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TAPED INTERVIEW WITH ELIZABETH TREMAINE PIERCE

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This is November 21, 1978. An interview is being held with Mrs. W. Neil Pierce by Janet Savin for the Oral History Project of the Westfield Historical Society and the Westfield Memorial Library.

My name is Mrs. William Neil Pierce. I was Elizabeth Tremaine. I was born here in Westfield June 5, 1903 in the house that still stands on the corner of Prospect Street and Ferris Place. My father built the house on the corner of what was then called Park Street. Park Street continued and Westfield Avenue which later developed into Stoneleigh Park. His cousin was already living in a remodeled house on the opposite corner of Westfield Avenue and Park Street and of course that's how my father happened to build there. It was part of a 20 acre tract of land called the Drake Estate. After my father built his home he found the property was being sold to a real estate developer who was planning to divide it into 50 foot plots and build small frame houses of identical design. That stirred both my uncle and my father. My father bought one of the 50 foot lots and his cousin decided to buy up the 20 acres and develop the land as he saw fit. They had the use of the water and all the facilities of the town of Westfield but they had this circular Park Street which was not at that time turned over to the town. He had underground lighting, all the facilities and all the arrangements as he wanted them. Then he let his friends know that the property was available for sale. They agreed on certain restrictions for the size of the house and the location of the houses and today that is still a very specially attractive area of the town, called Stoneleigh Park. We moved in when I was two years old, in 1905.

I have lived here my entire life with the exception of a few years, two years. We moved to Westchester when my father left the Aeolian Company and went into manufacturing pianos for himself. His factory was in Harlem so the commuting was very difficult. And we were all so unhappy in Westchester. We moved back and my father decided that he would rather take the long commute than live anywhere but Westfield.

I went through the public schools here graduating in 1922 and I belong to a bridge club in which five out of the nine members all went to school with me and three of us were born in Westfield.

Q: Who are the other two?

A: Mrs. Irwin Cassidy who was Joyce Ganzel. As a matter of fact she was born next door to me on Ferris Place. She was born a year ahead of me. They also moved onto Westfield Avenue and lived a few houses down further out towards town.

Another pleasant memory I have is the Westfield Golf Club which had tennis courts and was the first club to have lighted tennis in this area and that was way back in 1910 or 12. They had tennis tournaments even at night. My father and my brother were very good tennis players and this was of course before the tennis club was established.

Q: Did you ever play?

A: I never was very good and I couldn't live up to my brother so I lost my interest and became a spectator. When the tennis club was established my brother eventually became the first seated player in the club. My cousin also was a very fine tennis player but he was older and he married and moved away. His name was Henry Tremaine. My brother's first name was Lyman Tremaine. He lived here most of his life until his wife died. He eventually married again and his wife wanted to live in New York. They stayed there for a few years and now he lives in Heritage Village. He was two years older than I and now he is retired. 5:00 MINUTE

This tennis was a very big part of our lives. We played other tennis clubs and so forth.

Another very interesting aspect, because my father's piano business didn't work out very well and he had originally been in advertising, he went back to Walter Thompson who was a distant relative when he first went into business. He was good at advertising so he was persuaded to form what they called the National Bureau for the Advancement of Music and through that he started the National Music Week and he was able to promote classroom time for the bands and orchestras and choruses in the schools instead of having them an extra-curricular activity. When we were quite young we had one of father's player pianos which was one of the features he had when he was manufacturing them. We used to have all these records and we were supposed to play them over and over again and learn them. Then we had a contest between the two of us to see how many of the classics we could remember. And then he tried it out in the Westfield High School which was the first music memory contest in the public schools and that also spread throughout the country. I don't know whether they are still doing it or not but they did for many years.

Partly through his interest in music and knowing a good many of the well known musicians, before the time of the airplane and so forth and being only 20 miles from New York, our community concerts originally had all the famous people of the musical world. We had Paderewski here, we had Gallicurci, Madame Schumann-Heink and Rachmaninoff. Many others of that caliber and opera singers and it was a wonderful educational and great treat for everybody. A lot of these concerts were performed in the Roosevelt Junior High School as soon as the high school was built. I was through school before the high school was built. I'm not sure whether the concerts before that were in the old high school auditorium or not. I graduated from the old high school on Elm Street and Walnut Street.

Also a very early vague memory was the election of 1912 after we first moved back to Westfield. Both Theodore Roosevelt and William Taft were out here at which was then the old Washington School and later on the old high school. (That was the high school at that time.) The grounds are still there where they played ball and so forth opposite the old high school. There were great crowds of people there and I remember the excitement of having an ex-president and a president here. Of course Taft won the nomination and I wasn't interested in politics but I was interested in the excitement of being around. Westfield was a town where things happened and even when

it was quite a small town.

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I remember the discussion when they decided what to do for a memorial for the First World War, the Plaza. My cousin, Mr. H.B. Tremaine, who was the one that developed Stoneleigh Park, said when they built it the way they arranged it and the trolley was still going through town and the way traffic crossed other traffic, there would be some accidents there. And sure enough on election night in 1920 my parents were at a progressive dinner and grandmother and I were having dinner with H.B. Tremaine and his daughter, who was my age, Ruth Tremaine, who was also one of the ones who bought in this town and is now back here living in Westfield. She is now Mrs. Roland Swift and she lives at 659 Westfield Avenue, very close to where she was born. She was driving the car. She got an early license at the age of 16 and it was a very rainy night, we didn't have windshield wipers in those days and it was very difficult to see and in crossing just in front of where the Methodist Church is, the trolley car was coming through, going towards Plainfield and towards the underpass. It had its lights dimmed as it was supposed to do going through town and we ran into it. I have borne a scar on my forehead from the time I was sixteen till the present time. It was the first of many accidents that have occurred at that location. Now it isn't so bad because we don't have the trolley car. The trolley car was blamed for the accident and not my cousin who was driving because they should have turned their lights on because by now they had gotten through what was then the town. They also should have sounded the bell to indicate that they were coming. My cousin suffered from shock, my grandmother was partially hurt but I was the only one that... In those days we didn't have shatterproof windshields so my head broke the windshield and cut right through to the bone. Well, they were going to take me to Muhlenberg Hospital. I was unconscious and conscious and I said no, Dr. Sinclair, the lovable doctor through all my young days. He brought me into the world and until he died he was practically the only doctor in town but he was the most popular, even in Cranford and other areas. So then they went to the doctor's office with me and they rang the bell and he didn't rouse immediately and they said, "I guess he isn't here." They said we better take her to the hospital and I woke up again and I said, "No, I want Dr. Sinclair!" and he did come to the door and he did fix me up. But the scar went right through one eye and it wasn't for a week (because I was bandaged) whether they knew if I had lost that eye or not, but I didn't. He was a darling man, Dr. Sinclair. He used to have little licorice pills and every time he came to us for any particular thing my cousin and I were always meeting him at the door and asking for these licorice pills. They were innocuous for a cold, I guess, but they had a nice licorice taste and he would give us a few of them, they were tiny little things.

Another thing that was an interesting aspect of my childhood that goes further back was an epidemic of whooping cough. This was before we had started school and my cousin and I who were within three months of age, (Mrs. Swift) played together constantly. She came down with whooping cough first and I wasn't allowed to play with her. When my mother came home from her bridge club one time and I met her at the door and I was dancing up and down and I said, "I've got the whooping cough, I've got the whooping cough! Now I can play with Ruth!"

Well, shortly after that when I was whooping all the time I said to her, "I don't like this whooping cough." But at that time my cousin was having her birthday, I guess about fourth or fifth birthday, and there were so many of our friend's children who also had whooping cough that her mother decided that she shouldn't be denied her birthday party. She had a party where all the children that were invited to the party all had whooping cough or were just recovering from it. My mother tells me that every once in awhile these children would get into a paroxysm of whooping where the mother would grab the child and dash her out until she got over the coughing and then go back to the party. 15.00
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I went to kindergarten at the old Westfield Club that was on... that burned down. We called it the Casino. Miss Grace Phillips from a well known family in town had this kindergarten class at the Casino. Later on she gave it up. Miss Calloway who lived here many many years, long after I finished high school even, was a maiden lady living on Westfield Avenue and she had a private school that took Kindergarten and the first few grades of school. We all went there to school until I moved to Westchester where I went to second grade and then came back to Westfield. Miss Calloway was from an old Westfield family too and she lived with her brother on Kimball Avenue later on. She never married and was still alive when my son was going to school and had difficulty with his reading. I had her help him.

I was married to William Neil Pierce in 1933 and we lived first in the Carleton Towers and then we built this home at 763 Kimball Avenue when our son was a year and one half old. We have lived here ever since 1936.

My parents lived a very long time. My mother died in 1960 at the age of 87 and my father died in 1933 within three months of his 93rd birthday. He lived from the horse and buggy to the space age. He was very alert to the end and interested in space exploration. He didn't live to see the man step on the moon but he did live to see the flights around the moon. He was very interested in things right up to the end. He was one of the founders of the National Music Camp out in Interlocken, Michigan through his connection with music in the schools. He also started the custom of Christmas carolling throughout the nation. All this development through the National Bureau of the Advancement of Music. It was just a promotional nonprofit organization. He was, of course, still active in Westfield. He established a scholarship for Westfield students to go to the music camp. The scholarship still exists limited to either junior high or high school students with acceptable musical ability. Of course he was a member of the musical club.

My mother was president of the Womens Club from 1908 to 1910. That was about the time we moved out of time, I mean right after that. Then we sold the house in Stoneleigh Park and bought another house, or more or less exchanged with a man who had a house on Prospect Street. We moved there in 1914 when I was 11 years old. They lived there until my mother died in 1960.

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Of course my father wanted us children to develop musically. He wasn't musical himself, but his father, brother and two sisters had been amateur musicians in Brooklyn where they lived. They had a Tremaine quartet that used to sing at church socials and just in an amateur fashion because they loved music. They were very musical. They could play by ear and they had fine voices and formed a natural quartet. My grandfather knew Stephen Foster and because he had been a music publisher with Horace Waters in New York City. It is still a music publishing firm. He worked there for a good many years and through him he knew Stephen Foster quite well because Stephen Foster dedicated one of his songs to the Tremaine Family. However, it wasn't one of the popular songs. It was written after his family had left him and it was called "Why Have My Loved Ones Gone?" It never became very popular but has appeared in a biography of Stephen Foster. Then my grandfather was persuaded to leave the publishing business and go into manufacturing what they called the organette at that time which was an early piano. He died before it became very popular, or very successful. He died when my father was only 16 and his brother carried on. That eventually became the Aeolian Company which my cousin became president of after his father died. When my cousin died I think it was taken over by Steinway.

I took piano lessons from a Miss Jeanette Perkins who lived on Ross Place in Westfield. I took the lessons for about four years but I never practiced, I was too busy with other things. I was too busy playing. Miss Perkins finally called my father and said "It's a waste of my time and your money to continue Elizabeth with her piano lessons, so I think we better stop." I have regretted it ever since, but you don't always know when you're young what you're going to wish you could do later on. I had my children both take piano lessons and they went to the National Music Camp and so forth, but neither of them did very well on the piano either. My cousin's family are all musical so all the musical ability seemed to go to that side of the family. Miss Jeanette Perkins is still living and she must be up in her nineties now. Of course, sometimes when you're little you may think people are older than they are, but she's in the Neshanic Nursing Home and being a member of St. Paul's Church, some of the members still go to call on her.

I was brought up at St. Paul's Church here in Westfield. My family were members and my father was extremely active. He was on the vestry practically continuously and he was a warden and eventually he was a vestryman emeritus and of course had a great deal to do with the building funds and the drives and the selections of the various ministers we had here.

Dr. Sinclair who delivered me and a number of other people here didn't care much about birth certificates because it was rather new then. He didn't bother to register his babies and so I had no birth certificate. I was going to Europe before Dr. Sinclair died and I got him to give me a verification of date of birth and that sufficed for my passport, but I never had a regular birth certificate. Even

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that I couldn't find when I wanted it. So I went down to the church and asked for a record of my baptism because I knew I had been baptized and they had my brother's baptism record but they couldn't find any for me so I had to write out to Colorado for the census and I got my social security through that. Later when my brother was giving up his house we were going through some old papers and I discovered my baptism certificate, and just by luck because I never would have thought to look for it, I was baptised while we were away for the summer at Bayshore, Long Island, which was the farthest from my thoughts of where I should look for it. So I'm glad I didn't spend much time trying to locate it. I did think of asking in the church where my mother and father were married in 1900 in Grace Church in New York. And I thought maybe for sentimental reasons they may have had me Christened there. It would have been a fruitless search in that area. My mother had an aunt and cousins living on Long Island and in those early years we went to Long Island almost every summer.

Q: Is that where your family originally settled? In New York?

A: My mother and father were both born in Brooklyn. As a matter of fact my mother says she didn't meet my father until much later but she remembers a little boy who lived on Grand Avenue which is where my father lived and he had brick red hair and was a boy who used to torment her when she was visiting her aunt who still lived in New York after she moved to New Haven. This little boy used to throw snowballs at her. Later on my father had spinal meningitis and it left him with a very bad back when he recovered. He had to give up his business and went out to board with a widow on Long Island who happened to be my mother's aunt and when her mother died she went out to live with this aunt too. And so my mother thought that this young man who was boarding there was very, very attractive because she met him in the evening. She was horrified the next day when she found that he had red hair and a red beard and moustache and she had hated red hair ever since she was a little girl and this boy used to throw snowballs at her. His hair turned brunette. Anyway, of course she was attracted to him before she knew he had red hair. They became engaged, but they were engaged for about five years because of his health he couldn't go back into business. To keep him out in the air he sold eggs and raised chickens in a little wagon he rode around the neighborhood and she used to ride with him sometimes delivering the eggs, on a horse and buggy. They had a fire. They had a terrible time. They had a fire in the garage and they barely got the horses out and my grandmother at that time had given up her house and so a lot of her personal belongings were stored there including her wedding dress and many other things and they were all burned up. Some of her keepsakes were gone, but we have quite a few. In fact, my husband said we had too many keepsakes, he wanted me to get rid of them and I'm trying now.

My husband died a year ago last Sunday and I'm trying to adjust to living alone. It's not easy. But we had almost 45 years of a good life together and about eight years after he retired we took many trips. One of them was to visit our son who was a lieutenant colonel in the Air Force stationed at that time in the Phillipines and so we took that ~~trip~~ starting in 1972, we spent Christmas there, and we visited Japan and Australia, New Zealand and Hawaii on the way home. That's a wonderful memory, it was a celebration of our fortieth year together.

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We had two children. As I mentioned, my son who is William Neil Pierce, Jr., a lieutenant colonel in the Air Force now, stationed at ~~Arthur~~ Air Force in Omaha, Nebraska which is SAC headquarters and my daughter is married and they have two children, a boy who is 10 and a 6 year old girl. My son has two boys, an 11 year boy and a 6 year old boy. I am planning to go out there to visit both families at Christmas time. They are my main source of joy now and comfort. It was almost miraculous. My husband died on the golf course November 19th last year. He was playing with my cousin's husband and two other friends and they say he was playing the best game he ever played. He finished 9 holes and they went into the Kyle house for a snack before going on. He ordered a bowl of soup. He loved soup for lunch. He ordered the soup and dropped dead. There was a doctor in the foursome behind them and he said he thinks he died before he hit the ground, that he didn't suffer at all. So that's a good comfort. Everytime I meet some people at Echo Lake Club that I haven't seen since then, I've heard from various people so it apparently went around the club, he was playing the best game that he ever had. So I know he died happy.

It was a miracle that I was able to get in touch with my son because when I called his home my daughter-in-law said that he was on his way to Greece on a mission and he was supposed to go at 9 o'clock. It was about 11, so she said, "I'll see if they've taken off." It seems that the plane had some mechanical difficulty and they were delayed 2-1/2 hours in take-off. A neighbor who was also in the air force took her to the field and drove his car right in front of the airplane that was waiting to take off. The pilot was announcing "We're ready to take off now as soon as that car gets out of our way." The officer got out of the car and got on the plane and told my son what had happened and he was able to get off the plane. They flew here the next day and they were here for a week. If they had taken off, it was an air force plane, there was no way he could have gotten off until they got to Greece. He would have had to fly back which would have delayed things and he would not have been in such good shape to be my sustaining help. Of course my brother came immediately that very afternoon and my daughter and husband got in the car and drove all day and got here the next day also. They stayed for the week with all the grandchildren. It was just a blessing to have them with me. I spent a month visiting them over the holidays last year so that I didn't have to be home alone.

Q: Someone mentioned that I should ask you about a gift of an organ..

A: Oh yes, yes!! My brother and I gave a gift to the St. Paul's Church in memory of my mother and father who were so active in music. Well we waited for about ten years to find the gift that was just right. My brother and I couldn't agree on other things that were suggested and so we just built up a fund waiting for the right thing. When I saw they were ready to buy a special, almost like a spinet-type organ; its a Flintrop Chamber organ manufactured in Holland. It is similar to the kind of organs that were used in the time of Bach and Beethoven and Haydn and the famous composers of the Classics. And it can serve that kind of music better than the regular church organ.

We had the dedication of it just two weeks before my husband died with a special organ showing its various capabilities. It is used many Sundays for the preludes and sometimes for the oratory and the church has a very fine choir, men and boys, and they give concerts three or four times a year. They had one just recently on the twelvth of November in which that organ was used. It was a special Bach concert and the organ was used through every number of the hour long concert with solos and with the choir. It was a particularly beautiful concert. And so we were very happy that we were able to do that for the church. The church is very important to me and I'm very much involved with all the groups. It's very warming to be a part of something that has been in my life and in my family's life ever since I was born.

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Some of my other early memories of skating through town. There weren't so many people in the streets but what you didn't have much problem and there were no restrictions on, say, skating on the sidewalks. Everybody that I met, if not by name, I would know who they were and also it kept me sort of in line because I knew that if I did anything objectionable why my family would hear about it. Some of the early stores that I remember: of course Jarvis was there and Mr. Jarvis was running it himself and he was quite young then.

Then there was Frutchey's Drug Store where the high school boys congregated (which is now the Rexall), the Arcadian Building and where Rexall Drug Store is now. That was a family owned drug store for many years and well, I guess in the beginning Mr. Jarvis was working for Frutchey's before he went into business for himself. The high school boys used to gather on that corner and they would either tease or whistle at or pick up the high school girls as they went by. And of course it was kind of fun to go in there for ice cream cones, but that's what you really came for.

Q: How much was an ice cream cone?

A: 5¢. Then there was a Candy Kitchen which was another ice cream parlor on Broad Street, several stores in from where the Jersey Central Bank is now. They served ice cream and candy there and I can remember going in for a 5¢ bag of candy which would be quite ample to keep me happy all the way home. Then there was Schaefer's Dry Goods Store which was one of the old stores and Windfeldt's was the very popular and a very good grocery store. I don't remember exactly where my mother bought the meat. I also vaguely remember the old Westfield Hotel that was along Broad Street between Elm Street and Mountain Avenue. My only recollection of it was walking by and being afraid of the old people, the old men particularly. They were perfectly all right, but they frightened me because they were old and a little bit scroungy looking and they were sitting on the low steps there. That was demolished while I was still quite young, but I have the recollection of not liking to walk past there. And then I knew the Kinches whose house had been standing until just recently. Now it's a vacant lot. That was directly across from the present Rialto Theatre.

But when I was in school there were two movie theatres. Both were on Elm Street, one was Flagg's Theatre and the other was the Westfield Theatre or the Rialto. Above Flagg's Theatre Miss Denman

had a dancing class. But my cousin and I got acquainted with the gal at the window, the girl taking tickets, and she would let us into the movie sometimes because our parents didn't really approve very much of some of the pictures. Not because they were bad in themselves but they thought they were too exciting. "Perils of Pauline" and that kind of thing they thought was a little too much for us at that time. We managed to get in there without anybody finding out.

Gale's Drug Store was on the corner of Prospect Street and Broad Street, and Wittke's, I guess it was a newspaper store, I remember old Mr. Wittle, he had lost an arm, I guess maybe in the Civil War, and he was a very kindly old gentleman with a beard and I was always fascinated because he had this sleeve and this empty arm in the side pocket of his coat. We used to go in there too for penny candy sometimes and magazines. Ed Wittke worked there with his father. Of course Ed still lives in town.

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There was a Clark's men's haberdasher on Broad Street also. I think the Clark family was part of the old Clark family that Clark Street was named for. At least they lived here for many, many years.

I also remember we had a volunteer fire department. It was at the same place the fire house is at now. I don't think they had too many fires because I can remember going by there through the underpass and I would see the firemen sitting out there in the nice weather. They would also talk to us as we went by. I was kind of afraid of them too.

We had a wonderful Memorial Day and Fourth of July Day Parades. Memorial Day we used to walk as school children all the way out to the Fairview as they still do. In those days we used to have a car pretty well filled, or more than one car with Civil War veterans which of course are all gone now. That was always impressive to me.

All my memories of Westfield are all such happy memories. I can remember the Mindowaskin Park which was another thing they did more or less as a memorial to the First World War soldiers. It was very much smaller and not graded until they made it into a very nice park, about 1920. I remember going skating there when I was in high school. Every once in awhile in the winter the furnace of the high school would blow out or something and we would have an extra few days of vacation and we usually spent it all the time at the park. We had much more skating than the youngsters are able to have now. Maybe they weren't so particular then.

I can remember the pageant we had on the lawn of the Presbyterian Church. All the school children were taking part in that with the Indians and the colonial costumes.

One of the best memories I have is at the annual opening of the Children's Country Home which was just a summer home for youngsters who were sickly and emaciated from city life and needed the country air. Sometime around the end of May or the early part of June they

had a festival there, a fair, and people made fancy articles and then there were the food stands and everybody would get out there. We didn't have a car so we walked all the way. It was one of the things we were allowed to stay up late for because in the evening they always had a minstrel show. I'm sure some people will remember the people taking part in the minstrel show. I guess Harry Kniffen would be one that I am sure was always there, probably Harold Welch as well. It was a fascinating show and something I looked forward to from year to year. It always had lots of ice cream and cake and sandwiches and everybody in town seemed to be there.

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Q: Where was this exactly?

A: At the Children's Specialized Hospital, it used to be called the Children's Country Home. The main building is still there, but they have added so much to it. This would usually be before the children came. But then they found out that the children would come out and get their health so improved during their visit out here for two months in the summertime and then they would go back to the city and the next year they were just as badly off as they had been before. So that's why they decided to keep it open for the whole year. Two months wasn't enough to get them on their feet so they could maintain the improved health.

Just as I was graduating high school I fell in love. I got engaged the summer after my graduation to a young man I had been going with. He was quite a bit older than I. My family insisted that I had to go away to school. I had been living at home. Also he wasn't making as much money as father thought he should. So they persuaded me to go to Bradford Academy, Bradford Jr. College. I said I'd only go for one year. I did enjoy it very much. For the first time in my life I got really interested in my studies. I guess they were more elective and therefore I didn't feel pushed as much. But things changed. By the time I came back in the summer, I looked at this engagement a little differently. It hadn't been announced and it broke up during the summer. So then I decided to go back for the second year of junior college. I enjoyed that even more and I did still better. One of my teachers inspired me and said it was a shame for me not to go on and finish college. My roommate the second year was going on to Connecticut College which was very new at that time. It had only been going seven or eight years. I hadn't taken college entrance exams. I thought I'd be too old by that the time I finished four years of college because I had lost one year in the grade schools and so I was 19 when I graduated from high school and I thought in four more years I'd just be too old.

Q: Too old for what?

A: Well, I had a romantic idea that I should be married before I was that old. Well anyway, I got interested in going to college in Connecticut and they didn't require college entrance exams so I could transfer. The only thing is they only gave me credit for one year at Bradford. The junior college idea wasn't as universally accepted as it is now and so I had two years at Bradford and then I had to have three years at Connecticut College. So I was even older than I had expected to be by the time I graduated from Connecticut College, but I never regretted it.

I had a very good time at college and then I didn't get myself engaged until much later. I had two trips abroad in the interim.

The first trip abroad was a delightful, well they were both quite delightful, but the first one was rather unique. It was called the open road and it was a student tour, one of the very earliest of that conception. We were all college graduates, twelve of us with a school teacher chaperoning us. Every big city we visited we were entertained by English speaking students of that country. Almost every city had a university and it was really a marvelous experience. We went to France and Belgium and Switzerland and Italy. I remember we went to a beer party with students from Heidelberg. We took a trip down the Rhine and we stopped at Heidelberg. The boys expected the girls to pay because they thought all Americans were millionaires and they were still recovering from the war. I remember one German youth said to me that if America had only gone in on the side of the Germans they would have won the war. I said, "Why did you sink our ships?" He said, "That was nothing." It was two months traveling. It was a much longer trip than people take nowadays. Of course we went by ship. \$0.00
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And then later on I went over with Mr. H.B. Tremaine and Mrs. Tremaine. The first trip we didn't go to England at all. My cousin and I spent a month in England and that was a wonderful experience. And we went to the Italian Lakes and Switzerland and France again.

After college I went to the New York School of Fine and Applied Arts for three years, commuting from home. But then the depression came along and by the time I finished, I took fashion design, I went around with my portfolio, there were no openings. So then I decided I'd better do something and I went to Drake School and learned typing and shorthand. I only worked for nine or ten months before I got married.

In 1970 we took an alpine trip with my husband's brother and his wife. This was a three week bus trip through the alpine drives. We went to the Passion Play at Oberomergau which was a most marvelous experience. We went to Vienna and to three different places where they had the Olympic winter games and we also went through seven mountain passes. Then we flew back from Zurich, to the United States. That was a beautiful trip, all of it by bus. Some of these hairpin turns were most exciting.

When my son was stationed in Germany we went again to Europe. He met an American girl whose parents were living in Heidelberg. She finished high school in Heidelberg and went one year to college there and then she went to Grenoble and then she got a job in Frankfurt where my son was stationed. He met her at the Episcopal Church there, the American church. They both sang in the choir and they were married over there so my husband and I had another trip there for the wedding. After the wedding we decided we would go to Paris for a few days and then to London. When we discussed our trip plans with the young people, we found they were going to be staying at the Hilton in London, that's where they would be spending their honeymoon and we were going to arrive there about five days after they got there. When we arrive at our room we found a bouquet \$5.00
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of flowers there so we knew they didn't resent our being there. We offered to change our plans and they said why, it's a big hotel. So we had a couple of meals with them before they left. They left to go back to Frankfurt before we left London.

I am still hoping for a little more traveling in my life even if I have to find another traveling companion.

As I have mentioned before, my cousin and I grew up almost like sisters. We were very, very close. We played dolls and paper dolls and we used to design our own doll clothes. My father thought I had a talent for fashion design and for drawing. He seemed to think my drawings were pretty good; I don't think they ever were. Also, my cousin had two cats, one was a Persian cat and one was a tabby cat and we used to dress them up in the doll clothes and wheel them around in the doll carriages, as long as they would stay. The tabby cat was much more amenable to that than the Persian cat was. They also had two or three dogs because they had a big place.

My father seemed to think that I showed a good deal of talent in drawing these doll clothes for my paper dolls and for my dolls. He thought I should have a career; thought every girl should have a career just in case she had to make her own living. So after I graduated from college, he decided I should go to the New York School of Fine and Applied Arts. I used to commute from Westfield all the way up to 80th street, I guess it was, every day to school, and that was a three year course. As a matter of fact, one of the things I was interested in doing was taking my last year in Paris. However, that didn't work out. By that time I had met my husband and I wasn't that interested in going again.

I did have a very interesting experience when I was in London with my cousins. We went out to dinner with some friends of theirs because they had an Aeolian Company office in London, my cousin went over every year, so they knew quite a few people. Of course they were their age, not my age. I met the Deputy Treasurer to the King and he like to dance and so I danced with him quite a bit and I was telling him I was so disappointed that the King was ill that year with pneumonia so they hadn't gone away to Windsor Castle as they usually do or up to the one in Scotland. He was still in residence so Buckingham Palace wasn't open to the public at that time. And he said, "Well, I can arrange for you to go to Buckingham Palace." The next day before I even was awake, somebody came and delivered a letter, a note, and it had the Royal Seal on the back of the envelope. My aunt gave it to me and I could hardly wake up. She said I was awfully nonchalant about this. Anyway, I was invited to go that afternoon. I went out of the hotel and the taxi came. 60:00
As the taxi cab drove through the gates at Buckingham Palace, MINUTES
Queen Mary and Prince George, who later became king, were driving out the gate the same time we drove in. I wanted to see the changing of the guard. All the crowds that come to watch the changing of the guards were outside the gate watching and I was inside, just outside one of the entrances. They went in and got a chair for me to sit on, just outside the door, so I sat watching the changing of the guards and looking at the people outside the gate. And then finally they

word that the Deputy Treasurer would see me. When I got there he said he sent a note to the Queen asking her permission to take you through the palace, but I haven't gotten an answer, she's gone out. And I said, "Yes, I saw her go." And he said, "Well, I think I saw the King out this morning, he's probably resting now. I think it would be allright for us to go through the palace and go through the rooms." He took me through a few of them. As I say, as Deputy Treasurer, he was in charge of the expenses of running the palace, and he would say, "Well, the Queen wanted a new rug for this room but I told her that I didn't think we could afford it." Or he'd say the Queen wanted to redecorate or to buy something and she had to get his permission. Finally, he had to go back to his office so he turned me over to another butler or a steward or something and he took me the rest of the way. We went into the throne room and he said, "Oh Goodness, they're so careless, they've got the queen's chair on the wrong side of the king's." So I took one arm and he took one arm and we reversed the chairs. So I wrote home to my parents that I had something to do with the changing the thrones of the English Royal House.

When we went back to the room, the Deputy Treasurer, I had been talking about taking my last year in Paris, and he tried to kiss me and said when I was in Paris he would come over there. His wife didn't understand him. I mean it's like a storybook! Overwhelmed! And they invited me to go to their summer place, he invited me to go to visit them in their summer place for the weekend. I was scared to go! I didn't dare tell my cousins what had happened because I knew he was a friend of theirs. You know, they would have been horrified. My cousins kept trying to persuade me I was missing something, but I wasn't quite that much a woman of the world. In the first place I didn't think I would feel quite that comfortable with his wife and daughters if he was going to try to find opportunities with me alone. I didn't want to create any kind of a scene, so I finally persuaded my aunt that I just didn't want to go. She was quite disgusted with me, but I just didn't go. Sometimes I have wished maybe, it might have been interesting. Probably I wouldn't have had any problems if I had gone and it would have been interesting to have been in the home of somebody that high up in the royal household. But I missed that, because I was a little too prudish, I guess. That was an interesting experience.

Q: Can you tell about any games that you played?

A: Bridge was a big thing in my family. Mother and Father played Bridge a great deal and insisted that my brother and I learned to play Bridge. I resisted it to a certain extent, but I had to go along with it. I remember one time when I was home, it was vacation, my father had given my mother a course of lessons with Milton Work who was one of the promoters in the beginning of Contract Bridge. He was going to give a series of lectures and Mother had the flu, so I took the lectures instead. And then when I went back to college, I introduced Contract to my friends and we played, I don't think we played it very well, but we played it at college quite a bit. And then when we met my husband, he was an excellent player and we played a lot. That was during the depression and one of the inexpensive

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pastimes that we had. We played at the tennis club and I think it was 50¢ a couple for an evening of Bridge. Even in those days it was pretty inexpensive. My mother and father played also. Then we played at private homes for a good many times and my father kept on playing. He played with an old Westfielder called Eddie Clark. My mother liked the social Bridge, but my father played in Summit and in Cranford, the different games. And then the Women's Club later on, after we had bought the Women's Club and they had games there, he played Duplicate with this Mr. Clark, even when he was 90 years old and would often come out top on the deal. His mind was clear almost to the end. My husband continued to play at the Woman's Club right up till the time he died too. He played some with my cousin's husband. I played with him some of the time too, but I didn't want to keep reading the new rules and books and so I kind of fell by the wayside. My husband liked to try all new systems and it meant that I had to study. As it happens, they had these games up at Echo Lake Country Club just in the last year, year and a half, and my husband and I played there and we came out the top three times in a row and the prize was always two free dinners at the club for the next occasion. One of these occasions that we would go up for dinner and play Duplicate, we had a very nice game and we also won \$10.00 credit that night. I think we came out third that time but it was the night before he died. I know he was having a good evening then. I have been back for the afternoon Bridges, but I haven't been back for the evening Duplicate Bridge. I don't feel that I want to go without him, but I do play. I belong to two Bridge clubs and as I say, five in one club all went to school with me.

Q: Tell about that game as a child. Was it "snap the whip"?

A: It was not snap the whip, it was two lines of people lined up. Oh! It was called "Buck the Indian". Two teams would be chosen and lined up opposite each other, 20 feet apart. One by one they would take turns who was going to be the aggressor. We would line up in order and we would run across the intervening space and try to break the grasp of the other side. Then the other side would do the same thing and of course the team that held was the winner. 7000
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Q: How many children would participate? How large was the classroom?

A: This was during recess. This was outside.

Q: And it would be the whole school?

A: No, it would be just the people who happened to get together and say they wanted to play. There might be ten or twelve on each side so it would be quite a large group. It would usually be the contemporary age. It was usually the older children. When I think of it I was in sixth grade when I played it the most.

Q: How many children were in your class though? Do you remember that?

A: I think there were 60 in my graduating class. In different grades it's hard to tell how many were there.

For our 50th reunion I decided we had never had a reunion and I kept waiting for somebody for our twenty-fifth, for somebody to get

the idea and several times I'd meet people from our class and they'd say we ought to get together and nobody did. So finally I said well now if we're not going to get together for our fiftieth, we never will. So I took it upon myself to get the list of the graduates, our graduation program. I had a good start because a number of people are still living in town and then I would write to somebody that I could get the address. In each letter I wrote I asked them to send me the address of anybody they had kept in touch with. We had 42 people at the reunion which we held at Echo Lake Country Club and out of a class of 60 graduates. That includes the husbands too. After 50 years that wasn't too bad. There were only a few that I didn't eventually get in touch with. Of course some of them had died, some of them were out of the country, some were not well enough to come or had sick husbands. It was a very happy occasion. We had a very good time. And what I did for place cards, I mimeographed. Our class is the one that started the Weather Vane Magazine. So I got an old copy of that and mimeographed pictures. For place cards, I put the graduating pictures on the cards without the name and on the back I wrote the little caption they had under the pictures, the little write-up. Then I designated the spouses to go around and pick out the place they were going to sit by recognizing the picture from the old Weather Vane. Everybody seemed to find their way. Then everybody got up and told what they were doing in 50 years and some letters from people who couldn't come.

One of the particularly interesting memories I have is the Independence Day celebrations in the park. The Fourth of July sunrise service at Mindowaskin Park. Of course 7:30 on the Fourth of July isn't exactly sunrise, it comes pretty close to it when you get up that time. My father was elected president of the Sons of the American Revolution in 1923. In 1924 he was impressed with the fact that in the early days the Fourth of July was originally made a national holiday. The enthusiasm of the whole populace was so tremendous with celebrations and firecrackers and everybody was caught up with the emotions and the pride of the day of the birth of our nation. Little by little that enthusiasm has turned into something like let's go on a picnic and the children and the firecrackers and the meaning of the day through the years has gradually been lost. In an effort to recapture it, he decided that it would be nice to organize a celebration that would be more in keeping with the early celebrations and devoted to the cause and to the people who gave this nation birth. More serious and yet a happy celebration. He contacted the DAR, Daughters of the American Revolution, and asked them if they would like to cooperate in the venture. They worked hard on this thing to have a meaningful thing that wouldn't take too long and wouldn't keep people from going away for their holiday but they would take a half an hour to an hour to concentrate on the meaning of the day before they went about their golf and tennis and picnics. They decided the park, which is very, very beautiful and a nice, simple setting would be a good place to have it and of course it has the bandstand. So he got a well know speaker from a nearby neighborhood, Judge Eaton, as the speaker, and then one of the local ministers gave the opening dedication. Of course the band was there. The enthusiasm of the moment, there were 1,000 - 1,100 people who attended this first service and everybody thought it was a marvelous idea. They had the cannon salute at the end of the service and of course singing the National Anthem and some of the other well known and popular patriotic songs. The whole thing

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was over by 8:30 and people went home to their breakfast. The whole day took on a different significance because of this. I have been attending the services from that time on except when I was not in town. Little by little there have been fewer and fewer people. Then they decided to change it and have it at 9:30 so people wouldn't have to get up early and there were fewer people. Last year they decided to have it on Sunday at noon. If there were 50 or 60 people there that would be about the count. I think a lot of the meaning of it has been lost, but I guess it was like it was when he first got the idea of trying to revive something that you just can't keep up the enthusiasm and the repetition year after year, I suppose. But to his mind it was a very wonderful thing and after three or four years he had a friend of his who was a song writer, not famous, but he was good at leading singing. He used to come out at that time with us and as many people who would want to go with us, would go up to the Children's Country Home and bring a patriotic service and sing-a-long. Well it's now the Sick Children's Specialized Hospital, to me it's still the Children's Country Home. It was wonderful to see the joy in the faces of those youngsters that had many things that were out of the ordinary routine. So that was another part of the Fourth of July service that has a great meaning to me. I think the SAR and the DAR try very hard to bring us speakers and make the service meaningful, but it's not easy.

80:00
Mr. NOTES