

Kentwood Historic Preservation Commission
Oral History Abstract



Oral History # 063-2006

Name of individual (s): Mary Florence (Smith) Hale

Name of Interviewer: Joyce Thompson

Date: July 5, 2006

Brief summary of individual's importance to Paris Township/Kentwood history:

Mrs. Hale is the daughter of Marion and Josephine Smith who owned and operated a farm on 52nd Street at Breton (Walma) Road. She attended Smith School on Wing Road and provided information about early farm life in that area.

(Note: Oral histories from Josephine Smith (OH 15-1974) and Bernie Smith (OH 041-2003) in file.)

**KENTWOOD HISTORIC
PRESERVATION COMMISSION
[KHPC]**

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
(063-2006)

Mary Florence (Smith) Hale

INTERVIEWER: JOYCE THOMPSON
July 5, 2006

Transcribed by: Sandy de Ryke
de Ryke Transcriptions, LLC, Sept. 2006
Edited Version, October, 2006

**KENTWOOD HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION (KHPC)
ORAL HISTORY**

Subject: Mary Florence Smith Hale
Interviewer: Joyce A. Thompson
Date of Interview: July 5, 2006
Place: 960 Amberwood, S.W., Byron Center, Michigan

Transcribed by: Sandy de Ryke, de Ryke Transcriptions, LLC, October 2006

MH Mary Hale
JT Joyce Thompson

(Note: Oral histories from Josephine Smith (OH 15-1974) and Bernie Smith (OH 041-2003) in file.)

[I REMOVED CRUTCH WORDS AND FALSE STARTS FROM THIS TRANSCRIPT]

JT: Today is July 5, 2006 and this is the taped oral history of Mary Florence Smith Hale. We are at her home, 960 Amberwood, S.W., Byron Center, Michigan in the dining room. My name is Joyce Thompson and I will be recording this oral history for the Kentwood Historic Preservation Commission. This tape will be transcribed, a copy given to Mary so she can revise or make any corrections or deletions that she wishes. When Mary is satisfied and the oral history is completed, she will be asked to sign a release so it can become part of Kentwood's archives. Is this arrangement satisfactory to you, Mary?

MH: Yes.

JT: What is your name and date of birth?

MH: Mary Florence Smith Hale. December 31, 1930.

JT: And age today, Mary?

MH: Seventy-five.

JT: Where were you born?

MH: Grand Rapids.

JT: And your parents' names?

MH: Marion W. Smith; Josephine Burns Smith.

JT: Their birth place?

MH: Grand Rapids.

JT: Okay. The occupation of your parents?

MH: Farmer.

JT: And mother?

MH: Farmer's wife.

JT: Okay. I'd like you to think of a memory of mother. What comes to mind?

MH: Well, she kept everything up. Her eleven-room house was always neat and tidy. She did all the cooking for the help in the summertime.

JT: Okay, you said she did cooking. Did you have a favorite meal?

MH: Most anything she cooked was good.

JT: So, what did she cook?

MH: They were always full meals. Three times a day she had to have a full meal for the men.

JT: When you say a "full meal", what do you mean?

MH: Meat and potatoes and vegetable and pies.

JT: Bread?

MH: Oh, yes, homemade bread.

JT: Mmm. So, she did a lot of cooking.

MH: Yes.

JT: And dad. What memory do you have of dad?

MH: Oh, he was always good natured, worked hard.

JT: You said they were farmers?

MH: Right.

JT: Where was this farm?

MH: Fifty-second Street. Fifty-second and Walma. Both sides of the road on 52nd.

(NOTE: The KHPC Barn Survey Project has an historic picture of this farm looking south from Walma Road, as well as photos of the sheep barn before it was destroyed.)

JT: What kind of a farm was this?

MH: Grain.

JT: What kind of grain?

MH: Wheat, oats, corn, hay. That was about it.

JT: Any animals on the farm?

MH: Horses, cows, pigs, sheep. That was about it.

JT: Did you have a lot of horses?

MH: At one time we did.

JT: How many?

MH: Probably ten or twelve of all ages from colts to full-grown.

JT: Your farm was how big?

MH: About a hundred acres.

JT: Oh, that's a lot!

MH: And my uncle's was down the road. I think he had eighty down there. My grandpa's was another hundred over on Patterson and 36th Street.

JT: So, they pitched in to help on harvesting?

MH: They all worked together.

JT: Right, absolutely. Your farm house, tell me about that. What do you recall?

MH: Big.

JT: Well, you said eleven rooms. I remember you saying that. Did you have a favorite place, a favorite part of that house?

MH: I always liked the upstairs front bedroom. My dad never wanted me to be up there because it was too far away. I had my own room downstairs. Kitchen, L-shaped kitchen; dining room, big, big dining room; living room, that was twenty-seven feet long; two bedrooms downstairs; upstairs there was three rooms across the front and three rooms in the back.

JT: That is a big home, and mom took care of that all by herself.

MH: Oh, yes, it was cleaned twice a year, every corner.

JT: In the kitchen, what kind of a stove did you have?

MH: Wood stove. She never could cook after she got rid of it. She didn't like anything else.

JT: Who chopped the wood?

MH: My dad.

JT: Your dad?

MH: Or, my uncle. Whoever got there first.

JT: Trees on the farm?

MH: Mostly, ya.

JT: Besides the barn, I'm assuming there was a barn because of all those animals, what other buildings?

MH: We had a garage in front of our corn crib, it was down by the house, then we had a big chicken coop with quite a few chickens in. That was Bern's job, the chickens. There was a ban we kept the sheep in plus a big garage for the tractors, corn husk machine, and thrashing machine.

JT: You're saying your brother (Bernard Joseph Smith), correct? He was your only sibling, correct?

MH: Right.

JT: Older than you?

MH: Ah, huh.

JT: Okay, how much older than you?

MH: Five years.

JT: Now, being the youngest, you didn't have all those chores right away.

MH: No, I didn't.

JT: Do you remember the kind of chores you did have when you got old enough?

MH: No, because my dad said he never wanted my mother and I in the barn, so we stayed in the house. He never liked women in the barn. Then after he died my mother was out there all the time because she had to help Bern.

JT: Your brother and you growing up on the farm, must have had a lot of memories. What memory comes to mind of a sibling moment here?

MH: Well, we played together a lot. Of course, he being five years older I was just young enough to be teased. But, we did a lot of things together as we got older.

JT: Where did you play on the farm?

MH: Well, I had a little sandbox here and a nice hill on the barn bank.

JT: Swings?

MH: Yes, we had that in a pear tree.

JT: Okay, and that was close to the house?

MH: Ya. Kind of all over. When the corn crib was empty I used to play out there a lot.

JT: Why is that?

MH: Oh, I'd take all my doll things and go out there.

JT: Like a little house, you pretended it was a little house.

MH: It was my house.

JT: Right.

MH: Yup.

JT: You said there were trees on the farm? An orchard?

MH: At one time there was orchard, I don't remember it, but before my time there was an orchard.

JT: Okay. Apple orchard or pears?

MH: Apple and pears, I think.

JT: Okay.

MH: Mostly apple. That was west of the house where the driveway is now down quite a ways. There was a big field there.

JT: So, you told me a favorite place you wanted to be at the house, is there a least favorite place to be?

MH: No, not really.

JT: Not really? Okay. Favorite toys as a child?

MH: Dolls, paper dolls, cars and trucks. Oh, yes, I had my cars and trucks outside and my dolls inside.

JT: Were those trucks Bernie's?

MH: Nope, they were mine.

JT: They were yours. What were these trucks made of?

MH: They were metal.

JT: I thought kind of suspected that's what it was.

MH: Ya, little metal trucks I played in the sand with.

JT: And, favorite foods as a child?

MH: Strawberries.

JT: Really. You grew those?

MH: No our neighbor did.

JT: Oh, who was that neighbor?

MH: Pete Heyboer.

JT: Okay.

MH: He had a big strawberry patch.

JT: Did you go pick?

MH: Once. They picked 'em all and shared 'em with us.

JT: Oh, okay. Did you reciprocate with a similar food?

MH: Probably one way or another.

JT: Favorite outfit as a child?

MH: Oh, goodness. Nothing special I don't think.

JT: You wore dresses?

MH: Oh, yes. We never had slacks and jeans and all that stuff.

JT: Do you remember what your dresses were made of?

MH: Cotton.

JT: Cotton.

MH: My mother made them.

JT: She did? You didn't tell me she was a sewer.

MH: When I was little she made all my clothes in between acts.

JT: Well, she sounded busy.

MH: Oh, yes, she was.

JT: Where did she get the material for these dresses? Do you remember?

MH: No. Usually, Mierases, I think in Home Acres, a dry goods store.

JT: What kind of a sewing machine did she use?

MH: Sewing machine? I don't remember what it was, a treadle.

JT: I kind of wondered about that.

MH: I had it for a while, then my daughter decided she needed it.

JT: We're not talking electric.

MH: This is foot peddle.

JT: Peddle, that's right.

MH: Oh, yes. We didn't have electricity until I was seven years old.

JT: That changed everything, didn't it?

MH: Oh, yes.

JT: That was a big thing, I'd imagine.

MH: Made a lot of changes then.

JT: Probably got the radio then too.

MH: Oh, yes. Got lights! An electric refrigerator. Don't keep the door open too long because then it's got to run longer.

JT: It was probably clunky and boxy.

MH: Um, not really.

JT: Not really, no?

MH: It was smaller than ours, but a lot of food went through it.

JT: Oh, sure, absolutely. It made a difference the electricity when it came. You talked about your brother. Can I have his full name?

MH: Bernard Joseph Smith.

JT: Okay, and he was born five years earlier than you?

MH: March 22, 1926, I think it was.

JT: Did both of you go to the same school?

MH: Oh, yes. And he died March 5, 2006. It was just this year, four months ago.

JT: Correct. So, you went to the same grade school, I think?

MH: Oh, yes.

JT: Smith School, correct? Tell me about Smith School

MH: Just a little one-room school. I had one teacher all the way through from kindergarten through eighth grade.

JT: Do you remember her name?

MH: Oh, yes.

JT: Who was that.

MH: Mary Auble. and I had her daughter from tenth, eleventh, and twelfth.

JT: No.

MH: She was the same age as Bern.

JT: All right, what's special about Smith?

MH: I guess you knew everybody. You knew all the families, which is quite different from now.

JT: Ah, huh. A one-room school.

MH: Oh, yes.

JT: What was your desk like?

MH: Oh, it had a lid on it, it was wooden with a wooden seat.

JT: Did it have an ink well?

MH: Yes. I didn't use it.

JT: You didn't?

MH: Maybe the ones before.

JT: What kind of boards?

MH: Chalk boards? Black chalk boards.

JT: So, your teacher used chalk.

MH: Oh, yes. History questions on the board every day.

JT: How big was your class, Mary?

MH: Four.

JT: Four of you, of your age.

MH: There was just four of us.

JT: All through?

MH: Some came and went, but they didn't stay long and it was still the four of us when we got done.

JT: From the beginning to the end, eighth grade, just four—Joyce Benedict, Lois Patterson, Ruth Weaver, and me..

MH: Two of us, Joyce and I, went through high school together too.

JT: Okay. And your favorite subject?

MH: Probably reading.

JT: You liked reading, all right. And your least favorite subject?

MH: History.

JT: Oh, I almost thought that was your favorite. All right, you didn't like history. And you had math and spelling.

MH: Oh, yes, we had everything.

JT: And spelling bees?

MH: Not too much. We had our spelling class in English, history, and math, reading, art. She ran things new for us every Friday. I guess that's about it.

JT: Well, when you went to school did you have free time?

MH: Oh, yes.

JT: What did you do during that free time?

MH: We played on the merry-go-round and played tag in the summer. In the wintertime we went down and slid on the ice. About broke our necks.

JT: Did you spring your skates?

MH: Oh, no, sleds quite often we took.

JT: How did you get to school?

MH: We walked. Most of the time.

JT: How far away was that?

MH: Not very far. Down the hill and around the corner.

JT: A half a mile?

MH: About a half a mile I guess it would be.

JT: All kinds of weather?

MH: My folks took us in bad weather.

JT: I wondered about that.

MH: You knew that'd come out, didn't you? In later years my grandpa got so he knew what time I had to go, so then he'd come over. He didn't live in our house, but he would come just in time to take me to school.

JT: So, you went traditionally from September through June?

MH: Usually a while before Memorial Day, the middle of May.

JT: So, you had a lot of playmates at school?

MH: Oh, ya.

JT: More so than at home?

MH: Ya, because I was up on the hill away from everybody.

JT: So, that was fun to go to school.

MH: Oh, ya.

JT: See the kids.

MH: See, when I started there was around 40 in the school, but when I left there was 18 or 20. It kinda went down.

JT: I forgot to ask you about a brother/sister memory. What comes to mind when you were going to school do you have a brother/sister memory that you'd like to share?

MH: Not really, because Bernie was out when I started, or just about. He was like seventh grade when I started so, he was just that far ahead of me. Then in high school he was graduated when I started.

JT: Okay, can you think of anything at home that you remember growing up with Bernie?

MH: Oh, he was always good to me. He normally ran around with the same group. I'll think of a lot of things afterwards.

JT: All right, from Smith where did you go?

MH: Godwin.

JT: Godwin, okay you went to Godwin Public Schools? Now that was quite a ways away. How did you get to school?

MH: We rode with a neighbor.

JT: Who was that?

MH: The first two years of it we rode with George Patterson because he had taken the kids for years and then the last two years we rode with Jean Auble because she taught there and it was just as easy to ride with her. She was going direct.

JT: So, you attended Godwin High School, correct?

MH: Right.

JT: From what year to the end?

MH: Ninth through twelfth.

JT: Ninth through twelfth. Graduated?

MH: Forty-nine.

JT: How was high school different from good old Smith?

MH: Completely! I was lost. I never liked high school because I didn't know anybody there. It was a whole new world.

JT: All right. So, you didn't have any favorite subjects?

MH: Not particularly.

JT: Least favorite subject?

MH: Just kept up with what I had to do.

JT: Okay. Any favorite teachers?

MH: No.

JT: Did you participate in any extra curricular activities?

MH: No, I was too far away. Living on 52nd and Godwin on 36th and Division.

JT: Right.

MH: You didn't run back for just anything.

JT: Correct. I'd like you to remember what you wore to school. Can you remember some of the fashions?

MH: Pleated skirts. Navy jacket. Saddle shoes.

JT: How'd you wear your hair?

MH: About like it is now. Not this short.

JT: Your hair color back then?

MH: Close to what it is now (a dark brunette).

JT: Okay, you said you listened to the radio, correct? You did that in high school too.

MH: Ya.

JT: Do you remember the programs you listened to?

MH: Lone Ranger; Tom Mix. That was at night.

JT: Did your parents join you then, listening also, or just you?

MH: Usually.

JT: Was there music.

MH: No, not necessarily.

JT: They didn't listen to the music?

MH: I don't remember what we listened to. Oh, Fiber McGee and Charlie McCarthy and all those modern things. My ma didn't have television until I left, until I was married.

JT: Ya, that was in the late 40s, early 50s, I would suspect.

MH: Just before I was married I think --

JT: Most people got a TV set around then, I think. That was very typical.

MH: My husband's family got TV when it first came out because he had been in an accident so they got that to keep him quiet.

JT: All right, you talked about those early years in Paris Township. What did your family do for recreation or fun?

MH: We belonged to the Paris Grange.

JT: Oh, you did.

MH: Oh, yes, we all did.

JT: What did you do at the Grange?

MH: We had card parties and dances and dinners. Fun things like that.

JT: Was it something you did weekly?

MH: We had meetings every other week. We'd go to the meeting every other week and the dance would be on the opposite week.

JT: Oh, so it was a social get-together for the people in the area. You had to be members?

MH: No, not to come to the dances. No, I think everybody in the county came.

JT: What kind of dances?

MH: Square dance, round dance.

JT: Whoa! Were you a good dancer, Mary?

MH: Me? Not particularly. I liked it.

JT: You liked it. That's fun. You liked to dance, all right. How about family time with relatives? Did your family get together at holidays?

MH: Usually Christmas she had everybody in.

JT: You're talking about mom, right?

MH: Ya.

JT: At your house.

MH: Yes. Nothing to have thirty there.

JT: Not in that living room, though. Well, you said the big dining room.

MH: Ya.

JT: Okay. Was Christmas a favorite holiday of yours?

MH: Yes. It was of my mother's and she would make it special. All the trimmings.

JT: Tell me about those trimmings. What did she do?

MH: The tree and little knick-knacks around. She loved knick-knacks.

JT: How about the summertime, were there times your family got together with the relatives?

MH: Usually with friends. We have a small family. She had a brother. We'd get together with him once in a while. They had four kids.

JT: Okay, you had some cousins.

MH: My aunt would come up, my dad's sister would come up from Cincinnati and spend a couple weeks. That'd be about it. Otherwise, it was with friends we did things.

JT: Well, I'd like to talk about Glenn and you and your family, so tell me the name of your husband, please.

MH: Glenn Irwin Hale.

JT: Okay, and you married when?

MH: August 7, 1954.

JT: How did you meet Glenn?

MH: At the dances.

JT: At the Grange? And you dated for how long before you were married?

MH: Not too long. We always went as a group, we never went as couples.

JT: And where did Glenn live with his family?

MH: On 32nd near Shaffer between Breton and Shaffer.

JT: Oh, he didn't go to the same high school as you did, did he?

MH: Uh, uh. He went to Ottawa.

JT: Okay. His parents were farmers also?

MH: No, they worked in town. His dad worked for the railroad, C & O. His mother worked at Cutler's as a supervisor.

JT: Okay. You were married in 1954. Were you working at that time?

MH: Ya, I was workin' at General Motors.

JT: So, you graduated in 1949 from high school and you were working at General Motors. What were you doing?

MH: Payroll.

JT: Where did you and Glenn first live?

MH: On Fontenelle.

JT: Do you remember that address?

MH: Five twenty-three.

JT: Five twenty-three Fontenelle. What was that house like?

MH: Small.

JT: Tell me about small.

MH: It was a two bedroom story and a half.

JT: You didn't live there that long, did you?

MH: Thirty-five years.

JT: That's the house that you lived for thirty-five years.

MH: And we raised the roof and put two big bedrooms upstairs.

JT: Oh, so you remodeled at some point in time.

MH: Ya.

JT: You had children?

MH: Four.

JT: Tell me their names.

MH: Mariann, Jim, Barb, and Tom. (We had two stillborn sons.)

JT: That kept you busy.

MH: Out of mischief.

JT: So, you stopped working to raise your family, I'm assuming?

MH: Right.

JT: Okay, and then probably went back after?

MH: Mariann was in high school when I went back. I think she was in eleventh grade, twelfth grade. I think the twelfth.

JT: What was it like to raise the kids back then?

MH: Bedlam. Not really, they were all good kids.

JT: People talked about TV back then, but you didn't?

MH: We had TV.

JT: But, that was not a --

MH: It wasn't a problem, no. Jim liked his TV and we had to call him in for Huckleberry Hound. Otherwise, I'd call him in for that. But, as a rule they didn't --

JT: They played outside?

MH: Oh, ya, they were good about it.

JT: Your husband, what was his job?

MH: He worked for the railroad.

JT: Ah, what was he doing?

MH: He was a clerk.

JT: He was a clerk. I forgot to ask you about what you did after high school, your first job.

MH: I worked a couple months at Globe Knitting, then I went to Muir's and I went to Goshen & Hess and then to General Motors.

JT: Okay, what'd you do at Globe Knitting?

MH: Office work.

JT: You had to be trained for that.

MH: Ya, I got almost trained and then I left.

JT: Well, you found another job.

MH: I had a chance to get another job, right. I wasn't real red hot about what I was doing. Muir's I done the orders.

JT: In the office again?

MH: Ah, huh. They were all office jobs.

JT: You liked what you did in the office?

MH: Oh, ya.

JT: It was challenging. Now, you said you had a special job, on a special machine, didn't you?

MH: Well, I was a comp operator. Comptometer.

JT: That's what I wanted you to tell me about, because that is not heard of now.

MH: No, they don't even know what that machine is. A glorified adding machine.

JT: Was it really an adding machine?

MH: You could do anything on it, any kind of math on it.

JT: That was a very specialized skill.

MH: You had to go to school for it, yes.

JT: Right, so you went to school for this and this is what you did for all these companies, correct?

MH: I ended up at Globe Knitting. That's how I got the job at Globe, they sent me there. Then from then on I went on my own.

JT: Right. This is something that you did in the office.

MH: Right.

JT: And it's not done nowadays because there's no machine like that.

MH: That's right.

JT: Was this a machine on a desk?

MH: Oh, yes. It was about that big. (About 12 x 16 inches.)

JT: And you were able to add, subtract, or --

MH: Divide, multiply. You could do anything with it.

JT: So, you did the payroll.

MH: Not there. Just at General Motors.

JT: Okay, just at -- okay, got it, all right. When you had the children you lived on Fontenelle, correct?

MH: Right.

JT: And you said it was a small house.

MH: Right, country kitchen-type thing. No dining room.

JT: Okay.

MH: Living room, small living room.

JT: Okay.

MH: Two bedrooms downstairs. Then upstairs we raised the roof and made two big bedrooms up there. We had two boys and two girls.

JT: All right, tell me about some family times that you'd like to share. Christmas, was that special?

MH: Usually, I had Christmas Eve at our house and then we'd go to my mother's all day Christmas day.

JT: So, the kids can remember that back to the farm.

MH: Oh, ya, I'm sure they do. The older ones especially.

JT: If it was at Christmas time, winter activities that they engaged in?

MH: No, not really. Usually stuck around the house pretty much.

JT: Family vacations with Glenn and the kids?

MH: Usually was at his folks' cottage at Stoney Lake. They had a nice cottage up there and we would go.

JT: So, was there swimming, fishing, boating?

MH: All.

JT: All of that so that's a memory. The kids would remember that.

MH: Oh, ya.

JT: Did you spend a week, a few days, weekends?

MH: Every weekend. Glenn usually spent a week's vacation up there.

JT: Oh, that's very, very nice.

MH: The kids, she would take 'em up, grandma would take 'em up when she went. Friday nights she would come pick up one or two of 'em and then we'd go on Saturday.

JT: You said you didn't remember much about the farm during the Depression Era. What about --

MH: No, that was before my time.

JT: I know, I know.

MH: I know I'm old, but not that old.

JT: No, I know that. But, you remember a little bit about World War II.

MH: Not a whole lot.

JT: Any type of shortages that the farm had?

MH: I remember we had to have gas stamps for the car and butter. Butter was hard to get at that time.

JT: Okay, butter was hard to get.

MH: There were a lot of certain groceries that were hard to get that they didn't always have on hand.

JT: But, if you had the farm you were growing.

MH: We had most of our own --

JT: Your own groceries, right. So, that made it easier and your parents, I'm sure shared with relatives. You mentioned on the phone that you were part of Saint Mary Magdalene's organization. Charter members?

MH: Ah, huh.

JT: How'd that come about?

MH: I grew up at Saint Mary's Cascade, which is no longer there. It's now been incorporated into Holy Family in Caledonia. And then when they started Saint Mary Magdalene, then we went over there instead, St. Mary Magdalene.

JT: How big a group was this?

MH: Where?

JT: For Saint Mary Magdalene.

MH: What was there, seventy families when they started or something like that?

JT: That's a small group, but a big enough group to get it started.

MH: Ya, I think there was seventy families when they started but they all were good workers. They worked hard.

JT: Any people you are particularly still close to?

MH: Not really.

JT: What did you do to start up the church?

MH: Just worked on the committees that they needed help on. My husband helped build the pink church. He worked on that.

JT: Erected it, you mean, to build it?

MH: Ah, huh. Joe Rou would have it all laid out and then the men would go and help set it up. We worked on that quite a bit, but then on the rest of the buildings they weren't allowed to.

JT: No, they had to have it contracted and they had to build it up to code and things like that. What committees were you part of?

MH: I was on the First Friday Team for quite a few years. I was treasurer one year.

JT: What is the First Friday Team?

MH: We had coffee after mass on Friday.

JT: Okay. Was this all women?

MH: Usually it was mostly women. That was a good group that used to come.

JT: And you were treasurer?

MH: Of the Women's Guild one year.

JT: Okay. Were you part of the Guild for a long time?

MH: Ya.

JT: Do you remember how many years?

MH: Not really. Quite a while. I went to most of their meetings, a lot of 'em.

JT: Are you still active in the church?

MH: No.

JT: I can -- you hand it off, I can see that. I can see that too. I think Saint Mary's is celebrating their 50th, isn't it?

MH: Ya, they're getting ready to. We found some, the first financial report, we found that the other day.

JT: Oh, you have that?

MH: Ya.

JT: You have a copy of it? How cool!

MH: I took that over to Barb Kuhn.

JT: What was interesting about that report?

MH: Well, how much they had taken in at the time. It was one of the first reports. I don't remember what it was or all the amounts, but --

JT: Such a difference, isn't it? Of course, it's so much, the church is so much bigger nowadays, right?

MH: It's too bad because you don't have the feeling that you did when we were a small group and you knew everybody. Now, nobody speaks to anybody.

JT: Well, you almost have to be active in doing something to have that connection. You maybe needed to be in the choir.

MH: But even, this group over here don't know that group over there.

JT: No, you are correct.

MH: Shoot, we used to stand around outside for an hour after church. Father John and I would say, "Well, I could have kept you longer." There was four couples, three couples at the time, four of them joined later. We'd always stand around and talk and exchange kids. He'd always give us a bad time. "How do you know whose kid belongs to what?" But, he knew which kid belonged to who. He'd call 'em all by, maybe not their first name, but he knew their last names.

JT: But, that's not happening now with all those families. I understand, I understand what you're talkin' about. So, do you have hobbies, Mary?

MH: Not too many anymore.

JT: But, you do have hobbies. Tell me about your hobbies.

MH: Crossword puzzles, I read a little bit, I make scrubbies.

JT: You're quite a crossword puzzle fan, aren't you?

MH: I'm afraid so. You've got a few minutes so you grab the book and do a couple and go on about what you want to do next.

JT: Well, it keeps you alert. Where do you get your supplies from?

MH: I send for them. I get about twenty books at a time.

JT: Oh, Mary! Twenty books!

MH: That's why I only have to send for them once a year.

JT: In that lasts how long?

MH: Oh, close to a year.

JT: Oh, that's a year's supply. All right, I got it.

MH: It's much easier sending for them. They're just old copies, you know, that have been returned. It don't make any difference if it's old or new or what, you know. It's still a crossword.

JT: Anybody else in your family love it as much as you?

MH: No, they wonder what I'm doin' most the time.

JT: You said you read. Any particular subject or copy?

MH: Not really. I do like them Amish ones, the Amish stories.

JT: All right. We're almost to the end here, Mary. Have I forgotten anything you want to add?

MH: I don't think so.

JT: How would you describe yourself, Mary? Tell me some adjectives here.

MH: I have no idea.

JT: Mary, what are you like?

MH: Average.

JT: Okay, Mary is average and she --

MH: I don't have any idea how to describe myself.

JT: Mother. I'll give you a hint.

MH: Oh, yes. Mother, grandmother.

JT: How many grandchildren, you never told me that.

MH: Eight.

JT: Eight grandchildren. Do they keep you busy nowadays?

MH: No. Because they all live out of town. I have two in Florida, two in Indianapolis and the other four are in Fremont.

JT: Do you see the Fremont?

MH: On occasion. They've been pretty busy so I haven't seen too much of 'em. Hopefully, I'll see more of them now.

JT: Last question, Mary: Do you have any advice for the kids? If so, what would it be?

MH: For our kids?

JT: Ah, huh.

MH: Just keep things on the straight and narrow, which they have all done very well.

JT: You're real proud of your family.

MH: Oh, yes.

JT: You did well.

MH: Ya, they all have good jobs and nice families. Barb isn't married, but she does all right.

JT: And that's a tribute to you and Glenn.

MH: I hope so.

JT: Ya, see, you did good. Okay, we are done.

End of tape

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