

ESTHER LOCKMAN

August 10, 1989

Q: First, I want you to give me your name and where you live.

A: My name is Esther Lockman. I live at the Drakeshire Apartments, Apt. 103, Farmington, Michigan.

I was born in Detroit, in Corktown, which is several blocks from the Tiger Stadium. My father was an engineer at the House of Good Shepherd on Fort Street in Detroit. Mr. Maybury was a financial advisor to the Sisters of the Good Shepherd. Mr. Maybury offered my father employment with the City of Detroit in 1920. My father commuted to the sanatorium grounds each day from Detroit with several City of Detroit engineers. He operated an old horse-drawn steam fire engine that was moved from Detroit to pump the water for the W.E. Wood Construction Company. My family spent a month in a home on Eight Mile, across from what was then H. B. Clark farm, and then we moved back to Detroit.

Q: Where was that?

A: On the sanatorium grounds, across from the H. B. Clark farm.

Q: Did Mr. Maybury own that land out there prior to this?

A: No, the City of Detroit owned it, but he also was on the Board. This is the old fire engine and my father (Shows picture).

Q: Was this fire engine on the Maybury grounds?

A: Yes, it was taken there to pump the water for the W.E. Wood Construction Company. This was in 1920. As I said, in 1920, my family spent a month at the home on Eight Mile, which was across from the H.B. Clark farm. We went back to our Detroit home until the home on the sanatorium grounds was remodeled. My family permanently moved to the sanatorium grounds in 1921.

Q: How old were you then?

A: I was nine years old. There were three of us; I'm the youngest of three. I have a sister and a brother. I went to the Baseline School.

Q: Where was that?

A: Right where that nursery school is now.

Q: The little red school?

A: Yes, it was called the Baseline School.

Q: Was that one room?

A: One room with all grades up to the eighth grade. I went there for a couple of years and then my family sent me to Detroit to school. I lived with relatives and came home Friday and returned on Sunday. My sister and brother were also sent to Detroit to school.

Q: None of you went to Northville High School?

A: I did, the last two years, eleventh and twelfth.

Q: You are reading from what paper?

A: From the first issue of *The Horoscope*, a paper begun by the patients of the sanatorium.

“The infirmary was the first building and was originally planned as a children’s hospital. They entered in December of 1921. The first patient was admitted in January of 1922. Dr. Elroy Garvin and Ms. Fulgren, who was now Dr. Douglas’s secretary and office manager, were the first two of the staff out here. For two months, Ms. Fulgren’s office consisted of a packing case and a chair at the ambulance entrance to the building. The first supervisor of nurses was Ms. Cora Sanderson, who, with the other nurses, was housed on the second floor of the infirmary. Dr. Douglas arrived to assist Dr. Garvin in May of 1922. Dr. Frank Walker also came in May of 1922 to take over the business administration of the sanatorium, leaving Dr. Garvin whole time for his duties as medical director. In December of 1922, Dr. Garvin resigned to go to Buffalo, New York and Dr. Brooks H. Douglas became medical director and Dr. Saley became assistant medical director. Dr. Frank Walker resigned in September of 1923 to go with the American Child Association in New York and since that time Dr. Douglas has attended as superintendent and Medical Director. At the present time, the building is occupied by 115 adult patients under the direct care of Drs. Saley, Luttman (?), and Conklin. In 1922, a separate unit for the children was constructed and opened with the capacity of eighty beds. Recognizing the importance of early diagnosis and desiring to take care of more such cases, an addition was made to the building, which was completed in the summer of 1929, bringing the total capacity to 130 beds. The medical needs of the children were taken care of by Dr. Melby (?). The education of the juveniles is taken care of by a staff of teachers maintained by the Board of Education. Their play is supervised by a Recreational Director, Ms. Reagan.

The (?) building was completed in March of 1922. Housing adult patients, it consisted of a two story building separated into Wards A, B, and C, and Wards D and E were added in November of 1927. In December of 1930, a third floor was completed over the entire building, which now brings the capacity to 426, not including the twenty-three children who occupy A3. The medical needs of the adult patients of the building are taken care of by the following physicians: (no names given).

The Annex, a three story building, which houses 144 male patients ready for exercise, was built in 1928. The first medical advisor was Dr. C. Cahill, who was now replaced by Drs. L.A. Anderson and E.E. (?). Ms. Griffith was the first supervisor and she was succeeded by Ms. Sharp. At the present time, Ms. Campbell is in charge. The institution was originally called Spring Hill Sanatorium until January of 1927 when an ordinance passed by the City authorized a change to the (?) Maybury Sanatorium in honor of Mr. Maybury, whose philanthropic work is well-known to all.

(I think there is another little item in here that is of interest.) As of February 15, 1932, the census was as follows: fifteen doctors, six teachers, 105 nurses, 270 other employees, and 150 juvenile patients and 683 adult patients.

I think all these things are interesting.

Q: Esther, I wonder if you could tell us, because we have probably a whole generation of people that do not remember how devastating TB was, and I know you're not a medical person, but tell us why it was necessary to isolate those patients then?

A: It was because of the contagiousness of the disease. It was transmitted by coughing, kissing, and so on. One of the most devastating things about the disease as far as I was concerned, because I was in charge of medical records and we had to do all of the admitting, was when we would have fathers and mothers, and maybe four or five children all being admitted at the same time. The father was in one section, the mother went to another section, and the children to another building, which was very emotional.

Q: Were the children separated according to age, or were they allowed to remain together?

A: The children were in a separate building so they did see each other on occasion, regardless of their age. It was an emotional scene, terrible for the family. It was something an employee never got used to. After you admitted them, you would say now is the time that you have to go to these areas.

Q: Were they ever able to visit each other?

A: They did on occasion. We would set up in the library on the birthday of a parent or family member, and especially on the holidays, they would bring them all together, carefully. On occasion, we wore masks for admitting people. People used to say to my mother, "I can't believe it doesn't bother you that your daughter is over there where the disease is so contagious." We would see them at their worst. My mother said, "She doesn't seem afraid and if that's the work she likes, that's what she is going to do."

Q: How old were you when you began?

A: I went to school until the tenth grade at St. Vincent's in Detroit. I'm really a Detroit person. I came here in the eleventh grade because my mother was kind of lonesome and none of the rest were staying at home and I was in Detroit at school, so I spent eleventh and twelfth grade at Northville High School.

Q: What year did you graduate?

A: I graduated in 1928 from Northville High School. That summer, all of us worked at the sanatorium, there was no other place. My brother worked in the laundry in the summertime, during the vacation period, and my sister worked in the lab. So, after I graduated, I went into the hospital and was in the office, answering the phone was mostly what I did. I stayed from 1928 to 1930 and then went to Marygrove College for one year. I drove each day from Northville, and there was no salt on Seven Mile Road at that time and it was very difficult.

Q: But, you did drive a car by yourself every day? Was it the family car or did you have your own?

A: We had to have a couple of cars because of the family. There were three of us that needed a car. Where we lived on the grounds, we had to have transportation for church and everything, we were young.

Q: Was Seven Mile Road paved at that time?

A: Yes, and at one time Seven Mile Road was lighted all the way out and back. I went to school by (?). It came through Farmington and at the winery it went off to Rochester, and then Eight Mile Road. In later years, I could go down and get a bus from the City Hall, and it would come right out to the Maybury Sanatorium; it ran at frequent intervals. It was a nice place because of the number of people that were there and the people visiting the hospital at that time.

Q: You started in the office and then you went to college for a year, then did you go back?

A: I went back in 1931. From then on, I stayed until I retired.

Q: Were you always in charge of medical records after that?

A: Yes, for many years I was. Gradually, it built up. Medical Records was just a small little area at one time and I wasn't in that immediately. I did all kinds of things. I took histories at the children's building and I ran a lot of office errands and, it was a while before I took medical dictation, but I did eventually. From about 1940 on, I was in charge of the Medical Records Department. The Medical Records Department was different than the others in as much as they did admitting of the patients and all of the admissions to the hospital had to come through Herman Kiefer Hospital. They were the mother house, so to speak.

Q: Do you know what the screening process was? What determined the admission to the sanatorium?

A: There were X-rays and sputum and that kind of thing which indicated they had tuberculosis.

Q: What determined who went to Maybury and who stayed at Herman Kiefer?

A: It would depend on the vacancies, I suppose. We always felt that Herman Kiefer kept their hospital full and then sent whatever the overflow was to us, but we were always full. We had to call in our vacancy list every morning for how many women, men, and children, because at that time, they were all segregated. Our ambulance went every day to Herman Kiefer to pick up however many there were, or went to other hospitals. A lot of the diagnoses were made at other hospitals, but it had to be cleared through Herman Kiefer as well.

Q: Now, I seem to recall and maybe you can clarify this, was it not a law that if you were diagnosed as being tubercular, you had to be admitted for treatment? Wasn't it a violation of the law if you were not admitted?

A: The only law that I remember that we indulged in, I think, if somebody had tuberculosis, they were glad to get in under treatment and I don't think they wouldn't have.

The alcoholics had to be committed and we had a floor under police guard and everything for alcoholic patients who were committed there by law. That was a separate section of the hospital. They were never allowed to leave there. If they came down for x-rays, lab, or anything, the guard stayed with them so they wouldn't escape. As far as the rest of the hospital, if anyone decided they did not want to stay, they could go.

Q: Maybe that was what I read about. Did you have many walkaways?

A: Oh sure. We had a couple that got out in the cold weather and just wandered and were found later, they didn't survive. They either got so weak or so desperate to leave the hospital. The minimal hospitalization period was at least a year, no matter how minimal the disease was. It was not an easy thing to accept that. If you had a lot of tuberculosis, it was many, many years. We had a doctor who was confined thirteen years. Here is a little statistic that I think is of interest. The last patient that was admitted was number 29,464. That's how many admissions we had.

Q: Almost 30,000 people were treated?

A: Yes, but that only represents first admissions. Prior to my time, I understand that they changed the number every time someone came in to be admitted and I have forgotten when we changed it. It was in about the 1940's, if a patient returned, which was very frequent, we would give the same number – 2, 3, 4, or 5, however many admissions it was. This only represents original numbers, but the number of admissions would be, I suppose, 40,000 or 50,000.

Q: There were quite a few that were re-admitted then?

A: Yes, because we did surgery at Maybury on (?) and bronchoscopies, but surgery other than that had to be transferred to Herman Kiefer, they did all of that. If there was anything else, such

as appendicitis or anything like that occurred, they had to be sent to Herman Kiefer. So, when they came back, they were another admission, but it was their same number dash two or three, etc. Occasionally I get calls on this. Not too long ago, I was called and asked if I knew about the admissions. This little book was what I called “my brains”. There is everything in here and I kept it.

Q: Because this is the Northville Historical Society and we are interested in the larger picture of Northville itself, how did the hospital better relate with the City of Northville? Was it self-contained completely?

A: It was always a little village in itself. I was there because my father was on the staff, chief operating engineer, and we were invited to all the parties. As a kid, I was going to the parties too. Many of the people were invited. As a child, I don't remember who they were by name, but George and Martha Washington came to every Halloween party. He was superintendent of the Ford Motor Company in Northville, the plant. There were people that they invited. The hospital reached out to the doctors in the area and we did outpatient x-rays and other things for them; for a short time I was in the X-ray Department. We didn't do any extensive things. So, we were handy in that regard and reached out to all of the local doctors in that regard. The sanatorium was a (?) operation. It had a powerhouse, a creamery with pasteurization of the bottled milk that went to patients. The laundry took care of the nurses' uniforms. They liked to see the nurses in the same crisp look that the laundry would give them and I think that was kind of an unusual little thing that their uniforms were done right there.

Q: Did you have your own dairy herd there too?

A: Yes, and the House of Corrections had some.

Before we get too far away from this, we had a little bout of polio when it was going on and we lost a few children to that. We had nineteen children admitted from the Hansel and Gretel Nursery School in Detroit. One of the employees infected these children. They sued the Hansel and Gretel School and, I think it was some other place where she had the x-ray taken, I don't know if it was the osteopathic hospital in Detroit or just where it was. Part of Medical Records was to take the records of these children to the attorney who the parents had hired to sue. This was one of the high points of the sanatorium, with that many children being infected with this.

The other thing is, there is one story that was kind of interesting, I think. When a lot of these nursery school children went home, when we considered them cured and ready for discharge, the lawyer wanted to give a little party and she said she invited the children in the neighborhood, and they didn't come, which shows how afraid people still were. It is an interesting little story that I think about and that existed a lot.

Q: It was a devastating disease, I remember that from my childhood. What year did Maybury close?

A: In 1969. Admissions kept getting less and less.

Another interesting thing, during the Depression we were paid by script and if we paid for anything by script, you never received any change. I remember when they would bring the script, there were piles of it and it was all in one dollar denomination type of thing. I remember when I went to the movie, they would punch it. I had more of that stuff punched, and then you would forget to take it with you and it was a terrible waste as far as money was concerned. Our family was very fortunate because script was accepted for taxes and so our relatives exchanged what little they could with us so that we would have some cash. I had one for a long time and then finally it just fell to pieces.

Q: Would merchants of Northville accept script?

A: Yes. They would punch it, you never got any change. They would take two or three of the scripts. There were a lot of places that wouldn't, but some did. It was kind of a stress period in one's life.

The doctors' homes that were built on the grounds, you know that the rangers (?) have, they were built in 1974 as a WPA project, the Federal Government did that to create jobs. That is something I don't know if everyone knows.

Q: You would be surprised how many people have lived in Northville now for ten or fifteen years and don't know that Maybury State Park was formerly the Maybury TB Sanitorium.

A: I know, I work closely with the pastoral minister here at Our Lady of Sorrows, she is a Dominican sister, and I told her I had retired from the Maybury Sanitorium and she gave me this blank look. I said, "You've never heard of it?" and I nearly crossed her off my list completely because to me, it was my whole life and still remains that. I spent a good part of my family years there. As a matter of fact, it's kind of eerie that this should come up because two things made me get this stuff out the other day. We had a reunion at Dr. Romanik's the other day of Maybury people; he's done this on a couple of occasions now. He was the last pediatrician at the hospital and still, although he wasn't there so very many years, is very Maybury oriented and brings back the people that he knows like to be together. There are perhaps about (?) of us, most of them doctors and former nurses, and that led me to believe that I should do something. My birthday also led me to do believe that I should do something, which has crawled very high this last time. I will be out of the 70's, come next year. So, I took a lot of these pictures that I have of my father at the Sanitorium to my nephew. This is an enormous picture of the Maybury Sanitorium, you can tell how wild he was about the Maybury Sanitorium, and that's the Board at the time. I loaned this to somebody and I don't know what happened to that picture. In this picture, they drilled one well, but this is the second one as a reserve and they thought it would be nice to have a pump or fountain. You can see from that little car in the corner there that it was a long time ago.

Q: Would your nephew be able to make a copy of it?

A: He made copies of all of that. Also, I was going to give it up and if they have any interest in it, I would give it to them. He made copies for his sisters and brothers and so they have it. If anybody wants any of this, if they are interested at all, they can have it.

(Discuss pictures Mrs. Lockman has of Sanitorium and that she is willing to give them to the Society if they want them).

Q: I'll take the picture of the Maybury Sanitorium, do you have any idea about what year this is?

A: It was last finished, according to this article, in December of 1930, that's when the top was put on some of the buildings. This is a Maybury Manual in which there is everything. Do you have one of these?

Q: I don't believe they do. I know Mrs. Harriet Gibson had that with her when I talked with her, but she only had the one copy. I can't be sure that you will get things back.

A: I have two, so if the Historical Society would like that, I would be happy if they took it, and I do think you should have this. I will make a copy for myself. The reason I kept this is because in here it says, "Ms. Esther Lockman who was taken to Harper Hospital to be operated on for appendicitis has our best wishes for a speedy recovery." I went to the hospital on February 9th.

My father was injured on the grounds in 1936 and never went back to being chief operating engineer, but was in charge of the laundry and at that point we moved off of the Maybury grounds. He went back to work in 1938, so we moved to Seven Mile Road and built our home because we no longer would be entitled to live in the house on the grounds.

Q: This was Seven Mile and what?

A: Seven Mile and Ridge Road. They did ask my father to stay on simply because he was knowledgeable about what had gone on in the very beginning. When they were pumping the water after the well was dug, Mr. Maybury and the engineers ate at the Maybury Farm. That was before difficult (?) times. Mr. Maybury died of tuberculosis you know, at the farm house.

Q: What can you recall about the town of Northville itself as you grew up? I know you won't have a lot of memories because of the fact that you went to high school in Detroit and you commuted, but did you spend much time in the town itself, shopping, etc.?

A: We were all very involved in Our Lady of Victory Church. We built two churches there. There was no church when we came. We had a church in the library which they are now putting down in the historical section there. Once a month we had mass there, otherwise we had to go to St. Mary's of Redford. Then our little tiny church was built and in 1957 or so, we built again and now, of course, it has been redone again. It's a beautiful church. We were very active in Our Lady of Victory church.

Q: You remember attending mass in the library?

A: Yes. Sure, I was nine years old. I remember that real well. The priest had to come from Plymouth or from another place to say mass on Sunday. We went to Northville, St. Mary's of Redford, and Our Lady of Good Counsel in Plymouth to complete all of the Sundays. We had that distance to go to church. That's why we were all sent back to Detroit to go to school. My mother insisted that we have a parochial education and there was no other way. It was kind of difficult because in those days, which was most unusual, you salary and home and everything was based on the number of family members, which would have been five, and we weren't there, which was the cost of paying for tuition and living with family in Detroit. It was expensive, but it was the way my family insisted on having it. I often wonder how life would have been if we hadn't come out to Northville and lived in Corktown. My parents went to Holy Trinity and that's where my parents are buried. We have gone back there many times.

This is what was in the Northville Record when I retired, a letter from Mayor Gibbs complimenting me on July 1, 1977. "I am also aware that the number of years worked with the Health Department by yourself, you mother, and your father total 93 years. Few families can claim such a durable association with the operation of a municipal department."

Q: Now, we touched about the church, what else about Northville do you remember?

A: I belonged to the Business and Professional Women's organization. When I got back from school, the people that I associated with were the ones that I knew at our church. Of course, we used to go to all the other church dinners in the town at that time. The Methodists had a chicken dinner and festivals, and we attended all of those kinds of things. But, for the most part, the people I knew were associated with either Maybury or Our Lady of Victory.

Q: The other social activities in Northville you didn't participate in? You mentioned the movies before--did you come in for the movies?

A: Oh, yes. Saturday night there were band concerts in the center of the street. We'd get some popcorn and watch the people go by and then go to a movie. That was Saturday night. Does the Historical Society have any pictures of that, where the band played? Have you seen pictures of that?

Q: I haven't seen pictures, but I have been told about it. Is that where the interurban turned around?

A: From Ford Motor it backed up into the center of the street. It would swing around and turn from the Ford factory and then the urban would back into the center of the street right up to the bandstand.

At the time of the closing, in August of 1969, the ambulance driver and I moved 20,000 records from Maybury to the basement of Herman Kiefer Hospital, which were the last 20,000 records;

the rest of the records they just left there. The early records were microfilmed, I think up to 6,000, and then we moved 20,000 records. I was fairly close to retirement at that time or I could have taken retirement, but at that time I was asked to go down to Herman Kiefer and start for them the admission procedure that we used at Maybury which the doctors liked and many of our doctors went there. So, I went purposely to do that and to train some young employees transcribing histories from the Dictaphone and teaching them across from the hospital prior to that time. I retired in August of 1970, sold the family home, and moved to Farmington in November of 1971. I had 32 years of service and thought it was time enough to retire.

Q: Where is the rest of your family now?

A: I am the only living one. My sister died at 63 and my brother at 53, both of heart problems. I don't know why I am still here, but I am. I've even outlived my father who died at age 78; I just celebrated my 79th birthday. I thought it was kind of interesting or I feel it is a big part of our family life and that's why the grandchildren said they wanted pictures of all of these to keep. I was surprised that their memories of spending time with their grandparents on the sanatorium grounds is very real to them. My father was the first on the grounds and was practically the last one that walked off, so it's kind of an interesting thing.

I don't know if I covered most of the things that you wanted to hear about? Maybury was a village within itself, really. You knew a lot of people and I think it was because they all lived on the grounds; the nurses lived on the grounds. There was the building called "The Inn;" there was the office staff people and there was a doctor's residence. My family did more from the standpoint of Northville because of church association. My mother was a church worker and led us into that kind of thing. As a matter of fact, I am still volunteering here in Northville for church things. The Business and Professional Women was very interesting and I was in that for quite a while, but my father became ill and was ill for three years, and I could no longer handle that and take care of my father, but I knew the people in that group too.

Q: Any particular ones stand out in your mind?

A: Mrs. Douglas who lived in Plymouth, she and Ms. ... who are no longer living. Other institution people because they were from the Training School. They were teaching the children there.

Q: Wayne County Training School?

A: Yes. They were very active in that. Of course, my own friends were also there (?)

I think I have given some things here that are not known about Maybury anyway.

One other little bit that I think is of interest that I hadn't mentioned before is that they operated an open air camp for children. There were buildings that had Humpty-Dumpty and Little Miss Muffet and all kinds of children's things on the front of them from the nursery rhymes. They had

six weeks for girls and six weeks for boys. They were the children of some of the patients or underprivileged children from the City of Detroit. That screening also went through Herman Kiefer. That was a great thing.

Q: These were not tubercular children themselves?

A: No, but their family had tuberculosis, like the father and mother, or underprivileged children.

Q: This was on the grounds?

A: Yes, there is a picture of it in there. I don't know how I happened to have two of those, but anyway, I want them to have that one. If they should want this invitation of the change of 1927, of Mr. Maybury and this kind of thing, I will be glad to give them anything they would want.

That picture over there, that needlepoint, was done at Maybury in Occupational Therapy.

One more thing, the Record Department of the (?) in charge, frequently subpoenaed records and a representative from the Record Department had to go down to Workmen's Compensation and take the records with them.

Q: They used those in court too?

A: Yes, they did. Especially on these nursery kids. So, it was a very fascinating job. I liked what I did t here and the staff was nice.

Dr. Howard was the last superintendent and his daughter, Phyllis, lives here in Farmington. Her name is Allison. She keeps track of me. We were together at the party at Dr. Romanik's and what we have in common is that we grew up on the grounds. She was a small child. At the Romanik party, Dr. Steininger (?) was visiting here from Arizona and was the one who was treated for thirteen years. He was a patient and then stayed on the staff as medical director afterwards. He went to North Carolina to be superintendent of a sanitorium there. He and Phyllis played the organ at the Romaniks' and Phyllis had the ukulele which he had taught her to play when he was here and she was a little girl. They played for an hour and a half. It was a lot of fun. I know she went home with a blister on her finger from this. Dr. and Mrs. Howard were very kind to me. I think with the Maybury people you were more than just employees. When we get together we are real happy to see each other. It was really a family affair. For ten years they had parties with more than one hundred people who attended. Phyllis has lots of memories about Maybury too.

Q: Well, Esther, I want to thank you very much for your time.