



Photos by James K. W. Atherton—The Washington Post

Robert Reisner, former assistant to Jeb Stuart Magruder, and former Liddy secretary Sally Harmony testify.

WXPost JUN 6 1973 A Perfect Secretary's Bad Memory

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Through her mind passed some of the richest secrets of Richard M. Nixon's 1972 presidential campaign—the spy reports and the wiretapped phone conversations and the special espionage plans.

But the secrets are all gone, which the Senate Watergate Committee discovered when it questioned Mrs. Sally Harmony yesterday. They vanished in the ether of a good secretary's bad memory.

"As any secretary may be aware," Mrs. Harmony explained patiently, "the first word will not relate to the

third. You only take down words. When you type it you only type words, so if you do not read it for content, you do not remember the content."

Mrs. Harmony couldn't remember, but she couldn't remember with a winsome smile. Her videogenic good looks, which seemed younger on TV than in person, were just what any rising executive would want around the office, frosted hairdo and dark eyes and a smart polka dot blue suit.

Last year for 3½ months, Mrs. Harmony took some extraordinary dictation from her boss, G. Gordon Liddy, the convicted bugger who led spy operations for the Nixon campaign. She typed the Gemstone file, the collection

of wiretapped phone dialogue and secret espionage reports.

It had memos from "Ruby I" and Ruby II" and "Crystal" and maybe other geological specimens whom Mrs. Harmony can't recall. The secrets she typed went on nifty Gemstone stationery with this warning printed on the bottom:

"Warning, this information is for intelligence purposes only. Exploitation may compromise source and terminate flow of information."

The Gemstone file itself was hastily terminated in a GOP shredder last summer after the Watergate arrests.

See SCENE, A10, Col. 1

SCENE, From A1

Liddy, true to his peculiar code, still refuses to talk about it, as he again affirmed to the Senate committee at a private session.

That leaves Mrs. Harmony as one person who has seen a lot of this lost archive.

And she can't remember.

Surely something, Sen. Joseph Montoya asked. "Did the fact that you were writing letters on Gemstone stationery ever arouse your curiosity as to the clandestine nature of the activity?"

"Senator, it did not," she answered confidently.

Sen. Howard Baker tried the sweet smiling approach himself. "I really don't want to press," he said, grinning boyishly. She grinned back. Baker asked about a post-Watergate shredding incident.

"Could you give us any inkling of why you should do that?" the senator said with a wink in his tone.

"No inkling at all," Mrs. Harmony replied, just as friendly as a schoolgirl.

When Mrs. Harmony went to work for Liddy, then general counsel for the Nixon finance committee, he explained to her that he might be involved in "clandestine activities," she testified.

Sen. Edward Gurney asked: "What did you think he might have meant by that?"

"Well," said Mrs. Harmony, "to me 'clandestine' does not mean illegal. And I can keep a secret."

So she did. The grand jury called her four times. She was interviewed by

the FBI and the prosecutors and the Senate investigators, none of which refreshed her memory much.

The small fragments which she recounted yesterday were tantalizing. She remembered something from one of the spies about McGovern campaign workers getting their pay cut, which was not exactly a state secret around Washington. She remembers the names "Spencer Oliver and Maxie" from a telephone log. She remembers seeing some snapshots of documents with Larry O'Brien's name on one of them.

"Was there anything unusual about the photograph that you can remember?" asked Samuel Dash, the committee counsel.

"Yes sir, they were being held by fingers."

"Fingers?"

"Yes sir, I guess at this point they would have been fingers of rubber gloves."

The fingers did not stir her to question anything about her job. Indeed, Mrs. Harmony revealed that she played a little bit in the "dirty tricks" game herself.

On the day before the Watergate break-in, she said, Liddy was looking for some stationery from the McGovern campaign. He couldn't find any so they faked a facsimile, using an old McGovern envelope and a Xerox machine.

"We xeroxed and made a sample of McGovern letterhead," she said, "which I dictated in a memo to be typed . . . The nature of the message was: to whom it may concern, and it

was, 'This will authorize the bearer to enter the premises,' for some such reason."

Mrs. Harmony typed the name and initials of Gary Hart, Senator McGovern's campaign manager, then for authenticity added the secretary's initials.

"The signature was signed Gary Hart with the initials like a secretary would sign it," she said correctly.

"Who signed it?" asked Dash.

"I did," Mrs. Harmony said. The headquarters pass, she learned later, went to E. Howard Hunt, though she didn't say if it was ever used.

After Watergate, her boss was fired and Mrs. Harmony was given a different job. She's still working for the Republicans, a clean-up job with President Nixon's inaugural committee.

In the immediate aftermath of Watergate, Liddy's secretary shredded her shorthand notebooks at his request. She helped him pack up his belongings when he was fired. She commiserated with him for his bad fortune.

Then a bill arrived from the printer — \$57 for the Gemstone stationery. She took it directly to Jeb Magruder, the deputy campaign director, instead of sending it routinely through channels. Magruder ordered payment but he also dispatched it to the shredder.

"Mr. Magruder asked me to destroy it," she said.

"Did he tell you why?" asked Senator Baker.

"No," said the perfect secretary, "he didn't have to tell me why."