

STAFFORD COUNTY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW OF IDA DEACON BROOKS BY MARGARET MOCK

APRIL 5, 1986

PROJECT FUNDED BY A GRANT FROM STAFFORD COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS TO THE CENTRAL RAPPAHANNOCK REGIONAL LIBRARY

I hereby give and grant to the Central Rappahannock Regional Library, my tape recorded memoir as a donation for such scholarly and educational purposes as it shall determine. It is expressly understood that the full literary rights of this memoir pass to the Central Rappahannock Regional Library, and that no rights whatsoever are to vest in my heirs now or at my death.

Signature of interviewee_____

Address of interviewee_____

Signature of interviewer_____

Address of interviewer_____

April 5, 1986

Date of agreement April 5, 1986

Memories of life in Stafford County 1900-1964

Subject of Tape(s)

IDA DEACON BROOKS

This interview is being conducted with Ida Deacon Brooks at her home, 201 Cambridge Street, Falmouth, Virginia, for Stafford County Oral History Project on Saturday, April 5, 1986, by Margaret Mock.

Q: Miss Brooks, will you give me your complete full name and your date of birth?

A: Ida Deacon Brooks--you want me--I was Edwards--I had the Edwards in the Ida Edwards--I had the Edwards Deacon and then I drooped the Edwards for the Deacon (Ida Edwards Deacon Brooks).

Q: And when were you born?

A: In July 29, 1900.

Q: July 29, 1900, and where were you born?

A:

Q: In Stafford County?

A: Yes.

Q: Where was Oakhill located?

A: Off--Leeland Road.

Q: Okay. Okay, you said you were born at Oakhill farm--so that means that you were born at home, not at the hospital.

A: Yes.

Q: You were born at home.

A: I was the first one and then the next one was Henry and the last one was Alex and we were three big ones--I mean 13 pounds when we were born.

Q: Oh, really?

A: Yes, m'am. The doctor told us that when Ennis was born, he was so big, he broke the bucket down coming up the stairs. All three of us were big ones.

Q: Had your family lived at Oakhill very long? You were born at Oakhill--how long had your family living there?

A: Well, my grandfather and grandmother..., they owned a portion of Argyle Heights during the Civil War and he was a commander and officer ... and then her (my great-grandfather) grandfather died just after the Civil War. So she sold the Fredericksburg (farm?) and came up here to Oakhill.

Q: So that was your grandmother?

A: Great-grandmother.

Q: Oh, your great-grandmother. And your parents were living there when you were born?

A: No, they didn't get married until sometime after because he was a teenager. He wasn't even here, he was in Baltimore.

A: Yes, but when you were born, were both your parents living at Oakhill?

Q: Yes, with his grandparents. His grandmother, I heard her say, that Kofax ladies went up to the trough to get water, there was a soldier in the horse trough taking his bath. She said that she screamed like everything. Came back to the house and in a minute, a Union officer came through the door asking and he says, "I'm going to put a man outside this door. As many men as I have, I can't keep them out of that horse trough to save my life and so, whatever you all want--doesn't matter what it is, you just tell him and he'll get it."

Q: So no one would have to go out. That's when they were occupied when the Union troops were over here occupying.

A: On that street over there and I can remember one time... I called him over and he said, "Miss Brooks, I want to ask you a question." I said, "Alright." He said, "I know... is ... He said, "Is she you or is she by any chance kin to Captain San?" I said, "Yeah, that's my great-grandfather." I said, "Why," and he said, "Because I own that farm." He said., "I found out about it except for one person and I can't find that person." So I told him everything I had heard grandmother said, "I would like to come there and see it--I've never been down there." He said, "I'd love you to come down to see it. The house is in good condition," he said, "and some rooms have been added on to it."

Q: Which house is this now? The one that Murphy Street owns.

A: My great-grandfather owned.

Q: Great-grandfather over in Argyle?

A: Yes, I think that Argyle is this end of Argyle is part of it now.

Q: Do you know what the house is called today?

A: No, I don't. One Sunday, we went for a ride and we went to ... and I said, "Come on..." and Pina said, "I'm not going down there--walk in on all them on Sunday afternoon--something's gotta happen.

Q: Now, you told me that you lived at Oakhill since you were five months old. Your parents lived where?

A: Grafton.

Q: Grafton Farm?

A: Yes.

Q: And that's where you grew up?

A: Yes.

Q: And that's where Grafton Village Subdivision is today.

A: Yes.

Q: Is there a house there that you lived in?

A: No--all the buildings were town down years ago--it's all gone.

Q: And you lived there until you were 22 and that's when you got married?

A: Yes.

Q: And who did you marry?

A: Randolph Brooks.

Q: Randolph Brooks. And where did you all move to when you got married?

A: Ingleside.

Q: To Ingleside?

A: Yes.

Q: Is that the house that is still up there today?

A: Yes, m'am.

Q: Go up the hill and you look on the right?

A: Yes.

Q: Did your husband build it?

A: No, he didn't build it. He had a cousin... the original house was a small house and he added on to it and improved it.

Q: So he just bought it from someone else?

A: Yes.

Q: And you all farmed.

A: Yes.

Q: How much land did it have with it?

A: 197 acres.

Q: 197 acres.

A: All of that subdivision--from the river over here to Melchers Drive--all of that.

Q: Now, was that before Route 17 was cut through up here--did you just have the old Warrenton Road?

4

A: Yes, we had the Warrenton Road.

Q: Was your farm across the road?

A: No, we had sold it when they cut through and made the new one.

Q: So they cut through your property then to make the new Route 17--Warrenton Road.

A: Yes--that was after these soldiers cut through.

Q: And when you sold that, you moved here to the Cottonware house?

A: I couldn't get this then because his sister was living and her father had left her this for her life so we bought a small farm in Berea.

Q: Oh, I see, so you lived in Berea for a while?

A: Yes, and went to work at Sylvania. And when she died, we moved there.

Q: And when his sister died, you got this house. About what year was that? How long have you lived here?

A: 1945.

Q: You grew up in the Grafton area, but all of your married life, you've lived in Falmouth or Berea?

A: Yes. His father left it in his will that she was to have it her whole

life and he had both a piece of property down on the corner. The income rent from that place was to go to the upkeep of this house. I don't think he ever spent a cent on the house--he just took money and gave it back.

Q: What was her name? Your husband's sister?

A: Geneva.

Q: Geneva Brooks? And she lived here at the Cottonware house as a seamstress, but didn't do much on keeping the house up?

A: She didn't do anything. We had to do everything.

Q: Did you ever do any farming in the back here?

A: Had a beautiful garden. Years ago. My husband (had back sprain and he... ?) and I put half of it in corn and I was looking for corn with two ears on it--never thought about the... And I fertilized that thing and honestly to goodness... all the stalks had two ears. An ... you certainly generous with the fertilizer weren't you? I said, "Well, I wouldn't be Deacon's daughter if I hadn't fertilized everything." He said, "That's the prettiest corn I ever saw."

Q: You were tellint me the other day about when you lived at Ingleside--you were--that would have been about 1922 when you moved up there--you lived there until April 1922? At that time, Mr. Melchers was living in Falmouth--he and his wife,

(Q: continued) Gary Melchers and Corina Melchers, and they farmed and your farms adjoined each other?

A: They just--they didn't do any of the farming--they--I don't think--they had some cattle. They had heifers. I don't think they even raised enough food for their heifers.

Q: So they really didn't do any farming?' While you were living there anyway?

A: No, they didn't. He loved dogs and he had a white dog and he was crazy over that dog so... and we had some chickens... he told me, "They let my dog run away because he was just killing them, but he won't eat them. ... Please don't shoot him--I'll pay for the chickens." My husband recognized the dog and he didn't shoot him and so I sent the bill over there. He paid the bill and kept her tied. He came over in a hurry and paid that bill.

Q: For all the chickens he ate?

A: I never saw anyone appreciate anything in all my life like that man did

us not killing his dog. And then after he died, she had a Great Dane and we had a female collie. And they fed him 12 pounds of meat a day. And you know every morning, they would give him two pieces of meat about so big--red meat. And every morning that dog would pick up his one piece of meat and over to out field he'd come and lay that down and bark just as loud as he could bark. So this female dog would go to him and he wouldn't leave it there--he would pick it up in his mouth and hand it to her. Back home he'd go just as hard as he could go and get that other piece of meat and they would lay down and look at each other and eat the meat.

Q: So they thought they were feeding their dog 12 pounds of meat and really he was getting six pounds since he was sharing.

A: Yes.

Q: Oh, that's cute.

A: Yes. ...Safeway and a man... there ahead of me and spoke to me, called me Miss Brooks and I never seen him before. He said , you know he had a bag of dogfood and he said, "It costs more to feed my dogs than it does to feed myself." And I told him this story and he looked at me and said, "That's the cutest dog story I ever heard." And I said, "He couldn't pick it up and hand it to here just like a person would."

Q: So you grew up on the farm doing farm work. Did you do chores around the house? Let's see--you had a brother?

A: I had three brothers.

Q: Three brothers and no sisters?

A: One sister.

Q: One sister--okay. Three brothers and one sister--three boys and two girls in the family and you lived on a farm. What kind of work around the house or farm did you do?

A: We could do anything we wanted to so long as it wasn't something we had no business doing. I know one day, I'm trying to think it was, Papa came up and he says, "You and brother have hired men here to do that work and that is not for a lady." He said, "I never want to see you all do it again." If it was something we wanted to do, we made sure Papa didn't see us do it--no, sir, he wouldn't let us do anything--we could do light work... everyone of the calves were born and he said, "Ida, I'll give you the pick of the calves if you will raise all these heifers." I said, "Well, how am I going to do it?", and he said, "We'll build a trough out there and you teach them to drink."

So I did, ... and poured the milk in the trough. ... poored the milk in 5-gallon cans and to keep them from suckling each other, we had to fill the trough full of dry food and they were the prettiest heifers you ever saw.

Q: So you were in airy farming?

A: Yes, we sold sweet cream.

Q: How did you sell it?

A: We had a creamery.

Q: You sold it to Farmer's Creamery?

A: Yes. I used to carry it over there.

Q: Carry the milk to the creamery?

A: Yes--in a horse and buggy.

Q: You put the can on the buggy?

A: Yes--down on the buggy. And Jerry(?) Mitchell was the man--I don't know if

he's living now or not. Anyway, he was always out there to receive the milk--we would see a line of buggies. He said to me one day--no, he didn't say it--anyway, we were married and my husband said that the man told me today that you had the prettiest legs of any woman who came to the farmer's creamery. Well, I said Jerry(?) Mitchell said that because he was the one... and he never did let me forget that.

Q: And this was after you were married?

A: After we were married.

Q: You and your husband did dairy farming, too?

A: Yes.

Q: Well, that's interesting to me because I don't know anything about farming.

A: World War I, they were short of men, so they drafted every man of age, you see. And all the help Papa could get was old men that were too old to go in the service and the boys that were young. He had this 200-acre farm and grandmother's farm

and two or three farms he would work negroes(?). He had hayfever and I cut every bit of that hay with... and one little field was up on the road.

(A: continued) I had this one uncle--he was the most particular with his daughters as ever was in the world. And he came along one day... saw me on the mower... he said, "Minnie, has Willie Deacon lost his mind? There's Ida on that mower with a pair of horses. They might run through a bee's nest and they'll run away and kill her." Mama says, "Well, they haven't run through a bee's nest yet," so I kept on riding and cut off all the hay on that farm and raked it all up--we had side delivery rigs then, and a thing that we loaded up--I don't know what we called that and they go down and make a long row of hay. They go down one side and back up the next and then they would take that loader and the men just had to gather it up on the wagon.

Q: So you went through with the mower cutting it down?

A: Yes.

Q: So when the war was on, there were not enough men to help on the farm, you had to get out there.

A: Driving horses...

Q: You liked working outside? Did you like doing the inside work you had to do with your mother like the canning and-

Yeah, I did that. I've had guineas--used to raise guineas and that year I raised I was having trouble with them--getting them to live and somebody told me that I was hatching them a little too early. Around the fourth of July and before that there was a bug and they eat that and it would kill them--I had 175 guineas. I would go up around the hillside, you know, and when they got ready to come off the nests, you would hear them--you could hear them pecking and you could walk down and put the eggs... if you took all the eggs, they wouldn't go back in there so I left the hen eggs and took the guinea eggs and sell them.

Q: People like to eat the guinea eggs?

A: No, set them--the guineas.

Q: Oh, they ate the guineas. Is that what you raised the guineas for? To sell?

A: Yeah--during the war, I sold everyone of them--I think for 75c apiece.

Q: Yeah, well, during the war there was such a shortage. Do you remember anything about any sort of requests by the government to not eat certain foods or anything like that--during the war--do you remember anything about World War I ?

A: No, I don't remember except that the government didn't take any part in what you were doing then.

Q: Yeah, didn't have the rules and regulations that we have today. Well, I think during World War II, of course, there was rationing like gas and sugar and maybe ... there wasn't any sort of rationing like that that you remember during World War I?

A: I hadn't heard anything like that--of course, we raised everything we needed on the farm(?). Having so much cancer now and said Mama didn't have cancer when

(A: continued) you were growing up, why is it--I said, "Pina, there is a difference in the food. We raised everything down on the farm--papa did, and even down to the meat and I said, "We raised the vegetables--you had those go all through the year." And Pina says, "Couldn't raise enough meat." I says, "One of our family friends, Mr. Goolrick(?), down on number three, I said, "He killed his cows-- we killed the cows--this winter and cut half in two--papa got half, he got half. Next winter, Papa would do it." It was such cold winters then we would take the beef out and hang them up out on the meat house. Then if I wanted roast beef, I'd have to go out there and cut it off. And I said, "We had our pork, our vegetables, chicken and for a few necessities, you went to the store and bought them."

Q: Did you all do a lot of baking bread--baking your own bread?

A: Yes--we baked it and my mama had a pan that was so long and so wide and we baked every other day, I think. Loaf bread. Put them in that pan.

Q: There wasn't a whole lot that you had to get at the store.

A: No.

Q: Flour--did you ever raise wheat and have it ground into flour?

A: Yes, indeed. We raised wheat and he'd go every fall down to the

island(?) - near White Oak... and he'd go down there at certain times with the wheat and the corn. When he'd come, he'd leave one thing of whole wheat and it would be there all day and when we would see that wagon coming home, we would go beg mama for whole wheat batter cakes for supper. She said batter cakes are not for dinner, they're for breakfast. We begged and pleaded, but she wouldn't have those batter cakes until breakfast. A friend of mine, Susie Shepard(?) one day she looked at me and she said, "My mother's the same way." She said, "We did the same thing." She said, "When we would see that wagon coming home, we begged her to fix them... they're for breakfast."

Q: Batter cake is what we call pancake?

A: Yes.

Q: And you wanted them right away?

A: Yes, we wanted them right away. We couldn't wait for breakfast. Whole wheat had a different flavor from just plain flour.

Q: Some of the wheat was ground hard and some of it was bleached?

A: Yes.

Q: You liked the batter cakes made with the whole wheat?

A: Yes.

Q: Was there a mill over here on the Belmont property when you were living up there and farming?

A: No. Evidently, they had one up at Hartwood.

Q: And which neighbor was Hartwood? (?????)

A: He was up there above Goochland(?) Church--going down here at White Oak in a horse and buggy you'd never... Oh, yes, there was a mill up above Patrick's Mill.

Q: Tackett's Mill?

A: Yes.

Q: Where people in that area brought their corn.

A: Yes, and took it to Fauquier. Just two or three years ago, they tore the old Tackett's Mill down.

Q: Yes--I think you're talking about Prince William.

A: Yes.

Q: Yes, took it apart and put it up in Prince William County and they're advertising all kinds of things--Tackett's Mill. Well, we've talked about the kind of work that your family did and that was farming and none of the women, I presume, went anywhere away to work. They--your mother, you and your sister worked right there at home on the farm.

A: Yes.

Q: What about a farmer's organization? Was there any sort of an organization that your dad or your husband or you and your husband belonged to when you all were farmers like an association for farmers like the Farm Bureau or anything like that? Do you remember belonging to anything sort of an organized group?

A: We had one--I can't remember what it was called.

Q: There was a Co-op over there in Fredericksburg.

A: Oh, they had--Papa had one--farmer's--they had stock in it and they had a store down near Caroline Street and you got your groceries cheaper price.

Q: I see. A co-operative type of thing.

A: Called Farmer's Union or Farmer's something. My husband did all his shopping there.

Q: The word union kinda brings politics to my mind and I know that you are active now in political affairs, I wonder if you can tell me a little bit about how you got into politics--was that something your dad was into?

A: Well, my dad was Commissioner of Revenue.

Q: Your dad was Commission of Revenue for Stafford County?

A: At that time, we had two and he was Commissioner for the two districts, Falmouth and Hartwood.

Q: I see. So there was someone who was commissioner of revenue from the southern end of the county and someone else up on the northern end.

A: Yes. And they kept up with--Papa was a Republican--Democrats... paid so much attention to what the Democrats were doing.

Q: Your father was a Republican?

A: Yes, Republican. They asked him to run for treasurer and he did. And, of course, he was defeated as treasurer so he never--he was commissioner of revenue.

Q: Now the commissioner of revenue was elected also, right?

A: Yes. The one Saturday he was at a meeting at church and I was home by myself ... and these two men came to the front door and wanted to see these books. And one of them was Sergeant Chichester of Fredericksburg, and I says, "My father is not here and I can't let you see these books." "Oh," he says, "I'm Sergeant Chichester--you're not doing anything wrong." "That's alright," he says, "it's just something in there that we want to find out." So, I thought that by him telling me that he was Sergeant Chichester, it was alright. I let him in, but I did have sense to stay in the room and I listened to them and...

Q: Who was he looking up?

A: I didn't get the name.

Q: You didn't get the name.

A: A person--what he owed. Papa came in and I told him and Papa says, "Ida, it's not your fault. I should have told you"--he said, "I have always thought Sergeant Chichester was a crook--now I know it. He knew it was against the law for anybody to look at those books when I wasn't there."

Q: It was public property--it was alright to be looked at, but the Commissioner of Revenue was supposed to be there when they were being looked at?

A: Right. So I told Papa what they said about... saw mill and Papa said,

"They're getting ready to foreclose on somebody." Sure enough, it wasn't long before it came out in the paper that they had foreclosed on somebody.

Q: So you think the other man with Sergeant Chichester was the banker--someone from the bank or-do you know?

A: No, he was just going with Sergeant Chichester.....and I didn't know until afterwards, but Papa said that he had a reputation of being a crook.

Q: Sergeant--does that mean he was with the police department?

A: Yes--... Fredericksburg.

Q: So, you've been a lifelong Republican?

A: Yes.

Q: And your dad was commissioner of revenue until he died or did he--?

A: No, after he was defeated when he ran for treasurer.

Q: Okay, he gave up Commissioner of Revenue then and ran for treasurer--he didn't make treasurer, so he... Do you remember the names of any of the others who were Commissioner of Revenue after your dad?

A: No--we had my Uncle Henry.

Q: Your Uncle Henry?

A: Yes. ... beautiful brown... of course, my father never had anything... before and... and he grabbed my scissors... my father was so very disgusted because Uncle Henry didn't. And then when the colt... couldn't do a thing with him--couldn't do one thing. And the foreman down there... Papa had a knack for breaking horses. Papa says, "Henry, bring the horse on up here." So Uncle Henry brought him up and Papa rode him and he was just like a race horse--you couldn't hook him to the buggy because he went so fast... so Papa went up ... Hartwood district and that night at the supper table, he said, "... did just fine all day until I turned him around and started home. He took that bit in his mouth and he... I couldn't do one thing with him. Ran as hard as he could come down the

road." Jimmy says, "Papa, what did you do when you got to Falmouth? He said, "He came right through Falmouth." Tom says, "Something's wrong--Papa, you got something wrong somewhere." So next morning, Tom fixed the horse and back to Hartwood he goes... livestock... Tom walks and I think everyone must have said at the same time, "Tom, what happened?" And Tom--and Papa sitting there, too. Tom says, "Well, Papa was right--that's just what he did to me when I turned around, he took the bit in his mouth and I couldn't do one thing with him. "

Q: Well, you mentioned dog cart--that's not--

A: Two wheel.

Q: Two wheels--were dogs hitched to it.

A: No, I don't know why they always called it dog cart--it just had two wheels and a seat on it.

Q: Something you just ride in--you didn't pull anything.

A: I think Papa just bought it when you had to go--in those days, the commissioners had to go to everyone's house to assess the property.

Q: To assess the property, uh-huh.

A: Yes--and I think that's what he bought it for.

Q: He just needed a place for him to sit--he didn't need a big buggy. But you did hitch a horse to it.

A: Yes--he used this old...

Q: And then would your dad charge them a fee?

A: I guess so--I don't know. And I know the first time, I think it was or the second time, he was down behind the hay barn, the boys wanted to go down there and Mama wouldn't let them so anyway, ... argument--one way or another, one of them hit the other one and knocked down his... colored men... Mama says, "Tell Willie to come up here." So Papa came up there and he looked at Mama and said, "This never would have happened if you hadn't been so afraid these boys would learn something."

Q: She was trying to keep them away from the stallion and the mare.

A: So he put that... and pulled the snap and said, "Now you boys go up to the barn." ... in all of your life. I say children are missing a whole lot. That's why children are so much trouble today, they don't work hard.

Q: That's right--you always had something to do.

A: Yes. Something we could do. ... enjoyed every bit of it.

Q: Being outside working--there was always something to do either inside or outside.

A: Yes.

Q: And you were educated too--you didn't have to worry about taking any classes to learn the facts of life--you learned them right there on the farm, didn't you?

A: Yes--we certainly did. After great-grandmother's house burnt, then, of course, we brought her home and I had a grandmother and a great-grandmother. Grandmother stayed between three daughters--one in Richmond and one in Stafford and us. She stayed between the three.

Q: During the year she'd stay with them.

A: Yes. And they didn't let you get by with anything. You see, if you ever made a mistake or anything, ... they'd catch you and call you in and talk to you. I said it more than one time that grandparents are not talking to their children today like they used to.

Q: Uh-huh--that's right. You had a great-grandmother and very often, a grandmother and a mother and a father--you had plenty of adults there to give you guidance.

A: Grandmother had a cane--I remember it just as well if you did something... and she caught you, she talked to you nice and quiet.

Q: Would she spank you or would she...

A: No, just talk to you.

Q: Grandmothers didn't spank--they just talked. Your mother and daddy got to do the spanking.

A: Papa never spanked. All he had to do was talk to you. That was all. But I tell you he would take a strap to those boys. Yes, sir--even after he died, Henry was the father of two children...

Q: Got the corn with the pigs? With the shortest wagon?

A: One day, Henry was helping Papa load some corn and some was falling off the wagon "I knew that corn was coming out of wagon and I knew Papa was hollering at me," he said, "why, I don't know, but I never stopped to..." He said, "Papa walked up to that gate, held the horse's head and pulled the strap off that bridle.

I got off that back seat, boy," he said, "he burnt me up."

Q: Because he had just kept on driving and corn was falling off. And he knew it was falling off. He heard his dad yelling, but he didn't stop. He just kept right on.

A: He said, "He just burnt me up and he says you go back and pick up every ear of corn and if you leave one ear, you're going to get the same thing again." He said, "I want

you to know I always heard Papa after that."

Well, what about schooling? What did you all do--you lived on a farm--were there any kind of public schools that you could go to?

A: Where we lived--we were too small to walk--there was a private(?) school up at a private home.

Q: Private home?

A: Yes. And she taught--Mrs. Mary Custis Lee--she taught--

Q: Mrs. Mary Custis?

A: Yes--Mrs. Mary Custis Lee--and she taught everybody that wanted to go to school, of course, some of them wouldn't go. And then when we got so we could walk alone, we went to Leland--that's where we went to school--... high school.

Q: Well, that Highland home and then Leland--where was that?

A: Oh, boy--

Q: Was that out on 218?

A: No--you know where Leland Road is?

Q: Yes.

A: Well, it went right straight on back across the railroad and right down in the corner--that's where the old Leland School was.

Q: And that was probably run by the county?

A: Oh, yes. It was a county school.

Q: That one at Highland Home--was that a private school?

A: Yes--it was a private school.

Q: So your parents had to pay for you to go there and then you went to Leland School and that was public. How old were you when you stopped going to school? 15,.. 16, do you remember?

A: 17 and 18, I think--it was 13th or 14th grade.

Q: You went all--as far did you go. Did you have just one teacher?

A: Well, we had two--the upper grades had a teacher and another had small children.

Q: So the younger ones--primary grades first, third and fourth--something like that--may be first through six?

A: I don't remember... Miss Cloe and Mrs. Clift were the teachers.

Q: Miss Cloe and Miss Clift--Miss or Mrs.?

A: Mrs.

Q: Mrs. Clift?

A: ... she didn't take anything off the children.

Q: Mrs. Clift?

A: Every Friday, you had to recite a poem....in her room every Friday. And I know for a... short time... and Miss Porter then... so she and her younger brother came to school. They had moved here from New York. The Musantes up there where the... Stafford florist is and they walked from that across (she and this little boy) across through those woods and all to Leland School and she had taught him-- if it wasn't but two lines, you had to say it. So anyway, she had taught him... sister had taught him this poem and ... he wouldn't say it. He wouldn't get up and he wouldn't say one word. So Mrs walks over to him, takes him by

the ear, carries him in her room. ... and his sister said, "Give it to him." I don't know what she did to him, but I want to tell you every Friday after that, he said his poem.

Q: Really?

A: Yes--and the last time I saw Miss... was as a barbeque and I... son and daughter., coming on and I got up and went on to ... and sitting there and talking to her and I said--I told her about this and I was telling her about it and I said, "That Paul Musante," and she said, "Yes, indeed, it was Paul. You mean to tell me you haven't forgotten' that?" I said, "No, m'am, I haven't forgotten that."

Q: That was Paul Mosante? Is Paul Musante still living around here or do you know? His sister is now a Porter-

A: I don't know--his sister is now a Porter and she is--I think... son. I asked one of her daughters-- and I asked her brother how old she was. I think she is a year older than I am--I know she and I are about the same age because Leland...

Q: She remembered that incident?

A: Yes--and she says, "You remember that?", and I said, "Yes, I do."

Q: Well, how about the church that you attended growing up--what church?

A: New Hope.

Q: New Hope Methodist Church?

A: Yes.

Q: You went to that church all your life?

A: All my life.

Q: Still a member of that church?

A: No. It was too far then you see when we got up--the children--my husband was Episcopalian so-- driving from Ingleside down to New Hope was too far.

Q: In a buggy, yeah--it's a long way.

A: I went on to Fredericksburg St. George's.

Q: So now you're a member of St. George's?

A: Yes.

Q: You were telling me a little bit about going to church when you were young--going to New Hope Church--what were some of the--how often did you go to church?

A: Every Sunday.

Q: Once a day or twice on Sunday?

A: Once--of course, in those days, they didn't have preaching. They only had one minister, you see. And he--all the church Methodists went from New Hope to Brook and Ebenezer Register Chapel and all-- one preacher preaches at all those churches.

Q: So each Sunday, you didn't always have a preacher?

A: No.

Q: One Sunday you would and three or four Sundays, you wouldn't?

A: Yes, but we always had Sunday School. And my father was superintendent and he was superintendent for 60(?) years--was there when he was 21.

Q: I don't think I have gotten your father's name.

A: William Thomas Deacon. And you had a brother.

Q: Is your brother still living?

A: No--there's five of us and only two of us living.

Q: Is that right? Is the other one living is your sister or one of your brothers?

A: Brother--my youngest brother. I am the oldest one and he is the youngest one.

Q: Is that Henry?

A: No, Alex--he lives in New Jersey.

Q: How do you spell his name?

A: A-l-e-x.

Q: A-l-e-x.

A: ... named after my uncle.

Q: Named after who?

A: My uncle or a cousin--one or the other--no, it wasn't an uncle--maybe it was a cousin. ...

Q: So you went to Sunday School every Sunday and every now and then there would be preaching.

A: I think there was preaching two Sundays a month. Because I know the minister would come down here because they lived at Stafford Courthouse. And they'd come down here somewhere--usually at mama's... and spend the night. Everybody--all the ministers spent the night there except one and he was a Mr. Wiley and he would stay down there at my aunt's ... and come to find out why he was staying there--they were both drinking out of the same bottle.

Q: Oh, no.

A: Yes, m'am.

Q: Oh, my goodness--the preacher, huh?

A: Yes. And they had this one child and it was a boy and he was spoiled until he didn't have good sense. And I know one day--they had to spend the night there then--and he was having breakfast and, of course, our family--everyone of us ate breakfast at the same time--it was no coming in later with all these breakfasts. And if you didn't do it, you didn't get breakfast. And we were at the breakfast table and he walks in, looks up and says, "Well, there's nothing on this table I want to eat." Mother and father sat there and never said a word--Pina looked at him and said, "If you don't want what's on this table, you won't get anything to eat." But ... never has said a word to him before... or nothing.

Q: Now, was he a cousin of yours?

A: Hub?

Q: The boy that you were talking about--was he a cousin?

A: No, indeed, he was the minister's son.

Q: A minister's son--oh, he was the one you were talking about when you say the minister spent the night--does that mean that he brought his whole family?

A: The son was the only one he had.

Q: Oh, he didn't have a wife?

A: No--we never had but one that was a married one, and he was Mr. Glen Cooper.

Q: Mr. Cooper?

A: He had two daughters and he spent the night--nights there and we had the north end room where the guest room was. And then the middle bedroom was a great big bedroom and I think we had three beds in there and I know that's where the girls the two girls always slept in there in the room with us. And-- Papa had a colt it wasn't the first one either, he bought a map(?) at Leesburg... and he came to the house that Sunday morning, Papa did, and said, "Well, ... how is a beautiful colt...," and Mr. Cooper, he says, "Well, come on, we're going down to see him colt--he's never seen him a colt." Papa says, "No, I'll bring the colt up here, so Papa went on... and the colt comes up to the door, Mr. Cooper... grown man, "Well, I didn't know a colt could walk, I thought it was like a baby--they had to get so many years old before they could walk."

Q: He hadn't grown up on the farm?

A: No.

Q: Well, as superintendent of Sunday School then, I guess your father sorta ran things at the church?

A: Kept everything going just as smoothly and nicely as could gone, but certain a very short time for a man named Dallas Young.

Q: Dallas Young?

A: Yes. And he was a trouble maker.

Q: Oh, Dallas was?

A: Oh, my Lord, yes. And---

Q: He took over as superintendent after your dad--

A: I don't know whether he took over or who took over superintendent--I know he was always causing trouble. The minister went to his mother-in-law and told her he was praying for Dallas(?), says,"--

Q: Who was Miss Annie(?)?

A: His mother-in-law and she says, "I've tried... but nothing..., so they left New Hope and Fredericksburg because Dallas couldn't have his way with everything he wanted.

Q: At the church?

A: At the church.

Q: But what was his--do you think he had a job like superintendent?

A: I don't know whether he was superintendent or not. I think his father was superintendent. Papa never had any trouble... kept that thing going smoothly.

Q: Can you remember any of your Sunday School teachers?

A: The only one I remember is Mrs. Stevens--Johnny Stevens.

Q: Dottie or Dolly?

A: Dottie--Victoria was her name.

Q: Victoria Stevens?

A: Yes. But I went--I remember very well the first time I went to Sunday School with Papa and but I was small and I went to sit down by Papa and sitting on the front pew--I was sitting right beside him. Class was over and ... went to class and Miss Stevens, she

had... she got up and she came and got me ... and she--almost kept me under her wings almost all her life and she was one of the sweetest women...

Q: So she was your teacher for a long time? For a number of years?

A: Yes.

Q: They didn't have a separate teacher like they do now for the six-year-olds or the seven-year-olds or the eight-year-olds--you stayed with one teacher for a long time?

A: Yes, and we had charge of the--I don't exactly remember--children's day--children' day service and this time was sat before Children's Day and she was going to ...over to her house and Papa was down at church at a conference meeting and he had the horse that I always rode and the other horses were at work and os I cut across the field wo walk it--I thought I'd meet him, you know, and so I did-- I met him and he looked at me, looked at the horse, looked at me and he says, "Ida, don't you ever do a thing like this again." I said, "Well, Papa, Mrs. Stevens was waiting for me--may have been waiting--kept her waiting--I've got to help her." And he says, "Never mind about Mrs. Stevens--you let her wait, but don't you ever walk across this field... by yourself again like this." I said, "Alright, Papa." He got off that horse and he says, never walked there anymore. I told Mrs. Stevens that Sunday, "I knew Papa had the horse--I'm late...". Papa had the horse--yes, sir, Mrs. Stevens could wait.

Q: He didn't want you to walk far by yourself? In the field by yourself?

A: Yes.

Q: He was afraid that something would happen to you.

A: Now I know when I got older, he didn't trust men, you see.

Q: But you didn't know then?

A: I didn't know then.

Q: You just listened to whatever he said--he said for you not to do it so you didn't do it?

A: And we wouldn't dare to leave that farm without that whip for the buggy, that was strict orders and if a man reaches for that bridle, let him have that whip... that was on your...

Q: That was what he taught you to do. Might not have known exactly why then--

A: And my, and then I knew that we meant--I came through--he and I came through Harrell Road one day and got into a certain spot ... he says to me, "Don't ever go down there,"
so... the next time I came through by myself, I... so I went on down.

Q: That road that he told you not to go down?

A: Yes, I went--I wanted to see what was down there. Got down at the bottom of it and it was a stream of water. And a freight train was going through so I stood there and waited until the train left and I went on to... just a short distance, and there stood the biggest black man I ever saw; honest to goodness he was. And the horse didn't like it and did the worst neighing you ever saw. I didn't do a thing--it didn't take two seconds to reach down and get that whip-- I picked that whip up and I looked up at him and that man was gone.

Q: You reached for that whip?

A: Yes, I was reaching for the whip and I had that whip in my hand and he was gone. Then, I knew what Papa meant. I reckon if I hadn't of had that whip, he'd have come right on there and taken over.

Q: So you learned from your experience what your papa was talking about?

A: I didn't tell Papa about it.

Q: You didn't tell Papa that you went down that road? What about doctors and dentists and medical care--did you have any of those in the county--any doctors?

A: No, the only doctor lived in Fredericksburg--Dr. Hale. He borned me and--

Q: So he did--he came out to your great-grandmother's farm?

A: He used to live out here in Falmouth.

Q: Hale--H-a-l-e?

A: Yes--over on the old... where the Nobles (auto dealership) is and straight on up to the church--he owned the whole thing. And so then, the--they had a dentist up here back...
and Mama said that when... he had these boys ... Edwards... he asked the little boy if this was kin to
the Edwards in Falmouth and Mama said he scolded that boy... had a bad reputation. But sold it ...

sold the place over there and then to Fredericksburg and the second night after he sold it, I think the house caught fire and burned down.

Q: That's the one that Dunbar kitchen was on that property?

A: Yes.

Q: So there was really a big house and had a lot of land around it--was it a farm or-

A: The whole... the oldest and old houses ...

Q: You say two days after he moved out?

A: Yes--and then I don't remember who lived in it then--Dr. ... and Dr. was his doctor and he was so big and when he came there, they said that he was so rough and big that Doctor Barner had trouble coming up the hills and that was why the state... went around that hill and came up... and he got stuck one night-I think the buggy broke down or something happened and they said his head was so big he broke the buggy down.

Q: Well, other than the doctor coming to help a mother in childbirth, what other time did you see a doctor? Did you ever go into town to a doctor for anything or did you treat your own condition?

A: We all had--all of us had the measles.

Q: You all had the measles?

A: Yes--my father had pneumonia, and but I don't remember who the doctor was.

Q: Did you get any shots or inoculations?

A: No--they didn't give shots then.

Q: They didn't give those.

A: I know he ordered whiskey for the heart.

Q: Whiskey for the heart?

A: He gave Papa too much whiskey. And my grandmother was, of course, a nurse.

Q: Your grandmother was a nurse?

A: Yes, and she was what they called a practical nurse--she--she went wherever she was needed. And she wouldn't give him that whiskey until he brought it down there with a prescription. So she said... my oldest daughter was in the attic and over in the corner was a brown whiskey bottle sitting way over here in the corner. "You want it?" I said. "Yes, indeed, I want it," because there never was but one bottle of whiskey in this house that I know about ... so we got it ... and there it is.

Q: That was the one that the doctor gave him with the prescription. But he must not have had but a little bit each day--he only had the one bottle. What about electricity?
Did you have electricity on your farm out there at Grafton?

A: They didn't have it when I was there, they had it afterwards.

Q: What about up here at Ingleside?

A: We had electricity there.

Q: You had electricity there?

A: Yes.

Q: So what did you use when you were growing up down at Grafton--oil lamps?

A: Oil lamps. Rail lamps.

Q: What kind?

A: Rail lamps. They had great big shade's on them.

Q: Rail?

A: It seems to me.

Q: R-a-i-l, rail?

A: Yes.

Q: I am not familiar with those. Different kinds of lamps. What about telephones?
Did you ever have a
telephone?

A: No. We didn't get those until some time after I had left.

Q: So you had one up at Ingleside, but not down at Grafton?

A: We didn't get one at Ingleside until sometime--I think they were going to put...
telephone... up
Melchers Drive.

Q: Melchers?

A: No, ... up to--

Q: Warrenton?

A: No--up to the school. They hadn't built--they didn't have Warrenton Road or
nothing to drive... was all they had. So... he said, "Telephone people are
coming here for you to sign papers for the telephone to go up there." And I
says, "Well, I'm not going to sign any papers until they bring that telephone
here to the house." ... Ingleside Drive... and bring it up here and put it in
this house. So, I know they brought the telephone there and put it in and...
and I took the paper to read it over to see what they wanted and his cousin
says, "You don't have to read it--... you don't have to read it." So, I
didn't... after we moved to Falmouth, there was selling a piece of land
between--something about land up there, he came here and he said, "Ida, did you all--
what
about that telephone line that went through up there?" And I said, "Why?" He says,
"Well, ... so I told him what had been said and everything. He says, "They can pick
that... telephone... and carry it anywhere they want on that strip of land."
And he told me...

Q: He told you they had...?

A: He told me they had...

Q: But they didn't know--

A: But they didn't do it.

Q: Do you know who in Stafford County might have been the first family to get a
telephone?

A: No, I don't know.

Q: What about automobiles? Who got the first automobile? Do you have any idea?

A: No...

Q: When--did you and your husband have a car? An automobile?

A: Yesh, we had one--Model T Ford. I don't remember what year we got that. That's when I learned to drive, though.

Q: You learned to drive? The Model T?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you ever have any other car after the Model T?

A: He got a truck.

Q: A truck for the farm?

A: Yes--he had a truck and a car.

Q: You were married when you got the car?

A: Yes.

Q: So that was after 1922.

A: We had a station wagon and I...

Q: A station wagon? You had your own car which was what? Which model car did you get?

A: It was ... 1946.

Q: It was a 1946?

A: Yes.

Q: Was it a brand new car?

A: Yes, it was brand new.

Q: That was probably right after the war--right after they started making new cars again. So about a

1946--was it a Ford or Chevrolet or Plymouth?

A: ...

Q: A what?

A: Must have been a Chevrolet.

Q: Oh, that one out there? The grey one?

A: Cream-colored one.

Q: It might be a Pontiac--

A: Pontiac--that's it.

Q: I wondered whose car that was--that's yours, huh?

A: Yes.

Q: Well, how about paved roads? Do you remember when--let's see when you rode, like from Falmouth up to Grafton, I guess you were riding on what is today Deacon Road--218?

A: Yes, Deacon Road--we didn't go 218. That was called White Oak Road then.

Q: Oh. White Oak Road?

A: Yes. We went Deacon Road.

Q: Was it a dirt road?

A: Yes, it was a good road, though.

Q: A good road, but it was a dirt road?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you remember when it was paved?

A: It was paved after I was married.

Q: After you were married. What about down here around in Falmouth? Ingleside Drive--at first that was a dirt road, I'm sure. Do you remember when that was paved?

A: I don't remember what year it was. All I remember is before I was married, we had a blizzard.

Q: Before you were married, you had a what?

A: We had a blizzard.

Q: A blizzard?

A: Yes, and nobody--they didn't have equipment to clean the roads and you--they couldn't get up 218

and you couldn't get out our road and every farmer that had horses went out there and cleaned off

White Oak Road first. Papa took all his

continued) horses and then they came back and they got most of it off Deacon Road, and then.. that

night and they had the heaviest rain you ever saw in your life and all the snow was gone.

Q: They worked out there all day cleaning it off and it rained all night.

A: They worked for a long time because they cleaned White Oak Road all the way down and then they came back and cleaned off Deacon Road--but every person--every man had a

horse... I reckon the county paid them for it ...

Q: To clean that road off--how about that? What about mechanized tractors? Do you remember who got the first tractor that wasn't pulled by mule or horses?

A: No, my father, he didn't have a tractor when I was married, I'm pretty sure.

I don't think he did. Of course, he did an awful lot of farming... I told Pina ... the other... we went down to Chatham... and going across the field... and I said, "Pina, it is hard to believe Papa's had corn on all of this land."

And Pina said, "... ", and I said, "He did, he farmed all of Chatham." And I says, "I'm..." and Mama fixed his dinner at lunch time, put it in a big basket and I'd take horse and buggy and come up here and take it out and spread it out on the ground--the tablecloth--and the men would eat their lunch.

Q: From Grafton up to Chatham. You're talking about Chatham property today where it belongs to the Park Service--?

A: Yes--the whole thing--he farmed all on this side--that side was grown up mostly with trees, but he farmed--I don't know how... then. It was an... went through the land then,

of course, Chatham owns all of it and he'd feed them on that side toward the railroad.

Q: So all out in there what we call Chatham Heights today was a farm owned by Chatham then--your father was responsible for farming that?

A: Yes.

Q: For Mr. Pratt--I guess it was Mr. Pratt then?

A: No, it was... Goldsmith.

Q: Goldsmith?

A: Yes. Goldsmith owned it.

Q: Dr. Goldsmith owned Chatham. And your dad did the farming for him?

A: Yes.

Q: And they raised wheat--or did you say corn?

A: They raised corn, I remember him--he had a... and he... where the... National Bank... was called... Conway Gordon.

Q: Conway... Gordon and Garnett.

A: Yes, and he was... working on that farm... and doggone it if he didn't steal a whole lot of money and they sent him to the penitentiary. ... and they had a sale down there... and he had wrenches(?) ... sold everything.

Q: So it was Mr. Howard who owned Chatham and worked with the bank?

A: Yes.

Q: And he apparently embezzled some money?

A: Yes. And the bank was closed.

Q: And you say that was there the National Bank of Fredericksburg is today?

A: Right there on the corner--the corner from St. George's Church, that's where the building was.

Q: Well, let's see what else we haven't talked about. What about when it comes to grocery shopping-- you really didn't have to do much, but if you had to, where would you have

gone to get your sugar or-

A: Mama went down to--it wasn't called Farmer's Union, but it had farmer--farmers were stockholders in it and right across from that, building on Main Street, that three- or four-storied building.

Q: That big new one you mean on Caroline Street? Lower Caroline?

A: Yes--the grocery store was right across the street from that.

Q: I think there is a parking lot today--right behind the firehouse?

A: Yes.

Q: So, there was sort of a farmer's exchange or a farmers--

A: Something like that--I know the farmers all had stock in it.

--clothing or appliances for the home Q: Well, what about other kinds of shopping or anything like that, where would they go to do any shopping like that?

A: I don't know about that.

Q: Were there any general merchandise stores?

A: I don't know about that, but I know my... of course, then you made everything. My grandmother was a seamstress and she made clothes and taught me how to sew, too

Q: Where did she get the fabric to sew from?

A: Well, they had... stores and...

Q: So in town, they had places where you could buy fabric and thread, and you made clothes.

A: I know... grandmother... she'd... asked her if she'd want to cut out the pattern. ... says,, "She wasn't criticizing you. ... go get a piece of material just like I did." She said, "The dress... I turned up so many times, I've never known anyone else..."

Q: She didn't take a look at...

A: No, she didn't... grandmother had to have everything just right.

Q: What about the post office--which post office did you all use or how did you get mail--did mail come out to your house?

A: Yes, they had mail carriers.

Q: They brought mail to your rural route out there?

A: Yes--they drove an old horse and buggy.

Q: And what about if you wanted to go to the post office--where was the closest post office?

A: I guess the closest one must have been in Fredericksburg.

Q: Did you have one in Falmouth then?

A: No.

Q: The closest post office was in Fredericksburg?

A: Yes ... mail delivery--you had to go to your box--Powell, I believe, he was the first one... I don't know if he died or what, Sonny Powell.

Q: Sonny Powell?

A: Yes. He lived out at Four Mile Fork.

Q: Four Mile Fork? Are you talking about being the postmaster at Fredericksburg?

A: No.

Q: He delivered mail?

A: He delivered it in a horse and buggy. Always...

Q: And who was the man after him you say? Sonny Powell was the first one--

A: The first one--Mr. Goodloe.

Q: Mr. Goodloe?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you ever travel outside the county other than going to Fredericksburg--ever go up to

Washington, D.C., or any other place in Virginia?

A: Yes--over in Baltimore, I'd go over there.

Q: You went to Baltimore? How did you get to Baltimore?

A: ... we'd go to Richmond.

Q: When you went to Baltimore, did you go to the river--the Potomac River and go by boat?

A: No, we didn't go by boat.

Q: You didn't go by boat. By horse and buggy?

A: I don't remember, but I do remember going there. ...going to Baltimore--I reckon I was small...

Q: What about trains--were there trains that ran through that you could catch?

A: You'd catch the train at Leland.

Q: You could catch the train at Leland?

A: Yes.

Q: That was most likely the way you went because that would be a long way to go in a horse and buggy.

A: Oh, yeash, it was a good ways.

Q: Probably by the train. There was a station there?

A: Hub?

Q: There was a station at Leland? It's not there anymore, is it?

A: No. I don't know if the train even goes through there.

Q: Yeah, a train goes through there and on up through Brook. I don't know if you can get on a Brook anymore or not--I don't guess you can. They're talking about making it stop now, but-

A: Did you know that Brooks Station, this colored--senator, I believe he

lives in Massachusetts, Senator Brooks, his family originally... named after... railroad station...

Q: Edward Brooke, I believe he was a senator for a number of years from Massachusetts and he was from... farms--his family was?

A: Yes.

Q: Well, yow about that? I didn't know who Brooke Station was named after, but there are a lot of Brookes up there.

A: Somebody one day at St. George's, I forget ... Sunday School and I beard if

Q: Brooks Station was named after my family. I said that ... my family was ... she said, "Oh, I didn't know that." So I told her about Senator Brooks and she said, "Well, I never heard of that--I'll have to--somewhere in my scrapbook, I've got a piece that come out of the paper about him--and he ... family," and she said, "Well, I'm sure glad that I asked you."

Q: Could have been embarrassing, huh? What about when you were living down on the farm there in Grafton and strangers in the community--what were you family's reactions? You said the minister came and spent the night on Saturday night, but you knew him. What about if there were any people you didn't know who moved in or came-

A:, We didn't have any people to move in because there was just the farms and everybody stayed there.

Q: Your farm--how many acres was on that farm?

A: Ours was 200--my father's farm was out there where Woodlawn is. That was another huge farm, you see. And then there was a farm across the road now where the Belmans live and that--all that subdivision and everything was once a big farm and then the farms down below... and Sullivan's and Stone's and ... Hill, they was all big farms--we never had folks move in.

Q: No one new moved in--it was just family who kept the farm going from one generation to the next. So you didn't have any trouble.

A: No.

Q: You don't ever remember anybody cutting through to lull around in the neighborhood you were concerned about or wondered who they were or anything?

A: No.

Q: You just didn't have strangers coming through.

A: We didn't have any strangers I can remember. I know one--when the flu--1918... and not a one of us had it--not a one and the Sullivan family across the road had it and they were all younger than... and Papa would go over there and take care of their stock--feed them, turn them out, water them and everything and Mama would... kitchen door and sit inside the kitchen.

Q: Yeah, that was bad. A lot of people died.

A: Died--a lot of children... but not a single one of us had it. And that same family of Sullivans...

Q: ...

A: Yeah, and he would come over every Christmas morning... and bring us over us children a piece of peppermint candy--a piece about so long and about so big and of course, we just loved it because every time he'd come, he'd bring us something, but he had one son and the other one was alright and... and anyway, Papa had told him... Papa had told the boys ... down on farm, but not to ...

Q: Your father told them the Sullivan boys they could hunt, but not to hunt where the cattle were.

A: Yes, and Papa... they was going to steal her cattle. When Papa came home, he told her. So Papa goes on out ... I told you.... but not to ... the cattle ... he says, "Now, I mean it. I don't want you hunting anymore," so ... his father had a shotgun. Vernon picked up a stick of wood... and started hitting Papa with it and his father grabbed that shotgun and I mean he was going to shoot him. And Papa hit the gun and knocked the... and the gun went off--just missed his head. And Papa said, "... the next time, I'm going to kill you."

Q: You mentioned Christmas, Mr. Sullivan bringing you peppermint candy over.

What were your Christmases like? What are some of the things you might get for Christmas when you were little and growing up?

A: Christmas then was a big day.

Q: It was a big day. You have a Christmas tree inside the house?

A: No, we didn't--

Q: Okay, you were going to tell me about Christmas, but you said you didn't have a Christmas tree. That wasn't a tradition that you decorated a tree and put it in your house?

A: No, we had a Christmas tree, I think, just before I was married. They just began making Christmas bulbs.

Q: Christmas bulbs.

A: Yes.

Q: Were there--then what did you do--how did you celebrate Christmas Day? Big dinner or did you exchange gifts?

A: We exchanged gifts and we always had a big dinner. Most of the time, grandmother was there.

Q: Grandmother was at your house on Christmas?

A: Yes.

Q: And you remember exchanging gifts.

A: Yes.

Q: Did you have cousins--or any other relatives who might come to visit?

A: No ... some had cousins in Richmond and the Edwards were cousins and the Peytons(?) ... would come over once in a while, but ...

Q: Can you remember any of the gifts you might have gotten as a child? What would be a typical kind of gift you might get? I mean, did you get dolls when you were growing up?

A: Yeah, I had dolls with china heads on them.

Q: Dolls with china heads.

A: ... my girls when they were growing up.

Q: Is that right? Saved them for your girls.

A: Yes...

Q: Can you remember any gifts that you gave other people?

A: No. I can't imagine giving them... do now.

Q: What about church? Did you go to church on Christmas Day or just on the Sunday closest to Christmas?

A: No, I didn't go to church on Christmas Day.

Q: Did you have any kind of pageant at church?

A: Yeah, they had something, but it wasn't on Christmas Day.

Q: You had a Christmas program, but it wasn't on Christmas Day?

A: No, it wasn't on Christmas Day.

Q: Well, let's see--what was your area just called, Grafton? I know that we have in Stafford lots of names for different areas like Hartwood and Falmouth, Chatham were you considered part of the Chatham area or--?

A: Grafton and Woodlawn... Belle Aire... what other farms ...

Q: So it was just the names of the farms whatever the farm was called, then you would say you were from Grafton--that meant that you were from Grafton Farm?

A: One time, when we had ... church one Sunday, we didn't have an organist. The minister was playing the organ for us ... of the men from Highland(?) home came down... and said... Miss Lily was ill and she wouldn't be able to... and Mama says, "Ida, what are you going to do?" I said, "I think I'll go up to Belle Aire and get Ada Berry." So ... church we went up there ... Belle Aire and Highland homes was the last one(?) so I dressed, got the horse and buggy and went on to church. And the minister asked me--he had just started coming to our church--so I sat down and waited until... tied my horse, Ada says, "Ida, what are you doing up here?" I said--I did have sense enough to carry my music, I said, "I'm in trouble. I need your help." She said, "What?" And I told her what had happened... says, "Give me the music." ... went on playing...

Q: So what time was your service going to be? You were having yours later?

A: That was in the morning at 11:00 service--mine was in the afternoon. So we came on down home and she said, "Ida, Let's go early so I can familiarize myself with that organ." ... church had started so I just ... and we went on down in the horse and buggy. Papa had a Buick then.

Q: He had a what?

A: A Buick. So we went on down in a horse and buggy. And she got on that organ and she... so we had the service with everything straight ... because she lived--she had to go to Leland School, turn and go that road. Quite a distance. " ... you all go by the house and I'll take Ada home," so we went on by the house, waited until Papa got there so and he carried up on home. ...but he wouldn't let me drive from there--from her house back down to...

Q: With the horse and buggy?

A: With the horse and buggy. It was getting late in the evening.

Q: It was getting dark, uh-huh.

A: Yes.

Q: Did you feel that your father was real protective of you?

A: Yes, m'as--he was real protective of us. And one day, Gertie Higgins, she was going to take a vacation and she had the... and she wanted some... the woman was sick, so I was ... then and she asked me if I would come over there and ...and I said, "Yes," so I never thought to say anything to Papa at the breakfast table and so I went to see about the horse and all the horses were at work... I come across the field... go on up to... and then cut through the woods. ... you come out right there at White Oak Road. That night when he came home... we had just pulled up in the yard and Mama... "you're on time,"... my sister said, "Ida, ... 'cause Mama told him. He gave Mama a good scolding for letting you go through the woods by yourself." She says, "I thought I could hear you... all day,"... He says, "If you ever want to go somewhere again, you tell me at breakfast table." I

says, "Papa, all the horses were at work, that's why I walked." He said, "Never mind about the horses, you tell me and I'll take you in the automobile." So that's how particular he was-- he was concerned.

Q: Do you remember when your dad got that automobile? You say it was a Buick. Do you remember when?

A: It was before I was married.

Q: Yeah, before you were married. You got married in 1923. Let's see--when you talked about--was it Ida or Ada? Who helped with the music?

A: Ada Berry.

Q: Ada Berry? And she said to you, "What are you doing over here?" Was there a little bit of rivalry between churches and between communities?

A: No, that was a Baptist Church.

Q: That was a Baptist Church--Okay, so that's why she was asking, "What are you doing over here." She knew you were a Methodist.

A: Yes.

Q: What about people in other parts of Stafford--did you ever see, if you were up from the Grafton area of White Oak area, you didn't want to have anything to do with people from up in Garrisonville or Hartwood without-

A: ... up at Ebenezer... many a Sunday afternoon because services ... at 4 o'clock-at 11 o'clock and we would go up there and come on home and eat lunch and after lunch... many times.

Q: I see, so you didn't feel that there was any place that you... or you didn't like the people there. If they were Methodists, you were going to go up and be with them, huh?

A: Yes. Papa went... churches.

Q: Talking about these churches makes me think of old Union Church. Did you ever attend Union Church?

A: After we were married.

Q: When you and your husband were married and lived at Ingleside, you attended Union.

A: We had Sunday School up there. We had Mr. Fisher--he started that.

Q: Mr. Fisher started Sunday School?

A: Yes, and he had a brother that was a man who could do most anything he wanted to do, ... and Sunday School was every Sunday afternoon.

Q: Every Sunday afternoon?

A: Yes.

Q: So did you go to St. George's Church in the morning and then up here to Sunday School in the afternoon?

A: No, I didn't go to St. George's regularly when my children were little.

Q: You didn't?

A: No. I mean when they were real small because I could--you had to take them down in the nursery and all and I just didn't--want to do that.

Q: Didn't want to do that?

A: No.

Q: You'd rather have them with you?

A: Yes. But I went in and was confirmed at St. George's...

Q: You were confirmed before they were or--

A: No, when they were.

Q: When they were. What was Union Church like now? They call that Union--was it interdenominational or--?

A: The original church in Falmouth--the only church in Falmouth was--Christ Cemetery in the shape of a cross. Well, during the Civil War they--the--when the soldiers came--in Stafford, they burned that old church down. The foundation is there. ...still there now.

Q: It was probably a wooden church.

A: Yeah, it was a wooden church. And it burnt and there was somewhere, I forgot it, somewhere the men--the women of the... sold their wares--they had a bazaar someplace and made the money and the men of the town built the church. And they--I call them the trustees of the town, I don't know what you want to call them, they decided it would be a union church.

Q: By union, what did that term mean?

A: That whoever--if they could get a preacher for the Baptists and the Methodists, and the Presbyterians, all of them, they could have church services there.

Q: Anybody who wanted to use that church could use it?

A: Could use it--any denomination could use it. And so then of course, they stopped using it and... they had some people who... this man comes in and says he wants to have a meeting... I know he came and sat down and talking about something... the church... and he says, "That whole... I went to... I walked up on top of that roof and patch it--it was... pay you for the roof--pay you for everything--wouldn't cost them a thing--don't you know they wouldn't let me do it?" I says, "I never heard of that." He says, "Well, it's the truth..." ... and the roof ... fell in.

Q: Oh, the roof fell in?

A: Yes.

Q: And once the roof was gone, the rest of it began to--

A: Uh-huh. Yes, sir, it did.

Q: And that was--when did that completely fall down? Nothing but the front left? Was that in the early sixties or the fifties or--?

A: When it first fell, it... come down here... and Randy came down one Sunday afternoon... roof fell in and-

Q: And you were up at Ingleside then?

A: Ingleside.

Q: So that would have been in the twenties, thirties--you came here(Cotton Warehouse) in '45?

A: '45 and...

Q: Early forties?

A: Uh-huh, and--but I was the one... took--got that roof put on there now and we ... couldn't get anybody to do anything--nobody would go up there and work after I don't know how many people I tried and they said it was too tall--they wouldn't go up there. So I had... over here and I went out of there--I came in one night and there was a truck parked outside with a construction name on the side of it and I said to her, I says, "Is your boyfriend in the construction business-- he can do buildings?" She says, "Why?" and I told her. She said, "He and his father work together." And I said, She says, "You want it done?" I said, "Yes, I..." She says, "Well, if you want it done, he'll do it." So ... he told them and went up and looked... price on it and he was--he had been in the Navy and--what do you call it--they can call you back--

Q: He's in the Reserves?

A: Reserves. So they called him and he had to go... and I said, "What in the world are we going to do?" He said, "Well, my father and my brother can come over here and do it." So, his brother came and... looked at the inside of the church, you know, ... I said, "Will you wait until I can get a man down here... to go up there with you?" And there was no use in my going up there to get them so I called George Gordon on the phone and told him what had happened. I said, "George, can you get down here?" I said, "I can't get near enough..." He said, "Yeah, I'll be around in a few minutes." So he went up there and he told the men--how to spread things or whatever to do and they went ahead and put the roof on it and... a Mr. Colter(?) who lives up here on #1... he came down and ... he was going to build--he was a man IRS--IRS man--and he was going to get enough donations when he was filling out people's income taxes which was tax deductible... to... the church. So he says to me, "I, going over to Wilson Brothers and I'm going to buy enough roofing for that church, and pay for it as my gift." And then he... he died and I... he was married the second time ... well, if he had that roofing at his house behind the shed barn somewhere, she sold it.

Q: And that was about what year now that the repairs were done on the church? About in the fifties? Or the sixties? Probably the sixties?

A: Probably the sixties. Well, I remember it was after the sixties because we organized in '65, I think, and it was after that.

Q: Because last year--was it the twentieth anniversary? Of the organization (Historic Falmouth Towne and Stafford County, Inc.)? '65 to '85?

A: Yes.

Q: So it was after that--late sixties or early seventies that those repairs were done.

A: ...

Q: Yeah, there had been a revived interest in reconstructing the whole thing and then putting it to some use. That would be good. Restore it-

A: ... barbeque... barbeque raised money to spend at that church.

Q: And the money that's been made from the barbeque--most of it's been spent on the church, hasn't it?

A: Spent on the church, uh-huh... I think \$6,000 on that.

Q: I heard that something will come about to rebuild to really keep that front preserved. What about other holidays--did--we talked a little bit about Christmas what about birthday celebrations or fourth of July--were there any big celebration that you can remember when you were growing up or even when you were living at Ingleside...

A: We--I don't thing--I don't remember but celebrating birthdays... but I always did for my children- -I always had birthday. At Easter, I'd have Easter for the whole family...
Easter egg hunt out there...

Q: What about circuses or fairs or anything like that that came to town or to Fredericksburg or anywhere in Stafford? As a child or your children?

A: We didn't go--I don't think we even had a fair when--because I remember when my father exhibited horses and livestock ...

Q: At the fair?

A: Uh-huh. Because I have pictures here of ... I only have... the man... Papa had--... colts, that's what they were selling. And Papa... and this man up there had... and
anyway, she gave birth to the colt at the fair. Papa wrote it down the date that that colt was born so
Papa carried--you had to be born after the fair--and Papa had his colt-- a beautiful horse and ... so
anyway... didn't say anything when they were judging them and so they were going to give this

man a first ribbon, Papa already had it written out--when she was born and everything--so he kept on showing it to the judge.

Q: That other one was born at the fair not after.

A: Yeah, born at the fair and she was the prettiest thing... ride here when she was two years old or something. And we had a sleet snow storm and there was a lot of ice on the floor--the ground--and... comes out of box stall... and she came back... running... her door was here and she goes all the way around this barn to come in... both forefeet went out from under her.

Q: Oh, no--because of the ice?

A: The next morning, we found her dead. I know the first time... and my two brothers had two children and one day the youngest one could just look over the top of the table and they couldn't exhibit without--they put us over... in the corner so we had... had coconut balls and... entered her sponge cake and... and... sprinkled with coconut. The other one was made with brown sugar and... sponge cake and we dipped it in brown sugar and brown sugar icing, I think, and sprinkled cinnamon on it. So the third one, it took corn flakes and made a ball out of those. I wonder how in the world we ever did it now that I think about it. And dipped that in icing and so I carried... in by ten o'clock. ... getting up at 4 o'clock and Mom made that morning and carried them and two children in the horse and buggy and I saw the woman across the street... she always thought she did everything--she was the only one knew how to do anything... anybody

(A: continued)

else so I saw her--she made her... about the size of a big moth--that was all she made--didn't make them like... had told us to make them... so that day when I stayed over there to ... walked all around with the children and I went on in there and when I said something and she said, "I don't know who won-- I know you won a blue ribbon, I know that." So I went on in and sure enough, I had the blue ribbon. The woman across the street--no one knew how to do ... she had third and the woman up the street, she had second. So when I saw I had the blue, I said to... I knew her well, she was one of the judges, I said, "Ms. can I talk to you?" She said, "Yeah." I said, "Can't you do something about it?" She said, "I judges those things according to their qualifications," and she said, "And

I didn't know who they belonged to and they're going to stay just like I had them." ... she says,

"Well," (... little teeny balls just like that), she says, "Well, partiality was shown there." I never said a thing. You know she never spoke--now I didn't have a thing in the world to do with it. She never spoke to me for I don't know how long.

Q: Really? Because you got the blue--

A: Because I got the blue ribbon. And she got third.

Q: How about that?

A: I kept on carrying... tulips... house, our pictures was in the Free Lance-Star, we won the largest ribbon and everything...

Q: Now, you're saying that this was when the fairgrounds was over here?

A: The fairgrounds was over here.

Q: The fairgrounds was over here by the river?

A: Yeah, and I ... and when we had the station wagon, I carried a station wagon full and I carried canning then and pickles. I made pickles for every class and vegetables for every class. And I would get blue ribbons on everything--I couldn't get a blue ribbon on my corn to save me--to bless me.

Q: Corn?

A: Canned corn.

Q: Canned corn--you never did get a blue ribbon.

A: So I thought to myself--well, I'm going to get that blue ribbon and I thought it would be in the juices ... you know, and they, so that year I thought to myself, the juice was just as clear as could be. And--

Q: It looked pretty?

A: So, indeed--just as pretty as ... and I got the blue ribbon on it. And so when I went to use it, of course, I poured the water off.. and used it because ... and somebody told... one of the ... she, Mary Lou Christy ... she... carried cheese one time ... handmade embroidery... decent fare down here since ... Ms. Christy died

Q: Mary Lou Christy?

A: Christy, uh-huh.

Q: You won a lot of the blue ribbons, huh?

A: Uh-huh. What about Route 1 coming through here? Now when you first moved to Ingleside, there was old Route 1, was it pretty much the same location or not?

A: It was Cambridge Street then. It went right down this way--the bridge was down here.

Q: Oh, the one right in front of you here--oh, I see.

A: Yeah, right down here. The bridge was right down there and when they had one of the ice-

Q: In '42--... tore down the bridge?

A: No, ice torn one of the bridges down.

Q: Is that right?

A: Uh-huh--that happened before we were married. And then--oh, they didn't have any bridge--you had to go down and go across Chatham Bridge.

Q: Chatham Bridge?

A: Yeah, Chatham Bridge.

Q: So you had to come down here--Route I came down here and then you went on down what's River Road. And then across the Chatham.

A: Yeah. My mother had surgery... and in '23, fall of '23, and Ivy was born in January--the following January and I know I went everyday--and I went ...

Q: You were in Fredericksburg Hospital? Why you had to go down River Road. But then there was a bridge--I believe it washed out in 1942 when... and when they replaced it, they put this big one up here.

A: Uh-huh. ... when the bridge went, well then, we carried ... and it was so dangerous that none of the electricians would cross that bridge.

Q: ... wires standing there?

A: Yes. And they were in water and all and so our milk was sitting up on the farm going to waste. So ... he didn't and we ... how he knew it. But he found some way or another,
he got around he went over there and ... standing there waiting ...

Q: You say your husband carried the electrical wire across there?

A: Uh-huh.

Q: So the story of the electricity--I don't guess the flood, other than that, affected you because your farm was up on a hill.

A: Yeah, right. We couldn't get off, you see, because the water was high because down here--they've fixed it now--raised it all up--you couldn't get--water would come back at the end of the road, you see.

Q: It was at Belmont property there?

A: Yes. I know one time we were down here one night and ... Randy came in and he says, "I tell you, if we're going to get home, you'd better go." He says, "The river's rising right fast." And it was almost out to the ... it was almost at the bridge when we went across.

Q: And that was the only way you could get in and out of your property was to go around in front of Belmont?

A: You could walk. He had walked many times or go up there and come through Sunnyside. Come up through the--where the Sunnyside Bank is and all, come lip through there because his cousins owned a farm and he could walk through their property.

Q: And he could walk through their property?

A: Yeah. Because when the river was rising, folks on the farm would get back home. Something about that river has always fascinated me even as a child. I remember that night
when Island Bridge, I was standing home... and I couldn't see, but I could hear her when she went
down.

Q: Is that right?

A: Uh-huh.

Q: Was that in '42? or some other time?

A: I don't remember.

Q: When you say Island Bridge--

A: Island Bridge.

Q: Oh, Island Bridge. A bridge that went over to the islands, oh. Okay.

A: And I ... it was so pretty--those islands were and I said, "I don't know which was more gorgeous..." ,there's no bridge that goes out to it now.

Q: There's no bridge that goes out to it now?

A: No, not anymore. ...

Q: What was out there before, I mean, did you all go over onto the island?

A: Yeah, we had--one time, there was a colored family living over there. They were the nicest people and we--my children and she made so much of them and she... some Sunday afternoons, they would cry to go over there to see her. So I've gone down many a Sunday and just walked across the river on the rocks and...

Q: So they lived on that island?

A: On the island--they had a little tenant place, you know. But they were the nicest colored people you ever saw. That's one family ... farm... nicest colored people. We had a colored family down at ... and Grays down there where Grafton School--that whole farm belonged to a family of Grays and they-

Q: Grays?

A: Uh-huh, and they--people who ... they had a farm... and he could change horses ... and he... and he wouldn't jump ... he always asked permission to jump that gate so ... that horse.

Q: Well, I've gone way over my hour and a half that I was supposed to be here. You've really given me a lot of information, so I think we'll turn off our tape now.