

SUMMARY OF TAPE D101 INTERVIEW WITH DAVID DOUGLAS

August 31, 1977

Interviewers: Connie Fahnestock and Sandy Crain

David Douglas is the adopted son of Eric and Frieda Douglas and the grandson of Dr. Jo and Canon Douglas. Eric and Frieda also adopted twin girls, Eva and Polly, who are three years older than David.

David recalls childhood years spending the summers, and one full year, at Camp Neosho. In the wintertime the family lived at 260 Race Street in Denver. Dr. Jo spent her later years living with David's family and died there in 1938. Eric and Frieda traveled frequently for work for the Denver Art Museum; therefore there were times when David and his sisters lived with their grandparents in Evergreen. Canon Douglas was also gone a great deal. Several times in the interview David commented that he remembered his grandparents, but separately never together.

Eric, Frieda and the children lived in what is now called "Eric's House" or the "Baby House", but David's strongest memories are of his grandparent's house. He relates details and stories of the house, furnishings, outbuildings, and the surrounding country. David hiked and climbed with his grandfather and Larry Lowe, a friend of Eric Douglas.

A little boy's perception of his elders is interestingly related by David. He was aware of his grandfather's noted sense of humor, but also saw a "gruff" side. His father and grandfather took David on trips looking for Indian artifacts, and he remembers seeing his grandfather in a full Indian headdress. It was an era where "children should be seen and not heard". There were formal "presentations" on Sundays, special occasions, or when noted people visited Camp Neosho. David and his sisters would be dressed up and presented to Dr. Jo. He remembers his grandmother as a dominant personality with a "very heavy voice." He felt that Dr. Jo wanted to impress upon the children that they enjoyed their time at Camp Neosho because of her generosity.

Famous people visited Camp Neosho, including Teddy Roosevelt, who was a friend of Canon Douglas. He relates an interesting story of Roosevelt visiting in an entourage of Secret Service men. His parents' friends included Vincent Price, William Bendix, and "Major" Kelly (mother of Grace Kelly). They all visited at times during David's childhood.

The big house presented a wonderful opportunity for exploration and mystery to an imaginative David. He relates secret rooms, a movable bookcase, a secret passage, and a dumbwaiter. He wandered the ranch, rode horses, watched the cowhands milking, and made friends with neighboring boys his age. Chappell House (Denver Art Museum) provided another fascinating play space when David accompanied his father to work.