

Growing up on a farm near Arlington, Illinois
an Oral History

Teresa Gardner, Interviewee
Of Walnut, Illinois

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Narrator's Name: TERESA GARDNER
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Place of Interview: WALNUT MANOR NURSING HOME, WALNUT, ILLINOIS
Interviewer's Name: LELIA ANDERSON
For: STARVED ROCK LIBRARY SYSTEM ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Q: This is an interview as a part of a project of the Starved Rock Library. I am Lelia Anderson of LaMoille, the interviewer and the person being interviewed is Mrs. Teresa Neill Gardner of Arlington. Where were you born, Teresa?

A: On the farm home, a mile southeast of Arlington.

Q: And how many were there in the family?

A: There were twelve, four boys and eight girls, one boy died when he was four years old.

Q: Now how many are left?

A: Eleven. Oh, now there are only two of us left, the youngest ones.

Q: The two youngest?

A: Yes, Jennette Hopps and myself.

Q: And do you know without counting how many nieces and nephews you have?

A: Yes., I think I have about fifteen.

Q: Oh, that's not so many then. Some of them have died I believe?

A: Yes, some of them have passed on.

Q: Yes. Tell me about your father and mother.

A: Well my father was born in Gilford, County Down, Ireland.

Q: Oh, he grew up in Ireland?

A: Yes, he lived in Ireland until he was 21 and then he decided to see America, so he came to Peru, Illinois.

Q: And how long did he stay in Peru?

A: He stayed in Peru until he got married, till he got married.

Before--he didn't move out to Arlington till 18. . .

Q: 1870, I believe you told me.

A: 18. . . PAUSE Now I remember, it was in 1870.

Q: So he had been in Peru from 1847 to 1870?

A: Yes, I believe.

Q: What about your mother?

A: My mother was born in rural Peru, Illinois to. . .

Q: According to this, your father was very Irish, how about your mother?

A: Well my mother's parents were--came from Ireland.

Q: Oh, so the Irish got together?

A: The Irish got together, which was very happy, cause if you're not Irish, I'd be ashamed.

Q: Why?

A: Well, I don't know why, but I'd be ashamed if I weren't Irish.

Q: (laughs) That's funny. What do you remember--you like to be Irish, what do you remember from either things your father told or things you did that make you like to be Irish?

A: Well one thing that stands in my memory real plainly is St. Patrick's Day. We never did anything but that we always had corn beef and cabbage, and we always celebrated St. Patrick's Day. And he used to tell me that when he was younger his family used to meet to exchange their troubles and they'd all take their own and go home.

Q: That was back in Ireland?

A: That was back in Ireland when he was a boy.

Q: Did he tell you anything else about Irish customs?

A: He told me that an Irish custom was that when anyone passed away they would send their chauffeur with the family carriage to the funeral, and they would never attend, just see that their carriage

A: was there, and their chauffeur.

Q: And then they didn't have to go?

A: And they didn't have to go.

Q: So if you had a chauffeur, that you could take care of your social obligation at a funeral?

A: That's right.

Q: What about Irish wit. I've heard so much about it--that the Irish have this special skill in the use of words, so it sounds funny.

A: I don't know too much about that. I don't think we had any of that.

Q: You see my memory of you and at least two of your sisters--that you had a particular sense of humor that we used to say, well that must be the Irish in them.

A: I guess so.

Q: So that you're not even conscious of the fact that you and your family had this?

A: My father made three trips back to Europe. One time one of my sisters, Nellie, went with him. But my mother never would go, she said she'd wait until they built a bridge across. (laughter) But he made three trips across to see his parents.

Q: Maybe that's part of that. . .

A: And he had two nephews that came to America. I remember them coming here and visiting us.

Q: Tell me about this Neill Farm, you've had it since 1870. What did your father pay for it?

A: Fifty dollars an acre for 240 acres.

Q: And how much do you suppose it might sell for today?

A: Well I don't know. At the present prices it's hard to say but I suppose it would be way over \$1,000 maybe.

Q: Considerably over \$1,000. I heard of a farm recently that sold for \$2,100 an acre. Who's on the family farm now?

A: My nephew, Herbert Neill.

Q: Has anybody else had the farm other than Neills?

A: No.

Q: Straight down since 18. . .

A: After my mother left the farm, my brother John had it and as he moved to town, then his son, Herbert Neill is John's son.

Q: And he has it now?

A: He has it now and he owns all the land, he has bought it all.

Q: So it is really a Neill farm?

A: It really is a Neill farm. He has one of those hundred, that you have in front of your house.

Q: A centennial. . .

A: A Centennial.

Q: . . .recognition.

A: Recognition.

Q: I'm thinking, I'm trying to imagine a family of eleven--were you all home at once, or did some of the older ones get married before you and Jennette came along?

A: No, we were all home at one time. I know I was very small when my oldest sister got married and one of my sisters said I remember sitting up on the stair step taking care of you. So we were all home at one time.

Q: I'm trying to imagine how big that. . .

A: Eleven, and then my father and mother would be fourteen. And in them days we had hired men too you must remember.

Q: Did you ever have hired girls, or did you eight girls do the work?

A: I think we eight girls used to do the work, because I can hear my father say, "Come here and sit down. Haven't you got any girls, where's the girls? Do the dishes."

Q: So you had to do some work at home?

A: We had to do the work. One of my sisters all liked to work outside. She did a lot of milking.

Q: What was your particular responsibility?

A: I guess I being the youngest, I was spoiled, I didn't have any special responsibility. Only I had to bring in the cobs and the wood.

Q: In order to provide. . .

A: To keep the fire going.

Q: Tell about the cooking of those days. What did you have to eat, what could you buy at town, what couldn't you buy at town, anything about what was true of food in. . .

A: I don't remember anything that you could buy in town in them days. I know you couldn't buy any bread--I can't remember. We lived off of our garden and butchered and I know my mother had to bake bread and we had to do all the sewing. She couldn't go to town and buy a dress for anybody.

Q: But you could buy a hat?

A: Yes.

Q: Because--where could you go to buy a hat?

A: In Arlington, we had a hat shop.

Q: They had a hat shop, but no dress shop.

A: No dress shop. I don't think they had dress shops in the early days.

Q: Perhaps these were not available.

A: I know I always used to be crying for a boughten coat or a boughten dress, because I always had to wear hand-me-downs.

Q: What were the dresses like, do you have any recollection of dress lengths, dress style. . .

A: They were all mostly long.

Q: They were long. . .

A: And high button shoes.

Q: And in the wintertime, what did you do in addition to keep you warm? We have boots now.

A: I don't remember that. But I know we always had soapstone in our cars, or buggy, to keep us warm, or in a sled or bobsled.

Q: You grew up in the buggy and the bobsled days?

A: Yes.

Q: What is the soapstone?

A: Well it's a stone that we used to put in the oven and get it warm and then wrap it in paper and put it in the buggy.

Q: And it would keep the heat?

A: Oh, yes. But of course when we went we always went in a carriage.

Q: But in the wintertime, did you have a bobsled?

A: We had a bobsled.

Q: ~~And~~ then you could use it. . .

A: It--yes. And I remember on the Saturday night my father throwing out enough corn to feed the pigs and he'd have one of the neighbors milk the cows Sunday morning, and we'd go 21 miles east, take us all in the bobsled to visit my uncle and aunt near Ottawa, Illinois.

Q: And how long would it take on a bobsled?

A: Well I think. . .

Q: Twenty-one miles.

A: Twenty-one miles, I think it would take us a couple of hours to get over there.

Q: I would think even with a fast team, that it would take. . .

A: Well we always had good horses, that was one thing. And we always had ponies. I had a pony and I was always riding a pony and of course I had a sidesaddle.

Q: A sidesaddle, what's that?

A: Sidesaddle, well you sat on one side, you didn't straddle it.

Q: Why not? I could stay on better if I were straddled.

A: Well I guess that was the fashion in them days. I always had a sidesaddle.

Q: With long dresses (laughs) how could you. . .

A: Well of course they wouldn't be maybe just to your ankle.

Q: But even then, it would be a problem wouldn't it?

A: Yes.

Q: What about farm machinery, do you--you mentioned that you always had good horses.

A: We always had good horses. Well we had plows and harrows and they walked with the harrow and plows too I think, if I remember rightly.

Q: Yes, in other. . .

A: And they husked corn by hand.

Q: That would seem strange to some modern people, wouldn't it?

A: They wouldn't know what I was talking about.

Q: No. Could you describe what you had to do to husk corn?

A: Yes.

Q: How would you do it?

A: You had a peg you put on your hand. And I know my mother used to have to make cotton flannel mittens and thumbstalls and put on the

A: men's fingers. Thumbstalls.

Q: Why?

A: Well because the mitts used to wear out.

Q: Oh, from the use of the fingers?

A: The use corn _____ the fingers.

Q: Coming back to the house, I'm thinking of a house big enough for thirteen people plus several hired men, can you tell us anything about that house in which you grew up?

A: Well we had a real large house, we PAUSE about eight bedrooms, upstairs.

Q: Eight bedrooms upstairs?

A: Eight bedrooms upstairs.

Q: Were they small bedrooms?

A: No, they were good sized bedrooms.

Q: How high were the ceilings?

A: Ten feet, foot ceilings.

Q: And today most of our ceilings are how high?

A: I suppose six or eight, I'm not sure.

Q: Six or eight feet high. So that they were. . .

A: I guess, I'm not positive, but I think . . .

Q: How did you heat that house?

A: Well we had a hard coal stove upstairs--one hard coal stove upstairs, a hard coal stove in the sitting room--we had sitting rooms then, and a soft coal in the dining room and the kitchen stove.

Q: So you had four stoves?

A: Going.

Q: Why did you use hard coal?

A: Well I suppose because that was vogue and they had isinglass doors, they were very ornamental. I know my aunt lived a mile from us and she had eight boys where we had eight girls. And they would come down to visit my brothers on weekends and when they'd go home everyone of those isinglass would be punched through with holes. And I can hear my mother say, "Thank God my boys are girls."

Q: (laughs) Because the boys--well what did you do then, could you replace the isinglass?

A: You'd have to go to town and get isinglass and replace them.

Q: Oh, and you could buy isinglass?

A: Isinglass.

Q: Isinglass, is--what is it, a kind of glass?

A: It's something like plastic, in a way I think.

Q: More like plastic?

A: You could see through it.

Q: And you could see through it?

A: Yes, the fire--you could see it burning you know, it would be nice and red.

Q: The hard coal, I believe last longer?

A: Lasts longer, and with a steady heat.

Q: I see.

A: And you didn't have to be filling it up every five minutes.

Q: So were your bedrooms warm in winter?

A: Well, comparatively.

Q: You mean it really worked to provide heat.

A: Yes.

Q: You didn't have any fireplaces?

A: No.

Q: That's interesting. Do you know when this house was built?
You moved there in 1870, and you were born there, in this house.

A: Oh, well, let me see, we moved out there in. . .

A: Jennette Hopps: You wasn't born in the old house. . .

A: Well I don't know, I was born in the new house, you was born in
the new house, Suzy. . .

A: Jennette Hopps: So was Suzy.

A: . . .and John and Margaret. . .

A: Jennette: No.

A: John?

A: Jennette Hopps: Susan was the last one in the old house.

A: Susan. Well let me see. . .

Q: And you were born when?

A: In 1887.

Q: 1887, so by the ~~that~~ time you had this big house?

A: Oh, yes, before that, we must have had it 1880 maybe.

Q: Something like that. . .

A: We moved out in 1870, you say?

Q: Yes.

A: Ten years I suppose, 1880.

Q: So by that time you had enough family that you needed. . .

A: A larger house.

Q: How many rooms, eight upstairs. . .

A: And we had two bedrooms downstairs, a parlor, a sitting room,
a dining room, a kitchen and another kitchen--six.

Q: So that meant quite a few rooms. Who lives in that house today?
Or what is true of that house today?

A: My nephew, Herbert Neill.

Q: How many rooms does he use?

A: Well he has taken off the back of that house, he took off five rooms all from the back and has a garage there. And he uses only three bedrooms upstairs, and the downstairs, he uses the--he has a living room, dining room and kitchen and two bedrooms downstairs.

A: Jennette Hopps: And a front hall.

A: And a front hall.

Q: What, you mentioned that you had a pony and you did a lot of riding, what other recreation do you remember, what your family did for fun?

A: Well we did mostly the pony, with the horses.

Q: Just riding?

A: Riding. We didn't ride very far out in the field, up and down, and then we had a cutter and of course they boys used to have that, and it had sleigh bells.

Q: Was there anything like skating and coasting in the winter?

A: Well I had skates. I remember we had a gravel pit across the street from us, across the road, where I used to go skating.

Q: So there was some, the winter sports?

A: Yes, the skating.

Q: The cutter would be somewhat a different experience wouldn't it, from what people know today?

A: Yes, it's mighty cold riding in the cutter.

Q: Mighty cold riding in the cutter?

A: In the cutter, yes.

Q: That's where you needed that soapstone to keep your feet warm.

A: Feet warm.

Q: Where did you go to school?

A: Arlington.

Q: How far?

A: One mile, we walked.

Q: You walked?

A: Most of the time.

Q: Do you remember anything about that school? Was it a one room school? Who taught it?

A: No, it was three rooms.

Q: And who were the teachers?

A: Matt Ryan, and Hannah Wilson and Liz Dwyer.

A: Jennette: Liz Dwyer, Elizabeth McDonald.

Q: So this was in the days before they had sisters teaching. . .

A: Before they had sisters teaching. The sisters came there in 1902 I would say.

Q: And what do you mean by sisters teaching?

AL I mean. . .

Q: Not the Neill sisters?

A: Benedictine nuns from Nauvoo.

Q: Did they wear the garb?

A: They wore the garb and there was quite a little controversy when they first started, but they won out.

Q: What was the religious connection of your family and then of yours?

A: We were members of the Presbyterian Church at Arlington. When my father and mother lived in Peru they went to the Episcopalian Church. But when they moved out to Arlington they thought, well they were moving-- and my mother was a Catholic--and they thought when they were going to raise a family--so they both joined the Presbyterian Church in Arlington.

Q: Because so many people think that if you're Irish, you know, that you are Catholic.

A: Are Catholic.

Q: And I often wondered about the Neills being Protestant.

A: No, my. . .

Q: Your father was Protestant?

A: Protestant. He was an Episcopalian.

Q: Moving to Arlington, near Arlington in 1870, then that church had to have been started by that time. Was it the same building that you now. . .

A: Yes.

Q: . . .attend?

A: And it's in very good repair.

Q: That means, at least 1870, that building then is. . .

A: One hundred and five. . .

Q: One hundred, at least 105. . .

A: At least 105 years old.

Q: And I remember a few years ago, because I attended that church too as you know, that we had a 100th anniversary. . .

A: And I know that that's about another five.

Q: . . .so that it probably is near to 125. Tell about the town of Arlington when. . .

A: It was first called Lost Grove.

Q: Why, do you know?

A: I don't know why they called it Lost Grove, but it was called Lost Grove and the cemetery always went by Lost Grove up near a few years ago. And then they dropped that name and they don't have a name now I guess. And then they changed the name to Arlington, I think it was in 1874.

Q: That the town was organized here?

A: Yes.

Q: In 1874. Now whether they changed the name then because it became and official town in 1874.

A: Official town, yes.

Q: Well this means that this town did not, was not an official organized town when your folks came a mile away. . .

A: No, no it wasn't.

Q: . . .in 1870. But as you remember this town, as a girl and a young person, what about its size and what about its businesses?

A: Well as I remember it, we had a very good implement store, Mike Young had an implement store, and Larkin's had a grocery store, Russell Woodworth had a grocery store, Jimmy Arnold had a grocery store, Minnie Brown had a hat shop, and there were two taverns, George Meyers and Mr. Hassler, and T. A. Maul had what they called, he sold coal and flour, F-L-O-U-R, flour, and then we had a livery barn, a blacksmith shop, and a large husk factory.

Q: So you really had, except that you didn't have a dress shop. . .

A: We didn't have a dress shop, they weren't making dresses I guess then.

Q: And you didn't have a barber shop?

A: Yes, we had a barber shop.

Q: Oh, you did? So you mean men. . .

A: Yes, a barber shop, and a harness shop, Sam Smith had a harness shop.

Q: So this meant quite a. . .

A: Flourishing town.

Q: How big was it for people living in it?

A: Oh, I think there must have been about 800.

Q: What about railroad?

A: Well the railroad came--yes we had a railroad, CB&Q.

Q: Going through?

A: Yes.

Q: Did the trains stop there?

A: Yes, we had a passenger train that stopped, one going each way.

Q: So that you could get in and out. . .

A: Get in and out and they's why we did most of our travelling, we'd go up to Mendota about nine c'clock in the morning and come back about four in the evening.

Q: Going back to your family, what was the education of your father and your mother?

A: They were just educated in public schools. My father had his education in Ireland and my mother in the public schools in Peru, but she was a Catholic and she went to the sister's school in Peru for awhile.

Q: So when you came along, the eleven of you, what happened in terms of your education beyond grade school? I'm thinking of your family.

A: Yes. Well Susan was--I think about the first one that ever went away to school. She went to Princeton and graduated from the high school in 1900. And Jennette went to--she graduated, she went to Gimbler's College in Princeton, and she went to the teacher's training course at DeKalb and she was--then after she graduated there she taught in Cherry.

Q: So that your family got more education than would have been true probably of most of your neighbors?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you remember anything about the people who lived around Arlington, were they people like your father who came from other countries or were they. . .

A: Yes, practically mostly all were.

Q: And what countries?

A: Well, I think they were mostly all Irish--the Dwyers, we had a John Dwyer on one side and Jim Dwyer, the O'Connors and I don't think they weren't Irish, Pattersons were Irish, and Peter J. Cassidy was Irish.

Q: We've been speaking of the Irish, what did your father look like, or did he have any particular habits, whether they were Irish or not?

A: Well, I don't know exactly if he had any habits, he was very dressy. He had a rather high bald head as I remember him. And he, as I first remember him, he had a silk hat and he always carried a cane which was called a shillelagh. I don't know how to spell it. And it's made of an Irish, of the thorn of a hedge, I believe. And that's about all I can remember.

Q: How did he use that cane?

A: Just to carry it, for style.

Q: Just for style?

A: Yes.

Q: And I wonder if that was an Irish style or. . .

A: Oh yes, every Irishman had a tan shillelagh.

Q: Oh, you mean every Irishman had?

A: Yes, that's what they claimed, they they always carried a shillelagh.

Q: That's interesting. Let's go back again to something we talked a bit about before--this matter of home life. You talked about the outdoor, skating, pony riding and so on, what did you do in the house, especially winter nights?

A: Mostly we played cards and then none of my brothers like to play cards, so they always went up to Patterson's because Patterson's wouldn't allow cards played. And so the--we girls we had--we always played cards, but if we weren't doing that we were patching quilts, making quilts, or crocheting, or embroidering.

Q: Anything special you would eat during those winter nights?

A: We always had apples of course, and pop corn. And of course, pop corn balls.

Q: And you made pop corn balls?

A: Made pop corn balls.

Q: Because I remember as a child the apples and the pop corn, but we didn't make pop corn balls.

A: Yes, some of my older sisters would always make pop corn balls.

Q: I'm trying to picture eight girls of varying ages sitting around at home--cards and eating apples, making pop corn balls. . .

A: Of course as I remember then, there weren't eight girls at home then because I think my oldest sister was married when I was about a year old.

Q: Oh, so that actually you didn't. . .

A: There wouldn't be too many at home at a time. I can remember. . .

A: Jennette Hopps: Dolly was the last one married.

Q: Dolly was the last one married? She was one of the older ones.

A: I can remember about six home.

Q: About six at a time? Well even six girls, how did you get along sharing your living together?

A: Oh, we had our own fights of course.

Q: Of course? (laughter)

A: That went with it.

Q: Can you remember anything about any of those particular fights?

A: No, I don't know as I do, anything special.

Q: Well, we sometimes say those were the days, now whether we mean that we liked them or we didn't like them, you cannot tell from that phrase. As you look back what special things seem to you now important and what things are you glad we have now that you didn't have when you were growing up?

A: Well I think the home life was much nicer then than it is now. Because we didn't have the amusements, we didn't have the automobile, we stayed home and we made our own amusements. But of course, now we have electricity--that I think is marvelous. That we didn't have in them days. And especially the heat. We don't have to be carrying cobs and coal and using an iron. Electricity I'll say is marvelous.

Q: What did you have. . .

A: Jennette Hopps: And don't forget the telephone.

Q: And you like the telephone of today? The--what kind of iron did you have?

A: We heated it on the stove.

Q: For six girls, six of them at once, and long dresses. . .

A: And ruffles on your petticoats.

Q: I was wondering about the ruffles.

A: Yes, ruffles on your petticoats, and we had clothes then that had to be ironed. We didn't have no premature, or permanent.

Q: So the ironing alone, and what about the laundry in terms of the washing?

A: Well that was quite a job too. But wasn't anything to do--with the churning and making butter, my sister Nellie, she was the one

A: that did most of the butter making.

Q: And what kind of a butter maker did you have, could you describe it?

A: Well it was a barrel churn, but you made butter with a paddle.

Q: Oh, you mean. . .

A: A butter ladle and a butter bowl.

Q: And what did you have to do?

A: Work out the buttermilk. And we made prints, we had a two pound print that she used to make the butter in.

Q: What do you mean by a. . .

A: I mean a print, I mean like a two pound, well they were patties, pats. And we sold our butter. My mother went every week to Peru, we had customers where we delivered butter and eggs.

Q: You mean house to house?

A: House to house.

Q: And Peru was how many miles away?

A: Twelve miles, and we drove it with a horse and open wagon.

Q: Even in the wintertime?

A: Even in the wintertime.

Q: And that would be something difficult.

A: That would be something difficult.

Q: I'm thinking of just a variety of things, one of them you mentioned, Minnie's Hat Shop. Can you describe the marvelous creations that came out of Minnie's Hat Shop?

A: Well I remember having plumes, they were real large hats and having plumes I would say more than twelve inches long on hats. I can remember having a white plume on one of my hats and some other gals had dark, black plumes and. . .

Q: Did she buy her hats or did she make them?

A: She made them.

Q: So could you, tell. . .

A: And then you go in and sort whatever kind of a frame you wanted and then she would make it and make it up to suit whatever you wanted.

Q: Oh? So it was a tailormade. . .

A: Tailormade hat.

Q: . . .hat kind of thing?

A: Yes.

Q: We mentioned briefly that you went to the church in Arlington, did you go for classes or just for church. . .

A: Sunday school always and church and on Sunday evening to C.E., Christian Endeavor.

Q: So you came into town twice then. . .

A: On Sunday.

Q: . . .on Sunday?

A: Yes. And I can remember one thing with my sister-in-law, one of our minister's daughters is married to my brother John. And I can remember calling up when it would be a little bit snowy or rainy or something and asking him, "Rev. Malcom, are we having church tonight." "If anybody comes."

Q: And so you'd have church if anybody. . .

A: If anybody came. So then we'd go in.

Q: Well I would think that if your family went, you were sure that somebody came.

A: Yes.

Q: Because that would be quite a lineup even after one or two had gotten married.

A: Well of course my father and mother didn't go too often in the evenings, we--just a couple of we gals and one of the boys.

Q: Did you walk?

A: My brother Will. . .No. My brother Will was very good about taking us.

Q: I see. And so, well did you have a surrey then?

A: We had a two seated carriage, surrey.

Q: You called it a surrey?

A: Yes.

Q: At least that's what we used to call it in my childhood. So that your brother Will being older would. . .

A: He was always very good about taking us there and taking us to dances in later years. He didn't care how many girls he had, he'd take them.

Q: That's wonderful to have a brother like that. What, do you remember anything about the sermons or what the classes were like?

A: No, I don't remember anything outstanding.

Q: Did you have a basement then?

A: Yes.

Q: So you still could, just like now, you. . .

A: Yes, have. . .

Q: Have your classes. . .

A: . . .your classes in the basement.

Q: Well, this has been a remembering time and I thank you for sharing. . .

A: I hope it has been some, made some results.

Q: That it recalls days of the past. . .

A: Maybe some of my great-nieces and nephews will be reading, wanting to read this. . .

Q: The occasional voice that you have heard on this tape is the voice of Jennette Hopps, the sister just older than Teresa and she didn't want to be on tape, but at times she, she suddenly thought of something that we weren't getting. . .

A:Jennette Hopps: You were wrong.

Q: . . .yes.

A: And you might say that Jennette is 91 and I am 88.

Q: Yes.

A: She is in the nursing home at Walnut Manor. . .

Q: In Walnut, Illinois.

A: . . .in Walnut, Illinois and very happy I think.

Q: What do you like to do in the nursing home?

A:Jennette Hopps: Anything that they have to do in the crafts.

Q: And what do you make in the craft room that you. . .

A:Jennette Hopps: Right now I don't make nothing but poodles.

Q: Poodles. Would you tell us what the poodles are made of? I see two right here now.

A:Jennette Hopps: Well the foundation is an old coat hanger, bent to look like a dog. And then you take yarn and make it in about what we call curls and fill that thing with that yarn until you can't find any of the form to show.

Q: I see a very fat poodle. . .

A:Jennette Hopps: Well then, when she comes back she takes it and to see if she can pull anyplace that I didn't put enough things on, she goes this way--and anyplace she can find that wire, then I got to put

A:Jennette Hopps: those things back in there and fill it up again.
That's the part I don't like.

Q: That's what you don't like?

A:Jennette Hopps: That's what I don't like. (laughs)

A: And she puts on the eyes and then. . .

A:Jennette Hopps: They put the eyes on--I never have put the eyes on--
they put the eyes on and right here will be a little piece of red for
his tongue and then his ears will be over here and a ribbon around
his neck.

Q: How many people in this particular group?

A:Jennette Hopps: Oh, works in there? Oh, anybody that could do anything
that's here. Everybody is welcome in here. And you can always find
something to do for them.

Q: This is marvelous. I am remembering your mother at your age and
older, how old was she finally. . .

A: Eighty-nine when she died.

Q: That's what I thought, so she died a little younger. Eighty-nine
in those days was older than your 91.

A: She was in a wheelchair seven years.

Q: And you took care of her, Teresa. What a difference in those days
living in a home, private home, as compared with now living with other
folks.

A: Nellie lived to be 93.

Q: One of the other sisters?

A: Yes.

Q: And she again stayed in the home?

A: Yes.

Q: What are some of the advantages we have today over the housebound person of the past days, like your mother and your sister?

A: I think--some people won't agree with me--but I think that the Manor Homes, our nursing home, are wonderful.

Q: Why?

A: Well they get wonderful care.

A:Jennette Hopps: It's all under nurses' supervision, everything.

Q: So instead of depending on a member of the family to do everything, you have this skilled care now.

A: And you get better care, they know how to give you baths, and then those baths, what do you call them. . .

A:Jennette Hopps: Whirlpool baths.

A: Whirlpool baths and things that we didn't have in a home. But they have nowadays.

Q: So today the three of us are appreciating the Fourth of July (laughter) in a, one of these Manor Homes, where today older folks can have this fine care and friendship and sharing together that is possible and could not be true with those folks of an earlier day.

END OF SIDE ONE

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