

Wilmot Historical Society, Kearsarge Valley Road, Box 97, Wilmot, New Hampshire

Judith Walker interviews Marjorie Joyce Tilton - February 23, 1993

Judith: This is an oral history interview taped for the Wilmot Historical Society on February 23, 1993. My name is Judith Walker. I'm the Secretary of the Historical Society, and I'm talking with Marjorie Joyce Tilton at her home in Wilmot Flat.

Judith: So, Marjorie, we can't call you a born native of Wilmot. Will you tell us how you happen to come to Wilmot?

Marjorie: Well, it's kind of complicated. My biological mother sent me; put an ad in the paper that she had a child to board and Mr. and Mrs. Joyce read the ad, and they went down to Franklin to find me and see what kind of a child I was.

You were just a baby, then, is that right?

I think that there was another lady that went along. I was 8 months old. I don't remember that other lady's name. Anyway, the arrangements were made for me to be brought up to Wilmot.

You had said at the Golden Rule Farm?

Well, I think I had been at the Golden Rule Farm prior to, I think. And anyhow, I think they brought me home, I don't know whether it was that first day or not, but I finally arrived in Wilmot at the age of 8 months and my biological [mother] came up to visit me a few times, but I think times were kind of rough for her, and she had slacked off and finally didn't come anymore. That's basically how . . . she never came back after me, so I got adopted eventually by the Joyces.

Do you remember about when that was that you were adopted?

Well, I had grown up when the papers were legalized. Everybody had started calling me Marjorie Joyce, even though I came to town as Marjorie May Murphy.

And you said even Marjorie wasn't your name to begin with. It was Phyllis.

It was something different on my certificate than Phyllis. It's down at Franklin at City Hall. But what led my folks to believe that my name was Marjorie, because I think that Mother Joyce understood from my real mother that she thought she said my name was Marjorie. Of course, my real mother was French, and maybe, unless she decided to change my name, anyway, it ended up being Marjorie.

And what was your birthdate?

October the 25th, 1917.

And the Joyces lived in Wilmot Center?

Yes. What was that house, they called that “Whittemore House”, was that where Doc Whittemore lived?

Right.

I think he might have built that house.

We might locate that house for people who don’t know. That would be going at the foot of Center Hill going down from the Village of Wilmot Center. It would be the one, two, three, . . . fourth house on the left. Is that right?

Where are you starting out?

At the corner of N. Wilmot Road and 4A.

It’s the corner house, then Gove, and then you come down and there’s Mark and Susan’s place, and then where Jill Catino lives.

Yes.

And then your folks, so it was the 5th house on the left from the bottom of Center Hill.

Yup, yup.

And your parents’ names were?

My dad was Charles W. Joyce and my mother’s name was Grace Louella Joyce.

And you said that they were not natives of Wilmot.

No. Well, I think my Dad had been a native, born in Grafton. I know that my mother was born in Salem; she was a native of Salem, NH, and she used to work in the shoe factories down in Methuen, I think.

When you look at that house today, does it look basically the same as it did, or has it changed a lot?

Well, I think it would look the same if they had put a long porch back on that used to be there. That porch, I thought, left it looking kind of bare, in the front. Of course, I had great times out on that porch, and it went the whole length of the building. And when I noticed that that was gone, it made me feel bad. I think there have been great things done in that house, I’d like to go in there.

The bay window on the front—I was speaking to Walter about this and he remembered Connie Forsham saying that she was looking in her grandfather’s diaries—Fred Goodhue—and he had written in there that he built that window.

I don't remember that. That must have been before they came there maybe because I don't think they had money to have things like that built. And then there was the other set of bay windows looking north from the end of the dining room looking up towards town—two sets of bay windows. The bay windows looking up towards the Village on the north side was where I got my first haircut—sitting in front of those bay windows.

That was done by your mother or father, I assume?

No, there was a man came up from down in West Andover, used to cut hair, and he came up and gave me my first haircut. I think his name was Mr. Braley. And I didn't enjoy that haircut one bit; I didn't like it.

You probably howled a little bit.

I think I did.

Did your father farm then?

Yea-ah. We had horses, and hens and chickens, and cows, and pigs.

Okay, but your father also kept a store?

Well, that came about by Harry's illness, and Harry's passed away. His son, Harry, is the one who started the store. When he got so sick, he gave that up and went south and eventually west with another fellow, a friend of his. And that's how Dad happened to take over the store.

Do you know about when that was?

Well, he took over the store before Harry died because the day that Harry died, Dad was up to the store. And mum wrote a note and told me to "Hurry, hurry, hurry", as fast as I could and leave this note with Dad. And if I was 9 years old, let's see that would, uh,

Let's see, it says here Harry died in 1928, so . . .

and Harry came home?

Do you remember, was it a store when Harry started?

Yea-ah. It was small.

So, who did he buy it from then? You don't remember that?

No. I don't know who owned that building.

Then, of course, later, when Ethyl and I lived there . . .

That had a continuation from the back end of the store there was a . . . Dad used to put ice in . . . in the icehouse. And that was his trailer and brought 'em into the store in the back. And then, on the other side of that there was a blacksmith's shop. Dad used to do his own horseshoeing in there, and I remember turning the forge, the handle,

The bellows?

Yea-ah, it would make the fire under the coals, you see, sometimes he'd let me turn it. I was just a little child, so he had to be extremely cautious because, I was rather hazardous. But I used to enjoy watching him shoe. I would stand back, of course, in case, of course, he got irritated or something, but

Now that, we placed that building, too. That was also going down Center Hill, and that would have been the one, two, three . . . third building—it's now no longer standing—but it would have been the third building on the left.

Yea-ah. There used to be a little bridge out back there that crossed, but it got wiped out by high waters over into the pasture in back.

Yeah. I remember Florence Langley telling about that. They got logs out from there. So, you, then, did not work in the store at all; you were just a child.

Oh no, I was just a child.

And it was a general store? Yea-ah. But there was never a Post Office there when your father had it.

No, the Post Office was across the street at Harriet Woodard's—down at her house.

That would be now where Art and Kathy Springsteen live now.

Okay. Your father and mother were quite active in the 1st Congregational Church.

They had, I think that, uh, before, I think they used to, or at least, my mother used to attend the Methodist Church in Salem, was her big interest.

Now that's interesting, seeing that there was a Methodist Church . . .

But I don't know how active that church was. This is something, I think. I can't be too sure of it. They got interested in the Congregational Church, maybe somebody got 'em interested.

Your father was a deacon. And you were telling me about the deacon's chair.

Well, it was this chair in behind the middle row of pews, and it was always there. It was like a captain's chair. And Dad used to sit there and overlook the flock and sometimes he'd go to sleep.

I don't know if he'd get to snoring or not. But my mother, I think, was a little bit irritated over that; and she'd say, "Charles!" (in 'loud' whisper), and whatever, else she'd say.

Now, was the deacon the person who took up the collection?

I guess so, I know he had to with the communion once a month.

He was the one who prepared that or served it?

I think, probably the ladies, some of the ladies prepared it, the ladies had something to do with that. And, of course, they did with the linens and so forth. They would take the linens home and wash them.

That hasn't changed.

Course, there wasn't any water at the church, so the little wine glasses had to be . . . this is all, I think the ladies do these same things. But I remember Dad passing communion, and I almost think that once or twice, Dad preached a sermon when some minister being either ill or . . . I believe he did, once or twice. The congregations were quite small.

Oh, now I would have thought they were larger than we have today.

I know. As I remember, at the time the congregations weren't too many people. I don't know just how many there were, but of course, it was hard for a lot of people to get out, especially in winter.

So, would some people then still come in horse and buggy or was it cars by then?

Some people that had horses - I don't think were church goers. I think a lot of people didn't come to church, unless maybe they'd show up at Easter time. I don't remember a whole lot of people come to church.

So, your father sat in back of the last row in the middle pews. Did you and your mother sit in front of him?

We used to sit a couple of seats ahead but toward the back. My mum didn't like to sit way up front. She sort of liked to sit in the back sort of inconspicuously. Look at the size of that word, huh?

Yes. Okay. And your mother taught Sunday School. Is that right?

I think she did. We had different ones that taught Sunday School, but I can't remember a whole lot - if we did have a Sunday School teacher. Of course, Mrs. Campbell, she used to teach Sunday School. Probably my mother did, but I don't seem to remember that.

And the Sunday School would have been held right there in the church.

Now that little room, back of the church, I tried to recall, I don't remember if there was any heat in there in the wintertime. In the summertime, I think that sometimes we used to sit in that little room—the little, little tots. As we grew larger, we graduated out in front of the church and was dotted around to several different classes in different parts of the church.

You don't remember if any of the teachers were men?

I don't know.

You were telling me about the lighting in the church.

Well, they were kerosene lovely looking lamps. I don't know that there were maybe three or four along the side walls. And I don't remember, but there was some kind of lamp up by the organ. But what attracted me [was] those lamps on the side, they had the white shades and in my childish mind, they made me think of ice cream. I don't know if it was in cones or in dishes or what because the shape of those shades, I always thought of ice cream. The big chandelier had to hang over the center of the church. They had the same sort of lamps and the same sort of shades. There must have been a tall step ladder stored in that further hallway. There had to be to get up to service those lamps . . .

Yes, that's quite a distance.

...to put kerosene in and keep 'em cleaned and so forth. I almost think I can recall my father getting up there.

So, there was just that one central chandelier?

As far as I know. And then there was a lamp up by the pulpit, and I think the base of that lamp now, is that used for baptismal services, the nickel colored?

Yes.

That used to be a lamp, in those days, and I think that was by the pulpit. Of course, the pulpit I those days was in the center of the up front. I believe that was a lamp.

I always wondered where that baptismal basin came from.

As years went by and the church got redone, I think that a lot of those lamp fixtures got bought by somebody—I don't know who.

I would imagine because they certainly aren't anywhere in the church.

I think they found a sale for them.

Probably people were delighted to buy them.

Now, I was talking to Frank Langley, and he said he thought that your father and mother had one of the first automobiles in Wilmot. Do you remember that as being true?

Well, I don't remember about the first, but I remember it was a Model T Ford. I think at one time there were two. Was one that they parked in the barn, and they had another one. One of those might have had something to do with Harry, I don't know, it might have been Harry's. I can remember riding in the Model T. I don't know who else had cars, but there had to be other people who had cars, but I don't know who. My mind just won't remember as much as I'd like to have it.

That's a complaint of a lot of us. So, before that, you would have ridden in a wagon or a buggy?

Oh yes, I rode the wagon an awful lot, and sleighs in winter. Little sleighs, and big sleighs. Dad had a [????] and he'd hitch up his driving horses, Rodey and Roxie, and he'd go up and get the Bretagna boys, they lived over the two-mile limit to come to school—he would go way up on the turnpike, twice a day, and he'd bring them home after school.

Now 'the Turnpike'—what we call Route 4A now, you called the 4th New Hampshire Turnpike.

Yea-ah.

Do you remember a mica shop at the Center.

Yes I do, when they mined the mica mine.

Where exactly was that shop?

Well, that shop was that house where the Maloney's live.

Now that would be now where Townsend Howe lives?

I don't know who lives there now, but the Maloney's lived there, Mrs. Maloney had the Post Office after a while. I think the shop was hitched onto that. It was in that area.

That was just a little way up from Bunker Hill Road, was it, there was a house on the corner, the shop there.

That shop, unless it was hitched to a house, I thought was between Mrs. Bretagna's house and the next house. I thought it was. But it might have been a separate building. Who had charge of that? Was it Guy Smith? You know, when I tried working up there, you had to trim the mica and just have it just so, and somebody had to inspect it. And then, I don't know where the mica went. It had something to do with the war effort.

Partly. So, you worked there for a little while?

I did, for a little bit.

Were there very many people employed there?

Oh, there must have been 12 people, maybe 14.

Now we were talking about the town hearse and you said you remembered that.

I do. I guess we kids thought it was pretty nifty. They used to park it in the horse shed and we'd look in it and look it all over.

There never was any deviltry done to it like on Halloween?

Well, I don't think so, might a been, but if there was, I didn't know. It was real nice.

Can you remember seeing it being drawn by horses?

I don't know; I really don't know. I know that my Dad used to help Mr. Goodhue, who was the undertaker, way back many years ago. If somebody passed away up in the North part of town, I think that he used to drive the horses up in there to take Mr. Goodhue up there and bring out bodies. (*little crash*) Those are my icicles falling down.

Now that hearse is in the New London Historical Society. It was bought by Bill Kidder, and then he presented it to the Historical Society, but it's a very nice-looking hearse. When we had the Bi-Centennial parade in Wilmot, they lent it and had flowers inside and I think I remember a coffin—you know, it looked as though there was somebody in there, and a couple of horses drawing it. It was very nice.

Now what about telephones. Do you remember around when you got a phone? You didn't have a phone when you were a child, a small child.

No, Mr. Goodhue had the only phone in town, and I don't know how long he had it, but other people didn't have phone, too. I don't know. I think that I was married, and we came over to live with my mother, of course, she was living there alone, and after Dad died, we had a phone put in. But I was there in 1938, so it was sometime after that we had a crank phone put in.

So, if there were any emergencies then you would have to go up to Fred Goodhue's.

That was the only one.

Now you and I talked about peddlers and you said a very intriguing man, the stocking man, tell me about that.

Well, I think he came up from Franklin, probably from the hosiery mills down through there. And I don't recall him having a horse or a wagon. It seemed to me that he always was walking from house to house.

With a sack on his back?

I guess he did have a sack, but by the time he would get to your door he'd have the stockings, I remember, he'd put them over his arm. And they would be those old-fashioned stockings with ribs in 'em for children, and then he had plain cotton socks for older people, and I suppose he had stockings for men, too. But my mother usually bought stockings. I can remember her buying stockings for me, and they had those ribs and would be quite heavy. Probably good for winter.

Good and warm.

Winter warm, winter wear.

Now, did he ever eat at your house, because I've read about peddlers coming around, and he would eat at different homes or stay overnight with different families.

I don't remember that, him staying overnight.

And you don't know who he was, you never knew his name?

I don't know who he was.

Then you talked about butchers would come with the wagon.

There was a butcher that lived in Springfield, but I think by the time that ... I don't remember he had a horse and wagon. I remember him having a Model T or some kind of old-fashioned car with a cart on the back of it. That was Bill Hale, I think, and we had another butcher, I can't remember his name.

Frank Langley thought there was one by the name of Dall Patten.

That's right! Dall [Dallas] Patten, he was another butcher. He came down. And it was Bill Hale always gave me hot dogs. All the kids along the route got a hot dog from Bill Hale.

And you would eat it raw? Yup. (chuckle)

Now, the fish man—that was a different person?

Yes, he was all fish. He was, did I mention his name on the phone?

No. You said you couldn't remember who he was.

I don't remember.

Would these people come once a week?

Yea-uh, they used to come around once a week. And then there was somebody that came up from Franklin way and sold hulled corn and that would be at certain times of the year. It was probably only once a year.

And how would that be sold?

In a scoop, I think, and you'd buy those pasteboard containers that they used to have as a way to carry 'em. And they had scales. All these peddlers had a scale hanging inside of the wooden things that were built on the back of their . . . so they could weigh.

Now do you remember eating this hulled corn?

No, I didn't like it.

Then you must have eaten it at least once.

I must have tasted it; I didn't like it.

And he would come just once a year.

I think so, that's all I remember, once a year.

And people would buy their year's supply at that time.

Well, I don't know as you could buy a year's supply, see, it was loose. But I remember seeing it in the back of his peddling cart.

These carts, would they have writing telling who the person was and what they [sold]?

I don't think that hulled corn person did. And I don't remember, I think maybe the butcher did.

Now you must have had an ice man.

Well, maybe some of the other people had ice, but like I say, my dad had that little icehouse [and] he used to cut ice.

Okay, now tell where that was.

I don't know where . . . I think he used to cut ice. Maybe somebody else cut it for him there. I don't know where that ice was chopped. There's so much stuff I don't know, but I remember going in there in the summer and playing in the sawdust and running my feet down and getting my feet on a cold cake of ice as a child, and there was some other kids used to go in there with me and do the same thing. I don't know who it was now, but anyway, that was a lot of fun. But I don't know where that ice came from. It must have been from some pond.

You don't ever remember going with your father?

I imagine that would have been too cold at the time for me to go out granted we're cutting ice.

Well, that's too bad that you don't remember which pond.

I don't know if it was pond over here in Wilmot Flat. It could have been, I suppose, but I just don't know. Or it might have been Eagle Pond. It probably wasn't too far away. I would think not.

Now, what about tramps?

Well, I remember seeing tramps sometimes, sometimes it would be three. Mama would say, "Three abreast tonight."

And what did she call them?

She called them "knights of trouble." And they'd stop at different places. Sometimes they'd stop at our house and want drinks of water, and then they'd inquire where they could be put up for the night. And of course, Rose Heath? she had a special little tramp house up there on their property.

Now, that's where Fran and Ollie Wilcox live now?

That's right. Yup, that's where they used to go.

Oh, it was a regular house—little separate building?

I think it was. If my memory serves me right, and I think the Town paid her so much a night, so much a tramp, so much per person, for her to lodge the tramps.

Yes, I read that in Florence's book. In fact, Martin Morey used to take in tramps, and he lived where Dave Lorden lives right now, [see next interview for correction] right out here in front of you, sort of. So, they had them also. There were several different people around town evidently.

His mother used to keep her eye on me pretty close because when these different people would come along like tramps and also gypsies once in a while, they headed up toward Lebanon way, and they'd stop and that was when she really kept her eye on me. And I always had that fear that a gypsy was gonna steal me and take me away.

Yes, that was sort of something that was held over your head.

So, when these different kinds of people came along, I was right there, but I'd hide behind my mother's skirts, and the skirts were kind of big in those days, so I could hide and peak around the side.

Now, did she ever feed the tramps or was it just water, do you think?

Well, she probably did, because she was a generous person, so she probably did, but I don't really remember seeing them eat, but she probably did. If they said they were hungry, she would do something about that.

Now, would you remember whether some of the men came back year after year?

No, I don't remember. Once in a while a man, I think that one, came along and stayed two or three weeks and helped my father with the haying process. I think so, and then they move on and that way they got their meals and board, they could eat and sleep, probably.

Now, where would he have slept, in the barn?

No, I think in the spare bedroom, but I'm not sure about that.

Now, you and I talked about the Wilmot Dramatic Club, and you've said that you don't remember of any such organization.

I don't remember of anything called that. But I remember the plays they put on years ago.

Well, we can't be sure whether that was this organization or the Grange.

I don't know. Now of course, my folks weren't interested in Wilmot Center Granges, they came down to Wilmot Flat to the Grange. But mother would be in plays and Harry was in a play. I remember one time, before he got so sick and everything, the play was "Aaron Slick from Punkin, Crick," and Harry was in that play. And then Sue Briggs was great. She was always the Irish maid if they had any play that called for an Irish maid. She was wonderful. And my mother used to be in plays, but I don't remember the names of a lot of those plays, but dad would be in the plays. So, whether that was the Drama Club, I'm not for sure, that you would have heard about.

The reason we talked about this was that when the Town Hall scenic curtain was refurbished, Mildred Howard researched to find out exactly who owned that curtain—the Selectmen wanted to know, and it seemed that it was purchased by this Wilmot Dramatic Club in 1907 and given to the Town. So, it is Town property. But that's all.

Well, by that time, I wasn't even born.

No, and that's all that Mildred knows about it so I just thought that you might remember your folks having talked about it, but you don't.

What about Old Home Day at the Methodist Campground?

Well, that was pretty interesting. We used to go down there to the services. I think sometimes they had things that lasted a whole week. Of course, we didn't stay there a week.

That's what I was going to ask you. In your time, was it still going on for the whole week? Because later on it got put to just one day.

Well, I think, probably, when I was real small there was things that went on there probably for a week. Mr. and Mrs. Fortin had a lovely cottage down there.

He was a minister?

Yes. And then Mr. and Mrs. Brown, from the big house

At the Center?

Ernest Brown and his wife, what was her name? Stella Anyway, they had a lot to do with the Methodist Camp meetings. I think they stayed down there; they had a cottage down there. Then there was a lady by the name of Mrs. Tallows??, very odd acting lady, and this just came to me the other day, and she had a cottage down there, and she was Maude Swift's mother.

Maude Swift from New London?

Yea—uh. And there was other cottages, but I don't know, I don't remember who, or how many cottages there really were. And then the speaker's stand was a good-looking building and the dignitaries and the ministers and different people who were speakers, they had a platform and that was part of the whole deal.

You said you remembered Fred Goodhue being up on the platform.

I think sometimes he was up there.

Do you remember the bell being rung?

Yeah, they had a bell, kinda forgot about that bell.

In later years after the whole thing had collapsed in the hurricane, Fannie [Florence Langley] went looking for that bell and someone had taken it.

And I spoke to you about those lamps that they had on the trees. I don't know if they had things going on there in the evening, but the people had to see—the people who had cottages there. And this was their lighting system anyway. And those big—they looked like frying pans, what you would see would be like, to me, in my child's mind, would be like, the bottom side of a frying pan—but that was enclosed, and I think that's where they put the oil and that came down through a tube that was sort of bent upwards, if I remember right. Well, anyway, it was like a jet type of a thing, but it was fed by this kerosene. Must have been wicks in there, and it would be like flares around. It's a wonder they didn't set the woods on fire.

Yes, you're right.

But that was the lighting system there at night. Of course, the people in the cottages had their own kerosene lamps and lanterns and so forth.

And you remember the 'vittling' tent?

Yes, I remember that. You went out through the lane over towards the brook which is over there past the other road that goes up Cross Hill. It was out in a field out there, and that was wood. It was a wood building. It wasn't really a tent. It was a wood building. And when it was closed up those . . . when they opened it up, they put these log doors down and they made, they formed a shelf in front of the windows, and they were propped up some way from the ground. And you'd get . . . I don't know whether they had ice cream.

I remember them saying ice cream.

They might have had ice cream; of course, they'd keep it on ice.

There was some kind of a slushy drink, too. Crushed ice and syrup, I remember Fannie talking about.

I don't remember that. I remember those little old-fashioned tin stoves that they had. You will find those in antique shops now. I remember going out there anyway and getting some stuff.

Of course, young people nowadays wouldn't even know what you meant when you said 'vittles'.

No.

It was food for human beings.

I think my folks would usually pack something to eat cuz normally the circumstances were so that we couldn't buy too much out.

So, you would never attend the evening meetings with your parents, it would just be daytime?

I don't know. When I stop to think of it, did they have evening meetings?

I think so.

I would think the mosquitoes would get them.

Well, they were all covered up with clothes. It didn't bother them as much, I guess.

In the Historical room we have a sign that Fannie found, and it says, "Ladies' Walk," and it was a euphemism for the ladies' room, and it has a little arrow on it.

Yeah, there was one for the men and one for the ladies. I remember going out there. And it felt, when I was small, it felt like a long ways because here was the grownups out here, and if I said I had to go, I don't know if my mother went out there with me or not, or whether I found my way out there. Probably if I was real small, she went with me. But it felt like a long way from the big people. You're afraid.

Sure, sure. There were a lot of people who came to those, weren't there.

And, then I remember, they had a band. And they had the Old Home Days down there. And then sometimes there'd be a play put on up to the Town Hall and this peppy horse that we had, Roxie, would be afraid of that band, and she'd start to prance, and one day, I don't know who, whether it was my dad or my mother, they used to bring this lady up from East Andover that didn't have any other way to get up there, and her name was Grace Howard. And she came up to me at the Old Home Day thing down there, and she wanted to go up to the play at night. Well, I think my mother was driving the horse and wagon that day and this lady was awful frightened when Roxie began to prance. And it was hard to hold her, and she couldn't wait to get out of that wagon. And I don't know whether we left her there. There must have been some sort of arrangement that my dad might have gone back and got her later. She wanted to go to that Old Home doin's and then that night she came up to our house, went up to the Town Hall, and whether one of my folks were in the play, I don't know, but I think she stayed at our house all night, and then my folks took her home the next day or something. But I remember Roxie being afraid of that band. And I don't know where the people got their water, but there was a beautiful spring to get good drinking water. You'd cross the road and go over—I think that Arthur Clarke owned that field—but you'd go out there quite a ways, and there was a lovely spring out under some trees. And I don't know whether that's where they got the water for the campground or not or whether there was water out by the ????. But I remember that spring and going out there. It was lovely spring water to drink.

It was probably pretty dusty in that area, wasn't it?

Oh yeah, lots of dust came right from the road.

I wanted to ask you about where the Post Office is. You had mentioned there was a Post Office on Center Hill. Mrs. Woodard?

That was Harriet Woodard.

Do you remember other Post Office locations?

I think before she got the Post Office, well, I don't know whether there was any Post Office. Yes, I do, come to think of it. There was a Post Office in the store building of Marcus' and then, Grace's store. That's the first Post Office I can remember.

Okay, that was right up at the Center almost across from Bunker Hill Road.

Yeah, there was a Post Office there. I had forgotten all about it. Plus, they had a little store.

And they were the people who had this ‘vittling tent’ at the Campground.

I’d forgotten who had the ‘vittling tent’. I’m glad you told me who had it because I didn’t remember.

I remember Fannie speaking about that.

And I think that their daughter used to work in the Post Office. What was her name . . . I think she was their daughter, and she worked there. And then right across from there, right in the square [there were] the hay scales. Did anybody mention the hay scales?

No.

Well, they would weigh anything huge on there, rolled hay, weigh the horses, whatever. It was right in the uh, as you’d start and go up the hill.

Bunker Hill.

It was right there so that it was facing the road.

Now, that was where the . . .

A boxed up, it was all wooden. The steel part was inside of this box, part of it, of course, was underneath however a scale is made, I don’t know. But they were there for years.

Is that where the horses’ drinking trough was, too? Because we have pictures of that in the little triangle there as you start up Bunker Hill?

Gee, I don’t seem to remember that trough, there might have been one there, I’m just trying to think. Gosh, I don’t remember that trough. Probably was.

Do you remember seeing things weighed on these scales?

Well, I think so. I know when I was a kid I used to play on those scales. It was a fun place to play.

Now you had told me about these projects that went on in the Town Hall where someone would come and demonstrate?

Well, it wasn’t always at Town Hall. Now that hat meeting, which was a demonstration about making hats, I think took place over at Marcus’ and Auntie Grace’s store and there was like a little apartment on roads? Out back and I think that one of the hat meetings was out in the back of that store. Because there was room enough to do those things. But some of the other projects

later that I remember was making mattresses. They'd take over the dining room at the Town Hall.

I did speak to Walter's mother this morning about that and she said, 'oh yeah, she remembered that that her mother went down and it was kind of like the extension group now. Someone from the University would come and demonstrate.

Yeah, they called them demonstrators. I don't know what other demonstrators came along. Probably, but I don't recall. I remember that hat one so well because my mother made me that little pink felt hat with the little Scottie dog trim on it. I think the demonstrator brought those things with her and you picked out what you wanted.

Mother also remembered about canning down there. That people would bring their produce and they'd give a canning demonstration.

I think that was over in the dining room in the Town Hall.

Probably.

I think so. Well, that's pretty vague so see I do remember something that I wouldn't have if you hadn't spoken of it.

I wonder around when that was. Do you remember about how old you were when that was going on? I wondered if it was during one of the wars, like the 2nd World War.

Let's see, when did that get over?

'46

The 1st World War?

No, the second. The 1st World War was 1919, was it? You were just a little girl then.

Well, I know it was hard to get . . . let's see, sugar was terribly high-priced in those days. It was hard to get certain things.

This is the 2nd World War you're talking about now.

Well, I heard them talk about the first one. And see, by the time 1918 rolled around, and in the fall of 1918, I would have been a year old. And I heard talk about how hard it was to get . . . how expensive and scarce things were. And of course, my folks had a sugar orchard, so the syrup came in handy because Dad would work the sugar orchard.

This was up in back of the house there?

Up in the woods there, the maple orchard on the right-hand side going up the pasture road. And I used to go up there with Dad and the work horses, and I'd go up and watch the syrup being made. Course, Dad'she'd work up the wood in the summer and get ready for the spring and sapping.

Do you remember sugar on snow? Oh yes!

[Lapse in the interview.]

We can start with Memorial Day, as we know it now, but you probably used to call it Decoration Day and what did you do for that?

Well, the teacher was involved a lot in that . . . had us learn poems and some of the program went on over there at the Town Hall—they had pieces to speak and songs to sing and so forth. So, there would be the program at the Hall and of course, the parade, and we kids—the teacher would . . . I think those wreaths that we used to make—I think that was done at the school house.

Tell me a little bit about the wreath making. What would the . . .?

Well, we used to have to go out in the woods and get the whatever it was we made the wreath with. Probably the teacher showed us—we used to make a lot of them and also for the soldiers' graves.

Now, that would be with probably, ground pine and some wildflowers and making wreaths out of that?

Possibly they were green greens.

Would there be enough for each veteran in the . . . ?

I know we used to make a lot of them. I don't know how many we made, but we made quite a bunch of them.

And you would march up to Bunker Hill Cemetery?

We'd march up to the cemetery. I think the program was first at the Town Hall, and then after the program, the speech making and the things we children were to do—poems and so forth—then we Marched up and put the wreaths on with the little flags at the Veterans burial places, and then back down again and everything would disperse.

And what about a band?

Well, there was a band—I think it was Never's band, but it might have been Moulton's, I don't know. But they used to uh . . . when we had to have a band, it was one of those bands that always

showed up in Wilmot Center for different occasions, you know, for Old Home Day, they had a band.

Now, did they have a color guard at all in the parade? Did the veterans . . . there must have been still some civil war veterans then?

I don't know who. I can't remember the people.

You don't remember any old soldiers in uniform and things like that?

I'm trying to remember, and I don't. There must have been, but I don't remember. Because I don't remember who were the old soldiers in this town. I don't know. One person that was an old soldier was Arthur Rand, and he lived in Wilmot Flat, and he had fought in the World War I. He would be one of the old soldiers, whether he came up to Wilmot Center or not to march, but he marched when there was things going on in Wilmot Flat . . . he probably did. And I don't know who else. There was a man, he's passed away, Mattie Crystal, he was a soldier and he was much into the Decoration Day things. Gee, I forgot all about him. And they lived over in that little house where your grand-daughter lives—

Daughter—our daughter lives there. That brings up something. As you remember it, were Decoration Day things always at the Town Hall or did you alternate between Wilmot Flat and Wilmot Center the way we do now?

I don't know unless they had things down here at the Monument and on the bridge. I can remember them dropping the Wreaths of Memory of those lost at sea. And then my folks would often go over to New London to everything going on over there when things in Wilmot were over with. They'd go up to New London to the Decoration Day things going on up there.

Do you ever remember saying a piece in the Wilmot Flat Church?

No, just in Wilmot Center I remember saying a piece.

Well, I guess the next holiday would be 4th of July.

Well, I don't believe too much went on up in Wilmot Center on the 4th. I can't seem to remember. I know you were lucky if either your parents or neighbors had something loud or would make a big bang with a big firecracker. I think Mr. Goodhue put on a fireworks display on the night before the 4th.

And that was for townspeople?

People could go to it. And I don't remember much of anything. My Dad used to pop a couple of big firecrackers, and I think, I had sparklers. That's about all I can remember about the 4th of July.

There weren't any speeches and so forth at the Town Hall?

I don't remember them if there were.

What about Thanksgiving—was that observed much in your home?

Oh, yes, we always observed the Thanksgiving holidays.

Relatives came from . . . ?

Well, there weren't a whole lot of relatives. Of course, my mother had one brother, George, and he used to come up for Thanksgiving and Christmas if he could. He worked in Granite State Potato Chip Company in Salem, and he was a bachelor. But he used to come up for those holidays. And, after the days of the Model T, he came up in the heavier cars—he came up in a Studebaker. And oh, we thought—my Dad especially—we thought that was wonderful. I presume we had our own roosters for Thanksgiving as we had our own fowl.

And probably lots of pies?

Well, there didn't have to be too many with such a small family, but we had, probably, several anyway, for the meal.

Your mother was a good cook?

Oh, yeah and my Dad was a good cook, too.

Oh, really?

Oh, yeah and of course, Harry had been a chef—had been cooking up at the Brocklebank. So, Dad was a very good cook, because when I went to the grammar school, there was a little apartment out behind the store that Harry had that Dad finally took over, and I would go down and Dad would get my lunch ready for me. He'd cook it there at the back part of the store. Boy, it used to taste good. He was a *very good* cook.

Was he always interested in cooking or how did he happen to . . . ?

Well, I don't know, it was just one of those things that he knew how to do, and I can remember him saying to my mother, "Well, I wish you could make mince pie like my mother did." And my mother would say, "Well, Charles, I'm *not* your mother. And I guess I can't make mince pies as well as she could." And that would be the end of it.

I guess a lot of wives got told that, 'I wish you could make such-and-such' like my mother.

But I thought my mother was a very good cook; she *was* a good cook, but evidently her mince pies couldn't stand up to my grandmother's pies.

What about Christmas? Did you hang your stocking back in those days?

Oh yeah, I had my stocking, and once or twice I got a switch in it and a piece of an orange...

Oh, no!

...because I guess I had been a not very nice little girl. And once I remember getting a stick—but I'd get an apple and an orange. My mother used to crochet a lot. She'd make little things for me. You know, you didn't go out and buy. If I got one big thing, like, it would be like a doll. One year I got a sled when I got old and big enough to have one. And I think she'd been off to the State Grange somewhere—they were very much into Grange—and Harry was, too, and I think they brought this sled home from someplace here in New Hampshire and hid it until Christmas time and a pair of skis. I didn't have lots of skis—didn't do very good with all that stuff. But the sled was a wonderful thing.

That was quite a hill—Center Hill—to slide down.

Oh, and the Christmas Tree on Christmas morning, and of course, there wasn't a whole lot of things either under or on the tree like there is now for the children.

No, you were satisfied with a lot less.

You did have to be satisfied with it and like I said, she used to make things, you know, she would make doll clothes. She would crochet them, especially if I got a doll. I remember one Christmas I got a doll named Madeline and she had on a beautiful satin green, but I wasn't very nice to my toys; and eventually, I lost them. I didn't take good care of my toys.

Now you wish you had.

Oh, yes. But she was a beautiful doll. She came, probably from one of those trips out, and was hid until Christmas time.

You must have had a program at the church.

Oh yeah, we threw on little plays sometimes at the church and spoke a Christmas piece. I don't know whether they had a tree or not at the church much in those days. Quite often the tree was over at the Town Hall, but then later, I don't remember when, occasionally the tree would be at the church. But that was later on I think with different ministers, Miss Forbes, had a lot to do with the tree being at the church. I remember her, getting kids to put on programs and such and how hard she worked, too, to fix the stage up there.

And did Santa come and distribute presents from the tree?

I think so. Before Santa, . . . who played Santa, gosh I don't know, but I think Santa came. There were lots of times I remember the tree being over at the Town Hall, but I don't remember who did the honors of being Santa.

Would you get little bags of candy?

Well, we'd get an orange, and I think little small amounts of candy; and one present—the Ladies Society, I don't know—each child in town as they exited the building would get a present.

So, I was thinking when you were trying to think of who Santa might have been that maybe Fred Goodhue, sometimes, would have done that. Sounds like something he would do.

Well, he might have, but of course, maybe we kids would never know—maybe that was kept a secret from us, too, for the sake of Christmas.

Probably tried to, anyway. When you spoke of getting a sled, did you slide down Center Hill a lot?

Oh, yes. My sled was a little different—I can't remember the name of my sled. It seems though that maybe it was a Perfection, but most sleds had some iron work out past the steering bar, but my sled didn't. And one day, we slid a lot on Center Hill because it was much safer, there were tracks from logging teams and sleighs and so forth, and of course the town roller would go over roads, and it was good conditions for sliding and tobogganing and so forth. And after I got my sled, instead of going down on my belly on my sled, I decided to try going down Center Hill sitting up and steering with my feet. And one side had a tendency to stick, and I couldn't get it up quick enough one day with my foot and it stuck; and Mary Preston who lived up the street was just staring into her walkway and I ran into her and she was fairly well along in years then, but she lived a long time afterwards—quite awhile afterwards, anyway. But she was probably in her 70's when this happened, but I knocked her down. And I kept right on going. I was naughty. I didn't stop. And my mother had been up at the store, and Mrs. Preston watched--I think she must have crawled up her pathway and got into her house—and she watched my mother come walking down the hill and she hollered, "Mrs. Joyce, would you please come in?" My mother went in and she said, "You know, Marjorie ran me down with a sled!" So of course, they talked it over and when Mama got home, I don't know whether or not I was hiding, but I was all shaking and Dad was still off somewhere, and Mama says, "Marjorie, you ran into Mrs. Preston"? And I said, "Well, I didn't do it on purpose. Is she mad at me"? I don't remember what my mother said but she knew I was awfully afraid of Mrs. Preston and of course, it lamed Mrs. Preston up at that point. Now, she used to take eggs from my folks, so of course, my mother knew how to get around it, and I think it was the next day and she said, "I want you to take these eggs up to Mrs. Prescott." And I said, "I don't want to! I'm afraid she's gonna get after me for knocking her down." Well, of course, I had to take the eggs up anyway and that broke the ice. Mrs. Prescott

was very nice to me and everything. Well that took care of that, but I will never forget the day I knocked Mrs. Prescott down, whereas if I had been lying down going on my belly, I probably would have pulled that up and dragged my feet or something and gone on, and I was going lickety-split. Down she went, and she wasn't very happy about it.

What about sliding down where the Methodist Church used to be.

Yeah, we did that a lot at recess time—noon time—at the school and that would be well packed down.

I think Connie [Forsham] said that her grandfather used to have the roller come and pack it down on purpose so the kids could slide.

And also, I guess we'd slide down across the lawn in front of the church and down over the other lawn way down, but we slid on the road an awful lot, too. And one time, Leonard Gove, got hit, no . . . this wasn't a winter accident, this was a different kind of accident. We went out to the road in recess time, and Lee Kendrick came along with his—it wasn't a Model T, it was a later model something, but it knocked Leonard down went down to the tar and it banged Leonard good, but Leonard survived it. But that wasn't a sliding accident, but oh, we had great fun sliding, and it was a gentle slide. It wasn't as steep as Bunker Hill.

Did you ever slide on Bunker Hill, too?

Oh, yes. We used to go out at night sometimes sliding—a bunch of kids. And we had a toboggan and some other people had toboggans, and I didn't steer the toboggan, but in fact I don't know if it was our toboggan that used too much, I think lots of times it was sleds. And on nice moonlight nights, we'd start at the top of Bunker Hill, come down around the corner, slide all the way to down where I used to live.

And then you had to walk all the way back up, but I guess you expected to have to do that.

Priscilla Langley's sister had one of the nicest sleds in town. She had this huge, great long sled—we envied that, Priscilla's sled.

Did she take other people on it or did she just use it for herself?

Well, she was pretty proud of that sled. Mainly I think she kept to herself with that sled quite a lot. She wasn't too generous with it. I don't even know if she let her brother, Frank . . . of course, he had his own sled, I suppose. She took good care of her sled—probably it paid off to be a little selfish with it. (Laughter)

Speaking about school, what about at the end of school you probably had a program to show off to your parents.

Oh yeah.

Was that in the school or in the Town hall?

Probably in the school. I think school just closed.

Didn't you have an end-of-the-year-picnic?

Sometimes we had an end-of-the-year picnic. Some of the picnics we went on was over to Keyser Lake. Then where else did we have picnics . . .

You didn't go down to the Grove, the Campground?

Well, possibly, I don't remember. Keyser Lake sticks out in my mind.

Would that have been in a horse and wagon, or . . . ?

I don't know how I got there. Of course, it could have been Model T's and other cars that took us. If we went as far away as Keyser Lake, it had to be. Of course, I can't remember what age I was with that, pretty young, but I don't remember riding in a Model T.

Who were some of your playmates at the Center?

Well, two of my playmates—I went to their house much more than they came to my house—Margaret and Susan Langley. I packed up my dolls and my doll carriages, and I go up to play with them. Most always we had to play outside, especially in the summer because her mother was a little bit odd, and she didn't want us making a whole lot of noise in the house and so forth, so—and then sometimes we played with little old play trains. It wasn't always dolls we played with, but we had a lot of fun. And then another one that I played with was Esther Langley even though she was 4 years younger than myself. We were together an awful lot as kids, and she lived down to the John Preston house because her mother kept house for John.

Where was that?

The house just this side of the Quickwater farm—that big white house.

That would be where Sheffield Halsey lives now.

But anyway, Esther's mother kept house down there for a long time for John Prescott. He was one of the old-timers, and he had a brother, Moses Prescott, that lived there. And they both [were] blind. And of course, Esther's mother was a widow lady because Esther's Dad died when she was just a little girl, and of course, it was hard for her mother, and they lived up the other end of the town but she went down and cleaned house for many years for John Prescott so that meant that she would come up to play with me. I'd go down to play with her. She had a brother, John, that was about my age, and she also had another brother, but her mother gave him up for adoption. He was adopted by some wealthy people in New London—the Bucklins—adopted Ben Langley but then he turned to Ben Bucklin. Her brother, John, well he's dead now for quite a few

years, he didn't play with us two girls very much, but sometimes we'd have picnics either up in the attic at my house, we had little plates up there way up in the back. We could go up attic down to John Prescott's house, and the minute we got some food from my mother's to take up and have our little meals up in these little attic playhouse places, then John would come up if we were down there, and he would eat up our food on us. Then we used to play down in the brook an awful lot and down behind there, you had to go out through the barnyard in the field to get down to the brook when I was down at her house. But when we played in the brook up to my house, we used to go down to the field a little ways, and there's such a crop of ledges out there that are just beautiful. Of course, I used to get poison ivy just about every time because there was poison ivy down here before we were allowed to get over into the brook. But we spent an awful lot of time at those ledges. There's sort of like a pool down there. One part of that is almost square—a rock formation like a pool. So, I spend a good many hours by myself down there in that pool when there wasn't anybody with me. But Margaret and Susie, they couldn't play in the brook. Their folks wouldn't let them over to play in the brook. They were very strict with those two, but eventually . . . there was a little house right in the middle of the hill, so that house is gone for a long time, where Margaret and Susie's parents lived. And I think it was their mother's father that lived there with them, his name was Mr. Minor and he was an old, elderly man when I was small with great long white whiskers, and he always sat at the kitchen window, and I think he smoked a pipe. But he had a great big blue bunch was on one of his hands, and I used to ask them what that big blue bunch was, and I don't remember what that bunch was. But every time he lifted his hand up to fix his pipe or something, my eyes were just glued to that big blue bunch. Now, Susie is still alive and so is Margaret. Susan might be able to shed some light on her grandfather. I know it was their mother's father. Their father used to be Mr. Goodhue's hired man, and he milked cows and did what you have to do for farm work.

This would be Fred?

Fred Goodhue. He was the hired man for Fred Goodhue, and of course was the undertaker of the town. He held a very prominent place in the town. He was sort of a bigwig of the town, in a way, at least we thought of him in those days.

Now where . . . you told me where the barn was where Fred Goodhue's stock was?

It was quite a-ways. It didn't have anything to do with the KSP building [Kearsarge School of Practice] but it was right in back . . . between the KSP Building and Carolyn LaJoie's. And her father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Fowler, used to live there, and it was set off the road quite a-ways. And that was Mr. Goodhue's barn.

Now, getting back to . . . you talked about playing with Esther Langley—I would have known her as Esther Farnum, is that right?

Yes. And she was only 5 years old when her father passed away. And, I don't know how long they stayed up at the big house that they lived in because her mother had to do something. She

had John, and Esther and the other boy, Ben that got adopted by the Bucklins. But it was hard for Esther's mother. So, I don't know just how long after Esther's dad died that her mother came down to Mr. John Prescott's to keep house for him, but I know she was there for a long time. And Esther's father had a brother by the name of Austin Langley, that was Esther's uncle, he lived in West Andover. Have you ever heard of Austin Langley?

Yes. I thought he lived out on the road where John and Julie Morse live now—go up the North Wilmot Road.

He might have at one time, but I thought he lived down in West Andover. I don't know. He might have lived up there. The farthest back that I can remember anybody living up where Julie Morse lives was Mrs. Hyer...lived there a great many years ago.

Margaret Hyer?

Yes. She used to be the school nurse, come to think of it. And oh, I thought she was quite stern. Kids see people in different way, you know, didn't like them or be a bit afraid of them—I don't know.

Do you remember things like chicken pox and scarlet fever or being quarantined, or . . . ?

Well, I never had the scarlet fever, but I remember having the measles, and I had the chicken pox and all those bumps. When I had the measles, I don't know my age at that time, but prior to me having the measles—this is when other cars started coming through the town and somebody's car caught on fire down near where Ricky lived, and that car was an Oakland, and I think it was a one seat, it might have had a rumble seat. I don't know who owned it or anything, but it got on fire and somehow it wound up in our dooryard. And whether Harry had anything to do with it or whoever owned that car must have asked if they could get it off the road, and they just left it in our dooryard. Well, anyway, I used to go out and play in what was left of it. It was some part of the car left, and I used to get in there and play. So, when I had the measles, I guess I got delirious, because my mother told me later that I said, "Mother, you've got the top of that car in your pocket." And she said, "Marjorie, I haven't got that in my pocket." Because, she told me all of this later that I blamed her for having the top of that old Oakland car in her pocket, and I was mad at her.

You don't remember the [school being] closed because of any kind of an epidemic? Well, no I don't [remember] it being closed. Of course, when the influenza took so many people back in 1918, that didn't get down to my house, but the Goves lost Plant Gove and Marcie? Goves, I think, a set of twins. So, let's see, when did my folks come to Wilmot, because, how long had they been in Wilmot before this epidemic took place.

Let's see, it doesn't say . . . Harry died in 1928, so they'd been here quite awhile then.

Like I say, I think he was 16 or 17 when they came. But this influenza wiped out a lot of people all over everywhere. And, of course, my Dad, they were middle aged people when they took me in, and sometimes his heart would kick up and mother always kept a bottle of brandy way up in the top of the china cupboard, and that wasn't to be touched unless my Dad had a spell. And Dr. Somebody came over to see the awful sick children up at Mark and ????

But, some way word got round that my mother had some brandy—I think it was brandy—in the house. And this doctor, I think, came down and asked if that would be something that they would give as a medication—not full strength but they probably made it into a toddy or something.

Probably, in those days. So, these were just babies then?

I'm only able to tell where they are buried up to Wilmot Center, and they were pretty small. I don't know what their ages were, but they lost them. I know it was a boy and a girl. But fortunately, it didn't hit our house.

Did anyone else in the Gove family get it, do you know?

I don't know. But I don't know who else in town got it but that was sort of an outstanding story. That's why it stuck in my mind. They had a big family. And they had kind of a hard time growing up, those boys did. And at one time, somebody's got a picture and I don't know where that picture is now, Clarence Gove and Martha Gove were a handsome couple—she was a schoolteacher and they were handsome; and at one time Esther had the picture of them in their young years, but I don't know who's got it now. I asked Joe about it not too long ago and he didn't know. He said Esther gave away a bunch of pictures, and he thought she might have given that picture to Julia. But I don't know, they were handsome. You would never believe, it was awful hard for that life.

A hard life wasn't it—all those children and not much money.

And Caddy used to like his cider pretty well and whatever else to drink and that was hard on his wife. Pretty rough, but they're all dead and gone now.

Well, now, speaking of growing up, when you grew up, you went to high school?

No, I didn't go to high school and the reason, well, of course, it wasn't that easy to get down to high school down in Andover in those days, and I had such a hard—I don't know whether I had mental blocks, or what—but I wasn't too terribly keen on learning. I don't know if I had a learning disability or whether I was just thick, but arithmetic we called it in those days, was actually my downfall, and I would go to the board and I didn't ever seem to come up with very many right answers. So, when it got into complicated long division, fractions, I just couldn't get it through my head, so I didn't . . . I was late getting out of school because I got held back from

not being one of the brightest students. So, this made it that I didn't want to go to high school and be laughed at. I think that was a good share of why I didn't want to go. So, I didn't.

Stands to reason.

But that's as far as my schooling went. I learned to read to beat the band and thank goodness I can read and write and do what I have to know about arithmetic because there are so many people that can't read, and that's very sad, I think. Thank heavens that I learned to read very well.

So, did you, then go out to work?

Eventually, I did, and let's see, wherever did I go first? I don't know. I worked over at New London at the Fifield's boarding house one summer. And, I had a girlfriend, she's still alive, and she was related, in a way, to this elderly lady, to this Mary Prescott that I stayed with, too—the one that I knocked down on the sled. Later I used to stay with her nights at her house. In fact, one night, she up and died while I was there. See, I missed that part of the story, didn't I. But yeah, I stayed up there with her nights and in the meantime, her relatives came up—her daughter lived in Somerville, I think, Marion, and then she had granddaughters that lived there. Helen lived in Saugus and she married somebody—a David Churchill. And when she did then she had a sister-in-law that I call 'little Helen'. Well, Little Helen's mother and father were dead, and she lived with her brother that got married to this Helen Saunders, and she would come up to, she called her "Grandma Prescott's" and that's how I became acquainted with her. So, as far as going to work—Little Helen had something to do with this later, but I'll tell the story about Mrs. Prescott and how I stayed up there with her nights. And in the summertime, we would sleep upstairs. She'd sleep in the room toward the road, and I'd have a little room on the other side of the hallway toward the brook, and in the wintertime she'd come down and she'd sleep in the living room. She had a little bed over in the corner on those nights—real cold bedroom on the north side of the house looking up the road. But she got quite funny in the head, and it was in the summertime, and she thought she heard somebody around the house, and she had a .22 pistol, and she said, somebody's around the house. And she had to shoot that pistol out through the screen right up towards that cottage is up there in the woods. Wasn't anybody there.

Now tell me again where this house is that you're talking about where Mary Prescott lived.

Right next to Margaret Souza—this is Catino's house.

Okay, Brookledge.

Yeah. And she had to shoot that pistol out the upstairs bedroom across the road up towards the woods on the other side to scare whoever was prowling around the house. But I think this was imagination. I'd rather be alive, and I told my folks, I don't want to stay up there with Mrs. Prescott because it's frightening me. Well, my mother hated—my Dad had heart spells

sometimes and she hated to leave him—but she started staying up there with Mrs. Prescott and leaving me down at the house. Until I sort of faded out, and then I was back and staying at the Prescott's. It was before winter set in. We were still sleeping upstairs, but it was cool, and you had to build the fires with wood; and let's see, electricity, I think she had electric lights in the dining room. One night she hollered at me, and I went in her room. She said, "I don't feel well. Would you go down and start the fire and get some hot water and fix me up a toddy. She kept whiskey in the house. So, I did, but in the meantime, she got out of bed and she had her old fashioned underwear on and she got her bathrobe on and she came down the stairs and she couldn't get any further than the dining room table. I think I was about 13 when this happened. She sat down at the dining room table and put her head down like this and said, "Oh, hurry, hurry." Well, I hurried as fast as I could, and I finally get some hot water, and I got the toddy made, and she drank it, but not knowing that she was on the way out. I didn't know that. She drank that and she said, well, I'm going in the living room. She had a couch in there. So, I helped her in the living room, and she sat on the edge of that living room and she started to rub her legs and so forth. And she gets progressively worse and worse, and I put a big rug over her legs—one that her daughter made. I don't know whether she was going or not. She might have. I'll never know. But she said, "Would you help me lay down on the couch and put my legs up?" And well, gee, I was pretty slight of build in those days, and she was getting heavy, and I tried to get her legs up onto the couch, and then all of a sudden, she was like, half on the couch and her legs were half down, and suddenly a big fright entered my whole self and I just said, "Mrs. Prescott, you've got to let me go for help!" And it was a rainy night—I think it was in September, and it was raining and of course, no streetlights or anything. And I ran out back and I grabbed my raincoat and I ran down to Sue Bridges??? in the dark, and I jumped up on her doorstep because hers was the next house, and then I had to go further to get down to my house. Her sister Minnie was up here visiting at the time. Now, Sue had a wire—it was a flat, some twisted, I don't know what it was made out of—between her two lawn trees, and I step out back, and I went over that wire, which was probably waist high, and I leaped up and landed on the doorstep, and I banged on Sue's front door. And her sister, Minnie, answered and I said, "Come quick! And have Sue come quick!" So, she hollered at Sue. I said, "Mrs. Prescott is either dying or having a shock—I don't know which, but I think she's dying." And Sue had to get into her clothes, and she hollered, "I'll get there just as quick as I can!", which didn't take her long. And when I ran back up ahead of Sue, I peaked in, but I didn't go any further than the hallway. I peaked into the living room. I didn't dare go in there, I was so full of fright. Sue got right up there anyway, and the minute Sue got there, of course, I was much relieved, and she says, "Go get your Mama." So, I ran back down in the dark, and I got my mother and I told her, I said, "Sue is up there." And, of course, by the time my mother got herself together and got up there, Mrs. Prescott had passed on. I don't know whether she passed on before Sue went up there. She was in the process of it anyway when this all started, you see. So, anyway, I was terribly frightened.

You must have been.

I don't think my tongue was, it was thick, and everything. And Sue said for me to come in and help her and Mrs. Prescott up on the couch because she was so heavy. She was a little, short lady, but anyway. Sue told my mother, "If Margaret touches her, she won't be so afraid." Well, right then, I don't think it helped me then—Sue thought it would. Well, the next thing that happened, one of them wrote a note and said, "Take this up to Goodhues." Well, here it was, probably one or two o'clock in the morning by the time this all happened being that he was the only one who had a telephone to call up down to Somerville. They found the number somewhere, maybe in Mrs. Prescott's desk or somewhere from when her mother had passed away. So, off I went up in the dark up to the Goodhue's and banged on the door—and that was the night of nights.

I guess so.

For me as a kid. And that turned me into almost like a kid's nervous breakdown. It really did. And that held me up a lot. I couldn't go to school for quite a few days. I was just in an awful state. And, of course, I know that my folks felt bad for me that this happened.

That was quite a thing for a 13-year-old to go through.

Awful! And of course, that stayed with me for a long, long time. And even now, you see my voice is quavering, when I talk about it. I get emotional and everything about it. It was a heck of a position for a kid to be in.

And 13 was a lot younger in those days than 13 is now.

Oh yeah, you didn't usually grow up as fast as, you know, what's going on in this day and age. I was still a child, really.

Well now, when you married Bill, he was not a Wilmot person?

No, he had been born, he and his brother—he just had one brother—they were born in Tilton, but after their father died—and Mr. Tilton died when they were just kids—but his brother was quite a bit older than my husband, and so their mother eventually met up with a "Mr. Jones" who lived in East Weare, he had a store over there, and he was a very active person in the town, and I don't know, they met through some, I don't know whether it was the Grange or . . . He was a divorced man, and something couldn't function that they had, anyway, and so, she married him. And, Bill went over East Weare and lived with his Mom and his stepfather, and I went over into Deering—I don't know how I found out about the job. It was quite a large family and they were living in Deering in the Community Center and the man was a caretaker there. So, I went there to work, anyway, for them and help out with the kids and so forth. And that's how I met my husband, because he came up through Deering. He had a big ice route, and that's how I met him, and he asked the lady that I worked for, "Can I take Marjorie down to Weare center to the band concert on Wednesday night,?" I guess it was. And she said, "I don't mind." So, he came up after me,

and that's how I met him—by working over there. And then see, after my Dad died, and we had Billy by that time, we came over to stay with my mother so she wouldn't be alone.

What year were you married?

Let's see, the hurricane was in '38. Course I was, . . . you know, Billy was born.

Mr. Block was a minister?

Mr. Block walked down to the house to perform the ceremony in the parlor. But remember it was a stormy night, and we had to go up to Mrs. Campbell, she was the Town Clerk, to get the marriage license, you had to apply, uh, it was some type of paper we had to get so that we could.

It had to be a certain number of days before you were . . .

And I think that I was the first one that did a blood test when that came into being in this State.

This ends the first session with Marjorie Joyce Tilton.