

IRC 10

Interviewee: Florence Graher

Interviewer: Unlisted [I]

Date: February 1988

I: I am speaking this morning with Florence Graher. Start just like you did before. You were born in New Hampshire, I think you said?

G: No. My father was born in New Hampshire, and mother was born in Massachusetts. They lived most of their lives, before they came to Florida, in Hayville, Massachusetts. **Hannah Dustin** is in the history of Hayville. Her statue is there, and he married, Dustin Harrah married, a Webster, and that was our name. Mother's dad's name is Webster.

I: So, your name before you were married was Webster?

G: And we claim kin to Hannah Dustin. Then, they came to Florida because his father had gotten this acreage of timber, and they cut timber in south Jacksonville. Mandarin is where we lived. It is a little place up there. I do not know what it is like now. Dad's health did not get too good, so the doctor talked to him about coming farther south and getting right out on the river. Salt water and fish. He thought it would help him. Mother was having trouble with the lungs, coughing and colds and so on. So, they moved to Florida, and Dad found a man, that, he was older, but he had a little acreage. Twenty-nine acres, he had, and a two-story house and two parts to the house. So, he got a job with him, and moved the family down there. He got out on the river and tried to fish, but he never did like fishing. He decided that it was not for him. He was a carpenter by trade. He always said that fishermen were a lazy lot. They were their own boss. If the wind did not blow right, why, they did not have to go fishing. And he did not like it. The funny part about it is, everyone of his daughters married a fisherman, and his son turned into a fisherman, so that was unusual. But, this was in Brevard County, up there at **Shiloh**, a little place named Shiloh, and I doubt if it is still there. The Navy took over. When Alva and I married...he came up there with some crews to fish, and going to the post office to pick up the mail was about a half a mile. I would leave home and go get our mail, and we got acquainted that way. We really got interested in each other, but he said we were too young to marry. So, he took a two-year stretch in the Navy. He said, by the time he got back, why, he would be older and so on. Well, that is what we decided to do.

I: You grew up, then, in Shiloh, and you went to school there.

G: I went to school there. They had eight grades. [That] was all you could get. If you wanted to go any higher, you had to board in town somewhere, and no buses ran.

I: Now, what would be the closest town?

G: The closest town was Titusville or New Smyrna. It was in between the two. Dad ran the mail route from Shiloh to **Oak Hill** in the horse and wagon. If we ran short of money, he would carpenter work, and mama or one of us kids would run the mail route.

I: How many kids were there?

G: By that time, my older sister had gone and married and died. But, Carrie was above me, and then me, and then Nellie, and then Albert. There were four of us at home then. Dad had a little garden all the time and had started a nursery. So, because of the nursery, he put in a telephone. We thought we had moved uptown when we had the telephone, way out in the country, you know. Then, my sister and I would get the trees ready if he had an order for trees from the nursery.

I: Do you mean you dug them out of the ground?

G: Oh yes.

I: Did he plant seeds?

G: He knew how. He showed us how before that, you know, and how to dig them and how to trim the roots and everything. Then, you would bag them. With bags, you would keep them moist, keep them wet, until he could deliver them the next day.

I: Which sister was that, Carrie or Nellie?

G: Carrie. Carrie and I were working together nearly all the time.

I: Did your father plant seeds to start these trees?

G: He had them budded. He had somebody come in and bud them.

I: And what kinds of trees were they?

G: Orange, mostly.

I: Not grapefruit?

G: No, most of them were orange trees. Then, the grapefruits got so prominent down here because they are supposed to be the best in the world.

I: All right. Now, then you met your husband. What was his name?

G: Alva Crawford. Now, when I moved here, I was Crawford, most of my life. When we got married, he tried to do something besides fish, and it did not work out. So, we went to Sarasota County. He fished with his father for a while, and then he began to fish by himself. That is where I met the church that I started [at] here, this First Church of God down here just a little ways. When we left over there, we came back and homesteaded forty acres of land across from Titusville. I have the deed over there, I wanted to show it to you. Coolidge [Calvin Coolidge, 30th U. S. President, 1923-1929] signed it, in 1927, I think. We married in 1922, and I think that was 1927 [when] President Coolidge signed it. [We] homesteaded that forty acres of land across from Titusville. You could not get to town, only to go once in a while in a boat. The bridge was not in.

I: Oh, you were on the island?

G: On the island. That is where we homesteaded the land, on the island, yes.

I: Okay. So, you had to take a boat?

G: Yes. I had to go to town in a boat at first. After that, they got the bridge done, but they forgot to make their approaches to get it done, to get the approaches done. So, it was quite a while after that before we had a bridge and could go to town by the bridge without having to go in the boat.

I: Did you have a car by then?

G: We did not have a car at first, and our first car was a second-hand one. Somebody always had to come and help move us out of the mud or something because the roads were so bad down in there. Then, we lived in an aunt's house on his side of the family before we got our house built on the homestead land. The homestead house was something [that] would not be desired nowadays. They tore down some old fish houses, and it was heavy boards. We had a batten the cracks. That is the kind of house it was. I guess a hurricane came through while it was being built, and it leaned and they had to redo some of it. So, that is the kind of house it was. My oldest daughter was born in Sarasota County, in that little town of Osprey. That is where we met these church folks that we were really concerned about and really interested in. We tried to find another one like it, but there were not any here. My youngest daughter was born when we were living at the homestead, but we went up to Shiloh and she was born at my mother's home up in Shiloh. So, that is where she was born.

I: What was your oldest daughter's name?

G: Vera was the oldest, and Alice was the other one.

I: Any sons?

G: No, no boys.

I: Just the two children.

G: Yes.

I: When you homesteaded this place, what did you grow? Did you farm?

G: We planted peas. You had to have five acres under cultivation, and we planted peas.

I: Was that in order to be a homestead?

G: That was the orders of the homestead before you could get the deed to it, and that is the way we got the deed. Then, after we got the deed, the boom was over. See, we thought maybe we would get in time to sell it during the boom, but the boom was over by the time we got it. Anyway, we moved over to Haulover Canal because fishing was better up that way. So, we built a house on the edge of the canal on the north end of the Indian River, and I have lived on this Indian River for the ages. The house there at the Haulover Canal was a two-story house, very comfortable considering what we had been living in. Fishing was doing pretty good. My husband's mother had married again, and she lived in Jacksonville, and she had moved to Vero Beach. So, in coming down here to visit her, he found out that there was pretty good fishing down here. We already had this house built, and it had a pretty good location. For about five or six years, I ran the school bus.

I: Down here or up there?

G: From **Dummit Grove**—that is an old, old place up there, one of the first that was settled up—to Shiloh. I ran the school bus when my children were going to school, so I was there with them. I did pack oranges before that for a while. We were trying to supplement our living a little more.

I: Was the school bus like a truck that had been converted to a bus, or was it a regular bus?

G: No, we had it built, and the school officials passed it. It had to have certain specifications.

I: Did you own the school bus?

G: Yes.

I: Oh, it was yours?

G: Yes. When I quit, I sold it to the county.

I: I see.

G: And after that, in coming down here to Vero visiting my mother-in-law, we saw how good the fishing was, so we decided to try to get down here. While we were up there, there was a place on the Haulover Canal where a man had a tourist rental, renting boats to people to go fishing. We thought that was right good. We liked that. So, we decided when we came down here to try for that. So, we first got the land. Then, we built a smaller house. We lived in part of it, and part of it was a store for the fishing. We sold tackle and fish. I think I am ahead of myself. No, we were living in that when we bought out the fish market up town. We were delivering fish to different places and at the fish market up town, the man was wanting to get out of it. So, we bought that, and I ran that. Then, the children were in school here, you know, and it made it handy to pick them up and they could come close there.

I: Where was the fish market in town?

G: Let us see. Everything has changed. Where the Indian River Citrus Bank was...how long have you lived here?

I: I have lived here a long time.

G: The alley behind that, to the east. Just across the alley was the fish market, and it turned into a bicycle shop after that. Then, I do not know what else.

I: The post office was right there too, was it not?

G: The post office? Yes. It was just across from us, across the alley on the other side there. That is where the post office was. That is right.

I: Now, where was the house that you built? Right on the river?

G: It was right on the river, and we wound up using it for the business, all of it, and built a two-story house that is still there.

I: Now, where is that?

G: What does he call it? Bob's Marina? A two-story house with half-moons on blue shutters upstairs, railing across it, right at the end of Barber Bridge.

I: Yes. It is on the beach side?

G: It is on the left side as you go to the beach.

I: But, it is on the island side?

G: It is on the river side.

I: The river side of the island?

G: When you go across Barber Bridge, the fire station is down there, and then the two-story house.

I: Yes, I know where it is.

G: That is where we lived. We built that second house, not the first. We lived in three little rooms there. Part of it was for the business, and part of it, we lived in. We liked Vero Beach very much because there were advantages here that we could not get, for the children especially. They got into the band almost right away. I chaperoned for the band for some, and traveled with them some. I could not be gone too much, but it was really interesting. We had neighbors that ran the bridge. The Woods ran the bridge, and they also were tooting the horn. So I said, your neighbors were not fussing at you because the kids were practicing at home, tooting the horns that nobody wanted to hear, you know. [Laughs.]

I: Right. What instrument did your children play?

G: Vera played the saxophone and Alice the clarinet. **Adele Bund** was the leader of the band...well, they were girls but they called them band master, I guess. Anyway, Alice went in for that. Vera did for a while and then she dropped out, but Alice went in for it all the way. She was band leader for quite a few years. You had to play an instrument to get into that. The twirlers and everybody had to play an instrument. They wound up having twirlers without it. They had a contest for the twirlers in West Palm Beach, I remember, and Alice twirled two batons at once, and she was the first one to do that. Vera won a lot of things, and all the football boys chose her for queen that year. I was saving the papers, and Vera ran into them one day and she said, mama, why are you saving all that old stuff for? She does not like for me to tell what all happened to her. They really enjoyed the band though.

I: Did they both graduate from high school?

G: Yes, and they came back to the fish market to help me sometimes, when I needed help, after school.

I: Did you call that the Vero Beach Fish Camp?

G: It was Vero Beach Fishing Camp, yes. Finally, different people began to call it Crawford's Dock, but the sign up above it said Vero Beach Fishing Camp.

I: Meanwhile, your husband kept on fishing?

G: Yes. He was a net fisherman, and he kept on net fishing.

I: In the river?

G: Yes. But then, if trout season came—the summertime, when trout was coming in schools—he liked to trout fish, hook-and-line, for a living. We had fisherman in this river who were hook-and-line fishing, for a living, and they made pretty good at it. That was trout fishing. The trout prices kept going up, and we were shipping to New York--Fulton Fish Markets? Then, after a while, New York began to pay us so much for the fish, and I had to charge in the market less than that to make the customers satisfied. So, we did not do it. We just shipped them to New York. People who especially wanted certain kinds of fish, why, they were going to New York, and they would say, pay that much for fish when you caught them right here? And I would say, it sounds terrible, but they did. So, we closed up the fish market. We did not sell it or anything. We just closed it up and I went back home. **We was money in**, and I was back there to help him, to take care of the tackle shop. We sold tackle and bait. Bait was the main thing.

I: And you rented boats?

G: Rented boats, yes, and motor boats and row boats.

I: You made a pretty good living, then?

G: Yes.

I: What year did you come to Vero?

G: 1934. We bought the fish market out uptown in 1936.

I: And when did you close it up?

G: I do not remember. There are some dates I really should have gotten, but I cannot remember them. Vero Beach was just a little friendly village when we came. Everybody knew everybody. You even knew the tourists that came to town. It was just a little friendly village, and everybody helped everybody and everybody knew everybody.

I: You said you started the church?

G: Yes. That filled my whole life, really. It really has. I did **not** find one here like the First Church of God. I believed in the way they taught, and I found it in the Bible, so I was satisfied with it. So, some of the preachers came by and wanted me to start a Sunday school. They said, if you will start a Sunday school, why, maybe soon they can send a preacher here. And I said, well, I cannot do that. I was telling the Lord I could not do it, and I was telling the preacher I could not do it. And so, a family moved in here and I thought, this is real answer to prayer. They bought a home, and I thought that is solid; they were really going to be here, and they would help me. We started having prayer meetings in their home on Wednesday nights. Then, another family, a man and his wife, worked with the Royal Palm Inn Hotel in the winters, three months in the winter. So, she would be here three months in the winter. So I thought, well, this is really an answer to prayer. So, we felt encouraged, and we started the Sunday school and, in two years time, even the folks that bought, sold out and left. And now I was left with it by myself. My husband kept saying, it cannot amount to anything; we are just going to have to close it up or something. And I said, no. Some of the kids would see some more kids and they would bring them, and that would encourage us all along. It would be an encouragement. So, it slowly grew. Finally, during the Florida state convention, they phoned me, could I come to the convention? They wanted to meet me with the board, and they wanted to send a pastor. So, Reverend L. S. Mowery was our first pastor. And I rented the women's club building for our meetings. Then, he got his sister's husband to move down here. That is the **Dodsons**, and they are still here. He came, and people needed work so my husband started a crab plant. He had charge of steaming the crabs, and she had charge of the pickers.

I: You are talking about the minister, now?

G: The fellow that our ministers got to come here. That is, the Dodsons. He is a minister, too, in his own right. But, he left Homestead and just planned in his mind to move up here eventually and help Reverend Mowery. The family did not all agree to it. They were in school down there, and that was natural. But, eventually, they did. They got older, and the boy went to service and then another boy went to service. It thinned down, you know, to Rachel and Harvey. That way, why, the family was not so big, and they consented to come. So, that was a big help.

I: And then, you started a crab plant?

G: We started the crab plant, and the Dodsons had worked there. We figured that would give them a living while they were here, before he got to deciding where he was going to preach. Anyway, Brother and Sister Mowery and I went to West Palm Beach to talk to a man to draw the plans for a church. During the **Murphy** Act, you could pick up land for taxes, so I picked up four lots there on that corner

on 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue. It is where there is a water system in now. That was the church we built. The back of it was Sunday school rooms, and [there were] Sunday school rooms up above. The two stories in the back, we built onto later. But, at first, we just had that first part. We moved from the women's club building to there. **Oscar Dubose** lived just below us there. He had the jewelry store. The church grew slowly. Then, it took a while before we got settled.

I: About how many families did the church have at that time?

G: I do not know. Maybe fifteen or something like that. Well, I better tell you about my husband dying.

I: Yes.

G: He and I both loved to fish, hook-and-line. Run a fish business, and still loved to fish. We were fishing in the Sebastian Inlet. I am not going to tell you much about it, only just what happened. It was lightning and thundering. Well, before that though, we had leased the fishing camp and built a house up in, near this side of Sebastian, right on the river. We were living there when this happened. Mother and dad had come to Vero from Shiloh and had built a house on Old Dixie, and I built a house there when I was working in the fish market for them to live in. But, papa would not do it. He said, you can rent that. He said, we will live in it while I am building mine. We bought those lots during the Murphy Act and the lots from the church and some other lots around town that I picked up, but I let whoever had the land next to it have them because I did not have any use for them. I picked up a lot of them. I picked up some at the beach, too. \_\_\_\_\_ helped us to help papa to build, too. Anyway, we were living in the Sebastian house when my husband got killed. It was lightning and thundering and I did not want to go, but he did. So, we went, and lightning struck and killed him, in the boat while we were fishing. I called in, and somebody from the shore came and helped us get to shore and brought us to town. And that is all I want to talk about that. I do not to like to think about it, even.

I: Well, did you have a radio on the boat, or did you just call out?

G: No, it was just a little open fish boat with a motor.

I: So, you called and somebody heard you.

G: Yes, somebody from the shore heard me. There was another boat fishing not too far from us, and I knew it was no use in trying to get them. The man who came to help us had a station wagon or something, and he brought us.

I: Did he come out to your boat?

G: They took a boat and got hold of my boat and brought it into the dock. Then, when they brought it into the dock, then they backed the truck in there and helped to load him in the back. We were at Sebastian Inlet, you know. It was quite a long drive. When we got to Wabasso, we stopped and phoned the ambulance, and we kept on until the ambulance met us. We pulled off, and the ambulance met us and took us to the hospital... and he was declared dead. I was pretty sure he was. There was a hole blown in his suit, clothes, here, you know.

I: What year was that?

G: 1957. He was born in 1900, so he was 57 years old. He was born in Ponca City, Oklahoma. He said, the Lord had a hard time working it out so we could get together; my folks \_\_\_\_\_. [Laughs.]

I: What did you do, then, after he died?

G: I did not know where or how to settle. I was up there, and mother and dad were on Old Dixie. I had sold that place to Harvey and Pat Dodson, and they found another place and talked to me one night after the prayer meeting and wanted to give it back to me. I would finish the payments. I mean, they would quit on the payments and let me have it back by what they were paying by the month.

I: Do you mean the Fish Camp?

G: No, the house on Old Dixie I had built for papa to live in. The fishing camp, during this time, we were leasing it. The **Rices** leased it, and they eventually wound up buying it. Anyway, then, I left up there. I did not live up there too much longer after that. I moved into the house—Harvey and Pat let me have it back—and I lived side of papa and mama there on 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue, in that house. Then, I sold the other one to **Higgins**, and they are coming to see me this afternoon, him and his daughter. His wife is dead. Anyway, they wanted to come this morning, and I told them they could come this afternoon. I just wanted to tell you that I moved away, but the church was coming along pretty good and making two ends meet. I was footing nearly everything, pretty much--to begin with, I had to. Then, after it got going, why, it would be a little easier, and I thought, well, it will go on along all right now without me. Mama was dead. Mama died the next year after my husband died.

I: 1958.

G: Yes. She was eighty-three years old. So, papa was here at the house. I was sitting here with dad, trying to take care of him. My brother and sister lived in Sarasota, in Nokomis and Sarasota. I thought, well, why don't I take papa and move over there; it does not matter to me where I live as long as we can all be

together. So, he lived to be ninety-six years old. My dad did. And mother was eighty-three years old when she died. So, I suggested it to somebody, and everybody thought it was a pretty good idea in the family. So, I went over there. She called it a homecoming thing; Sister Dodson did. She was the one who planned it, and it was "This is Your Life," for me. And I did not know it until after they came back and took me out of the crowd and took me up there in front. We had it in the community building.

I: This was before you moved?

G: Before I moved, yes. They knew I was going to move. So, we stayed with my sister over there a little bit until I could find land and get a house built. Then, we would have get-togethers with dad before he died. Then, **Eddie** was an usher in our--that is my present husband--in our congregation. His wife had just died a little while before.

I: Was this in Sarasota?

G: In Sarasota, yes. We got interested in each other a little bit. I was single [for] twelve years, and we got interested in each other. He liked fishing over there. He could get in his boat and go out across the Gulf and not worry about waves like we have got over here, and he was doing pretty good fishing. I kept praying about it and, finally, the Red Tide moved in over there. He said I caused it [laughing], and that ruined the fishing over there! So, he was willing to come over here with me then. So, we moved over here in 1980. We rented a house first, and then we built. I should have stayed in Vero Beach, but we went down to Lakewood Park. He liked one of the lots down there and I thought, if I do not agree with this, he is going to say, we will stay where we are. So, I was kind of moving him too, so we built down there. Then, after a while, we would see...every time I phoned my kids, I had [to make] a long distance call. So, we decided to get out and look. He found this being built, and he took me that afternoon to see it. This one right back here is the same copy. So, this afternoon, we came to see this [and] because it was not done--it was being built--they showed us the other one. So, we liked it, and we sewed it up that afternoon. So, we had this and rented it down there, finally, we sold it, and that straightened that out.

I: Yes. So, you have not lived in this house very long then?

G: No. Maybe three years. I am not sure. It was an open porch out there, and my husband finished it with that lumber. My brother brought the lumber over here in the truck. He had it over there.

I: It is a very comfortable house.

G: Three bedrooms.

- I: Yes, it is nice.
- G: It is not as good as the house as we sold at Lakewood Park, but...
- I: You probably sold it for less, too.
- G: It is where I wanted it, anyway. Well, I was going six miles to church over there. That is about what we had to do over here. But, all the other advantages, this close to the church, and then the kids, I can phone to them and go and see them, without being a long distance call.
- I: Are they both married?
- G: Yes. Vera is divorced, but Alice is married to **Don Vickers**.
- I: He is from Sebastian, is he not?
- G: Yes, that is right.
- I: And Vera was...?
- G: Married to **Albert Ryall**, and they are divorced. Albert remarried again. She is single. She still lives over at the beach in the same house.
- I: And he is from Wabasso?
- G: Yes. That is where she lived to begin with, before they built down here.
- I: And do you have any grandchildren?
- G: Yes. Vera has two children, and Alice has two?
- I: Are they boys or girls?
- G: A boy and a girl, each one.
- I: Do you have any great-grandchildren?
- G: One. Pam has a son. He is in college in Fort Pierce.
- I: Oh boy. Pretty good.
- G: That is Vera's daughter.
- I: Okay. Anything else that you remember about the early days?

G: In Vero?

I: In Vero, or Titusville, either one? How about when your father was delivering the mail and you would help out?

G: Yes. I cannot remember how many years ago it was, but he had a carbide light on his wagon. Everybody was there waiting at Shiloh, waiting for the mail to come. He picked it up at Oak Hill and had to come to Shiloh with it, and everybody would be waiting for the mail to come in. When mama and I ran it, everybody was there waiting for you to come in with the mail.

I: To the post office?

G: There was a post office at Shiloh. When we were kids up there—I am back tracking a little bit right now, but—we had to plan our own games. Whatever we did, we had to sort of manufacture them, you know. Every Christmas, we played checkers, starting with papa. He was a marvelous checker player. It started with him and went down to the last one, whoever could play checkers, the youngest one. I was the last. Albert was too young to play ever in this, I think. Anyway, I remember one time, I beat papa, the last time I played checkers. I am still wondering, did he let me beat [him]? Everybody claimed that I was papa's pet, because I helped with the butchering. I helped killing chickens. I even plowed. So did my sister Carrie, as far as that goes. Working on the farm, hoeing, plowing, or anything, we did all of it. [We] took care of the pigs. We had pigs, chickens and a horse. We did not have a cow. We did, finally, have a cow later on and some goats, finally, they had. I especially remember something I enjoyed when I was a kid. There was a big dead tree on the part of our land that edged down to the river, and there was an eagle's nest in it, a big enormous eagle's nest. Every year, there was hatchlings coming out of it, and you would see them. The fish hawks would catch fish. You would see them fighting the fish hawks up in the air and make them drop that fish. Then, they would zoom down, and catch it before it hit the water. We had a windmill. It was just a little country place.

I: You had a windmill? That meant, then, you did not have to pump your own water.

G: No. No, we had a windmill.

I: Did you have a big tank?

G: No, we did not have a tank. When we wanted water, when we watered the garden or anything, we would go turn the windmill on, and most of the time...

I: There was a breeze, yes.

G: . . . we could get water. We had regular surface pumps. We drove down a pump off the kitchen to a little porch, and you could just pump your own water. If you wanted some water, you could just go out and pump it. We always had to pump water, even at the homestead house. We thought we had moved upstairs sure enough down there. We put the pump for the house by the sink, you know. Boy, I was so proud of that. I thought that was wonderful. We had a pump in the house.

I: What did you do for cooking?

G: Oil stove. I had a wood stove when I was in Sarasota, when we moved over there. When we were first married, we had an old house that was already there, and we rented that. You had to put screens over the windows to keep the mosquitos out and put a blanket over the stairs where they came up. We had the upstairs part. The downstairs was nothing. It was tough living through. A wood stove was there, so we used that. We would go along the river shore and pick up driftwood and stuff and bring it up for the wood. So, we had a wood stove there. When we were raised, my mother had a big old wood stove. That kind of cooking is just different.

[End of side 1.]

I: Did your mother do all of her own housework and washing?

G: Yes, she did, and she took in washings when we were a little bit short, and ironing too, you know. Us girls had to help her with that.

I: Did you have flat irons?

G: The flat irons, oh yes. You had to the cook stove to get the iron...

I: Did you scorch things much when you did that, when you used those kinds of irons?

G: Well, you could not have them too hot, and you had to be careful.

I: You learned, I supposed.

G: Yes, you had to wash stuff over if you did not. You washed them over.

I: And everything had to be ironed?

G: Oh yes, everything had to be ironed.

I: Did you always wear stockings and long sleeves?

G: Oh yes. The mosquitos were terrible at Shiloh. They were terrible. We had one part of the farm that we just raised, oh, throwed-away sweet potato vines. We would pull them and put them in the pigs' pen for the pigs to eat. When you went down there, you either put a bee veil on or you kept fanning in front of you to keep from breathing mosquitos in. They were so bad. Then, you blocked stockings. You would put paper inside of it to keep the mosquitos from biting you so bad. And a heavy jacket, even in hot weather. They would bite you terrible. But, there was that brackish water on each side of [us]. There was a high place where the house and windmill and barn and everything was, and the stable and so on. Then, there were ditches way on this side to help drain it and way on that side. The ones on that side, the salt water got into it. My brother and I were going down to the river one day. We would set down there and go fishing on that dock that was there, old **Terwilliger's** dock. He shipped . . . this is shallow . . . he shipped fruit. He had run it way out in the water. So, we would walk out there and go out there and fish. Anyway, he and I were coming back from the river one day. I do not know how old he was. I was a teenager. And we saw an alligator in the pond right there. They were not protected then and I said, Albert, go get papa's gun, quick. He ran to get the gun, and I watched the alligator, waiting for it. I did not know, then, that he could get up and travel faster than I could. Anyway, when Albert brought the gun back to me, the alligator hissed. I could see the motion. He opened his mouth real wide and hissed, and I shot right down his mouth. I drug him up to the gate. Your fence was--your place was fenced in, then. There were no fence laws. Cattle roamed freely, everywhere. You fenced in what you wanted to save. My boyfriend was coming by. We were going to the mail. This was Crawford, who I married. I stretched him out inside the fence and hid his head in the weeds so that would not show. I knew he was going to come in that gate, so I sat on the front porch and waited for him. When he came, he stopped all of a sudden and said, bring the gun; bring the gun, quick! And I said, what in the world do you want a gun for? He saw a better look on it and he said, oh, never mind. [Laughing.] So, then we went on down to get the mail, of course. It was about half a mile. There was a little post office there, and the woman was with them, and she ran the post office. [She was] one of the old settlers there, and she had been there for years and years, and her brother too. She was real sweet to us kids. When we were teenagers, she would play the phonograph and invite us in the evening. Or, \_\_\_\_ would go to visit her, you know, we would go to visit her, and she would play the records for us. Nobody had stuff like that, especially the poorer folks. Anybody who wanted to go to school, even high school, had to be boarded in town.

I: But, you had to pay for that yourself, if you wanted to go.

G: Oh yes, yes. Sure. No, that is the reason you did not get any education. I did not quite finish the eighth grade. I took it over again. I am not good in

arithmetic. I do not know what else I may have failed in. But, anyway, I was going to take it over, and I could pack oranges that year. So I thought, well, that looks...I cannot go any farther anyway, just as well to quit now. So, I started packing oranges. I think I was thirteen or fourteen, fourteen probably, that year.

Another funny story of this woman who had the post office . . . they had chickens, and the boards between the chicken nests had a knothole in it. A snake would get in there, did get in there, and eat all the eggs. One day, the man came from work, and a snake had crawled in there and swallowed a china egg and crawled through this whole and swallowed another. He could not get one way or the other. I thought that was funny.

I: What did they do, just shoot it?

G: Yes, they went and killed it.

I: Were there a lot of snakes around?

G: Oh yes.

I: How about over here at the Fish Camp? Were there a lot of snakes over here?

G: We never saw any.

I: Were the mosquitos just as bad down here?

G: No. They were until the Navy moved in here. When the Navy moved in here, they started from the ridge, right about the road, and back and forth spraying from the air. That was wonderful to us. We were real thrilled because that let up on the mosquitos. One night, there was a commotion. The boats all filed in the ocean. A bunch of us gathered at the beach. We did not know . . . one ship had fired on another one. I do not know whether it was at the end of the war, or sometime during that time. I am not sure what the year was. Finally, the men folks sent the women and children all home, and they stayed and watched. We found out afterward that submarines had been coming in, and a submarine was caught with the day old bread from Fort Pierce on it. It was **found with** Germans. Our colored boy finally had to go to war. He was here from Georgia, and he worked with us in the Fishing Camp. We could trust him with anything. When he went to war, he was stationed in Germany. He was a guard over the German people. He said they were the best people. It was just Hitler, you know. It was not the people at all who did it.

I: Well, we have talked quite a long time. Can you think of anything else you want to say?

G: I think you want what mostly what is down here, and most of my life was up

there.

I: Well, no, we have gotten a very interesting story this morning. I had no idea about the Fish Camp. Was it mostly the tourists who rented the boats, or was it the people who lived here?

G: No, the people lived here. That is what got my husband to really [do it]. It was needed here. They kept pestering. It was net fishing first. He moved down here when his mother lived here. He night fished, and they wanted to borrow his boats in the daytime. He said they pestered him so with it until he realized that it would be a good business down here. And it really was a good business. Rented boats, and then we sold tackle later on and sold fish. We cleaned the fish and sold them.

I: And bait.

G: And when I had the fish market uptown, I had the trade of all of the hotels for a while.

I: And there were several hotels, weren't there?

G: Yes, there was. Most of the hotels had restaurants.

I: Well, I do not want to get you too tired so, unless you can think of anything else that you want to say, I will just take your picture, and then I will go. I would like to see that deed. Maybe I could take a picture of that deed.

G: Us kids are trying to get the history up with my dad. He had so many colorful things in his life. That is what I have here in these envelopes. This deed...oh, that is Hannah Dustin. Through a cousin of mine, we think we are the Websters who married into...married Dustins. We have traced it down. We have traced it back to her.

I: Good. Now, if you would just let me take your picture.

G: Where do you want me?

I: Right there. Let me have you with your Bible because that has been a big part of your life. I can see that. Do you still go to that church?

G: Oh sure. Yes, I work on it. Before I left here to go to Sarasota with papa, we bought this acreage out here where the church is now, and we have recently added on to it, now, this new part, because we were having three services in the morning to get everybody to be seated. Now, it will seat 1100 and something, a little more than 1100, and with balconies. It is just wonderful to be sure

everybody can have a place to sit down. We have a marvelous preacher.

I: And it is such a beautiful church.

G: Yes.

I: Well, if you can think of anything you want to say, you could give me a telephone call.

G: I will as soon as you leave.

I: Here is my card, and that is my home phone over on the left. If you think of anything that you would like to say, why, just give me a phone call.

G: Alright. Thank you.

I: And I certainly thank you very much. I hope I have not tired you too much.

G: Ball? I think I knew some Balls way back.

I: There are Balls around town, but we are not any relation. Webster, though. You are probably from English stock, aren't you?

G: Yes, the Websters were.

I: That is what we are, too.

G: Crawford was Irish.

I: Well, I sure thank you, and . . .

[End of the interview.]