

Sydney Weedon Templeton

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The pages that follow constitute the transcript of an interview conducted as part of the Wilmette Public Library Districts 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: Sydney Weedon Templeton

Interviewer: Rhea Adler

Date of interview: June, 1976

Locale of childhood from 1895 presently lives in  
Scarsdale, NY

Family lived in Wilmette Father commuted to Chicago from Liewelyn Park Station

House built for Weedon family by a local carpenter · surrounded by fields ·  
unpaved streets

First motor cars on Hill St. (now Maple)

Wild flowers bloomed profusely then

Cows · abattoir on Isabella ;Horse· drawn carts and carriages

Grocery orders taken in person - delivered later the same day

Laundry man injured by a %un· away+horse

Mother Weedon\$ school --Public school routes traveled · all wooded ·

wooden sidewalks · spring wild flowers grew under them · · 13° weather but  
walked

High School at New Trier - rode trolley or bicycled

Typhoid fever · dress alterations

Anniversary · gardening · chickens · ducks · rabbits · root cellar · baking

Swimming in Lake Michigan

Reading Elbert Hubbard - bookbinding

Oil lamps - gas lights - mantles · electricity

Art · Hull House - Jane Addams --%The Cow+· framing · Van Gogh

Nova Scotia · Ginger Hill

Amy and husband · botanists; Dorothy and husband - trip to visit sisters

Winifred Weedon - Vivian Weedon

Carleton Washburne · Winnetka system - book publishing

Victoria\$ jubilee · Father\$ trip to England - his mother grew up at Court - Hardy  
family

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ST: Templeton-and the Sydney is spelled SYD.

RA: And where did you live in Wilmette?

ST: We lived on the corner of 5th and Gregory, with the house facing 5th street.

RA: And when did you come to Wilmette?

ST: We came in August of

RA: And you were how old?

ST: Ten months0

RA: Do you wish to go on from there? And where are you now living?

ST: In Scarsdale, New York.

RA: Do you wish to go on from there and tell us about your coming to Wilmette and why you came?

ST: Well, my father and mother were living in Chicago on the north side where I was born and which became Lincoln Park a little later on. So I was born in the zoo. It wasn't Lincoln Park at the time. And it wasn't a very good part of Chicago to live in, and they had me and my elder sister, and my father wanted to get out, where he could have a garden and things like that, which he did, later on. A very big garden.

RA: This is very interesting. Did your father work in Illinois- in Wilmette?

ST: No, he worked at the Peoples Gas Company, which is directly opposite and always was the Museum

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of Art.

RA: On Michigan Avenue?

ST: On Michigan Avenue. Worked there all his life.

RA: For heaven's sake! And how many were in your family?

ST: There were 7 of us. My elder sister, who was my father's child, myself, Winifred, Hardy, Dorothy, Vivian, and Georgiana, who was born when I was 7 years old, and had left high school.

RA: Then I assume you went to New Trier?

ST: I certainly did.

RA: In what year?

ST: 1907 to 1910.

RA: So New Trier had been started 6 years before, I believe, was their first graduating class.

ST: Might be. I wouldn't know.

HA: Ella Butz was in that class and gave her class pin to the historical society.

ST: Oh, how nice.

RA: And this is- -I believe--Well, we will let you go on with your anecdotes, because you have so many and they are so good.

ST: Well, our house was built by a little carpenter who lived across the street and built the house he was living in. Later, when we got to be a big family my father added on to it at the back,

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ST: a great big playroom for the children, big kitchen for mother, the kitchen becoming the dining room and so forth. At the time that I remember, the streets were unpaved. And later on they were paved with brick. But the very first motor cars that used to come down Hill Street and turn up 5th, tore great holes in the gravel, and the dust on Sundays was simply terrible. I am sure they weren't going more than 25 miles an hour but we thought they were going 100! The house was completely surrounded by fields, in which we were allowed to wander as far as Isabella Street, which was then Evanston, and as far as the railroad at the back, which is now the elevated line tracks, came out to a place called Llewelyn Park. Three trains in the morning, and three at night. And that is one of the most precious memories, because we learned to know all the wildflowers. The most beautiful things grew there, gentians, and things that now the florists sell. But to us they were wildflowers. And we picked hazelnuts, and Mother of course, would tell us everything, All about these different flowers and plants and things, and I am sure that it was there that I learned to love the crows, which I still love, incidentally, because they were part of the picture of the fields. There had actually been an abattoir, down there at Isabella, there was a great trench, and the

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ST: carcasses had been thrown into the trench, and it was a fascinating spot because there were all kinds of varmints. Well, there were all kinds of skulls, of animals, bones and things like that. It seems incredible when you think of it.

RA: Was it where the butchers took their excess?

ST: As I understand it, they did, you know, the butchering right there. There wasn't a

RA: Oh, right there at the abattoir.

ST: That's what I always understood. But that was gone, by the time we children were there. Just the remains,. And so all I - the early days I remember, that everything was horse drawn, And I remember that there was a man came on a pony from the grocery store over at Central Street, Evanston and he would tie his pony up. I can see him doing it now, come in with his pad, and Mother would give him the order. Later in the day, he would come with the cart and deliver. I am sure this was not a daily service. But that was how we did our shopping. All the other services were horse drawn, and I can see the men throwing out those great heavy things that they used to have to keep the horses from getting restless while they were doing their business. And one time, our laundry man was just getting ready, and his horse took fright and ran away, and he turned over the cart, and hurt him very badly.

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ST: and somehow Mother got him into the house and laid him out on the ironing board and dressed all his wounds, and picked out the gravel and everything.

Those are memories that are clear. My first really clear memory is the birth of my brother. I was three years old, we had had a rather exciting day. My aunt had come on from Ohio, and I can remember very well being taken up into the bedroom to see my Mother holding in her arms her little new son. And so that is my earliest actual memory.

RA: And it would have been a vivid one, since your brother was the only son in the family. And it probably-

ST : Right, but we didn't know that then. Now, my Mother ran a little school. And she ran this till Vivian was born in nineteen hundred and three. The little people in the neighborhood attended the school. And it was like a one room school house because she could teach everything from Kindergarten on up. And I think she gave us a tremendously good background, a more rounded background than we ever could have gotten in grade school. But when this baby was born, he was the last baby for eight years. Amy and I were sent to school. And we were put in the 5th grade. And of course this was a very exciting experience.

RA: This was the old--the first school on Central.



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ST: Is it Street or Avenue? Street. And Amy and I would walk to school and whether we went down Linden or Laurel over to 6th, I can't be sure, we would take different routes, but it was all wooded. There were no houses at all. The sidewalk we walked on was planks, and they were up in the air, because down below there was - - sort of ditches. And I always remember the beautiful things that grew down under the walks. Violets, oh, just quantities of violets in the spring. And we would walk to school. Now actually, I walked up to that school when it was 13 below zero. We hadn't been very long in the 5th grade before we were promoted. a half year, because it was obvious that our knowledge was beyond the 5th graders. So we graduated in February, from grammar school and were sent up to the high school, which we did in three and a half years. Which is why I graduated just after my 15th--my 16th birthday. I was 15 in February - - . When we came to go to high school, there was a little trolley car that went down Greenleaf Avenue, and we used to take that sometimes, sometimes we walked it--it was three miles.

RA: And that later became the North Shore Railroad.

ST: That's right. That's right. And we also used to use our bicycles. Now unfortunately, in those days girls didn't wear bloomers. That is, the bloomers they wore weren't supposed to be seen. But I can remember riding

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ST: along the lake shore, clutching school books in one hand, and lunch in the other, and with my skirts blown up around my ears. So much so that I came to hate bike riding. And later in life, when our girls went to Bermuda, they were thrilled because that was the only way to get around, I didn't want to bike at all. But that is just an early memory. Then, another of my early memories was the year Winifred had typhoid fever. It was in January - - bitterly cold - - Mother came and waked me very early in the morning, and told me to go for the doctor. Still no telephones, you see. She thought Winnie was dying. So I walked all the way up--almost to the Wilmette station, the doctor lived on Greenleaf Avenue.

RA: Do you know his name?

ST: I can't. I try to remember. I should, of course, because he delivered all of us.

RA: Was it one of the Stolp family?

ST: No, he was a little bitty, kind man. Actually, he delivered both my children. So, anyway, I walked up there, and I sat in the cold drafty hall waiting for him to get ready. He hitched the horse to a sleigh, and we drove back to the house. And whether he saved Winnie's life, or whether God saved it, I don't know, but she did not die. And that is another very, very clear memory, - -

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ST: Now, once in grammar school - it was Lincoln's birthday, which is incidentally, mine too. And all of a sudden in the morning word went around that they were to have a program in the afternoon and every class was to contribute something. So, our teacher picked me out to deliver the Gettysburg speech. I think the reason she picked me out was I had a phenomenal memory, and I was probably the only one that she could trust, because I wasn't supposed to read it. Well, I can remember that very distinctly. I went home to lunch. Mother stood me up on a stool, because I had nothing to wear, but there was a white dress that had belonged to Amy the previous summer, and of course it was too long for me, but she stood me up on the stool, and ran around with pins in her mouth, you know, shortening it, while I declaimed the Gettysburg speech!

RA: Delightful!

ST: Which I later delivered. I don't actually remember you know, the program itself, but I do know, I went through it without a break. But I can surely remember my Mother shortening that dress. Well I - - . So that was one of the things that happened. Well, let's see now Mother's and Daddy's wedding anniversary is the 10th of June, and it came on the 7th year, which would have been, let me see, could have been 1900. And Amy and I decided that we would do something very special. For

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ST: Mama's wedding anniversary. And, so, I can remember, I was in my little nightgown, and I suppose she was too, and we went down and we went outside, where we had those lovely wild rose bushes that smelled so terribly sweet, and had a single rose. - just beautiful. And we picked seven of them and we brought them in and we set them up in front of the clock on the mantel. All of a sudden I think it was Amy had a horrible thought. She said, "Sydney, this is Father's wedding anniversary, too!" So we didn't know what to do. And at last we decided that we would go back to the garden and pick seven radishes, nice, beautiful, red radishes. And that was Father's gift.

Now Father had a beautiful garden. He grew everything. I was--I can remember being paid 5 a pail for picking potato bugs off the potatoes. We grew corn, beans, squash, lettuce, everything you could think of.

RA: How big were the pails that you picked?

ST: They were quite large! 5 was a lot of money. We had ducks, we had chickens, we had rabbits, so we had our own eggs, and our own chickens, and we had a root cellar. And we had the kind of cabbages we could keep, and turnips, things like that. Mother bought flour by the barrel. We did all our own baking. She - we bought apples, by the barrel, and there was a kind of unpaved part of our cellar, and that's where we would keep these.

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RA: A root cellar?

ST: Yes, a real root cellar. But outside of that, in the winter time, I guess we lived on cans, as far as I know.

RA: Do you remember a Zimmerman family when you were growing up? 1

ST: Now that is a familiar name, but I don't know just where to place them.

RA: Well, the ducks remind me of an account Mr. Zimmerman had as he was growing up across the street from you, and his quarrel with the ducks, that someone else owned in his - because he kept something else, and he didn't like the ducks. And I just wondered if you might have remembered him. He's not, I believe - he's a bit younger.

ST: Well, actually, we didn't have ducks very long. The ducks eggs used to be promised to the children in turn. They were a beautiful pale green, and actually they have a very strong flavor. I don't know why we thought they were something, but we did. But an animal came in one night and Father went down in the morning, and all his ducks were dead, and had their throats torn open.

RA: So what we still have in the area, and that is an. opossum.

ST: Well, -

RA: And we have drakes from the canal that come in and - watch over the hens who make their nests in our compound, as it were.

ST: Oh, is that so. Well, we didn't really have the ducks too

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ST: long. Because my father felt so badly that he never put them in again. But, as I did say, we did grow everything. We had the most marvelous vegetables all summer. My sister Dorothy, once planted a peach stone and eventually we even had peaches, believe it or not. We also had the little red cherries, and we made cherry jam and cherry pies.

BA: Did you can them during that period of time?

ST: Oh, I think we generally made cherry jam. But we did used to can tomatoes, and something called swiss chard.

BA: Oh yes, this is like, like a spinach.

ST: Yes. Let me see now. Did I tell you--

BA: May I ask you-- you mentioned Gregory and 5th. What other street was nearby?

ST: Yes, well, there was Hill Street, named for old Mr. Hill, who lived on it, and who planted all the maples that afterwards gave it its name. He was still living, I am sure, in my early memories, but eventually, what I remember is his two daughters, maiden ladies, who grew to be very old and rather peculiar. I do remember them quite well. I can even almost see their faces.

BA: And where did they live?

ST: They lived on Hill Street, just beyond 5th.

RA: West?

ST: Going toward 6th Street. On the· · on which side of the

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ST: street? . .

RA: It would be on the south side?

ST: Yes, it was on the south side. Yes, yes, it was on the south side. And of course we used to go down to the lake for our swimming in the summertime. It was a very, very, lovely treat. And it is funny thing about Lake Michigan, sometimes we would have beaches that would go out and out and out, and other years the waves would come up almost to the cliffs. There were always high cliffs there and we would have to go down the stairs. And at times it was really almost dangerous, because it just came in . .

RA: And it's rather interesting, that Wilmette has each township is square, as a rule. But New Trier township, or the village of Wilmette, is one acre short, I have learned, of the rest of the state. . . from the rest of the state, because the water has washed one acre out into the lake.

**ST:** I believe it! I believe it! Well there was a place between what we called the end of Wilmette and the beginning of Kenilworth, which we called No Man's Land. And there were no houses there, nothing, it was just a stretch of road that connected the two towns, and of course I rode that many, many times on my way to high school.

RA: Was there not even a house?

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ST: No, there was nothing, a wilderness.

RA: And it belonged to no one.

ST: Apparently. I don't know now, whether it belongs to Wilmette or Kenilworth.

RA: It is Wilmette, now. It has been annexed. A number of-- oh, back in the late 40's or early 50's, I believe. It was taken into Wilmette. And has a very elegant shopping center.

ST: Oh, Don't I know. I've been back there in late years. In fact, Edna's sister had a beautiful apartment facing the lake in one of those big buildings that was put there. She doesn't live there now, but she did. She lived there at the time mother died.

RA: Oh, yes.

ST: But, when we were children, and Mother would put us to bed quite early, and read, to us. And she would read things like "The Back of the North Wind", and "Hans Christian Andersen", and then when Daddy came home, she went down stairs. And then they had their reading time and then we were not supposed to make any noise after that. And they had a great many hobbies. One of them was bookbinding.

RA: Really!

ST: Yes, and they were very much taken with Elbert Hubbard. And Elbert Hubbard was getting out a magazine at that time. And they bound, all his published works. He



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ST: later had a scrap book, I believe, that was sold in book form, which I acquired.

RA: Did you?

ST: Well, as I say, of course my father was a book worm. He thought - - . He would visit all the second hand book stores, and he would just come home loaded with books, some of which, I presume, came to be quite valuable. But when we girls closed the house, and moved away, we had to dispose of most of the library because a central room was bookcases to the ceiling, on every wall.

HA: Oh, yes.

ST: And I remember my Father used to sit on a three- cornered chair, and he was a pipe smoker, and the pipes were all on a little rack, and he had a student lamp with a green shade, And I remember my Mother filling the oil lamps every day, and cleaning them.

RA: That used to be my job, as a child.

ST: Oh, did it really? Well, I remember when Father brought home the first gas mantels. Well, first of all, we just had things that stuck out of the wall, which lit with a flame. Then they invented this gas mantel.

HA: Little white balls?

ST: Yes, little white things, and I remember distinctly installing it - - . And burning it off, then it burned up and made a funny smell. And then, of course, we had those. I don't know how much light they gave.

RA: They gave more than the other. And I understand they

RA: were manufactured in Chicago, and when they quit, they had many on hand. A friend of mine in St. Charles, husband, who was connected with the firm. And they are buried out in Lake Michigan, because for a very definite reason, but they took them way out into the lake because they were not to be lying around, after, and they couldn't dispose of them in any other way. But then, did you have later, electricity, and gas?

ST: Oh, later, yes. No we didn't have a phone for a long while, and my father hated it. Actually, he did, and I can't tell you just when electricity went into the house. But I think it must have been quite later on. Probably about the time I was in high school. Although that, I cannot remember dates on, because I just can't remember.

I was an avid reader from the time I was 6 years old. Oh, I was reading %Arabian Nights+, and %Murders in the Rue Morgue+. And things like that when I wasn't more than 6 or 7. And I wonder I didn't actually ruin my eyes because I used to read in dark corners and things like that, and Father had these special reading lamps!

RA: I wanted to ask you, if your mother had been a teacher prior to her marriage?

ST: Yes. She had. My Mother really was an artist and she had studied art in New York, actually, and she had taught art, and Vivian seems to think that she had never taught anyone art, but I had the distinct impression

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ST: that she taught what would have amounted to kindergarten. So, I don't know which one of us is right. Of course, I go way back farther than Vivian, but still, she could be more accurate. Mother, in my memory, what I was told, taught at Hull House. Vivian questions that and says maybe she did have art classes.

RA: There were many North Shore people who involved themselves with Hull House.

ST: I am sure that Mother was attached to Hull House and Vivian just didn't know about it that's all, because my memories of things that I didn't actually know what I was told.

BA: Well, the heyday of Jane Addams was about the time you left the area, really.

ST: I suppose maybe that was so.

BA: About the 20's, I think, was when she -- really. And then the peace movement that she went into after the war was over.

ST: Well, I'll show you a picture -- it's in my dining room, of 'The Cow' -- it's beautiful. I've loved it. I can remember back from my earliest days, it used to hang in the dining room, and, I don't know that anybody ever paid any attention to 'The Cow', except me, but I adored it. Then the one time they did some decorating, and 'The Cow' got pushed out on the sun porch, and was in a very miserable position, and nobody ever looked at it.

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ST: Oh, oh, she was terribly busy.

RA: Teaching her children---

ST: Well, she taught her children, she was sent for every time anybody in the neighborhood was ill, it was Mother that went over and took care of them, she, at one time, the only painting she did, one of her nephews, went to work for a cemetery group, and he was trying to sell a gravestone, and he wanted a picture to show, and I remember Mother working on the porch on this big piece of paper, and putting lilies on it. I think the gravestone was supposed to be engraved with lilies. And us children rushing out there and bothering her, and she became so darned mad and slammed the door and told us not to bother her. But that is the only piece of painting I actually remember her doing. Because, as I say, she just - she simply didn't have the time for it.

RA: Umhum.

ST: And it's too bad, because I think she really was quite a good artist. When I took this cow up to these boys, they asked me "For heaven's sake, why did your mother choose to paint a cow?" And I said, "I think it was because it was the only thing that she could get to sit for her!" She was actually about 17 or 18 when she did "The Cow", it was back home in Ohio, you see.

RA: Oh, yes.

ST: So, I think that probably was right.

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RA And it would be in the latter part of the 19th century?

ST: Yes, yes.

RA: And we were still an agrarian economy?

ST: Oh, yes. That would be in the 1880s because it was before she came to Chicago, you see.

RA: Yes.

ST: I - as you see, I have a fancy for Van Gogh.

RA: Indeed.

ST: And I bought a beautiful one not too long ago that I had never seen before, and that also is in the dining room. And do you know that I paid \$103 to frame it? Framing is terribly expensive!

RA: Yes, it is most expensive. I know, because I decorated the North Shore Mental Health Association offices, and we had some paintings given to us by a New York artist, and I had to see that they were appropriately framed, and I had an artist friend from Highland Park working with me in the hanging of them, and she - I had taken them to a refugee friend I knew on Linden Avenue, and told her the total bill, and I thought it was high. And she said, "My dear, I couldn't, with all my professional work, have gotten them framed for the price that you did."

So, I felt good about that. But I know how very expensive - I

Evanston now has places, where you can go in and they

help you to select - and to do your own cutting, and with their equipment, and everything, and do your own

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RA: matting, and framing, which for young marrieds is most important. So many of them are acquiring art things, and can't afford those exorbitant prices.

ST: Yes., Well, of course, over where I lived before, it was a very big living room, 24 feet square, and lots of wall space, and I had all Van Goghs. The %Goldenrods+behind you.

RA: Oh, yes!

ST: Oh· -Goldenrods· · I mean %Sunflowers+! And then I have one in the hall that he did when he was in the south · · and a beautiful one, %Pines+. I couldn't bear to part with any of those when I came here. And this other one I am very fond of, too.

RA: This one I have been admiring. This is·

ST : Well, that one is· · or was owned by the Museum of Modern Art. I have seen the original there.

RA: Oh, yes.

ST: But I'm particularly fond of that one.

RA: I have seen that, and I do admire it. This also----is not a Van Gogh, but is an original, and it's a lovely seascape.

ST: That's a very interesting picture, that has nothing to do with the past. We used to go up to Nova Scotia, in fact, we owned 1800 feet of beach on the Atlantic and 40 acres. It is· · that little hill there, that protrusion. It is called Ginger Hill, or Ginger Hale. The old captain we were never quite sure of what he was saying, it was

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ST: very famous. It appeared in all the brochures for Nova Scotia, I used to go and sit on it. One fall- -well, one summer, we went up there and we took Dorothy, who had just lost her little boy. Had an operation, so couldn't have any more children- - she was only 26. And my husband insisted on her going along, with her little girl- -the children played together, and she and I lay on the hill. I wasn't well, and when we came home I said to my husband, "When I die, take my ashes and blow them off of Ginger Hill." And the next thing I knew he had bought Ginger Hill, and the beach and the 40 acres that went with it!

RA: Well, for goodness sakes!

ST: Well, because the only way he could get it was to buy the whole thing. And then, of course, we went for years and years and years. We went there, to Nova Scotia. And then some of the people that we knew very well, someone from one of the local families, took up painting, and he painted that, and signed it. His name is Lang, and brought it down here on his way to Florida. And that was after my husband died.

RA: Oh, how wonderful that you have it!

ST: So that was our place, at Ginger Hill. And as I say, it is so famous that it is on the back of their 50 dollar bill.

BA: Oh, really. Well, for goodness sake.

ST: And we tried to give it to the province, and they said

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ST: 40 acres was too small. And they turned it down, which I think was very stupid, I think somebody certainly must have--because with Ginger Hill there and all. They were making so much this fuss about Ginger Hill, and there they could have had it. So we were told that it would be a great complication with realtors that we had. The taxes were \$6 a year, and we supported the one-room school house that sits on the property. Anyway, eventually we gave it to the granddaughter of the original owner of all that property for a dollar received, because we knew that she would take care of it. At one time they had wanted to use the gravel, and they brought in diggers and they wanted to make a mole, and she had sent for the mounties, and kept them from doing it. And you know this absentee landlordism is terrible!

RA: It's impossible.

ST: So we felt that she deserved it, so she has it.

RA: And you never go up there anymore, then.

ST: I've been---let's see--when was the last time?--Oh--I

--yes, my sister, after my husband died, came from California and said why don't we go up to Nova Scotia, So I supposed we could. We took the ferry from Portland over to Yarmouth. So that was the last time I was there. That was about 6 years ago.

RA: Oh, yes. You have many happy memories.

ST: Yes. Well, that's a very personal family picture. I



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ST: don't think It's a good one, really. I think his water is too white

RA; Well, the angle at which I am viewing it, it is very pleasing to the eye. And very soothing. And yet you know that part of Nova Scotia coast is anything but soothing. It can be quite--

ST: Oh, terribly rough! That was the beautiful part of sitting on the hill. In a storm- the water would just come WHEEE! But as I say, I think the waves needed a little shading. That's the way I feel, actually, I know nothing about art.

RA; I'm only attracted to art. I am not a connoisseur, either. But I did recognize Van Gogh, one of my favorites, too. And so this is very interesting. Tell me, you mentioned your time in the grade school in Wilmette. Was it the original school building at that time? Was it a one-room school? Can you describe the building?

ST: Well, I was just thinking, it wasn't the one-room. There was the one-room before. That was before my time. No, it had an upstairs and a downstairs. And the janitor came out and rang the bell in the school yard, and we filed in and the 5<sup>th</sup> grade was upstairs and 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup>, we went round the corridors.

RA: Yes.

ST: And the smaller grades must have been downstairs. I'm sure they were, but I never was down there.

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RA: Did you have big cloak rooms outside each room?

ST: Umhum. . . there were cloak *rooms*. I don't suppose they were tremendous, but they were cloak rooms..

RA: They were spacious for. . . but there was one for each room, or was there one single?

ST: No, each one had its own with a corridor off the classroom.

BA: And can you remember any of the teachers?

ST: I should remember our 5th grade teacher, because she was very. . . oh, she was lovely and she was so good to everyone. We were green!

I remember nobody ever found out how terribly nearsighted I was. And my mother talked me into going to the grade school that day. I usually sat in the back row, and of course I couldn't even see the board from the front row, and I burst into tears. So then Mother had my eyes looked at, and found out that I was terribly nearsighted. But she was an awfully sweet woman. I think I could probably get her name from Amy. Amy's better at remembering these things than I am.

RA: No, I just thought maybe sometimes-

ST : And she was particularly sweet to Amy, to whom learning came harder than it did to me, as I said I had this terrific memory which was so . . . .

BA: May I ask, what did you have - - -

ST: Well you know, it just rolled out..

BA: Well, you still have that memory.

ST: Well, I do. I don't think that I could memorize things

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ST: the way I used to, but you know I used to be able to memorize anything at all. Oh, a lot of poetry, family favorites and all. Amy, however, afterwards, went to college. She went to Illinois University. After she had worked several years. And put herself through, and took degrees in botany and has written treatises that are recognized.

RA: For goodness sake.

ST: So, she may have been a slower learner, but she's got a much better education than I.

RA: Well, what is better . . . - and it was this teacher of nature who probably started her on her way.

ST: It could have been. Yes, it could easily have been. Of course I loved the fields and the trees and the bushes and all, but it didn't mean that much to me. But as I say Amy, after . . . in fact, she married a professor of botany.

RA: How interesting.

ST: Yes and they had a very nice life together . . . - nobody spoke the language that they spoke to each other.

RA: Were they in research or teaching?

ST: Well, he was in teaching, Amy was raising her family, she didn't marry until she was 35, and she had three children after that. And he was sent down to Panama to do some cross-breeding of bananas. Because he was very good at cross-breeding. He cross-bred iris here at the Botanical Gardens.

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RA: Oh, yes.

ST And made beautiful varieties. So they sent them down there. They wanted a banana that would ship, you know, and apparently the ones they had weren't too good. So he and Amy lived in the jungle, and her first child was born down there. And she tells about being taken into the hospital over a railroad track in a hand car, and they had to run the hand car back and forth over the tracks to keep the weeds from taking over the little railroad.

RA: For goodness sake! That is fascinating.

ST: I think that's very fascinating. And then the banana company. . . oh, what was the name. . . United Fruit. . . I guess, they brought them up to New York-- BEAUTIFUL quarters, when the baby was a few months old, and they had a bassinette, and everything, I remember and we went down to meet them and then he got Clarence by some job, at any rate, I know that Amy came to live with us, in our first house here, which was up on the parkway, until the following July. And then they went to live in Memphis where he had a job, in the college there.

RA: Oh, yes.

ST: And eventually, he died. But she also died, but they had a very good life together.

RA: What about some of your other. . . the rest of your family that grew up in Wilmette?

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ST: Well, Dorothy married so young, that Daddy had to go and say that it was O.K. She got to going, during the first World War, with a boy up at Great Lakes. And he was from Texas, from Dallas, and of course it wasn't too long before they were engaged.

RA: Did she meet him at Brown's Hall in Wilmette?

ST: No, she met him somewhere in Winnetka, they were giving dances, you know, and the service men were coming in and the girls were coming up, and that's where they met. And then he used to come down in the ambulance to pick her up for a ride! He must have been attached to the ambulance corps because he used to come down from Great Lakes. I was living in Glencoe at the time, and he would stop by, and pick Dorothy up, and take her for a ride in the ambulance. Well, as I say, of course naturally they decided that they would get married, and our Daddy had to go because she wasn't of age. And she went down to Dallas, and she's lived there ever since. And still lives there. And we're in very close touch, Dorothy and I.

RA: Was he originally from Dallas?

ST: Yes, oh, yes. Well, his family, his family owned property in the middle of Dallas which is now, I think, worth millions. Right in the center of town.

BA: Dallas is a very interesting community.

ST: Oh, yes. And Dallas has changed a lot. Even in the

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ST: time since I've been there.

RA: Well, I haven't been there really recently, but this is true. Dallas is a very up and coming Texas

ST: I flew down there about six years ago. I made a round trip of all my sisters-- Chicago, Memphis, Dallas--and that's when planes used to come into Love Field, which now they've given up. They now have a combination of Dallas and Fort Worth. Which the Dallas people hate. And I don't blame them. But of course I had been to Dallas several times, and I had driven down, and I could see the change. My how the place has grown! It's unbelievable!

RA: I can believe that because Texas, all of Texas, has more or less exploded. Houston is so very modern.

ST: Then Georgianna went to school in Kentucky--that is college. And Vivi and Winnie felt, you know, well, they had both been to college, but not gotten any social life out of it, and they wanted to give Georgianna a thing that they had missed, so she went down to Kentucky, and they gave her nice new dresses so she could have a good time. And down there she met her husband, who was down there working in Lexington. It was kind of an off and on engagement, but eventually they got married. And then they moved to Washington, he was with the Associated Press, and he covered the Senate.

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RA: Oh, yes.

ST: And then after he stopped doing that he went to work for General Motors. And they have a very nice house on the outskirts of Washington. They have three children all of them beautiful. In fact, - - lives in Evanston now.

RA: Oh, does she?

ST: Spends a lot of time - - - She's the youngest. She-- when she was 50 she had breast cancer, and she died, so-

RA: Oh, that was young, but it's so, so very common. I have a sister who has breast cancer, also bone cancer, she is being treated with chemotherapy now, but and there was no surgery, at all.

ST: Do you like chemo?

RA: She is able to take it, and take it well, and she has been ill for a year and a half, and taking the treatment, and she-- I can see - - she is slipping. But I want to go back to Winnie, because she made such a contribution in Winnetka.

ST: Did she! Did she! Oh, Winnie, as I say, she really made the name famous on the whole North Shore! And she had three generations, you know. She had the people that grew up, and had children, and then the children that grew up, and had children.

RA: That's right.

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ST: And practically everybody knew Winnie. -Miss Weedon-you know.

RA: I know!

ST: Oh, she *was* really, a wonderful, wonderful person.

RA: Well, I lived in Winnetka. My children were through the public, the lower grades and were in college when my Winnetka life - - -. But Winnie was still going strong, and she . . .

ST: Oh, yes. Well the day she was killed she was going out to get into her car to go to a meeting.

RA: Well, I. know. This was such a tragedy. And the whole area. . . I mean. . . all of the shore. . . she had had influence because that first generation. . . many of them were married and living in the area. . . so that it was such a shock to everyone.

ST: Oh, she not only taught children, she went and lived in with the families where the mother and father wanted to go away for the summer.

RA: I think that is where the Charles Merriam Jr. family had come to know Winnie because it seems to me that Katherine had told me that Winnie was like one of their family because she lived in the house with the children for many vacations that they had taken while the children were growing up. And she had 4 or 5 children, of course, and so she had had them all.

ST: Ah, Winifred was really a wonderful person. It's really



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ST: bad- -too bad somebody can't write her life story. I've gone beyond my writing days, I had written a great deal, but I can't do it anymore. But it should be done, it really should.

RA: And someone who knew her as intimately as you did- perhaps you could do it on tape, and then someone could transcribe it.

ST: Well I would actually have to get a lot of information from Vivian, of course I've been back, and the schools, and the memorial service they had for her there, and they made a garden there at the school- - -

RA: Yes.

ST: She really was a remarkable person. So understanding of children!

RA: She really was. Well, they were- - they had some outstanding people there- --Langworthy, Murray. Any number of them that--I even go back to the days of the old Greeley School.

ST: Yes, yes. In Hubbard Woods?

RA: No, the Greeley School originally was where the park, at, between Elm and Oak, I guess it is now.

ST: And, she was in Hubbard Woods, when I was living in Glencoe.

RA: Yes. And the man she was working with at that time- and I can't think of his name--he still lives in Winnetka--Jim-- and used to be on the board of the North

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RA: Shore Mental Health, I know him and his wife very well, but his name .

ST: Well, there was somebody that she worked with, and Vivian afterwards worked with him, who is dead0 He went away to Michigan Iqn sure .

RA: That's not Harold -

ST: Carleton

RA: Carleton Washburn

ST: Washburn

RA: He was superintendent of schools and really initiated the Winnetka system.

ST: Yes, he was very progressive.

RA: He was there for 25 or more years. I remember him so well.

ST: Well, he is dead, Iqn sure.

RA: Yes, I think he and Harold Lane are both dead. Harold Lane had been in the Wilmette schools, and was up at Michigan at the time of his death. And they both were very concerned about THE child, as an individual.

ST: I think Vi worked with him on a book. . . Iqn not sure. But I know she was quite close to him.

RA: Well, as I understand it, I think Vivian, . . . Winnie published a number of books, didn't she? With her name on them that came out of the Winnetka system?

ST: Well, It might be Vi has at least two that she still gets royalties on. I didn't remember whether Winnie

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ST: had published or not, It's quite possible, as I say, I was away you know.

RA: I can't tell you how grateful I am to you for all of the bits that you filled in, because your memory goes back farther than a number of the people in that area who have given tapes, so that for a long time they were wondering if anyone in town knew where Hill Street had been. And it was in the Wilmette Life, but of course, the Historical Society knew, because they knew from the early maps.

ST: Well, you might say I remember from 1897

RA: Yes!

ST: And that's a long way back.

RA: Well, it is a, a very, memory though, it is such an ephemeral thing that one can't always count on the memory.

ST: I know, I know! We find that out just between the sisters, that I remember a thing one way, Vivian remembers it another, and I guess Amy might remember it another.

RA: This is so true, and this is why I am going, interested in getting Vivian's version. she wrote me a note, and said you had probably have told all by the time I returned, and I don't feel that way at all, because her memories will be very different.

ST: Oh, no, oh no. And she will take up more or less

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ST: where I leave off,

RA Yes0 Is she+ no- she was next to the youngest.

ST: She was the next to the youngest. She was the baby for 8 years.

RA: Oh, yes.

ST: And she was a very good sport when Georgianna was born, to give up that position in the family, you know. Really9 she was, do you know, that I remember my father going back to see his Mother in England for Victoria's jubilee?!

RA: Oh, really!

ST: Yes. That would have been in07. - 1898? Anyway, he came back with trunks full of things. You see, his sister was taking care of his mother, and we got pinafores- -BEAUTIFUL pinafores, with great big blue satin bows that were supposed to be - - She lived until 1901. I'm sure it was07, because I think she was crowned queen in07.

RA: Well, my granddaughter in Rye could tell us quickly, she is a British history nut so to speak. And so, I well, she was telling me something about Mary Queen of Scotsqreign, and James and so on and so forth, and she has it like you would know about today, in her memory, and mind, because she has been so interested in British History.

ST: My Father's Mother was a Hardy, and grew up-- actually grew up at court

RA: flow interesting.

ST: She was a little girl- - a little girl- - and afterwards- -

RA: Was her mother at court at the time?

ST: It was her father, who was secretary, to one of the  
- princesses. The only living princess of George the Third. The only living  
daughter of George the Third. And he was her secretary. She was the Princess  
Royal and when he died, they had to move to Windsor, and my grandmother had  
a cottage in Windsor. Queen Victoria wanted to have, but she didn't want  
anybody but this family in it. And eventually - - But she used to go visit and  
take her things, so it was quite an interesting history back there on my Father's  
side.

RA: I'm sure of that!

ST: Of course, there were a lot of Hardys. There was Hardy the author, there  
was Hardy, Richard Thomas Hardy, Nelson's Captain, we feel that the whole  
family was related. They all come from Dorset. They were all farmers.

RA: There were Hardys in Winnetka too.

ST: Were there?

RA: Yes, and now the son is living out in Barrington. He had been a neighbor of  
ours, at one point, and his

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RA: family has grown, and I can't think of his first name, but probably related in some way, because their family too, go back to - a long ways, to Britain.

ST: Well, I can see Mother unpacking that trunk - just as if it was yesterday! And taking out the things that my Aunt had sent for Amy and I.

RA: This would be a real thrill. Well, I think I really must get back, and I do thank you very very much on behalf of - - and this is Rhea Adler, having interviewed you - - signing off.