Phillips, Alice Twibell

Overview

Alice Twibell Phillips recounts her childhood in Smith's, Massachusetts, where her father, James Twibel, worked in the woolen mill. She describes the town's layout, including the Swift River and the Quabbin Reservoir. Alice shares memories of her family, including her siblings' roles in the mill and their living conditions, such as using a backhouse for sanitation. She also recalls local personalities, like Lucy Reither and Marion Smith, and her experiences with spiritualism and seances. Alice reflects on her marriage, her husband's service in World War I, and her life in Gilbertville, where she still resides.

Outline

Recollections of Life in Smith's Valley

- Audrey Duckert introduces the recording made on September 16, 1976, with Mrs. Alice Twibel Phillips in Gilbertville, Massachusetts.
- Mrs. Phillips discuss a picture of a mill, confirming it is not Smith's mill.
- Mrs. Phillips mentions a grist mill in Enfield and recalls schooling in Enfield from Smith's.
- Mrs. Phillips discuss Lucy Reither and Morgan Reither, noting their connection to Enfield.

Details of Smith's Mill and Family Life

- Mrs. Phillips describes Smith's mill, mentioning Marion Smith and the town's layout.
- She recounts her family's living conditions, including the lack of a toilet and the use of a backhouse.
- Mrs. Phillips shares memories of her siblings and their roles in the mill, including her brothers as weavers and her sisters as menders.
- She describes the Swift River Valley and the Quabbin Reservoir, noting the changes over time.

Community and Social Life in Smith's

- Mrs. Phillips talks about the railroad station in Smith's and the early railroad tracks from Springfield to Athol.
- She recalls the railroad station's location and the local residents, including Mr. Gardner and Ralph Thayer.
- Mrs. Phillips shares stories about her father's gardening and the family's livestock, including pigs and chickens.
- She describes the community water source and the sale of their house to the state for the Quabbin Reservoir.

Personal Anecdotes and Family Stories

- Mrs. Phillips recounts her father's emotional reaction to the sale of their house and the changes made by the state.
- She shares memories of playing in the water pump and her father's drinking habits with Uncle Stewart.
- Mrs. Phillips discusses her brother's pitching skills and her own baseball abilities.
- She describes the flooding of the valley and the current state of the area under the Quabbin Reservoir.

Spiritual and Social Activities

- Mrs. Phillips talks about her involvement in the Methodist Church choir and her experiences with spiritual activities.
- She recalls attending seances with Helen Beatrice Laughlin and Henry W. Smith, a spiritualist.
- Mrs. Phillips shares a prophecy about a red trunk in her attic and her family's history in Ireland.
- She discusses her mother's religious upbringing and her own experiences with prayer meetings and church activities.

Phillips, Alice Twibell

Education and Work Experiences

- Mrs. Phillips recounts her education at Bay Path in Springfield and her subsequent job at the Travelers Insurance.
- She shares a story about her husband, Tom, and their early relationship, including his proposal.
- Mrs. Phillips discusses her work experiences and the challenges of balancing work and personal life.
- She reflects on her family's support and the impact of her education on her career.

Community and Family Connections

- Mrs. Phillips talks about her connections to the local community, including her neighbors and their backgrounds.
- She shares stories about her family's involvement in the mill and their relationships with other local families.
- Mrs. Phillips discusses her experiences with spiritual activities and the influence of spiritualism in the community.
- She reflects on her family's history and the changes they experienced over time.

Personal Reflections and Anecdotes

- Mrs. Phillips shares personal anecdotes about her family, including her father's strictness and her mother's gentleness.
- She recounts her experiences with spiritual activities and the impact of spiritualism on her life.
- Mrs. Phillips discusses her family's history and the challenges they faced, including the sale of their house.
- She reflects on her own experiences and the lessons she learned from her family and community.

Final Reflections and Family Stories

- Mrs. Phillips shares final reflections on her life, including her experiences with spiritual activities and her family's history.
- She recounts stories about her father's gardening and the family's livestock, including the pigs and chickens.
- Mrs. Phillips discusses her involvement in the community and her experiences with local residents.
- She reflects on her family's history and the changes they experienced over time, including the sale of their house and the impact of the Quabbin Reservoir.

Phillips, Alice Twibell

Transcript

Audrey Duckert This is a recording made on September sixteen, nineteen seventy six with Mrs. Alice Twibell Phillips in her home in Gilbertville, Massachusetts. Mrs. Phillips grew up in Smiths, and her father, James Twibell, worked in the woolen mill at Smiths. These are some of her recollections of life in the valley. This is Audrey Duckert.

Alice Twibell Phillips Now the picture. The picture? Yes. The picture. And what have you got there? Oh, she said something about you. And a picture of a mill. Yes. Well. And I wondered if I would know it. Oh, no, that's not where my father worked. He worked in Smith's Mill. And that is not Smith's Mill? No. And I don't know where it is. I really, you know, I wasn't in Enfield very much, although I went to school in Enfield from Smith's. But that is not Smith's Mill. No it isn't. You don't.

Audrey Duckert Think you ever saw.

Alice Twibell Phillips It before? I know I didn't. Well, you know, there was a grist mill in Enfield. Riders. Oh, yes. Did you hear of Rider's, Lucy Rider? I went to school with her. Did you? Yes. Did you know Lucy? No, no, but I've heard about her. Oh, yes. She's a lovely girl. I knew Morgan. Of course. Morgan? Yes. You don't know the mill? No, I do not. But I was wondering if Doctor Seager would have known that mill because he was from Enfield. He perhaps would have. Yes. Well, let's look at this one. Well, I know that it isn't that because. But Smith's. Of course. Please sit down. Yes I will. This isn't on now, is it? Oh, is it really? Sure. Wow. I'll have to be careful with my grammer With a teacher? Don't let.

Audrey Duckert Don't think.

Alice Twibell Phillips About that. Well, there is the mill there.

Audrey Duckert Right in the center.

Alice Twibell Phillips No, it's not in the center. Because this is the little town of Smiths. And there's the Smiths. That was Marion Smith that lived there. She was an old maid, and she moved to Ware and she had the house torn down and brought a great deal of it to Ware.

Audrey Duckert Where is it in Ware?

Alice Twibell Phillips Gosh, I don't know. Fulton Rindge's son lived there. You know, Fulton Rindge he did have the Rindge you know, industries in there, but it's no longer. And his son bought it because she died. And but this is the town of Smiths And my father had that block and there was ten rooms. It was each tenement, as they call it. Some people call them apartments. Is he there? Yes. So I better call an apartment. Sounds better than a tenement.

Speaker 3 What was your father's name?

Alice Twibell Phillips James Twibell. Yes. And we had. I had two brothers and three sisters. So there were six children.

Audrey Duckert What were their names?

Alice Twibell Phillips Well, my brother William, William John and Edwin James. Those were the two boys. And my sister, Margaret and Letitia Eleanor and Elizabeth and me. That's the four. Alice Jane Twibell. And we in those days didn't have a toilet in the house. This this was a shed. The length of the block and each apartment had a shed, and in the shed was a backhouse And I remember the backhouse very well, because as you entered the place there was a wide well wider than this to the backhouse and there was for the three bears, the little, the mama, the mama bear, and papa bear, and the baby bear. Little hole in the little middle sized and the big hole. And I remember. And when you look down there, you looked I thought I was looking to h-e-l-l. It was so far down and smelt like a backhouse would naturally smell. And on the in the backhouse there was a big board there, and on the board was Sears and Roebuck catalog and some corncobs. But we never used the corncobs. I guess my father did. I don't know who did, but somebody did. But I didn't. I know there were two sticks, so that was that. But we did use just the paper catalog to wipe ourselves. Isn't that dirty

when you think of it now and then, too? My mother used to have. She loved to sew, and she. She had a lot of patterns. And as she got through the patterns, they went into the back house. So we were the originators of toilet paper.

Audrey Duckert That's a new one. What did they manufacture in the mill?

Alice Twibell Phillips A woolen goods. And they were noted for their woolen goods. And my two brothers were weavers, and my two sisters were sewers and menders. They called them in those days.

Audrey Duckert What was the name of the mill?

Alice Twibell Phillips Smiths.

Audrey Duckert Oh, Smiths.

Alice Twibell Phillips Smiths. And do you know you've heard of the Swift River? Well, right back of our house. Here was the Swift River. You know, this is a Swift River Valley.

Audrey Duckert Is that the Middle Branch or the West Branch?

Alice Twibell Phillips Don't ask me what branch it is I. North, south, East or west? I don't know one direction from another. But I do know that these hills here, you see. And then over on this side there were hills. And there was a lovely song, the wedding of the valley and the hills, and that happened to be the Quabbin Reservoir.

Audrey Duckert I didn't know that.

Alice Twibell Phillips Yes.

Audrey Duckert Well, what is the name of this hill?

Alice Twibell Phillips Don't ask me, I don't know. You see, I was just, uh. I was just in high school, and and. Oh, here is the. Where's the railroad station?

Audrey Duckert Oh, yes.

Alice Twibell Phillips Yes. Now, let me see the railroad tracks go down there because it goes to Enfield from there, you see. And this Mr. Gardner is now dead from Ware. And that was 1928, March 17th I guess, in 1928, Smith's mass. But the railroad track came from, uh, From Springfield? No, no. From Palmer. No. Where did it come? Well, from Springfield to Athol.

Audrey Duckert That's the Rabbit, isn't it?

Alice Twibell Phillips That's the Rabbit. Gee. But there was no Rabbit there. Anyway, then it came up here and the railroad station was up here somewhere. I don't know where, but it was there anyway. And Mr. Thayer lived there. Ralph Thayer, his son, was a doctor.

Audrey Duckert What was his name?

Alice Twibell Phillips Who?

Audrey Duckert Mr. Thayer?

Alice Twibell Phillips I can't remember his name, to tell the truth. No, I can't. But. But I do know. When we moved to Gilbertville, he was very fond of my father. And he gave my father an angora cat. And, oh, it was beautiful. And it was so proud of its tail. You couldn't touch it. Its tail. Well, you know, when my mother was sick. Considerably. And when she was in bed, of course she was a feeder. You know how cats love their feeder. And you know, it used to go around my mother's bed and cry. Imagine. And it was so beautiful. Well, anyway, my father was a great man for gardens, and he had this place was all gardens down here, and we had two pigs and a lot of chickens.

Audrey Duckert Oh, what kind of chickens?

Alice Twibell Phillips Rhode Island reds. Yes. I've still got my mother's egg basket here. Good. Yes. And and and two pigs. And he killed two pigs a year. And you know what was where they kept them? Where? In the cellar. Yeah. Hanging out. Mhm. Well, and the barrels of potatoes and my father built a bin around the cellar way, a cellar rather. And he had carrots in there and all the vegetables in the ground. In the dirt. Mhm. Did you. That was our grocery store.

Audrey Duckert Sure. Did you call that a cold cellar?

Alice Twibell Phillips Well, it wasn't a warm one. Gee whiz. Was it cold? Woo hoo! Even in the summer, it was cold.

Audrey Duckert This was your house right here.

Alice Twibell Phillips That. Well, no. The Richies lived there. And then a man and his two daughters. A Mr. Lusk and Sarah and Lillian. And then Jim Gilpin and his wife. They had no children. And then we were on the other end, and there was a barrel out there, out there full of water. And we had the best water in the world.

Audrey Duckert Was it from a spring?

Alice Twibell Phillips I don't know whether it was from the Swift River or just from, but it was from someplace. And my father, he spent a lot of money on that place. He had to, you know, put the roof on and paint it and and made it, you know, all he got for it? Six thousand dollars from the state.

Audrey Duckert What happened to it?

Alice Twibell Phillips They used it there when they made the reservoir for their boarders and roomers. And my father went over there one time and he cried his heart out because they had put, you know, they had put all the lower floor in a dining hall and the kitchen and everything, and made my father heart sick, you know, and they'd put a furnace in there. They did a lot of things to it that we didn't have because we just had stoves, you know. So. And, but my father had put water in the place and that cost a lot of money in those days, too, you know. Yes. Because in the other side was a pump. I remember because I remember we kids used to go with the pump and throw water on each other. We really had a ball. Oh, yes we did. And and this Uncle Stuart, you know, my father. Oh, my father and him. One time they used to go down to Enfield, to Galavan's Hotel and get drunk. That's the truth. I'm telling you the bad with the good. And I don't care. My mother always said, Alice, no matter what you do, tell the truth, and then you know the truth, and the truth shall set you free. She was a great old Bible woman. She knew more about the Bible than anybody, I thought. Well, anyway, I've always told the truth, even to my own detriment. And I mean it.

Audrey Duckert Good.

Alice Twibell Phillips So my mother is rooting for me down here. She's in heaven, I know. And so I had a very good father, too. If I do say it. And my brother Jimmy was the greatest pitcher. Oh, he was a very good pitcher. He was known well in Ware too for his pitching. Yes. And he pitched for the Springfield Indians. Semi-Pro. Not pro, but semi-pro. And I used to be a good ballplayer, too, if I do say yes, the fellows were, you know, had the clubs, you know how they do. But to see which one I'd be on, because it was the only girl on the team. But, you know, I could catch very good for my brother because there was all this pitching to me, you know, sometimes hit me, too. But I eventually got the hang of it. And here, this used to be all a lot. And we used to play ball in that lot. Mm. Yes.

Audrey Duckert Now, is this is this area now entirely under water?

Alice Twibell Phillips Oh, definitely. It certainly is. All of it.

Audrey Duckert This hill might, might still be sticking up.

Alice Twibell Phillips Haven't you ever why you came past?

Audrey Duckert Yes, yes I did.

Alice Twibell Phillips But don't you ever. There's a dam there. Oh, it's a beautiful sight.

Audrey Duckert Yes, I know. I know the reservation well, but I'm trying to get a landmark and figure out if I can still see this hill.

Alice Twibell Phillips Well, there is a place over there, you know, that. You go up onto.

Audrey Duckert The Enfield.

Alice Twibell Phillips Lookout and a lookout.

Audrey Duckert Yes, I know that place.

Alice Twibell Phillips Didn't you see the layout there?

Audrey Duckert Mhm.

Alice Twibell Phillips Yes. Well I should think you'd take pictures of that little part so that you could have it. Well listen, I think this would be a good thing for you to take back with you.

Audrey Duckert I think that would be very nice for the museum. We would like very much to have it.

Alice Twibell Phillips And not only that, you see, there was a frame on it, but of course, it's so old that I took the frame off because it was cracked here and there. So you'll have to put a frame on it yourself.

Audrey Duckert That's no problem. We'll do that.

Alice Twibell Phillips I love you, Audrey.

Audrey Duckert Well. Thank you.

Alice Twibell Phillips You're so pretty. Don't you wear your glasses? No. Oh, aren't you blessed? I'd be blind without mine. Well, why don't I do very well as eighty in February?

Audrey Duckert It's hard to believe. It really is. You don't look it.

Alice Twibell Phillips Well, I don't feel it either.

Audrey Duckert And you don't sound it either?

Alice Twibell Phillips No. Well, you know, I've got four grandchildren and one great grandson. He's a year old. They live in Ware.

Audrey Duckert Where Did most of your family come to Gilbertville when you had to leave the valley?

Alice Twibell Phillips We all came. Yes. Of course. I was in my second year in high school here. I graduated fifty one years ago, 1915, nineteen what sixty one years ago did I say fifty?

Audrey Duckert Said fifty one.

Alice Twibell Phillips Oh, well, you know, when you're old, you want to be young, you're young, you want to be old. And I don't know.

Audrey Duckert When did you leave the valley?

Alice Twibell Phillips Well, well, it was well if I. Well, it was in 1912.

Audrey Duckert Well that early.

Alice Twibell Phillips Yes. Well, you did in fifteen. I graduated in 1915, you see.

Audrey Duckert Did you know that early that you were going to have to move, that it was going to be flooded?

Alice Twibell Phillips Of course we did. Why, of course we did. Because my father had gotten the money for the block, and the walkers from Greenwich were the assessors and the assessed whatever they wanted. And

they assessed it very low, because my father spent more than six thousand dollars on the place. Mhm. I should say he did.

Audrey Duckert Did he set up business in Gilbertville? Then who? Your father?

Alice Twibell Phillips No. He didn't. He worked. He got a job over here. I came over with him because I was going to high school. He thought I was somebody. I guess, you know, my brother's children used to think I was wonderful. Then they all got college. Twelve years of college. Is Ellsworth in Springfield? He lives out in Longmeadow with all the millionaires. And they don't know me now. I'm the poor aunt, I mean it. I used to be somebody because I graduated from high school. Then when they went to college, they both graduated from Massachusetts State. Goodbye.

Speaker 4 Can I put it on three?

Alice Twibell Phillips Oh, God bless you. Thank you sir. Now, how much do I owe you?

Speaker 4 Oh, jeez. Do you owe me something?

Alice Twibell Phillips Why? For you work. What's the matter with you?

Speaker 4 Happy birthday.

Alice Twibell Phillips Well, you tell. You can tell him. I'd like to know how much it will be.

Speaker 4 Well. Eleven dollars.

Alice Twibell Phillips Oh, God bless you. Well, that's not too much. Okay. Thank you. Bye bye. You know, he was here before. He's a different one. He's got a Polish name or something. You know, this is Polish town, Gilbertville. Yeah. And I don't know whether you're Catholic or Protestant. You're Protestant. Nothing. Well, I'm a Protestant, and I'm the only Protestant here. Next door is Agnes Belisle. She married a Frenchman, but she. She's, uh. What's that other thing they don't like? She's not. She's Lithuanian. Lithuanians don't want to be called Polish, you know. Did you know that?

Audrey Duckert No I.

Alice Twibell Phillips Didn't. Well she's that. Oh, she's death against Polish. She said no, she says I'm Lithuanian. I says, what's the difference? I said, I'm Scotch-Irish. I'm proud of it. My mother was born in Scotland, my father in Ireland. So. Oh, dear.

Audrey Duckert Where was the church in Smith's or wasn't there one?

Alice Twibell Phillips Oh, there was no church in Smith's. There's the little schoolhouse that I went to school for five years. Who was the teacher? Oh, she was lovely. She's dead now. Uh, Kennedy. Rachel Kennedy. Yes. She was an old maid, and her house was right back there. So all she had to do was walk right to the school. And her sister Mary was a school teacher in Enfield. Mhm. Yes. So Rachel and Mary and they were both old maids but but she was a very good teacher. Mhm. And oh I had Ida Howard in Enfield you know. And after we came here she. Oh this smith, she had two brothers. Yes.

Audrey Duckert Tell me something about her. She sounds she sounds interesting.

Alice Twibell Phillips Yes. But I didn't know her that well. But my aunt did. My Aunt Maggie and Uncle Stuart's wife came, used to come over here to visit with us. And she did. And she says, oh, well, I want you to come down to Ware with me to see, uh, what's his name? I've forgotten what her name was for Smith.

Audrey Duckert Marion.

Alice Twibell Phillips Marion? Yes. Marion. Smith. And she had a mansion there. Oh, this was a mansion, too. And, uh, so we went there, and she was very stiff, you know, one of those kind that you felt as though you had to say just the right thing and look just the right way. And what I said to myself, my daughter was up here this morning, and I, of course, I was in my pajamas and. And I looked like Santa Claus when I go to bed. I'm so cold. And I bought my son in law a hunting suit one time. If you ever saw me and I looked like Satan, it's

bright red like this. But it's. It's padded and it's insulated. And I have two sets of pajamas on me. Two sweaters and a hunting suit and long socks at night, even in the summer.

Audrey Duckert It keeps you warm.

Alice Twibell Phillips It keeps me hot.

Audrey Duckert Woo hoo!

Alice Twibell Phillips Well, what was I saying? I forget what.

Audrey Duckert I was talking about. Marion Smith.

Alice Twibell Phillips Oh, Mary. Yes. Well, she had Ned Smith and another Smith. Well, they were both all bachelors, and Ada Howard was an old maid, and she went with one of them, and they had these big high stepping horses, you know, the old look. And they would he would come for her during the day, you know, and we always could hear the horses and all. But she was a nice teacher, too. She was a very, very good woman. I think most teachers are old maids. Yeah, I mean it. There you are. I don't know how you escaped. Do you have a boyfriend?

Audrey Duckert Not now.

Alice Twibell Phillips Not now. Did you at one time? Yes. Did he marry somebody else? No. Oh, really? Oh.

Audrey Duckert Gee.

Alice Twibell Phillips Well, hitch up to him. No, I can't marry again. My husband was a lawyer, and he wouldn't take a divorce case. And he says, Alice, you know, he says, you can't divorce me. I said, you can't divorce me either. I loved him. That's good. There he was.

Audrey Duckert Oh, very nice looking man.

Alice Twibell Phillips He was born in England. He was. He was a graduate of Trinity College in Hartford and Harvard Law. So he didn't need any recommendation. When you graduated from Harvard, you don't.

Audrey Duckert Did he practice law here in Gilbert?

Alice Twibell Phillips No. Oh, no. He practiced law in Hartford, Connecticut. Yes.

Audrey Duckert So you lived in Hartford?

Alice Twibell Phillips No, we lived in East Hartford. Yes, because it was cheaper.

Audrey Duckert Burnside, I think.

Alice Twibell Phillips Well, it was lovely. And our our landlord was a lord, and she was no pain. (??) Rather, she gave me a pain. (??) And she was Helen, Lord pain. (??) And oh, she was lovely. And they had two children. But they're all dead too now. Everybody's dead, belonging to me, my mother and father and my sisters and my two brothers. They're all dead.

Audrey Duckert You have a daughter, though, haven't you?

Alice Twibell Phillips I wonder if I do sometimes. Well, I have a dependent. She came up this morning. She says, Ma, she says you've got any Kotex? I said, well, I said, there's some, there's some. I, I usually well, I don't wear that now anyway, but what do you call it. There's another not Kotex but what's the other thing. Well, I have it anyway. And I said, well, you know, in the closet. I got one room here I call Alaska and it's freezing.

Audrey Duckert Alaska.

Alice Twibell Phillips Yes. It's Alaska, yes, because it's so cold. But it's a state now, huh? Mhm.

Audrey Duckert Um, somebody told me once that there was a spiritualist either a church or.

Alice Twibell Phillips Oh, do I know that? Yes. Oh, here he is. Oh. And did he love me? Henry W Smith. And he was related to this Smith. That was her uncle, and he was a spiritualist minister in Greenwich. And I you know, he used to have pianos and he had plush pianos covered with plush.

Audrey Duckert I heard about those.

Alice Twibell Phillips From.

Audrey Duckert Raymond Downing.

Alice Twibell Phillips Oh, Downing. Yes. Oh, did you know that little Downing? She was little. She lived in our place here. Franklin's daughter. And she married Homer Downing. Oh, yes. Well, he must have been related to Raymond. No, there was Dorothy Downing.

Audrey Duckert Yeah, that's Raymond's sister.

Alice Twibell Phillips Oh. That's it. Yes, I remember Dorothy Downing. Yes.

Audrey Duckert And they had one of these velvet covered pianos.

Alice Twibell Phillips Oh. Did they. Plush. Oh, plush. Yes. One was an ivory. I'll never forget it. You know, he came to the Methodist church. See, and I used to sing in the choir in Enfield, in the Methodist church. So he was there, and he wanted to know what the little girl's name was that sang contralto. It was for alto. Classy. Name a contralto. And they said, oh, that's Alice Twibell and Agnes (??) she was another one. She sang soprano. Mommy sang bass. You know that song? I love that.

Audrey Duckert Mhm. So. So he lived.

Alice Twibell Phillips So he lived at the spruces and there they are, the spruce. See the spruces. There they are. And oh he had a mansion of a home there. And in every room. Why. He had a what do you call those pipe organ. You know, a pipe organ. And he had. And the first one was an ivory color plush piano. The next one was the gold plush. And the next one was this great big, long piano, you know. Oh my God. And and, you know, there were three great big. Well, they were bigger than this, each room, you know. And as you entered, of course, you entered the reception. And in that was a, was a was one of these things that were Long like this. Oh, do you need new plates? It's okay. Maybe you can't hear me.

Audrey Duckert Oh, yes. Yes. Quite well.

Alice Twibell Phillips In the reception room. Of course. You had to make your announcement. You know, when you came up onto the porch and five or six, they had three or four maids. Harriet Levitt was beautiful. But you know what? This this Mr.. Mr. Smith was divorced.

Audrey Duckert He was.

Alice Twibell Phillips Yes, he was divorced. And he had a mistress there, Helen Beatrice Laughlin. And she was a spiritualist. Well, they used to take me to Lake Pleasant in Greenfield. Did you ever.

Audrey Duckert Oh, I have been to Lake Pleasant. Yes. Tell me, tell me about that.

Alice Twibell Phillips Oh, that was the most interesting thing because I. You know, she used to give seances. Miss Helen, Beatrice Laughlin did. And she's buried now over in Quabbin. Oh. Is she? Yes, she is. And so is Henry W Smith, too. They've got. Really? Have you ever been to that place. Yes. Maybe you've seen their stones.

Audrey Duckert I don't recall specifically, but.

Alice Twibell Phillips No. Well, anyway, what was I going to say? You know, my mind isn't all there. Half the time.

Audrey Duckert You're telling me about Henry Smith and his seances.

Alice Twibell Phillips Oh. Oh, yes. Oh, that was Helen Beatrice Laughlin. Well, you know, she told me so many true things. She was a seer, you know, and she said, now, Alice, she said, you have a red trunk in your attic. She said, never let it go, because she said, when you came over to this country, she said, your mother had it full of blankets and bedding. And she said, it's going to bring you good luck someday. Well, you know, I never I wondered how she could see it because she described it. My father had painted it red.

Audrey Duckert I mean, she really knew.

Alice Twibell Phillips She knew. She said it's painted red. And I told her how my father had painted it red before we came to the country. I was born in Ireland. Were you? Yes. In Armagh. And you know, we used to make a joke of it. I said, well, everybody was born in Armagh. We used to call my mother Ma.

Audrey Duckert Oh.

Alice Twibell Phillips So everybody's been born for their ma, you know. And they thought that was quite a joke on me. Anyway, here comes our ma. Well.

Audrey Duckert What became of Henry Smith?

Alice Twibell Phillips He died, and he's buried at Quabbin. But he was a lovely man. And I had the Star of Progress. He had written it, and he had. She was a poet. Helen Beatrice Laughlin, you know, she didn't have to compose it. These seers did it for her. Oh, tell me, darling.

Audrey Duckert Did she do automatic writing? You know, she she held the pen, and then.

Alice Twibell Phillips The pen went. No, I don't know about that. No, I never did, but. But she might have because she did it with her brain. I mean, she saw things with her brain. She gave me the willies. And and this and this. Oh, this Harriet Levitt. Oh, oh, she was beautiful. And she was their maid. One of the highest maid. you know, they had lawyers and hires and so forth. And oh, she was a very beautiful. Well, she came with us to Lake Pleasant to in Greenfield. And listen, one night, you know, I never heard anything. And I really knocked my ears out trying to hear all the sounds that they were saying. They heard, and I never heard anything. But of course, I wasn't a spiritualist. Maybe I would have heard. And the little the wind listeth where it moveth. And no man knows from whence it cometh, or whether it goeth. And that's in the Bible. They're they're trying to make the spiritualists out of the Bible. Well, in a way that would be true, too. You know, you I don't since I've grown old, I've no religion at all. I hate to say it. I was brought up religious. My mother was very religious and brought up to go to church every Sunday and Sunday school, you know, and sing in the choir. Oh, dear. Go to prayer meetings. Gee, it seems my life was one big prayer. Every Wednesday night we went to Epworth League and then we had Christian Endeavor.

Audrey Duckert And was that all in Enfield.

Alice Twibell Phillips In Smith's in that little. Oh, yes. And my sister, they had a piano in the school. And my sister Lily used to play the piano, the hymns, you know. Oh, yes. And the old gospel hymns. There's nothing like them. Well, what were you, Congregationalists? No. What were you, Episcopalians?

Audrey Duckert No. I was brought up a Presbyterian.

Alice Twibell Phillips Oh, Presbyterian. Oh, those are there a lot of Presbyterians. But is there a Presbyterian church? No, not in Hadley. No, no no, no. Well, we don't have church. Oh, we have got a beautiful church here. Oh, it's beautiful And it's patterned after a church in England. Oh, so. Yes, it's a very lovely church. It's quite a history to it too, that I really don't know. Mm.

Audrey Duckert But you know this history.

Alice Twibell Phillips Well, I know some of it, you see, but I don't know all of it. But I must tell you about when we landed. We landed at Ellis Island, you know, and my sister Margaret, she was why we came over to this country. I was only five years old, and my sister Margaret had taken something on her neck and down here, and it was all broken out. She was all broken out in sores. And my mother carried her from a baby until she was eight years old in a basket, because she was all full of sores. So they had to go to Portatown. Did

you ever hear of Portatown? Well, it was a town like my mother always thought. Where was Portatown? Which when we came to Gilbertsville Eric when we came to Smith's, we my father every month came and put his money in the Ware savings bank. Oh, yes, every month he had to do that. And so my uncle, uncle, uh, Atkinson, he had a big farm. He never did work the mill. He just did farm work. And his daughter lives in where now. She's married to George West. I don't know whether you've ever heard, the West's were a prominent family in Ware, but they're most of them dead, too, excepting George. And she and George are both retired anyway, and they have a lovely home in Ware. And she lived it and at Greenwich Pond, and they had a thirty two room house.

Audrey Duckert My heavens.

Alice Twibell Phillips And my father had so many gardens. If anybody had any land, they'd say, give it old Jim, he'll take it. And he did. And I remember Charlie Snyder. Oh, here's Charlie Snyder's house away up there. And we, uh, he had land Charlie Snyder and at some land and they said, give it to Jim. So we did. And my father had gardens all over. He was a great gardener. And Irish potatoes, you know, out of the garden. Oh, boy. All that stuff we got. Well, anyway, Uncle Atkinson gave him, um, wheelbarrows for each of us. As little as I was, I had a wheelbarrow too. And we'd go away up to Charley Schneider's, you know, and was up a hill, I can just see it now. And up over to Charley Schneider's. And I can see where my father's garden was in this picture. You know, this is a memorable picture.

Audrey Duckert It certainly is.

Alice Twibell Phillips Definitely. So. And but most of the people are all dead. Yes, indeed. And this. This was a road here. Oh, yes. When we came to the country. Now I don't see it, but, uh, we lived my Uncle Atkinson. He had a two tenement house, and we lived in one side of it and he lived, but he had to put the other people out because my father was coming, you see, and he had it furnished for us. Yes. That's one of the chairs that was to our dining room set. Yes.

Audrey Duckert That has some history to it, then.

Alice Twibell Phillips Oh, it does definitely. Well, can't you see, by the looks of it, it's worn to pieces.

Audrey Duckert It has. It has been well used. Oh, oh.

Alice Twibell Phillips That was my father's chair. And then my bedroom was my father's chair. Do you know, it was just like Carroll O'Connor, you know. And that All in the Family, nobody could sit in his chair and nobody could sit in my father's chair. And it's a leather chair. But he bought that for himself purposely. And none of us ever sat in my father's chair. Of course, we sat in it now.

Audrey Duckert But the Uncle Atkinson that you mentioned was Atkinson.

Alice Twibell Phillips Twibell, their mother's name was Atkinson, Sarah Atkinson. So she called Atkinson Twibell.

Audrey Duckert Was she from Prescott, by any chance? You know.

Alice Twibell Phillips Prescott was right beside.

Audrey Duckert Us. You know, the place called Atkinson Hollow. Was that named for that family?

Alice Twibell Phillips No, because that was his first name. Oh, I see. See, that was his mother's last name. Sarah Atkinson was my father's mother's name. And? And my father was quite a dictator. And this when we knew about Hitler. Well, we thought my father was, you know, what do you call that? Descended from Hitler? Because my mother was as gentle as a lamb. She never crossed us in any way, but she used to do crosses. She said, I'll tell your father on you. Well, we had to obey my mother, or else my father was very strict. He was too strict. He really was. But. But he was a very good man.

Audrey Duckert He was apparently very successful in the in the business world then in the mill, wasn't he?

Alice Twibell Phillips Well, of course. Well, he was a fireman, but. But when the engineer left in Smith's, he left his, uh, what do you call it? Certificate up there. And they put my father, the engineer, in the middle of Smith's, and he made more money. And the man was moved to Ware. Yes. And now I've forgotten what his name. But his daughter married a Walker. The funeral man. But he's dead now, you know. Well, but Mr. Walker's dead. But she's still living. And, uh. Simmons now is the undertaker there. Mhm.

Audrey Duckert Well, speaking of Walker's, uh, did you ever see or hear of Doctor Mary Walker?

Alice Twibell Phillips Doctor Mary Walker? Yeah. No.

Audrey Duckert She was she used to come to visit in Greenwich sometimes.

Alice Twibell Phillips Well, the Greenwich I knew the Walker girl because you know who who went with her was Ralph Thayer went with the walker girl. I've forgotten what her name was, but she went to Athol High School.

Audrey Duckert Doctor Mary was famous for wearing pants at a time when no other women.

Alice Twibell Phillips And look at how they do now.

Audrey Duckert Yes, she she had been a surgeon in the Civil War.

Alice Twibell Phillips No.

Audrey Duckert Yeah. I thought perhaps you might have heard of her.

Alice Twibell Phillips No, no. Well, you see, I'd been too young. Really? I didn't hear much history. Anyway, there's a lot of history to Enfield that I don't know, too. But I do know Lucy Rither(??) because she went to grammar school with me. Oh. Did she? Oh, she did? Yes. And she was crazy about Billy Bryans. And he was a terrible fellow. Oh, he was a rotten. He was sexy. Oh. Very sexy. Oh, and when he didn't know how to talk with a girl unless he talked sex.

Audrey Duckert What was Lucy Rither(??) like?

Alice Twibell Phillips She was very nice. Yes. She was. She had very black hair and long hair. I think of her when I see Tony Orlando and Dawn. You know, Dawn has the long hair. But she was a very pretty girl.

Audrey Duckert The Rithers were an old family in the valley, weren't they?

Alice Twibell Phillips Oh, definitely so, yes, especially in Enfield, because they had the grist mill and everything, you know? Yes. They were a nice family, and I do know she lived with her grandmother. Lucy did, because her folks had died.

Audrey Duckert Lucy was Harry's sister and Morgan's.

Alice Twibell Phillips Well.

Audrey Duckert Harry was Morgan's father.

Alice Twibell Phillips Oh, Harry Rither. Well, Morgan was the one that had the grist mill.

Audrey Duckert Yes, he did for a while. Yes.

Alice Twibell Phillips Yes.

Audrey Duckert He was a very nice man.

Alice Twibell Phillips I liked him, yes. Oh, Donald Howell, he's he's alive, you know.

Audrey Duckert Did you know him, too?

Alice Twibell Phillips Why? His father in Enfield, at the post office and the little store.

Audrey Duckert You remember him?

Alice Twibell Phillips Donald Wiley?

Audrey Duckert No, no, I mean the old gentleman.

Alice Twibell Phillips Which Howe would that be, Donald?

Audrey Duckert Howe's father?

Alice Twibell Phillips No, no. Oh, yes, I do, because he used to be back of the post office place because we used to go down there, you know, go to Enfield Haskell store. Uh, and, you know, those were the times when fellas didn't whistle, you know? And my sister Lil had beautiful black curly hair. Oh, it was shiny, shiny. And she had white, white teeth. Yours are false. Somebody said to me, are those your own teeth, Alice? I said I should hope so. They're bought and paid for many years. Oh, gosh. But yours is so white. They're good, you know. They add to your face.

Audrey Duckert Thank you.

Alice Twibell Phillips You're very pretty. And that dress is becoming to you. This is a bicentennial.

Audrey Duckert Yes. You're very much in the festive spirit, aren't you?

Alice Twibell Phillips Well, I went to wear this one day, and this woman, uh, stops me. She says, are you dressed for the bicentennial? Red, white and blue. I said, that's it.

Audrey Duckert Speaking of, uh, anniversaries like that, uh, I came across the other day in some stuff, an old program from the Enfield Centennial dance in 1916. Do you remember it?

Alice Twibell Phillips No, because I was going to Baypath in those days. After I graduated from high school, I went to Baypath. It was in Springfield. Now it's, I think, in Longmeadow Baypath. And when I went, it was BPB. Baypath Business Institute.

Audrey Duckert And now up on Chestnut Street, didn't it?

Alice Twibell Phillips Well, it used to be there, but I went to it when it was on Main Street and I lived at the YWCA. And my sister Margaret paid. It was only six dollars a week. And every Friday I came home after school, you know, came on the trolley and from Springfield to Palmer, you know. And then from Palmer and a bus. To Ware in a bus. One of those buses that jiggle back and forth until you got there? Yes. From Ware to Gilbertville.

Audrey Duckert Did you ever ride the Rabbit?

Alice Twibell Phillips Rabbit, I told you. Of course I did. It was Athol high school.

Audrey Duckert Oh that's right.

Alice Twibell Phillips Yes. The Rabbit track. Yes. And you know, there was a man there that looked just like Uncle Edwin, the conductor, you know. And so my brother Jimmy had killed a deer. And I said to my mother, when he gets it, you know, slaughtered or whatever, you know, cut up. I want to bring the man, I've forgotten his name now. But I fell in love with him, and he did with me because I brought him deer, venison, you know, and. Oh, he thought that was so wonderful. And my brother shot it. And my mother had a rug made out of it. You know, the it was a beautiful rug. But, you know, Jimmy wouldn't walk on it, you see. And he cried. So when he shot the deer, you know, they're so tender. I mean, they look at you so innocently, and he shot it without thinking. But it was quite an innovation for a young fellow in those days to shoot a deer. And it was on exhibition and everything. Oh, dear.

Audrey Duckert Was the conductor named either Vaughan or Bennett?

Alice Twibell Phillips Oh, no. But Richard Vaughan from North Dana went to high school and I fell in love with him. Another fellow, Francis Parker from Enfield, I fell in love with, yes I did.

Audrey Duckert You spent a lot of time falling in love, didn't you? Definitely. That's a good way to spend it.

Alice Twibell Phillips Well, do you know what? I went to work in Springfield. Why? Well, I went to only three months to Baypath because it was just the same as high school. You know what I was taking? Of course. Shorthand and everything. Well, anyway, I got myself a job, and it was at the Fisk Rubber Company in Chicopee Falls. And you know who I rode with? The man that I worked with. And I didn't even know it was going to work for. I went into what they call a pool, a stenographic pool. And behold, if one day this man didn't send for me in the stenographic pool and hired me, and I forgotten there was a red haired fellow. I got struck on him to Everett. I forgot his first name was Everett. And anyway, I'd heard that the Travelers Insurance. They were looking for a girl in Springfield, you know. And at that time, it was near the railroad tracks. You know, the the where they go overhead to go to the station. It was near that place on the right, on the left hand side. And I was hired anyway. And then they moved to the Third National Bank building, you know, on Main Street. And, uh, anyway, my husband, when I first went there, when I, when I was hired, you know, after I was hired, they took me to the claim department, and I was introduced to to the investigators. And my husband, Tom, when he was the only one, shook hands with me. And do you know what? He got such a kick out of shaking hands with me that he wrote to me at the Travelers Insurance and wanted to know where he lived. He liked to make a date with me.

Audrey Duckert And that was the beginning of it.

Alice Twibell Phillips And that was the beginning and the end.

Audrey Duckert Very good.

Alice Twibell Phillips Oh, and he was handsome. You know, the English people have color like you. Uh. And he. You just think he'd painted his cheeks, you know? Oh, he was a very good looking fellow. And he had lovely wavy hair and an abundance of it. I've got very thin hair, but I tease it to make it look bigger.

Audrey Duckert Did you ever know Mike Vaughn from Dana?

Alice Twibell Phillips No, but I knew Myron Vaughn.

Audrey Duckert Well, that's Myron.

Alice Twibell Phillips Oh, no. Did you know him? You didn't go with him, did you?

Audrey Duckert No. No, no.

Alice Twibell Phillips Well, he's married now.

Audrey Duckert I saw him just last week.

Alice Twibell Phillips Oh, really? Oh, well, he would remember me, I'm sure. Yes.

Audrey Duckert I made a tape with him some time ago. In fact, we've made a couple.

Alice Twibell Phillips Oh, marvelous. Oh.

Audrey Duckert He is in very good shape, and he's very active.

Alice Twibell Phillips Has he any children? Have they?

Audrey Duckert He has one daughter.

Alice Twibell Phillips One daughter? Yes.

Audrey Duckert Her name is Frances. Oh, and she lives in, uh. She lives down Boston way. She works for the Sheraton Hotel.

Alice Twibell Phillips Oh, nice. That's a good hotel. Yes, the Hilton too.

Audrey Duckert She she, uh, does editorial work for them.

Alice Twibell Phillips Oh, well, she.

Audrey Duckert And I.

Alice Twibell Phillips Have met her.

Audrey Duckert She's a very pleasant girl.

Alice Twibell Phillips Lovely. She's not married. Oh, yes. Oh, is she married?

Audrey Duckert Married? And I think she has two children.

Alice Twibell Phillips Yes.

Audrey Duckert I don't.

Alice Twibell Phillips Know. Yes.

Audrey Duckert Well, I will tell Mike. I'll probably be seeing him Saturday at the annual meeting, and I'll tell him that I saw you.

Alice Twibell Phillips Yes. Oh, do tell him. And you tell him. I remember him very well. I think he had red hair, didn't he?

Audrey Duckert He may have.

Alice Twibell Phillips Well, it's probably white now. Mine would be white if it wasn't. It's not tinted. It's rinsed. You know, years ago, they used to call it dye. But you don't say your hair dyed, it's either tinted. And somebody says to me, do you have your hair colored? I said, no, I haven't rinsed. It's cheaper rinsed than it is dyed.

Audrey Duckert Oh is it.

Alice Twibell Phillips Yes. But I spent thousands on my head. The first permanent I had was in Holyoke with two brothers. They eventually went to Springfield and the Woodworth's. I don't know whether you have ever known, but I had permanent and I had long hair. I thought I became Mary Pickford because it was, you know, it was the days when they put these things, you know, you were electrocuted. They brought them down, you know, and then they'll give you a pointer. It scares the hell out of you. And they say, no, if it gets too hot here or there, say, I had it pointed all over my head. It was so hot. I'll never forget it. I'll never forget it. And I thought, gee, I. They talk about being burned at the stake. Well, at thirty dollars, I had to pay for it. Thirty dollars. When I was in Washington, I got one for two fifty. Not not two hundred and fifty two dollars and a half and a and a, what do you call it? Whether a school, you know. But they had supervisors and you got just as good a permanent for two fifty. I said, Tom, think of my first permanent was thirty dollars here. I got one for two fifty. He says good. He says where? I says it's a school in Washington. Oh, boy. So I've had more prevalence.

Audrey Duckert Oh, dear.

Alice Twibell Phillips Oh, my husband was in World War one. Yes, in 1917. And I was going with them then. And I you know, I never believed in men, in men getting girls pregnant. I think it's the girl's fault, because I did practically everything to get Tom to do something to me before he went into the service. So he'd marry me before he went, you know, because I'd heard some terrible things about soldiers, you know. So. Of course. Oh, I was kissing him. And of course, he was half gone. It was terrible. Instead of him kissing me, I was kissing him. Yes, I was trying to get him all excited. Well, he nearly died. He had told me that. I said, Tom, I never would believe that a fellow got a girl pregnant. The girl got the fellow pregnant because I said I did everything trying to make you do something to me so I would get pregnant. And I knew nothing to tell the truth. I was ignorant as can be. Yes I was. Tom said that's why he married me. I didn't know anything.

Audrey Duckert When were you married?

Alice Twibell Phillips Well, I was married in. What was it? In 1916? No. 1917.

Audrey Duckert Seventeen?

Alice Twibell Phillips No. Not 1917. What's the matter with me? I couldn't have been married then. No, I wasn't married until 1932. Oh, and do you know what? Every letter he was telling me how much he loved me and this, that and the other. He had a chance to go out with so many girls. And I had to promise him, though, that I wouldn't go out with a fella. Well, there was a little monkey that used to like me, and he worked at Smith and Wesson, and his name was Eddie Dayton. And.