Lenoir Hood Miller

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The pages that follow constitute the transcript of an interview conducted as part of the Wilmette Public Library District's Oral History program, started in 1975 by a committee of the Friends of the Wilmette Public Library which has been chaired since its inception by Rhea Adler, a resident of the Village of Wilmette since 1932.

A copy of the tape on which this transcript is based is available for circulation, and may be obtained by checking with a Reference Librarian concerning circulation procedures.

This program would not have been possible without the cooperation of the many long-time residents of the Village interested in helping to preserve particulars of a fascinating past, and the patience, energy and effort of a small but dedicated group of interviewers, transcribers and typists who share the belief that the past is too important to be forgotten.

Richard E. Thompson
Director

ABSTRACT

Interviewee: E. Lenoir Hood Miller
Interviewer: Ellen Robinson Epstein
Date of Interview: November 8, 1974

Early history - Lenoir - parents ï grandparents -- North Carolina plantation - cotton - tobacco ï large families - Hood's move to Indiana to educate children.

Civil War - father Hood enlisted in 51st Indiana Volunteers - served 4 yrs. Prisoners exchanged.

Her father returned to Greencastle, Indiana and married her mother there. Traded horse and buggy for 80 acres of Iowa farm land near what later became Glidden, Iowa. Lenoir Hood youngest of nine children and no doctor in attendance. First five died in epidemic.

Lived on an Iowa farm with parents near home of grandparents
Mother wanted an education for nine children - unusual for those days - she was creative, but never robust. One brother a dentist, another went to University of Nebraska. Lenoir eight years younger than her brother Guy - eight years older - she was youngest of all.

She grew up in the town of Glidden, Iowa. Church social center of the town - everyone participated in activities. Cards and dancing forbidden even in 1905 at Grinnell College. No dating in high school, lawn tennis was played mixed doubles. Christmas a church celebration.

Picnics, dancing, dating during college years at Grinnell.

Celebrations of Memorial Day in Glidden, Wilmette, Evanston, Chicago. "Daddy Hood" participated in all as a Civil War veteran for his lifetime.

Life at Grinnell for four years, majored in philosophy and history.

December 1904 filed on a claim at Rapid City, S. Dakota - 70 mi. west of the Black Hills. Was graduated at Grinnell in June 1905, returned to "Water Lily Lodge" with her dog "Boots" and for 14 mo. lived in a little shack built by her two cousins from Indiana (who were staking claims also in the same area), on 160 acres. Took train to end of the line in Sturgis, S.D., next two days took a stage coach 60 miles west to her claim.

Taken wallpaper from home for inside and tar-papered exterior by herself. Rode 20 mi. to square dances - stage coach driver was the caller.

ABSTRACT (cont.)

Permission to teach children of area. School housed in an unused sod house on an already proven claim.
Had 10 children ranging from a kindergartener to a freshman in H.S. taking Latin and algebra. Lost in a snow storm in winter, taken in by a neighbor. Paid $45 per month - considered good pay - built fence which was promised "improvement" to property.

Met husband on adjoining claim from Rockwell City, Iowa. Became engaged June 1911 and were not married until 1913 due to family deaths and illness in both families. Parents and nieces moved into an apartment across the hall in Chicago when the Millers married.

Description of their wedding in Glidden, Ia. Came to Chicago where Abe Miller was employed. Six years later the two families moved to Wilmette.

"Bob Cratchett Tale" a Christmas tradition. Life in Wilmette when children were growing-up. Husband's illness, 1929 trip to Mayo Clinic, diagnosis of cancer and need for surgery. Death from "1918 type flu", before operation took place, in Rochester Inn.

Return home and began "Sunshine Corner", after teaching in Wilmette school as a substitute teacher for a year and six weeks summer school at National College of Education.

Philosophy of the little school and practices through the years. Mrs. Miller's community activities. Her philosophy of life; trip to Alaska.

P.E.O. and its support of Cottey College and other college scholarships. Founded in 1869. Admiration for Norman Thomas and Walter Lippman.

N.B. This was taped in Mrs. Miller's daughter's home in November 1974 by Ellen R. Epstein for the Center for Oral History of Washington, D.C. and given to the Wilmette Public Library by the John Miller family since Mrs. Miller's death. This transcription abstracted by: Rhea S. Adler, August 1984

Lenoir Hood Miller

ERE: The following is an interview with Lenoir Hood Miller.

The interview is taking place in Mrs. Miller's daughter's home on Friday, November 8, 1974. The interviewer is Ellen Robinson Epstein of the Center for Oral History in Washington, D.C. Tell me what your full name is.

LHM: Well, my full name is Ethel Lenoir Hood, but there was a girl in our little town of Glidden with not a very savory reputation, and her name was Ethel, and my older sister who was ten years older than I just didn't want me to be called Ethel because of this other girl whose name was Ethel. So she took it upon herself to change my name to be called the middle name, Lenoir. Lenoir Hood was my name. So I can remember walking down the street with her and someone would say, "Hello, Nettie," - that was her name - and then, "Hello, Ethel," and my sister would stop right there and say, "Her name is not Ethel. It's Lenoir."

ERE: What did your parents think of that?

LHM: I don't seem to think or remember that they had anything to say about it at all. And Lenoir was the name of the town in North Carolina where my father was born. And it's from the French originally -- Le Moir, but its been boiled down to just plain Lenoir.

ERE: And where and when were you born?

LHM: I was born in Glidden, Iowa, a little town of 800

on September 30, 1888.

ERE: And how many children were there in your family?

LHM: There were nine and I was the baby. The first five Carrie, Charlie, Stella, Walter and Lulu - I never even saw at all. They were the first children and it was the time when diphtheria and scarlet fever was so tragic. Those first five brothers and sisters I didn't ever see at all.

ERE: And what was your father's name?

LHM: Daddy's name was John Andrew Hood.

ERE: And where was he born?

LHM; He was born in Lenoir, North Carolina, on a plantation.

ERE: Do you know when?

LHM: Um hum. June 22, 1842 and Mother was born four years later, 1846.

ERE: And what was her name?

LHM: Her name was Amanda Malvina Sears. She was born in Indiana.

ERE: Okay. Before we get to your parents, do you remember your grandparents at all?

LHM: Very, very well. On my Daddy's side I just have a vague recollection of Grandma Sears - just as a very small girl. She had a big pocket in her skirt. I can remember that and she always had some sort of a little goodie in it that she would [laughter} every once in a while let us

have a small portion of it. [laughter]
ERE: Where did they live - Grandma Sear's family?

LHM: Well, they lived in Indiana, too, and I don't remember. I don't think I ever saw Grandpa Sears and Grandma just lived - used to take turns living with the different children in their homes.

ERE: Was she born in Indiana herself - Grandma?

LHM: I don't know, really. I really don't know where Grandma Sears was born.

ERE: Do you know what the origin of the family was?

LHM; NO.

ERE: Whether they were Scots or English or something like that?

LHM: No.

ERE: And what about on your father's side?

LHM: Well, Grandma and Grandpa Hood - they lived on a plantation in Lenoir, North Carolina and when Daddy was ten years old, they decided they wanted - they had thirteen children and they decided they wanted some of them to be preachers and there was a little Methodist Academy at Greencastle, Indiana. And so they sold their slaves. I just almost hesitate to say that they did. And Grandma sold her Aunt Fanny who had been such a wonderful slave, but she sold Aunty Fanny to her brother, George, for eleven hundred dollars in gold. And Grandma sat on that little chair right there ï that

gray chair as they came over the mountains from North Carolina to Greencastle, Indiana. And under the seat of that chair, she had a little wallet in which was eleven hundred dollars in gold that she'd gotten from Aunt Fanny, her own personal slave. Aunt Fanny had a little pickaninny, her own little Sambo, and I've heard my father say many times how Aunt Fanny brought him and another little nigger up.

ERE: That's very cute. What - had their family bought the plantation, the Hood family?

LHM: I don't know how in the world Grandma and Grandpa ever got hold of the plantation.

ERE: Did you ever go to visit it when you were....

LHM: Yes, I have.

ERE: Can you describe it?

LHM: Well, it's just good farmland and it's in the western part of North Carolina. Beautiful. Right close to the mountains.

ERE What did they grow there?

LHM What did they what?

ERE Grow.

LHM Oh, regular crops of....

ERE Was it tobacco and cotton?

LHM .... tobacco and cotton. I remember one time when I visited there, they brought out - everybody in the area was at least your forty-second cousin and they brought

out the family Bible and they read a letter from Grandma written from Greencastle, Indiana, after they had moved in which she said to Brother George, "Oh, Brother George, I wish you would free your slaves. You have no idea what a light heart you would have if you would free your slaves." And I remember these forty-second cousins with raised eyebrows said, "Nancy Caroline would sell her slaves and then write and advise us to free our slaves, which to me shows that we sometimes are not sympathetic with their point of view.

ERE; Who was Nancy Caroline?

LHM; Nancy Caroline was my Grandmother.

ERE: Your Grandmother?

LHM; Her name was Nancy Caroline Tuttle. And then she married Andrew Hood - Andrew Washington Hood. And they were the ones who had thirteen children and my father was one of the thirteen. And they did, two of them, turn out to be preachers ð Uncle Jules and Uncle Will Hood.

ERE; Did you know all of your aunts and uncles?

LHM: Um hum.

ERE; Did they live to maturity?

LHM: Um hum.

ERE: What was the house like on the plantation? Was it still standing when you went back to visit?

LHM: No, not the original house. They had done it over. Modernized it quite a bit. So it didn't look it had

originally.

ERE: Did your grandparents ever tell you the stories of the war - Civil War?

LHM: Not my grandparents, but my father. You see, he was - when they moved from Lenoir, North Carolina, to Greencastle, Indiana, he was ten years old and then in another eight years the Civil War broke out and he enlisted in the 51st Indiana Volunteers for two years and served two years and the war wasn't over and he enlisted for two more years, and I don't know how he had the courage to do it. He said all they had to eat really was wormy bacon and hardtack. He came out of the war weighing 98 pounds - a man of around 180 pounds and he was - just loved to tell his Civil War stories. Used to go up to the school, the public school, in Glidden - not in Glidden, I mean in Wilmette where we lived after we were married and tell his many, many in-stances - he was in Libby Prison and how they dug their way out of Libby Prison - escaped.

ERE: Where was Libby Prison? Was that in Indiana?

LHM: That question has been asked before and I'm not real sure, but it was very close to the border, but what state it was in I ought to know but I don't.

ERE: Do you know if his parents had letters from him during the war? Do you know where he was fighting?

LHM; Oh, yes. He was down in Rome, Georgia, and then there was a prisoner exchange and he was sent back North.

Colonel Straight was his colonel and I regret very, very much now that we just didn't take account of his stories because he just had a vivid memory of those war years. Of course, they were so terrible - so terrible. It was before anesthetics, you know, and the doctors would come on the battlefield and saw off a leg where gangrene had started in and no anesthetic. I don't see how they ever lived to tell the tale.

ERE: Can you recall any of the stories that he told you about any of the battles or just the daily - what went on from day to day?

LHM: When they were in this prison at - there was a woman from the town who sent a note. Uh, the colored man would come in every morning with fresh barrels of sawdust and empty the cuspidors - spittoons - that they used and in one of these barrels was a note from a woman who said if there were any four of them who could make their escape from prison, she would hide them in her attic until it was safe for them to go across to the Northern - this was at, not Gettysburg, but what did we say the prison was?

ERE; Libby.

LHM: Libby Prison. Yes, of course. And so Colonel Straight - there was a fire. Libby Prison was an old tobacco factory. There was a fireplace in the basement and each night they would take out the bricks until it was wide enough for one of them to crawl through. And after, oh, weeks of

working, they finally got to the place where it would be safe for them to make their exit to come up to the [Indistinct] And so everything was set. Colonel Straight led the line and then there were three others - three others and Colonel Straight - and he was almost at the end of the line to come up when he just couldn't make it. He was a broad shouldered man and they hadn't made it quite wide enough. So they had to all back out. And then the next night he didn't - Colonel Straight didn't go, but the other three did or else three others. I don't remember just how many - who they were, but they did make their escape to this woman's home and she hid them in her attic and some time later escaped to the Northern lines. That was one of Daddy's favorite stories.

ERE: That's fascinating. Did he ever tell you what happened the day the war ended? Did he describe....

LHM: No, not the day the war ended. I know he had saved enough from the little pittance that they gave them after four years in the war to buy a spankin' horse and buggy out there in Greencastle, Indiana and he courted Mother. And when she said, "Yes," he traded the horse and buggy for eighty acres of land in Iowa and he and Mother then went out there and that's where the first children were born. And that was where the tragedy of the death of so many of the children - no doctors, no neighbors - just scared to death to come in. And Daddy just made little wooden

coffins there on the farm and then the children were buried right there in the yard. Then when the town of Glidden was started and the cemetery set out, they took up the little coffins and put them in the family plot. I remember just so well hearing Mother say, standing at the kitchen door looking out at this vast expanse of prairie - Iowa is such a - such a fertile, beautiful state - of course, there are fields, too, rivers - but Mother standing in the door and saying, "Oh, for the wings of the dove to fly away." We sometimes have no idea what our parents and grandparents endured.

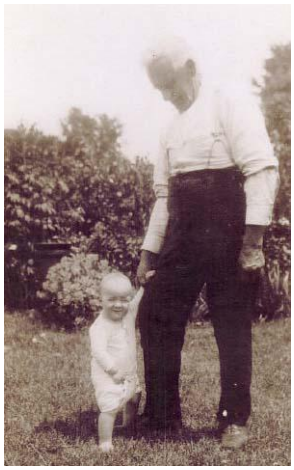
ERE: Um hum.

LHM: Just to have your children ill and no chance of a doctor and no chance of neighbors. They were good neighbors, but they were afraid of this. And with all the fresh air and all - everything - you wonder how and where the scarlet fever and where the diphtheria came from.

ERE: Um hum.

LHM: And always on Decoration Day after the war. Daddy was the one that led the parade. And would he ride in a car when automobiles became common? No indeed! He carried Old Glory and walked. There was always a parade in Wilmette and then adjoining Wilmette was another suburb, Evanston, and they always had a parade and then down on State Street right in the heart of Chicago and Daddy went to all three of them and would come home at the end of the day and I

would say, "Daddy, you must be just dead." "Oh, fit as a fiddle," he'd say.



"Daddy" Hood and John Tuttle Miller

ERE: What did your father look like?

LHM: Well, this is his picture, dear. On the second shelf. That's when he was eighteen years old and enlisted in the 51st Indiana Volunteers. And then this one here is when he was ninety-five on this side of the [Indistinct] holding little John in his lap. He was really a very handsome man and I - just the other day I thought of him because I - you probably wouldn't be interested, but this is a picture of my Grandma and Grandpa [Indistinct] Those two are Grandma and Grandpa.

ERE: Oh, yes.

LHM: And they had this man - there's John and John married Mother and she and Daddy had me. This was senior year in college. And I married Abe and we had Mary June. And Mary June married Bud and they had Larry. And Larry got married and now has little Amy. [Laughter] Six generations;

ERE: Um hum.

LHM: And the rest of them are grandchildren. I have twelve grandchildren and six great grandchildren and one on the way - one, as they say, in the oven. [Laughter] Oh, I didn't know. That won't be going in?

ERE: It doesn't matter.

LHM: Well, I don't care. That's what it is, isn't it?

ERE: Sure. Absolutely. So your father had a moustache his whole life then?

LHM: Well, he had one on and off. I can remember both very well.

ERE: About how tall was he?

LHM: Daddy Hood was just an average - he wasn't so very tall. Now he wasn't anywhere near as tall as his father. Grandpa Hood was a - very tall and erect. I can just remember on Sunday afternoon - Grandma and Grandpa lived in a big white house at the top of the hill and we lived down closer to town, but Daddy every Sunday afternoon would go up to visit them - his Father and Mother. And quite often I would go along. Grandpa always called me Kate. I reminded him of his sister, Kate, whom I never did know. And they had a big baseburner - this was in the winter time and I can just see those coals glowing in the baseburner - isinglass, you know. They left it open so you could see the burning coals. And he had a very favorite chair that he sat in. And, indeed, they brought that chair over the mountains from North Carolina when they moved to Indiana. And now our son, John, has the chair. Its never been re-caned. It's just like it was and there isn't a break in it, but it had an arm on it that came up- so if you were reading your paper or a book or writing, you could rest.

And Grandpa had a little dog, Nether. And Nether would sit on the arm of that chair. And I remember then after Daddy died and after Grandpa died - then we had the chair in our home there in Wilmette. Our little Bob one time was sitting on the arm of the chair and Daddy was saying, "Bobby, I'd like to go home and be with my loved ones." And Bobby, who was only about four years old said, "Well, Daddy Hood, I think you have quite a few loved ones right here." [Laughter]

ERE: Terrific. Let me get back to when your father came back from the Civil War. Do you know how he met your mother?

LHM: They both lived on farms in - near Greencastle, Indiana.

ERE: Had their parents arranged the marriage do you know?

LHM: Oh, no. No.

ERE: Did your mother ever tell you what kind of wedding they had?

LHM: Well, I have their wedding certificates of - enough to prove most anything - the tree of life and the witnesses and the Bible and all and their own pictures.

ERE: Were they married in a church or at home?

LHM: I don't know. She had four sisters and one brother, Uncle George.

ERE: So they were married shortly after your father returned from the war?

LHM: He returned in July and they were married the next July.

ERE: Tell me a little bit about what your mother looked like - what you remember about her. Usually people have a certain thing that they remember about their mother.

LHM: Well, Mother - she had such high aspirations for her children. And in those days not so very many of them - of the children - especially in our little town in Iowa went to college, but Mother was so determined that the children should have the advantage of education. My sister had a very lovely voice - Nettie - her name was Jeannette, but we called her Nettie. She studied music in Chicago at Chicago University - no, not Chicago University, but Chicago Musical College. And then my brother - one of than - went to Iowa City and took - and graduated from Iowa City Dental School.

EKE: What was his name?

IBM; Guerne.

ERE: What kind of name was that?

IBM: I don't know where they - who is the politician in Florida? That was Gurney, wasn't it? And my brother was Guerne. Mother and Daddy had nine children and my sisters. Her, um - she had four children so then at the time of the birth of the fourth child, sister died.

ERE: Um hum.

LHM: So that I'm the last one. Then there was another brother. Guy, who lived to be -well, he died in his early eighties. He's gone and so I'm the last one.

ERE: So your Bother wanted all of you to go to college?

LHM: Um hum. Very much. Guy did go to the Lincoln University and my brother Guerne, as I said, went to Iowa City. The dean of the dental school at Iowa City sent my brother, when he had passed his eightieth birthday, a little jingle which he himself wrote and do you want me to tell it to you?

ERE: Surely.

LHM: Because my brother sent it to me when I had my eightieth birthday. Let's see, how does it start?

I'm eighty-two years old today

My joints are stiff

My hair is gray.

It's funny,

But you get that way

When you're past eighty.

I remember when

I thought eighty years was quite

A lot.

But I've decided

That it's not.

Now that I've past eighty.

Some think you've had all your fun

before you're eighty,

But I for one think life has scarce begun

Till after eighty.

Before that time you've been erratic and

full of bunk and prunes and static,

Not much wisdom in your attic before

you're eighty.

You're judgment's often in reverse,

Your self control is sometimes worse".

Indeed you almost need a nurse

Before you're eighty.

Youth's golden years gone by foresooth

But just keep faith in love and truth,

And you'll still be enjoying youth

Long past eighty.

ERE: That's lovely. Your brother wrote that or did the dean....

LHM: No. The dean of the dental school wrote it and sent it to my brother.

ERE: Terrific. Okay. You were telling me what your mother looked like and....

LHM: Um hum. Well, she was dignified and very capable. Indeed she had the first and only sewing machine in Carroll County, Iowa, when she and Daddy went out and pioneered after the Civil War. And she was - in those days there were no additions to the machines. She could just run the finest little tucks and the babies' dresses were all so fancy, you know, and the men's shirts - white shirts with tucked

bosoms which - the tucks she ran by eye. She was a very lovely sewer - just did beautiful things - liked to create.

ERE; Was she a particularly good cook?

LHM: Yes. She was. My memory of Mother is - oh, sort of her frailty after all she had gone through. When I came Mother was forty-four and, as I remember Mother, she was never sturdy at all. Well, just quite often I'd come home from playing and Mama would be lying down.

ERE: Did she ever have any real illness or just that she had had so many children and....

LHM: She really - when we were married and came to Chicago to live then Daddy and Mother took a little apartment right across the hall from us and took their meals with us and, indeed. Mother passed on. She - I had her in my arms. She just ....

ERE: Was your home the kind of home where the other neighborhood children if they were close enough - children would come to spend time at your home, that people loved to be there where there were thirteen children?

LHM: Well, now there - it was Grandma and Grandpa that had thirteen children, dear.

ERE: Well, your family had....

LHM: Nine.

ERE: Nine?

LHM: Nine. Um hum and I was the baby. So there was quite a little difference between me and - eight years between me

and my brother Guy. Oh, yes, there was always - seemed to be things going on. The people in little towns like that - 800 people - they made their own fun, you know. We didn't have television. We didn't have radio. We didn't have telephones. We didn't have cars. We went sleigh riding in the winter time and ice skating - we used to go skating on the river.

ERE: What was an average day like once you started school?

LHM: Well, it would be getting up in the morning and running out into the living room where the big base burner was to dress by the fire because the house was cold - no furnace heat in those days at all and then it was getting on our long underwear. I remember I used to labor to make my long underpants smooth so when I pulled my stockings on over them they would be smooth. [Laughter] I have a vivid memory of hours spent that way. [Laughter] And then the schools were - we had lots of fun at school.

ERE: Were you expected to do chores on the farm before school or after school?

LHM; Well, the years I spent on the farm were really quite few. I was - Mother and Daddy - Mother was not so very well and they decided to build a house in Glidden - just a block from Grandpa and so I was born in the town of Glidden....

ERE: I see.

LHM: ....and spent very little time on the farm. Daddy was a

farmer. That's the way he made the living. It was seven miles from Glidden to the farm....

ERE: I see.

LHM: ....but most of my life was spent in the town of Glidden. Though we didn't go out and live in the house on "the farm, we'd go out a lot and uh - oh, part of the time during the school year I rode horseback into high school - the seven miles - and left the pony at my grandpa's barn. Rode back then at night, but most of my life was spent in my child-hood in the town of Glidden itself.

ERE; What did the town look like? Was there one main street?

LHM: Um hum. No paved streets at all - just dirt roads. One store that sold everything and the Lee Hotel - the tradesmen used to go around and always try to make the Lee Hotel because Mrs. Lee was such a good cook. What do you call those salesmen who go around and sell their wares - you know.

ERE: Traveling salesmen.

LHM: Traveling salesmen would always try to make Glidden and the Lee Hotel their ending part of the day.

ERE; Was there a doctor in the town?

LHM: Um hum. Dr. Dexler. He was the....

ERE: What about the church?

LHM: And - well, there was the Presbyterian Church and the Methodist Church and the Church of God and if you were Catholic, you had to go up to Carroll which is the County

Seat for a Catholic service.

ERE: And was the church the center of the social activities in the town?

LHM: Very much so. Um hum. Every year there would be an ice cream social. Now there was no ice in Glidden so the men would go up to Carroll seven miles and get ice because Carroll was quite a bit larger and they did go to the river and cut ice and put it up in an ice house in sawdust for the summer, and so the men folk from the church would go up to Carroll and bring home ice for the ice cream and I remember going with Mother in the horse and buggy with Nell and the pony, and the pony would go to the different farm houses to gather up cream and eggs to make the ice cream and I remember one time especially. We little girls were to wait on the tables. We were about twelve years old and we had waited on the tables and everybody would have their ice cream and then when it was time for us to have ours there wasn't any left. I never will forget. I don't think I ever longed for anything so much in my life because that was the only ice cream we ever had - just that one time in the - well, if we ever went up to Carroll as once in a great while they did. There was no transportation except to drive up by horse and buggy because there were other stores in Carroll and I remember one time Mother bought some lace curtains at Carroll and it greatly disturbed Daddy because

he didn't think we could afford them [Laugher] and that's the one little memory I have.

ERE: Would you describe your family as being middle class?

LHM: Well, I wouldn't think of....

ERE: I mean - well, by middle class I mean - I take it you weren't extremely poor or extremely rich, but if you wanted a new dress....

LHM: Yes.

ERE:...your father could save the money for it.

LHM: Yes. Yes.

ERE: Or your mother could make it - buy the material?

LHM: Yes. Yes. I think you could call us - well, my sister and my - the fact that my sister was sent - she didn't have any scholarship or anything like that but we sent her to Chicago to study music and my brother went to Iowa City Dental School, graduated and was a dentist. My brother. Guy, went to Lincoln - Lincoln University and I went to Grinnell four years - not on a scholarship but just paid tuition so we - nobody ever thought, I don't think, as a little girl about middle class or upper class or lower class. Everybody kind of just did things together.

ERE: Well, was your family one of the only families where all the children went to college?

LHM: Well, just mighty few. There was two girls and I can just remember looking up to them [Indistinct] to Rockford a girl's school. Now that was just about the only other

ones beside and, of course, my brothers and sisters. There was several years between when I went to Grinnell and sister went to Chicago. I was, I guess, eighteen when she went to Chicago to study music.

ERE: Was it a matter of money or just that people didn't really expect their children to go to college?

LHM: Well, a little bit of both, I think, and mother had such aspirations for her children.

ERE: Is there anything else you can remember about Glidden? In the summer time the kind of things you'd do - was there a place you'd go swimming or did you take hay rides?

LHM: Um hum. We took hay rides and we took bobsled rides in the winter. That was such fun. We'd tie our little sleds on behind the big sleds, you know, and....

ERE: Did your father build a bobsled for you or did you....

LHM: No. I don't know where it came from. My cousin, Gifford, two cousins - Gifford and Ray Grace lived in town. Elvina was mother's sister and Gifford had a pony, Topsy, and he had a Sled that would hold about four and then we would fasten our little sleds on behind and we would go almost a half a block sometimes and he, all of a sudden, would snap or crack his whip and Topsy would spring ahead and Gifford would turn a corner real quickly and the sleds would all go over in a heap. [Laughter]

ERE: Was it done purposely?

LHM: Um hum. [Laughter]

ERE: Is there anything else you can remember?

LHM; Well, I almost hesitate to say because it doesn't sound that it could be true, but, oh, dancing was forbidden, playing cards - there were no cards and/ of course, there were no movies. I don't know....

ERE: Okay. You were telling me that you didn't play cards or dance....

LHM; Oh, no. And even when I went to Grinnell in 1905, there was no cards, no dancing. That is the oldest college west of the Mississippi. It's a small college of about 1200 but, oh, its changed so. Not that I disapprove of - because I just think it's lovely that - for people to dance.

ERE: What did you do when you went out on a date?

LHM: Well, you see [Laughter] you didn't date in high school. Nobody ever - if you ever - I remember one of the boys asked me to go to church one night and I said no. I didn't want to and this very close friend, Margaret Culbertson, she said, "Why, if you had gone to church with Hobey Stewart, everybody would have thought you were going to get married." [Laughter] But there were no picture shows to go to - no, we didn't have this. We did play tennis. I remember Margaret and Austin Fisher and Hobey and I used to play tennis quite a lot together, but we never thought of it as a date.

ERE: Did you play on grass at that time?

LHM: Um hum.

ERE: In college - was there any dating there?

LHM: Yes. There was some dating. I happened to be the class agent of our class and just the other day I had a letter from Bruno Arne who's eighty-seven years old. I'm eighty-six. And I remember the glee club concert. He sent me a bunch of red roses. Got them from Des Moines. Ordered them from Des Moines, Iowa - a florist there. They were such long stemmed we had to put them in the bath tub. [Laughter]

ERE: Was he one of your suitors?

LHM: Well, I went with him a little. Um hum.

ERE: Did you meet at the glee club?

LHM: Oh, he was in my class.

ERE: I see.

LHM: No. He wasn't in the glee club, but when we had a concert, everyone who had a ticket could come.

ERE: What kind of social activities did you go on?

LHM: Oh, we had a lot of picnics out at Arbor Lake. You mean at Grinnell?

ERE: Um hum.

LHM; And masquerade parties and costume parties.

ERE: Were you interested in politics when you were in college?

LHM: No. No, I wasn't.

ERE: Were you aware of Teddy Roosevelt or....

LHM: My father was a staunch Republican. If he knew that I voted

Democratic now, he'd turn over in his grave [Laughter] because he was such a loyal Northerner and he thought Abraham Lincoln was just next to God. And so it was the Republicans that were on the side of the North.

ERE: Did your father ever tell you what happened the day Lincoln was shot - about his feelings or was....

LHM: No. He was just so grief stricken.

ERE: Well, back in Glidden - let me just ask: you a few more questions. What was Christmas like in your home?

LHM: Oh, it was all centered in the church mostly. We didn't have Christmas trees in the home.

ERE: NO?

LHM: The Christmas tree was the big Christmas tree in the church and we all went and strung popcorn and cranberries and I remember we had candles, but there was fire. It was not serious, but it might have been so they abandoned the use of candles on the Christmas tree at the church. There was always a little program.

ERE: Did you have a big family dinner - on Christmas?

LHM: On Christmas? Yes. Aunt Vina and Uncle John - Aunt Vina was Mother's sister. They were the close relatives and then Grandma and Grandpa, Daddy's father and Mother. As long as they lived, we were all together for Christmas.

ERE: Did people exchange gifts - the way they do today?

LHM: Um hum.

ERE: Do you remember what the best Christmas gift you ever got

was?

LHM: No.

ERE: Did you mother usually make gifts for you or....

LHM: I think mostly it was things like an under dress she'd make or something like that. I don't remember. I remember some of my clothes. Uh - I came in to Chicago with my brother Guerne one time. Mother had a sister, Tabitha Ann, who lived in Chicago and my brother brought me - this was after he had started dentistry - he brought me a lovely brown coat with a little brown cap that matched. And I thought that was just about the loveliest thing I ever had.

ERE: Do you remember making or buying Christmas presents for your brothers and sisters and your parents?

LHM: Well, I remember one Christmas I decided to make hearts - little silk shaped hearts and put little bits of cotton in and sachet - as a little sachet. And I can just remember so well I didn't have anything made for my brother Guerne. And I couldn't think of anything and I guess I did run out of money to buy anything so I gave him a little sachet heart which was [Laughter] about the silliest thing you could give a boy. [Laughter]

ERE: What did he do with it?

LHM: Well, I don't know whether to tell you this or not. I even put it on - wrapped it into a little package and hung it on the Christmas tree at the church and he and some of

the older boys and girls were there and he opened it and he was - I happened to be standing near when he opened it - and I don't know whether he or I was the most embarrassed because it was such a silly thing for a boy to get. [Laughter]

ERE: That's a good story. What about the Fourth of July? Was that a big occasion in Glidden?

LHM: It was a big occasion, but not as big a day as Decoration Day or Memorial Day. We always called it Decoration Day. The students all marched or rode out to the cemetery and the G.A.R. - the Grand Army of the Republic - as long as there was a single soul left, they would come with their muskets and shoot over the graves, you know.

ERE: I understand that your father was one of the last?

LHM: He was - members. Oh, he thought more of Decoration Day than he did of any other day of the year. That was to him the big day. He would march in the Wilmette parade - always the head of the line, carrying the flag. Never, even after cars came into existence, would he get in and ride.

ERE: He never rode in a car?

LHM: Well, finally. He lived to be ninety-seven and just went to sleep one night - not ill at all. But then he would go to Evanston, which was later in the day, and march in the parade and carried Old Glory and then clear down to the city to State Street in Chicago. Would lead

that parade and he'd come home at night and I'd say, "Oh, Daddy, you must be just dead." "Fit as a fiddle."

ERE; How far was Chicago from Glidden?

LHM: From Glidden?

ERE: Oh, Chicago - when you were in Wilmette? What I -meant to say was what was the nearest big city to Glidden?

LHM: The big city was - the nearest was Des Moines, the capitol about a hundred miles.

ERE: And when he went - your father marched from Wilmette to Chicago - what was that distance he had to walk from one parade to the other - I take it since he wouldn't ride?

LHM: He marched in Glidden. That's the little town of eight hundred people. Then when I married and moved to Chicago, we lived in Chicago four years and then we moved out to Wilmette which is a suburb of Chicago.

ERE: I thought that you said before that your father came to Wilmette and marched there and then went to Chicago and marched there or were you talking about Glidden then?

LHM: I was talking about when he marched at State Street in Chicago. That was when we lived in Chicago.

ERE: Right. Okay. Did your father talk about politics at all while you were growing up ~ other than Abraham Lincoln?

LHM: Well, there was nothing much to talk about because there was nothing but the Republican party that amounted to anything. He was a Republican through and through.

ERE; Do you remember when President McKinley was assassinated?
LHM: Om hum. I don't remember very much about it - especially there was no -- I was trying to think what year it was.

ERE: 1901.

LHM: 1901. Well, I graduated from high school in 1903. So you see I hadn't even gotten to high school.

ERE: What about your course of study at Grinnell?

LHM: Well, when I went I thought I would keep on - take a regular college prescribed course and my music. Well, oh dear, the head of the Music Department -" I went to him and he said, "Would you play something for me?" and so I sat down at the piano there in the studio and played Auf Den Frelig. It's a number of Grieg's that I had played at our music club in Glidden. I thought I played it beautifully. When I finished he said, "Just get up, please, and I'll play it as it should be played." I just tell you I just never was more crushed in my life.

ERE: I can imagine.

LHM; So I took from him until Christmas, but I just didn't do well at all. I didn't like him and I found, too, that taking a full course - academic course was quite a plenty. So I didn't take any more music.

ERE: What was your favorite subject?

LHM: Hum?

ERE: What was your favorite subject?

LHM: My favorite subject was - grew near the time of graduation,

my junior and senior year - was philosophy.

ERE: Any particular .philosopher?

LHM: Well, we studied them all.

ERE: Was there someone in particular whose philosophy appeals greatly to you?

LHM: Um hum. History and philosophy I thought kind of went together and my favorite historian was Toynbee. And he is still. I think one of the most wonderful things he ever said in his Civilization on Trial....

ERE: Um hum.

LHM: ....he said, "All the world's great religions have the same fundamental basis. They all stress a divine Creator and they all stress service as the loftiest aim." And I just think that's the finest bit of philosophy I know. And there is so much ill will and criticism among the various religions when there ought not be. If they could all just be boiled down to a simple statement as that....

ERE: Um hum.

LHM: ....a divine Creator and service as the loftiest aim. If I were President of the United States, you know what I'd have for my first priority?

ERE: What?

LHM: I really would and I mean it and I've thought it for a long time - I would really have a more equitable distribution of the good things of life - health, education, and a fair share of the filthy lucre, as they call it, but I just cannot

see any rhyme or reason for people having such vast sums and little children going hungry. Why, they can't take it with them and it's just - why? Why? I don't know how it would be better. I voted for Norman Thomas every time he ran, but we don't have any man - I think the Democrats are the nearest to the solution of a more equitable distribution.

ERE: Were you ever a Suffragette - involved in any rallies?

LHM: I'm so sorry to say - you know, Emerson says, "What you are sounds so loud in my ears, I cannot hear what you say." I am - thoroughly, thoroughly approve of equality between men and women, but I really have never gone out and done anything about it. After my husband died - for twenty-five years I had a little nursery school in my home - little tots between two and five. Just a dozen of them. And that took my time, besides having the house to take care of - and of the children.

ERE: Well, we'll get to that in a minute. Let me ask you a few more things. What did you do when you graduated from college? Where did you go?

LHM: Well, that was - that's an interesting period. The Christmas before I graduated I went out to Rapid City, South Dakota, where the Land Commissioner lived and filed on a claim, right in the Black - seventy miles west of the Black Hills. You could see the hills plainly - a hundred and sixty acres of Uncle Sam's perfectly good land.

ERE: Went by yourself?

LHM: Um hum.

ERE: Was that considered extraordinary at the time?

LHM: I didn't know anybody else that did it. I had two cousins out there - two boy cousins - Ralph and Ben Lindenwood and they had filed and had proved up on their claims. They came from Indiana.

ERE: I mean - for a woman to go out and file, wasn't that pretty amazing at the time?

LHM: Well, I didn't know anybody else nor any other girls who went alone. Ben Everett - he was a judge there in Sturgis, South Dakota, and he had filed on a claim and the girl to whom he was engaged had filed on a claim. They were going to be married, but if they would file on a claim before they were married, they would get two claims and if they filed after they were married, they would get only one claim. So Ben and his wife, Leia, or his sweetheart, Leia, and then their mother, Mrs. Barber, and their dress-maker, Mrs. Wilson, all filed claims and had quite a ranch, really.

ERE: Why don't you explain first some things in case one of your grandchildren doesn't understand exactly what it means to file a claim - what you did and....

LHM: You went before the Land Commissioner and you say - he asked you questions: "Are you an American citizen? And

do you own any land? And do you promise to live on it for fourteen months?" And he held up his hand for me to take the oath. I thought he wanted to shake hands on a good deal, and I grabbed him by the hand and shook it vigorously. [Laughter] So we had a good laugh. And then I went back to school and then in June, as soon as I had gotten my degree, I went out and my two cousins, Ralph and Ben, had built a little shack right on the prairie - kind of on the side of a hill.

Lenoir Hood on the roof of her cabin

So they found some flagstones with which they made a walk down to the bottom of the little hill where there was a natural spring - icy cold water, and on down from this spring there was what they call a draw - kind of a valley. And it was just white with wild water lilies. So I called my little place "Water Lily Lodge." And that's where I lived for fourteen months until I proved up on my claim. I took some pictures. There is my little shack.

Lenoir Hood with her dog Boots

And that is I with my dog, Boots.

ERE: Is this the shack your cousins built?

LHM: Um hum.

ERE: And how many acres were you given?

LHM; A hundred and sixty acres.

ERE; And did the United States government provide you with grain or you had to buy your own grain and animals to farm?

LHM: Oh, yes. We had to - when I went out in June to Sturgis - that was the end of the Northwestern Line, Sturgis, South

South Dakota, right in the hills. And I stayed all night at the [Indistinct] Hotel. And the next morning, Mr. Whitman was the driver. He was an old cowboy. Had been a cowboy in his younger days and I sat on the front seat with him on the stagecoach. There were seven other people going out to establish [Indistinct]their claims, and we drove sixty miles to the river the first day. Spent all night at the river and the next day made the - oh, it was sixty miles altogether. We drove thirty miles the first day and then thirty miles the next day till we came to my little shack. And, oh, Mr. Whitman had regaled me with stories of cowboy days and he happened to notice and remark that, "You see those acres and acres of brown-eyed susans blossoming on the prairie." He said, "You know, the Indians use the brown-eyed susan, the roots of the brown-eyed susan for rattle-snake bites." Well, when I got on my claim and got established, I tarpapered the roof and I had taken some wallpaper with me in my trunk and I made some flour and water paste and tore an old sheet into strips and Stripped the cracks in the little shack and then papered over it. There was just one window and one door, a little stove - pot-bellied stove - in the corner and then I made an orange crate cupboard in the other corner and had my little couch and it was a cozy little nest. And then tar-papered it on the outside. I think there is a picture of

the tar-papering. So - but you have to do a certain amount of improvement. Fencing - I didn't have enough money to buy fence posts, and I thought how could I earn some money? Then I thought of those millions of brown-eyed susans growing on my claim and thought maybe there was a market. So I wrote to a wholesale drug house in Omaha to ask. In the meantime, I had looked up in my botany. The brown-eyed susan is called Rudbeckia Triloba. So I wrote to my friends. I told them I was breeding Rudbeckia Triloba. [Laughter] And they wrote back after two or three weeks and said yes, they would pay twenty-nine cents for a dried pound. Well, I had my butcher knife and little pail and dug for two or three weeks and got about a pound and I knew that I'd never make enough money to buy fence posts that way, but I did. We used to ride, oh, twenty miles to a dance and dance all night and come home by sun-up. And this Mr. Whitman who had been the driver on the stagecoach was the caller at the dance. So it was like I had met an old friend when I met him at the dance. So I had, in going about horseback riding and so forth, noticed quite a number of children in that area so I found out who the county superintendent was - Miss Daley. She lived in Sturgis and I wrote her and I told her that I had just gotten a degree from college and I would love to teach. And I said, "I think there are enough children in this area to warrant a school." So she

wrote back and said, "We'd love to have a school, but we have no schoolhouse." Well, it just happened that the Erickson brothers had proved up on their claim and had gone back - they said back East. I thought they meant back to Massachusetts, but they just meant eastern South Dakota. So it didn't take too long to get a message from them and they had a sod house about twice the size of mine, but it had a good floor and had a stove. So I asked them if they would be willing to rent it and they wrote very graciously and said we were perfectly welcome to use it. They didn't want any rent for it. So the parents made little makeshift desks and seats and I had ten - averaged ten children from Howard Brooks, kindergarten, to Lala Fern York who was a freshman in high school. I started her on her Latin and algebra. Never worked so. hard in all my life.

ERE: How far did these children have to travel to come to school?
LHM: Well, some of the parents brought them and some- now I walked three miles and those that were further away, their parents brought them.

ERE: What happened in the winter when the snows came?

LHM: Well, that was the time - did Mary June tell you about the time I got lost? It was the first big snowstorm and I thought it would be wise to have the children go home because it was just snowing gently. So I excused them

from school at noon, but I had some little things to do and didn't realize it was getting so much worse and so I left about four o'clock and thought I was headed right straight home, three miles, and it got worse and worse and the wind was just terrific, and the snow was coming down in sheets and I didn't seem to feel frightened at all. I just thought that by and by I wish I could run into a fence and I would follow that fence because I was completely turned around. And all of a sudden I did bump into a fence and so I followed that. I remember thinking that I would not sit down to rest. I was going against the wind, too, because I thought I was going toward home. And the wind, that, of course, was very tiring, but I remember thinking that I wouldn't sit down to rest because I remembered reading of people who did that and just became kind of unconscious and frozen to death. So I thought if I just could run into a fence I would follow that. And I did finally and then off in the distance I thought I saw a little tiny light and then I didn't see it. And I thought, "Oh, I'm beginning to see things, I guess," and I remember thinking that I just wouldn't stop to rest, but I did leave the fence and I saw the light again and left the fence and went toward the light. And it was Mrs. McKeegan out doing her chores. The men folk had gone to the Badlands to get coal and she had this lantern going in and out of the barn. That was why I saw the light and didn't see it. And so she

took me in and undressed me and put me to bed and "Now," she said, "I'm going to fix you a good whiskey sling. How much do you think you can take?" "Oh," I said, "Give me all you want. I never took any before." And so she fixed me a good hot drink and I went to bed and - just as good as new the next morning.

ERE: How far were you from your own home?

LHM: I was - I had gotten completely turned around and was on the other side of the school.

ERE: Did you hold classes in the winter?

LHM: No. Then we just had three months in the winter. Guess how much they paid?

ERE: How much?

LHM: Forty-five dollars a month which I think way back then was pretty good.

ERE: Was that how you finally built your fence?

LHM: Is that how I what?

ERE: Finally got the money to build your fence.

LHM: Oh, yes, that's exactly how I did it.

ERE: That's fascinating,

LHM: Well, the fascinating part, dear, was that's where I met the man whom I married.

ERE: How did that come about?

LHM: He had a claim just south of me. I hadn't met him. Didn't know him at all. He'd been a cashier in a bank in Rockville City, Iowa, and had decided, "Why not just make a little

adventure and get 160 acres of Uncle Sam's perfectly good land?" And, of course, it was all in the cards, I'm sure. He had the claim just south of me. As I said, I hadn't known him before.

ERE: How did you meet exactly?

LHM: Well, I guess it was over at Ben's shack. Ben, my cousin, had the claim just north of me and Ralph, my other cousin, his claim was further away, but Ben's claim was adjoining mine on the north. And I met Abe over at Ben's house one time.

ERE: And how long did you court?

LHM: Well, I went out in June and the next June we were engaged, but we didn't - we weren't married - that was in 1911 we were engaged, but we weren't married until 1913.

ERE: Why was that?

LHM: Well, his mother wasn't very well and my brother's wife had died and left two little ones, Ruth and Ellen, the Ellen I spoke of, just two and three years old. Mother wasn't well and I just felt - we just kept postponing it until, well, until the time seemed more propitious for me to leave because I just felt I couldn't leave Mother with the care of little Ruth and Ellen to go to Chicago to live. And then this little apartment across the hall became vacant in Chicago so Mother and Daddy and Ruth and Ellen came and took that little apartment and they could take their meals with us and Mother didn't have to do the cooking.

ERE; You left South Dakota before you were married?

LHM: Oh, yes. Um hum. Came back home.

ERE: I see, but was your husband still out there - your husband-to-be still out there - still out in South Dakota when you went back home?

LHM: Yes. He had not begun his period of having to live on the claim. His father was ill and he'd filed on the claim, but he hadn't begun residence till later because his father was sick.

ERE: What was your husband's name?

LHM: Abe. Abe. Not Abraham. Just Abe.

ERE: And where had he been from originally?

LHM: Well, he was born in Iowa, too. And he had gone to business college in Des Moines, Iowa.

ERE: And after college he went out to the Black Hills?

LHM: Um hum.

ERE: You courted for almost three years then?

LHM: Um hum.

ERE: Part of that time you were back home....

LHM: Um hum.

ERE: ....and he was still in South Dakota. Where and when did you finally marry?

LHM: We were married at my home in Glidden - in our own home.

ERE: What was the date?

LHM: September 20, 1913.

ERE: Can you tell me a little bit about your wedding?

LHM: [Laughter] Well, it was on a Saturday and, uh, and those days our hair was long and I - well, we called it washing our hair, today we say shampoo our hair, but after my hair was washed, it always had a little tendency to be curly.....

ERE: You were telling me about your wedding ceremony. You said you used to wash your hair and it had a tendency to curl.

LHM: ....because - so it was rainy and dark. No sunshine. No breeze and how was I to get that hair dry because I was supposed to be married at noon - at one o'clock. No, I guess it was twelve, and then we had lunch in the afternoon - after the wedding. I don't know which came first. Which would naturally come first?

ERE: The wedding.

LHM: Wouldn't it? [Laughter] Anyway, Mother said, "Well, we'll just build a big fire in the cook stove in the kitchen and put your head in the oven and get your hair dry," which I did. [Laughter]

ERE: Weren't you worried?

LHM: Well, for fear it wouldn't get dry?

ERE: Or for fear that you wouldn't have that beautiful long hair?

LHM: [Laughter] Well, I guess we used a bath cloth to keep it away from any extreme heat. Anyway, it got dry. And we took the train. We called it "The Stub." It was the train that ran between Marshalltown and Omaha.

ERE: Why was it called "The Stub?"

LHM: Well, I don't know. Because it was such a short train, I guess and went as far as Cedar Rapids and we stayed all night in Cedar Rapids and then came to Chicago the next day.

ERE: Oh, you were married in Chicago?

LHM: No. We were married at Mother's house.

ERE: I'm sorry. You said just you and Abe took this train?

LHM: Um hum.

ERE: I see. Well, let me just ask you a few more questions about the ceremony. Do you remember what your dress looked like?

LHM; Well, my dress was made by a modiste in Lexington, Kentucky. A friend of Mother's had had some work done there and you just send her your size and the color of your hair and eyes, and she asked for just many very exact measurements and then she makes your dress. And she made my little going away suit and an afternoon dress - one of the prettiest dresses I ever had.

ERE: Did they all fit perfectly?

LHM: Just fit beautifully - urn hum.

ERE: Amazing. Do you know whether it was very expensive to order?

LHM: Well, I think, dear, if you went down to Des Moines - one of the big department stores and got something, it would be comparable to that. I'd not say for sure.

ERE: How many people were at the wedding?

LHM: Well, my whole Sunday school class served the luncheon. And then there were about a dozen of my old college friends from in and around that area who came. Some - Mary and Lee drove a horse and buggy from Lake City, I remember, about fifteen. And then relatives - my brother-in-law from Jefferson and his wife. My sister, Nettie, had died when her fourth baby was born so there were four little children left without a mother, and then my brother - I told you, his wife, Fanny, died and left two little ones - Ruth and Ellen. So we've had a great deal of sorrow, but not what you would call tragedy because everything was sweet and lovely.

ERE: I understand there was an amusing part to your wedding - that you had some goldenrod?

LHM: [Laughter] Well, for the decorations. They didn't know anything about hay fever being caused by goldenrod so that was practically all the decoration. The house was just full of lovely bunches of goldenrod. We did send to Des Moines and got two beautiful, big yellow chrysanthemums and in the heart of each one was the wedding ring. And these two little nieces of mine, Ruth and Ellen, were the flower girls, but the girl who helped get the chrysanthemums ready got the wrong ring in the wrong chrysanthemum, so when Abe tried to put my ring on my finger, he had the big one and when I tried to get the one on his, it just wouldn't

go on so we just bent his finger. [Laughter]

ERE: I was just going to ask you Åafter the ceremony you left and went to Chicago by the next day?

LHM: We left that afternoon at four o'clock and went as far as Cedar Rapids that night and then on to Chicago the next day. Abe had already rented a suite of rooms just across from Lincoln Park where we lived for two months until we found a little apartment, brand new, on 516 Demming Place. That was across from Lincoln Park at the north end of Lincoln Park and that's where we lived from 1913 until 1919 - for six years. Mary June was four and David was two when we moved out to Wilmette.

ERE: What was Abe doing in Chicago at the time?

LHM; My husband? He was working for the United Agency. It was a rating concern like - comparable to Bradstreet and Dunn. He'd been in a bank before and that was his education in Des Moines - in business, business education.

ERE: And when you moved to Wilmette was he still working with the same firm?

LHM: Um hum.

ERE: Wilmette was just a suburb near Chicago? And did your parents move to Wilmette with you?

LHM; Yes. Grandma - Mother and Daddy and Ruth and Ellen came in. It happened to be a duplicate - an apartment just across the hall from us. So they took that and Ruth and

Ellen went to school - a little school just a block away. And they took their meals all at our - in our dining room because Mother was very much of an invalid. She could walk and all, but she just didn't have strength.

ERE: But then your Mother took it upon herself to raise Ruth and Ellen even though she was quite ill?

LHM: Yes. There was just no place else for them to go. The relatives on the other side, on Fanny's side, were just not able to do it.

ERE: Where was Guerne at the time?

LHM: Well, he was a dentist at Dunlap, Iowa.

ERE: Was he living with your parents with Ruth and Ellen or not?

LHM: No, he was not. He lived - had a room and boarded at this town of Dunlap, which was only maybe a hundred miles from Glidden. He used to come home a lot to see little Ruth and Ellen, but he had his dental practice there in Dunlap, Iowa and Mother and Daddy and little Ruth and Ellen and I were living in Glidden, Iowa, about a hundred miles from Dunlap.

ERE: Okay. So you were now in Wilmette and Abe was working for the United Agency.

LHM: The United Agency was the name of it. Um hum.

ERE: And what years did he work there?

LHM: Well he was - I was going to say he was with the same company at the time of his death, but Bradstreet and

Dunn - the United Agency was a new company and Bradstreet and Dunn was an old company and the competition was just - they just kind of forced them out of business, really. They couldn't keep up with their competition. So at the time of my Abe's death, he was working with another company in Chicago that was doing a local business in the famous rating concern, but it was a local concern.

ERE: Now where were your children born?

LHM: Well, Mary June was born in September, 1915, and Dave was born in October, 1917. We moved to Wilmette in 1919. Johnny was born in 1924 and Bob was born in 192 [sic] - now that's not quite right. We were married in '13. Mary June was born in '15. Dave was born in '17. We moved to Wilmette in '19. Johnny was born in '21 and Bob was born in '24.

ERE: Were you closest to Mary June in that she was your only daughter?

LHM: Am I closer to her?

ERE; Growing up - of all your children. They always say that mothers and daughters have a special relationship that mothers and sons don't have necessarily. Do you feel that you were very close to one another growing up?

LHM: I don't know what you mean by close.

ERE: Well, I know now she thinks you're the most wonderful person in the whole world. And sometimes, in some families, that happens when once a daughter is grown

and has her own family she gets along with her own mother much better than she ever did while she was growing up. In her own, you know, in her family as a daughter, I was just wondering if you always had this special relationship that you now have.

LHM: I think so. I can't remember when we ever have been any different, but I thought you meant was I closer to her than I was to the boys. I'm not. The boys have been just - they write every week. Bob and John, and, of course, I see what you mean. There is a - well, there isn't a thing that I wouldn't do for Mary June that I wouldn't do for the boys and I just can't stand partiality in a family. I've seen instances of it when it just nearly hurts. I think it is just devastating to the one that feels that they are not quite as much beloved.

ERE: Um hum. Did your - did the family go on any particular outings together on week-ends or Sunday or did you stay home or did you go to visit friends or relatives?

LHM: No. We didn't ever have very much money to - Abe was on a very limited - well, indeed, when we were married in 1913, he was getting $95.00 a week.

ERE: That sounds like that was good money at that time.

LHM: Or was it a month - now let me think.

ERE: Because the next Depression was 1915. Ninety-five a

week. It sounds like it might have been ninety-five a month.

LHM: We paid forty-two fifty for our rent a month. It must have been ninety-five a month. I think it was. (Indistinct)

ERE; What is the history of the clock?

LHM; Well, Abe and I bought it the first year we were married and have had it ever since.

ERE: What do you remember particularly about your husband? Is there one incident that you think about?

LHM: Well, I - this is too precious to talk about, really. Just - he had a little saying up there on the wall there back of you which seems to me to express - the children picked it out.

ERE: Here - let me get it for you.

LHM: It's the second one. Um hum. That just seems to say everything. Then there is the picture of our Dave that was killed his senior year in college. He is right in our hearts. He is not gone. He's right with us. You know, in the last analysis the spiritual is the great reality. Do you believe that?

ERE: Um hum.

LHM; I do, too

"Words don't come just right some way
When I've something real to say

Words somehow don't seem a part"
You'll have to read it, darling -

"Of things that live down in the heart
Father, when I think of you
Something warm just fills me through
Something that I can't express
I thank my love, my thankfulness."

That precious? And Abe was so much fun. Maybe Mary June told you, the children in the neighborhood just loved to come down to our yard along about the time to go to bed. You could hear the mothers calling for them to come home. They'd be over in the corner of the yard listening to stories that Abe was telling them.

ERE: I understand he had a thing about giving Walnettos out to people.

LHM: About what?

ERE: Giving little chocolate or butterscotch candies.

LHM: Oh, yes. They used to go down to meet the "El" when he came home from the city. Abe always had something in his pocket for 'em. [Laughter]

ERE: What was Christmas like in your family?

LHM: What was....

ERE: Christmas.

LHM: Well, it was hustle and bustle. Somehow or other one's outstanding Christmases seem to kind of blur all the rest.

It was Christmas that we went up to Rochester when Abe died. He would have had an operation for cancer. We left just the day after Christmas, [near tears] but otherwise the happy Christmases with the stockings and all.

ERE: I understand you had a favorite story about Tiny Tim. Did you used to tell that to your children or has that become a new tradition in later years?

LHM: I guess I don't remember when we did begin telling that.

ERE: Do you want to tell it now?

LHM: Do you want to hear it?

ERE: Sure.

LHM: It was Christmas Day and the Cratchett family were going, to have a most wonderful dinner.' Perhaps some other day they had scarcely enough to eat for they were a large family, but work as hard as Father Cratchett could, there was often not enough to go around for there were Mother Cratchett, and Martha who worked in the milliner's shop, and Belinda who helped at home, and Peter and the two little Cratchetts, and last of all Tiny Tim (Indistinct) Tiny Tim who wore always a little crutch and had his limb supported by an iron frame. But although he was only a little, little boy, he was patient and mild and they loved him more than all the rest. And it was Christmas day. Mother Cratchett and Belinda laid the cloth. Peter blew the fire till the slow potatoes were bubbling up not loudly

against the saucepan lid to be let out and peeled. Martha came home from the milliner's shop and the two little Cratchetts came tearing in to say that outside of the baker's they smelled a goose cooking which they knew to be their very own. At last in came Father Bob wrapped in three feet of mufflers with his threadbare clothes brushed and darned to look seasonable and carrying Tiny Tim on his shoulders. "And how did Tiny Tim behave?" asked Mother Cratchett. "As good as gold, and better," said Father Bob, setting the child down tenderly, while the two little Cratchetts hustled him out to the wash-house that he might see the pudding singing in the copper. And he said to me as we were coming home that he hoped the people in the church had seen him because it might be pleasant to remember on Christmas who made lame beggars to walk and blind people to see. Father Bob's voice trembled as he said this and it trembled more as he said he thought Tiny Tim was growing very strong and well. Then they heard the sound of his little crutch on the floor and they put him on his chair over by the open fire while the two little Cratchetts went out to fetch the goose. Mother Cratchett made the gravy ready before in a little saucepan, sizzling hot. Peter mashed the potatoes and then sweetened the applesauce and Martha came home

with the goose, set chairs for everybody, cramming spoons in their mouths lest they should shriek for goose before it was their turn to be served. There never was such a goose. Father Bob said he didn't believe there had ever been such a goose cooked before. What with mashed potatoes and applesauce, it was a sufficient dinner for everybody. Indeed, Mother Cratchett said if she spied one small atom of a bone left on the plate, they hadn't eaten it all at last. The two little Cratchetts were steeped with onions and sage up to the eyebrows. At last the table was cleared and Mother Cratchett left the room alone to take up the pudding and bring it in. Suppose it should not be done. Suppose it should break. Suppose someone had come over the walls and stolen it while they'd been making merry with the goose. Hurrah; A great deal of steam - the pudding was out of the copper. It smelled like a washing day. [Indistinct] It smelled like the eating house next door to the pantry. That was "the pudding. At last Mother Cratchett entered bearing the pudding aloft like a speckled cannonball, so hard and firm and blazing and bedight with holly stuck in the top. Everyone had some-thing to say about the pudding, but no one thought it a small pudding for such a large family. Any Cratchett would have blushed to hint at such a thing. At last the table was cleared and a whole pile of apples and oranges

was placed on it with a shovelful of chestnuts beginning to sputter and crackle merrily. They all gathered round the fire. Father Bob took Tiny Tim beside him and held his slender little hand in his and said, "A Merry Christmas to us all, my dears." "Merry Christmas, Merry Christmas," cried all the Cratchett children. "God bless us every one," said Tiny Tim last of all.

ERE: That's beautiful. Do you tell that every Christmas?

LHM: Do we? Um hum.

ERE: I understand also in your family there was a particular story about some baked beans - baked beans and vegetable soup?

LHM: Oh, well, I don't know about the baked beans, but I know my daughter-in-law, John's wife - when the two boys both joined the marines at the time of the war and - oh, and I'll never get over feeling grateful to the marines. I'd always thought the marines were kind of half-civilized and never shaved, but, boy, they were certainly wonderful to our two boys. Bob was a freshman and John was a senior when the war broke out. They wrote home and said that they would join the marines. I mean they were at Grinnell College. They were freshman and senior and I thought, "Oh, I wonder why they want to join the marines." Well, I wrote back and said, "If you want to join the marines, you have Mother's blessing, but if you don't want to join

the marines, you have my blessing, too." And I said, "Why don't you talk to Dean Beatty - he was the Dean of Men there at Grinnell - and see what he thinks?" Well, they talked to him and he'd been very helpful and he thought that they could pass the physical and all and it was a fine organization. And you know John was a senior - this was in January and they let him finish at Grinnell and graduate in June and then he was sent to Quantico to officers camp. And Bob who was a freshman, they let him - they sent him to Oberlin in uniform for the V-12 program. And they lived in barracks and had their drills every day, but he carried on regular college work ð two years of college there at Oberlin and then he was sent to North China just in as a guard duty on the borderline there. There was fighting, but they had guard duty. That's where Bob decided that he wanted to teach history. The marine's headquarters sent these boxes of books- oh, biography, history, novels, and Bob just became so intrigued with biography that he decided that he wanted to teach history. So after the war was over he went - came back to Northwestern. Oh, he finished at Grinnell and then came to Northwestern and got his Master's and his Doctorate both in history, and now is teaching at the University of North Carolina in history. But I've

always felt so grateful to the marines for doing such a wonderful....

ERE: Um hum.

LHM: ....giving them such a wonderful chance.

ERE; Are there any other particular stories you can remember when the children were growing up? Any time you had problems at school or funny stories that you know - now look funny but at the time didn't look so amusing?

LHM: Well, I remember we had a Buick - 1921 Buick - and it was the most long lived car I ever did see. My husband died in '29, but this car was still going strong. And the boys - Dave was about sixteen and Barry Burblinger and some of the other boys - wanted to go out to the Black Hills, so I let them take the Buick and they took the top off and went down to Evanston and got some second hand tires and - oh, they were going to camp out. They took a tent along and they took some cooking utensils and they were going to earn money for the gas by selling those Teddy Roosevelt hats that were popular at the time. And they got a neighbor who was able to get them by the gross. So they would trade a hat for gasoline or sell a hat and buy gasoline. And they, the boys, there were four of them - about sixteen years old - and Johnny, who was twelve, wanted to go so badly, but I thought he was really too little, but he begged so hard and they were on

his side. They said, "Oh, yes, let him go. Mother." And what they really wanted, I'm sure, was Johnny had. ten dollars. [Laughter] So they wanted to refurbish their funds by this extra ten dollars. So they went and they had a marvelous time after - went to the Black Hills. The same man, Ben Everett, who had been on a claim when we were out on a claim - he was a judge there in Sturgis and I knew if the boys got out to the Black Hills, they would just be taken care of fine by Leia and Zack. So I let John and Bob go. When they came home, I said - Oh, I felt quite conscience stricken about it because it seemed like they were almost too young, but I said, "Did you ever just wish you hadn't gone, John?" And he said, "Well, one time we saw a rabbit and so one of the boys shot the rabbit and we were going to cook it, but they wanted me to skin it. So I did. And then we only had a little bit of water in the jug and they wouldn't let me have any water to wash my hands so I cried." [Laughter] I think that's one of the most touching stories. I can just see them out on the prairie and not letting John get - Bob have a - no, no - yes, it was John. Bob was just a little [Indistinct]

ERE: How did you get water? That's what I wanted to ask you - when the boys were out there and when you were out there?

Water and milk and food - were you responsible for getting your own or did your neighbors?

LHM: Well, I had right at the foot of my little flagstones was a natural stream - icy cold water. But I think there were men that, by some sort of magic, went around and could tell where there would be water available by digging so that there were wells.

ERE: What about the food in general?

LHM: Food in general? Well, this same Mr. Whitman made the trip out from Sturgis once a week. Had this little store [Indistinct]

ERE: And he drove the coach back and forth?

LHM: Back and forth. Um hum.

ERE: So when the boys were out there was Mr. Whitman still around?

LHM; No. That, you see -- when I was in - when I was on my claim, that was in 1910 and '11 and then we weren't married until - well, John was born in '21 so it was quite a bit later.

ERE: One other thing - as your family was growing up, your father was living with you?

LHM: Um hum.

ERE: When did your mother die?

LHM: Mama died in 1918, the year before we moved to Wilmette.

ERE: I see.

LHM: Daddy used to say - going back to the water business. I

would say - Daddy didn't very much approve of my going. He didn't say too much, but I was the baby daughter and, anyway, he - but I said, "But, Daddy, the land is so rich and then they do have plenty of rain and the crops are so bountiful and it's so lovely." And I said, "We don't have the drought very often, but when they just have plenty of water you just - the soil is very rich." "Well," he said, "That's all hell needs - just a little more water." [Laughter]

ERE: Did he ever go out west to see how you were living?

LHM: Um hum.

ERE: Did his impression change at all or did he still think....

LHM: No. He never got sold on it. He was spoiled by the good old Iowa farm land, you know, where the crops never failed.

ERE: I understand that there was a special occasion on his birthday. The [Indistinct] the Peacock Ice Cream Store.

LHM: Well, all of the world would stop going around if Daddy didn't have a celebration on his birthday. And he would invite everybody in Wilmette, really, from the garbage man to the Village president. And they practically all came. I remember that we had birthday cake and then ice cream and a path was almost made from our house to Lyman's Drug Store we went so many times to replace the ice cream [Laughter] because, well, just everybody in Wilmette knew Daddy. He was a very....

ERE: At that time, I take it, they weren't still turning it so there was enough for everybody.

LHM: That's right. [Laughter]

ERE: Um - now Abe died in 1929?

LHM: Um hum

ERE: And his death was a total shock, I guess. He hadn't been ill before. Is that right?

LHM; Not - he had not been ill. Maybe two or three months he had been having this back trouble and Dr. Weishaar had had him go to the Evanston Hospital and thought it was in the spine. Just a nerve being pressed on. So he put him in traction, but then that didn't seem to help. So they made an examination and found that there was this cancer in the duodenum, which is the opening up of the stomach to the intestines. So our own family doctor was ready to operate at the Evanston Hospital, planned to do it that coming week. when my sister-in-law, my brother's wife, whose husband was a good friend of Dr. Budneson, the Health Commissioner of Chicago, was talking with him and he said, "Well, you know, it would be politic for me to say there are no better doctors or no better hospitals than we have here in Chicago, but if it were one of my own family, I would take them up to Rochester to Mayo' Clinic because if there is something unusual that's not been delved into - if anybody would know it, they would know it there at Rochester."

So I just got ready and took my brother and his wife, Alice, and Guy came up from South Bend, Indiana, and took the children - the four children home with them and I went with Abe up to Rochester and we got in on a Thursday night and Friday Dr. Charlie Mayo examined him and planned to operate on Monday, And on Saturday morning Abe developed this old 1918 type of flu and by Sunday night he had died of pneumonia. So there was no operation, but Dr. Mayo asked is I would object to an uh.... ...

ERE: Autopsy.

LHM:...autopsy, and I said, "Not at all. I think anything that can be helpful would be all right with me." So they made this post-mortem examination and found that it was the duodenum, and that it was - that the cancer had gone into the adjoining nodes. And it just happened that Charlie Mayo was on the train coming home from Rochester when I came home and he sat down beside me and he said, "If I can be of any comfort, I would like to tell you that if I had operated, I would have just had to sew up the incision because it had gone into adjoining nodes and there was just no hope." So he has been saved weeks or maybe several months of agony.

ERE: And you went back after that and started....

LHM: Sunshine Corner. Well, I started immediately almost

within a few weeks teaching in the Wilmette Public Schools as a substitute teacher and then a neighbor, Mrs. McCabe, said, "Lenoir, why don't you start a little school of your own? I'll send you my Ruthie." And that was 1930 and I borrowed the money and went up to the National College and took the summer course in "Nursery School." Of course, you can't have four children of your own and keep your eyes open without getting something of practical value. ...

ERE: Surely.

LHM:..and after that Fall, I had a dozen - a little baker's dozen.

ERE: Um hum.

LHM: I'll show you my little - I have right here, I think, one of my little announcements. Terry Orr, who was a cartoonist for The Chicago Tribune for many years was a very dear friend of ours who lived in Wilmette and his daughter, Dorothy Jane, and our Mary June were very close friends, and so he made the little announcement for me which I used.

ERE; Oh, my goodness.

LHM: He made that little cartoon.

ERE: So you ran this from the home?

106 Sixth St., Wilmette, Illinois

LHM: This is a picture of our house. We had plenty of room for it. That was done by a man who was president of the

National Geographic and they lived just kitty corner from us and I'd never met him. They lived in Evanston. We lived in Wilmette, but I just never met him and he came over at Christmas time with this picture framed for me. So I was glad to have it.

ERE: I must say that this strikes me as being sort of the kind of thing you'd see today for an advertisement for a nursery school. I wouldn't have expected that anything so official looking thirty years ago or forty years ago, I should say.

LHM: Well, nursery schools were very rare then.

ERE: Um hum.

LHM: Hardly any.

ERE: Do you think that nursery schools are necessary for children in light of your experience?

LHM: Oh, I think that children love to be with those of the same mental age.

ERE: Um hum.

LHM; Some have to be always looking up. I think it makes all the difference in the world is the director. Boy, it's so important....

ERE: Sure.

LHM:...because those little personality patterns are formed. Those years are the - the patterns are - that's why I wanted - they said at the National, where I went for

summer's work, that they would let the girls come and [Indistinct] in that case I said I could have more and that would be more remunerative. And I said, "But I don't - I want it to be as near as possible like an old-fashioned family set-up because I think the little ones learn so much from those a little older and I think the older ones learn so much of helpfulness with those that are younger. So the old-fashioned family where it's a good sized family is the ideal in my thinking...,

ERE: Um hum.

Lenoir Hood Miller

LHM:....and so they said, "Well, let the girls come and they wouldn't need to have - and I said I didn't think too much adult help was good. I don't think a child should be asked - expected to do things that make them nervous like tying a shoe lace too soon or something like that, but I do think that it's just the old-fashioned family set-up is the way and that's why I'm going to take only twelve and have them from two to five years of age, which I did.

ERE: So you kept it to twelve or thirteen?

LHM: Um hum. A little fellow went to Florida one winter and they expected to be gone all winter, but they came back sooner. He thought he was coming right back to Sunshine Corner. Oh, I wanted him so badly, too, but I said, "You know, I have just been very firm about not

having over a dozen." And then I remembered Mother used to tell about a baker's dozen so we called Johnny our little baker's dozen.

ERE: Uh, were there any other activities outside of Sunshine Corner that you were active in - later on?

LHM: Well, I had the music department at Sunday school for 25 years. There were 40 enrolled. Usually about an average of around twenty or twenty-five each Sunday and the little helpers from the church, but we loved that. I used to take the little - always we had a pussycat named Marmalade and she had two little babies and one of our nursery school daddies sent special word that Marmalade's babies should be called Jam and Jelly. We had a sweet family - uh, cat family. And we had a dog. Napoleon, because of his boney parts. And we had a Tinkerbell, a little lamb. Not all of these at the same time, but in the course of the 25 years. And Tiddlywinks and Tiddlydee, two little fish. Pete and Re-Pete, our two little turtles. And Sarsaparilla, a little white hen who always sat on a dozen eggs and hatched out little chickies in the spring.

ERE: Did you name all these animals?

LHM: Um hum. The names popped up, you know. And, uh, oh, Mrs. Tom Duck was our great love. I wonder if I have that here. She came home from Sunday school one Sunday

and she was out in the yard - didn't come to meet me and I went and her little leg was broken. So I took her in the car out to the hospital - animal hospital and he said, "Yes, a broken leg." And I said, "Well, you can fix it, can't you?" "Well," he said, "I've five hundred dollars worth of dogs - a dog worth five hundred dollars - fixed five hundred dollar dogs, but I've never had a dollar and a half duck to fix." [Laughter] Well, I said, "She's worth a million dollars and so he put a splint on and we used to go out in the little Plymouth and take little goodies to Sarsaparilla, er..., to Mrs. Tom Duck and she got well. She limped, but - and I said, "If we can have lame ducks in Congress, we can have one here." [Laughter] This is just a little glimpse of our playing out in the yard. There was a little lady at home that wanted to write us up one time and so he did.

ERE: Have you always used your maiden name as part of your whole name?

LHM: Um hum.

ERE: That's a very popular thing for women to do now.

LHM: Is it?

ERE: Sure. Women who don't like being known as Mrs. John Smith, you know, become Lenoir Hood Smith, or whatever, and uh... .

LHM: I didn't use it until after I started Sunshine Corner.
ERE: I see. I noticed on your brochure you have Lenoir Hood Miller. Very nice. Did you have a waiting list for the nursery school?

LHM: Yes. Always. My greatest desire was to have a little colored boy or girl....

ERE: Um hum.

LHM: ....but there were very few in the area.

ERE: Do you think other people would have taken their children out?

LHM: Oh, they wouldn't have just taken their child out, my dear, uh....

ERE: Um hum. Would you say - I was going to say it seems in many ways you're very avant-garde for your time - staking claims and....

LHM: Well, it came as the most natural thing in the world. I don't remember ever having to debate about whether I wanted to do it. It just seemed to me that the time was ripe to do it and I did it.

"Do your duty
That is best
Leave unto the Lord
The rest."

That was one of my Mother's favorite sayings and it isn't very hard to know what your duty is. It's most always

pretty close at hand, such as washing the dishes, [Laughter] which I find to be....

ERE: Whose saying was that?

LHM: That was Mama's.

"Do your duty
That is best
Leave unto the Lord
The rest."

ERE: I understand that you're quite fond of little poems and - is there one in particular that is your favorite?

LHM: Is there one that's my favorite, dear? Oh, I have several I think.

ERE: Can you tell me a few of them?

LHM: There've been so many lovely things this fall that - autumn - you know that one about, um -

"A haze on the distant horizon
The infinite blue of the sky
The rich, ripe tint of the cornfields
And the wild geese sailing high
And all over upland and lowland
The glow of the goldenrod
Some of us call it Autumn
Others call it God."

You know that, don't you? And there is something that I learned and tried to teach Mary June and one of her

friends while in the car the other day. [Laughter] We got the giggles over it. It's from Aristophanesô play, way back five hundred years before Christ and he said;

From the murmur and subtlety of suspicion
With which we vex one another, give us rest,
Make a new beginning,
And mingle the kindred of nations
In the alchemy of love
And with some finer essence of forbearance
Temper our mind.

Isn't that lovely?

ERE: Um hum.

LHM: And that was written at the time of the [Indistinct] War. Athens and Sparta had been fighting for seventy-five years.

ERE: Did you do a lot of reading in history after you left college?

LHM: Well, you know, not anyway near like I'd long to because I never had a maid. I had the four children and lots of things to do, so - always thinking about....

ERE: How do you remember these quotations from Aristophanes and all the others?

LHM: I don't know, dear. [Laughter] How do you?
ERE: I don't.

LHM: Well, you would if you just put your mind to it for a minute.

ERE: I don't know. I just don't memorize things that well.

LHM: Well, someone has said, "It's easy enough to be a clever parrot, but what we need are dynamic personalities." That's what you are. [Laughter]

ERE: Now I want to ask you about another thing that you did that I consider very....

LHM: I wanted to show you. Darling - just a minute - this was in the Sun-Times. I think it was the Chicago Daily News - Chicago Daily News. This was one of my little nursery schools. Mrs. Tom Duck loved to race with us, and on the other side are some more pictures. And if she couldn't win, she was as pouty as could be. So I'm giving her a little head start there.

ERE: Is this after or before she broke her leg?

LHM: This is before she broke her leg.

ERE: Isn't that cute?

LHM: [Laughter] I picked this up, dear, at the same time and I think it's so sweet. An old friend whose husband - whose wife died and was one of my dearest friends and just the other - oh, a month or so ago he sent this. Oh, no, it wasn't a month or so ago. It was for the New Year.

"A smile costs nothing but creates much
It happens in a flash

Yet the memory of it may last forever
It cannot be bought, begged, borrowed or stolen
And it is of no earthly good
Until it is given away.
So if in your journey through life
You meet someone too weary to give you a smile
Leave one of yours
Since no one in the world needs a smile quite as much
As he who has none to give."

ERE: That's beautiful.

LHM: Isn't that sweet?

ERE: Terrific. Now you were going to tell me about why you believe in discipline, but not punishment.

LHM: They do say that discipline comes from the same root as the word disciple and a disciple is one who follows willingly and if you haven't persuaded the child willingly not to do something of his own free-will, you haven't done a thing for his character.

ERE: What happened with the two or three times that Mary June was spanked?

LHM: She was practicing and she kept playing the wrong note. Playing it repeatedly and I was at the sink doing the dishes and I would come in and I would say, "This is the wrong note you are playing. Now play this right." I'd go back and in just a few minutes she'd play it wrong again. And she did it for, oh, three or four or five or

six times and I just thought she was doing it to irritate me. I don't know what ever entered my head that would make me think that, but I did. I thought, oh, she's just playing that on purpose wrong because I had corrected her so many times. So I went in and gave her a little spanking and she said, "Now I want you to play this right and not do it wrong again." But I felt very guilty. I really did. And I don't remember what I spanked Abe for. I've just forgotten, but I know this - that I did it because I was cross or I did it because I was really tired.

ERE: That's what many of these child psychologists say, "Everything works in the morning and nothing works in the evening when you're tired."

LHM: That's right. [Laughter]

ERE: I think that's true. I want to ask you another question ~ something that I considered was very unique. I understand that you went to Alaska before it was a state and when it was still quite wild.

LHM; Um hum.

ERE: Why did you go there?

LHM: Well, this very dear friend - we'd gone all through grades, high school together - married the same year. She married a man who taught at the University of Illinois and her husband died and she was left with three little boys and the very next year my husband died and left the four children and we'd always been so close in so many ways

and one of her boys was - had pioneered in Alaska. Built a big log house and he was, oh, a wonderful boy. I hear from him now. And so he invited Margaret and me to come visit him. That's how we happened to go.

ERE: I see. How long did you spend up there?

LHM: Oh, about six weeks.

ERE: And where were you exactly?

LHM: Seldovia is a town - it's at the tip of the Kenai Peninsula - the closest Alaskan part - part of Alaska closest to the United States. It is the peninsula that comes down from the mainland.

ERE: And were you pioneering when you stayed up there?

LHM: No. We just visited.

ERE; But, I mean - were you living in his little home?

LHM: Yes. The - when I think of his house, it was about ten times bigger than mine. One whole end was a fireplace. He would bring in just really small trees to burn in the fireplace. Then there were two bedrooms and a kitchen. Oh, I loved it.

ERE: How did you get across country?

LHM: We flew from Seattle to Anchorage.

ERE; What year was this?

LHM: This was about fifty something. And then from Alaska we backtracked down the peninsula to Seldovia, an old, old - one of the oldest towns in Alaska founded by the Russians and then it had been taken over by some of the

Scandinavian people and by the Alaskans themselves and it was more a sort of a shipping point. The boats came up from Seattle with supplies for the store there at Seldovia and mail. You could mail letters there at Seldovia. Then there were little cottages all dotting the hill where the fishermen - fishing was their livelihood.

ERE: Was he fishing - you friend's son?

LHM: Um hum.

ERE: Is he still there?

LHM: Um hum.

ERE: Okay. Another thing I wanted to ask you about is Cottey College and the P.E.O. I know that it's a secret organization. You can't....

LHM: That talk's so silly.

ERE: Well, what is the - how is it tied into Cottey College first of all?

LHM: The main aim of our sisterhood is to provide funds for girls who want to go on to college. Borrow the funds and pay back so as to keep this fund ever growing and open to other girls who want to....

ERE: Is it only for Cottey College girls or is it any college in the country?

LHM: No. You could go to any college.

ERE: And why is it a secret organization?

LHM: I don't know, dear.

ERE: How did you get in to it?

LHM: How did I?

ERE: How did you become a member?

LHM: Well, it started in Iowa at a little college and there were some sororities and fraternities at this little college and these girls, I think, had not been invited to become members of the P.E.O. so they decided to start with something of their own with a very noble purpose of these funds being used for girls who were willing to borrow at - I don't think there's any interest charge at all. And then they pay back after they're out of school and in an earning capacity.

ERE: How many women belong now?

LHM: Oh, it's - well, I guess every state in the United States.

ERE: Are there thousands of members?

LHM: Yes. Um hum. An issue just came yesterday. You see The New Republic?

ERE: Um hum.

LHM: It's my political Bible and it's grown so in numbers. Walter Lippman was one of the first writers and he is just about my idol in politics.

ERE: Um hum.

LHM: And this is the P.E.O. record.

ERE; And you're not allowed to say what P.E.O. stands for, is that right?

LHM: You can say anything you want. "Poppa eats out" or what is that other one they joke about? P.E.O. "Poppa eats

out." Well, if you aren't careful, you'll get me to say it and I'm not going to, of course. [Laughter]

ERE: I wouldn't ask you to.

LHM: [Laughter] No. No. I thought maybe it gave what the aims are in this. I should - uh - the P.E.O. sisterhood is a philanthropic and educational organization interested in bringing to women increased opportunities for higher education. It was founded as a college sorority at Iowa Wesleyan College, Mount Pleasant, Iowa, in 1869 and later voted to retain its English letters and its off campus chapters thus changing from a college group to a community group. The P.E.O. sisterhood maintains four educational philosophies - the P.E.O. educational fund, a revolving loan fund established in 1907 to lend money to women needing it for education beyond high school; Cottey Junior College for Women, a fully accredited liberal arts college at Nevada, Missouri, owned and supported by the P.E.O. sisterhood since 1927; and the International Peace Scholarship Program, established in 1949, to provide scholarships for foreign students to peruse - to pursue graduate study in the United States and Canada? Program for Continuing Women in the United States and Canada for Purposeful Educational Goals for Self or Service. That's what the - it's educational mostly.

ERE; Um hum. Talking about Walter Lippman and The New Republic....

LHM: I love him.

ERE: Yes, he's wonderful. Other than Norman Thomas and Walter Lippman, who would you have liked to have seen as President of the United States?

LHM: Who would I like to see now?

ERE: Now or at any time.

LHM; Well, I haven't thought about this too much, but I have felt that we need some young thinking and vivacity. So I said I thought it would be fine if we had a triumvirate. I think it's far too much for any one man to have to take the responsibility of foreign and national and all. It's just too much for him to have to be responsible for the final yes or no. There ought to be - I think they had in Rome the triumvirate and I would like to have Charles Percy and Bill Moyer and - uh, oh - who's this one that's working on the cars so much?

ERE: Ralph Nader.

LHM; Ralph Nader. Yes. I'm almost ready to join his little organization. I got a letter the other day from him. But don't you think they are trying?

ERE: Um hum.

LHM: I do, too.

ERE: You said before that if you were ever President of the United States you would be in favor of more equal distribution of....

LHM: Good health and wealth. Absolutely.

ERE: Do you think you would have liked to have been President?

LHM: Would I have liked to have been President - myself?

ERE: Yes.

LHM; Oh, no. I never could have done it.

ERE: Too much work?

LHM; Well, I'm not smart enough.

ERE: I don't think that's true.

LHM: Would you have liked to have been President?

ERE: No.

LHM: We're just a little bit selfish, aren't we? I just don't see how anybody [Indistinct] could be.

ERE: I agree with you. Was there anything else you think you'd like to add?

LHM: My, you got all of this. [Laughter] Nobody will ever want to read it. It would take up the whole library. [Laughter] Its been fun though. I keep forgetting that this is going on tape. I've made so many mistakes and mumblings and grumblings and - it ought not be on tape.

ERE: Okay. Well, thank you very much.

[End of Interview]

[This interview transcribed by Amanda Barnett]

ERE: At Mrs. Miller's request the interviewer returned one week later on November 15, 1974 to continue a few stories which Mrs. Miller felt important enough to be included in this interview.

LHM: Did I tell you about this colored man who came to live with us?

ERE: No.

LHM: Well, when my father was--he lived with us most of our married life, mother had passed on earlier--and when he was 95, I went to a PTA meeting one afternoon, and when I came home, the water was dripping down our living room and dining room ceilings. Daddy had left the lavatory upstairs on and, the faucet in the lavatory. This was in February. We had to have the ceilings taken off. It was just the awfullest mess that you ever did see. So I just knew I musn't leave Daddy alone. I was busy with my little Sunshine Corner so I couldn't see what he was doing, and he loved to turn on the fire and heat a little glass of milk in the afternoon and things like that. So I went down to Evanston, that was a suburb right next to us,and Dr. Katherine Rye [?], who was a psychiatrist there, answered. Little Hazel came to Sunshine Corner. I said "Katherine, I just am at my wit's end. What am I going to do about Daddy? I just can't leave him alone all the time because of this accident with the water." So she said "Well," this was just the beginning of the Depression, she said "there's an awfully nice man who's here on relief in Evanston. He and his wife did couple duty at a lovely home on the North Shore. Then his wife died, and the people wanted a couple, so they just let Sam go, and he didn't have anywhere so he was on relief in Evanston. So I went over to see him. His name was Sam Hunter. Nice looking. Very well-built man. And I told him I didn't want him for me for work in the house. I wanted him as a companion for my father, that Daddy loved to go every day he was out for a walk and down to the city to the library where Marshall Field had fixed up a room for the old soldiers. And they would go every other Saturday and have a marvelous visit, swapping lies about the Civil War, you know. So, and I said I wanted somebody to help. Sam, his name was Sam Hunter. I wanted somebody to help Sam [sic] bathe and get out every day for a walk. So [indistinct] came Saturdays to go to the folks meeting down in the library building, Sam would go with him. And about the time of the anniversary of the battle of Gettysburg, Daddy received this beautiful engraved invitation from Washington,D.C. inviting him to come to Gettysburg with all expenses paid, and if you were not able to travel alone, the expenses . . . [cut off by end of track].

LHM: So Sam and Daddy got ready to go to Gettysburg. Now, they put the Blues on the one side of town and the Greys on the other side. And they lived in tents. The tents were floored and very comfortable, Daddy said. And then they let them come together every noon for dinner and to swap lies, the Blues and the Greys. The Blues... Daddy had a brand-new suit, very pretty blue with gold buttons down the front and a gold braid cord around the hat, and he and Sam made a fine-looking picture going down the walk as the went to the car to go down to the city to go on the train to Gettysburg. It . . . it was wonderful that they could have this companionship at this library building. It was the G.A.R., the Grand Army [of the] Republic was the name that was given to the hall there in the library building. Sometimes going down, Daddy would go on the elevated, Daddy and Sam. This was before we had Sam, and one of the grandchildren David went with his grandfather. And on the way. . . In the elevated trains, the seats were parallel, and Daddy and Dave were sitting on one row of seats, and then just across the aisle was another row, and there were three or four, three girls over there. And Daddy took his cane and with the crook of his cane, he reached over, and he pulled this girl's skirt down over her knees. He said "Young lady, don't you know that you should not have your skirts above your knees?" Well, you can imagine the chagrin they suffered or ought to. But Daddy was really in earnest that this hurt him terribly to see any girl with her skirts above her knees. So that night at the dinner table, Daddy was still thinking of that girl who had such poor manners, and he was telling about how he was trying to teach her to keep her skirts down over her knees, and David piped up at the end of the table. He said "Daddy Hood, I think it's all in the mind," which I thought was quite an observation for . . .

ERE: Did your father retort at all?

LHM: I don't remember that he said anything. He was quite hard of hearing. Maybe he didn't even hear it.

ERE: Let me ask you about the battle at Gettysburg. How long did he go to Gettysburg for?

LHM: They were gone about ten days.

ERE: And the United States government sponsored this?

LHM: Yes. Paid all expenses and mileage [?].

ERE: Do you know how many men were left to go on this?

LHM: No, I don't.

ERE: Did he tell you anything else about what they did for the ten days?

LHM:Well, it was mostly just "swapping lies." He used to always use that expression, they'd swap lies. He knew that many of them were telling exaggerated stories [laughs], who won what.

ERE: What was his rank in the army?

LHM: He was just a private.

ERE: And the government paid for the new uniforms?

LHM: Yes. And then they. . . Sam was very handsome, had a very fine figure, and I can just see them going down the brick walk.

ERE: Sam had a uniform also?

LHM: Hmmm?

ERE: Did Sam wear a uniform?

LHM: No, he just wore his own suit.

ERE: What . . . um . . . What can you tell me about Sam? Where did he come from?

LHM: Well, he came from Kansas. And his wife, they did couple duty, and then his wife died. At one time, Ellen, he was on the police force in Topeka, Kansas. He was very well informed and very likeable.

ERE: Wasn't that pretty amazing for a Black person to be on the police force at that time?

LHM: I think it was very unusual. Mmm hmm.

ERE: Had he gone to Kansas on the Underground Railroad?

LHM: I don't know. I wish I had asked more about Sam's past. I just know that he and his wife came north. Whether they were offered positions by this couple on the North Shore where they worked for quite a few years until his wife died.

ERE: How many years was he with Daddy Hood?

[end of track; response cut off]

[New track]
ERE: And where did he go afterward?

LHM: He went back to a sister who had been writing for him. Well, after Daddy had died, he stayed on with, at our house. He had a room, and he had his own radio. And he helped in the house for me. And also he was janitor at the church. So he . . . And then he began to get sort of frail. He took Geritol. Oh, but how he swore by Geritol. [Laughs].

ERE: What happened when he became frail?

LHM: Oh, his sister kept writing: "We've got a room for you, Sam. Come home now". So, he finally went back to Kansas. And he began getting sort of senile. Forgetful and things. Finally, it got to the extent that they had to put him in a home. So I read [?], his sister wrote me after he died, after he had died.

ERE: What year was that? Do you remember?

LHM: Oh, there were so many things. Daddy died in '39. Our David was killed in '39, our oldest boy was killed in an auto accident his senior year in college. Mary June was married in '39, and John started college as well in '39. So there were four that left our table in one just one fell swoop.

ERE: Mmm.

LHM: Their father had been gone for ten years. He died in '29.

ERE: Is there any other. . . uh, well, anything that you can think about?

[New track]
LHM: Well, I was thinking, Ellen, why I have such a fondness for ice cream. [Indistinct] I could practically sell my soul for ice cream. But it's because when I was a little girl we never had any ice cream except once a year, the church would have an ice cream social. And the menfolk at the church would go up to the next town, Carroll, which was the county seat, and buy ice and borrow their ice cream freezer. Now, in Carroll, the men would go down to the cooler at the time [?] and cut ice. And they had sawdust. It was the county seat. Glidden was only 800 people, and Carroll was a good-size town. Not in the thousands, but they lorded over Glidden in the ball teams . . . ballgames. And often times Glidden would win in the ball games, even though they were a much smaller town. But anyway, the menfolk would go up and buy some ice and borrow the ice cream freezer for this ice cream social that was in the church lawn, on the church lawn. And I remember going around with mother in a horse and buggy--the horse's name was Nell--we'd go around to the farmers' wives and get cream and eggs for the ice cream. And then we little girls were asked to wait on the tables. We were about twelve years old, fourteen. And here we were drooling for this ice cream we were going to have. And lo and behold, next thing you know, the ice cream was all gone. It had been saved for the grownups, and they told us to wait on the tables. And just longing for our little dish of ice cream and didn't get any at all. [Laughs] I've never quite forgiven that Women's Nursing Aid Society for . . . [laughs].

ERE: And that was only once a year that you had ice cream.

LHM: Yes. That was all.

ERE: How long did it take to make the ice cream? Do you remember?

LHM: Oh, just about the same time it does today. My John out in Wilmette--family lives there, he and his wife--they make ice cream every Fourth of July, just for the family. You know, you have to pound ice, cracked ice and salt. Some, they churn electrically, but John just churns by his strong right arm.

ERE: [Laughs]. One other thing you mentioned was that Daddy Hood had a thing about baking soda.

LHM: Oh, yes.

ERE: [Indistinct].

LHM: One night, I was baking my [indistinct] I was taking out the [indistinct] and it was Sam and Daddy in the bathroom, and Sam was saying: "Now, Mr. Hood, I've given you sodas three times tonight, and I'm not going to give you any more sodas. And I heard Daddy say, "Sam, are you taking care of me or am I taking care of you? When I ask for soda, I don't want sermons."

ERE: [Laughs]. What did they take it for?

LHM: Oh, sweeten the stomach, you know. He never took any medicine at all. Never. He would just be aghast at the pills that are taken today, he really would. I just think it's . . . Well, I got [indistinct].

[New track]

LHM: We'd been at a meeting, a geriatric meeting, and said, after the lecture there was a question period, [clock begins to chime] and one man got up and said "I'm 91 years old. I've been very discrete all my life, I never smoked, I never drank," and, he said, "I'm perfectly well." And sat down. Another man got up and said "I'm 92. I smoked all my life. I've drunk ever since I can remember. I've been very indiscrete, and I'm perfectly well." And sat down. Then another little old man got up in the rear of the building and said: "I'm 93, and I'm perfectly well, and I think it depends on who you had for your grandparents."

ERE: [Laughs].

LHM: And I wondered how in the world Daddy ever survived the rigors of the Civil War. He came out of the war weighing 98 pounds.

ERE: Hmm.

LHM: [Indisinct]. I guess I told you about his [indistinct]? a little bit? Did I? He had saved, they would have paid him almost nothing. He enlisted in the 51st Indiana Volunteers from Greencastle, Indiana. He enlisted for two years, and the war wasn't over. And he re-enlisted for two more years until the war was over, and he had saved enough to buy a spankin' horse and buggy. He came back to Greencastle, and he courted Mother, and they were married. And he traded that horse and buggy for 80 acres of land in Iowa, and he and mother pioneered in Iowa after the Civil War. That's where they had their first five children: Carrie and Charlie and Stella and Walter and Lulu. Born out there on the Iowa prairie, no doctors, no. . . there was no town until a little later Glidden was founded.

ERE: Was there a midwife? Or did your father deliver the children?

LHM: I don't know. Mama never . . . Our neighbors, I think. There were neighbors, there were other pioneers. However, of these children, all five babies died either of Diptheria or Scarlet Fever. And no doctors. The neighbors were afraid to come in. Daddy made little coffins, just out of the wood they built the house.

ERE: Uh-huh.

LHM: After the town of Glidden was founded, they picked up the little coffins and put them in the family plot. But Carrie and Charlie, Stella and Walter and Lulu, I never did see. The first five children. Then there were four more. And I was the last one. And they're all gone now except for myself.

[New track]
ERE: Is there anything else you want to add?

LHM: I guess that's all, Ellen. Though there're those trivial things that come back so clear to you. There was a little girl with whom I'd played. Lisa McNaught [?] lived right across the street from us, and we just played together all the time. We didn't stay on the ground, hardly. The tree where we had our playhouse, the bark was just stripped we went up and down it so much. We had a playhouse up in the tree. We used to take leaves and thickets from the evergreen trees and put flowers on the . . .

[Disturbance of some sort. Perhaps something in the room was knocked over. A bit of indistinct dialogue is exchanged about this].

Lisa and I used to. . . She had an older sister Pearly, Pearly McNaught. And Pearly went with Guy Poole, a boy that lived there in Glidden. They were over fifty years old, both of them, before they got married. Because Guy's mother didn't want them to marry. She was a widow herself, and she didn't want to give up her son. So they went together, Guy and Pearly, for all these years and years and years. Finally, they did get married to each other when they were over fifty years old. But Guy, in just a year or two, passed on.

ERE: Mmm.

LHM: But she used to get dolls for her little sister, Lisa. And Mama used to get dolls for me. And we had . . . And do you know, not too long ago, I had a letter from her. She lives in Boulder, Colorado now. And she enclosed a picture of herself and her husband, and they had just come home from Hawaii, having celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary. And I hadn't seen her in all these many years.

ERE: If she didn't get married until after she was fifty, how did she . . .?

LHM: No, that's Pearly. Her older sister is the one who got married after she was fifty . Uh huh. [Laughs].

ERE: Oh, I see. Uh huh. Okay. [Laughs]. Being 110 would be pretty terrific.

LHM: Speaking of. . . Let's see. What did I do with that?

[New track]

LHM: This is a picture that my cousin who lives in Lexington, Massachusettes sent me. This is in her last few days [?]. [Pause]. [Indistinct]. [Pause]. That is my cousin.

[Track ends. Problem with track].

[New track]

LHM: . . . was a minuteman. He's my father's nephew. He's my cousin. His father and my father were brothers. And, Ellen, the strangest thing, Martin [?] says in his letter: "Incidentally, something funny happened. A friend of mine who did portraits of Eleanor"--that's his sister--"and me was visiting a picture gallery and saw my picture for sale at $350 and titled 'Revolutionary Soldier.'" Now, he wasn't a Revolutionary soldier at all, but that's what the picture was entitled. [Returning to letter]: "She said to the manager: 'I know him, he's one of my neighbors.' The manager gave her a naughty look and said 'This picture is very old, and you are not twenty-five years old.' It was a picture I had posed for at an art class, but it had been doctored up to look like a genuine antique."

ERE: [Laughs].

LHM: Honestly. [Returning to letter]: "I suppose some sucker will buy it, and I will become one of his ancestors. Ha ha." [Laughs].

ERE: That's terrific. Very cute.

LHM: Isn't it? What people won't do to become famous. [Laughs]. I think, Ellen, I've told you a great deal, and I imagine you'd just like to delete a great deal of it. Oh, I guess I told you why Daddy was so comfortable with Sam. They just hit it off beautifully. Because, I think, when Daddy was a little fellow, Baby [indistinct] his grandma, his mother, had a another baby in about another year. And so, Daddy was just turned over to Aunt Fanny, the colored nurse. And she had a little pickaninny of her own, [indistinct], and I heard my my father say many times how Aunt Fanny brought him and another little nigger up. So he had lived, you see, in North Carolina until he was about ten years old, before he moved to Greencastle. And so that may be why he and Sam seemed to be so comfortable together.

ERE: Mmm hmm.

[New track: blank]

[New track]
ERE: Anything else?

LHM: No, I guess not, dear. That's a lot of things. But nothing . . . special [?].

ERE: Thank you.