

Q: Mrs. Parrilla, 606 Pocahontas, April 30, 1984. How long have you and your family lived here in Williamsburg?

A: All of my life, which will be 81 years this coming July.

Q: So since 1903?

A: Nineteen-oh-three is right.

Q: Wow, that's a long time.

A: My whole family _____.

Q: How big is your family?

A: Well, there's my mother and father, my brothers and two sisters, and my son. That was our original family. My mother was a Dunlap. _____.

Q: Oh, okay.

A: Yeah, her original family. My father was a Jones. _____. So that means we go back a long way.

Q: I'll bet.

A: Uh huh. And I have, I can take it from Duke of Gloucester Street back before _____. This is where I have lived in my 81 years come July, up to today. And I have seen, of course, plenty of changes.

Q: I'm sure you have.

A: Uh huh.

Q: What have some of those changes been?

A: Huh?

Q: What have some of those changes been since when you were a child?

A: Oh, when I was a child I lived on the corner of Henry, you know where the drive-in bank is on Henry Street?

Q: Right, uh huh.

A: Colonial Williamsburg?

Q: Uh huh.

A: That bank coming out there?

Q: Uh huh.

A: Well, that was where I was born. My father built and all of us were born right there on that corner. And the corner of Henry and, North Henry and Scotland, I think that's where it is. Scotland Street, North Henry and Scotland Street, yeah. And we lived there until I think, we didn't have high school then, but we had, we went, I finished school, grade school, went to elementary school and high at Hampton Institute. My father went to Hampton Institute, my father. And all of us were Hampton Institute students. And I lived there until we lived on Duke of Gloucester Street, the corner that's facing on the corner of Duke of Gloucester, the intersection right across from the William and Mary College, where the Methodist Church, that property was sold to my mother and father, the Dunlap property. My oldest daughter was born on Duke of Gloucester Street in the block, from the Gaults, Gault family, the property that we bought in the block when we sold to the Methodist Church was bought from the Gault family. That's where my daughter, my two daughters, Julia and Mary were born on Duke of Gloucester Street. Right now, that's that little empty, the toy shop, right in, that's where the house was. The tree is still there in the front. And that's where we had lived, and from Duke of Gloucester we moved to Braxton Court, which is the family house, you see. Right around the corner, and on the corner of Braxton

is _____. We lived there until after my father died. And this was how I _____, my sister is left, it's just the two of us, my sister and myself. But she has one son, and I have two children. I have grandchildren. And this is when I came into town, called myself coming into town. And to see the progress, I'm taking this in particular because when I first moved down here we had no lights, no water, no sewage and water, and my father fought and fought and fought for water. And finally we got water and sewage.

Q: What did you use?

A: A pump, it's right out there, the pump right out there. You had your own well or your own cesspool or whatever. Now, I wasn't living down, when I came down here, when I moved down here in '56 the city had put in water and sewage, but because we, to bring the sewage in, and the water, was 700 and some odd dollars.

Q: In 1956?

A: Uh huh. And that's what it cost. There was no, it was just a dirt, we're in the country, see? You know, we just were in the country. Now, this is just as far, well, when I first moved down here I didn't think I was going to make it but I did some improvements, and by me moving in here, some of the people who just didn't care began to fix up their property, and sold some property, _____. And my sister's on the other side of this property. And this is the closest I have lived in the county or in the country. Now, my grandchildren would come down from Jersey in the summer, every summer, and you would watch them because you were

afraid of snakes. And they stayed right in the middle of the road, coming in here from over the park, over the city park, Restoration Park, coming from there around... But sometimes they would cut through the little wooded spot, and that's what we were afraid of. And that's the closest I have ever lived now. Of course, now, I don't consider I have ever lived in the county. But I did live in the county until the city took over this area. And CW was right on the bottom line. Now, what else would you like to know?

Q: Okay. What kind of funny or humorous things do you remember from your childhood that, like what sort of things did you do that you ____?

A: When I was in my childhood days I lived in a white neighborhood on Scotland and Henry Streets, right across from where that drive-in bank is. There was Mrs. Reed and children, Dr. Henderson was further down. We were the only black kids in that block, where Casey's Corner, see where the parking lot of Casey's, how Casey's parking lot is? Well, our land was right, where the road runs right down, we were right on that corner. And there were no black children there. And that's where I grew up.

Q: Did that...

A: That's where I grew up, and where all of us grew up.

Q: Did that cause any problems?

A: No. And when I lived on Duke of Gloucester Street, Mrs. Lawson was right next door to me, to us. Mrs. Nightingale was right next door to us, and when, it was nothing for them to come in if they wanted a piece of bread or butter or

whatever, that was it. There was no hard feelings or, of course, we didn't have, the progress wasn't then as it is now because the only thing we had to do when I came out was either teaching or go to work in somebodys kitchen. And the salary then, when I first started was \$39 a month. Out of that you had to have your transportation and everything. So you didn't, and then your transportation depended on whether you had any way to get, go, and Daddy did have, you know, I had a car. And on Monday morning if it decided to start you're okay. And I taught out at Magruder, and I taught _____. And then I worked for CW. My mother was a invalid about five years and...

Q: So what did you do?

A: I taught, and I worked for CW. That's the only thing I've ever done.

Q: What kind of job did you have with CW?

A: A sweet baker, a baker.

Q: Oh, that sounds really neat.

A: I did that until I retired, and I enjoyed it. I worked with very good people, and I _____, at which time they had _____. And since then I have been working with organizations and _____, work with my church. And then sometimes, not even when I feel like it, they will call me for various things. But I do, I still work, I still keep busy. Not laborious work, but...

Q: Well, I guess you have to. Yeah. Well, what did you do for entertainment when you were little?

A: Well, now that's amusing because I have, I was ____ about a

year from Norfolk, I mean what was our livelihood? As I said, I lived on the corner of North Henry Street and Scotland. Across where the bank is was the fraternity, William and Mary fraternity. During the winter months we would skate from Casey's, they could skate from Casey's Corner right straight on down all the way the block because of snow and ice.

Q: Yes, it's clear back there.

A: And Daddy, my daddy instead of buying us sleds he would, my daddy was a contractor until, and he built us a sled, long like this, about long as this. In the daytime we used it for snow and all, in the evening the students used it. We let them use it, they'd give us 50¢ or a quarter, or what have you, and they used it for the evening. And for pleasure we had candy, made candy and had candy pulls. You don't know anything about that. You made candy with special molasses, candy, and you'd pull it until it made this beautiful color, and then you'd twist it. And we'd have those in the wintertime. In the summer, during the summer months we played outside, and outside we had friends who lived in the county, like out at Magruder. Daddy would put us all in the buggy, the wagon, whichever way he decided to carry us, and we'd go out there. We'd go and have, go fishing, we'd go, just go and have a day of fun. Games and what have you. It was a beautiful time. Then it didn't make any difference who you were, if you wanted to go you went. They'd take you if you wanted to go then. But today, it's a little different.

Q: Oh? How is that?

A: Huhm?

Q: How is that?

A: Integration since CW has changed from the relationship between blacks and whites. They're not as close together...

Q: Really?

A: As they were then, because nine times out of ten, the majority, Mr. Gardner Brook's mother, we grew up together, we grew up together. And did things, her mother was Mrs. Shipman, and she lived right down the street from us. They paid us no mind and we paid them no mind. If she had anything Mama wanted she got it, if Mama had anything she wanted she got it. That was the closeness then, between then and now. And a lot of people can't really realize what it was like before Colonial Williamsburg.

Q: And you think Colonial Williamsburg was the reason of this separation?

A: Well, I don't think it was the reason but it had, because over a period of years everything changed. So therefore, we changed with the times. CW, everybody changes with the times. And when they first came, CW first came Dr. Goodwin, you've heard people speak of Dr. Goodwin?

Q: Uh huh.

A: Dr. Goodwin and my father were close friends, very close friends, and he smoked a pipe. You could smell him a mile, that old stinking pipe. And he'd come and sit on the front porch and talk to Daddy. He always just said, "Jonesy, where are you?" if Daddy was home. If not, he sat down on

the porch with that old pipe and you could smell it after he was gone. And he said to Papa, he said, "Jonesy," he said, "I'm not going to see it." And he said, "You may not see it, but if this project is really carried out like they want to carry it out, there will be a gate at each end of Williamsburg." It's there now, per se. You don't see it but you can go from New York to Virginia Beach, and you don't touch the gate, don't even see because the highways have changed everything. We are not out there. If you come from Newport News, just start from Newport News and go to Richmond you don't touch Williamsburg, you don't see Williamsburg. So, now, they may eventually have something, nobody knows. But that is _____. When you get the little map they give you, coming from Richmond coming into Williamsburg, and if you don't read it very carefully they keep right on to Newport News.

Q: Why do you think that is?

A: Why?

Q: Yeah.

A: That's progress they call it.

Q: What do you call it?

A: That's what it is. I couldn't live here if I didn't work with it. It has not done me any harm. It has not done the majority of this entire community much harm. It opened up a lot of doors for blacks and whites. Williamsburg was not a rich town. It was not a rich town because as long as I can remember, the only thing we had, even blacks, whites was the College and Eastern State Hospital to work. And that wasn't

very much, until, well, there were like farmers, they made it because their vegetables were not shipped in bins like they are being shipped in now. You had your bin, you put your potatoes and your vegetables in the root bin. When you wanted them you got them. You raised your cows, your hogs and you had everything. But now you go to the store and buy everything. You don't have that. And when we were growing up, O'Neal Wolf's, it was a white family then on Duke of Gloucester Street in the block where, let me see now, where Judge Armistead is on that corner, he was in the block coming this way, Mr. Brooks, Old Man Ferguson, and they, the Wolf's were heavy farmers, big farmers. We didn't know what it was because my Daddy wasn't a farmer, but we didn't know what it was to buy watermelons, cantaloups, corn, tomatoes, potatoes. When they'd come back from the farm our porch was just as full as anybody who had a farm, and it didn't cost a penny. That was the old man, the young man had a meat market on Duke of Gloucester Street. And Mother would say go over to the store, give you a quarter now, and when you're going over to the store with the quarter, said, "Tell Mr. Wolf we want a nice big soupbone," and all like that. You'd have meat and your soupbone. I mean that was what _____. And it was just a lovely way to live. We never had any real trouble with anybody, not to my knowledge. My father and mother did a beautiful job of raising all of us. There's my sister, my brother and myself, two sisters, my youngest sister died when she was very young, as soon as she came out of school. And Lilly worked for the government in

Washington, my mother raised her, she was just about a sister but she was my uncle's daughter which my mother and father raised nearabout.

Q: Do you think that the tourism and CW has hurt Williamsburg or helped it? How has it affected, you know, life in Williamsburg?

A: It has had, we've made progress. We couldn't stay at the ____ that we were in, we had to progress one way or the other. But CW came in. Had they not come in perhaps some factory or, that would have been on the James River or some of that stuff might have, but something would have made a change. It had to make a change because you couldn't grow if somebody didn't come in and start the ball rolling, and CW did that. Now we had real estate in, you know where the Ludwell-Paradise House is on Duke of Gloucester Street?

Q: Uh huh.

A: The Stubbs owned that, they sold that property to CW. They offered that property to my daddy for \$9,000, the Ludwell-Paradise House.

Q: When was this?

A: Oh, that was just before CW came in. They sold to CW. It has been a Godsend to folks like me.

Q: Do you think it's hurt...

A: No.

Q: Williamsburg in any way?

A: No, to me, I don't see that it has. It has had it's advantages. The only thing about it, when it first started people didn't know what would happen. It wasn't explained

to them as to what, because Old Man Delaney, which is right out here where King's Arms, not King's Arms, Christiana Campbell's, in that street, that was where they lived, and they were some of the, but they didn't get their money. They didn't, the way I understood it, that they weren't satisfied. They weren't told what was happening, and it hit most of the people here at that time, where money was scarce because it was right after the government, the United States when it went into that slump.

Q: What? The Depression?

A: The Depression, that's what I was thinking. And they needed money, and some of them needed money to save their homes, and save their _____. And that was when they just, this was _____, right after the Depression.

Q: What was the Depression like? What went on in Williamsburg during the Depression? What was the lifestyle like in the Depression compared to before and after?

A: The Depression came at the same time that, CW had just started. It had just started, and it's not in any building or anything but they were just buying property and remodeling some of the buildings which gave a few, well, most of the people then were brought in from New York and the upper, for CW. And a lot of the whites sold, some of them never sold because when they, Mr. Harrison Coles, their property _____ CW asked for, _____. Lawyer Armistead has never sold. _____ and they'll never get his. And the Braithwaites, they sold for life rights or 99 years, or something like that. And that's one of the houses that's standing over

there. So it had its advantages and its disadvantages, but more advantages than it had disadvantages because it helped those at that particular time to have a little something to do. And when CW first came they hired quite a few people to get started.

Q: So you don't think the Depression was as bad in Williamsburg?

A: Not like it was in many places, no. No, it wasn't.

Q: Because of CW?

A: We didn't have, no, we didn't have any souplines or anything at that particular time. And the College, people who worked at the College which was state, those who worked at Eastern State which was state and those who worked, had just started working with CW, they still had their little, it was held up for a while. I think it was about, just held up for a little while, like everything was. And then people who were teaching, they, well, there was no souplines or breadlines, nothing like that at that time.

Q: Because most people had some work to do?

A: They had something to do, enough to keep them going. Now, we, it was a struggle because the family house that we lived in, we lost that to Casey's, on the corner of North Henry and Scotland Streets. We lost that, but my mother, it didn't hurt us to the point that we didn't have nowhere to go or nothing. But Casey's just, the Dunlap property on the corner of Duke of Gloucester _____. So it didn't, I don't say it didn't hurt us but we lost it. And that was, I think it was just about three or four, I know the Harris' lost

something but it wasn't, it gives you a little... But you made it just the same. We still went to school.

END OF SIDE 1

Q: Have for celebrations and what did you do for this?

A: I'll tell you one thing we had, which my people were, my father and mother were educated. The James City, we had no high school.

Q: Right.

A: The lot on the corner where the Brick Shop made brick was where the school, we had a one room school. And when Colonial Williamsburg, before that we built James City County Training School, and that was where CW came in and bought that. And that was moved over where the, the school right across the bridge there, elementary school.

Q: Berkeley?

A: Berkeley, no, no, uh uh.

Q: It's not Matthew Whaley.

A: No, my children went, my grandchildren went, not my children but my grandchildren. They moved from there to, out on Ironbound road where...

Q: James Blair?

A: Huh?

Q: James Blair on Ironbound Road?

A: It's not James Blair. It's on the corner of, this is why I don't like to do any talking. My mind, it doesn't come to me like I want it to come to me. But anyhow, CW bought James City County Training School and I was just looking at a picture of it the other day. They still were, that was

the beginning of the educational curriculum, the curriculum into high school, that was the way high school. Now, Julia, my daughter, both of my daughters and my nephew, they, Julia was one of the first ____ and the first high school, she was one of the first to pass high school. She, and my youngest daughter came right on about two years behind her, but they all finished high school. That was the beginning of our family in a high school. And of course, Julia went on to Virginia State, she's teaching in the county now, in New Kent County, not James City County. And my youngest daughter, she's a school teacher in New Jersey. But those were two of the things that they brought, education, and when they first, they weren't particular about going over where the school is today, but they managed. Let's see what I've got here, I'm trying to think what the name of the Training, it was the James City County Training School. Their just had their _____. That was when they had this, and education was a great problem for us because we didn't have a high school, because I didn't have a high school, and when I left here I left here and went to Hampton Institute right from elementary. And, but now they have _____. And some teach now, and they never finished anything but just high school. That was one of the main things.

Q: Well, what did your family do for times like Christmas and Easter and holidays?

A: Oh, we had a lot of things.

Q: What did you do?

A: Well, first place, we had the, well, we looked forward to

it. Number one, my father had an oxcart. He pushed the apples down in newspaper and sand in there. Pears, they'd grow so big, Heath Pears, do you know them? -- but anyhow we do them like that: wrap them, put them down in the sand. At Christmas time we had the pears because we didn't have fruits like bananas and all that stuff like we have today. We made our own Christmas decorations: popcorn chains, paper chains, pretty decorations, and we had a good time. And there was a family like us who lived on South Henry Street and we'd get together and we'd do decorating. We'd go get holly, down on Jamestown Road at the Burn's place and get holly, get Christmas trees -- nobody'd bother you. You could cut down a tree and take it home.

Q: A big tree?

A: No, we didn't have no little skimpy trees. No indeed we hadn't. And then we'd decorate ours here, like tonight we're all of us going to get together and decorate the Christmas tree. Tomorrow night we'll get together and we'll decorate the Dillard's tree, we'll decorate theirs. Then Lydia, Mrs. Frazier, they had just one child but there were more of us ____ then we'll go down there and help her decorate her tree. We made candy, we made cookies, we didn't have no movies years ago, so we had our own records -- not records, victrola -- that you'd wind up. That was our music for our own entertainment. Then you didn't have no drinks or nothing like that -- you had jello, cake, candy, food galore, and that was every day during the Christmas holidays. Come Christmas Eve, everybody stayed

home to their houses and you went from house to house and that was our entertainment. One night during the week, First Baptist church would have their Christmas program and they'd give everybody an apple, orange and a bag of candy or something like that with a program. Now there were just two churches did that in my area, but Mt. Ararat wasn't where it is now -- it was over on Francis Street, and we'd go to their Christmas show. That was it. The rest of the holidays belonged to us. We just had a good time. My mother, father and the older people, they made fruitcakes and there were pies, they had chittlins which I haven't eaten in a couple of days, but I love pigfeet. They had a plenty and chine bones -- you don't know nothing about it -- which comes right out of the middle of the hog which is delicious. And they made cornbread, rolls, biscuits -- you had everything you wanted to name, sweet potatoes. We would go under the house which was closed in -- it wasn't the basement; the basement was closed in -- but it wasn't made a basement, but it was where you could put your potatoes, your vegetables, and we'd go down there and get that. We had a good time. Baked tomatoes, canned, peeled, you made your own preserves. I got a stone jar out there now that Mama used to keep her stone pear preserves in. And hot breads, oooh. But now nobody has time for that. Those days are gone.

Q: What kind of presents did you have, or did you give any presents?

A: Well, yes, you always gave -- we made them. We made our

presents, we made our gifts. But now when it comes down to clothes, that was a different story. We never -- the parents if they wanted to give. I know one year I wanted a sailor suit -- pleated skirt and a sailor blouse. Well, at that time, that was ____ but I didn't, but that was what I wanted, and I just knew I wasn't going to get it. But I got it. And I wore that until it was just nowhere. But we made our own little gifts that we exchanged in school with our different classmates and all. We did that, sometimes we'd make up a big box of candy; walnuts -- we'd gather walnuts, make all kinds of candy. Now you don't even see walnuts. And you go to buy walnut meat in the store it's oooh. And I bought some this winter when I made my fruit cakes, and I said I can't afford that. But we used to have them by the pecks, get them, and gather them and knock them out the hull, let them dry. Boy, oh boy, and we'd make the best walnut candy, chocolate with nuts, delicious. Those are the things that -- you see now -- we didn't have cars and when we went out we had to have -- well, didn't you have golashes? My Daddy had boots. There was a fight over who was going to get Daddy's boots if he didn't go out. The three of us tried to get one pair of boots, but we did have overshoes (rubbers), you know the low ones, come around down there, and we would put stockings on and you'd wrap your legs with the newspaper -- that's for when you're going out in the snow in the evening or whenever you went, the older ones. But the little ones never got out at night, but then after we got older and we're going from house to house that

was when we'd have to wrap up just to keep warm. No, we had an old big furnace stove, well, it wasn't a furnace stove. But we always called it Old Herschel. And she would light that at the beginning of the Christmas holidays, Christmas Eve night, and it didn't go out anymore until the weather changed because we had an old long hall we had to go down, but if that stove was burning it took the chill off of that. And that was where we because we didn't have no heat live you've got now. No, indeed! In the summertime we used to take a tub of water and put it out in the yard and the sun would heat it. That's your bath water, and you'd go in there and take your water bucket and go on to your bath. And that's just what we did, and we stayed clean and we stayed sweet. But now they've got the water right in the house to take it, _____. Yeah, but those were good days.

Q: What kind of things did you do for Easter? Did you do anything for Easter?

A: Oh, yeah. We'd have an Easter egg hunt, church would usually do it, and we had colored eggs just like the kids do now. That has been a tradition. And we would color the eggs and hide them, and some elderly person would hid them. And as we grew older we would hide them so that the little ones that were coming up ... We had our Eastern outfits, and we never had Easter outfits. Mother would always get ours on Palm Sunday, we wore our Easter outfit on Palm Sunday. We didn't know why.

Q: It was just something they made you do.

A: That's what she did, that was her ... and I always got my

children the things, when Julia and ___ were growing up, on Palm Sunday they had their outfits. If it rained Palm Sunday they'd put _____.

Q: Well, what were their Easter outfits?

A: Clothing, just like you wear today. But my mother sewed beautifully, coats, suits and everything. And sometimes we'd get a piece of material -- like I know one year I wanted this pin stripe, white on brown with a velvet collar. And I just thought by the time she got through making everybody's things when she got around to it _____. I don't sew now but I sewed for my children. Ain't you tired of me yet?

Q: Me? I'm not tired of you, I love to listen to this because a lot of these things, you know, I've just never heard of, something that's really new to me.

A: Well, you take it where we lived on the corner of Henry Street, like we'd go out for a Sunday evening walk. You didn't go up as far as the Bright House, you know where the student's Bright House is on the hill by the athletic field?

Q: Uh huh.

A: You were dead in the country.

Q: That was the country?

A: Yes, indeed, dead dust flying. And when we were growing up we'd better not go no farther, not as far as that because our parents didn't like us to go any farther, not as far as that. But we had friends who lived in the County, like on Ironbound Road. It wasn't called Ironbound Road then but it is now. The Lewis', and if we got out there we had to go,

there was a little road through there that carried us right on out to their house. And in the summertime that was fun for us, we stayed until not dark but just back home at dark. And over at the Eastern State they had their fire house, they had a horn. At 6:00, it would blow every evening at 12:00 for lunch and 6:00 in the evening. And I don't care where we were you'd be better be back when that whistle would blow in the evening time. We weren't out at dark. When folks ask me _____. And on winter evenings we'd skate from Casey's Corner right straight on down up to where the Robinson House is, where that vacant lot is on the corner, those two blocks. White and black out there. _____, all of us out there skating. _____. And we had a beautiful life.

Q: Sounds like it.

A: And then another thing I can always say about my parents, they participated and planned some things for us as we grew older. Say for instance, like this evening I would like for Lucy, Des, and all of them to come to the house. And she would say we're going to do thus and such. Okay. She'd always have hot gingerbread, Coca-cola, or something that we could have while she was telling us what she wanted to do. And that was when we'd get ready to start doing our little things for Christmas, our Christmas tree decorations, and what have you. And Thanksgiving we'd always have drawings, and baskets, and we made our own baskets because we didn't have -- say for instance, went to Casey's "We want some boxes," and they knew us. They'd say, "Well, what are you going to do with your

boxes?" We'd tell them _____, we'd take those boxes home and cover them and fix a basket. We had a good time. Now, my father was a contractor and builder by trade. He built the Williamsburg Theater for George Roller, George Roller was the owner of the Williamsburg Theater, which is still standing. Of course, now it has been remodeled but that was his work. He did, there's two houses that he did that are still standing on Jamestown Road.

Q: Which ones were those?

A: Mr. Bridge's house and the Clark's, but all of those people are dead. He built the James City County Training School, I mean he was not exactly a contractor up there, he was the head man by trade, recognized for his work. And well, I guess that's all.

Q: What are some of the buildings that were here a long time ago that aren't here anymore, and how were they, you know, were they torn down or ...

A: Yes, they're torn down.

Q: Or did some of them burn?

A: They take, let me see. On Duke of Gloucester Street there's no houses there other than the brick houses that they have restored. Just like the Ludwell-Paradise House is restored, Judge Armistead's House they haven't done nothing with, Bruton Parish. The Parish House of Bruton Parish, that was built new. The old Parish House is torn down. And let me see, all of Casey's building, Casey had a grocery store and a dry goods store. They had clothing, cloth and material on one corner.

On the other corner was a regular grocery store. And coming on down on Francis Street, Peter Epps had a business. John Armistead had a business. Now these are black people I'm telling about that had businesses there. Crutchfield, the Canadays owned all of that property in there, all of that property was sold to CW. And Peter Epps sold his property to CW. And all the way up Mr. Parker, I can remember them having a store there but I don't remember when he sold it or anything. But they did sell it to CW, two brothers, Willie Parker and I can't think of the other one. And over on Francis Street Mrs. Frazier, Mrs. Baker and all of those houses were torn down.

Q: There must have been a lot of houses torn down when CW came.

A: It was a whole lot of houses torn down. It really was. And Casey's, when they tore that down hadn't been built long.

OFF THE TAPE

A: In the CW area Mrs. Baker, she lived right there where the brickyard is. And all of those people houses were just bulldozed down.

Q: How did they feel about that? What were their reactions?

A: There wasn't any reaction because they had sold and had moved into wherever they were going to. Now our house on the corner, when we lived on Duke of Gloucester Street, that sold to the church. The Methodist Church bought that, and that's when they moved in the block. Now when those houses, the Gault House, Goodall House and Casey's Store on the corner, all those houses were knocked down. And the post office was

built in that lot. And that's it.

Q: But people didn't feel ...

A: Lost without it?

Q: Right.

A: No, for the simple reason, now, I feel worse for being down here than for moving up in Braxton Court because when I came down here I didn't want to leave Braxton Court. But this was mine, and I couldn't take care of a big house because I would have been there and my children in their own homes and what have you. I don't say I couldn't have, and that was not mine. There was no point for me to so I just moved in here because this was mine. I _____ and I'm comfortable.

Q: What do you remember about your grandparents and the way they lived?

A: Now I can't say too much about my grandfather, Old Man Dunbar, but I can about my grandmother. She lived with us when I was very, very young but she was a cute little old lady. She was just as sweet as she could be. Everybody called her Miss Betty, Sister Betty, and she lived with us and she lived with a white family in Washington. And____, anyhow I can't call the name right now, but she lived with them and they thought she was a piece of pie, and so when she just, you know, Bryant that was his name, the Bryants, she raised James Bryant. And when she came back to Richmond she lived with the Ropers, she was a Roper. And she met Mr. Dunlap and she came to Williamsburg. He owned a blacksmith store here, and it was just the two of them, my mother and her brother. And that's

where they lived on the corner of, well it was called Main Street then, the corner of Duke of Gloucester Street where Casey's is. And he had a business at the corner.

Q: Did she tell any stories of when she was little that you can remember that she told to you?

A: She read a lot.

Q: Oh, okay.

A: She'd read to us. And my daughter last week was asking about, because she had the old original story of the Bible, and she had always read. She was old but she loved to read, and in the evening all we did around here was sit and she'd read stories to us.

Q: What were some of the stories?

A: Huh?

Q: What were some of the stories?

A: She had a little story book, I've got a piece there now that I have kept, a comic strip. I don't know how that has stuck instead of some of the, well, I can see that too because story books, we wore them down to threads.

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A: ___ But we didn't have that. Now my daddy made a lot of our toys. He made them, wagons, sleds, what have you. And see now every time a mother goes to the store she brings the child a toy or something. But we didn't have that. We got it Christmas and birthdays. Now I was very, very young when my grandmother died, very young. I can remember her very well, but she was 76 Christmas day, and New Year's Day they were

burying her. So that is one of the most important things that I can remember really was her talking to us and reading to us about her life. Now they were Ropers and they had a family, their family, one of them, they always called her _____ Fan because Fannie was darker than other family, was the darkest of the family. And she worked with this family who left and went to Manchester, New Hampshire and the place that they went, they had never seen a dark person. And she couldn't understand why they couldn't realize that she was just dark. But they wanted to know what was she, and she had beautiful hair and they just hadn't ever seen anybody like her. So Fannie got sick of that and she came on back to Richmond.

Q: She didn't like that, huh?

A: Uh uh, no. But most of the Ropers were fair, not very fair but a little lighter than I am, most of the Ropers that I knew. I didn't know them on Grandma's side, and my daddy, Grandpa's side, he came here from ... You know sometimes, now, like Miss Julia Armistead said to me one day, she said, "Elizabeth," she said, "Come down and sit down and I'll talk with you and give you a family tree." And I never did, and I was so sorry I didn't know what to do. Miss Julia Armistead. But she was telling me about Grandpa and how he happened to be in this area. And he was a blacksmith, had a blacksmith shop on the corner. He had his own business. Now their life, I didn't know too much about, no more than just what we'd hear Mama and Daddy say, but I didn't know too much about, in fact, I didn't know too much about, I didn't know anything about him

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at all because he died long before Grandma did. And that's
how come Grandma was in Washington _____. And then when he
died and Anne got married she came back home to Williamsburg.

END OF TAPE