

Opening

It was cold that October Saturday in 1938. I stood on a ridge looking down at my father in the gully below. I could barely see his red and white checked jacket as he worked, cutting the two hind haunches off the illegal deer. I shifted my rifle and looked around at the deep woods watching for any intruders. That was my job and I was to shoot off the rifle if I spotted anyone. I was 16 years old.

On another ridge, to the East, Dick Heinz stood watchful as well, though I could barely spot him through the trees. I was shivering with cold. Down at my feet I could see curled up oak and maple leaves, fall-brown, each one filled with snowflakes like cream of wheat poured into a bowl. I was wishing Tom would hurry and get the job done, when I heard a low whistle. Then Dick left his post to hurry down and help Tom load up the hind quarters into the old Chevie. I moved more slowly, being the rear guard, and checked the woods even more closely. Soon we were all in the car, lucky this time, with the deer in the trunk covered with burlap.

It never occurred to me at the time that this was an unusual occupation for a 16-year old girl. I'm sure I knew that most of my friends weren't tromping through the woods with a 30-30 Winchester in hand. But my father knew

the deer population was huge and he thought it silly that we weren't supposed to have some free deer meat except for a very limited time. It certainly made sense to me. Probably that's where I learned my healthy disrespect for some laws, not to mention some standards of behavior equally silly.

Meanwhile my friends at high school were engaged in more social activities. (a few here - then back to earlier days.)

WINTER IN FORT VALLEY

The women who grew up during the depression years, then experienced World War II with its rush of women into the war industries, formed a particularly vulnerable group. Most graduated from high school (if they were lucky) with only an expectation of marrying and raising children. Few planned for careers, and perhaps even fewer were fortunate enough to gain a college education. The war industries provided many of them with an unexpected year or two of work, followed immediately by a forced return to whatever they were doing before the war. The men needed their jobs back and no one questioned their right to have them. Women returned to home and children. Before long, however, society began changing.

Women who had experienced the freedom and pay of their wartime jobs began to realize that they need not be confined to home. And as time went on, many others, who had been happy to remain at home, were forced to hunt jobs, either because of divorce, a death in the family or financial problems. Unlike the present time, however, these women were ill-prepared for the job market, -- they were uneducated, unskilled, and therefore forced into the most menial, or service-oriented roles. Such jobs, of course, were also the lowest paid. Hence, if the woman happened to be alone, or with children to support on her own, her situation was often desperate.

My high school class belonged to this group. Born in the early 1920's, growing up right after the 1929 market crash, and graduating from high school in 1940 just as World War II burst onto the scene, this group provided a classic example of women who were often forced into the job market when they were 30 to 50 years old. In general they were totally unprepared for the traumatic change in their lives. I know. It happened to me.

Married and with five children, I discovered, not only that I desperately wanted more education, but that extra money would be necessary to raise these five children. When I returned to work, I found that I was lucky to be

able to get a secretarial job. I still had to return home after five in the afternoon, prepare dinner and take care of five children -- their clothes, their food, their schoolwork, and their problems. My job was from 8 to 5 and when I took a night course it was especially difficult.

Often I wondered what it was like with all the other women caught in my predicament. In an effort to find out what really happened to such women, I decided to interview as many as I could from my own high school class and see how they coped with a depression, a World War, and a society that changed dramatically during their adult years.

The City of Rutland, the second largest city in the state, has a rich architectural heritage. The city itself encompasses a wide variety of architectural styles, dating from the late 18th century when the village of Rutland became the seat of county government in 1784. (The first white settlers arrived in Rutland County about 1763.) The Federal style was the first major style in Vermont and was used widely from the early 1700s through the 1830s. Following soon after came the Greek Revival and the Gothic Revival. Also popular was the Colonial Revival from the late 1800s and the Italianate style, copied from the Italian countryside villas. The French Second Empire and Queen Anne styles followed in short order, and even Bungalows

sprang up around Rutland and elsewhere in Vermont. The large old farmhouses in Vermont that I recall with great nostalgia were almost all Queen Anne styles with widely irregular and asymmetrical building forms. They rambled, and included bay windows, wide porches and sometimes even towers. For me, the Queen Anne style represented the most interesting of the architectural styles, but Rutland was full of every one of the above mentioned house styles and we grew up thinking such treasures were commonplace. It took only a short time in the "outside world" for me to realize that most cities are comprised of houses boringly similar and often with no real architectural style at all.

Last summer I went back to Rutland, my home town, to interview my old classmates as well as to soak in the healing atmosphere of this lovely state. The class of 1940 that graduated from high school in Rutland, Vermont, was my class. We are all roughly seventy years old now (the lucky ones still alive) and many still live in Vermont or at least in the surrounding states in New England. Surprisingly, perhaps, many remain friends -- quite close friends. We have met often for reunions and we all seem to have a special love for our home state of Vermont.

Recently I had suffered a bout with ovarian cancer and after looking at a few statistics, I decided I might not have a lot of time left to do

much else, but perhaps I could finish a book. I also began to wonder why, when I was young, I was in such a hurry to speed off into the great unknown in search of excitement and adventure. True, I found a lot of it, but always in the back of my mind, the soft, green hills of Vermont and the huge, wonderful old houses of Rutland, played a soft background music to my crazy, changeable, wandering existence. Rutland was my reality, my link to my real self.

Now, here I am again in my sister's house on Temple street, about to start off for a walk through the familiar streets. First I head North on Main Street (Route 7), past Marty Temple's old house, on past Carolyn's Brehmer's old house, until I reach the stop light at Crescent street. The street light is new, of course, and I turn there, cross route seven, and head East on Crescent Street. I am heading, hardly realizing it, for Grandma's house. I always headed for Grandma's house when I needed a bit of solace. I passed Bernice Smith's old house, remembering the time our gang slept overnight there and told ghost stories in the living room until we were all really scared. I passed other familiar houses, one duplex where some boy lived who played the violin, but I couldn't remember his name. Later, my sister told me he was Russel Flagg.

Grandma's house looked almost the same. It would have been nice to be able to enter it again through the side porch like we always did and to find things the way they used to be. My mind moved in anyway, remembering when I was 8 or 9 years old. I would unbuckle my high black overshoes, hang my coat and scarf on the low hooks of the kitchen wall, and drop my wet hat and mittens on the blue and white checked oilcloth-covered table beside the door. I could smell the cooking and see the huge, warm, black kitchen stove with a string behind it holding kitchen towels to dry.

Grandma was my security blanket. If I really needed to get an honest answer to anything, I could count on her. My parents were fine, but they usually told me what they wanted me to hear and sometimes it had little to do with the truth. It was Grandma who told me there was no Santa Claus. She understood that I really wanted to know and I was way too old not to know. She even told me about her little girl Agnes who choked to death at two years old, and she told me about her other children who preceeded her in death. I could never understand how she could talk about those days when her four "boys" would come home and the funny things they would do -- she would laugh and seem happy remembering those days, even when we both knew that two of them were

long dead -- one at 17 and one at 22. Her other, beautiful eighteen year old daughter, Beth, died in the "insane asylum" (as it was called then) in Brattleboro after diving off a dock at Lake Bomoseen and hitting her head on a rock. Today her headaches and strange behavior could have been easily diagnosed and cured.

The deaths of Grandma's two boys were even more tragic. Howard, at age 17, was thrown out of the house for fighting with his older brother when his father decided that the fight was Howard's fault. The father, old GM Hascall, was a tyrant of the first magnitude and his wife, his children, and even his grandchildren were scared to death of him right up till the day of his death -- a day of great jubilation to the grandchildren, at least, who made no secret of their fear and hatred of the old man. Howard, who had not even finished high school, made for New York City to seek his fortune. What he found instead, unfortunately, was a bad case of syphilis. At this age this seemed a tragedy too great to handle. His answer was to return to Rutland, sneak one of the guns out of the house and to take his own life, which he accomplished with dispatch, shooting himself in the head down by Baxter wall, just a few blocks away from his home on Crescent Street.

Howard's brother Buell went off to the first World War and served in France. Instead of coming home, however, he fell in love with a French woman who, unfortunately, was married. As the story came back to us, many years later from the lady herself, this was not a problem in itself, as her husband did not mind a lover or two in her life. When Buell became bold enough to suggest that she leave her husband for him and a new marriage, however, the wealthy husband simply eliminated the problem by having him exterminated. Grandma never saw him again.

In those days I suppose, Grandma had very little to say about the treatment of the children or anything else. She lived on in the old house where old GM (named for General George McClellan) remained until his death at age 70 from prostate cancer. By this time the two remaining sons, Robert and Tom had married, Robert leaving Rutland and Tom remaining. GM's meanness stayed with him even as he lay on his death bed -- where he kept a baseball bat nearby to hit Grandma with if she got too close to him. My memories include nothing redeemable about the old man.

Grandma's youngest son, Thomas Hascall, was my father. Tom was the biggest liar in the state of Vermont and proud of it, according to his friends. He could never tell a story without

expanding it, embellishing it, adding new characters, even new incidents. As a result, one never heard the same story twice in anywhere near its original state. No one ever seemed to hold this against him, however. He was good company and always had a lot of stories to tell, true or not. Also, he was generous to a fault, and kind and forgiving to his many friends who had plenty of faults of their own.

My father and his cronies were an important part of my upbringing and my life. There were many of these friends, but all of them accepted me when I tagged along on my father's excursions. My sister Edna did not go as often, but she was nicknamed "Petie" and was well-liked by all these men as well. They were mostly large, blustery types, very masculine and outdoorsy, but kind and considerate to me. "Nat" Williams nicknamed me "Jerry" for some unknown reason, but the rest just called me Jeannie. Nat was a neighbor in Rutland who eventually moved away to Troy, New York, where he became employed in a shirt factory. Our families still remained friends, however, and twice I was allowed to go to Troy to spend a week visiting with Nat and "Who Who" his wife, so named because when we children were very little we used to call her "Who Who." The name came about because the Williams lived above us when we were very young, in a two-

storied duplex on Kendall Avenue and my mother used to call "who who" upstairs to get her attention. We thought that was her name.

Guy Townsend was another close friend of my father. He and Tom did a lot of fishing and hunting together and often I went along. Guy was probably Tom's closest friend. I think he was a lawyer, and he used to be a professor, also, at the University of Vermont, but these days he seldom worked, apparently having plenty of money. He and his wife Mary Ann lived in a huge farm house up on Stratton Road. That house had an old wood stove in the kitchen and Guy's wife always wanted a new stove but Guy woundn't buy one because he couldn't find one with just the right space underneath it for his favorite dog who slept there. Guy had several dogs, most of them sort of growly and cross. Besides the favorite, who slept under the stove, the others each commandeered a bedroom upstairs and whenever someone stayed at Guy's house overnight, he got to sleep with whatever dog slept on the foot of that particular bed. Tom said the dog he slept with one night growled every time he rolled over making for a rather unpleasant night.

Sometimes we would stay up at "Tom's camp" over the Notch. Usually just me with

Tom. This camp was a bit primative but I thought it was wonderful. It had two rooms and a wood heating stove as well as a wood-burning kitchen stove. Few supplies were kept ther because often the camp was broken into, so it was never sure what to expect when we got there. Usually there was a large can of flour, one of coffee and one of sugar, and plenty of wood in the woodshed. Tom kept an old rind of salt pork hanging on a nail behind the kitchen stove. "Good enough to grease the pans," he often said. Never mind how old it was. I do remember one time when we had little food with us and Tom greased up the pan, mixed flour and water and made us pancakes with sugar on them. A far cry from what my mother would have done. Right behind the cabin, however, there was an old orchard, and there were always plenty of apples in the fall, not to mention tons of raspberries and blackberries. That, plus the game Tom always managed to shoot, provided plenty for a short stay. Right beside the cabin a small, but fast stream ran clear, beautiful water so it was easy to bring water to the cabin. Of course there was the usual outhouse in the back. Many parties were held there, some even with my mother and sisters and various relatives, but mostly the cabin was used by my father and his friends.

Another good friend of Tom's was our local doctor, Ed Hines. I don't remember him being at the cabin or hunting with us, but he had a camp at Lake Bomoseen and one summer we rented a large camp right next door to the Hines family camp. Ed Hines had a beautiful polished wood Criscraft boat with an inboard engine. It was a far cry from the small rowboat that came with our camp even if Tom did bring a small motor to attach to it so we could troll for pike. But we were invited to cruise the lake with the Hines family and that was real big time for us. I think they had one son whom we didn't know very well. But Doctor Hines was our family doctor and we thought very highly of him even if he was short-tempered and swore a lot. He and his wife fought a lot too, and later divorced. He remarried a younger woman, but I remember his first wife best.

Another "lake" buddy was "Pip" Long. He and Tom used to fish together, not only in summer but during the winter when we would drive our car out on the ice and put up an ice shanty to protect us from the cold while we fished through the ice for perch. On those occasions, Tom always was accompanied by a large bottle of bourbon or rum and the fishing party often grew raucous. Once they had used a spud to enlarge the hole so several could fish from the same spot and Tom fell through the

hole. He said afterward it was very scary because you were way down in this dark water and you could look up and see this small hole which was your only way out. He said he swam for that hole as though his life depended on it, which it certainly did. They had to strip his clothes off him and get him wrapped in blankets when they got him out and they built a fire on the ice outside the shanty to warm him up before driving home. They finished the bottle of booze on the way back.

Pip Long also had a camp on the lake, but it was on Sunset lake, not Bomoseen. Sunset was better for trout in the Spring. I loved trout fishing but I preferred the streams and fly casting. During my High School days our school didn't start until nine o'clock in the morning and many days, after I had learned to drive and had my license, I would get up early and drive up toward Mendon Mountain. It was not very far up Woodstock Avenue before a nice, cold trout stream ran beside the road. I was always able to fish for a short time and get back home in time to cook a trout or two for breakfast before school. I loved those early morning drives and fishing all by myself. Once I took a high school friend with me but she thought it was a drag. I guess she didn't care much for the outdoors.

One time Tom shot a deer out of season and he needed help to get at least some of the meat out without getting caught by Joe Canty, the sheriff who was always keeping an eye out for my fathers' various out-of-season activities. He kept hoping he could catch my father "in the act" of some illegal enterprise. This deer was down in a gully where there were two wooded hills on each side of the gully where the deer lay. Dick Heinz and I went with Tom to keep a lookout while he dressed out the deer. I remember we both had rifles; mine was a Winchester 32 Special. Dick and I were supposed to station ourselves on the two hills on either side of the gully and to shoot into the air if we spotted anyone around in the woods while Tome was cutting off the two hind quarters. We never saw anyone and the deer meat was hauled out surreptitiously but successfully. I think Dick took one of the hind quarters and we kept the other.

Dick was one of Tom's old buddies, although he was younger. He worked for Tom in the sporting goods store after I did. Eventually he married my cousin Lillian and they raised a family of three boys, later moving to New Hampshire. While he was in Rutland, however, he was one of Tom's gang. He was a slow-moving, slow-talking, pipe-smoking

young man, very easy going and friendly. Most everyone liked him.

Tom had lots of other friends in Rutland; everyone knew him, but not all of these friends took part in the hunting and fishing trips. One of these friends was "Nippy" Jones, who was a lawyer and a father of a friend of mine, Barbara Jones. Another friend was Milford K. Smith (add more here from Edna). Clayt Kinney was another friend of Tom's. He was a judge and when we moved to Tremont Street, Clayton and his family lived right behind us. He had three sons, Bob, Howard, and Jackie, and a daughter Phyllis who was in my sister's class.

Ira Glover, who once hired my mother as a car salesman, was also a good friend of Tom's and he was another who took part in some of the fishing activities and, I believe, also went camping with the Hascalls one time. Ira's wife, Ruth, was a friend of my mother's and her daughter, Lady, was a friend of mine. They also had a son Bob who was my age but I don't remember much about Bob. They were all redheads, I remember, and moved around a lot, living in Brandon when he had the car business, and later in Manchester where Ruth's family owned a large home.

The story of my mother's job working for Ira Glover was a strange one. Her job was selling cars; at the time Ira had a dealership in

Brandon. At one point in her job, she traded a car for a cow, much to Ira's surprise. It turned out to be a good deal, however, and she was complimented on her ingenuity. Her job took her, daily, to Brandon, Vermont, a town about 30 miles from Rutland. Her boast was that she managed to get to work at least within 30 minutes from the time she left Rutland. My father, to his credit, never worried, but instead bragged about her driving ability. On roads at that time it was a miracle that she actually got there each day, considering the speeds at which she drove.

It seems to me, when I think back on it, that many of my parents friends that I remember were the parents of friends of mine or my sisters. That's just the way things worked out in a small town.

Another family that we spent a lot of time with was the Overbaughs. As I recall, they didn't live in Rutland very long, but Don and Em were good friends of my parents, Tom and Edna. They had two children, Wayne and Binny. Both were older than my sister and myself, but Binny was close enough to be friends with us when the families were together. Don was a salesman, an "operator" of sorts who usually made quite a bit of money, one way or another. I remember going to visit them in some town in New York state. At that time I became

very ill and we had to stay there a lot longer than we had expected. "Auntie Em" as we called her, was very kind to me I remember, and helped take care of me.

Small towns become, at times, rather ingrown. Most of the families know one another and certain ones socialize together, those who have ideas and activities in common. My father's hunting and fishing hobbies drew a certain type of crowd, but we also had many family friends who were not associated with sporting at all. My mother's bridge clubs drew us together with the families of those women she played with, such as the Morse's, Bob and Jo. We knew their children too, at least I remember Carolyn who was a little older than I.

In addition to these many friends, my mother's family were a close-knit and sort of rowdy group. When they came to visit (mostly from New Haven) they all played poker and drank and whooped it up a lot. They were a fun group but they also argued a lot. When Grandmother Van Sickles died, all three sisters and their brother fought bitterly over who was to get what. My mother, being the youngest and the least vocal, probably got very little, but at least she remained friends with all her siblings whereas one or two of them were not on speaking terms, off and on, during this time. My mother was closest to Aunt Edia and we

visited them (Edie and Jess) in New Haven often. There we used to dig clams in the tidal flats and Aunt Edie cooked up great seafood meals for the group. Their two sons, our cousins, were Jesse and Warren and we didn't always hit if off with these boys, but we liked Warren better than Jesse when we were young, because Jesse had a sarcastic tongue. When we grew older, however, we all became better friends.

Uncle Freddie and Grandpa Van Sickles also lived in New Haven in a big old house that Grandpa Van had built by hand in his younger days. Aunt Agnes, (Freddie's wife), died young so Freddie and Grandpa kept house for young Freddie, one of our other cousins. He was an only child. Grandpa Van had been a carpenter all his life and a good one. He could build anything but he was not a very industrious person, really, and liked to work only when he wanted to. Fortunately, his wife had enough money to make that possible. We never knew Grandma Van Sickles because she also died young. Grandpa Van, however, was a favorite of ours because he always played jokes on people and lived very independently. When he visited us he always got up early, at least by six o'clock, and would come out into the kitchen and make coffee which he would give to all the children before my mother was awake and

could stop him. "Coffee's good for you," he would say. Then he would eat his bran flakes and take off for a long walk with a big stogie in his mouth. The routine never varied. I guess it was healthful for him, at least. He lived to be ninety-six years old and never saw a doctor. He dropped dead at a party that Uncle Freddie was having at the old house at 372 Townsend Avenue in New Haven.

Aunt Millie was mother's other sister and she lived somewhere in Massachusetts with her husband, a dour old German, and their two children, Lillian and Bill. In our family, relationships always became a bit obscure. Lillian always called Bill "Brother Bill" and so did everyone else. We always thought of him as Brother Bill and not as cousin Bill. Nobody bothered to enlighten us. I still have trouble with cousins, nieces and nephews, not to mention grandnieces and grandnephews.

Some of my happier memories include visits from mother's two sisters, Edie and Millie. One time in particular I remember, they all decided to go down to the Bardwell Hotel and have a couple of drinks. I happened to be there so I was invited to go with them. I'll never forget that they got into a silly mood, even before getting to the bar, and all three of them joined arms and decided to skip their way to the bar which they did. It was quite a sight, because by

then all three of them were pretty heavy and they jounced and bounced and skipped and laughed all the way to the Bardwell Hotel with me bringing up the rear somewhat more sedately, but greatly amused. I hope my mother remembered that time with pleasure because when Aunt Edie died first, of liver cancer, my mother was devastated.

In Rutland, as I remember, when I was about seventeen or eighteen years old, we had moved three times from our first house. That first house was a duplex that old GM owned and that we lived in when I went to grammar school. First we lived in the side that was on Lafayeet Street. At that time Nat and Who Who Williams lived on Lafayette Street just a short ways down from us. I was pretty young when I lived there but I remembered Ed Hines, our doctor, coming and I think he took out my adenoids right at home. He wouldn't take out the tonsils at the same time, however, (which was the practice at the time), because he said, "How the hell do I know if you need them or not? I know goddam well you don't need those adenoids. They're as big as a house." I remember coming out of the anesthesia upstairs and hearing everyone downstairs right below me in the kitchen. I could hear them talking through the transom which opened from the upstairs bedroom into the kitchen (so the heat

could come up.). I can also remember sleeping on the sleeping porch there. Later we moved into the other side of the duplex that faced Edgerton Street. I was older then and remember a lot more because we lived there quite a long time.

From this house I walked to Dana Elementary School. In those days there was no school lunch so I walked home for lunch. My earliest friends at Dana were Beverly Melen and Joyce Hill. Joyce and I used to play jacks out on the school steps every morning. Beverly was the best slug ball player at school and that was what we played during recess every day. I've long forgotten how to play slug ball, but I know we got hit by the ball a lot and fell in the cinders a lot too. I think there were some swings and a large field where the boys played baseball, but we had few facilities and very little supervision as I recall. I remember having a severe earache one day and my teacher let me out of class to sit next to the radiator in the hall in hopes the warmth would help, but there was no school nurse. I remember each teacher in those six grades very well, and I also remember that in the sixth grade the girls had to take cooking. I hated cooking -- it was so slow and boring and we never turned out anything that was very tasty. My mother had already taught

me more than we learned there. We were not allowed to take "shop" like the boys.

A lot of funny things happened while we were living at that duplex. First, we wanted a slide, but such toys were way too expensive for us, so my father made us one out of galvanized iron folded over two two-by-fours for the sides. The middle of the slide itself, was made of plywood. It worked real well and we used to "keep the pot boiling" going around up the stairs to the top of the wall that dropped off into the back yard, and sliding down the slide where it was nailed up against the wall's highest point. We also had a goat that was kept tethered a ways away from the slide and some ferrets. I don't know why we had any of them. The goat butted and the ferrets gave nasty bites.

Tom was also into cock-fighting and had a wonderful rooster named "Reddy rooster" who won many a fight. I don't know if the fights were illegal or not, but Tom wouldn't have cared much one way or another. Finally, some out-of-towner brought a rooster to one of the fights that killed Reddy Rooster. Tom was very unhappy about that. I think that was the end of the cockfights.

Another time I remember Tom was annoyed at the streetlight on Edgerton street. It would shine right into his bedroom window at night. One evening when we were all sitting on the

stoop outside the house, Tom came out with a 22 rifle and shot out the light, leaving the gun with us. Immediately, he went back inside, then came roaring out again yelling , "What do you kids think you're doing? You're not supposed to be shooting out here." My mouth dropped open in surprise. However, it took the city a long time to replace the light and when they did, Tom just shot it out again.

When we lived at Edgerton Street we still had an ice box. I'm not sure just when electric refrigerators came in but we were probably late in buying one anyway because we had little money. Most people in the neighborhood at that time, however, must have had ice boxes because I remember the ice man very well. He came up the street in a big truck, dripping water, and followed by lots of young children begging for pieces of ice. I remember hanging onto the metal drop door in the back of the truck, picking up small pieces of ice that fell there when the iceman chopped the large chunks of ice. He would then grab the ice with huge tongs and sling it over onto his back which was protected by a large, yellow-brown square of rubber so he would not get his back wet. Then he would haul it into whatever house wanted it. He came fairly often, it seemed.

Winters in Vermont were long and cold and especially dark with very little sunshine. One

winter I remember well was when we had the blizzard. My mother and father were away when the blizzard struck and we were home with a baby sitter. They were on their way back from some place in northern Vermont, probably Burlington, by car and we had no idea when to expect them. The blizzard was frightening. The first thing to happen was that all the electricity went out so we had no lights and it was a dark, late afternoon. I remember watching cars trying to get back to their houses on Edgerton street and the wind would keep pushing the cars back so they crept along not making very much progress. We would breathe a sigh of relief when one finally reached its house safely. The roads were solid ice and telephone poles were falling, with wires dangling all over the place.

Suddenly, there was a loud crash real close to us and we rushed to the window to see the huge old elm tree across the street from us come crashing down, fortunately in line with Edgerton street, rather than on top of any of the houses. Our parents did not get home until the next day and we all spent a bad night wondering about the. We had a phone at that, the old kind that was fastened to the wall with a crank to call the operator, but the phone lines were out of course.

The next day blossomed sunny and beautiful but we were not allowed outside because of the wires that were down. The town blew its danger whistles and we soon learned via the grapevine, (neighbors walking back and forth between houses,) that schools were closed and everyone was advised to stay indoors until the lines were repaired. When we were able to go out we had great fun climbing that crashed elm tree and sliding down its trunk on the ice that coated everything for about the next week. Our parents had returned safely with tall tales of how many telephone lines were down across the road all the way down from northern Vermont.

While we still lived at Edgerton street I was struck down by a terrible stomach ache -- one that made me cry and scream it was so bad. My parents got me to Dr. Hines and he rushed me to the hospital where he operated on my appendix. It broke just as he removed it, he told us, but he thought there was no infection inside. I think I stayed in the hospital about a week, and when I came home I remember sitting in our swing and just swinging slowly for quite a few days before I really recovered. I didn't have to go to school for quite a while.

At that time Tom owned beagles which he used to hunt rabbits. They were from registered stock and the first was named Debonaire King, I. From there they went on to the fourth, at

least, that I remember. I think it was Debby the first that was hit by a car on Lafayette street. Someone called Tom and he cam down the street to where Debby was lying. The dog was very badly hurt and Tom ran back to the house and got his 45 and shot him in the head. A lot of people were standing around by then and for once Tom was real angry and yelled at them "do you like to see a dog killed?" Then he carried Debby home and buried him in the back yard.

On Edgerton street we had our first "hired girl". Her name was Mary Czochor and she lived in West Rutland so she stayed with us during the week and went home for weekends. I remember saying something rather disrespectful to her once -- maybe about her being Polish -- and my mother heard me and came out and spanked me real hard, telling me I should always treat Mary nicely. Mary was really nice to us children and we stayed friends with her for many years afterward, even when she married and became much richer than we were.

Both the Lafayette and Edgerton Street sides of the duplex had a large back porch, with a sleeping porch over it upstairs. In the winter the downstairs porch was used as a place to hang the rabbits that Tom would shoot. It was always way below freezing out there in the winter and the rabbits would hang, frozen, until we wanted one for supper. Tom would then thaw one out

and skin it and my mother would make roast rabbit, fried rabbit, or rabbit stew. One had to be very careful eating rabbits, however, because it was almost impossible to get all the shot out of them and biting down hard on a buckshot was not too good for the teeth. But they tasted really good. They were easier to eat than the perch we had during the winter, because perch were so boney. Sometimes we ate squirrels, too but they were so small that my mother usually cooked them in a stew.

By the time we moved into Meldon, the intermediate school, my father had bought a house on Tremont street which was a lot farther away from school than the house on Edgerton street. The walk was well over a mile to Meldon, but we still had to walk home at noon for lunch. It took more than half the lunch hour to walk back and forth. The house on Tremont street was a nice, large four-bedroom house with a field on each side and another in front that flooded in the winter and became a neighborhood skating rink. The Kinneys lived right behind us. Mr. Kinney (Clayton) was a lawyer and a judge; he and his wife, Elsa had four children, one girl who was in my older sister's class, one boy in my younger sister's class, and two other boys. One boy was in a class ahead of me and we dated occasionally. His name was Howard but we called him "Spit"

because, our friends said, he was the "spittin" image of Clayton.

On Tremont street I remember the cats and the fact that we ate a lot of deer meat. I remember cats because at one time, cats were so numerous in town where Tom worked with his father in the jewelry business, that he sometimes brought home one or two strays in a box and then shot the box full of holes. That always made me feel bad. The deer meat was the best game, of course, and we ate a lot of it during the winter. When deer was in season the carcass hung in the basement, aging, and Tom would cut off steaks. But we ate lots of other cuts of meat too. My sister, Edna, hated eating deermeat and always complained, "Why can't we have hamburg from the store like everybody else?" But the steaks were good, especially when they had lots of mushrooms. Tom would gather mushrooms, also, often from people's lawns and I suppose it was a wonder we didn't die from mushroom poisoning, but he seemed to think he knew his mushrooms and perhaps he did. The ones that grew in town on the lawns were black when cooked and he said they were called "Inky caprinus" -- but with his reputation, one would hardly believe that.

Nevertheless, we really ate well, with all the game, our own chickens, and a large garden. When game was scarce, I remember, we ate

chipped beef on toast, salt pork and milk gravy, home-cooked beans, macaroni and cheese, and sometimes hot dogs on Saturday, with a chicken on Sunday. As far as I was concerned it was all good, because I was always hungry, it seemed.

Money was always tight. We never had very much real cash. Every time I wanted a dime to see a movie, or for anything else, Tom would say, "You know where the 'Loma' is." "Loma" was a fertilizer for gardens and lawns. Tom had come across a huge supply during one of his trades and it was stored in the cellar. We kids could have as much as we wanted to peddle around the town or neighborhood. We charged a dime a box, but it was pretty hard to sell sometimes. Often we would end up calling on Mr Cleveland across the street. He had lots of money and he was very generous especially to all the children, but even he got tired of giving out dimes for a lot of fertilizer that he didn't use. Tom had to tell us to stop going to Mr. Cleveland, but to get farther afield.

Tom got most everything we needed by trading. Because he had a sporting goods business, he traded in lots of guns which were not too good. When we all complained loudly about not having a radio like everybody else, Tom finally capitulated and grabbed a few of his guns and went off to trade. Late in the day he came back with a really nice Zenith radio --

a large one that sat on a table. He also came back with a porch swing and a humidor with several pipes in it -- not that anyone smoked pipes. I guess he figured he could trade that for something else. That's the way we obtained most of our material goods.

Speaking of guns, they were part of our life. Tom kept three or four rifles behind the front door -- always loaded. I remember a 32 Winchester special, a 30-30 rifle of some make and a double barreled shotgun. We were always very careful of the guns because there was never any doubt that they were loaded. It wasn't just a pretend situation. I never recall any trouble with them while I was growing up and Tom made a big effort to teach any of us who wanted to learn (that meant only me) how to shoot and how to be careful about guns and how to carry them safely in the woods. I also had to learn how to clean them, load them and take them apart.

In our Rutland High School, students were allowed time off to go hunting during deer season. That usually applied to the boys, but once I got time off too, to go hunting with my father. Nobody seemed to think it was unusual. I never shot a deer. In fact, I don't recall ever shooting anything except targets.

My mother did not seem to object to hunting or to the guns. She was really a remarkable

woman to put up with the strange happenings that my father seemed to instigate. First of all, she learned to cook anything that Tom came home with. She was barely eighteen when she came to Vermont and she had little education. I believe she completed the seventh grade. But she did work for a while, I believe at a phone company. She had no high school at all and she had to compete with all the ladies in our small town, some of whom had college degrees. There was nothing wrong with her brains, however. She was a very bright woman, and could best almost anyone at bridge -- she was a real pro at that. She learned to play duplicate and even played once with Blackwood. She seemed happy enough with her role as housewife, but then most women during that time did not think of any other role.

Mother was an excellent cook and a good housekeeper. She had many exemplary traits, but she never could understand why anyone really needed a lot of education, and she constantly thwarted my unprecedented thirst for reading. Her remark was always, "Get your nose out of that book and do some work around here." I was always hiding in a corner or behind a tree to read. I read anything I could get my hands on. I even read the Bible, and got to First Kings before I became bored with the whole procedure and realized that there were a million

books out there that were more interesting. About that time, I think, I became a student of Mabel Morrill, an English teacher, who thereafter provided me with enough books to satisfy even the most voracious reader. In fact, she over-provided me, so that one time I hadn't finished an assigned book for class, (I was too busy reading something more to my liking), and I cheated on the report. I was caught (Mabel Morrill was very sharp) but she only reprimanded me because she knew that I was a constant reader. I remember her as an exceptional woman for whom I held a great deal of respect and admiration as well as affection.

My grandfather, old GM, was a jeweler and, for a while, he owned and operated a jewelry business in Rutland. My father worked for him and that was not the very best of arrangements, because Tom was always the underdog in this relationship. He was paid, as I recollect, fifty dollars a week which was barely adequate to bring up a family of five. Eventually, old GM went bankrupt -- or almost. I believe he paid off his creditors so much on the dollar which was better for them than a bankruptcy would have been. Not necessarily better for the Hascalls however. It was after that fiasco that Tom decided to open a Sporting Goods store.

Hascall's Sport Shop was located on Merchant's Row upstairs over McClellan's Drug Store. The Hascall sign hung out over the street and one walked up a narrow flight of stairs to reach the shop. On the same second level right across from the Sport Shop door was a barber shop. In front of our Sport Shop was a lawyer's office which looked out onto Merchant's Row. Eddie McClellan was one of the lawyers in the law office. The Sport Shop was in back of that and a door in the rear of the Shop opened onto a roof. For a while Tom spent much of his time in the Shop fixing it up and stocking it with sporting goods. He fixed the counter where the fishing lures were stocked with rough bark siding and it really looked nice. It was to become a place where I had to spend a lot of time because shortly after the shop opened my father became very ill.

Tom had been unloading crates in the jewelry store and had scraped his elbow on a packing case and very soon after that he contracted "blood poisoning" as it was called then. I was sixteen years old at the time. Before we knew it, he was in the hospital and not expected to recover. Since it was summer and school was out, it fell on me to take over the Sport Shop. I had already learned to clean the guns, repair the fishing rods, and manage the business. Tom grew worse and worse until one

day Dr. Hines brought in a new drug called sulfa. He said it had not been tried out in Vermont yet, but Tom was so bad we might as well try it. To us it was a miracle; Tom recovered rapidly and we had all expected him to die.

In the meantime I had been putting in over 50 hours a week at the Shop. Hours were 9 AM to 6 PM week days and 9 AM to 9 PM on Saturdays. In the absence of my father I had several times run out of goods or had questions that I couldn't answer. My only recourse was to call on Mr. Wilson who ran the largest sporting goods shop Rutland. He knew Tom and knew he was sick. He was most kind and helpful to me even though we were competitors. He supplied me with goods at cost when I had not ordered them far enough in advance and gave me advice and encouragement. He probably thought we were not too much competition, but I recall his help with gratitude. This was in 1938 and while Hascall's Sport Shop is now gone, Wilson's Sporting Goods is still operating in Rutland as I write this in 1991, fifty-three years later.

One day when I was working at the shop a man came in asking for an inexpensive fishing rod, "Not much over fifteen dollars," he said. Well, at that time the most expensive rod in the store was just fifteen dollars, so I brought that

one out, thinking he must be pretty rich. He tested the spring in that particular rod, timing it with his watch, and said it was too springy. I brought out our next most expensive rod, twelve-fifty, and he tried that one and said that would do. Then he brought out a raft of credit cards and identification so he could write a check. One of the cards said he was a member of the Screen Actors Guild, or something like that. Well, I hadn't taken any checks before, but I figured I'd take a chance so I accepted it. Later I found out I had sold a fishing rod to Harpo Marx. The Marx brothers were staying that summer at Alexander Woolcott's place on an island in the middle of Lake Bomoseen.

I used to get very bored working at the shop when there were no customers. Once in a while Charlie McClelland would come up to visit from the drugstore below. Another time I remember wandering out on the roof and noticing that the drugstore had placed the big cardboard cases that they dipped the ice cream out of, just outside their back door. Lots of ice cream still remained in the bottom of the cases. Some friend of mine was in the shop at the time and we decided to get a fishing rod with some strong hooks and hook onto that case and haul it up so we could eat the ice cream. It was a great idea and it worked and we had lots of ice

cream, but old man McClelland found out and wasn't too pleased about it. No sense of humor!

That reminds me of my sister Edna who would always go into McClelland's drugstore for a chocolate sundae -- always when Charlie was tending the soda fountain. She would work on the sundae a while and then go up to the fountain and tell Charlie that she was out of chocolate on her ice cream so could he give her some more chocolate. Then she would return a little later and tell him that she had run out of ice cream for her chocolate, so he would give her some more ice cream. That went on until she had eaten at least two sundaes, but Charlie was so obliging that he never seemed to mind. Edna thought it was great sport and she always got at least two sundaes for the price of one.

In Rutland, it seemed that we always lived in big, old, Vermont-type houses. Ours were never really special, architecturally speaking, but they all were large with large living rooms, dining rooms, dens, bedrooms, big kitchens and often another room called the "reception room". In Vermont, frequently the first room you entered was the "reception room" and it was just a large room that one could use for anything. In our house on Tremont street, the reception room held the piano and was sort of a music room. The same was true of the house on Lincoln Avenue. It seemed a good place to put

the large, upright piano that we always had. From the reception room one went into the living room, then the dining room (each about the same size) and from there into the kitchen. All kitchen were large and always held the ubiquitous kitchen table. Lots of family activity went on around the kitchen table. Then there was always a large dining room table, a "sideboard" or large buffet (nowadays called a "hutch"). The sideboards in those days, however, were larger than any hutch I have ever seen, and were usually more elaborate with lots of drawer sapce to hold linens and other necessary items for the table. Our house on Lincoln Avenue also had a den and four large bedrooms upstairs and a sleeping porch stretching all the way across the back of the upstairs of the house. The house had two bathrooms, one up and one down, and a large front porch as well. (here others homes).

In our earlier days, Halloween was always a time of great excitement for us during our younger years. Tricks or treats were great fun, though we had no fancy costumes like today's children. As we moved around in groups yuelling and thinking up mischief. One Halloween when we were, I think, in the 6th or 7th grade, we got into a little too much trouble. We had come across a large, old, empty house that had been abandoned, we thought. No one

had lived there for quite a while, although furniture remained inside and we wondered what it looked like inside. The house sat back from the road on a large lot with many trees. We all trooped into the yard and found a way to get up onto the roof of the wide, front porch. From that roof we were trying to get into a window that had been left unlocked when we saw a police car cruising the street below. We all dropped flat onto this flat roof. The police car trained their search lights on the house and we thought, for a while, that we had escaped detection because their lights couldn't really pick us out on that flat roof. But we were wrong. They had spotted us and came up on the roof and caught us.

We were really scared having never run up against the police before. Also we knew we shouldn't have been trying to get into the house. We were taken down to the police station and asked our names. I can't remember exactly who was with us, but I know Marty Temple was there because her father was Mayor of Rutland at the time. My father was an Alderman and I think those two things weighed in our favor. I think that Joanne Willcox was also with us and her mother was a State Senator. Anyhow, we were reprimanded but not held. We were told to go on home and not to engage in any other such unsavory activities. Of course, it was

Halloween and I suppose that counted in our favor. But we were properly frightened and vowed to be a little more discreet in the future. We knew that our parents would punish us if we really got into trouble.

There are some important things I would like to get down on paper. I thought, at first, that by writing this journal I could talk about my life, my cancer, my separation from my husband, and the wonderful experience of living in Ft. Valley for this winter. I am beginning to realize that there is no way to tell about one's life without telling the whole truth. First, how would anyone be able to understand just why I separated from my husband, after living with him for forty-seven years, without an in-depth discussion. Secondly, the very fact that I have been living alone for ten months now has forced me to face many things that I have not faced before.

This really has come about because of the time I have had to evaluate myself, my actions, my reactions, and to finally believe -- after having been told almost daily for many, many years -- that I am not a "bad person" for having lied at times, and made some serious choices that could be considered "wrong" by the type of people who like to put "right" and "wrong" into little boxes and to also put people into those boxes if they fall into one or another

of those categories held dear by the religious, the old time Calvanists, and even by society as many people think it should operate today.

A friend of mine said to me "you must write the truth -- all of it. People want to know what happened. I want to know what happened." How can I learn myself to manage a workable relationship with anyone if I don't know what is wrong.

I think, in order to even to begin to understand our relationships with one another -- opposite sexes, or same sexes -- we have to go back a long ways into the past. What influenced me, for instance, to do the things I have done? What influenced me to think I was a "bad" person if I did not follow slavishly the norms or standards of the time? What made me afraid that if I acted in ways that my body and my feelings told me were "right" for me, that I would have to lie in order to keep up the pretense of living according to someone else's standards? Why was I afraid to stand up for my own standards? I was not afraid to live by my own standards, because of some of the influences I received. But I was afraid to say, "I don't believe your standards, because they are wrong, wrong, wrong for me. I felt I must pretend.

First, I received conflicting messages from my mother and my father. And my mother was the stronger of the two. Right from that point, I guess, I decided that I must hide my real feelings and my real actions and pretend to go along with what my mother taught me. My father, on the other hand, was the kindest person I have ever known, but he did his own share of lying just in order to get along. My mother (they were both people who cared about their children in their own way) always thought that I was the "bad apple" of the three of us. I was the "crazy" one, because I always wanted to do or say things that did not go along with her idea of what should be done. I always wanted to read -- she was very afraid of what I might learn, or what "notions" I would get from reading. She read very little and had gone only to the seventh grade.

My father, on the other hand, had graduated from Yale in Philosophy -- but his big love was the woods and the streams. He hunted, fished, and loved the outdoors. But I remember him telling me "you might better reach for the stars and hit a mountain rather than aim for the mountain and hit the ground." And he put me into an airplane when I was six years old. Perhaps those two things conspired to make me a pilot. But what made me become a writer was my feeling that everything needed to be

recorded. How else would anyone else know who you really were? I want my children to know who I really was -- even if it wasn't the greatest person in the world. My father also wanted me to "reach" and to get educated, but he was way outnumbered by my strong-willed mother. One neighbor I will remember, however, told me, "Jean, you will never regret the things you do -- you will only regret the things that you didn't do." Her advice was sound. I have only regretted the things that I didn't do. It was a funny upbringing nevertheless

G.SpaULDING

These are just suggestions.

I always planned to go to the reunion with Dot Miller.

Rutland High School had three different programs: College, Academic and Commercial.

And I took the commercial. There were a good many of my classmates who commuted. Came in on the school bus. Well, do you want to hear when I started High School?

Do you remember any pre-high school?

Oh, yes, yes. I was in North Clarendon and of course at that time they didn't have a high school. It was during the depression which was bad for everyone, my clothes were all some that my mother would redo for me so that I would have some to wear, and I had five brothers and a sister. My father was a self-employed carpenter and of course at that time there wasn't a lot of work around. All we had was a truck so it was impossible for him to transport me back and forth to school so I decided I would have to go and live somewhere where I probably would have to work for my room and board, which I did for my whole four years of high school. This lady, (her husband had died in April), and she had the ad in the paper in September which I answered. And I was very lucky to get it because I was there for the whole four years and one little boy was in the first grade and the

other was in the third, and we went on the school bus together and came home together. I worked for my room and board for the four years of high school and when I first started the boys were tiny and of course she had to work all the time (they were her boys) so at night I would have to come home and take care of our supper and especially nights that she was doing dinner parties or something like that. Her name was Margaret Anderson and she lived on Stratton Road. We went on the bus and we had to take our lunches; and I had to pack the boys' lunch of course.

Then on the weekend, on Saturday, I would have to do the Saturday's work. Then I would walk to North Clarendon with my suitcase and my books. I walked the back road; it was quite a distance. I didn't mind it, because I couldn't do it any other way.

I felt that I was real fortunate to find such a wonderful place to stay. And to work for my room and board.

Then how did you get your grammar school?

That was in North Clarendon. They had a little one-room school with eight grades. Then I graduated from there. We were so used to do it. I just automatically turned off the others. We had a couple of different teachers. They all taught the whole eight grades.

THEY much have done all right. You got through high school all right.

Well, they seemed to. But I decided to take the Commercial course because that would be the simplest and the easiest. I knew I couldn't afford to go to college. I met my husband when I was a freshman and we were in high school through the whole four years. He worked in Springfield during the war -- at Fellows Gear Shaper. Then after I graduated we married and moved to Springfield where he worked at the war plant.

Then we had three children; two girls and a boy. And we didn't move from there until after my son was born in 1945, when we moved up here to Pittsford. Those plants were done by that time, but he came up and got a job here in some factory. We've been here in Pittsford ever since 1947 when we got this place. My children were lucky; they had a school right across the street, which was handy. We had a high school here in Pittsford, now it's changed to Otter Valley High School.

In high school, then, you didn't expect to go to college, or even to go to work. Everyone expected you to get married -- that was your role.

Well, it's what I did. I'm not sorry for anything.

But I'm just thinking of the differences.

I couldn't go to college. I knew it. My folks couldn't afford it. My husband and I keep busy, keep a garden, have a greenhouse. My husband was always able to do enough to support the family. He always had good work. For a long time he was with the Vermont Marble Company. But they had a metal division, a whole line of machines. I didn't have to work outside the home for money, buy I did. After my children left high school, I went to work at the bank, and their pay, of course, was minimal, but that was in Proctor. Then this time-keeper job came up at Callahan in production control so I applied for that and worked there for maybe eight years. All the children were gone by then. So I worked for the fun and to keep busy. And I think that when the children left home I missed them so much. When your last one leaves, you're just like well, am I worth anything to anyone -- am I good for anything? What good am I? So I just decided to go to work. I retired the year after my husband did, and it worked out fine. Because that business was sold -- it went to Florida. So it worked out beautifully for us.

Now you have this wonderful life in the country with these beautiful flowers and that marvelous vegetable garden out there.

We have everything to be thankful for. We have a beautiful camp up in Chittenden which

we go to once in a while -- not as often as I would like. I could live up there for the whole summer. We both belong to the Lion's Club, and they make the money to help people who aren't as fortunate as we are. Sight and hearing etc. Our children are all around. I have a daughter in Brandon, and my second daughter is right here across the street in a trailer. Then my son lives up on the Plains road which is parallel to that road.

Does he farm?

No, no, he went to Ohio and was instructed in meat cutting. So he was a meat cutter for quite a few years. And a couple of years ago he heard of an opening in this meat business where they sell the kind of meat that doesn't need to be refrigerated. Salted, cured, etc. And he had the whole of Vermont and parts of New York, so it's a wonderful job. They supply him with a truck and all his expenses. And he loves it. His income is much more than any of the rest of us ever thought of and he can still live out here in this beautiful place. He has a beautiful home. It's all very close family.

Tell me a little more about the depression times.

Well, we didn't live on the top shelf. We had the minimum necessities, you might say. And we didn't have electricity for quite a while. We were pretty far out. It was much better for me

where I was than if I had been at home. Of course I had to work all through my high school years, and she was so unhappy the first of my being there, she would set on a cot until late. Because she'd lost her husband. and had small children.

What fun did you have then, in high school?

Well, we had a commuter club. Where we had our meals. We were all very close, because we were all in the same situation. I had no time to stay and enjoy things after school, because I had to be home. I played basketball, that was my big fun, and I did go to one dance. I did have a boyfriend, but he was away in Springfield working. He was six years older than I was.

Where did you meet him then?

Well, it was really funny. One of my close friends used to go up to Chittenden where they had dances every Saturday night. And her mother lived right near the hall where the dances were held, so her mother would take the two of us up to the dancehall and of course we danced. So anyway, two or three months went by and it got to be that almost every Saturday night he'd be there. Then finally he said, "Could I come and pick you up?"

And I said I'd have to ask my folks because I was with my girl friend. Well, it took quite a little while before that took place. After my

folks found out who he was and where he came from and all that they didn't mind if I went. After that, we'd get one or another of our friends, couples, and we'd go out to a dance or on a weekend. Or sometimes we'd all go hiking, or we'd go to these little lakes and rent a boat and take a picnic lunch with us. There was a little island in one of these lakes where we could get out and have our lunch. So those are the fun things that I did.

Was he from Rutland, then?

He was from Pittsford, but he was working in Springfield.

Mainly you did go to a dance or two.

Well, we had the old-time callers for the square dances of course, and then they'd have a round dance. But I did see my family. I went home every weekend.

What about your holidays?

I went home from Christmas and Thanksgiving and of course we were a big family and my father grew most of what we had to eat, like vegetables, and my mother would can. She had probably 200 quarts of just corn and all of the rest of the vegetables and she used to go out and pick raspberries. We canned blueberries; that was our fruit for the winter. And we had apples, yes. We did and the way my father got that was that he cut Xmas trees at that time of the year for the people in the city

and he'd take them to New York. And the money he got from that he bought a barrel of apples. Which was Northern Spies. We had our fruit in the winter.

What did you do in the winter -- sports.

Not much. We did skate. When the water would flood over in some places in the fields, then we'd go and skate, and we had a good place where we could go and slide. It was hilly. In Stratton Road at Killington Ave. we would go to the top with a travis and slide down. There were a lot of the different kids there, my age, that I went to school with. I was allowed to go with them, but I'd just take the oldest boy with me. The mother would be home if I went.

Did she finally get less sad?

Yes, she did. She didn't remarry, though, until the year after I graduated. Married a man with the same name -- Anderson. We're very close and she's still living and hasn't changed a bit. She's just wonderful. She came to our anniversary. And we keep close touch with them. of course the boys and I are just like brother and sister, really. She's just like a second mother to me. She calls me her daughter.

You don't seem to have missed it much, but during your high school times, you couldn't do much.

I didn't feel sorry for myself; it was something beyond my control really. At different times -- at one time when I went to one of the dances at school, and Mrs. Anderson's sister had a dress that she had for a wedding or something, taffeta, so they fixed it so I could go to the dance. But to me I was out of style compared to what the other girls were wearing. I just felt like a little stuffed up, because I was so tall, and a lot of the boys weren't as tall. I think I was very conscious of my height. But I was asked several different times by boys in high school but nothing major of any kind. I already had my boyfriend.

Actually, if I had something new, I thought I was taking it away from my other brothers and sisters and I didn't want to have more than they had. I wore a pair of shoes until there were holes in the bottom of them, but I'd put some cardboard in them and no one knew the difference. But I was self-conscious. I thought everybody was looking at me because I wasn't dressed like the rest of them.

You say you had a sister and five brothers? What did they do for high school.

There were only two of them that went to high school. And they didn't go completely through. My sister went through Wallingford high school and we were the only ones who graduated. There were 13 years between the two

of us. I was the oldest one in the family. The boys just had to go out and work. They sort of got their education on the job, you might say.

It's a different world now, isn't it?

Oh, it certainly is. One big thing was, going back to school, with the young people now, a lot of them don't have respect for the elders and Rutland High School is so different from when we were there because we had a principal, and he could handle everybody. You know his secretary is still there, and my daughter is in the library at junior high, and they've let a lot of people go. They've had a lot of drug problems, and of course we didn't have anything like that. To me it's gone downhill since we were there. Because then everything was prim and proper as far as I was concerned and now they have some pretty funny performances that take place.

The curriculum has probably changed too.

I think it has. Yet I don't know how much. Children can't be managed these days like they did in our time. Maybe it's because of drugs; that could be.

Well, you knew your neighbors and I don't know if, even here, they know them now.

Well, there's a lot of people living in Pittsford that I don't know. It is getting to that point. Another thing with Rutland High School, many of the parents of these children are living on welfare and so the poor children aren't to

blame, perhaps, for what they do. Maybe they come to school without any breakfast, who knows? I think the school does try to give food if they think some child is not having any. But, it's an entirely different set-up. All this was in the depression, but we were too proud to do anything or to ask for any welfare of any kind.

And you raised your own food?

Yes, we did. These welfare people just have it handed to them. They aren't interested in anything that is work. They just like to receive.

Well, you know there is one thing that I think bothered me the most during this depression and that is one memory that I have. My mother was expecting my sister who was 13 years younger than I and one of my brothers needed some rubbers to wear. It was winter time and he didn't have anything to keep his feet dry. And at that time they had the Red Cross. And so someone suggested that she go there, that a lot of clothes were given. And she went but they didn't have anything that would fit and I felt so bad because she was so much in hope that she could get something for him. That was the only time that I know of that they ever asked for anything, with all their big family.

Another thing, these chambray shirts that they're charging such a price for now, that was the cheapest you could buy back then. My father wore those for work shirts. The boys had

dungarees, of course, well you were considered poor if you wore dungarees. But now-a-days they're so expensive and even with holes on purpose. The holes my brothers had were worn holes. There are a lot of changes. I have five grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. These are all my grandchildren on the top, and then as they were married I have pictures of them. They all come here at Christmas and their little great-grandchildren, they keep everyone in stitches. A wonderful family.

The only other thing I would like to ask. Did you have an allowance?

Money was something that I just didn't have. No, I never had extra money to spend; it just wasn't there to have. I think, during school at lunch time -- the time we were allowed for lunch -- maybe an hour or so after we ate lunch. Some of the girls would walk downtown and back, just for something to do, look in the windows. But we had fun -- money wasn't everything then.

Do you think of any old stories handed down? From your grandparents maybe?

Definitely. They lived in Shrewsbury -- mother's parents. Sometimes I would, before I started high school, I walked up to her place and stay over the weekend. It probably took about two hours. Quite a step. But it was always fun to go to my grandmothers, because

she had this great big pantry. And on Saturday was her bake day. She'd have these shelves with all kinds of cakes and pies and cookies and doughnuts. On the weekends, her friends would come and she'd fill their baskets with something to take home that she'd made. It was fun. And they lived on a farm; they were farmers. My grandfather was such a wonderful man. When we sat down to eat, he would go around and kiss each of us on the top of the head before he would sit down at the table. He'd used to go out in the summertime at night and pick up hay by the forkfuls so that he'd save the horses that extra trip the next day. So he'd do it that way. They were such wonderful people. I wish they could all be here.

Did they tell you any stories? Or old Vermont legends?

Well, not that I can remember. I think maybe on my father's side there were story tellers. But some of his stories weren't always true. They went hunting, though, and usually got a deer. My mother would can it. And he raised a pig; we had pork and beef and chicken. But there was always one thing I wanted to have and that was a turkey. Because we didn't have it, and to this day I can't get enough turkey. It seems to be one of the things I appreciate having. Of course when we were in grade school we had to carry our lunches. My mother did all the baking;

bread and everything. The other kids would have boughten bread and I used to feel sorry for myself that I didn't have boughten bread a few times. But since then I realized how fortunate I was. Nowadays, I'd love to have some of my mother's home made bread. She was a wonderful cook.

How far did you have to go to your grammar school?

We walked probably two miles. Of course when we were in first grade we were in Shrewsbury. My father would sometimes take us down. And again, that was a one-room school.

Any other ideas that you would like to put in here?

Well, something I haven't told you is what I have done since I have retired. I was called by one of the girls at court, superior court, asking if I would be interested in being a guardian ad litum. Which I knew nothing about. When these couples go to court and they are having these troubles between them and they can't decide what they are going to do about the children -- what is best for the children -- the judge appoints a guardian in litum. This person goes and talks with every person those children are with. Their school teacher, their mother and father (who are separated) . We had to go and see where they slept, and what the place was

like, safe and whatnot. When we checked through all this then we had to write a report and take it into the court which both lawyers and the judge could then read. It seems like it was investigating for the lawyers. And I've had some very interesting experiences with that.

You're supposed to be representing the children?

Yes, in court, and when they go to court. At first the children are a little bashful about it. They didn't say much about it at first. One little boy and girl in particular, when they would go to visit their father, their mother would bring them -- drop them off. And the first time they saw me, they walked to the corner of the room and looked out of the corner of their eye because the mother told them that I was going to try to take them away from her. And today, these little children call me, they invite me to their birthdays. They finally went with their father because that was where they should have been. Their mother had nothing. She was kind of on the bad side. They are so happy. The father built two rooms, one for each of them. But they still come and visit me. And this morning I had another call from another girl, who is 13 now. She called to tell me that her father had married again. And of course she'd been living with them. Every time she has to share her fun, you know.

Was she unhappy about this?

No, she was very happy about it. I told the husband this morning that it really makes you feel that you have done something worthwhile to have these children continue to call you and confide in you. Whether you have to go to court for them or not.

I'm going to slow down some, though, because I think there are other younger people who can do it. And I'm getting so that I can't trust my ankles and I can't trust my knees with the arthritis. So I have to be more careful. Sometimes you go into these places that are almost impossible to walk to, way up in the boonies, in the back woods. There are a lot of them. And one place I went to, they were just trying to build their own home and they had three little children. He started making problems and she had to take them away from there. He didn't work to help her. She just had to work and earn what she had. And in her place, for partitions, she had put up blankets or sheets. She was happy doing it. She knew she had to. She was to keep the children. He couldn't have them, which was good. Some of the hardships that the ladies go through it's hard to believe. One family were taken into the battered women's shelter. So I've been there.

Were the children battered too?

Well, they were there -- yes, they were. There was a mother and three children in one room. Two of the children slept on a bunk and then she and the small one slept on, like a couch. It was very small and they had to help clean up the kitchen and clean up after themselves. The mother had to work. At that point they were being helped by welfare, I think.

What did they ever do back then, before welfare?

Well, people were just too proud. They just stayed poor is my only way of explaining it. I never felt that we suffered. But there is a lot of love in our family and I think that is one of the main things in life, really. My folks would have just been too proud to ask for help. I do remember they did have commodities, like flour. I know they, my mother did get such commodities like that from the government, that they were handing out to large families. I could hear her many times, scraping the bottom of the flour barrel. She had a big barrel and her cooking board on top. And making biscuits for supper, you could hear her scraping the barrel. We didn't have a bathroom; we had an outhouse. Saturday night was bath night for everybody and we had this big wash tub and each one at a timea would take a turn, in the kitchen before the fire. Everybody would stay

out until their turn. Mrs. Anderson, in Rutland, had all the facilities; a bathroom and electricity. That was another reason why it was nice to be there. Really it was a pleasure for me because I had these niceties that I didn't have at home. Electricity and running water. We had to carry our own water into the house.

Where did it come from?

A spring. It was tough in the winter, and my mother had to carry the water, of course. Bring it in and put it in a big tub. My father was working, of course. In the winter times, a lot of time he'd would cut wood and sell it. We heated with wood, of course. It was a little chilly around the edges sometimes, especially around the windows. But we didn't mind. This is the one thing -- all my brothers were just growing up, of course. When Herb started to come to pick me up. And in the winter with the big wood stove, they'd been out in the day with these leggings and heavy wool socks. And high top boots or moccasins, so what they would do was to undress their feet and put the socks on their boots and make a circle right around the stove. Well, when I knew that Herb was coming to pick me up, I would take and put them where they couldn't be seen. But this was how they picked on me.

What did your brothers do, then, without a high school education?

Well, one of my brothers is a well-digger. And his boys went in with him when they got older. And then my other brother, one, worked at the J. & L in Springfield. Jones and Lampson. He went to work there and another brother is a mechanic who repairs farm machinery. Something they learned on the job, of course. And then two of my brothers went into the service. But the others were -- they all came back to Vermont. I lost one brother to a car accident and another brother had cancer and he died a couple of years ago. That was a very sad thing. I hope someday that they can find something to cure it.

Do you know how many miles it is from Stratton Road in Rutland to North Clarendon?

It's quite a little step. Of course, I went the back roads so that might have made it shorter. I didn't go down to Main Street. I cut right up through bedbug hollow. That was one place that I hated to go through. There was a covered bridge and all of the people that lived there were of the same family. They were kinda of drinkers and kind of scary. But they called it bedbug hollow. That was one place I hated to go through. They have a new bridge now. It's on what they called the Cold River Road.

We always used to go down to the Cozy Diner in North Clarendon after treasure hunts.

Yes, that was a place we went to. I used to go down -- they had a swimming pool in back. Before we started high school, we used to go down there to swim.

Nobody else mentioned outhouses, yet I know Edith Cook (who won't talk to me for some reason) had one.

My grandmother, who lived in Cuttingsville, had an outhouse. The one thing that she used to do, this time of the year, --there was this kind of plant that grew; it was sweet, sickeningly sweet. I can't tell the real name of it, but she used to pick it and hang it up inside so it would smell better in there. Every time I think about that, I remember that sickening smell.

We have some wonderful birds. My grandchildren have great fun watching them -- when they were smaller. I had a funny experience with one of my birds. It was a red pole warbler. I happened to look out at the feeder and a squirrel was eating on it. And the little redpole came, and he made a lunge for her and caught her. And here he hangs on with his back feet, hanging onto her, so I went out and he dropped her when I came out. I put her in a bird cage and kept trying to bring her back, and of course, I put water and food in there. The first couple of days, she didn't pay any attention to it, but then she started to eat and soon she could fly up and around in the cage. It was in

the winter, so I let him out on the porch in the cage. So in the Spring when it was warmer, I let her go out of the cage on the porch. But she'd go back in her cage at night. When the day came that I figured she was well enough to go, I opened the door and stood there for her to leave. She got as far as the door and just fluttered; I guess she just could not believe that she could go straight. When she figured it out she made one lunge through the door. And I could always tell when she came back because she had one feather that was twisted where she'd been injured. So when he came to feed I always knew she was there.

In the summertime we would go swimming. I would stay home and I worked before I went to high school. I worked for Dr. Hannrahan. His wife was usually sort of sickly. That's why she needed the help. I did some cleaning and some of the cooking. And I had to serve the food at the tables. They had their fingerbowls, when they had company, and I sat at a little table in the kitchen, but I had to bring my plate in to be served. And those two toys, you know, they were just full of the devil I guess, they would just snicker. Or try to grab my plate or something. It made me feel belittled I guess. I think a lot of those feelings stick by you. They come back to memory. We don't have any such thing as that.

Well, I used to admire the girls who were cheer leaders. I used to wish I could be one. I was too tall, and I didn't try out for it. But I always admired them. They were so pretty with their outfits on.

I remember Beverly Melen, she was so pretty. She was a neat girl. Well, I think by not having all those things, that I made it possible for my children were going to. They were going to have the things that I didn't. And they did. They participated in everything that they wanted to and they were all state band, and they had a lot of different things. Herbie was in sports. I used to have a violin, and I only played by ear, because my uncle used to have a banjo. He used to come and see us and he'd play his banjo for a while and then he'd play his violin. Those were the different things we enjoyed. He was my father's brother. He never took lessons either. And he played for dances. He was good and they'd get a good piano player and they could play for square dances.

I would go out on weekends to dances with Herbie, my boyfriend. I think I worked babysitting, a lot of that.

Who were some of the other commuters?

I can't remember a name -- oh yes, Webster was in our class. Annabelle, and she married a Levak. Recently I've seen her in -- both of our mothers were in nursing home. We used to

see each other. She lives in Brandon, I think. They were at High Pond for many years. Andrew Levak was her husband. Of course, a lot of our classmates have died -- quite a number of them. One of my closest friends was Kitty Hudson. After she graduated she went into the service. I didn't see or hear from her in years. But in later years, I did. We got together a lot, mainly because she had to be in White River. She had cancer but she wasn't so fortunate; she died.

Is that E. Irma Hudson?

Yes it is. Elgia. She has been dead since this past year. She was in White River almost a year, and when she came out she had to have a place where she could manipulate around. She had a whole hip removed -- bone cancer. The Lions have a place where they have a flea market where they used to rent places to people. Another money-making job that we do. She used to sit up there -- she was a great collector of buttons, the kind with names on them. And she had all sorts of old post cards. She always tried to get me to come and be down there on a Saturday and I never went. After Herb was in the Lions, I'm a third vice president now. We just had an auction the other night.

And another thing that has been a big part of my life is Eastern Star. It's the women's part of

the Masons. We joined at Brandon. And now my oldest daughter has joined. I've been a member for quite a few years. I've been president of the PTA and other things for the children on they're way up through. I think my life has been very happy. I got good marks in high school and liked all my teachers.

I think you don't get to know a lot of people in High School because you're all taking one of the three different curriculums. I remember you, though, but we were never close in high school.

We even had different teachers, too.

Right. There were so many of us too. It was a big school, really. Mrs. Anderson's brother was in our class and his last name is Meyer. He was in my home room the four years of high school. Because of the alphabet.

What was your name in high school, then?

Rabtoy. But all the time in high school I was in the same home room with Meyer. And we hardly paid any attention to one another. He used to come with all the other brothers to her house (Mrs. Anderson). We have since become close with our children and grandchildren and our great-grandchildren. I am going to see my great grandchild play ball while he will be there to see his grandchildren. They are on the same team. And we enjoyed the reunion together.

You don't mind that I use this material?

No, no, it's all true.

I wish you a lot of luck.

Talking about teachers, Mrs Willis -- well, one day I was in the girl's room and I don't remember how it all came about, and I can't remember now what they were doing -- smoking or what -- but, anyhow, I was in the bathroom and so I got sent to the principal, because I was one of those in there. But she went to bat for me. She called me to her desk and she asked me if I had had any part in it, and I said no, I didn't. I just happened to be going to the bathroom. So she went to bat for me with the principal. She was the gym teacher of course. And I just loved gym, the fun part of high school, I thought. During high school I didn't have the chance to go to football games etc. but now, when my grandchildren are playing at Rutland High School, I went to the football games. But it was a little hard at times, because I was afraid they were going to get hurt.

Glass Doors

Some houses
have oval glass doors
that open into rooms with broken walls.
Brick fragments spill from old fireplaces;
stuffed animal toys block stairways, but
no children sing here.

Old people move slowly in wheelchairs
faces scarred, flesh peeling under
filmed eyes.

Do not peer closely into such houses.
All the windows reflect familiar faces
'
manipulated, but restive
behind oval glass doors.

Joanne Willcox

I wouldn't advise any of my kids or grandkids to do what I did. (Seventh and eighth grades at once and then go on.) But my family wanted me to go to boarding school, but I didn't want to. I had a horse. I wouldn't leave the horse to go to boarding school. In boarding school I might not have been allowed, as immature. I doubt that I was really immature.

Well, starting with statistics, high school.

Did you go to college?

Yep. I went, again, because I was bound and determined that I would be someplace where there would be horses and riding.

But did your family encourage you to go to school?

Oh, sure. It was understood that college was in the schedule. My brothers had gone to West Point and that was not an expense for my mother -- my dad had died when I was nine or ten. So college was going to be possible for me and I planned on it in high school. Because my mother's sister was going to be able to pay for tuition.

But your mother was in the legislature.

Not until later. Not for a long period of time. After I got out of Rutland High School I went to Virginia to a junior college called Virginia Intermont in Bristol, VA for two years. And do you remember a girl in Rutland named Dinky

Reynolds? Lived up near--she was in my class but not a Rutland girl. Her family had moved to Rutland so she was in my Senior Class. Graduated. She went to the same college. We weren't close friends when we went there and we weren't close friends when we were there but we went down on the train together.

That was for two years and it was known that I could go to college for four years -- that my aunt was going to be able to pay for tuition. It was ridiculous to go to a two-year college, but I went because there were horses there. There were other schools, but I wanted to go to a new place -- out of New England. My family wanted me to go to Middlebury and I was not particularly interested in going to Middlebury. But I ended up majoring in languages, with guidance from Rutland High School. Then I transferred to the Univ. of New Hampshire. So I graduated in 1943 from the U. of New Hampshire, but in February because it was during the war and classes were accelerated and I had gone all through the previous summer to summer classes. In February, recruiters were coming from everywhere to get any warm bodies that they could to work in the war industries. They were looking for any engineers they could find, so a few of the boys who were engineers deferred their service and worked in some of these companies as engineers. Pratt,

Whitney in WEst Hartford was recruiting in New Hampshire and a few of the girls and I went to work at Pratt & Whitney as Industrial Engineers. That's what the term was. My Major was French and Spanish so I guess I had more courses in Spanish so I guess my degree was in Spanish. Anyway, I ended up on a drawing board doing drafting and the dept. that I was in was called Installation Development and its specific duty was to design the engine are of the aircraft so that it would accomodate the Pratt & Whitney engine. I wasn't designing anything, I was just drafting according to instructions.

After the first year a young man who was waiting to be called into the service in another department and I became acquainted and engaged. Then he went overseas, and the next year we were married and I promptly got pregnant and came home instead of staying at work. After we were married I went to work for an architect for a short period of time. Then when Mel went overseas, the time frame escapes me a bit, but it was in 1944 and I had a premature baby that did not live, but by then Mel was overseas. In the Philippines, I think. He was in Japan. Then I stayed in Vermont; my mother was alone and she did not like to go to Florida so I stayed with her that winter. That was the winter of 44 or 45 and worked in Rutland for the winter months. That was for just

one year. I was all set to go to Japan because had signed up for the army of occupation which many had to enlist for a certain number of months. But he changed his mind and decided to come back. Before he had gone overseas, we had bought 140 acres of land up here. In Plymouth. He was as idealistic as I and he thought the two of us could manage this property and he didn't know where he was going to work, and I didn't know where he was going to work. But he came back in the middle of the summer and by October by the time of the first snow storm we decided that this wasn't the thing, and his father was very anxious for him to come back to Hartford and go to work for him.

His father was a CPA and at his father's insistence, he had had a lot of courses in accounting, economics and things like that. But he never would have become a CPA. This was not what he wanted to do. But he did go to work for his father. He had gone to Harvard and Harvard business school and finished, just barely, before the war. Then he had water on the knee, so his enlistment was held up for six or eight months. Those were the months that he worked at Pratt & Whitney while I was there. Then, when his knee was all right, he went to Ft. Devens.

So, now we are back in Hartford with him working for his father, and Stephen was born in 1948.

How many children did you have?

Three. I wasn't working when I had the children. We lived for a while in West Hartford and apartments were very hard to find, and we found a garage apartment in Manchester and so we lived in that garage apartment when both Stephen and Nancy were born, 1948 and 1950. We were a little tight. Then we bought a house in Manchester. Mel and his father were not compatible working together, it really didn't work. And Mel was very unhappy working for his father. So he switched jobs and worked for a man who was a developer. He did a great deal of building. In Connecticut and in Vermont and on down the coast. And it was called Green Mansion Construction at the time. And Mel worked with his controller or his financial officer of the company. But during his entire life he was never satisfied with his job. He always wanted to be president. He always wanted to be something he wasn't in the company. He was striving to advance himself but with a certain amount of discontent because he didn't want to be in finance in the first place.

He really wanted to work for a newspaper. And be a reporter, or write books or poetry or

something. He was in a slot that he wasn't happy with.

Then you had the third child?

Not right then. His discontent was -- first with his father's CPA company, and then with this company, which wanted to cut financial corners, which he never wanted to do. His approach to life was that you don't do anything illegal, and you don't want to do it for others who ask you to. So he left this company. And he went to work for the Taft school, which is a boys preparatory school in Watertown, Conn. as the treasurer -- the financial officer of the school. The business manager. And Ted was born in Waterbury, Conn. in 1955. The boys are seven years apart. So we were there almost 15 years. And during this period of time Mel would like very much to have become headmaster of the school. Again wanting to get away from that area of finance. He was not successful in his attempt to get a job as headmaster. He interviewed as far away as California. But he did go from the Taft school to the American Field Service, which is a student exchange program in New York City. An outgrowth of the Ambulance Corps. Some of the men coming back devised the idea of young people getting to know each other on both sides of the ocean, that these kind of wars would not happen. Mel was treasurer of that for

Then you lived in New York?

Nope. We lived in Westport, Conn. and he commuted by plane. And I'm trying to think of when I started teaching school. It was in Watertown when he was working for the Taft school. And Ted started kindergarted and I started teaching.

You didn't have the problem that some had of expecting to stay home and raise the children?

No, I had said many times that there was a teacher shortage and that they were hiring warm bodies off the street. Because I always thought it was wrong for the school dept. to hire people such as me in the public schools without them having refresher courses. It had certainly been over ten years that I had studied languages. I could still read French and Spanish but oral doesn't stay with you very long and I hadn't had any requests that I take refresher courses. But my teaching started in a little private day school, teaching French to sixth graders and even the little children, and then the seventh and eighth and then into the ninth and tenth. It was a little Episcopal school in Waterbury called St. Marguerite's. You didn't need education courses; you just needed a college degree and even for that I was hired without any insistence on refresher courses. Nobody knew who could teach foreign

languages. But I was hired. Then when Mel went to American Field Services in New York, and we moved to Westport, I taught in another private school. A country day school; still teaching French and a couple of years of Latin. So when we left Westport we came back to Manchester and Mel went to work for the same company that he was disenchanted with before. Then I started teaching in public schools in Manchester. So during all those years I was teaching full time, but the private school that Mel worked at had the same vacations etc. that I did so it worked out.

Then by the time we came back to Manchester, Ted was off at boarding school, Nancy was in college and Steven was in college. Actually I taught at Somerson, not Manchester, for 13 or 14 years. Somewhere along the way, I was teaching at Somerson, we bought another house and I think that was in 1969. Then our marriage started to fall apart and we were separated for -- but Mel and I never should have gotten married in the first place, Jean. He was a complete extrovert, I am not. He wanted to be in the middle of the dance floor -- and a show-off. I just died. I never wanted to be an exhibitionist. I was often very uncomfortable. I just never knew how to play properly, I guess. Anyway, there were many areas where we were unsuited. No question.

The kids were grown up then, through college, and Nancy was getting married. Mel had moved into an apartment. He was still working for the same company, but he was seeing a lady down on Long Island Sound and I guess we were -- I finally ended up suing him for divorce but we never did anything about it.

We kept going off to the side. I didn't feel that the financial settlement that he was willing to agree on was fair, proper. We never had any great fights about it but we never did get a divorce. But I think we were apart about eight or nine years and sold the house and I moved into a condominium. Then he left the Manchester company and he became the treasurer for the Hartford College for Women. He liked that job very much, and I'm still teaching, and the kids were most unenchanted with their father during this time. Ted, who I think was 16 at the time, especially.

I came back to Vermont to visit but not to stay for any length of time. My mother had died in 1948 when Ted was born. She died in Florida. The big house, at the corner, my brother had bought -- the one who had gone to Westpoint. In his second marriage he had acquired three stepchildren and then he and his wife had three more children, and Jimmy had one from his first wife. His first wife died. There were seven children, so Jimmy knew he would have to go

back overseas, to Japan, and he wanted a place for Francis to take care of the children. But then they got a divorce, and Francis was over here with those seven children, pretty much to herself.

You had a sister and two brothers?

No, a brother and two sisters. But this brother was nearer my own age. So my mother was not living, then Francis sold this big house over here, and I was busy with the children and teaching and I very seldom got up to Vermont. Sometimes I'd get up to see Marty (Temple) and in the summertime I might stay here at this red house.

When Mel and I were first married, when Min and Dale was a baby, maybe Mel and I visited Marty and Lee on party weekends. I remember bringing Steven in a car bed to Marty's house. But we had started going to Lake Winnepasaukee for summer vacation. Anyway, I bought a condominium and was working for Hartford College for Women. It was a great condominium, had huge closets. I wish this place did. I just goofed on the closet space.

Did you design this place?

No, it never got designed, it just got built. The bedrooms are much too small. But anyway, Mel came back and started bringing his laundry and pretty soon he moved back in. Said he'd

never see this woman any more. But he couldn't do that. So my kids thought I was terrible for that. Then Mel got an inoperable brain tumor, probably about the first of the year. He didn't tell me about a few times that he had fallen. He died in April, he was in the hospital -- I think it was diagnosed in February so he was in the hospital in March and three weeks in April. No, no, Mel went into the hospital in April and died in June. I was mixed up. I came home only one weekend during that time.

Then, Steven is living in Golden Colorado, Nancy is married and moved down to Mystic on Long Island Sound, and Marty appeared, was keeping Monk informed as to how Mel was. And Monk is a kind, gentle person and he called a few times. But I had moved into a residence for families of seriously ill patients at Mass General, right near the hospital. Monk called to express sympathy a few times and once asked if I could come down and go out for dinner, thinking it would be a break for me -- and it was. He drove down once and took me out to dinner, that was after his wife had died (Monks) and there was never any thought at all that Mel could get well. They did a biopsy that proved it was cancer and inoperable. I asked for the report but in all the confusion I never did get it. But it's all on the death certificate.

For the most part, he had no pain at all, and could not speak or remember. But before long I was back in my condominium and I had a leave from school and they had a long-term substitute. I had signed my contract to go back that September but before the summer was over, Monk was coming down a lot and I broke my contract in August -- They didn't care because I was high on the pay scale. I had taught 25 years and was in senior high school and the kids were awful, and I'm not sure I could have gone back to it. I was burned out. This was the summer of 1985.

I found myself coming to Vermont, first insisting on staying at Marty's, but skiing with Monk and going back to Conn. and got the condominium ready to rent. So the next summer I was here all summer. Anyway, I owned these five acres in Plymouth, since way back in the 50's from my same aunt. It was kind of a wedding present, and I always wanted to do something with it. So, somewhere along the way, when I learned that I would get more social security money than I would have got on my own, I had enough income with some IRAs, it became possible for me to build this place and retire.

Now you're married to Monk and everything is great.

He had good retirement, not exceptional, but we keep saying how lucky we are.

Now, we have a problem -- you have to try to remember way back when. You did say that you did both 7th and 8th in one year.

I did Lincoln School, I lived in Rutland. I was born in Montpelier and my father was superior court judge and then was appointed Supreme Court Judge of Vermont. While he was in superior court, we moved to Rutland and I was about two and a half. Lived on Holly St., parallel to Grove St. I went to Lincoln school for the first, second, third, and part of the fourth grade; then my Dad became ill and could no longer work and we all moved over here to Plymouth -- my mother, father, brother and I and my older sisters were off in -- one in nurses's training and one in dental hygenist school in NYC. Then my mother, and I and Ginny rented an apartment so Ginny could graduate with her class in Rutland (that was before). And I went to school for the fifth grade. But I had gone to the rest of the fourth grade in Plymouth. Then I went to longfellow school for the fifth, and Ginny graduated from high school and we all came back here and I went here for sixth, seventh and eighth --The 7th and 8th I did in one year.

I boarded with the Eliot's in that yellow house right on the corner near the high school

my Senior year in high school. They had kids and a new baby. I don't think I was any help at all. I was a Freshman.

That Freshman year, the rest of us were still in eighth grade? But you still knew Marty real well.

Yes, from Lincoln school, and Marian Shaw, Bernice Smith.

Even though you were a year ahead, then, you still hung out with our group?

Yes, even more than with Betty Jean Lyons, and Marian Perry. I can't even remember the names of most of my own classmates. And Monk was in Marty's class. So actually we went through high school. I was living, a Freshman in Rutland High School, living with a family, on South Main St. by the park, my Sophomore year I was really living at the Temple's most of the year at Marty's home. I always went back to Plymouth on weekends. My mother came and picked me up.

When we got older, we came out to Plymouth and play around with you.

Oh, yes, a lot. Then my Junior year, because Mrs. Temple was not very well that year, I went to Mt. Vernon, N.Y. and lived with my sister and her husband -- Dotty. Her husband was Charles Yates and he was a lawyer in New York City with Metropolitan. And they had an apartment in Mt. Vernon, N.Y. and he

commuted to New York from there. Dotty, up until that time, had been a dental hygienist, in NYC, but that winter she was going to have a baby, so I don't think anybody thought I'd be much help with a brand new baby, but they had a second bedroom, and the baby was born in March, so most of the school year I had that second room. It worked out well. I spent my Junior year down there. Then I came back for my senior year, and that was the year that I lived with the Eliots.

That was Hugh and Ruth and their mother?

Yes, I just had a room there, and I used to go to the Bassa's -- they were kitty-corner from the Eliots. I was supposed to take my meals with the Bassa's. Which would be supper -- Jean Bassa and Donald and her mother. There wasn't any cafeteria in the high school. I can remember walking often down the street and getting a milkshake at Shangraw's. I don't think I wanted to go to the Bassa's for lunch. Didn't we go home for lunch? There was time for us to go home for lunch. Because there wasn't a cafeteria. But I was supposed to go over there for supper. But more often than not, I'd go up to Marty's for supper. Anyhow, I spent an awful lot of time with Marty. And all this time I was here in my senior year, I was going "steady" with Monk. My junior year in New York, I

remember seeing him when Marty came to visit me at my sister's and he stayed at the Y.

We and Monk went to the World's Fair, I think -- someplace.

Monk says that I dumped him the summer of my senior year. To this day he really believes this. But I don't really believe it. He thinks I was interested in another man whose mother was a friend of my mothers. I can't even remember this young man's name -- I think Eddie. That I didn't see Monk the summer of my senior year. But Monk was still spending his summers being a counselor at a camp down in Connecticut. He wasn't around anyway. Then he repeated his senior year (for football). He still has hurt feelings about the summer after I graduated.

I don't have a good memory of that summer.

Did you go to all the dances and other things at school then?

Sure, sure. Some time along the way I went to the freshman prom with Dick Jones. That was my first date in high school. I'm sure his mother and my mother cooked up, because they were good friends. And I remember somewhere along the way going with Sonny Perkins. But I don't remember when it was. It might have been later in the freshman year. But he had a car, so it couldn't have been -- maybe sophomore. I

went to some dance, I think, with Larry Matthews, but I'm not positive.

What about after school activities, if you were living in town?

No I would have been with my class. I did field hockey, baseball and basketball and tumbling. Someone, Margaret Holland, Irene Hoder, too. My senior year I was the captain, but I don't know for sure.

Were you with us on Halloween, the time we got in trouble?

June McKee was there and Monk and Jackie Martin and I was there. Jackie used to walk Marty home sometimes when Monk would walk me home. He was just a good friend, though. One thing, when my family moved out here from Montpelier, we lived on Edgerton Street for a while. Monk said next door to him, but it wasn't really next door but right on that street. Monk thinks that it was the same time that you lived on Edgerton Street. He goes around telling everyone that we knew each other since we were two. (Laughter). We used to play together on Edgerton Street. Of course his mother was probably pushing him in a carriage and my mother was probably pushing me in one two.

We used to play kick the can too, but up on Holly street.

What about any effects you had from the depression?

Well, somehow or other I have a memory of my mother's paying five dollars a week for me to live at Temples -- room and board, I think my sophomore year. Whether that means anything or not, I don't know.

Do you remember panhandlers coming around to the door?

I don't remember that. I know that we used to go to the Bridgewater woolen mills to get material for a couple of skirts to have wool skirts to wear to school in the fall. My mother was not a seamstress, but there was a woman here in Plymouth who was. And I remember distinctly that I didn't care for the way she sewed skirts. The zippers were always bumpy -- always. Marty's mother sewed beautifully. I can remember something about Wilson's shoes -- Marty and I used to always wear hightops, but that was before high school. Soft, soft leather with kind of a moccasin toe that came up the side and our wool socks were pulled up and folded over the top. This was winter.

Did you ever get an allowance?

The only money that I remember was my grandfather giving my brother and me ten cents every time we filled the woodbox, and I was always interested in nickels and dimes to go over to the store and get either an ice cream

cone or a milky way. And I was always filling the wood box, but I don't think I saved my money; I think I used it. I was always trying to outdo my brother to fill the woodbox to get the money. Those were during the depression years and my grandfather was in his eighties. But I certainly didn't save my money.

I am horried at my grandchildren's allowance -- the amount that it is. Because if I had any small change given me, it certainly was a small amount. One of my grandchildren is eight and one is eleven and they get a lot. But Johnny has a paper route now and I think it is twenty-six dollars a week for his paper route down there in Conn. He has over eight hundred dollars in the bank. This eleven year old? I can't believe it. The parents are divorced. The eleven year old said to his mother, "I have some money in the bank if you need it." The father just walked out. The mother stopped working when the children were born.

Could she go back? Did she have an education?

She graduated from Harvard. Cum Launa. But she's gone back and got all her credits to teach, but there are no teaching jobs this fall.

I don't remember an allowance, but I'm sure I had an allowance of some kind.

Did you ski?

Yes, but really not very well. I skied when Karl Acker from Switzerland was there, that was at Pico. My brother and I used to ski on the hills -- pasture, but all that's grown up now. I probably cross-countryed -- just herring bone up and skiing down. They had a rope tow at Pico. I just think there was very much money for me to go skiing. I'm sure you had to pay something to go.

Money was tight, wasn't it?

Yes. I don't think I ever had a season ticket. I don't have very many memories of skiing.

Remember my 16th birthday, and everybody was over here at Plymouth for a picnic and stay over. There were three of us in the front seat and you were sitting right next to me and the car tipped over and the first thing you said was, "Turn off the ignition so we don't start a fire." I was so impressed with your presence of mind at fifteen. And do you remember that the frosting hadn't hardened on the cake and Sally was carrying it in the back and we ended up with frosting all over the roof of my mother's car. That white fluffy frosting. My recollection of it is that we were on the road ready to turn up into the state park, and there was a sand pit on the side of the road, and this dump truck came out of the sand pit in front of me and the brakes on my mother's car apparently were not the greatest. I don't think they completely failed,

but response and the suddenness of his coming out, left than perfect brakes, and in order to keep from hitting that truck that backed out of the sand pit, I swerved to the left and over there was soft shoulder which was what all the work was doing, was widening the road at that spot. But it caught the wheels and it went over.

I remember my mother was seeing a man who was a lieutenant at the CCC camp. The wife of the captain at the CCC camp was boarding at our house. The big house, while her husband was on duty. She and her seven or eight year old son were boarding at the house and they became friends, and they introduced my mother to the officer at the camp and so my mother called either the captain or the lieutenant immediately on hearing about the car turning over. And the CCC crew came up and righted the car -- do you remember? And I could still drive it and we went right on to the picnic. We just didn't have as much frosting on the cake.

Who else was in that car -- you, me, Marty, Sally, and who else?

Maybe Carolyn Brehmer and Suzanne Woodfin -- maybe.

Did you work on the Red and White?

I don't remember that I did. I remember that I was home room treasurer one time and I was in the government. I always felt bad that I

wasn't National Honor Society, but I was away my junior year.

The Yearbook says you were on the Red and White sophomore year and you were a class officer and on the Ski Club.

I have no recollection of what I did on the Red and White. Blair Brown was editor.

Can you think of anything else?

We always were -- Halloween in Rutland, Thanksgiving I remember being in New York a couple of times with an uncle and aunt who lived there. Christmas, always here. Summer vacations either in Rutland or, I remember a couple of weeks at North Hero with the same aunt and uncle whom I remember visiting in New York.

Marty's father was mayor at the time we were picked up on Halloween. My mother was in the legislature. I think it was the year of our 5th grade, I think.

Shirley Morris -- I vaguely remember her -- her father ran the Morris Inn.

Is it all right for me to use this information on this tape?

Okay, yes.

Never did I take dancing lessons but we went to dancing class at night, ballroom dancing. This diary says, "went to Jitterbug contest with Albert (Monk) and had a date with

him afterward. 1938 -- fall of 1938 was my senior year, because I graduated in 1939.

We had Junior Women's Club in the evening. Do you remember Junior Women's Club? Up to Marty's afterward, supper. Started to Pico for skiing but the road was too slippery -- went to the show instead -- Bob and Marty, Monk and I. Cold out. Home after and copied essay -- back to Eliot's afterward. Talisman meeting. I was on the Talisman, yearbook committee. Extra meeting of scouts at Marian's. Worked on program. Albert (Monk) walked home with me. Stayed out and talked a while, then worked on essay. Almost every day something with Albert in this senior year. Downstreet afterward with Albert. We used to get a coke at Shangraw's -- do you remember doing that?

Yes, but we went to McClellands -- maybe because I was going with Charlie McClelland at that time.

Oh, here it is. October 31st -- school, Halloween. Went out with the whole gang. When down to the old Stern's house and got caught by the police. Had fun at the station. Next day, went to a Sunday School party that night. Went to the Freshman Reception, had fun. So it was my freshman year and your eighth grade year.

Next year -- went to Junior Women's Club. Dance in the evening with Sonny Perkins. Went

to church with Hugh (Eliot). Climbed Pico in the afternoon with Graham Collins and Hugh & Jean. Had fun. Jean in the evening for supper. Home early. Oct. 1938-39.

Remember the hike on Pico where I cut my arm?

Yes. Monk and I ran down ahead to get a car.

Veronica Fish Solomka

I went to Lincoln Elementary School. We lived on Lincoln Avenue just a couple of houses up from the school. It was the usual elementary school experience. At that time, the ones that lived around were our friends. David Miller lived closest to us, Gage Miller, there was a whole group. I didn't have a lot of close friends because my mother did not allow me to. We were children who were brought up very close to home. Therefore, people more or less had to come to us. My mother did not allow us to be away. I was confined pretty much to the premises. I had an older brother and an older sister. A sister quite a bit older than I and a brother, believe it or not, who was only 51 weeks older than I. So naturally we became very very close. So that I grew up mostly tomboy, but at the same time, on that rare occasion when I might want to play dolls, he would. On rainy days, because we had a playroom up in the attic, but the rest of the time I was playing chucks and boys games and things like that. We also had a playroom built like under our back porch with sand in there where we could play. So it was wonderful. I had a built-in companion, so I didn't become as isolated as you might think I would have.

That kind of upbringing affects you. It really and truly does. Very early on, I must have been aware of families, how they functioned, and of where I was in this whole arena. Barbara Jones just lived up at the top of the hill, I think on the corner of Melrose; Marian Shaw lived just down on Kingsley Avenue, and though I knew them and played with them and was friendly with them at school, it wasn't that I could run those streets like they could. They were a lot freer to come and go. That affected, naturally, my feelings and very early on I knew what my goal in life was going to be. I knew before fourth grade. Which was, "I was never going to be like my mother." My mother was the most powerful mentor, negatively, and I just felt that I was not going to be like this.

This was just instilled on my brain because I was seeing what everyone else was doing and I was not allowed to do it. I felt my mother was very controlling, and at the same time, very dependent on making sure that everybody in her family, she was controlling -- but in a dependent way. If we needed her because we were young, evidently she also needed us, for whatever reasons. I learned this within the arena, plus I was a tremendous reader. Because I was reading before I went to school.

She didn't mind your reading though?

Oh, no. And because I read more than I should probably, in comparison with playing with your own peer group. Then I know I got into older books much quicker than other young people did. I don't know why I went this way; I did not read fiction. I read all non-fiction and I had my own choice of reading material. The house was full of books because my Dad was a great reader. Also non-fiction.

What did he do?

Well, he had, well my father, who was H.G. Fish and Hardy Fish were painting contractors. And he was also a great reader and a great sportsman, fishing and hunting in its finest sense. He was an environmentalist before they coined the word. He taught me, I think, my love of nature. A great deal of my religion is based on the love of nature that God has given us. I look out these windows and from there, those mountains, come my strength. And this has been my strength since I have been in my early twenties. We bought this place the summer we got engaged.

Then, after the sixth grade?

I went right on to Meldon. I was still as confined and pretty well into high school too.

You didn't get to go to those Meldon dances?

No, no. Perhaps because I was younger than most of the people -- most of my peer group.

Because I started in my Senior year at only sixteen years of age. I started early. Actually I was confined but I started doing quite a few things in high school. I started playing hockey and things like that, but as far as the social scene was concerned, no. I was not allowed to date at all until my senior year in high school. I had my time that I had to be home from school. When other people went downstreet and they could shop and everything -- oh, I'll never forget, when everybody was able to work at Woolworths during Christmas vacation, I was not allowed to. And I used to think "Oh, what fun that would be."

You couldn't go down to the drugstores or anything?

No, I had my time that I had to be home from school. Of course, I could walk to all of my schools. But at the same time, Meldon was kind of far away in the winter. My Dad transported us a lot. Same in high school. Lincoln was closer, on the corner of Melrose. Remember Barbara Woods on the corner of Melrose and Lincoln? Her dad owned the Percy Wood store. She would be older. I was just a couple of houses north. Let's see, I was just three houses up from Melrose Avenue going North on Lincoln.

You must have been close to me. I was 141 Lincoln Avenue. You know where the little brook went under the street?

Give me a cross street.

Well, the closest was North Street where David Miller lived. You must have been really close to the school then.

Oh very close. It took me all of two minutes to get there.

You didn't work, then, in high school?

Oh no, I was not allowed to. But I did some sports. I was very friendly with some other people, that I had learned to be friendly with through my parents social group. You probably remember Ruth Clifford. Her father was Lewis Clifford.

I remember Frannie Clifford.

Oh, Frannie was a very good friend of mine. On Elm street.

She's in Braintree now. I tried and tried to get her. She said she would do a tape for me but she must have been on vacation. I couldn't find her.

I became friends with those kids, but they went to Mount St. Joseph. She and Carol, & Ruthie Clifford. But Frannie went to Rutland High. So two very close friends went to MSJ when I was going through high school.

Was some of your mother's keeping you so close due to religion at all?

No, no. It was just her makeup. My father didn't object because my mother was very controlling.

What about your holidays during high school?

Actually I can't even think of any Halloween that was outstanding. Christmas was all right. We went to grandparents or relatives came to our house. I had, actually, no relatives in Rutland. My dad was from New York and my mother wasn't a Rutland native either.

What about summers?

Summers part time we spent at home and I also spent a lot of time on Lake St. Catherine. Because I had an uncle who had three cottages there and different members of the family stayed there. We stayed in the middle cottage; a lot of my summers were spent at Lake St. Catherine. And I had some cousins there in the cottage right down below that was right on the water. There was a girl cousin there that was just a bit younger than I was. They spent there summers there too so it was nice to have them there.

It wasn't, basically, an unhappy time, because I seemed to be able to work within this environment

How about your teachers? Or what courses did you take in high school?

We had a commercial, an academic, and a college curriculum. And I took a mixture of academic and college. It was intended for me to go on to school.

Did your parents expect you to go on to school, or college?

I think from early on, that opportunity was told us, "Hey, it was always there for you if you wanted to go." It wasn't a thing that you must do, but I always knew it was an option. And because of my feelings, I knew that I was going to go to college, I was going to graduate from college, and I was going to go out on my own. I was always going to be independent. I would never allow myself to be dependent and controlling of others. I said yes, I hope to get married and the usual, but I said I'll never allow myself to be as dependent as my mother. I think that her innate dependency was this controlling, so that things and people would not be --- I just had the opposite feelings. I was going to leave, I was going to be independent. I said, even if I married, I would not allow myself to be emotionally, financially, or that dependent upon a person. I knew I was going to have a career and be a career woman before it became the buzz word of women's liberation.

You were really ahead of your time, don't you think?

Yes, now that I look back on it, yes, because it was done with so much forethought. I had my life planned out in five year segments. Andy has a very quiet nature; we're opposites but we match perfectly. I can give you the five year segments and then much more so from the day I got married. We're skipping over education but we can come back to it. We got married in 1948. I had all my education and experience first. And different things I wanted to do. Andy was in my class, but I didn't even know him. Then he went off after school and he was living in Connecticut. So there was no contact at all. Then he came back and then the connection. We got married in 1948 and I said that, in five years, I want to leave Vermont. I was teaching in Rutland at the time. And I said, I want to continue teaching but I want to go on for further education. I want to make sure I do it in a large city area.

So, I said, if you're willing, that's our goal in five years. And I made it. One day I sat down and I wrote fourteen letters. To all the major cities from Washington, D. C. up as far as Boston. And I got responses but some of them didn't grab me, but those that did, we went off on interviews. And for no reason at all, other than just environment, what was in my plans, I ended up in New Rochelle, New York, and of course Andy was involved, and he became

associated with a private school, both financially and teaching-wise, -- he was a teacher too. And also he was an investor in a private school -- that's why he was in Manhattan all those years. Then, within another five years, I figured I wanted to have at least one or two Master's degrees. Actually, I had one and a half.

So I went on and got my Master's degree in General elementary education from CCNY. I commuted into New York. Then I started work again on another masters and then, just for my own fun -- because my hobby is art. So then I went and I got a master's in Fine Art.

An MFA? That's a terminal degree, is it not?

It is for an artist. You can go on and get a doctorate in Art History or things like that. Of course at the same time you learn a lot of crafts and things like that. So you get a general mixture. By that time, I was well

into education, and then I decided I would climb the ladder. Career-wise. And I said I just hope this ladder is up against the right building. Because I loved school teaching -- elementary. I had a lot of encouragement from the superintendent on down. So then I thought, I have to get another masters.

So I went to Columbia and got a masters in Public Administration. Actually, I matriculated at Columbia and I was going to go through with

the PhD, but then I was so busy doing other things that I just kind of ran out of time. And it wasn't really essential for my career. And I knew I did not want to be a superintendent of schools.

Plus a lot of other things began to close in around me. I became interested in art as a side thing. I became very interested in the open classroom, at the time. Then I wanted more education along that line. So I took some more time off, three months, here and there -- I was allowed to take three sabbaticals. Then I went to the Univ. of London, and then to the Univ. of Amsterdam, and picked up just education -- not degrees, just courses. I was able to take internships in their schools, like in the infant and the junior schools in London. Just for the experience.

Now where was Andy all this time? Was he with you?

Yes, but he was going in a different direction. He got his Masters and he also has a Masters in Art.

What type of Art did you do?

Unfortunately, or fortunately, I don't think I have a real favorite. Any art or craft course that came down the line, either in my formal education or outside my formal education -- you name it and I've been there. Oils, all sorts of things. Right now, I'm probably the busiest

because I'm involved in freelance work from my connections in New York. And oddly enough, I don't know how it ever turned out this way, only because another course I thought I was interested in -- I got into photography. Once photography was recognized as an art form, I took an awful lot of courses. I took two college courses in black and white, I took two in color. I have my own dark room -- I do all my own developing. All my own printing.

You must have started out with a very high IQ

Yes, I do have a high IQ. Which I would not tell you about. I found out about it in Columbia because they wanted a group of us to do it. In order to go to Columbia and get a masters, you had to pass the MAT and that's a pretty hard one. And because of the percentiles that different people fall into, the ones in the higher they wanted to go on and take an IQ. There were doing some kind of a longitudinal study. So I said fine, I'll go. I do a lot of calligraphy and illustrate my own calligraphy. I do subscreening and I do a lot of stained glass. In my house I did a stained glass lamp over the dining room table, over the table in the family room, shutters, I do a lot of shutters. I don't bring any of that over here to this camp. You see a lot of hooks, but I don't bring any of my art work over here. Some of them I have taken

down. So it's been a lot of my art work over the years, that has changed focus, in different phases. So in retirement it's been a godsend.

Then within another of the five years that we were down there , I said, we will buy a home, which we accomplished in those five years. Then, I had another five year thing was to get our daughter through college and a masters degree -- in five years, which was done in 1973.

Then, in 1973, I figured, OK she's got a good education, and I said, there's your life, kid, go. We always will have a home base here, to come back to, but because of my upbringing, I made sure that she was free, she had her wings. She's an only child, so consequently, she's a lot like I am. She did a lot of college work. Started teaching, gave it up, because she wanted to go into the corporate world, which was OK with me. So that was in 1973. Then I said, she's all set, I can see no reason for us -- I love New York City -- because we used to be there so much, Andy was there, and going to school, somehow or other, I picked up a lot. I not only went to CCNY and Columbia, but I also taught there, as an Adjunct Professor. I would never give up public school work. So that was a lot of fun. So then I said, by 1978 we're going to retire -- early in our 50's -- and we're going to.

You were financially able to do that?

Yes, because in the back of our mind, this was one of our five-year plans. So we were able to do that, and in 1978 we did retire. We went back to our home in Rutland.

You were about how old then?

I was fifty-four. We had it all planned out, we wanted to make sure that we didn't retire from, that we were retiring to. I came to Rutland, and I bought my house, probably for all the reasons that you wouldn't buy a house. It was too big for us, I love it, I bought because my mother came with it. She was not able to stay in New York. Remember that very dependent person? I said, fine, but I wanted to be sure that she had an area that was completely isolated from me. I will never forget Jackie Barrett, who was City Clerk, I told Jackie, I'm in the wrong residential area, what shall I do? He came up and looked at the house and said, you can do thus, thus, and thus. So I was able to get her settled in like an apartment, but not an apartment of her own, in my house -- it was so big. And I bought it for the bottom part of the house where I could have a beautiful thirty-foot porch. And those were the two reasons I bought it.

You really had to take care of your mother, then?

Yes, when my brother and sister left home, they left home. They wanted no further to do

with my mother. So then I was going to do my art, which I started, and then one day I got a phone call from the superintendent of schools. I said, I'm sorry, I don't know you, -- I thought I was keeping a very low profile -- because I really didn't want to work. He said, well I've heard about you from various people, and I think I've found out who he'd heard from. But he wanted me to be Principal at Clarendon Elementary School, which was a beautiful school, had a pretty good rating, and the Principal was leaving. For a step up. Their last Principal had left them on the opening day of school. So I said, no, I really don't want to work. Well, this went on for three months. He said, well, would you please just come down and he said your education, especially your European education, and you were a Supervisor in New York. Well, you see, I'd been first an Asst. Principal in New York, then Principal and finally Supervisor of five schools and coordinated an open-classroom program in those five schools.

Where did he get your vita?

Well, it certainly wasn't published or anything like that, but in the long run, you probably knew Lennie Johnson, you were in his class. Leonard was in education too, he was a teacher and he has a cottage on Rt. 30, Bomoseen. We always kept in contact in the

summer. So I knew what he was doing, and he knew what I was doing. We always kept in contact; we still do. So he knew and by that time he was a professor of chemistry and he had students at Clarendon. So he knew. He must have dropped that. Plus they were what you called an open-space school and no one had ever been educated to do that. So I finally accepted. I told them I would only stay a certain time. But I had a wonderful time. I stayed six years. And when we put it on the map at that point, I think we were about the third highest rated elem school in Vermont. We got a lot of recognition from the state and it was a wonderful way. Because when I was a Principal in New Rochelle I was in a school with 1600 elementary kids, and this was 300 and it was just like a little private school. It was really wonderful. So then, at my usual time, after the first year that I was there I said, after five years I'll be done. And of course I was. We're basically not on a five year plan now. Now, it's every day as it comes. Enjoy all the things that come and just take things as they come in stride.

How about your mother? You finally had to put her in a home?

Yes, I just did very recently.

But you're still friendly with your brother and sister?

Well, my brother is now dead, for three years. And I do not have a close relationship with my sister. She was always older. Except I did prepare; I'm a very pragmatic person. I knew I wouldn't always be able to keep the pace. I said, OKay, some day you're going to be more confined to home, and so I wanted to prepare for that in some Arts and Crafts way. I'm not going to be able to go out and do the kind of photography I do, eventually. So I said, well, I'll learn to crochet. So I took courses from Alberta Lamb. She's a whiz. So I'm getting prepared for the time when I'm, not going to be so active. And I think when you set a goal and you're so busy doing it, -- Jean, you don't have time, and I don't have time, to sit and think well, that pain's bothering me. Because I've got something else to do. We're very active in environmental and water resources, because of our lake, which has millfoil. And we want to return it to the next generation -- better than we found it. So we're affiliated, state-wide, and I happen to be president of the pond association. In hortonia, Lake Bomoseen, and so on. Then, there's a northern one. So we're meeting all year round. Now we're involved in this public trust doctrine. It's a legal trust doctrine. It's still enforced in America in different states in different ways. Every state has a public trust doctrine law. However, some have not much in

common. They're not unified at all. We own this shoreline (quote), but we do not own that lake. That belongs to the public trust doctrine. And all the laws control it -- to the high water mark. Every one in Vermont is judged by each body of water. My feeling is, I don't own the land anyway. I'm, just here as a caretaker. To keep it and make it better. We haven't developed our wet areas at all so we still get herons, wild duck, the sandpipers and so on. We do have great blues, not little greens, but great blues.

In the evening, they'll come up and get their supper. So that's pretty much.

You skipped from 1940 to 1948. Where you went to college.

Oh, I first went to Castleton (Normal school). I took summer courses other places, but mostly when I was in Castleton, I spent my summers camp counseling. I had gone to Red Cross Water Safety and I was a water safety instructor. It was great fun. I loved it. I did it basically in one camp -- at Hillsdale, New York which is just outside of Pittsfield, Mass. I got my BS at Castleton in Elem Ed. Then I got one in General Elem. Ed. and in Art. I met Andy in Rutland through friends and my brother. June 7, 1947 was our first date and I remember it because it was when we had one of those flash floods. I was through Castleton then and teaching at Longfellow School. But I knew I

wanted to get out of state and go to a large place for further education. I was living at home during those few years teaching at Longfellow.

At that time my parents did not object. At that time, the social arena was different. It was the years, and as far as the opportunities for women were concerned, it still wasn't really acceptable in Rutland to get your own apartment. It wasn't like it is today.

So then you married Andy in?

1948. That's when you were teaching at Longfellow. He was finishing up his degree, at Castleton. When He finished up he took a couple of part time jobs, and that's when I decided, Andy, no point even to start to get a job here in Rutland, because I think if you do, we'll stay here. How do you feel about that? You've been all over in the war. And he felt very much like this too. He said, okay, and we both got our jobs together in New Rochelle.

It wasn't just that you had this opportunity to go and he came with you, then.

Oh, no, we both got our jobs together. We were in New Rochelle, where there were eleven schools. We did this together. We didn't follow each other.

One other thing, did you have an allowance.

I did not have an allowance. What little money I had I got from working for neighbors,

baby-sitting, etc. That money I could keep. It was not accounted for.

And the family was traditional in that your mother cooked and took care of children and your father worked.

Yes, and my mother was a tremendous seamstress, she made lots of our clothes. Some were bought, but she was a good seamstress.

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Anything else you think we are missing?

As for honors, I had a lot of them, I just left them out. But I have had a lot of fun along the way.

With your background, I think I might have left home.

I knew I had to be prepared. You can't just leave home at eighteen with no education and go anywhere. But I just couldn't do it. I could have got married right after high school, but it was not my intent. I knew I wanted to go on to college and go beyond. I knew that very early on. I look back at it; I've had a wonderful life. I've been a lot of places and seen a lot of things. Any honor I got, I always felt I got there, not entirely myself, but because other people helped me. I know at Clarendon, when honors started to come, I used to say, "If you don't care who gets the credit, you can get an awful lot done."

That's always the way I've done it. I never thought anyone got those honors alone. I know one of the greatest honors, was to be invited by the State of Vermont Dept. of Education to be the keynote speaker to open their new year. Their keynote speaker to kick it off, they chose me. Things like that that just came along.

I think, perhaps, as I look back at the people of our class, if you put "rich" in quotation marks, I don't think any of them were really rich. They're fathers had pretty goods, and I'm sure there were people who were poor, because we were depression kids. We entered high school, in 1936, which was a depression time.

Did the depression do anything to your family?

Well, we weren't rich, neither were we poor. But I knew I think down deep that there were different stratas in life. Everybody knew that. And I chose -- I don't think I wanted to be rich, but I wanted to be comfortable. And to be able to have the things I wanted, but I also wanted to be comfortable in what I was doing.

Do you think the depression made any real difference to us in high school at that time?

I don't think it did. Because we never knew anything different. Our parents had already been in that. A lot longer than we had. But our parents had experienced it right from the beginning. So they did know better times.

Because they lived before the market crashed. I know my grandfather had a little money, but he lost it when the market crashed. But we had nothing to compare it to. Now, if we had to compare, our lives during what I call the halcyon days, -- those were the 50's and 60's -- where life was beaver--cleaver. But it wasn't as great as people thought, because I lived in this environment. I don't know if you remember The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit, etc. Everything was supposed to be wonderful. The husband worked in New York City, had a good job, the wife had the station wagon, like I did, and you picked him up at Larchmont station, like I did. And everyone was wonderful. But it wasn't that wonderful. There was a tremendous un settlement And eventually the suburbs fell apart. Divorce, family problems, the drug culture entered into it. Our kids generation going against the establishment. That was all simmering underneath. And the women's movement and all That was all simmering underneath. The worst and the best of times. The suburban culture all around the cities all over America. And I was part of that culture. Everybody went from New York City and you bought your home in the suburb and you raised a kid and a mortgage and that was it. But I didn't get really caught in this, but my neighbors did.

Because I was already working and educated. Those women were not educated and their husbands were well educated. I can give you an example. Right next door to me was the vice president of Reingold Beer. The wife was home, raising two children hadn't the faintest idea of what was going on. Her husband came home one night, I want a divorce. That was it, she was out of the house-- she was out of the picture. And this was happening in house after house after house.

So what were these women to do?

Times were changing. We just formed a whole new society. Things have to change. I was ready for it just because of the way my life went. But many other people were not ready for it. It must have been much harder.

I think of the people our age who were thrown into the job market. What did they have out there?

They had to, they had to.

What else is there? If you think of anything.

It's OK for me to use this information you gave me?

Yes. I think my mother knows my exact feelings.

Eileen Burke Haddeka

When you got out of high school, did you go to college?

I went to nursing school in Rutland with Joyce Beauchamp, Agnes Burke and myself and Teresa O'Shea; we were in the same class for five years. We had a ball. We lived right in the nursing home. Nobody lived at home. You had to live right at the hospital. It was the war years and after that Agnes and Joyce went on to be in the service but Teresa and I didn't. Both Agnes and Joyce were Navy nurses.

Did your parents want you do?

My parents were dead set against me going into the service. I had joined what they called Civil Patrol, but my husband to be didn't want me to go. He had been a bombardier and he didn't want me to go.

But your parents didn't mind you going to nursing school?

Oh, no. They loved me going to nursing school but they didn't want me to go into the service. My mother wanted everyone of us to do something, not just get married. There were six girls in the family and two boys.

She really did want us all to do something, but nobody had much money. I know my older sister went into Nursing school and I went into nursing school. My other sisters did get jobs.

But she didn't want us to get married right away; she discouraged us. Wait a few years, enjoy life. But we had not money to go to college. I wanted to go to UVM like a dog but we didn't have any money. Dad was a farmer -- in later years he had money, he became a senator, and worked for 20 years in Montpelier, and loved politics, made money. But we were all gone by then.

So I went to Nursing school and all we had to pay and this sounds strange, Jean, was a hundred dollars. We didn't have to pay for room and board because we worked for it. You see a lot of places made you pay for room and board and then gave you a stipend every month, but we didn't. Our hundred dollars included our uniforms and our books. But we got no stipend all the time we were there -- for three years. And you only got two to three weeks off.

Then what did you do with you nursing?

I worked as a supervisor in the OR for one year until my boyfriend came home from England and then we were married in September. In 1944. Then we left because he was assigned to Westover Field -- and I didn't work. And then the oldest girl, Michelle, was born the first year and we stayed in Westover for two years. Then we came back from Westover to Rutland in 1946 and he was discharged. He was a bombardier. He was

originally from Rutland, but had traveled. And then came back. He was a friend of my brother's; he used to come to the house all the time. Then we came to Poultney and bought a house and he went into the quarry business. So he'd been in the slate quarry business since 1946. Now we have a company -- before it was just him. And his brother has one too. Now we have the company; the three boys run the company and I'm the president. I used to do all the secretarial work, all the forms, all the payroll, but not anymore. Finally one of the daughter-in-laws took over everything. My husband should retire, but he can't stay away.

You had how many children, then?

We had six children. Michelle is the oldest, and she was a professor at UVM in nursing. She went into nursing, same as I did, only she got her degree and her master's and taught at the University. Then just a year ago she had had 27 years of nursing and decided, that was it. So she and her husband now run two pro-image stores where they sell athletic supplies, like NFL shirts and so on. They have one in Burlington, VT. and one in Glens Falls, NY. He used to be a coach. And he got tired of teaching too so he got out of that.

Then Raymond, our oldest son, is manager and VP of business. He said, "Mother, if you'd just retire, I could do this whole thing myself."

Then we have Doreen, who you just met. She's been married and divorced and now lives in Boston.

Then we had twins, Bill and Jerry. One runs the plant in Castleton and the other helps run the two places.

Then we finally had Christine, who we call Cricket. She lives in Boston and has one girl and will soon get another baby. Billy & Dale have four children which gives us six grandchildren. The rest of them don't have any.

My parents lived long -- they both lived until they were 81. So we had our parents a long time, and Ray had his parents a long time. And we've been in Poultney all these years. It's a lovely little town.

Where did you go to school then?

That was the one thing I thought would be interesting. It was so different from anyone else you interviewed. I went to school in Mill Village in a one-room school, in Rutland Town. Grades one through eight. One teacher. I went all the way through.

You didn't go to Meldon or anything?

No, no. So it was like -- well, I probably was very naive when I went into high school. You just don't believe this -- you get into a class with 160 or 170 students where you've been in a class with maybe one or two. We had very good teaching. We had a lot of fun. There were

probably from three to five in each grade and some had less. I think I had three when I was in the eighth grade. We knew nothing about Algebra or anything like that. I never even heard the word Algebra until I got into high school. But fundamentals, we knew everything. Geography and history were a bit thing. And English. No foreign language. Now they do, and we used to have to teach the younger children. Like when the sixth grade were having one class, she'd have the first grades reading and I was told, back then, that our teacher started the first hot lunch program. We used to have a huge round stove in one corner of the room. And we used to bring potatoes to school and she'd put them up on the top and bake them while we were having class. And at mealtime we'd have potatoes and she'd make cocoa. And with our sandwiches we'd have a baked potatoe and cocoa. Once in a while we'd have soup but most of the time we'd have potatoe. We'd all bring milk and she'd put all our milk together and she'd make it. Her name was Miss Moorehouse. She was great.

She only died a little while ago. She lived in Rutland. And she was just wonderful. She used to take us up in the woods on a picnic and we'd have our lunch on a picnic sometimes.

What did you all do for recreation?

Oh, we played baseball. We had swings and a teetertater in the school yard. Most of the time we played baseball. I never remember a basketball court, but we did play baseball. We all played together, boys and girls. Now Marguerite Whitmore was in our class in high school; she was in my class in Mill Village. So it was, Jean, what an experience to go to high school. And I'll always remember this: Joyce Beauchamp because my name was Burke and her name was Beauchamp, and she was just wonderful to me. And Joyce made sure I went everywhere and got invited to everything. Because Joyce's sister and my sister -- my older sister Carmen -- were very good friends. Joyce's sister died when she was a Freshman in Middlebury. But they were always friends with me when I was in high school. She had TB and in those days, you died fast with TB.

The Beauchamps were a large family -- did you have a lot of brothers and sisters?

I had five sisters and two brothers. Then Al Beauchamp, Joyce's brother married my younger sister. Joyce has been here twice this summer, because of nursing school. She looked great. She lives in Georgia now. She did tell us that when the old aunt died, that she thinks that she will come back to Vermont. Evidently we all have that little secret. Would you want to come back to Vermont to live?

Well, I don't know.

This is the first rainy day we've had in weeks.

What did you do outside of the activities in school?

Everything was mostly family. We seldom did anything else. We did belong to 4-H. There was the boys 4-H and the girls 4-H. Other than that and exhibiting at the Rutland Fair.

What did you do in the country on Halloween?

We didn't do anything on Halloween. I don't ever, ever, remember Halloween being anything. Christmas was a big deal, Thanksgiving was a big deal, but I don't ever remember Halloween being anything. As I got in high school -- well, I didn't even know the Thomas boys and they always lived just across the river -- until we got in high school. They went to a one-room school, but they went to Cheney Hill. Cheney was up on a hill closer to town and Mill Village was down here. So Dick and John and Merritt and Billy all went to a one-room school too. They used to come over, after we went to high school, and we'd have baseball games at night -- and they always had to walk. They didn't have cars. I remember Bob Holland, and Bill Onion, they all had to walk up -- they dated my sisters, older sisters.

Was it hard in winter to go to this school?

No, no -- Dad used to have a sleigh, and he'd drive the sleigh when it was too bad to get through with the truck. So we just didn't have many things. We had a neighbor girl who we would ride to school with when Dad couldn't take us. Otherwise we walked. And we used to ski slide. And we used to skate. We had an area that used to freeze over every winter and we used to skate but we never skied. Not even in high school did I ski. My father took us in to high school every day from Mill Village. Until my brother was old enough to drive and then he drove a car. Then he'd pick us up at night.

Did you stay, then, and do afterschool activities?

We didn't get into any of those because we had to go home by 3:30. The only thing I did was to belong to the forensic society. I did play basketball and my father did wait for that. First we had home room teams, then we had gym, and they used to play each other. Then Miss Willis finally picked a Freshman team, a Junior team, etc. The best of all. Agnes Burke and Joyce and Beverly Melen and Mary Morrissey. I think she died. And Claire Mayer. I never knew what happened to Claire Mayer. Barbara Ackley, Marian Shaw, and Franie Clifford. This is the Lavalley girl and she lives up in Middletown. I don't know if this is Ruth or Leah. They never married and now live with a

sister in Middletown. I see them in church. The one that's in a wheelchair-- I always avoid saying their name at church because I'm always afraid I'll say the wrong name.

And Zoa -- Zoa Pratt. We went down, a few years ago, to Fitzpatrick's and we met Jack and we had lunch there. I went over and introduced myself. He called Zoa, Jane wasn't there that day. He sent us over to their new factory and we had a lovely visit with Zoa. She was at our class reunion. And she's so thin. Jane looks good too.

Do you have any pictures of you back then?
I have pictures but they're not here.

There were quite a few rivalries in Rutland.

Oh yes, there was terrible rivalries between MSJ (Mount ST. Joseph) and Rutland high school. And Rutland High School was very cliquey.

And there were many prejudices about protestants, catholics and jewish.

David Miller, but they were all accepted. And a lot of the cliques thought you just weren't good enough. If it hadn't been for Joyce, I probably wouldn't have been invited anywhere. Joyce used to make sure that I was included. But I guess it's a phase you go through. It didn't bother me much. But after we got out of high school. And the girls we met in nursing school, there were 21 in our school, but there were lots

of classes because they took a new one every six months. Over a three year period. There were people from all over. But there was Teresa, Joyce, and I and Agnes Burke. We held each other up.

What about the effects of the depression?

Well, it was -- do you remember the depression. All I remember is standing in the kitchen and my father coming in and saying, "They've closed all the banks." That was in 1932, I think. Other than that I remember nothing about it. But I do remember how devastating it was that morning with all the banks closed. I'll tell you, living on a farm we probably had a little more to eat than some had, and my mother was a beautiful seamstress and she made all our clothes. I remember Mr. Purdy saying, "I don't know how your father does it with all you kids and you all have nice clothes." I used to say to him, "Oh, Mr. Purdy, in our house, the first one up is the best one dressed." He used to laugh at that. My mother used to make all our skirts and blouses and boleros. So we probably didn't feel it as much as some of the kids in town. Because my father still had his cows, and he still milked them and he still sold the milk. Which was better than having no job at all, like some. And we learned to cook from mother and she never, never had an empty

cookie jar. At the time I thought I was somehow deprived in high school.

My older brother ran a chicken farm which was good during the depression and he sold eggs. And we used to get five cents if we put together 100 egg cartons for him. And if we picked a chicken we got two cents. He would sell fliers, and Wilma and my brother and I and we would go over and pick chickens. They would scald them and then we would pick all the feathers off and he would sell them to the stores. If we picked 10 chickens, we got ten cents. And then we'd go to the movies on Saturday afternoon.

In those days, the egg cartons had these little inserts that you'd put in that would make a dozen. It lay flat and you opened it up and put the inserts in and then put 100 together and then we'd get five cents.

How about the high school dances?

As I became a Sophomore I got asked to the dances and I went to all the dances. The parents drove us to the dances. I should tell you about my first date. It was with Louis Pathe? and my father finally said I could go to the movies but I'd have to go in the afternoon. Of course, Louis' family was supposed to have money. He was running a nightclub or something at that time. So Louis had to hire a taxi. To come all the way up to the farm and to take me down to

the movies for the matinee and then he brought me back home. I never went out with him again. He did ask me but somehow I never went again. I never went to the dances in my Freshman year -- just when I got to be a Sophomore. Mother made dresses for them and once in a while we had a boughten dress. We had a lot of fun. I went with Dick Jones -- he was a year ahead of us. He took me to quite a few dances. And then I went with Barbara to Winter Carnival Weekend at prep school over in New Hampshire. First time I ever rode in a train. I think it was New Hampton Prep School. My mother made me a dress, pink princess style and she embroidered on it. I thought I was the greatest. Barbara had a date with Dick's roommate and I went with Dick. And my father let me go. I remember Barbara's stepmother, Charlotte, she was awfully nice. They put us on the train. We stayed two nights. We went on Friday and came back Sunday. We had a bake and they had ski jumps and a big dance. That was my one excursion outside of high school.

The high school had a lot of games, though.

Oh, yes, we always went to the football games. My dad would be sure we got down for every football game. My one desire was to be a cheerleader. But I wasn't. But my daughter did them all. Michelle was a cheerleader, Michelle was a drum major, Michelle went to Girls State.

I lived my life over again. Isn't it strange how things happen like that? And then all my children graduated from the Univ. of Vermont. It was my desire to go but all my children went. My husband went two years to Mass. State. Depression, because he's older than I am. And he had to come home. Two years and he had no money. He was trying to work his way through but there was no work. No one had any work. And it was his desire, too, to see that his children went to college. And I can remember one of the twins came home and he said, "Dad, I'm going to go into the quarry business with you. I love driving those trucks and all that big equipment." Why am I wasting my time up at UVM. They were in football, but in their Junior year UVM dropped football. So it made him lose his interest in college. So his father said, "Actually you have only one year left. I really want you to graduate from college." And they weren't going to show up for graduation, saying that nobody shows up for graduation any more. I said, "Your father wants you to." They showed up for graduation.

When Maureen graduation from the UVM is was that heyday, you know. Haight-Asbury you know? And they came down the aisle drinking champagne; they were just out of it -- some barefoot. I just couldn't believe it, but she did graduate. Now they're back to being a little

sedate. It was just the time. But her graduation was the worst. I mean, everybody was there, but these kids, they didn't care whether the professors liked it or not.

We did used to go to basketball games, and I think it was Mariam Shaw who had the license and she'd say, yes, I'll give you a ride home. So my mother would let me go. And we'd go down to Shangraw's for ice cream after the basketball game. That was the only way I could go. Because Marian had the car. She probably doesn't even remember it. But to me, it was the greatest thing, that she'd say, yes, I'll give you a ride home after the game.

I can remember these certain people that were always so nice to me. I think as the years go on, you remember them more. She probably doesn't even remember that. But I remember it. That was quite a little ride, too, up past the country club. In those days.

How was our medical care? Of course we had the usual, measles and mumps.

I didn't. My brothers and sisters did, but I didn't. I didn't even catch them when my kids had them. I was different. We had a brother, Billy, and he finally ended up in my class because he lost school time. That was the only illness in our family. He had a strep infection in the bone of his leg. That's why he couldn't play sports in high school. So he was in my class.

We did get a big introduction to taking care of people. We used to have to take care of him; maybe that's why my sister and I became nurses. They took him to Children's Hospital in Boston; my father had to mortgage the farm. I think that Billy had sulfa. He has great big wounds in his leg. A bone infection and they wanted to take his leg off and Dr. Ross wouldn't let them. So they sent him to Boston, and he was there for about three months. There was no Shriners then. But by the time Billy got better somebody did come up and say, "Well, you could have gone to the Shriners." Nobody had health insurance then.

Any old Vermont stories or legends, or anything handed down from your grandparents?

My father's mother always told us -- she came over from Ireland when she was 17 years old, probably steerage, you know, and she had her own cup and saucer and fork and spoon. She came into New York. And when they got there they all threw their utensils into the ocean. Because they'd been told that the streets of New York were paved with gold. And they'd never have to worry about anything again. But she said, they weren't paved with gold at all. And she had to work real hard. But my other grandparents were born here.

Is it all right that I use this for my book?

Oh, yes, of course.

What about the values then and now?

Well, having only lived in a small town and then moving to another small town, during the two years that Ray was in the service -- Springfield was big. Springfield, Mass. But everything was the Army. You went out to the base, and you didn't know anybody. So then when you came back and went to a little town like Poultney, it was like coming home. It's all the same. My mother always used to say, "Poultney is such a pretty little place." And everybody knows everybody. The same in Rutland Town. Everybody knew everybody. I never really lived in a big city. But the values are the same. Because I think our mothers and fathers taught us our values. I mean, Ray makes real good money, but I never wanted to spend it all, I wanted to save it for a rainy day. I always wanted, and our parents wanted us to be educated. They wanted us to wait a while before getting married. I think we did the same with our kids. We would help them get an education and we didn't want them to get married right off. I think the values are the same. We didn't have money so it was like nursing school was the best place to go. And I only worked one year after Ray and I were married. Then I never worked again. I stayed home with my children.

But you did work in the business.

Oh, yes, but I mean I didn't use the nursing. Except raising my family. I never got upset if they had colic and so on, because I'd seen sick kids. My son says my favorite remark was, "Take two aspirin and go to bed." I didn't get upset over things. So I used my nursing to that extent.

I never was that popular in high school to get elected to anything.

Anything else you can remember?

Will you be able to talk to Joyce?

Eventually, I hope.

My children are getting a big charge that you are coming over to interview me as a woman of the 1940's. That asked me what are you going to tell her? I said, I don't know, my life has been very quiet. She was a pilot she probably had a lot more excitement in her life than I had in mine. When I mentioned the fact that Jean Hascall was going to do this, my older sister Carmen said, Oh, I know Jean Hascall. I said, How do you know Jean, Carmen. She said because she used to work in Sterns. She said, she used to ride with my husband over to the Fair Haven Airport. to take lessons. Her husband was Mickey McDonald. She said, Mac used to pick you up. He had snow white hair but he was young. He was taking flying lessons. Their daughter is 51 now. He used to leave Carmen and Penny home along so he could go

and take flying lessons. Carmen said, she was so scared that something would happen and she'd be left alone with Penney. But he never used it after he learned. But wasn't it strange how she remembered the name?

The men were very nice to me. I was the only woman there.

Ray was stationed in England. In fact, he and I are supposed to go back next year. It will be the fiftieth reunion of his group. He didn't go over until 1943, but some of them went in in 1942. So 1992 would be 50 years. We did sign up to go to England.

Our daughter Cricket went to the overseas training and she went to London. While she was in England, Carmen and Mickey went with me and we went over to London and spent two weeks with her. Ray wouldn't go, so I said, OKay, I'll go without you. And I loved England. And we flew over and spend three or four days in when we were there. So Carmen and Mickey and I decided that we would go back. So Doreen and I and Al (Beauchamp) went back and spent three weeks in Arland (?) and had a car and drove all around. And Al said at the time, "Now if you want, Ray, we can take turns going over to London and you can check London out. But no, he didn't want to go. But when this deal came up, he said, "Put our

names down and, God willing, maybe we'll go next year." It's June of 1992.

The men were getting worried about their jobs back then so the WASP was disbanded in 1944.

Those chauvinists. They don't want a woman to be president, either. And one of these days, when there are more women than men, and there's going to be a woman president.

Ray went to Russia but most of his time was spent in Germany. Most of his bombing was in Germany, but one run went to Russia.

Cricket said yesterday that the planes here came in right over the lake.

I

VT-Joyce Hill How is Marty?

She's all right -- she's on oxygen, though.

Do you remember Herrick Sterns? He lived next door. He's gone -- he had oxygen, even in the car.

Well, Marty can get off it for a little while. And then Brad Smith -- remember Brad Smith?

Oh yes, we saw Brad at the funeral home.

He's gotten older -- well, we all have.
(laughter) Are you on chemo, Jean?

Yes, I'm on it now. Well, let's get back to you. You didn't go to college did you?

No, I had to start work right away. When I first went to work, I think I worked for a short time at Barter's music store. He was a terror to work for. So from there I went to the Howe Scale at eleven dollars a week. I thought that was tremendous. I worked there six years in the Engineering Dept. -- very interesting. And from there, in 1947, I went to work at the telephone company. I started right from the ground up. On repair service, then I went to another place and then to the business office and then was Asst. Mgr. there for about 18 years. I worked 38 years and then, when I had an attack of angina in 1984, I went on disability for a couple of months and it just seemed the right time to make the break. I decided to retire.

I married in 1965, I was an unclaimed jewel, and I guess my biological clock had stopped ticking. We had no children. I was around 43. I guess in this day you could, but how nice it would be to have children as you get older.

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VT-M.Temple

I can't remember through that period.

But you're money allowance was very interesting. Where did you find it?

Well, you see, I keep everything. These are some things I did after working. But High School -- I had a wonderful time in high school. We had a crowd. I think maybe we had one of the good classes. When you think of being friends with people who had a lot in common with you and that we have right now. I've seen Sue, I've seen June, I've seen Burt, through the ages.

I wanted to ask you another thing. Any facts, information about Rutland, any old stories or legends in your family, back to your grandparents.

Geraldine Walker

After High School in September I went to New York City to the Traphegan School for Fashion. I was going to be a fashion designer. That was on Broadway -- quite exciting after living in a small town. In High School, you probably don't remember, but I did a lot of sewing and they had the state dress reviews and we were selected and we were sent to Burlington for a week to do dress reviews and such. I took a couple of first and second places and I was very interested in being a dress designer. So I went and studied.

Then in 1942, of course, the War broke out and there were no jobs in New York City for girls out of school wanting to be designers, because all the factories were doing uniforms for the services. Then I did take a course at Columbia which was fabric analysis.

--You were a little unusual for your time.

I think I was perhaps a little ahead of my time. Being encouraged by my Dad, he, as I was sewing at home, when I was in High School, sewing for these projects, I remember at one time (we had two living rooms, and one was like a library where we had the piano and the sewing machine and the library table where we sat around and studied -- there were four of us girls) and my dad would sit around the

corner reading his paper, and I remember I had the machine apart. I had it all apart and was cleaning it and I had it all stashed around, and he kept watching me, just waiting, just dying for me to say "Dad, I need some help".

But I got the machine all back together and running again and then he came back in and said, "Well, it's running pretty good." But he was dying to come in and help me. So he was really the encouragement. He wanted me to do something, whatever it was he found that I had. Whatever I wanted to do they were very supportive. When I think of Katherine Hepburn, she said my mother and my father always said, "Do whatever you want to do." She lived in Conn. you know. And she was ahead of her time. And her mother encouraged her to be her own person. And when she went to Hollywood they tried to get her to sign contracts and things and she wouldn't sign them. She held out. She knew exactly what she wanted and she held out. She was a little hard to deal with. But it was because her mother had been a friend of Panghurst, you know, who was with the women's liberation movement and she came to Hartford to visit Katherine's mother. So she was very progressive. I feel that my father was a little progressive in that respect, in that he wanted each of his girls to have an education, and to have a profession of some kind.

What did your father do?

My father worked for the railroad. For the Rutland Railroad which ran from New York City Grand Central to Montreal. But he had two brothers who lived in New York City and one was with the New York Sun, so they were in a position where they felt it was important for women to have some kind of a vocation and, as my mother said to me, "Have your own little account. Your own little money tucked away." She told all of our girls that. I think that encouragement gave all of us that "something".

But your mother stayed home?

My mother stayed home and never worked. And I think that was another point. That she saw how important it was because she never was allowed to work and she sat home and played the piano and had afternoon tea. They lived -- I don't know if you remember where the Perkins lived? The teacher on south Main street? They lived just beyond her and there were two or three in that neighborhood, young ladies, who had afternoon tea.

Most daughters, at that time, expected their daughters to get married.

Yes, to stay home, play the piano, have their teas, and find a proper man.

You were fortunate then. So then, with the War, what did you do?

Then, with the War, I went home and didn't know what I was going to do. I thought maybe I'd check into the service because they were calling for volunteers you know, and my Dad said, "No. The better thing for you to do would be to go to one of the factories where there are young men who should be out in the service helping. So you go out and relieve some of these war workers so these young men can go out and help the rest of the men."

Then Pratt and Whitney came through. They were signing up people, they were looking for help all over, and so we came down and went to work for Pratt and Whitney, and I went into testing. So that these young boys who had had some engineering could go on, and the one I relieved went on and became a Pilot. I don't know whatever happened to him. He trained me and then he left.

You were testing parts?

Testing engines. I was testing engines, the 2800's -- Pratt and Whitney bombers. The big ones. So when the war came to end, in the meantime in 1945, we were married. We were both working for Pratt and Whitney. I said, "That's the end. I'm out of here." Then I went and we wanted to stay in Connecticut because we liked it here. So I went to G. Fox to find out what I could do there. They had several positions, but one I went into in the fabric

department as assistant buyer, buying fabrics, and doing fashion shows. We would select the fabrics and then go to New York and buy the fabrics and make up patterns and do the show.

So you did do designing, really?

In that respect -- not really designing, but you're working in the field. An allied field.

You were married then though.

Yes, we were married, but we never had any children so I just continued. I worked for forty-two years. All that time for Fox.

That was a very successful career.

Yes, it was. It was very fulfilling since I didn't have a family, and it was a little creative. From there I went into work rooms. They had a tailor shop and a dress shop. They had upholstery and so on, and they had a manager who was retiring and she wanted me to have her position, so I wasn't really interested that much but I said yes and I became manager of the work rooms. And I had taken, after I came out of Pratt & Whitney, management. I knew I wanted to have management courses which I took at Hartford -- it combined with Hartford College.

Did you have any awards or honors, then? You probably got some awards for doing war work.

Well, there were 160 men and only three girls working in the war plant. And surprisingly

the men treated us very well. Because I had learned to use a slide rule when studying drafting for patterns, so I could use a slide rule. Not many girls could use a slide rule. That was engineering you see. At first they did give us a hard time, but then they realized that we really could do the work and knew what we were doing.

Did you get comparable pay at that time?

Yes, we did. And we used to get bonuses and it was split across the board. It was unusual, I was fortunate because there were only three of us. I didn't have an engineering degree but I had had two years of drafting and I could use the slide rule. But I really enjoyed it. I really loved it except for the noise.

How long have you been retired?

Just four years. I waited until I was 65 because my husband had a heart attack when he was 55 with brain damage, so I had to carry the load. It's funny, I think that a lot of this in your life prepares you for something. There's a reason. There's a reason for a lot of what happens. I really didn't want the management job of the workroom, because one workroom had 65 people in it, and another had almost 100 in it, and the responsibility -- I didn't think I was ready for that. But it's funny, you just grow into it.

So, you really had at least 165 people under you.

Yes. And outside workrooms, and that was difficult because I could only go maybe once in two weeks to check the other workrooms. Things that were going on there I was responsible for but I couldn't put my finger on. So that was hard. I didn't think I was ready for it, but because of the home problem, I just had to face the issue and do it.

Well, I think you've done a remarkable job. And you're the only one I've heard say that their parents encouraged them to have a career. Well, we could now go back to High School.

How about pre-High School. Can you remember? What elementary school did you go to?

I went to Watkins Avenue. Because we lived on the West End of Rutland, up on the hill. I don't know if you know where Pine Hill was? Evergreen Avenue? We lived up at the end of Evergreen Avenue. We were up quite high on a hill, a big white house, and we faced East. The sun came over the mountain in the morning, right into our bedroom. And, of course, the city of Rutland was down below us -- we had the view of the whole city

and all the church towers. So it was a nice spot. It was really a nice spot to grow up in. And down below us was the pasture, the state

of Vermont Reformatory. They had a garden where the women worked. They had to work their own garden. And then they had cows so they had their own milk. But then the pasture was just across the street from us and we were high on the hill, and there was a pond down in the pasture where we used to ski down the hill with our skates around our neck. It was a wonder that we didn't fall and get cut. Then we'd put our skates on and skate. It was a nice place to grow up. A nice place for children. My mother and dad would come out at night with us and slide. In those days they didn't plow the road like they do now, so we would slide with my mother and dad. My dad really enjoyed his girls. So each one of us did something different.

My younger sister went into interior decorating. My other sister went to Stevens and studied music. And my other sister became a nurse. Each one of us was encouraged to do something beyond, something for ourselves in case we ever needed to fall back and I had to later. My other sisters didn't have to but they had something that they did.

My sister that studied music, when they lived in Alaska -- they lived in Fairbanks for about six years -- and a lot of the service men that lived there had little children and there was no kindergarten so she brought them into her home and had like a little kindergarten for

them. Because, of course, Fairbanks was so cold, you know, so she had this little kindergarten and loved it. So even though she never worked outside the home, she did that for the children. We were encouraged in everything. And when I think of tearing up my mother's front lawn to make a garden, flower garden. She never stopped me, never said you can't do it, and encouraged me to plant flowers and watch them grow. Now, I wouldn't allow anyone to put a garden in my front lawn.

You wouldn't really say that this was any Vermont trait, though. I mean it's more anyone who --

I think it may be a Vermont trait that Vermont women are quite strong and independent even though they stayed home with their children. But they were strongly family-oriented. They had a firm hand, I think, on their children, and on their home and of course, the husbands were expected to bring home the income and the woman was expected to run the home on what he brought home.

And I think that made for a strong person too. My mother was a strong person and my grandmother certainly was a very strong person. My grandmother worked before she was married. But not very long.

Let's get back to school.

Well, I went to Watkins school for six years and then went on to Meldon.

Who was in Watkins school?

Gloria Puccini, and the two Lavallee girls. They're over in Poultney or somewhere over that way. Because they came over and spoke to me and said, "Don't you remember us? We remember you. We started out in first grade together." And I said, "Isn't that wonderful?" But I didn't really remember them. They were sisters and both in the same class. One was a little bit cuter. And I think one of them was slow. I don't know though. Maybe they were twins. But one always took care of the other one. They both are still around.

Were you sewing in grammar school?

No. I didn't start sewing until Meldon. I started with -- what was her name? We had to make an apron.

Oh, yes, someone else mentioned that. That could have killed you off on sewing.

Yes, it could have killed me right away, that apron. (Laughter).

There were a lot of plays then people have told me.

Yes, I remember I was in two at Meldon. Let's see, one was -- well, I was a snowflake. Something like that. We sang a song and bounced around the stage. And I was always at

the end because I was the smallest. Or I was the first out because I was the shortest.

What did you think about our education then?

I think we had an excellent education, because to this day you know, that I remember a lot of things that we learned about geography that they don't even know now. We had a map of the United States and we had to know every state and every capital and then we had the European theatre, which had all the nations, and we had to learn all the capitals of the world, and we had tests on that. They don't do that any more and I think that's a great shame. You go into a store now and try to get a young girl to make change and she can't. She just pops it into your hand. Of course, that was a no no in our day. You always counted back to your customer every penny. Now the machine tells her want to do and sometimes she can't even run the machine properly. YOu know, you can do it in your head. They can't do that.

I don't know if it's the right was of teaching or wrong. But all our basic stuff came from Rutland High School, or from our grammar schools.

Also the writing. The Palmer method of writing is gone. We had shop and home economics which is wonderful for someone who hasn't the aptitude to go to college. But

they have to have a profession of some kind. So my beginning was from home economics, too.

Did your mother sew too?

My mother couldn't even sew on a button. There was just something there that I had the aptitude for and I was encouraged. I think that's all it takes.

Did we do many sports in seventh and eighth grade? I'm not remembering very well.

I don't remember sports until High School. Then I enjoyed volley ball and basketball -- really enjoyed them.

I don't remember you in any of the pictures I had of basketball and hockey. Were you in those?

I was not in hockey. But I was in basketball, for three years. Because I could run fast. It's listed in the year book. And I was on the volley ball team. I was pretty active.

Do you remember your teachers?

The ones I remember in grammar were Mrs. Lamb -- she was my first grade teacher; and Miss Keyhoe -- she was either my third or fourth grade teacher. I don't remember. The only one I remember in Meldon was the principal. For home ec we had to go back from Meldon to Dana, I remember that. But I can't remember the teacher's name.

So what kind of a course did you take in High School?

I took the academic. I Took a lot of ancient history because I wanted to be in designing. That went along with the old costumes. It came in handy later. It was surprising that a lot of the periods we had studied in ancient history, when it came to designing, a lot of these costumes came to mind.

And you see them repeated so many times over the years. Even today some of the clothing is designed -- the television clothes -- go back to the ancient history.

You're probably still very interested in fashion.

Yes.

Tell me about your holidays.

They were very family oriented. In those days, my grandmother was alive, in fact she lived down on South Main street, down just beyond the Perkins' house. Of course, now it's all gone. They had a very large, victorian house and my grandfather had a sand and gravel, and a wood business. In those days, they burned wood in kitchen stoves and in fireplaces and also in furnaces, some of them. Anyway, they had this large house and they were family oriented. So every Sunday, my grandmother would have all the family for dinner. We went in my father's car which had side curtains -- do you remember? You would have to lift them up to peek out to see where you were? So that

family was very strong and very important because she also encouraged us girls to be independent.

Were they Vermonters?

Yes, they were Vermonters. They came from East Randolph where my grandfather's father raised horses, like you have used car dealers. He was a horse dealer -- raised them and sold them. He had two sons. One of the sons stayed in East Randolph and ran a lumber business and furniture, and the other son came to Rutland and started his business, which was wood. But he had the different kinds of wood, like construction material. And then the sand and gravel business which the state bought from him. Because all the side roads were gravel.

What about the depression?

During the depression I remember very well how fortunate we were. Because my Dad worked for the railroad which was very stable. I remember so many of these girls at Watkins school who lived down near the river and it used to flood, remember? Those poor kids. Their fathers were WPA and they would have cardboard in their shoes. And I'm not sure we were as kind to them as we should have been. We didn't realize that they probably didn't have food on the table that we were having. I think we were very fortunate, and also that my grandparents were very stable. My grandfather

was very kind. There was a man, an old Italian man, on State street -- I think he lived down in the basement. And in their front living room he had set up his shop to repair shoes. Apparently he wasn't doing very well and my grandfather had furnished him with wood. When the depression came he couldn't pay my grandfather so my grandfather continued. He said, "You just can't freeze." So he continued to give him wood for a couple of years. I remember after my grandfather died, even in high school, if we would stop to have our shoes fixed, he would never, never let us pay. Because my grandfather had given him the wood and said, "I'm not going to have you and your children freeze."

That was on State street. You have a feeling for your customers -- maybe more in a small town -- that feeling I don't see now. Too bad. People don't seem to care.

We also spent Xmas at home Xmas was a big thing in our family. We always had a big tree we put the lights on and the family trimmed the tree.

Did you get into the skiing that came along about when we were in high school?

I didn't belong to the ski club. But I did ski at Pico. But because of where we lived, we didn't have to go very far. We lived on a big hill. We'd ski down and then we'd ski cross-

country across the golf course. From where we lived we could go down, around and out to the golf course. So we could cross-country.more than down hill. But later on I did ski at Pico, downhill.

And Halloween? With your family support, you probably didn't get into any trouble.

NO, my father was pretty smart. He would give us soap, not wax. If you're going to do anything, here's a cake of soap. He didn't say you can't do it, he just said to leave the wax at home, here's a cake of soap.

No, I didn't have a car in high school. I didn't drive until later. Until after the war really.

What about any school activities, clubs and sports?

That had a Home Economics club and then the Chorus. You know, also in those days, they had certain levels of study -- if you wanted to be -- if you wanted an A there was all sorts of extra work you had to do. So I was really into trying to get my grades and trying to get my B's to an A level, so I could get to college. Because in those days, you had to earn your way. If you brought home the marks, then your parents said okay. We want you to go on the school. But if your marks weren't Okay then you could go and work in Woolworths.

School politics?

We elected our officers, but it wasn't much of a deal. I and I think most of the girls who were on the National Honor Society were the ones who were picked. As I remember. I'm thinking of Barbara Jones and Marty Temple and a couple of others.

Did you get an allowance?

No, I didn't. Not as such. If we were going to stay at the high school for lunch, we would get money. I don't remember how much it was. But that was only on stormy days. Otherwise we would go home for lunch. If you lived within a certain distance, you couldn't use the cafeteria. That was for the kids who came in from out of town.

But I sometimes had to run to get back to school on time. You really had to rush to get back to school on time.

Do you remember our high school dances?

Yes, I enjoyed and I enjoyed decorating for them. It was such a big

thing for us. To decide how to decorate with all the crepe paper. And we always had great clothes; always long dresses. I made all my gowns. And then when my sisters came along, I made the gowns for my sisters. I was the oldest.

I think of a lot of people who were poor who couldn't get such dresses.

Well, that's why I was thinking, I may have been a little cruel to those girls who lived down by the river but we didn't think. You know, you think what's wrong with their shoes or why don't they have a better looking dress.

ANd that's being cruel. But being children, you are not realizing. In fact, now, when I see the two Lavallee girls -- it seems to me that they lived down in that area somewhere I was so pleased to talk to them. And they said, "oh, yes, we started out in first grade together. And we went all through the grades together." And I was a little ashamed of myself.

Well, I put in clothing styles, but I think it was because many people made their clothes.

Yes, of course, I did.

And did you learn to cook from your mother?

Yes, yes I did. Because in the summer we weren't allowed to work. I think I was a junior in High School until I was allowed to work. My dad always said your life is so short. You have a long time to work. Enjoy your childhood. I think he had to go to work when he was young. About 12 I think because it was a large family and his mother died. He was determined we were not allowed to work during school like so many did. I always wanted to work at Woolworths, but no way. We went home after school and we were not to go near the

drugstores or near the corners. We were not allowed to hang around. He always said, "If you tell me the truth, I'm going to be easy on you, but I don't want somebody else telling me what you're doing. You tell me first.

I think when I was a junior I was allowed to baby-sit. Then there was a woman down the street who had dinner parties and I was allowed to go down and serve. And do the dishes for her. He was president of one of the banks I think.

I was wondering about bigotry at that time. I seem to remember that there was some prejudice against Catholics and Jews in the town.

I think you're right. In Watkins Ave. there were children from the Italian section. And some Russian families that came and built up beyond us in a wooded area. There were about four families, I think. One of them was the Solomka family. Andy Solomka. Veronica Fish married him. They came from the Ukraine and of course they couldn't speak English. And these children had to go to school. There parents worked, I think, in the marble quarry. They were all quarry workers and I think somebody brought this group over; they all lived together, like a clan. I think they were kind of discriminated against to a certain degree because their language, at that time, was a little

broken. Because of their parents not speaking English.

SKubo was one of them and Kachube was another, along with the Solomkas. There was another family that I can't remember. These poor children didn't have toys. We would play ball -- there was an open field just beyond our property where all the children and their parents would play soft ball. We played with another family. And these two kids were about the next house up on the hill, and they weren't allowed to come and join us. They never had a toy and I remember trying to be friendly with Mildred and they wouldn't let me in the house. They would have to take off their shoes before they went in the house. It was a new house, you see, and apparently they were very proud of their house. And having come from Russia, I don't know how they had lived over there, but these four families would all help each other and they all had new houses. They had their own little clique, but the children did not have toys at all. They didn't mix well with us, and therefore I think we discriminated a little against them. With Mildred, we tried to be friendly with her but she wasn't allowed out of her yard to come and play with us. And I suppose they were carrying some of the Russian traits, that the family stays together and they work, they don't play.

I was also thinking more of the anti-Italian, or the separation between Protestant and Catholic and Jewish -- that sort of thing.

Yes, the Italians lived in the poorer section of town. I know there were some in the Watkins Avenue school. And then when these children got to high school, they went to Mt. St. Joseph, so we didn't see them so much in high school. There were a few but we didn't see them so much because they stayed down in their own little area. But we had them in Meldorf.

You have to reach out to those people. They were very talented with their hands, because they start in at ten or twelve years old in Italy to go into the trades. True, they don't have an education -- they don't go beyond sixth or seventh grade, but they're talented with their hands and you have to give that to them. And you have to encourage them. I had two or three Italians who were very fine tailors. Very fine. But they couldn't write their name. But I had gotten over the prejudice by then, and you just have to work with them and understand them. But this country being a melting pot -- you know, we're having trouble with the Puerto Ricans. Of course, it's a different world out there now, and they're dangerous. Their dispositions are not like the Europeans. You can't reach them.

Aren't you glad that you had such a good youth?

Yes, and my sisters are all living and even my mother is still living -- she's ninety-three. She's in a retirement home in Randolph. And her mind is still good.

Are there any other ideas that you might want to mention?

I think the fact that we did not have busses -- we had to walk to school, and we walked in groups. You had a group of friends from your area that you walked to school with. We would come down off the hill and at the end of the street there would be two or three girls and a couple of boys. Well, the girls didn't walk with the boys, because you didn't do that, but you walked as a group to school. I think that's something they're missing now. These kids hop on a bus -- the bus is practically at their front door -- and I think it's a healthy thing to walk. We walked a lot -- no such thing as a bus. And these kids that lived way out -- North Clarendon, Pittsford, Ctr. Rutland, I don't know how they got to school.

Some of them lived in town during the week and went home weekends.

I didn't know that.

Joanne Willcox lived in Plymouth and came into Rutland and lived with the Eliots near the

high school. She lived there for five days a week for her high school days.

I know my grandmother had a live-in for a number of years. I think that girl lived up in Shrewsbury.

So that's how they did it. Either their parents had to pay or some worked for their room and board.

The farm boys, well, the Thomas boys. They always had a truck for the boys. Dick always had a truck and he would bring a whole bunch of them in.

High school was a great time. I think the football games and the basketball games were wonderful. We really supported the organized sports.

Do you remember the West Rutland stone-peggars?

Yes, (laughter) and the boys from Brattleboro used to be so mean to us. And some other team that was very strong -- it seemed there were a whole lot of foreign boys, -- big, husky boys. We thought they were mean. Maybe it was West Rutland, or Proctor. The Proctor boys were pretty rough. Maybe because they were Polish boys.

Now, see, there was some prejudice against the Polish, too. I think it was just that we were all so isolated in our little groups.

Yes, I think, because our backgrounds were really just American from way back. I know my mother's side goes back to Noah Webster. That's why my mother's so fiesty. But I think that's the tradition -- strong American. The women were strong.

And some of those beautiful houses -- the architecture -- in Rutland, and I think, who said, "build me a house like that" -- look at them. The architects that did it.

Yes, I hated to see my grandmother's house go -- very Victorian. Stained glass windows, but her house is gone. The Perkins house was a lovely place. Last year, when I was there, when I went by, I wanted to stop by and say hello to her but I didn't. It was a shame -- it used to be so beautiful, with the arbors, and the gardens and all. And of course she can't take care of them now. It's a shame.

I must say, while I'm on this tape, "Is it okay for me to use this information that you are giving me?"

OH, yes, anything you want to use, or to eliminate. I'm just chatting on.

The other thing that concerns me at the reunion last year, was that they never mentioned the boys, or girls in the service that never came home. I wished that there had been a list of the deceased. It would have been nice to know.

Did you have a group of friends?

Yes, I did. And one of them that I lost track of was Edith Head. And I know that at one time she went to the New England school of Music. Then when I was buying fabrics, One day I was in the office and a girl came in and said, someone would like to see you. And I went out and there she stood. And how she found me, I don't know. At that time, she was head of the music department in some school of music near the Boston area. I can't remember what she told me. I asked her to please keep in touch, but I never heard after that. But that was funny that she looked me up and how she found me, I don't know.

NO -- not Edith Head, Patricia Head. But I don't know whatever happened to her. Because she left her address that time, and I send her a Christmas card with a note, but I never heard from her again.

I do remember that hamburg was 21 cents a pound. I remember that because I used to go to the store for my mother and she would give me just 21 cents, to buy a pound of hamburger. Times were tight, but at least we had hamburger.

Pankhurst -- in the women's liberation group. Remember they used to demonstrate and made a great disturbance? This was early -- way back, before graduation. In the 20s. But

anyway, she used to come to -- Katharine Hepburn used to talk about her.

Any stories your grandparents used to tell you.

My grandmother met Abraham Lincoln when he came to Rutland. Did you know that he came to Rutland?

No, I didn't.

Yes, he came to Rutland and he stayed at the Bardwell I think. And my grandmother met him -- she was a girl then. Of course, they did have a home in Manchester you know.

The Lincolns?

Yes. He built a home for his son in Manchester. It's now been restored, and it's open as a museum. I think that's how he came to Rutland.

Well, if you can't think of any more, I'll just shut it off and we'll look at some pictures.

Vt. M.Burditt

Do you have children?

No, no. We didn't get married until late in life. We've only been married 26 years. So, well, I had one miscarriage. But, that was the extent. But we have cats, and we have all the neighbors kids. So I think I've got kids. And I taught Sunday School for a number of years, so -- everyone calls me Margy. I don't insist on them calling me Mrs. Anderson. So it's real fun. I didn't go to college, but I did go to Rutland Business College. I started working for Red Cross -- right after Business College. I worked for Amy Perkins. She was Vera Perkins sister, her father was mayor of the city for a while. But she gave me my salary out of her own money. She didn't take it out of Red Cross. She just took it out of her own money. While I was there, of course it was during the war, they were recruiting for overseas. And I wanted to go overseas. And I finally got almost to my twenty-fourth year and they said, OKay, we'll take you. Because I'd had no college and they were looking for college people. But they were getting desperate about that time and they were taking everybody. So I had a year overseas, in France, and then I came back because my father was not well and my sister was getting married and it seemed a good time. All the clubs were in

France were being closed and you had to go on to Germany for two years or go home. I'm glad I came home because I had two years with my father that I probably wouldn't have had otherwise.

Betty got married and I was her bridesmaid and when I got married back in 1965, why she was my matron of honor and she wore the same dress that she had when she got married and I wore the same dress that I wore as a bridesmaid. We shortened the dresses so that they were street length, but other than that, they were the same. And we could still fit. I don't know if we could now, but we could then.

What other work did you do then?

Yes, after I came back from overseas, it took a while, but I finally got a job in Red Cross at the Veterans Hospital in White River Junction. That was closed out so then I took a job at Dartmouth College. About that time my father died and my mother was having a struggle keeping the house and I couldn't help her by maintaining a room in Hanover, which is very expensive.; So I told my boss in Hanover that I either had to go back to Rutland to work, or I would have to have a raise in pay.

He said, "You're one of the highest paid secretaries in this college, and I can't raise your pay any more." So he said you'd better plan to go back to Rutland, so I said, "Here's my

notice." I went in to see Bill Johnston who was a Vice Pres. of Central Vermont Public Service. He had told me that anytime I wanted a job to let him know. (My father worked for CV.) So I went in and saw him and he asked when I was coming back to Rutland and I said probably about the first of Sept. And he said all right, I'll have a job for you.

And he made a job in the accounting department for me. Because he knew that someone was getting married and at that time, married women had to leave. They were not allowed to work there. So as soon as she got married she had to quit and I had her job. There was something in the paper about starting a protestant young adult fellowship and my name got mentioned because I was helping J. Graydon Brown set it up, and him being the congregational minister. But we also had Mr. Porter from the Methodist Church and someone from the Baptist. Four people from the four protestant churches were working together to make this young adult fellowship. Primarily for the young adults who were not married who had come to Rutland or come back to Rutland to work. And they had no place to do anything. There were couples clubs for all the churches, but no singles. So this was a singles really. So my name got mentioned in the paper and I had a telephone call from Dorothy Sussman, who

was, at that time, head of the Vermont Assoc. for the Crippled, the Easter Seal Society. They were looking for somebody to start a job as a field representative, which was a combination of fund-raising and public relations. Part of the job was to show pictures of what is done in Vermont with Easter Seal money, and part of it was getting the Easter Seal Chairman to raise the money. So I initiated that job my first year. I was on a special loan from Clarence Oatman. If I proved myself worthy, and if I showed there was improvement, because of my work, then they would put me in the budget and I would be a permanent employee.

I had a lot of fun and for 16 years I worked for the VAC. It's still VAC and it is not an Easter Seal anymore, but it still operates for children who are handicapped, primarily. But also adults. I married and worked only one year, and I found that I was doing only half a job so I figured I'd married to be a wife and if I'm working I'm, probably being only half a wife, so I gave it up. But he was afraid I might get cabin fever being a city girl and his aunt had come here to take care of his mother and she got cabin fever terribly. He was a farmer and she had to stay here. She couldn't go off and do lots of things like she had been in the habit of doing. But I had the advantage on her because I could drive and she couldn't.

She had to wait until someone took her. I did work one year after I was married, but that was enough. I wanted to stay here. It took two people to do my job when I left.

Well, then you were married. Have you been out here in this area ever since?

Yes. It's gorgeous. And I've found my niche is playing the organ at the Baptist church. It's a very tiny church, a very friendly church and not very many people go, but we have an awfully good time and we're awfully good friends. And they're not very critical of my playing (laughter). But somebody said the other day to me, you started playing the piano and then the organ, didn't you? And I said, Yes. Does it still show? After all these years. You don't remember all the other organists that played at the Grace Congregational Church? I did a lot of turning pages for them, and listening to them. I never actually sat down and played but they would give me pointers as they played.

Well, lets go back to growing up in Vermont.

Yes, that was wonderful. We lived on Bellevue Avenue and my sister still lives there. She's married and back there as a widow. I think, (she and I were talking this morning) that we got our first car in 1932 and from that time on we took Sunday afternoon drives. My father was one of those people who liked to try out back roads and so that's where we'd go. I

remember one night, toward evening, it must have been late summer and he stopped right in the middle of the road (it was all right because it was a back road) and he said, "Listen" and we heard a bob-white. I have never heard one since. During the depression, my father's job was kind of iffy and so

What was his job?

He was a civil engineer. And he wasn't sure he was going to keep his job because after the 1927 flood they were struggling to keep afloat at all. Then the 1929 crash didn't help. So mother took a job with Fay Morse sewing, and I rode a bike and I used to ride up by Dr. Johnson's stable. It's all built up now. You can't find the paddock any more.

There were just you two girls?

Yes.

But you did all right during the depression?

Yes, we managed. We've never felt any pinch, but I expect my father and mother did. But we girls didn't. If there was something we wanted and something was said about it, if they had the money and could, we got it, otherwise they'd say, "we don't have the money right now, so you'll have to do without." And we did. We understood that if that was out of the question, they we didn't have it.

They didn't really expect you to go on to school?

No, but mother encouraged me. Mother who had a very dear friend who was a nurse and I thought I'd like to be a nursle. And she said, "Marjorie, if you are good and strong -- you're tall -- if you're strong too, all right. But I'm not sure if you're not a regular horse, don't go into nursing. Because she had found out from her own experience, that just because she was tall they thought she was strong too and they gave her all these heavy lifting jobs -- people and bedding. It was too much, she said. You couldn't do it and I couldn't either. So that sort of discouraged me. But then I went to business college and got some training as a secretary and also in accounting and well I just went on with that. Now my sister went on to college. She went to Syracuse University. She wanted to be an art teacher and so she went and studied Art and Education, both at Syracuse and graduated from it. But the darned fool went and got married so she never used it, except what she could use at home. She did get a certificate to teach in Connecticut but she didn't use it except to substitute.

It was because I didn't know what I wanted to do that I didn't go to college. They would have sent me, I could have gone. But I didn't have any great desire.

I ask these questions, because things were different then.

They were.

In my family they had the idea that girls should have one year. That was all. So everyone had a different outlook.

Wasn't your father in the same class with my mother in Rutland High School?

I don't know.

You've probably done more research than I have on this.

No, I've just heard my mother mention him.

He was a nice father. Someone of an alcoholic, but he finally quit.

I think she knew him before then -- in High School. I think he went to Cuttinsville with her and Majorie Jones who I'm named for, and who had a big house down there. They lived in the big house across from the cemetery and her father among other things had the care of the cemetery and that mausoleum.

She came to Rutland High School and she lived with her aunt, my great-aunt, who lived on Chestnut Ave. But mother lived on Grove Street, right in back of them, and she got to know Marjorie Jones very well and Marjoried Jones to keep up her social life, invited all these people out to Cuttinsville weekends and sleight rides and everything. Her parents encouraged it. They did all these things out in Cuttinsville and I'm sure Tom Hascall was one of those that went.

I'm sure he did. And Grove St. is right near where he lived on Crescent Street.

And that's how mother met her husband, Ned Voiles. He and Tom Hascall and Roland Burditt were all in the same area near Crescent Street.

You know more about my father than I do.

I've heard my mother talking about him and about her High School days so.

She's gone now?

Yes, in 1981.

Then where did you go to grammar school?

Dana. And so were you. And you were in Sunday School with me too.

Do you remember Pike who used to lead us in the singing? She played the piano some of the time, too.

She was a relative of Sally Curtis, I think.

Yes, she was. Both Shirley and Louise Squires were the girls that I went back and forth up East Street with. They were both in our class when we graduated. Shirley dropped, as I did into the class of 1940. She was originally a year ahead of Louise.

They're not twins, though they were close. Do you remember anything special about Dana?

Not really, except that huge hall in the center. And I remember Mr. Cohen, the singing teacher. After I got into the fifth and sixth

grade, he used to take me downstairs with him to give the pitch to the little kids, the 1st and 2nd grades. Because they couldn't get the right pitch, so I would give them the soprano pitch. I remember that. That was Miss Gleason, but she came the year after I did, then Miss Kiley and Miss Anthony and I had Miss Gaynor and Miss Corcoran and I had Miss Schryver. She used to whisper; she lost her voice.

I remember Miss Schryver but I don't remember the whisper.

You don't remember that she lost her voice? Well, she didn't. I think Miss Gaynor is still living but the rest are gone. Well had an assembly hall on the second floor. They opened it up and we used to sing, "Oh, Columbia the Gem of the Ocean". For our patriot songs. And kids don't even know it anymore. They've never heard of it. I play it once in a while as a patriot tune on the organ, but they don't know it. They're not musically inclined that way. I have one gal that really appreciates music. The rest like it and they sing, but they don't really care.

I remember that we had a skating rink in our back yard and all the neighbor kids came and skated. It wasn't very big; about 25 feet square, I'd guess. It covered our whole garden and Daddy flooded it every night. We laughed about it all our lives, I think. The kids all had to be home by five o'clock so they couldn't help

shovel it all off the last time before he came home.

Do you remember anything about your younger years.

No, except mother encouraged us to play in our yard, so the kids in the neighbor came and played in our yard. We played ball and we played in the sandpile, which was half under the house.

Then we went to Meldon.

Yes, and we went back and forth from Dana to take sewing and cooking. In the eight grade you had your choice of taking Latin or Home Ec. We had big celebrations at Meldon, too. We used to have assemblies and programs and we have a revue every year. We had a Meldon Revue. I was in one of them and sang a solo -- The Old Spinning Wheel. No, not that one, something less popular. Another thing I remember about pre-school -- first grade, was when the new High School was built -- 1928 or 1929. All the grades had to do some kind of a demonstration, and I remember that our class wore red skirts -- I don't know what you call those things that lace up. And we had to wear white blouses. And we did a dance of some kind. My mother made the costumes.

Your mother probably made a lot of your clothes.

She made all of our clothes. That was one thing she could do that saved us a lot of money. We got clothes from cousins and other relatives who had clothes that were outgrown. We had -- I know my aunt sent a couple of navy blue velvet dresses. And my mother made some blouses and something else from the velvet trim. We were always dressed alike. We didn't look alike but we were always dressed alike. So everyone knew we were sisters. The difference was that mine were always trimmed with blue or green and Betty's were trimmed with red or yellow.

Lots of the mothers made the clothes.

Mother almost always made panties that matched our dresses and Betty would pull them all the way to the top, and mother would reach up under her skirt every morning and pull them down. As long as she stayed in the house they were pulled down, but as soon as she was outside I'm sure they went right back up again, as high as possible. We had to wear cotton stockings in the winter, because we couldn't wear pants. No slacks at school, never. Well, I guess I'd rather wear tights and skirts than slacks, because I'm not warm in slacks. The floors are cold here so tights are really a help. They keep your feet warmer.

Our summer vacations as kids were always at Lake Hortonio. One year we went to Maine

to pick blueberries. But we used to take the small island that the Byrds owned on Lake Hortonio. We were just there for Daddy's vacation. I remember it because we would clean up the cabin and clean up the grounds and really ;police it and Mr. Byrd would knock off some money because Daddy would get it looking so nice. We always had the first two weeks in July, so that was early in the season, so the rest of the season it looked pretty good. And the first two weeks in July are usually pretty good weather too.

I've talked about winter in Vermont.

Did you ski too? People didn't ski as much then.

Not as much. They hadn't started then. George Peck was getting things going, and Suicide Six was starting over in Woodstock, but that was kind of far away. Daddy did get us some skis. Betty's not an outdoor person, so they were trying to get us both outdoors. I would go, but she wouldn't So they got us both skis and they took us over and let us ski on some hills over in Sherburne, but Pico hadn't started, or was just starting. And if it had it was too expensive. We just couldn't afford to pay for lift tickets and so on. But we had the old reservoir up on Woodstock Avenue where the senior center is now. It was built up real high and used to have water in it.

Then they cut off one side because of the road, and then the rest of the hill was still there. We used to come down through the old orchard. Right behind the Hoits.

We used to ski at the country club. But we lived on Lincoln Ave.

But your big holidays were at home weren't they?

Oh, yes. As for Halloween, the first year I was in High School, I fell down the stairs right there near room five -- do you remember room five?

I slipped on the wet and cracked the cartilage off my ankle. Immediately I was in a cast. From my toes to my knee. I did go to school, but in those days they didn't do much for you -- it was all stairs there. So most of my work I did at home and come Halloween I was still in a cast and still on crutches and a little boy next door came over and he soaped our front windows. We had a big front porch and the windows were right there and he soaped them good. My mother called his mother and said, "Ralph has been over and soaped our windows." And his mother said, "Well, they're the only ones he can reach." And mother said to me, "Do you want to soap some windows? I don't usually let you do something like that but I am mad." So I said, "Yes, I'd love to soap

some windows." She asked, "Can't you reach some of their windows?" I said, "I sure can." So I went over there and I soaped the windows and they had to get a ladder to wash them off. (Laughter.) But I remember that. I never was allowed to soap people's windows. Mother didn't want our soaped and she didn't want us to soap someone else's.

But that time, she was mad. I don't remember (anyone handing out candy). Funny things happened -- they told about taking people's gates away and throwing cabbages or pumpkins on your porch. But there was never any candy handed out. Mostly we just dressed up and went to our relatives and showed them our costumes. They had to guess who we were. Of course, they had a hard time with that (laughter). I have a really hard time here because they're so many little kids on the street. Unless I know their mothers or fathers. But they're getting away from it a little -- at least the face masks, so the kids can at least see where they're going.

So, then High School.

But I've been told they had three tracks: college, academic, and commercial. Is that right?

Yes, and I took the Academic. So it was half college and half commercial. I took home ec instead of typing for commercial and I took French but not Latin, and Algebra and English

and Geometry. Oh, and I took Chemistry and Physics too and Biology. Those were college courses but home ec. I think sewing is fun, if I just had time. Now, I have my mother's machine; it's upstairs. And I can leave my stuff there because the bedrooms upstairs are not permitted to the cats. The cats are not allowed upstairs. We can shut the door there and we shut the door here and they just can't get upstairs. They do try. We have big radiators upstairs, so it's not just shut off but it's not as warm as down here because we have a stove. The furnace just keeps the house and rooms from freezing. But we have the wood stove which gives off a lot of heat.

What about the effects of the depression?

I don't think we noticed it much. If my mother and father were in trouble, I didn't know. They didn't pass that feeling on to me at all.

Were you in any sports?

No. The last three years of my high school, well they took me even out of gym when I broke my ankle. And they took me out of all but two courses. I had English and something for the next three years, because every month that came around I was in bed for two or three days. With my period. So the doctor just insisted that I cut down. And that's the reason I am in two classes. I didn't have enough points to graduate

with 1939 which was the class I had been with all through the year. So I had to drop back into the Class of 1940.

Sort of like Joanne Willcox.

Didn't we have clubs or other high school activities.

Yes, but I didn't get into any of those. Because I just was unable to do anything like that. Practically the only outside activity that I had was choir. The church. But I did go to those.

Girl Scouts?

Not until after I graduated. After I graduated, I was a girl scout leader until I started working and then I told them. We met at the Mead Community House. But when I started working, I had to ask them to come in the evening or from five o'clock on. Their parents didn't like the idea of them being out at night and so I had to give that up. But I was with them for five years.

You did well in school, though?

Yes, I got a prize for my essay on Women and I also got a prize when Mr. Eddy, in English class, gave to me for my essay on Ann Story. The DAR Chapter in Rutland is named the Ann Story Chapter. She was an early Vermonter who hid her family in a cave next to the Otter Creek River up near Salisbury when the Indians came. Also she hid Green Mountain

Boys there too. She was a widow. Her husband was killed felling a tree for their house so she and her boys built the house and then they built this cave to hide in when the Indians came. So I wrote an essay on her and got a prize for that. Then Mr. Mayo called me into his office and gave me a ten dollar prize for my essay on Women. That was a social studies thing that Mr. Elery Purdy did instead of Miss Moran. He had half the year, that year, and she had half a year of Social Studies. We were supposed to write an essay on whatever you had from early times up to the present. So I wrote on Women because I was absent when He passed out the subjects, so the only one he had left was Women. I interviewed Marian Ward as a lawyer, as a modern woman, and I interviewed a woman doctor that I can't remember her name. I can't remember the name of the first gal early on that having salons in her home. She taught them to read an write and they discussed politics, etc.

You just had women who were ahead of their time?

Well, I didn't just use plain women who were doing housework. Now I'm being a housewife, I'm appreciating what it is.

Did you get an allowance?

Yes, I got 25 cents a week. I'm not sure I got it until I was in High School. But I was encouraged to give some of it to the church and

to put some of it away. I could spend some if I wanted to, but it was not encouraged. I was not out in the store buying candy every day.

Did you have to keep track of it, or account for it?

I don't remember that I did. It just went into the piggy bank and when it got heavy we just took it to the bank. But I did have to take money out of my allowance for Sunday School every week. OH, and I got paid. We got paid in the choir, I think ten cents each Sunday. Don't you remember?

One of my first jobs was to keep attendance for the senior choir when I was in High School. Because the high school kids went in with the senior choir. I had to keep track of who came. We didn't get paid after we were in High School in the senior choir. Just in the Junior choir. I used to take attendance of the junior choir some of the time, but Gladys Hart did most of it. But she didn't want to have to come out at night so she said you're going to choir anyway, and I said, "Sure", so she said then you take attendance. So I got acquainted with the people in the choir real well because of taking their attendance. It was a real large choir, besides the quartet.

Did you learn to cook from your mother?

Yep. Just watching her. And I helped her too. We were expected, in the summer time when it

was canning time, to cut up the beans. When that was done, then we could go play. Or we were to shell the peas. But work before pleasure. We didn't mind, most of the time. She said we will do it, and there was no question about it. Mother said. But if we wanted something, please, we'd go and ask Daddy. But he'd say, what does your mother say? So that didn't do us any good.

Do you have any other ideas that you would like to talk about.

It helps to remember if you stay in the area. This particular area I'm in now, over here in Castleton, we're very historic minded. Especially with the battlefield up here and everything that's been going on with the bicentennial. You begin to think back to things of the family. Some of it's 200 years ago, but some of it is less than that. I think it's easier to remember things than when you've been away and been completely out of it for a while.

Don't you think growing up in Vermont was pretty special?

Yes, that was pretty special. And I was awful glad to get back to Vermont. I was glad to come home to Rutland. Glad for an excuse that I had to come back to Rutland, because of mother and trying to keep hold of that house. As soon as I got a job, I paid her something every week, toward my room and board. But I helped her

enough so that that made a difference. She used the money for expenses for the house. But I made my own bed and cleaned my own room and I helped her clean the rest of the house. If we had guests, I helped her with that. She used to do most of the ironing, but I did other things.

Did your sister come back too?

She moved from Syracuse (she married out there) to Connecticut. But when her husband died in 1974, she couldn't get back to Vermont fast enough. Of course, by that time I was married and over here so she had great hopes -- well, her husband had muscular dystrophy so he was quite severely handicapped, especially at the end of his life -- but she had great hopes I think of her and mother doing things and going places which she had not been able to do because of him. By the time she got here, however, mother wasn't able to go much either. And Betty's life style and mother's life style was so different. They didn't mesh the way mother and I did. Mother would come over here for a vacation. Oh, we just had such good times, but then she'd say, "Well, I've got to go home." It was not that she didn't love Betty. Because she did. But just the difference in life styles. Betty was trying to fit into mother's life style and mother was trying to fit into Betty's, but it didn't work. It was much better with mother and me.

Even when she couldn't do much for herself. I used to plan, and we had a hired man too. She'd get up, and we'd have an intercom, and she'd say, "I'm ready for my bath now." So I'd go and help her bathe in the room because she couldn't walk even as far as here. We had a commode in there for her. She'd come out for meals, and she'd come out and sit in the chair in there and read, but then she'd go back in her room and spend a lot of time in her bed. But as long as she was able she came over here and stayed. aFinally she got so she didn't even come downstairs and that was hard on Betty. I used to go over and spend the day so Betty could have a day away from her. Mother finally died and it was really a release.

Is there anything else? And you don't mind if I use this information for my book?

No. I hope you can.

Probably after you've gone, I'll think of lots of things I could have told you. But I don't remember anything right at the moment.