

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

Special Exhibit: A Century of Women in Congress

Scott's Hotel for Girls

Mary Ellen Atkins remembers finding a place to live in Washington, D.C. in the early 1940s.
Interview recorded August 24, 2016

In September, I took the trains to Washington, and I was met by a Centerville girl, who lived there and worked there. She met me at the train station, and said that she lived in an apartment with some other girls, there's no room for me there, but she would take me to a nice boarding house. So, we went up to Massachusetts Avenue to an open boarding house near DuPont Circle. And I lived there. And it's the days of sugar rationing, back in the '40s. I had to turn in my coupon because we were served breakfast and dinner there. I went there to live, and I had lived in a large bedroom with two other girls. About two or three months later, we heard about the Scott's Hotel for girls, which was in a neighboring street, on O Street. We went over there, we three, and applied, and were accepted. About three months or so after I landed in Washington, we moved over there. It was a nice hotel, about six stories high. It's kind of cross-shaped. In the center were the elevators and offices. I was on the fourth floor of a small room, kind of like dormitory living, because it's just a single room with a single bed, and a desk, and a bureau, and an easy chair. And then we had the wash basin and our boarder closet at the entrance. The bathroom facilities were down towards the end of center. So, it was quite a bit of fun.