

This is Tuesday, May 7, 1996. I am on my way to interview Sr. Irma Corcoran, BVM, of Chicago, Illinois, about the founding of Mundelein College and its early days. My name is Joan Steinbrecher, and this is my tape #1, side A.

IC: I am trying when I ever get at it to finish putting together the paper I gave at the Renaissance meeting at the University of Indiana some time ago. It's a general Renaissance meeting, not an Indiana thing particularly, but the program was there. And, I'm trying to get it in order for a periodical because it really is unique. I have researched everything in that field. And, this is the only spot of this particular, absolutely indisputable source of Milton's treatment of the *Temptation of Eve* came from. And, it is so much fun because it is in the Desolate Cajetan's *Comparium in Geneson* during the early 17th century when every possible theologian was writing about Genesis.

JS: Well, how marvelous that you are pulling this all together.

IC: Well, I had done a review of all the Genesis material down to the writing of *Paradise Lost*, and this was one thing that nobody mentioned anywhere and I had no clue existed. It wasn't even in the unit catalogue of the Library of Congress. And, I got a letter from Sister Mary Aurelius, who was the Mundelein Librarian then saying, "Would this be of any use to you?" It was Cajetan's *Comparium in Geneson* which was in the form of all of the compariums(?) which were coming out and theologians were getting out Biblical commentaries in which they would quote the chapter under discussion from the Bible and then they would give the opinions of all the theologians they wanted to call attention to or all they could find. They really were remarkably ecumenical about it. But this was a commentary that they probably wouldn't have noticed because it was done for the Catholic University at Luvaine, Belgium. And, it was cheap. You see, Catholics were still underground in England, and you weren't allowed to do anything and people just hadn't noticed it. But, it was cheap enough that the students in Catholic universities on the continent could afford it.

It would be, well I can't say, but it would be very cheap in comparison to the others because it was on cheap paper and the ink was not particularly good. And, it went through, I don't know how many editions, because it was used year after year after year in seminaries. And, Milton's father was a fallen away Catholic. He could possibly have had a copy. But, Milton couldn't afford it because it was the cheapest thing on record. And most of these commentaries were quite imposing to look at and some of them were beautiful and I had handled 18 or 20 of them, all there were extant, I thought. And, I got this letter from Sister Mary Aurelius saying that a seminary in Canada was closing and it was selling its library and would This book be of any interest to me? And, she could get it for 7.50. (Laughs, excited)

JS: Oh, my.

IC: I wrote back special delivery, "Get it quick." And, she did. And here was this material. And, all of the things it quoted. I shouldn't be giving all of this to you because it's probably not the kind of thing you want at all.

JS: No, I want to hear about you. And, so it is. Your interest as a Milton scholar. Yes. Yes.

IC: If it's about me. This is as my research goes. And, if I do say it's my Milton book. At the British Museum, the British Library, which when I was in England was in the British Museum was practically worn out. And, there isn't one derogatory comment on it. And, it's marked, it's underlined. There are no sine? a margins. I had a letter from a Ph.D. candidate at Cambridge

University in England that he thought I'd be pleased to know that when he announced he would like to pursue Milton for his dissertation, his director had handed my dissertation, my Milton book to him and said if you are going to write on Milton, read this before you do anything else. And, I felt very happy about it. Loyola didn't have a copy.

JS: How did your interest in Milton, how did that all come about?

IC: Well, I was always interested in the Renaissance well because. Well, I'll go back to this Cajetan thing first. He quotes a paragraph which he says is from St. Bernard on the 7 forms of procedures of Temptation. Well, I went through all of the writings of St. Bernard in the Menia Papolgia Attenia? And, I think that's pretty complete at that time and it isn't there. So, Cajetan was mistaken about that point. But the fact remains that the material is there. And, in everyone of those temptations there would not have been presented to or effective to people who were in the State of Grace which Adam and Eve were allegedly created in. And, of course, they didn't know anything about modern science in those days. Milton mentioned and explained why it wasn't used on Eve.

(Gasps) Things that nobody else had mentioned at all. Things like that. It's so funny when all the brilliant, chiefly Protestant commentaries. There was one very brilliant, Catholic one, a beautiful book too, and I have the microfilm of that. To have this thing from an ordinary run-of-the-mill Catholic seminary in Europe just does something for me. (Very animated) And, also, I've run into some of these fine, humanist scholars to whom their research and their scholarship is all the God they think they need. And, they've been fine people, I've liked them. And, if I bring out something that gives some idea of what Catholic intellectualism was like in those days and the contribution that is there still to be explored, I feel I have done one little thing that is important for the knowledge of Milton and for the scholarship of women but above all, a clue that maybe there is something in the thought about God, more than they have thought about before.

But, I really became interested in the 16th and 17th centuries when my mother started me, one rainy, cold, dark day. My parents were a lot older then.

My father was 47 when they were married, my mother 38, almost 38. And, she had taught for 14 years. But, you know, they were a long way from a child psychology. And, we didn't have any little people's books in our little library in the sticks in Missouri where I had my elementary school education except once in a while somebody had given me a book about little bunnies or something when I was very small. And, to get me out of the way and to keep me quiet my mother took out this big Shakespeare, the complete works of Shakespeare. And opened it to a Midsummer Night's Dream. She thought I would be interested in that. And, I was. I was absolutely charmed by the fairies. I knew there weren't any fairies, you know, but I had imagination enough to enjoy it. And, I thought Theseus was a bore.

JS: I just read that play on Sunday, on a cold, dreary Sunday afternoon. (both laugh)

IC: Well I read it first on a cold, dreary afternoon. And, I think I was 8 going on 9, or 9 going on 10. I'm not sure which. And, I know the age. Because we used to go nearly every summer we went back to Iowa where we had come from originally to a little town which I am going to visit in another week. I had a boy cousin a year and one-half younger than I. And, I played with him and his friends. And, most of them were like other little boys at that age and I was used to them because the men who worked for my father in Missouri all used to bring

their little boys when they came to work on the farm. And, little girls had to stay home and help mama. So, I never thought anything about playing with boys. It was that they were playmates. But, one of them I liked best was Don Moore. It was said that he knew Shakespeare by heart when he was 10. He was a year or almost a year older that summer. I liked Don, we just hit it off. He was on a Romeo and Juliet kick at the time. And, it was a cold, dark, rainy afternoon. And, my cousin and Wright Fraiser, who was the dumbest boy in the group, had gone down to Mechanicsville to celebrate Wright's birthday with his cousins down there. He had a pony cart and they had driven down. See, this would be back, if I was 8, it would have been 1913. Long before your grandparents were extant.

And, so it was around that time. And, Don decided that it would be nice, and would be fun if we dramatized Romeo and Juliet. So, we did. When I found out that that was what he was interested in and at the time, I spent a whole day sitting on the floor in the guest room in my uncle's house cramming. I shouldn't be worrying you with all this Shakespearean history. But, I can't resist interpolating this after Midsummer Night's Dream. Oh, I was just heartsick when Titania, the lovely Fairy Queen fell in love with Bottom, with an ass's head, that was the limit. And, anyway, I absorbed Romeo and Juliet. I couldn't remember all the words, of course, but we decided to stage it at the fireplace in the Moore's living room. They had a long, wide living room. His mother must have been upstairs with a migraine, it's understandable that she had them (laughs). Her husband was the editor of one of the two town newspapers. And so we had the house to ourselves. And, he explained about Elizabethan theaters and everything. And the fireplace, they had a big fireplace, but it was cleaned nicely, swept all out for the summer. That would do for the inner stage.

Well, to proceed with the play where it came to the point where I awakened from my drugged sleep and found Romeo dead beside me, I wept with what I felt was the dignity that such poetry deserved. And, Don rose from the dead and scolded me. I should be tearing my hair and screaming and flailing in a faint. And, I was so angry at the insult to my histrionic ability that I stormed out of the house. I can still hear that screen door banging. I don't care, Don Moore. I wouldn't cry if you were dead. And then we went back to Missouri and for weeks, I grabbed the paper, the paper came on Thursdays, the home town. And I'd watch for that, to be the first to get it. It might be bordered in black, it might have Don's obituary in it and if it did, I'd feel that it was my fault. (laughs)

And, they had moved away when I got back to Anamosa. We left in a day or so.

Don became managing editor of Cosmopolitan Magazine when he was 23. He graduated from Princeton at, I don't know, at 17 or 18 or something like that. From time to time, I'd see his name on books on a variety of things. Then one day, the younger of my two men cousins, the other one who had gone on and was on Wall Street at that time, a clipping, he had just retired, and there was a delightful picture of him and his wife and they had retired to Florida, Boca Raton, I think, it told some of the things he had done, he had written these books, he had taught at Princeton and one of the other Ivy League places, I forget which, had been a radio announcer. And, anyway that was Don and I am sorry I didn't write to him when my cousin sent it. If I ever get to a library that has telephone books from different places, I'm going to look just for fun and if he is still alive, I'm going to write to him.

(Laughs) Because it was such fun and we had lots of fun.

Ed Gorman who was another one of our gang. His family moved to Cedar Rapids, his father was

a doctor and he writes novels and mystery stories.

Well, anyway, mother had books whenever she went anywhere. She came into Chicago from time to time. She always got a book as a souvenir of the trip. And, she got the books that people of her generation were reading, Victorian poets for the most part. Of course, Shakespeare, and occasional books of that period. And, then, I had a very fine English teacher in public high school, we moved back to a little town in Iowa. The principal taught senior English. She was very good. I got slightly interested in Milton there but I was more interested in his cosmology. I went to Columbia from the Novitiate. Sister Mary Justitia sent the five of us who had our degrees when we entered the Novitiate away for a Master's because she wanted us for Mundelein. Mundelein would open a year from then. We didn't know there was going to be such a place. She sent two to the Jesuit St Louis University which was the only Catholic University that was generally respected at that time and while there were a lot of BVMs with Master's degrees flitting around the high schools, she couldn't take them away from those schools. She already had assembled a good many people.

She was the co-foundress and the first president of Mundelein College.

JS: She already knew then that she was going to establish the College.

IC: Yes. This was the thing she did scholastically. I've heard it over and over. She was a great builder but she wasn't a school woman. She WAS a school woman. Five of us in the Novitiate had our degrees before we entered. Most of them were just kids who came right out of high school. They all stayed, though. She took the five of us who had degrees the day after and we sat around the novitiate, the provincials were sending for the ones they wanted for this school, and that school, and for the other school. And, more and more, we felt, they don't seem to want us. And the next day Sister Mary Justitia came on, and she was the one who was in charge of building Mundelein. We didn't know there was going to be a Mundelein and told us two of us were going to St. Louis. She didn't tell us anything about each others. Just gave the directions to those two, one by one. Two to Ann Arbor, Sister Mary Colombo, who later was Business Manager and Sister Mary John Michael and me to Columbia.

We were five young people who would be there, faculty. (At Mundelein) So, I was sent to Presentation for a month because Columbia wouldn't open until late September. My companion, we always went in two's in those days, had taught the lame duck Latin I took in freshman year which was 8 hours, 4 hours a semester. I had had only one year in high school because that was all we could get in our own public high school. They said only the Irish wanted Latin so they wouldn't offer it. But, we got it in Senior year because another one of my friend's father became head of the school board. They were good Methodists but Curtis said he would be ashamed to apply to any college or university he wanted to go to without having had any Latin or Greek. So, we got a year of Latin. We had had a magnificent teacher for French. We were all babbling French by that time, in our own little crowd.

In college then, in survey, we had a very fine teacher, we didn't get very far, we just got as far as the Romantic Movement. She was so good, she spent too much time on people. When I went to Columbia, the director of the Master's program simply laughed at the idea of majoring in English for one year for a Master's degree, look at the scope of the English language in Literature, you pick one period and you read everything extant that was published during that period and then, I can still see the sarcasm, if you

have time, read the criticism but never be so pedantic as to talk about something you haven't read. Well, you know, that stayed with me.

It was wonderful. Also, I was warned to stay away from his classes. Because he had said, he hoped there wouldn't be any nuns in his class. There was only one other sister, as far as I knew, on the campus, besides my companion and me. She was in something else.

Anyway, he was in the Romantic Movement and because Shakespeare was about the only one I knew anything about (laughs) I chose the late 16th and early 17th centuries.

And, the man I had for Renaissance poetry was the editor-in-chief of the big 12 volume collection of Milton's works. So, of course, we got a lot about Milton and we bought a book of the poetry of the period. (Laughs) We did that on our own. But, we got a lot of Milton and I got interested in him. And, from my very early childhood, I never had catechism, never had Catholic school and my mother got all her religion from the old Jansonistic Irish priests of her day. She was born in '68, I think. 1868. And, she didn't question anything about theology. I did. And, to be sure I would be very good, she said, God saw everything you did all the time.

And, I couldn't get this idea of God straight in my head. My mother, you didn't question anything about theology in my mother's view. You memorized it. But, my father was a convert and he had the same miserable inquiring kind of mind I had. So, she told him, for heaven's sake, straighten this child out. He convinced me that there was a God anyway. He used the old cosmological arguments of St. Anselm. I don't think he had ever heard of St. Anselm but had read everything. He learned to read at the age of 3 and he never stopped. So, when I got into Milton, I was interested in his ideas of creation and everybody was fundamentalist at that time. You've no idea (with great emphasis) the changes I have seen. My father was an amateur anthropologist, archeologist, paleontologist, you name it. Anything in science. The big event for the two of us was the arrival of the book catalogues in the Spring and the Fall. He sat at one side of the kitchen table and I sat at the other. And, I could pick out a book that I wanted. And, he would pick out what he wanted. And, I got up to being able to spend a dollar on a book and that was a lot, we didn't have much money, much cash. And, it was very judiciously harbored.

Tape 1, Side B, Irma Corcoran, BVM, May 7, 1996

Irma: I attended a country school and I mean really country. My cousin and her family and my family were the only ones I would call really literate in the sense of reading anything beyond the local papers and the big events of the day. When World War I happened, they knew about it. But my first political memory was of Theodore Roosevelt's campaign for re-election. And, I remember that especially but, of course, his pictures and the fact that my grandfather had a magnificent shillelagh a friend of his had brought him from Ireland. And, although he was a thorough going democrat and had become a naturalized citizen in 1855, he said if Roosevelt won, he was going to send him his shillelagh. He didn't win and I guess the shillelagh went to my cousins.

JS: Tell me, after your Master's, then did you go right on for your Ph.D.?

IC: No. After my Master's, my companion thought she wanted to go on for a doctorate at Harvard where there was a very great Medieval scholar at the time. She was interested in Medieval literature

but, of course, Harvard was not coeducational then. I think she tried Sr. Justitia too and she ignored that to give me a little more sophistication. I had gone to Clark which was a women's

college in the Midwest at a time when the women's colleges, even the big ones, were a little on the, oh, what shall I say, finishing schools of sort, they didn't take them very seriously. Except maybe Vassar and Smith. The really big ones were ignored. And, later on when I was retired from Mundelein one of my best friends in Philadelphia was a retired history professor from Bryn Mawr, she was an English woman and we just hit it off wonderfully (laughs).

Well, anyway. I was delivered at the door of what we called the little green house, next door to the Skyscraper which was Mundelein College. The Skyscraper had been topped off two hours before I got there. It had just reached maximum height. It would not be finished enough for us to move into it until September. The little green house in which we lived was a green stucco residence, three stories, with servants quarters. It was not any little cottage. (Laughs) It was little compared to Mundelein. And, it was an absolutely wonderful experience. The first thing I have to tell, you would have to know a good deal about religious life in 1930

to understand just what things were like. And, I had lost a coin purse with 2.00 dollars in it. When we came back from Boston, we had letters from the professors at Columbia and they just practically wrapped up the then new, now it's the old library at Harvard, Weidner Library, and gave it to us in pink ribbons. They were so nice to us. We were the only women I saw on campus, outside our various religious people. I immediately acquired a nice carrel with a floor to ceiling window, and desk and permission to reserve for a week, maybe two weeks. I had been sick in the middle of the year when I was at Columbia and I was living in the Cenacle and the doctor had said this was it, that I couldn't go back to school.

But I did after six weeks. And, I didn't have my dissertation finished. And, I had finished that in Boston. And mailed it back to Colombia on the feast of the Sacred Heart, incidently. Anyway, I arrived at Mundelein College two hours after the only building we would have for three years was topped off. And, I had to go and report to Sister Mary Justitia that I had lost a purse with \$2.00 in it. This was in the spring of 1930. The building had been commenced two days after the Wall Street Crash. The money, there just wasn't any. Two dollars would have kept us in potatoes for a week. There were 16 of us. And, I had lost \$2.00. Sister Mary Justitia looked very seriously at me and said, "Now Sister that was a very unfortunate accident". (Laughs) I expected to be ripped to pieces.

One of the first duties assigned to me was to go on weekends or whenever she had finished a chapter with the Dean elect, far down to Our Lady's Academy on the far south side of Chicago so that she could read her latest chapter to the chaplain there who had been a seminary mate of Bishop Sheehan, I think it is, about whom she was writing her dissertation for the University of Illinois. On the way back one day a rather shabbily, but tastefully, dressed woman gave each of us a 1.00. Well, people weren't handing out dollars in those days easily. I gave mine to Sister to give to Sister Mary Justitia with hers. And, the next time I went to Sister's room on an errand, she said "Well, Sister, did you recognize your \$2.00 dollars?" (Laughs) Which was such a beautiful thing for her to do.

My regular assignment was as portress and as receptionist and the phone. There was a main phone on the first floor and Sister had an extension in her bedroom which was also her office on the second floor. And, very shortly I knew what I would be authorized to take care of, to use my own judgment on and what questions had to go to her as the authority. So, I was running up and down stairs all the time. I weighed at that time and I was a good two and one-half inches taller than I am now, 112 pounds and 8 pounds of serge of habit. And, I didn't gain. But, I became acquainted with the voices and questions of the architect and construction manager and of people

who were trying very hard to get the orders of the new institution. One of them, I believe, was the brother-in-law of Cardinal Mundelein or maybe a nephew-in-law, Mr. Eppich, who was selling coal. And, he was very persistent. And, I used to argue very gently with him but my big plus in that connection was the produce, particularly, the egg dealers. They all wanted to sell eggs for the cafeteria. So, that regularly I would get this carton of a dozen eggs and if you put enough water in, you can make scrambled eggs for 16 people out of a dozen. (Laughs) And, I loath the eggs, nothing could have made me eat eggs when I was a child. The man would deliver this dozen eggs and he would be back the next day to see if they weren't the best eggs we had ever seen and I would tell him how delicious they were and how nice it was and that I had given his phone number and his address to the incoming President and he would go away happy but with his fingers crossed.

JS: Did you have any other duties during that summer?

IC: Well, that was enough, the phones and the door bells just never stopped. We had a wonderful black and white collie named Prince.

Sister Robert Hughes' brother had given us. And, he had a bark that would intimidate an army. And, one night he got the two sisters who slept downstairs, it might have been the dining room of the servants originally, up with his barking. They went all through the house and there was nothing out of the ordinary that they could see. When they opened the basement door and started down, the dog trotted around behind them with his tail between his legs whimpering. When we got down, there was an open window and the next morning we discovered a silver coffee service someone had given us was missing from the dining room. Another morning, Prince was barking terribly out near the front door. So, I went and looked out and there was Prince on the ground jumping up and down and the postman lying on the railing of the porch with his heels in the air. (Laughs)

JS: Prince was protecting all of you.

IC: I said, Prince. Prince looked at me and lowered his head. He knew he was misbehaving. (Laughs) Put his tail between his legs and trotted around to the back yard. (Laughs)

And, we had to go for a walk right after breakfast. This is getting more into the religious life rather than the academic you understand. And, Sister Mary Justitia's way of getting acquainted with the latest Sister to arrive was to take that Sister for a companion. We never went out except in two's. And, I was the latest. So, I was her companion and we would walk down Kenmore to Rosemont, then over to Sheridan and she would stand for some time gazing at the Sacred Heart School which was brand new in French Renaissance. She was directing a Skyscraper in the very latest style. And, then we would turn and walk up to the little beach. There were residences, very, very nice ones, really mansions all along Sheridan at that time. And, we would stand and look out over the Lake and her eyes were just the color of the Lake at its very bluest. And, then we would turn and walk over to the building and of course, all the men would be working by that time. And, she would say, she would stand there until the boss appeared and then she would say, Mr. Provo would you get so-and-so for me. No, she'd say to the nearest man, Mr. So-and-so, she knew their names and there were a lot of them, will you get Mr. Provo for me?

Well, he'd come back and say he doesn't seem to be around and this would go on for about three trials and finally Mr. Provo would give up and come around. (Laughs) "Mr. Provo, I thought this was going to be done by this time." Well, Sister, there would be different reasons, maybe material hadn't arrived. "Well, then get it Mr. Provo." Or this had happened, she had an answer for all of

it. And Mr. Provo assured her everything would be taken care of. And, we would go on in to the little green house. And, she'd go up to her desk and I suppose figure out the finances. And, how many additional teachers we would need and how many secular teachers we might have to employ and how much it would cost. And, I would go back to answering BELLS which would start ringing right away. Then there were always little things like typing and so forth and studying. (Laughs) Because we were going to be college teachers in the Fall. Here we were. I had had nothing but practice teaching for elementary work because my mother had insisted that along with my college degree I get a teacher's certificate. It meant that one semester I carried 21 hours and the next 23. And, I did it.

JS: Was it while you were at Clarke that you became interested in community life? Talk to me about that a little bit.

IC: Well, it wasn't through Clark exactly, except, you know, the religion courses at Clarke, as far as I was concerned were for THE BIRDS. They took those of us who were public school products and taught how to say the Rosary and the Stations. Things I had no patience for, you know. And, I had a real theological sense. There wasn't anybody. They just thought that was nuts, that wasn't what I was supposed to be thinking about. I could get all the answers right there in the Catechism. Then, finally in senior year, we had a rather hard bit-nosed philosophy teacher from Loras. I was just there for one semester at the end because I had taken so many courses, I had plenty to quit. I didn't need even that last semester but on account of North Central I had to come back for it. (Laughs) He gave a course called Introduction to Philosophy and it was awfully good. The girls thought I was terribly courageous. I didn't think anything about it. I just naturally walked along with him when he went out to his car after class and asked questions, and talked to him, I liked the old guy. He was really the only one I could ask theological questions. I think maybe he kind of liked me, took an interest in me because he had a question in a test about time, I don't remember what the question was, but I said I didn't recall the class discussion of the question but St. Augustine said that time is the measure of change. (Laughing) I think he was so surprised that somebody in the class had read St. Augustine. Well, I loved St. Augustine. My father's father had named him Augustine because he liked St. Augustine. So, I had read, being curious about my father's name, the Confessions of St. Augustine and the City of God. And, I was fascinated by it.

To go back to the religion matter, I had planned diligently from first year high school to be a foreign correspondent in Spain. I got Spain from a quarrel in my family, on the Fourth of July, when I was in eighth grade. The neighbors were going on a picnic and they wanted me to share in it. My parents weren't going, they were older than my friends parents. They weren't interested in going. But, my friends wanted me to come along with them and I wanted to go. And, I was not permitted to go. It was some years later I discovered that it was because some of my friends' fathers celebrated a little too much on these occasions, and my parents didn't want me to see that loss of dignity. (Laughs)

But, I wanted my mother, who was the principal disciplinarian, my father felt that daughters were matters for mothers to take care of and sons, if there were any, for the fathers. Well, I had no brothers. I had a handicapped baby sister. To make my mother see how cruel she was and how much I was suffering I took her best quilt and put it down on the grass in plain view on now what would be called, a---well, it was a very big window, and took what looked like the dullest book in the library. It had a dull red, maroon silk cover with small letters of the author's name in gold on the cover, an old-fashioned Victorian volume. And, the pages were a little bit yellow and lay down on that quilt with that book.

The book was Washington Irving's Alhambra. And, I was fascinated. I read from right after breakfast until it was so dark I couldn't see anymore. Normally, I would have been expected to be doing the dishes and doing other household tasks. But, mother thought I was sulking, and she didn't even call me in for lunch. I could just suffer. I didn't think of anything but Granada and the Alhambra. And, from then on, I just had to get to Spain, especially because my grandmother was very proud of her Spanish blood which must have been pretty thin by the time it got to her. Some Spanish officials had stayed with her ancestors and they were Lords of Alsatian. When he and his family went back to Spain, I have an idea he was conspiring to get to Queen Elizabeth, one of the girls stayed behind and married one of the German boys, and that was where grandmother got her Spanish blood. (Laughs)

Anyhow, that settled it and my freshman year in high school my very best friend stayed with relatives in a little town near us, Atlanta, during the week and went to school, in a little high school there. Well, mother didn't think very much of the little high school, for a variety of reasons. So, I was sent to the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet at Chillicothe, Missouri, a boarding school and I had marvelous teachers there. One of my English papers came back with good or excellent all over the place in red. And, I was so thrilled. I sent the paper home and my father was so thrilled. Father had withdrawn from school when he was 12 years old, his mother died. She sent for him on her deathbed and said he would have to stop school, his brothers would have to help his father on the farm. My grandfather had bought property, that was the only thing in Ireland in his day because it was under the thumb of the English conquerors. So that owning land was the big thing for most Irish people when they came over here.

He came in '48. The two older boys would have to help him outside so he (her father) would have to stay home and take care of the house and his little sisters. To see that they were clean and properly dressed and went to school and the house was clean. And, he did that and he managed to read. And grandfather, like a good many of those early Irishmen, was quite a reader himself. He must have had a little knowledge of French because there was a quote here and there in his diary. But, anyway, I sometimes thought it's strange the way that the providence of God works. If father had been able to continue school, he would have had reading and writing and arithmetic up to what today would be junior high school. As it was, he had time to read anything he could get his hands on and to study what interested him most, which was science. And, the Indians who lived on a plot of land, I think there was something like 26 acres, that had not been taken up yet. It wasn't a reservation but this tribe simply had shrunken and had moved back and back as the whites took more and more of their property. And, they lived there and they traveled around trading horses and sometimes the women were out begging and my father was fascinated by them. He didn't become acquainted with them as far as I know but he watched anytime he saw any of them. And, later on when the youngest sister was 18, they decided to sell the property and my grandfather would have a third of it and the results, the rest would be divided among the children. And, when that was done, the three boys pooled their lot and divided it among the four girls because they thought it was easier for boys to make their way then for girls. The girls took off for Colorado, Colorado Springs because neighbors had gone there. And, it sounded new and interesting and exotic. And, the boys, my father and his older brother John took time out and went up and worked in Wisconsin on a lumber gang to get enough money to start out on their own.

And, father took a walking trip. This was a year after the Custer massacre. He got as far as Jamestown, North Dakota with the money he had earned. He took a job as a busboy in the hotel there. He used to tell about a time the town was threatened by Indians. There was a crowd of Indians, it was a year after the massacre, were congregated in the valley beyond the town dancing,

doing their war dances. The custom was to dance until daybreak and then attack. All the men of the town were lying on the ground looking over the brow of the hill watching them. And, at 2 in the morning the Indian scouts came back and reported that the militia were on the way.

Tape 2, Side A, Irma Corcoran, BVM, May 7, 1996

IC: The Indians stopped their attack and went away. The town was saved. Many years later when I was a Sister, I was companion to Sister Mary St. Irene to Jamestown, North Dakota, where her brother was ill. And, in the taxi on the way to the hospital I looked out and I said that must be the row of hills my father told about from which the men of the town watched the Indians doing war dance down in the valley and the cab driver turned around and said I've heard the old timers of this town tell that story many a time. I was thrilled and delighted because mother and I had always wondered if father's imagination had crept into this wild story.

In between this, the spring of my junior year in college, they unveiled the Custer Monument in commemoration of the massacre and the Eucharistic Congress was going on in Chicago. My mother wanted to come to Chicago for the Eucharistic Congress and my father wanted to go there (Jamestown, ND.) and to stop on the way in Colorado to visit three of his sisters who were still living. Well, finally my mother gave in because she knew it meant so much to my father. And, we had a new car and I think we could drive, it seems to me, only 35 miles an hour, it was dreadful the limitation for that distance. I was allowed to take my exams early. I left early and we went west first to Colorado Springs and then north.

Of course, for the Indians it was the celebration of the last big Indian victory. And, Indians came from all over the west many of them in Cadillacs, they were ornamented with bright silk dresses, anything bright colors and shiny. Of course, the white part of the program was all laudatory and courage of Custer and so on and so forth. We had an army captain and his family lived in a tent next to ours. We had a tent with us. And, after one of the programs my father turned around and said to mother and me, "Custer was a skunk." It's interesting that now that would be sin but at that time he was considered a hero.

So, I had many interesting questions but at Clarke for the first two years I was still bent on being a foreign correspondent and I was going to transfer at the end of sophomore year to Medill. I had investigated, my father had said I could go to any school of journalism in the country I wanted to. I investigated. And, I found out that the one that was ranked the highest was in Colombia, Missouri and the second was Pulitzer at Colombia University and the third highest was Medill at Northwestern. But, if you graduated from Medill you were practically guaranteed a job on the Tribune.

And, I thought, ha! I'll transfer to Medill, get a job as copy-girl at the Tribune. I never heard of a girl having that position, it just never occurred to me a girl couldn't get it. The copy person picks up the pile of material that's to go to the different departments, distributes that to the different departments and in that way, I'd get a look at all of them and they'd all get a look at me and when an opening that I thought I could handle turned up I'd apply for it. And, I gave myself to the age of 26, I think, to get a good start. And, I met in the meantime, which was fun, this very dear friend of mine, whom I shall see a week from Friday, who was visiting me for a few days, she had gone to Sinsinawa for high school, a Dominican high school, a very good one. And, then she had gone to, her mother was a widow, and she had two maiden sisters and the three of them had moved to Cedar Rapids and Lucille had gone to Coe. And, in the two

or three days she was visiting me, a boy named Harry Hanson, who was at Coe, had a summer job, selling kitchen utensils, that they sell from homes and he stopped at our house. Well, he was also a Coe student and he and Lucille had quite a conversation. And, he said he was going to transfer to Medill and I said oh, I had the same thing in mind. So, we had a great conversation about it, he was an awfully nice kid. There was no question of any romantic interest whatever because both of us had that one aim, we were going to get into big time journalism.

In the meantime, at Clarke, because I had a lot of questions about Catholicism, so much of it just didn't make sense to me and fortunately, the library stacks were open. I spent hours on end sitting on the floor. I didn't have much trouble with the courses because I had a pretty good foundation I'd had awfully good high school work. Sitting on the floor between the stacks reading and I read quite a lot of philosophy and theology, such as I could get my hands on. And, I got very much into St. Theresa and I read Theresa. I had gone to the University of Iowa, I was going to go for the whole summer but I was in an automobile accident and got kind of wound up in the middle of the summer. So, I had only 6 weeks. I had gone down there to get Spanish because they weren't teaching it at Clarke at the time. It was before all the excitement about the Hispanic Americans came in. And, they had no journalism at Clarke except a news writing course taught by Sister Mary Richard who was a very fine teacher but the only thing she knew about newswriting was one course she had had during the summer at the University of Wisconsin. I had been the high school reporter for Hughes newspapers and also I was a senior. I had had the only practical experience. So, I went down there and I took feature writing from a young graduate student. I didn't know he was a graduate student at the time whose name was George Gallop.

I had wonderful hard grounding in beginning Spanish from an exchange professor from the University of Texas. And, then came the automobile accident and I had time to think things over. And, I had been reading and because I had got very much interested in Spanish things. I had read all of the works of the Spanish St. Theresa and Don Quixote and Cervantes and just odds and ends that way. St. Theresa stuck very much in my mind and other Theology that I could get hold of. I'd read all of St. Augustine or I had read the two books. And I read Nietzsche, thus spake Zarathustra, at the same time. I didn't get that at Clarke, I got it from the public library. And, I gotten more and more convinced of the truth of the Church and by that time, even, some of my high school friends and contemporaries, weren't particularly close friends, had married and their marriages had broken up. Things had just gone all awry for a lot of people. And, some of them, nice kids that I liked very much and had gone around with a lot. And, I thought there are a lot of things wrong with the world that this has the solution for. And, if I could bring people to take seriously, to look seriously at Christianity, something more than just going to church on Sunday and singing hymns, that would be the most important thing I could do. In the meantime, my friend Lucille, she was really the perfect person. She was pretty, she was bright, she was so good. She just seemed to be naturally good. My mother used to say, "Why can't you be more like Lucille?" And, you know the strange thing about it was that Lucille and I were great friends. We loved each other. I didn't hate her at all. You'd think I would have hated her. We had about the same IQs, there wasn't anything terribly emotional about our friendship. We were just good friends. And, of course, too, my mother had taught for 14 years before she was married and then she had gone into the store as sort of an assistant to her brother who had a business that he had started around the turn of the century. But, when she was teaching she had taught over in the Bear Creek neighborhood which was the railroad Irish section of the county. See, these old, old communities have traditions that go way back. My father's family had come from the other side of the east-west road and they were more staid and serious and bookish. And, I thought more and more and there

wasn't anybody I could really talk to about the problems that I had. But, I decided that what I wanted to do, what God wanted me to do, I used to be kind of angry at him. I'd say "Why don't you take Lucille?" She's perfect. It would be awfully hard for me to get myself around to be the kind of person I'd need to be. And, yet I felt that I was supposed to be a teacher in the convent tradition. And, so I stayed on at Clarke and on account of taking these courses at Ottawa and having a Teacher's Certificate because my mother was determined I would get one. She was so afraid that something would happen to her and my father and my sister was retarded. She was a Down's Syndrome baby. Not of the worst sort but bad enough that she would need someone to look after her and my mother thought the one thing about the only thing a girl could be was a nurse or a teacher. You only get the Certificate. So I got it. But hell or high water I was going to get a liberal education. And I did. So, I went on. Well, I had enough credits, through all of this I could have graduated at the end of my third year, but North Central, of course, would question that so I had to stay on for a semester. So, I saw that if I was going to the convent and leave my parents, my sister had died in the meantime, as they were getting old, I owed it to them to spend that last semester with them anyway. So, I finished in January. I went back for the commencement fanfare in May. It was funny. I didn't consult any of the sisters about it. (Laughs) I have an idea they would have said no. (Laughs)

It just didn't occur to me. I would just think that this is the will of God for me. I wasn't awfully happy about it, I'm ashamed to say. But, nevertheless I had accumulated enough conviction that I thought my own feelings weren't that important. So, I entered my mother's brother, my uncle, for whom I was named, with permission to settle flood damages in Cascade, Iowa, a little village, which is on the dividing line between two counties. So, one day when he was driving into Dubuque for a meeting of his concern, I went with him and I went to Clarke to find out just what to do about it, to be a BVM. My mother in her first year of teaching had stayed with the Hanson family, not related to my young friend at Coe who's daughter had entered the BVMs when the next girl in the family was old enough to help the mother in the house. That is, when she was 8 years old. And, Sister Naceta (?) was sacristan at Clarke in my days. She was very elderly by that time and a darling little sister. And I thought I'll ask her what I ought to do. I went boldly up to Clarke and I asked for Sister Mary Naceta and I told her I had made up my mind to enter the Congregation but it never occurred to me that they wouldn't want me. And, I wanted to know how you went about it. Of course, she was thrilled to pieces and she went around to the Dean. The Dean had liked me strangely enough. She was kind of odd-ball, herself, her father had been the Governor of Nebraska. I was always doing things, nothing out of the way, that I wouldn't have done had I gone through BVM, parochial school, and high school in Chicago. I had gone through a little country school in the sticks and to a small town high school. I just didn't know the ropes. She (Sr. Naceta) went and got the Dean and the Dean was delighted. There was just one girl in the class besides me was entering Mount Carmel in the Fall. She thought it was a kind of reflection on the College (laughs) because so few girls were attracted to the Congregation. She immediately got one of the workmen to drive us over to Mount Carmel.

It just happened that my best friend had entered there. That had nothing to do with my entering at all. She was the niece of the big bad boss of Kansas City. And, she and I, we'd get up at something like 5 in the morning during nice weather and play tennis and then go to the 6 o'clock Mass. We called her Penny. Her name was Pendergast, of course. I had the supply list which the Dean, Sister Mary Basilene, had gotten all of this stuff for me then. She got Penny from the Novitiate to come over and go over it with me and all that kind of thing. She was sympathetic enough to the two of us to understand us. Penny and I were a lot alike, we were very good friends. We just howled over some of the things on the list that we were to bring with us.

Well, anyhow, I wound up a BVM. And, when we were leaving, my father insisted on my driving into Dubuque. It's only about 50 miles because it would be the last chance I'd have to drive a car.

When we got there, they said, "Why weren't you here last night?"

I said, "Why would I have been here last night? What was going on?"

They said, "Well, anyone entering from Clarke always spends the last night at Clarke."

I said, "Well how would I know that?" I didn't have anyone hovering over me. How would I know that. Nobody gave a damn about me. (Laughs) Well, anyway, they were very much annoyed, and it was terrible because my parents and I were just going to say goodbye to everybody, and we were going to go and have a nice lunch by ourselves down at the Julian which was the best place in town in that day and then drive over to Mount Carmel. Well, nothing would do. We had to stay for lunch and we did. And another of my classmates had driven up from her hometown to see me and she was determined she was going to drive me over there. And, here were my poor parents. Well, she made such a terrible fuss, we just decided to let go. I don't know why she should have. We were good friends. But, part of it, I gathered from a letter later on was that she had a dim feeling that she was supposed to do the same thing and she didn't want to and she didn't. Well, anyway, my father and mother and I said goodbye and they drove home.

The portress took my suitcase from Sister. My trunk had already been delivered there. I just got a steamer trunk so there wouldn't be any danger of my accumulating stuff. She took my suitcase from Enid who had carried it up the walk for me. And, she (Sister) kissed Enid and shook hands with me and said you'll come to see your little friends often won't you. And, my little friend turned and tore down the walk as though the devil were after her. (Laughs) And, I stood there in my black and white dress with the white lapels because my kid cousins had cleaned out my wardrobe the day before and I didn't have anything else to wear. And, my white stroller hat with the black sash. And, Sister said, Oh, you're the one. And, I said yes. So, she took me around and set me down in the library. And, there were other people there. And, every so often a novice or a professed sister would come and get the young girl who had risen and they would say good-bye. And, finally I was the only one there. And then, Sister Mary Thelma, who had entered after her sophomore year, a couple of years younger than I came in and her household duty at Mount Carmel was taking care of that library. And, she looked and said, "What are you doing here?" I said, "I thought I was entering." She said, "Oh, my God", and tore out, and she came back with the postulant mistress who was very much disturbed. People were in line to go into the dining room for supper. And, here I was, one oddball, she had measured them all, the people were lined up by height. (Laughs)

So, anyway, I took off my hat. I don't remember what happened to my suitcase. I just was brought down and put into the line with people my height. We went into supper and a redheaded postulant was seated across the table from me. We had ham for our supper and I was trimming the fat off the ham and looking very distastefully at it and wondering if sisters had to eat the fat that was on the ham. And, Mary kicked me under the table and said, "You're in the army now." (Laughs) And, we laughed, the two of us laughed.

Anyway, I settled down to a year and a-half of novitiate. And, my last half was really great because we had Sister Mary Anesta for a novice mistress. It was her first turn as novice mistress but she was a very sensible woman with a good sense of humor and understanding of oddballs. (Laughs)

We got along fine.

JS: Throughout what you have been talking about has been this passion for reading, for literature, in your curiosity, that has been impressive. The education of women, I keep thinking about too, comes through very clearly.

At the age of 90 you have seen so many different varieties of people and even without being a world traveler you have seen so many places that any word just draws up a volume of memories. It's very hard to keep them in line. But, when Sister Mary Justitia was our Superior and President until 1936, for 6 years, she was a great woman, a very great woman. Then, Sister Mary Consuela was brilliant, temperamental but also a good school woman in her way, was president. And, she was determined to get as many advanced degrees as possible in the Community. She sent Sister Mary St. Irene, who was a friend of mine and the head of the French Department, to Fordham and me to Catholic University and it seems to me she started somebody else. And even though we went on a shoe string, that was an awful lot of money, not to long after the ensile (?) crash, that was another financial catastrophe in Chicago and this was '36. That had happened in '34 and '35, I forget which.

Tape 2, Side B, Irma Corcoran, BVM, Ma7, 1996

JS: At Catholic University, I went in with this good background in the 16th and 17th centuries. Catholic U. interpreted philosophy as it was originally interpreted - love of learning. You were expected to have minors as well as a major. And, for the major in English you chose 5 periods in English Literature and I took from Beowulf through the 18th century and for minors I took philosophy for the first minor because I was just very much interested in it. Linguistics for a second minor, because I was fascinated by languages. And, we had to have qualifying examinations in French and German. Well, I took the French immediately because I'd had awfully good teachers in French both native speakers who knew how to teach. For German, I had audited just in spots whatever I could

here but I was always being called out of class to take people through the building or to talk with people who had come for information and so forth. I didn't get much, although the German teacher was splendid. She was so good. I have to digress a little bit about Sister Mary Celesta. She had grown up in a German community and had spoken German as well as English all her life, she was of Irish decent. And in those days sisters were not supposed to have family names, or anything you know. Everything was secret about us. And, the girl couldn't understand. She didn't appear to be German and yet her German they knew was faultless and they just couldn't make out who she really was. And, of course, because everything was so secret, it was exciting. So, Celesta took an old elementary German book and on the flyleaf she wrote her name, Katrina Hemilstein, and left it on her desk. Well, of course, one of the girls picked it up, they found a book with her name in it, Katrina Hemilstein, she was German. That settled it and everything was all right. Well, I learned things I will never forget, always covered in the native case. The end of the Aesop Fable which was about the man and his son who were going to town and they had the donkey pulling them in the cart. Or they were riding the donkey and the donkey got so tired and couldn't go any farther. So, they got off and took a long pole and tied the donkey by his four legs over the pole and they carried the donkey to town on their shoulders. (Laughs)

And, she had a carved wooden hound with long ears sitting up and looking very doleful. And his name was Foosganer(?), foot walker, pedestrian. That was the word for pedestrian, foosganer. So, when we saw anybody jaywalking, we'd go foosganer. I remember things like that from the

German. And, then at Catholic U., I took the French exam immediately and sailed right through it, of course. But, I didn't know how I'd ever get through a German exam so I took what I thought was an auditor's card for a German reading course.

It was evidently designed for preparation for exams. It had essays on engineering, poetry and all kinds of things in it, very interesting. And, I took the exam at mid-term just for fun just to see how much I knew from it. And, I got the exam back with a B on it, which was pretty good because I was spending all my time on the English, naturally. At the end of the term I said to the priest who was teaching, Dr. Lan, I don't think I'll take the exam, the final examination because I'm just auditing. And, I have to give my time to my major. And he said, oh you are not an auditor. I said, oh yes, I am. And, then light dawned. It was an undergraduate course and I knew it was. He said, "Oh what color card did you take?"

I said, I took a white one. The Graduate Schools are the gold ones. And, he said, Oh, in the college, white is registration. You are getting credit for it. (Laughing) So, I started cramming German and I got a B in it. One thing that helped a great deal was reading German newspapers. I stopped at the library and read a German newspaper every day. Of course, the poetry stuck from Sister Mary Celesta's class. I still remember every evening when I got on the elevator after dinner. I am so tired. I have aplastic anemia which means that the red corpuscles refuse to pick up as much iron as they should and my lungs run out of oxygen too soon. And, it's supposed to have the same effect on my brain and my memory, I remember too much.

JS: It's wonderful. (Her memory of events.)

IC: So far, it hasn't struck at anything serious. I forget names, everybody around here forgets names, we joke about it. There are a 100 hundred old women on a floor, more or less decrepit.

Anyway, I had a very checkered educational career. My parents both became ill. There were no nieces or nephews, no one to help them out. I got permission to go home for six months. That was provided by Canon Law to take care of them. And I did. They made remarkable improvement. And periodically I was able to go back to see that everything was fine, to get people to stay with them when I could.

I'm afraid I have not told you the things you needed to know.

JS: Yes, because you told me about your education, your family, really the very early days of the College, your community life, how that came about, your travels, the things that just interest you so much. And, that's really what I wanted to know.

IC: The community life was really very wonderful and this was one thing that helped about it that four of us younger people were appointed to help Sister Mary Angelita with the foundation of periodicals of the materials here. And, in the spring of the second semester of the College, we started a literary magazine, The Cliffsignon (?), a poetry anthology, Quest, a newspaper, The Skyscraper, and a yearbook, The Tower. We would work very, very hard on those things. We were all teaching a pretty heavy schedule until 2 in the morning. We've have a pitcher of coco and some rolls about 11:00 o'clock because we couldn't have anything after midnight, of course, because of communion the next day. Thank God for John the 23rd, whom I was to see eventually. Then we would take Sister Mary Angelita up to her room at 2 and the 4 of us young ones would go down and clean the publications office which was 506, a wonderful room. God help us if there was a crack on that large floor the next morning. And, we'd get back to our rooms about 3 in the

morning. I remember one morning, I look across at the Skyscraper now and I look at those two windows in the center of the 13th floor and think I was the first person to live in that room. And, I remember going into it at 3 o'clock one morning and there was a white pigeon sitting on the window sill. It amused me so much I went and got Sister Mary Magdalena from her room around the corner and said, "Come See the Holy Ghost." (Both laugh heartily) We had a lot of fun. We were so tired that we were punch drunk half the time. But, it was a wonderful year and we knew we were being blessed with helping to do something that had never been done before and it was very important to the women in Chicago.

Rosary had been invited in from Sinsinawa but they went to Oak Park (River Forest) which was almost inaccessible to people of ordinary means. And, the Cardinal wanted a college for women of moderate or very low means right in the City to be available by public transportation. Loyola was not coeducational at that time, neither was De Paul. It just seemed like the right spot and the right time and the education of women had been a top priority for us from the beginning. So, that was the natural thing to do. Then, Sister Mary Ann Ida had twisted my arm during her Presidency to get me to look for a grant for foreign study. It was 1961. Students were going on Students for Democracy grants and so forth to Europe, loads. And, she felt that the Community, the Sisters showed up for their lack of travel experience. And, I said, I think younger people should get these grants because they have more time to use them. I was commencing to feel old, I was 58. (Laughs) I'm 90 now. (Laughing) And, she said, try the AAUW (American Association of University Women) because some of these organizations prefer mature scholars. So, I went up and you'd think I had planned it all. I sat down and wrote a page about Thomas Holmes why his life should be written. I said it would be a push over to get a grant for that because you can't get any European Literature now, everything was American studies. She said, "Who's he?" Nobody knew who he was. Nobody except people who lived in Philadelphia.

I knew about him because (Laughing) he was one of my ancestors and we always kind of, I don't know why, kind of grinned about him because he laid out the City of Philadelphia. Well, anyway, I did a page about what I would do with \$3000 if they gave it to me. And, \$3000 in 1961 was a lot of money than it is now. And, then I wrote a page about my own background and the people I thought would recommend me, one of whom was the head of the English Department at Wisconsin whom I didn't know but was considered the top Milton scholar of the day and who had spoken very highly of my dissertation at a Modern Language Society convention. So, I thought he'd be friendly and he was. And, I had had a course in Jacobean Drama from one of the librarians at the Shakespeare Library and he had given me high on it, so I put that down. Anyway, I got a big thick packet of application blanks back by return airmail and they said the winners of the grants would be announced the First of March. The third week of February I got another airmail special delivery, a big package saying I had been awarded the Marian Talbot Fellowship. And the Congregation was beautiful. Sister Mary Cecile, who has sense died at the age of 101, offered to give my examinations for me. Sister Mary Ann Ida said, "Get out of here as soon as you can. We'll advance you the money and then when the grant money comes in, we'll subtract from it that way." So, we did that. I had my grades all ready except for the final exam. Cecile would do the final exams for me, a former student and editor. When the publications we had started were finally divided among us, Sister Mary Magdalena was appointed to do the Skyscraper, I was appointed to do the yearbook and Sister Mary Angelita kept the creative writing, one of them was still a student and the other went on into psychology or whatever she was supposed to be in. In Holy Week of that first year, Sister Mary Angelita said to me, Sister I'm going to have to retire now and you are to take over the magazine and the poetry, too. Sister, it isn't that bad. I didn't say anything, Sister. She said, "No, but you turned green." She was dying of cancer but we didn't

know that she had struggled with cancer for a long time. That wasn't the first year, that was the last. And, the two girls who were editors-in-chief of the magazine were absolute darlings. One is dead now, her father had been a friend of William Butler Yeats and the Irish Renewal before he came to America. The other, Gertrude Scanlon was so little we called her Peanut, the cutest kid. She was going with a Loyola senior who was a darling. Gertrude is still a very dear friend of mine, we've been in contact all of these years. She graduated exactly 7 years after I graduated from college. Of course, I'd had a good deal of experience in between that she hadn't had. Her husband, she married Dan shortly after school was out. And, Dan, it was still depression years in 34, the charter class. Dan's father had given him \$38 for a new suit for graduation. He was so proud of that suit he just had to wear it to school to show it to the guys. He wore it in chemistry class. He had a wrong mix with sulfuric acid, it blew up and blew the back off the suit. We could cry for him, it was tragic, it was terrible, it was so funny, we were uproarious over it (laughing). Poor, Dan. They were married, they went to Washington, he was a lobbyist for a business organization. One day he dropped dead in the Senate corridor and left Gertrude with two daughters and a son. It was a great blow. And, Gert kept on writing, she wrote columns and she got a job and when I was studying in Washington she was working for, oh the summer I was teaching in Washington was fun, she was working for Eugene McCarthy in his office. And, she would say when you hit a good stopping point, drop in and we'll go to lunch. So, when I'd hit a good stopping point around noon, I'd go over across from the Library of Congress, it was before the new building was operative and we'd go down to the trolley and go over to the Senate Dining room and I met a good many senators that way and overheard a lot of gossip. It was good, it was fun. And, she also introduced me to the Newspaper Box, they called it, a little restaurant a couple of doors from the Supreme Court Building. So, if I was down there when she wasn't and I didn't want to take the time for the senate jaunt, I could drop in there and it was interesting too although there weren't very many reporters around at that time of day but it was where the reporters from that area congregated.

JS: Irma, it's after 12 (noon). This has been wonderful

IC: Has it given anything that you wanted?

JS: Absolutely. Of course, I had an outline but I knew what was in it. You have done what I needed and what I wanted.

IC: This is one thing. People expected me to be heartbroken over the amalgamation with Loyola. But, I wasn't at all. I had felt at times that Loyola was a big bear hovering over our shoulders waiting to grab us. But, when the time came, I didn't feel that way at all. I felt that Mundelein had accomplished what God wanted of it. And, by this time Loyola was taking in women so that a separate women's college was not needed. It had something that Loyola needed very much and that was the women's special opportunities and the weekend college. And, I have no regrets and I feel that Carolyn (Farrell) has done a magnificent job. And then when I won the \$2,500 prize for the book that I finally got to write for which I had collected material in the early 60s which came out in '92, I was able to give a \$1,000 to the Gannon Leadership fund and a \$1,000 to the Coffey mature women's scholarship fund because I felt I would never have done the book if it hadn't been for Sister Mary Ann Ida and I thought anything I could do to make Sister Mary Justitia's works, name appreciated a little bit more was worth it and I had \$500 to contribute to our own retirement fund.

JS: This will be wonderful for the Archives and for people who are interested in you and also in

Mundelein College. And, in the development of women.

IC: It's been a checkered life. It's been lot's of fun.