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This interview was conducted with Marion Krabbe on January 28th, 2006, in Lynden, Washington. The interviewer is Tamara Belts.

TB: Today is Saturday, January 28th 2006, and I am here with Marion Krabbe, who attended Western and also student-taught at the Normal Training School. She had a long career in education and is now 100 years old. We are going to do an oral history. My first question is why did you choose to attend Bellingham Normal School?

MK: Well, it was the closest school to home. About everybody in Bellingham who was going on always either went on to college out of town or they just went right up to the Normal School.

TB: So roughly what were your dates of attendance at Western? We know that you started in fall of 1924. Do you know how long it took you to go through?

MK: Two years. Then I got a life diploma.

TB: Did you get any other degrees? Did you come back and finish your bachelor's degree?

MK: I can't quite answer that. There was so much teaching in the meantime. But I was back several times. I was back summers. I had to go summers because I had teaching positions. To keep the certificate renewed, I had to keep coming back summers.

TB: Alright. What was your first job after leaving the Bellingham Normal School? Where was your first teaching job?

MK: It was very interesting. I was hired to teach in Lynden, Washington. One other life-long friend, Melva Kaufman, was also. We had both received an „A“ for our teaching.

TB: Excellent!

MK: A minus. I have to explain this. There was somebody in the class that had had experience and some way or another she got the „A“ and we got the „A“ minus. It was something about...we didn't know what. Anyway, Melva and I were the first graduates that they had ever hired in Lynden. They had always hired experienced teachers we were told [by] the superintendent of schools, Mr. Fisher. [He] called us to his home and he said he had something to tell us. He said, *“You are the first ones we have ever hired here with no experience, so you will have to work very, very hard, because if you don't make a go of it, it will ruin your whole life.”*

TB: Oh my goodness!

MK: So we took it very seriously.

TB: I guess so!

MK: We had to get room and board in Lynden and we took all our books home every night and worked. Finally the man where we were living called on Mr. Fisher and told him that we were working too hard and we were staying up too late and he wanted it stopped!

TB: Oh my goodness!

MK: He didn't like all that electricity. They were very nice.

TB: Okay; now how long did you teach out at Lynden?

MK: One year. During the whole year, Mr. Fisher would come and visit both Melva and I to see how we were doing. Then he would ask us to come over to his office at night. He had things to criticize about or tell about. He'd think of something to criticize about but he'd say, "*But you're doing fine.*" I made my mind up; I was not going to go back there, partly because I was afraid of him and partly because there was nothing prodigious to do in Lynden at night. We just had to go back to our room. There was no entertainment of any kind. He came over and said, "*We want you back.*" I hadn't made up a reason so I couldn't think of anything but on the spur of the moment I stumbled around and said that my family wanted me to be closer to home. That night he went over to visit where I boarded and roomed. This woman was very frank and he said, "*Now we want Miss Cowell back, but she made up some kind of an excuse about not coming and I want to know what it is.*" She said, "*I think you scared the daylights out of the kid!*" So he came again but I had my mind made up. In this day and age, I would never have done that. I didn't know enough not to do it because it took me almost to the beginning of school to find another place. It's not a very good reputation for just teaching one year and then trying to get another place. But it turned out that they wanted a first grade teacher in Anacortes. I had not had very much experience with first grade. Now you wanted me to tell more about [my] teaching experience at [the] Normal, didn't you?

TB: We'll come back to that, but yes.

MK: I had had a great deal of teaching with second and third graders, but I hadn't really had much experience with first grade. It was a shock to see all those little faces in front of me. The only thing I knew to do was just to teach what I knew about third grade, so I did. They were very nice and the mothers helped. Some of them were just babies because their mothers wanted to get them into school and they weren't even six years old. I think a lot of them slept quite a bit! Some way or another I made it. At the end of the year, all those little children lined up and they came to me and they shook hands and said, "*Thank you Miss Cowell for teaching me to read.*" That's all I know.

TB: Nice. How long did you stay at Anacortes?

MK: I just stayed one year!

TB: Oh my goodness!

MK: I was hired in Bellingham. My family lived in Bellingham and they wanted me to be at home, so I applied in Bellingham and I got the position.

TB: Where did you teach in Bellingham?

MK: At that time, there was a Washington School that has now been made into a government home, Washington Square. But it was a school that I had attended when I was a child. I was put there because they didn't know much about me either and they had a principal named Madge Ware. She just expected absolute perfection and if you didn't give it, out you went. They were taking no chances, you see, in putting me there. It turned out that it was very difficult, but I loved it. There were lovely other teachers. I taught there

as long as I taught in Bellingham. I was there seven years. I didn't teach after I was married. But that experience, that teaching, was wonderful. Her school went up higher and higher in reputation and it got so that they put the student teachers out there for us to train. Washington was the only one that had them. We got extra money for that.

TB: Nice.

MK: I liked having them. They brought a great deal to the children that the teacher couldn't do and not have some time to do it.

TB: Did any other members of your family attend Western?

MK: Yes, my cousin.

TB: What was her name?

MK: Her name was Maybelle Barker, but there wouldn't be any record of that. Then after my father passed on, my mother was a teacher and she went back up there to the school. She attended it and she taught. She was hired to teach in Blaine, but her health broke down and she never was able to teach again. Two members of my family went there.

TB: Nice. When you were going to school at Western, where did you live? Did you live at home or in a dorm or with a local family?

MK: I lived at home.

TB: Do you have any favorite memories of that, of going to and from school or anything?

MK: It was wonderful.

TB: How did you get to school? Did you take the trolley?

MK: I had to take the street car. It was a long ways. There were times I could walk up and back. We didn't think anything of it in that day.

TB: That's right. Who were your favorite or most influential teachers when you were going to the Bellingham Normal School?

MK: There were so many; Dr. Arntzen.

TB: Why did you like him?

MK: Dr. Arntzen was a teacher from "teachersville." He was the best teacher that there could ever be in the whole world.

TB: Oh wow. You mentioned that you student taught under Catherine Montgomery or you worked with Catharine Montgomery.

MK: She was the head, like the superintendent of a city school. She was the head of the whole department. I don't think I took any classes from her, I don't know if she taught. An interesting thing happened one day. My mother and my aunt wanted to see me teach, so they came up to visit. I guess they had to go to her first or something. She brought them in and she stayed to watch me teach. After the session was over, my mother said to her, "*Do you think Marion will make a teacher?*" She was Scotch and very frank, she said, "*If she lives long enough.*" Well, my supervisor was a wonderful, wonderful teacher and we all tried to pattern her. She worked very hard at it. She was here and there all the time over the classes. Miss

Montgomery thought that I was doing the same and she didn't think I would live long enough because it would be too hard.

TB: Excellent.

MK: But I did!

TB: I guess so you made it to a hundred! I wonder what she would say if she knew that?

MK: I don't know.

TB: She lived quite a long time.

MK: Did she?

TB: She did. She lived until 1957.

MK: I liked her. She was a wonderful person, a wonderful influence in the school. They had wonderful teachers up there then.

TB: Can you name some other ones?

MK: I know, but I can't think of the names. Dr. Fowler was one. He was...

TB: Oh, English! Right. Did you ever take anything from Mr. Hoppe?

MK: No, I didn't, but he was Expression.

TB: We were talking a little bit ago about Mrs. Burnet. Could you tell me a little more about her, what she was like?

MK: It was my mother's idea for me to be a teacher, and I didn't want to be. I wanted to be in newspaper work. I took a class from her, and she was very, very good. She left me with the idea that I would still like to be in newspaper work. She was outstanding.

TB: Do you remember anything about Mabel Zoe Wilson in the library?

MK: Don't get me started on that! It would take all night! She was absolutely wonderful. She came into my life many years later as a very important help.

TB: Can you tell me about that?

MK: Well, I had been married a while and I missed going to school and teaching and so it came to me one day that I would like to work in the city library. I had to have some kind of recommendation and I just mentioned it, she was still up there and she knew me. The minute that she heard of it she called me up and said, "*You're not going to work in the library! We need a children's librarian for three months up here and you're going to come up here and work here.*" I said, "*Miss Wilson, I have never been in the children's library! I know nothing about it.*" She said, "*That doesn't make any difference.*" Her name was Miss Snow, she was the head of the [children's library] and she needed a vacation. They said, "*You will come up to the library every day for a week and she will show you how to run it.*" She phoned me and said, "*Now listen Mrs. Krabbe, you will start Monday and you will come every day at nine o'clock and I will show you how to run the library.*" So I went up, and the first day I got there she said, "*Now, since you are untrained and know nothing, I will start by showing you how to open and close the doors.*" When I went home and told my husband, he said, "*Well, you're not going back. Nobody is going to tell my wife that she knows nothing.*" I said, "*Honey, I did know nothing. That's the truth.*" I went and she showed me in about two

weeks how to run the library and she said she believed that I would be able to do it, and then she thanked me that she would get to have three months off. It was quite an experience. But I worked at it and I loved it. The children were helpful. They had eight grades. They started with the Kindergarten clear up through the eighth grade. They knew I was a primary teacher, so the eighth grade teacher asked to see me. She said, *"Now the children I have, they are very poor-disciplined. They will come in and they will try you. I wanted to warn you."* So they came. I had been at it quite a while by then. They came in and they threw the books down and [were] talking, talking. I just sat there. I never said a word. Pretty soon they began to wonder -- what's the matter with her? I said, *"This is a library. I suppose that you come in here to get books or to study the books that you have, and I think right now is the time to start in."* Then one of the kids started waving his hand and snapping his fingers. I said, *"What do you want?"* He said, *"I want to go to the john."* I said, *"Oh, did you want me to go with you?"* That was the last I heard from him. All the kids roared and made fun of him, so I had no [more] trouble.

TB: Your main course of study then at the Bellingham Normal School was to learn to be a teacher, right?

MK: Yes.

TB: What classes did you like the best or learn the most from?

MK: I really can't answer that because I just loved them all. I was teaching under a supervisor of penmanship, Miss Gragg. That was part of what I taught the children. Then I taught them reading.

TB: Can you tell me a little bit more about Miss Gragg, what she was like?

MK: She was just charming and a very good supervisor. She taught you every single thing you needed to know.

TB: Excellent. What extracurricular activities did you enjoy while you were going to school?

MK: Dancing. They had a dance every Friday night. We all looked forward to Friday night and we stayed and danced.

TB: Nice; anything else? Did you go on any of the hiking trips?

MK: No, I'm not a bit athletic.

TB: Did you go to any of the games, the sports games?

MK: No. I was raised with women after my father passed on; aunts and cousins and Mother. I lost out on a lot in that direction.

TB: But you did like the dances?

MK: Yes. We used to love to go across the street and all get together at the ice cream [parlor] and all that. We were very social. Western was a very social school. All the teachers up there, the supervisors and everything, were always having teas and we knew all about them, about their dates and everything else. It was just a charming school.

TB: So you used to go to the College Pharmacy that was across the street from the library?

MK: Yes. I didn't know it was a pharmacy. They sold books.

TB: Books and I think they had a soda fountain or something there. And they had places to dance there too, right?

MK: I didn't know about that.

TB: I interviewed the daughter of the man who built that store not very long ago.

MK: It was part of our life.

TB: You were [up there] before the Depression. We're going to talk about the [Training] School in a minute, but do you have any other just outstanding memories of your time as a student at the Bellingham Normal?

MK: There was a lot in incidents I don't know. There was a lot of fun with it. I had two friends; that will come in later -- twins. We were together, the three of us, all the time.

TB: Nice.

MK: They were just going to school because people go to school after they graduate from high school. They weren't planning to do anything about it especially. There were dates, we had lots of dates.

TB: What were the twins' names?

MK: Carter, Anne and Arlene Carter.

TB: Now I am going to ask you questions about the [Training] School when you were student teaching at the Campus School. How did you happen to become a student teacher at the [Training] School?

MK: My mother wanted me to be teacher and that was the only school there was.

TB: What were the years or grades that you student taught at the [Training] School? What grade level did you teach in the [Training] School?

MK: Primary.

TB: Which is second and third grades?

MK: First, second and third.

TB: Did any other members of your family attend the [Training] School?

MK: Yes, I answered that, my cousin and my mother.

TB: They went to the [Training] School or they student taught at the [Training] School?

MK: They just went there.

TB: To the best of your recollection, can you describe what was a typical day like in the [Training] School?

MK: I really can't. We always began around eight I think and went until four and we were busy all the time. I think we took our own lunch. What's that restaurant that they still have?

TB: Edens Hall?

MK: Edens Hall. That was there. Once in a while we went over there I think. You haven't found who my supervisor was?

TB: I thought you thought that was Miss Montgomery.

MK: No. She was the head of the whole school, Miss Montgomery was. She was over all the other teachers. Almost all these teachers were from the eastern colleges. They were very expert.

TB: Well Miss Moffatt?

MK: Yes!

TB: She was the training teacher for first grade.

MK: First grade! I didn't get into it for some reason.

TB: She had been at Chicago University.

MK: Yes. She was wonderful.

TB: And you're right, Miss Montgomery was the supervisor of the primary grades.

MK: She was expert on storytelling.

TB: Miss Montgomery?

MK: No, Miss Moffatt.

TB: Can you tell me a little more about that?

MK: That was part of our training, to be able to tell stories. The children loved it. She was busy, busy all the time. Her whole life was her teaching. She lived somewhere in Bellingham. Several years later I saw in the paper where she had passed on.

TB: Oh. Was she kind of young then when she passed away?

MK: Yes, I think so. I remember writing to her brother, but I've forgotten long ago now.

TB: Any other thoughts about what a typical week might have been like and how you brought in things like assemblies or the music programs?

MK: Oh yes. We had wonderful assemblies and they were required, you had to go. People were brought in from all over the world and the United States to perform. It was not only wonderful for us, but for the townspeople of Bellingham, it was a privilege. They almost always attended assemblies.

TB: Nice. Did the [Training] School kids go to those assemblies then, too?

MK: No, I don't think so.

TB: Did they have their own kind of assemblies?

MK: I really don't know. No. I was just there when I did my teaching and that was all. I was telling Suzanne today that a peculiar thing about this is I don't remember much about teaching the children. I don't remember the children, and I'm sure I knew most of them because they were children of my friends around town. I don't know if I should put this in. You can ask if you should put it in or not. It was considered a little bit higher, a little bit up the social ladder if your children went to the [Training] School instead of the city school. People were beginning to register their children there before they were born!

TB: Right. That is pretty early. We know that happened, but that's interesting that by the mid-twenties [they were doing it].

MK: I will say one interesting thing to me was that when the parents that knew me in town, some of them were my friends and some were just people I knew, heard that I was going to run the library for three months, they were very concerned. They said, "*Well she doesn't know anything about the library.*" One time one of the children asked me to get her a book for herself. What was that book that was later made into a movie (for children) and it was so popular? I know you can find out. It was made into a movie and it was so popular. I sent that home with her. The mother didn't like it and she didn't want her child [to read it]. It was about a poor child. Then it became famous. I was quite gratified when it came out because she hadn't wanted her child to read it and it became the most popular one that ever was made into a movie. Anyway, I got through. I went back many times. I went back three times for Miss Snow in the library after I married.

TB: So she thought you did a good job.

MK: Oh yes. I'll have to tell you that. The day she came back, the first thing she did, not go home or anything, was go to the library. It was all quiet and everything. I was just going along. She said, "*I hesitated opening the door! I didn't know what I would find! And there it was, just like I left it.*"

TB: Excellent.

MK: Miss Snow is enough to write a whole volume about.

TB: Well do you want to tell me any more about her?

MK: No; I mean it was just among all of us. The first time she went away, she met a man. Mathes his name was; his father was the first president of the college. He had a very hard life with liquor. It was so strange that they got together, of all the people in the world. She was just a whole different person. Well I don't know if she was more like him, but she was lively.

TB: This is going back to the [Training] School. Could you describe a little bit of the kinds of games and activities that you remember the children playing?

MK: No, I wasn't in on any of that.

TB: Was there any kind of dress code for the students when you were there?

MK: Not at that time.

TB: How about for teachers? Was there any kind of dress code for you?

MK: No.

TB: Is there any part of the curriculum that you particularly remember (like the kinds of things you taught them, or did you use Dick and Jane books)?

MK: I didn't teach them anything but reading and penmanship.

TB: Even when you were student teaching then you just did the reading and penmanship part?

MK: Yes.

TB: Can you remember what the grading system was like when you were student teaching there?

MK: It was „A.“

TB: So it was letter grades. Was there any momentous national or international thing that happened while you were student teaching?

MK: No. The world was quiet, poor and quiet. It was very sad that many of the children didn't get to go away to college. They couldn't afford it. But they went up to the Bellingham Normal School and got credits [like] that they would get if they were going to college. That was very wonderful that that school provided that. Of both the twins, one went on to college and ended up in Washington DC in the business world. The other one ended up in the home world. I will tell you something that's interesting. The day the three of us entered the school, we were told to come back the next Monday for a test called an IQ test. Well we all decided that we wouldn't be doing that because we had never heard of it. We didn't want our intelligence to be tested. We just forgot it. But we had no choice, so we had to go back! Here we were, the three of us, just like this, like more than sisters and the test came out so funny. Mine was the lowest of all of them. I got so scared and I didn't know about a lot of the things that they asked because I didn't drive and my folks didn't drive and I wasn't out in the world you see, to know. One of the twins had one of the highest IQs they had ever known. It was A+. Anne and I were medium, really. It ended up like that, too. I guess it did test what you were good for. But I got along fine with it. It didn't seem to influence me in any way. I don't think it's a good thing though.

TB: To do the IQ tests?

MK: Yes. I don't think it's a good thing. It isn't broad enough. There are so many things that you are that aren't in the test.

TB: Right. Do you remember any of the other people that you student taught with when you were at the [Training] School?

MK: Well I mentioned Melva Kaufman; I think they're all gone.

TB: Okay. What subjects or classroom activities did you most enjoy teaching?

MK: I taught music. I was never very good with handwork, so every place where I taught I usually exchanged artwork for music. I loved to teach music. I taught it from the second grade to the sixth.

TB: Wow; so when you were at the [Training] School were you able to do that?

MK: No, that was after I started teaching. They didn't know about that.

TB: So when you were at the [Training] School did you mainly teach reading and penmanship?

MK: Yes. I can't remember doing any other. They didn't do much. Now when I had student teachers, they taught the whole thing, lots of it. They took the room over. I always had a bulletin board of interest. That was a good test to find out whether they were going to be teachers. I remember two of them with extra high IQs. I asked them to take charge of it and they said they thought it was foolishness and they just didn't think they could put anything on it. They were very brilliant, but they weren't going to be teachers, you could see that right away. I loved having the girls. Miss Dawson, how does she figure in this? She was the primary supervisor, I think for later, for the city schools. She later married Dr. Arntzen.

TB: Oh right. I've heard of her.

MK: We knew about all the romances. It was part of our life what they did. It was all so combined here. Everything was so wonderful.

TB: That's exactly right. Marjorie Dawson, she's in the 1926 catalog, she was the primary supervisor in the city schools.

MK: She was my supervisor. When I took the student teachers, I was responsible to her.

TB: So what was that like? How was it like when you were on that side of it, having these student teachers?

MK: Well, it was hard work. She was just like [our] principal, she was very strict. She was very critical. But I was glad for her. I liked her.

TB: What was she like as a person?

MK: She was charming. She was from Boston. I don't think she'd ever left Boston. She was one of the Boston people that when they discovered that moon (this is just an illustration) she wouldn't really care about that. "*What does the moon have to offer that Boston doesn't have?*"

TB: She and Mr. Arntzen got married kind of late, didn't they?

MK: Yes. They had quite a romance. It was very interesting. He was an interesting man from every standpoint. I knew them later in life [after] they were married. There was also a Mr. Kolstad. He was one of the outstanding socialites. He was single and very brilliant. And I would have liked it better if he had never been born!

TB: Oh, really?

MK: Not him, but his subject. I had a terrible time with it. Does it say what he taught?

TB: Well, research and education is all it says.

MK: It was numbers, all about numbers.

TB: Statistics?

MK: Yes. I never had him as a teacher. Then there was a man that taught sociology. Kolstad and him were very close. He was just there one year I think. He taught about the sort of thing like if a redheaded man marries a black-headed woman, what will their child turn out to be? I never could see what it had to do with me! What do you call that, what's the name for it?

TB: Well genetics now.

MK: Mr. Arntzen told us, this was before the atom bomb, he told us that there was a theory (he taught civilization is what it was called) that at one time the world became so advanced in everything that they blew themselves up. He told us that; that was before the atom bomb. People just laughed about it in a way because that's ridiculous. When all of this thing began and after September...

TB: 11th?

MK: Yes. I called up one of the professors at the college who teaches civilization and asked him if he had heard. He said he had heard it. But he said, "*Mrs. Krabbe, what I'm more worried about is that people will starve to death; taking all the land.*" Look out here at Lynden, there isn't hardly a farm left. That's how that was.

Oh, the plays were wonderful. The drama up there at that time was outstanding. The townspeople never missed a program. Hoppe, Mr. Hoppe.

TB: I interviewed his daughter, too. That was fun. She lives in Edmonds.

MK: You are finding out a lot about what it was like up there.

TB: I'm having a good time.

MK: Are you going to write a book?

TB: No, but we transcribe these oral histories and so it's kind of like different chapters, different takes on things.

MK: It was the core of the educational life of Bellingham. Everybody loved it. Then at the very opposite, the first president that came, a hippie president, he was a hippie and he brought a lot of hippies with him.

TB: Dr. Flora?

MK: No.

TB: Dr. Jarrett?

MK: No.

TB: Bunke?

MK: I don't think I know his name. He brought one with him that was...what is it...men are gays and women are...

TB: Lesbians.

MK: Yes. And she came to my house. I was a widow then. She came and wanted a room. I met one of the men, too. I think he was only here a couple years.

TB: Bunke was only here a couple years.

MK: Maybe that was him. I wouldn't remember.

TB: Harvey Bunke; and it was controversial when he was here.

MK: Yes! He brought them with him that talked.

TB: Right, speakers like Timothy Leary.

MK: I didn't know any of them by name.

TB: That was one of the really controversial ones I think.

MK: It brought the school down.

TB: As a [Training] School teacher, what was your relationship with the other faculty at the [Training] School?

MK: They were all together. I just loved it. People here did. It's getting so they don't, but it isn't anything to do with the school. People today, they don't have time for stuff like that. They've got to make money. They've got to have two or three jobs or they can't make it. That is, they can't all have a car and they can't all go to here and Europe and so forth. This isn't important to them anymore. I wish you could go back and take part in their lives. They don't know what they're missing.

TB: You mean the more social side of relationships?

MK: The educational [side] and the programs from people from Europe even; wonderful, outstanding musicians from all over the world.

TB: That used to come to Western?

MK: Yes; it was a great thing. And not only from the school's point of view, but the very building up there. It was used one year [for] actors and actresses from plays [that] came out; we had plays that they had in New York.

TB: Do you at all remember [Training] School faculty meetings?

MK: I know they had them; that's all I know.

TB: Do you remember how involved the parents were in the school?

MK: Oh yes, very involved. I had a stepson, I didn't raise him, he was living with his grandparents. When they heard it was a status symbol, they sent Freddy up there. He hated it because he wasn't with the people where he lived. It was hard on him. Most of the children were just used to it. They were sent there and their friends were there. It was kind of by their neighborhoods.

TB: Was his name Freddy Krabbe, then?

MK: Yes; how did you know about him?

TB: Well you just said he was your stepson.

MK: Oh I see. Fred, he was seven years old.

TB: Did he just go that one year?

MK: I think so. He was lost. The family didn't understand about that.

TB: Do you remember any other thoughts about the administrative structure of the [Training] School? Did you think it was basically well run?

MK: Oh I think so, yes.

TB: Any other favorite memories we haven't talked about [regarding] student teaching at the [Training] School?

MK: I don't think so, I told you so many. I think Miss Dawson had a great deal of influence in the city schools of Bellingham by bringing [in] the student [teachers]. And I think they still do it. It's wonderful because the children get things that an ordinary teacher can't give them; outstanding things like [special] studies. One I remember was about the life of the bee; that sort of thing. They could build things like a post office and things that the teacher can't simply do with all she has [to do]. I think it's such a wonderful thing that we have it.

TB: Can you tell me a little bit more than what it was like when you were teaching in the Washington School and you had some of these student teachers coming and helping you. What were some of the things that they did for you and your classroom?

MK: Well, as I say, they quite often brought in the subject. Name some subjects about things that children would like, and they'd choose one of them, then they'd go and get all that information for them. They learned something they wouldn't have gotten from me about things. For me, they'd take over the class and I would go take some child from another room that couldn't read good and spend a whole morning with him in another room giving special attention. It was so good. They were always a blessing, always. I never had any that I had trouble with but that one. She knew so much already that there wasn't anything I could give her. She's not going to be a teacher anyway. Really and truly, don't you think a teacher is born?

TB: Probably.

MK: I do. I think it's very hard to make a teacher. My husband was a good example of that. He was a graduate engineer and he could fix anything. He was the manager of a cement plant. You know, he couldn't teach me how to make a square knot. That's an example. I would say, *"I want to know how."* He'd say, *"Well it's just simple! All you do is push this here this way and this one this way."* But it never turned out. He couldn't teach anything. He couldn't teach me to drive. That was short and sweet.

TB: How did you learn to drive? Oh you never did? In all your life you never learned to drive?

MK: Yes, I drove once. Melva, that went with me to Lynden, my lifelong friend, she taught me to drive a car. It was perfect. My husband was gone and Melva took me out every day for week and she taught me. Mogens came back home and it was Sunday and I said, *"Let's take a little ride out into the country somewhere."* He said, *"Alright, I'll get the car out."* I said, *"Oh you don't have to get the car out."* I did. We started out and he said, *"You know, honey, you're going to make a wonderful driver."* I said, *"Well, I worked hard at it."* So we went out in the country. He noticed that I rode the clutch (being an engineer, he was worried about the clutch). *"Don't ride the clutch, dear. You do that a little too much."* But that was safety to me. I felt good. Then we went to see some friends and I said, *"Let's turn in and see our friends."* I had it in my mind I was going to do it. We were going to turn in on the clutch slowly. He said, *"You don't have to do that! You don't have to do that! Put your foot on the gas when you go in!"* And I did. I took down two trees and I broke the headlights on the car. The man that owned it came out with his hands up, and said, *"What in the world is going on?"*

[End of tape 1, side 2]

TB: So did you not keep driving after that?

MK: No. Everybody said, *"You should have gone right back."* They always said, *"If only Mogens hadn't said that!"*

TB: That's right.

MK: Well I never blamed him. I never blamed him for anything.

TB: Anything else that you want to talk about related to the Campus School or to Western?

MK: I hope I haven't left any things I thought about. I will say that after I married, my husband, it was a Danish custom that when they marry, the wife didn't work. She did everything in the house. The man did nothing. He didn't wipe the dishes. He brought the money in. I liked that because I was a natural homemaker.

TB: Nice.

MK: I did miss the school itself. I was a substitute for the children's librarian whenever they wanted me. They had a room up there. It was called the "professional work room." It was a great big room and it had information about everything in the world. They needed somebody to run it. I did that for a year.

TB: Was that in Old Main?

MK: Yes, my husband said that was enough. But I loved it. I was on call at the university for a lot of different things. They would call me up and ask me can you do this or that. I loved that.

TB: So you lived in town then? You must have lived in town?

MK: Yes, we lived right close; 249 South Garden. It was just walking distance.

TB: 249 South Garden.

MK: And I loved to go up there and I enjoyed Suzanne letting me address her. She wanted me to address the new students coming up, to give them an idea what Old Main was like in those days and what the school was like. I enjoyed it.

TB: So why don't you tell me a little bit more about what Old Main was like?

MK: You know, there's a tape of everything. You should ask Suzanne to play it for you. It would probably give you information that I hadn't thought of. I was telling them how I just started out by saying that my two friends and I on such and such a day in September boarded a street car down in Bellingham and came up here to what was called Old Main. It's so beautiful, isn't it? You walked in there and to the left was an office, just an old office. To the right was a long hall where all the supervisors had classes. They had their classes there. That was all on the main floor. There was an office over here as you came in to the right, and that was the Dean's office. We had wonderful deans. Wonderful! They taught us how to speak, how to act. They taught us manners. I miss that today. At that place where I live they have none of the niceties. I have lived there three years without a salad fork!

TB: Oh, my goodness.

MK: They give us a dinner fork, a long, thin-handled thing. They give us our salad in a little cup about like that. People come in, sit down at the table, they don't speak to anybody or maybe they say hello. I went to the man recently, the head of it. I said, "*Would it be asking too much if I could have a bread plate and a bread knife?*" He said, "*What do you mean?*" I said, "*They come around the first thing and ask if you want a roll. There's no place to put it but on the bare table, and I'd rather like to have [a bread plate].*" He said, "*I didn't know that.*" Oh, and I said, "*Would it be alright if I could have two spoons?*" You get a fork, knife and a spoon, even in a restaurant in old town. "*Would it be alright if I could have a teaspoon so that when the coffee is served, I won't have to put the same one in the coffee that was in the mashed potatoes?*" Oh! I got a spoon. Now I have a bread plate (not a bread knife, I've never seen a bread knife) but it has that extra spoon on it. Not one other person at that table has asked me how that happened. They just ignore it. They don't miss it at all.

TB: So you learned all those manners at Western?

MK: Oh, yes, the Dean. We had a class, it was a required class. She taught us about things and how to act under certain circumstances. It's so important. People used to be mannerly. This place that I speak of up in Victoria is just like this. It's for Christian Scientists that need care. My goodness, all the difference in the world; wonderful food, they all come in and sit down and visit a little while and the waitress brings in the food. They bring in our food in one of those cart things that rumbles. You hear it starting down there in the basement, rumbling. They start taking the plates and they drop it, it's enough to give you a nervous breakdown to eat a meal where I am.

TB: You used to live in Victoria, then?

MK: No, I lived in Bellingham all my life. But I heard about this place and when my husband went on trips, he left me there. I'm a member. I've been a member of it since 1962.

TB: That's over in Victoria?

MK: Yes. There's never been a year I haven't gone back for a visit. That was my birthday present from my family, three nieces. They said, "*We heard that you would rather go there than anything.*" So the three nieces got together and they came over here and picked me up and they took me over and dropped me at Wayside House. It's in the residential area of Victoria, it's charming. Then they went to the Empress. None of them had ever had that experience, that's wonderful. They all stayed there and shopped in town and did things. They picked me up and came back on Sunday. We all went to church and then I came back to Wayside for dinner. Three days in heaven!

TB: So how did you happen to come to live out in Lynden?

MK: I don't know. One time one of the nieces and I were out here and I had taught here and I knew people here. One of my oldest friends, Elvina McGill (she graduated from Western and taught, but she's gone), she's the only one I can remember that would still be here. That's why I went there. She had a nice home there. She married one of the Dutchman. It was fun and I went every week to visit her. Now that's she's gone I miss her. I'm looking for a new place to live.

TB: Does one of your nieces live in Lynden?

MK: No, I haven't anybody there now. One of my husband's nieces lives there and she has children, but she doesn't have any time for me. Children today require constant care, did you know that?

TB: Well they do keep them pretty busy these days.

MK: Do you have children?

TB: No, I don't.

MK: I can't hardly stand them, the children of today. I don't like them and they don't like me.

TB: I can't imagine that!

MK: No. It's strange but I don't cater to them enough. They expect me to say, "*Oh! Here comes [so-and-so].*" I just say, "*Hello.*" They just look like they're going to die! Are you in contact with children?

TB: Not too much; I have a couple little cousins that live in town.

MK: This I don't understand, I hope it isn't true, they live right across the street from the school and she has to go and get them.

TB: You know, it probably is true.

MK: It doesn't seem believable, does it?

TB: Yes, but there's just so many people out in the world that are not very nice sometimes and kids are so vulnerable, so people watch their kids pretty close.

MK: Well she's a good mother. I have nothing against that. I guess that's all.

TB: Okay, nothing else then?

MK: No, I don't think so. I just can't say enough good for the whole thing. I think it's a blessing, even yet. Of course, when the hippies came there, now that was hard. I was still living at 249 and I had to take the

street car home or the bus every night. That bus reeked with the marijuana. It just reeked with it. I hope they got rid of it.

TB: Yes, it's a lot different now.

MK: That's good.

TB: Okay. If there's nothing else, I'll say thank you very much and we will shut the tape off.