



THE RUTH ANN OVERBECK
CAPITOL HILL HISTORY PROJECT

Interview with Helen Carey

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TAPE 1/SIDE 1

[Note: edits made by the interviewee are incorporated in brackets.]

DAMOS: ... 2003. This is Betsy Damos, here speaking with Helen Carey. Helen, you've worked on real estate for a long time on Capitol Hill. Where did you live when you started, and what brought you to the Hill?

CAREY: When I started in real estate, ~~unofficially~~ I was [living] in Georgetown. I really backed into it [real estate] through a neighbor, a friend, who actually was introduced to me by one of my college chums. I met her at a party in Alexandria (laughter). Things go round in this area.

DAMOS: It's all one area (laughter).

CAREY: She had been a reporter and was with a new baby, making her living by using a small inheritance her husband had [and was] redoing houses [alley dwellings] in Foggy Bottom in Snows Court. They [Jean and Joe Robitscher] did seventeen houses. And so I would go down with her and we'd fight with carpenters, and so on. We both had children's strollers. Well, they moved on several years later. They sold some. They kept seven, and I took care of them while they were away, for a while.

DAMOS: Does that mean manage them?

CAREY: Yes—just as an administrative person paid for doing work. It wasn't as an agent. Then they got the idea of doing work on Capitol Hill, and [around 1962] I helped with building a complex at Third and C SE—the corner house and the two houses [beside] it on Third Street [305 and 307]. And then they did the 500 block of Sixth Street, from 500 to 516.

DAMOS: So this was buying and renovating?

CAREY: New. New construction. [Some were renovated. Most were built new. Third and C had two old buildings and one new, at 307 Third Street. Russell Eldridge, Georgetown, was contractor for all the properties.]

There had been garages in the [500] block [of] Sixth Street, and ~~then~~ in the [400] block of Fourth Street—408 through 418—SE. That was in the block before the park. Before E, between D and E. So that was all new construction. They were [three story] townhouses, with a house above and an apartment [and garage] below. Then ~~finally~~, people started asking me to do work. And I said, 'Well, I just work for one person.'

DAMOS: Your reputation was spreading, getting out there ... (laughter).

CAREY: Yes. Yes (laughter). Enough people asked me that I thought, ‘Well, maybe I should do that.’ And I kind of inquired of other real estate people about joining with them and found out that they’d take more than half of the money (laughter). That didn’t appeal to me too much, so I thought, ‘I’d rather be a broker and have the business, and then I could take it all (laughter).’

DAMOS: On your own...

CAREY: Yes, right. Since I’d been doing it on my own. So, that’s what I did. At that time, I could go direct to broker by taking a test, providing a business address which you could do by hanging your license and your phone number at Sincerely Yours answering service, down on Pennsylvania Avenue...

DAMOS: Oh, really? And so it provided an office of sorts...

CAREY: ...in the 300 of Pennsylvania Avenue.

DAMOS: Sincerely Yours...

CAREY: Yes. So, I took a cram course. I forget—you could take it three times a week, once a week... I took the most, to get it over with. So I wouldn’t forget it in between (laughter). And passed the test, so I was a broker [in 1964]. And I knew absolutely nothing about sales (laughter).

DAMOS: That’s amazing.

CAREY: Or about much of anything else! So I created my own forms, and I had a good friend in Georgetown who was a broker, and I’d call him up and say, ‘How do you do this?’ Or ‘What do you say when you ask for that?’

DAMOS: So you were actually selling?

CAREY: Of course, I was concentrating on rentals, because rentals were what the properties I was involved with had been. So, the first sale I got, I kept up with them a long time. They’re really a darling couple [who would purchase] over here in the 500 block of Seventh Street [SE]. I called up [my Georgetown mentor, Donald Davis, Old Dodge Warehouse] and I said, ‘What do you say when you order title?’ He said, ‘You say I want to order title!’ (Laughter.)

So I stumbled through. [My purchasers] never knew that I was doing the first sale of my life.

DAMOS: That’s wonderful. Did you continue to sell, or were you primarily a rental agent?

CAREY: I always primarily did more rentals than anything else. I had this office and the equivalent space across the hall for a sales office. And I always had one, two, three sales people, but that was all.

DAMOS: So this office here at 711 E Street SE.

CAREY: And this office always had three people I had to pay every Friday.

DAMOS: That's the hard part (laughter), when you start to grow, isn't it? Not as much fun (laughter).

CAREY: Yes, yes. So you have to have the right mix of rentals and management. Most of your rentals are what is in your management, but we also did rentals for people who took back the management themselves. I think that's still done some by people, I'm not sure.

DAMOS: That was the case I think in '76 or so when my husband rented from your company. And I don't think you managed it, but he rented through your company. His first Washington apartment.

CAREY: Yes. Yes. So, I really backed into it. It wasn't something I really planned to do when I started with Jean Robitscher. It was in the car, and I would do it from home, because I still had three little kids.

DAMOS: Right. And they were young.

CAREY: And (Jean) said, 'You can do it better than they're doing it, with your hands tied behind your back.'

DAMOS: And you did. You continued to, and are still doing it. What were some of the other rental companies? I've heard of Donohoe and Company mentioned. Is that one you know of?

CAREY: I didn't know Donohoe, really. He's old line, and I have no personal experience with him. Wasn't he at Third and Independence? There was a real estate company there.

DAMOS: Could have been.

CAREY: I don't know, I think Donohoe maybe was NW.

DAMOS: Oh, really? Not on the Hill? I just heard that on another interview, but I didn't know anything about them.

CAREY: I'd have to go back and look. There was a real estate office where the Liberty Lobby is, that Republican thing that's at the corner.

DAMOS: The 300 block.

CAREY: Yes. They had all the Baist plat books. I bought a couple of them from them when they went out of business (laughter).

DAMOS: Was real estate more fun then, because it was less formal?

CAREY: It certainly was probably less professional, and in some ways more difficult because you didn't have the central information like you do now, where you just pop it in and you can find out what the place looks like in pictures and everything else, in the computer. They had some paperwork that came around that you had to refile all the time. People would hold listings for two weeks before they would co-op on them.

DAMOS: Oh, really?

CAREY: That just raises people's hair today! To imagine that you would have the effrontery to do that! But, nobody thought a thing about it, except to mumble and grumble because they were doing it.

DAMOS: Once somebody knew about it, I guess.

CAREY: No, Barbara Held did it. Perfectly respectable people did it.

DAMOS: Barbara Held's business was another. Who else was doing real estate?

CAREY: Barbara was up where Tunicliffs is now.

DAMOS: On Seventh Street, right.

CAREY: I don't know if she still owns the building.

DAMOS: I don't know, either.

CAREY: I'm not sure. Bo Bogan was in [the 400] block of Seventh early on.

DAMOS: Just south of Pennsylvania?

CAREY: Yes. Between D and E. Well, there's a big corner house that was the Womack dirty books man. And then two or three doors up was where his office was, in the English basement.

DAMOS: Did you say the Womack dirty books? Did I hear you correctly?

CAREY: Yes. (Laughter.) Womack took the two houses, the one that opened on E Street [700 E Street SE] and the next one which opened on Seventh [428 Seventh Street SE], and put the houses together. And that's now a law firm. It's that house with the big lantern [hanging over the front door]—huge corner house. That man ran pornography out of the big building [on 8th Street SE, next to District Lock at 505]. It was a printing [business]. There was a big door [in the rear on the alley, adjoining my 711 E parking lot] where the trucks [delivered] like to the *Washington Post*—with the big rolls of paper. It was two floors, they had a photography lab up on the upper floor.

DAMOS: This was in the open then?

CAREY: Oh, yes. Everybody knew it was there. [The subject] was men, primarily. And then boys, and children. And that's what got him in the jug.

DAMOS: I'm sure it did.

CAREY: He moved down to Virginia Beach. He wasn't really in jail very much, I don't think. He got out. But he was a very rich man. And he [had] rebuilt that house on the corner with huge rooms and steel beams and everything else. It's really quite a structure.

DAMOS: Do you think the fortune came from the business?

CAREY: Oh, sure. It was very profitable.

DAMOS: I recently was hearing an interview where they were talking about houses of ill-repute, I think on South Carolina, in the 60s probably, or early 70s.

CAREY: The house Bo Bogan did over here on E Street by the alley, the house next to the alley, just west of Seventh. The alley in the middle of the block that goes into the back of the church, and then the little alley dwellings in there, too. Well, that corner doesn't have much yard, but it's a big, deep house. Bo Bogan did (it) over, and it had been—I was told—a whorehouse. I think there were quite a number of them around, because of the Navy Yard.

DAMOS: That's true, the Navy Yard. That's probably part of it. You don't think it was Congress?
(Laughter.)

CAREY: No, I don't think so. They rented a place for their people. We had two rentals that Congressmen paid. I never said who or when (laughter).

DAMOS: No. We shouldn't.

CAREY: No.

DAMOS: When you started, who were your rental clients? And did they change over the years? Were there a lot of people from Congress, for instance? Or staff people?

CAREY: The answer is no, and yes. Congressmen for the most part will go to the suburbs. Many of them have children in the mid-years, like junior high and high school. They want the good school system. To go here, on the Hill, meant they'd have to go over to NW to school every day to get quality schools to go to.

DAMOS: I guess there's Capitol Hill Day School. There are a few now, I don't know how far back they go.

CAREY: Yes. They're in the up-to-seventh-grade category. Most Congressmen then and still go to the suburbs, and you get staff who live here. And some Congressmen.

DAMOS: I know Senator Moynihan has lived on the Hill. There are a number right down here.

CAREY: Yes. G Street.

DAMOS: And Eighth?

CAREY: He had two houses. The only one that I knew him (to be) at was in the 600 block of G, in that kind of farmhouse-looking gray, with a side yard. He walked a lot, and he was always amiable, always greeted you. He's a tall man.

DAMOS: Yes. I liked one day after he retired, I saw him in the Safeway grocery shopping, which was sort of a surprise (laughter). He was doing what all of the rest of us were doing.

CAREY: He's such munchkin (laughter). A fun person.

DAMOS: Yes. Did you ever handle the rentals on the rooming houses or the boarding houses on East Capitol? I know there were some there.

CAREY: No. I knew Miss Taylor quite well who rented 630 East Capitol, or 628 [it was 628]. They were done in-house, out of the house, for tourists. They were not by the month. Maybe by the week. Like a motel.

DAMOS: It could be by the day, or the week.

CAREY: Yes.

DAMOS: The owners lived there in most of those cases?

CAREY: Yes. And they rented out themselves, did the work. This lady and her daughter did the work. They finally ended up selling that house, and they bought another house at the corner of Sixth and [A Street] NE, the second block off East Capitol. Selling the rooming house was profitable!

DAMOS: I'm sure it was! That property really appreciated.

CAREY: Yes.

DAMOS: It certainly did. When did they start converting those into single families? Do you have any sense of when that took place? Was it the 60s, or later, mostly?

CAREY: Probably more in the 70s. Because I know (Miss Taylor) didn't leave until some time in the 70s. There had been one or two before her. There were quite a few on East Capitol Street.

DAMOS: I know there were, yes.

CAREY: I can't tell you the numbers. I just remember there were several. Hers was not the only one.

DAMOS: The place you rented to my husband was 642 [ed: 630] East Capitol, on the north side, on an alley. It was a basement apartment, although the whole building was rentals.

(Interruption).

DAMOS: We were unavoidably interrupted for a second, so we'll start again. Helen, where were we?

CAREY: We were talking about East Capitol Street and the number of tourist accommodations that changed into single-family homes. Closer in, a lot of the big houses had been changed into two, three, four apartments per floor.

One of the reasons there were early multiple dwellings was [that] Congress, like states [legislatures now], was only here a few months of the year. So when they came, they'd rent an apartment. So there were apartments on Second Street SE of four units per building or maybe even a little more. The Linville was the same way, 116 6th Street [NE]. It could be divided into bigger or littler apartments with connecting doors for Congressmen. They didn't bring their families. The Congressmen mostly came and did the sessions, and then went home.

I don't know what they did with (the apartments) after the Congressmen went away. But that was the story that I heard. The reason there were apartments so close in was because Congressmen and staffs didn't stay all year. They wanted to be close, and they rented places.

Anyway, so later on, when [there] were year-round leases, they still got to be valuable enough that people wanted to turn them back into single houses. That happened in the unit block of Third Street. There were several houses that went back from being multiple units.

DAMOS: What years did that really start, do you think?

CAREY: That was probably the 60s and 70s. More like the 70s.

DAMOS: Of course, that's very close in. That's not far north, either. But how did the riots after 1968 after Martin Luther King was assassinated affect things?

CAREY: I had just opened an office all by myself, and not in the station wagon (laughter), on the 500 block of Seventh Street [546 Seventh Street SE]. Barry Linde had the office next to me,. He built all those houses. The day after the riots, I went down. The city was burning. People were coming past the office bringing TVs and whatever they'd gotten out of the shops up here.

DAMOS: Coming down from H Street?

CAREY: No. There was some breakage here on Eighth [SE]. There was a TV shop on Eighth that they broke into. Actually, they broke into the liquor store, and District Lock they didn't break into, for some reason. So, yes. It was very close by. Going down to the housing projects, primarily. It was like Mardi Gras. Everybody was whooping and hollering. 'Hey, what'd you get?' (laughter).

DAMOS: It turned out to be not so funny, because some of the businesses didn't recover.

CAREY: That's right. It was not ominous to me, because I didn't have anything of interest. But it was just peculiar. It was a mob psychology, I guess. But it was a happy mob (laughter).

DAMOS: *They* were happy (laughter). I don't know if the victims were.

CAREY: That's right (laughter). So then the next day, we got the Army in with the Jeeps [with] tape all over [the windshields], and the [helmets] and stuff. They were bivouacked up in the park across the from the police station, between Fourth and Sixth [and E, i.e., Marion Park]. And their guns and everything ...

DAMOS: Quite a scene!

CAREY: Yes, it was. I loaded up my files, which I didn't have all that many. I had them in boxes like this. Into the station wagon (laughter). And my electric typewriter, which was really special to me. And I was the only one on the freeway. I stopped and looked at the city. Not another one on the freeway. And everything was smoke across H Street against the sky. I didn't have a camera, but I wished I did.

DAMOS: What a picture.

CAREY: Yes. It was really scary.

DAMOS: Property must have changed after that.

CAREY: You couldn't get insurance. Finally, the city got insurance. You couldn't get fire insurance. Forget it. They weren't going to insure DC (laughter).

DAMOS: Poor DC! We've had so much of this. So maligned!

CAREY: So we hobbled along for a couple of years before they came back in and thought they weren't going to burn anymore.

DAMOS: It was a hard time. Property value went down, so it became a real buyer's market?

CAREY: No. It was about the same. For this area, the problem was not that bad. In other words, you had H Street [NE], and then you had Seventh and Eighth [SE]. H NE was the one that got hit the most. Farther down Pennsylvania, there was some, but it wasn't like everything—the 200 and 300 block. It was mixed.

The people who rented here were like you said, staffers, and people who were committed to the Hill. They were staying. It wasn't a general 'shewww' [makes a sound like a rush of people leaving]. It didn't affect things all that much. I mean, it wasn't good! But I don't remember that the rental market really was downgraded very much. It stayed pretty much the same.

DAMOS: The selling market though might have been? It seems to me that a lot of people bought very low at that time.

CAREY: I think the seller's market was more affected than the rentals. And, of course, I was primarily doing rentals.

DAMOS: And so it didn't affect your business very much.

CAREY: Right.

DAMOS: Today we have community policing and lots of concerns about private, individual safety. Was that much of a concern in, say, the late 60s and 70s?

CAREY: Oh, yes. Probably not so much personal safety, but you got robbed easily. In your house, some on the street. The police will give you better statistics on that. My sense of it is probably very little.

DAMOS: But that's the sense that I really wanted to see. Did people feel relatively safe? I think it's a matter of expectations too. Today people have higher expectations, and we're just a little more casual about a lot of things, probably.

CAREY: I don't think people felt less safe than they do now. If anything, it [may be] the other way around. [Children then were some of the burglary problem. They crawled through French door panes and let in the adult. There was one story about the kid who picked the cop's pocket on the way to the precinct station—true story!]

END OF TAPE 1/SIDE 1

TAPE 1/SIDE 2

CAREY: There was another warehouse. People are always so interested in warehouses! (Laughter).

DAMOS: (Laughter). I just asked Helen what other businesses there were on the Hill.

CAREY: It was in the 400 block of Second Street SE. It was toward the Canal Street end of the block. They had a red [velvet] swing in the living room, and I later rented apartments there after it had been done over into a house with a basement unit. That's when I was told [its history], I guess it was true. And I never saw the swing (laughter).

[There was a hardware store where Don Denton's office is—600 block of Pennsylvania Avenue SE—and also a movie theater in the middle of that block.]

Libby [Sangster's] antique shop, which was at the corner of Seventh and North Carolina, where Barry Hayman ran it after his mother-in-law (Libby) died. His wife and he lived upstairs. Now he's split, and he's moved to Maryland. [Libby] started out on Pennsylvania Avenue around Fourth Street.

DAMOS: Is that where the Hawk and Dove is?

CAREY: I'm terrible on remembering anybody's name! I dreaded this encounter because I knew I wasn't going to remember names.

DAMOS: You remembered a lot of names. Names I haven't heard of, actually—some of them.

CAREY: [This paragraph is about Mike Palm.] The guy was a sports person, and he had the restaurant on the 200 block of Pennsylvania Avenue for years, and then his wife ran it. Her house was at the corner of Second and C, with a garage. If I keep talking, maybe I'll remember her name (laughter). It's not working.

DAMOS: Somebody's been talking about someone's tea room? I've heard this before. I want to say Mary's Tea Room.

CAREY: Oh, yes. That was the one they got to tear down at Fifth and East Capitol Street. Mary's Tea Room [ed: Mary's Blue Room] was a restaurant and an old house, and the Baptist church wanted to tear it down for the Baptist church parking. And they tore it down.

DAMOS: Right. So that's gone. Was Jimmy T's on East Capitol Street?

CAREY: Jimmy T's is across the street from there. That's still there. It's one of the few of the old style.

DAMOS: It makes me think of my childhood.

CAREY: Yes. I love it. Every time I walk in there, I love it. And the food's good besides! (Laughter).
You can have breakfast all day.

DAMOS: That's right. Its specialty is breakfast. We used to go there a lot for breakfast. Do you remember street cars on East Capitol Street? Were they there in the 60s?

CAREY: No, they had taken the street cars off. Somewhere in the end of the 50s, or maybe in the early 60s. I came round really working here in about '62. I don't think there were any left. I always thought it was a great mistake to take them off.

DAMOS: Such a grand street. It would be nice to see them going down that street.

CAREY: In general, throughout the city, I thought they were the best way to travel. Street cars got the track, and, 'Everybody (else) get out of the way!'

DAMOS: But the cars could go on the side of them, right?

CAREY: Oh, yes. They just went down the middle of the road, and traffic on each side. I never could see why busses were better than that.

DAMOS: Well, there's actually talk now on H Street, where they're renovating in the NE, to put a street car back to alleviate parking problems.

CAREY: Yes, I don't know.

DAMOS: We've come full circle again! (Laughter).

CAREY: Full circle again!

DAMOS: Were there business organizations? Now we have CHAMPS on the Hill. Was there anything comparable, maybe a little less organized, more relaxed?

CAREY: No, I don't think there were. There was a Kiwanis Club. That was as much chamber of commerce as I think we had. Of course, the store that I hated to see go was the five-and-ten [Kresge's].

DAMOS: I knew you were going to say that. It was here when I moved here.

CAREY: Up at the corner, yes. I've got the cover of the *Hill Rag* [ed: The Washington Times City Magazine, Thursday, January 29, 1987] that came out with the corner window draped. It was going to become something else.

DAMOS: So this was draped after the store closed?

CAREY: When they were closing, yes. They just had paper over the window. You could get anything in there! I bought my husband's underwear, my children's socks, a lamp, office paper. And they had the best fried chicken! (Laughter). It was just a terrible thing when they closed.

DAMOS: I know. I was very sad to see it close. Now, I moved here in '79, so it was after that. Do you remember when?

CAREY: I can you—if you let me go back and look at the newspaper date. I've got it framed, I've got it hanging on the wall in this office.

DAMOS: Well, I don't know if we want to stop to do that. But we'll make a note of it, because that's really good to remember.

CAREY: I really don't remember the year. [1987]

DAMOS: I think that was so much a part of the neighborhood. And part of the beginning of a lot of changes, at that point. When that five-and-dime went, lots of other things changed.

CAREY: Well, the changes in real estate from primarily individual companies here. Chatel had the office here and in Georgetown—Millicent Chatel. It was individuals. Bo Bogan, Rhea Radin, Helen Carey, Barbara Held. That was pretty much it. Jerry Dunphy, who never counted much except for doing his own things.

DAMOS: Was he more developing? Building?

CAREY: Yes. He bought and sold a lot of houses himself, and built or remodeled some. Then came Shannon and Luchs. [They were] about the first one of the bigger, multi-office groups. And then Don Denton. Now, there's no individuals. Well, Jerry Dunphy's still around! (Laughter). Formant is about the only individual company now. Everybody else is part of Coldwell or—actually, Pardoe has got Coldwell in it now.

DAMOS: That's right. They're not independent.

CAREY: And what used to be Bob Williams and Thom (Burns)—Thom left their company, and Bob Williams is (with) Coldwell. I don't think of any companies that are individual.

DAMOS: Well, Formant did you say is still...?

CAREY: An individual? Yes.

DAMOS: That's a big change.

CAREY: That's a *big* change. And the paperwork is the other big change. I can show you somewhere I've got stashed an original listing card, which was a [about] a four-by-six card on the front and the back. Now, legal-size listing sheets are like five pages (laughter).

DAMOS: Yes. So much more of that.

CAREY: It was not a litigious society; that's the biggest difference. People sue people for everything, or they try to get out of something. And so you've got to write in all this stuff. The age of the handshake is over.

DAMOS: Yes. I'm sure it is.

CAREY: Contracts are the same way. Contracts, some of them, were one, two pages. Now they're sixteen.

DAMOS: And lots of papers to sign at closing.

CAREY: Oh, yes. The paperwork at closing is the same progression. And they talk about saving paper! Everything gets more and more paper.

DAMOS: That's right. Even though we talk about how the internet and computers are saving paper. We're still printing things out.

CAREY: Hopefully, we are recycling, which we never used to do. We can retrieve some of it, but I think it's still a net loss! (Laughter.) When you think of how much longer the paperwork is.

DAMOS: Well, I think we've covered a lot of territory here.

CAREY: Well, good!

DAMOS: I think we've got a lot of good things we've touched upon. Unless you have something more you'd like to add, we'll wrap it up.

CAREY: I expected that if you asked me questions, I'd get off on one thing or another. But I don't think of anything particularly. It was a little simpler age, but it was in some ways—not probably personal concern, but—stealing things out of cars. I had a pocketbook stolen out of the office. While I was in the front office, they came in the back door and stole it [out of my desk].

DAMOS: Was that recent?

CAREY: Oh, no. That was back in the 70s.

DAMOS: But that happens today. That still happens.

CAREY: I think the police can give you the statistics on it. Although, the police at that time—I got a phone call, and the police said, ‘We’ve retrieved your car.’

And I said, ‘What? It’s in the parking lot.’

They said, ‘No, it isn’t.’ (Laughter).

I said, ‘Wait a minute!’ I went to the door, and it was gone. It was a convertible, and I guess they [police] at that time could pick people up. Stop them. They can’t do that anymore. But they stopped them, and he couldn’t produce the paperwork for the car, and so he called up to say, ‘You didn’t give this fellow permission to take this car, did you?’

And I said, ‘No!’ (Laughter).

DAMOS: That’s amazing policing, but it sounds like they had a lot more authority to inquire.

CAREY: I guess [the policeman] knew he didn’t [have my permission], because I think he [had] wired the ignition to start [the car]. I don’t remember that that well. But he was pretty sure that this guy had stolen the car, and I didn’t even know it was gone!

DAMOS: That’s amazing. That’s a good ending to the story.

CAREY: Yes, they caught him over in NE.

DAMOS: Were the policemen really familiar with the business people at that time? Was it sort of the old beat system, where somebody walked the beat and you knew them?

CAREY: Yes, I think there were more beat people then. They were getting irritated because of the burglar alarms that people were putting in. And the ones that were referring over to the police station. It was causing them work, and most of them were false alarms. They were getting PO’d about that.

I had a plumber who I remember went over—and we had an alarm in a done-over building at Sixth Street and E [SE], just this side of it. It was called the Sheep Farm, the house. It was next door to 508 Sixth Street, or 506 Sixth Street. They jump numbers there, because there was quite a bit of space on the side yard.

It had in the old days been [a] sheep farm, and it was still called that, before the buildings were built on E Street. Although the buildings on E Street went pretty far back, because they had two privies behind them.

One time, when we had a lot of rain, the contents of the privies were still underground, and it came into the basement of [504 Sixth Street SE]. We were managing that house.

DAMOS: This was the 600 block of E?

CAREY: It actually is on Sixth. So it's behind the 600 block of E. Oh, that was a mess.

But the plumber who was supposed to go over there knew that we'd just put in a burglar alarm. He said, 'I don't want to go over there. Last time I went over there, I got taken over to the jail!' (Laughter).

DAMOS: Oh, no! (Laughter). Was this as early as the 70s—when these burglar alarms were being put in? You think of them as more recent than that?

CAREY: No, they go back. That's when they started.

DAMOS: I hadn't know that. Well, Helen. I thank you. It's been my pleasure.

CAREY: You're welcome.

END OF TAPE 1/SIDE 2

END OF INTERVIEW