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West Side Oral Narrative Project

Transcribing Discourse and Diversity in
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***WEST SIDE ORAL NARRATIVE PROJECT:
TRANSCRIBING DISCOURSE AND DIVERSITY
IN SARATOGA SPRINGS, NEW YORK***

Edith Van Dorn Luce

An Oral Narrative Recorded by Mary Ann Cardillo Fitzgerald

May 10, 1999

Overview

Edith Van Dorn Luce (1928-2009) was born in Saratoga Springs, New York, to a family with ties to settlers who had arrived in the area as early as 1796. In this conversation, she warmly shares memories of her youth on the West Side, including attending School No. 1, ice skating, roller skating, winter sleigh rides, dancing, and swimming at King's water hole. She mentions significant people in her life—including her childhood friend Roy Luce whom she married during World War II—and cherished places within the tight-knit West Side neighborhood where she and her husband raised four children in a house they owned for over forty years. Edith also discusses working as a switchboard operator at the New York Telephone Company, and she shares how she has pursued a lifelong passion for creating arts and crafts, including paintings of historic buildings and places of the city she loved. [*Interview duration: 0:47:40*]

Keywords: School No. 1, World War II home front, telephone operators, local artists, Van Dorn family, Waterbury family

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PREFACE TO THE ANNOTATED TRANSCRIPTS

**West Side Oral Narrative Project (WSONP):
Transcribing Discourse and Diversity in Saratoga Springs, New York**

You have to visualize these places 'cause it's long gone now.
—Edward Smith oral narrative, May 1, 1999

The West Side Oral Narrative Project (WSONP) began in 1998 as a community volunteer initiative to document oral heritage shared by long-term residents of neighborhoods on the west side of Saratoga Springs, New York. Recorded on tape cassettes, the interviews of over 60 residents encompass experiences of ethnically diverse, working-class, and immigrant families living on the city's West Side. Covering events since the early 1900s, the narratives reveal how Irish immigrants, African-American migrants from the South, and Italian immigrants contributed to the social and economic development of the City of Saratoga Springs.

Interviewees comment on a wide range of community activities, including family life, religious celebrations, schools, railroad transportation, the tourist industry, family-run restaurants and other businesses, sports and games, gardening and cooking, gambling, and entertainment in a sporting or red-light district. Residents also comment on the decline of the West Side due to economic downturns, the departure of younger generations, and the displacement of residents due to Urban Renewal and community development. The collection of audio recordings represents a delightful way to imagine the experiences of hard-working and creative families from the African-American neighborhood of Congress Street, and the Irish-American and Italian-American neighborhood nicknamed Dublin that was concentrated along Beekman Street.

Since 2011, faculty and students from the Department of Anthropology at Skidmore College have collaborated with the WSONP to help preserve and present local heritage. We digitized the original set of cassette tape recordings and created oral history transcripts for the Saratoga Springs Public Library. The WSONP collection of audio recordings, oral history transcripts, documents, and memorabilia are available at the library's Saratoga Room. Audio recordings and oral history transcripts are also available online: https://www.sspl.org/research/local_history/.

With guidance from the Lucy Scribner Library at Skidmore College, anthropology faculty and students created this series of annotated transcripts titled *West Side Oral Narrative Project: Transcribing Discourse and Diversity*. An accompanying *Transcription Style Guide* describes editorial considerations for producing the annotated transcripts. The series and style guide allow faculty and students to develop new projects and broadly share local culture and heritage.

We encourage others to accept Edward Smith's invitation to visualize people and activities that have long gone. The voices, stories, and laughter within each interview connect us with special people who created a meaningful, and often overlooked, part of Saratoga Springs heritage.

Professor Michael C. Ennis-McMillan
Department of Anthropology, Skidmore College
November 9, 2020

Edith Marie Van Dorn Luce
An Oral Narrative Recorded by Mary Ann Cardillo Fitzgerald
May 10, 1999

MARY ANN: Good morning. Today is Monday, May 10, 1999. I am at the home of Edith and Roy Luce at 204 Washington Street. Today I will be talking with Edith Van Dorn Luce about life on the west side of Saratoga Springs for the West Side Oral History Project.¹

[*pause in recording*]

MARY ANN: Good morning, Edith. How are you today?

EDITH: I'm fine, Mary Ann.

MARY ANN: Um, this morning we've had a very nice time looking at photographs and different memorabilia about the west side of Saratoga Springs. Um, Edith, how long have you lived on the west side of Saratoga Springs?

EDITH: [*inhales*] Seventy years. [*laughs*]

MARY ANN: [*laughs*] All your life?

EDITH: All my life.

MARY ANN: And, um, how—

EDITH: I was born on the on the ea—on the west side.

MARY ANN: And what street were you born on?

EDITH: We lived on Walton Street.

MARY ANN: And uh, how long did you live on that street?

EDITH: I would say about—I moved—we moved to State Street when, I think, I was about six.

MARY ANN: So you started off on Walton then State.

[
EDITH: Moved to State. And we moved to Division Street. And I attended No. 1 School there.² And in 1940, we moved—we bought the home on Grand Ave.

¹ See Edith Marie Van Dorn Luce Obituary, *The Saratogian*, June 4, 2009 (Online: www.saratogian.com). Edith's family names suggest that her family heritage includes people from the Netherlands and England. Roy Luce, her husband,

² Public School No. 1 was located on the west side of Beekman Street, between Washington Street and Division Street, where basketball courts are currently located. For background on School No. 1, see

MARY ANN: Now, when you say we, who is that?

EDITH: My mom and dad, uh, Charles 'n Grace Van Dorn.

MARY ANN: Charles and Grace Van Dorn. And your mother's maiden name was?

EDITH: Grace Antoinette Leek.³

MARY ANN: Antoinette Leek. What were you telling me about, um, the Leek family? What did your grandfather do?

EDITH: My grandfather moved—they moved here from, um . . . Athens, New York down near Hudson. And I don't know what year. I ha—I think my mom had to be around eight because of the pictures, the picture I gave you. Um, they moved here and, uh, my father was originally a photographer at the Cla—Clarendon Hotel. In the yard of the Clarendon Hotel, he had a, a camera setup and he used to do postcards. And then later, he had a studio on Broadway called the Clarendon Studio.⁴

MARY ANN: Now, do you know where the Clarendon Hotel is located?

EDITH: On . . . just south of St., uh, St. Peter's Church.⁵

MARY ANN: St. Peter's Church.

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: Um, do you have anything from his, um, prior time at—

[
EDITH: Oh, I wished I did, you know. Every time I go to, um, anything—like an antique place where there might be old photographs—I look for anything with the Clarendon. I talked to Michael Noonan about it. And at one point, he found something from the Clarendon, but it—it was something of somebody else's that he couldn't acquire.

MARY ANN: But that accounts for, um, the, the, uh, vast number of photographs you have from the time he was, um—because he was a photographer.

Amy Siverson, "Education on the West Side: School No. 1 precedes Division Street School." *The Saratogian*, March 4, 2002 (Online: https://www.saratogian.com/news/education-on-the-west-side-school-no-1-precedes-division-street-school/article_a635816e-cdc4-551b-826a-9dce5c5d20d9.html).

³ Grace Leek married Charles R. Van Dorn. Throughout the interview, Mary Ann and Edith refer to women by their family names they had before marriage (i.e., maiden names).

⁴ A picture and information about the Clarendon Hotel is available in the Joki Collection, Saratoga Room, Saratoga Springs Public Library. (See the New York Heritage digital collections, online: <https://cdm16694.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/sspl/id/414/>).

⁵ Saratoga Central Catholic High School, located north of Saint Peter's Catholic Church, is built on the site of the old Clarendon Hotel.

EDITH: Right.

MARY ANN: So you have quite a nice album that—

EDITH: Um, all, all my mom's and all their family pictures, he took.

Mary Ann: Yeah. Now—

EDITH: In the studio atmosphere.

MARY ANN: In the—right. And that one particular picture, um, of the two girls at Christmastime, was taken in their home?

EDITH: I, I believe so. Up in, up on Broadway. They lived in an apartment on Broadway, and his studio was there also.

MARY ANN: So your mother then, um, lived over here. Grace in that photograph lived over here on Grand Avenue.

EDITH: Yeah. Since 1940. She died in 1988.

MARY ANN: Um, having always lived on the west side of Saratoga, can you tell me what—is there anything that makes it special—

EDITH: No.

MARY ANN: —the west side of Saratoga Springs?

EDITH: Yeah. I loved—I love living over here. A lot of my friends moved, but I never did.

MARY ANN: Yeah. You stayed here.

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: And, uh, your children—

EDITH: I loved, um, St. Michael's.

MARY ANN: Tell me. Tell me about—

EDITH: [*Inaudible*] We used to go to St. Michael's all the time.

MARY ANN: Share—share with me your recollections. See how far back you can go. Tell me how St. Michael's was.

EDITH: Well, I remember the parade all through, uh, what we called Dublin, with the big, uh, statue or whatever it was they carried in front. And, um, just going down there and having fun.

MARY ANN: Yeah. The, um, the music?

EDITH: Yeah, the music.

MARY ANN: And people—can you tell me, were there any games or activities that they featured?

EDITH: I think they used to dance in the street, too, back in those days.

MARY ANN: Yeah.

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: Yeah. And, uh, where was the bandstand located? Do you remember?

EDITH: Oh No, I don't.

MARY ANN: Yeah. It's—

EDITH: I think it was across from the Princess . . .

MARY ANN: Where it's now located?

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: Principessa?

EDITH: Or it might have been on that corner there.

MARY ANN: The corner. Yes.

EDITH: Diagonal from DeGregory's restaurant.

MARY ANN: Right. Yeah. Do you remember the, the restaurant?

EDITH: Oh gosh, yes.

MARY ANN: [*laughs*]

EDITH: Our ph—our telephone company used to have our parties in there a lot, in those days.

MARY ANN: Oh, now you worked for the telephone company?

EDITH: *Yeah*, many years.

MARY ANN: And wh—and where, uh, did you go to work? Where was it located?

EDITH: Down on Putnam Street. *Yeah*.

MARY ANN: Putnam, um . . . it w—is it currently there?

EDITH: The building's there, I think. I think the building's still there, but it—and I think it still has something to do with the phone company. I'm not sure of that though, so—

MARY ANN: Can you tell me how—what—how—what was your job like when you went to work in the telephone company?

EDITH: I was an operator.⁶

MARY ANN: Um, it's so different from today.

EDITH: Oh *yeah*, we did, “Number please.” Well, I started out as a long distance operator.

MARY ANN: *Yeah*.

EDITH: And in those days, you had to build up to go across country. Today you can just—they just—you can dial from your phone.

MARY ANN: Right.

EDITH: But we used to have them come in on our board, 'n they'd say, like, they wanted San Francisco, we had to tra—we had to go to New York and then to San Francisco. They would bridge, all the way across. And on local board, when we went to, uh, cutover in 1963, the year Nancy was born, um, we were practically—we were literally standing on our chairs to reach the, the high numbers.⁷

MARY ANN: That's amazing.

EDITH: *Yeah*. We'd—we'd have—we had these chairs with the, like around 'em on the bottom, and we would have to brace ourselves on the board and go way up to get those high numbers.

MARY ANN: So different than today.

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⁶ For oral history accounts of telephone operators in the region, see Maury Thompson, “Telephone operators dial up recollections at Chapman event.” *The Post Star*, April 9, 2015 (Online: https://poststar.com/news/local/telephone-operators-dial-up-recollections-at-chapman-event/article_59f65ebb-b7a3-5f2b-9085-cdc7c4ad135c.html).

⁷ A cutover refers to switching from one type of telephone system to another.

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: Yeah.

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: Um, who were some of the people that you worked with at the telephone company?⁸

EDITH: Oh gosh, Ida James was the chief operator. Marg Roc—Margaret Rocco, who was, uh, Teddy Butler's aunt—lived on the West Side over here. And, uh, Natalie Gentile Rosell. I'm try—you mea—want West Siders?

MARY ANN: Sure, or anyone really.

EDITH: Oh, well Louise Lackey, you know, uh, she's a hundred years old and living in, um, The Home of the Good Shepherd. And we had a party last year for her ninety-ninth birthday—

MARY ANN: Really?

EDITH: —at, uh—where'd we have that? The City Center, I believe.

MARY ANN: Oh, I think —yeah.

EDITH: Now, wait a minute. Where was that? When was the City an . . . anyway, it was downtown somewhere.

MARY ANN: Right.

EDITH: Holiday Inn! The Holiday Inn.

MARY ANN: Now, you have a group that meets?

EDITH: Oh yeah.

MARY ANN: And you're call—what's the name of your group? The people who worked at the—

EDITH: Well, that's a Pioneer.⁹ But I never, I never, I never st—you know what hap—I would leave to have a child. And I would say, "I'm not going back to work." But then a few months later, I would go back in as a, a substitute, where they'd call me in. And so I was actually there from 1945 to 1963, off and on through the years. I was on steady when they cutover, but I

⁸ The New York Telephone Company had a Saratoga Springs office located at 47-49 Putnam Street until the 1960s.

⁹ Telephone Pioneers of America is a volunteer group of retired telephone company service and lineman employees (Online: <https://www.pioneersvolunteer.org/>).

hadn't accumulated enough working time to be what you called a Pioneer. I never retired. I was too young to retire. [laughs]

MARY ANN: Now, you must remember the party lines.

EDITH: Oh gosh, yes.

MARY ANN: So wha—so when you were—how did that work? If you were gonna ring my home on Grand Avenue.

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: And I was already on. Would you ever cut in and—

EDITH: No, you would—it was one, it was one, like, if your num—say your number was—

MARY ANN: 4-1-5-2.

EDITH: 4-1-5-2.

MARY ANN: Yeah.

EDITH: You would take the cord up and you'd test it, and you would hear a, a, a pitchin' in your ear. And if it—if you were on there, it would test busy. Now, if you were, uh—what was the number?

MARY ANN: Or 3-9-1 R.

EDITH: 3-9—

MARY ANN: That's more like that kind of number.

EDITH: 3-9-1-R. On that board, we had *J*, *M*, *R*, and *W*.

MARY ANN: Okay.

EDITH: So when you called *R*, we'd go up, and if it wasn't busy, you plug in, and you come back down, and you ring *R*.

MARY ANN: Mm-hmm. So you never had to get people—I mean, you, you wouldn't as a rule get people off. Other people on the party—

EDITH: Oh, we—we'd cut off sometimes, but it wasn't meant to be. If we pulled the wrong plug. [laughs]

MARY ANN: [laughs] Oh, that's fascinating.

EDITH: The fascinating thing is that people in those days would come in and say . . . “Well, operator, I don’t understand. It was just busy, and there’s—now it’s not answering.” And we’d have to explain that somebody else could’ve been calling that line, before we went in on it—before we could get her in on it.

MARY ANN: Oh, I see.

EDITH: But they’d get so irate, saying that, “They gotta be there.” [*laughs*]

MARY ANN: So you should know—and because a lotta people, you had a lot of interaction?

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: Where nowadays we don’t have that.

EDITH: Yeah. Oh yeah, yeah.

MARY ANN: Big difference.

EDITH: Uh-huh. Big difference.

MARY ANN: I had forgotten that you worked for the telephone company. That’s really interesting.

EDITH: Oh, Mary Ann, I’m gonna tell ya, one morning we had snow up to here. And I came outta the house, and I called—I called in, I said, “I don’t think I can get in.” And they said, “You gotta come in, we’re so busy. We don’t care how you get here, but you gotta come in.” And I started—I walked in snow *that* deep. It was up—one of those horrible storms, but I got there.

MARY ANN: So you were living on Grand Avenue?

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: And you walked straight down Grand?

EDITH: Uh-huh.

MARY ANN: And then how did you—

EDITH: Over to Washington [Street] and down Phila [Street].

MARY ANN: Down Phila and to work.

EDITH: Mm-hmm.

MARY ANN: Great.

EDITH: Used to walk all the time.

MARY ANN: So when you were, uh, raising your children on Grand Avenue, and, and when you were growing up, you didn't necessarily have access to a car—all the time.

EDITH: No, no. Well, we did. My husband had a, a company car, which we could use for anything we wanted.

MARY ANN: And who did Roy work for?¹⁰

EDITH: Stewart's Ice Cream Plant, out at the plant.

MARY ANN: And how long was, uh, Roy with Stewart's?

EDITH: Oh gosh. He retired at, I think, 37 years.

MARY ANN: So he was with them from their early years.

EDITH: Well, he worked for Fil Fina, the garage down on Woodlawn [Street] years ago.¹¹

MARY ANN: Oh, on Woodlawn.

EDITH: When he come home from service, he worked for Fil Fina for, oh, I'd say a year and a half.

MARY ANN: What years was he in the service?

EDITH: Nineteen forty f . . . 1945 to 1949. Four years.

[
MARY ANN: Did he go in during the war?

EDITH: Early part, but he never got into ser—into the action at—war was settled in 1945 at some point.

¹⁰ Edith's husband was Leroy "Roy" E. Luce, Sr. (1929-2013), and he went by the name Roy. (Source: "Leroy E. Luce." Obituaries, *Saratoga Today*, April 3, 2013. Online: <https://www.saratogatodaynewspaper.com/news/obituaries/item/1103-leroy-e-luce>). An online obituary includes a photograph of Edith and Roy take by their daughter, Judy Luce Blunk, with a caption "Mom & Dad enjoying just one of so many days at the races (Source: "Leroy Luce Obituaries." *Saratogian*, Legacy.com, April 2, 2013. Online: <https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/saratogian/obituary.aspx?n=leroy-luce&pid=163987412&fhid=13059>)

¹¹ Fil Fina's Garage was located on a corner at 6 Division Street.

MARY ANN: Right, so he was coming in pretty much after that was settled?

[
EDITH: Yeah Mm-hmm.

MARY ANN: And, uh, and then he, he stayed in the service for how many years?

EDITH: He went—he joined for four years.

MARY ANN: Four years. And then worked for Fil Fina at the garage. And that was, uh, Woodlawn Avenue. That's pretty much the West Side—

EDITH: Oh yeah.

MARY ANN: —of Saratoga.

EDITH: Oh it is. Corner of Division and Woodlawn.

MARY ANN: That's right.

EDITH: The little fruit store on the corner?

MARY ANN: Which store was that?

EDITH: The—it was a little fruit market, right on the corner there.

MARY ANN: Who had that?

EDITH: Uh, gee whiz. I can't remember.

MARY ANN: Was it Gerri's?

EDITH: Gerri's! Gerri's Fruit Market.¹²

MARY ANN: Yeah, that whole, um—

EDITH: Gerri Parisi? Or he married a Parisi? Or he was—I don't know.

MARY ANN: So often we mention that, and we're not sure of, uh, the name but, um—that whole block of Division Street was, um, so different than it is right now.

EDITH: Oh yeah.

¹² Gennaro Guerriero operated a fruits and vegetables market at 23 Division Street. Local residents knew him as “Gerri the fruit man.”

MARY ANN: Yeah. Now, when you were, um—you and, uh, Roy were raising your family, you lived over—you lived on Grand Avenue, just the other side of Washington Street?

EDITH: Right.

MARY ANN: How—tell me about Grand Avenue as a street for raising a family.

EDITH: It was great. We had nice neighbors. A lotta children were in the neighborhood then.

MARY ANN: Yeah. And did, did you have to worry much about—

EDITH: No.

MARY ANN: —the kids.

EDITH: And my children were never on Broadway hanging out in front of a store, I might add that.

MARY ANN: Yeah. They were—

EDITH: They were in their own yards or they were in their friends' yards, or . . . even when they grew up, you know?

MARY ANN: Yeah. So they stayed close to home.

EDITH: Mm-hmm.

MARY ANN: Yeah. And when you were growing up, your childhood playing in your neighborhood would be, um, Division Street perhaps? Um, how was it for you growing up on the West Side as a child?

EDITH: Oh, wonderful. Oh, I had so many friends.

MARY ANN: Who were some of your friends?

EDITH: Jeanne Geppner Burritt lived across the street right here. Mary Rowell. I don't know if you remember her. Rita Moote, Rita Isolda Moote. Anna Corsale. Audrey Waring. We all—we were known as the f—it was five of us that were known as the five goons. And I don't think Anna was included in that. It was Jean, Mary, me, Audrey, an . . . Rita.¹³ We were called the five—we called ourselves the five goons.

MARY ANN: Do you know why you got that name?

EDITH: No. It was just a gooney area—at that era.

¹³ Rita Isolda married Joe Moote. Audrey Waring married Charles J. Furey, Sr.

MARY ANN: Era.

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: And what age group was that?

EDITH: Oh, gosh. I'd sa—I'll say . . . twelve, thirteen, fourteen, fifteen.

MARY ANN: What were some of the things you did together growing up?

EDITH: We used to roller skate all the way to the west—the, the East Side Rec. We used to have dances, 'n dance and jitterbug over in Jean's living room. We drank Pepsi and potato chips.

MARY ANN: Terrific.

EDITH: And we used to have hayrides and sleigh rides in the winter.

MARY ANN: Where did you go for those?

EDITH: We used to hire, um, a—the whole neighborhood, um—like, uh, Anna—Anna and her, her brother Eugene Corsale. And, um, Joe Moote, 'n Joe Butler, an—gosh, there was a whole group of us. We'd hire it, and we'd all put in for it. And they—he would come and take us all up through Seward Street 'n wherever he wanted to take us.

MARY ANN: Do you know who he was?

EDITH: No. No, I don 't.

MARY ANN: And he would come over here with, like, a hay wagon—

[

EDITH: With the, with the bells hangin' on the side, and it would jingle and, then we'd have a, a chocolate—hot chocolate party afterwards at one, one of the houses. Probably—uh, sometimes we were at Rita's. Sometimes we were at Jean's.

MARY ANN: So Rita's was down here on Washington Street?

EDITH: Right where—right where the Mangonas live.

MARY ANN: Oh, the Mangonas on the corner.

EDITH: She was m—when she was married, she was down below.

[

MARY ANN: She was down further.

EDITH: Then they bought the house on the corner.

MARY ANN: Okay.

EDITH: The Isoldas.

EDITH: We had a very—and then of course we had the skating rink over here.

MARY ANN: The West Side Skating Rink.

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: Now that was wonderful.

EDITH: Mm-hmm.

MARY ANN: And, um, you could go there when? After school?

EDITH: After school and the—and the evening, if you had your homework done.

MARY ANN: Yeah. And everyone—did everyone skate?

EDITH: Oh yeah. Roy and I used to skate over there together.

MARY ANN: And you'd have the warming hut where—that you could change in.

[
EDITH: Yeah. Mm-hmm. Yeah.

MARY ANN: Now, when you roller skated—you say you roller skated from h—from the West Side—this is like as far in the west as you can go—to the East Side Recreation Fields?

EDITH: Yeah. At night we w—

MARY ANN: At night?

EDITH: In the evening, in the summer. Yeah.

MARY ANN: And what kind of skates? What were your skates like? Were they shoe skates?

EDITH: Oh, no. You had to hook 'em on and, and with a key and tighten 'em.

MARY ANN: And they stayed on your feet?

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: And they were—um, what kind? Do you know what kind of skates they were?

EDITH: No, I don't remember. I think I still have some down 'n the cellar.

MARY ANN: Some skates. That would be a nice artifact for an exhibit.

EDITH: Well, I'll dig 'em out for you.

MARY ANN: Oh, that's great. Ball bearings, were they?

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: Something like that?

EDITH: They may have been Judy's. I don't know if they, they're mine. But they may have been Judy's.

MARY ANN: What happened if you lost your key?

EDITH: You had a problem gettin' 'em off, I would say. [*laughs*]

MARY ANN: 'Cause the keys were made—

EDITH: The key used to hang, hang around our necks.

MARY ANN: Now what did you put the key on?

EDITH: A string.

MARY ANN: A string?

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: At some point, did ya ever make something special—

EDITH: No.

MARY ANN: —to put 'em on? That was—or, um, a whistle? That was a later time.

EDITH: Yeah, nah. I never had that—never got into that.

MARY ANN: Yeah. Um, now, when you went to school, you went to—first it w—did you start at [School] No. 1?

EDITH: Yeah. I came here—I—we moved to Division Street, and I entered third grade. And my husband, Roy, lived on Beekman Street and he entered—he was in third grade with me. And we used to roller skate over on Division Street together.

MARY ANN: In third grade you were friends? You were buddies?

[
EDITH: In third grade. Oh, yeah. Yeah.

MARY ANN: With your husband? Wow.

EDITH: And then he moved. His father died. I remember we all had to stand up and say goodbye to 'im in class because he moved.

MARY ANN: Oh, that must have been hard.

EDITH: And, um . . . I'll tell ya another friend of mine—or, two! Te Te Santos and, um, Teresa Bardino.¹⁴ We all went to school together. That was before Jean and Mary an them.

MARY ANN: Yeah.

EDITH: That was in grade school. Yeah. And, uh, well actually, they intermingled I think through the years, the friends.

MARY ANN: So there were a lot of people your own age all through this neighborhood.

EDITH: Oh yeah. Yeah.

MARY ANN: And, um, at No. 1, who, who were your teachers that you had there?

EDITH: Miss Hauerwas. Miss Biffer, Miss Simpson was down on Washington Street. There was, uh, Miss Blackmer. They may have been Miss—[*inaudible*]. Um . . . tryin' to think who else.¹⁵

MARY ANN: Who was the principal?

EDITH: Mrs. Flynn—or, Miss Flynn.

MARY ANN: Miss Flynn.

EDITH: Julia Flynn.

MARY ANN: And so Julia Flynn, um, before her was her mother? There was a Mrs. Flynn and a Miss Flynn.

EDITH: No. Just her.

¹⁴ Te Te was the nickname of Marion Santos. She graduated from Saratoga High School in 1947. The 1940 city directory lists the Santos family residing at 171 Grand Avenue, and the 1950 directory lists Alfred Santos residing at the same address and working for D&H railroad. In the 1960s, Alfred Santos was residing on Outlook Avenue, and he was married and had children.

¹⁵ Miss Dorothy Hauerwas lived at 24 Lincoln Avenue. Miss Margaret E. Biffer lived at 135 Washington Street. Mrs. Blanche Simpson lived at 146 Washington Street.

MARY ANN: Just her.

EDITH: Miss Flynn.

MARY ANN: Miss Flynn. Julia. And she was the principal.

[
EDITH: Julia Flynn.

MARY ANN: For a long time?

EDITH: She stood about five foot tall, and I tell you, she could raise a boy right off the floor.

MARY ANN: [*laughs*]

EDITH: She was a good—well, I am, I'm a firm believer of good strong teachers.

MARY ANN: So you feel you had strong—

EDITH: Oh yeah. We had no foolishness in school. I can remember Miss Hauerwas just walkin' up 'n down those aisles and watching everything that was goin' on, an you didn't—you didn't get up and walk away—walk away and walk around.

MARY ANN: And you were always conscious of that?

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: So y—so you would always keep that in mind if, if, uh, if, um, anyone was thinking of causing a problem—

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: —or seemed to be.

EDITH: Oh, you didn't do it. But if you did—

MARY ANN: What happened?

EDITH: Julia would—Julia would get really mad. She'd—I had seen her raise a kid right off the floor by his shirt. She would get really mad. She never abused.

MARY ANN: No.

EDITH: But she was a strong, strong administrator.

MARY ANN: Um, what did the school look like? 'Cause No. 1 doesn't exist anymore.

[
EDITH: I know.

MARY ANN: What did it, it look like inside? What—were the classrooms comfortable?

EDITH: You went in the fr—you went in the front door and to, and to the right and the left—the left and the right it was classes.

[
MARY ANN: So center entrance, yeah.

EDITH: Um, one, two, three and the back of the, of the downstairs was—this was one, two, three and four and then you went upstairs to five, six, seven and eight.

MARY ANN: Eight cl—eight classes?

[
EDITH: Oh yeah.

MARY ANN: In kindergarten?

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: Okay.

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: Um, and they had—what, what did the room look like? There—all the rooms were alike, but what did a typical classroom look like in that building?

[
EDITH: Well, typical. You know, you had the blackboards, an, all—mostly all the way around, and the cloakrooms where ya hung yer, yer clothes, yer outer clothes.

MARY ANN: How 'bout the desks?

EDITH: The desks were wood.

MARY ANN: Did you have, um, inkwells?

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: What kind of—do you remember the kind of pen you used?

EDITH: Um, no not really, probably just a—I would say, uh . . . where you put the point in—

MARY ANN: The straight fountain pen?

[
EDITH: Yeah, the straight.

[
MARY ANN: Oh not a fountain pen, but a straight pen, with a—

[
EDITH: A straight pen with a . . . the point.

MARY ANN: The point that you took in an out.

EDITH: Yeah, right.

MARY ANN: And they were, um, very conscious of teaching you your, uh, penmanship?

EDITH: *Penmanship.*

MARY ANN: And what else did you learn besides . . . penmanship at No. 1? Anything outstanding?

EDITH: Well that's where I started my artwork. [*laughs*]

MARY ANN: Tell me about your artwork, because artwork is one of those things that can come and go with a school budget. And, uh, tell me how—well your experience and how you feel about it.

EDITH: Well, we used to do these hu—humongous posters that would hang in the lower halls. They were, they were just, um—in fact my son Roy, when he went into Division Street [School] over here, they had one of my—with my name on it that he remembers seeing over here. But I never could find out—

MARY ANN: At Division Street School?

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: They had brought it over from No. 1?

EDITH: It had apparently been brought over or something an—if I'm—if I'm not mistaken, I think that's what it was. And he also found a desk with, I think, with our initials on it. [*laughs*]

MARY ANN: Oh my. You'd like to find that, I'm sure.

EDITH: An—now I gotta, I gotta work with him on this an find out what it really was. But I have a, I have a—we used to do autograph books in those days, and I have Julia Flynn's

MARY ANN: Autographs?

EDITH: I have Miss—I think I got Miss Hauerwas and I got Miss Biffer. And in one of those, they mention that . . . I'd have to get it again and look at it. Something about my artwork.

MARY ANN: And—so that would've—was that your favorite subject, your artwork?

EDITH: I loved art, but I gave it up and I don't know why. Because I started at this—there's my Casino. And I had done the Batcheller Mansion and City Hall over here.

MARY ANN: Oh they're beautiful, Edith.

EDITH: And this is from out where Nancy lives.

MARY ANN: I was admiring that earlier. So you have done all of these paintings?

EDITH: Oh, these are just recent.

MARY ANN: And these—your formal art education is from school?

EDITH: That's the only education I ever had.

MARY ANN: S—this is from nothing from beyond.

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: So you have a lot of, uh, natural, inborn talent but you—

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: —you feel that it was encouraged at the public school?

EDITH: I, uh, I'd, I'd, as I say I did posters over there for years, and then we did a school paper.

MARY ANN: Oh, a school paper?

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: In grade school?

EDITH: Yeah. And we used—

MARY ANN: What was the name of it?

EDITH: Don't remember. [*laughs*]

MARY ANN: What did you do?

EDITH: We used to have articles done. And, um, gee, I wish I'd kept those.

MARY ANN: That would be very nice to have.

[
EDITH: *Oh.*

MARY ANN: Did you interview people?

EDITH: I think so. I think we did. And we used to go out and sell them, too, in the neighborhood. To—for the c—for the school.

MARY ANN: To make money?

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: That's interesting.

EDITH: And in those days, in parent-teachers—you went—oh we went as far as North Broadway to sell parent-tea—PTA.

MARY ANN: Yeah. And you could just go off and walk—in grade school and walked all the way to the north—

EDITH: Yeah. Here's another little, little tidbit. When we were in, um, No. 1 School and we had gym, we had to walk to the Armory . . . for gym class. And we had to go fast because you didn't have much time.

MARY ANN: All year round, you did that?

EDITH: Yeah, I can—I don't know about with a real winter, but in the, in the—sometimes I remember being cold walking down there.

MARY ANN: What did you wear for gym?

EDITH: Blue. Blue, uh, they—blue bloomers with the [*gestures*]. And we had to shower too.

MARY ANN: At the Armory?

EDITH: At the Armory. Yeah.

MARY ANN: And then walk back.

EDITH: And then walk back to school. That was in seventh and eighth grade.

MARY ANN: And so the Armory is down on Lake?

EDITH: Lake Ave.

MARY ANN: And you're walking from Division Street.

OTHER: I was just seeing if you had Tisha. I saw you let her out when I went. Sorry.¹⁶

EDITH: [*chuckles*]

MARY ANN: And what, and what, um, kinds of things did you do at the Armory during gym class?

EDITH: Everything that I couldn't do. I was not athletic. [*laughs*] Like climbin' the ropes 'n . . . oh, volley balls an whatever they do inside, you know, with the balls 'n

MARY ANN: What's climbin' the ropes?

EDITH: Where you had to go [*gestures*].

MARY ANN: Oh.

EDITH: I, I couldn't do it. I never, I never passed gym, even in high school. [*laughs*]

MARY ANN: [*laughs*] You passed art, with flying colors. That's where it was at with you.

[
EDITH: And I didn't take art in high school. And I don't know why I didn't do that.

Um, there's another thing, too. When we, when we lived . . . when we were in high school, we couldn't stay in school for lunch. They had no lunch program. You could either go up to Kaye's and buy your lunch, or you could walk home. And we walked home. Mary and Jeanne and I, Audrey.¹⁷

MARY ANN: So Jean Corsale, Audrey Waring—

EDITH: No. Jeanne Gep—uh, Jeanne Burritt.

MARY ANN: Jeanne Burritt.

Edith: Geppner. Jeanne Geppner Burritt. And we'd have to walk home, get our lunch, and walk back to school in an hour.

MARY ANN: In an hour.

¹⁶ Another person interrupted the interview to ask a question, perhaps about a pet.

¹⁷ Alvin Kaye Pharmacy located at 154 Lake Avenue was connected through a wide-open doorway to a luncheonette at 152 Lake Avenue. The luncheonette was independently operated by various people over the years, and listed under those names in the city directories. It was located on the southwest corner of Nelson, and was commonly known as Kaye's (which referred to both the pharmacy and the luncheonette). Located a short block east from Saratoga High School, Kaye's was popular with students and many others in the city. Al Kaye was also a musician and had a "big band" orchestra. Before he retired, his last place of business was a jewelry store on Broadway in the Downstreet Market Place.

EDITH: Up on Lake Ave.

MARY ANN: That's a long walk.

EDITH: That's a long walk. And sometimes your hands were—even with gloves and mittens—were freezing.

MARY ANN: Mh-hmm. And your feet.

EDITH: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

MARY ANN: So in one hour, you had no time to do anything else but get home, eat, and go back.

[
EDITH: No. Yeah. Unless you were rich and you could afford to go to lunch every day at, uh, at Kaye's. *[laughs]*

MARY ANN: And in grade school you had no lunch program either?

[
EDITH: No. No, we had to come home then too, but that wasn't so far.

MARY ANN: Mm-hmm. Right.

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: Right. Now, when—did they have the, um, any summer programs for children?

EDITH: No.

MARY ANN: So once school got out, you just—

EDITH: If you failed, you failed. And you did—you stayed back.

MARY ANN: You stayed back, if you failed. Um, and then you waited and repeated the year.

EDITH: Mm-hmm.

MARY ANN: So what did—what would you do in the summer then? There was no, uh—was there any kind of day camp program for you?

EDITH: We used to ride out to King's out here and swim. On our bikes.

MARY ANN: So King's is located . . .

EDITH: It's not there anymore. It's there, but it's all grown over. Used to be a big field, and . . .

MARY ANN: Was King's a farm?

EDITH: No. If—if you go out Washington Street, there's a dip that goes down and then back up. And that dip had a, a little waterhole called King's, and they—was quite a few of us that used to go out there.¹⁸

And, um, in fact, I, I've been in contact with an old friend of mine, Connie Williamson. And she just was writing me one time about how she remembers swingin' off the rope out there and going in and, and Bob Pastor's dog jumped in on top of her and almost drowned her. [*laughs*] And that's Bob Pastor, you know, the former, uh, heavyweight champion.¹⁹

MARY ANN: Oh, my. Oh! [*laughs*]

EDITH: And we—he, he *fought* the heavyweight champion.

[
MARY ANN: Right, right. So that was the swimming hole, in those days.

[
Edith: Yeah. And we used to bike out there.

Mary Ann: So you'd bike out Washington. There probably w—the traffic wasn't like it is.

[
EDITH: Oh, no, no, there wasn't the traffic. You couldn't do it today. I wouldn't allow my kids to do it.

MARY ANN: No. So your boundaries as a child and a teenager growing up, were way, way out Church Street, which is six—

EDITH: No, Washington.

MARY ANN: I mean, Washington.

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: That's about how many miles out?

EDITH: Was it—no, I don't know h—maybe a mile.

MARY ANN: About a mile out on a bike to swim.

EDITH: Yeah. I think so. Mile an a half, maybe.

¹⁸ King's Pond was located west on Washington Street/Route 29, on the left between Pine Road and Slade Road. Kids rode their bikes or walked to the pond to go swimming.

¹⁹ Bob Pastor was a well-known boxer from New York City (*Source*: Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bob_Pastor).

MARY ANN: Yeah. And then, and then all the way to the east side of town?

EDITH: Yeah. [*laughs*]

MARY ANN: That's great. An—and this was all on foot or bicycle.

EDITH: Foot or bicycle. We didn't have cars.

MARY ANN: Oh man, that's wonderful. Now, um—so you went to Saratoga High School?

EDITH: Mm-hmm.

MARY ANN: And, um . . . what were your favorite subjects and what were your favorite—

EDITH: None of 'em.

MARY ANN: None of them?

EDITH: I didn't like any of 'em. [*laughs*]

MARY ANN: And you didn't take art?

EDITH: No. [*laughs*]

MARY ANN: And you didn't—

EDITH: I only—I, I left school at my—in my second year of high school.

MARY ANN: And you went to work?

EDITH: Yeah. When I hit—became sixteen because my mom was alone. My brothers—my father died. My brothers went in service. And she had to go to work to keep the house, so . . . Roy had gone, to—moved to—went in the service, and I really had no interest. I wanted to get out 'n work an make money.

MARY ANN: Mh-hmm. And, and did you go to work for—

EDITH: Like so many of us did in those days. Yeah.

MARY ANN: That's right. Yeah. And wh—and did you go to work for the, uh, phone company at that time?

EDITH: No. First I went to work for the Army Depot down on—what is now Espey.

MARY ANN: Oh, that's interesting.

EDITH: I wasn't—I went in there as a typist, which I didn't have much, um . . . field in. So I didn't really like it an I, I wasn't good. Let's put it that way. I was too slow. And I ended up bein' a messenger for about a year. But this was a big complex, you know. It was where all the, uh, tanks and everything were.

MARY ANN: Oh my—did you see these tanks—

EDITH: Oh yeah.

MARY ANN: —on the floor being built?

EDITH: Oh no. They weren't—they were out in the yard. It was at the station, what, for, uh . . . Army vehicles 'n things like that.

MARY ANN: And that's where Espey Manufacturing is right now.²⁰

EDITH: Right now.

MARY ANN: At the corner of, um—

EDITH: Congress Avenue and Ballston Avenue.

MARY ANN: Ballston Avenue. So that musta been a fascinating place to work.

EDITH: My mom worked there too. That's how I got the job. Uh, she was a typist. And she was slow too. [*laughs*] In those days, people didn't have that, you know, that [*makes sound, imitating typing*].

MARY ANN: Right. They didn't have the ability—

[
EDITH: The ability, yeah.

MARY ANN: Yeah. Or the—or the training and they didn't have the computers.

EDITH: So in 19—that was in 1945 and then . . . 19—and sometime in 1946, I went with the phone company. And then we were married in 1946.

MARY ANN: Tell me about your wedding.

EDITH: It was small.

MARY ANN: And it was at you—your house.

[
EDITH: It was my mom's house. My brother made my wedding cake.

²⁰ Espey Manufacturing & Electronics Corporation is located at 233 Ballston Avenue, Saratoga Springs, NY (Source: <https://www.espey.com/>).

MARY ANN: Your brother?

EDITH: Yeah, he made a, um, fruitcake. It was Christmastime. We were married the day after Christmas.

MARY ANN: Oh, how lovely.

EDITH: Bill loved to cook. Bill loved to bake. And he made my wedding cake. It was a tiered cake. Yeah.

MARY ANN: That's very special.

EDITH: Very small wedding.

MARY ANN: Yeah. And it was in the home?

EDITH: 'Cause he only had 10 days home.

MARY ANN: Oh, he was on leave from the service?

EDITH: Yeah. And here's another little [*laughs*] thing—I always wondered if we were ever legally married because Bob Gass had to open the City Hall on Christmas Day.²¹ Roy came in in the morning, Christmas morning. He had his blood test in California. I had mine here. And we had an appointment. I was workin' twelve to four and five to eight at the phone company. An on Christmas Day, you just didn't get the day off, you know? You had to work. [*laughs*] You're—if you were low in seniority, and I was low at that point. So, um, he ca—we went at, um, four o'clock. Bob Gass opened the City Hall to give us our license, an we had to wait till the next night to be married. We were married 7:30 on, on the twenty-sixth, and we had ten days and then he left. He was gone three years.

MAY ANN: Really?

EDITH: Well he was gone, um—he came home maybe once or twice. But he was stationed in, in San Francisco and Hawaii. So—and then he was on ship too.

MARY ANN: Mh-hmm. Oh, and he—was he in the South Pacific?

EDITH: Yeah—well, very, very briefly.

MARY ANN: Very briefly.

EDITH: He was at Guam.

²¹ Bob Gass worked in the Accounts Department, office of the City Clerk, in Saratoga Springs City Hall.

MARY ANN: Oh, really?

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: Very interesting.

EDITH: But the war was—it was over then. There just was the, uh, chance of snipers, I guess.

MARY ANN: Yeah. So he was there to, af—in the aftermath.

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: To un—um—

EDITH: But he was considered a veteran because they didn't de—you're a veteran of World War II, as long—until it is declared the war is over. And it wasn't declared till I think, '47 . . . '46 or '47.

MARY ANN: Yeah, late forties, probably. So you were separated for most of three years.

EDITH: Yeah, I lived that with Mom.

MARY ANN: You lived with your mother and you continued to work?

Edith: And then when he came home, we continued to live there with Mom and Bill.²²

MARY ANN: And then you moved over to an—

EDITH: The apart—the, the garage apartment. And then I moved to Grand, back to Grand, and then I moved here. I've been here all my life.

MARY ANN: And then you've been in this particular house for how long?

EDITH: Thirty-four years.

MARY ANN: Thirty-four years.

EDITH: Mm-hmm.

MARY ANN: And, um, all of this—

EDITH: Actually, it's gonna be thirty-five in November.

MARY ANN: Oh, my.

²² Bill is Edith's brother, William Van Dorn.

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: So you pretty—did yer—your children were raised in this house?

EDITH: Yeah. Nancy was a year when we moved here. That's how I know. She's gonna be thirty-seven.

MARY ANN: So do you have how many children?

EDITH: Four.

MARY ANN: And they are?

EDITH: Judy . . . forty-s—she's forty-seven. Roy is forty-two, Chuckie's forty, and Nancy's thirty—gonna be thirty-six in November.

MARY ANN: So they did do a lot of their growin' up right here?

EDITH: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

Mary Ann: [*knocks*] Right here.

EDITH: Oh yeah, baseball out in the back in Bill's yard 'n—

MARY ANN: An swimming pool.

EDITH: Oh yeah. Yeah.

MARY ANN: Now did you have a skating—

EDITH: Playing with different kids on the area and the block.

MARY ANN: Yeah. Now, who were some of the kids that your children played with in the neighborhood?

EDITH: Danny, Danny Natale lived here.²³

MARY ANN: In this house?

EDITH: Mm-hmm. And, um, let's see. I think your brother was one 'em.

MARY ANN: Dominic?

²³ She seems to be referring to Danny Smaldone. Jimmy Natale was another boy who also lived nearby.

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: Cardillo.

EDITH: Dommy Cardillo. *Dommy* we called 'im. And . . .

MARY ANN: [*laughs*] Probably Mary Fran Smaldone.

EDITH: Yeah, Mary. Was she more Denise's age, or—

MARY ANN: Yeah. She's—but—

EDITH: In between. [*whispers something inaudible*]

MARY ANN: Yeah. So there was always a lotta good kids to play with in this area?

EDITH: There was. There isn't anymore. The—

MARY ANN: They're all grown up and gone.

EDITH: Right.

[*pause in recording*]

MARY ANN: Edith, um, I'm admiring—uh, I see four pieces of artwork here that you've done. Please tell me, um, of what they are and what medium you work in. And explain the process that you use.

EDITH: Well, they're, um, acrylic on canvas, and, um . . . I have done the Casino and City Hall and the Batcheller Mansion. And I have pictures upstairs in my bedroom—slash office—that I have got pictures of all the houses on North Broadway and the Post Office I wanna do, and the, um, Adirondack Trust Company, and just nice buildings around Saratoga.

MARY ANN: So your process is to go and first photograph?

EDITH: I photograph, and, uh, I come home and I do it on graph paper first. And then I—from my graph—I enlarge it. And then I do it—I put my graph to my—I trace it onto my canvas, and then I go from there.

MARY ANN: And then you paint in, uh, acrylic?

EDITH: I paint in acrylic.

MARY ANN: They're just beautiful.

EDITH: Thank you.

MARY ANN: They really are. Um, and then, now, you said that several times while you're working on it, you go back and you—

EDITH: I, I have to go back and see it. "Is that, uh, brown up there, or is it—." Because I've got the picture, but sometime the picture isn't enough to t—to tell me different things.

MARY ANN: Now, your pictures look so beautiful here, um, in your home. Uh, where can I—are these pictures out in the public somewhere? Do you display them?

EDITH: I have, I have a few down in, um, Palmetto's—

MARY ANN: Palmetto's

EDITH: Food—uh, Market Place.

MARY ANN: So they're on permanent display.

EDITH: Yeah, they're there, till I take 'em out.

MARY ANN: Right. And they're all—

EDITH: Or somebody buys them. [*laughs*]

MARY ANN: Okay, so they're available for sale?

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: And, um, you said that you do something, um, as a contribution with your artwork every year?

EDITH: Yeah, I, I, um, I, um, I, uh, con—I contribute to the EOC, which is the Economic—

MARY ANN: Economic, Economic Opportunity Council.

[
EDITH: Opportunity. Yeah. Every year, they have a gala at—at, um, the Casino. And I have—well, not my pictures, but I do re—I do a lotta Christmas items. And I contribute to the, uh, Festival of Trees.

[
MARY ANN: So you're still doing that—okay, now that's held . . . ?

EDITH: At City—at the City Center in, in Dec—I think it's early December.

MARY ANN: Okay. And what do you—and you do a tree or wreaths for that?

EDITH: I do wreaths.

MARY ANN: Wreaths.

EDITH: I donate wreaths.

MARY ANN: Okay. So you have also, um, a craft business then that you do.

[
EDITH: Yes. Yes.

MARY ANN: And what's the name of that?

EDITH: It's a funny name.

MARY ANN: [*laughs*]

EDITH: My daughter Judy picked it out—Foggy Noggles. And everyb—it's, it's really a good name because everybody says, "Hey, what does that mean?"

MARY ANN: So it draws attention.

EDITH: We don't know. We don't know what it means. [*laughs*]

MARY ANN: [*laughs*]

EDITH: Nancy lived in Virginia Beach, and I used to go there an awful lot. Course I went all over the country to see Nancy and her husband—we did. And I went to a place called, uh, Williamsburg Pottery. And they started—that's where my, my crafting started. It's a big pottery place in Virginia where you can buy artificial flowers and wreaths and whatever. And we started down there, and Judy started contributing, an Nancy started to contribute, and we went into a, um, a Crafter's Gallery down there in Virginia. And we were in that for about a year till Nancy moved back north.

MARY ANN: And so now where do you display crafts?

EDITH: At craft shows.

MAY ANN: At shows.

EDITH: I only do two though.

MAY ANN: Which ones are those?

EDITH: St. Peter—uh, St. Clement's and Caroline Street.

MARY ANN: And those are, uh, big?

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: Big shows.

EDITH: Yeah. I used to do 'em all year long but I, I don't do that anymore. I just concentrate on Christmas now.

MARY ANN: Now, are your other—are your daughters also making crafts?

EDITH: They're still on the card, but they ma—[*laughs*]

MARY ANN: [*laughs*]

EDITH: —they make a few things, but—

MARY ANN: So if I go to the, um, craft show, I will see wreaths, pottery—

EDITH: Not pottery.

MARY ANN: Not anymore.

EDITH: Well, I've had—I've, I've got painted, um—

MARY ANN: Painted pottery.

EDITH: —painted pottery, little holly dishes that I paint. And Santa Clauses and I, I originated my—what I call my Spindle Santa. It's made out of a, a stair spindle and they're tall. And I'll show you one before you leave.

MARY ANN: Is that the wooden stair spindle?

EDITH: Yeah. Yeah. But they're car—you know, you buy 'em carved.

MARY ANN: Okay. So you get that like from, uh, um, a wood—

EDITH: Well, yeah, I get 'em down at HQ. Used to—I get 'em at HQ, they're gone now.

MARY ANN: Yeah. And then you make Santa Clauses out of them?

EDITH: Yeah. I won't take you in the cellar because there's a terrible mess down there.

MARY ANN: [*laughs*]

EDITH: But I will bring up a few things an show you, before you leave.

MARY ANN: Well, Edith, before we close, this has been so fascinating because, um, your family dates back to the west side of Saratoga Springs and, um, in—into America, we decided, um, since 19—since 1662, your family has been in this country. [*inaudible*]

EDITH: Yeah, on my father—on my father's side.

MARY ANN: And, um, in Saratoga, we traced you back at least to 1796.

EDITH: Mh-hmm.

MARY ANN: And we have many notations, um, that we know of in the Durkee's Reminiscences.²⁴ And I think it's so fascinating to read about history and then connect that to a family that is so part of our community right here in Saratoga Springs. Is there anything you want to say about Saratoga, or the West Side in general?

EDITH: I love Saratoga. That's my first statement. I *love* Saratoga. I can never, ever imagine not living in Saratoga. And I've always liked the West Side.

MARY ANN: The West Side.

EDITH: I like the East Side too. I have nothing against the East Side. [*laughs*] I like that too. I have a lotta friends over there.

MARY ANN: Yeah. But you—your family has always been here on the West Side.

EDITH: Always on the West Side, yeah.

MARY ANN: And, uh, it's a wonderful presence, an as I sit here and I lo—I look around this neighborhood, it's a neighborhood I grew up in, and . . . I miss not living on the West Side.

EDITH: Yeah.

MARY ANN: And it's great to be in touch with so many people that I've known all my life.

EDITH: I know. I remember all you girls.

MARY ANN: Yeah. But I live on Macarthur Drive now.

EDITH: Do you?

MARY ANN: And I've been there for thirty-some years.

EDITH: Have you really?

²⁴ "Reminiscences of Saratoga," compiled by Cornelius E. Durkee, reprinted from *The Saratogian*, 1927-28 (Online: <http://www.saratoganygenweb.com/durktoc.htm>).

MARY ANN: Yeah. Thirty years.

EDITH: Macarthur Drive, hm.

MARY ANN: Yeah. And you've been here for thirty-four in this house. So . . . anyway, I want to thank you very much. An as we go and look through, um, these things that we find, we may come back and we've got another side of the tape here. We can always put more stuff on—

EDITH: Uh-huh. Anytime. Anytime. And if I get any more information on the boundary lines, I will—

MARY ANN: Yeah. On the Waterbury land that, uh, most of this West Side is located on.

[

EDITH: Yeah.

EDITH: Well, I know my mom on Grand Avenue and me—

[*end of interview*]