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Souter, Ken Oral History Interview: Polio Survivors in Holland

Matthew Nickel

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Oral History Project 2003
Joint Archives of Holland
Polio

Interviewee:
Ken Souter
(edited)

Conducted by:
Matthew Nickel
3 June 2003

2003 Oral History Interview: Polio
Interview with Ken Souter
Interviewer: Matthew Nickel
3 June 2003

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KS: She (Jan) wasn't supposed to live. She was, they gave her, when my parents first brought her into the hospital they gave her very very low chance of her ever coming out. They thought she was going to die. She was really bad. She was in the oxygen tent and everything else, for a long time. A lot longer than we were.

MN: An oxygen tent?

KS: No, it was called an iron lung or something like that. Wasn't it at that time. No. You could see her in it. It was something to help her breathe. I know that, but she was, I am sure that when we were allowed to go in there and see her, she was in either an oxygen tent or she was in, didn't they put them all in, wasn't part that whole deal was the iron lung thing where they couldn't breath. I don't actually remember, I just remember seeing her in this thing.

MN: That is interesting because she had described having some kind of tent in a crib-like area.

KS: It was something like that. All I remember, she was underneath this canvas, I was nine then, so this is fifty years ago, but, I remember her being in, maybe she was just in an oxygen tent or something like that, in the crib, but there was something all the way over her. I thought it was, what they put them in. Wasn't that what they used to call that, an iron lung. Give me that phone behind you, I will make sure right now. What is my parents number? [Wife Judy (JS) gives the phone number, he calls. *Hi, its me. I have got a question, this guy is here and I think I*

made a bad statement already. You made several too? We were talking about Jan, and what I remember when we were allowed to go in that room, she was in some kind of a machine? She was in a tent. She was in an oxygen tent. She was never in an iron lung. Okay. She was in an oxygen tent then. But wasn't the iron lung the thing that they used for a lot of polio victims. Okay. Mrs. Larson was up there when we were there. I just remember seeing people in those iron lungs. Okay, Jan was never in that. I remembered her being behind something, underneath something, she was in an oxygen tent. Okay. See you later. Bye.] She was in an oxygen tent, there were rooms up there when I was up there when people were in iron lungs and she said, you must have remembered them, I know I saw people in those iron lungs. They were right inside this whole thing, you could see them. They were totally inside these machines. Those were the people who had it more in the lung muscles and the chest and lungs where they could not breathe by themselves and this thing breathed for them.

MN: So were you and your brother allowed to visit, go over and visit Jan? Or, were you guys near each other?

KS: We were apparently across the hall from her, when we first got there. When we first got into there and were diagnosed. We had the spinal tap and then at that point we stayed right there. My brother was diagnosed first with polio, he had a spinal tap, and then, I really didn't have any signs of it at all. He was having a little bit of problems that I don't remember what caused them to have to have him checked, but then they give me it too and I had it also. They caught my brother and I very early in the stages, and that is why I don't think that we had as much of

a problem as what some people did. We were nine, and we were kids. So I am sure that they couldn't keep us in the beds all the time. When I first got up there we were in the hallway, we were checked and we were in the hallway. There wasn't any rooms available, because we were in the pretty much the height of that polio epidemic, when it was going on pretty strong.

MN: This was the early '50s then?

KS: It was, when I had it I was nine years old, '59. I am sorry, '50. I was nine years old, so it was in 1950, and I was born in '40 and it was in the summer of '50 so I would not have been 10 yet. So I was in my ninth year.

MN: So you remember that the hospital was full when you came in?

KS: There really wasn't any rooms available, my brother and I were both in the hallway, and that only lasted like a day or two days, or something like that, and then we were put in a room. They actually wanted us to be in three different hospitals, and because they were so full. The doctor that we had, or our doctor said that there is just no way that is going to happen. All three of them are going to be in the same hospital so my parents wouldn't need—they wanted to put one of us in Muskegon, one of us in Grand Rapids in either one of the hospitals. One in Blogett and one in Butterworth. The doctor said no, they are going to be in the same hospital, so that just saved my parents from running around all the time. Otherwise they would have been up in Muskegon, over here, back, they put enough miles in as it was back in '50. It was full, there were a lot of people that were sick. And then we had a bed, and my mother said she could stand in the hallway and see my sister and see my brother, so we were fairly close.

MN: What do you remember the hospital being like?

KS: I don't remember a whole heck of a lot about it. The only thing that I can remember real vividly; I better not say this.

JS: He might appreciate it, just be careful.

KS: I have got to be careful. Coming from Holland at nine years of age, a little Dutch community, I had never seen a black person before. And I got to dread seeing this black nurse, she would come, you could see her coming down the hallway, I don't know how I could see her coming down the hallway, out the door, the door was showing down the hallway, you could see her coming down the hallway and they had these steam carts where they had the wool rags in the steam and then she would take and wrap my legs with these steamed wool rags and my brother was the same thing because I had it in the lower part of my body, so did my brother. And they would take and wrap you in these, it was a boiler, I mean really what it is. And these things were hotter than heck. And they would just wrap your legs in all these wool cloths, and supposedly that was treatment for this thing, I guess it was a treatment because apparently it worked. But that was one of the treatments. I don't know they gave me a lot medicine. I don't remember anything about medicines. All I remember about it is that black lady coming down the hall with the steaming hot cart, that is the only thing I remember about it. I mean really truly about that hospital. We were there for about a month and then we were transferred to Mary Freebed, and we were at Mary Freebed for about two weeks and then we came home, and then we were, we had to go back for a lot of visits, they kept us on an exercise program and we had to do certain exercises every

morning and my mother stood over us with a bull whip to make sure we did them. Sit ups and, stuff that stretched, touch your toes and stuff that stretched your leg muscles because they did not want those to tighten up at all. And we had to go back to the doctor. I think my mother said his name was Dr. Aiken. We had to go back to him quite regularly and we had to go back for a lot of check ups. To say I remember a lot about it, no. It is something that you go through, I mean hey, last fall I broke my neck, fell out of a tree while I was hunting and broke my neck. I have already put that out of my mind and that is only one year ago and that was the most miserable time. It was a lot worse than this polio ever was because I was in a halo, screws in my head, and that was a lot worse than this polio ever thought of being. So I have put that out of my mind. We are talking fifty-five years ago. That is something that you just kind of forget after awhile.

MN: Would you remember how you contracted it, or possibilities?

KS: Why? I heard rumors, a lot rumors why Ottawa county was one of the worst areas in the state. There were not a lot of open sewer systems around here at the time. And there was a lot of people that, it was very unsanitary. Let's face it. The dumps? We had a lot rats in Holland. The dumps were open dumps and the landfills we had it right back of Riverview Park there was a huge landfill. They just filled in the swamps there. I don't think that the times there were quite as sanitary as what they should be. I think there was a lot of dumping into the lake, there was definitely in the rural areas, people just connected their septic tank to the ditch. That has not gone by that long ago. While I worked for the Road Commission and that was one of my jobs. In '78 to '80 is when the big sanitary

push was for all of the townships around here. I heard people talk that that might have been one of the big reasons that we had such an epidemic around here, who knows? How I contracted it? I was just a kid, I was just playing outdoors and I got it. Who knows why or how you got it? Maybe I got it from my sister. She had it first. I don't know if polio was a different germ than any other ones, you probably contracted it from somebody you knew. That's as close as we can have. We probably got it from my sister, but how I got it, I don't know.

MN: Do you remember any other kinds of reasons or rumors that people would site for why polio, the polio epidemic was bad in town?

KS: That is the only one I have heard. Poor sewage disposal systems, where bacteria just went rampant.

MN: Growing up, did you ever face any social problems because of polio, any stigmas?

KS: I missed one whole summer vacation. [Laughter] If that's bad enough, I got it after we got out of school and I was well enough to go back to school that fall, and that was a stigma I had. [Laughter]

MN: That's your stigma. [Laughter] Were there any stigmas that other children had?

KS: The kids that I played with before I played with afterwards. It was all neighborhood kids. It is a lot different than; we played in the streets at night. We played kick the can until dark and maybe sometimes after dark. You guys did it on your block, we did it on our block, the kids were racing around all after dark at night, it was different then from it is now. Those children, I don't know that any of the kids that I played with before, I had any problems with. None, you didn't

think about it, you didn't worry about. They were the neighbor kids and I was one of the neighbor kids, so no, I didn't have any stigmas.

MN: How were the neighborhoods different than today?

KS: They were safer. The kids could play out there at night and you could play on the streets. I remember when 18th street was paved. I remember that, so it was a gravel road in front of me, 18th between Washington and VanRaalte. I remember when it got paved. So these were gravel roads out there in the city of Holland. It was just a safer time than it is now. We didn't worry about drugs, we didn't worry about somebody speeding—

JS: And you knew all you neighbors—

KS: You know every one of the neighbors—

JS: you all stayed in the neighborhood. You all went to the neighborhood churches and you just knew everyone.

KS: It was a whole different era, it was a great era. It was a great area to be a kid because you played with the kids on you block, you went to school with the same kids on your block, you went to church with the same kids on your block. You were kind of a mixed bag here. Right now we go to a church in Grand Haven, and we do have one person here that is fairly close to us as a neighbor, but other than that, there is not many people that I go to church with that are in the same block as I am. So it was a different era. It was a different era, almost like a family in the same block.

MN: Community seems so much different. People relate.

KS: That's right. The people I knew when, I mean my parents knew when Joe Blow was sick on the same block. It was different. Now I don't know the guy who lives on that house right up there.

JS: Very few of the mother's worked I think that made a difference.

KS: Mothers were all home.

JS: And you were always accountable, if not to your own mother, to somebody else's mother.

KS: You had the same thing on your block. She lived on 20th between Harrison and Cleveland right? And I lived on 18th between Washington and VanRaalte. I went to church on the corner of 18th and VanRaalte. I went to school on the corner of 20th and VanRaalte. So everything was tight, everything was close. It was different. People that I knew before I had polio, I played with the same kids afterwards, so there was no stigma.

MN: Did polio physically affect you at all? Were there any changes that you had to adjust to after polio?

KS: Not really, other than my mother making me do all these stupid exercises, other than that, other than having to go for checkups all the time to the doctor. Really I didn't have any rehab, there was an area of two weeks where we were in the hot bubbly whatever, like a spa type thing. But after that, it was just, the only thing we had to do is exercise. We didn't have to take any medications that I remember. We didn't have to do anything different, we played the same. We were not limited on what we could do or not do.

- MN: Did polio or your experiences with polio affect any of your attitudes towards school or work, or anything of that nature?
- KS: No, nothing that I would say that would affect me as far as school or work or anything else. It was, I just had it, and I just went on with life.
- JS: It was serious, but you almost, he almost treats it like, alright, I had the measles or I had the chicken pox.
- KS: It was kind of hard, but I got on with life. It did not stop me from doing anything I wanted to do. Other than that lousy six weeks that I missed summer.
- MN: Can you remember any restrictions that were put on you or other children, kind of warnings or those kinds of things, don't do this, you might contract polio, don't play here, you might get polio? Do you remember anything like that?
- KS: I don't remember anything in that nature. I don't at that point think that they knew where it was coming from to start with and why it was happening. If anything, and this is just kind of in the back of my head. If anything, it was about swimming, that you shouldn't swim in the lakes. Like going swimming down in Lake Mac and this sort of thing. But at that time there was raw sewage being dumped into Lake Mac. There were raw chemicals and everything else too, but I think there might have been there might have been some notification that you shouldn't swim in Lake Mac at that time. Didn't stop us from swimming, there might have been notifications at that time. I can't, you'd have to go back in the archives to look at that sort of stuff, in the back of my head I think there might be something to that effect.
- MN: What about fears?

KS: I already had it, there's nothing to be afraid of. [Laughter]

MN: What about during that time though, were people in the community, were there any particular kinds of fears that people had about polio?

KS: My mother would have a lot better handle on it. I know there were certain people that were really afraid of it. There was one family that lived just down the street from us, and she would not let her kids out to play that whole summer. I remember where they lived, because they were at 304. Yeah. My parents was 318. They were at 304, just the other side of VanRaalte. When I had polio, we lived on 18th street to the west of VanRaalte. In a little bungalow there, and then we moved, it might have been I am not sure where exactly. We were on 18th street regardless of where it was but there was one family that lived about three houses to the west and she was really paranoid. And that was the only one, like to say that everyone was running around scared, I am sure they were, there were a lot of people sick. There were a lot of people that were affected by it. We were kind of young at that point though.

MN: Do you remember any stories your parents or anyone else have told you about when you had polio or anything of that nature, or any kind of discussions you had since?

KS: Nothing really, I just talked to my parents to make sure I knew when exactly it was I had it. I have got that down pat now. Other than that, my parents had a lot of running to do, my dad worked for General Motors at the time so he had insurance, and March of Dimes helped out really really well. I know that for a fact. I know that every Christmas we would get a present from the March of Dimes, we would

get a Christmas present from them for quite a few years afterwards ever. One of the Christmas presents was given, I don't know if you, you are probably too young to know what an Erector Set is? Do you know what an Erector set is?

MN: Yeah.

KS: Okay, well, they gave us an erector set for Christmas.

JS: And he still has it.

KS: And I still have it downstairs.

MN: That is great.

KS: That I know I got from, that is probably the only present I remember exactly what it was. A lot of time I mean I think they gave like teddy bears or stuff like that. But this was, they gave us the Erector Set one year, I remember that. But they stayed in pretty good communications, and they really helped out with the money I remember. But hey, with three kids in the hospital, my parents were under a lot of pressure, but they still, I do remember a story that my mother tells, that when they had polio, then they came around with Christmas baskets. Food baskets. She actually told them, "Why don't you give them to somebody that really is poor?" That really needs the helps, so she didn't take, we weren't that bad off. My dad still had a job, and he had insurance through general motors, and on top of that, March of Dimes helped out a lot. With the costs, so. That is probably one of the only stories that I can remember.

MN: Do you know if polio was a big topic at the time in town?

KS: I couldn't tell you. Because the only town I had was my little block there, to say that it is a big talk, I would bet it was a big topic. There was probably no body in

Holland that didn't know somebody that didn't have polio. There was a lot of them, a lot of people that had it during that period. I am sure that it was the talk off every coffee shop in town.

MN: Where did you go to school? You said on 18th and?

KS: I went to VanRaalte High sch—Van Raalte Elementary School, and the then EFL Junior High, and what was the high school, Holland Senior High on the corner of 16th and River. That was the Junior High and the high school right there. And your brother and sister, did you all go to the same schools? We all went to VanRaalte through the sixth grade. And then in 7th grade we went to EFL Junior High, which is over on 16th between River and Pine, and the senior high school is right there. So we went to the same basic complex, through all the grades.

MN: Do you remember any fundraisers or charities that were going on in town?

KS: The only one that I can remember is the one that my brother, sister and I did and I was looking for that book because we went around and did a paper drive or something like that and made a hundred bucks or something like that for the Polio Foundation, after we had polio. There was a picture in the paper with that. I have got a picture in that book of that polio drive that we did as kids. I was sure it was a paper drive. That picture, it was in the newspaper at the point in time and that would have been the next year after we got over it.

MN: A paper drive as in...

KS: Newspapers, we collected newspapers and we sold the newspapers to like Padnos and got money for them. Like they do paper drives right now, and I am sure that is what we did.

MN: Do you remember anything else, or did you participate in anything else? Or participating in any other things like that?

KS: They didn't have "A Walk for Hunger" and all that sort of stuff at that point in time. I am sure the churches donated, I am sure of that, but to say that, there wasn't all this get together and walk ten miles for polio type of thing. I don't remember anything about that if they did, again I was nine years old so I don't have any recollection.

[Judy shows an old scrapbook to us]

JS: His mother has her own archives. She made one of these for each of the kids, but here is a couple of articles that were in the paper. Here is where they raised the money.

KS: And this was, we had a cart, and we had, I don't know what it says on there but we drew it on a cardboard box and we went out...

MN: Give us paper we are working for—

KS: Something polio. And then this was my sister and a guy from the Polio Foundation with a check, and then this would have been myself and my brother.

JS: 2,200 pounds, that is what it says.

KS: [Laughs]

MN: Wow. That's what it says: "2,200 pounds of paper during their two week drive." Way to go.

KS: So if you are saying that there was things, yes, three little kids going out and doing something. I am sure other people were doing stuff.

MN: There must have been a lot of support then. If people gave you 2,200 pounds.

KS: That was a lot to haul in that little cart.

MN: Do remember what it was like, what is your recollection of what your family was going through? What your family felt during the time—

KS: I really don't have any—I know it was really tough on my parents, here they got three kids, and they are all in the hospital with this polio stuff. I know it had to be real tough on my parents. It wasn't tough on us. I mean other than being in the hospital. To say that we were, I mean the toughest part was some of the procedures they used to counteract the polio. I mean, like I told you before, with they came around with these steam carts with these rags and sort of things. There were people out collecting all these wool things. But I really don't have a lot of recollection at this point. [End side A] Oh we did a circus too. Back in '52 we did a circus. We made ten bucks. "Homemade Kids' Circus Yields \$10 for Polio". See this is a case again. "The big event was held in the backyard of Roger and Allen Berma on West 18th street. Carol Cook served as MC. She lived in the neighborhood and she was a baton twirler." Dave Eltina was in there, he owns the paint company, REPCO Lite paint. Betty Loen lived in the neighborhood. I was a clown, Kenneth Beltman lived in the neighborhood, I mean these were all neighborhood kids. And we did a little circus, we made \$10 and we gave that to polio. So that was two years later in '52. But I think that is about it. Then I went on to be just a normal kid, I went to Camp Geneva and all this other good stuff. I played on the ball team. Yeah, your right, [to Judy'] my parents probably just said "hey, its done, its over with, move on." They didn't feel sorry for us.

MN: It sounds then that your family was a real mainstay going through this that your family really worked together—

KS: Definitely. My parents were pretty solid community people. And they basically lived in the neighborhood, went to church every Sunday and it was just a good solid relationship. You stuck together and worked through these things.

MN: Do you remember the church your family went to?

KS: Bethel. Right on the corner of 18th and VanRaalte. Which is now the Boys and Girls Club.

MN: Okay. What was the church like?

KS: It was all the neighbors again, it was the neighborhood people. It was the people that lived on the same street as I did. We probably three blocks either direction and three blocks both, because everybody walked to church.

MN: So it was small and it was—

KS: It was a small church, it was not a big church.

MN: People you knew—

KS: It was all people I knew, same kids I played with at night. The same kids that were on the same block I was. Now a couple of them went to the Christian Reformed Church, which pfff. Ken Beltman that was in that one little article, he went to the CRC but other than that you were pretty much, we were this little Dutch community, I wasn't Dutch but it was everyone knowing everybody else. You got a lot of support from the people in the community, from your neighbors. You didn't have to go and have this national organization other than the bills. It was different. It was a good thing.

MN: Things happened locally.

KS: Not globally. And people then, it wasn't always somebody else's fault, you took your own responsibility for life. If you did something, you took responsibility for it. Now, you always have got to have somebody to blame, it always has to be somebody else's fault. It is a whole different era were we are.

MN: Could you describe how you were brought up, how you and your brother and sister were raised, just kind of generally?

KS: How we were raised? We were raised a lot like every other kids who was raised in the city of Holland. We went to school every day, you didn't skip because you knew your old man would beat you up, you didn't sass your parents. It was just a good family life. How I was raised, I went to church every Sunday, I went to church every Wednesday night. My parents, my dad had a decent job at General Motors so we always had plenty to eat. My mother would bake every Saturday, all day long Saturday. She did her washing on Monday, she did her ironing on Tuesday. We had our chores to do. The kids all had their work that they had to do. We had to wash the dishes. My brother washed one day and I dried that day, and then it was just the other way; my sister got away with a lot but she was, she was spoiled.

JS: This is going to be on tape. [Laughter]

KS: It was just a good family life. Boys had to mow the lawn, and wax the car. Every summer my dad would leave the car home and my mother and all the kids would had to go out there and simonize the car. First you had to take the cleaning stuff and then you had to put the wax on and then you had to buff it all up and that was

one job in the summer we could figure on. It was going to happen. It was just a regular normal family at that point in time.

MN: Is there any difference between your experience and your brother's and sister's experiences with polio?

KS: There is a lot of difference between my experience and my sister's experience because she had real problems. You have talked to her already so you know what problems she had.

JS: That were visible.

KS: She had visible problems. She couldn't chew. The only way she could chew was to uses her shoulder like this [Demonstrates pushing shoulder up and down against his chin.] to force her jaw. She had no strength in her jaws at all. The lower jaw never grew after she had polio. She had to have bone implants to bring her jaw out like it is now. She had a lot of operations, plastic surgery and everything else. She had it basically right in here. So she had a lot of visible problems. I didn't have any problems other than maybe a little weakness in the legs, but I don't think that has really held me back in anything either.

MN: What do you remember about, do you remember anything about your doctor?

KS: Nope. I know his name now because my mother just told me a couple of minutes ago. That is all I remember about him. I wouldn't have been able to tell you his name even. I don't know what he looked like or how he acted or anything else. We never really wanted to go to these annual visits. So my mother would drag us along, we'd have to go see him and it would be just another time where you had

to go to Grand Rapids or wherever we had to go. The ride over there to see the doctor just took up time.

MN: Is there anything you remember generally then, about polio, anything that I may not have asked about?

KS: Other than our family, I don't really don't, I know some people now that had it. Like Terry DeYoung had it. Matt's dad had it, same era, both of them had some real major problems, but to say I know a lot of people, or even then had a lot of people that had it.

MN: So not even, were there any classmates you knew?

KS: I don't remember any of the kids in my class that had it to tell you the truth. None of that group that I was in class with had it.

MN: Well I guess if there is anything else, or any other stories that come to mind. Thank you very much.

KS: Not a problem.

Home-Made Kid Circus Yields \$10 for Polio

The polio-conscious kids are at it again!

This time the West 18th St. crowd staged a circus and invited their dads and moms. They charged pennies too, and together with contributions from more generous parents cleaned up about \$10 which they presented to Gabe Kuite, polio campaign chairman for Holland.

The big event was held in the back yard of Roger and Allen Buurma on West 18th St. Carol Cook served as emcee and also took her spot to do some baton twirling.

Dave Altena put on a magician act and Betty Lieuwen was an acrobat. Art Souter served as door man and Ken Souter and Kenneth Beltman were clowns. Roger and

Allen Buurma were strong n and Carla Kruithof the large lady.

Chubby Bobbie Teel took the most applause as the "biggest budy in the world." He appeared wearing a diaper.

A few of the participants were polio victims the last couple of years. They have recovered entirely.



Former Polio Victims Raise Funds for Fight

AWJ
1950

Three Holland children, who one year ago were in a Grand Rapids hospital as polio victims, have just completed a campaign to raise funds for the Ottawa county polio chapter.

Arthur, Kenneth and Janice Souter were stricken with infantile paralysis last August, all within two weeks. All three have recovered sufficiently to renew childhood activities, but still are under a doctor's supervision.

In addition, little Janice is being treated for facial palsy.

As their mother, Mrs. Raymond Souter, relates the campaign, Arthur, 11, got the idea two weeks ago that they should do something to help others who have been hit by polio this summer.

At first, the scheme was hatched to sell soft drinks and contributing the money to the polio fund. But that idea was discarded.

Then the children decided to collect waste paper, sell it, and turn over the proceeds to the fund. So Arthur and brother Kenneth, 9, began their campaign. Janice, who is only three, didn't do much collecting, but she helped in other ways.

During the first day of the drive, the boys gathered 970 pounds of paper, and reaped a financial harvest of about \$4. Their drive the next two weeks netted about 2,200 pounds of paper, and a check for \$13 which was turned over to the county fund.

Mrs. Souter explained that the kids knew first hand what polio victims went through, and wanted to do their part to repay the kindness of polio workers when they were sick. The boys especially were sympathetic to sufferers, because sister Jan was near death at one stage of her illness last summer.

It was hard work for the kids, too. While other children were enjoying summer play, the Souters were diligently collecting their contribution to help others less fortunate than themselves.

The kids didn't keep a cent of the money for themselves.

It's only a small item—\$13 as compared with last year's county quota of more than \$10,000—but it displays a willingness to help that won't go forgotten.



Three children who were all victims of polio one year ago contributed \$13 to the Ottawa county polio fund this week after earning the amount by collecting waste paper and selling it. The Souter children, Arthur, 11, and Kenneth, 9, look on as little sister Janice, 3, presents the check to Gabriel Kuite, Holland chairman of the county polio

chapter. They are children of Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Souter, 360 West 18th St. Arthur got the idea that they should do something to help repay the polio fund for aid they received when stricken, and to help other sufferers of the disease. They collected 2,200 pounds of paper during their two-week drive. (Sentinel photo)



1956



MICHIGAN I
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DETROIT

Aug 1949

3 in Family Hit by Polio

Crystal Brothers Join Sister at St. Mary's Hospital

The Lewis Keeler family of Crystal is among the Western Michigan families hardest hit by the spread of polio this year.

Three Keeler children now are under treatment for the disease at St. Mary's Hospital, with the arrival Monday of two brothers, Paul, 10, and Wayne, 14. On Saturday a sister, Sandra, 4, was brought to the hospital with an illness diagnosed as polio.

FAIR CONDITION

All three children were reported in fair condition. Diagnosis of the two brothers constituted only new cases of polio from Grand Rapids hospitals on Monday.

Their illness brought to 215 the number of polio cases diagnosed in Grand Rapids hospitals since June 4.

Of this Summer's polio victims, 28 have been residents of Grand Rapids and 25 from Kent County. There have been 21 deaths from the disease here, three Grand Rapids residents.

The Keeler case was the second this year in which three members of one family had polio. Last Wednesday, two brothers, Arthur, 10, and Kenneth Souter, 8, sons of Mr. and Mrs. Ray Souter of Holland, joined their 3-year-old sister, Janet, in St. Mary's Hospital.

DATE PREPARED <u>August 24, 1949</u>		
Hospital <u>ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL</u>		
City <u>GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN</u>		
PATIENT'S NAME - FIRST MIDDLE LAST		
<u>Kenneth Souter</u>		
RELATIONSHIP TO CERT. HOLDER	AGE	MARITAL STATUS
<u>Son</u>	<u>8 yrs.</u>	<u>Single</u>
IN PT	OUT PT	TIME OF ADMISSION OR OUT-PATIENT TREATMENT
<u>yes</u>		DATE <u>8/23/49</u> HOUR <u>10:30 pm</u>

Ray Souter
304--W.18th
Holland, Mi

Dear Subscriber

So that
ing to you this
Hospital Care

These L

Michigan Hospital Service membership, we are sending to Blue Cross for the services provided under your

ch your hospital's participation in the sponsorship

Polio Strikes 3 Children in Holland Family

All three children of Mr. and Mrs. Ray Souter, of Holland, are hospitalized in Grand Rapids today as poliomyelitis patients.

Sons Arthur, 10, and Kenneth, eight, were admitted last night. Their condition is reported fair.

The Souter's three-year-old daughter, Janice, was entered at St. Mary's hospital on Aug. 14. Her condition is reported critical.

Jean King, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth King of this city, who has had a mild case, and has been treated at Municipal hospital, was released today.

1949

