

Interview with Mrs. B.

W14775 [?]

[GROWTH?] OF [BRIDGEPORT?]

[?. ?. ?]

M. [?]. [?]

MAR 16 [1939?]

INTERVIEW WITH MRS. B.[?] Clinton Ave. Survey

We walked up a dark flight of stairs to the door of an apartment above a vacant [store?]. The hallway, originally painted bright blue, was [streaked?] and dirty; the stairs were narrow and worn. At the top of the stairs, a narrow hall led to a bathroom at one end, and to the door of the apartment at the other. The open door to the bathroom showed and old [?] [toned?], white enameled bathtub. A woman's voice answered our knock with a [call?] to "Come in". when we put our heads around th open door, the woman inside hastily dropped the spoon with which she was mixing batter, dried her hands on a soiled house dress, and apologized for not having opened the doors door to us.

We stepped into a large, dark kitchen(about 12x12) with two windows hung with dingy, [w ite?] white net curtains. Between the two windows [stood?] a large square table - with the two drop leaves set up. It was an old fashioned one, with heavy machine-carved legs. The table top was cluttered with baking ingredients, a huge yellow bowl full of batter, crumpled dish [clothes?]- cloths, etc. Two dirty-faced, little boyes, aged 3 and 4, with wide and bright [y?] eyed interest, were hanging over the yellow bowl, staring hungrily at its contents. During the interview, they [surreptitiously dipped?] their fingers into the

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batter, and licked furtively. In one corner stood a black coal stove; in another, an old , and chipped, grey Maytag washing machine; a baby's highchair - one that had seen many years' service - stood in a space between two doors. There were three straight backed wooden [?] child- chairs, varnished, as the table was, in dark brown. In the fourth corner, stood an old chest of drawers - with its top cluttered with odds [an?] and ends of soiled clothing. Over the table was a bracketed a wooden shelf, also cluttered with odds and ends. The woodwork was painted a dark brown, the walls and ceiling a smoke discolored buff. On the floor was a [linoleum?], so worn that the patterns pattern was no longer [distinguishable?] clothesline , stretched across one end of the , was hung with [??]

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A large pantry opened off the kitchen, just opposite the hall door. This was bright with the light of a fairly good sized window. A [set?] tub and sink were at one end, and shelves were lined along the wall. The shelves held a [notley?] collect plates, cupps cups, etc. A large [tine?] tin flour bin was on the floor. [????]

Three bedrooms led off the kitchen. The front bedroom(probably meant as a living room) was as large as the kitchen, and had three windows. The other two rooms were [m ch?] much smaller, and had only one window. There was a painted, iron double bed in each room. In the front bedroom, there was an old type, varnished rocker, and a radio placed on a small square table, and an old dresser. The center bedroom had a white, baby's crib and a small table in the corner piled with laundered, but unironed children's cloths. The outer bedroom was furnished with a tall chest of drawers. [?] The beds were neatly made, covered with thin blankets.

The writers visited Mrs. B. twice in order to complete the interview. The second time, the [?] oldest child, a boy of twelve, was at home. Mrs. B. explained, in a half sad, half angry voice, that she had to keep him out of school because his shoes were in such a bad [condition?] [he?] could not go out into th snow and slush, particularly since he had a very bad cold. On the second visit, also made rather early in the morning[.?] Mrs. B. was

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preparing to scrub the floor; this had been swept and everything was- in the kitchen was in order. A small size galvanized tub filled with water was being [hosted?] on the stove.

Mrs. B. asked us to be seated, and cleared two chairs of crumbs for us. She seemed to accept our entrance and right to ask questions - we distinctly had the impression that she thought we came with some authority to do so. This submissiveness, let us say, (for want of a more precise word) while it created a feeling of uneasiness in ourselves, and some embarrassment - was quickly dispelled when we had a chance to "chat" with her. We first discussed the relative merits of corn breads with her - for it was that that was in process in the yellow bowl.

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[Interview with Mrs. B.?)

Mrs. B. is [about?] 5 feet 6 inches tall, well built; though [her?] shoulders droop badly. Her oval face was [??], with a tight, [somewhat?] strained full mouth; pale, seemingly [dazed?] blue eyes that stare [unseeingly?] at times. Though she was a particularly good informant, and answered all our questions readily, her eyes showed little change in expression, little response. Her face remained more or less expressionless- dead- except for a rare and momentary smile, that flickered out instantly, when she spoke of one or two past / girlhood experiences in [Nova Scotia?] and Maine, and when two of the children, a boy and girl came in from school. Then her face came to life, and her eyes lighted up.

Mrs. B. stood by the table, looking down at us as we asked our questions for some time. She seemed unconscious that she was doing [so?] until we asked her to be seated. She sat at the table, and during the early part of the first interview, until we managed to engage her in reminiscences, her hands kept wandering restlessly, without conscious purpose, to the collection of utensils, cloths, etc., on the table — picking them up, putting them down again in the same place, touching them. Later she sat still, with one arm across her

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protruding abdomen, holding her hand close to her body —almost hugging it; this, we noticed, was an habitual relaxed position. Mrs. B. told us she was thirty-three years old, and had been married for thirteen years.

“I was born in the Province of Quebec, in Canada, but I was brought up in Trenton, Nova Scotia, so I look upon that as my home. My father and mother were both born on Magdalen Island — it's only fifty miles long. Did you ever hear of it? It's just a fly speck on the map. My father was a fisherman there. They were married there. My father was an adventurer; he traveled all over like — what's the expression they use — like the ‘wandering Jew’. My father went to work in the coal mines in Nova Scotia; he got Miners' consumption at the age of forty and had to quit. You know what that is? No, he didn't get any compensation. He took up cobbling then; he's still doing that there. The Company doesn't allow them to go back into the mines when they have consumption.

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“My mother had nine children, but brought up only seven. My oldest brother went into the coal mines when he was twelve years old. He did regular work, side by side with my father; why, at sixteen, he was a full-fledged miner with miners' papers. I'm glad my other brother never went into the mines. He worked at the steel works in Trenton; he got as high as \$45. a week when he was only sixteen years old — heating rivets. Then the steel plant closed up. My uncle was buried alive in the same mine where my father worked, just last year. He was my Godfather. That was the third brother in that family that was killed; two died in the mines, and one was killed in the war. My oldest uncle had the heart knocked right out of his body — they were blasting, and they struck rock — a piece of it hit him. He left eighteen children, but they gave the widow a \$60. a month pension, and gave the two oldest boys jobs in the mine. You know, it was a strange coincidence — my uncle's son got up late one day, and didn't go to work. That day the mine blew up and seven hundred people were killed; that was twenty years ago. They never found some of the men; and some of the bodies were so mangled they never sent them home.

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“You know they have a very strong Miners' Union in Canada; they all stick together; they're what they call a brotherhood. If one man gets fired, because of a grudge or something, they all walk out. That's what I call a real brotherhood. I think the miners have the most fighting spirit; they have to have — why, they're in danger from the minute they go down until they come up. They never know when they leave the surface if they're going to come up. I'm glad my other brother never went into the mines.

“Trenton was next door to being a city — if it had gone on as it was going during the war it would have had enough people to become one. There were two steel mills, a glass factory, factories where they made bridge parts and box cars, and two mines. It was a nice little town; it had concrete walks, and everything, not like here.

“During the war, my mother took in boarders. There were no 5 hotels In Trenton, and they begged my mother to take them in. I remember we had to put three beds in each room. The war was the ruination of this country — they brought all the women into the factories, and then when the soldiers came back, instead of giving them a break they kept the women on at lower wages. when the depression came , the women had that training and went back to work for lower wages than the men were getting. They ought to pay the men a decent wage and let the women stay home and take care of the house and children. Some women really don't have [tox?] to work. I know what I'm talking about; I worked with them up in Maine. Their husbands were making good money, and they were working because they didn't like taking care of the house — and then they'd flirt with all the men. That causes a lot of divorces. Of course, maybe I shouldn't say this, but I think they ought to give the men decent wages, and let the women stay home. It's the manufacturers who are responsible for a lot of this. They're responsible for the depression. If the workers stuck together here the way they do in Canada they'd be a lot better off.

“Nova Scotia was a pretty place. Have you ever been there? You've heard of Halifax? It's the big harbor. I went there once for two weeks, when I was fourteen. You could see all the big ships come in. My mother spoke poorly English — she can't read; she was timid, and

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afraid to go round, but my sister — she was twelve then — and I, we went all around. we had a lot of fun. They have what they call the 'Public [Gardens?]' — you /should see the beautiful flowers; they had animals there — like a little zoo; and a lake with swans — that was beautiful. There was a drilling ground on tue hill — you could see the whole harbor. There was an armory, too— with lots of cannons and guns inside — that was beautiful too.

"I went to work when I was fourteen — in a lobster factory, packing. I got \$25. a month. Well, I thought that was pretty good pay for a fourteen year old child. We got room and board — and got [paid?] whether we worked or not; when it was windy or stormy, and the [fishermen?] 6 couldn't go out, we had nothing to do. That \$25. was clear — there was no place to spend it there. It was just a long beach. I thought that was good pay. There were eighteen girls, and eighteen boys. My mother was cook at the boys' cook-house; she got \$35. a month. We used to have a lot of fun there. I worked there two seasons — you only worked two months a season — from April 26th to June 26th. Then I did general housework in Trenton for a miners family. There were seven in the family, and the father and three sons worked in the mines. They were scotch Scotch — real old country scotch Scotch — with some brogue. I had to do everything; there were no conveniences then. I had to do the big washings by hand. I was only sixteen, and I papered walls, whitewashed the ceilings; I morescoed the bedrooms in blue and white — it was so pretty. That was my first experience with papering. I only got fifteen dollars a month, and I stayed at home. It was just next door. That was a hard job. Then we moved to Maine; my father did cobbling there. My mother and father separated — they've been apart a long time now. He went back to Nova Scotia; he's still there, still cobbling. He's sixty-six years old. He took a cure by himself, and is all right now. My mother is still up in Maine.

"My first job up in Maine was washing dishes in a boarding house. I got my room and board, and \$8. a week. After getting \$15. a month, that was a lot of money to me. Then I waited on table in the dining room; I had to get up at 5:30 in the morning — the men used to come in at six for their breakfast. Then I went to work in another boarding house; I didn't have to get up there until six. I washed dishes, and got the same pay. Then I got a job

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doing general housework — that was a confinement case; I got \$12.50 a week, but I had to leave after two weeks because it was too hard, I strained myself from lifting something too heavy — a tub of water. I had to doctor myself when I left there; it cost me more in doctor's bills than I earned. She had two babies on the diaper, and I had to wash every day. I was just a kid, really. I had to stay up half the night rocking the baby.” She made a cradle of her arms 7 and rocked back and forth, “WAH — WAH, all night long. Then I went into the mills, thank the Lord. I went to work in a paper bag factory; I operated a press that printed the bags — I used to feed the machine. I made seventeen dollars a week. When the gong rang, we were through. That was good. we didn't have to think about work until the next morning. we used to walk home — it was about a mile; when you're young you don't mind so much. when you got home, your mother had the meal ready; you had your dinner, got dolled up, and went out with the boy friend. You have a lot of fun in a small town. You know everybody. That was in Rumford; we lived in a little town nearby — in Mexico.” She laughed. “When we came to Bridgeport, and the kids in the neighborhood asked my kids where they came from, they were so surprised when they said, 'mexico'.

“I worked nine hours a day — from seven to nine — with an hour off for dinner — that broke the monotony. I worked half a day on Saturdays. Once I got my hand caught in the machine; it was so smashed that my fingers were all flat; the skin didn't break, but the blood was coming through the pores. It felt like a thousand pins and needles. I could feel that blood pound and pound, until the first aid man slit the little finger and let the blood out. It healed all right. I worked there until I was twenty, then I got married. A month after I was married, my husband got hurt in the mill. He almost lost his right arm. He worked in the Oxford paper mill — you've heard of that — feeding the machine, and got his arm pulled into the roll. It was burnt to the cords; it's lucky it didn't burn the cords, otherwise he'd have had to have his arm amputated. First they put in a steel plate, but the bone wouldn't knit, so they took silvers from both his legs, and now he's pretty well. He got eighteen dollars a week compensation, but they took that away from him after three months. They wanted to give him a lump sum — \$300. but they wouldn't have taken him back to work. He figured

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that it would be better to go back to work, because they guaranteed him his job that way. After he was back a short while, the mill closed down. So what good was [that??] 8 while my husband was out with his arm, they called me back to work. You see, they had let all the married women go when things got slow — that was only fair; they had brought a lot of single girls there. They lived [and?] rooms, and if they lost their jobs they were stuck. when my husband got hurt, it was a blow; it wasn't so bad, though, I didn't have any children then. They wouldn't have provided for me any better than they did , if I had had the children. There was one man with four kids that got his foot caught in the roller, and had to have it amputated.

“My husband had some good jobs. He made \$35. in the paper mill. Then the mills moved out and went down South. When the first mill closed, it threw 350 people out of work; and when the second mill closed, it threw 700 more out. Then they kick because the people go to the town for help. And, in fact, we were on the town. My husband tried everything, but he couldn't find work. The relief is much better here than it is up in Maine. I used to get script for [\$7.?] a week, and a quart of milk a day for me and six children. I was pregnant then with the youngest. [?] She's [?] a year old now, and doesn't make any attempt to get up. I wasn't getting the proper nourishment when I was carrying her, what I had I gave to the children, and didn't take it for myself, which I shouldn't have done. I cheated her to feed the others. Somehow you don't think of the one that isn't there yet, you just think of the poor little kids around you. Did you see in the papers about the 5000 people — children — all [undernourished?] in Maine. They took a survey.

“I have four boys and three girls; the oldest is twelve, and the baby is a year old. I hope I don't take after my own mother or my mother-in-law. My mother had nine, and my mother-in-law had nineteen. Seven is enough; they all came close together. Let's hope there won't be any more. I'm only thirty-three, so I have plenty of time to have more. Two of the kids are at [Elias?] Howe, and two go to Saint Anthony's — the two younger ones. I want them

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to make their first communion, and I figure the nuns can teach them their [catechism?] better; I don't have the time.

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I wish the Nuns were Irish instead of French. I think you should speak of the country that you're living in. My husband speaks poorly French; he was born in Canada, but his father was an American. That's how he's a citizen. He was three months old when he came to New Hampshire, and he never spoke French. You know, more people speak French here, then they do up in Canada. I always spoke English in Canada. If they heard you speaking French on the street there, they'd laugh at you and call you a Frog. My mother hasn't got good English; she speaks French. I speak it too, but not very good. My father used to holler at us if we answered him in English. He made us repeat it in French. He didn't want us to lose it.

"I'm not a citizen yet. I never had the money to take out my papers. I don't think you should denounce your country. America and Canada are the same, anyhow."

We asked Mrs. B. if she had to pay to send the children to parochial school. She answered us, a little on the defensive — embarrassed. "No, I don't have to pay at Saint Anthony's. I told them I couldn't afford it. But they want them, so they told me to send them just the same.

"My husband had worked in Winsted, Conn. once, so he came down to visit his brother there and look for work. He didn't get anything there so he came down to Bridgeport. He got a job at Cudahy's packing plant, working in the kitchen. He had done it years ago, in the winter he has to work from seven till four, and on Saturday mornings; in the summer he has to work plenty / of hours. He only gets \$21. a week; that's salary.

"I left a beautiful rent up in Maine. My husband was down here about six months before I came. I paid \$4.25 a week for rent; here it would cost about \$60. I had five rooms on the thrid third floor of a three family house. It was all new and clean. The kitchen was so

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big I had two stoves in it, and you couldn't even notice it. There was a bathroom and a hot water heater. Not like here. All the houses in Maine have hot 10 water. There was a porch on three sides. There was a beautiful view. You could look out at the mountains and wide open spaces — and breath the fresh air. I didn't like it then, but I miss it now. I had a nice [?] front room there. I sold the front room set for \$15. before I left. It was pretty — brocaded velour in taupe and blue; I paid [\$165.?] for it when I was married. We had a nice cellar, and a big patch for a garden.”

The oldest boy interrupted[.?] “And a nice yard to play in, too.”

“Yes — did you notice that little patch alongside of the house? That's all the yard there is here. It cost us about [\$65?] or \$70 to get our furniture down. It cost us well over a hundred dollars before we got settled. Of course, I'd like to have my front room furniture for when I have company — but then I don't have so much company. while I was up in Maine waiting to come down here, we ali got sick with the Flu. There was no one to take care of us, and all the while I was pregnant. One of the boys — this one”, she said, pointing to the four year old child, “I almonst lost. He had convulsions; then when he got over that, he got the Flu and then Pneumonia. I had to be up night and day putting hot [poultices?] on his chest. we were all in bed — we got by as best we could. I was so sick I had to go to bed. I felt like a pig, depriving them of care. They used to come crying to the bed saying, ‘mama, I'm sick, I'm sick’. I almost went foolish. I don't know why I didnt. At Thanksgiving, my brother-in-law brought us a chicken. I don't know how I managed to get up to cook it. I couldn't enjoy the meal , but the poor little kids did. My husband had sent me some money so we could have a Thanksgiving dinner. I had abscesses in my throat, and the kids had running ears. They were afraid of mastoids. I had the Doctor for a couple of days; the town paid for it.

“I came to Bridgeport last June. My husband found the place, and scrubbed for a month before I got here. The Landlord wouldn't [do?] anything. He said it was the dirtiest place, and grown up people lived here before. She used to drink all the time. Thank God, I don't

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drink. It's 11 hard to find a place where they'll take so many children. The landlord lives downstairs — with his wife. They're [Lithuanian?]. He's been out of work for a long time, and now he's getting relief. They wouldn't give it to him for a long time [because?] of the house, but he can't eat the house, can he? They're fussy about noise so I have to keep the kids quiet. They have never had any children of their own. The house is tumbling down. I have four rooms here and one up in the attic; I pay \$4.50 a week for rent. He didn't want to take it that way at first, but it makes it easier for both of us. This way they have a little to go on with, too. I don't have any gas. I burn coal and wood; when it gets too hot for the baby to sleep with the stove going [?] I use a two burner oil stove. The bath is out in the hall, but who can take a bath out there — it's so cold. My electric bill is about \$2. a month; I have a washing machine and a radio - it's so old I can't play it hardly. Thank God I got the washing machine the first year I was married, or else I wouldn't have it. It's twelve years old. I've experienced it all — it's tough to get married and not have enough to get along with. It's a struggle. Sometimes I have only five dollars a week for groceries. It's pretty slim. The milk comes to \$2. I get two quarts a day. I have to get vitamin D for the baby. She's undernourished. I buy day old bread at the bakery — it costs five cents a loaf. I used to bake it myself, but it's so cheap I don't now. I shop where I can get the cheapest — at the Giant, and the self-service A. & P. You know, last Christmas the priest at Saint Anthony's gave us a big basket of food; I guess that's because we were strangers here, and had a big family. I haven't been able to get the baby any Cod Liver Oil but I'm going to try very soon. She needs it.”

She turned back to the bowl and stirred the batter. “If I don't get this done, the kids won't have any lunch. They'll have soup tonight. One thing, I make good bread,” We discussed bread making — the French, the Italian, and the Jewish methods of making it. Mrs. B. was simply astounded when she discovered that one of us was Jewish. Her astonishment 12 indicted incredulity that anyone could be so nice and be Jewish at the same time. Later in the interview she voiced opinions that corroborated this deduction.

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"I have a sister living across the street," Mrs. B. told us. "That's how we happened to come on this street. My husband had an awfully hard time finding a place for us to live. Nobody wants children." we mentioned the Government Housing program for Bridgeport to Mrs. B. "That would be wonderful. Government housing? well, I don't care where you go, there's a certain amount of slums in every city. Up in Maine it ain't so hard to find rents. I had an awfully hard time up there. My brother-in-law used [toh?]help me — when he could. You know, my brother-in-law was the president of the State Federation of Labor up there for years. Maine is pretty backward; my brother-in-law lost his job in 1934 when he tried to organize the Oxford Paper mills. He's been out ever since," Mrs. B. shook her head.

"Up in Maine I had my folks. Down here I don't know many people. The only person I really know is the woman next door — I took care of her kids when she was working. And I know the little Polish woman across the street. I'm making a [Novena?] with her now at Saint Anthony's. we went last night — they had a wonderful speaker — a Franciscan father. She used to walk way down to Saint Peters, but I told her what does she want to go so far for when we have a church right here. I like Saint Anthony's its a smaller church, and it seems homier. She's a nice little thing, but her husband beats her, and beats her. He's a jealous fool — with an uncontrollable temper. I don't know why he wants to pick on her. They had the cops over there the other night. She was sick not very ling ago. I was sick last summer. I had womb trouble. I went to the clinic — it's way up Main Street. It's hard to get down there — that's why I haven't taken the baby down. I have to walk, and it's too far. [I've?] been ailing for years. The first doctor at the clinic said I had chronic appendix, and the woman doctor there told me that my uterus was twisted [?] 13 one of my ovaries was rotted and would have to come out. It's awfully crowded in the clinic — and you have to wait a long time. They have Niggers and everything down there." One of the interviewers [made?] a general comment referring to the [?] 'Negroes'. Mrs. B. looked a little surprised. "Yes, I noticed a lot of Negro people," Mrs. B. said carefully, "Lived around the clinic. I was waiting for the bus one day. I couldn't walk," she continued apologetically, "I had such a terrible pain. That night the pain was so bad, I was sweating bullets. My husband told me

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to go to a private doctor. He told me the same thing; I would have to have an operation. But I'll tough it out a while. After my fourth child, I almost died. The doctor told me not to have anymore — I wouldn't live through it. But I had three more. After this last one, I had hemorrhages for twenty-one days. I guess that was because I was so undernourished. Well, I didn't intend to have anymore — “, she broke off. “You're married, aren't you? Well you know how husbands are, they don't think of your health. I guess Birth Control doesn't work with me because I'm weak. I get those — what do you call them? — suppositories from the drug store — they cost seventy-five cents a box.” We told Mrs. B. that this was a waste of money,. [?] Mrs. B. said, “I wish I knew what to do. The Polish woman was talking to me about it, too. She's having such a hard time — she's got six children, and just lost one.” we suggested that Mrs. B. look up the Maternal Health Center, and apply there for advice.

“Are you Catholic? And you're not married in the Catholic Church? Well,” she shrugged her shoulders. “You don't have to go to the priest and tell him things.” One of the interviewers mentioned that she was married to an Italian. “I've never been in a place like Bridgeport,” Mrs. B. said. “Everybody mixes together — Catholics, Jews, Protestants, and all. It's the first place I've[e?] been in like that. Up in Maine, the Jews stick together— they're only a few, of course. [The?] Protestants bicker back and forth with the Catholics. Like I was gonna say, the Jews stick together up there — the Jews own all the big stores as usual, as you 14 know. In small town, the Jew will always have the store. If a poor Jew comes to town, they all get together and help him out. From / a poor Jew with patched pants, he'll pretty soon have a store. You've got to hand it to them. They've got the brains. Up in Nova Scotia, I remember an old Jew who started out an a junk dealer — then he worked himself up till he owned the biggest clothing store in town — but he still kept on with his junk. His wife and two daughters took care of the store. When I was a kid I remember when I'd find a bottle I used to run to the junk shop — and I'd get a penny for it, one of his daughter's names was Rebecca — they were pretty girls. There aren't many Jews up in Rumford — but the place is polluted with what we call ‘Pollocks’ — they're really Lithuanians though —

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and Italians. what do we call them? wops.” Mrs. B. laughed. “[ell?], don't care, they call us ‘Frogs’. They have slang names for all nationalities, what's the slang name for the Jews? I never heard any up there. The Italians and the Pollocks mostly all work in the mills. There was one Italian we used to call Frank Banana — he used to go round with a banana cart calling, ‘Ba — na —ni, Baa - naaaa — ni.’ They say that's typical of Italians. They always sell fruit and vegetables. Up in Nova Scotia there used to be an Italian who sold ices in a little cart — I forget his name.” The interviewers remarked that they didn't know that French Canadians were called Frogs, and remarked that they had heard them called ‘Canuks’. Mrs. B. said, “That's true — they do call them that sometimes. That comes from the Duke of ‘Canuk’ (We suppose Mrs. B. referred to the Duke of Connaught) You see they were all old country people. There are a lot of Scotch and English people up there. You know what they call us from Nova Scotia — Bluenoses — I don't know why. You've heard of the racing boat — the Bluenose? Well I guess that's where they got it. Up in Maine they're all P.I. [/Frenchmen?] — what a pile of them. They come from Prince Edward's Island - that's why they call them P.I.[s?].

“Didn't your family make a fuss when you married an Italian?” Mrs. B. asked one of use “I thought the Jews took it awfully hard when 15 one of their children married outside their religion. I'm not such a good Catholic, but I wouldn't want one of my children to marry outside our religion. But after all,” Mrs. B. shrugged her shoulders. “We all believe in one God.”

Mrs. B. continued about the difficulties of getting along. She spoke of the unexpected necessities that arise. Drawing aside her hair, she showed us a large bald spot. “I've got [ringworn?] [ringworm?],” she said. “I went to the Doctors, and he gave me a prescription. It costs two dollars for salve. I'm supposed to shampoo my hair every other day. I was afraid I was going to be bald. The salve's almost gone; I don't know what I'll do when I have to get more. Then there's the operation I'm supposed to have — I just can't afford it. I have such terrible pains every month I can hardly stand up.” We noticed that the oldest boy was wearing glasses, and enquired about it. Mrs. B. told us that he /and the oldest

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girl had been having continuous headaches, and the school had finally provided them with glasses. She told us that she had worn glasses, too, and needed them now. "I started wearing glasses when I was nine." Mrs. B. said, "I can see far away now, but I can't see anything close. What do you call that? Farsighted?"

We asked Mrs. B. about her social life. She laughed. "When I go [but?], it's to go shopping, and then I come right back. Sometimes — once in a great while — I get out to the movies; not down town, right here in the [west?] end. It's not so nice inside, but you just go to see the movie anyhow. I'd like to go down to the warners'— it used to be the Cameo, but they were fixing it when I first came here. Everybody's holering hollering about it. It must be nice."

Just then the two children came in from Parochial School. They burst into the room. The little girl, about seven years old, came in with great excitement, "Mummy, Mummy, I've got a surprise." She tugged at a crumpled scarf of blue and red wool that had been stuffed into her pocket. "Look — the [Sister?] gave it to me." Mrs. B. said, "Isn't that nice. You look as though you came from RaG-Town [Rag-Town?]." Her brother laughed, "Oh, you 16 come from Ragtown — Ragtown." Mrs. B. turned to [him?], "And where do you come from? Right next door."

Mrs. B. prepared to give the children their lunch of corn-bread. We thanked her, and left.

The children were very well behaved. With the exception of the oldest boy and the seven year old girl, all the other children were thin and pale; they all had running noses and colds. The baby was white-faced and thin, with huge transparent purple shadows under the eyes.

When we went across the street to visit the Polish woman, later in the afternoon, we saw Mrs. B's. seven year old daughter playing with a companion on the sidewalk. She had the

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new scarf tied around her neck. As we approached we heard her boasting to her friend, "Those two ladies were in my house. They were in talking to my mother."