Interview begins with a test of sound by interviewer:

M: This is Mary Rose Lane interviewing Lydia Howard on February 24th, (L: four I think) 1994. (L: Yeah) And we’re going to be talking about the demise and demolition of the Merrimack Mills and the Dutton Street row houses.

L: The Merrimack. Is it, is this okay?

M: That sounds pretty good.

L: Is that pretty good? (M: Yeah) Um, no, it’s, we were talking about the row houses on Dutton Street, for the Merrimack Manufacturing. [Long pause]

M: That sounds fine. So if you want to hold it, that’s fine.

L: Whatever you want. (M: Okay) It’s all right which ever you say.

M: Yes. Yeah, I don’t need it. I just want to hear your voice. So if you feel comfortable holding it. If it works for you.

L: Well I just want you to answer what you want to know.

M: Well I guess we can talk about some things we’ve already talked about.

L: Oh yes, some of the things we’ve talked about.
M: Then we could maybe start at the beginning. Um, and you sort of alerted into this before. How did you get personally involved or interested in saving the row houses, and however much you were involved in saving the mills. How did you get interested in that?

L: Well I think the very first things would be saving the row houses. And that’s where Mr. Ziskind comes into it. He was in Florida, and he had his secretary called me and said, he was a very wealthy man and I figured that, that he would be able to help us at St. Anne’s. I was after the money for St. Anne’s Church. They were building a parish house. So that was the reason for that. And uh, I waited on his secretary to call me. And Mr. Ziskind died. So the end of that was that I had no access to the money for the church. But that was the start of my interest in the row houses.

And as far as that was concerned, I presumed, I don’t know whether he ever tore, you tore down the row houses. I don’t think he had torn down the row houses. None, nothing of that. No, I think not. I think that the Merrimack was torn down probably some time after this. But the row houses were such a very important part of the city. They were so beautiful! That’s why I want you to see those pictures that the Lowell Sun took and gave to me. And they did, they took them from me. And uh, so they must be over in the Historic Preservation thing at the City, University of Lowell Library, as far as I could see. And you ask anything you want to ask that I can tell you.

M: Maybe you could describe the row houses. You know, the physical characteristics of them.

L: Oh yes! I don’t know whether there, there were eight or not. I think there may have been eight. The end house was stunning really, because it went up and the chimneys went in a very interesting way. I think it’s a type they call, I’ve seen in mills other ways. It was the end was very pretty. And then what, all of them were alike. They had white granite porches. Not porches, but stairs, steps you come into. And then you went into the hall. I’m saying the best one that I knew was the end one. And it is really unbelievable how beautiful they were. They had no, we found no leaks. I went in with a, I don’t know who the man was who went in with me. We walked up and down. There was no leaking, no damage done. And [clears throat] it seemed very important to me that they could be restored for residency. That I didn’t plan at all to have them done just to have a museum of them. I never intended that at all.

And from there I intended to talk to the people in Boston who were in the real estate business, and they were going to do the restoration. They knew how to do it. There were people down in Boston who would do it. And they were to be the row of the gas lights. There were going to be handsome ones restored there, along there, along the canal. And there was that, and then all the plans were there of the row houses. They must be some place that the row house is shown what they were like inside, or the building of them. Because there was nothing junky in it at all. And there were three stories I believe. And it was just in such wonderful shape. That was the thing that impressed me the most. That was what I really, I couldn’t believe that it wasn’t, wasn’t leaking. There may have been some areas that would, would have been, but the ones we looked at were in splendid shape.
M: What were the grounds like? (L: Hm?) The grounds?

L: Oh well, there’s really, there was nothing, because it went, it was right on to the street. There was no back at all. They were right straight on the street. And then the back had sort of a square inside. Like a little courtyard. And the courtyard, I think, was used for a garden. And it went on on each side. And each one had one. So, that was going to be possible for you to, if we were going to rent these, or sell these row houses at a condition, really pretty good condition, there were people that were, wanted to, who’ve now died, but they wanted to buy into these houses. Mr. and Mrs. Paul, were two of them that were very interested in coming to live in those houses. So that all went cafooey with me. There was nothing I could do. I couldn’t do anymore. And maybe that’s when I started sitting down for two years, on a Monday night, at the uh, Chalifoux building, and whatever the name of the committee was. I just know that Mr. Fleming would know. Brendan Fleming was a member of that board. And another man, Mr. Hudson. And those two men knew what I wanted, that it was going to be done right. The other man voted me down. And voted my, voted Brendan Fleming down.

M: You went to those meetings for two years?

L: Every two years on a Monday night, on the second floor of the Chalifoux building.

M: For this specific purpose?

L: To go and hear the hearing of this meeting. I couldn’t tell you the name of the committee. It was a city committee really.

M: What, what was the (--) I guess I’m confused. What was the main focus of this meeting?

L: Well it was to protect these houses. Yeah.

M: Very focused.

L: It was to protect these houses, yeah, in every way that we could protect these houses. And then they went. That was the end of that.

M: You were saying (--) Maybe you can describe how you felt at those meetings?

L: Well I felt very haughty. I was not going to be allowed to be pushed back someplace. And I went in, and the man who was a city employee, I don’t know his name, he was Chairman of the thing. And he said, “get a seat.” I said, “I will stand until somebody gets me a chair. I don’t intend to be push around.” And that was when this priest got up. And he said, “I have, I’ll give you my chair.” I said, “no Father. The Chairman of this Board can get me a chair.” And that was that. And after that we never had any trouble. I got to sit every time, and I was treated gracefully. And, but I never will take anything
from anybody. That’s the way I’ve been, and the way I intend to be till I die. [chuckles] I really, I’m a very determined person. If I thought it was right, and it was right. Though I do know there was one girl with me who had come to, to work, not to work, but come down with me to go to the meetings so I wasn’t alone. And um, then I find out that she has given up, and she didn’t want to do anything of any part of it. So I was just stuck by myself. There was so many people that plain either could have helped me, but didn’t know what to do. They were very timid. People who’d worked in the Merrimack, and so forth.

But there were no (--) By that time my husband was gone. And um, so I believe that there were men that were going to have the money, would have the means of getting the money and fixing themselves into the Post Office, and the, part of the High School. The whole thing was being done. And the row houses were replaced with this disgusting cement block business. And I’ve heard since that one of the women who’s husband had been on the committee, said that, she had been, he had been prom… She had been promised, I had been promised the brick outside. And the bricking never happened. And it was just terrible! It was just a real disgusting thing over the years. You probably never saw what it was like. It was, uh!

M: I’ve heard some people [words unclear]

L: Yeah, it was terrible. Terrible. And these people who came in and having to live in poor conditions. And they were just awful, awful conditions. It was close to the police station, I will say that. I was there, but it was just on that whole corner.

M: How did you feel about the media coverage?

L: Wonderful. See, Mr. Costello was a friend of mine. More than one Mr. Costello, but Clement Costello. And I believe he was very, very (--) Oh, he came. I know what he did. He came and wrapped on the door, rang my bell one day when I was still living on Nesmith Street. And uh, you know, that’s it. I think I wrote a thing for the paper for him. I think he allowed me to run a page Editorial thing about it. I think that Clement Costello, I knew him slightly. The doorbell rang and Mr. Costello said, “may I come in?” And I said, “yes.” He said, “it’s about the row houses.” “Oh yeah.” He said, “this is about the row houses. And I think it’s a shame that you’ve been working so hard on this, and that they’re going to be torn down.” I said, “well, what can we do Mr. Costello?” He said, “well, what we’re going to do is we’re going to send for the Head of HUD in Washington,” which he did. He send to New York, to Washington for the Head of HUD. And it didn’t even do any good at that, with that. But he did do that for me. And I had never forgotten as long as I would be ever around, what Mr. Costello did for me and for the city.

So that was, that was very true. And from then on Mr. Costello did everything in his power, Mr. Clement Costello. I had absolute freedom of the press. I could take, get anything in there I wanted. Anything at all. And you see, he died too. It happens, you know. And so then his brother was also a friend of mine, but he, I don’t think he had the same interest that I had, that Clement had. He was exceedingly, exceedingly friendly about it with me. And have him come and ring the bell, you know, it was, it was pretty
outstanding for me. And to have him do that, you know, that was the way that went on. And because, what he thought that the Head of HUD coming up from Washington could prevent the taking down of the row houses. But it didn’t do it.

M: Did the Head of HUD actually come?

L: Yes he did. Yes he did.

M: But that didn’t (--) 

L: No.

M: In your, what you just said. You were describing the conditions of the boarding houses as pretty good.

L: Oh, they were very good. Physically they were very good. And the end ones as I remember, where they had some people boarding in there who were drinking, drinking and so forth, those looked a little pretty messy. But the others were in very good shape.

M: Do you um, were there any people saying that they weren’t in good shape?

L: No. Not anyone who came in, no.

M: Uh, I guess in different publications, or people who wanted them torn down for whatever reason (--) 


M: I guess my question would be, was any propagating the idea that they should be torn down because they were dilapidated?

L: Well I never do, do think I didn’t ever see that. The Lowell Sunday Telegram was there. That was an opposition to the Lowell Sun, but I don’t think there was ever any, anything I knew about. But I did know about the people who, [chuckles] who had other ideas than I did. But I couldn’t do anything about that. I couldn’t, I couldn’t fight City Hall. [Chuckles] It was worse than City Hall. No, it wasn’t. It was much worse than City Hall. It was greed on the part of some men. So. No, I can’t say that. I can’t say anything against Mr. Costello and the Lowell Sun. They ‘d been wonderful. They were wonderful to me. I mean who ever thought I’d have, on the front page of that big newspaper, that I would have a whole, I could write my own editorial on the front page. Now not many people got that privilege. But he let me.

M: I’ve seen that [unclear]. (L: Oh have you?) Yeah, I have a copy of it. We’ll look at it.
L: [Laughs] Yeah. That was uh, that was really a very [unclear]. But that was Mr. Costello who made that possible. And he was alive quite a few years when I knew about all of this. That’s why it was, on the row, of getting the HUD man up there. And he thought that by doing that they couldn’t tear, they couldn’t tear the place down. He said that whatever they used to call the big thing that came down, the ball, wrecking ball, will not come says Clement. And that’s what he planned. But it came. So.

M: At one point you said something about so few people really cared.

L: Oh yeah! Well I think so, I think so few people cared. I said, two Professors from Amherst, at the University, those two men were very, very um, are we hearing? Two men I remember, and I think Mr. Olney. But I’m just not sure. I’m quite sure that he was concerned about it. And me. And I don’t think there were many people. The only people, there were people that cared, but they were people who had worked in the mills. And that’s, some of the mill men, I don’t know, were caring. I know some of the mill people that were, probably cared, because they were probably all involved in this thing. But when the Merrimack got in such shape, they couldn’t keep on any longer. I don’t know any further about that. I know that, that the, having the mills go in Lowell, are the reason why the city fell, fell apart. When you say C.B Coburn and Company, Company. And I didn’t realize (--) And the Grist Mill was another one. They supplied the chalk, whatever that meant. And that was, the chalk was made there later. And the chalk was important with the materials. That’s right. That’s how that came about. And the two big hardware stores, C.B Coburn, and Thompson I think is the other one. And those were the people that were absolutely getting the material to make the mills run. The oil, and whatever they needed. But I think also they uh, the chalk, which is made in the building that was the Grist Mill. Originally the Grist Mill, not later.

M: I guess I don’t know about that at all. The chalk?

L: Oh the chalk. Well they mark materials, that kind of chalk. I guess it’s a chalk, I had some that I used to have when I was marking out a pattern. You make white mark. I don’t know whether they used different colors, but that was what they used to mark off materials. The Chalk Mill. Chalk, which I guess it was Chalk Mill.

M: They produced that in the Grist Mill?

L: And well then that, that was the last thing that that little built mill had. It was a darling little mill. And they couldn’t, nobody would let him sell it. Could buy it, nobody could buy it. I think there were three people that tried to buy it, until this little group of men took care of themselves.

M: As I understand it, the, the demolition of the boarding houses were part a larger Northern Canal Urban Renewal. Um, what would you say… is that, is that true as you recall it?

L: On the Northern Canal, that power plant up there?
M: Uh, well just the, the whole, like the demolition of Little Canada. Was it part of all that?

L: Oh, it (--? Yeah, well it’s part of all of that. Yes. I think when the Merrimack went, there’s no question that that was the end of Little Canada. Absolutely. Yeah. I remember that very well. I remember from, from Boston (--? I remember in Boston at times, of there were Urban Renewal. That’s what we get into there. And the Urban Renewal was going on in Boston. And women would lye down before trucks to not be interfered with moving into their street. And it was, I had remember having a, some men came to my house. I was a picture of my, at my house. And the uh, the reason with that was that this Urban Renewal business was going on. And Lowell was getting the same thing that, that Boston had gotten into. And that’s where we lost (--?) Urban Renewal, there were men there that night who had worked down in that area by Saint Joseph’s Church downtown. St. Jeanne D’Arc. Um, yeah, that was Little Canada. There’s no question. That was a beautiful family situation. And I think that the uh, the thing that made is so tragic for the young people who lived down there in the French district, I knew a young man, very young man who had been living there. Politically he used to work at some politics I did. He said that it was a family that they lost. All of these were family. And he said, um it’s, I don’t know just how to say it, but I know what he said was, was uh, if anything happened, if you had [long pause] Is it all right? (M: Say it again?) I said, did I, did I hear something pop? (M: Yeah, that was kind of weird. You heard it too?) Um. (M: It seems to be okay) Okay. Well this business at Little Canada, this young man was, made it very clear to me that if your mother saw the boy next door acting up, they could call out the window and grab that boy, because they were all family. There was nothing like the crime we got today. It was absolutely not the same thing. And so in that French district, it was like a family. I remember that boy very well. He was a young man. And you just called out a window, and you grabbed these children, and get in here and behave yourself. I think this is true over the whole city of Lowell. Of downtown Lowell. It’s really exactly true. Because I wouldn’t mind yelling at a few children. I was a teacher a long time, and I wouldn’t mind if I had children up around Belvidere, where I live. But if they act like that I’d be a little afraid to um, make any fuss with any of those people. That’s just not the same way it was then. So, that’s very true. But that’s true how the, how the redevelopment thing, Urban Renewal, that’s how that happened. And I think, I don’t know whether there’s a picture of me in that, someplace in that, in my house. I think, well there certainly would be in the uh, the scrapbooks that I left someplace over there, in the Historic. They may have those over at the library too. But not in my possession anymore. I gave it to them because I didn’t want anything, any damage down to them. Because they used to come up from the two, my husband was in politics. He was very active in politics. And so I had all of this publicity for him. And then later for me. And uh, so they’re in the scrapbooks. And there were two large scrapbooks. And I had them up on the Boulevard. And for some reason the men from the University of Pennsylvania who were doing, what do you do if you’re studying for a degree, and so forth. How, what do you, what do you say? You’re, I’m a thesist. You’re doing a thesis, and that’s what they were up here doing, but it was, they often came up to
my house up on the Boulevard. And I’d sit there and let them look at the papers, and everything they wanted.

But then I had a little trouble with Mr. Sampas and his wife, because he was going to write a book and he wanted all of my papers. But she, one morning Mrs. Sampas was very extremely disagreeable to me, and I don’t mind saying it. Um, he had died, and I got the, I said, I want the uh (--) Mr. Connors was Editor, or Director of the Library, of the City, of the News, of the Newspaper. Mr. Connors. And I had to find out who had the authority that I would get those, those uh, scrapbooks back from Mr. Sampas. And there had been something very un-American that was said that day. And so I called, well someone called me. A woman called me. I didn’t know who she was. And I remember her saying, uh, I’m not suppose to work. This is a holiday, and I’m not suppose to be working on a holiday. And so she had called me. And I said, well I’ll call the Sun and find out. It’s either going to be the FBI, or something else. And so I called, and Mr. Connors called that got this FBI, and they said, that’s it. You can’t turn the President’s picture behind and then to the wall. That’s what they had done. And those women were having a fit. And uh, this woman then began to shriek at me the next morning because her daughter might lose his job, and this and that. And I said, I then said to, down at the Lowell Sun, I said, just please call. Mr. Connors, please get those scrapbooks back in Mrs. Howard’s hands. They’re hers, and no more do you have it. So that was that. That was the end of that. So Mr. Connors was a classmate of my husband’s at Harvard, so they were friends, you know. It wasn’t so difficult to get things done. And uh, no, I just, I don’t think anybody has ever, can, unless they’re very rude to me. If they’re rude to me they’re in real trouble, but if they’re not, I get on very well with people.

M: You mentioned earlier in our conversation that you said you sometimes think like a man.

L: Well yeah, I do. I know I do. I really do. This is my personal opinion about me. I don’t think that I, I think I think like a man. And I know that I’m not, and I’m not afraid. I’ve never been really afraid. And I’d rather, much rather be in the uh, in the group with a man, with a group of men than I am with women, because I don’t want to go to tea parties and that kind of thing. They’re not, that won’t please me at all. So I guess that’s it.

M: [Comment unclear]

L: So what else did I say that you’d want to hear?

M: Um, well um, I guess you mentioned um, (--) 

L: I think it’s very important that you see those row houses.

M: See the pictures. (L: Yeah) One of the things I understood um, was that like right at the very end there was an attempt to file a suit in Boston to get an injunction to stop the demolition. Do you know anything about that?
L: I don’t remember much about that, no. I know that um(--)  

M: Well Mr., Mr. Riley, William Riley?  

L: Oh well, he’s a bit of a crackpot. I think he was. I don’t know. I don’t know. [Laughs] Yes I think Mr. Riley had something to do, but I wasn’t involved with it.  

M: Uh, they also said that (--) I was reading and one of the newspaper article’s said, I think he might have mentioned [few words unclear] that they, whoever, was doing the demolition, knocked a hole in one of the houses and then said, “oh this building needs to be condemned because it’s damaged.” [Comment unclear]  

L: I don’t remember anything about that. I mean if anybody had done it, I didn’t know anything about that. (M: No?) No. No, because the condition was remarkable. And I had, we had had the people from Boston, the Historical Preservation people who had been up and looked this over and agreed that everything was in good condition, and that we could, the buildings could be restored. And it got, I was not involved in the thought of the idea of having museums, because my idea was to have something that was going to be financially beneficial to the city. And that’s what it was going to be. It wasn’t going to be any old museums running around. So it wasn’t going to be that way. It was to be on things where people were buying these condominiums, or row houses, whatever they wanted, but it was to be very [unclear] for the city.  

M: And you feel that it could have been, that it was possible.  

L: Oh yes! But I don’t really know what happened down in Boston. I don’t know what happened, not with Mr. Riley. Not what, what happened I do not know about the man on the boat to Nantucket. And I think he was the man that had to do with the Historic Preservation. And I don’t, I had forgotten his name. And he was the one who was going to be in charge of the real estate men who were going to go ahead and do the restoration, but do it the right way. You had a lot to do, involved with that. [Clears throat] And uh, I don’t think that, that uh, I think that was all involved in it. But I think that was involved with the money up in Lowell. I personally think so, because they suddenly this man had been going to be perfectly willing to have me in charge of the restoration in Lowell. And then it all fell apart.
M: Would you say that anything either illegal, or unethical was going on?

L: I think a lot was illegal and unethical. [Chuckles] Yes, I think so. I do think so. I don’t think there’s any question about it. But I don’t, I don’t think that, somehow I didn’t feel Mr. Costello thought these people were illegal. I thought they were. But I don’t think Mr. Costello, Mr. Clement Costello thought so. I don’t think so.

M: Why do you think?

L: I think a lot like a man. I do. I think so. I don’t think like women.

M: Did you feel, how did you feel about the pace of the (--) You’d been going to meetings for two years, and then did it, how did, did you feel that it went quickly at the end, or?

L: Yes I think so at the end. But you see, there was, there was no control. I had two friends on that board. No, I really had one very close friend. Clement um, Mr. what’s his name? Mr. Fleming, Brendan Fleming. He was a, I think he has been a Mayor. And I think he was in the, I know he was in the council for years. And a Mr. Hudson whom I did not know, but he was the only other one of the nine, or ten people on that committee that were my favorite, see. And I think Mr. Clement, Mr. Fleming lost his committee chairman. See, such lovely things happened. He was a remarkable man. And I would, he was very, we were very good friends. I wrote him, wrote notes about him when he was running for the Council, whatever. And I ‘d write these little notes to people. And we were very good friends. Yeah. And Mr. Hudson I did not know, except that he agreed with Mr. Fleming,

M: You mentioned that you received a lot of correspondence from people?

L: Oh, well you see, I think that comes about because of the newspapers, of both in Boston, and in Lowell. And anyone who had lived in those row houses years and years ago, that had, some of them had become quite famous as I understand the notes, the letters they had sent me. And it was about that. And I was very impressed with that. But of course I didn’t keep that stuff either. I couldn’t have just gone and done this, because there was no way I could do it. Everything sort of went “kaflooey”. You think of Mr. Ziskind from the start of that which this noon I’ve forgotten all about. And that would have made such a difference I think, because he wouldn’t have died.

M: In, in what way? If he hadn’t died (--)

L: Well you see, I figured I had had a difference, because I don’t think that he intended to destroy the mill, you see. I don’t know what he was going to do with it, but he was not going, I don’t think he was going to destroy it. Not all of it. So.

M: So there wouldn’t have been the movement to, to get rid of it all.
L: Oh I don’t think they, he intended to do that. No, I don’t think so. Because where was he going to produce all of this money for me for the church? That was all I wanted it for. Because the church connection with the mill, the Merrimack, were very close. You can see there are places in, in St. Anne’s Church there were for little children, young girls to sit in a certain section, and they had to pay money to go, every Sunday they had to be at church. And I think that was very important. And the way Mr. Ziskind felt about it, about the connection of what he felt. Because the girls um, I think the connection is very important with the St. Anne’s Church. There were nuns there, and there were Sunday School business. And also the women who came and worked, young women who came and worked in the mills, coming from uh, parts of New Hampshire and certainly farms in Massachusetts, and they came to work there. And that was really the best opportunity they had to get their, educate their brothers. That was mostly the thing, or to pay for the taxes on the, on the farms. I think that’s very, that was very right and true. And I have a picture on the wall in here of a Mrs. Charles Potts Talbot, who gave the beautiful chapel at the Lowell Cemetery. And I have her painting which I intend to put over there one of these days, because that was given in loving remembrance of her husband. So that’s why I’m giving that. But she was from one of the towns that just, I have it written down in the back someplace, right sort of in the border state of New Hampshire. And she was on a farm I’m sure, from the sound of it. And she looks like a farm girl. She has a lovely face. I don’t like to give it up because she’s so pretty, you know. I’ll show it to you. I put it there so she’ll look right across at the convent. That was her house across there. So I’ve had a pretty interesting life because of these people, and because of this, this mill town. I really, I really, my husband was a very brilliant man, and of course that all changed everything when he died. And then I, from then on I, I wasn’t just a girl, or a woman. I was forty-seven when he died. And uh, I saw this lovely friend of mine who came down the other day. We were going up, it was a C.B. Coburn connection that we saw on the map. I asked her, I said, “Sandy, how, what, how old are you? I said, you look so young.” She said, “I’m forty-seven Liddy.” Liddy, she always called me. That’s what I was when my husband died. See how young you are when this happens. It’s, that’s the way it was. But I have, I made a lot of friends, like Clement Costello. If anybody mentions the Lowell Sun to me in a critical way, I said once, I resigned from the Whistler House because somebody said something about Clement Costello. And I said to Mr. Donoghue, I said, “I’m going to resign right now, because I said, I have no intention of having anything further to do with the Whistler house if, that’s the way I am.” So that’s the way I was. And I quit, because I wasn’t going to be bothered with that kind of thing again.

M: Uh, would you say, you know, you were talking about your husband dying when you were relatively younger.

L: He was ten years young, ten years older than I.

M: Did you sort of consciously feel a need to pick up in his shoes, or?

L: No. (M: no?) No, I don’t think it was that. I think that, I was naturally, I had a very good college education. I graduated from Vassar, and I had a good education. And I
don’t think there was any of that. He, he made me think that (--) He used to call me, “Tweets” he called me. Now that’s a silly name for a grown-up woman, right? I was only twenty when I was married you see. So he was, he treated me like I was a child I think. And I was very young looking. And it was an old Irish lady that lived in the next house, and he seen me come out with, by then my daughter was quite grown up too. And she said to me, he’s got just the two daughters, is that right? And I said, no, it’s me and a daughter. So I looked a little, I don’t know, but I, I’ve really (--) It was a very interesting life with Mr. Howard. Extremely interesting life. And uh, so. I’ve never regretted marrying a man ten years older than I was. Never. Never. No, I was, I was please with what I did. And what I did, he did for the city. So.

M: He cleaned up uh, cleaned up politics a little.

L: Uh, did he ever. I mean there were (--) In Lowell it was um, to change the Charter. The, it was possible to do it with just $1500.00. And in Cambridge it was $15,000.00 to run a campaign to get the Charter changed there. And though it really was pretty quick that things were done there, and politics was the first time ever when he got this changed, it was, for the first time it had all been all Irish in the Council, and then it got to be, there was at least one Polish, several French, several Greek. It just, and very few Protestant, I mean white people, but there were (--) When I say white people, I mean they were uh, English people. And so they were about even on these things about the, the uh, what do they call it. The even, the possible (--) Uh, I can’t say it right. I know I should be able to say it. Uh, each of the nationalities were represented. Now this was before the Cambodians. I don’t know now about what they get in the things, but mostly we had representation very even in those days. So I think that’s one thing that he did. You had all kinds of people you know, getting a chance to be represented. So.

M: I was looking at um, when I was sort of doing some research before I came here, about some of the city council members that were on there at the time that the boarding houses were taken down. Lots of, lots of Irish names on there I think, you know. Do those people ring a bell at all? I think those were the (--) I think that was [unclear].

L: Yeah, well they’re practically, they are all Irish. [Laughing] Yes, they are! Um, I, I really, see, by the time they were tearing this down I had no interest in anything. I just left. I had nothing to do with it. And if that was the time, those are all, they’re very good men. They were, Richard Howe was fine. I knew Thomas O’Donnell. I knew George O’Meara. I knew Ed Maguire. I never liked [Pollard?]. No, I just knew Howe, O’Donnell, O’Meara and Maguire. The others I didn’t have any use for. I didn’t know.

M: Yeah, just when I saw that I thought it was kind of (--)

L: They’re all Irish.

M: Sort of the stereotype of [unclear] politicians.
L: Yup. Oh yes! I, though I don’t have any, I never had any, any fuss about the Irish really. It was um, I got on very fine with, with most people. But I think that the trouble was that in the uh (--) Before, when we got hold of the uh, the Charter, and then it gave representation to the other nationalities. That was fine, because before that there was a really a bad situation of something illegal. A man went to jail. So I don’t even remember who he is, but he was Irish. And so I would think that that was one of the things that caused trouble. And we had, we got $1500.00. That was all we raised to run that.

End of interview