

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

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

Secretary's Responsibilities

Mary Ellen Atkins describes her daily tasks as a congressional secretary in the 1940s.
Interview recorded August 24, 2016

Well, of course, I was dictated to with the letters, and would answer questions from the constituents. A lot of those calls came directly to me—whenever they called from Iowa. There were a lot of farmers in that area, and if they had a problem with agriculture, or something like that, why, we would help take care of them, or tell them where to contact somebody, to help them out. And, of course, greet the people as they came in to see us. It was just a standard kind of clerk secretary work that I did there.