

Boulton26102003A-B
Tremont Oral History Project

Interview with Frank Boulton
Interviewed by Megan Persuric
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8:00 PM
Broadview Heights, Ohio

Megan Persuric: What is your name and can you please spell it for me?

Frank Boulton: My name is Frank Boulton. F-R-A-N-K B-O-U-L-T-O-N.

Persuric: When did you move to Tremont?

Boulton: Well, I was born in the Tremont area. I was born at home in a house on West Fifth Street. I was not born in a hospital.

Persuric: And what year was that?

Boulton: That was in 1947.

Persuric: Do you know when your parents moved to Tremont?

Boulton: Well, I think they moved, they moved in the earlier part of the 40s, mid--perhaps around 43 or so.

Persuric: Was there any specific reason why they chose Tremont?

Boulton: No, I don't think. I think at the time they just moved in the area because it was just a make-up of a lot of ethnic groups and they just thought they'd like to live in that area.

Persuric: What was your family structure like? Who lived in your home with you?

Boulton: Well, I was raised with my two brothers, my mother and father.

Persuric: And they all grew up in the same home in Tremont?

Boulton: My brothers did, yes.

Persuric: Where did your parents work?

Boulton: Well, my mother was a homemaker and my father, at the time he

worked, he had a dump truck and he hauled construction materials and then he got a job with the city of Cleveland and retired from that job.

Persuric: What did he do for the city of Cleveland?

Boulton: He was a water meter installer.

Persuric: What are some of your early childhood memories growing up in Tremont?

Boulton: Well, one I would guess is like I said, there was many different () ethninticities there. It was make-up of many different foreign people. Polish, Ukrainian, Slovenian and knowing that I used to hear a lot of the different languages spoken in the area, from my friends, some of the kids that I run around with which were Polish and stuff. They spoke with their parents and I would hear them speak to them in their native tongues. And, just a nice are to live in.

Persuric: Did your family speak any language other that English in the home?

Boulton: No, we spoke only English.

Persuric: As a child where did you play?

Boulton: Well, I lived in the lower west side which is down around the West Fifth and Jefferson, West third area which is actually down in the areas where they call the flats so we had a lot of places we played down around West Third Street. There was some fields and things down there between actually what was the top of the hill, West Fifth Street down to West Third Street. There was some hill area there were we used to play and build forts down on the woods and stuff like that. Most of the time we played in the Tremont school playground area. Of course, that's the school I went to from kindergarten through the sixth grade. I left there, that school in nineteen fifty-seven and went to Lincoln High School which is on Scranton Road. But, most of the playing growing up was around the Tremont School area. When I was growing up they had an orphanage on the backside of the school. It actually wasn't affiliated with the school anyway. It just housed the orphanage. The school was completely separate. But, we often times would see the kids hanging out and holler. We'd holler at them and kid with them and say hi to them and stuff like that. But again, we played a lot around the Tremont School are which is right on Jefferson.

Persuric: Was the orphanage a separate building on the same lot or--.

Boulton: No, it was all one building but it had a partition wall in it that separated it from the school so you couldn't go through that wall in any way. They didn't have a
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door to go through into the orphanage. It was just a solid building but it did have a

separate wall, separate part that was the orphanage.

Persuric: Did those children go to Tremont school or did they get taught separately too?

Boulton: I think they were taught separately because I don't recall any of them being in any classes with me in school.

Persuric: Do you know when the orphanage left or how long it was there?

Boulton: Well again, to my recollection, after I left here in 56 or 7 when I went on to Lincoln I think they were still in the building. After graduating from high school and stuff I don't remember them still being there so it happened sometime within the next five-year period. So, I would say somewhere between 57 and 62.

Persuric: You never heard an explanation as to why they had moved it or gotten rid of it?

Boulton: No, I think they just went into a better facility because the actual school was, or the building that was the school and the orphanage was pretty old so I assume they just housed them in a better facility.

Persuric: Moving on to when you were a teenager, where did you frequent on dates or just hanging out with your friends?

Boulton: Well, growing up in the neighborhood you knew a lot of kids that went to the other schools in the area such as St. John Cantius so we hung around with a lot of kids from there. So, we would go to things there. They'd have dances, Friday night dances and things like that. We'd go to dances there. Just the regular dates that kids go to, a show or drive-in. It used to be up on West Twenty-fifth Street, Garden Show. That's where we'd go to the show when we were young, you know, teenagers. But, most of the stuff was done through school activities with the other kids's schools and you know, your friends you know from other schools. And, likewise, they'd go to things at our school, you know, the football games and things like that, the basketball games and the parties afterwards. Maybe some kid would hold a party at their house or something.

Persuric: Did you or your parents ever frequent the stores in Tremont, the little grocery stores or the bakeries or the--.

Boulton: Yes, actually, we frequent them all the time because around the corner from us on Jefferson at about Sixth Street alley there were about two stores there. One was like a delicatessen store. His name was Sammy's. The other was the Wetzels

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grocery store. Mary and John Wetzel had a grocery store right on the corner of the alley. The two stores were next to each other but they were completely different kinds of stores.

One sold groceries and soaps and detergents and things like that, but the other store was like an ice cream parlor. You could get sodas and phosphates and things like that. It was completely different types of store. But, yes, we frequent the stores in the neighborhood all the time. Infact, at that time back in those days, these people would even take credit form you. They'd just have a little index card and if you had to put it on a card for a week or two and come back and pay them on payday they'd carry you for the week or so. I remember we had to do that at times. My dad or my mom would get stuff there and they'd put us on a little card and trust us for credit for the week until my dad got payed and things like that. Back then they did things like that. [laughter]

Persuric: Probably not anymore.

Boulton: No. [laughter]

Persuric: Did you or your family go to church in the area?

Boulton: No, we weren't very involved in church at that time. I myself got a little more religious when I got a little older. But, no, my parents didn't frequent churches.

Persuric: So, you never even just on your own went to one of the church services?

Boulton: Well, if I did again, it would be with one of my friends like either that went to St. John Cantius or maybe one of their other churches. But, I didn't have a religion at the time that I followed or anything like that. So, if I went it's only because I went with a friend for that Sunday. I might have stayed over their house or something like that and went with them on church on--stayed over their house on Saturday and went with them to church on Sunday that day.

Persuric: Do you know any of the social places that your parents visited?

Boulton: Well, they didn't actually socialize a heck of a lot. We used to visit our relatives more than anything. That was our form of socialization because there wasn't a lot of money to be doing socializing like going out to clubs and stuff like that. No, there wasn't very much socialization in that way.

Persuric: Do you have any memories of Lincoln Park?

Boulton: Oh sure, Lincoln Park is where I learned how to swim. I used to sneak in there when I was six years old. They'd keep throwing me out and I'd keep sneaking back in. I'd probably get thrown out of there four or five times a day. Yes, I used to sneak into Lincoln Park, the swimming pool. It was built around the time that I was

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again, about five or six years old [laughter] and I used to sneak in there to swim. Yes,

that's where I learned to swim, sure. And the park was always real nice. Old people used to come sit in the park. There used to be a fountain. I don't recall the fountain in the middle of it ever having water in it. It was like a dry pool in the center--a dry fountain. People would sit around that in the summer and talk and stuff. It used to be very pretty.

Persuric: So, you and your friends both as kids spent time sneaking into the pool? Or did you do it on your own or with your brothers--.

Boulton: No, it would be like if I went with my brothers and then they realized that I was too young to be in there without a parent so they'd throw me out and I'd sneak back in and I'd get thrown out. I used to go with my brother and stuff, not so much parents, nothing like that.

Persuric: So, did you learn to swim through an instruction class or just by going there on your own--.

Boulton: Just by going there on my own. Just swimming on my own, going with friends when I could get in there.

Persuric: Are you married?

Boulton: Yes, I am married?

Persuric: Did you marry someone from the neighborhood?

Boulton: Coincidentally, yes I did. I married a girl that lives, lived on West Twelfth Street. I met her through a mutual friend of hers. Well, it was a friend of hers but I was going to summer school at West Tech taking summer classes and a young girl, young lady that I met at the school there would take the same bus home that I would from school to get back to the Tremont area and we became friends, talking and stuff. So, she wanted me to meet her girlfriend one time and from that time on we used to run around together after I met her, this girl. We dated off and on for probably eight or nine years until finally we round up getting married through the acquaintance of the girl that I was going to school with there.

Persuric: Where did you get married at?

Boulton: We got married at a Lutheran church. St. Matthews Lutheran Church on Scranton Avenue up near, towards, it used to be called The City Hospital but it's now Metro Hospital, Metro Health--but it was up towards that hospital there.

Persuric: And when was that? When did you get married?

Boulton: We got married in 1968. May 18, 1968.

Persuric: Did you have a reception and if so where was it?

Boulton: Yes, we had a reception. We had it at the V.F.W. club on Memphis between Fulton Parkway and Fulton. Again, it was a V.F.W. club and that was in, of course, 68. Obviously after the wedding that night we had about, I think about 250 guests. I was in the service at the time and we left a couple days later. I had to go back. I was stationed in Tucson, Arizona. So, I took her back with me there and we spent the next year in Tucson, Arizona before I got a shipment to go overseas to Thailand in support of the Vietnam War.

Persuric: So, at the time of the two of you getting married she still lived in the Tremont area until moving out with you or--?

Boulton: Yes, she did. She lived with her parents on West Twelfth Street just north of Mentor Avenue. Yes, she stayed in the neighborhood and then when I went overseas she stayed with her mother there at her parent's house for the year that I was overseas until I got back.

Persuric: What year did you go into the service, Air Force?

Boulton: I went in 1966. August of 1966, the United States Air Force.

Persuric: Did you live in Tremont up until that point or had you moved out prior to that?

Boulton: No, I lived in the area. Infact, I enlisted right from the house that I again bor, not born in but raised in on West Fifth Street. I was eighteen years old and that's when I went in the service. But, I went right in from the Tremont area, yes.

Persuric: Going back to the house that you mentioned you were born in a house in Tremont, did you stay--it sounds as though you moved after that or did you stay in that house up until--?

Boulton: Actually, I was born in the house directly across the street and I lived there for about a year. Again, I mentioned earlier that I was born at home. I was born in the house directly across the street. I lived there I think a little better than a year and then my parents moved into the house that I consequently was raised in for the next seventeen or eighteen years until I went into the service. So, I stayed there until I was eighteen, in the Tremont area and then after I came out of the service--Actually, I moved back to the Tremont area for a few years and then bought my first home out of the Tremont area.

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Persuric: You moved back to the Tremont area with your wife?

Boulton: Yes, we moved a couple doors away from her mother and lived there for a few years over her lady friend of hers house. She had an apartment upstairs and we lived there for a few years.

Persuric: And why did you choose to move back to, back there rather than somewhere else?

Boulton: Well, I guess it was just the comfort of being close to family and stuff like that. My parents were still living in the Tremont area so I guess I just wanted to be back and be close to them for awhile until I decided where I was going to move and start making my own family and settling down.

Persuric: When--You said that you eventually bought a house and moved out of the Tremont area. Where did you move to?

Boulton: It's actually still called today the Old Brooklyn area. It's Twenty-first and Valley. Off of Valley Road in Cleveland around the Schaf Broadview area.

Persuric: Is there a reason you chose to move from Tremont to a different area of Cleveland?

Boulton: No, we just--Again, I wanted to start my own family and my own life so we just moved. We didn't feel that it was terribly far away. It was still close the downtown and everything. I guess more of a matter of convenience. We moved to that area because you could still get on the freeways and such real close and it was just a convenient area to move in.

Persuric: Did the houses you talked about being born in and the one across the street that you were raised in, did your parents own those homes or did you rent or--?

Boulton: Well, the one that I was born in we didn't own. It was funny that we moved across the street and we were living there for a year or two and our landlord at the time came to my parents, came to all the parents in the building because it was a five family home, and said that he was going to be selling the building so my dad figured instead of moving and trying to find another place to live that he would try to buy the building. Which he did. He bought the house. Again, it was a five family house. So, he went ahead and bought it and we then stayed there.

Persuric: Do you have memories or stories about, in regards to the construction of the inner-belt?

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Boulton: Well, they're pretty vague but I do remember that back when they was talking about building it the people of the Tremont area weren't very happy because they knew it was going to divide what would almost be considered the upper Tremont and the

lower Tremont areas, which it did do. It cut off completely streets that crossed over from again, the upper and lower part of the Tremont area between West Fourteenth Street and Scranton. It divided them completely in half causing a little bit of problems of getting up to Scranton just a few streets across, through or under the freeway. And, it took a lot of people's homes out and displaced a lot of people that lived in the area and I know that even though their houses were bought back then at what was considered a far price it was still very inconvenient for them people to have to move and stuff and sell their houses to the state so they could put the freeway in. I'm sure that it made a convenience for people getting downtown and stuff but it sure inconvenienced a lot of people that lived there that had raised families and wanted to continue living there for the rest of their lives.

Persuric: Can you describe what it was like when some of the bridges were out? The Abbey Road Bridge or the Clark Road bridge?

Boulton: Well, I don't have a lot of memories of the Clark Avenue bridge being out until it was actually closed down and of course that caused a lot of inconvenience or hard to get across to the east side of town, you know over on to the east side, Broadway area. But, when the Abbey Road Bridge was out for a lot of years under construction and such again, that to caused inconvenience because you had to go up to, you had to go straight up to Clark Avenue to go over to Twenty-fifth street or else you had to go almost all the way downtown and come back on the other side of the West Side Market back down to come back down to get into that area. There were no other access routes to get over to the West Side Market so it was pretty inconvenient. It caused a lot of problems being out and closed.

Persuric: Do you feel as though the neighborhood has changed since you were raised there or somewhat stayed the same?

Boulton: Oh no, there has been drastic changes in the Tremont area. Right now there's a big house building movement going on in Tremont, a lot of renovations. The projects are half the size of what they were when I was growing up. They've, you know, closed a lot of that down. There's a lot of vacant lots. It went from a nice neighborhood that we lived in as a kid to blighted area and now they are started to restore it and bring it back. but, yes it's changed considerably. It's not the neighborhood that I grew up in.

Persuric: So, when you were a child you don't feel as though it was blight?

Boulton: Oh no. We had a very nice neighborhood we lived in. Everybody knew everybody. You could--It's like they say--You hear people talk about being able to leave
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your doors open and everything like that. You trusted everybody but it's not like that anymore. There's a lot of bad things that do happen in the area unfortunately. I have a piece of property that I manage in the area and just from being connected with that and doing the stuff that I do down there I do know that there's a lot of trouble down there. But, no, it's changed considerably and not necessarily for the best. Some of the things

that are going in are very nice and new and things but the surrounding areas from where the new houses are is still pretty hard, pretty rough.

Persuric: So, you are in favor or against these new restaurants coming in? the more upper scale, high-class restaurants and housing or how do you feel about that?

Boulton: Well, the restaurants going in and everything is probably helping the neighborhood to get a nicer reputation but it doesn't do anything for the people of the area that can't afford to go to them. You've got to understand that that's not a very high-income area to most of the people that live there so therefore they can't frequent these restaurants. Most of this new building and construction going on in the area is aimed at young people with high profile jobs such as downtown, working downtown, making it convenient for them to live in the area close to getting to downtown. It isn't for the people that live in the area. Those restaurants and those building aren't being put up for them.

Persuric: Have you been to any of the newer restaurants in Tremont?

Boulton: We were at Fahrenheit on Professor Avenue a very nice restaurant and very good food but again, it's not geared towards the people of the neighborhood. It's geared for people that can come in and afford it a little better than the people that live there.

Persuric: Do you remember what the building was like prior to the new restaurant coming in?

Boulton: [laughter] Yes, it used to be called The Jefferson Inn. It was a bar, neighborhood bar. Obviously the word conotates that neighborhood meaning people of the neighborhood would frequent and it was pretty run down. As a young fella when I was running around the neighborhood and stuff it was pretty rough, what do you call it, ambiance you want to call it. It wasn't very nice inside and stuff. Just to go get a fish bowl and stuff like that. it wasn't high brow like it is now. They've completely gutted it and renovated it and put thousands of dollars in it, in the whole building. It's a very nice building now compared to what it was. But, it wasn't very nice when I was a young fella.

Persuric: So you do occasionally go back to the area to the restaurants or like you said, to manage the property?

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Boulton: Oh yes. I'm in the area at least a few times a month. I again, go by the property and we have gone to the restaurant and stuff. And I'm familiar with--I do still have friends in the area too that I talk to and we talk about the neighborhood so yes. I'm not completely disconnected from it.

Persuric: Friends that you went to school with as a child or a teenager?

Boulton: Yes, friends that I went to school with at Lincoln. Yes.

Persuric: So, did most of the people never leave the area? Have they been there since growing up or did a lot of them come back or--?

Boulton: If I had to make a guess on an average, to base it on an average amount, I would say that only ten percent of our friends still live down there. They choose to stay there. They felt stronger ties to the neighborhood than I did. As I say, I moved to raise a family and they just decided that they would raise their families there. But no, I don't have a lot of friends down there. They've mostly done like me, moved to the suburbs and moved on with their place of living and stuff like that. Very few friends down there but still enough that I still know the area and I still go down there once in awhile to see them and talk with them and run into them occasionally.

Persuric: Do you have any memories of the Bath House?

Boulton: I used to play behind the Bath House, play basketball back there. This is long before they even thought about making them into the condominiums that they are now, the very high brow apartments that they sell for thousands upon thousands of dollars. It was pretty run down when I was there as a kid. It stayed sort of run down over all the years because again, it wasn't a high priority in the neighborhood but you did go there for recreation and to play basketball and meet friends there and they had--It seems to me that they had dances there once in awhile too. But, it was like a meeting place for kids to hang around.

Persuric: Do you remember when Carl Stokes was elected mayor of Cleveland? And if so do you realize any sort of impact on Tremont? Could you gauge the reaction of the neighborhood?

Boulton: Well, when Carl Stokes was made mayor of Cleveland I was an employee of the city of Cleveland at the time. I think it was the year before I went into the service. I don't recall it making an immediate impact on the Tremont area and I don't really recall what impact he had on the city at that time because like I said, shortly there after I went into the service. I do think he was a good mayor over the term that he was in or the two terms that he served. I think he served two terms. I do know that he was fair with city workers. We were always able to get our raises and he seemed to manage that

well for the city workers. I say that as a city employee. He was fair to us. But, I don't know other impacts he made around the city. I know there was a lot of turmoil in the city of Cleveland during the riots and stuff under part of his administration. Through no fault of his there was some problems in Cleveland.

Persuric: Continuing with the politics of Cleveland, how do you feel about Kucinich? As I am understanding he was from the Tremont area.

Boulton: Yes, Dennis was raised in the Tremont area and went to St. John Cantius. My wife worked on his first council, run for councilman in the neighborhood. The young lady that I mentioned earlier that introduced me to my wife, she dated Dennis for awhile. She was his girlfriend for a short time. But, I did know Dennis personally and I still do. I don't socialize with him but I still consider him a friend of mine. I knew him back then and I do believe that he is a good and sincere politician. I just felt that at the time when he became mayor of Cleveland he just surrounded himself with the wrong cabinet members. I think his intentions were good for the city of Cleveland but again, I think his initiations to policies and things weren't very well advised by his administration and therefore caused him to get in some trouble, problems therefore not be able to keep, stay mayor of the city of Cleveland.

Persuic: You mean his intentions were good? Does that have anything--Do you relate that to Cleveland Public Power or his--?

Boulton: Oh yes, he was a very staunch supporter of the city retaining, owning Cleveland Municipal Light Plant and stuff like that. The county wanted to take it over and there was all kinds of things. He as we know through history stood fast to keep it owned by the city of Cleveland. Yes, again, he tried to do a lot of good things but not referring to that particular scenario, he did do some things wrong that again, I don't feel were caused strictly by his ideas. It was by his administrations advice. You know, some of his cabinet members that he brought on board gave him ill advice and caused some bad decisions.

Persuric: What do you think of his run for president? [laughter]

Boulton: Well, I'd like to say that I know a friend of mine that became president but I really think that he doesn't have a very good chance because of his notoriety. Sure, he's well known in our area and in the Tremont area he is well liked. He could probably go down there and make another strong bid for mayor but I don't think nationwide he has much of a chance.

Persuric: Do you know how your wife was involved in his campaigning? What kind of work she did for his--?

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Boulton: Well, again, I at the time, I think I was in the service when he ran and most of what they did I believe was go hand out leaflets and stuff like that, packets that, what do they call them, campaign packets and things like that telling you what he stands for and things like that. What he's going to try to do and things like that for the city of Cleveland, or council. In the case of this it was council. Just to try to help him with his bid for council and consequently he did win it by the way.

Persuric: In the course of talking you mentioned that you too worked for the city of Cleveland. You also mentioned that your father had. What did you do for the city of

Cleveland?

Boulton: Well, I got my job about two weeks after I graduated from high school. I went and saw our local councilman. At the time it was John T. Belinski and sometimes when you know the councilman and stuff you can talk to him and they can get you an interview with somebody that needs in the city, in the departments that sometimes needs employees. So, at the time when I went to see him he sent me to a gentleman named Steven Sahichik down at the what used to be the Standard building downtown and at the time it was were the meter readers for the Cleveland Water Department would disperse from to go and read the meters in the different areas in the city of Cleveland. So, I did. I got my appointment to go and see Mr. Sahichik and was hired there. That was in, again I said I graduated in 1965 so it was a couple weeks out of high school. I was very fortunate that I got a job right away. He did hire me and I became a meter reader. I did that for a year before I went into the service. At the time when I went into the service there was about twenty-six meter readers for the Cleveland Water Department and they would do the whole city reading meters but they read by sections. They would read let's call it the Tremont area one-week. Then the next week they'd read obviously the Glenville area and the Shaker area and throughout the city but it was done by sections of the city. And then sometimes we were able to back then get some overtime. We would do card readings and that was when you would go into the Standard building after, like in the evening, like from four to--I think we used to go down from four to seven o'clock after we got done with our day's work we'd be able to go down there and we'd enter cards. Just like most utilities hand out meter reading cards. If you want to read your meter yourself you can mark it on the back of a card and send it into the utility. But, we used to enter those in the books and that was a source of overtime for us. We'd get like three hours a week. They'd give us overtime to make a little extra money. But then I went in--Like I said, I did that for one year and then I went in the service. Then I came back and I went back to that job for another year and then I transferred out to Harvard Yards, The Cleveland Water Department pipe repair division out at Harvard Yards where they dig up the water manes and stuff like that. While I was doing that particular job I was part of a crew, a four man crew and I did that for about six or seven months and during that time I took a test to become what is called in the city as a bricklayer helper. I passed the test so I then got appointed from being, working in pipe repair to being a bricklayer helper and that's were I spent the balance of my working years until I retired in 1995. I put thirty years in

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with the Cleveland Water Department and I retired form there.

Persuric: You mentioned earlier that your wife's mother, your wife had grown up in Tremont with her parents. Do you know when they moved there or if they still live in the Tremont area?

Boulton: Yes, she moved in and again, she lives on West Twelfth Street just off of--between Castle and Mentor and she still lives there. She's eighty-five years old. She lived there at that address. She's been there since 1946. She's there alone now. There

used to be a house that was right next door to her, a big two family house that burnt down and she bought the lot from the city of Cleveland so she's got a big fenced in yard now because of the house burning down. But, she still maintains it the best she can and she still lives in the Tremont area.

Persuric: Does your wife see anyone from the area, both inside or outside of the area. Meaning, does she visit friends that she grew up with? Do any of them still live there or have most of them moved out?

Boulton: Well, she still very close friends with the girl that introduced us. That's still what I would consider probably her best friend. We socialize with them occasionally. We go out with her and her husband. That's about the only friends that she still meets or sees from that area. There are still some of the kids that she's grown up with down there but she doesn't socialize with them or get to talk with them very much. Not very much.

Persuric: And her best friend, does she live in Tremont still?

Boulton: No, she's moved out to--She lives in Strongsville.

Persuric: When you were growing up, you mentioned that there were many different ethnic groups. I believe you said Ukrainians and--

Boulton: Polish.

Persuric: Polish. Were there Hispanics, blacks, any of that or--?

Boulton: When I was growing up there was the projects down at the end of West Fifth Street. It was on Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Street. It was what would be the south end of the area there, south end of West Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Streets. There were some blacks that lived in the projects. It was predominantly white at the time it gained more and more ck folks moved into it and it was actually become more of a low-income black housing. By the time I left the area there was a lot of Hispanics or as we call them, they were Puerto Ricans, now they're Hispanics or whatever. They use the term Latin

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Americans or Spanish. But, there was Puerto Ricans starting to move into the area. It wasn't overpowering like it is now but there's some around--Again, up around my mother-in-law's area there's quite a few Puerto Ricans and Spanish that live up in that area. But, most of your Polish people and Ukrainian people moved out into the Parma area. Again, there is obviously some still down there but not the mix of Ukrainians and Polish as there were. It's mostly Appalachians down there. Puerto Ricans are down there. here are still some blacks down in the projects area, what is left. As I said earlier, they tore down a lot of the projects so there isn't as much housing down there as there used to be.

Persuric: So that there was and influx of Puerto Ricans and Appalachians. When do you suppose this started to occur?

Boulton: Well, I can remember as a young fella approximately ten or eleven years old a lot of the Appalachians were coming up from West Virginia because it was easier to get jobs up here. A lot of them went to work for the steel mills and stuff. Infact, the building that I told you that I lived in was a five family and my parents rented to a lot of the people that came up here from West Virginia to find jobs. Although they lived there for maybe a year or two every time they'd get new tenants in they'd be mostly from West Virginia or somewhere. Or they'd have a friend that came up. So, it stayed occupied but it was a lot of turn over in the apartments because them people you know would come up here and get a job and either just go and rent somewhere else or even eventually go and buy their own home in the area consequently making more and more Appalachians or people from West Virginia living in the area. It built up pretty quick and again, that's because jobs and stuff were pretty easy to get in Cleveland. It was a good work area.

Persuric: So, is it your observation---

END OF SIDE A

START SIDE B

Persuric: The tape ended I'm going to repeat the question. You mentioned that a lot of the Appalachians came in and rented in the area. Growing up did it seem as though the majority rented or owned homes? Or, was there a good mix of both?

Boulton: Well you've got to understand that all homes in the area weren't five family homes. Our's just happened to be one of the rare ones that was five family. Most of them were either doubles and single homes. So, if you're asking me, were a lot of them renters? No, I don't think so because there wasn't that many places for them to just

rent apartments. I think if they come up here they either stayed with family until they found their own home and then if infact they did find one in the area, they would be like a single home or something like that. Again, there wasn't a lot of multiple, multiple dwellings like in our own home. Slowly they bought into the area. Again, they'd live with family and stuff that was up here.

Persuric: So, growing up most of the children you went to school with stayed in the area for the extent of their school years?

Boulton: Oh yes. I think all the kids--. I do know for a fact that the kids that I went form Tremont Elementary School to Lincoln High School with, I know almost all of us continued our education there until we graduated right, out of high school. Now, they did move out of the area and went to college and stuff like that out of high school. Most of us stayed together in the area and continued school right there. You know, we did.

Persuric: You mentioned going to college. Did a lot of the kids that you went to school with go on to college or--. I know with the war right after you got out of high school, I'm sure a lot went into the war but you have any observation as to what was trend--?

Boulton: Well, I would say in my particular graduating class I would say most of the guys, I shouldn't say only guys because a lot of the girls went to college too, most of them went to college. A lot of us were draft hot meaning we're very eligible to be drafted so some of them such as myself, elected to join the service instead of being drafted. But, I do know that most of the kids form my graduating class that didn't go into the service, they did go to college. It was a very good class that went on and went to college instead of going into the service.

Persuric: So most of the--. You did say most of the children you went to Tremont school with ended up continuing on and following through with the same path you did as to Lincoln High School. Was Lincoln High School mainly just kids from the Tremont area or--?

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Boulton: No, it had kids all the way from the Denison area, west Denison, east Denison area. It took in kids form all over the, all over the upper and lower west side areas as far south as I say Denison as to as far north as probably--I knew kids that lived all the way as far down as almost to, almost Lorain Avenue, some of them lived. So, it covered a very broad area. There was probably 2800 students in Lincoln High School when I graduated. It was a good-sized school. Again, you had to understand that it went all the way from seventh to twelfth grade so it had a lot of classes. You know, there was a lot of students there.

Persuric: Do you ever go back to reunions or see anybody in formal group settings that you had graduated with?

Boulton: Yes, I've gone to my twenty-fifth, my twentieth, twenty-fifth reunion. I just recently went to a mass, what they call a mass reunion of the high school of everybody that worked and attended Lincoln High School from 1928 till it was, I think, again, it was torn down while I was in the service but I think it was torn down in 71' or so, because there's a new school. It's called Lincoln West on the site of the old school building now and everybody that had something to do with the school from 28' till that period. It was at the Avalon Center out here in North Royalton. It was a pretty nice event. A lot of the people showed up. Of course, a lot of the people have passed away and stuff like that. But, it was a very well done event and, real nice, I'm glad I went to it.

Persuric: You say out here. Where is out here to you? Where do you live?

Boulton: Well, where we're being interviewed here is Broadview Heights. I live in Broadview Heights now.

Persuric: You moved to Broadview Heights with your family. When was that? Why did you choose Broadview Heights?

Boulton: Well, my parents were living out here and there was some lots still available and after working for the city and working for a few years saving a little money I decided that I'd like to build a new home so I looked into the area and it had a good school system and such so I decided that I'd build my home out here.

Persuric: Your parents moved out of Tremont to Broadview Heights. When did they do that?

Boulton: Well, actually they moved from Tremont and lived in Garfield Heights for a year or so. They rented a home there in Garfield Heights and then they decided well--. Actually, freeway 480 took the house that were renting in Garfield Heights. So, when they decided to make a move they moved out here to Broadview Heights. They bought a house on Sprague Road in Broadview Heights.

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Persuric: And about when was this?

Boulton: This was probably 19, I think it was 67 or 68. Again, that was done while I was in the service. They moved here to Broadview Heights. A lot of things went on during the service years that you know, I can't pinpoint a date exactly but a lot of things changed the four years I was in the service and a lot of it was between 66 to 70.

Persuric: Do you know why they chose to move out of the Tremont area originally?

Boulton: Well, at that time I had a younger sister that was like fourteen years younger than me and they just wanted to get her out of that area because, get her in to a

nice school system. Although, Cleveland was a good school system at that time but they just wanted, wanted to get a newer home or move to a nice area in the suburb. There was a migration to the suburbs at the time because of the freeways and things like that. It was making it more accessible to get places quicker. You mentioned the inner-belt and stuff like that. It just made things easier to get out, you know go out of town and live further away from the city.

Persuric: You mentioned briefly that you had two older brothers and a younger sister. I know your sister was quite a bit younger but growing up did your brothers and you hang out in the Tremont area together or did you--?

Boulton: No, we all actually had different friends that we ran with. We had different interests. I liked sports and they liked motor bikes and things like that. No, we didn't run together. We were close in a sense but sometimes we weren't a close as we thought we were. But, no, we didn't run together. They had different interests.

Persuric: Talking about () you mentioned something about a car shop or something.

Boulton: Oh yes that's one of the things that you asked me about some memories of the Tremont area and I forgot to mention that there's a restaurant that's pretty popular in the Tremont area. It's been there for a whole lot of years. I want to say fifty or sixty years. It's on University. It's called Sokolowski's and if you know anything about the Tremont area it's a pretty popular restaurant. But, right next door to it on, what actually I think used to be the back garage of the restaurant there was a car group there called the Choppers Hot Rod Association. I remember as a little fella standing out of the door watching these guys in there putting together these thirty-two Fords and these custom paint jobs and these thing that they were doing to these cars, as a little guy you wouldn't believe they were able to be done. But, they're not there any longer. There's still a Choppers Hot rod Association but I don't know where the building is now or where they-. If you go to your local car shows and things like that you'll always see a Choppers

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hot rod there. There's always one or two that still has the license plate Choppers. But, now these guys are probably fifty, sixty years old now. When they and I was watching them they were like twenty-three and stuff that's how things change over the years.

Persuric: So, Sokolowski's, do you have any memories of visiting there when you were a kid? Or even now?

Boulton: Well, I've eaten there a couple times. I know that the owners, the parents of the family that owns it now are passed and there was just a big write up in I think the Scene magazine about the Sokolowski's restaurant and how well it's still doing in the old neighborhood and stuff like that, the quality of food they have and how they've expanded the restaurant over the years and things like that. They talked about it in this article. So, it's still going pretty strong down there now, I know that.

Persuric: We talked a little bit about the grocery stores and the restaurants in the area. Were there numerous things? Was it just a city within a city or--?

Boulton: Well, you could probably find most of the things you wanted right in the neighborhood. I know for example, on Professor, on the corner of Professor and Literary there used to be a St. John, not St. John Cantius--There was a Cantius drugstore. A gentleman named Henry Matt used to run that. On the opposite corner there was an old Fisher Foods Store. It was a major grocery store in the area. Right next to that was the, at that time I think it was called First Federal Bank. It used to be the old Lincoln Heights branch. Years and years and years ago that Tremont area used to be known as Lincoln Heights. It was a very affluent area. All across West Fourteenth Street they had the large homes that were also known as a millionaire's row where they had those big house and stuff. So, at one time, even before I was in the area as a little fella, this used to be a pretty affluent neighborhood and pretty well to do people that used to live in the area. But, back to Professor, that was like a main shopping area street that you would call it and on there there was drycleaners, there was the dime store, there was a furniture store, barbershop, beauty salon, there was quite a few things. So, if you had to have something--. There was a shoe cobbler, shoe repair. If you had to have things done you could probably get it done right in the neighborhood. You didn't have to go very far to have it done.

Persuric: Do you notice that a lot of that stuff is still there maybe under the same name--.

Boulton: Oh no, almost all of that's gone. A lot of the buildings that I just mentioned, the Fisher Foods and the Cantius Drug and the drycleaners, these buildings are all being used now by these new restaurants that are in the area on Professor Avenue. The buildings have been renovated and fixed so they could use them for restaurants. Now they don't--they're gone. The other businesses are all gone.

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Persuric: Off the record you did again mention a little story about how houses that growing up behind your house () were something like that of shacks on the alleys. Can you describe these?

Boulton: Well your talking about on the south end of West Fifth Street. There was, between West Fifth Street and West Third Street which is down the hill obviously off of Jefferson, there was a little alley way that you would walk between to get back to house that if you had to designated it as a street it would almost have to have been called West Fourth Street but it wasn't really a street name, numbered there. It was just a little dirt walkways between the houses and there was a row of houses back there that as late as the 1960's there was a lot of them that had outside toilets. I mean, it was just like what you might relate to as like a shantytown where people lived in these little, tiny homes with no bathroom inside. But, I know one of my friends grew up in one of the houses

there and it's one of the friends that I've talked to recently and he's a property owner in the Cleveland area. He's bought up quite a bit of rental property himself. But, yes there was, there was a number of houses sort of nestled in between West Fifth Street and West Third Street. And again, the best related thing I could call it is like a little shantytown. You wouldn't believe they were back there. They weren't visible either from West Third Street nor were they visible from West Fifth Street. So, it was sort of a tucked away little, little area that probably there was only about seven or eight houses back there. Again, they were on the south end of the West Fifth Street down near the projects between Jefferson and a street called Marquette. Marquette's the beginning of the projects down at the south end of West Fifth Street.

Persuric: So, they were on their own plot of land not sharing with another house?

Boulton: No, they was on there own plots of land. They were all individual houses but they weren't very big. They were very, very narrow houses. Probably--If I had to guess the house probably wasn't much more than twenty feet across the front and maybe twenty feet to the back, like a twenty by twenty house. They were, normally they were two stories but they were very narrow, narrow and high.

Persuric: Describe a little bit about how or what the houses looked like in your area that you grew up? Did they have garages or porches or you know, duplexes or--?

Boulton: Well, the street that I lived on on West Fifth Street, a lot of them were two family houses. They had nice big, large porches on the front of them. A couple of the buildings were business buildings. Infact, the building that I grew up in at one time was a storefront but before we owned it somebody had closed it up and made an apartment in the storefront, which is where actually, we lived. The next door building was also a store-fronted building that was boarded up and made for residential use. Across the street from us there was a brick building that was formally a funeral parlor and again, it was converted to residential use. Next to it was another storefront that they close

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off and made residential use. A lot--if I had to relate, and again now this is talking about before I was, my parents were living in the area, perhaps more like when it was more known as Lincoln Heights, a lot of the buildings on our particular street were probably stores at one time. Further down to the other end of the street, down towards Literary, there was a lot of residential houses or two family houses with the big porches that I'm talking about. But, here and there there was scattered single homes in the area too. There wasn't a lot of them but most of them were like two family houses at least.

Persuric: Okay, well, I appreciate your time and I think that will about do it for the interview. Thank you.

Boulton: You're welcome.

END OF INTERVIEW