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Interviewee: Nancy Hubbard Clark

Interviewer: Lara Alqasem

Date: October 23, 2015

A: This is Lara Alqasem with the Samuel Proctor Oral History Program. The date is October 23, 2015, and I'm here with Nancy Clark at Christ Church, interviewing her about her experiences. Can you tell us when and where you were born please, Mrs. Clark?

C: I was born in Kilmarnock, Virginia at home.

A: Wow.

C: My father's – no, my grandfather's cousin, who was Dr. Hubbard, Dr. Benjamin H.B. – P.H., whatever his name was, he had too many initials. He delivered me at home in 1930, September the sixth. It must've been a busy day. My parents didn't give me a middle name and I've never forgiven them.

[Laughter]

A: That's so funny.

C: Anything else?

A: Is that nearby here, where you said you were born?

C: Yes, the town of Kilmarnock.

A: Okay. How far is that from where we are?

C: It is about four miles from here.

A: Okay. And did you grow up there?

C: I grew up in the house where I was born, and after the war, 1946, my dad built another house further down the street. By that time, I was approaching and did – well, I went to high school locally for two years and

then I went to Saint Margaret's Prep School – Episcopal School at Tappahannock, Virginia, which was about forty-five miles from Kilmarnock. The school is still there.

A: Wow.

C: Graduated there in 1948. Then, I went to William and Mary College. My father had gone to William and Mary, my grandfather went to William and Mary, my uncle went to William and Mary. I had no desire to go anywhere else. But, in those days, I was there in 1948-[19]49 and [19]49-[19]50, William and Mary was strictly liberal arts. Of course, it was co-ed, which I adored after being at Saint Margaret's, which was more like being in a convent.

[Laughter]

C: But, at any rate, I knew that I was not gonna be able to be a schoolteacher or a social worker. It was just not in my genes, and so I had done a lot of artsy things throughout my early beginning. So, I transferred to what was then Richmond Professional Institute, which was an art school. Had a design department, and I took design – for three years I was at the drawing table and learned a lot that I loved, a lot of art history, that's what I really loved. So, that was my background in education, and I've done some artsy things. I've painted furniture. I have a great big old dollhouse that I don't know what to do with.

A: Did you make it yourself?

C: Yeah. My husband helped with the bigger things. But I've collected for it. But it's a lot of memory because it's an interpretation of my dad's home place, which was here on one of the creeks, which was...his family had arrived about like 1750 something, and his ancestors had built that house, which is a pretty nice big old home. And it's still there. But I spent a lot of time there. So, I have a lot of memories in my dollhouse. It's not an exact replica, but I had more fun dressing windows and doing things. Had that dollhouse, I've done a lot of needlework. I say, I'm so frustrated, I would love to paint pictures, but I don't paint pictures. I've done all – I've made miniatures. I did half-scale miniature furniture for...the steamboat museum has a big steamboat, it's open on one side. It was a fella who did that, actually was the steamboat *Lancaster*, and my grandparents went on the steamboat *Lancaster* on their – they called it their, not a honeymoon, what did they call that? Anyway, it was their wedding trip. But they had another term for it. Anyway, I did the miniature furniture because the fella knew about my dollhouse and he asked me to do that. But that was half-inch scale, it was a pretty good exercise. And then it's an open-sided boat so you can see the things inside. And I did a miniature of a very much loved little soda shop that was in the town of Kilmarnock. The town of Kilmarnock burned in 1952, I was here that night. It was quite a thing. At any rate, Leon's Soda Shop, I had been to so much I remembered every inch of it. And for fun I did a little Leon's Soda Shop. So, I've been sort of a nut, a nut over little things.

[Laughter]

A: That is so amazing.

C: You see, I didn't want to be a schoolteacher or I couldn't be, or a social worker. I was not meant to do that.

A: No, you were an artist.

C: And that's what most girls, most of them did then at my period in time.

A: Wow. So, I want to go back for a second. Can you talk a little bit about your childhood, and maybe also about going to your dad's house where he grew up, that you made the dollhouse out of?

C: Oh, **Waterview** Farm it was called.

A: Is it still around today?

C: It's a big horse farm, she has Morgan horses. It's beautiful. I don't know her so I don't get to go down there. And she's planted so much in front that you can't see it. But I loved going down there. I was an only child, and I was the only grandchild for sixteen years, so I have great memories of that place. Because they sold it in 1946, they really gave it away. It was, at that point in time, an isolated area, and my mother wouldn't live down there.

So, that's why they moved to the big town of Kilmarnock.

[Laughter]

A: When would you go there, like during the summers?

C: Oh, I went and stayed with my grandmamma a lot, and we went up – we had Sunday dinners, oh, my goodness. Do you want to hear about that?

A: Yes!

C: Well, on Sunday you always had fried chicken. My grandfather died when I was seven years old in 1937. But we called him – the family called him father. And my grandparents had had two boys and two girls. And my parents were married and the others weren't married but they were grown. Nevertheless, my grandfather was big on politics, and his two grown sons, my father and his brother, were the same way. So, at the Sunday dinners, they would have the Sunday political arguments at the table. And after most people had finished eating, grandfather would push his chair back and light his cigar, and the political arguments would get so loud that I was scared to death. I thought they were fussing. They weren't fussing, they were just arguing. But I was a little girl so I went in what they called the sitting room and hid under the big desk.

[Laughter]

C: But I spent a lot of time down there because my parents let me go down there with grandmother. With Nanny, she was called, always called her Nanny. She was a wonderful person. She was a descendent of Robert Carter. She was a Carter.

A: The same Robert Carter?

C: Yeah. And her mother had been a Ball, Lucille Olivia Ball, descended from Washington's mother, Mary Ball, who was born in this country. She was born twelve miles away. But we are collateral descendants on the Ball side, not direct.

- A: Wow. So, what was it like growing up in your house? What were your parents like?
- C: Well, early on, I remember when they got radiators in the house.
- A: When was that?
- C: Oh, in the early [19]30s, I'm sure. Because when we'd go to the farm, Waterview, they didn't have radiators. They had stoves, woodstoves, and you'd go from one room – one warm room to a cold. Let's see, what was it like growing up in that house?
- A: Uh-huh.
- C: I lived on Irvington Road. I had the most wonderful childhood you could ever imagine. I was the oldest of the little girls on the street so I was always the big boss. But a doctor lived across the street who had two daughters, and their grandfather was from the mountains, and he came to live with them. And he built them a log cabin playhouse. Back in the woods, behind their house, had a play world like you wouldn't believe. And we played every day. It was a game of, what we'll play today, and all that kind of thing. Then, I had this little boyfriend who was my age, I was six months older than he was. He and I had played together until the girls on the street came of age, as I said when I wrote my little memoir, and I dropped Jackie for the girls. But he and I used to play cowboys and Indians. And at Halloween, I remember this so well, we played something called tick tack on the side of the house. And what you did was you went

to the drugstore and got a little whatever they called it of rosin. Do you know what that is?

A: Uh-huh.

C: Well, that's the only time I ever remember hearing about it, but we had some rosin. And you would take a string and tie it sort of up under the board of a clapboard house. Well, his house was a clapboard-sided house. So, Jackie and I played tick tack. We went outside on Halloween night to play the trick on his parents and stuck that thing up under the board and extended the string all the way out to where we could hide. And then you rubbed the rosin over the string that you pulled taut, and it makes sound like board is being ripped from the side of the house.

A: Oh, my gosh.

C: And then, we watched his father get up from his chair inside of the house, and when he did we ran. This is what children did.

[Laughter]

C: They were the kind of games we played. And then, my mother had lived – had grown up in little Lancaster, it's a village, Lancaster Courthouse. And the old jail is – it's still there. It's very historic. But when I was a child, there was a girl in the neighborhood up there who lived at a house that is now the Mary Ball Washington Museum and Library. But anyway, it was close to where the jail was, and on a summer day it was a great game for us – when there was still some inmates in that old jail downstairs, they would sit by the tiny two, three little windows, and when they'd make a yell what

we would do was we'd sort of sneak over as close as we'd dare to the jail and if they yelled we ran like crazy. Then, we'd go back and do that again.

So, that was our game. That was a fun game.

[Laughter]

C: It was a relay. That was the kind of entertainment we had, other than paper dolls and our regular doll, baby things.

A: Wow. That's so interesting.

C: Well, it's interesting to young people today because the world is different, and very different from the way I grew up. Now, as a teenager, there was a little group of friends, girls and boys. We'd roller-skate in the afternoon on Sundays, most particularly, all over town. We went sleigh-riding, there was a big hill where everybody went sleigh-riding. Outside of Kilmarnock, at the bottom of the hill, there was a big pond, still there. But when I was growing up – still in college, still – when you had a big freeze and **Doris'** Pond would freeze, that's where everybody went ice-skating. Had a big bonfire outside and young and old all went. It was great fun. Moonlight skating was good for the adults, I wasn't allowed to do that.

[Laughter]

A: Wow, that sounds beautiful.

C: It was fun, a fun life.

A: You mentioned, before we started the recording, that you were baptized – was it at this church?

C: At Christ Church. I was confirmed here in 1942. Now, I have very little or no recollection of my baptism, but I do remember my confirmation. I was twelve years old and Bishop Henry **Saint** George Tucker presided and confirmed me with a group of others. One big group, I don't remember how many. But I wore, of course, a white dress. And I kept that dress, it had Irish crocheted lace on the collar. I kept my confirmation dress, actually, up until the time I moved nine years ago – and it was in a place, I had kept it in the attic. And I finally decided, it had turned so yellow I might as well get rid of it. But I'm a sentimental fool, so that's sort of the thing I did.

A: That's alright. So, what do you remember from your confirmation other than your dress? Do you remember anything else?

C: Well, it was homecoming. I can tell you about homecoming, and I'm sure that Homecoming Day was no different from the other Homecoming Days. Christ Church had a big iron fence across the north side of the yard. We used the north entrance to the church, always. The west door was not the main entrance in those days. Of course, originally it was. But there was a great big grove of trees where everybody parked out there, and some of those trees are still standing. But we would – just inside of that iron fence, which was just across the north side, and there was some other kind of fencing, maybe I don't know what kind of wild fencing around – and there were bushes, you see, and trees around most of it before the restoration of the church and the brick wall had been reconstructed. But I remember

so well, there was a board shelf, just boards, placed inside of the fencing, that high iron fence, on the inside of it up at waist-level. The food that everybody brought was placed on that. It was your buffet table. And, of course, in those days, everybody brought their own lunch and shared with others. Everybody had fried chicken and ham biscuits, potato salad. No refrigeration, don't ask me how it was handled. But the Kelly plot of graves was, at that point, in really bad shape because big trees had grown through and up cast those flat tablets up and broken them. And there was weeds and mostly periwinkle, I guess you would say, the vine growing. Maybe some ivy. And we would sit there. But there were big trees, and I suppose those big trees are what kept the potato salad from making people sick, because people just...there was no refrigeration and everybody brought potato salad, that's just what you did. They had other things, too, but I have always wondered how in the world – I know there were some tables along there – when you arrived, the ladies put their food on the tables and you went into church for the service. Afterwards was the buffet luncheon, picnic style. Definitely picnic style. We had brought our own card tables and chairs and sat out there where the cars were parked under the big trees out there.

A: And was this like homecoming for the high school?

C: It was homecoming for the members of Christ Church parish. Christ Church parish, in those days, consisted of Trinity Church, which was at Lancaster, midway between there and old Whitechapel Church, which was

– the Ball family came from that end of the county. And that was a very early church and still there. But those three congregations comprised what homecoming was all about.

A: Oh. So, people came from other churches?

C: Those two churches. The three churches mainly. But other people – and visitors who came, you know, relatives and so forth. It's a big day. But we didn't have regular services at Christ Church until I think they started having...well, they certainly had homecomings when I was a child, but they didn't have a regular every single Sunday because it was a small congregation at Christ Church, and we just had church there on Sundays. But in the early – mid [19]40s I guess it was, they began having – I don't know just what the dates are, but a service once or twice during the summer at Christ Church, and with then the homecoming service, which was always the first Sunday in June. But then, gradually, they began to have regular services all the time in the summer only because, of course, Christ Church is not heated, no electricity.

A: So, do they have regular services here now?

C: Do they have what?

A: A regular service here?

C: Yeah, in the summertime only.

A: Oh, only still. Okay.

C: Because no heat.

A: Oh, there's still no heat?

C: No light and no light.

A: Wow.

C: Well, Christ Church – you're going to have to have a full tour.

A: You're right. Yeah, I haven't had a full tour yet so I don't know what I'm thinking.

C: I was a docent here for thirty-five years and I decided finally I had told the story so many times I needed to stop.

[Laughter]

A: Wow. Okay. So, were homecoming services any different than normal services, aside from like the picnic after and everything?

C: No, they had just the regular service and sometimes there was an ordination that took place. And I believe that homecoming could've been at the same time when some ministers were ordained on that Sunday.

A: Wow.

C: I know the bishop – it was a big deal when the bishop came, and he was here for confirmation. He could've been here for ordination too, I don't know. But there was no ordination the Sunday that I was confirmed.

A: So, Christ Church was used primarily for like major events, would you say?

C: People – when I was married here in 1955, people thought it was terrible for me to be married at Christ Church, because they said you can't see. See, they're high-back pews. The church is in the shape of a cross, so they were afraid they wouldn't see anything. But that was just the general

consensus, they liked to go to a wedding where they could see all the pretty dresses. But no, I wanted to be married here. My grandmother was married here in 1902. And, of course, they were not having services here except on special times at that point in time. Because I'm getting into what I shouldn't get into, and that is a little bit of a spiel about the disestablishment of the Anglican Church following the revolution. And the Protestant Episcopal Church in America was found in what...I can't remember the date. I should, because was I was a docent so long. But, at any rate, that was when little Grace Church congregation – see, there were so few members of the church. Little Grace Church, they built the little Grace Church in 1851 in Kilmarnock, and continued to be the parent congregation for Christ Church. But then, later on, I don't remember what year it was, it could've been in the [19]60s, when the parish system was changed to regions. That is when Trinity Church and Whitechapel Church were divided off. So, it is no longer a Christ Church parish. But we're still close by. So, we still do things with all of those people.

A: Okay. So, how involved were your parents at Grace Church and then also here, I guess, on the occasion that there were things?

C: Well, my mother was on the Altar Guild, of course. My father was on the vestry, and that was no different from what most of the families that were in that early church, descendants of the main Christ Church family were. I went to – didn't go to Sunday School there all the time. I was very ecumenical. My daddy used to say, you tried them all except the Catholic

and then the – what? Something else. We didn't have any Catholic church. We had a Catholic church in Kilmarnock. But I tried them all but so and so and so and so. I started off in the Baptist Sunday school because they had a huge Sunday school with a lot of children. And I didn't go there very long because the girls on my street were mainly Methodist, so I moved over there. And it wasn't until I was in about fourth grade that I went to Grace Church to go to Sunday school because there only were three of us, three girls at little Grace Church. And the dear lady who taught us was a lady who was well-dressed and had a beautiful horseshoe diamond ring on her finger. I think that's why I went to Sunday school, I loved looking at her ring. But we just didn't have any children in the congregation.

A: So, would you attend like Sunday services at Grace?

C: Oh, I attended...oh, yeah. My parents went to all of the services, and I went to the services with them, though I was going to Sunday school elsewhere. Oh, yes. And when Lent came, I went right along with them.

A: And how do you think your parents, maybe like religion influenced their bringing you up? Aside from, obviously, taking you to church?

C: Well, it was a given that you were gonna go to church. You just didn't even think about it in any other way. You always said the blessing at the table. You went to church on Sunday. If it was Easter you polished your white shoes.

[Laughter]

C: And we didn't know any Catholics, we had a very, very small group there. And we mixed, of course, with Methodists and Baptists. And my mother's father was a Confederate soldier, and he died in 1922. He had two wives. By his first wife he had several children, and she died. And so he married my grandmamma, and he had seven children by my grandmother. My mother was the youngest. And they all laughed and said, "Becky, he gave out of names when he got to you." Because he named my mother for his first wife.

[Laughter]

A: Oh, my goodness.

C: So, I said, "She must've really been a good woman."

A: Yeah, that is so funny.

C: Interesting.

A: That is really interesting.

C: I never knew him, of course. My mother wasn't married until 1928. He died in [19]22. I never knew him. But my mother was a member of the UDC, and I've never joined it but I have record of his service. And he – oh, he was in some major battles. He was in the cavalry. He was at Yellow Tavern and at Malvern Hill. But one of the few soldiers who was never wounded. He joined when he was eighteen, and in his service record it was noted that he was one of the first to cross the bridge, and I wondered what bridge it was. And I later learned it was the **Mail** Bridge in Richmond at the end of the war. He was one of the first to cross the bridge at the end

of the war in Richmond, and took him a week to walk home to Lancaster County.

A: Wow.

C: And, of course, all I could envision was *Gone with the Wind* and Ashley Wilkes walking home.

[Laughter]

A: Wow. So, did you hear any – I mean, I know you just told me a lot about his involvement, but did you hear any other stories about him?

C: No, that is the interesting thing. You know, they didn't talk apparently. All those children, they said, "Papa just didn't talk about it," and I'm sure he didn't.

A: Uh-huh.

C: Soldiers today don't want to talk. Very few that will say anything.

A: Yeah. What about maybe – well, you said you were born after he died?

C: Oh, I was born in [19]30, he died in [19]22.

A: Oh, yeah. Okay. Much later. Sorry, I was just gonna ask you about interactions. So, you also said that your father was involved in the vestry?

C: On the vestry, yeah.

A: And your mother was – what was she?

C: She was on the Altar Guild.

A: Can you kind of explain what that –

C: Oh, you're not an Episcopalian?

A: No. But also for research purposes.

C: Well, the Altar Guild dresses – puts the hangings on the altar in the Episcopal Church. They take out the candles, they polish the brass. They mostly prepare for the communion service, and those kind of things. And do the flowers, the weekly flowers on the altars. You used to be asked to be on the Altar, my mother was asked to be on the Altar. I was asked to be on the Altar, too, but in more recent years people volunteer to do most anything in the church. It's a different turnover, tradition.

A: That's very interesting. Can you talk a little bit about your wedding? That photo that you have here is so beautiful, I want to hear all about it.

C: Well, one thing I will tell you about in Christ Church. When I was married in 1955, in those days, any wedding in any church, they always spread – the ushers would come in with this red roll of white what they call tracking, and roll it down the aisle, so that when the bride came in she would be walking on this white rug that was over the carpet or whatever the floor was. So, that was the tracking that was brought in from our wedding. My wedding, it was 1955. And I have five girls in the wedding. My lace veil was a Brussels lace veil and a fan I had gotten in Brussels. I went to Europe right after I got out of college, for a whole summer, with two of my sorority sisters, and we were on a student tour with seventeen girls. We went over in [19]53 on the *Vulcania*, an Italian line, came back on the *Saturnia* sister ship. Spent eight weeks and went to eight countries, all summer long. It was wonderful.

A: Wow. It sounds amazing.

C: Yeah. I was right out of college, and all that art history. I was seeing things – we went to Pompeii and all that good stuff. But anyway, when I was in Brussels, my girlfriend said, "Nancy, you've got to get a lace veil, you've got to get a Brussels lace veil." I said, "No, I'm not gonna do that." She said, "Yes, you are." So, I got my Brussels lace veil for thirty-six dollars. Hers was fifty dollars, she got a longer one than I did.

A: That's beautiful.

C: And then I got the Brussels lace veil and I had an orchid on it the day I was married. And I let a cousin of mine use it when she got married. My daughter wore my veil and my dress when she was married here in 1988. She did – I had long sleeves, which you did then, that was a style. And she wanted to have it restyled, so we took it to a lady who did all that kind of thing and she fixed the sleeve so she didn't have long sleeves. But she wore my dress. She didn't use the fan, I had, by that time, had framed it, and it's hanging on my wall.

A: I don't blame you. Wow. Okay. So, how many people came out? What was the –

C: Oh, how many people did we have?

A: Yeah, and what was the ceremony like that?

C: Oh, it was a traditional Episcopal wedding ceremony, by the book, by the prayer book. The organ in Christ Church then was a pump organ. See, incidentally, I have the write up of my grandmother's marriage here in

1902 from a newspaper, and they had brought the organ in for my grandmother's wedding.

A: The same one?

C: I don't know that it was the same one but it certainly was a pump organ. And then we had a pump organ at Grace Church, and that was the pump organ. And I had a cousin's wife who was quite very musical, had a lovely voice, she sang the Lord's Prayer. And I don't know, we had a reception over at Tides Inn. It was pretty nice.

[Laughter]

A: It looks beautiful. It looks so nice. How did you meet your husband?

C: Long story. He is a tar heel – was a tar heel. He had gone to Davidson College and after college he went to join the army, and got into counterintelligence. And when he was just finishing that he had orders to go to Berlin, he came down with spinal meningitis. And so, Fort Holabird was a counterintelligence school then, in Baltimore. They put him in Johns Hopkins. And then, when he got well enough, they would not let him go overseas. So, he was sent to Richmond, to the office in Richmond. And I was working in Richmond, don't ask me what I was doing. I wasn't doing anything very exciting.

A: What were you doing? You don't have to tell me if you don't want to.

C: It was a little office job instead of being a decorator. I didn't want to be a decorator and have to work apprentice work six days a week and Monday

night in a department store. So, I had – my social life as more important, and I met Irwin in Richmond.

A: Oh, wow.

C: And we got married after a year and a half.

A: Wow. That's so sweet.

C: And we lived in Carolina at his hometown where he had grown up. He had relatives who were in the textile business, and he was going through training and came home one day and said, "Do you want to go to New York to live?" I said, "What? For how long?" He said, "About fifteen years and then we'd come back here with the mills." I said, "I don't want to live in New York. I'm a small town girl." He had not grown up in this town. He had grown up in a tobacco town that was a small town. All the tobacco there is gone, of course. But anyway, so we came up here to Virginia to live after that rather than go to New York.

A: Yeah, much better. And was he in counterintelligence for like – I mean, I don't know if you can tell me.

C: Yeah, he was in counterintelligence. That was the work he was – actually, they were playing close, and I didn't know what he was doing at first. I thought he was FBI. For a date at night I would seat in the bleachers while he was pitching for the counterintelligence, CIC boys they called themselves, playing against the FBI guys.

[Laughter]

A: Oh, my gosh.

- C: Softball. What a day. But they were an interesting group of boys, they really were.
- A: Were a lot of them involved with the church here or any of the churches around here?
- C: No, those boys weren't...they were in counterintelligence, they had nothing to do with here at all. Unh-uh.
- A: But was your husband involved at all with the church?
- C: Well, he was brought up Presbyterian. His family were Scottish. And when I brought him to Virginia he joined the Episcopal Church, and he made a really good one. He knew the Bible much more than Episcopalians were ever taught. He taught Sunday school and he was on the vestry and he became a reader. You know, now, more people read. But you had to have a little license then to do that. But he did that. He was very involved in the church. He was a good man. Better than I was.
- A: Aw. I'm sure you were great. And how involved were you over time, and how involved have you been now?
- C: With church, you mean?
- A: Uh-huh.
- C: Well, I taught Sunday school, and I was on the Altar Guild. And, there at one point, the girl who was president of the women of the church – actually, there were two of them, who came to my home and challenged me, said I had to be a president of the women of the church. I didn't feel like I was a leader and I didn't want to do that, but they said, "You have to

do it because your mother was the first president of the Ladies Aides Society," which was the early women of the church organization in her time. So, I did that. It wasn't something that was my cup of tea, but I did it for the term I had to serve.

A: How long was that?

C: I think it was two years. And I don't sing in the choir. And then, I haven't done a whole lot of other things. I had some – now, at my age, I do go to the church and answer the telephone for the secretary, like a lot of women volunteer to do.

A: And how often is that usually?

C: It's about once or twice a month. Sometimes it's twice a month, depending on the schedule she gives me.

A: That's so interesting. So, what changes have you seen in your church over time? I know that's a long period of time.

C: Oh my goodness.

[Laughter]

A: But, you know, any that come up for you, any changes you can think of?

C: It is so enormously changed, it really is. Like I said, Grace Church was a small church. And when my children were growing up we all attended the little – what they called the chapel then. But actually, when they built the big church – the big church is now the brick church, was built in 1957. This is Grace Church. And when they were getting ready to build it, this very lady who wore the diamond horseshoe ring, who taught me Sunday

school, was a wealthy lady. She owned pretty much most of the real estate in town. She was an Episcopalian and she wanted that chapel – that building saved. It is historic. It was the first Episcopal edifice that was built in this county, I'm sure, after the disestablishment of the Anglican Church when the Protestant church was formed. Anyway, so it was built in 1851 and Mrs. Turner wanted to be sure that it got saved. So, she had it moved just a few feet, because they were going to build the new church on the very foundation, and larger, of course, than the little chapel. Now, it's a chapel. Well, we used it as our main church until the new church was built, and then we had – I've been going to that church. And, of course, I had brought my husband up here and we continued to go to Grace Church. And, of course, you're not Episcopalian but we had all the 1928 prayer service was in the prayer book. Then, there was a movement to change the prayer book, and they did change the prayer book. Some people left the church, went else – to other churches. I know a couple of them who went to the Anglican church, which is across the river from here, because the service was going to continue to be like the old service, and they didn't like the changes in the service. I didn't worry about that, so I stuck with my church.

A: What kind of changes did they make?

C: Oh my goodness, I couldn't begin to tell you.

A: Could you give me like maybe –

C: Oh, I'm not that good at the church. Well, wording in the service, that was the main thing. That was absolutely the main thing. And then, of course, the other change in the Episcopal Church was when women became ordained, that was a big thing. Some people didn't like that. And they got used to it. I've known some wonderful priests, women priests, and we've got one right now.

A: Oh, really?

C: Oh, yeah. She's wonderful. She's an assistant to the main rector of that church. And he is the rector of this church, you see, of Christ Church, Grace Church rector. And assistant, served as the priest for Christ Church.

A: Okay. Wow, that's so interesting. That's a lot of changes.

C: Well, yeah, we've had some changes. And in the Episcopal Church, unlike the Methodist, apparently, I don't remember because I didn't stay in the Methodist church to become a member, I just went to Sunday school. But their...it used to be that I know that their – they call them preachers, I guess, I don't know what they call them. But they only stayed four years, and then they moved on somewhere else. In the Episcopal church, when a priest came, he could stay a good long time until evidently he decided to leave or maybe decided to leave because the congregation wanted him to leave, I don't know. But there's no limit on the timeframe for a priest to stay at a church in the Episcopal Church.

A: Is that something that has changed?

C: No, because we never had timeframes in the Episcopal Church. At least, I don't remember. I'm pretty sure of that.

A: Wow, that's really interesting.

C: Something that might be interesting to you, because I remember him, I remember him very well, a minister that we had at Christ Church in the [19]30s served as a – he ferried planes during World War II to the British before – what did they call them? It had a name, the group that he – he flew, he had a plane. I can't remember what that term was. But it was interesting because he was part of World War II flying when America had not – the United States had not even entered the war.

A: Uh-huh. And that was before he was a priest?

C: He was ferrying the planes that we were giving to England **in Leesville**.

A: Oh, okay. Was that before he was a priest?

C: He was a priest during that time.

A: Oh, that is very interesting.

C: It is. And I remember his wife, she was so cute. She said, "You know, I didn't marry an Episcopal priest, I married a lawyer," that's what he was. And she liked to play bridge. In those days, apparently, bridge playing was frowned upon by the church. Because a lady in our church who lived somewhere else had some money, and she gave the money for our church – and I'm going to have to get a cough drop, I've got this tickle in my throat. Anyway, she gave the money, the funds...

[Break in recording]

A: Alright, we're back.

C: I don't remember the year. But it could've been something like 1954, something like that. When this lady, who had relatives and had grown up here I guess, and had moved away and married someone else. And she had married a wealthy man, and she wanted to give the funds for Grace Church to build a parish house. And she did, but with the stipulation that no card parties or any alcohol be served or any card parties had in the parish house. That was her stipulation. Because, like I said, those things were frowned upon. But later on, the congregation wanted to add on to the parish house and remodel, which they did, and the funding all came from the congregation, so that little stipulation was erased. But before that, you see, I was married in [19]55, and I remember that our women of the church, once a year, had a fundraising card party, and we could not have it in the parish house because of that stipulation, we could not have card parties in the parish house at that point in time. So, we had these parties elsewhere, in our homes. And one aside, that has nothing to do with – I think it's interesting. We have such interesting people who have come here to retire in this area, and this lady that I was being a hostess with at her home, she looked so New England. She looked like a painting done by an itinerant painter in New England. She had pageboy hair and sort of poppy eyes, and I had studied enough art history to know those things very well. At any rate, she and I were sitting in her breakfast room while the ladies were in the other room playing bridge, and I looked at the

teapot, the silver teapot on her table there in front of us, and the inscription said something about Herman Melville. And I said, "Herman Melville, he wrote Moby Dick." She said, "Yes, he was my great grandfather."

A: Oh my goodness!

C: So, naturally, she looked New England. But that was exciting. So, later on my husband and I had to have a New England trip, of course. We went to his home, and wouldn't you know, the day we got there it was closed. It wasn't open. But anyway, that was kind of an interesting little piece. But now, very interesting, very intelligent people who moved to this area.

A: Uh-huh, I'm sure. You mentioned, before we started the recording, that you had written a little kind of memoir about your life?

[Laughter]

A: Can you just talk about that a little bit?

C: I should not have mentioned that.

A: No, I'm so glad you did! Just maybe a little bit.

C: Well, one thing about it is the title was *Echoes in Ferryland, F-e-r-r-y*, because, you see, this is a peninsula, this Northern Neck, between the Potomac and the Rappahannock Rivers with the Chesapeake Bay at its tip. And the bridge, the Norris Bridge, which you crossed today, was not opened or not built until 1957. It was opened in 1957. It's too old to not be replaced, we all know that. But anyway, so, we were pretty well isolated, and this is what I mean about a sparse population. And it was all agricultural. But the biggest industry that had developed was the fishing

industry and the oystering industry. There were big fish factories over in Reedville. And then, the farmers, it was agricultural, and you had tomato factories. The tomatoes were picked and put in these baskets and taken by truck, some little dinky funny looking little trucks, I remember them, to Richmond, or taken to the tomato factories. There were lots of tomato factories. Matter of fact, I had an uncle, my mother's brother, had a tomato factory. And that was interesting. I went there once, and I don't know how old I was, but I remember it very well. All these Black ladies were – there was a long table of them, and they were peeling tomatoes just so fast with a bowl in front of them. And then when they finished – how was it? The Steamboat Museum has an oral history told by a lady who owned a tomato factory, and that's really good. But anyway, there was a track where the cans were – oh, tomatoes went in a big boil or something. I don't remember it very well. But it was interesting. And those Black ladies were singing, always singing. That was interesting.

A: Do you remember any of what they were singing? I know that might be –

C: Oh, no. Oh, no. But we had a good relationship with Black people here.

We really did. I think we always have in this area. Not like cities, not like the world today.

A: Were there ever any Black people in the church here? I'm just curious.

C: No, no. They had their own churches. But nearly everybody had – they called them a cleaning lady. Very few people had a cook. But when I married my husband and went down to that town in North Carolina, and I

married him in [19]55, I said, "My gosh, we're so far ahead of him." His mother had Annie May, their cook. His mother couldn't boil water.

Everybody had a cook. That's just the way it was.

A: Wow.

C: My mother didn't have a cook, she liked to cook. She was a good cook.

[Laughter]

A: That's really cool. Well, that was really my last main question. But I was wondering if you had anything that you would want to share that maybe I didn't get to in my questions?

C: I haven't allowed you to ask a question, have I?

[Laughter]

C: Go ahead and ask though. Do you have any others?

A: No, that was my last one. But is there anything like maybe I haven't asked you that you really wanted to talk about or that you had on your mind to mention?

C: Well, you were talking about the relationship with the Blacks. My gosh, I had the feeling that they people who worked for us almost loved us. I don't say every one of them. But there was never any animosity shown in any way. My husband and I had Sam Arthur, I loved him to death, and Ida May, his wife. I get tears when I think about them. He died suddenly, and I didn't know – this is after we had lived over down the creek, and I found out Arthur Sam had died, and I went flying to his house. And when I got there, all these people out in the yard, and this one man said, "**Who is it,**"

I said, "Oh, I'm so upset, I just heard about Sam." He said, "Yeah, Ida May died this morning." She died of grief. And that's possible, they were so close.

A: Oh, I'm so sorry.

C: Sam was such a good man. He helped me in my yard, I had a lot of flowerbeds. He would come and we would stand out there and he would start talking about them young bucks, they won't do anything. He was an older man, and that was the way he expressed it. And we would philosophize in the yard about the world today. He was a good man. I still have some...two guys at the Tristar Supermarket, they're my good friends, as well as a couple of others. The girl up there. I was so sick a couple of winters ago I couldn't get over this horrendous cough, and I had a terrible thing going in my chest. She would forever – months later, how are you doing, Miss Clark? How about your cough? She just always cared about you. That's what I mean. The relationship is good. They don't know everybody, but I guess I'm a country girl and –

A: Everyone knows you.

C: They know me, I'm in there enough.

A: Wow. Well, thank you so much for this interview. I really appreciate everything you've told us. It's beautiful hearing your stories.

C: Well, I love talking about the past. I'm real good at that. Don't ask me a thing about anything new.

A: Well, thank you very much.

C: Okay.

[End of interview]

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