

ALTHEA PRATT-BROOME

TAPE 4, Side 1

November 1, 1995

M.O'R.: This Michael O'Rourke from the Washington County Historical Society, and I'm sitting today with Althea Pratt-Broome on November 1st, 1995, at her home. This is a continuation of her oral history.

Well, as I said just a minute ago I thought one of the things - we talked a little bit about your life at the Sylvan house. I guess you stayed there for about three years, was it?

A.P-B.: Three.

M.O'R.: Yeah. Back in the 30's, and I heard a little bit about the woods there and your experiments with gravity, et cetera. But one thing I don't think we did talk about was your outings to the Tualatin River at that time. Now, maybe in talking about this we might even get a little out of chronological order here, but anyway, we'll risk it. Can you tell me, what were the places on the Tualatin you would visit in this period?

A.P-B.: Right. It was Louie's, and it was L-o-u-i-e-apostrophe-s. And Louie's was a farm. It was on the southeast corner of what is 99W now, and then Avalon was across the river on the northeast corner by the highway. And they both bordered on the river, and one being an old farm, Louie's, it didn't have a lot of amenities. He did have boats that you could take and row out, old rowboats, and they were kind of neat. And he had a dock that you could jump off or dive off into the river, and picnic tables so that you could go as a family and picnic, and that was our favorite

because it was usually quieter; there weren't quite as many people. But my father would take us because he liked to fish, and we would row, and so I learned as a little girl to row a boat.

M.O'R.: While your father fished from the boat?

A.P-B.: Yes. And then Avalon had a lot more things. They - oh, nothing that was what we would consider play things for kids. You always made up your own games and played old games, but you didn't have all the entertainment that kids have now. It was really a lot more fun because you could make up things, you could use your imaginations. And of course that was one of my big troubles was the fact that my imagination was always running away with me and I was I always inventing and creating things. Now it comes in very handy.

And then the other one was Roamer's Rest.

M.O'R.: Now, all three were right there ...

A.P-B.: All three were right there.

M.O'R.: ... at the place where 99W crosses the river today?

A.P-B.: Yes. And Roamer's Rest was on the southwest side, and now they're putting in houses there. Quite a number of years ago they stopped operating at all, but Roamer's Rest was the last one to go. Louie's was the first to go because it was a family farm, and then they sold it and the other people didn't do that anymore; they didn't allow anybody on their land.

But Avalon went on for a long time because we would go there as teenagers. And I told you that they had like a bandstand - you know, sort of an octagonal thing, only it was a dance floor, so that sometimes they would have a band there, so it was just like going to a park on a Sunday afternoon in the old days when they

would have a band and everybody just sat around and listened to the band.

I experienced that in a small college town in South Dakota there one time. I was back there for a couple of months, and on the campus they had a bandstand, and the band would come on Saturday or Sunday afternoons. There were no buses in that little town; everybody walked, and it had these big old houses and yards and trees, and it was just so beautiful there, out in the middle of nowhere, out in the plains, you know. But it was a wonderful college town. It had that very old-time ambience to it.

M.O'R.: What town was this?

A.P-B.: Brookings, South Dakota, and one of the colleges - I can't remember - it was one of the state colleges was there.

M.O'R.: Now, this was a place that you visited as an adult, I assume?

A.P-B.: Oh, yes. I was 20 or 21. But at any rate, Avalon had the same kind of bandstand, and sometimes they would have a band, and then everybody just sort of sat around or walked around and listened to it. And other times they had a nickelodeon there when I was a teenager, and you'd plug the nickelodeon and everybody could dance. So it was ...

M.O'R.: Dance on the bandstand, then?

A.P-B.: Yes, on the floor.

M.O'R.: And when they had bands there then ...

A.P-B.: No, then you didn't dance.

M.O'R.: Then you didn't dance. You just listened?

A.P-B.: You listened.

M.O'R.: What kind of music would be played when there was a band there?

A.P-B.: Well, the bands played - oh, mostly the old-time things. Sometimes they played the newer things, which would go back into the 30's, 20's and 30's music, popular music. But most of the time it was kinds of things that my mother and father sang - popular music like "Daisy, Daisy, Give me Your Answer True," and "On the Sidewalks of New York," and - oh, I have stacks of music in the sideboard there of the old-time things that I've used with the summer arts program so that the kids get a taste of what it was like back in those days.

And after all, we just did "The Music Man" this summer, and even though Meredith Wilson took old music and turned it into new music, it still has that flavor of the old barber shop with the barber shop quartet he had in that. And so anyway -.

M.O'R.: Now, let me see, was Louie's - did it continue to operate as a farm as well, then?

A.P-B.: Oh, yes. Yes. But Avalon and Roamer's Rest did not.

M.O'R.: And so Louie's, there was a portion near the river that was dedicated to these recreational activities, but otherwise - what kind of farm was it, then? Was it - did they grow crops there?

A.P-B.: Yes. They had crops. They had a few animals. And of course this is one of the things that fascinated me so much about going to Louie's and why I wanted to go there because I could see the animals and I could see the farm and the crops and everything. They had fields that usually had oats or barley, sometimes wheat. But being by the river, mostly oats, barley. They could

take the climate better. And then a lot of vegetable crops because it was close to Portland, and you could take a truck of the produce and sell it in the marketplace. And the marketplace in Portland was always one of my favorites down there on Yamhill.

M.O'R.: Oh, yeah. The farmer's market?

A.P-B.: Oh, yes. The farmer's market. It was wonderful.

M.O'R.: Yeah, I think that persisted into my own childhood, although it disappeared shortly after that.

A.P-B.: Well, you were born during the War?

M.O'R.: That's right. I take it, then, that you had - well, maybe not everybody had, but maybe you had, I'm not sure, the run of the entire grounds at Louie's, then? Did they allow people to kind of wander around in their - the place where they kept the animals and ...

A.P-B.: Not most of the time, but they let some of us see those things, too, especially because we were children and we lived in the city, even though Sylvan wasn't like the city, which I did not want to live in - I would love to have stayed out there at Sylvan. It was amazing, even though I was there three years, what a tremendous change in my life those three years were in many, many ways.

M.O'R.: And what are some of the most important ways?

A.P-B.: I look at children now, and I think between 10 and 13, what are those years doing to you, because it seems that you're very impressionable then - not that you're not impressionable all the time - maybe because of a lot that I was going through at that time with my father, maybe it made it even clearer to me, things about life, but it was very important to me to be able to go out

into the woods, to explore, to be on my own. I was always an explorer, but I would get in trouble for it. There I didn't get in trouble for it.

M.O'R.: Because it was a safer place, obviously, than ...

A.P-B.: That was considered a safer place because it didn't have people out there. And so I had 35 acres that I could roam and because my bedroom was only, oh, maybe two to three feet off the ground, and I always woke up very, very early in the morning, 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning when nobody was awake, and I would pull up the window and crawl out, and I would go in the night - this was at night when I was supposed to be asleep, but also early in the morning, but at night I would go out, also, and I would be out there and listening to the owls.

One time I discovered something that I had no idea was in Oregon. It was a glow-worm, and I read afterwards - because when I found this thing I started going through the encyclopedias to find out what this critter was, and it apparently is supposed to grow into a firefly, which we do not have in this country. Now, how those glow-worms got in that log, I'll never know, but I was sitting on this log at nighttime. There was - it was in ravine, and a stream went down through the ravine. And I was sitting there listening to all the creatures and the stream, and then I looked down and here this thing was glowing, and I thought, "What is it?" I didn't have a flashlight or anything, so I very carefully gathered up part of the bark around it and carried it home with me, and turned the light on, and it didn't glow anymore. Then I put it in a box, a little box with no cover on it, but I could watch it. And when the light was out it would glow again.

So I discovered things like that. There was a lot of nature for me to deal with, and I always wanted to make gardens, so I'd make stump gardens. There were a lot of stumps out there where people had in the long ago cut trees. So I would take violets that grew under the trees and fungus - I found all kinds of the most beautiful fungi out there, and I would gather them, and I would make them into the garden, too, and little ferns, all kinds of things. And I'd call them fairy stump gardens.

M.O'R.: They were in stumps, then? The garden itself was in the stump?

A.P-B.: Yes.

M.O'R.: A hollowed-out stump with some earth or something placed in it?

A.P-B.: Yeah, they were rotten in the top, and so I would scoop out, and then I would carry dirt and I would put dirt in, and because we had the horse I had some manure, and I would bring manure out there, and I would - but mostly I tried to gather the dirt that they were growing in.

M.O'R.: Can you tell me whereabouts in present-day Sylvan your place was located?

A.P-B.: Yes. When you come to Sylvan the way the roads are now, you turn off and there's a service station - I think there's one on both sides; I'm not quite sure.

M.O'R.: This is both sides of 26, then? The main ...

A.P-B.: Well, the main highway, the exit to Sylvan, when you come off the exit there are the service stations, I think, there. And you have to go up, and then the road curves and goes to Skyline. In fact, it may be Skyline to begin with where it comes

off of the highway; I'm not sure. But at any rate, you follow that curve.

Well, just as you begin to come around the curve there's a little road that goes straight up the hill, and I don't know what it's called. I don't even remember what we called it. It was a dirt road then. And about halfway up there's a great big house there now, but that was not our house. The one we had that my father remodeled and redid and everything, it's gone. There's another house there, I think. I haven't gone up that road for a long time.

Then the other house was closer to the top of the hill, but they were both on the east side, so it was a two-and-a-half acre piece about midway, and then another two-and-a-half acres above, and then the 35 acres was all behind and is full of houses now.

M.O'R.: I can imagine.

A.P-B.: All of that is gone.

M.O'R.: Now, when you say this steep road that you turn off on to get to what was formerly your place, this then is north of the main highway now?

A.P-B.: Yes.

M.O'R.: Yes. Okay. I've got a picture in my mind of where this is.

A.P-B.: And it was north then, too. And then in - if when you come off of the main highway, Canyon Road ...

M.O'R.: Right.

A.P-B.: ... then instead of making that curve if you turn to the left there - you'll be in front of the school house, almost. You'll be just to the side of it. The road that goes past the

school house was called John's Road then. I don't know what it is now. But it's a very high, steep hill, too, and it seemed much steeper when you were little.

And then between them is land that slopes down into kind of a ravine in there, and I used to explore all those places. That was all open fields. There are houses in there now, too. But that was all open field and ravine and woods, so I had those places to explore. There were great big blackberry patches down in there, good old Himalayans, and there were wild rabbits. And because I was always making up the things to do, all of the kids would come and they'd say, "What are we doing today?"

Well, one of the things that I wanted to do was find out how rabbits lived in the blackberry bushes, because you read "Br'er Rabbit" and of course he was always getting tossed - "Toss me into the brier bushes," he'd tell the fox, because he was safe in there, and it took the fox a while to figure that out. So anyway, I wanted to know how the rabbits lived in there.

And I also unfortunately wanted to catch the rabbits, and I became very proficient at catching the rabbits, and then I would take them home and look them all over and keep them maybe a day or so, and then I'd take them all back again, because they were wild rabbits. So we would make tunnels through these blackberry bushes, and it was like being in a cave, because they were so high and you'd tunnel through them and make paths all the way through them. So we would play that way.

And one time - this finger? This one. I almost chopped the whole thing off, because I had been reading about cave men - you see I had this wonderful freedom out there, and this was one of the

most important things to me, and so I decided that we would play cave man, and so I was telling the kids about the way cave men used to live and how they cooked their food. So we had to build a spit. Well, I had these branches and things that I had to cut to make this thing, so I went home and got the big double-bitted ax, and you know, you take this log about this big, and then you put the ax on it, and then you lift it and go - wham! - like this?

M.O'R.: Right. To split it.

A.P-B.: Well, it came down on my finger, and of course my father kept his ax very sharp. I went home with almost no finger. My mother didn't take me to a hospital in those days - for one thing, I would have had to tell my father, and my mother wasn't going to tell my father I almost lost a finger. So she bound it all up, and it healed beautifully. It left this tiny little thin scar.

M.O'R.: Let me bring you back to Louie's here for just a minute, or Louie's and the other places, so did people charge admission ...

A.P-B.: Oh, yes.

M.O'R.: ... to these places, then?

A.P-B.: Oh, yes.

M.O'R.: Was there an actual gate or did they just rely on an honor system?

A.P-B.: Oh, it was an honor system. Oh, yes. It was by the carload.

M.O'R.: So you'd go up and knock on their door and pay your fee?

A.P-B.: Oh, yes. Well, they usually had somebody out there because they were open on the weekend.

M.O'R.: I see.

A.P-B.: I don't think they were open during the week at all.

M.O'R.: I see.

A.P-B.: But everybody else was busy during the week. In fact, usually Sunday - most people worked on Saturday in those days, you know, because when I first started working I worked six days a week. I didn't - you only had Sunday off. So it was usually Sunday when you went there, and of course that's why there were a lot of church picnics there, too, because a lot of the churches came and brought whole groups.

M.O'R.: And how would people usually get there, by car?

A.P-B.: By car. There were no other ways that you could get there. So you'd just load everybody in, and then oftentimes it was all the neighbors came, too, with their families, and we usually had other kids from the neighborhood that we loaded into the big old car, and away we'd go.

M.O'R.: You mentioned dances at the place across the river, at the Avalon, which I guess you'd dance to jukebox music?

A.P-B.: Jukebox.

M.O'R.: Sounds like their operation was more of just a park on the river; is that right?

A.P-B.: Oh, yes.

M.O'R.: No farm there, then.

A.P-B.: No, no farm at Avalon, no farm at Roamer's Rest, although I do believe I do remember that there were some farm fields out there beyond Roamer's.

M.O'R.: So did you ...

A.P-B.: But the park wasn't.

M.O'R.: Now, as I said, maybe this gets us a little bit out of chronological order, but you would dance there in later years with dates?

A.P-B.: Yes, when we were teenagers. We'd come out from Portland, because I wasn't up there at Sylvan anymore. However, we did start dancing when we were 12 and 13, learning ballroom dancing, and of course I was doing tap dancing and things like this, too. There was one teacher there at school who also taught dance, and so she taught us tap dancing and ballroom dancing, and it was only because it was her extra work that she did because she never got paid much as a teacher.

Even when I started teaching, it was \$350 a month.

M.O'R.: Doesn't sound like you'd get rich on that salary.

A.P-B.: No, you never get rich on any of those salaries. I worked in a number of teaching things.

M.O'R.: So you would go out to Avalon with your dates as a teenager or did you go out with your class, or both?

A.P-B.: Oh, yes. This was when we were in Portland. Yes, we'd go out as a whole group. Dating most of the time was not what it is now. It usually was a group of kids, like we went skating, we'd go out to The Oaks and go skating at The Oaks rinks, and we'd go as a group to Avalon.

There were always those people who were your favorites, and that was another important part of my life out there that I didn't realize at the time would be as extensive as it was, but being only ten you - maybe you don't think romantically, but you make attach-

ments. And there was one of the boys, Gene, who - and we always - we competed with one another academically, but we were the best of friends, and there was always this kind of closeness there, and it continued later until he was killed in the War. I won't go into that, okay?

M.O'R.: Okay. So this - well, you said this dates back to when you were ten?

A.P-B.: Yes. Ten, 11, 12, 13. And then of course we were all in the same high school together, too, because Sylvan, everybody went to Lincoln, and even though I had moved back to Portland, at that time you could choose any high school you wanted to go to. You weren't confined to a certain district; that came later. And when it did, because I think I was in the middle of my four high school years when they made the change - I think I was going to be a junior - and so because I'd already spent time there they allowed you to be there. So we were all there at school together, all the kids from Sylvan, as well as I was still going there, and we would go - I remember ice skating. I was an absolute dud with ice skating. I remember Gene used to try to help me. Roller skating I was great, but ice skating not so good.

But we'd go to - well, we'd dance at each other's houses, too. By that time we were in the house at the top of the hill, and it was a much bigger living room than the one we had had in the one down below. It wasn't as long as this room, but it came close.

M.O'R.: On the top of ...

A.P-B.: Up the top of that dirt road. The top two-and-a-half acres.

M.O'R.: I see. Okay. So there were two houses at Sylvan, then, that you lived in?

A.P-B.: Yes.

M.O'R.: I see.

A.P-B.: Yes. As I told you, my father was restless, and every year or two we moved. And so we moved up there. He - they were working on the house up there while we were living - after he finished working on the house on the middle of the hill, then he started working on the house at the top of the hill, and then when that was finished then we moved up there. In fact, it never was quite finished before we went back into Portland again.

But at any rate, we would dance there. My father had bought this great big radio phonograph thing. They were big pieces of furniture, and the top lifted so that the record player was down in there. He liked Bing Crosby, so he bought a bunch of Bing Crosby records, and we all danced Bing Crosby. And then later there were other records, too. But everybody would come up there, and we'd practice dancing in the living room. We'd roll back - there were all these Oriental rugs, and we'd roll them all back and roll them up by the fireplace, and then we would dance. The dining room was at the end of it, sort of like the dining room is at the end of this room, only that instead of having a door it had an arch, like this kind of thing, so that you could dance straight on through, which made it much nicer.

And then also they had some dances at school when I was 13.

M.O'R.: So this would be at Lincoln?

A.P-B.: This was at Sylvan.

M.O'R.: Oh, at Sylvan School, okay.

A.P-B.: The new school had been built, the one that's there now, only at that time it was only two rooms and a central hallway and the hallway going down to one room and the other room, and then a gym, and it was sort of like a daylight basement thing, and it's still there, but they've added rooms and things to it in the meantime. And there were woods behind.

And then the playing field was to the side of it, the south side, and we played baseball and football there, and I played baseball and football. I was the only girl that played football, but I could run like the wind, and the boys always wanted me to be on their teams because they knew I could make touchdowns because I was little and I could wiggle through everybody. And there were three of us who could hit the ball out into the woods, and I was the only girl who could hit that ball into the woods, and most of the time I hit it farther than the two boys, so they always wanted me on their team.

M.O'R.: For baseball, too, huh?

A.P-B.: Yes. And of course this was part of the fun of living out there, because it was a small school, and it was much more intimate. You could get to know people better.

[end of side one]

ALTHEA PRATT-BROOME

TAPE 4, Side 2

November 1, 1995

M.O'R.: So there were lots of things to do?

A.P-B.: Yeah, there were all of these things. Do you know where Calvary Cemetery is?

M.O'R.: Yes.

A.P-B.: Well, we played in Calvary Cemetery. It was a wonderful playground. We would play all of these games of hide-and-seek where somebody is it and they have to find everybody. Oh, those gravestones are wonderful for that. And one of the mausoleums would be the base, so we'd start there, and then everybody would run and hide, and it was full of these wonderful trees and things, too.

I used to love to go up there during the day and look at all the gravestones and think about the people, and some of them had pictures on them, even. But all of the inscriptions and thinking about who had been there, what was their life like. And so I was allowed to just explore all over the place. I could spend hours in the cemetery, hours in the woods.

We had the horse; I could ride all over the hills and everywhere. But if the horse was busy with somebody else, I could go hiking. So there was that kind of thing that was impressive, some of the friends I made there. I don't know, a lot of the things I thought about that made a big difference in my life. Reading that I did.

M.O'R.: Well, I want to talk to you a little bit about your formal education in these years, too, but before we move on to that, let me just follow up with one last question about the - or maybe a couple of questions about the Tualatin in those years. You gave me a sort of a description of Avalon and Louie's. What was Roamer's Rest like? Was it ...

A.P-B.: Very much like Avalon, but ...

M.O'R.: Did they have a bandstand there, then, as well or ...

A.P-B.: I can't remember that, because we never danced there. I'm sure they must have, but I don't really honestly know. But they did have boats. They did at all three places, so that one of our occupations besides swimming in the river was taking the boats out and going downriver and then working like the dickens to paddle upriver, but because it was a very slow moving river, it wasn't that difficult to row in it. And there were some canoes. I can remember only going out in a canoe once. They were so tippy, and we usually had a bunch of us that we all went out in the boat, so it wasn't a convenient - a canoe was if you were being a little more romantic when you were a teenager, which I still wasn't doing much of. We weren't singling ourselves out like that.

M.O'R.: Not identifying yourselves as couples necessarily?

A.P-B.: No. In fact, I only can remember going to one dance as a couple with Gene, and this was in high school. And he was in Hi-Fi, and they had a dance. And so I had taught him to dance, and we - when I taught him - he hadn't - he wasn't dancing with us when we were doing it at my house, but his grandmother's house, which is still there, had this big kitchen in it, and the whole - it was a big family, and everybody gathered in Grandma Butz's kitchen. It

was one of the most wonderful places to me - the big beams in the ceiling and the great big old cookstove, and she was always baking and the wonderful smells to it, and the big kitchen table, similar to the one that I have in this kitchen. That was where I taught him to dance, with his whole family sitting there, encouraging him.
[laughs]

M.O'R.: So when it came time for him to get a date for the dance at school ...

A.P-B.: That's right.

M.O'R.: ... then of course there was only one person he would ask.

A.P-B.: That's right. So ...

M.O'R.: Bringing you back one more time here just to the Tualatin, you said that you swam in it then?

A.P-B.: Oh, yes.

M.O'R.: So I take it the water was fairly nice quality then compared to later years?

A.P-B.: Oh, my. No, later it got to the point where nobody went swimming in it. It wasn't safe. It was always kind of murky because it was - there was so much soil that washed down in it from the farms, and there were farms all the way up to Cherry Grove and back again, you know.

M.O'R.: So even in the 30's, then, when you swam there it was a little muddy?

A.P-B.: Yeah. You didn't - you couldn't - it wasn't like the Clackamas, where you could see every rock on the bottom. You couldn't in the Tualatin. It was never that clear. But it wasn't dirty. I mean you didn't have dirt on you when you got out of it,

and it wasn't like the Willamette that you didn't dare put your hand in.

M.O'R.: The Willamette was pretty bad in those days.

A.P-B.: Oh, well, I think I told you you could watch the offal fly by, float by, and condoms and everything. That was when I learned what condoms were, because I saw these things floating by, and I said, "What's that?"

And my mother said, "We don't talk about things like that." And then she explained to me, but I think I was 17 or 18 by that time. But at any rate, there was stuff floating by in the Willamette River. I told you a whole group of us from Sylvan went out there in a rowboat one day, and we stopped at the grocery and bought all these fig bars, and then we were sitting in the rowboat eating fig bars, and I looked down at the water, and the stuff was floating by, and it took me years to eat a fig bar again. It was just - aah. Awful.

M.O'R.: Got to you, eh?

A.P-B.: Yes. The Tualatin was not like that.

M.O'R.: One of the apparently chronic problems with the Tualatin was that it has great variation in the flow of the river between the winter and the summertime, and yet it sounds like these outings you would make to Avalon and Roamer's Rest were probably mostly in the summertime, but there was still sufficient water coming down -?

A.P-B.: Oh, my, yes. Oh, it was very full. I can - I don't remember swimming down near the bottom to see how deep it was, but it seemed very deep. It wasn't shallow. It wasn't like a stream. So maybe in places - well, up towards Cherry Grove it probably was

shallower. There was that big pond below the dam at Cherry Grove when I was taking my children there and you could swim in that, but you didn't swim - you couldn't swim in the main part of the river in the summer; it was too shallow for that.

M.O'R.: I guess there was the possibility of some sewage coming into the Tualatin even then, but I guess difference between the Willamette and the Tualatin was that all the communities upstream on the Tualatin were pretty small.

A.P-B.: Apparently, because we never saw anything like that, and if we had we wouldn't have been swimming in it.

M.O'R.: I wonder if you remember years later - I just ran across an article in *The Oregonian*; I wasn't actually able to get the article, but I saw the headlines, and it seemed like in the early 70's - that was a time when there was a lot of focus on the pollution in the Tualatin, and in fact there was a temporary building ban out in Washington County until they got various sewage systems squared away. But the clippings I came across indicated that Avalon and Roamer's Rest, I think, were still both operating at that point in time.

A.P-B.: Yes.

M.O'R.: This would have been in the early 70's.

A.P-B.: Yes, they were. They hadn't been torn down. But I never went there. I never took my children - oh, now, wait a minute. I did one time take them to Avalon, maybe twice even, when they were little. Their father and I took them there. This was the 50's.

M.O'R.: Did they swim, then, in the river at that point?

A.P-B.: No. No.

M.O'R.: So you wouldn't let them swim?

A.P-B.: No.

M.O'R.: Well, the thing that interested me about these articles was that apparently some people swam in the river as late as the early 70's, and there were people quoted in the articles as saying that it was okay, you know, and that there wasn't a problem with the river, but there were lots of other people that were concerned about the pollution.

A.P-B.: Well, my children were born '54, '55 and '56, so it would have been the late 50's, early 60's, and I didn't let them swim in it then.

M.O'R.: So you already had feelings about the river ...

A.P-B.: I did.

M.O'R.: ... that it was too polluted to swim in at that time?

A.P-B.: It wasn't like it was in the 30's. It could have been. I've forgotten scientifically how many feet a river has to flow from the point of sewage before it's lost a lot of the toxicity of the sewage.

M.O'R.: Before it's sufficiently diluted or whatever?

A.P-B.: Right. And as I said, I never dove near the bottom or anything. I swam along the top of it.

M.O'R.: Let's bring you back now to this period we're talking about. I wanted to ask you a little bit about your experiences in school with your teachers and what kind of educational experience you had both in grammar school and then later on in high school. How was school for you when you were quite young and going to grammar school?

A.P-B.: For me it was very exciting, because I could learn, and I'd already begun to look at words and recognize words and everything, so when I was five I started first grade, and I had a wonderful teacher. I never forgot her. She was just the sweetest person. Very kind and encouraging, and I just had a wonderful time with her.

Then second grade I got a teacher who was much more of a disciplinarian, and everything had to be done just right, and I always had some other ways of doing things.

One of the exciting things being in school was having a library. There was a little portable behind the school, and they had all kinds of books. So I would bring books home with me all the time.

M.O'R.: This was in Oakland, I assume?

A.P-B.: Yes, in Oakland.

I remember getting in trouble, and I can't remember exactly why I got in trouble with my second grade teacher, but I know that I didn't feel that I was guilty of whatever it was, because I can remember what I did about it. I was very bad. The teachers had to go out at recess with the kids, and because I had been whatever, I had to stay in, and I was all alone there. And I was very upset with her because I didn't feel that I had done anything wrong. So instead of having a Christian attitude about it, which I usually tried to do, this time I decided that I was going to have revenge; the only time I can remember doing that.

So I didn't want to do anything too bad, so I was sitting there listening to the clock, tick, tock, and I decided to set the clock forward, and we might get out of school sooner, and I could

go home. So I dragged a stool over, and I climbed up on the stool and onto the cupboard under the clock, because I wasn't very big. And I opened up the front of the clock, and I made it a half an hour early. The whole rest of the day the teacher apparently didn't realize the clock was fast - I don't know. I just know that we got out early. They didn't have bells then; you just got out.

M.O'R.: So I take it you were unobserved when you made this change in the clock setting?

A.P-B.: Oh, yes. They were all off on the playground having fun. So anyway, I do remember that. I remember that like I remember my first lie.

I can't remember again exactly what it was about, but I certainly remember the fact that I had lied about something. It was when we were living at Mt. Tabor, and I was nine. And my mother said to me, whatever it was that had happened, she approached me about it, and I lied and said I didn't. So I went to bed that night, and I couldn't sleep. I felt awful. So I came out to the living room where my mother was, and I told her I had lied to her.

She took me up on her lap, and she said, "I knew you did," but she said, "I'm so glad you came to tell me about it." So I had a big cry over it, and I went back to bed and slept peacefully.

M.O'R.: And you were able to sleep then, eh?

A.P-B.: Yes.

M.O'R.: Well, when you were in grade school, what were your good subjects and what were your favorite subjects?

A.P-B.: My favorite ones? I was good at all of them, but my favorite one was reading, always that. And then a little farther along when they were talking about history, because I was already

taking books home about history and things, what had happened back in the old days. Like I was going around to old people's houses and asking them what it was like. So I just was always very curious about that kind of thing.

And then - we didn't do experiments, and we didn't do anything called science. That wasn't until we got up here, and I was a third grader when I left Oakland. I came up here, and as I told you, the school, because it was in a wealthy neighborhood, was kind of an exclusive school, which I didn't like, and I hadn't been used to that kind of thing. There was so much more snobbery. You experience a certain amount of - well, you can't really call it snobbery, but in Oakland it was more jealousy; if you were good at things, then people were jealous, and they could say mean things to you, try to hurt your feelings, and every child, I think, experiences that kind of thing.

I was good at sports and at gym. I could run fast. I could climb anything. So I was good at games, and I usually won, and so girls would get unhappy with me over these things, and the little boys all liked me. I still have some notes from way back when I was a little girl in Oakland. They would send notes to you, unless they were caught by the teacher.

M.O'R.: So notes from your classmates, then ...

A.P-B.: Yes.

M.O'R.: ... little boys?

A.P-B.: Little boys. And they would bring presents. And so this caused problems, and a girl would be mean to me when I was little, and I would go home and I would cry, and my mother would say, "You just don't pay attention to it, Honey. You just be your

own self and don't worry about it." And that was the best advice - one of the best [pieces of] advice I ever got.

And then when I came up here they - at that time Massachusetts was first, in the tops for education. California was second. Oregon was second to the bottom. But guess what? When we came up here, I found Oregonians hated Californians. They had this thing about California, and they still do.

M.O'R.: Right.

A.P-B.: I never understood it, and particularly because they decided that we couldn't be up with them in education, so they put us all back a grade. Well, that lasted about two weeks, and of course I was answering all the questions in the second grade. Nobody else had a chance to answer the questions. So they put me right back up in third grade then.

M.O'R.: But they would routinely do that with people who came from California?

A.P-B.: They did it with all three of us. My little sister had just started first grade, and my mother just took her out, because they said, "Well, she couldn't possibly be up with them." And my older sister, they put her back, and they didn't put her back up again. They kept her there.

M.O'R.: Really?

A.P-B.: Yeah. And it just really upset my family terribly.

So then when we - as I told you, the Jewish - there were a lot of Jewish kids there. The Schnitzers lived there and all of these people.

M.O'R.: Right. And when they found out you weren't really part of them ...

A.P-B.: Then the other kids had already dumped me, because I was - they thought with my name I was Jewish and so -. Anyway, that kind of snobbery I just couldn't stand. People were people to me.

M.O'R.: Was the school, then, that you were attending up here a more elite one than the one in Oakland?

A.P-B.: Yes.

M.O'R.: So it was a question of the neighborhood you were living in, I guess, partly?

A.P-B.: That and the fact that they were doing a new experiment in education there. It had caught on, and I don't recall the name of it, because I was too young, but it was a new kind of system that was popular back East, and they were trying it here, and it was the only school in Oregon where it was being tried. So they figured that the kids who were going there were smarter kids, and so they would try it on them.

Another thing that they did that really bothered me, you went - even though you had a homeroom, you would go out of it for certain things, nature was one of them. And it was wonderful to have a nature class, and the teacher was very good. She taught me all kinds of things, and I loved nature, so that was very exciting to me. So they had some specialties like this that they would take you out of homeroom and go to. At first it was very confusing to me, and I didn't like it, but then I got so excited about what they were teaching that then I had fun. And they took you out for gym class, and they had a regular gym teacher, which was not the way we had done it in Oakland in a smaller school.

I think we only had four rooms in Oakland, because they also had a different system that they had the elementary school and then the middle school and then the high school, so that the elementary school was only first through fifth, and then the middle school was sixth through ninth, and then the high school was the last three years.

M.O'R.: I see.

A.P-B.: So up here my sister was in the same school with me, where down there she was in the middle school.

M.O'R.: I see.

A.P-B.: And then we went out to Mt. Tabor. So we came in November, and the I was there in the Holladay School from November through June - well, the end of May. We were always out of school the first part of June. And then whatever that amount of time was, that's all I was there.

M.O'R.: In the Lloyd Center area school?

A.P-B.: Right. Then we moved out to Mt. Tabor, and I was in that school for a year, a school year. And again, it was an even bigger school, much bigger even than Holladay School was, so that I felt lost, very lost there. Things were getting worse at home, and I just was not happy out there at all. I wasn't particularly happy at Holladay, but there were classes there that I really enjoyed, which I didn't have at Mt. Tabor.

One of the things that I did when I was out there at Mt. Tabor, because as I told you my mother had grown up in this church in Oakland, but was very shy and we didn't go to church when we came here. So when I lived there at Mt. Tabor, we would go shop sometimes down in - I think it was called Rose City, the little

kind of a town down in there, neighborhood that was like a little town, and when we were shopping there I noticed that there was a Baptist Church there.

So on Sunday morning when everybody was asleep I got up and got ready, and I walked the two miles down there, and I walked in and said I wanted to go to Sunday School, and the lady said, "Well, we'll wait until your mother and father get here. They must be parking the car. And they can sign you in."

And I said, "No, I'm here by myself." I was nine years old. And they couldn't believe me, and the lady went out looking for my parents. She didn't believe me. And so then she let me go to Sunday School. So every Sunday I would walk down there and go to Sunday School.

M.O'R.: And your parents didn't follow suit and start attending this church, then?

A.P-B.: No.

M.O'R.: Just you?

A.P-B.: No, I was the only one. And then we got out to Sylvan, and there weren't any churches. You had three miles if you wanted to come into Portland, and they were all very big churches, and so I didn't do that. So I just read the Bible and learned by myself.

M.O'R.: How did you find the Baptist Church in the Mt. Tabor area, then?

A.P-B.: It was very nice. It was small, and they were nice to me. I guess they never figured out what I was doing, but -.

M.O'R.: And that school year you said wasn't a great one - well, you said the year wasn't a great one for you all the way around?

A.P-B.: No, it wasn't. There were a lot of things that happened to us there, too.

My little brother was five by then, Joe. We were fairly close to the park, so we would go and play in the park, and we would all four of us go because of the safety factor. And this one time my little brother wasn't ready, and so my mother said, "Well, you watch for him at the entrance, and we'll let him walk. But you watch for him."

So we were by the swings close to the entrance there, and when we looked up, there was a man walking with him up the hill. I saw and ran and told my sisters. So we all headed that way. My mother had always told us, "Don't go with anybody."

Well, by the time we started over there one of the teenage boys in the neighborhood who had had his sister kidnapped when she was five and had a perfect horror of this kind of thing had seen the man walking with my little brother, and he knew that shouldn't be that way, and there was a local policeman who patrolled the neighborhood there, and so he went to get him.

And right at the time that we were coming to get my little brother, this young boy came with the policeman. The man who had my brother halfway up the hill already turned and ran, and my little brother had already started running down the hill. When we questioned him he said that he had turned and seen us coming and so he told the man he had to go down there, and the man said, "Well,

if I give you a quarter will you go with me?" And my mother had always told us, "If they offer you money, run like crazy."

[end of tape]