he didn't think a woman could be a success!

SG: Were there some other women, classmates at that time?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: They were mostly working for the state. I don't recall offhand anybody in private practice.

SG: What about in school with you - - at Lewis & Clark or - -

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well there was Carlotta Sorensen - - was not in Lewis & Clark. She was here, and there was one gal who came to law school and didn't stay very long because I think she came on account of the boys, and that didn't go over too big.

SG: [Chuckle]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And I don't remember offhand any other woman - - I don't remember who all took the bar. Well, I think that I went up to Portland and stayed with Ms. McCormick, who was a teacher in the Portland schools, and who had gone to Northwestern, and she took the bar examination and flunked it and I think it was on account of her age, because she was very bright. Really, there was no reason for her flunking, but she was probably over sixty - -

SG: H-m-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - and I don't think that the bar examiners thought she needed a job as badly as some others did. So on a quota basis, I guess she failed.

SG: H-m-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And then there was - - I know that Mrs. Harrison Weatherford, and her name was Eileen, and I don't remember her last name. She was a very beautiful gal and she met Harrison at the Northwestern and they got married finally - - lived together happily, but they had two sons, both of who were killed accidentally, and then Harrison was killed accidentally.

SG: H-m-m!

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Totally wiped out the total male contingent; isn't that tragic? She was so pretty, too. I think she was on the board of several corporations that the family owned, so I haven't heard from her lately. I must get in touch with her again, because I really like her.

SG: H-m-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So that's about it.

SG: Your court reporting must have given you a jump on things.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Oh, I think it did.

SG: Because you've been to so many trials.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Because here every day you're sitting in court listening to lawyers argue the law and stuff and it can't help but make some impression. It helped also when I went to work as an attorney. I know my first case I was sitting there, and I thought, gee, would I recognize an improper question if I heard it? So just about the time the lawyer on the other side asked a question that called for a conclusion of the witness, and I objected, and the judge sustained my objection, so I settled back and decided I could recognize them, and it was sort of fun.

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I enjoyed trying cases. It was a big help, too, because every once in awhile something would come up, and I'd remember something that had happened in a case in court which helped me in forming objections or presenting the evidence. One thing I often noticed when I was a court reporter - - a lawyer would ask a question and it was in an objectionable form, but if he had revised it, it could have been inserted, so when lawyers would object to questions I asked, I would just revise them so that they were proper and get the information in anyway. Sometimes I'd sneak it in.

SG: Were there particular lawyers that you had observed who made a large impression on you?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yes. There was a Clarence Young from Portland that came to Dallas a lot on insurance cases, and he was a very brilliant man, and it was interesting to listen to him, and he had an easy flow of language and it was very impressive, in arguing to the jury or to the court, and he always had the law right at his fingertips, so there was some of them that were quite outstanding. I think some of the Portland lawyers were maybe a little sharper than some of our local lawyers, but we had good lawyers like - - Oscar

Hayder[sp.?], over at Dallas, was very good and very smooth, and I know one time I had a case in Portland afterwards - - a malpractice case and the lawyers on the other side were continually objecting – first of the complaint that it was too general, and then that it was too specific, and then that it wasn't general enough, and then that it was too specific, and so I listened to them arguing to the court and I felt I'm going to handle this just like Oscar would have done it, so I got up and in very polite tones said to the court that I felt that counsel for the defendant were not so much concerned about the content of the complaint since they had objected to it, both as being too general and too specific, and that I thought they were more interested in delay than in revising the complaint and it was funny because there was a lawyer sitting along side against the wall, waiting for his turn, and he said, "That's the way to go! Give it to those sons of bitches!"

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And it just gave me a real boost to feel that he was with me on it, so the judge said, "File your answer and no more delays."

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So we got going on it. They finally settled it. It was kind of fun, but some of those - - Some of the lawyers were really sharp and good gentlemen, and then there were some that were the weedy kind. I think now we have a lot of intelligent lawyers. I think some of the young women are very good, and I think they are generally accepted. When I first started practicing, there was one judge that simply couldn't decide a case against his fellow "man lawyers" so he would always find in their favor, and sometimes when it wasn't really proper. So I finally got mad and I appealed one of his decisions and it was obviously wrong and they tried to bar me from the appeal - - they were looking at the old law, and I had looked up the new law, so my appeal was accepted, and then he called - - this was after I was district attorney, just working on half

salary until I closed up my cases, so I was going to work over the Labor Day weekend on my brief, and they called one of my deputies down to the judge's office and the lawyer said to tell me that they'd give me a quit claim deed on this case and wouldn't fight it anymore if I would drop it.

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And he said, "Well, if you're going to do that, you better do it today, because she's planning on working all weekend, and if she does, I don't think she'll be interested in settling, so he came back and told me that, so I talked to my client and my client wanted to agree to that, so we agreed to that, although I would have been happy to continue the appeal [laughter], but from that time, I got more respect from the court, from knowing that I would appeal them, so I didn't get so much of that stuff. Some of the lawyers were very partial to particular male lawyers who were friends and influential. It was kind of funny because some of the male lawyers that had a reputation as being top criminal lawyers after I became District Attorney did not want to try cases against me, because if I beat them, it would have been a real reflection on their ability as a criminal lawyer - -

SG: [Chuckle]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - so they would settle for a negotiated plea rather than go to court, which was helpful.

SG: You must have been a risk! [laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: [Laughter] My win rate was pretty successful. I know that my successors said that I lost four cases and won four - - well, the cases I "won" were murder cases and negligent homicide cases, and the cases I lost were misdemeanors and one

case the fellows that had come in and complained and got a complaint of assault and battery against this particular client, changed their story when they got on the witness stand and mainly couldn't remember anything, and I said, "Have you been talking to the attorney for the defendant?" and they said, "Yes," and I said, "When did you talk to him?" and they said, "Yesterday." I said, "How long did you talk to him," and they said, "four hours."

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - and I said, "Did this affect your memory?" and they said, "Yes."

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - So there was a little hanky panky there, and if they had decided to drop the case, they should have notified me, and then the attorney for the defendant had the right to make a civil settlement with them if he wanted to, but he should have notified me and not let us get into court, so I didn't consider that a bona fide loss, and then another case, the judge was obviously prejudiced and permitted some evidence to go in that had happened, the events had happened after the fact, which wasn't appropriate and things like that - - they were finding in favor of my successor rather than me, so that was life.

SG: Did you find the local bar very collegial and courteous?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I think they were pretty nice. I think probably they looked at me a little askance. I know one time I - - when I first started practicing, I was the attorney for the defendants in a criminal case. I think there were five defendants, and I went over and submitted some arguments and got the case dismissed, and as I was walking back to the office, there was lawyer leaning against the wall and he said [southerly drawl and cocky]

“Well, how did you do?” Well, I said, “I won, of course,” and he said, “Oh!” Very surprised, because he probably I’d be thought defeated, so from that time on, they treated me with a little more respect, because they found out I could win cases, I guess, and I did pretty well on civil cases and everything. I think I did - - I don’t have any complaints, and when I first started practicing law, I used to represent mothers with children that the Juvenile Department was trying to take away from them, and it got to the point where the juvenile officer would look when I came into the court and say, “Are you on this case?”

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - and turn sort of pale, and I’d say, “Yes,” and I got some of those knocked out pretty fast, because they had sort of an idea that a foster home of any kind was better for the children than their own home. My opinion is that most children can survive in their own homes and even improve - - All this stuff about blaming everything on their mothers and fathers is ridiculous because as adults, they know the difference between right and wrong and they can straighten themselves out and they don’t have to blame things on things that happened when they were children.” [Loud door chimes going off”] Now who’s that?

[End of Tape 1, Side 2]

Tape 2, Side 1

1995 May 6

SG: This is an interview of Hattie Bratzel Kremen at her home in Salem on May 6th by Susan Glen. The last time we spoke we skipped around a little bit, so I'm going to backtrack a little bit and if I try to get you to cover something we talked about already, just let me know.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Okay.

SG: I might forget a little bit. We talked some about your court reporting days and after that you headed off to Germany. I would like to go over that a little bit more.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Right.

SG: How did you get involved with that in the first place?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: As a court reporter I had often reported cases with Judge Brand as the judge - - Judge James T. Brand who was from Coos Bay I think it was, and I read in the paper that he had been appointed as a judge at the Nuremberg war crimes trials and he was then on the Supreme Court here, so I thought, well, I must call him and congratulate him about that because I thought it was a wonderful opportunity, so I called him and we chatted about it and at the end I said, "If you need a good court reporter over there, remember me," and then forgot about it, and two weeks later, I came home to my apartment and looked around and I thought, "It isn't much, but it's home." My mother had just died about the year previously, so I'd moved from my house into that apartment, and so just at that moment, the telephone rang and it was Mrs. Brand and she said, "Judge Brand just called me from Washington, D.C. and he wants you to go to Germany with him as his court reporter," and so I said, "Well, I'll have to think about that."

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I called a few people, one of whom was my sister, and I told her - - "Well, you know I'm engaged to be married," and she said, "Oh, well, don't worry about that - they're will be another man along every half hour like a streetcar."

SG: [Laughter]

K: Which was probably her experience, and so in due course, by 1:00 o'clock that night, I sent a letter to Judge Brand accepting the position, and then had to rush through a lot of medical shots and everything else, and they didn't know just exactly what you'd need in Germany, so they gave me everything - -

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - and finally I said, "That's enough!"

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I need to be able to sit on the plane while I'm flying over, so the rest of 'em I'll get over there, and then took off - - I guess it was about the middle of February. We got to Washington, D.C. and we were stuck there for a few days on account of snow, and then one day I went out shopping and about 5:00 o'clock I got sort of nervous and I called the hotel and they said, "Oh, there'd been some telephone calls from the airport for you," so I called and they were really up in the air because they were trying to locate me, so I tore to the hotel, dumped my clothes into a couple of bags and went out to the airport - - had a terrible time getting a cab, I remember, and I got out there and we took off in one of those army planes. Some place along the line we had an electrical storm

and it hit our plane and one of the engines was put out of commission, so we landed at the [] and spent about four hours there while they repaired it and then went to Paris, and when we got to Paris, they said that the women could go into town to the Dependence Hotel, but the men would have to stay out at the airport, so I intervened and presented some arguments why that wasn't feasible, so we all got to go to the Dependence Hotel in Paris.

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: We got there in the very early morning hours and checked in and then trudged over to Notre Dame and took in an early mass and then came back and took in some wine cellars on the way back to the hotel. Had a wonderful introduction to Paris and I just got to my room about 1:00 o'clock in the afternoon and fell into bed. That was the first sleep I'd had for 36 hours or something, and the phone rang and one of the fellows asked me if I'd like to go to the opera and I said, "Sure," so I got up and went to the opera [chuckle]. After the opera we had dinner at an interesting basement restaurant that served cognac instead of coffee, I remember, which I didn't like very well.

SG: After dinner?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And then we - - no - - that's the only drink they had.

SG: Oh [Laughter].

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So then I finally got back to the hotel and got some sleep. It ended up that we had about three days in Paris because the airports in Germany were all frozen over. They had the worse storm they'd had there for sixty-three years and so we got the three days in Paris, which were really interesting, and then we flew to Germany and I got to Nuremberg and the Brands had made a reservation for me at the Grand Hotel there,

and then they were in Berlin on business, but when they came back they invited me to live in their home with them, which I did, which was very nice, and I could act as interpreter for the maids because I had spoken German as a child because my family was from Germany.

SG: Was your German still pretty good?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, good enough. As we got older in the family, we girls stopped talking and the family stopped talking so my German was definitely "child" German [laughter], but I knew enough about it so if I didn't know the bigger words, I could explain what I meant to say and they'd understand me, and I guess the Germans knew that I was of German stock because they all opened up to me very freely - -

SG: Hm-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - more so than they did to the Americans who had learned German in school, college something. So then I worked on that trial and Judge Brand assigned to me the job of reading the transcripts and picking out important parts of it, applying to the different defendants. We had 15 defendants on that trial and we had four judges. Three were judges and one was an alternate. I also went through the exhibits, which had been translated from German to English by various interpreters of various degrees of varying degrees of facility in the language, so occasionally I picked up some errors and I fixed up one document of excerpts from the testimony for each of the defendants and other excerpts from the exhibits - - just two or three lines - - so the judge could scan them and get through them fast, and then the judges were always getting mixed up. There were certain German words that they didn't try to translate like the titles of the different officers, [words spoken in German] various things and the judges had them all confused so I fixed up a glossary for them of that.

SG: H-m-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Then I went through the different defendants and prepared a bibliography telling their background and their positions and so forth so the judges could keep those straight, which they appreciated immensely, and which caused me some trouble later, because I decided that when Judge Brand's trial was completed, I decided to go on as court reporter and I had applied for the job and been promised the job and then the secretary/general decided he wanted me to continue as a secretary to his new set of judges, and I didn't want to, and they were very insistent on my taking it, and so I told him, if he refused me let me continue as a court reporter, I'd come back to Salem where I had a perfectly good job and didn't have to stay over there, so he finally relented, so I continued as a court reporter. One of the reasons was that as a secretary, of course, I was getting work that was beyond the average secretary's work and he had refused to reclassify me as a result of which I had the status of a non-commissioned officer, and as a court reporter, I would have the status of a captain, which gave me a lot of better entrée and recognition as you traveled around, so I wanted that and got it and enjoyed myself thoroughly. I had ordered a car in July, a little Italian Fiat called a Topolino or a little mouse - -

SG: [Chuckle]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: It was supposed to be delivered to me in July and because of some problems with communication from here, I didn't get it until November, and that was when we were ready to leave to come back to Oregon, so I decided, I'm just going to stay another year and use my car and travel.

SG: So that's why you wanted the court reporter job?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Mm-hmm. That's why I stayed on, and that was very interesting. They tried to get me to stay on longer to finish the trials because at the last they just practically threw all the defendants into one big trial just to get it over with. [Laughter]

SG: Mm-hmm.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So they wanted me to stay on, but I didn't - - I wanted to come back and finish law school, which I had started the year before I left.

SG: When you were working as Secretary to Judge Brand, what was your daily routine there like?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, we'd go down, probably around 8:00 o'clock in the morning and I'd get to work on these books. See we had daily transcripts and daily exhibits, so I'd go through those and, course, take any notes that the judge wanted me to take. Unfortunately, I couldn't attend the trials because I was so busy in the office, so I didn't get to watch that particular trial until I got to be court reporting. I watched other trials, [German Words] and the doctors and a few others, the occupation troops and so forth that they were trying there, which was very interesting. I was a little lackadaisical frankly, and I spent all my weekends traveling. We didn't have to work Saturday or Sunday, so I'd take off on the 6:00 o'clock plane Friday evening, you can be in Paris at 11:00 o'clock the next morning or in Amsterdam at 11:00 o'clock or in Prague at 5:00 o'clock in the morning.

SG: So even before you had the car, you were traveling around.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: By train. Mm-hmm, and when I got the car also - - I sometimes took it on trips, like to Lichtenstein and various places. I was sort of counting my time by that and I know one time they told us we could come down and go through the photography

section and pick out pictures of ourselves, so I went down and flipped through and pulled a few of them and I decided ["Oh, pew."]

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Didn't get any; is that terrible? Afterwards, I thought to myself, how stupid of you. I should have picked them out as a record, and the only record I kept of it was letters I wrote to my friends. I would write them lengthy letters, unfortunately, mostly about my travel experiences more than about the trials.

SG: Letters back here? I mean to friends back here?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yes, and told them to keep them so I could have them when I got back because I didn't want to keep a diary, so [Laughter], they did that and I got all those letters back and I don't know where they are! [Laughter]

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I had some kids clean up my back bedroom over at the condominium which was sort of the general storage place, and the letters were in a box there, and I don't know if they threw 'em out or what.

SG: H-m-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I've only been here eight years and I haven't even gone through the stuff that's stacked in the basement, so you know what kind of a housekeeper I am, and I haven't missed a thing.

SG: Eight years is no time.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Isn't that terrible?

SG: What trips do you remember particularly?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: What?

SG: What trips?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Oh, there was lots of beautiful ones. We went to Prague one time, and I got lost and I stopped in a little bookstore and asked directions to the hotel, which was The Ellsinore, but whoever I asked for The Ellsinore Hotel couldn't figure out what I was saying. Finally some man said, [dramatically and drawn out] "Oh! The Ellsinore!"

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I thought what difference does that make! [Laughter]

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: But none of them could understand Ellsinore! That time they showed me, but this time this little lady said, "Oh, I'll just close the shop and take you there," and I said, "Oh, you shouldn't do that," and she said, "Oh. That's okay. I can do it," so she closed her shop and walked me over to The Ellsinore and on the way over told me all about the wonderful city of Prague, which she just adored and the thousand cathedrals there and everything, and she said, "Tomorrow I'll take you and show you all this," and I said, "Fine," so she came by the hotel, picked me up the next day and off we toddled, me in high heel shoes - -

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - on a cobblestone street and that was a memorable occasion. We went up to the Arch Bishop's palace and just as we got there, he came driving out with his beautiful coach and the horsemen, and [ekwere?] is sitting on the back and it was really exciting, and she showed me the inside of the palace, and we went to Saint - - some Saint's tomb, and I remember the walls were paved about four feet high with semi-precious stones, and his tomb was solidly covered with it. Well, after the communists had been in there, I went back again, just rather recently, and that was all stripped off. All of those jewels had been stripped off of the walls and the tomb. Isn't that terrible?

SG: Terrible!

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I don't know what they did with them - - sold them I think, because I know in Vienna, in a jewelry shop, I saw sort of a plate of semi-precious stones that looked terribly familiar. [Laughter]

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So I think they just ripped them off and sold them, which I think is a crime, because it was fantastically beautiful at the time. Then of course, to Paris, which I always loved, because it's such a happy city. You go there and you hear little pianos tinkling here and there, and little bars where people are having fun, and I went to all the things like Versailles and then museums and everything, and Amsterdam was very interesting with all its little canals and of course, one of the biggest thrills was getting down to Venice. That was just like being on a stage setting. You just sort of expected to see Humphrey Bogart slinking out of one of the alleys or something!

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: But it's a beautiful city, or was then. I think it's deteriorated a little, unless they started keeping it up. Then we went to Rome. We actually could have had a personal audience with the Pope, but we would have had to wait a couple of days and so we decided we didn't want to do that. That was the judges, and I was with the judges on that trip and their wives and so we just went to the general audience, which in a way was more exciting because we were in the cathedral and they kept moving us up until we were right up to where he stayed, and spoke from his throne and from a distance you could hear the people shouting, "Il Papiette, Il Papiette,"[sp.?] - - and they were carrying him in on one of those sedan chairs with the Swiss guards, all in uniform. It was very dramatic, and they had told us to get some things that we would like to have blessed, so we had picked up some little things and held them up and he blessed them as he passed, so when I came back, I gave them to some of my Catholic friends, which I'm sure meant a lot to them. He was pious and was a very beautiful looking man and he was gaunt to the point of emaciation, and looked like he was just very ethereal.

SG: H-m-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And then of course, the next time it was John who was chubby and jolly [Laughter] - - quite a difference [laughter], but all those experiences were very interesting to me. I had always wanted to travel so it was really an answer to a prayer to get the opportunity to go over there, and I sort of decided when I went that I wouldn't think of hoarding any of the money I made there, that I would spend it all for travel and for things that I was interested in and consider it a vacation, so I really enjoyed myself.

SG: Had you been in Europe before that?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: No. I had never traveled extensively before that, just around here.

SG: Who were you traveling with, usually?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: When I traveled in Europe?

SG: Hm-hmm.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Oh, friends that I met. Everybody was traveling. It was no problem to find a companion.

SG: Ah-huh.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Some of the girls that I worked with and some of the couples; it was fun.

SG: Did you go any place that you really didn't like very much?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Hm-m?

SG: Did you go to any place you didn't like very much? Any place you wished you hadn't chosen?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: No. Didn't have too much trouble any place. After I came back and when my husband and I were traveling, we went to Spain one time. I guess we first went to Portugal and they just had a sort of a revolution, and the airport was bristling with young kids with guns. Leonard said to me, "If you hear a gun go off, don't look around, just hit the ground!" [Laughter]

SG: Yikes!

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Nothing happened, though, but they were sure around there, and they were just itchy young kids. They could have very easily blown up any minute, and the next time we went to Spain, and they had just arrested 60 priests, and in view of the fact that that's such a strongly Catholic country, it amazed me that they would arrest a priest, but I think they felt they were getting too liberal or something, so they had arrested them all and we went to a bull fight, and the lobby there was just packed with soldiers with guns. It was not exactly an area that would make you feel happy and welcomed. At that time, I could hardly wait to get out of Spain. Every crossroad that you came to - - we were driving, and when we came to an intersection, there were always police and militia there stopping the cars and searching. They just waved us through because of our license plate I guess, which showed we were tourist, so they didn't stop us, but it makes you nervous anyway.

SG: When you were working in Germany, do you remember much about the political atmosphere in Germany and around Europe at that time?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, they didn't like us. No reason why they should right after the war, and of course, there were a lot of German employees working at the Palace of Justice and I know there was one girl who was a baroness and really kind of a nice gal, and she'd come over to the house with me and one time I said to her, "What do you think the political feeling is here," and she says, "Well, Nazi" - -

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I said, "What's the most difficult thing about this for you?" and she said, "Well, I was brought up in school to believe we were the master race, and then to have it develop this way is sort of a shock and you can't hardly absorb it." She said she'd gone to school for 17 years and that was the emphasis all the way through, and then it had all fallen apart. She was having some trouble because she was using the name of a

previous husband who had been killed and then she had married a commoner and her previous husband's family wanted her to stop using their name, because they said she wasn't entitled to the title, so that gives you a picture of their aristocracy over there. We don't really recognize that, do we?

SG: No. No.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I'm glad we don't.

SG: What about the economy there at the time?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, terrible.

SG: How was that evidenced?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Everything was smashed up and Nuremberg was just a heap of rubble, and it had been one of the most beautiful old cities, and really it wasn't anymore a war place at all. There was no manufacturing going on there, but the English bombed it like they did Dresden as a retaliation for the bombs that hit some of their historical cities and it was just - - you can't hardly picture it because it was just ashes. They had these buildings and walls of the city that were built of stone blocks, like about two feet long and a foot square or more, and they were just smashed. Our buildings, of course, would burn probably and there'd be less left of them, but there it was just piles and piles of rubble that you drove through on the way to work in the morning.

SG: Were they rebuilding or was there not much of that going on yet?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Not much at that time. There wasn't any money.

SG: Yeah.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: They didn't have anything. That was '47. It was right after the war, which ended in '45, but with occupation and stuff, they didn't have anything. They had 900 calories of food a day.

SG: H-m-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Which didn't do anything but maintain their health if they were healthy. If they got sick, it might take months for them to recover. I know I was having some clothes made and I asked the tailor how long it would take and he said, "Well, if all goes well, we can have them in a few weeks, but if anybody gets sick, it could be a month or two."

SG: Wow!

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Because he said, "We don't get enough food to recover." Isn't that terrible?

SG: Yes.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - and I was down at the doctor's office one time and there was a little girl there that was coughing very hard and she just looked like skeleton practically, and I said, "Why don't you come up to my office tomorrow, and I'll get you some food from the PX, and so she beamed and she didn't show up the next day, and she didn't show up for a couple of weeks, and all of the sudden, the door opened and she came dragging in and she was just a waif, just looked like she was practically up from the dead, and she told me that she had been terribly sick and that the only thing that had maintained her was the memory of my kindness. Wasn't that nice?

SG: How sweet!

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So I got the daughter some food and soap and stuff at the PX and then she told me that she was planning to get a divorce from her husband and the problem was that they had an apartment and she couldn't get a divorce from him until he had an equal place because he was entitled to live in the home, so the divorce had been dragging on for a couple of years, and I said, "Well, is there anything I can do?" and she said, "Well, if I had some cigarettes, I think it would be speeded(!)"

SG: [Hearty laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And I said, "How many do you need?" and she said, "Well, maybe two packs for the judge and one for the lawyer."

SG: [Hearty laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So I gave her three packs of cigarettes and she got her divorce [Laughter]

SG: [Hearty Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: [Hearty laughter] Terrible! Well, cigarettes were the medium of exchange over there because money was worth nothing - - 1,500 marks to the dollar, and you couldn't give them military script because it was limited to the Americans and you couldn't deal in American money because that was against the law.

SG: H-m-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Couldn't give them greenbacks or anything, so the only thing you could give them was cigarettes for pay - -

SG: Ah!

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - and cigarettes were really valuable. \$1,500 for a carton! I know that somebody told me one time. Unfortunately, I heard of - -

[End of Tape 2, Side 1]

Tape 2, Side 2

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SG: Okay.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: A carton of cigarettes is worth 1,500 marks and the economy pegged the market ten marks to the dollar, which was purely artificial.

SG: Mm-hmm.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - Because you could go to Switzerland and buy marks for over 300 for a dollar.

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: That was legal exchange in Switzerland, and so it was an artificial rate, so this fellow was down at the post office with all this German money and he was writing money orders for \$150.00 for every 1,500 German marks he had, which were practically valueless, and he was there writing all morning! [Laughter]

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: [Laughter] - - money orders! - - must have sent back a million! They finally woke up to it, and there was an article in the U.S. World & News Report or whatever that paper was over there, that the government had become aware of this and found that they had probably lost \$5 million dollars!

SG: Oh, my gosh!

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - In Americans exchanging German marks for U.S. coin and I'm sure if they admitted to \$5 million, it was probably several times that amount.

SG: Yeah.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: That was one of the little games that they played over there.

SG: Would you pay someone like your tailor in cigarettes then?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yes. I think I paid them both in German marks and cigarettes.

SG: Oh. You mentioned the Palace of Justice, That sounds pretty - -

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yes. It was pretty dramatic.

SG: Amazing.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: It was a building that was maybe a couple of blocks long. When we first went in, it was very, very cold because the ends of it had been bombed away and all they had was canvas cloth to close it and, of course, the cold wind drafted right through there. You usually put on your coat just to go out in the hall.

SG: Huh!

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And the rooms were fairly comfortable, but it was a very cold winter and when we flew over Germany, coming in it was dark, and I looked down and you could see no smoke coming up from the residence buildings at all, like apartments and

very few lights. Like you come over to this country and fly into San Francisco and it's just obscene - - the number of lights - -

SG: Yeah.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - that are flashing there, and when you come like, even from China where you see about one light to every block - - why, it's kind of shocking to see the waste that we engage in here, but the Palace of Justice was quite imposing, and I think they had at least seven big courtrooms that were going in there at the time with various trials.

SG: How was Judge Brand as a boss?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: He was all right. I knew him and Mrs. Brand. I'd been a friend of theirs here, so it was pleasant. I lived with them in this home, and the home that we occupied had been the home of the - - it's the equivalent of the managing mayor - - not the political mayor - - but the administration - -

SG: Oh, like a city manager.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And he had a very nice family. They came to visit us one time. We had this very comfortable house with a guard that marched around it every 15 minutes with a gun on his shoulder.

SG: H-m-m!

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And we had two maids and a chauffeur, so it was really quite comfortable and then when the Brands left, the Maguires - - Robert Maguire, who was an attorney from Portland - - he and his wife came over and he was going to be judge on

another trial and so I stayed on with them until - - well, I guess October of 1948, I decided to come home and go to law school, so I came home and I was a month late when I started law school.

SG: Did that cause any problems?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Some, I guess - - I didn't know what had happened before I got there. Did you ever start school a month late? It's a little difficult to catch up.

SG: This was at Lewis & Clark again, was it?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Pardon?

SG: Were you back down at Willamette then, or up at Lewis & Clark?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I had gone to Northwestern to start with and then when I came back, my friends persuaded me to go to Willamette, so I did that.

SG: Were they attending Willamette at the time, or did they just want you down here in Salem with them?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I don't know. I think they thought Willamette was a better school.

SG: Oh.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: They thought I should finish there, so I went there for two years and then I had about ten hours to do, so I went back up to Northwestern because by that time, I found out that Willamette wouldn't accept Northwestern credits. I think they've

changed that since then, and so I had to get my degree at Northwestern so I finished up at Northwestern.

SG: When you were in law school, were you involved in any kind of extra curricular activities?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Where?

SG: Either here or at Willamette or up at Lewis & Clark?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: At Lewis & Clark, I didn't have much time for extra curricular activities. I had about six hours a week to study [Laughter].

SG: You were being a court reporter then.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yeah, I was court reporting.

SG: That's what I thought.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: At Willamette, outside of the usual round of concerts and attending parties, I was staying with the Spauldings[sp.?] and they gave several nice parties and I would help Mrs. Spaulding[sp.?] around with those.

SG: Were there subjects that you liked and disliked particularly?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Pardon.

SG: Were there subjects that you liked and disliked particularly in school, in law school?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: No. I think I found them all rather interesting.

SG: And then - -

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Some of the teachers were - - of course, in Northwestern we had very excellent teachers because we had judges and practicing lawyers and they were really people of high quality. I was always amazed that they'd spend their time teaching school, but they seemed to enjoy it.

SG: H-m-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And Willamette was pretty good, but it had a few teachers that weren't quite up to snuff as far as experience was concerned. I said I felt like I'd come from a desert into an oasis when I went back to Northwestern, but you better not quote me.

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Of course, that was right after the war and there was a shortage of teachers and students to begin with.

SG: Oh.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: They had a lot of veterans that were going to school. One of the things that I thought was sort of funny - - they had a rule that you were not to be seen in a place where hard liquor was served.

SG: Huh!

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Which was a little ridiculous for war veterans that were older, whether it could be appropriate for the usual high school graduate that came into Willamette, but for fellows that had been over fighting the war, and for me who had been out in civilization for twenty years, it was a little childish, so we would go out to Shattuck's[sp.?] which was a popular place and hob-nob with the teachers who were out there drinking and having fun. [Laughter]

SG: [Laughter] Was there a division between the older students and the students who were just out of high school, or just out of college?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I didn't think enough of them to make a division.

SG: Oh.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I think they all got along pretty well because it was a majority of the war veterans that were attending and I think there were three girls - - three women.

SG: Including you.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So there wasn't much of a division. [Laughter]

SG: How did the bar exam work then? Was it right after graduation, you started studying for the bar exam?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: It was in July.

SG: Okay.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And I looked at my classes reviewed and I discovered that I had 21 subjects I had to review in 29 days, or something like that. [Chuckle]

SG: Huh! [Chuckle]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So I did a real fast hard review and I came up with the highest grade according to the judges.

SG: On the bar exam.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I thought that was pretty good.

SG: Huh!

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Of course, I think the secret was that I knew how to write legal papers from the years of experience I'd had as a court reporter and legal secretary, so I could express myself better in law terms than some of the fellows - -

SG: H-m-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - who had just been exposed to it in law school, so it worked out pretty good, of course there was one fellow that's always being introduced as a fellow that got the highest grade, and he always looks at me when they introduce him, but I never say anything! [Laughter]

SG: [Laughter] And then do I remember correctly? You started practicing by yourself right away?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yes. Well, I went in with my former employer, William H. Trindle for whom I had worked when he was City Attorney and District Attorney - -

SG: Down here in Salem?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: In Salem. He offered to have me join him in his office. It was a very small office at that time, and it didn't work out too well, because he'd have clients and I'd have clients, and then I just decided to run for District Attorney. I was reading the paper and I found that three of the fellows I'd gone to law school with were running for District Attorney, which was sort of a hit or miss job at the time. It usually went to some law school student.

SG: What do you mean? - - to some law school student.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, nobody wanted the political job particularly. There wasn't much competition for it, and so some kid that graduated from law school would probably be appointed - -

SG: Oh.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - or elected to the job, so these three fellows were running, and I read that and I thought, well, I know more about the District Attorney's office than they do. Why don't I run? So I called up Wendell Webb down at the Statesmen, and I said, "What do you think of my running for District Attorney?", and he said, "Great! Come down and we'll talk about it," so I got a nice little article in the paper which made the boys very upset.

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So they said, "If you want a doctor, you don't call for a nurse."
[Laughter]

SG: P-l-e-a-s-e !

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So anyway, I ran and then at the last minute, two of my friend lawyers that had promised to support me came up with a dark horse, so there were four men against me, and that fellow was a member of my church, and - - gosh it was probably a better member of my church than I was.-

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: He got 900 votes and I came in second. If I'd had 151 votes I would have been elected, and what was funny about it - - the different business men in town had been active in the Chamber of Commerce for quite awhile and they all promised they'd support me, but I could see by that look in the back of their eyes - - [Laughter] So they said to me, "Well, Hattie, if we'd known you were doing so well, we would've really got behind you. Now we'll get behind you this fall, and I'm sorry." Well, there won't be an office, probably because we were all Republicans!

SG [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So the lawyer that got the job told me later that he just hated it after six months.

SG: Huh!

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Which was too bad. So anyway, it did me a lot of good, which I had really counted on. I figured that if I didn't get elected, the publicity I got would help my

business, which it did. I got a lot of business out of it. People would come in and say, "Oh, we heard you speaking." Little did they know how my knees were shaking when I was speaking.

SG: How long after you got out of law school were you running for D.A.? Was it - -

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Same year.

SG: Same year?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, I don't know - - let's see, I graduated in 1951. Do you start running that fall, I think; don't you?

SG: Probably.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: It must have been the next year or something. Anyway - -

SG: How did you campaign for the position?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: H-m-m?

SG: What did you do to campaign for the position?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Oh, I went around to different meetings and spoke. We always had about two or three minutes to present our position and did a certain amount of advertising and we went around to the different communities, which was fun.

SG: Did you have really strong political views at that time?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, I probably was a little stronger than I am now [Laughter]. I was a Republican and I belonged to Republican organizations.

SG: So you went back and practiced - -

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I also campaigned for a Democrat! [Chuckle]

SG: Oh, really! [Chuckle]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: A Democrat was running for Attorney General and so I went around and got petitions signed on his behalf, I guess, so one of the fellows who was a strong Republican came up to my office and said, "You know, I don't think you should be doing this," and I said, "Oh" – and he said, "After all, you're a Republican. You shouldn't be campaigning for a Democrat," and I said, "I don't think my political feelings have anything to do my job. I think that depends on my expertise as a shorthand and writer and transcriber", and he said, "Well, nevertheless, I don't think you should do it," so then later I went down to Judge Page's office and he said, "Well, we've got the Republican candidate and a Democrat candidate here. What are you going to do about this?" And I said, "Oh, I'm not doing anything about it anymore because" I said "the Republicans have put the finger on me, and with a finger as big as that, I don't want anything more to do," and this other attorney was so embarrassed. "Hattie!"

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: But anyway, that stopped that. I didn't hear any more about it.

SG: [Chuckle] You said at one time early in your practice you represented mothers in cases involving their children.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Right.

SG: How did you get started doing that kind of thing?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, they'd come to me with their complaints. One of the first ones I had was a little girl that came in that said her baby had been stolen from her, and so it seemed that she had had this little illegitimate child and I think she got - - I don't remember whether it was the child that got sick or she got sick. I guess the child was sick and they put it in the hospital, and then they kept stalling her about seeing it for about two weeks, and she was very upset so I checked with Nola White, who was our only juvenile officer at the time, and she got a little bit disturbed about my "nosing" into it, so I thought that was interesting. I don't remember what happened, but anyway, we had a court hearing and one of the things they said was that this mother had failed to nourish this child and that it was suffering from malnutrition and so forth, so I said, "I want this child to be in court. I want to see the child," so very reluctantly, they brought this child in. It was the cutest little boy you ever saw about two years old or something, and chubby and healthy - -

SG: [Chuckle]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - a picture of blooming health!

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And he couldn't have been suffering from malnutrition and he was so cute because we were in the judge's office and the little boy started pushing a chair around, and pushed it around and pushed it up against the judge's legs, and pushed it and pushed it - - so that melted everybody's heart.

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So anyway, we got him back for her. Sometime later, I read where she was killed in an auto accident, so I guess the aunt had wanted the little boy, and so I suppose she got him finally. I don't know how old he would have been then.

SG: Mm-hmm.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: It was sometime later, but then I had another case. A divorce case, which - - one of my attorney friends said, "Hattie, you can take this case. It's been kicked out of court twice because the woman has committed adultery and had a child during their marriage." So therefore, you know at that time, they had to be without fault to get a divorce - -

SG: Oh.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So she could never get a divorce and this lawyer and the lawyer before him had tried to get a divorce unsuccessfully, so she came up to my office and we talked and finally, I said, "Well, what about this child?" and she didn't like that, you know. I said, "Well, what happened?" and she said she'd gone to a party and her husband made her mad so she'd gone home with another man and had sex relations with him, and I said, "Well, when you were having sex - - where was your husband while this was going on," and she said, "Well, he wasn't home," and I said, "Well were you having sex with him?" and she said, "Yes," and I said, "How often?" and she said, "Once or twice a week," and I said, "What makes you think it wasn't his child? "Well, he always used withdrawal," and I said, "Withdrawal is about 50% effective," so anyway - - where did I know all this stuff? From practice from being a court reporter.

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So anyway, I went into court and filed another complaint and said that another act of cruel of inhuman treatment was her husband charging her with having an illegitimate child, which obviously couldn't be true when they were married and he had access to her - - you know - - so I got her a divorce, and I know her husband's attorney was going around town telling everybody about this funny case that this woman had had an illegitimate child, and you know it's conclusively presumed that the husband is the father unless he does not have access to her, so it was a ridiculous contention to make, you know?

SG: Yeah.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So I called the doctor and asked him what was the likelihood of the woman becoming pregnant with one isolated act of intercourse, and he said in about one in 50,000 times [Laughter]- -

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - so that took care of that, so I got her a divorce, and then the worst of it was that this man that she was so much in love with, that she'd been trying to get the divorce so she could marry him, all of a sudden she decided she didn't like him anymore.

SG: What other kinds of cases were you taking at that time?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, anything I could get. There's all sorts of cases. I had one case over at Sylvan about some stray cattle and two young lawyers came into the courtroom and sort of glowing with their prospects of knockin' the pants off of me, and I won the case and their client told my client, "If I'd a had your lawyer, I would have won the case!" [Laughter]

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So a few little things like that made me feel pretty good.

SG: Did the lawyers who you had worked for - - did that experience influence how you managed your practice?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, I think my court reporting experience did me a lot of good. You know you see lawyers in court and you observe how they act and you know that some of the things they're doing are wrong, and you can avoid that sort of thing later yourself, and some of them were very excellent, and you'd automatically sort of copy their style a little bit, and of course working in the law offices was also helpful, certainly a lot better than just coming out of law school and trying to do it.

SG: Were you thinking all this time about running again for D.A.?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, sort of toying with the idea and then the lawyers started calling me. "Hattie, are you going to run this time?" Sounding real worried you know?

SG: [Chuckle]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So they challenged me to run, so - -

SG: The competition you mean?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Pardon?

SG: They were worried about the competition?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yeah. They didn't want me to run, you know, so I thought, "Well, that might be sort of fun," and if I had stopped and analyzed my cases and stuff, I probably wouldn't have done it, because I was really building up quite a practice by then, you know.

SG: Um-m-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Usually takes about 5 years and that had pretty much elapsed, so I probably should have stayed on, but I enjoyed the District Attorney work very much, contrary to the other young lawyers' feelings about it, I liked it, because it could do a lot of helpful things for people without having to charge them money for it.

SG: Um-m-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: That's one thing I didn't like about the practice of law, you know. Well, you have to cross my palm with silver before I can tell you any more. It seemed sort of grasping.

SG: Had you met your husband by this time?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I got a husband in 1959. I had a boyfriend whom I then married, because everybody kept saying, "Why don't you get married?" "When are you going to get married?"

SG: How did you meet him?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Here in town. He was a friend of some friends of mine and they brought him over to my apartment one evening when I was hanging curtains and stuff so I put them all to work helping me hang curtains.

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: We had a lot of fun, and then I just dated him casually, and then of course, I was going to law school, so I had very little time for boyfriends at the time, so I told him I'd just go with him while I was going to law school and then afterwards I'd find somebody better!

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Which probably challenged him [Laughter]

SG: You were talking before about how you kept very long hours, I think. Working as a D.A.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yes. I figured one year that I'd put in 378 hours in overtime, and this was because the police would always call me when there was an accident or a homicide or something because I lived downtown and was easily accessible. They'd pick me up on the way out to the scene.

SG: Oh.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: That was one of the things. Another thing was attending meetings and working on cases and all that sort of stuff - - you know you can put in a lot of overtime on that.

SG: It's a political job. How did the politics influence what you did?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I don't think the politics influenced me at all. It gets you elected, but you don't do any favors for anybody because they're Republicans or anything. You treat all your people alike, or should - - I can't imagine how you'd - - you couldn't function the other way.

SG: Any cases that stick out in your mind from that period?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Hum?

SG: Are there any cases that stick out in your mind from that period?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, I tried all the murder cases, and the big ones, and of course, there was a lot of cases that I'd be prepared to try, but they would come in and negotiate a plea, which is a reasonable thing to do in a reasonable manner, but I wouldn't reduce a charge against somebody that was of a criminal nature. I might reduce it for somebody that got involved in something in the heat of passion or something. I don't think I ever reduced a murder charge. I tried them all and I got convictions on them all, but juries - - for awhile we had the death penalty, and juries wouldn't return first degree murder cases. Of course, the cases I tried didn't really involve first degree as much as anything - - I know there was one that I called the geriatric's case because it involved some old man that the kids at South Salem High were teasing a lot and always crossing his property and he took a shot one day and a bullet hit a young kid and killed him. I tried that and got the conviction, but I think the jury felt sorry for the old man. I think they found him guilty of manslaughter.

SG: Uhm.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: But he was like in his 70s, so it didn't really make too much difference anyway, and then there was another one who was mentally ill and was out on medication and he met a woman who had a couple of children and she fell in love with him, I assume, and moved him into her house and moved her husband out, and then he was supposed to look after her children. Then she decided to move away from Salem and she wasn't going to have him go with her.

[End of Tape 2, Side 2]

Tape 3, Side 1**1995 May 6**

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I was sitting next to him and somebody said, "Why don't you put Collis," who is my deputy, Collis Marstures[sp.?] between you and the defendant for protection," and I said, "Well - - I think I'd rather sit next to him next to myself and not get trampled to death by Collis." [Laughter]

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So as result, I figured maybe I could put a well-placed kick and discourage him if he made any passes at me, because he was threatening the District Attorney. The Deputy Sheriff who brought him down to court said that he was always making threats against the District Attorney, and so he didn't do anything as far as I was concerned, so then we got him convicted, and then I had another case that was rather interesting. A little lady who had been a prostitute in California, and she came up here to Salem with a man who had done business with her and lived with him. So one day he kicked her dog, and she said, "You're so mean. If I had a gun I'd shoot you," so he went in the other room and got a gun and said, "Go ahead and shoot," so she tried to pull the trigger and it wouldn't go and so he reached over and took off the safety and then she pulled the trigger and hit him right in the aorta, so he died promptly. [Laughter]

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: He was already suffering from a severe case of syphilis, so I guess it was maybe mercy. So anyway, she came to court and she was down in the jail and somebody said, "You should come down and see her," and so I went down and introduced myself and she said, "Oh! A woman District Attorney" she said, "I feel like the people in the Bible I should call unclean, unclean," and I said, "Oh, I don't think so" and

sat down and talked to her for awhile, and then we were in court later because her attorney pled insanity, so she and I were sitting there while her attorney was in talking to the judge which he shouldn't have been doing and so she said, "You know, if you weren't the District Attorney, I wish you could represent me, because I think you understand me, and I said to one of the newspaper reporters, "You know, that's true. I would understand her because we're both professional women!" [Laughter]

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: But anyway, she was kind of cute. I got a kick out of her.

SG: Did people get used to having a woman D.A. pretty fast?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Pardon?

SG: Was it hard for people to get used to having a woman D.A.? A woman doing all these [_____] cases?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Oh, I don't think so, because I'd been around for so long that a lot of people knew me and I think they sort of accepted me and besides that, I think my predecessor had done such a lousy job they were just really grateful [Laughter].

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I'm sure! [Laughter] We got along pretty well. I didn't have any problem with the voters, I think. I don't know. I don't think there was any particular problem. Ultimately, I got a deputy who played up to the police and to the public a little more so he got elected finally, which was fine with me because I was really tired. I shouldn't have ran the second time, or the third time, rather. I was elected twice and I

was going to run again, only to protect the office, but I didn't go out and campaign as much as I usually did. One, because the weather was sort of like this that year - - it rained and rained and rained [Laughter]. Very discouraging about going out and campaigning and I was also tired, so he got elected, which didn't do the county any good, although he stayed on for a long time because none of the lawyers dared running against him because they were afraid the judge that who was his close friend would reciprocate.

SG: Oh.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: That's what they told me anyway! [Laughter]

SG: Oh. [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: He was eventually found guilty of embezzlement.

SG: The D.A. was?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Mm-hmm.

SG: Huh. That's not good.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Not good at all.

**[End of Tape 3, Side 1]
[Tape 3, Side 2 BLANK]**

Tape 4, Side 1

1995 June 10

SG: Okay. This is an interview of Hattie Bratzel Kremen on June 10, 1995, in her home in Salem. Last time we spoke, we were talking about the final election for Marion County D.A., which ended your term as D.A. there. I'm wondering if we can backtrack a little bit. I think you told me last time how you first met your husband, but I've forgotten how that was.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, it was when I came back from Germany. I was redecorating my apartment which I had subleased while I was gone and on that particular evening, I was putting up curtains, and my friends called up and said they wanted to come over and see me, and I said "Okay," and they said they were bringing their neighbor along, so they came up and they all helped put up curtains, so that was an easy introduction, [chuckle] and then it kept on. We just casually dated for quite a long time, and then finally, decided to get married.

SG: So you were both living in Salem at the time?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yes. Mm-hmm.

SG: And he was running a department store? Is that correct?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yes. He was the manager of, first of Roberts Brothers store, and then Roberts Brothers bought Lipman's, which had been built a few years before, and it was not very successful, so they built it and Leonard became the manager of that store and was at that store until his death, practically.

SG: What was your household routine like? Both of you working.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Pardon?

SG: What was your household routine like?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, I was District Attorney when we got married and he was manager of the store, so it was flying in and flying out. [Chuckle] We were both quite busy, and we had bought this cabin up on the river, on the Little North Fork and we spent a large number of our weekends up there. We played golf here and - -

SG: Hm-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - went over to the coast and things of that kind. I had a very pleasant relaxed time really, between our working hours, which were extensive.

SG: For both of you?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yes. Mm-hmm. A lot of calls at night for me to - - about murders or accidents - - fatal accidents and things like that, and I would usually go to them because I didn't want to bother my deputies because I lived right downtown and most of them lived out, so I would go out to investigate these things a large part of the time, and one night I was called about a murder and I went out with the officer on the way to the scene. We were called and told that the woman was acting very sleepy and I said, "Take her to the hospital and have them pump out her stomach, so they did and she had apparently taking a lot of medication, attempting to commit suicide, so it was 8:30 in the morning. I came into the apartment. My husband was putting on his shoes and he says, "Where have you been?" - -

SG: [Chuckle]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And I said, "Investigating a murder [chuckle], so - - that was the kind of hours you had once in awhile.

SG: Did he have family here in Salem also?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: No. My sister lived in California and I only had the one sister.

SG: But Leonard's family - - was it here?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: No. They were mainly in Minnesota.

SG: Oh. Okay.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: He had some - - he had a relative, an aunt, in Portland - - a very nice lady and her husband, and we would go up to visit them and they would come down to visit us, and some more extended families. A cousin and his wife were friends of ours. Then he had some relatives in Seattle we went up to see once in awhile

SG: Driving up?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: He had a rather large family.

SG: Hm-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And very, very close.

SG: How did he wind up in Oregon?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, he was - - he had a store of his own with his cousin back in North Dakota and then I guess they closed that store and he went to Idaho, I think it was – where his uncle was working for Montgomery Ward and he got a job with Montgomery Ward and was up in Washington for awhile, and then he came to Salem and he had a request from Montgomery Ward to go to Chicago to learn something about retail marketing with apparently a very pleasant career ahead of him, but at the same time, Uncle Sam tapped him on the shoulder for the World War II.

SG: Mm-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So he went over to and ended up in Europe, and right up in the front forces, so he had that war experience, which cured him of wanting to camp out or anything.

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: He told me that he swore when he was in the fox holes in France that he would never camp out again.

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: That was one of my favorite pastimes, so we didn't do that.

SG: Was it before you learned that or after you learned that, that you decided to buy a cabin?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, no - - I think I sort of bought the cabin on impulse for no particular reason but because I liked it.

SG: [Laughter]. Am I correct that you never had children, did you?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: No.

SG: How do you feel about that?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: [Laughter]. For one thing, I was a little too old when I got married. You see, my father died when I was 22, so I was the sole supporter of my mother - - and I never felt that I could impose that on anybody else, so I always ran real fast when anybody wanted to get married, so that was it, and by the time that I got married to Leonard, neither he nor I were particularly interested in having children. I guess we would have been glad to have them if we had, but a little too old for that pastime. I went through a period of time when I would have loved to have had a family, but it wasn't practical at the time, so you get over that urge when you get a little older, I think. [pause] You look so stricken!

SG: No. Not at all.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: [Laughter] One lawyer told me one time. You know, Ms. Bratzel, children are a certain care and an uncertain joy.

SG: [Laughter]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: And I have seen so many children who treat their parents so badly that I'm sort of glad I didn't have any.

SG: Hm-m. No. I'm not stricken. In fact, your answer doesn't surprise me at all, because it's a big time commitment and if it doesn't fit in, then it seems perfectly natural not to have them. I was just thinking about the next transition. I was going to ask you

again about your career. After the D.A.'s office, what next? You continued on with them for awhile.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: I had about two and a half months of vacation, more or less, attending a lot of teas and coffees and all those social bits, and then fled back into my office.

SG: [Chuckle].

BRATZEL-KREMEN: [Chuckle]. Pardon the expression. [Chuckle]. To me that was a very shallow life, and I wasn't really accomplishing anything that I wanted and I gave Leonard the choice of either subsidizing me as a scholar or that I would go back to work, and he thought work was the best idea so that's what I did. I opened my office in the Oregon Building and practiced law.

SG: Why do you think he thought that was better?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Probably because he didn't want to subsidize me as a student [Laughter].

SG: Did you have much socializing while you and Leonard were both working? Did you have a lot of dinners and that kind of things to go to?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: We did. We went to practically everything that was going on in town. He was active in various organizations and I was active in various organizations. I did drop some of mine because I found out before I was married that I had something on every evening except Saturday night - -

SG: [Chuckle]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - and I decided that was too much of attending meetings and going to various events, so I sort of cut out some of the organizations I belonged to, rightly or wrongly.

SG: So you set up an office and more or less - -

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yes, and put in practice just general law - - stayed in the Oregon Building for ten years and then moved over to the Garfield Building and was there until last year I guess.

SG: What kinds of things were you doing?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Practically anything, except I dropped divorces and I hadn't handled them for ten or fifteen years, and I concentrated mostly on estates because many people had me write their wills and I guess they felt that that was something I could do when they might not have entrusted more important cases to me, so I survived them all and handled their estates - -

SG: [Chuckle]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: - - which wasn't a bad arrangement.

SG: Is that enjoyable work?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Pardon?

SG: Is that enjoyable work?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, the thing about it is, sometimes you run into squabbling heirs that make it sort of unpleasant, but most of the time, it's a simple more or less administrative thing and not very difficult usually. You don't have conflicts. Sometimes you do.

SG: You had said before that your trip to Germany was the first time you'd been abroad.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yes.

SG: But I can tell just from the things around your house that you've done a lot of traveling since then. When did you start traveling again?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, let's see. Of course, when I came back from Germany, I went right in to finish law school, and that tied me down for three years. I didn't take any major trips during that period of time, and then starting the practice of law ties you down for about five years to get "that" rolling. So I think, basically, it was after we got married because Leonard had suggested I go around and find a suitable house for us and I went around and looked at houses and their beautifully kept gardens, and I thought this place will look like a mess after six months after we move in because Leonard doesn't like gardening, and I don't have time for housework, so we'd have to have a gardener and a housekeeper, so I went back and I told him, "You know, I can see where living in a house would cost us a lot more money and I'd rather stay in the apartment, save the money and take trips," and he said, "That suits me to a t," so that's what we did, and we had the cabin as our little bit of ground to step on when we felt the need for it, so that's the way we spent our time, and it was amusing to see how many of our friends after a period of a few years sold their homes, moved into apartments or condos and had a place over at Sunriver or Black Butte or something where they could relax and also take trips, so I think that it was considered a good life style.

SG: Interesting. That's interesting. Any trips stand out in your mind?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: We had a nice trip to the Orient, and several trips to Europe. We went to Spain and rented a car and we had his aunt and uncle with us - - the ones from Salt Lake, and traveled around the Mediterranean all the way to Rome, and Leonard and I flew home from Rome and they stayed on awhile longer to go see Paris and stuff, so that was a very interesting and pleasant trip. We went through Spain and part of Portugal and France and Italy and then Leonard and I took a trip over to see all the places that I had been to while I was over in Germany so that he would know what I was talking about. That was an interesting trip. We had about three weeks for that, which was heavenly, - -

SG: Hm-m.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Of course, we went to Hawaii and Mexico a few times. Money well spent. It gives you nice memories and at least you can apparently take those with you, which you can't do with the money.

SG: That's true. I took some photos last time. Were you a big photo taker on these trips?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Pardon?

SG: Did you take a lot of photographs on these trips?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Take a lot of what?

SG: Photographs.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Oh, yes. We usually took cameras and took pictures and I have scads and scads of slides, which nobody will get any benefit out of I suppose.

SG: [Laughter]. If you were going to start practicing law today, is there any area that you think you would particularly be interested in going into?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, I like to try cases and that - - [phone ringing in the background]
- - if I were - -

[telephone break]

SG: Okay, you were saying that you really liked being in the courtroom.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yes, and I enjoyed trying cases, and I think my experience as a court reporter was very helpful on trying cases, because I sat there for years listening to the best attorneys in the west and the worst and was able to make a distinction between the two, so I learned a lot about trials. I think it was helpful.

SG: Are there things that we should talk about that I'm forgetting to cover?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Not particularly, I suppose. I continued traveling after my husband died and went to number of places, including Africa and then recently to Israel and Egypt, and I had been to Israel previous to that time also, so I've been over there twice, which is really a very interesting experience.

SG: How so?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Well, you're walking in the places where Jesus walked and all the things you learned in Sunday School and so forth are laid out before you and become

realistic. It's very interesting I think. Besides it's quite a beautiful country and the Israelis have done a lot to build it up. Unfortunately, people are constantly warring in those countries and whether that's a part of the great scheme or not, I don't know. Now we have the same thing in Bosnia, and that area has been engaged in war almost constantly, including Egypt and Turkey and Syria and all those countries. Most of their wars are over their religious beliefs which is rather ridiculous I think because most of their religious beliefs, with all due apologies to their superiors, have been framed by men - -

SG: [Chuckle]

- - who can be illogical and inaccurate sometimes, so the minor differences that they have really shouldn't lead to wars if they really followed their religions.

SG: Have your religious beliefs been an important part of your life throughout your life?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Pardon?

SG: Have your religious beliefs been an important thing in your life throughout your life?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yes, I think so, because my family always went to church. My grandmother, with whom I lived for awhile, always had a little prayer meeting at breakfast time when she would read from the scriptures and say a prayer. My sister and I were drafted into singing Christmas songs and singing for other events and I started singing in the choir when I was 11 and kept that up until I was about 22, when I sort of rebelled I guess, probably wrongfully. I should have practiced my music a little more.

SG: [Chuckle]

BRATZEL-KREMEN: So anyway, I think it's been a strong part of my belief I think.

SG: What are you doing with yourself now besides traveling?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Listening to my heart! [Laughter] Not really [Laughter] No. I participate in things. Last week was particularly busy - - or this week rather, and I went to seminars and plays and meetings and entered into discussions on civic affairs, so I keep quite busy.

SG: Good. Well, shall we end this tape?

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Yes. I think so.

SG: Okay. Thank you very much.

BRATZEL-KREMEN: Mm-hmm.

[End of Tape 4, Side 1]

[End of Interview]