

Mill Valley Oral History Program

*A collaboration between the Mill Valley
Historical Society and the Mill Valley
Public Library*

LORRAINE GODDARD

An Oral History Interview Conducted by Carol Wilson

TITLE: Oral History of Lorraine Goddard

INTERVIEWER: Carol Wilson

DESCRIPTION: Transcript, 8 pp

INTERVIEW DATE: October 20th, 1997

Lorraine Goddard was born Lorraine Roux at her family home at 35 Sycamore Avenue in 1914. Her parents, George Francois Roux and Mary Agnes Johnson, immigrants from France and Ireland, respectively, met in San Francisco. Lorraine attended Park School, Summit School, and Old Mill School. She graduated from Tamalpais High School and majored in French and History at Dominican College. She also studied at the University of California, Berkeley. Lorraine married Dr. Tom Goddard in September of 1941 at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church. In this oral history, she recounts growing up in the Mill Valley school system, the various stores around town, life during World War II, and raising her son John and daughter Marne.

© All materials copyright Mill Valley Public Library. Transcript made available for research purposes only. All rights are reserved to the Mill Valley Public Library. Requests for permission to quote for publication should be addressed to the:

Lucretia Little History Room
Mill Valley Public Library
375 Throckmorton Avenue
Mill Valley, CA 94941

Oral History of Lorraine Goddard

Index

- 35 Sycamore Ave...p.1
Bennett family...p.1
Boyle Park...p.8
Craft, Eddie...p. 4
Crookedest Railroad...p.5
Family
 Goddard, Dr. Tom
 (husband)...p.5-6
 Goddard, John (son)...p.6-7
 Goddard, Marne
 (daughter)...p.6, 7
 Johnson, Mary Agnes
 (mother)...p.1, 2
 Roux, George Francois
 (father)...p.2
 Wilcox, Sara
 (granddaughter)...p.6, 7
Father Cleary...p.6
Finn, John...p.2
Gilmore family...p.1
Larkspur Bowl...p.5
Levi Strauss & Company...p.7
Mill Valley
 Changes...p.7-8
 Establishments
 Albert's Department
 Store...p.7
 Allen's Grocery Store
 ...p.4
 Bennet's Variety
 Store...p.7
 Brown's Furniture...p.7
 Craft's Bakery...p.5
 Mosher's Shoe
 Store...p.7
 Hanley's Shoe Store...p.7
 Hub Theater...p.4
 Lenhardt's Boarding
 House...p.2
 Lockwood's
 Pharmacy...p.7
 Mayer's Department
 Store...p.7
 Meier's Bakery...p.5
 Melody Shop...p.7
 Men's Shop...p.7
 R & M's Dress
 Shop...p.7
 Rutherford's
 Pharmacy...p.7
 Sequoia Theater...p.4
 Tiemann's Hardware...p.7
 Varney's Hardware...p.7
 Mill Valley Film Festival...p.8
 Mill Valley Historical Society...p.8
 Muir Woods...p.5
 Newport Beach...p.7
 Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic
 Church...p.6
 Pearl Harbor...p.5, 7
 Rudder family...p.1
 Schallock family...p.1
 Schools
 Dominican College...p.3-4
 Marin Catholic High
 School...p.7
 Mt. Carmel School...p.7
 Old Mill School...p.2
 Park School...p.2
 Tamalpais High School...p.3
 Strauss, Mr...p.4
 Summit School...p.2
 Sweetwater...p.7
 U. S. Air Force...p.5
 University of San Francisco...p.7
 Woods, E.E...p.3
 World War II...p.7

Oral History of Lorraine Goddard
October 20th, 1997

Editor's note: The transcript below is not a verbatim match of the oral history interview. For the full, unedited interview, refer to the recording.

Carol Wilson: I am Carol Wilson and today is October 20th, 1997, and I am at the home of Lorraine Goddard at 100 Del Casa Drive here in Mill Valley. Lorraine is a lifelong resident of Mill Valley.

Carol Wilson: Where were you born, Lorraine?

Lorraine Goddard: Here in Mill Valley at 35 Sycamore Avenue. The number was 524 then, they changed the numbers. I don't know how it got to be 524 because the numbering should have started at Blithedale. I never forgot that.

Carol Wilson: And tell me your family name, your maiden name.

Lorraine Goddard: Roux. My maiden name was Lorraine Roux.

Carol Wilson: And the house at 35 Sycamore was the family home?

Lorraine Goddard: Yes, they built it.

Carol Wilson: Do you remember who built the house? Who the architect was?

Lorraine Goddard: My mother was the architect. Well, they had a builder, but she planned the whole house, and it is a beautifully planned house.

Carol Wilson: It is a beautiful house. Do you remember the builder?

Lorraine Goddard: No, I don't. After all, that was a long time ago.

Carol Wilson: What year did they build the house?

Lorraine Goddard: About 1913, and I was born there in the house in 1914.

Carol Wilson: Do you remember who the neighbors were in those early days?

Lorraine Goddard: My first memory would be of the people next door, the Gilmores and then, two houses down were the Bennetts, then the next door were the Rudders. I'm talking about when I was maybe 7 or 8 years old. Across the street were the Schallocks.

Carol Wilson: What brought your parents to Mill Valley?

Lorraine Goddard: They met in San Francisco and were married there in 1898 and they just liked Mill Valley. They had made many trips over here, so they moved to a boarding house on Miller Avenue. It was where John Finn's income tax office is now. That was the Lenhardt's Boarding House. They moved there in 1898.

Carol Wilson: What was your father's name?

Lorraine Goddard: George Francois Roux.

Carol Wilson: What was your mother's maiden name?

Lorraine Goddard: Mary Agnes Johnson.

Carol Wilson: Do you know how your parents met?

Lorraine Goddard: No, they were both working in the city. My father came here alone from France when he was 19 years old. And she came over as a young child from Dublin, Ireland, with her family. And he was working in the city in an importing-exporting business. My mother was a secretary. I don't know how they met. They never told me.

Carol Wilson: How big was your family when you lived on Sycamore? How many children were there?

Lorraine Goddard: There were three girls and a boy.

Carol Wilson: And were they all born in that house?

Lorraine Goddard: I was born in that house in the upstairs bedroom. My older sister, the one next to me, was born just two houses down in the Bennett house. My family lived there at the time while they were building the house. And my brother and oldest sister were born down on Miller, just a block away.

Carol Wilson: Where did you go to grammar school?

Lorraine Goddard: I went to Park School and Summit and Old Mill.

Carol Wilson: How did you get there? Did you walk?

Lorraine Goddard: Oh, I walked. My mother didn't drive. We didn't even have a car then. Later on, they had a car and my father drove. However, my mother never learned how to drive.

Carol Wilson: Did your father work in San Francisco?

Lorraine Goddard: Yes, he took the train and ferry to work.

Carol Wilson: Do you remember what your interests were in school?

Lorraine Goddard: Grammar school: I used to love to play volleyball during recess. We had no teams then.

Carol Wilson: What high school did you attend?

Lorraine Goddard: Tamalpais High School.

Carol Wilson: Do you remember any clubs there? Were you interested in athletics?

Lorraine Goddard: No, I hated athletics then. I did everything I could to get out of it. I took dancing. They had a dancing teacher there and we were allowed to do that instead. We did have to do some athletics. I did swimming.

Carol Wilson: The pool was there then?

Lorraine Goddard: Yes, they had the pool inside the gym. I remember the punishment at that time. If you had any infractions, you had to mend the bathing suits. The school had the bathing suits and so if you got into trouble you had to sew buttons on the suits. And, of course, we had to wear uniforms. Middy blouse and skirt.

Carol Wilson: Do you remember who the principal was when you were there?

Lorraine Goddard: Mr. E.E. Woods.

Carol Wilson: Mr. Woods was the principal? My, he was the principal for a long time.

Lorraine Goddard: Oh, a long, long time. He was principal all the time I was there and a long time before that, and, I guess a long time after.

Carol Wilson: I understand that he lived almost on campus.

Lorraine Goddard: Yes, he did. His house was near the main building.

Carol Wilson: Did the students from all over Marin County attend Tamalpais High School?

Lorraine Goddard: Yes, they came from all over the county. The students from Stinson Beach and Tiburon came by bus, and the students from San Anselmo and those areas came by train. But the locals had to walk.

Carol Wilson: After graduation from high school, where did you go?

Lorraine Goddard: I went to Dominican College.

Carol Wilson: What did you study there?

Lorraine Goddard: Well, I majored in French and history, and later Spanish. I went the fifth year to get my secondary teaching credential, and then I went to U.C. Berkeley for a year.

Carol Wilson: Did you become a teacher?

Lorraine Goddard: I did some practice teaching and substitute teaching, but I never became a full-time teacher. At that time, if you wanted to be a high school teacher, you had to leave the community and go someplace else, to some small high school in the country, and I didn't want to do that so I gave up the idea.

Carol Wilson: Did you have another job?

Lorraine Goddard: No, I never worked.

Carol Wilson: I'm going to ask you a bit about growing up in Mill Valley and what you remember of the town when you were a child. Do you remember the stores that were in town then?

Lorraine Goddard: Sure, I remember Allen's Grocery Store at the corner of Bernard and Throckmorton where The Frog and the Peach restaurant is now. That grocery store was up some steps. And Mr. Allen and his wife ran it. And next door was Mr. Strauss the butcher, or maybe he was two doors up, I'm not sure. And across the street were the pool hall and the ice cream store. And there was the Hub Theater on the corner of Madrone and Throckmorton.

Carol Wilson: Were movies shown at the Hub Theater?

Lorraine Goddard: Oh, yes. I used to go all the time. They had silent movies with Charlie Chaplin, William Hart, and others.

Carol Wilson: That was before the Sequoia Theater, of course.

Lorraine Goddard: Yes, the Sequoia wasn't built until the late twenties. 1929, 1930 — I'm not sure when.

Carol Wilson: Do you remember any town services that were available then? Like taxis, grocery deliveries?

Lorraine Goddard: Oh, I remember deliveries. We had a bread man, a milkman, a vegetable man. They all came to the house with deliveries. I remember the name of the bread man, Eddie Craft.

Carol Wilson: Was there a bakery that he delivered for?

Lorraine Goddard: Yes, the bakery was in downtown Mill Valley on Miller Avenue next to Lockwood's. It was Craft's Bakery. There was a bakery there for years and years and they used to send out their truck with their baked goods. Later on it became Meier's Bakery.

Carol Wilson: Was the library there when you were little?

Lorraine Goddard: Yes, it was on Lovell at the end of Madrone Avenue. I don't know when it was built, but I remember it.

Carol Wilson: When you were young, did you do much hiking to Muir Woods, or to Stinson Beach or, perhaps, to the mountain?

Lorraine Goddard: Occasionally, but not too much.

Carol Wilson: How about the Larkspur Bowl. Did you go dancing there?

Lorraine Goddard: Oh, yes. Of course, I was older then and I had a boyfriend who had a car and we drove. Actually, the Larkspur Bowl was there so long that I used to go there with my husband in the '40s. I don't know when it closed, probably in the late '40s.

Carol Wilson: Do you remember the "Crookedest Railroad"?

Lorraine Goddard: Of course. However, I never rode on it. I've lived here all my life and never rode the railroad. Isn't that terrible! I don't know why. We used to hike up to West Point.

Carol Wilson: I know that your husband was Dr. Tom Goddard. When were you married?

Lorraine Goddard: We were married in 1941, in September. And you know what happened three months later? Pearl Harbor.

Carol Wilson: Did your husband go into the service?

Lorraine Goddard: Oh, yes.

Carol Wilson: Did he serve away from the area?

Lorraine Goddard: We were very lucky. When Pearl Harbor happened, he knew he was going to get drafted so he went up to Hamilton Field and signed up in the Air Force. He was trained as a flight surgeon. He was there for two years and then he joined a fighter group and was moved to Santa Rosa training fighter groups. And he was up there for two years so he never got overseas. And we had a wonderful time.

Carol Wilson: How did you happen to meet your husband?

Lorraine Goddard: I hardly remember. His brother Wilson had his practice in Mill Valley and Tom used to come here from Texas in the summer. He was in medical school there. The family is from Texas. And I used to play bridge with Wilson's wife and I think they invited me up to play bridge and I met him there at their house.

Carol Wilson: You said that you were married in 1941. Where were you married?

Lorraine Goddard: At the Catholic Church¹ in Mill Valley. Not the church that is there now, the old one that was in what is now the parking lot.

Carol Wilson: Was Father Leary there then?

Lorraine Goddard: It was Father Cleary. Do you remember him? He frequently had snuff all over his vest?

Carol Wilson: Oh, yes, I do remember him. I don't remember the snuff though. How many children did you have?

Lorraine Goddard: Two. A son, John, and a daughter, Marne. My middle name is Marne as I was born on September 8th, 1914, the day of the battle of the Marne and so we named our daughter Marne.

Carol Wilson: Any grandchildren?

Lorraine Goddard: Just one granddaughter: Marne's daughter, Sara Wilcox.

Carol Wilson: What year did your husband die?

Lorraine Goddard: 1975.

Carol Wilson: I know your son has the music store in downtown Mill Valley. How did he develop his interest in music?

Lorraine Goddard: Actually, he started in when he was twelve years old, buying records. He never did play an instrument, but he just loved the records. Later on when he was in high school he started working at the music store in Mill Valley.

Carol Wilson: There were a number of music stores in Mill Valley, weren't there?

Lorraine Goddard: Well, George Larson had one. Remember the Melody Shop near the Sequoia Theater? Then he sold it to Sarah², I can't think of her last name. And that's

¹ Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church

² Sarah Wilcox

where John used to work. And then she moved to where he is now on Blithedale in one of the stores. He now occupies three stores there. And that's where he started to work when he was in high school.

Carol Wilson: He certainly has made a success of the business. He's very well known.

Lorraine Goddard: He went to college, but he still went back to the record business.

Carol Wilson: Tell me about your daughter, Marne. Does she live nearby?

Lorraine Goddard: Marne lives in Berkeley and she recently retired. She attended school at Mount Carmel and then Marin Catholic and then graduated from USF.³ After she graduated, she thought she would get a job for the summer and went to Levi Strauss. She liked it so much that she stayed there and, after many promotions, she eventually became a computer analyst. She worked there for 25 years and then she got an early retirement just last year, so she's now retired. Levi Strauss is a wonderful company to work for. She is now doing a lot of volunteer work at the school, at the hospital and so forth. And she's raising Sara, her 10-year-old daughter. Sara goes to school in Berkeley; she's in the sixth grade. I should have mentioned that my daughter is a single mother. She's divorced.

Carol Wilson: I would like to ask you a little more about the stores in Mill Valley in the early days that you remember. Was Mill Valley a complete town where you could buy everything that you needed?

Lorraine Goddard: Yes, you could buy everything. There was Albert's Department Store. It became Mayer's after the war. And they had everything. And there was Brown's Furniture, Tieman's Hardware and Varney's Hardware, Lockwood's and Rutherford's Pharmacy. There was everything. There was the R & M Shop where you could buy clothes and the Men's Shop. Now there is nothing. We had dime stores. Bennett's and the smaller one on Throckmorton near where the Sweetwater is now. There was Hanley's Shoe Store and Mosher's Shoe Store, and gas stations on almost every corner.

Carol Wilson: Do you remember much about World War II? About the blackouts that we had?

Lorraine Goddard: Oh sure, I remember after Pearl Harbor my husband going up on the roof looking for Japanese planes. And we had to buy black material to cover the windows, and black shades. And then we were down at Newport Beach. He was in flight surgeons school down there, and that was eerie because the lights were all out. We were by the beach and everything was dark and it was scary. We had to drive at night with dim lights on.

Carol Wilson: Tell me about the shortages during that time? Do you remember difficulty in getting certain things?

³ University of San Francisco

Lorraine Goddard: Yes, of course. We had to have ration cards for butter and sugar and meat, things like that. But it really didn't bother me. Gasoline was short, too. But then it was dark out and you didn't want to go anywhere anyway.

Carol Wilson: What do you think of Mill Valley today? I know you have some pretty firm opinions about that.

Lorraine Goddard: Don't get me started about that. To tell you the truth, I don't go uptown much. I go to the bank, the library, and the video store, and that's about it, because there's no place to shop for me. I don't want any more stuff for my house. You can't find a spool of thread, or hardware, nothing. So why bother? To me it is a shame. But what are you going to do? I do go to the movies, I forgot about that.

Carol Wilson: Have you gone to the film festival that they are having?

Lorraine Goddard: I have, but for the last couple of years I haven't. I hate the crowds. It is just too crowded, and to me, no movie is worth standing in line for. Even if you have a ticket, you have to stand in line to get in. Besides all the movies eventually come to the theaters anyway, the good ones.

Carol Wilson: You are still an ardent movie-goer?

Lorraine Goddard: Oh, yes. And I rent about three or four videos a week, too.

Carol Wilson: You could become a movie critic.

Lorraine Goddard: Well, the boys at the video store always say, "Lorraine, was it a good movie? Did you like it?" They want my say-so on it. So many movies today are not good. However, I do like foreign films.

Carol Wilson: I see your other interest is gardening. Your garden is lovely.

Lorraine Goddard: Yes, but it's too big. I have a gardener who helps.

Carol Wilson: You say that reading is one of your hobbies, too?

Lorraine Goddard: Yes, I enjoy reading. I try to always have a good book.

Carol Wilson: Any other hobbies that you would like to mention?

Lorraine Goddard: Well, my dog. Walking my dog down to Boyle Park or to the golf course. This is a good location for dog walking.

Carol Wilson: Well, thank you, Lorraine, for this interview. Next year's walk for the Mill Valley Historical Society will include Sycamore Avenue and the information that you gave us will help to make the walk more interesting.