

## **Emily Madison**

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Interviewer: Ruth Terwilliger  
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Abstract: Emily Petra Madison (1896-1984), daughter of Peter Madison and Christina G. Christensen, was born and grew up in Perth Amboy. The second oldest of seven children, Ms. Madison and her family moved to Metuchen when she was ten years old. Her father was a contractor who built several houses in Metuchen along Bissett Place, Bounty Street, and Clifford Place before the Depression. The Madison family lived in several houses in Metuchen before settling at 14 Home Street, a house designed by her mother.

Following her mother's death in 1926, Ms. Madison began work at the United States Shipping Board as a stenographer alongside her sister. She subsequently worked as a property auditor for the Raritan Arsenal during World War II, and then served a two-year assignment for the government in Newfoundland, Canada from 1949 to 1951. Following her return to Metuchen, Ms. Madison worked at the Metuchen Pharmacy for twenty-four years until the pharmacy's closing in the 1970s. Ms. Madison was briefly married to Everett Ward Boulton and she had no children. A lifelong Republican, she served as a member of the Metuchen League of Women Voters and as a poll clerk at the Mildred B. Moss Elementary School for approximately fifty years. She was also active in the Golden Years Club and the Delphic Dramatic Association.

In this interview, Ms. Madison discusses her family and her early childhood memories of Metuchen, including the trolley car and Main Street businesses. She also talks about her participation in the Delphic Dramatic Association and her work as a stenographer and a property auditor, which included a government assignment in Newfoundland. She concludes the interview by discussing her relationship with Edward Allen Burroughs Jr., her work at the Metuchen Pharmacy, her traveling adventures, and her religious views.

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R. Terwilliger: Today is September nineteenth—?

**E. Madison: Twentieth.**

R. Terwilliger: September 20, 1978 and I am visiting with Emily Madison, 11A Redfield Village [Apartments], Metuchen, New Jersey. And this is Ruth Terwilliger speaking and we're going to do an interview with Emily as part of our Oral History program.

Now, Emily, were you born in Metuchen?

- E. Madison:** No, I was born in Perth Amboy. I moved here when I was ten years old.
- R. Terwilliger: And you were one of how many children?
- E. Madison:** Seven.
- R. Terwilliger: One of seven children?
- E. Madison:** And one [Howard Madison] has passed on. So there are only six of us left now.
- R. Terwilliger: And where in the line of the seven children did you fall?
- E. Madison:** I was the second oldest, yes. My brother, Howard, who [passed] was the Woodbridge engineer, township engineer.
- R. Terwilliger: Oh, how nice!
- E. Madison:** And I think your husband [George Terwilliger, former borough engineer] would know of him.
- R. Terwilliger: Oh, surely!
- E. Madison:** And then me; and then my brother Russell [Madison], who is an engineer; then my sister [Dorothea (Madison) Hisgen], who is in California; then my brother [Walter Madison], who is also in California now; and my sister [Ruth Ester (Madison) Oliver] and brother [John Mirvin Madison] here in Metuchen. So there are seven; now there are six of us. And I'm the head of the clan now. [laughter]
- R. Terwilliger: What did your father [Peter Madison] do in Perth Amboy?
- E. Madison:** My father was a contractor. He built houses here in town. He built all the houses on Bissett Place on that side of the street. He built one house on Carlton Road. He built six houses on Bounty Street where the school [Mildred B. Moss Elementary School] is, and he built, I think, four on Cliffwood Place. And then the Depression came along and we lost it all.
- R. Terwilliger: Oh really?
- E. Madison:** Like everybody else. [chuckles]
- R. Terwilliger: Oh, and your mother [Christina (Christensen) Madison], of course—?
- E. Madison:** My mother designed this house that we lived in, the last house we lived in, which was at 14 Home Street. And that was to be our final home because you know being a contractor, he'd sell them and we'd have to move. But that was to be our final home. She moved in there in July [1926] and she was stricken in the [First] Presbyterian Church with a cerebral hemorrhage and passed on that same night. She went to see *Old Ironsides* at the church.
- R. Terwilliger: Oh! Was that a play or a movie?

**E. Madison:**       **Movie.**

R. Terwilliger:     Movie production.

**E. Madison:**       **Yes. And my father lived to—he died in 1964-[19]65?**

R. Terwilliger:     And how old was he when he died?

**E. Madison:**       **My father was seventy and my mother was fifty-one.**

R. Terwilliger:     You said 14 Home Street?

**E. Madison:**       **Fourteen. That’s where now Ernie Hansen [Ernest Hansen], who was president of the Perth Amboy Savings Account [unclear].**

R. Terwilliger:     Oh yes, I know the house. It’s a beautiful home.

**E. Madison:**       **Yes, it’s a nice home, very nice.**

R. Terwilliger:     Yes. And you’re Scandinavian then by background?

**E. Madison:**       **Danish. Danish descent.**

R. Terwilliger:     And both your mother and father were Danish?

**E. Madison:**       **Yes. My father was born over there, but my mother was born here in this country.**

R. Terwilliger:     You’re truly a squarehead then, right?

**E. Madison:**       **Yeah, I am a squarehead. “Dumb Dane,” I call myself. [laughter]**

R. Terwilliger:     And when you moved to Home Street, was that when you moved to Metuchen from Perth Amboy?

**E. Madison:**       **Oh, no, no, no. When we moved to Metuchen, my father built the first house on [16] Peltier Avenue. It’s now where the Sergeants live.**

R. Terwilliger:     Oh yes.

**E. Madison:**       **And that was the first house on the street, and we lived there. That’s where my youngest brother [John Mirvin Madison] was born in that house. And we sold that. And then we moved to Carson Avenue, built a house and moved to [16] Carson Avenue. Then we sold the house on Carson Avenue and we moved over on Bissett Place. [laughter] And from Bissett Place, we moved back to [14] Home Street. And that was our final resting place. My father passed away.**

R. Terwilliger:     I see. So you were used to packing up and moving on?

- E. Madison:** Oh yes! Being a contractor's daughter, he couldn't turn down a good price when he'd get a chance to sell the house. In that house time, they were easier to sell than they are today.
- R. Terwilliger: Right. Now Metuchen was a quiet, little sleepy town.
- E. Madison:** When I moved here, there were no sidewalks practically on any of the streets. And the Main Street was these hard stones with a trolley track running through the center. And the trolley car ran to Perth Amboy. There was no means of other transportation.
- R. Terwilliger: Did the trolley run straight up Main Street then too?
- E. Madison:** No. The one from Perth Amboy came up Amboy Avenue and turned and went out to Bonhamtown, and then onto New Brunswick. With the Toonerville Trolley from Metuchen, you used to just go out to that turn-around and come back down here. And that's the—
- R. Terwilliger: I see. But that wasn't in existence when you were a girl?
- E. Madison:** Oh yeah. [recording paused]
- R. Terwilliger: [recording starts mid-sentence] ... kind of imitate, quaint little thing that he would pick up groceries.
- E. Madison:** That's exactly right. It [trolley] went from the length of Main Street down where Wilbert's Coal Yard office [Wilbert Coal Company at the corner of Main Street and Christol Street] is; from there, out to the crossing or the turn-around at Bonhamtown right over the [New Jersey] Turnpike, about right there. And then he'd go out and switch the wire around and go back again. And it had just two long seats in it. And there was a great, big stove, a tremendous big stove that was what he heated it with. And all the people that lived down that part of the section on this side of Main Street would ask him to stop at the grocery store, leave the grocery list, go to the drug store. Gene O'Hare [trolley conductor] would jump off the trolley and go in there.
- R. Terwilliger: Was he a local man, this Gene O'Hare?
- E. Madison:** He lived in Bonhamtown, I believe. And then Mr. Frank [Frank Smith] (we always called him Papi Frank), he knew everything in town. He had a barber shop and everybody—visitors went in the barber shop and came out of the barber shop. [chuckles]
- R. Terwilliger: And where was the barber shop located?
- E. Madison:** Right now, approximately where the hardware store, Metuchen Hardware, is.
- R. Terwilliger: Oh yeah. That was then in old Robins Hall [at 401 Main Street], wasn't it?
- E. Madison:** That's right. And that's where I used to go to the movies upstairs.
- R. Terwilliger: They had movies upstairs?

- E. Madison:** They had movies upstairs there. And where the Drake's Hardware was a baker's shop.
- R. Terwilliger: Hannah's Bakery?
- E. Madison:** Hanemann's [Bakery at 395 Main Street].
- R. Terwilliger: Yeah. There were two sisters there, weren't there? Elsie and I don't remember the other girl.
- E. Madison:** Yes, Elsie was the one. The other one was sort of a retard, Anna. She was a retarded girl or something. Not retarded, but something was efficiency wrong with her.
- R. Terwilliger: So you went to school then in Metuchen?
- E. Madison:** No, I didn't go to school in Metuchen.
- R. Terwilliger: No, you had finished school by the time--?
- E. Madison:** Because I would continue to go back to Perth Amboy by trolley car and finish because I didn't want to move up here.
- R. Terwilliger: Well, of course, you had all of your friends.
- E. Madison:** I didn't want to go to school, I mean.
- R. Terwilliger: Yeah, you had all your friends in Perth Amboy.
- E. Madison:** But all our family went to--it was only the Edgar [School] and the Franklin [School] then when we moved here, those two schools.
- R. Terwilliger: Yes, uh-huh. And did you make friends then here in town?
- E. Madison:** Oh yes! I made many, many friends, many friends.
- R. Terwilliger: How old were you about then?
- E. Madison:** I think I must have been about between twelve and fourteen. I'm not quite sure. I never checked it back that far how old I was. But I know my brother, my youngest brother, was born in that house on Peltier Avenue, which was the first house we lived in. And he is now in his sixties, so I know I put him about that old.
- R. Terwilliger: Yeah. Can I ask you, what did you do as a young girl, twelve, thirteen years old, for a social life at that time?
- E. Madison:** Well, we had in the Presbyterian Church what they call the Eplis League [phonetic]. I think that's what they called this thing. And all the kids would go to Sunday service and we had parties there and things like that, and we'd all come home from this winter, we'd all go sleigh riding afterwards. We used to go up Daniels Hill to sleigh ride. And just do anything that an ordinary child would do

**because there's nothing else to do in the town. And naturally, as I got older, I got interested—then I joined, as I got older, I joined the Delphic organization<sup>1</sup>. And I think probably Mrs. [Mary Ruth (Burroughs)] Eby told you about the Delphic, did she? At that time, it was the oldest amateur organization in the state. And we would put on plays for the benefit of anybody that wanted to raise money. And we turned everything over to them; the only thing we took out was the fee that we had to pay for the books. And everybody always made between six and seven hundred dollars.**

R. Terwilliger: And so this was actually one of the first theatrical groups.

**E. Madison: That was the first theatric—the oldest, let me say, in the State of New Jersey was called the Delphic Society.**

R. Terwilliger: And where did you put on the plays?

**E. Madison: In Forum Theatre [at 314 Main Street].**

R. Terwilliger: In the Forum?

**E. Madison: And we put one on in the—where the hardware store is?**

R. Terwilliger: Robins Hall.

**E. Madison: Robins Hall, yes. But then the Forum Theatre came in and we used it there.**

R. Terwilliger: Someone once told me, I believe it was when I interviewed [Police] Chief Ed Leiss, he said that he remembered going to the movies on the corner of Highland [Avenue] and Main [Street].

**E. Madison: Yes, that was when Jimmy Forgione [James Forgione] had it. That place was the movies. That was the first movie house [Metuchen Theatre at 460 Main Street] in town.**

R. Terwilliger: That's where Century [21] Real Estate is now?

**E. Madison: That's right. That's when I started going to the movies. That's where I went until this one [Forum Theatre] was built. I don't know what year this one was built<sup>2</sup> here, but Jimmy Forgione owned and operated that movie picture place.**

R. Terwilliger: I see. He couldn't remember who it was that owned it when I [unclear].

**E. Madison: Yeah, that was Jimmy Forgione.**

R. Terwilliger: And I always wanted to find out because it's one thing to know the location of something, but then it really ties it in with the town when you know it was the Forgiones.

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<sup>1</sup> The Delphic Dramatic Association was a theater group established in Metuchen in 1888.

<sup>2</sup> The Forum Theatre opened in March 1928.

- E. Madison:** And Mr. [Frederick] Zimmerman, who was the minister of the [Dutch] Reformed Church, belonged to that Delphic [Dramatic Association]. And there's only four of us left: Ruth Eby; Mae Peck, who lives down the shore; and Everett Rich; and myself. We're the "Last of the Mohicans" in that.
- R. Terwilliger: Can you remember some of the plays?
- E. Madison:** Oh yes, we did *The Thirteenth Chair* [in 1932], and we did—I did know more at one time. But as I say, when you lose interest in things, you forget them.
- R. Terwilliger: Yeah. That's unfair to ask you to say them.
- E. Madison:** *The Thirteenth Chair* was the most important. I know the fellow had to drop the knife down and go right. It was supposed to stick in the table. And every time we had a rehearsal, it did it perfect. The night of the show, it flopped. [laughter] What were some of the other ones? I really can't think. I didn't expect you to ask me questions like that.
- R. Terwilliger: No, I didn't expect I was going to, but I thought it might be interesting to know which ones you did do.
- E. Madison:** But the one in particular I always remember was with Mr. Zimmerman. We were stranded in a railroad station and I was there. I always carry a bottle with me, in the play this is. So he and I got drunk. [laughter] And I always laughed about that. I said, "Gee, Mr. Zimmerman, they're going to love you in the Reformed Church when you get drunk with me." [laughter] And I got the most drunk, so they laid me on a table with my feet hanging over the table, my legs hanging over the table. And nobody was supposed to know I was there. So everybody came in the railroad station, they take their coat off and throw it on me. [laughter] So I was piled up with these coats and with my legs hanging down, when the last act—when they took me off the table, my legs just collapsed.
- R. Terwilliger: Oh yeah, from laying that way for so long.
- E. Madison:** But we had lots and lots of good times here. Now I'll start putting my thinking cap to see what are some of the plays that we did. We did about two a year.
- R. Terwilliger: And who directed most of these? Do you remember?
- E. Madison:** Well, Mrs. Eby did them.
- R. Terwilliger: She was a schoolteacher now, wasn't she? Mrs. Eby.
- E. Madison:** Yes. And George Carman, Mrs. George Carman directed them, Josephine [Carman].
- R. Terwilliger: Was this relation to Charles Carman?
- E. Madison:** Yeah, it was Charlie's brother.
- R. Terwilliger: Charlie's brother? Uh-huh.

- E. Madison:** George was Charlie's brother. And his other brother married Mae Peck. Well, no, that was one of the Peck boys. Fred Peck married Charlie Carman's sister. And they now live down at the shore.
- R. Terwilliger: Mrs. Mae Peck, her maiden name is Carman?
- E. Madison:** Yes.
- R. Terwilliger: I didn't know that. We interviewed her.
- E. Madison:** You did?
- R. Terwilliger: Yeah, yeah. She came up and—
- E. Madison:** She lives down there with her daughter. Well, she and Everett Rich. Did you ever interview him?
- R. Terwilliger: No, no.
- E. Madison:** Well, he just came back, moved back from Tennessee. And they moved back to Phillipsburg, he's going to live up there. And Ruth Eby and myself.
- R. Terwilliger: Isn't that something?
- E. Madison:** They're the last three, four people with that thing.
- R. Terwilliger: And did you make all your own costumes and everything?
- E. Madison:** Well, if we had to have costumes, we did most plays, we could—
- R. Terwilliger: Wear street clothes?
- E. Madison:** —what we had, wear street clothes. If we needed costumes, we hired them.
- R. Terwilliger: Yeah. But that is really something. I guess we haven't had anything like that until Theatre Six<sup>3</sup> came to Metuchen, and they had a resident.
- E. Madison:** Yes, and that wasn't handled properly or there was a poor place for it.
- R. Terwilliger: Yeah, but that was different. You all volunteered your time to do this?
- E. Madison:** We got nothing out of it. We did one play a year for the Masonic Club, the Masonic Lodge [Mt. Zion Lodge No. 135 at 483 Middlesex Avenue]. We did one for the Eastern Star. We did one for the [Metuchen] Kiwanis or Rotary Club, I think it was. They took care of all the advertising; we just put on a show for them.
- R. Terwilliger: I see. And what time in your life was this that you were doing this? We're you still a teenager or was this—?

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<sup>3</sup> Formed during the 1960s, Theatre Six was a professional theater company located in the former Centenary Methodist Church at the corner of Main Street and Middlesex Avenue.



- E. Madison:** No, no, I was in my twenties. And I was married when I was twenty-eight years old. And it was before I was married, in my twenties.
- R. Terwilliger: Yeah. Well, when you finished high school, Emily, what did you do?
- E. Madison:** Nothing. I lived home with my father and mother. I didn't work at all until—my sister worked for the United States Shipping Board and started down in the Celotex [Corporation]. And then they moved her into Pier 3, Brooklyn [New York], so she went with it. Well, when my mother passed on, they needed some extra help and she asked me to come in and do typing and things like that. So I went in and worked at the Shipping Board, Pier 3 Army Base in Brooklyn. We both worked there. And then, that was why my father was building up our Home Street house. And we lived at the Metuchen Inn [at 424 Middlesex Avenue] then because the family had to break up because we had no house to live in. And we used to commute way out to the 59<sup>th</sup> Street Army Base every day.
- R. Terwilliger: Was there a train that you could take out?
- E. Madison:** No, we took the train to Jersey City, and across to Jersey City over to the terminal [Central Railroad of New Jersey Terminal]. And from the terminal, we took the Fourth Avenue Express.
- R. Terwilliger: Oh, isn't that something? And this was both your sister and you traveled together?
- E. Madison:** I was there two years, and they transferred me to the New York office, No. 1 Broadway. And I stayed there. Then from there, they sent me over to Hoboken.
- R. Terwilliger: And what kind of work did you do for them?
- E. Madison:** Just typing. Just typing with them.
- R. Terwilliger: And were you self-taught? You never had—you never went to—?
- E. Madison:** I picked it up myself. In fact, I don't use a touch system, but I could go pretty fast. I'm like a reporter.
- R. Terwilliger: Right. [laughs]
- E. Madison:** At that time, my father said he wanted me to come home and keep house because I had this young brother and sister after my mother passed on. So then I quit and came home. And I got married [to Everett Ward Boulton]. And the marriage lasted six months. Then I got a divorce in 1934 and that was the end of that. And I've never been married since. I had no desire.
- R. Terwilliger: Can we talk about that or is that too private for you?
- E. Madison:** No! I don't care about it.
- R. Terwilliger: Why do you think it didn't last? That you're just not suited for marriage?

- E. Madison:** Well, he was a gambler, which I didn't know. So he gambled anything that came to his hand. And it was a pretty sad six months, but I lived through it [unclear] right.
- R. Terwilliger: How sad that really is.
- E. Madison:** And he always, on our anniversary, my birthday, he always called me up even to the day he died, which is only two years ago.
- R. Terwilliger: Oh my goodness.
- E. Madison:** And I said, "Why do you keep calling me?" because he got married again. And I said, "Why do you keep calling me?" And he said, "Well, you're the only girl I ever loved." [laughs]
- R. Terwilliger: Oh, isn't that something? You know I believe that's true. I've heard of more situations like that where—I think there only is one love in your life.
- E. Madison:** And before I really started working out, Mr. [Edward Allen] Burroughs [Jr.] was the borough clerk downtown, and he would bring me the same work that the girls do in the Borough Hall now. He would, every meeting, he'd bring all the minutes down and I would type them up for him. He'd pay me so much a sheet, whatever.
- R. Terwilliger: Was this man you married, not to go back to this, was he a local person?
- E. Madison:** No, he was from Rahway.
- R. Terwilliger: He was from Rahway. So there's no sense in you mentioning his name?
- E. Madison:** Yeah.
- R. Terwilliger: So you probably were a little down in the dumps after you had this experience?
- E. Madison:** No, I wasn't too down in the dumps because—
- R. Terwilliger: What do people think of divorce at that time? That was kind of an unheard thing.
- E. Madison:** The part that—didn't worry me what anybody thought, I knew what I was doing. I went to my father and explained it all to my father. And I said, "I don't want to keep this up in case I should get pregnant, I have that on my hands too." So I said, "Let's call it quits right now." He said, "If that's what you want, that's what we'll do." I talked it all with my father and explained the whole thing, why I was doing it. And it would have gotten worse—
- R. Terwilliger: And so you reverted to your maiden name?
- E. Madison:** Yes, I paid to have my maiden name taken back after I got my divorce.
- R. Terwilliger: So did you stay home then and help out with the family?

- E. Madison:** I stayed home ever since. I always lived home after my father died. Then I kept the house for the family after my father died.
- R. Terwilliger: Well, there was quite a bit of family there too?
- E. Madison:** Well, my oldest brother had gotten married. But the rest of them were all home. But then as they started going away to school, it wasn't too bad. But I didn't know that.
- R. Terwilliger: And you did this part-time work for Mr. Burroughs?
- E. Madison:** Yeah, I did that at home before he used to bring it up to me.
- R. Terwilliger: Well, that's interesting. And Mr. Burroughs owned that whole building [Burroughs Building at 396 Main Street] that he lived in with the town.
- E. Madison:** He did! That's the building I sold for him, for his son [Edward Allen Burroughs III], not for him. Mr. Burroughs died.
- R. Terwilliger: Yes, I remember. We used to go to that drug store [Metuchen Pharmacy] all the time. I probably said hello to you over the counter many years ago as a young girl.
- E. Madison:** When I started to work down at the drug store, [coughs] pardon me, they had the telegraph thing there. And I usually send and receive the telegrams on that telegraph, like a typewriter. So that was my first job that I did in the store there.
- R. Terwilliger: That someone said to me in one of the interviews I did that that was actually the first—before the telephone company then.
- E. Madison:** They were the first telephone company [Western Union Telegraph Company] moved upstairs. That's where the first switchboard was.
- R. Terwilliger: Isn't that interesting? That's what they said to me.
- E. Madison:** And after they had been up there, I don't know how many years, then they said to them, "Well, haven't you got any other buildings?" Well, he said, "I'll build you a building. You pay for it, I'll build you a building because I got a piece of property."
- R. Terwilliger: Who said this?
- E. Madison:** Mr. Burroughs said this to the telephone company. So he built the building over where the nursery is now.
- R. Terwilliger: The ABC Nursery [phonetic]?
- E. Madison:** Yes. And they were there for almost twenty-five years.
- R. Terwilliger: I remember the phone company there.
- E. Madison:** And they need a much bigger place, and we had nothing to offer them, so they built the place up here.

- R. Terwilliger: Right, on Main Street. But tell me now about being this telegraph operator. Was there anything ever interesting that happened there? Did you ever get any messages that were—?
- E. Madison: The only thing, and I won't mention his name, there was a man that was in the Army. He wasn't from Metuchen, but he married a girl from Metuchen and these telegrams would come through very early. In fact, I just told him about it the other day. "Oh my darling, I miss you and I can't wait until I see you, and all my love, and I wish I had you here," and all those kind of things in the telegram. But that was the only thing. And of course then, we got lots of gripes. People would call up and say, "My husband sent me a telegram, but I never received it." Well, maybe the husband never sent it. We would trace these things, but we would find no records of them. Not only that, anytime people said they had a message, a telegram sent to them, but never received it, we always checked it through to give them what happened to it, if it went somewhere else, or what happened to it.**
- R. Terwilliger: Right. Now were these delivered to the person's home once you got the message?
- E. Madison: Yes, but we had the taxi man deliver them, the messages. And many of them were a lot—during the war when these boys were being killed and injured and all that, I said, "Oh, here's another one of those sad ones, Allen." So he didn't like to send those kind out.**
- R. Terwilliger: So you probably knew a lot of things that were going on in town through the telegraph office?
- E. Madison: Well, not only through the telegraph office, but a lot people in the stores. You'd be surprised some of the people who come in, some of the things you hear, and some of the things you see.**
- R. Terwilliger: I know. I know from working in the library [Metuchen Public Library], it's the same thing where you're dealing with the public.
- E. Madison: But I don't want to get into any of that. But I mean I could write a book on a lot of people in this town if I wanted to. [laughter]**
- R. Terwilliger: Now we're talking what time period? Tell me what year about we're in now, when you worked—
- E. Madison: Well, I started with Allen—I retired from the [Raritan] Arsenal in [19]56. And that's when I went to work for Mr. Burroughs.**
- R. Terwilliger: In 1956?
- E. Madison: Yes, in the store, I meant. But prior, while I was working at the Arsenal, I worked at the store nights. That's when you went in at six o'clock and stayed till ten. And that's when I operated the machine and Saturdays.**
- R. Terwilliger: Well, then we missed a whole portion of your life because I know you traveled and worked for the government.

**E. Madison:** Well, that happened after.

R. Terwilliger: Oh, this happened after.

**E. Madison:** We had to travel, we went after. After I left Raritan Arsenal, I went into New York. I think I was sent into New York to work. Then while I was in New York, it came out on a bulletin board that they wanted two auditors to go to Newfoundland [Canada]. So I said to this girl, "Let's put our names down just for fun. We won't get called." [laughter] So we put our names down. A week later, I went on my vacation, and I went to Puerto Rico on my two-week's vacation. While I was in Puerto Rico, my orders came through that I had been accepted and I was to be ready at a certain date. Well, I was then living down at 535 Main Street, that old house that's made apartments.

R. Terwilliger: Oh yes!

**E. Madison:** I lived on the third floor in a nice little one-efficiency apartment I had there. So they got in touch with me when I got home and they said, "Where have you been? You got to leave this Monday." I said, "I can't leave this Monday. I have to sublet the apartment. I got a lot of things I have to take." So they gave me an extension, two weeks to get ready. And I met this girl in the railroad station, the Grand Central Station [in New York], and we went up to Springfield [Massachusetts] by train. And there we had to wait for our airplanes to take us out.

R. Terwilliger: Now what year was this, Emily?

**E. Madison:** That was [19]49.

R. Terwilliger: Nineteen-hundred-forty-nine. Let's see, the war [World War II] was over at this point?

**E. Madison:** Oh yes, the war was over.

R. Terwilliger: The war was over. What about the war years, you were working—?

**E. Madison:** I was at the Arsenal. I don't remember just what year I went to work out there. It was during the WPA [Works Progress Administration] days. Anyway, that's when I went, started out there.

R. Terwilliger: Yeah. There were a lot of things done in Metuchen through the WPA. Wasn't there a library built with WPA money?

**E. Madison:** That might have been. I don't know.

R. Terwilliger: I thought Mr. [Paul] Fenton told me that. Do you remember anything—I hate to skip over, you're so articulate.

**E. Madison:** No, I mean I skip over because I have trouble—

R. Terwilliger: And you have such good recall about the way things were then that—

- E. Madison:** The library used to be, I think, on the corner of Hillside Avenue and Robins Place when I moved here. And the jail used to be there too. And the first thing exciting when I came to town, they had put a man in jail and they forgot to lock the door. So when he was there, I guess he didn't think to try the door. But he was in there, I guess, three days, nobody came after him. So he tried the door, nobody was there, so he walked out and went away. [chuckles]
- R. Terwilliger: Do you recall when Dolly Buchanan's grandfather [Samuel Prickett] was—?
- E. Madison:** When he killed a man, you mean?
- R. Terwilliger: When he was shot. He was the judge.
- E. Madison:** Yes, that's where I was leading.
- R. Terwilliger: And I think they said it was [Archibald] Herron was the name of the man that killed him.
- E. Madison:** I knew him, knew that man.
- R. Terwilliger: And that he eventually, I guess, just died in jail because the judge that—
- E. Madison:** I had a newspaper clipping on that. I think it was one of the last ones before he died. I cut it out of a newspaper and I sent it to my brother because he knew him too.
- R. Terwilliger: And the Herron families are still here in Metuchen?
- E. Madison:** Are they? I don't know of any of them.
- R. Terwilliger: I don't know if it's the same family. I see the name in the library.
- E. Madison:** He was the only one I knew.
- R. Terwilliger: But that must have been the real scandal in town, wasn't it?
- E. Madison:** Well, I suppose it was but [unclear]—well, it was like the Hall-Mills<sup>4</sup> case, when the Hall-Mills case that was in all the papers, and that was too I suppose in his day, but it was—it didn't get out of Metuchen very much. I don't think it made New York papers or anything like that.
- R. Terwilliger: How would you describe people in Metuchen in those days? What kind of people lived here?
- E. Madison:** I thought they were very nice. In fact, I thought they were nicer than they are now. There was no poor and no rich. There was a rich and a middle class. I don't know of anybody who was real, real poor in Metuchen. There might have

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<sup>4</sup> The Hall-Mills murder was the double homicide of Edward Wheeler Hall, an Episcopal priest from New Brunswick, and Eleanor Reinhardt Mills, a member of the Episcopal choir, on September 14, 1922 in Somerset, New Jersey. The two murder victims were believed to have been having an affair and the priest's wife and her brothers were tried and acquitted of their murder in 1926.

**been, but I didn't know them. Of course, then the Danas<sup>5</sup>, they lived out on the Plainfield Road and my brother surveyed all that property for where it is now, built-up to that, all those houses.**

R. Terwilliger: Pumptown, yeah.

**E. Madison: And Mr. [Walter] Williams gave my brother a lamp that had been on a carriage. And my sister has it hanging on her yard. I shouldn't have said that because if you ever say that, she says, "The Dana [unclear] back here!" [laughter]**

R. Terwilliger: She probably would not even ever hear this tape.

**E. Madison: They were noted for their nice parties that they had.**

R. Terwilliger: I just want to check [the tape] and be sure we're still going.

**E. Madison: I better not I talk so much, you didn't get a chance to ask questions.**

R. Terwilliger: No, that's okay. We're doing just fine. I thought I'd have a problem. You're just a delight to interview. But you would say that people were conservative and serious?

**E. Madison: Today, I think there is too much class. And when I say class, I mean—maybe I shouldn't say this, so it go on that thing—I think the Jewish elements here in town have taken over. I don't know whether if it was in there, I rather not go ahead, come out.**

R. Terwilliger: Well, we can bleep it out.

**E. Madison: I would rather that be agreed, but I think they've taken over the town entirely too much.**

R. Terwilliger: Well, it was predominantly Republican town too at that time.

**E. Madison: That's right. There were only two Jewish families here. That was the Kramers. When I came here, there were two Jewish families: the Kramers and the Franks. And the Franks is where the Mili's shop [Mili of Metuchen Dress Shop at 418 Main Street] is now. And you used to go up three steps this side of it, and three steps that side, and then you go in the door. That was like a five-and-ten-cent store. They had everything, but nothing.**

R. Terwilliger: Yeah. And then wasn't there a Mr. Friedman who took over years later? Friedman's [Jersey] Five-and-Ten?

**E. Madison: Oh, that was the five-and-ten on the corner where the Costa Cottage is now. He started that after he bought Mommy Frank out, or they died or something. I don't know how he got it.**

R. Terwilliger: But they were the only two Jewish families in town?

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<sup>5</sup> The Danas lived at the Walter Williams estate known as Roselawn, located along the south side of Park Avenue near Plainfield Road in Edison.

- E. Madison:** They were the only when I came to town here. And two of the finest Jewish families you're ever wanted to know, very fine, both of them.
- R. Terwilliger: Well, I remember the Kramers and they were—
- E. Madison:** The Kramer girls and Harry Kramer.
- R. Terwilliger: Right. Were there many black families?
- E. Madison:** I don't even remember! Well, yes, there was one. If you remember not too long ago, there was a big article about a girl from Virginia that just got her Master's degree or some big degree. She's a doctor, her husband's a doctor, and the name was Stately [phonetic]. Do you remember reading that in the paper?
- R. Terwilliger: Yes. Now I do.
- E. Madison:** Well, that was the only black family that I knew. And he used to go when wealthy people would give dinners. He would always go and prepare the dinner, and take care of everything.
- R. Terwilliger: How about Percy Mulligan?
- E. Madison:** Yes, he was here too. He lived there in the back of the [First] Presbyterian Church, there's a house back there. And he also was very fine and I know Percy very well. And somebody told me he died, but I saw him the other day in a car. I used to help him out with his son. His son had been ill and I used to see that he got things so that he go out, [unclear] if he want to.
- R. Terwilliger: And Percy for years worked in New York City, wasn't he?
- E. Madison:** He worked for the Barrs, the Barr family. And the Barr family lived where the White Sisters [of Africa] lived, in that place. That was where they lived.
- R. Terwilliger: But you would say then that Metuchen from, say, oh, like the 1920s through to the forties were—it was different quality of people than what we have here today?
- E. Madison:** I liked them better, I must say, yes. Everything I think was more sincere and more truthful. And those that had the money, you knew they had the money. They didn't have to advertise it. They didn't have to pretend; they knew it back then.
- R. Terwilliger: There was no nouveau riche then. They were sincerely wealthy if they were wealthy. And how did they ever get the name of the "Brainy Borough"? Was it because there were so many intellects here?
- E. Madison:** Well, there were quite a few like [author] Mary Wilkins Freeman lived here.
- R. Terwilliger: And I understand that many people who taught at Rutgers and lived here in Metuchen?
- E. Madison:** Well, Mr. [Charles C.] Mook taught in New York, in Brooklyn, some college or something. And there was a Dr. Hunt, who was over at Rutgers. He was also



- famous in town. There were a lot of very brilliant people here in town more so than there are now, I think.**
- R. Terwilliger: Yes. Well, they seem to be people of really high quality. And it's interesting how a town can change? We're only talking, what, thirty-eight years?
- E. Madison: Well, there's no place now in Metuchen to go, only up. I don't think you can buy one lot in this town. It is just like a doughnut; we're the hole in the middle of the doughnut.**
- R. Terwilliger: Well, the traffic proves it. Every time you try to go from one side of town to the other, it's really horrendous at the wrong time of day. [recording paused]
- Emily, I hope you don't mind that I am calling you Emily?
- E. Madison: No, of course, I want you to. That's my name! I don't like this formal.**
- R. Terwilliger: Emily, when you went to work for the government up in Newfoundland, was it? What year was that again?
- E. Madison: The early part of [19]49. And I came back in [19]52.**
- R. Terwilliger: And tell us about that. I think we left off with—
- E. Madison: We went up from Springfield, this other girl and I from Springfield Base.**
- R. Terwilliger: This was Springfield, Massachusetts?
- E. Madison: Yes. And we went up on a plane that has bucket seats, one on each side, not this way, they're bucket seats.**
- R. Terwilliger: This was a troop carrier?
- E. Madison: A regular troop train, airplane. And we were all assigned clothing to wear up in that cold country, Arctics, and everything. So we had a duffel bag just like a soldier. And we landed at Gander—Goose Bay, we landed at Goose Bay. No, it was Gander we landed at, about four o'clock in the morning, I guess.**
- R. Terwilliger: Where's Gander now?
- E. Madison: Well, it's in Newfoundland. But it's where the—it's the easy part to get out of Newfoundland by flight. That was the home station where the—then you go out on little flights from there.**
- R. Terwilliger: Yeah. Now let me backtrack just a minute. I got to catch you while I have you right at this moment. What were your thoughts in Springfield, Mass. when you—was this your first plane ride?
- E. Madison: No, I had gone to Puerto Rico that year. I had no thoughts at all. We just had to wait until they called us. And we waited there four days and I met somebody—**

- R. Terwilliger: You never had any question about this decision you made. I mean it started off as a lark.
- E. Madison: Yes, and I didn't know what I was going to—I knew I was going to be in the Auditing Department because it was the work I was doing.**
- R. Terwilliger: Right. But you thought it was more of an adventure then.
- E. Madison: Yes. My family were amazed when I told them I was going. They didn't even dream about it. So I picked up and went. And we landed there about four o'clock in the morning, and all the gear was brought in and piled in the place. And everybody was supposed to get their own and I thought my name was on mine. But when I went and got what I thought was my bag, there was no name on it. So the next morning, we go down to breakfast to the Officer's Club and I see this one officer looking around at everybody. [laughter] Everybody was looking at. So I said to Kelly, "What's he watching everybody for?" So he came over and he said, "What size shoe do you wear?" And I said, "A five. Why?" He said, "Well, you've got my duffel bag, I think, because I've got yours." [laughter] So we had to switch our duffel bags and we were in that airport for four days because if it's bad weather, they don't go out. Then we went over to Newfoundland—St. John's, Newfoundland, which was a big base. And they controlled all the north part of the country: Greenland, Iceland, Labrador, and all those places. They had to come down to our main office there in Newfoundland.**
- R. Terwilliger: Now what were you auditing?
- E. Madison: Property, just property.**
- R. Terwilliger: Property that the government owned up there?
- E. Madison: That's right. And also when I worked here, that's what I was in, the property.**
- R. Terwilliger: And what kind of quarters did you have?
- E. Madison: Well, the first night they assigned us to a quarter, which was a barracks where the soldiers lived. But this one was reserved for the Newfoundland girls. They had Newfoundland girls working on the base and doing the office work and like that. So they gave us one room upstairs. Otherwise, we had officer's privilege. We ate at the Officer's Club, but there were no rooms in the Officer's Club so we couldn't live there. And they had no other facilities to give us. So listen, we didn't care where we lived just so long as private. And we used to go up to the Officer's Club, this was right up the hill in back of where we lived, for our meals**
- R. Terwilliger: That must have been very nice. They treated their officers very well.
- E. Madison: And we used to—one night we bought a bottle. I was up there and brought it back in our rooms. Well, the Newfoundland girls weren't allowed. They made inspections; the soldiers made inspections of the Newfoundland's quarters. And if they ever saw whiskey or anything, they were tagged for it. So they thought they'd get back at us. They reported it to a boyfriend of one of the Newfoundland girls that we had liquor up in our room. [laughter] So he came, made the inspection, sure enough he found the bottle and took it. So he wrote us up that**

**Madison and Kelly had liquor in their rooms, which was taken away from them, and gave the reason for it, and so forth and so on. So we both went up to the Club and we raised Cain until we made him give us a whole new bottle of liquor. [laughter] So then they found out that they didn't gain anything by that and they weren't—he wasn't supposed to inspect our quarters because we were Americans, see?**

R. Terwilliger: Right, yes. The Newfoundland girls now, what background are they?

**E. Madison: Well, Newfoundland, yeah, Canadian. Canadian.**

R. Terwilliger: And you were treated much better than they were?

**E. Madison: Oh, they had nothing to say over us at all. Nobody had anything to say over us. We came to that one department, that's where we worked, and he was the only man who could say anything to us. But we had, as I say, officer status. Wherever we went, we had the privilege of the Officer's Club.**

R. Terwilliger: What an exciting time that must have been for you?

**E. Madison: When I went out—we'd take turns being sent out. And this one time, I went to Goose Bay, and when I was finished at Goose Bay, they asked me to go up to Narsarsuaq, which was in Greenland. And they wanted me to go up there and finish up, up there. So there's where I stayed, for almost four months I was up there.**

R. Terwilliger: And there was no other way to get out of here except to fly out. And were there ever any problems with the flying at all? Did you ever run into bad weather?

**E. Madison: Well, I only went—when I would go to a different station, that some time I'd fly. But while I was there, some of our boys got lost on the ice cap. I had to write up in the paper about that. But I never had any trouble.**

R. Terwilliger: And were the winters really something else?

**E. Madison: Well, I didn't mind the winters as much up there. I just took a heavy winter cloth coat like you wear here and I never wore a hat.**

R. Terwilliger: Oh really?

**E. Madison: Never wore a hat.**

R. Terwilliger: And what were the temperatures like?

**E. Madison: Well, it was so cold when you walked, it crunched. That's all I can tell you. And the one night, the New Year's Eve (first New Year's Eve I was up there), they had this party, and this one colonel came up to get me. I stayed at the Nurses' Quarters there. And that was the night that the Northern Lights were out. I didn't know what it was when I saw this gorgeous thing, it looked like chiffon—you know how chiffon blows? And that's what it looks like, girls dancing. And I said, "What is that up there?" He said, "Well, that's the Northern Lights."**

- R. Terwilliger: Do they actually twirl around too?
- E. Madison: Yes! You think if you are looking at girls that were dancing, their skirts were going around, you wouldn't see anything else. But that's the way they went. It was the most beautiful thing I had ever seen.**
- R. Terwilliger: And are they different colors?
- E. Madison: All colors, pinks and lavenders. And as I said, that was the most wonderful thing that I saw up there. There was nothing else to see.**
- R. Terwilliger: And that only occurs at a certain time of the year?
- E. Madison: Yes.**
- R. Terwilliger: Do you remember what time of year that was?
- E. Madison: It was around New Year's. Well, it was in winter because it was New Year's Eve; I was going to a dance at the Club.**
- R. Terwilliger: Yeah. So it sounds like you had a good social life up there too?
- E. Madison: Oh yeah, because we all went—we mingled with the officers.**
- R. Terwilliger: And was the ratio—?
- E. Madison: It was only this other American girl and I, and the nurses. We were the only American girls there.**
- R. Terwilliger: Oh my goodness, then you must have been treasured items. [laughter]
- E. Madison: So we had our pick of the take of our men. [laughter]**
- R. Terwilliger: And you never fell in love and wanted to marry anybody?
- E. Madison: Nope, nothing like that entered my head, not until I met Allen, until I started going steady with Allen.**
- R. Terwilliger: Yeah. Who was Allen now?
- E. Madison: Allen Burroughs. See I was engaged to him when he died.**
- R. Terwilliger: Oh, I didn't know that. Was he part of the group that was up there?
- E. Madison: No, he owned the pharmacy!**
- R. Terwilliger: Oh, oh, I see, yeah.
- E. Madison: Mr. Burroughs, and he had two children. But I better not go into that. That's why we never got married. So I took care of him until he died. That was my only love life after that.**

- R. Terwilliger: But you've always enjoyed life and had a good time. I just get the feeling that you do enjoy a good time. You had to have fun.
- E. Madison: I remember there was some wax up there one time, this one major, she was going to give a big party. So she invited Kelly and I, being the two Americans, and she started off serving Manhattans [cocktail]. And so this girl said to me, "You watch me because I can't drink Manhattans. I get drunk right away." And she was six feet tall and you know how little I am. [laughter] I said, "Come on, Kelly, let's have a good time. If you get drunk, I'll take care of you." And it so happens, she did get drunk. So this colonel and I took her home, put her to bed, and covered her all up, and we said, "She's all right." And we went back to the party. [laughter]**
- R. Terwilliger: And they got to her before you. That's amazing!
- E. Madison: Yes! Well, I didn't drink too many of them because I don't like Manhattans.**
- R. Terwilliger: Right. But they were some fun times up there then along with your work—was the work hard that you had to do?
- E. Madison: No. We just audit. Well, when I say audited property, it's like you go in, they had records that show every item, when it comes, where it is, and when it goes out. And if it isn't where it's supposed to be, they have to account for it. Where is it? And it was our job, if they couldn't find it, to go find it. And when we found it, then we had to write them up that it was very important for people or something like that. In other words, the records weren't kept too good.**
- R. Terwilliger: Right, yeah. That must have been problem if people didn't keep good records.
- E. Madison: Well, when you're far away from that—in fact, I've been up there when the ship would come up and when they were unloading it, if they dropped something overboard, it went in the Kill. That's where it stayed. But they accounted for—it was on the manifest so they said they received it and you had to put it on the records. And then they had to get it off the records some other way.**
- R. Terwilliger: So how long did you stay up there then?
- E. Madison: I came back the latter part of [19]51. I came back.**
- R. Terwilliger: And back to your home on Home Street?
- E. Madison: No. We sold that house for a long time. I came to that place on [535] Main Street. And from there, Lilla Mundy—did you know Lilla Mundy?**
- R. Terwilliger: No, I didn't, Emily.
- E. Madison: She owned that house. And she wanted to rent the apartment I had, so I had to look for an apartment. That's how I landed here. So I've been here seventeen years now.**
- R. Terwilliger: Oh, I didn't realize you were in Redfield Village that long. And you've never gone back to work then formally?

**E. Madison:** Well, I worked at the Metuchen Pharmacy. From here, I walked up there to work. I started when I was on Main Street. I was at the pharmacy with Mr. Burrough twenty years, and twelve years with Frank [Puhan]. That was thirty-two years right there that I was in the pharmacy.

R. Terwilliger: Right. You really were to work there when you came back from Newfoundland?

**E. Madison:** That's right. Prior to that, I had been part-time at the pharmacy.

R. Terwilliger: And you were Mr. Burroughs right-hand man, or right-hand woman, I should say.

**E. Madison:** Well, the case that they wrote up in the [*Metuchen*] *Recorder*<sup>6</sup> when they closed the place was complimentary to me.

R. Terwilliger: I never saw that interview.

**E. Madison:** You didn't.

R. Terwilliger: No, you'll have to show it to me.

**E. Madison:** Well, next time you come. I don't want to keep you too long.

R. Terwilliger: And what year did Mr. Burroughs die?

**E. Madison:** Seems to me it was [19]65 or [19]67, something? I could go and look at my records. I have a record.

R. Terwilliger: It doesn't have to be exact. I just wondered about what time.

**E. Madison:** In the sixties<sup>7</sup>. I'll say the sixties.

R. Terwilliger: And he, as you had told me, previously—

**E. Madison:** He had cancer.

R. Terwilliger: He had cancer. And also—

**E. Madison:** Mr. Puhan.

R. Terwilliger: —died of cancer too. But Mr. Burroughs sold the property to Mr. Puhan.

**E. Madison:** Yes, he sold the pharmacy to him because Mr. Puhan was his pharmacist. And while he was in the hospital, Frank ran the place himself.

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<sup>6</sup> She is referring to an article in the *Metuchen Recorder* from January 1, 1974 titled, "No Rx for a failing pharmacy" about the closing of the Metuchen Pharmacy. Ms. Madison was hired to work at the pharmacy in 1954 on a temporary basis and wound up worked there for twenty years. According to the article, Ms. Madison "will continue to manage the building, which contains of seven offices and three stores" despite the pharmacy closing.

<sup>7</sup> Edward Allen Burroughs Jr. died in January 1968. Born in Metuchen, he became a pharmacist at the age of eighteen and acquired the Metuchen Pharmacy at 396 Main Street. A veteran of World War I, Mr. Burroughs served as borough clerk for twenty-five years. He also served as a charter member of the Metuchen Rotary Club and the Metuchen Riding Club. Due to illness, Mr. Burroughs sold the pharmacy to Frank Puhan in 1965.

- R. Terwilliger: Right. He didn't pay rent or anything for the pharmacy then?
- E. Madison:** **Yes, he did. Mr. Puhan paid rent to him because when he first went in—just before Mr. Burroughs died, he had a meeting and he sold it to Frank. It actually had to be recorded and all that. I mean it was a very nominal fee that Frank got. And then after that, he paid rent to Mr. Burroughs for the building, see? Because then he was the owner of the pharmacy. And my painter worked for us at that time too.**
- R. Terwilliger: Oh yes. And Mr. Puhan had business then for how many years?
- E. Madison:** **About eight years, I think he actually owned it. He was there long before that. He was there, worked there, when I did.**
- R. Terwilliger: Oh yes. I remember him as a pharmacist there before Mr. Burroughs died. And so—let's stop it. [recording ends]

[END OF TAPE I, SIDE 1]

- R. Terwilliger: [recording begins mid-sentence] ... ask you, what kind of man Mr. Burroughs was?
- E. Madison:** **Wonderful man. That's all I can say to him. He was wonderful and loving and kind and good-hearted. And he did a lot of good work for that Chinese family. He adored those five children.**
- R. Terwilliger: Which Chinese family was that?
- E. Madison:** **Din Lee.**
- R. Terwilliger: Oh, Din Lees. Yes, I remember them.
- E. Madison:** **And the youngest one that now just graduated this year from Montclair State Normal School (I guess that's what you call it, the State Normal), she was his just pride and joy. He knew her since she was this big. [gesturing to size] And she was born there on [9] Pennsylvania Avenue.**
- R. Terwilliger: They ran the Chinese laundry [Din Lee Dry Cleaning & Laundry], right?
- E. Madison:** **Laundry. And he and I used to go there. I don't want this to be said on there, it was so dirty in the Chinese shop. And we'd go there and eat dinner, I said, "Allen, if anybody ever told me I'd do this, I'd say they were nuts." [laughter] And he just loved those children.**
- R. Terwilliger: Isn't that wonderful?
- E. Madison:** **We got so that he and I did things together with those children like they were our own. We took them to the circus and we took them here, there, and everywhere. Of course, the old children, the two smallest ones were the ones [unclear].**

- R. Terwilliger: But he probably—this kindness that you speak of—?
- E. Madison: He lived home; his daughter [Anne (Burroughs) Miller] was married and he lived with his son [Edward Allen Burroughs III]. His son was with the U.S. Steel, and he wasn't home very much. So his life was very quiet at home. And I guess that's why he came to my house because it was a little bit more life. Not life, but it was more like a home! And then he used to take his meals down with me, his evening meal, he'd come down after dinner.**
- R. Terwilliger: Well, you were more his contemporary too?
- E. Madison: And then he really felt at home. He enjoyed being with my family and all. Well, I couldn't say one bad word against him. Not one bad word.**
- R. Terwilliger: That's beautiful to have some feel that way.
- E. Madison: In all the years that I knew him, even when he was a borough clerk when I just worked for him, he was always very kind to me. Always very kind.**
- R. Terwilliger: And he was good to people in town as far as the pharmacy goes?
- E. Madison: People that owed money would come in and give him a hard luck story and he'd say, "Well, forget it then. Forget about it." And a couple of colored families come in, this one old man came in, he'd say, "Boss, I want to go down, see my mother in South Carolina. Can you lend me twenty dollars for the fare?"**
- R. Terwilliger: Oh my goodness!
- E. Madison: He'd give him the twenty dollars, yeah. "Pay when you come back! Pay when you come back!" And he did, Letsinger, old man [Perry] Letsinger.**
- R. Terwilliger: Oh yes. Isn't that something?
- E. Madison: I don't think anybody could say an unkind word about Allen unless they were just malicious or jealous maybe of him.**
- R. Terwilliger: But as a person that you knew very well, he was a fine man. Well, that is a beautiful tribute to pay to someone who was in business for all those years, who lived in town, who raised his family.
- E. Madison: And I mean I knew all his troubles, he knew all my troubles, and we cried on each other's shoulder.**
- R. Terwilliger: Did his wife [Florence Burroughs] die very young?
- E. Madison: I really don't know how old she was. I didn't go with him when his wife was alive. I was friendly with him, but I didn't go out with him. It wasn't until after his wife died that I started going out with him. One thing lead to another, you don't think of those things until you try them.**



- R. Terwilliger: Right, yes. So tell me, in winding up our little conversation here, I'm sitting here looking in Emily's dining room and she had a beautiful collection of Royal Copenhagen China.
- E. Madison: Plates. The yearly plates, they're the Christmas plates.**
- R. Terwilliger: They're the yearly plates and they date back to—what was the earliest one, 190—?
- E. Madison: The earliest one I have is 1912, [19]13, [19]14, and [19]15.**
- R. Terwilliger: And they're just beautiful. Her whole house is beautiful. I didn't know she was an artist; she has some beautiful paintings hanging on her wall. [chuckling] And it just sparkles with love and joy and there's real warmth in her home that if I met Emily on the street and never saw her home, this is what I'd expect to see if I came here because it really is a reflection of the kind of person you are. But I want to know your secret, Emily!
- E. Madison: I have no secret! I always say, "I live right and sleep alone and don't like it." [laughter] I went to Europe two years ago, and I thought, *Well, instead of taking pictures wherever I go, I'm going to buy prints in that particular—and frame. And that is what these all are. I actually have been to all of these places.***
- R. Terwilliger: Aren't they beautiful too?
- E. Madison: This one is where I saw the Changing of the Guard. And that's where the Queen lives in Denmark. This is on top of a mountain; we went by bus and came back by that casket.**
- R. Terwilliger: Cable car?
- E. Madison: Cable car. This is the house in Brussels, the House of the Golden Roof. If you notice right on the top there, there's a solid gold roof. That's 400 years old. The people are now chipping the gold off. [chuckling] This is where the *Sound of Music* was made. The first one they filmed over in Switzerland.**
- R. Terwilliger: Uh huh, the [von] Trapp family?
- E. Madison: Yes. No! That's not the *Sound of Music*.**
- R. Terwilliger: Oh, the *Sound of Music*?
- E. Madison: Yes. Oh, what is it now? That's what it is, the *Sound of Music*! There's a movie on it.**
- R. Terwilliger: Yeah. But I thought that was the German [unclear]?
- E. Madison: It was filmed [unclear] over there, and up atop this old castle was a great, big, old—nothing in it, not a thing in the thing. But the guide said, "Now, if you sit down or stand where you are, this man will sing." And he went to the middle, stood right in the middle of the building, and he sang the main song, the *Sound of Music*. And it was just as plain as I'm talking to you here. And that building must have been three blocks long.**

- R. Terwilliger: It was just the acoustics were–
- E. Madison: The acoustics were wonderful. And that’s where they filmed a lot of the singing.**
- R. Terwilliger: Wow. That’s beautiful. Well, the prints are all so pretty.
- E. Madison: Of course, the Mermaid [“The Little Mermaid” statue]. I had my picture taken right in front of her, but that is not up there.**
- R. Terwilliger: And what is this, Emily? This one on the bottom? [referring to photograph on wall]
- E. Madison: That’s in Copenhagen. They’re called the Walking Street [Strøget]. There’s no traffic allowed to go on that. And there’s shops for three blocks long on both sides and they just walk in the road and walk all over. Nobody could even go in there by automobile, or horse, or anything. And they call it the Walking Street.**
- R. Terwilliger: Oh, isn’t that interesting!
- E. Madison: And it’s very interesting to see because everybody goes to see the Walking Street. And well, I have snapshots of Tivoli Gardens, from the gardens, but I didn’t take prints of that. And I had these framed from the gardens.**
- R. Terwilliger: They’re just beautiful. It surely does make a beautiful wall gathering with all the prints.
- E. Madison: But I mean the fact that I was actually there, and I can say that I was actually there with all these prints.**
- R. Terwilliger: Right, and everyone. That was a wonderful idea, Emily.
- E. Madison: I was gone for twenty-six days.**
- R. Terwilliger: Oh, lucky! [chuckles] How long ago was this now?
- E. Madison: Two years ago.**
- R. Terwilliger: Just two years ago. So you’re not going to give away any secrets to us girls about how–?
- E. Madison: I don’t have any secrets! I live right and I live—I always want to help everybody. And the only thing I can say, lay it to is this, that’s the only thing I can lay it to.**
- R. Terwilliger: She has a book on her coffee table here that says *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*. So you live by the Bible too.
- E. Madison: But I never belonged to a church. And I thought, Well, some of days, I’m going to die and there won’t be anybody to say a kind word for me because I don’t want a funeral of any kind. So I went down to the St. Stephen’s Lutheran Church (Danish Lutheran) in Edison.**
- R. Terwilliger: Clark?

- E. Madison:** No, in Edison. And I asked a man to be in his church. So he said yes. He asked me my background. [coughing] My father and mother were married in that church when it was located in Perth Amboy. And I was christened in it. So I figured that was where my roots started, so that's why I went back there and joined that church. But I told him I still intended to carry my own science work on, live by my science work. He said, "Well, what Bible do you use?" So I showed it to him. He said, "Well, that's the same one I use, so there's no harm in that."
- R. Terwilliger: What is the science work that you—?
- E. Madison:** This is the Bible, and this is her interpretation of each paragraph in the Bible, Mary Baker Eddy's interpretation of the Bible. So if you pick a chapter out of that or paragraph out of that and read it and compare this one to it, you see there's only the wording is changed a little bit. And she believes in positive thinking. She doesn't believe in death and she believes that your material body goes away, not your spiritual body. And I think there's a lot to it because I can almost see my mother sitting in a chair, could have a conversation with her, not that she answers me. But I can say, "Well, you know what I mean Mom, don't you?" Just like I'm talking to her. This I went into when I broke up with my marriage, that's what kept me alive.
- R. Terwilliger: Really? You've had this—
- E. Madison:** No, this woman sent me these books when I broke up. And she said, "Read them. You may get some good out of it."
- R. Terwilliger: These are not the original books here, are they?
- E. Madison:** No, I went and bought myself these. I bought these myself.
- R. Terwilliger: And is this kind of thing still available to anyone?
- E. Madison:** Oh yes, yes! This is the way they put it out, it's a *Christian Science Sentinel* and this is the weekly lesson. And what you do is start Sunday and read all of them right up to where they stop. Then every day you read one. So in other words, you read one every day and that's the way you keep track of your lessons.
- R. Terwilliger: And you do this every day?
- E. Madison:** Yes!
- R. Terwilliger: Every morning or every evening?
- E. Madison:** Every morning. Any time, the time I have time to sit and do it.
- R. Terwilliger: And does this kind of guide you through your daily life?
- E. Madison:** Yes, because I love people and I love everybody. And I believe in being kind to people and I believe in not condemning people. And sometimes you slip, like I slipped with saying about the things about Gardenia [Emanuel], but never

- anything maliciously bad of anybody. I never speak any—there’s always a reason why, if somebody steps off the straight and narrow.**
- R. Terwilliger: It wasn’t meant maliciously. It was just an honest evaluation on your part.
- E. Madison: Well, that’s the way I am, and that’s the way I live. Some people will say to me, “Oh, she’s terrible.” This is just a good example of it. Is that [the tape] on yet?**
- R. Terwilliger: Um-hm.
- E. Madison: Would you put it off because I want to tell you this, there’s a girl ... [recording paused]**
- R. Terwilliger: [recording begins mid-sentence] ... do you believe that you have ESP [extrasensory perception], it is?
- E. Madison: No, I don’t. I don’t have that at all. I just feel that I work through my spiritual work, and I like to see the spiritual work, and I believe in the spiritual work. It is good. It is good for the individual; any individual can be cured if they believe in that because I am spirit and you are spirit. Our material bodies are nothing.**
- R. Terwilliger: And you just feel it’s very important to look close to the Bible then?
- E. Madison: To me, it is.**
- R. Terwilliger: Well, if you’re any evidence of it.
- E. Madison: Well, no. Many people can condemn the Bible. That girl that’s starting all the trouble in Metuchen, Mrs. Murray or Murphy [phonetic], she thinks the Bible is a lot of hogwash. Well, someday she may eat her words. You have to have something good to guide you in life regardless what it is. And it so happens it’s the Bible for us Protestants. I don’t know whether you’re Catholic or what it is? And I’m sure the Catholics have a Bible of their own.**
- R. Terwilliger: Oh sure, we do. Yes.
- E. Madison: But they go by that. So if you have nothing good to live for, how could you do good? And I just don’t see how that woman gets away with it.**
- R. Terwilliger: So this has been all of your life practically then too.
- E. Madison: Since 1925, I believe [unclear]. And I never joined the mother church for only one reason, you have to give up smoking and drinking and everything. And I thought, *Well, I have very few vices in my life. I’m going to keep those two vices.* So if I can’t do it, and do it conscientiously and truthfully, then I don’t want to give it up. I don’t want to join that church, but I can still get the benefit out of these lessons. And that’s why I told the man at that church that I joined.**
- R. Terwilliger: Lutherans aren’t allowed to smoke or drink?
- E. Madison: No, I didn’t say Lutherans. Christian Science.**

R. Terwilliger: Oh, Christian Science?

**E. Madison: They don't believe that there is no such thing as pain. There is no such thing in sickness. It's all a thought that you have. And it's a material thought, not a spiritual thought. God created you, and He created you perfect. And that's what I still am, perfect.**

R. Terwilliger: You certainly are! [laughter] I can't believe it; it's really astounding. I mean this is really a revelation for me to find out that this is the basis to the zest I see when I look at you for a living.

**E. Madison: Well, I say it is. Whether it is or it isn't, but I say it is.**

R. Terwilliger: But you do smoke and you do drink?

**E. Madison: Yes. I'll take a highball [drink] and go tonight. And I do smoke. Maybe I smoke more than I should.**

R. Terwilliger: And you've never had any problems with your lungs?

**E. Madison: Maybe I have, but I don't recognize it.**

R. Terwilliger: And how long have you smoked? All your life?

**E. Madison: I've smoked since I'm twenty-eight years old, three packs a day, and fifteen cups of coffee a day.**

R. Terwilliger: Well, you've broken all the rules in one! [laughs]

**E. Madison: I remember the night that I told my father that I was going to smoke. We lived on Bissett Place, and it was on a Christmas Eve, and I said, "Daddy, you going to--," my father smoked a pipe, I said, "Do you want your pipe?" He said, "Yeah, get it for me." So I got it and I said, "Well, I'm going to smoke with you." He never said a word, he just looked at me. Never said one word! [chuckling] Next day, I said, "You're not mad at me, are you Daddy?" He said, "No, that's what you want." He always called me Little Emily because I was the shortest one of the whole lot. And he said, "Little Emily, if that's what you want, you do it." He never said a word.**

R. Terwilliger: He sounds like he was a marvelous man, your father.

**E. Madison: Well, he was a good father to us, very good father. And my mother was too.**

R. Terwilliger: You had a wonderful relationship then with both of them. And to be that close because that was a time when parents, they were the authority figure.

**E. Madison: No, my father was never like that. And we sat at the table, we always said grace at the table. And my father when he'd come home from work, we were not allowed to talk at the table until he had discussed with my mother everything that happened during the day. When that was over, then we could all talk. That was his time.**

R. Terwilliger: But there was always grace before meals?

**E. Madison: Oh, definitely. We always said grace.**

R. Terwilliger: Was this just in the evening or was there—?

**E. Madison: At our evening meal because that was the only meal we were all together. And when I'm alone here now, I still say it to myself when I eat by myself.**

R. Terwilliger: That's beautiful. Oh gosh, you don't know how you touch me.

**E. Madison: And I think those are all the things that gave me a happy life.**

R. Terwilliger: Yeah. Well, I think we're going to end it now, Emily. I can't tell you enough how much and how exciting you've been to me to interview. And I thank you so much.

**E. Madison: Well, anything I can do to help out. You're entirely welcome, I'm sure.  
[chuckling]**

[END OF INTERVIEW]