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REMINISCENCES

OF

MARY FRANCES LINDESMITH PAYNE

Payne, Mary Frances

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Interview by  
Harriet F. Miller  
February 4, 1976

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MILLER: Today is February 4, 1976 and I am talking with Mrs. Mary Frances Lindesmith Payne. And of course the name that is recognized in Alliance would not necessarily be the Payne name but the Lindesmith name. Because of Lindesmith's Hardware which has been established on Main Street for a good many years. When was this hardware established on Main Street?

PAYNE: It really goes back almost 100 years, that we can trace it. It went back actually to 1865 when Jacob Lindesmith who was the father of William Stewart Lindesmith Sr. moved from Hanoverton, Ohio, with his wife and five children. And he began his own harness and saddlery shop here. We found a little blurb from the history of Hanoverton 1804 - 1813 and a quote in it was, "as to who was the first among the harness makers to engage in the work in Hanoverton there is no record, but numbered with those of early years was Benjamin Wright, he being followed by Jacob Lindesmith. Each in his work during their day in the village having had extensive trade." So that he was probably one of the originals in the state of Ohio in that area, to be a harness maker. So he came to Alliance Ohio, and he established his own harness and saddlery shop and he taught the trade to his eldest son who was William Stewart Lindesmith. We don't know where this shop was located but I wrote to Mr. Pritchard feeling that if anyone could tell us Herbert Pritchard could tell us. And he said,

"no," he couldn't tell us. But he said, "I'll tell you a little story." He said, "when we were little boys," and this was 1900 he said, " we would get a small rubber ball and then we would painstakingly wrap it in twine, over and over again until it was large. And then we would take it down to Mr. William Stewart Lindesmith Sr. and ask him to sew a cover on it and this was a baseball."

MILLER: Oh, a do-it-yourself baseball.

PAYNE: A do-it-yourself baseball, that's right. And as we say, we don't know where the first one was located but then when William Stewart Lindesmith Sr. came into it, he rented space at 334 Main Street on March the 20, 1877, and he paid the fabulous sum of \$4.00 a month for this space. Not bad. Then as he progressed in his business and was doing much more work, in 1890, he purchased this lot and another one. And so he had two buildings then; one was at 335 and 337, it was kind of a joint building there. And for these two buildings and the two lots he paid \$2800. And again he enlarged his saddlery shop. And needless to say business progressed and in 1910, he erected the new three story building that was then known as the Lindesmith block. And again he enlarged his business to trunks and hardware and leather goods. Now, this three story building had two doors and they were both to the left or to the east of the building. One entered the stairway leading to the second floor offices and they were rented at the time that I knew about it by a Dr. J. C. Temple: I wonder if it was Ben Temple's father.



MILLER: I don't know.

PAYNE: And a lawyer by the name of Mr. A. C. Baker. And they were there for an awfully long time. And then the same stairway went to the third floor. And the third floor was rented originally to the Knights of Columbus for meeting rooms. And then to a group of young athletes who had a club they called the Tusco Club. And then after they went it was rented by the Selfridge School of Dance. This was Gay and Beulah Selfridge, and you could hear the old piano pounding; the kids were tap dancing. Cause these were the days you wanted to get in movies. So Gay and Beulah had their shop up there too at the time.

MILLER: Let's continue.

PAYNE: When my father then came into the business he realized that horses, carriages and things like that were going out of business and they had better look forward to the horseless carriage and he began to get batteries and automobile tire, automobile accessories and automobile blankets and the like of that. And then when they went into just batteries and things like that it was as though we went into a whole new era: so that it was a hardware. And they went into paints and varnishes, shoe findings. And shoe findings means way back then we used to resole our own shoes and everyone did. So we would sell this flat piece that would look like a sole on the size whatever it was and you would buy your piece of leather, we were in leather goods, and sometimes you cut out your own size. But if you had a little more money you could buy the size of leather already cut out.



MILLER: I see, I see.

PAYNE: That was very nice. Then you would have the tacks and everything and you could fix your own shoes. This was a very big business we had. Then we had trunks and handbags, went to bicycles and other automotive accessories and it really began to grow and grow. Of course the times themselves began to grow too. One of the things I found rather interesting was that Jacob Lindesmith who would be my Great Grandfather, my children's Great Great Grandfather and my twin grandsons Great Great Great Grandfather was born in 1834. And at 22 years of age he was not only a harness maker but he was the father of William Stewart Lindesmith who was the eldest of his five children. And he was born in 1856. And William Stewart Lindesmith Sr. at 23 was already a harness maker and he was married and he did have my father, but it was much later because three of his children died. And Jacob was a harness maker at the age of 20 to 22 years, William Stewart Lindesmith Sr. was a harness maker at 20 and William Stewart Lindesmith Jr. was a harness maker in the trade at the age of 21.

MILLER: And William Stewart Lindesmith Jr. then is your father.

PAYNE: Right. And of course we began very early working in the store and I have happy memories in the seventh grade of being able to use the cash register which proved he had a lot of faith in me. I don't know how well founded it was, but he had a lot of faith in me. And then we, when we child-

ren went in, my sister and myself, Adeline Jane, we opened up a toy shop on the second floor. And this really went great for about ten years. Until we could no longer buy toys and things and by then of course I had grown up and left home. But this was nice, we would have anything that made noise and ding dong going and then people would hear it and come up the steps and of course we would nail them and they would never get away.

MILLER: You children had this idea for the toy shop you mean.

PAYNE: Uh huh.

MILLER: And your father had enough faith in you that he let you go ahead and stock it.

PAYNE: Well I think he had enough faith in the people in Alliance really.

MILLER: Toys.

PAYNE: That they would want the toys for the children.

MILLER: Very good idea.

PAYNE: And we didn't have them except at Christmas time so that on Christmas Eve whatever toys were not sold we would take out to the Children's Home. Hundreds of dollars worth of toys and games and everything else.

MILLER: A lovely idea.

PAYNE: Which was another good idea. Now I like to tell stories about my Grandfather Lindesmith because he was probably the gentlest, dearest little man that there ever was.

He would come up in the toy shop and he would see a little boy and little girl ogling something. He'd say, "pretty nice isn't it sonny?" And they would say, "oh yes sir Mr. Lindesmith." He'd say, "put it in your pocket, Merry Christmas." This would happen so often that we didn't make a heck of a lot of money up there but he was an angel, he was just really darling. And he always went on Friday night to Mass and Confession, to Confession not Mass. And time and again in the winter when he was in his 80's and eventually his 90's we would find him gone. And everyone else couldn't even get up the hill and we'd send Bob Bell or we would send John Robinson out to be sure he got home safely. They would return saying it's too slippery (ice) I can't get up the hill. And about 45 minutes later Grandfather would come trotting down the hill, come in and he didn't know it was slippery. He was going to Confession so everything was very nice. And another story I learned from a Mary Arter Lehman; she'd come in the store with her sister who was Helen Arter Lindesmith who was the wife of Jacob Lindesmith another branch in the family. And she brought her son and when they introduced him to Grandfather and he found that this boy's name was the same as his father's name he reached over and got a big flexible flyer sled and he said, "this was for you because your name was Jacob Lindesmith."

MILLER: My goodness.

PAYNE: And Grandfather was very generous. I don't think many people knew this: I didn't till after he was dead.

And people would write me and say it was thanks to your Grand-



father I got through Nursing School. And one from a doctor who said it was thanks to your Grandfather that I am a doctor.

MILLER: My word. Not just toys and things then. But education as well.

PAYNE: That's right. We had one little thing I thought would be interesting historically. He was very interested, well he was always buying things and he was buying land in Cuba and hoping to grow sugar cane on it. And it was when Cuba was just opening and he was working through a priest in Lorain, Ohio and a German couple who were down in Cuba. And we have a letter here that I brought along dated April 8, 1918 in which the wife of the German couple says that her husband was picked up by the police and will be incarcerated for the duration of the war because he was a German citizen prior to coming down there. And I don't think we think about us as arresting the enemy and locking them up. But sure enough she tells in the next letter what his prisoner of war number is and where he's being held, and things like this.

MILLER: Of course this occurred in the Second World War when we incarcerated or somewhat kept under control the Japanese, but I did not know that there was anything done with the Germans. Now we would like to talk a little bit about your Father and your Grandfather who were both very active in the community other than their hardware business. And we had some listings here to see if we can give some of the things that they were participating in, for instance the Knights of Columbus. I suspect both were....

PAYNE: Both of them were members of the Knights of Columbus and they went through the third order.

MILLER: And then they were involved in the Alliance Building and Savings Company.

PAYNE: Grandfather was one of the first officers and began that. They believed in a Savings and Loan, otherwords a Trust Bank.

MILLER: And it mentioned in one of the sources on Alliance history that one of them was on the board 43 years.

PAYNE: That would be Grandfather, William Stewart Lindsmith Sr.

MILLER: The senior. Members in the Chamber of Commerce, that would fall naturally. One of them was the Director of the Red Cross, and also working in the Associated Charities.

PAYNE: That would probably be Grandfather because once Daddy took over the hardware he pretty much ran it and Grandfather had more time for these things like as I said making purchases in Cuba.

MILLER: Yes. Associated Charities I suspect was an early predecessor of the United Way Organization.

PAYNE: I would imagine. I know they worked very closely, with the Salvation Army.

MILLER: I thought it was interesting and apropos that one of them was on the first book committee for the Library which at that time would have been the Carnegie Library in 1904.

PAYNE: And that would have been William Stewart Lindesmith Sr. Minnie or Mary B. and there was Willie who was William

MILLER: Your Grandfather.

PAYNE: However, all of them... And my Aunt who was the sister of my Father were avid readers. And we have fond memories of my parents sitting in the living room of our home night after night not televising but reading.

MILLER: Reading. Yes. So appropriate, he should have been on the book committee. Then we had another listing also for the hospital building commission. This would have been the hospital building, that was going on in 1914.

PAYNE: And again I would imagine that it could be either or. By 1910 my father pretty well began to come into his own.

MILLER: And started being active.

PAYNE: I don't know. They were very humble men. And I don't think I ever learned anything about them until after they were gone and people would come up and tell me these things. Then I wished I would of had had opportunities, but I don't think they would have told me anything anyway.

MILLER: You know I didn't mention this before but I did find a listing in the directory of a Miss Minnie Lindesmith. Do you know who that was?

PAYNE: There was Aunt Minnie; she was my Father's Aunt. There was, oh I wish I could give you the names right now but I can't. There were five children of my grandfather. In that family. Jacob had five children, and there was



Daniel and there was Francis J. (died in 1898) and there was Minnie or Mary B. and there was Willie who was William Stewart, also John E. (died in 1894). And I can't remember right now, remember the other one. But they lived one block east of the Catholic Church, what street would that be? That's not Linden. The Catholic, Saint Joseph's Church is on Linden is it?

MILLER: Yes, I believe so.

PAYNE: Okay then they would have lived in a brick house that is owned by a doctor now one block down.

MILLER: Freedom?

PAYNE: Freedom Street alright.

MILLER: One block east of Linden we know this is, we can check it.

PAYNE: Southeast corner. And that was Dan and Minnie, and they were the brother and sister of my grandfather.

It might be interesting too, that on Linden Ave., you came down from the Church and directly behind the hardware was my father's home when he was a child. And they had a little barn behind there and he had a pony and a buggy, which was

the only means of transportation. And then Grandpa could just walk across the alley and go to the harness shop and then he would go home for lunch. And it used to be very humiliating for my mother when she of fine breeding was being courted by my father and he would come by in a pony cart. And she had a beautiful, five hands high coal black

horse that my grandfather Clifford Norris would put coal oil on to make him shine.

MILLER: Oh my. Protestants. But my sister and I were raised

PAYNE: And then this poor moth eaten little pony and cart would come by because my Dad just wanted to pass the house where she lived. She might be there on the porch, or something. She met him in a hardware incidently.

MILLER: Oh did she? as born to a Catholic man and a Prot-

PAYNE: She came in to look for a saddle for her horse and she was about 15 and there was this handsome 21 year old young man. And it was love at first sight. And in those days Catholics didn't marry Christian Church people. And so they courted for eight years while the grandparents sent her to New York to try and find some nice man and sent her hither and yon. Each time she came back and Daddy was there with his boisterous Knights of Columbus friends boozing it up. And he won out and finally everyone gave up and they were married. But they couldn't be married in the church in those days. They had to go over to the Parish House and Rev. Banks married them.

MILLER: It was something for their marriage just to be accepted though. I mean in spite of the fact they had to....

PAYNE: They were not accepted.

MILLER: No. we going to do with our friends; we were putting

PAYNE: No. He had his friends with the Christopher Columbus and with the Knights of Columbus and with the men who worked downtown. And she seemed to have a lot of friends with the doctors and lawyers.

MILLER: And the Protestant groups then.

PANYE: And the Protestants. But my sister and I were raised Catholic. Thank God for little favors.

MILLER: Now we have; there was another marriage of the Protestant and Catholic faith in your family was there not?

PAYNE: That was the father of the Rev. Eli Washington Lindesmith. And he was born to a Catholic man and a Protestant mother and she promised to bring all the children up Catholic, and then her husband died. And it's to her ever lovin' grace that she decided that she would keep the promise and brought him up and the other children Catholic and he became a priest and was known all over as the Wilderness Priest.

MILLER: And I think that we have some indication that he was possibly the first Catholic Priest assigned to Alliance.

PAYNE: Yes.

MILLER: And I think the dates for that are 1868 to 1872, that he was here.

PAYNE: Yes, in fact getting on to this Lindnorwood bit; he purchased the land for the Catholic cemetery. Well he didn't purchase it, he got the congregation of the Saint Joseph's Church to purchase it. He was the idea behind it for a Catholic cemetery because they had a Christian cemetery and what were we going to do with our friends; we were putting them in the back yards. And that was what everybody did you know bury in backyards. You had a little corner, your own little acreage where you buried people. So he bought this land off of what is now route 62.



MILLER: Which would be State Street in Alliance.

PAYNE: Which would be State Street. It's a five acre tract and this was the Saint Joseph Catholic Cemetery. Now we're not sure and I'd rather someone looked it up because here again this is hearsay that it was probably at that time in 1868 that my grandfather went out and purchased all the land that is now the Lindesmith land that is adjoining and abutting and surrounding the Catholic Cemetery from State Street all the way back to the Purcell home. See, Mr. Robert Purcell had been working with architects for a multi-level house for sometime. And he needed a hillside. And he couldn't find one and we happened to have the hillside. And the architects were Roller, Scott and Zimboli and they wanted to make a French Norman home. They wanted it to be a villa or chateau, not a castle where a king and his entourage would live but an elegant home for a mistress. And in a wooded area where his, the nobleman's, comings and goings wouldn't be quite so observed. So William Stewart Lindesmith, my father, who owned the land then, sold him a certian acreage I think it was about that time eight acres. And it was on this that he built the French Norman home. But we had the first right to purchase it when the Purcells should decide to sell. And in 1939 as you know they did sell and we purchased it in the spring of 1939. Now this is a French Norman home and it was deliberatley made to look old. It is brick and it was paitned so that it looked like the white wash had jolly well washed off over the centuries. It has very steep roofs because in Normandy they have a lot of snow and if you have anything else (except a steep roof)

you're going to have a nice cave in. You may not know this Mr. Rockhill, but most of these slates are between 12 and 16 pounds each. So think what weight the roof is holding.

MILLER: Yes, the weight.

PAYNE: There they had a three car garage, which was attached to the house by a porte cochere. And a porte cochere being an entrance to a court yard sort of thing. The porte cochere had a door on either side, one going in to the fifth level of the house and the other going into a three car garage. What made this rather interesting was, the three car garage had a second story which Mr. Purcell had totally sound proofed. So if you would go in there and close the door and yell it came right back to you, hit you in the ear drums like. And it was here that he worked on his airplane engines. Because he was one of the original aviators and you know they didn't have a hanger in those days. In fact he was known to have taken off on some of the property going north toward State Road and he was known to have landed on the Country Club late at night. And you know he would come in and have breakfast and have to take off again before people got going around. But this was where he worked on the engines and the noise then didn't carry back into the rest of the house. The garage is now a beautiful bachelor quarters that was made this way by Mr. Merrick Lewis who purchased the house from us. And we'd like to mention here that that is probably the nicest job of paneling in there. He had black walnut tongue in groove paneling. He has a sauna and a bathroom. One door of his bachelor's quarters goes



into the sixth level of the house or the ballroom. And then he has a winding stairway going down into the garage so that if he wants to get out of his car and just zap right upstairs he can do it. If you would then go to this porte cochere into the fifth level you would be looking down into a two story cathedral living room. And it had as it's focal point a fireplace. It's interesting because you can enjoy the fireplace from two sides. There are love seats on either side, the east and west side. But from the west side you can look right into the flames and get the warmth. And then of course in the front you have the area where the heat can go out to heat the entire house. There are two huge carvings of Vikings or Norsemen on either side holding up the beam of this fireplace. And each one was hand carved from a solid oak tree in Europe, I don't know where, and brought back and put up there. There's just a little bit of coloring on them. They are Norsemen but we're not certain who they represent because we figured Normandy was invaded by the Norsemen or the Danes in 1011 thereabouts so one of the men could be Rollo the first Duke of Normandy. And then the other one could be King Charles the Third of France. That's the fellow with the crown maybe. Because he gave the Norsemen Normandy as his Duchy and he made him then a nobleman. Or we figure another thing it might be, it could be William Duke of Normandy who was better known as William the Conqueror who in 1066; you know the old Magna Charta time, defeated the Anglo Saxon King Harold. And so that could be King Harold and the Duke of Normandy. Because at that time remember the Norsemen had



come into France and they took on the French language and the French religion and they really became Frenchmen. And so when the time came to invade England then these French Normans went over into England and this is when they introduced the Norman architecture and the French language to England.

MILLER: And these are quite sizable characters that hold up this beam.

PAYNE: We figure oh, seven or seven and a half feet high. I wouldn't want to have any idea guessing what the weight of them would be.

MILLER: You mentioned that your house now, we had talked about the seventh level and different, multi levels. Can you explain how many levels were there in the whole house?

PAYNE: Yes, it was a multi level house, it had seven levels. That's why they needed the hillside in which to put it. Now the whole house was built around an Artesian well which was drilled 185 feet deep. And from this, like rungs of a wheel went off the various rooms. Down in the far basement, which would be level one, was the utility area for the furnace and washer and things. Then level two would be the recreation room and fireplace which opened out into the sunken garden which had it's own little lily pond and all. And then level three would be the dining room, the kitchen, the butler's pantry and the servants quarters which was a bedroom, bathroom, livingroom and a porch going outside. So if you notice most of these levels do go right out onto some part of the land. And to get light into the level, the dining room and kitchen and the basement level they had two-story wells which allows

light to go down there. Let's see that's one, two, three. Okay the fourth level would be the livingroom going north south and it is a two story. The fifth level would be the east and west wings. Would be four bedrooms each of which had bathrooms joining them. One was a blue room that had a bathroom all in blue tile. One was a rose room and everything was rose, one was green and one was black. Then the sixth level would be the ballroom and the secret room. And the seventh would be another attic, up higher so that there were the seven floors.

MILLER: And the house had a tower.

PAYNE: It had a tower and the top two stories of the tower were library. And here again the support for the library had a table around it for study with lights and then they had four or five windows. Every room in the house had loads of light coming in because the Norman idea was if you don't have light inside you've got to get it from outside. So they had many windows to let in the light. In our house we're very proud of the fact that many of the large beams those that hold up the two story livingroom and the big ones in the stairway were taken from the Arter-Nicholes Warehouse from Hanoverton, Ohio, when it was destroyed. It was the first seven story building in the state of Ohio, that was built on the Sandy Beaver Canal. And when it was no longer in use and the railroads had taken away all the business of the canal it fell into disrepair; my Father was instrumental in getting these beams for the people that were building Mr. Purcell's house. And we think this is interesting because the



it was a seven story warehouse and this was a seven level house. Also it was Arter-Nicholes Warehouse and my mother Marie Norris Lindesmith was an Arter, (her mother was Minnie Jane Arter). If you were interested in that two story living room there were three doors opening on to the terrace there and on to a balcony that would over look the sunken garden. And we had there hand creweled lined draperies that were made in Europe and the scenes depicted were Crusaders and these at the time they were made were made by the W. and J. Sloane Co. of New York, at least they put the business out to the Europeans. And they were valued at that time at a thousand dollars each for the photographic clubs and the art groups and the garden clubs because mother had flowers all over the place. And I remember one in particular party she had with the garden club where she had a woman harpist in a beautiful long dress and she gave a concert in the sunken garden and we had about three hundred people there that day. And this means then that somewhere in the area too because you had photographic clubs I think you mentioned and people who would frequently request to come in and photograph and I think this that somewhere in the Alliance area exists a lot of paintings and photographs of this house. And it has a lot of iron work. And the iron work was installed by the Stafford Company of Canton, Ohio. And there is a wall, a very unique brick design. And these bricks were from the Alliance Brick Company right here and all the walls there, the woodwork in them is either mahogany or oak either brought in or again from this warehouse down there. The people who did the woodwork in there, it was the J. T. Weybrecht and sons Co. We'd use the swimming pool and the recreation, ping pong.



And to give the feeling of age in all of this woodwork, the men who working there would take chains and would strike it making depressions in it to make it look old.

MILLER: Right. Which we do with some furniture today and we call it distressed wood to make it look antique.

PAYNE: The main stairway goes around the well from the very first level right up to the fifth level in winding stairs and then after that it's a little bit different. When Mother and Daddy lived there they were awfully good in letting as many people enjoy it as could. And they would have parties for the photographic clubs and the art groups and the garden clubs because mother had flowers all over the place. And I remember one in particular party she had with the garden club where she had a woman harpist in a beautiful long dress and she gave a concert in the sunken garden and we had about three hundred people there that day.

MILLER: And this means then that somewhere in the area too because you had photographic clubs I think you mentioned and people who would frequently request to come in and photograph and paint this, that somewhere in the Alliance area exists a lot of paintings and photographs of this house.

PAYNE: Right. Right.

MILLER: Which we would love to see.

PAYNE: If some of them would come forward, yes, I wish you could see them. And I know that when I was in college we made a lot of use of them because I was in Delta Delta Delta. I would have rush parties there and loads of kids would come in. We'd use the swimming pool and the recreation, ping pong.

MILLER: And while you're on the subject of college we should spell out what college that is.

PAYNE: This is Mount Union College.

MILLER: Mount Union. And you were not the only Lindesmith to attend there were you? Wasn't there another one graduated?

PAYNE: Not to my knowledge. My mother went there and took a few courses because she was a school teacher but she would be there under the name of Norris.

MILLER: I see. But she did attend Mount Union? Although she didn't graduate.

PAYNE: Right.

MILLER: Alright. And I think we should mention that during your college career not only your sorority activities but that fact that you were a May Queen one year.

PAYNE: I told you the story behind that.

MILLER: Well the credit is still given where credit is due.

PAYNE: Well I would like to tell you something about the kitchen before we stop because here again this kitchen on two sides is below ground level. And in the kitchen was installed the first G.E. oven privately owned in the home. And it is all yellow tile, has two ovens and four burners. Prior to this they had put them in professional places, in hotels and the like. But this was the first one that was ever installed in a private home. And it does have very nice tile in it. And incidently down in the....

MILLER: Let's go on and talk some more about the kitchen now. This was by G.E. you mean a General Electric built in



kitchen set.

PAYNE: Yes.

MILLER: And this would be the first time it had ever been installed in a home.

PAYNE: Just remember that up until then it was pretty much gas stoves. And electric was coming in but it wasn't in the homes yet. They came sometime after 1959, the G.E. people wanted to run a story on it. And they came with their photographers and their writers and Mother said it would be fine if they did it and please give her the article and they said thank you very much and left and we never saw the article. But somewhere G.E. has a marvelous article with color pictures of that kitchen stove.

MILLER: Of that kitchen.

PAYNE: Well one thing that kind of made our house pretty was that my great Uncle J.C. Arter was a fine artist. And we had many of his paintings hanging around. One in the blue guest room in the west wing was a portrait of my Aunt, great Aunt, Kitty Arter Newman. And her eyes would follow you anywhere that you would go. It was very interesting. And then up in the ballroom we had a very valuable painting, about eleven feet high, of Pope Pius X. And J.C. Arter was the first American to be privileged to have an audience and paint the Pope live as a portrait. This painting is now hanging in the Pius X choir room in Birmingham, Michigan in the Holy Name Catholic Church. So we're glad that it found a good home. My uncle has many of the other very fine paintings that were



around here. Incidentally the Pope was so pleased with the painting because he said all the other ones he had made looked like he was a great white ghost with his wings out ready to take off. He said that it was so lovely that on the reproductions in his handwriting he wrote: "May the most high God grant you his ever favor and blessing" and he signed it Pope Pius X. And now you know he is Saint Pius X.

MILLER: A chateau seems an appropriate name.  
MILLER: He's been canonized by the Church.

PAYNE: A chateau.

PAYNE: Right.

MILLER: Seems like a perfect name, yes. And it picks up

MILLER: It should be pointed out that as we're sitting here taping with Mrs. Payne we have an audience for our tape and we are talking also to Mr. Jack Rockhill, who is the current owner of the house. Because the house does still stand in Alliance. And Mr. Rockhill has added some information.

Would you tell us how much square feet is contained in this house?

ROCKHILL: According to the engineers who inspected it, 10,200 square foot of living space.

MILLER: That's quite a bit of square footage. And did we exactly spell out the name of the house?

PAYNE: We call it Lindnorwood.

MILLER: Lind Nor Wood.

PAYNE: Lind for Lindesmith, Nor for Norris and it was in a wooded area. What do you call it now?

ROCKHILL: We don't really call it anything.

PAYNE: Call it Lindnorwood, that's it's name.

ROCKHILL: It's always referred to as the Lindesmith mansion.

PAYNE: But I never think of it as a mansion, it's too cozy and too comfortable and too warm and too personal. And a mansion kind of gives me the idea of something big and cold and dark. And I think it's such a lovely and warm exciting, light house.

MILLER: A chateau seems an appropriate name.

PAYNE: A chateau.

MILLER: Seems like a perfect name, yes. And it picks up the French background again the French Norman feeling of it. Yes.

PAYNE: This is not a cold building, it is a beautiful building.

MILLER: So we can go through all the owners because the first being, it was Robert Purcell?

PAYNE: Yes, Robert Purcell.

MILLER: Then the Lindesmiths.

PAYNE: William Stewart Lindesmith.

MILLER: Then it was sold by the Lindesmiths to Merrick Lewis and currently then owned by Jack Rockhill. And there's the whole history of the house in a nutshell.

PAYNE: We were once told and this would be about 1942 that to build that house then it would cost about \$750,000. So I don't know what it would cost now. And we were offered \$100,000.00 for it at one time by a racketeer from Youngstown who wanted to make it a nightclub and gambling place. And

my father said first, "no way would it ever be used like that." You know it's a house full of love and faith and hope and he said secondly, "If you really love something and want it no amount of money can buy it."

MILLER: That's true.

PAYNE: And he just wanted it. He liked to hear the frogs croak and the birds sing and we encouraged the pheasants. You probably see hundreds of pheasants. Because we would cut down branches and cleaned up brush and make nests for them to come in and live in the winter and throw out corn and feed all them. So we encouraged all the little animals. Of course you can kill yourself in the spring because the ground moles dig it up and your ankles get turned.

MILLER: Oh yes. It would be of interest too to know, how much land is currently connected with the house?

ROCKHILL: Three and one quarter acres.

MILLER: And you had mentioned at one time it was eight? About eight acres.

PAYNE: Oh yes. Well see the land that we bought was at least eighty five acres. The land that my father owned.

MILLER: Yes.

PAYNE: So you can see that this was just a very small corner of it. And when we were living there we had an awful lot of the land under crops, under shares. We didn't personally do it but we would be on shares with someone else who had equipment to plow it and fix it up. So it was a very hard working farm when we lived there. We also had



a barn out there. I don't know whether you knew or not, we had horses.

ROCKHILL: I heard about the barn. That was close to the parking area wasn't it?

PAYNE: Right. And we had two horses out there. Beautiful big sorrel we called Cleopatra. She was a very large horse. And then we had the Rock of Lindnorwood. And I called him Rocky. He was five gaited, Bay Gelding, beautiful horse. In fact there were rumors around all the time about people saying, "well I heard there was a hrose in that house." Well he didn't go in the house but he was so gentle and so loving that we never put a halter on him. And when we would bring him over to the back side of the porch to get his drink of water he would just walk over there on his own and turn around and go back, except that mother often would call him to the back door to give him sugar and he would clomp clomp across the cement back porch and then turn around and go back out.

MILLER: Sounds like he would have been gentle enough that you could have invited him in.

PAYNE: We had one funny thing happen, we had a big pit bull, and he was a wonderful hunter. And though we had "no hunting" signs posted all over the place you couldn't keep the hunters off. And just about annually he would come back with a big pheasant in his mouth that someone had shot. He was retrieving.

MILLER: Yes.

PAYNE: And some man would come rushing around, "your dog has my pheasant." And we would say, "you are on our property."

MILLER: And finders keepers any way.

PAYNE: And we had pheasant dinner.

MILLER: And did we mention when we were talking about the beginning of the house that it is a house of renown. It has won an award.

PAYNE: An international award for architecture in the year it was built and unfortunately I can't tell you that year. I don't think we mentioned it had a swimming pool too.

MILLER: No that's true. We didn't mention it.

PAYNE: That's right. And it was way back when the only way they could keep the water clean was by throwing in chlorine. They didn't have filtration systems at that time. But it was a very large swimming pool. And to get to it you went down three, I suppose you'd call them levels or grades of terreaced grass to get down to this area.

MILLER: So it was not only a lovely house but a beautiful setting for the house, as well.

PAYNE: Well lived in.

MILLER: Now have we just about covered the whole story do you think? Anything else, hardware?

PAYNE: Did I tell you about all the flowers that my mother planted because she was in the garden club. Thousands of daffodil and crocus bulbs and the woods are full of filac and dogwood, azaleas and rhododendron. Although a lot of them have been vandalized and taken of course.

MILLER: You know this is really going to change the sub-

ject but I think we might want to mention when the Lindesmith Hardware was a harness shop, because this is how it had begun, and was listed in the early city directories, say around 1890, it was listed as a harness shop. You had mentioned that at one time there was a fellow who had worked there who was quite a famous harness maker.

PAYNE: Yes, Steve Leictchoft. And he was a harness maker to the King of Austria. And he very proudly had hung in his harness shop area a picture of an eight-team harness along with the coach of the King of Austria. And it appeared to be black and as he said the silver in there was silver not nickle.

MILLER: Pure silver.

PAYNE: And that means of course it was a sixteen horse team when we would have the eight sets for it. And my father was a harness maker and my grandfather was a harness maker and in the early years of McCasky Register they made the covers for McCasky Register right down there.

MILLER: They were made out of leather?

PAYNE: They were made out of leather, yes.

MILLER: And did we have on the tape too, yes we had about building the balls from the rubber ball with the twine and then the leather cover going on that. Yes. When these harnesses were made were they made in the building?

PAYNE: Yes.

MILLER: They did their work there. And did you mention at one time that they sometimes would spread them out on the floor.



PAYNE: Well you would have to spread them out on the floor to see that you had all of your pieces in their proper place. And all the fittings. And see they made everything really even right down to the fly chasers that would go on the backs of the horses. Then they made purses, they made wallets, just about anything that was made out of leather.

MILLER: And saddles too you mentioned.

PAYNE: They made side saddles. Yes. Now that I can not explain because I know that they had medal supports so that they would probably have to have a certain amount sent in, but yes they did. And I had a side saddle up until a couple of years ago and like a fool I gave it to a rummage sale and sold it for \$1.50.

MILLER: Oh my. So you suppose only side saddles? Was that all they made?

PAYNE: By the time I was there everything was English saddle and of course the kind of saddles you would use for polo. And of course then in the 37's and 35's, Ray Ash, Merrick Lewis Sr. and all those fellows were polo happy. And this was really a great time for us but we did not make a thing then, we repaired them.

MILLER: I see. But that would have been very necessary at that time.

PAYNE: Uncle Dan, my Grandfather Lindesmith's brother, also knew something about harnesses and he used to help. And then we had a fellow called Charlie Lock. He was a harness maker too.

MILLER: Then it would have been very far sighted of your father to realize that the horse was being replaced by the horseless carriage and begin to stock parts for that.

PAYNE: Yes.

MILLER: Yes. I think it's been a facinating story. We appreciate you taking time to do the tape with us.

PAYNE: Thank you very much. I enjoyed being here.

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