

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Depression Project

Life During the Depression

O. H. 385

RUTH DOERIGHT

Interviewed

by

Maribeth Harry

on

June 11, 1976

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

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INTERVIEWEE: RUTH DOERIGHT
INTERVIEWER: Maribeth Harry
SUBJECT: Depression life; F.D.R; Radio shows; Speakeasies
DATE: June 11, 1976

H: This is an interview with Mrs. R. C. Doeright for the Youngstown State University Project of Youngstown in the 1930 Depression Years, by Maribeth Harry, at 7127 Youngstown-Pittsburgh Road, Poland, Ohio, on June 11, 1976, at 11:00 a.m.

Mrs. Doeright, what do you remember about your parents and your family?

D: My father was a doctor, and he had his office in our home. My mother had been a schoolteacher, and we all had to work in the office because during the war it wasn't possible to have a nurse there. If an emergency would come up, whoever was home had to help father. I've had a lot of experiences, a lot of tragic things happen with children and farmers, and automobile accidents, and horse and rig accidents. My parents were very, very happy people. I think one thing they did for me was they never made me afraid. They gave me a lot of philosophies to live by, which I think is very important. They were, I think, charming people. My father was very interested in politics. The only thing that disturbed us was that our name was in the papers so much. Our name was Cardot and they had big headlines about what my father had said or wouldn't say, and so on. It did perturb me a little bit, and it made me a very private person.

H: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

D: I had two brothers and one sister.

H: Have you lived in Poland for most of your life?

D: No, I have not lived in Poland most of my life. I was born in Erie County. My father delivered me, delivered all of his children. We moved to Erie about 1911, where my father opened his office on East 8th Street. There were many doctors on that street. It was called by the youngsters, Pill Alley. If you needed a doctor then 8th Street was the place to go.

H: When did you move to this vicinity?

D: I was in college at Edinboro State Teachers College. I went to a Christmas Masonic dance with a young man. Later, my father-in-law introduced himself to my chaperone. In those days we took a chaperone to a dance that wasn't a school dance. He introduced himself to my chaperone and they had this young man meet me. I thought it was a short, young man, and it was a tall, blonde, young man. The following July I married that young man. If my in-laws had any fault to find with me it's their fault for introducing themselves to my chaperone. (Laughter)

H: That's romantic.

D: My philosophy was made, however, on the first day of school. I was shot. Crime has always been with us. It has probably changed my whole outlook on life because they declared me dead and I was conscious enough to have heard it. My philosophy is that I live in heaven, and whatever befalls me I am in heaven or hell.

H: That's a wonderful philosophy. This is when you were in high school?

D: This was on the first day of grade school, my first year, first day in school.

H: I hope it wasn't intentional.

D: Yes, in a way it was. I was sitting there writing on a slate--in those days we had slates in school--and a boy came along who my brother knew, a newspaper boy. My brother asked him what he had, and he said he had a gun. My brother said, "Oh, it wouldn't work." He said, "Yes, it will. I'll show you." He pointed it and I was shot.

This was on Thursday and on Thursday you really could not get a doctor. They rushed me into the house and laid me down on the table in the office. Finally, a doctor came along and he probed for the bullet, but, couldn't find it. Later, my father came home from the Wattsburg Fair and he said, "Is she dead?" The doctor said, "Yes, she is dead." I heard them and my father leaned over and kissed me. I was just conscious enough to realize that something was going on, and that is all I remember. It went on for several days. Several days later my mother and father were dressing my wound. It went completely through the ankle and they thought I would be crippled for life. Of course, I wasn't. They found the bullet when they shook the mat on the porch. It was a .32 revolver.

H: What a joy to find that you were alive. How many people would ever have that chance to think the one that they loved they had lost. That gives me goose bumps.

To speak of your elementary days, was it a one-room schoolhouse?

D: No, I never went. I went to Jones School, which was an eight-room schoolhouse. We had the eight grades in the schoolhouse. One thing that we did have in school that is different than today was that we had German from first grade through high school. This was before World War I. We lived in a German community and a foreign language was always taught.

H: Do you remember any of it today?

D: Yes, I do. I remember quite a bit. When I'm with German people I pick it up readily.

H: I wish they would do that today.

D: We didn't start departmental work until I think I was about in the sixth grade, when we marched from one room to the other. We were just little devils though, and I feel that was a great mistake.

The one thing I remember about school is this: In coming into our school we had a lot of people who came from Russia. This was before World War I and these people were fleeing Russia and the Near East, and Scotland and different places. There was particularly one girl. Every spring and fall we all had head lice. It was the bane of my father to get the school nurse to try and get this poor girl taken care of who brought them to us. The

interesting thing was that the family situation was tragic. Today, something would be done about it. In those days it was the school nurse and my father who tried to do something about it. We just looked forward every spring and fall to having a seed from the very head of hair and having lice. I think I've tried everything in the world except to shave my head. There were about ten of us that went from first grade through high school together and were very good friends. We meet every so many years for a reunion, our high school class does. This is one of the things we talk about and laugh about, things that our parents used, the recipes they used to get rid of our problems. I think one of the things that we laughed about today, we all said we would like to have our grandchildren rub heads with us back in those days because they wouldn't be so fond of their long hair.

H: What would be one of the recipes, do you recall?

D: My father poured alcohol on my head. The main thing that my mother did was that she would comb my hair with a very fine-toothed comb looking for the little animals. They're kind of grayish looking. She would get the nits out and get the little fellows that ran around. Then we had a coal stove and gas stove combination in the kitchen, and we had a big, coal stove in the living room. I never lived in a house with a furnace in it until I was married because we had stoves which my father considered far healthier. She would stand there and she would put the stuff she combed out of my hair on the heater, on the hot part of the stove. That did away with them. Then, of course, she would wash my head. She washed it with everything. The thing that they used most was lye soap, laundry soap. Even today I think it's the best thing in the world to wash your head with. It really cleans your hair.

I had one experience with one of my daughters when she had it here in Poland. I warned her not to use my combing brush, and she did. I said, "Why did you do that?" She said, "I didn't want them in my combing brush." I called the principal of the school and he informed me that no one in Poland would have head lice. I said, "Well, someone in Poland does have head lice because my daughter has brought them home." I called the doctor and he told me what to buy to get rid of them. It was the best stuff I ever heard of because it got rid of them in about twenty minutes.

H: Too bad your father didn't have that remedy.

D: If he had had that remedy it would certainly have saved our whole school.

H: Tell me a little bit about your father's medical philosophy. My mother mentioned that he would never leave home on holidays.

D: My father would never go away from home on holidays. He worked very hard on holidays because, as you know, most people go someplace on a holiday or have people in. My father felt that working people needed to have the opportunity to go to the different places that were open, the picnic grounds and the fairs. We never went; we always stayed home. Another reason we stayed home was there was always so much to do on the Fourth of July. It started at 8:00 in the morning. Some child would burn a hand with a firecracker or some horse had gotten frightened by something exploding and had thrown someone and they had broken an arm or a leg. In those days, the hospitals were only about ten rooms. You didn't go to the hospital; everything was done in the doctor's office. Consequently, those wounds were taken care of in the office. A younger man than my father moved in just two doors from us and he was the same way. He stayed home too because father felt that he could go another day. They needed to take care of what went on in the district. He made us feel it was a real privilege to stay home. Father never made us feel that anything we had to do was a detriment, because it was always wonderful to do it. We did it with much joy because we had a good time at home and all these patients that came in the office were interesting people.

H: Do you recall what he would charge for an office call?

D: Two dollars was what he would charge for an office call. A charge into the country, if we had to hire a horse, was ten dollars. For a maternity case it was twenty-five dollars. You understand that not that much money changed hands because everything was brought into our house by these farmers to pay my father.

I can remember as a very little girl wondering how I could ever get married and have children. Each spring this man brought my father two bushels of red raspberries to pay for the delivery of a baby. My mother was beside herself with so many berries. They would pass each one of us a quart of red raspberries to eat. We would sit right down and I could eat a quart of red raspberries as easy as saying hi to you. Another thing

they did was bring my father a big bag of cabbage. We would rent the cabbage slawer from Kraus Store and we would then make sauerkraut. My father would always stand there pounding the sauerkraut and have us sprinkle the salt in. He would say, "Now I want you to understand that when I was a boy we did this with our feet. We got right in the barrel. Now come on, don't you want to get in the barrel?" We would say, "Oh my goodness, no!" We learned at school that that was unsanitary. Wood was brought. Anything that was produced was part pay. It was marked down in my father's book what people had paid him, the value of what was brought in. As far as cash was concerned, there wasn't a great deal of cash. There was a great deal of produce, food. We had the best of everything.

Another thing that my father had that doctors don't have today, my father had a drug room. This doesn't mean that he had drugs as we think of them today, but he had all the products like powdered iron that he mixed with wine to make you a tonic. He had things for your stomach, peppermint things for your stomach. I don't know if there were any hard drugs. I believe it was in 1912 or 1913 that the federal government licensed the doctors to give hard drugs. I don't believe my father ever kept them in the office. I never heard any discussion of it, although he did post a form from the government that he had a right to have them.

When I was young, a man came to the door whom my father seemed to know. He told me to go to the door and let the man in and let him in the office. He said, "Sit him down in a chair in the office." I was to sit him there and talk to him. We were never made afraid of anything. He wanted to know what my father had in the place. It was my duty on Saturday to take row by row and clean those places, so I knew what was in there. What he wanted to know I could tell him.

As far as morphine was concerned, that word I didn't even know. That wasn't even kept around.

H: Do you remember the dates?

D: Yes. We moved in in 1918. We moved in the Blood house about 1912 or 1913. I think it was 1912 because the big freeze was in 1913. I remember that because we had plumbing trouble.

H: Where did your father receive his medical training?

D: Western University in Pennsylvania.

H: Did he ever mention how long he went to medical school?

D: He graduated from Clarion College because they had principal trouble at Edinboro. He was one of the dissidents and went to Clarion and finished up there. He taught a few years too. My mother was a student of my father. Then he went to read with a doctor. He read with the doctor and he lived in the country. Then he went to Western University of Pennsylvania. I believe he was there two years. Then he came back and he read and went around with this same doctor to make calls. One time when he had driven for the old doctor on a house call, the farmer offered him a bag of cabbage. My father said, "Oh no." He didn't need any because he was living on a farm. The old doctor said to my father, "You accept whatever anyone offers you because some day you will get something you want. I never refuse anything anybody gives me because if I can't use it, I always can find somebody who can." He felt that if you don't accept it you will not be offered it.

H: What would be a typical day for you when you were sixteen?

D: I was the second daughter and so my duties were . . .
Do you mean a school day?

H: A school day and a Saturday.

D: St. Mary's Catholic Church and the Benedictine Nuns lived on 9th Street in back of us. I lived to their bells. I miss bells because I'm used to getting up when the bells ring. I was used to eating my lunch by the noon ringing of the bell. I was used to having my dinner at 6:00 when the church bells rang and I was used to going to bed by 8:00 at night when the bells rang. We lived very much by the bells. I'm almost glad when I go back to Erie and hear the bells ringing.

We would get up and get dressed. Our second floor was never heated. Our bathroom had a stove in it and we would all go in there and dress. I suppose my mother and father were up very early and then we children would get up when the bells rang and all of us would go in the bathroom and get dressed. I would put on long underwear, and over my long underwear, in the winter, I had to wear black tights, which were very hot and embarrassing to me, but very comfortable when it was so cold out. Erie is a

very cold city. Then we would eat breakfast. I never was a great breakfast eater, and we would be off to school. On the brick sidewalks someone had told me if I slipped on a crack I would break my mother's back. I had quite a hard time getting to school. I would go to school in the morning and come home for lunch and go back in the afternoon. Then I would get home and I would usually have some sewing or knitting or something that I had to do. Being the second daughter I never knew we could have new clothes until I was married, because I always had my sisters. She was always just enough larger that there was always something to make over for me. I learned to alter beautifully, and I alter everything. At 8:00 at night my father would say to my oldest brother Larry, "What time is it?" My oldest brother would then say, "Goodnight father." We would all prance upstairs and take off our clothes and lay them out very carefully to air. Going into the attic to our bathroom was a lot of steps. We very carefully laid our clothes out on those steps to air because washing was not such a fetish as it is today. I suppose my mother washed once a week. It wouldn't run over three loads, so you were always careful about seeing that your clothes were properly aired.

H: Were they as crazy about baths as we are today?

D: No. My bath time was in the evening as I remember it. I may have had a bath twice a week, but I always know that I had that bath before I went to bed. When it was winter my mother always put a soap stone in my bed to warm it. She would rub it back and forth and back and forth. She would very carefully slip a flannel cover on it that had a very pretty ruffle on it. Then I could put my feet on that. They were very careful about me in this way. With this shot ankle they didn't want me to develop rheumatism. I've always had a very long, flannel nightgown in winter up high at the neck and long in the sleeves. I would lay out completely straight and wrap my feet up. These rooms were not heated and it went 20° below 0 up in Erie. I don't know how cold it was in the rooms because we didn't have a thermometer to worry us about it.

H: What do you remember about the roaring 1920's, if anything?

D: I was a flapper in the roaring 1920's.

H: Were you?

D: I'm a real flapper. I graduated from high school in 1923 in the class they said would never amount to anything because we were such a wild bunch. I want you to know the three boys I ran around with and myself, there was no trouble about love; we were just buddies. These three boys, one of them was a general in the Air Force, one of them was a captain in the Navy, and the other was a dentist. I don't know what we all amounted to, but we all contributed something to living. We're a very happy group of people. As I say, we're very, very close friends. Maybe we don't see each other for four or five years, and we pick up right where we left off. We laugh about the things that happened to us in school. One of the boys said to me after his second marriage, "You know Ruth, I made a terrible mistake by not marrying you, but I never knew you were a girl. I always thought you were just one of the guys."

I had extremely heavy hair and I never really could do my hair myself. In the roaring 1920's, beauty shops started to open and cut women's hair. In my grade school class, probably half of us went to high school, but only about ten or fifteen of us went to college. Anyway, beauty shops opened up and I went up to a store called Trask Prescott and Richardson to have my hair done. The beauty operators in those days went in and trained in a beauty shop. They were given work to do in a beauty shop and whatever they made they got a percentage of that and the tips. Later, when I moved to Youngstown, I found a girl that learned to do hair on my head. We're still great friends and we talk to each other once in a while. Anyway, I decided that I would have my hair cut to go to dances and dress in high style. I had it cut but I did not tell my father. My father gave me an allowance of five dollars a week and I had to buy all my clothes and my lunch in high school. Consequently, I also made everything over. I went and had my hair cut and came home and showed it to my father. He just put his head down on his desk and cried.

H: I'll bet you felt terrible.

D: No, I didn't feel terrible, because after all, I was the new generation. This was the thing to do.

One night, one of the boys I used to run around with, Harold, called me up and said, "Come on down, my father has some wonderful new cigars." I said, "I don't know

if I should. I'm on my way to choir practice." I always sang in the choir. He said, "Come on down anyway and have a cigar and then go onto choir." I went down and we had a cigar, but I did not get to choir practice because he had not smoked a cigar before and I had never smoked a cigar before. We were both deathly sick.

H: Did you tell your father?

D: Oh sure I told my father. He never scolded about things.

H: Do you remember what a haircut would cost in the 1920's?

D: It must have cost all of a dollar because it was the most expensive thing I did.

H: What people would do to pay a dollar for a nice haircut today.

D: That was hand dried. When I see these operators today, they're back with these hand dryers. I think, how ancient. Everything repeats itself. They fan and comb the hair and put the air on it, why that's going back to the flapper age.

The dresses were either terribly long or terribly short. If they were terribly long I shortened them and if they were terribly short I lengthened them. That's the way we did things.

On Friday nights the high school crowd went down outside of Northeast Pennsylvania and they had a dance. It was really wild. We would Charleston somebody or we might hold hands under the table, or the fellow that you were with would bring another fellow over to meet you. We would feel that we were very abused if we didn't have every dance with a different fellow. We always had a card, and that card was always filled out by the young man that brought us. We would just hope that we would get to dance with this one and that one.

The liquor situation was never any great problem at our house. We were French and looked upon wine particularly as a beverage, as something to drink, like you drink Coca-Cola. I never grew up with any fear that liquor was something that you shouldn't have. It was sort of a medicinal condition. Furthermore, I don't think any of our family could stand to drink a great deal because

we all have squirmy stomachs over food and certain foods we're allergic to. If we would drink too much we would get very sick. That is a great blessing in disguise.

My mother was a beautiful reader. She almost kept us from learning to read she enjoyed reading so much. We could have a glass of wine at the table and in the evening my mother would read to us.

At these dances liquor was introduced to us and everybody carried a bottle. I talked to my father about this and he said, "If you're going to carry it, I only want you to drink good stuff. I don't want you to drink what everybody is making. Once in a while I can prescribe a pint of liquor, and you will be allowed to have that." He said, "But I wouldn't drink anybody else's because you don't know where it's made and anything could go in your stomach. Your liver just won't take it." He outlined all the problems of it and was very logical about it. During the roaring 1920's, I never had a liquor problem. The only funny thing that happened to me one night was when we were down at this inn and we thought we had drunk too much. We stopped in at the Greek place to have coffee. It was an all night eating place. We stopped in there to have coffee; there was a great, big table of us. There were eight or ten or twelve people at the table. My father always seemed to know where I was. Maybe he would have to call someplace, but he always seemed to know. Sometimes on Friday nights at the dances he would come in and look around and see what we were doing. I was always aware that father could appear. Anyway, we were sitting there at the table and we all ordered black coffee. Coffee wasn't made very often in our house. We never had coffee; we were tea drinkers in our house. This one morning he had made coffee and he poured me a cup of coffee. I sat at the table and I asked him to pass me the sugar. He said, "Oh Ruth, you drink your coffee black." I have never drunk my coffee any other way.

H: Did you have a curfew?

D: No. We never had rules that we could or couldn't do anything. I talked to my mother about this afterwards. I said, "You never told me I could or couldn't do anything and father never told me. I never saw you and father ever have a fight." I never heard them raise their voice to each other. She always called him doctor around everyone and he always called her mother. I knew that every so often they would go into the office and close the door. I never heard anything, and they would come out and one

or the other would make a statement of what we could or couldn't do. Maybe they would say nothing, so I suppose that was when they had a personal discussion. Mother said we were educated, intelligent people and there was no need to raise our voices. We were never made to feel we were under any depression at any time. We never had that feeling that our parents were against us; they were always for us. If we asked them a question they answered it. When I wanted to know where babies came from, father took me into the office, or my mother took me into the office, and told my father the question I had asked. My father took down the doctor book and sat down with me while my mother opened the book to the pictures and explained to me just the question that I had asked. As my life went along, that's the way he did it. Each question was answered by one of my parents out of a book or out of something where I knew they had told me the truth. I never felt that they were lying to me. When I was little and children talked of the doctor bringing the baby in the black bag I knew he didn't because I knew that I helped prepare that black bag. I had to see that those sterilized towels and those instruments were wrapped up properly. I knew there was no baby in my father's black bag, and he only took that on consignment cases. I had no compulsion about babies coming from doctors' black bags, and I knew the stork didn't bring it.

I went with my father many times on a delivery and I would sit in the kitchen while the women busied themselves there. My father and a woman who was always dressed in a very white apron with a cap on her head went into the bedroom. Later, I would hear a baby cry. I knew it had something to do with that when I was little. The women would ask my father what he wanted them to do. My father would tell them to boil lots of water. The baby would be delivered and father would come out and they would give him water to wash up with. He would then go out and call the husband and so on. The women would ask him again what he wanted them to do with the water. He would say, "Now you can make me coffee and make me breakfast." I know father could eat three breakfasts. (Laughter)

H: What was your father's reaction to prohibition?

D: My father thought it was extremely foolish. I remember prohibition night, the last night the saloons were open; I remember it. I believe I was in high school when it happened. Eighth & State was a big saloon; I believe it was one of the best saloons in Erie. I remember that

Grizzy, one of the boys, and Harold and I, were walking home. We started to go by the saloon on the side of the street that we usually walked on, the side I lived on, but we decided to cross over and listen at the door of the saloon. You never heard such noise in your life. My father thought it was very foolish and he said we must get something in for medicinal purposes. I remember my father coming into the house with two, splint baskets of bottles and going immediately into the drug room and putting those away. He came out and he said, "I've got that for medicinal purposes." I remember that night because the noise went on until midnight. People were going up the street in much inebriated conditions because everybody was going to have their last fling. My father was put on the federal board of inspecting at the Meadville Rye in Meadville, Pennsylvania. Later on I knew Mrs. Fleischman, whose family owned the Meadville Rye. Lots of rye whiskey was made throughout this district where rye is grown and it makes a very fine whiskey, but very few people drink rye whiskey today because it has not been talked up as being as good a whiskey as corn whiskey. But if you're a connoisseur of American whiskey, rye will be the whiskey that you will drink. It is considered much superior.

H: Did you ever got to a speakeasy?

D: I never went to a speakeasy until after I was married because my father considered that utterly unnecessary. There was no reason for me to go and get liquor as a girl. I don't ever remember going anyplace when I was a girl to get liquor.

I had one of the finest wines across the street. A woman gave me a glass of wine that was the most beautiful color. It was like looking at sunshine through a buttercup. It was such a beautiful color. I sipped it and I wanted to know what it was. It was dandelion wine. It was the only time I've ever had dandelion wine and it was perfectly delicious.

H: Did she give you the recipe?

D: No, not at that time. Later on, she got to inviting me for dandelion wine for lunch. (Laughter)

After I was married, though, I went to a speakeasy. All of them were in Youngstown because I didn't go until we were in Youngstown. There were some on East Federal Street.

There was one on East Youngstown. There was one right near city hall that was painted black and red. I didn't think it was very exciting.

H: How did you obtain entrance? Did they really look through holes?

D: Yes, they looked through a little hole or they had somebody outside. They seemed to have some kind of signal to get you in. Getting in didn't seem to be any great trouble. I suppose there was a lookout on the outside.

I think one of the cutest stories about prohibition was when we were going out to my uncle's farm. They were one of our families who raised grapes. Every fall we went to the vineyards to pick grapes. My family had five vineyards. Even one of my grandsons today goes; it seems to be in the blood. We went out to the farm and there was quite a party of us from Youngstown. We were all just married and we decided that we wanted something to drink. Nobody had anything and nobody knew where to go, so my cousin said that she thought she knew of a place that her uncle, who was the big dry of Northeast Pennsylvania. . . she thought she heard him say there was a family near the Catholic church that had a speakeasy in back of their grocery store. She felt we should go there. The boys went there and we girls sat out in the car and we thought we were going to go in. They were going to see if we could get in and then they were going to come and get us. They went to the door and they wanted identification. My husband gave the name of my cousin's uncle in reference to get in. Well, they wouldn't let us in, but they would sell us something. That was quite a weekend because we all had a pint and a half of whatever it might have been among ten or twelve of us. I think we were in very high condition.

H: Were the prices terribly inflated in a speakeasy?

D: I never paid for anything so I really can't tell you.

We've moved to Poland, and I think our drinking here in Poland is quite interesting. (Laughter)

H: How?

D: Everybody made something. We got together on Fridays or Saturday nights and whose ever house you went to always had what they made to serve. Everybody would

say at that house, that was the best. Immediately you get out a notebook and you would take the recipe down. At one house here in Poland they got moonshine in a wooden keg and they put it on a rocking chair. You were supposed to go down and rock it in the basement because that was supposed to age it faster.

At our house I had a cook and her brother had been brewmaster of the Jones Brewery. We never made it, but he came out to our house and had a batch going in two, ten-gallon jars. When it had worked properly he came out and bottled it.

Another thing, the Taylor Wine Company never went out of business during prohibition. They put out a five gallon barrel and stamped right on it, "Do not put any sugar in this or any yeast in this barrel." It was illegal because it would make wine, Chablis. Whatever kind of grapes those were, it would make that kind of wine. It would give you the exact recipe of what you were not to do. I'm the only person that had been up to the winery after it opened two years ago. The first they met that had actually made wine which I should not have made; I should not have done that. They really called the president of the company to come and meet me.

My neighbor directly in back of me, where I lived then, was the big dry of Ohio. I started going to a church here in Poland because I believe that all churches are for good. We made a pledge to the church and got envelopes and then we decided that maybe we should join. To join the church they told me I had to sign the abstinence pledge. I said indeed I would not. I didn't believe in that because everyone of my friends made something and they were very prominent in that church. I was not a hypocrite and if I signed the pledge I would not make anything and I wouldn't drink any of it. If that was the rule to join the church, I would not join it. We were one of two families in Poland to be discriminated against because I would not sign the pledge. I was the one who had made the stink about it. My husband thought it was a big joke. This was in the Depression and the other family who came to Poland, that man lost his job at the Union Bank. They only job he could get was with the Remmer Brewery Company. I don't know what business they were in because I wasn't a Youngstown girl and I didn't know too much. They wouldn't let him join unless he would leave his job as bookkeeper for the Remmer people.

This would be something that he would be absolutely unable to do because he couldn't get another job. They went to another church like we did at that time.

H: What do you recall about the Depression in the 1930 Depression years?

D: The Depression didn't affect me like it did other people because although my husband never told me anything about finances . . . To have something or not to have it wasn't any great shake with me. We started to build our house in the Manor in 1929 and we moved in on Armistice Day, November 11, 1929. I was very happy, but my husband came home and he told me that things were in very bad shape and we would have to be very careful about finances and that the mills were going down and all these things. 1930 came along and I put in a little garden. The Depression didn't affect me very much, but I did purchase new rugs. My mother-in-law felt I was very extravagant because I had paid \$2.25 a square yard for the carpet in my living room, dining room, and upstairs, going upstairs, and upstairs hall. I had purchased for our bedroom a large rug that I paid .75¢ for. The other two bedrooms were bare. I personally never charged anything except when I had money in the bank to pay for it. In 1930 then I was very busy because we formed a garden club out here.

H: Was this the first garden club?

D: That was the first garden club, the Poland Garden Club. That was the first one and there wasn't supposed to be any other garden club. Everybody was supposed to join and it wasn't to be over one hundred people. We had a wonderful time. Everybody was hard up for money.

In October of 1931 I had a daughter, Sarah. That was my second child. My first daughter died. I was very delighted that I was pregnant and going to have a baby. I had delivered and was in St. Elizabeth's Hospital in the new wing. The money had been put in a safety deposit box to pay for my pregnancy and the hospital bill, and I was able to have a hired girl. I got her for the large sum of \$10 a week to do the laundry and the housework. She was very glad to have food in her mouth because she had no family and no place to go. From then on, really, my house became a rendezvous of girls who were having a hard time of it. She would have a friend and then her friend would come out and help.

A very interesting thing is when I was wakened very early in the morning after delivery and I heard extra! extra! The Telegram and the Vindicator always put out extras and we were always wakened by it. I couldn't understand what the boys were saying though. They mumbled or didn't speak so that I could understand what they were yelling about. Anyway, the cleaning woman came dashing into the room with a big mop and she started to push the mop. She said, "I want to tell you, yesterday you were delivered of an heiress. Today she is just as poor as all of the rest of us." Heiress, I didn't know I had an heiress. I didn't know I had any money either. I didn't know what had happened. I think in the meantime the banks had closed. All of the banks in Youngstown had closed. This was a terrible shock to people. One of my friends from Erie was living in Youngstown and she came over to see me. She came in after the cleaning woman had been there. And she told me that she had fifty cents in her pocket and she had walked from wherever she lived on the south side to the hospital to see me. She was so upset she wanted to talk to me.

My hospital room wasn't big, but you were there for two weeks and I think you paid about \$6.50 a day for the room. The doctor bill was \$25. That also included care before and after.

My Scotch girl had to leave then and I always got my help from Wells Employment Agency. They had the best in town. I got a wonderful girl from there and she was with me for many years and we were very close friends.

H: Do you recall another incident concerning the stock market crash?

D: I really didn't understand much about the stock market crash. It was pretty complicated. In the first place, I knew a lot about the stock market because in school I could never learn to spell. I have an Elizabethan ear. I can spell Elizabethan; I can read Elizabethan English much easier than I can the way we spell. My German teacher became my homeroom teacher, and the four of us were probably the worst children of the school. I wrote poetry about my teacher. Rose Whitman was her name. I had to stay after school almost every night unless my father was picking me up. She said, "Ruth, I cannot teach you to spell. I have done everything in the world to teach you to spell. The only thing left for me to do is to teach you how to be a rich woman." I learned everything

there was about bookkeeping and banking and stock market, but it didn't mean anything to me because my father wasn't that type of person. I read the stock market every night, but the stock market crash didn't mean anything to me because I didn't own anything. If you didn't own anything it didn't mean anything to you. I do remember this, my beauty operator worked very hard and she had very good clientele. She was very frugal about her money and she would invest it in stock. Of course, I was very interested because she would talk to me about it. My husband wouldn't talk to me about it, nobody else would, and the bankers would never give me any information about anything. So I learned to be very much my own person. I talked to her about it and she said that she was buying a certain stock on time. Of course, she explained to me how it was. If she had \$10 or X number of dollars she would go down and buy \$100 worth of stocks. She would then hope that stock would go up and then she would sell it and pay the broker. Then she would have whatever was left over from her \$10. Instead of doing that, why, the market went down and she was certainly very upset. She left McKelvey's and I never knew what became of her. It was a sad case as far as I was concerned. One thing I was taught was the Barney Brew method. You sell when the newspaper says on the front page how high a stock is. You buy when the paper says how low the stock is. This is the Barney Brew method. This method was what my teacher Rose Whitman told me to go by. This is the method that later on, when I became a widow, I had followed and had success with.

We had one, sad case that has to be the speakeasy and stock market story. I had close friends and my daughter Sarah was just a baby. This man had never held a tiny baby in his arms and I told him to come to me. I put the baby in his arms and he almost dropped her; he was so shocked because he had never held a baby before. Anyway, we went out a lot together. We went out to each other's homes. In the Depression you didn't go out places, you went to people's homes. You had an awfully good time in our neighborhood. This girl came from a very wealthy family who had lived around the world and probably were millionaires and left her very well off. Of course, she was smart like everybody else and she was apparently investing in the stock market. This one night she wanted to go out to Blackie's, I believe the place was called. It was off of Belmont Avenue, beyond Gypsy Lane. She wanted us to go there with them that night. I had never been there. We went up to their house and got in their

car and we drove around. We went all over the north side, and finally when it got really dark, Howard said, "We've got to go back to our house because I forgot something. I forgot my wallet." That was fine. I think we all had about \$2 among us. We had to go back and he said, "Come on up. You might as well all come on up while you're here." We went up and when we had finally gotten upstairs he lit a candle in the kitchen. He said, "You all want to go to a speakeasy and all you do at a speakeasy is drink and blow smoke in each other's face and step on each other's feet. We don't have any money among us, and we might as well sit here and do it than go off and spend what little money we need for something else." I thought it was a big joke. I thought it was really cute. My friend was very angry. She thought her husband had been highly insulting for having her get all dressed up and then do this to her. It had very tragic consequences though. The following Saturday night, this friend went out. She went out there. I don't know whether she went alone, with her husband, or with somebody else. I never really found that out. Anyway, she came home about midnight and he had turned the lights on. She got into her medicine cabinet. She kept poisons in there along with her other medications: she was a very foolish woman. She took them; somehow it was lead poison which just destroys the kidneys. She just lived a few days then. Whether she wished to commit suicide or not, I don't know. She told me at the hospital she didn't want to die.

H: What do you recall about F.D.R.? Did you like F.D.R.?

D: I had no use for F.D.R. He did do something good; he promised that prohibition would be over with. The only bad thing about prohibition being over with is that certain people, who were very prominent, got all of the warehouses in Canada all along the lakes; and all of the liquors of any type sewed up so that that one family reaped the benefit of the importing of liquor into this country. We hadn't been able to make it and weren't making it. Our distilleries didn't have any to put on the market. I think it should have been handled a little better for our businessmen. Everybody seems to be against our business in this country, then and now. I think it would have been better if the distilleries in this country and the breweries, and the wineries, would have been able to tool up and have merchandise to put on the market so that when prohibition was over with there wouldn't be this great flood of Canadian whiskey and Scotch whiskey and German beer coming in. I don't believe that was done. I thought that was very wrong.

Another thing, a number of our families are bankers. F.D.R., whoever, his men, they said certain banks must close. The government recommended that some banks buy certain countries' bonds. Our government said the bonds were no good and they closed the bank.

Another member of our family owned a bank that never needed to close, and the government just came along and said that bank must close. That had been a family bank. It had always been prosperous. It was in a prosperous part of the world.

Another close friend of mine whose family had a bank along the Ohio River, the president of that bank committed suicide. I just know so many banks that closed. It was very sad for me to see these things happening. I think they should have happened, but I think they should have been done easier. One day they were open and the next day they were closed.

Of course, I didn't like F.D.R. running for a third term at all. I feel that was a terrible mistake. He wasn't that good of a president. The thing I held against him was this, "War, war, how I hate war." I heard him give this speech in Chicago, how he hated war.

H: Do you feel that many people blamed Herbert Hoover for the Depression?

D: People who were not business did. I believe the men in the mills in Youngstown blamed Herbert Hoover for the Depression.

H: Mrs. Doeright, what do you feel has been the greatest change since you were a young girl?

D: The greatest change is how successful everyone is now.

H: Do you recall Fred Allen, the comedian?

D: I recall him, but not well. I like satire better than comedy, so I didn't watch him.

H: Is there anything you would like to add?

D: No.

H: Thank you very much, Mrs. Doeright.

END OF INTERVIEW