

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Hubbard History Project

Hubbard Bicentennial History

O. H. 719

NELL BURROWS

Interviewed

by

Mrs. William Glaser

on

February 20, 1976

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

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INTERVIEWEE: NELL BURROWS

INTERVIEWER: Mrs. William Glaser

SUBJECT: early life, recreation, education, activities,
teaching experiences

DATE: February 20, 1976

G: This is an interview with Miss Nell Burrows for the Youngstown State University Program, on the Hubbard Bicentennial History, recorded by Mrs. William Glaser, at the home of Miss Burrows who lives at 59 Christian Avenue, taken on February 20, 1976, at 5:00 p.m. Miss Burrows has been a teacher in the Hubbard school system for thirty-five years.

Nell, what do you remember about your parents and your family?

B: Well, I am from a family with five children, four of whom are still living. We had a happy childhood. I can remember living down on North Main Street near Youngstown Sheet & Tube furnace. We lived with my grandfather who was a very informative person. He used to tell us about when he was a sailor on a sugar boat that went from New York to Cuba. He was always telling us about the various escapades that happened and so on and so forth. We lived on a thirty-two acre farm. We had many of our own recreational facilities. We had our own baseball field; we had our own tennis court. Grandpa had horses that we used to ride. We used to go swimming at the creek across the street. We used to go skating there in the wintertime. We used to skate clear up to the Coleburg Dam in the wintertime so that we never wanted something to do. We always had much to do, and we enjoyed it.

G: Can you tell us anything more about your childhood, anything more about your grandfather?

B: He was a person that was very likable. We used to have people at our home all of the time. He had some old cronies as we used to call them; Mr. Drummond for whom Drummond Avenue has been named was a very good friend of his. He used to come and visit him practically every day. They used to exchange stories

that they had. My grandfather was really from Canada. Mr. Drummond was from Scotland. Therefore, as children we used to sit around and listen to their stories. My mother was born and raised in Hubbard as I was. My father was born in Franklin, Pennsylvania and then came here to Hubbard. We did have an enjoyable childhood as I said. We enjoyed being with each other.

G: I would like to know a little about your school experiences, especially grade school and high school in Hubbard.

B: I went to St. Patrick's Grade School for grades one through seven. At that time then I transferred to the Hubbard High School which is now the Roosevelt School. At that time they had kindergarten through twelfth grade in one building. When we were in eighth grade, they were building the school on School Street. We tried to have classes while they were building the school. Of course, we had a lot of noise going on. I do remember that I went to school for ten years without missing a day. I missed a few days when I was in the second grade because I had the measles. I consider that to be an honor, and I am very proud of it. I took the academic course in high school with the idea of going on to college and becoming a teacher because I had always wanted to be a teacher. I enjoyed high school and going to the basketball games and football games. When we were juniors, we had to make money for our junior-senior prom. I can remember going to the football games up on Fifth Avenue. We had no stadium like we have now. We boiled the wieners in a kettle and sold them to the people. I enjoyed doing that while we were in high school.

G: And then when did you decide that you would like to become a teacher?

B: I went to Youngstown College--that was what it was called at that time--Business School. I intended to perhaps get a business education and then maybe work in an office so I could earn some money to become a teacher. But Vera Jenkins who was teaching in the business school at that time--I believe that she is still teaching at Youngstown University in the accounting department--persuaded me that I should go on and become a teacher. So it was from her influence that I didn't go into an office to work. So then I became a business teacher at that time. I did get my credits transferred to the college so that I really got two years of business school and the four years of college in five years. I did work my way through college. Mother paid for three months of it. I did work in the bookstore and worked at night and went to school during the day. I did have a few college night classes. I did work my way through school; no one paid for my education. I also went to Westminster College and got my Masters degree in 1947. I was one of the very few in the high school at that

time who had a Masters degree. I think that there were just two others. I was very proud of that. I thought that while I was going to college, I might as well go ahead and get my Masters degree. So I have had it since 1947. I have been teaching for the thirty-five years in the high school.

G: I imagine that in the thirty-five years of teaching you have seen a number of changes in the school system.

B: Yes, there have been a great many changes. I came back to teach at Hubbard High School and did my student teaching there with Mary Ethel Lyons. I came back to the high school and taught with the teachers that were my teachers. They were all very helpful to me. There were a great many changes right in my own department and in the English and the mathematics. When I first started, we just had basic English for instance. Now we have honors courses; we have basic courses for those who are deficient and also want to go on to college; the honors are for those who are exceptionally good in English. In our own department in business, we have added the COE program which is Cooperative Office Education where the students go to school for a half a day, and then they go out and work a half a day to get that office experience. We have several vocational courses for the students. We have added many, many courses especially in the home economics. It used to be just nothing but cooking and the clothing. We used to call that domestic science. Now if you mention the word domestic science, that shows your age. So it is now called home economics.

G: Sort of like manual training for industrial arts?

B: That is right. So it has been changed to industrial arts. Our own commercial course has been changed now to business education. There are many, many changes. I was trying to think of the courses that we have, and when I start to think of all the various courses that we have right now in the high school, there are so many of them that you couldn't pick out one or the other. In the math department we used to just have algebra and advanced algebra and geometry. Now they have math analysis and fundamentals of math I and II and general math and business math and what have you. There is no reason why the student can't find a class that suits him.

Another thing that has changed in the high school is that we have now the mod system which used to be that you came and went with the bells. The bells rang and you went to the next class. Well, we have no bells at all now. We have a bell in the morning, and we have one at night. The rest of the time you have to watch the clock. We have classes changing at various times. Right in the middle of your class, another class might be changing, for instance,

those lab classes and that sort of thing, but it isn't disturbing at all. We have that.

Another thing that was instituted about two or three years ago was self-scheduling. The students choose their own courses that they want and their own teachers, similar to what they do in college. There are not very many high schools that do have that. We have spent a day for each of the classes where they go ahead and schedule their own subjects and their own teachers that they want. It has worked out very well. We have so few changes. The student then chooses what he wants. If he wants to change, then we tell him that he can't because he chose what he wanted. So that was it; he had to put up with it. Where prior to this time, he was just assigned something, and maybe he didn't like the teacher or he didn't like the course, and therefore, he wanted to change. This way he chose, and he is stuck with it. We do like the self-scheduling. We were asked the other day if we wanted to continue with it, and I think that most of the teachers said yes.

G: What events stand out as particularly significant during your teaching period?

B: We can always remember working and making money for the junior-senior prom. I think that is one of the outstanding events of the school year. It always has been. I can remember that in my high school days, and it still is what the children look forward to in the spring.

Another thing that is outstanding as far as I am concerned is that I was one of the organizers of the FTA, the Future Teachers of America. I felt that some of the girls should know something about teaching. We would get them to go to the elementary school. They would spend two days; one day they would observe, and the next day they would help the teacher teach some of the various classes in math and that sort of thing. So that was some of the outstanding things. Many things are outstanding. I enjoy being with the children and helping them.

I have been the advisor of the National Honor Society. That has always been an outstanding organization as far as I am concerned. So much emphasis is spent on athletics that not a whole lot is spent on the academic student. I certainly do think that we should do more for the National Honor Society.

G: I agree with that.

B: I was advisor of that for several years. We always said that was a big event choosing those people for National Honor Society.

- G: You mentioned the proms. Would you like to comment about how the proms themselves have changed through the years?
- B: I don't know. Years ago we would have a big banquet at the Baptist church. We would go across and march down from the high school across to the Baptist church. Well, we no longer do that. The last few junior proms have been held at the Avalon Inn where they have had dinners. I don't know what they are going to do this year. They are going to have some sort of a change. I don't notice that they are any different. There are just more children there. Of course, the boys all have to get into their tux and so forth. The boys have changed more than the girls. The girls always did wear their long dresses and so forth. But the boys now in the last few years have been wearing tuxedos, where before they wore more or less of a business suit. But they haven't changed a whole lot. Of course, the music has changed an awful lot from what it used to be, if you want to call it music.
- G: I know that you have been active in organizations outside of the school, some of them pertaining to the school and clubs.
- B: Yes, I am a person who believes in belonging to clubs that have to do with your particular work. I am a life member of the National Education Association and a life member of the Ohio Education Association. I have been for many, many years. At one time I was the recording secretary of the Northeastern Ohio Association. That was back in 1957, I believe. I belong to many business organizations like the Ohio Business Teachers and the Youngstown Area Business Teachers. I belong to Delta Kappa Gamma; that is an honorary teachers group. It is international. I have been active in it as a treasurer, secretary, vice-president, president, and I am now the parliamentarian. I have represented Hubbard Education Association of which I belong to and have always belonged to. I was their first secretary, and I have represented them at the national and the Ohio education conferences that they have had. So I have traveled many places across the country representing that various teacher organizations. I also belong to the Fort Nightly Club here in Hubbard. I am presently the vice-president, and next year I will be the president.
- An honor was bestowed on me this past September where I have been asked to become a Jennings Scholar. It is for outstanding teachers. I don't know how I qualified for that, but we do go to Kent once a month and listen to lectures of very outstanding speakers. There are only six other teachers from Hubbard who are Jennings Scholars, so I consider that an honor. I do appreciate being chosen.

- G: Are there any other clubs outside of your career oriented organizations that you belong to?
- B: Not a whole lot. As I said, I do belong to the Fort Nightly Club and these other organizations. By the time you teach school all day long and have papers to grade at night and belong to your other local organizations and so forth, you don't have much time for a whole lot of outside activities.
- G: Looking back through the years, are there any changes that you would have liked to have seen in the city of Hubbard?
- B: I don't know. I am very proud of the city of Hubbard. I always have been, and no one dare say anything about the city of Hubbard in front of me because I certainly will stand up for it. I have seen it grow, and it has progressed. I don't know. I am mighty proud of Hubbard and the people in it and the way in which it is run. I know that sometimes you get a little provoked at council and mayor and so on and so forth, but I don't think that I could do any better than they could do. I really am very proud of the city; I am very proud of the children. I have always been proud of them when I took them places. I went to various meetings and so on, and I could never take a backseat for the students of Hubbard. I have always been very proud of them. I tell them so too.
- G: And I know that you are working on the bicentennial committee. Which one is it that you are working on this year?
- B: I am chairman of the decoration committee, and I belong to the executive committee of the bicentennial local committee. I am in the process now of contacting decorators to have the town decorated. I kid myself about climbing poles and so on to get all the bunting and store fronts decorated, but I do have a committee, and we will be working and hoping that we can have the town nicely decorated. The commission wants to have it done by Decoration Day. I am now waiting for the bids to come in. I hope that we can do a good job on that.
- G: Have you any future personal plans?
- B: I think after thirty-five years of teaching I have in the back of my mind that I will be retiring soon. I don't know if it is going to be this year or not. I can't go on much longer. I will leave it for the younger people. When I do retire, I expect to do some traveling to get caught up in some of my reading that I have that I haven't been able to do lately. I love to crochet; I like to play bridge; I like to knit, and I just haven't had time for all of those things. So I do expect when I retire to get caught up in a lot of those things. I do love to travel, and I haven't been able to do that just lately. Miss Helen Rice, who is now deceased, and I really have traveled all over the country.

I sure miss her because we did travel together. Since her death, I really haven't done too much. But I do intend to do a lot more.

- G: When you mention Miss Helen Rice, I think about the home in which you are now living where she formerly lived. Could you tell us a little about it?
- B: Yes. This is an older home. I used to come here to visit with her and never thought that I would be living here. After mother died, I lived at a home on 142 Church Street for almost thirty years. I moved out in August, and if I would have stayed until November, I would have been there for thirty years. So when Helen decided to buy a home on Hager Street, she asked me if I would like to move into her home. I was very happy to do that. I was used to the home. I had been here many, many years. Another thing about this particular home is that I used to hear mother tell me that she used to come here when she was in high school. She and Miss Maude Reed used to come to this particular house, and this was about in 1900, to pick up Dolly Bailey; she was at that time, Dolly Schook. They would come here and pick her up after they would eat lunch. Then they would go back on down to the high school. I used to hear mother talking about it. How old it is, I don't know. But I imagine that it is about a hundred years old. It was owned by Milly Rowens. Her daughter and son-in-law still live upstairs. I have the downstairs apartment which I love very much. I have the ground floor here. I enjoy the flowers and the lawn. I don't enjoy raking the leaves and mowing the lawn and shoveling the snow, but it is still a nice place to live. I really enjoy it very much. I really don't know how old it is, but it is, I think, around one hundred years old.
- G: Nell, I want to thank you very much for the interview. You had told me formerly that there had been a number of teachers in your family and that they have had perhaps some influence on your wanting to become a teacher. I am sure that they can be very, very proud of your record as a teacher.
- B: Oh, thank you. I hope I had some influence on some of the other students or some students around town. I know that I have many students who are now working and are holding very good jobs. So thank you for inviting me to talk to you.

END OF INTERVIEW