

**Mary Ellen (Winter) Atkins**  
Secretary, Representative Karl Le Compte of Iowa

## **Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress**

### **Congressman Le Compte's Office: Part One**

Mary Ellen Atkins remembers the physical layout of the office she worked in.  
*Interview recorded August 24, 2016*

Well, of course, it was a little different from what I was accustomed to. The office was on the seventh floor of what we called Old House Office Building, which we found out later had become the Longworth Building. They changed the names there. We were in a large office. He had a number one secretary, Margaret Welsh, who was from Grinnell, Iowa, but she lived in Washington. She was his number one secretary—continued there. But the number two or the number three secretaries—I was number two—we would be there until maybe we left to go on to college or go on to get married. That was when he would be in the habit of going into other counties in our district for his new secretary. But I was in the first desk at the left as you entered in the office from the hallway, and I greeted most people. We had constituents come in from our Iowa district, and we'd take care of their needs, whenever they had a problem or just to greet them. We had a lot of the sailors in the Navy and Army men come in, and took care of them—see that they were able to get various places. And then, in fact, I even dated a couple of those.