

Interview with Mrs. Edith May Hill Culpepper
along with her Husband Mr. Robert Culpepper.

Narrator(s): Mrs. Edith Culpepper, Mr. Robert Culpepper

Interviewers: Tom Wallace and Christen DeMarco

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After explanation on project and consent given by Mrs. Culpepper, interview began. Mr. Robert Culpepper was also present and often chimes in to react or help his wife.

TW: "What is your full name?"

EC: "Edith May Hill Culpepper."

CD: "Great. And Um, where and when were you born?"

EC: "I was born on Ridge street, 524 Ridge Street, Steelton, Pennsylvania and let me see, July the 22nd nineteen hundred and twenty one."

CD: "Wonderful, so, you were born in a home?"

EC: "Yes."

CD: "By a midwife?"

EC: "By a midwife. Yes."

CD: "That's wonderful. Um would you be able to explain your family life a little bit, maybe talk about your parents, or siblings."

EC: "Well, my parents were settled... my father was maybe twenty years older than my mother but she married him as a young girl, maybe eighteen years old, looking for security because he worked in the steel mill. So then with that marriage it was eleven children and I happened to be the eleventh one."

CD: "You were the youngest? "

EC: "Yes."

CD: "Oh wow."

TW: "Did they meet, did they live here?"

EC: "Yes. They were all born in the general area, some were born out in Bressler but then they moved up here. When the oldest son got a job, he quit school and started in the steel mill. And they moved up on Ridge street and he started, and this is where I was born. But then see she had ten children by that time, I was the eleventh one."

CD: "Um, do you know how old your mother was when she had you?"

EC: "(to Mr. Culpepper) how old would mom have been when she had me? She was up there. My pop was the one that was the oldest. The mother was still in child bearing, I don't really know with my mother, how old she was then. She must have been sort of young, within ten or eleven children and some of them were like two years apart at the most, and some were less than that."

CD: "Right"

TW: "What were the ages? I mean, when you were born, who was the oldest..."

EC: "My oldest brother got married the year that I was born. Now he always would say that to me. And, Clifford, my oldest brother, and see all of them were grown and by the time I come I was left at home, they were out. Some of them had gone to Philadelphia and all around and it left me at home with my other brother. Three of the children died, young. I didn't even know them. Then I had the brother, Edgar (?), was eight years older than me. Then I had a sister in between that but she stayed with an aunt of mine. And uh, we, I don't know, gee the ages get away from me, and then always said that I was the spoiled one, that mom spoiled me, I was the last one at home."

CD: "Because you were the last one in the house probably, all by yourself."

EC: "Yeah but see... they, but we were poor. They were poor. And um, he worked in the mill, but the mills wages was, what, a dollar a day, then. I think, something like that, that's all, that's all they made, you know. I can remember, I used to have to take his lunch box over to him. We were down then on the lower end of Steelton after they come off of Ridge street and I'd have to walk a couple blocks with the lunch box at lunch time for him cause then there wasn't no sandwiches put in there. you know, they had cooked food they couldn't afford no soup. That was a delicacy, to get a sandwich, you know. and uh, but, but you know what with all, it was better then than it is now. You know because, people wanted to help you then, they helped one another. Out here, you go out here, and now you like not worth a plug nickel. Then they would bring you home and the people in the neighborhood that the adults had a right if I was wrong they would spank me and send me home to my mother to get another one you know. I mean this is, this is the way life was then."

CD: "It was a close sense of community?"

EC: "Very, very close and we, one thing I can say that I am thankful for even to this day, I never knew a hungry day. There was a depression and everything. I never knew, but we lived among the foreign people. The Croatians and the Serbian people back in the, the nook down the lower end, where the creek run down the front of the houses. And outhouse in back. But they did not have refrigeration, we did not have it then, you couldn't but no ice, you didn't have money to buy. We'd chip it off at the ice man would come to the store and deliver the ice. But they, would cook and any thing that was left over they would give to my mom, and we had and then mom would have her little food there so, so we made it good, you know. Now people wouldn't feed ya if they see you hungry."

TW: Looking around your house, you have a really nice environment here... compared, the way you describe, compared to then, who do you feel your parents, looking back on what your parents did for you and what they taught you in the community, can you tell me maybe one thing that you really remember about your parents, about what they taught you? And what to always remember?"

EC: "Uh."

TW: "I know that's a pretty serious question."

EC: "That is. And don't, the biggest thing was respect and don't tell a lie. If you did something and you knew it bad, if she know finds out, then she finds out that you told a lie about it then you were really in trouble. And they really, really was respect. It was yes ma'am, no ma'am, yes sir, no sir. You could not say yes and no. you know, they really did. And that was not just my parents, that was the regular thing that you did. And then with me coming up out of the family I had to go to Sunday school every Sunday morning, now when I was young they didn't force

me to church but then after a while as I start getting larger, maybe eleven years old, we were Baptist, of the Baptist faith. Then they said you are old enough to stay in church and not walk all the way down to the lower end again. And I was baptized, because a lady was sitting there and told me to go up front when they had the prayer and I guess wandering around, my mind wandering, you know and I didn't, I just stood and everyone went and sat down and I'm still standing and that said that I joined church, you know, that day. And then they baptized me and I've been going to church ever since."

CD: "Wow."

EC: "But I was afraid not to tell that lady that I don't want to go up there."

CD: "Right, it was what an elder told you... EC: And you listened, I don't care who they were. You know because if they got back to your parents with it, he can tell you... CD: You're in trouble."

CD: "Well it sounds like that in that community that you were growing up that there was a very large influence of other adults. How about the children within the community? Was there a close group of children, or a lot of people growing up together?"

EC: "Yes, Yes. Uh-huh. And there was another thing. The foreign ones, they were allowed to say dirty words, you know. They would teach me in their language, the dirty words. I might could come with some of them to my parents and say it, thinking, you know how a kid will... but when they find out that you saying the bad words ummm...but that's the way that they were. Those kids, they said it to their parents, but they didn't care, you know. It wasn't... in our homes, that was the wrong thing. You didn't use any swear words. But in theirs it was just common place, you know. I mean it was just the way they were brought up, you know."

Robert Culpepper: "Croatsians, Hungarians... ???"

EC: "It was a wonderful place. With me, I think it was the best days of my life."

CD: "What sort of activities did you participate in? Were there a lot of games within the neighborhoods or just playing on the street? EC: yeah!"

EC: "Just playing on, well see, we did not have to worry about too many cars or anything like that. When we saw a car we would run and hide, you know. You half scared of it more or less. But that's the truth. I'm talking way back there, now, seventy five years, you know. And but the horse and buggies I knew about, you know, they'd come and then... but I still say what with it all, the only thing when I was growing up I said, when I get big, when I get out, I'm going to have me a house with a bathroom in it. That was the only thing. And I was 21 years old before I moved into a house with a bathroom in."

CD: "Really, Wow"

CD: "Can you tell us a little about your school, did you go to public school, private school, was it segregated?"

EC: "I went to school, my first two years I went to Bressler school and that is a little hamlet right outside of Steelton, up there now, it is there now. The school is gone but then I did one year in the Steelton public school down at father, major, father gill (?) that was, down at the lower end. Then it was a black school here and from the third up to the eighth grade, that was as far up as it went, I came up with my sister to stay because they wouldn't allow me to from, past that school but I wanted to go to be with my niece's and all and I did, transferred from there to Steelton High School then and I graduated in '39."

CD: "Was the Steelton High School segregated or integrated?"

EC: "Very much so, you know, right to this day, I'm not a member of the Alumni associate of Steelton. Whether they have it now or not, I don't even inquire about it, but one graduation day when the prom was, we went into the office, a group of the black and said we wanted our tickets to the prom and they said oh no you don't have no tickets to this prom, you got your own. The Douglas give you a prom and we had our prom in the high school gym the night that they're down in Hershey, you know, with the prom. We, We, were the first class that went in asking for it and then he said that we didn't have it, we didn't cause any commotion, like or rioting, or anything like that, we just went and I don't know. They just never had it."

TW: "Did you have a good time?"

EC: "What at the prom? Yeah we had a good time. How about that Pep? He went with me. Yeah, you know we made our own fun more or less. We got gowns and everything just like everyone else and went, you know, but we had to be in at a certain time remember?"

RC: "As far as school systems concerned here, but prejudice was real high, real high, always was and still is."

EC: "Yeah, yeah and they havin problems now that coming out with although."

RC: "But it was always high"

EC: "Yeah, they never, never. But then we had what they called the Douglas association here that honored the graduates you know and they, we had a prom then too from that, from the Douglas. And you were awarded, you know, for your standings and your class in all and I happened to have been the girl who was the outstanding one. It made me feel good and I got an award from an undertaker, and the woman's name slips my mind now, but she was from Philadelphia, and I think it was something like five or ten dollars, to me, that was a whole lot."

CD: "Exactly, so you got nice recognition at school"

EC: "Well in our little Douglas association. Not over there. Yeah"

TW: "So you were doing a lot of school work in high school, it sounds like?"

EC: "Yeah, yeah. I was all right. I do not think I was outstanding but they said I was."

TW: "Did you work? After school did you work?"

EC: "Well yeah, what was that?"

RC: "NYA."

EC: "NYA. National Youth Association had a thing. And we corrected papers for the teachers, you know, and did other, cleaned the black boards. And uh. And we got for each month we got six dollars and you know that was big money to us. We looked forward to that, but I did that."

RC: "That was brought on by FDR."

EC: "Yeah, uh-huh. Because I was in high school when I started doing that."

RC: "Yeah, we both went and did that."

EC: "The teachers, you know, and I had pets that I liked to work for and do ..."

CD: "Um, do you, did you participate in any other activities outside of school such as church groups or choir or any sport activities?"

EC: "Well yeah, well yeah, church to even this day, I'm active with the flower club and the different organizations"

and I've been an usher, you know, and I've been very active, you know."

CD: "Looking back at your childhood what do you feel is your most memorable experience in childhood. I know that's a tough question but..."

EC: "Yeah that is, you know, because it would be so many, I don't. I wouldn't say that I have anything that would be the mot, you know. And when, when, and looking back and getting up as when I can remember and met him when I was in the eighth grade, was deathly afraid of him. It was the man who now, it was the mayor of Steelton, would, he was a little better off, I guess, his father had, and he would get penny grab bags and then give me grab bags and he would come along and I was afraid of him and said, girl give me some of that candy. And I, Bus would give me the candy, and turned around and give it to him and Bus would be afraid to say to him don't take it. I will always remember, he don't like for me to tell that, but that's the truth."

CD: "So when did it come about that you were not afraid of him anymore and you two.."

EC: "Well, after I went on, and then he left Steelton school after we transferred. See, you had the transfer exercises and then uh, that, they did those transfers together, weren't, they called us over there then to transfer us from there. We didn't have separate, you know, that was together, and then uh, I don't know. When I was in my senior year, he had been out and gone around and we met at a dance, wasn't it, yeah, up at the old Madird ballroom. They used to have 12 to, 12, 12 midnight to six, five o'clock in the morning."

RC: "Dances."

EC: "And uh-huh."

RC: "They had big name bands"

EC: "Duke Ellington, Count Basie, uh-huh, all them big bands."

RC: "Cab Calloway and all them."

EC: "uh-huh."

TW: "Really?"

RC: "We used to go up there"

EC: "You see, these bands would come through here and this was like a rest stop and a practice to them more or less. And they'd play and we would have a good time and then... And what would it, it would cost a \$1.10."

RC: "And that was \$1.10 on the 12 to 5 and \$.85 from 9 to 2."

EC: "And there we were, we'd be hustlin around, begging a nickel here and a dime there, saving our money up, you know, to get ready to go to this dance. Cause we'd know a month in advance so you had a whole month to get the money."

CD: "Wow that sounds great."

EC: "See we had nothing handed to us. Your parents... My dad, when he retired from the steel mill he made \$44 a month. And the rent was \$10, I think, this was for a house that didn't, that just had the rooms in it but didn't have running water or anything like that, we had the pump outside. You know, It was rural, very. You know, but what with it all I think I have done well. And now all my people are gone, all of em."

CD: "Your whole family?"

EC: "My whole family. I've got some nieces now and some cousins but I'm the last one of that Hill strain."

CD: "Where originally is your family from?"

EC: "My dad was from Conestoga, down around Lancaster, in Lancaster County. My mother was Luray Virginia, she came here, as uh, I think, she said she was 15 or 16 when she came here, with her mother. And they settled down on Adams Street. And then she progressed from there, cause she married very young, married my father, very you know, young."

CD: "So you two, got together, senior year in high school?"

EC: "Yeah."

CD: "What did you do after high school?"

EC: "Well, I, after high school what did I do? In between that I did private family work, you know, like going up Second Street and with the Jewish people, you know, and I did that for a while. And then I went to Middletown when the war broke out, see then, I worked down there for a while. And..."

CD: "What did you do there? EC: On the base."

EC: "Uh, I did office supplies, I did the invoices that sent overseas. And it was an experience, and then it was money, but then, it was good. Then, then in between time I married. And this, it wasn't with Pep. But then after a while it meshed right back in. So I was always say that it was God's will that I marry him and then, I started, we started and been together ever since. We have twins that are fifty... they will be fifty two this year and my daughter lives with us here. She's forty some, isn't she. Forty two, forty three, I don't know which and then I have younger son who is in Savannah Georgia, the twins are somewhere I guess in Atlanta, I don't see them, uh but the one, uh, the youngest boy is Savannah, he is about thirty nine, yeah."

CD: "Great."

TW: "When did you get married? What year?"

EC: "Uh, yeah, what year? Fifty four? The twins were seven years old. Fifty four. yeah. (Mr. Culpepper says something that is not distinguishable) Fifty two okay"

CD: "'So you were married once before?"

EC: "Uh-huh"

CD: "And when was that?"

EC: "When I was a fool. I was a young, you know, and I don't know, we had some words, or some and I started dating this other guy but it never worked, you know. I was young. Young and foolish."

CD: "How long did that last?"

EC: "oh not too very long, I married in September, at the end of September I think and that Thanksgiving I was back home with my mom."

RC: "Yeah, but... but how much longer until you divorced?"

EC: "Yeah, well.."

RC: "About two years?"

EC: "Yeah, eh, eh I would say two, about two years."

TW: "Looking, looking at the way your children grew up, and the world they grew up in, what kind of differences did you see?"

EC: "EH! Oh Man!"

TW: "I know there ... Let's see if I can rephrase this a bit differently"

EC: "When you ask me a question like that, nothing like that, nothing. Like it is now when, this, that's going on now was slower with me bringing the children up. Understand me, it was a little slower, I could see the pace, you could see the pace moving up. You know, it, it even got... then when I went to school the teachers paddled you. Then they sent the note home to ya and you got one. They better not touch em now, they got a law. There is no respect."

RC: "Well, it is so much different."

EC: "It, it's, it's, see this is what upsets me. You know, that I think that when you forget discipline and respect, you've lost the battle and that's what's wrong here, but what can you do, you, the child.. I've got a granddaughter here and she's up stairs there. And if I'd slap her, she could call 911 and they'd lock me up. I've seen it happen to a friend of mine."

CD: "So, um, respect and discipline were main things that you instilled in your children?"

EC: "YES, Yes. Now if they strayed away from it, it wasn't because they didn't know, you know and that's the truth. And one thing I can say with my daughter here now, she, she knows and I've heard her say to her daughter, my mom did the same thing for me and it didn't kill me and your going to listen. And I find that you can do more with a child like that, but if you don't teach them respect how, you know when a child comes into the world, they don't know a thing, so you have to train them. Now, sometimes you train them and after they get to be a man then they don't do like you think that they should do. I used to think that it was my fault, but it is not my fault. You know."

CD: "Society has changed."

EC: "Yeah, yeah, exactly. My one son, the youngest one, had a good job at the state, lost that job through this dope and stuff, they sent him to Wrightsville to clear out, the state did. Right out and right back into the same thing again. Come here after a while and told my husband and I the problem here now is, cause we're talking about how the neighborhood has changed, you know, you are almost afraid to sit on your porch at night. But the trouble is that you got to get out and take your neighborhood back and I said to him, what do you mean take my neighbor..., my life ain't worth a plug nickel out there. Oh yeah, you get out there and do... I said, for something like you and the rest of them caused the do. You know, that doesn't make sense. But, here, we are two old folks, caught in this mess now."

RC: "The world's moving too fast."

EC: "It is."

RC: "People in the world are moving too fast."

EC: "It truly is, it makes me feel bad."

RC: "I don't know, they think that what they are doing is right on top. And I'm going to tell you right now, I won't live to see it but all this computer stuff and all this crap that they got on the net, is going to be a demise for people living in this country. EC: yeah RC: it's, it's no good, it is going to come to no good."

EC: "You even got no privacy any more..."

RC: "You see what happen to the thirty nine people that killed themselves, they were computer freaks. And they in breathing something weird."

TW: "Yeah."

EC: "So you know, it's just, I don't know."

RC: "But this town.."

EC: "That's what I am trying to do, is good as ever."

RC: "This town don't ever change... This town is almost like when were going to school."

EC: "yeah, but you got good people in this town, I got friends, I got both, you know. I do, I got out to restaurants, and you know that for yourself..."

RC: "You meet people that you know."

EC: "They glad to see ya, hug ya, ... I am picked on up here in this neighborhood. My best friend now is the DA uptown. And people hate the law. Well, it's good people."

CD: "Are you still friends with anyone you grew up with, are a lot of people still here that were in the community when you were growing up?"

EC: "Quite a few, there is quite a few. Yeah, we always have what they call, what they first called it was the lower end reunion, but now it is the Steelton reunion and I meet up with a lot of them. You know you get people who come will come back for those things, you know. Yeah in fact, the, the one year when they had it, they I honored my husband and I, they said for the east side, they always called this, you know. But I told them that I was insulted, I come from a bottom down on the lower end of Steelton. See they had the West side, the East side and the lower end of Steelton, you know. And that was thing, they always used to tell us when we lived on this side, don't go over on that West side and them people were just as good as we were but they said it was bad over there. I guess they did that... "

TW: "who? EC: huh,""

TW: "Go ahead, keep going"

EC: "I guess it was bad over on the west side to them and then they just didn't want us to go. I never found nothing bad over there, you know, any worse than were I was."

TW: "So who lived on the West side?"

EC: "People, regular, just people... a mix of people just like I was explaining down there. Uh-huh, all sorts were over there. And then they had the hotel over there and the school, one of the schools was over there. The elementary school.. but then the school was over there and the children, the black ones, had to come up here to Hygienic. Cross Front Street and all, you know and they had a school over here that was segregated, that's all and we... that was their school. There was no protesting or anything like that."

CD: "So after you two got married did you work at all or did you stay home with the children?"

EC: "I did thirty five years. First I was in Middletown... CD: Right. EC: then, then when I started on at the state I worked there for thirty five years and then I retired in 82. December 82."

CD: "What did you do for the state?"

EC: "I first started out as a junior clerk , then I went into the key punching field and I ended up key punching for a while and then uh, supervising them and then I went to fiscal assistant, I went to the liquor control board then. I started out civil service commission and then went health and welfare and ended up at liquor control board."

CD: "Out of all those positions which ones, which one did you enjoy the most? Did you enjoy your work in general?"

EC: "I, I'd enjoyed it in general, I don't know which one would be, I think, I think I enjoyed the one at the liquor board the most because I knew that time wasn't long for me. And when they sent , they always send you a list around of your retirement and the money you put in and how many years and they said you have now reached the thirty five years and I said good bye to them. I'm gone. And at first I didn't want to go and then he was retiring and then I thought I'm going to get up and I went and signed the papers and it was a good thing. I beat the system. Cause they hope when you retire that you don't even get that first check and they have sent me quite a few."

CD: "Wonderful."

EC: "Yeah."

CD: "Did you, uh, find that, at all, during that time you were working that there were any problems due to gender relations or race relations, within your job."

EC: "Oh yeah! Yeah, and it affected me too. I've seen them promote over me, you know. And uh, this was before the union got in there, I didn't do too much moving till AFSME (?) took over, you know with the state. And AFSME as far as I'm concerned, was the one that changed things you know and set up standards that, even though you know, didn't care what color you were, if you were the person for the job that then you got it, you know. But I know I've been, was overlooked a many of time, you know. But uh, I mean I just went with the flow you know, because when you are in a supervisory capacity you too much a headache anyhow, so it would be better to sit back."

CD: "So you have four children total?"

EC: "Uhuh"

CD: "And Do you feel you have close relationships? I know you said you don't talk to the twins that much"

EC: "Now listen, now I love my children, but I don't know what happened to those boys. they got too much I think when they were little because my family, "Oh twins!", I had two sisters that just showered on them. It took twenty two men to play with one football, they had two footballs, what one got the other one got, and I think that they got a little bit spoiled."

CD: "Did they grow up around here?"

EC: "Yeah we took care of them, until I had to tell the one, how old was Bob when I told him that I couldn't keep taking' care of them, he didn't want to work...he was grown almost."

RC: "He was a man"

EC: "Robert was doing two jobs, and one was at Sears Robuck company, he worked at the gas company, UGI, he said to his dad ' Oh that little measly job, like that, I wouldn't have a job...' , he didn't have no job.. (laughs it off)... but I don't know what happened to and , ah, and they left, I haven't heard from them in I don't know good couple of years..."

RC: "Three or four years..."

EC: "I guess he's all right , I tell you where I have them, at the foot of the cross and I let god take of them my...I tell everybody that. And that helped me, because there for a while I was getting neurotic behind it, I was saying what did I do wrong, but I didn't do nothing wrong...cause Joyce is still here, she's has got sense enough to stay, but

she's good though, you know I'm not a religious fanatic but I say god specializes and he knows. That girl works for the state, all I have to call and say your dad's sick, or he call and say I'm sick and she's home..."

CD: "How many children does she have?"

EC: "The one girl Megan, she's eleven."

CD: "How about any other grand children?"

RC: (Laughs loud in the background).

EC: "I've got plenty of them but I don't know them. (Here she goes on to point out pictures on the wall, explaining pictures of children they have no connection to but through blood. One mother of their grand children doesn't allow the children to come around to see their grandmother.)"

CD: "Do you have a full house during the holidays or is it just the four of you?"

EC: "We use to, you know when my brother lived they 'ed come and wed have some people. Sometime they came here about five six, seven years ago... when Bob and Jeff, or when Jeff brought Bob up here, then..."

RC: "I think it was four years ago... it will be this Christmas, they came up from..."

EC: "I thought it was longer than that?"

RC: "No, no it was about four years ago they came from Atlanta but we haven't seen them since."

EC: "See they don't set too much horses with their dad cause their dad fuses at them about not sending me a card, not coming to see me, At least you could send your mother a card, and they don't, but I've learned to live with it, I know it wasn't anything I've done..."

TW: "What kind of role has the church played in your life?"

EC: "Good role, good role for me."

TW: "From your childhood did the view change at all? In anytime?"

EC: "How do you mean with me, at how I felt..."

TW: "How did you view religion as a child ...how did you view god and did it change?"

EC: "I knew it was supreme being and I knew I had to go to church, and I think with my mother saying 'Yes you have to go that that instilled that in me, and I automatically went. Even to young, when I going to high school I went. And then we started with first Baptist on Adams street, the little church there, I use to come up in the evening to go to the BYPU where the young ones meet, the young Christians. And everybody met at first Baptist, everyone looked forward to that you know, as I went on I belonged to Mt. Zion another Baptist Church but then I picked up with first Baptist because the boys started going down there, see, cause they were signing in the choir and doing, and the baby sitter said to me 'You need to come down there and here them boys' and I felt bad about the thing so I started to go but as soon as I started to go they flipped out and stopped going. But, Joyce and I continued on, and Ronnie went for along time too but stopped, but Joyce and I still, we went out here when they built the new church, and I like to go I have been through how many Rev. Green and Rev. Bartley..."

(Their Grand Daughter Enters the Room and Continues On To talk about her involvement in the Flower Club at Church, how they do little fund raisers, she also goes on to explain that they are having a hard time recruiting any younger members to help out with the Flower Club and she doesn't know what the older people are going to do when there are no young people to take their place. Christen asks her what she does on her spare time. Mrs.

Culpepper tells us that she does crossword puzzles and that every Thursday she goes to the hair dresser. After this we end the interview and we pickup the recording of conversations held after the formal interview is over. Some very potent information is attained in this informal interview.)

EC: "In one sense I feel this way about how things are moving, I'm not worried about dying, To me because it doesn't look like anything is getting any better, I don't what the answer would be, it sad, now see here I'm talkin to two good ones here, but look at all bad ones running the street that's not good, and didn't nobody push you into to doing that you wanted to that yourself, and I admire you, and that's why I said to you, when you asked would I talk to you, I said yes, and I don't know whether any of them other people said they would talk to you, did they?"

CD: "Yes, they did."

EC: "They did...?"

CD: "Yes a few people who came to the back of the church said they would talk to us. I don't know what some of their names are. Tom here is trying to get an interview with Rev. Cooley."

EC: "Oh he ain't from Steelton! No he don't know anything about Steelton...he's out of North Carolina..."

RC: "Your going to have a hard time...I'll say it this way, he might let you do it because he..."

TW: "He said he'd do it, I talked to him the day we visited"

RC: "But I bet, he said he'd get back to you though right?"

TW: "Yeah"

RC: "Yeah, well those are his most famous words, 'That he will get back to you'"

TW: "I kind of expected that, actually I did'nt expect anything really..."

RC: "I feel this way about it, if he has no intentions he should tell you, yes or know..."

EC: "Yeah but, he can't help you if your talking about Steelton, that man doesn't know nothin about Steelton."

RC: "He doesn't know nothing about Steelton, he's been at our church seventeen years, but tell you the truth there are a lot of people at the church he doesn't know anything about, he doesn't know anything about."

EC: "I think he's been in this house once..."

RC: "But like I say I mean now here you are, he's a man that he's always talkin about young people and education and college and this that and the other thing. Then this what I'm saying he should of squared with you and said I don't have time or I will do this, and be truthful about it or whatever..."

EC: "Well, you know he can't help him in what he wants."

TW: "See the thing is with our project we are going to concentrate mostly on this interview, and I have another project that's an Anthropology project, and I can really select anything that I want to do, and I felt that just from what he said in his sermon, because he has an opportunity to be a leader in this community which most priest and ministers have in communities to be leaders..."

RC: "If they want to be!"

TW: "If they want to be, and I wanted to see, I'm not saying he's going to give me positive results, I wanted to see where he stands and if he is possibly a good leader or isn't, he could, that's what I'm trying to find about him, and so, its not so much well what you can give me, I'm just trying to find out what he's doing as a leader, what his

responsibilities are as a leader, and if he's doing that."

CD: "It sounds like from this that you don't necessarily feel that he is...do you feel that he is a leader within the community."

EC&RC: "No he's not a leader"

EC: "And he knows that I have said that to him, and I speak out to him."

RC: "Anything that I say to him, I'm not afraid to say to him, he's not leader, he's really not a leader, because we're church members there and a lot of things he should do he doesn't do, you know like visit the sick and things like that, and I think that if your a pastor or a minister in a neighborhood, OK you take care or you look after your people that are in your congregation, but he doesn't do that, I have heard him say, that 'Don't look to me to come to visit you if your sick just because I'm your pastor, the Deacons will so it" but there are a lot of old people that want to see the pastor they don't want to see the Deacons."

TW: "Because they feel he's an important person to see..."

RC: "Right, right, exactly"

EC: "We had to elderly that lived over there, and they were like mother and father to 'pap' and I, and they were my parents friends, they were old, this lady I would say to her 'What can I do for you Ms. Clark?' , 'Oh, nothing, if you could just get the pastor, I'd like to meet the pastor.' And I went to that man and I told him, and he said, ' Well all right Ill go see her' and he came, and I walked over there with him, and they talked and she was elated, but do think he came again, that poor soul she..."

RC: "They only wanted him to come give the communion..."

EC: "They have wanted him to give the communion but the Deacons give the communion. See these other pastors that we had, if you were sick, they came to the home to the sick, but not him, to give the communion to sick, and that's what they wanted..."

RC: "This is why I'm saying you'll never get him pinned down"

EC: "This is why its hard for me with him, I have a pastor, I have a couple of them, one of them is a Methodist, and the other one is Baptist."

RC: "Where did you meet him?"

TW: "We met him at the church the day we came."

EC: "You were off sick, he was in the hospital..."

TW: "I was pretty interested that he had a new residence, that, you know it just sounds like that he has a nice new house..."

RC: "Well that's what's the matter with him..."

TW: " I was just interested in the way it relates to, If you, the way you say things are going in this community, they're still the same but they're not getting any better, and you said that, people did help you, the pastors did come see you when the community was really tight, so what does that mean now that you have some one who is from North Carolina, that's been here for seventeen years and he's really not doing much for the community."

EC&RC: "Yeah, that's right?"

TW: "So what does that do for the youth? and how much does it insure that this community is going to be stable?"

EC&RC: " That's right, that's true."

RC: " The truthful thing about it, in our church, the youth in our church is very, very small, and I don't know what there going to do but they better find some young people."

EC: "Cause it's the older people that are holding the church up."

RC: " Because the older people are dying off, and the church has got to continue, course I'm a believer in God and the Lord, he's not going to let the church go down, someone is going to lift it up, somebody is going to bring it up, because right now, we need young people."

EC: " See because we had a split, we had a minister that wasn't doin, I loved him, but he wasn't doin, and we had a split, And when he went some left, and we were in dire straights, because that same man, Bartley, that was his vision for that church out there, and he brought it through, he was spunky enough to do that. He had charisma about himself cause he could get money out of a brass monkey and Mr. Culpepper. He could talk to you and make you so ashamed, and he did do but see he went out on the deep end.."

RC: "He let the world get to him, you hear about these preachers that go back out in to the world, and that's what happened to him, and the world got to him."

EC: "That' sad, but see, the people loved him even though we had to say hey your not going to stop, we got to get rid of you, were losin this church, he was different, than this man that came in, he wasn't that man, in his heart, I think he saw fame or somthin else..."

RC: " It was something that he had never had in his life he never has had a church this big."

At this point both Mrs. and Mr. Culpepper tell us that Rev. Cooley has a large state position as the head of the Chaplency of Pennsylvania. They really feel that this is his problem. They say that he has said that Rev. Cooley considers his job in Steelton as his part time job. They also express that not everyone comes to the church for the right reasons, and that because they worship the pastor instead of worshipping god they won't say anything to pastor. Also with Deacons are on the side of the Pastors.

EC: "See and older people like me and 'pap', when we came up in the church, when the twelve deacons where part of it, they ruled the pastor, the kept him in toe, but see the way he has it he keeps the Deacons in toe, and that's wrong, but you get these younger people that don't know that and they think that is all right with them."

RC: " The pastors want to rule the church, and the deacons do too, the pastors and the deacons together want to rule the church, and that's not the way it supposed to be, it used to be run like a community and everybody work together, that's they way it used to be."

EC: "Its this modernization, (Everything's a business,) and running a church that's not a business, and you don't run a church with to have a big a balance on one of these things that the federal governments is going to get in on one of these days... will all that money you feed the poor, they do that once a year, they give them Thanksgiving meal once a year, but they can't live off of one meal a year."

RC: "We have a lot of street people here, if it wasn't for the missionaries, and the salvation army, some of those people would be up the creek, these organizations help them...we don't have enough people at this church that will go to these meetings and speak up."

After this Mr. Culpepper goes on talk to about the structure of how things get relegated in the church by the people who make decisions. We went on talk about the town council and they told some horror stories about how they didn't have the power or the money to make the system work.

They also have a hard time adding on to the house, and keep the area clean because they can't do anything because everything they want to do violates city codes.

RC: " This neighborhoods gone, this neighborhood use to be nice, up to about ten years ago...lived here since 1959...and this neighborhood is gone. They rent these houses to people on section eight, and all that stuff. People coming in here out of projects, and their dealing drugs, and their beating up people and their shooting guns, tell you the truth, its awful it really awful, because at one time this community use to be really nice, we used to sit out side talk to everyone, now you don't know anybody, I don't know how it was when you came in here did you see kids standing on the corner, yeah, and a lot of them are strangers aren't from around this neighborhood because they come around just because of what's going on around here."

We continued a casual conversation and then finished up the interview and left.