

**Interview with Delia Cornell**

**Interviewed by Helen Thompson for the Heritage Education Commission**

**Interviewed on July 10, 1985**

**Delia Cornell - DL**

**Helen Thompson - HT**

**Lois Selberg, Cornell daughter - LS**

**HT: This interview is with Mrs. Delia Cornell, a homemaker living temporarily at Moorhead Manor, but the farm home is in Rustad, Minnesota. Mrs. Cornell has lived in this area since 1914, and this interview is being held at Moorhead State University's recording studio on July 10, 1985. The interviewer is Helen Thompson representing the Heritage Education Commission.**

**All right, now--a few questions. I'll begin asking you some questions about your childhood. As a child, where did you live, Mrs. Cornell?**

**DC: I lived at Mazeppa, Minnesota; that's in southern Minnesota. It's about 80 miles from Minneapolis. And my father died with I was a year-and-a-half old and my mother moved to Mazeppa, so I was raised there.**

**HT: And where did you go to school, then?**

**DC: Well, I went to school in Mazeppa, and then I had a sister that lived down in southern Minnesota and they told me to come down there and finish high school; so I went to high school in Welcome, Minnesota, and graduated from high school, you know.**

**HT: And then where did you take your training before you began teaching?**

**DC: Well, I went right from high school--they needed a teacher--and [?] asked me if I'd teach. I wrote to the State Department, and the one that was the head man there had been my teacher in Sherburn, Minnesota, and he said, "We'll give you a life certificate," and they sent it to me.**

**LS: One thing you might remember, Mama, too, is that she taught a couple years when she only had two years of high school, didn't you?**

**DC: Yes, I taught two years, and then I went back to school.**

**HT: Isn't that interesting?**

**DC:** I thought I had two years, but the Superintendent, after asking me some questions and one thing and another, he said, "You can finish in one year," and I finished. [Laughter]

**HT:** And you taught, then, in a country school?

**DC:** Yes, I always taught in a country school.

**HT:** And all eight grades.

**DC:** Oh, yes; sometimes I had part of the classes. Of course, it was individual. Maybe I'd have one in the eighth grade.

**HT:** That was tough teaching.

**DC:** Well, no, I enjoyed it.

**HT:** I'm sure you did.

**DC:** I guess that was the best thing I could do. I liked it.

**HT:** And then you came to this area and began teaching in 1914.

**DC:** Yes, I had a sister living up here, I think. And then I thought I was going to teach in Felton, I think, but they didn't have a vacancy; so they told me they had a vacancy at Rustad and I went to Rustad and I taught two years and then got married. [Laughter]

**HT:** Well, great! Okay, now, going back a little bit. Could you describe a typical day in your home as you remember it as a child?

**DC:** Yes. My mother was a widow, but we had our own home; and I lived right beside of the river and I spent lots of time either on the river or around it. I had a very nice childhood. I was always very happy and then we went to school and had friends. My mother was a very--oh, religious--woman; and she insisted that I go to Sunday School and like that. She was careful about what friends--that my friends came from good families and like that.

**HT:** Did you have brothers and sisters?

**DC:** Yes, I was the youngest one of eight children; but they were all away; there weren't any of them there.

**LS:** Eight that lived; there were actually fourteen births, but a lot of them died.

**DC:** My mother had 15 births, but only eight had grown. They counted every birth whether it was a . . .

**HT: Yeah, I think in those years there were many children that died at a very young age.**

**DC: Yes, quite a few died at birth. I think my mother had some that died at birth.**

**HT: Did you live on a farm, then, as a child?**

**DC: No, my father died when I was 18 months old, and my mother bought a small house in town; and that was Mazeppa, Minnesota.**

**HT: What holidays were especially important to you as a child?**

**DC: Well, we always celebrated the Fourth of July; and, of course, we always kept Christmas.**

**LS: Did you have Christmas trees when you were little?**

**DC: Yeah, we always had a Christmas tree.**

**LS: Oh, you did have a tree?**

**DC: Yeah, as I remember. Of course, that's a long time ago.**

**HT: Well, I'm sure you would remember. Were birthdays an important?**

**DC: Yes, I can remember my twelfth birthday; that was the most important day in my life. My mother had made a real nice meal and invited all my friends, and it was a surprise; and I was thrilled. And I always have remembered it.**

**HT: Oh, that's great.**

**LS: Mama, how old were you when President McKinley was assassinated? Do you know?**

**DC: When McKinley?**

**LS: What do you remember about that?**

**DC: Of course, I remember, but I can't say--**

**LS: You were about nine. You must have been about nine years old.**

**DC: I was nine or ten years old.**

**LS: And do you remember about the poem?**

**DC: About what?**

**LS: The poem about President McKinley.**

**DC: Oh, yes, a neighbor wrote a poem; he thought he was smarter than he was [laughter], and he wrote this long poem and I had that for a long time because it was so funny. Did I ever tell you any of it?**

**LS: Yes, it starts out with Leon Shellgosh [spelling].**

**DC: The assassin.**

**LS: Yes.**

**DC: With all faults, without, within;**

**And he killed President McKinley.**

**Oh, how dreadful was the din. [Laughter]**

**HT: Isn't that something! Oh, dear.**

**Now, could you share a little bit of what one day of your life was like when you were a homemaker?**

**DC: When I was a homemaker?**

**HT: Yes, after you were married.**

**DC: Oh, yes. Well, we lived on a farm and I never did any outdoor chores, but we kept a good home and we always were ready for company for we had lots of company.**

**HT: That's great.**

**DC: And that's about all, I guess.**

**HT: When the children were small, they kept you busy just taking care of--When your children were small, I imagine that kept you very busy.**

**DC: Yes, that kept me at home; and I never wanted to have a babysitter or we called them a hired girl then to leave alone with my children because sometimes I oversaw one being quite mean to little ones. So I watched them. I always had my eye on them.**

**HT: Very good. How many children did you have?**

**DC: Well, five, yes.**

**HT: A good family.**

**LS: All girls.**

**HT: All girls. Goodness sakes. So when you went anywhere, then, the kids always went with you, right? When you went anywhere, you always had to take your children with you, then.**

**DC: I'd probably take the little one.**

**HT: Oh, yeah.**

**DC: My oldest girl, then she was 10 years old when [?] was born, so I know I had company that wanted me to go to town with them, but they wanted all the children to stay home and I said I couldn't go if I couldn't take the baby because I wouldn't leave her with a 10-year-old girl. And so I mostly had my children with me.**

**HT: Oh, I know that people did in those days. They always had their little ones along.**

**Well, let's see. Did you have any time at all for volunteer activities when you were on the farm?**

**DC: Oh, yes, we had the Homemakers, and I don't know if we had another church circle; and I always furnished food. We always had lunch.**

**HT: There was always plenty of food, wasn't there? Yes.**

**LS: Remember 4-H Club, Mama.**

**DC: Well, yes, I was head of the 4-H Club for, I don't know just how long. The 4-H Club, we had meetings and did some work to show at the County Fair and things like that.**

**LS: Do you remember your trip, then, that you got? Do you remember your trip that you got for being a 4-H Club leader? Your trip to the State Fair.**

**DC: Oh, yes, they sent me to the State Fair and they were so hard, you know, they paid all my expenses; and I was thrilled to death.**

**LS: About 1937 or 8, I think.**

**DC: And I had a lovely time.**

**HT: Very good.**

**Well, let's see. Did you have any hobbies?**

**DC: Well, let's see.**

**HT: You did handwork?**

**DC: I never did much handwork.**

**HT: You didn't. Well, maybe--**

**LS: You had flowers in the summer.**

**HT: You had flowers. You kept flowers? You liked to garden?**

**DC: Oh, yes, yes. We always had a garden, and then I had flowers around my house.**

**HT: Very good. So you didn't do outside work except, I suppose, you took care of the garden, though--you and your kids.**

**DC: Well, I'd do some weeding by hand; but my husband cultivated it with the cultivator.**

**HT: Very good.**

**Well, maybe this should come now if I can remember to go back to some of these. You produced, then, a lot of your own food.**

**DC: Oh, yes, because we had a garden; and, of course, we always had our own potatoes and tomatoes and cucumbers, I can remember because I always made the pickles.**

**HT: You canned a lot of your food, then, did you?**

**DC: Yes, I did canning--what do you call it when we boil them 3 hours.**

**HT: Hot pack.**

**DC: Yes, and I canned quite a lot of meat. I canned enough meat so that, well, we had meat right along and especially if we were a little careful of the meat, then if I had company I could always go down in the basement and get a jar of meat.**

**HT: How nice.**

**DC: That was handy, too.**

**HT: Did you have a pressure cooker in later--**

**DC: No, I never had a pressure cooker.**

**HT: You never got a pressure cooker. And you didn't have any trouble?**

**DC:** You know, I used the boiler, a regular boiler, and I had something on the bottom so the jars wouldn't sit on the--

**HT:** Yeah, they had to be up a little.

**DC:** Yeah, they had to have something between it and I canned a lot of meat that way. So we had meat down cellar all the time.

**HT:** And you didn't have trouble with food spoilage or anything?

**DC:** I had one jar of all the meat I canned in all those years--I had one jar that was spoiled; and then I discovered that the fruit jar had a little crack in the bottom and I hadn't noticed that and I'd canned in it.

**HT:** I think nowadays people would really think it was bad news if we canned our food that way; we have to use pressure cookers. [Laughter]

**DC:** But I never had any trouble.

**HT:** Oh, good. Do you remember when you got your first refrigerator?

**DC:** Yes, I believe I do.

**HT:** That was nice, wasn't it?

**DC:** That was wonderful.

**HT:** Yeah.

**DC:** And who did we have--how did we get it? I can't remember just how--somebody wanted to sell, they were moving and wanted to sell their refrigerator. And as hard up as we were, we bought it anyhow.

**HT:** What do you remember about grocery shopping?

**DC:** Well, we had a small town; well, it was only about a half a mile and they kept all the--Kirchhorn was the name of the man that kept the store; and I could send the kids over there and we did a lot of trading. Of course, we went to Moorhead when he had time. I never learned to drive.

**HT:** You didn't!

**DC:** I never learned and I think that was--I always feel kind of ashamed of that; my husband had a car before we were ever married.

**HT:** Oh, did he? Oh sure, yes.

**LS:** She started to learn. Didn't you start to learn and then you went in the ditch.

**DC:** Well, I started to learn and I had an accident and a scare; but he was always willing for me--and I could have driven to the field, you know--learned that way or practiced that way. But I don't know--well, of course, I was busy; I had five children and then we always had a hired man.

**HT:** Well, good, I was wondering--yeah. Did you have any other help at home in the house? Did you ever have like a hired girl?

**DC:** Oh, yes, I always had a hired girl when it was busy times.

**HT:** During harvest and--

**DC:** It was too much for me alone, of course. And, of course, when we had children, I always had a girl for quite a while afterwards.

**HT:** Well, that's great.

Did you have ever an extended family living with you like your mother or sisters?

**DC:** Well, my mother came and stayed with me a year, and my children were babies then; and I enjoyed having her and she helped me.

**HT:** Did you children have any responsibility at home? Did they have to help with things?

**DC:** Oh, they pulled weeds. They had to pull mustard [laughter] which they didn't like. Oh, they had to go and get the cows out in the pasture, and I guess all my children could milk; I think even Lois [?] could milk. And I never learnt to milk. [Laughter]

**HT:** I think your husband was fine; that's the way my father was with Mom; she didn't do any of those things.

**LS:** You know, yes, very lucky. But I think it was interesting that Mother always said that my father's mother, her mother-in-law, had said, "Don't learn to milk" when they were married--"Don't learn to milk; then you can't" because it is too hard.

**DC:** If I could have milked, I would have had to milk, especially during thrashing and times like that; well, I couldn't milk so they had to get a man.

**HT:** I think you were very wise. [Laughter] Very wise.

Okay. Now, let's see. What was your source of water when you first started homemaking? Did you have a well?

**DC:** We had a well, yes, right not too far from the house.



**HT:** So you carried water into the house for use.

**DC:** So we carried the water into the house, yes. And then it wasn't too long until the well didn't give as much water--of course, we had stock--and so they dug a well out in the field and then they piped that into the house; so I had water in the house fairly early.

**LS:** They piped that into the barn but not into the house. Didn't have water in the house until I moved back from California. Didn't have water in the house until 1960.

**DC:** We had water for the stock.

**LS:** For the stock, but not in the house.

**DC:** Oh, well, okay. Well, but after a while, they put it in. But I got along fine.

**HT:** Well, when you're used to it; but it was kind of nice to have it in the house, wasn't it? And all the other things that you could have.

**DC:** Well, it was wonderful, of course.

**HT:** Well, sometimes those things get left. [Laughter]

**DC:** Well, it takes time.

**HT:** Well, of course it does; and it takes money.

Now, during the Depression, do you remember any particular problems during the Depression?

**DC:** Well, I always said that we didn't notice the Depression. We didn't have a bunch of debts to have to worry about; and we got along just fine. But my husband, of course, worked in the--we always called it "up at the office," but what was the name of that place?

**LS:** Well, it was the original Triple A; see it was with the Roosevelt program--the Soil Conservation Office--he worked there 28 years.

**DC:** He worked there for pret-near 30 years. Of course, that helped a little.

**LS:** Would you say we were poor at all or not? Would you say you were poor during the Depression? Times were hard?

**DC:** No, we weren't.

**HT:** You mean you had plenty of money?

**DC:** Well, we had enough for what we needed. But we didn't need anything. We were pretty careful what we needed.

**HT:** I bet you were.

**DC:** And I was always bound to send the kids to school, so I was careful in that we'd get money ahead for that.

**HT:** Now, did your children attend when they got to high school? Was there a school out there?

**DC:** There was a school, you know, at Rustad; but when they were--I think the older girls, not Lois, but I had the older children, you know--and they went 2 years in Rustad. They had a teacher that taught some--

**LS:** Three years, actually--three years, all except the senior year. They could take from one teacher for all the high school grades.

**HT:** Oh, my. I kind of remember that--for three years. And then where did you go for your last year?

**DC:** To Moorhead.

**HT:** To Moorhead, okay, that's what I kind of remember.

**LS:** Then, that would be about 19--must have been in the 30s they cut out the high school at Rustad; so they could either go to Comstock or Moorhead; but my dad wanted us to go to Moorhead so we had to live in town. We had to have an apartment; they had no bus service.

**DC:** Oh, yes, they'd give us \$5 a month if we'd send our children to Comstock; but dad said no; we'd send them to Moorhead.

**HT:** Some of you people must have been in high school when I was there.

**LS:** Oh, we were in high school forever. My sister graduated--my oldest sister graduated in '36 and my youngest sister graduated in '40--.

**HT:** I graduated in '36.

**LS:** Oh, you did, eh?

**HT:** So that's why the name, and I was trying to--.

**LS:** My older sister, Miriam Cornell, graduated. She was only there one year, from Moorhead High. And my sister, Dorothy. They had both gone three years to Rustad--

everybody did; and they went to either Comstock or Moorhead and then they cut the high school out, so by the time I came along.

HT: You had to live in town.

LS: We had to live in a room in town, so from the time I and my youngest sister were 14, we lived on our own in Moorhead, really without any supervision. We'd make all our own meals, do everything for ourselves.

HT: Did you buy your own food?

LS: Well, we brought most of that from home; but we'd have to take care of all of our things because we were there Monday morning through Friday night, so we had to take care of our clothes and our food and everything, yeah.

HT: It was quite good training.

LS: Yeah, I didn't have any problem with it. [Laughter] That's funny; I wouldn't want to send a 14-year-old kid off to live in an apartment.

HT: Not any more, I don't think.

Now, as far as clothing and household items were concerned, were most of your clothes purchased ready made or did you make them?

DC: I made most of their clothes.

HT: Good for you! Did you ever send for things through Montgomery Wards, Sears Roebuck, yeah.

DC: Oh, yes, yes, we sent.

HT: So there were made-over clothes?

LS: One interesting thing is that my mother had some sisters who had a lot more money than we did and they sent boxes. Do you remember, Mama, getting boxes from Aunt [?]?

DC: Yeah, they lived in Seattle, didn't they? And she talked about giving her clothes, you know, to the Red Cross or the Salvation Army; and I said, "Don't do that." I said, "Send them to me, and I'll fix them for our children." So we had quite nice clothes. You had quite nice clothes. I made them over a little bit.

LS: An example of that is I never had a new coat bought from a store in my life until I was in eighth grade and my mother was making over a fur coat on the--remember, you were making over a fur coat, which is pretty hard to sew on, on the sewing machine, and she made a mistake and cut it too short and started to cry, and my dad came in and he said,

"What's the matter?" She says, "Well, I've ruined the coat; I don't think I can fix it. It was going to be Lois's coat." And he said, "Well, maybe we can buy her a new coat." Now, I was in eighth grade, and that's the only coat--that's the first coat in the store, so that's kind of interesting. And my mother also said she felt the Depression was over when my dad said we could buy her a coat. I think it cost \$12.

DC: He said to take her to town. I can remember that. He said, "Take her to town and buy her a coat."

HT: Those things sound kind of familiar; it brings back memories.

LS: So we noticed the Depression.

HT: I imagine you taught your daughters to sew, then.

DC: Well, one of them--some of them sewed. I had the one girl, Ruth, and she did real well. But the others didn't care for it and I didn't like to sew, either.

HT: But you did.

DC: Just as quick as they were old enough, I had them go and buy clothes ready made then, you know.

LS: But my mother's attitude toward is kind of interesting, I think, because she just felt that cooking and sewing were things you'd have to do the rest of your life. She always said, "There's nothing to learning cooking and sewing; don't bother with it; I'll do it. You'll have to do that enough years anyway." So we didn't learn very much about that.

DC: About sewing? Well, I wasn't much of sewer either.

LS: Sewing or cooking. Didn't feel like it was important.

DC: And as quick as they got old enough to go themselves, to go to different stores and look for bargains, then I gave them the money and told them to go because I didn't like to sew and I don't like to sew yet. [Laughter]

HT: That's great. And then, as far as keeping clothes clean, I suppose you did some washboarding.

DC: Oh, I washed all by hand--you know, we had a tub and a washboard and did the washing.

HT: Well, people didn't use as many clothes as we do nowadays, then, do they?

DC: Probably not.

**HT:** They didn't put on clean from the inside out every day back then.

**DC:** No, no. [Laughter]

**LS:** Once a week in long underwear.

**HT:** Oh, my. Do you remember when you got your first washing machine?

**DC:** Yes, I remember that plainer than most things. The man came and he brung in the washing machine. He brought the washing machine and started to bring it in and I said, "Well, you don't need to bring it in." I said, "We can't afford to buy a new washing machine." I guess I didn't have any before that. Maybe I did have; I don't know. "Well," he said, "this is yours." He said, "I'm bringing it in. I met your husband on the way to town and he's already bought it and paid for it." So, my, I was tickled to death.

**HT:** Now, was that a gas engine machine?

**DC:** Yes, it had an engine. But, see, I couldn't start it. But he'd start it and then, of course, as quick as we got electricity, we had an electric one that I could just turn on.

**LS:** Do you remember why you happened to get that washing machine?

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[missing] to buy them. He didn't mind spending the money, but he had some kind of thing about--he couldn't buy it until there was a good reason so he could justify it. And what was the reason? Why did we have to have a washing machine? You had just been in the hospital. She had gall stones and was in the hospital 5 weeks.

**DC:** Oh, yes; they said--

**LS:** And the doctor said you can't be washing clothes. So my dad got it, but he had to have an excuse.

**DC:** I had to have gall stones to get it. [Laughter]

**LS:** Didn't have a telephone until my oldest sister's husband went overseas and she stayed home, and he said, "You can't stay home without a telephone." My dad said, "We'll get one." But he had to have a reason. We never had a telephone until we were all out of the house, then.

**HT:** That's one of the questions I was going to ask. I mean, I'd forgotten.

Then, of course, you recall when you got electricity in your house? Do you recall about when you got electricity in the house?

**DC:** Oh, yes, I can remember, because they hooked up--they wouldn't put in an electric line for us at first because whatever you call it that runs the electricity didn't want to go over the railroad--they didn't want to go east a long ways. But dad talked to them and they came up and put ours in, but they didn't go any farther east.

**HT:** Do you remember what year that was? Do you remember about what year?

**DC:** What year?

**LS:** 1940.

**HT:** 1940. Yeah, right about that time.

**LS:** Before the war.

**HT:** Do you remember anything during the war about, oh, rationing and that kind of thing. Food stamps--

**DC:** Oh, yes, we had food stamps. We never had any trouble, though, because I know Clarence had to go in and register to go to war; but they told him, "You go home and raise your--."

**LS:** That was the First World War.

**HT:** That was the First World War, wasn't it?

**DC:** Yes, that must have been. So he didn't have to go.

**LS:** He was 30, though, at the time.

**HT:** World War II?

**LS:** Do you remember when I gave the lady all my meat stamps, and you were really mad at me? [Laughter] We went and had a meal at this lady's house (I was in college; it was down in St. Cloud), and she asked me for the meat stamps and I gave them to her. [Laughter]

**DC:** Yes, and we couldn't get meat without the stamps.

**LS:** Yeah, we had men grouchy [?] and Mom was real mad because I gave her the meat stamps.

**DC:** But, of course, we didn't have much trouble; we generally butchered, you know. And I canned--we called it "cold pack."

**LS:** Now, during the war, there was a big change in your life because they were short of teachers.

**DC:** Yes, I went back to teach. And I never dreamed of teaching again. Of course, I had children by then. But I guess my kids were all in school then.

**LS:** Grown up, yeah!

**DC:** And we had a school towards Sabin, you know, and they came down one night and asked me if I'd take it. But I had a life certificate, and so, my, that was wonderful. I remember when I got my first check and I went to Herbst and I spent it all in clothes.

**HT:** Good for you!

**LS:** And then, remember about the checking account.

**DC:** Yes, my husband would never put my name in--we had quite a checking account, too. And, you know, he said I'd spend it all. But how did we happen to change?

**LS:** Because then you got the money in your salary and you told him, "Either we have a joint account or I have a separate account and all my money goes in the separate account."

**DC:** And, of course, if I had a checking account, it would have been small and I would have had to pay; so then he agreed to put my name in.

**HT:** In other words, your husband--that's interesting. Good for you! Women's rights!

**DC:** He had never had--now we had quite a checking account and owned quite a bit of land; and, you know, he never had my name in the bank with him. If he'd have died at that time, I would have had to have everything probated. Now, wasn't that dumb?

**HT:** Yeah, well, there was a lot of that. In other words, your husband was the money manager.

**DC:** Oh, yes, well, his excuse for not having my name was that I'd spend it all. They got after him at the bank [laughter] and told him to put my name in.

**HT:** Oh, that's interesting. [Laughter] Oh, boy.

Now, let's see. Was there any particular job that you hated to do more than anything else, as far as your housework was concerned?

**DC:** Well, I think washing clothes was the hardest job because, well, I did it by hand; but then it was a thrill when I got a washing machine.

**HT:** Do you remember the drouth years?

**DC:** Oh, yes; oh, yes. There was one year when we didn't have any crop at all. But we got along. I think we got along better that--well, you know, we always had some money ahead. We were never desperately poor. And then I always was determined to send the children to school.

**HT:** Oh, let's see. Were there any particular housekeeping chores that you considered to do on a weekly basis, except washing clothes? Were there other things? Like you ironed on Tuesday, or--.

**DC:** Oh, no. I did my work each day, whatever was necessary. I never had certain days because I might say I'd want to wash on Tuesday; then there'd be a Homemakers--you know--and I never missed or things in the church--I always went and took part in everything.

**HT:** Can you think of anything else that might be of interest in case I'm forgetting things?

**DC:** Anything else that might be interesting just to put in the--?

Well, the 4-H--that was--and I was head of the 4-H for quite a while. Then we had lunches and things like that in 4-H. I worked with the 4-H for years. And then the 4-H sent me to Minneapolis.

**HT:** Yes, you mentioned that; that's great. Well, that was a very important activity for youngsters during that time; and it still is a very important thing.

**LS:** Can I suggest a question? I just thought of it now. But my mother was from sort of another culture--a little different religion--from around Rustad because at Rustad nearly everyone was Scandinavian immigrants at that time. Now, she was not a Scandinavian immigrant; came from a different background. It was kind of an interesting thing. Could you comment on the differences between you and the people in Rustad--nearly all of them had been born in Norway--the older generation. And neither my mother nor my father belonged to that group.

**DC:** And I was eastern; my people were born in the far east, of course.

**LS:** Eastern United States.

**DC:** And I wasn't Norwegian.

**HT:** That's quite a change for that area, isn't it?

**DC:** But we got along fine. My friends were wonderful. And we joined the Norwegian Lutheran Church, and I said to my husband, "What's the sense of driving to Moorhead to a Presbyterian Church or something like that and probably going about once a year?" I said, "Let's join over here." I said, "It's the same God whether it's the Norwegian Church or the Swedish Church."



**LS: They moved the church up from the country in 1926.**

**DC: That's when we joined.**

**LS: And we joined in 1928. So all five of us and my father were baptized on Pentecost Sunday, 1928. My mother didn't have to be baptized because she'd been; but my father had been a Church of the Covenant Baptist--I don't think they baptize until they're older. So we all had to be baptized.**

**DC: And, of course, I'd been baptized.**

**LS: And my mother's relatives thought becoming a Lutheran. Your relatives didn't think much of your becoming a Lutheran, did they?**

**DC: Oh, you know, my people were all Methodist; and they thought I was lost, I guess, because I joined the Lutheran Church.**

**HT: Well, I think people were more that way back then than they are now, about your joining a different denomination.**

**DC: Oh, yes. And I said, "What in the world is the difference? It's the same God." I said, "It's funny; what would be the sense of driving past a Christian church to Moorhead, 10 miles, and probably never go more than once a year." So we joined, had all our babies baptized, and joined the Lutheran Church at Rustad.**

**HT: Very good, and were very active members, I'm sure.**

**DC: Well, we always did what we could.**

**LS: Ma taught Sunday School for many years. That's one of the things you did, didn't you? Taught Sunday School for many, many years.**

**DC: Oh, I taught Sunday School for pretty near 20 years. I taught the eighth grade, and then the minister used to come up when I had a class; and when I taught that class, he didn't have to come up to Rustad. So, he felt I was pretty good.**

**HT: You must have been pretty good; that's for sure.**

**I will ask this: What was your impression of Eleanor Roosevelt? Do you remember?**

**DC: Oh, yes, I remember Mrs. Roosevelt. And she was quite active. I admired her.**

**HT: Good, very good. I think most people did. And you remember Amelia Earhart?**

**DC: Well, she was the first one that crossed the ocean. Did she go around the world? No, she just crossed the Atlantic Ocean.**

**HT: No, I think she went around the world, didn't she?**

**LS: Yes, yes. You know what happened to her?**

**DC: Now, wait a minute. She was lost flying across the Pacific Ocean. And I don't remember just what accident; she was lost.**

**HT: She was never found.**

**DC: Oh, she was never found. Well, either went down or she had some kind of an accident. She was never found. Oh, my, that's terrible.**

**HT: You think radio and television, and so on, has had quite an impact on homemakers? Do you remember your first radio?**

**DC: Oh, yes. My, we all sat around listening to the radio instead of doing our work.**

**HT: That was pretty important, wasn't it?**

**Now, is there anything else that you would like to--?**

**DC: Well, I think we've covered quite a--.**

**LS: Mom, what do you think is the most important invention? I remember her talking about this. The most important new invention or new thing for you as far as being a homemaker is concerned. What is the thing that made the most difference to your life? Radio or television or electricity or what?**

**DC: Oh, well, I think radio was wonderful; but, of course, television is nice, too.**

**LS: She used to say about the most important invention was fly spray.**

**DC: Well, you know, I had taught school for years, and I hadn't lived where we had flies too much; and then the grandpa would stand in the door and leave it open and I had quite a bit of trouble with flies. But then the Raleigh man came with fly spray; and, boy, that was wonderful. I never had trouble with flies after that. My hired man could never understand why I sprayed outside the door and then we had two south windows and I'd spray all around those south windows and, of course, around the kitchen door. And he couldn't understand why I said for every fly we kill outdoors is one less in the house.**

**HT: Oh, yes, because on a farm there could be lots of flies. I should say so.**

**DC: Well, we never had trouble with flies after that fly spray.**

**HT: That's great. You have granddaughters--grandchildren.**

**DC: Yes. Dorothy--how many children does Dorothy have?**

**LS: Four.**

**DC: She's got four children, but they live out on the coast.**

**HT: Would there be anything that you'd wish for your granddaughters as they become homemakers?**

**DC: Well, I'd want them to have a decent husband.**

**LS: What else did you want for all of your daughters, Ma, would you say?**

**DC: I wanted an education. We sent them all to school. And that wasn't easy either. But did they all graduate? I guess so. One summer I went to school.**

**HT: Oh, that was great. When was that--after you started teaching again?**

**DC: Do you remember when that was?**

**LS: It must have been about '51 or '52 or right in there. It was about 1950 or so. She needed some more for her certificate, I guess, and went to school.**

**DC: Why did I go?**

**LS: I think you had to get your certificate renewed, I think.**

**HT: Did you go to Moorhead State, then?**

**DC: Yes, uh huh.**

**LS: So we all have gone to Moorhead State, and my father went before he ever met my mother. He went as a young man. Now, he didn't go to high school because his father gave him a choice of going to school or staying on the farm and making money. So he didn't go to high school. It would have been very hard; there wasn't any high school in Rustad then, at all, or else he would have gone. But he went to Moorhead State for what they called Short Courses--he went all the way; I know he went almost a whole year.**

**DC: Who's that?**

**LS: Papa.**

**DC: Oh, yes, he went to Moorhead State.**

**LS: I just found a letter that said, "I'm going to be there until May," and this was at New Year's time; so he went and stayed and lived in town and went to classes.**

**DC: What'd you say?**

**LS: He went to classes at Moorhead State. I didn't even know that until a year or so ago.**

**HT: Isn't that interesting--the things one can find out?**

**Well, unless there's something else you'd like to mention, I think we'll end our interview.**

**DC: Oh, yes, I think we've covered it pretty well.**

**HT: And I think you very much. It's been delightful.**

**DC: You're wonderful to ask me, you know, and thank you.**

**HT: Thank you.**

**[End of Interview]**