

Woodbridge Public Library Oral History Interview
Mrs. Holden, Mrs. Werlock, Mrs. Campbell and Mrs. Osborne
WPL02

(digital audio)

On April 27, 1978, Mrs. Holden, Mrs. Werlock, Mrs. Campbell and Mrs. Osborne were interviewed for the Woodbridge Public Library Oral History Interviews. There was one female interviewer.

Female Interviewer: Mrs. Osborne, were you born in Woodbridge?

Mrs. Osborne: Yes, I was.

Female Interviewer: Where were you born in Woodbridge?

Mrs. Osborne: On the corner of Grove Avenue and Tisdale Place only it wasn't Tisdale Place then.

Female Interviewer: When were you born?

Mrs. Osborne: Do I have to tell you all that?

Female Interviewer: No. What was your father's occupation?

Mrs. Osborne: He was a custom house broker in New York.

Female Interviewer: So you lived in Woodbridge all your life?

Mrs. Osborne: Yes, except when I was away at school.

Female Interviewer: Where did you go to grade school?

Mrs. Osborne: No. 1 School.

Female Interviewer: No. 1 School in Woodbridge?

Mrs. Osborne: All through the schools in Woodbridge.

Female Interviewer: And the high school, where was the high school then?

Mrs. Osborne: Well I graduated from Barron Avenue when that school was on Barron Avenue.

Female Interviewer: You went away to college?

Mrs. Osborne: I went to Trenton State College.

Female Interviewer: What type of things did you do for your social life as a teen? You know, Sewaren and dances.

Mrs. Osborne: We used to dance at the old clubhouse.

Mrs. Campbell: And everybody always rented a bathhouse in Sewaren.

Mrs. Osborne: Oh yes, we went swimming practically every day.

Mrs. Campbell: Everybody rented it for the season.

Mrs. Werlock: And they took tickets for the whole season too for the dances, didn't they?

Mrs. Campbell: Tickets?

Mrs. Werlock: Yes, didn't they take tickets? It seems to me when Lil and I went we were always guests of somebody but we had to have a ticket to get in.

Mrs. Holden: Boynton Beach you had to pay.

Mrs. Campbell: Where was it?

Female Interviewer: What clubhouse?

Mrs. Holden: You had to belong to that.

Mrs. Osborne: On Grove Avenue, not too far. I remember the clubhouse was there. It would be almost next to the Congregational Church. I mean it was in there where the Jackson House is now if you know where that is.

Female Interviewer: Yes, okay, then I can get back to the interview. Mrs. Holden, you weren't born in Woodbridge; you came into Woodbridge?

Mrs. Holden: I came to Woodbridge in 1926.

Female Interviewer: 1926.

Mrs. Holden: I taught English in the high school.

Female Interviewer: You met your husband in Woodbridge?

Mrs. Holden: Yes.

Female Interviewer: You mentioned to me before that you went out for five years.

Mrs. Holden: Yes, we were married in 1931.

Female Interviewer: And you wanted him to get his Bachelor's Degree?

Mrs. Holden: Yes. And at that time you married in two minutes.

Female Interviewer: What did your father do?

Mrs. Holden: My father, gee what was he in 1926? I don't know but he started out in **Bethlehem Steel** in Lackawanna, Pennsylvania and he worked himself up until he had to retire because he was sick. He was superintendent of the yards in **Bethlehem Steel**. I don't remember too much about Woodbridge except the train wreck and the elevation of the railroad tracks. Those two things I remember really well.

Female Interviewer: Okay, we can get back to what we said before. Okay Mrs. Campbell.

Mrs. Campbell: Born in Woodbridge.

Female Interviewer: You were born in Woodbridge?

Mrs. Campbell: Yes.

Female Interviewer: Where did you live?

Mrs. Campbell: It's a house down here on Freeman Street almost opposite the high school.

Female Interviewer: Oh, you lived there all your life practically?

Mrs. Campbell: No, then we moved out of there later on but I lived in Woodbridge all my life.

Female Interviewer: I see and you met your husband in Woodbridge?

Mrs. Campbell: Yes, he's a native of Woodbridge.

Female Interviewer: You went to the schools throughout Woodbridge, grade school and.....

Mrs. Campbell: I beg your pardon?

Female Interviewer: The school system, Woodbridge school system.

Mrs. Campbell: Oh yes, there was only one school, that's all we had. You went from first grade and you graduated from high school on School Street. One school, you always stayed in the same school.

Mrs. Osborne: With a gymnasium in the attic floor.

Mrs. Campbell: Yes, the top floor.

Mrs. Osborne: We used to play basketball up there on the top floor.

Mrs. Campbell: Do you know where that building is?

Female Interviewer: I believe so, yes.

Mrs. Campbell: Down by the Administration building.

Mrs. Osborne: That was the main school.

Mrs. Campbell: They rode from Fords on their bicycles and Avenel and Iselin or maybe their parents brought them. They all had to come. Oh, we had those ungraded schools, of course, around. We had about three or four of those.

Female Interviewer: What did you do for your social life in Woodbridge?

Mrs. Campbell: Well we always belonged to the Acker's bathing beach. Of course, I think to own a bicycle and ride was an important thing.

Mrs. Holden: Well, you and I both belonged to a basketball team. We used to play at the WAA Clubhouse.

Mrs. Campbell: Yes, we used to play basketball. All my relative were in Philadelphia so, of course, all holidays we always went to Philadelphia.

Female Interviewer: How did you get there?

Mrs. Campbell: Train.

Female Interviewer: Okay, Mrs. Werlock.

Mrs. Werlock: Well, I was born in Woodbridge. In fact, my home still stands. Dr. Ross has his office in my home on Main Street. I went to the schools in Woodbridge but I went first to School No. 1 and then I went over to what is now the junior high school.

Mrs. Holden: Ours was the first class to graduate from there.

Mrs. Werlock: I was thinking of the activities of my childhood. When I was ten or twelve years old.....

Mrs. Holden: You'd inadvertently tell me something that you used to do when you were growing up. I can't think of it.

Mrs. Werlock: Well, when we were that age, where children now walk around with their radios and ride on their skateboards and all like that, we used to play dolls cutting the figures out of a fashion book. You see in those days people made their own clothes and every house had a heavy fashion book. So we'd cut those out and we'd cut out the costumes we have and we'd sit by the hour and we'd play with those things just to pass the time away. You don't see children playing with dolls so much anymore.

Mrs. Holden: You don't see them skipping rope either anymore.

Mrs. Osborne: Well, I think that there were great many games too in those days, you know, and like there were eight in my family. Well we always had plenty of people to play games with or go on walks. We'd go on May walks up where the apartment is now.

Mrs. Holden: Well there were a lot of flowers around.

Mrs. Osborne: And chestnut trees and hickory trees. We always went in the fall and got those walnuts. Those were walks.

Mrs. Werlock: Wasn't that where the center is now, the shopping center? Wasn't that the sand hills?

Mrs. Holden: Some of them were clay banks, wasn't it?

Mrs. Werlock: I was thinking of when you spoke about May walks we always went up there with our sandals and.....

Mrs. Holden: And where your apartment is now, back there, that used to be

where they used to have a lot of violets.

Mrs. Werlock: And too, if you brushed the leaves.....

Mrs. Osborne: Which was all farm.

Mrs. Werlock: Oh, yes, that was all farm.

Mrs. Osborne: Of course when those clay pits were just about done for they fill up with water and, of course, all the boys would want to swim in them and they were warned and warned, you know, because that was just clay and if you ever got stuck, you know, you would drown and several boys did drown there because you can't step in that stuff, it sucks you right in.

Mrs. Werlock: You know that this all used to be clay banks don't you?

Mrs. Osborne: I know.

Mrs. Holden: I thought probably it was the temperature of the water that would.....

Mrs. Osborne: Because when Bud would come in I would say where's..... up at the clay banks swimming he would say. I would have a fit, you know, because they were all there doing it.

Mrs. Holden: I remember somebody was killed over there.

Mrs. Osborne: Yes and a couple of dogs too got in there so it was dangerous.

Mrs. Werlock: They were pretty deep too.

Mrs. Osborne: Yes, they were deep. There wasn't too much for children to do, you had to create your own things. People didn't say that there isn't enough entertainment in this town for the youth you got to do something for the youth. They never said that about us. I read that in the paper all the time now that something has got to be done for the youth they have nothing to do. But, of course, most young boys had something to do. A lot of people had farms around here and the boys had things to do. They are not living in apartments and there isn't anything for the young people as way as work.

Female Interviewer: You mentioned before about all the horses.....

Mrs. Osborne: We had a police force of two men.

Female Interviewer: Is that right?

Mrs. Osborne: Yes.

Female Interviewer: Two men.

Mrs. Holden: Patty Murphy and Patty Kayna.

Mrs. Osborne: Both named Patty. Enormous men.

Female Interviewer: Oh, really.

Mrs. Osborne: They were enormous men.

Mrs. Werlock: We didn't have a police building either, did we?

Mrs. Osborne: Yes we did. It was where the firehouse is. There was a city hall and the police and everything else.

Mrs. Campbell: The lockup. Mr. O'Meyer, who was janitor of the school, was also keeper in the jail. The most you had were drunks. They used to pull them in off the street. That's about the only crime they had I think.

Female Interviewer: Someone mentioned in another interview that they had one patrol car and the patrol car was also used as an ambulance.

Mrs. Campbell: Patrol car? These men were on foot.

Mrs. Holden: They were all on foot.

Mrs. Campbell: That was later. That would be about 1920.

Mrs. Holden: They didn't even have bicycles.

Mrs. Campbell: Not even a bike, they walked. It ought to be about the 1920s when they had that long black patrol car.

Mrs. Holden: And as far as I can remember we only had two black families, the Westwalls.....

Mrs. Werlock: Well there was the Harvey family.

Mrs. Holden: And the Harveys.

Mrs. Werlock: And the Russo family.

Mrs. Holden: The what?

Mrs. Werlock: Russo.

Mrs. Holden: Oh, Russo.

Mrs. Campbell: They lived back there behind School No. 1 on Valentine Place.

Mrs. Werlock: Yes, that little row of houses.

Mrs. Holden: And we used to all go out in the yard when they would kill pigs.

Mrs. Campbell: Oh, really.

Mrs. Holden: I mean as youngsters at school we used to have a long recess to watch them kill pigs over there.

Mrs. Campbell: Is that right?

Mrs. Osborne: Then, of course, they said the Salamander Works were down there at Heard's Brook where the gas station is now on Rahway Avenue at the circle, you know, and boats were able to come up the Woodbridge Creek and land there on that salamander plant right there on Rahway Avenue, that's how deep the water was.

Mrs. Campbell: Salamander like a fish?

Mrs. Osborne: Yes.

Mrs. Campbell: Oh, I didn't know that.

Mrs. Werlock: Well, remember the salamander can live in heat. It's like a little lizard isn't it?

Mrs. Holden: I think so.

Mrs. Osborne: Yes.

Mrs. Campbell: How did the boats come up there?

Mrs. Osborne: A sailing vessel. That's how deep the.....

Mrs. Campbell: Well, how did they come?

Mrs. Osborne: Up the Woodbridge creek and what looks like a brook now there along side of Foodtown that was a wide creek.

Mrs. Campbell: I'll be darn.

Mrs. Werlock: Yes, but you see it's filled in and there are houses there now.

Mrs. Osborne: Well there wasn't a thing, nothing but salt washes, all salt washes.

Mrs. Campbell: I'm learning a lot today.

Mrs. Osborne: Where the Turnpike was and so forth.

Mrs. Werlock: You're probably visualizing a boat that has a great big deep

hole. These are sailing with probably a flat shallow.....

Mrs. Campbell: Did they come with the clay to this part?

Mrs. Werlock: And the supplies went into New York and so forth and so on. But the hotel was there. That was Kings, you know Pike's Peak, and Mr. Peak, who discovered Pike's Peak, ran that hotel.

Mrs. Campbell: Oh, that was the family?

Mrs. Werlock: I just read this recently.

Mrs. Campbell: The one that discovered Pike's Peak was, I think, in the Army.

Mrs. Werlock: Yes, but he belonged to the Peak.....

Mrs. Campbell: He belonged to the Peak family, yes.

Mrs. Holden: And the Kings were there, the King's Hotel.

Mrs. Campbell: It was a very interesting building that was taken down. Everybody felt so sorry when it was taken down.

Mrs. Osborne: Where everybody lived? That was really colonial, the whole thing where Jimmy's place is.

Mrs. Werlock: Well what was that great big green house?

Mrs. Osborne: That was it.

Mrs. Werlock: Was that a hotel at one time?

Mrs. Osborne: Those were separate houses.

Mrs. Holden: Separate like apartments or something?

Mrs. Osborne: Yes.

Mrs. Werlock: Oh, up and down.

Female Interviewer: This is what I'm looking for, this type of thing. You mentioned, I know I hate to bring it up again, about the houses on Main Street and they had races and things.

Mrs. Werlock: Well ours was occasional.

Mrs. Osborne: Yes, right. You'd get two men with carriages and they'd always race.

Female Interviewer: How about the racetrack in Woodbridge, the car races?

Mrs. Holden: Where the high school is up around in there.

Mrs. Osborne: Now a man by the name of Bell Carpenter, who was such a horse lover, he really had charge of that racetrack because he went to Freehold afterward to that big racetrack. People must have come out to that hotel to watch those races because I don't know what else they'd come out to that hotel for.

Mrs. Campbell: Where was that hotel?

Mrs. Osborne: It's on St. George Avenue and the Cloverleaf cemetery is behind it and this big hotel was on St. Georges Avenue.

Mrs. Campbell: What was the name of it?

Mrs. Osborne: Thatcher's, a French woman owned it.

Mrs. Campbell: Oh, it seems to me I read something about that somewhere.

Mrs. Werlock: You know, it's strange that we had a big hotel in what we call Spa Spring there were all those linoleum plants are on the way to Amboy. There's a spring there and I asked this man who worked for the Swift Ice

Cream Company if they used that water. Then I thought, oh, wouldn't you use it for the motors because it was so clean. But the train stopped from New York at Spa Springs and people came out there and spent their vacations.

Mrs. Campbell: Tell her about that cottage that's still standing there.

Mrs. Werlock: Yes, I don't know the history of this house but it's up on the Winterburg factory on Covert's Lane. In on the factory grounds is a perfect colonial home and it's never been changed. Every feature of it is the same. I don't know who lived in there or the history of that house.

Female Interviewer: Oh, really.

Mrs. Werlock: And it's owned there, of course, by the plant and it's inside the fence but they've never changed it. It's beautiful.

Mrs. Campbell: Well, that's Spa Spring? I remember my father would be guiding along, I used to go out when he's go to some of his jobs, and we'd stop there and get a drink.

Mrs. Werlock: Oh, yes.

Mrs. Campbell: And just recently I came along there and I couldn't find it, I couldn't find the spring.

Mrs. Werlock: No, well this man said they're using it at the Swift Ice Cream Company. That's closed now. Something else is going there. So the springs are all around there. It always gets awfully wet around there.

Mrs. Osborne: When there's the flooding, more than wet. It's really deep.

Mrs. Werlock: People came up from the financial places, you know, for vacation. There was no scenery there

Mrs. Holden: Maybe they can go somewhere from there though.

Mrs. Werlock: I don't know where they'd go. You'd have to go by horse and carriage, you know.

Female Interviewer: You mentioned Mr. Boynton that at Boynton Beach there was never allowed any alcohol there.

Mrs. Osborne: You know his initials were C.W. Was his first name..... it was an odd name. Was it Cassius or.....

Mrs. Werlock: Casimer.

Mrs. Osborne: Casimer.

Mrs. Werlock: Casimer what?

Mrs. Osborne: W, I don't know what W was for. Casimer W. Boynton and he had a large family.

Mrs. Werlock: Was he a relative of THE Boyntons?

Mrs. Holden: Yes, he's the founder.

Mrs. Osborne: He's the founder of the bunch of them.

Mrs. Werlock: Where does Mrs. Boynton, the Hinsdale, come in there?

Mrs. Osborne: Well she married the son, Ernest.

Mrs. Werlock: Who's son?

Mrs. Osborne: Mr. Casimer Boynton's.

Mrs. Werlock: Oh, yea.

Mrs. Osborne: One of those sons went out to Washington State and he was in a timber business out there and he sent what was the flagpole in front of Barron Avenue.

Mrs. Holden: That was Ernest Demarest.
Mrs. Osborne: Yea, that was Demarest.
Mrs. Werlock: Demarest?
Mrs. Holden: Yea, Ernest Demarest.
Mrs. Osborne: Well, anyway, that had to go around the tip of South America.....
Mrs. Holden: To get here.
Mrs. Osborne: It was a very, very tall flagpole.
Mrs. Campbell: Yea, he actually went in the lumber business.
Mrs. Osborne: Very successful.
Mrs. Werlock: Which Demarest is that?
Mrs. Osborne: Irv's brother.
Mrs. Werlock: And where was their family home, the Demarest home?
I mean where was.....
Mrs. Holden: Well they had the farm.
Mrs. Osborne: Across the street where Ross's house is.
Mrs. Werlock: Oh, is that the reason Mr. Irving Demarest wanted to build there then?
Mrs. Holden: Yea, his uncle lived there.
Mrs. Werlock: Oh.
Mrs. Osborne: And then the other one down where the Dunigans lived was another Demarest house where the reindeer was.
Mrs. Campbell: Where was that then?
Mrs. Holden: The reindeer belonged to the Boyntons. Mrs. Boynton said that the reindeer was in front of her house and the last time she saw it was in front of Doug's house next to the railroad.
Mrs. Werlock: Because they were in front of the Demarest house when she was a little bit of a kid.
Mrs. Campbell: Well, maybe it was another one.
Mrs. Holden: Yea, because she said the last time she saw it it was in front of the Elks home on Rahway Avenue.
Mrs. Werlock: Well they may have it in their but it's not the one that we're talking about.
Mrs. Osborne: The Elks always had that as a symbol. I mean that's national. But she means that the Boynton's had it on the lawn.
Mrs. Holden: I mean the Boynton's had it on their law, that's what she said in this letter.
Mrs. Osborne: Well, it could have been another one.
Mrs. Campbell: Oh, this is Mae that wrote to you?
Mrs. Holden: What?
Mrs. Campbell: Mae wrote to you.
Mrs. Holden: Mae wrote to Margaret.
Mrs. Campbell: Oh!
Mrs. Holden: She wrote several letters to her. We're getting off to the house; we're supposed to be talking about Woodbridge.
Female Interviewer: No, that doesn't matter. It's good.

Mrs. Holden: I was going to show you this before. This is a diagram that Cathy, the granddaughter, made for Mae to sent to her other house.

Female Interviewer: Oh!

Mrs. Holden: There's a lot of material that she doesn't want to get rid of.

Mrs. Werlock: Is this Mae Boynton?

Mrs. Holden: Yes.

Mrs. Werlock: Is she still alive?

Mrs. Holden: Yes, she lives in Georgia.

Mrs. Werlock: And she's still alive because she was always kind of frail and her son lives there?

Mrs. Holden: Her son lives about two blocks away.

Mrs. Werlock: And what does she do, live alone?

Mrs. Holden: What does she do? No, she's married and her name is Westergard.

Mrs. Osborne: She married again?

Mrs. Holden: She married about two weeks before she moved.

Mrs. Osborne: Oh, yes, the Danish man. We used to meet them at the Howard Johnson.

Mrs. Holden: Do you want to see this?

Mrs. Werlock: I'd like to, yes.

Mrs. Osborne: And what is this?

Mrs. Holden: The diagram of the house as she remembers it.

Mrs. Osborne: What, the Boynton house?

Mrs. Werlock: Her grandma used to come over here for parties and they used to bicycle on the ground.

Mrs. Campbell: Mrs. Williams had a weekend party for us when we were seniors. So that the girls didn't stay in one place we were all over the house. So this is interesting to see this diagram here. I wonder what that in the back there means? Well, anyway, I'll look at it later on.

Mrs. Osborne: Well, also the house across the street, the Inslee house, that's an old one isn't it?

Mrs. Campbell: Yes.

Mrs. Osborne: Captain Inslee?

Mrs. Holden: Captain Isaac Inslee.

Mrs. Campbell: Is it a duplex house?

Mrs. Osborne: Oh, I guess so.

Mrs. Holden: There must be four parts to that now.

Mrs. Osborne: That's a very solidly built house I guess.

Mrs. Holden: It can't be more solidly built than this one is

Mrs. Werlock: That's right.

Mrs. Holden: The walls are not that thick.

Mrs. Osborne: Well this house was over there on Freeman Street and had the round fountain in the middle and the house was so far back. The grounds were beautiful. We'd always watch that fountain in the middle, it was beautiful.

Mrs. Campbell: The Williams didn't have the fountain going.

Mrs. Osborne: Oh no, nobody did in years but it was lovely.

Mrs. Holden: All this land and its empty.

Mrs. Werlock: It had a lovely orchard beside it as well. I know it because we used to go sleigh riding there and one night, when we were belly whopping somebody landed on top of me and we went into the tree so I was out for about fifteen minutes. It's just one of those things that happens.

Mrs. Holden: Where the Hinkel house is now is where the barn was. Mae said it no longer exists.

Mrs. Osborne: I often think now in the school system they had a rule the minutes you were married you couldn't keep on teaching, you had to quit. Women's lib wouldn't go for that today but they enforced that then. Although there was one exception, during World War I, and when there was a scarce of teachers, we had a Mrs. Paxon who was a Latin teacher and she became pregnant.

Mrs. Werlock: Did she?

Mrs. Osborne: Yes, and there was a (inaudible) for that because Woodbridge was scarce of teachers.

Mrs. Werlock: I was trying to think of any of the different prominent men in Woodbridge at that time.

Mrs. Holden: Well Cutters with their clay banks.

Mrs. Werlock: Well how about your father. Your father was a prominent man.

Mrs. Osborne: Yes, he was always in politics.

Mrs. Werlock: Yes, and he was in the Philadelphia and Reading.....

Mrs. Osborne: Yes, superintendent now.

Mrs. Campbell: What was his name?

Mrs. Osborne: Farrell and he always entertained the governor for dinner. We always had a succulent pig, you know, and he always.....

Mrs. Werlock: And he always had those tugboat rides.

Mrs. Osborne: Oh, yes. Well he had that fleet, about five of them.

Mrs. Campbell: Of tugboats?

Mrs. Osborne: Tugboats and he would allow us to have a group on, you know, and the crew would make clam chowder and all kinds of food.

Mrs. Werlock: Oh, it was great and we had the run of the boat.

Mrs. Osborne: Yes, or we'd go to Coney Island on it or up to see the fleet when it was in the harbor. It was handy.

Mrs. Werlock: And when they had that (inaudible) and celebration I remember going up to the replica of the half moon up there.

Mrs. Osborne: Oh yes, that's right.

Mrs. Werlock: And then another time we pulled in beside the big German sea going.....

Mrs. Osborne: Liner?

Mrs. Werlock: And that was the largest of its kind at the time.

Mrs. Osborne: It was in the harbor?

Mrs. Werlock: It was docked there and we went in, you know, when it was there.

Mrs. Campbell: How old were you then? Were you in high school?

Mrs. Werlock: I don't know, maybe twelve or thirteen.

Mrs. Campbell: Well I can certainly see why you say there wasn't any need for any entertainment for young people.

Mrs. Werlock: And, of course, Fred Briggs always played the banjo or mandolin, one of those things. You know, he went to Rutgers and he was with the Glee Club there and he would always bring that along and I can see where young Fred gets his musical strength from. His father was very musical. Of course, they'd bring those things along. On the boat that sounded nice, the singing.

Mrs. Campbell: Was he a native of Woodbridge?

Mrs. Werlock: No, Perth Amboy but he lived in Woodbridge after he married.

Mrs. Campbell: Do you know that I was down Perth Amboy recently and on what is that street that the Brigg's store was on.....

Mrs. Osborne: On Market?

Mrs. Holden: Where they lived you mean?

Mrs. Campbell: No, no, where the store was.

Mrs. Holden: Smith.

Mrs. Campbell: Smith Street but what's the street that goes off that? Well Anyway I looked up and there was Fred Briggs name still on that building.

Mrs. Werlock: Yea, I suppose they wouldn't bother to go up and get it off.

Mrs. Campbell: And he's been out of there for twenty years at least.

Mrs. Werlock: Yea.

Mrs. Campbell: I was thinking the other day we had women in our Woman's Club, you know. Douglas College wouldn't be in New Jersey today if it wasn't for the Woman's Club and we had a couple of women in Woodbridge. Mrs. Jarusi and Bertha Boynton and they just fought tooth and nail to get that college in New Brunswick and I think that, you know, they deserve a lot of credit.

Mrs. Holden: You know Miss Mauro? Well she's one of the first graduates. I guess she was in the first class wasn't see?

Mrs. Campbell: I don't know.

Mrs. Holden: 1910.

Mrs. Campbell: Oh, I guess, yes. Now it was named for Mrs. Douglas, she was the first president. She committed suicide afterwards.

Mrs. Holden: Did she?

Mrs. Campbell: I don't know why but that was a big step. We didn't have a single college for women in New Jersey. I give those women a lot of credit. The men didn't get behind it.

Mrs. Holden: All the women in the state got together.

Mrs. Campbell: Yes they did. Now Mrs. Jarusi was a reporter for the.....

Mrs. Holden: You mean all those card parties here? Because I remember when I came in they were still doing it and they were still wanting to have

people donate and the way they would donate was have card parties.

Mrs. Campbell: Yes, anything.

Mrs. Holden: Make candy and.....

Mrs. Campbell: I thought she was a go-getter.

Mrs. Holden: I didn't know Mrs. Jarusi.

Mrs. Campbell: You didn't know her? She was quite a character. She was one of the earliest female news correspondents. She reported for Woodbridge and she reported for the Amboy News. Everything got in the papers.

Mrs. Osborne: That was a time when they even told what you served for refreshments and what different dresses.....

Mrs. Campbell: They'd never put that in the paper now.

Mrs. Osborne: They went through at that stuff.

Mrs. Holden: They can't be bothered with all that stuff.

Mrs. Osborne: Well they listed the guests at weddings.

Mrs. Holden: Well they didn't have enough to put in there.

Mrs. Osborne: No, they didn't. Of course, there were a lot of buildings that changed hands like the post office that was down near the railroad station at one time and got out of there. That was the Masonic building.

Mrs. Werlock: You were going to tell about the elevation of the tracks, go ahead.

Mrs. Holden: Well the tracks, you know, had things too close up. There was a girl walking from the high school and she was talking to somebody and she walked right straight across and didn't pay any attention.....

Mrs. Osborne: She saw a boy across there she wanted to talk to.

Mrs. Holden: She was killed and after that they elevated the tracks and put the station up, way up there where it is now.

Mrs. Osborne: And I thought it ruined the town.

Mrs. Campbell: It did.

Mrs. Osborne: It just ruined it.

Mrs. Werlock: Well Ruth, there had been numerous accidents before.....

Mrs. Osborne: Oh, yes.

Mrs. Holden: Yes, but they hadn't done anything about it.

Mrs. Werlock: They hadn't done anything about it but this was so startling, so horrible, to such a lovely girl and so beautiful. But that spoiled the town, cut it right in half.

Mrs. Holden: Then the other child died because they wouldn't let her have any of the anti-toxin, didn't she?

Mrs. Osborne: Yes.

Mrs. Werlock: Oh, I didn't know there was another child.

Mrs. Campbell: Another child died.

Mrs. Holden: Yes, Harriett Wall's sister.

Mrs. Osborne: A lot of diphtheria.

Mrs. Holden: There were afraid of the anti-toxin.

Mrs. Campbell: Who was?

Mrs. Osborne: The parents. A lot of people, I think, were.

Mrs. Holden: They were afraid to lose her and then they lost her too. They lived right across the road on that county street there. I lived at the (inaudible) and Lil lived at the (inaudible).

Mrs. Osborne: I just remember the lodges. We had the Knights of Pythias and oh, a couple of others and for entertainment the women would bring a luncheon in a box and the men would bid on those boxes not knowing what was in them and then after they bid on and bought that box they ate lunch with the woman who made it. They had those quite often.

Mrs. Werlock: Did they have their meeting in Choper's building there?

Mrs. Osborne: Yes, where?

Mrs. Holden: Mandikos.

Mrs. Osborne: Mandilos Restaurant on Main Street?

Mrs. Werlock: And the Odd Fellows and.....

Mrs. Osborne: The top floor about three stores down.

Mrs. Campbell: I've seen that before at the Elks.

Mrs. Osborne: Well, this was before we ever had the Elks or anything like that. They were started like kind of an insurance company in a way. There was an insurance involved, you know, you had a policy or something which afterwards never could pay. There's another meeting hall in town that just recently I was talking to Raymond Anderson, who was a prominent mason here in town, and I said what was the name of that hall where the Barron always had their annual picnic, was it Columbus Hall, and he said no it was Washington Hall. Do you know where it's up?

Mrs. Werlock: Up in the back.....

Mrs. Osborne: It's up in the back.....

Mrs. Werlock: Of Grove Street.

Mrs. Osborne: And it had a beautiful big building with a wonderful dance floor in it and behind they had a place for foot races and all kinds of things.

Mrs. Werlock: Clambakes.

Mrs. Osborne: Yes, clambakes. It was a wonderful place. Then he said that he and his family were living across from that place and one night a fire started internally and the building was wooden and it had a tin roof on it. He said that thing just exploded. He said it was just an awful noise and that was the end of that. But I often wondered as I would made the turn from Route #9 to Main Street it always crosses my mind if that's where I used to have such a wonderful time once a year. I don't know what they used it for other times.

Mrs. Werlock: I know they played basketball up there.

Mrs. Osborne: Oh, they did?

Mrs. Werlock: And I know they had clambakes up there; those were a big thing in the summer, clambakes. They were well attended.

Mrs. Campbell: Where did they get the clams?

Mrs. Werlock: And they had lobster and sweet corn.

Mrs. Campbell: Where did they get the clams from?

Mrs. Werlock: Oh, it was easy here.

Mrs. Campbell: Around here?

Mrs. *Werlock*: Yes, it was easy to buy clams.

Mrs. *Campbell*: Buy them, yes, but where did they get them?

Mrs. *Werlock*: Well, they'd come from Morgan.

Mrs. *Campbell*: Morgan?

Mrs. *Werlock*: Yes, there's a big fishery there and you could go down. They had a great big restaurant and you could have a very, very fine fish dinner at a very economical cost.

Mrs. *Osborne*: Yes and the tables were covered with oil cloth.

Mrs. *Werlock*: Well, there were quite a few fisheries in Morgan that it was easy to get fish and clams.

Mrs. *Campbell*: Are there any fisheries there anymore?

Mrs. *Werlock*: Yes, there are, and there are quite a few fish places you can buy fish and at one place they'll cook it and you can go out in your car and sit and eat it.

Mrs. *Campbell*: Oh, they do let you do that?

Mrs. *Werlock*: Yes, at Keyport.

Mrs. *Osborne*: I was wondering if there was a lot of contamination from the factories along the coast.

Female Interviewer: Can you tell me any bad changes in Woodbridge today from years ago and how many things have changed like houses that aren't here anymore and people that have left.

Mrs. *Campbell*: We've been doing that.

Mrs. *Osborne*: What?

Mrs. *Campbell*: Telling the changes how things aren't here anymore as they were.

Mrs. *Osborne*: Well, one thing we haven't touched on is has anybody told you about the clay industry in town?

Female Interviewer: I started to get a little bit of it, yes, just not too much.

Mrs. *Werlock*: That's what put us on the map.

Mrs. *Osborne*: Yes.

Mrs. *Werlock*: Main Street would be just a line of cars loaded with clay and taken down to a site where Pearl Street is now and to the parking lot. This would then be loaded into railroad cars and taken away. I think Lenox China.....

Mrs. *Osborne*: Lenox China always bought it and they said the best bag was under the New Jersey Turnpike. You know what I was doing before I came today?

Mrs. *Holden*: What did they do with all the rinse, the clay, to get it out? What are they doing with it? Are they just digging it under to make the Woodbridge Center for instance? That's on a clay pit.

Mrs. *Osborne*: Are they digging clay out of there?

Mrs. *Holden*: No, I'm saying what are they doing with that red ground?

Mrs. *Osborne*: Filling in.

Mrs. *Holden*: Just filling in, it's not any good anymore?

Mrs. *Osborne*: There's clay there I guess.

Mrs. *Holden*: Well, why doesn't somebody in the country come and get

it?

Mrs. Osborne: Of course, I think some of them are paid out all together but I always heard there's lots of it under Route.....but you know when the Turnpike wants to come through. Of course, the Valentines are more prominent clay people.

Mrs. Campbell: Yes, I heard.

Mrs. Osborne: And the Cutters and then there's Phil Anese. You know Ray Anderson told me that when Mr. Anese built that house on Main Street he had his flowerbed especially made for that house.

Mrs. Werlock: That's being sold now.

Mrs. Osborne: Oh, is it?

Mrs. Werlock: Yes.

Mrs. Osborne: I heard there was a single person living in there.

Mrs. Werlock: Well a man, but he's got apartments in there.

Mrs. Osborne: Oh.

Mrs. Werlock: Then Mr. Leeson was in the clay business too, Jack Leeson.

Mrs. Campbell: What were the Coles known for?

Mrs. Holden: This was made out of a piece of Woodbridge clay.

Mrs. Osborne: Now let's see, well Cutters. She was a Cutter of Strawberry Hill Center.

Mrs. Werlock: But she was more outstanding then Cutter's little house down on the railroad.

Mrs. Holden: That's nice to have isn't it?

Female Interviewer: Always look at the handprint.

Mrs. Osborne: They always told me that Mr. Cutter gave that to his daughter as a wedding gift when she married Paul and she was kind of matriarch that she had these big tea parties.

Mrs. Campbell: Did you ever see this?

Mrs. Osborne: No, I never did.

Mrs. Campbell: That came from Woodbridge Clay.

Mrs. Osborne: Is it?

Mrs. Werlock: That's great.

Mrs. Campbell: In fact, we got that from old Mr. Dunigan.

Mrs. Osborne: Oh, you mean Forrest Dunigan?

Mrs. Campbell: No, the other one.

Mrs. Holden: Tom.

Mrs. Campbell: Barney.

Mrs. Osborne: Oh, Barney Dunigan.

Mrs. Holden: Oh, Barney.

Mrs. Osborne: Oh, maybe that was made up in the mines.

Mrs. Campbell: I don't keep it out.

Mrs. Osborne: And the mines were in the clay pits. You know that when Ray Anderson was handling Cutter's place wasn't that the time that they found the dinosaur footprint?

Mrs. Campbell: I don't remember.

Mrs. Holden: I don't remember who was around there.....

Mrs. Osborne: But they did find it.

Mrs. Holden: But they did find them.

Mrs. Osborne: I don't know where it could be now but where would they take it, maybe down to the state museum.

Mrs. Werlock: Maybe, or Rutgers.

Mrs. Holden: That's where it should go.

Mrs. Werlock: Or Rutgers. When there's also the Berry Fire Brick.

Mrs. Holden: Yes.

Mrs. Werlock: Berry and Valentine but Cutter didn't have fire brick, they dug it, they dug the clay but they made the brick as well as they dug it.

Mrs. Osborne: Yes.

Mrs. Werlock: Then who was the other one, Anese? So there were the five.

Mrs. Campbell: You know it was so beautiful, so different, from anything else and there are so few pieces around anymore.

Mrs. Werlock: Of course, I think yours is the only one I've seen.

Mrs. Campbell: I've never seen any before.

Mrs. Holden: No, now come to think of it I haven't either.

Mrs. Werlock: That's what I mean, not to know it you wouldn't know it.

Mrs. Campbell: Well, they had class ceremony and Barney gave it to him.

Mrs. Werlock: Oh, really.

Mrs. Campbell: Yea, I wasn't there and he said be sure you take care of it.

Mrs. Werlock: Well, of course, that Cutter house on Green Street somebody made them.

Mrs. Campbell: You know how he used to talk, be sure you take care of it Ruth.

Mrs. Werlock: Well I was going to say I suppose that Cutter house on Green Street that was very beautiful brick that that was made of and it still is.

Mrs. Holden: Do you remember the Oxon the Cutters used to have that would drive down Green Street?

Mrs. Werlock: No.

Mrs. Holden: A team of Oxon, sure, with the man walking along side.

Mrs. Werlock: What was that for?

Mrs. Holden: A fire of some kind. I forget whether it was clay or what that was in the car.

Mrs. Campbell: He didn't have a covered wagon did he?

Mrs. Holden: No.

Mrs. Werlock: That's interesting. Green Street used to be lined with Valentine homes.

Mrs. Osborne: Yes.

Mrs. Werlock: There were about what five?

Mrs. Osborne: More than that I guess.

Mrs. Werlock: Howard and Mrs. Brown on one side and then.....

Mrs. Holden: And young Howard next to the Browns.

Mrs. Werlock: And Mae.

Mrs. Campbell: Yes.

Mrs. Werlock: And Frank, Mae and Fred. Alright, and then he started with Sadie and Moe and Bob and then Ed.

Mrs. Campbell: Where was Ed?

Mrs. Werlock: Down near the end where you live.

Mrs. Holden: The older Howard Valentine was next to Bob and then Ed was down there where I live.

Mrs. Werlock: And across the street was Ben.

Mrs. Holden: Yes.

Mrs. Campbell: Oh, I didn't know him.

Mrs. Werlock: Sadie Valentine's father.

Mrs. Campbell: Oh.

Mrs. Werlock: And she had a brother too.

Mrs. Holden: And then there was an Arthur Valentine.

Mrs. Campbell: I didn't know that.

Mrs. Werlock: And Oscar, Ruth's father.

Mrs. Holden: Yea, and Oscar Valentine.

Mrs. Campbell: Do you have a big family?

Female Interviewer: I only have a brother and a sister.

Mrs. Campbell: I think it's wonderful to have a big family.

Mrs. Werlock: Oh, well then now there were gradations there. Moe was the grandfather and Howard.....

Mrs. Campbell: Moe was the grandfather?

Mrs. Holden: Well he was (inaudible) brother.

Mrs. Campbell: He was?

Mrs. Holden: Yes.

Mrs. Werlock: He was the oldest.

Mrs. Osborne: And Miss Neary was the housekeeper. Any other questions?

Female Interviewer: No, I think that's good.

Mrs. Holden: We haven't talked about the train wreck yet.

Female Interviewer: Yes, I was going to bring that up before when you were talking about the train. The train wreck was in the 1950s wasn't it?

Mrs. Osborne: Yes, so that's in the newspapers there.

Mrs. Campbell: It was even in the Reader's Digest.

Mrs. Osborne: That was an accident that was all mismanaged that the ambulances couldn't get in

Mrs. Werlock: We had people come up and park in our driveway from Newark and all over. They came right up in the driveway.

Mrs. Campbell: How did that happen?

Mrs. Osborne: It was traffic.

Mrs. Holden: The traffic was so heavy.

Mrs. Osborne: And of course the affect of those fur coats that those women that were in those trains and were hurt and killed. They had beautiful fur coats on.

Mrs. Campbell: I didn't hear about that.

Mrs. Osborne: Oh, and their pocketbooks.

Mrs. Campbell: You mean the women that were working?

Mrs. Osborne: Yes.

Mrs. Campbell: Oh, really.

Mrs. Osborne: It was wintertime.

Mrs. Campbell: How many were killed in that, do you know?

Mrs. Werlock: Oh, hundreds.

Mrs. Campbell: Oh, really.

Mrs. Osborne: I want to say eighty off hand but I don't know, that's just a guess.

Mrs. Holden: Because I remember I was in No. 1 School then and I remember them bringing the bodies and putting them on the floor there in the first aid building until somebody came and claimed them.

Mrs. Osborne: Well, you know we lived right opposite the municipal building, two blocks away from where the wreck was. We never heard anything. We didn't hear the noise or anything. I was busy making supper, the radio was on and suddenly somebody said what's all the traffic for?

Mrs. Werlock: That's what brought the attention.

Mrs. Osborne: And then we went out and we learned that.....

Mrs. Werlock: It was put on the radio right away.

Mrs. Osborne: Oh, was it?

Mrs. Werlock: Yes, because we had a friend in Augusta, Georgia and she called up and she said I know Pat commutes, is that the train she comes from New York on? And I said no, she comes earlier. But they heard it out there in Augusta, Georgia.

Mrs. Campbell: Is that right?

Mrs. Werlock: But you don't realize the vandalism and the thievery that goes on.

Mrs. Osborne: Well then there's another thing when you're speaking of a tragedy. We were in the throws after the Morgan explosion, the ammunition factory down in Morgan.

Mrs. Werlock: They all came through Woodbridge.

Mrs. Osborne: And they camped out in the field opposite Main Street.

Mrs. Holden: And in the old parish house too.

Mrs. Osborne: That's where they opened up the hospital which brings another thing to mind, the old parish house was used for everything. That's where they had a hospital during that influenza epidemic.

Mrs. Campbell: Where was that?

Mrs. Osborne: What do you mean?

Mrs. Campbell: The old parish house.

Mrs. Osborne: Do you know where this new deli is.....

Mrs. Holden: Behind the Mantz.

Mrs. Campbell: Oh.

Mrs. Osborne: That brown stucco building.

Mrs. Campbell: What did you say about it?

Mrs. Osborne: They opened it as a hospital because people were dropping in their tracks as they were walking along. I remember my father went down there, he was a nurse at night and their way of catching the thing was they had a little glass of whiskey.

Mrs. Werlock: Many of those people are in our cemetery.

Mrs. Osborne: Oh, really.

Mrs. Werlock: They opened up a little section for them.

Mrs. Osborne: That brings another thing to mind, a lot of them that were brought in there were almost sure to die because they were so frightened. They knew that when they were going there that this is really bad. But Woodbridge was the center for immigration. Your clay banks due on the Hungarians and the Danes and the Swedes and the Polish. They all came in and they all had their own ways of immigration. Do you remember? On Main Street we'd see these religious celebrations where they'd carry their banners and they'd carry their statues.

Mrs. Campbell: Did they have parades?

Mrs. Osborne: And I remember the Italian people, when they had funerals, they always had a band that preceded them up to the cemetery.

Mrs. Werlock: Oh yes, it was nice.

Mrs. Osborne: And then the German bands used to play on the corner. But when you think it, they were talking about it the other night, these people came and they couldn't speak one word of English but did we start this bilingual stuff. They came to school and they learned to speak English from going to school and from the playground. Now all these people want Spanish. They're in this country and they should be made to speak English and they're the only ones catered to; the Puerto Ricans are the ones catered to.

Mrs. Werlock: Because everyone now when they have some sort of a grievance gets in touch with the press and TV and lets it be known. I know that many times we got names written wrong in school when we enrolled because we couldn't understand what they were saying. I remember Alex Palko saying the school had him down as Polko and when they got older they knew their name was Palko but we called him Polko. But they learned to speak English.

Mrs. Holden: I was going to say it didn't take them any time at all to learn. It might not have been good English but they learned.

Mrs. Werlock: They certainly did.

Mrs. Holden: So they could understand you.

Mrs. Osborne: Now in Perth Amboy there are Spanish signs all over about directions and stores and stuff.

Mrs. Werlock: I think it's terrible.

Mrs. Osborne: Well probably the influence is so great that they have a lot of politics and powers of course.

Mrs. Werlock: They can't understand English and therefore have to be helped.

Mrs. Osborne: But they can learn just the way the rest of them did.

Mrs. Werlock: Well I think the people that came here treasured the privilege

of being educated.

Mrs. Holden: Now they don't.

Mrs. Campbell: That's right.

Mrs. Osborne: The Puerto Ricans are American citizens, that's another thing. I suppose that's how we had to take care of them. The Hungarians just did the best they could and they did well.

Mrs. Campbell: They did.

Mrs. Werlock: And I think now you're seeing how each ethnic group has raised itself from ordinary workers to the professions, to dentist, to medicine and insurance. I don't know of a town that had more of that than Perth Amboy. They were raised to lawyers, to surgeons, to everything under the sun. A lot of prominent men were raised in Perth Amboy just because their mothers were regular matriarchs. They would see that they got somewhere.

Female Interviewer: Okay, I appreciated everything and I think I learned a lot.