

Barbara Anderson  
interviewing Lois Tucker

ME: This is Barbara Anderson interviewing Lois Tucker at her home, on December 31, about her life.

ME: Where and when were you born?

Mrs.T: I was born in Ishpeming, Michigan on April 16, 1910.

ME: Did you have any brothers or sisters?

Mrs.T: I had two brothers and one sister.

ME: Where did you go to school?

Mrs.T: I went to school at Ishpeming and at Northern Michigan University.

ME: How did you get there?

Mrs.T: Oh, we stayed at Marquette at that time. They didn't have dormitories, but they had rooming houses and we just stayed there.

ME: What is your major?

Mrs.T.: my majors are Latin, French, English, and a minor in history, and uh I taught at Minnesota for 2 years and I taught Latin there and English and science and reading and then I came to Ishpeming and taught History and English

ME: What chores did you have when you were a child?

Mrs.T.: I didn't have too many, I was the youngest in the family. My parents, uh my brothers + sisters were much older than I and my sister was 21 years older than me and my other brother was 19 years older and another was 7 years so I go over to my friend that lived across the street and we would play. We played house and paper dolls and we'd play with dolls to, we use to like to play school too. I liked to pretend I was the teacher

ME: What was the town of Ishpeming like when you were a child?

Mrs. T.: Well it was, a of course it has expanded a lot since I was a child but a we had like eighth edition and the fourth edition west of here and north of here and also south. so it has expanded a great deal that way. They have got some new homes and there are still a lot of lovely old homes. I like this home because it's old.

ME: Was the Pennys store there?

Mrs. T.: Well, um, There was a Pennys store yes it was in the same place as where it is now.

ME: Has Old Ish always been in the same place?

Mrs. T.: Yes, uh, I was always interested in how Old Ish. got there do you know the story?

ME: no.

MRS. T.: Well, there was a man from Ishpeming,  
a mayor who was called Mr. Hull,  
and he, the people liked him very much and  
held him in high esteem and they  
wanted to get him a gift so they  
gave him the Indian, well, it  
was too big to keep in his yard or home  
so he gave it to the city of Ishpeming.  
I've done a lot of research in this area  
and this is what I've found.

ME: What was the Butler theater before  
it was a movie theater.

MRS. T.: Well, it was built as a movie theater in fact  
Mr. Butler, who owned it, lived across the  
street from me on 3rd street where I was  
born. It was a very nice theater and  
of course it was also, it was also the  
Ishpeming theater.  
In fact it was the parking lot of Joseph's old  
store is where the Ishpeming theater was  
They had wonderful performers who  
from away.

~~scribble~~  
MRS. T:  
(cont)

They were main performers, actors, and actresses as well as movies and star company. They performed shows and would stay for maybe a week at a time.

me: what was in Jacksons Hardware?

MRS. T.: There was a furniture store there named Laniger la-n-i-g-er furniture store. Many of the furniture stores at that time mostly had undertaking, they were like undertaking parlors they took care of the dead. Like the funeral homes we have today.

me: Was the Post office always in the same place?

MRS. T.: No, it wasn't at one time it was in the block near, when I was young at the building where Sears is now and the Post office was there at that time. It was rather small. I was a very young child. I remember it.

me: What restaurants do you remember?

MRS.T.: Well, does you mean when I was a child?

ME: ya, when you were a little girl

MRS.T.: Well, I don't remember any when I was a child. I mean we didn't go out to eat like that. There was the Anderson Hotel and I used to go there with my friend and that was at the parking lot next to the library. Right next to the children's department between the Sears store, I had a very nice dining room, a lot of the teachers ate there and the engineers. and it was a very nice place it was called the Anderson Hotel. Mrs. Anderson was the cook, she was a very good cook.

ME: What was the Mather Inn like?

MRS.T.: What was it like? I remember when it was built. I remember the night it was opened. I was going to Northern and there was a private party and we have, there was a bus that ran between Ishpeming and Marquette. I rode this bus and it used to stop right at the Mather Inn.

MRS. T:  
(cont)

and my brother who was with the mining Company on the Mesabi Range was invited to this private party and for some reason or other he couldn't come. And it was so beautiful all the lights were on and I could hear the orchestra playing inside, and I wondered, Oh I wonder if I'll ever be able to go into this place, or be able to afford to go in this place. I was just so beautiful, and it's never lost its charm.

ME: What kind of affairs were held there?

MRS. T.: Well, I attended a lot of them myself, a luncheon, a wedding parties, a-a-mainly that thing-dinner parties, Christmas parties, a lot of Christmas parties, and most those attended private parties, New Years Eve parties

ME: Could you tell me about your church  
I understand you have done some ~~few~~ research?

MRST: Well, yes I go to the ~~Grace~~ Episcopal Church  
it's the un first church to be built in brick  
in Ishpeming, as a matter of fact there is  
another church on that block, an episcopal  
church, which was latter known over near where,  
oh-umm-a the Lambert Beauty Shop is in that area  
and then this one was built in 1901 it was  
the first church built in brick, and within  
the last few years it has become a  
Historical site. there are four of them. the Matter Inn,  
that church, the a city Hall, and the library in Ishpeming

me: How has the service of your church  
changed over the years?

MRS. T: Well, it has changed as it has in many churches  
prayer  
book, hymnal, and the ritual, but a

me: I understand you have done some research on the  
hospital. Could you highlight some of that for  
me?

MRS. T: Oh, yes we did alot of work on that Dodie  
Anderson, a lovely lady who died, just within



MRS. T. : the last year. She a- worked at the hospital.  
(cont) So we worked, I found it very interesting.  
On my first research, at the hospital was  
before that and during the hospital  
week I was called and asked if  
I would do the history of the hospital.  
At that time and I remember some of it  
from what my mother told me, she was born in  
Houghton and came to Isnpaming when she  
was five weeks old, so she saw the city grow.  
and a the first hospital, well, I'm going  
ahead I'd better get back to Mrs. Anderson  
and so we worked on this, I think I  
had 29 pages typed on both sides concerning  
the history of the hospitals because there's  
others. the first one, hospital, was on  
Candis Street, you know where that is, (going to  
get a pamphlet) — the first patient  
by the name of Wylie who was there  
for treatment on frost bite.

mrs. T.:  
(con't)

(Looking at pamphlet) this is what we did, and I enjoy doing research. I going to start maybe next month, I'm going to work with some men, They have a club it's like a deer camp, and I used to go there with a friend of mine's father used to go there. I went there first 50 years ago, and so this year when they entertained their wives they invited me there too 50 years later, so I told them I would help them. Work out the history of that. I've done all kinds of research I really enjoy doing them.

me: What was the Ishpeming School System like?

mrs. T.: When I taught or when I went to school?

me: When you taught.

mrs. T.: Oh, when I taught, well the disaplina was much more strict. Mr. Phelps was the Superintendent and he was known for a clean school system

MRS. T:  
(cont)

at that time—it was known as one of the best in the state. I have friends who attended the University of Michigan. They said they could always tell, for example, Ishpeming students, because for two reasons, they knew how to study and they knew where to go to get information.

me: were you a teacher for many years?

Mrs. T: I taught - all together I taught 40 years. I taught two years in Minnesota, and 37 at Ishpeming.

me: what are some things that stand out in your memory?

Mrs. T: My teaching you mean? Oh, well my relationship with the students, and with the teachers, but with the teachers I just love their company, I still keep in touch with so many of them.

Mrs. T.:  
(cont)

I belong to clubs in which they are,  
I belong to two reading clubs in which  
& some of them are, I-uh belong to a  
bridge club, but they're mostly retired  
citizens or teachers, and they are so  
nice they call me and take me out  
for dinner, and lunching, my relationships  
with them I just love it. There was one  
couple started going together in my room  
in 7<sup>th</sup> grade and after they got  
in high school, whenever they would go  
to ~~to~~ a prom or something they would  
come and see me and show me the  
dress and I would take a picture  
and I would always save one. Then  
they broke off for a little while, they  
weren't sure if they really loved each  
other. I think that I felt worse than  
they did so I, but they finally made  
up though.

mrs.T.: He had to go to service, and I wrote to him. Then he got out, and they got married. Now they have 2 children, the children a- (pause) Well, they used to call me their other mother. Now when the children were born they called me grandma Lois. So they still come over and visit me.

me: Books are an important part of your life, could you tell me about their importance?

mrs.T.: Oh, yes they're an important part of my life. So much of my life has been spent at the library. We are very fortunate for the Carnegie library like this and we've always had very good librarians. My sister at one time worked at the library. I remember she used to bring me a lot of good books. I think I must have learned how to read before I

~~2/20~~

MRS. T:  
(Cont)

went to school. I just always loved to read. I can't emphasize enough the need for people to read and use our library. There's so many phasilitys, there are many things that the library has to offer. On Sunday afternoons, not every Sunday after noon but some they sponsor a ——— an they have a speaker, someone who is interested, very interested in a field Mr. Volgure or Robert Shaver who wrote Anatomy of A Murder, spoke once. Mr. Read Home gave a talk once about the history of this area, he's writing a book now. There are many different speakers who are interested in different things. There are artists, musicians. It's very interesting. The

mrs.T.: The friends of the library do a great deal. The dues are only \$1 a year. I don't know how they can do what they can do. Well, a they have a good will offering, and they have tea afterwards. and that just keeps them going, but they do an awful lot. They just bought a computer not too long ago for the children's department.

ME: I understand you volunteer your time at the prison. What do you do there?

mrs.T.: Well, I started to go there with some friends from my church, who were very much interested in prison ministry, and so I use to go there every Tuesday night to an undenominational service in the chapel outside the walls, and-uh- they were all trustees. Well, then I use to go up and visit some of these people who wanted visitors.

MRS. T.:  
(cont)

The first one I visited was a young man who had been there since he was 17 he was then 34 and he had never got a card or letter and he hadn't seen his parents in years because he didn't know where they were, his step-father had been away so he didn't know where they were. I think they realized he had a problem and since then I think he's at Jackson's prison. But I haven't been there for a while but I expect to go there again. I visit, when I visit for a half day not a whole day, but I haven't been there for a while.

me: were you afraid?

MRS. T.: - Pardon?

me: were you afraid?



MRS. T.: no, I've never been afraid my family's been afraid for me, and my friends, and some of my former students who keep in touch have said, why do you go there, I think maybe I'm a little apprehensive now, because I know more of what goes on there, but of course my interest of the prison goes back many years. My oldest grandson's father was on the State Prison board and his brother was on the parol board. He was kidnapped. MR. -a- one of the former guards, his name was Ed Wood and he has written this book 100 Years of Hard Labor I had planned to do some research on the prison, and he was writing this book and it was just about to come out, we had it here at the library.

Mrs. T.:  
(cont)

(looking at the book) this kidnapping written there is just like fiction. You see these horror, I don't mean horror but crime things on the television it is happening in our back yard. In fact one of the men at the service was a member of the mafia. But a one of the trustees was a man I worked with, - a - it's a \_\_\_\_\_ you never know what's going to happen. My two friends of whom I started going there with, were there when they had that little mini-uhm riot. One of my former students who was a guard was badly hurt. I saw him just before he got his surgery. He said, "You know there's still some good guys in there." He works someplace downstate somewhere. he's um. involved in work other than guard work, probably a minimum security. You might wonder why so many people work there, they have such a big payroll. There has been something in the paper recently ~~and~~ since this man has been killed. Just during the last week or something

Mrs. T:  
(cont)

in Jackson, and when that woman guard was killed, and a-a - I that makes a person care, but benefits are good, it's civil service, your secure, a lot of people are applying for jobs. If you've noticed when they're talking about the new prisons working opening up in this area, there are already a lot of applications I understand. You have to have special training. I uh - another about the prison Mrs. Kirstoferson is the wife of a presbyterian minister her and she's a nurse there. And this is another thing I've done in connection with the prison and - uh - I was asked to give a talk at the Rotary Club, I thought what will I talk about. Well, it was the year of the <sup>100th year</sup> Prison's centennial. And I thought there are a lot of people who don't know anything about the prison in this area.

MRS. T.:  
(cont)

They just know it's there and it's a good place to stay away from. So I thought I'd talk about that, the history of the prison, and now I became interested in it well, then Mrs. Kirstofferson and I were asked to give a talk at Perzpergry Point. that's a summer camp for young people and they were like from Junior high to high school so we talked about the prison and ofcourse alot of the young men I worked with were there because of drug and alcohol related crimes, and so we could talk to the young ~~men~~ <sup>people</sup> about that you know so they could know where they would land. So then we were asked to give that at a study club in Marquette.

MRS. T.:  
(cont)

and we did it, and those people seemed interested, because those people didn't know about it either. although 1 of the men was a dentist at a prison too but, a then, let me see the last time we did it was for the Educational Organization- Philanthropic Educational Society for people in Negaunee and Ishpeming and a they gave scholarships and they're interested in education. That's are thing and we gave 4 of those talks too. We could share what we know, but Mrs. Kirstofferson is so interesting she works with all you know in the cells, she had some exciting experiences, especially when that very bad riot broke out

me:

What improvements do you think could be made on the prison?

MRS. T.: On the prison, well, I think probably, more legislation and more money, they need more counslors. I think they're very few a-a- counslors for the populations of the prisons, although I understand they are well paid what there salaries are I don't know. Legislation, if they could only stop the alcohol and drugs, they still get in from outside. A lot from their wives and girlfriends who come to see them.

me: I understand you have don quite a bit of historical research could you tell me some of that?

MRS. T.: Well, I'm very interested in the history of so many things in this area that, the history of the: city, the bands, the glee club, the hotels, the hospitals, schools various schools you know the early days I just follow up anything I can find.

MRS. T.:  
(cont)

Of the history of this town and even this area of Marquette County and I remember the Marquette Historical Society. And I think I should tell the young people all the things it has to offer. Tomorrow and every New Years afternoon they have an open house. It's just lovely they have a beautiful tea table. I have to pour tomorrow, I did last year too. If the weather isn't too bad that we can't get over there. Another lady from here come with me, and they have such nice exhibits. Have you ever been there?

me:

no

MRS. T.:

I understand I'm not sure now about this now that there going to have it also on dolls, OH, and in

MRS. T.:  
(cont)

The museum along the library oh, you can get so much information. Students from Northern use it. It's really a wonderful place. It's located right next to the Peter White Library. If your tired of football tomorrow or if you want to get out of the kitchen it would be a wonderful place to go. It's starting again in January. The hours are Monday through Friday 9-5. On Saturday I think it's from 9 till noon. But they sell books about the history of the area. And I like to collect books about this area.

me:

Well, my immediate family, my brothers + sisters are all dead. I'm the last one but I have a niece and his wife and his family and I love them very, very much. One is 9, I mean 10, one is 9 months old. The two boys who often use the library

pg. 24



MRS. T.: Come and have lunch with me on Saturdays and we go to the library on Storyhour. And watch the puppet show the older one I think I taught him now to use the card catalog when he was 5 or 6 years old now the other ones ready to learn that too. Now the older one likes to go there to use the computer. He's read most of the books down there, and I get him books from upstairs. They gave me permission to do that. Now I can take him upstairs to use the computer. I want to learn how and I don't know now so I go up there with him.

ME: Could you tell me about the taking care of your mother and sister?

MRS. T.: Well, it was my pleasure to be able to do so.

MRS. T.:  
(Cont)

my mother was just short of 90 when she died, my sister has been dead almost 10 years. The last 10 years she was either in a nursing home or in the hospital or a custodial care home, because she couldn't take care of herself.

I couldn't help her physically. I was still teaching then. The hardest part was going to the nursing home and seeing her and to think you can't do it yourself. That was hard as an emotional thing.

me: Have your friends been important to you?

MRS. T.:

Oh, yes my friends have been very important to me, there's not really any one I don't like very much, friendship means a great deal to me. Yes, I have such wonderful friends, I'm very fortunate.

MRS. T.: I'm always meeting nice new friends.  
And the volunteer work. Like going to  
the hospital & nursing homes. You'd be surprised  
at all the nice people. At the hospital one  
afternoon I went on Sunday it hard to get  
people on Sunday. They like to ski or watch  
television or something. If it's something  
I can do to help relieve them I'll give  
up my Sunday. I've met many interesting  
people through the hospital, through the  
nursing homes, and the other volunteer  
work. I've just met some nice friends.

MC: What has your involvement  
with Red Dust been?

MRS. T.: I was one of the judges, but  
I was always interested in 7 & 8  
grade. I taught 7 grade. I think what they  
have accomplished is just been great.

MRS. T:  
(cont)

You know you have national and state recognition, as well as a recognition ~~at~~ here. You presentation as well as film productions, I can't tell you how many books I've given as gifts, and-a- I love the note cards I've given so many of them for gifts.

I have a draw here I keep here with every once in a while I'll see things I'll buy at the hospital or someplace and if it's a birthday or something I want to remember I have something here, I still have quite a few of the cards, I just enjoy them so much!