

# Orleans County Historical Association

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# Orleans County Historical Association

## INTERVIEW

Mrs. Ann Richards  
3421 North Gravel Road  
Medina, New York

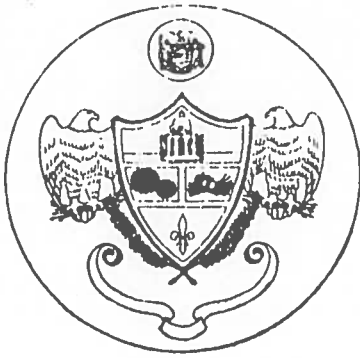
Ann Richards was born in Ontario, Canada in 1913.

The interview is conducted by Dorothy Corlis of Medina, N.Y.

R Ann Richards

C Dorothy Corlis





# Orleans County Historical Association

## ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

The purpose of this project is to collect information about the historical development of Orleans County by means of tape-recorded conversations with people whose experiences reflect the county's growth.

These tapes and transcriptions will be preserved as educational resources and possible publication (all or in part).

I hereby release this tape and transcription to the Orleans County Historical Association.

Ann Richards

Signed

Oct. 9, 1979

Date

Understood and agreed to:

Louise S. Curtis

INTERVIEWER

Oct 9, 1979

Date

For the Orleans County Historical Association, October 9, 1979, this is Dorothy Corlis of Medina, New York interviewing Mrs. Ann Richards of Medina.

C Where were you born ?

R I was born in Peterborough, Ontario, Canada in 1913. I guess that will tell how old I am - - but I am 66 at this moment, in case it's hard to figure.

And I lived there until I was about - - a - - 5 years old.

C Will you tell us your father's name and your mother's name ?

R Yes. My father's name was Heber Dobbin and my mother's name was Mildred Stinson Dobbin. And my father was born in Peterborough and my mother was born in a very small town called Janetville, Ontario.

C Did you have any brothers or sisters ?

R I have one sister. Her name is Helen Dobbin Wheeler. And she now lives in East Bloomfield, New York and she is two years younger than I am.

C Well let's get back to your father's business. You lived 'till you were 5 years old in Peterborough ?

R Yes, I think it was about 5 and my father was in the grocery business, so to speak; he had owned a little grocery in Peterborough and then he sold it and moved to Port Hope where he joined with the Dominion Store Company. And he was - - oh wait a minute - - Sorry, I goofed ! We moved to Oshawa, Ontario and there he worked for the General Motors for a few years. Then he went back to Port Hope and went in to the grocery business again for the Dominion Store Company.

C He was a manager ?

R He was a manager. And then we moved from Port Hope to Toronto and he went into - - he went to the T.P. Loblaw Company.

C That was the first store Loblaw had ?

R That was the very first store that Mr. Loblaw started. He started the Self-Serve stores in Canada and they were the first there; I won't say they were the first over here because I'm not sure. And from Toronto; a - - my mother became very ill while we lived in Toronto and her doctor suggested that we

go to a little area in the back, back woods in Canada. It was as primitive as any place you could even think about. And my aunt, who was my father's sister, was a school teacher there in a little one room school house. And she had married a farmer in the area and they had a tenant house and so my mother's doctor said, "This is best place in the world for you to go to recuperate." So my grandmother and my mother and my sister and I went to this farm house, which was a tenant house, and we lived there most of one year.

C This is where you got interested in nature ?

R This is what I give my natural love for nature credit. My Aunt Wilma, who was the school teacher, was a definite lover of the out of doors and she taught us so many things and she taught us to respect and love every bit of it and I'm sure that this is where I got all my interest and pleasure for nature; and I have loved it ever since, as you know.

C She taught you about the plants and about the animals, the birds ?

R She taught us about plants and the birds, she made us aware of being able to see things that we had never seen before. I'll tell you one little thing I think sticks out in my mind. We had a little out-house on this tenant farm and I was sitting out there one day, just sort of contemplating, and I happened to look under one of the rafters and there was a little green thing with gold design on it and I thought it was a miracle. I couldn't imagine what it was. There'd been some gold mines in the area and I, of course, was very excited about gold mines because I'd never been near one and we'd heard quite a little talk about it and I was sure that this was some kind of gold that I was discovering. I ran in the house and called my grandmother, who knew a great deal about nature, and I said: "Come quick, come quick ! There's something beautiful out in the little out-house !" And she came out, running. And it was a Chrysalis of a Monarch Butterfly. I couldn't believe my eyes and to this day it's just as big a miracle when I see one. There is nothing more beautiful than that little green enamel cocoon with the gold on it. And that's where I

discovered my first little tid-bit about the Monarch Butterflies.

C This you discovered on your own, it's not something your aunt showed you.

R Right.

C And you stayed there about a year ?

R Yes, we were there about a year and we loved it. The woods were just beautiful and the lake was very near by and we'd go on little picnics to the Sumac Island. This was a little bunch of sumacs out in my Auntie's field. And she'd pack us a little lunch and we'd go hiking out to this Sumac Island, then eat our lunch under the sumacs. And that was another little bit of memory that I will always cherish.

C This island was in this little lake you speak of ?

R No. It was called Sumac Island but it was nothing other than a little group of Sumac trees growing in the field; surrounded by the field.

C This lake you mentioned. Is this some small inland lake or is this Lake Ontario ?

R No, this is a small lake. A very beautiful little lake called Rush Point Lake. And it was surrounded, of course, at that time by ever-greens and white birch particularly and some cottages, very few though, considering the way they are today, they were scattered around the lake. It was a beautiful lake for fishing and for swimming and boating. And the boating, by the way, was no other than just row-boating. Nobody had anything but a row-boat.

C No canoes ?

R Very few canoes. I don't even remember canoes on the lake at that time.

C Then you left Havelock to come to the United States ?

R Then we left Havelock, yes, - - let me think a little on that. We left Havelock and we went to Peterborough for a few weeks to stay with an uncle and then he in turn rode with us on the train from Peterborough to Mt. Morris where my father had been transferred to for the A & P. We didn't mention that but he was already in Mt. Morris. So we went to Mt. Morris and that was quite an experience. On the train at Black Rock we were taken off to be inspected

- and to be - - a - - to go through immigration and it was late in the afternoon and they took us off and put us in what I call a Dungeon. It probably was just the basement of the railroad station, I'm not sure.
- C But to a little girl it was like a dungeon.
- R But it was just like a dungeon ! Cold and damp and just a few benches around the edge of the room. We were separated from our - - - my mother and my uncle.
- C And just you two little girls all alone ?
- R We two little girls. And we were ~~10, we were 10,~~ 8 and 10 years old. And we were taken into this other cold, dark room and questioned severely. We were petrified ! We were absolutely petrified ! And then, of course, our mother and our uncle also were separated and questioned. And they questioned us so long that we missed our train and had to stay in that terrible spot all night long. And the next morning we were able to get on the train and go on to Mt. Morris.
- C I didn't realize they questioned little children like that.
- R Well, you see that was a long time ago. That was 56 years ago and they were very, very strict and I can't even remember the questions they asked us but we were questioned and probably they wondered why people were going to the United States. They wanted to know why and that's no doubt the way it should have been. But to us it was a horrifying experience.
- C You wouldn't think they'd have to question 8 and 10 year old kids.
- R Unhuh. Yeah, they did.
- C So you got to Mt. Morris the next day ?
- R Yes. We arrived safe and sound, and three weeks later my mother died. She hadn't really recuperated from being at this little place in Havelock. It didn't do anything for her. But she passed away and then my aunt who was a nurse, working in a hospital in Chicago, gave up her good job and came to live with us. And she really was a delight because we missed our mother very much but she was a young person and had lots of modern ideas and was very good to us.

She, however, is the one who taught us how to eat because I think we were rather spoiled kids. And she insisted that we eat a little bit of every kind of food that she prepared. In fact she was so generous that she gave us a quarter after we had eaten it several times and said that we would really eat that particular food. One of my dislikes in the whole thing, one that I never learned to like, was ketchup. And she'd put a little dab of ketchup on my plate every day, we had food and I would eat it with my eyes shut and I ate it until I got my quarter. And I have never eaten it since and I just can't stand it. The looks of ketchup, let alone the taste of it !

C That's the one place her technique didn't work.

R That's once it didn't work.

C And she stayed with you a year.?

R Yes. Another thing that might be a little interesting to people a 100 years from now; we had a big old stove in our living room with Isinglass all the way around it. Do you remember those ? And she would - - - we would have a nice warm fire in our living room and she would put a table leaf between two chairs and put us on little stools and we'd have our supper there every evening with candles. And the nights my dad came home to eat dinner we'd have it in the dining room. But when we were alone, the three of us, we'd have it before this fire, and that stands out as a child-hood memory.

C Like eating before a fireplace.

R Right. Unhuh. It was beautiful.

C So your aunt left to get married ?

R Oh. No. My aunt left in June and then we went to the first little auntie in Havelock again, back in the woods. And we stayed there for two months.

C Oh you had a good summer there.

R That summer. And then my grandmother came back with us to Mt. Morris. That was another experience! We were all ready to come back in time for school, and we got to - - - we were coming - - - going - - - I don't know whether I'm going or

coming - - but anyway we were there and we were going to Mt. Morris again and we were to get on a boat at Cobourg and go to Rochester. Remember the old Ontario boats that used to cross the lake ? So we had our clothes and my grandmother had a trunk and we were all set to get on the boat. In fact we were on the boat. Our trunk was on the boat. And, when they questioned my grandmother, she did not have a birth certificate. And so off the boat we went ! We weren't allowed to go on that trip. We had to get off and the boat had gone out - - - had started off, oh maybe 3 or 4 feet from the dock, when they threw our trunk back on the dock and there it was. And there we were. And again my uncle, who had brought us to Cobourg to get on the boat, had already left for home. So we had quite a time. We had to call him and ~~he had to~~ - - - we had to wait 'till he got home and then he had to come back, which was a matter of about 40 miles each way. And it took us one whole month for my grandmother to get a birth certificate.

C So you were late getting to school ?

R We were a month late. And she was unable - - - she had never had a birth certificate. They did not record births at that time and so in her county there were absolutely no record. So she finally got one and we finally got back to my dad in Mt. Morris.

C Did you go to school in Havelock, meanwhile ?

R Oh no, we didn't go to school.

C You just enrolled a month late ?

R Yes. So we made it up all right because school wasn't really too difficult for either my sister or I, so we didn't have any problems.

C It was too late to go by boat then, in the fall, I suppose ?

R Oh yes, then we had to go by train.

C Back to Black Rock.

R Back again by train.

C I hope they didn't keep you in the dungeon.

R And that time is the first time that I saw Niagara Falls, Ontario. I don't remember Black Rock, but we were in the Niagara Falls station and we were able to go out and see

the Falls before we caught the train that took us on to Mt. Morris. So we had an interesting time but I saw Niagara Falls then and was thrilled and I've been thrilled every time I've been to it since and I try to see it 2 or 3 times every year at least. I love it !

C So you got back to Mt. Morris and your grandmother stayed with you then ?

R She stayed with us a year, and then she is the one who got married. She got married in June and she left; so back we went to Havelock for the second summer. And while we were there my father remarried. And so when we came back to Mt. Morris again we went to Toronto and met with our new mother and she brought us over to Mt. Morris at that time. And we were there a couple of years, then we went to Rochester; we went to school in Rochester in the Public and the High Schools. And then we moved to Canandaigua. And it was there I met Dick. And - - let me see now - -

C And he came there for the summers.

R Yes, he came to Canandaigua for the summer and my sister had gone to school with his sister so they knew each other. And we finally got acquainted.

C So you met Dick at Canandaigua ?

R Yes, and we went together for a couple of years, off and on, and finally we got serious and decided we'd get married. We got married in 1935 and moved to Medina and we've been here ever since. And I've thought this a very great place for our roots. We call this our roots because actually we haven't any anywhere else.

C And you lived first up on Williams Street ?

R Yes, we lived in Williams Street the first year and then we moved over to Frank Street, where - - oh, what's her first name Ramming - -

C Oh yes, Joyce-Lynn Ramming.

R Yeah, her mother lives there now. And then in 1940 we decided to build our little house on the North Gravel Road.

C And Dick and your father built that house ?

R Yes, they did and we've been here ever since.

C How did you get interested in Girl Scouting ?

R Well, I was living on Frank Street at the time and Mildred Rosenkrans lived around the corner on West Avenue. And one day we each had a call from the Baptist Church, Reverend Lowery, who asked if we would start a Girl Scout Troop in Medina. We both were very new at it, we didn't know much about it and so Mr. Lowery had a committee formed in his church and they would sponsor a troop. We would be leaders. The committee consisted of Addis Hart and Jessie Breitbeck and, I don't know, did we have another one there - - someone else - - Marion Swett might have been on that committee, I'm not sure. I can't remember. However, there was a committee and we agreed to be the Captain; Mildred Rosenkrans would be the Captain and I would be her assistant and I was called the Lieutenant at that time. So we were Captain and Lieutenant of the first troop in Medina. We had absolutely no training. We trained ourselves with the help of our Girl Scout Handbook. We'd study it and read it, and read it, and read it when we'd go to bed nights and we'd get together during the week, plan our meeting and try to have something great come from it. She definitely was the indoor type leader and I was the outdoor gal, so we worked beautifully together. We had a very, very happy year and in the meantime the ~~girls and the~~ demand ~~rather~~ for a Brownie Troop came about.

C Excuse me a minute. I want to interrupt you before you talk about the Brownie Troop. Can you remember the names of any of the girls that were in your first scout troop?

R Oh yes, O-K. I'd forgotten about that. I remember some of them. I will feel very badly leaving any out, but my memory isn't what it ought to be. Dorothy Breitbeck, Dorothy Swett, Julia Rosenkrans, Hilda Meland, Ann DeBrian, and Edris Litchfield, Irene Whittleton, and Livina Hayes and there may have been a couple more. And I'm sorry if I just don't have their names at the moment.

C And you said that there were some people who came in and helped with special badges?

R Oh yes, during this first year, of course we knew very

little and no leader or assistant leader is skilled in everything. So we had very much help from one particular, Addis Hart, who was a Home-Ec teacher at one time and she taught us all the home-making things as well Mildred Rosenkrans; she too could work on that, but Addis helped us a great deal.

C What did Jessie Breitbeck help you with ?

R Oh yes, Jessie Breitbeck was very good about helping us with corsages and little favors and many little things in the plant world because she was a great lover of the plants and so on. And she helped and oh there were many others who helped.

C You did most of the out-of-doors ?

R I did most of the out-of-doors. I loved it and I got all kinds of literature from National Headquarters by sending for it; and we hiked and we biked and we swam and we did over-nights and we made all kinds of tin-can stoves and had lots of fun besides.

C Now we come to a Village Council being formed ?

R Yes. The demand was so great and we could not take care of too many girls because we were just really starting out ourselves; so a Village Council was formed. And these people would have to find leaders and places to meet. Mainly, the girls just came themselves once they'd get a leader and an assistant leader.

C You have the names of some of them.

R So some of the leaders and the Council members - - these are the Council members, that I recall: Addis Hart, Augusta Chater . Christine Trippense and Marian Swett and there were many, many more I'm sure as the next year or two went on.

C Peg <sup>Mirand</sup> hadn't gotten here yet ?

R No, she hadn't come yet.

C Later.

R And, let me see, we have some more names here. Oh these were the Brownies.

C So the Brownie Troop was the next troop that was formed ?

R Yes, that was the next troop. And as I recall: Flora Webb

and Dorothy Corlis did that troop. And it was highly successful. They had many little Brownies that wanted to start in and then eventually become Girl Scouts.

C Can you read some of their names ?

R Yes, some of them, the little ones - - I'm saying little ones - - they'll laugh when they hear this after all these years. Arden Skinner, Joanne Menke, Mary Ingersoll, Ann McAvoy, Barbara Kennedy and Virginia Adams. Oh yes, Barbara Long and, - - are there any more that you can think of Dorothy ?

C Doris Clendenon.

R Doris Clendenon. And they were the main little Brownies in the first troop that met in Central School in the Kindergarten room. Then, just about that time a second Girl Scout Troop was formed and Ruth Needham was the leader. Many of my records have long since disappeared so I cannot go on and tell all the wonderful leaders and wonderful assistant leaders that we had over the years. A second Brownie Troop, I believe was sponsored by St. Mary's, and Bernadine Cole was the "Brownie Owl". Brown Owl they called her didn't they ?

C Unhuh.

R And the assistant would be Tawny Owl and that's what Dorothy Corlis was. She was a Tawny Owl. And Flora Webb's troop. Flora was called the Brown Owl and Dorothy the Tawny Owl. And then in St. Mary's Troop, Bernadine would be the Brown Owl and I don't remember who the Tawny Owl would be.

C How did you get help from Lockport ?

R Oh, in the first few years, in fact, Lockport was very helpful in eventually giving us a little bit of leader's training. In the a - - - yes - - - they would have leader's training meetings and they would invite us to join them and they were very kind to us. Evelyn Wilhms was a director up there and she helped us in many ways after we got going. And we appreciated all that help indeed.

C Did you form a Leader's Club in Medina ?

R Yes, very shortly after we formed a Leader's Club and we have a few of the names of the early leaders. We had Mrs. Babcock and Ann Condon, Marie Brennan, Lois Coleman, Alberta Parker, Janet Sharman, Trudy Vanderbrook and Marge McCann, Margaret Posson, Jane Peglow, Mildred Rosenkrans, Flora Webb, Dorothy Thiel, Helen Collins in Albion came to our meetings quite frequently because they were beginning troops over there also. In Lyndonville we had Eleanor Rehorn and Mildred Housel attend many of our meetings so that they could get started.

C How did you happen to go to Camp Edith Macy ?

R Oh yes. Our council was very much interested in sending somebody for a little more training particularly in the out-of-doors to Camp Edith Macy. Camp Edith Macy is a very, very beautiful Leader's Training Camp at Pleasantville, New York. And so, as they were talking and thinking about sending somebody, they asked me. I was very pleased and very honored to think they would ask me to go. So, the council said that they would pay \$25.00, if I could pay \$25.00, and they would help me go to Camp Edith Macy. And this was for two weeks ! Just think about this. Two weeks, board and room and instruction for \$50.00. So off I went to Edith Macy, one of the greatest experiences of my life and I'm sure everybody else who has ever attended. Do you want me to say a little bit about Edith Macy ?

C Yes I think that would be very interesting.

R I'm sure it's just as active today as it was then but one of the things that we did - - - I was living in a tent, with another girl, we were in the Pioneer Section, which was all quite rugged. There were other sections in the camp for various types of training. But our Pioneer Section was selected to cook an out-door meal for 125 people. And we had to plan it and cook it and carry it in to the Great Hall which was the place where the big dining room was. The day we were to cook it it rained! Poured all day. We had many, many fires. A great big area with many fires. We had to collect our own wood. We had to build our own fires and cook the meal for the evening.

We cooked a lamb. On a spit. A whole lamb on a huge spit and actually barbecued it. We had a great big kettle of sauce that had to be slopped on it and it turned frequently and a fire kept going steadily.

## SIDE TWO

- R We had many, many cans with sand in and potatoes buried in the sand that we baked in fires. I just can't remember the other things we baked; but we had a complete meal all ready to take in for the 125 people.
- C How did you keep these fires going during all this rain ?
- R Oh we had to. We had to - - - we collected our wood the day before and we had covered it so we had a great stack of wood. Great stacks of wood and they were fairly dry. You see that's a little foresight, 'cause if you wait until the day you're going to cook and get your wood you're libel to be disappointed. So we had great fires going. It was a beautiful sight ! So at night, when we had everything ready, we had the lamb on two big, long logs. And four people had to carry it. And here we are in rain coats. And each of four people - - - well the spits on the shoulders of the people, parading down into the Great Hall and all the rest coming with their potatoes and their vegetables and what-ever else we had cooked, in a big parade in session. It was set up like a smorgasbord and the cook for the camp cut the lamb. Sliced it and prepared it for serving at the table. And there was a great thing going on, we sang and had quite a to-do over it. So that was a big high-light at Camp Edith Macy and everything they did there was terrific !
- C So this prepared you for Camp Nundawaga?
- R Yes, we got a great deal of camp preparation. And then I was asked to be the Director for Camp Nundawaga the following year.
- C Now is that the first or second year of ~~Nune~~-Da-Waga ?
- R Oh, now wait a minute. We didn't get to ~~Nune~~-Da-Waga yet. We hadn't spoken about the first year.
- C This was the first year.
- R O-K.

(C)

**NUNDA-  
WAGA**

The first year the council had joined with Albion; in the meantime they'd gotten quite a few girls together for, I think they had just one or two troops, but two councils decided to have a two week camp at Camp Nundawaga on Lake Ontario, down near the Lighthouse at Barker. It was owned by Thiels, I believe at that time.

C Well the land had been bought from Thiels by a YMCA Council in Medina.

R That's right, that's right.

C It had been a Y Camp for Medina and had not yet been sold.

R Right, O-K. We had this camp. A gal from Buffalo directed it and counselors were chosen from Medina and Albion. And some of whom were Margaret Stocking, Dorothy Corlis, Marian Carr and Roselle McAvoy was the nurse. Do you think Marian Gratricks was there at that time?

C I don't remember.

R No I guess she wasn't that year. And there were many other good gals, we just can't remember their names completely. But that was a very successful camp. And then - - - shall I say it was the following year - - - no it was that same year, later in the year that I went to Camp Edith Macy. And then the next year, in 1940, they were going to have camp at Nundawaga again and I had been asked to be Director. But, a funny little thing happened, a very beautiful thing in fact. We adopted a little girl in April, on April 24, And so put the kibosh on the camp for Ann that summer! Lorraine Garrett and Marian Gratricks were chosen for Director and Assistant-director for the camp. And I have a great deal of - - well in fact for the whole year we had been training leaders, and the staff was all set up. Everything was practically complete, ready for the camp, when Marion and Lorraine took over. And they did a marvelous job and that too was a very successful summer.

C Now is it right after this that you decided to build a cabin?

R Yes. It was just about this time. Again the council and the leaders in Medina thought they should have a central meeting place. They had been meeting in the churches

previously, which was very, very good, but they wanted a little cabin for their very own. So that girls could leave things in it if they were working on a project or whatever. So the council said that they would let us have a cabin if we could provide a little of the money. The cabin was going to cost \$500.00.

C This was in 1941, you could build a cabin for \$500.00 ?

R 1941. And I can't remember how much the council had on hand but the leaders stood on the street corners of Main Street and around town and collected money all one Saturday in little tin cups. We really felt kind of queer - - - we'd never done this before, but it was great to see the response and we did accumulate quite a little money. So we had enough to build a cabin.

C Did you get any money from your cookie sales toward the cabin ?

R Oh yes, yes. That's where a good share of it came from. The Girl's cookie sales. And I'm sad to say; at this time of life or many years later, the girls money for cookie sales, after we joined Big Councils, did not seem to show for individual girls in their own towns.

C You mean not much of the money stays locally ?

R Yeah, it doesn't - - - it seems to me that when we used to have a cookie sales, you could see where the money went. It went for the girls benefit.

C It went locally.

R Locally.

C Now it goes to the Headquarters.

R Yes.

C You also had bake sales.

R Had bake sales. I can remember one in Rosenkrans Drug Store, right at the front, and I don't know how they ever did it because it isn't a large store; but they put up with us. We had a big table and everybody contributed from our troop particularly, but there were many others. Many other bake sales and all the girls participated in the cookie sales.

C Now who built this cabin ?

R The cabin was built by my father, Mr. Dobbin. And he had finished working on our little house here and so he said he

could stay another month to work on the cabin and Dick helped him a great deal. And it was all ready to go for that summer.

C Where was this cabin ?

R The cabin was built first over on a little piece of property on the Conservation property. It was built right beside a very beautiful little quarry. And the location was great for out-of-door activities but eventually vandals, of course, began breaking windows and smashing the door and broke up a little stove we had inside. Tipped over the out-house and so on and it was in a remote area; nobody could really keep an eye on it.

C You weren't able to use it winters anyway, were you ?

R Oh yes.

C You had your meetings there in the winter ?

R Well we didn't have our meetings there but we did all our hiking out there. We had cook outs out there and once in a while we had an over-night there. And the little stove would heat up for an evening. But we didn't have all our meetings - - it was too far out really.

C So after the vandals came what did you decide to do ?

R Well, the council decided that it would be better if it was moved in a little bit better location where it might be watched a little more. So William Barhite, who was with a construction company, had all kinds of equipment and he moved that little cabin - - - I can't tell you the size of it but it would hold a good troop, you know with 24 girls. And he moved it from there to the <sup>Medina</sup> City Park. And it stayed in the City Park for many years. We had many leaders outdoor training programs there. The girls would meet there and often do projects like if they were going to make something for Halloween or favors for Christmas or what-ever and it took more than a week or two, they could leave their materials right there and go back and finish what they were doing. It was a very handy little building.

C This was where Dick Richards built some - - -

R Oh yes, at that time we thought would use it even more than we ever had before so the council had Dick build some cupboards. Very nice little convenient cupboards to store things in and

also a big table and benches all around it. And in it was a new little stove, a little wood stove and it was very cozy at any time you wanted to meet there.

C And you finally got them a director for the Medina area Council ?

R Yes. We had so many troops and our little council began to feel that we needed someone other than them to direct all the troops. And so they hired Adelaide Holt and she had her office upstairs over the original Jim DiGiulio Shoe Store on the corner of Main Street and East Center Street.

C Oh, the building that's burned.

R The building that burned completely a few years later. And she was there and Margaret Koneski was the secretary for many years. They did a very good job and it was worth while having someone.

C It's too bad we don't have it like that now.

R Yes. When we had a local council, I really felt that we had everything.

C And it was during this time that you had a Day Camp for a while at the Conservation Club ?

R Yes. I think it was in the - - - let's see it was in the late 50's, I believe. By having this new director and so on, we were able to have a Day Camp and again I was asked to be the director of the Day Camp. And it was going to be at the Conservation property at the Boy Scout cabin. They had a nice cabin there and it was larger than the one that we had; also there was a great deal of woods around and places for exploring and working and playing. And so we had a very fine camp for a couple of weeks, Day Camp, over there in a - - - oh it was probably 1956 or so.

C Who was your assistant ?

R Oh yes. I must give credit not only to my assistant but to everybody who has helped through all the years. I can't give enough thanks to people because I could never do anything alone. I've had to have so much help. And my assistant at that time was Muriel Snyder and she was great, just great.

We had many counselors, or quite a few counselors, and some of them - - - some I have to say - - - I can't remember all: Barbara Bacon, Vera Parsons, Shirley Moore and Dorothy Corlis. And the two assistant counselors: Bonnie Richards and Joycelyn Ramming and there were others. I think Mary Alice Wheatley helped also; I'm sure she did. And by the way, her mother was a very good Girl Scout leader for years and years.

A few of the things we did at Day Camp. We had quite a little bit of out-door cooking, cooked spaghetti, reflector oven cooking and crane cooking. That's building a crane and cooking in pots over the fire. We had a lovely little library and I'm sure Dorothy Corlis was responsible for bringing books from the library for it. And we had all kinds of crafts. Nature hikes. And the children brought their lunches every day and we had milk delivered every morning. We had lots of good singing. Alice Meland was singing counselor, I recall now, one year and we had some very great times. Can you think of anything else that we did ?

C I remember the "Some-Mores".

R Oh ! Dorothy Corlis specially remembers the "Some-Mores". I guess I've had so many "Some-Mores" in my life that I hardly think of them any more.

C I think those were my first.

R And she says they were her first "Some-Mores". And I think everybody knows what they are. They're a Marsh-mallow toasted over the fire, put on a piece of Chocolate on a Graham-cracker or between two Graham-crackers; and they are yummy to this day. And I think everyone looks forward to having at least "Some-Mores" once or twice in their life-time.

C You raised some money for camp equipment ?

R Yes. That was the next project. Girls needed out-door camping more than they could get at just Day Camp or some camp for a week or two. So again, the council

and the leaders and the girls all worked towards getting some Girl Scout camping equipment. I recall that Jean Fenton from Albion was very interested in camping equipment and Helen Collins. And in Medina we had a - - well I know Barbara Bacon and Vera Parsons and I just can't name everybody who really pushed to get this equipment. We bought, did I say we bought tents? We bought, I think, about 10 tents, and very lovely ones. They had to be put together. They were - - the poles were aluminum poles in sections and I'm going to tell you we had quite a time every time we put them up. We did number each pole and we had a system for doing it but they all looked alike and in a pile they very often got mixed up. However, they always got put up within a reasonable time.

C You started right out in your back yard.

R We started over-night camping particularly in our back yard. Leaders had training down here in the back yard first and then we would have one troop at a time.

C You even had Brownies.

R We had Brownies and they loved it. The little Brownies, I think, enjoyed it more than anyone. And there was ample space for cooking; we'd have three - - - at least three fires, fireplaces built up and the girls did all their own cooking, all their own planning and just enjoyed every bit of it.

C Then you began to branch out, use other places?

R Yes. Then the leaders, after they felt assured that they could really do it began going to various places. I know we all went, or I went with a group, with a troop and the leaders to Mirror Lake one time. We bicycled to that particular spot, ~~and~~ However we didn't take our tents and we had a couple of station wagons take our equipment for cooking. And we slept all night out-doors until it began to rain and then we went into a barn. They allowed us to go into a big barn there. And the girls had a great deal of fun. One of Dorothy Breitbeck Grapes favorite pastimes was taking an alarm clock along. And she took an alarm clock and after the girls settled down and stopped talking

it was just about time to doze off when the bull frogs began to croak, and they croaked for a few hours, and then you just about began to doze off and Dorothy's alarm clock would go off about 4 o'clock in the morning! This was Dorothy's fun! We didn't think it was so funny but then it's funny now. And we went another time, the leader of a troop and myself, bicycled to Lockport. There was a youth hostel up there at the time. And the girls - - - there were 10 or 12 girls who went and we stayed over-night, cooked all our meals. They were cooked indoors because they provided a place for it. And then many of the troops went other places to camp and I just don't know now all the different places they did go; but the tents were available and the equipment anytime they wanted to go.

C Was it before or after you joined councils with Albion that you prepared the Girl Scouts for the "Round-Up" in Michigan?

R It was after. A few years after this we joined with Albion - - the councils joined together and so we worked together very well, we had no problems. And then, I think, it was 1956 that the National, rather International "Round-Up" was going to be held for Girl Scouts near Pontiac, Michigan. And so that was a great contest. Every troop in the country worked to prepare girls who would be chosen by a definite judging contest in each council to be sent to the "Round-Up". And generally speaking, each council would have about 6 girls. Maybe the larger councils would have more girls going but proportionality I think we were allowed 6 girls.

C. Well I think you said 4 from Medina and 4 from Albion.

R 8, 8, I'm sorry - - that's right. There were about 8 from our particular area. So they trained for a whole year. Out-doors and in-doors and everyway possible. That year we had a committee for the out-door training and I remember Anna-Mae Wheatley being on that. I was on it and Leona Wells from Albion and Mrs. Fenton was very helpful. There were others, I'm sure, because we called on people to help us again. We weren't equipped to do everything that they were supposed to be prepared for.

C But you helped specially with out-door cooking and that type of thing ?

R Yes. I worked on the out-door cooking with my good assistants and we built stoves. We built all kinds of things for the girls to take them. They had to take their own tents and they had to take their own equipment, every bit of it. And they had to plan their own meals. They also had to take a few bits of folk-lore from their area. In fact we worked on the Cobblestone buildings from this area, that was one thing that they planned and prepared, studied.

C That's before the Cobblestone Society began !

R Yes, it is ! And they gave that as their particular part of a program at the "Round-Up". There were 6000 girls at the "Round-Up" and it was a very great experience and they have, I believe they've had one probably every year since.

Our next venture in camping was we have had a very, very great worker, devoted worker, Jean Archbald, who offered us a cabin and many acres of woods for Day Camp for the county. And so for several years they had Day Camp at Camp Archbald. Once in a while they'd have an over-night. I believe they had an over-night every year at the end of the camp.

C This was on Lake Ontario ?

R This is on Lake Ontario near Waterport. It was very successful every year and that was sponsored by the two councils (Oak Orchard on the Lake / Point Breeze = Waterport)

C And then the small council was swallowed up ?

R Yes, yes, yes.

C 1963.

R And then about 1963 we were more or less forced to join the Big Umbrella as they called it. It was three councils: Genesee, Orleans and, I believe, Wyoming. Headquarters in Batavia. Miss Somirtic was head of the council there. The reason we joined this was because many, many, many had been working many, many years and we were getting so that we couldn't go on too much longer. Our council had grown tremendously and because we were getting short of leadership

and what not we practically had to join. Also pressure from Headquarters, because that was the plan at Headquarters in New York City, that we join up with a big group.

C And then in about 1964 you heard from Dr. Tanner ?

R Oh yes. When we joined this council in Batavia we had left in our treasury \$2,000.00 and we felt that we could not part with that because it had been earned by all the people here in these two towns. So we had wanted to have a Girl Scout camp in our own area. One for Day Camp particularly. So we had a committee and - - - did I have some committee members names around here somewhere ?

C No, I don't think so but you told about David Barnes and Dr. Tanner.

R O-K. There was a committee to find some property for a Girl Scout Camp in this area. The property was finally found on the Horan Road, near Portage Road, and purchased from Mr. Carpenter, ~~William~~ <sup>N. & E.</sup> Carpenter. The land is <sup>a</sup>very beautiful piece bordered on the west by Oak Orchard Creek and on the east by Horan Road, of course. This camp, or this property - -

C 65 acres.

R 65 acres, about 65 acres, I believe. And just at this time we didn't know what we could do as far as having a building. We had talked about it with the remainder of the money that we had from purchasing the camp and we had quite a struggle when one day Dr. Tanner called and said that he and a group of men had been on the former old YMCA committee as trustees, after that camp had been sold.

C Camp Nundewaga

R Camp Nundewaga And they had reinvested the money and it had grown to a certain proportion and they were prepared to give us, as Girl Scouts in Medina, \$10,000.00 providing it was used in Medina. No other way. And so we were elated, we absolutely thought it was a gift from Heaven. ~~And we so we tried to - - - or~~ We met with the Batavia council and they were a little bit upset, but Dick Richards and a few other men finally convinced them that we had to

See  
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this or else we wouldn't have the money. So they finally approved the idea and Dick met with Mr. Balcerzak, Robert Balcerzak, and drew up some plans for a building and this was all to be done with volunteer help. And let's see now.

C Warren Amos was one of the professionals.

R He contacted some of the key men, we'll say, such as Warren Amos who was a professional carpenter, Andy Mirand who was an electrician, and Mr. West, most everyone knows him from Albion. He surveyed the property and worked with us a great deal on nature trails and so on. He was a terrific out-door man. And Shirley Amos was one of our key leaders or recruiters and she just called everybody that she could even think of and got many, many volunteers to come and work, and they worked all summer long— Three whole months— And put up a beautiful building. Shirley was a very good worker. She was found digging the hole for the latrine, shovel by shovel, knee high in mud one day, and we all had quite a lot of fun seeing Shirley in a hole. (C)

C And Tom Forrestel built the road ?

R Yes, Tom Forrestel built us a road. It's quite a long distance from the highway into the cabin and he and his men built the road.

Mr. Brown, in Lyndonville, donated a great many ever-green trees.

## SIDE THREE - Second Tape, First Side

R Another very helpful group of people were the Dingmans and their friend, Bill. Mr. Dingman and Bill had a back-hoe and a tractor and used it frequently. Dick and several other men, plus the Dingmans, worked for almost a year, off and on, clearing the property with this tractor and axes and saws and what not. Louise Dingman played a big part in helping the men with - - - by bringing drinks and food to them during the time they were building the cabin. I made a "boo-boo" just a little bit earlier about this camp. I said that we bought the property from Bill Carpenter. That is a mistake. We bought it from Norman Carpenter and Earl Carpenter. And I'm sorry about that.

Now - - - . About a year later, after the camp was built, Jean Archbald very generously donated funds to build a pond on the cabin to enhance the property and hopefully for the girls to be able to canoe and so on. It was a very beautiful pond indeed.

This camp has been used for many years for over-nights, week-ends, and day camp and all the people who helped build it, I'm sure, have assisted in going to the camp with girls on these events; it's been a very wonderful thing in our lives and we have been happy to think that there is such a building. It is now in the hands of the Rochester Council and they still continue to have Day Camp. (In the past few lines there was much emotion expressed by the speaker.)

Going back a little bit, I did think of a few more things and people to talk about. One, for instance, was Peg Mirand, who worked for many years organizing troops and recruiting leaders. Janet White, the wife of Tom White, worked hard on our camp. Also Janet was head of the Medina group for many, many years and did many great things. I'd like to name all the people for all these years of hard, hard work and dedicated love but I can't do that and so I will thank them right now for everything that everybody has

done in all the years of Scouting. ( It must be noted that again MUCH emotion is being expressed by the speaker during this segment.) I was an active Scout for 25 years, active Scout Leader, and the last - - - for 10 more years, I was acting consultant and out-door programing and took troops on hikes once a week for two years so that every girl in town would have a chance to go on a hike one time or another. And ~~now~~ now I think - - - oh, at that particular time my father was beginning to age and needed a lot more help, and so I was not able to continue with Scouting but had loved every minute of it. And I guess this is the end of my Scouting career.

C It must have been quite a help for them to have you go on hikes because some people that make good leaders do not like hiking and are not good out doors.

R That's what they used to tell me and some of the leaders were a little bit afraid to take the girls on hikes and after they'd go on one or two hikes they ~~XXXXXX~~ would feel much more at ease and then they continued on and did many hikes themselves.

C Some of the leaders would go with you ?

R Oh yes, the leaders always went with me. The leaders always did.

C But they thought you had the responsibility.

R Yes. And I would plan the hike with the leaders and the girls some time during the week and then we would go on the hike with all our little First-Aid Kits and all the precautions we had to do for hiking. We used to take the Brownies right along the canal and some people criticized us for this. They said: "How would you dare take Brownies along the canal on a hike ?" I said: "No problem. We go by twos, we're always in pairs or buddies and the one on the outer side or nearest the canal, each girl would hang on to one long rope." And I said: "There'd be a leader at the front and a leader at the back." And there was no problem. We never had an accident or a mishap on these hikes, what-so-ever.

C A lot of it is due to good planning.

R Good planning.

Good planning makes it easier for everybody. And the kids even like good planning. They like things organized so that they know what they're doing as well.

C They like to know what's expected.

R And I have to also add, that I have never made better friends than I have in Scouting. And nearly all the friends I made in my early years have continued to be my friends and I am very grateful for this.

C Thank you very much and I am sure that this area is much the richer for the work that you and these early pioneers in Scouting have done.

R Well we'll thank everybody.

C Will you tell me the names of the four girls from Medina who went to the "Round-Up" ?

R Yes. Mary Alice Wheatley, Bonnie Richards and Joanne Monacell and Barbara Rankin.

C And those were the four Medina girls.

R Right.

C Who had a great experience.

R It was a terrific experience.

C How did you get involved in the Methodist Church ?

R Well, Joy Thomas was my daughter's seventh grade Sunday School teacher and she called me one day and asked me if I wouldn't teach a class of third grade boys. I was a little bit skeptical about this because I'd never worked with boys but finally I agreed to teach the third grade boys. I went in as brave as anything one Sunday morning and found 12 squirmy little third graders sitting there, all giggling and poking each other and one thing or another.

I began the lesson and I thought I had it well prepared but first thing I knew one was poking another one and the other kicking under the table, kicking his shins, another one had socked his friend in the jaw because he wasn't doing something he thought he should. And I thought "Oh brother, is this Sunday School?" I couldn't believe it! I had no idea what to expect. So I tried to get a little discipline by changing their seats around and one thing or another. And we got through the first Sunday. Well the next Sunday wasn't much better. Finally I had to take two little boys by the collar and march them in to Mr. Wise. He had a class in the other part of the room and I just took them in and said: "Now Mr. Wise, you can have these two boys, I can't do anything with them." So that was that. Well a few Sundays more, things calmed down a little bit and Mr. Cory called and asked if I would be a Superintendent of the Primary Department which included first, second and third grades. And after some thought I said "Yes" I would, if I could sit in and observe Mrs. Cory because she had been doing a wonderful job for years and I might get a few ideas and learn a little bit about that. So I went the first Sunday and sat in with Mrs. Cory and the next Sunday Mrs. Cory had found another job some-where in the Sunday School and I was left on my own. I was quite bewildered and confused but I struggled along somehow; I don't know why I didn't give up right then, but I didn't. And we finally got some law and order and a little bit of knowledge of what we were supposed to be doing. And we were meeting in the basement of the Methodist Sunday School, or Methodist Church rather, and I thought it was about the dullest, gloomiest place I had ever seen. No curtains on the windows, just a big old basement with a few little flimsy curtains between each classroom, which wasn't too noise proof.

C It didn't cut out any sound.

R No, not at all. And I just didn't see how children could even stand to sit there and listen or learn anything. Well, the good men of the church were already looking for a better place to meet and they bought the Cox House next door to the Methodist Church. It would be west of the church, For Sunday School rooms. The downstairs apartment was to be Mrs. EskeLson's, a very dear lady who taught Sunday School there for 25 years, and her assistant, Jane Brigham, would have kindergarten in the downstairs apartment. And they gave the primary department the upstairs. It was nothing more than an apartment.

Gaudy wallpaper and so on and I didn't think it was too much of an improvement at first but after awhile we began to see the light and see that something could be done with it. The first thing I had to do was find some teachers. So I was very fortunate and found, and did find all through the 12 years, I think, the very best teachers available. Among the first teachers in our new primary department were: Grace Wheatley, Martha Cook, Joyce Beatenbough, Marian Kaegebein, Lila Goodwin and Lucy Weet. We were very happy to have two or three people who could play the piano because I could not do that. Martha Cook and Marian Kaegebein & Lila Goodwin took turns playing for us. Also Grace Wheatley helped lead the singing and we had some dandy music and songs in our little department. Again we were all very fortunate to have good husbands. And we felt could bring them into this new apartment we had and do a little something about it. — Make it look a little more like a place to worship and also a bright, cheerful place. So we finally had the men do all the painting in the upstairs and all the rooms were nice bright colors - - - blue and pink and yellow and almost really livable. The girls, the teachers, painted all the chairs and tables - - - we just inherited a few old rickety tables and a bunch of chairs that were not very pretty. Rather beat up. And so they did all the painting and we, of course, had one

piano, which we were lucky to have, I guess. Then we bought some plastic draperies and Dick framed ten pictures with Bible story - - - or Dick framed ten Bible story pictures and painted the frames gold. We each had two nice pictures in our rooms which helped our bare walls and now we really looked like something. The next, the teachers and Dick and I discussed a little worship center. We had the idea that we would like some little pews like our church, only for little people, and we'd like a little lectern and we'd like a lot of things. So, the only problem was - - - we could get the labor, again some good husbands, but we had no money. Marian and Bill Kaegebein went to the Couples' Club the night that we had discussed this and told them what our plan was and we'd like some lumber for some little pews. And by-golly they came up with \$37.00 in one night which was a lot of money back in those days, and we had enough money to build the little pews. Dick, and Ward Nevale and Paul Beatenbough made them and painted them and put them up in our big front room upstairs in our new location. Then we wanted a lectern. So Dick thought he could build a little lectern, which he did, for our little people to stand & lead the service each Sunday morning. ~~And~~ Dick is a pack-rat by nature and has a lot of junk around, or did have - - - still has some - - - and he made us a nice shadow box with a light behind it so we could display one of our teaching pictures each Sunday. And on the side of it were two little wings and he put little wires on it in order to put little numbers for our hymns. He made the little numbers out of pieces of tin and the children could just hang the numbers over the wires each Sunday morning for the proper hymn.

C All the children got a chance to participate ?

R Each child had a chance to participate in turn. We couldn't all do it every Sunday. But every Sunday we had six people, at least, participate during the whole service or take charge of it really. And then the next Sunday we'd have six more and so it went.

Perhaps you might be interested in knowing our way of our little service or how it was handled. Each Sunday morning when the children came in we chose a leader. The leader would stand at the little lectern and would announce the program as we went along. The first thing we would do, usually, would be to have two children light the candles. They would be the candle lighters. And then we would have the little leader give a little prayer. His own little prayer from his own little heart. And then we'd have a Bible verse; everybody would participate. And then we would have our hymn singing, all announced by the little leader. And we'd have a little story and sometimes we'd have some drama. Sometimes we'd have a little dance. Just depending on what the lesson would be later on; it would correlate with the lesson. At the end on the service we would have our closing song and then the candle snuffers would come up, they would be selected, two other little people, and that would be the end of our worship service. We would go to our rooms, singing a pretty little song.

Some of our projects would be or were - - - I'll name two of them. Our church was taking care of a little Korean girl for many, many years and each department was asked to help with that. And our little people were so interested in that little girl and the other children in Korea that they just remembered to bring their pennies and nickels and dimes every Sunday and every month we could turn over almost \$10.00 towards the fund for taking care of this little girl. That went on for quite a number of years. And then, another project the church had was supporting one-fourth of a missionary and his family in Alaska. This was a very interesting project and we wrote to the minister there and asked for the name of an Eskimo lady or children that might be interested or the same age as our children and might be able to write back and forth. So Mrs. Blackburn, the missionary, sent us the name of an Eskimo friend who had five children. And our little people wrote letters to these little children and they in turn wrote back many,

many times. And they were very interested and very excited about it. The Eskimo lady was making dolls for a living, to help support her children, because her husband was ill with TB. And so again we found out how much it would cost for her to make a doll for our children to see in the native dress. So she wrote and told us it would be \$8.00. Our children were very excited and again they brought their pennies and nickels and dimes and we sent the money to her and she sent it - - - sent us this beautiful, beautiful little doll. The children were able to hold it and handle it and they learned the different names of the different skins from the animals. And every stitch on the doll was hand done. And so that was a very nice little memento to have around when we were studying Alaska and the Eskimos.

C That was a very meaningful thing.

Did you ever have the advantage of teaching in the new, beautiful education building ?

R No, I didn't. Just about that time I was beginning to go to my dads again in East Bloomfield because he was getting older and needed quite a bit of help. So it was just about that time that my 12 years had ended and I didn't have the opportunity to teach there. I know it is a beautiful building and I'm sure that it's been very, very worth-while. I just want to add that the 12 years that I worked upstairs in the primary department - - - I don't think I ever had better - - - made better friends with teachers and the children and loved every minute of it. It too was a wonderful experience for me and I think of it often and I see many of the teachers and many of the children even yet and it's been a great joy.

C And you had had experience with girls and now you were exposed the boys and girls together.

R Yes, and I learned to love little boys too, and I learned to get along with them very well. And I'm glad because now I have two little grandsons and it's helped me to understand them just a little bit better.

C They're not such strange creatures to you.

R No.

C With those poking and kicking little boys the first Sunday you were in the third grade.

R Oh, right right. Well little boys are little boys and they're precious too; you can't get along without them.

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Mc This has been Tape Number 2 with Dorothy Corlis of Medina, New York interviewing Mrs. Ann Richards of Medina, New York for the Orleans County Historical Association.

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This taped interview was transcribed by Lysbeth Hoffman of Waterport, New York.