

Interview with Nancie Stafford Anders

Side A of tape #1:

Helen Wykle (HW): This is today March 13th 2002 we're at the home of Stafford Anders daughter of Lillian Exum Clement Stafford.

Nancy Stafford Anders (NA):... should write a book sometime, course I'm not gonna write a book sometime. (Unintelligible) down on the corner of Charlotte and Chestnut... Mary and Miss Jo...of course Miss Jo died.

HW: I know.

NA: This is one thing that's happening, you know, with this... Miss Jo always teased me; she said I was mixed in the generation that was after her (?). She was a wonderful person.

HW: (Unintelligible) kinda going out of town. (Unintelligible) Sams, Peggy Gardens...

NA: That name sounds so familiar that I must know her.

HW: Peggy had helped (unintelligible) But Peggy had said...called just the day before asking for a recipe...

NA: Yeah, well I think that's wonderful that you got to go. My grandfather did it the same in '93, with the end of (unintelligible), you know. I was gonna tell you, Miss Mary is standing there. I'm amazed at (unintelligible) I really am, because usually someone that old has managed to outlive a whole bunch of people, but the church (unintelligible) and we managed to (unintelligible) and finally work our way up and she looked at me and her dog is Nick, so she said, "Tell Nick that I need a new bag of hair. That the groundhogs are in the backyard again and something has to be done, but we've got one of them in a cage." And all these people looked at me and finally they all looked at me again and since

I'm used to be ignored cause people don't look at old people, they all thought well it must be something (unintelligible) but of course they don't know that Nick is a dog and what kind of hair! (laughter) Oh, I thought that was great.

HW: Let's see (unintelligible)...

NA: I doubt though you can read it. Five... (Unintelligible)

Another person, possibly Gwen Ashburn: I told her that my mother suffered some of the same ravages of diabetes too.

NA: And you told me she lived alone—

GA: Yeah, lived alone. Well so far so good, we're always (unintelligible), I tell her that I'm not gonna leave Asheville and she needs to come join me but she thinks eastern North Carolina is home.

NA: You said that you were Scottish descent from that area?

GA: I am. My grandmother was kin to the MacArthurs, her sister married a McCann, you know—

NA: You didn't know anybody named McKellar did you, from Roland.

GA: Well I had a cousin who lived in Roland and I'm sure that they probably knew the McKellars but it's been too long ago now but my grandmother would have instantly told you about the McKellars, she—

NA: Oh, I'm sure, uh-huh.

GA: She loved genealogy and local history and...

NA: I can't believe that (unintelligible) in the '70s. One thing I notice, that when you knew people they don't get any older, they stay sort of the same, you know. I ran across one of the school papers called *Sky High* that we had in high school. Aunt Nancy had

saved it because I was feature editor and I started trying to remember some of those people, you know, and (unintelligible) but there were some funny things in it.

GA: Well I wanted to show you, this is...Helen has been busy building information on women of Western North Carolina and so this is what she has put up so far about your mother.

HW: I wondered if (unintelligible) I saw that in the report and could never verify it...

NA: Let me tell you just a little bit about this. My people, mountaineers, are, they talked about mother as if she were still practically alive. She died when I was (unintelligible) years old. Aunt Nancy resided quite a position for a woman in those days she was hostess at Oteen which was a government hospital.

GA: Your mother's sister? And was her name Nancy—

NA: Nancy Rebecca.

GA: And Burnett was she a Burnett?

NA: Well I don't think it's in there, but oh yeah she was, my grandmother married (unintelligible). My mother had four brothers and three sisters and (unintelligible) but her books were here, her clothes, her jewelry, my mother was closer to me than a lot of mothers who are alive. I have her love letters and the diary she started the day I was born and finished the day she died.

GA: Tell me now about this house, Stafford, was this where you were born? This is not your family home—

NA: I was born around the corner in the old Mission Hospital we called it and so was my cousin (unintelligible), she had a brother but I'm an only child, we grew up together.

But this house was full of people. My oldest uncle had five sons that ran in and out of here, they were the sneakiest ones that ever lived, he was a preacher.

GA: Everybody says yeah.

NA: Well, anyway, I think she was the first one in the South not to (unintelligible) to operate without a male partner. I have had some historians tell me that they thought she was the only woman in the East, that there was one in Wyoming, I think it was. They usually worked with their fathers or their (unintelligible). You see none of them had been before the bar. Well somebody wrote one article saying that she was never a suffragette, but she sure was...

HW: We found that...

NA: Some of the funniest things have been written.

GA: I have that same article that appeared in something...

NA: Like I've got a sister I didn't know I had for almost eighty years and my mother died in childbirth and there was a beautiful article in State Magazine about it.

GA: We copied that cause you had told me about—

NA: And I called the old goat that wrote it and oh of course he was very cool and funny, he said, "Now Madam just what is your say so in this?" And I said, "Well sir I happen to be her daughter."

HW: (Unintelligible) the information we have is ...inaccurate.

NA: Yeah, I'm surprised that (unintelligible) cause I'm sure that you've gone into this many times, but I don't see just the mistakes that have been made about Mother, it's amazing there's any history at all. It's so, everything is so, things come up, you know, that aren't true at all. Like this, I asked him, I said, "I'm not blaming you sir. I know that

you didn't know my mother and that you have never been in Asheville." And he was gonna (unintelligible) and I said, "Buck, you know, what am I gonna do about this? I think that the editors of the magazines (unintelligible)...

GA: I was gonna ask you, did you ever (unintelligible)

NA: No. (Unintelligible)

HW: I am fine thank you.

GA: (Unintelligible)

NA: Tea, coffee, scotch or bourbon.

(laughter)

GA and HW: No!

HW: A short glass of root beer would just be great.

NA: Now this is without...it's good, I like it. I like so much what you said (unintelligible), it's the only time that I know about that she quoted scripture.

HW: (Unintelligible)

NA: (Unintelligible) about the city. Then another thing, I noticed a lot of times they, at the end of her career they think she just dropped out or went and deserted or her back was deserted or something. But she was going back into politics (unintelligible) run for Congress when she died.

GA: You said she planned to run for Congress?

NA: I think she was going to. Well I think this is one of the most interesting things too, see Mother was elected by sole male ballot, she couldn't vote for herself and I think that's important because when we finally did get the vote they could have run, you know,

Lucrezia Borger and we'd have all voted for her, I mean of course. But she was elected by male ballot; there has never been another (unintelligible) even now.

HW: You know what prompted (unintelligible), swelling of—

AN: Well she started work as a secretary in the sheriff's office and she got to know all the (unintelligible) my people (unintelligible) my uncle (unintelligible) ballot and (unintelligible).

GA: Not only did she know the right people though she must have been a good lawyer from an old family—

NA: She wouldn't take a case with a person she believed was guilty. She said not because of any good two shoes but simply because she didn't think she could defend somebody that *she* knew was guilty (unintelligible). It was so funny, there was one story they tell about (unintelligible) a man came and he wouldn't believe she was the real lawyer and he (unintelligible) go tell him I want to see him, you know, wouldn't believe that she was.

HW: Such a rarity, especially in the South.

NA: Yeah, they had some in New England but I'm not too sure that even there they had women that (unintelligible) don't quote me on that cause I've never been able to find out definitely, but I think...

GA: When your mother and father were first married they lived in Asheville.

NA: They lived across the street that was their honeymoon cottage, they lived here until she died and then he lived in this house with my family. He was a (unintelligible).

GA: So your grandmother and aunt had to raise you—

NA: Grandmother and Grandpa. Grandpa, oh boy, he didn't die till I was nineteen and he was thirteen when (unintelligible). He came from down east, his people owned a plantation and slaves.

GA: Came to Asheville—

NA: But this isn't slave owning country. I could give you the names of all of them but (unintelligible) was buried up there with them. When she died they didn't put her in a separate place.

GA: And your grandmother is the Burnett?

NA: Uh-huh.

GA: Burnitt, you say it.

NA: Well in one sentence I'll say Burnett and the next Burnitt, this is the way I grew up, I was very close to (unintelligible).

HW: Frances Hodgeson Burnett often...(unintelligible).

NA: We've often wondered. I (unintelligible) I think I was kin to the governor of Texas for awhile and the governor of Tennessee, one of the three brothers. The wife of the, when I was quite young, who was then governor of Tennessee came and spent the afternoon with Aunt Nancy and then finally (unintelligible) some connections. We didn't know as much about the Clements because when my grandfather left home there was always kind of a mystery of really why. His mother died of typhoid, he had it (unintelligible) he tells all kinds of stories about how his mother was in bed with the baby when the Yankees came and (unintelligible). He was a wonderful fellow because he put a card on it (unintelligible). You know when Sherman burned Atlanta and then came up and burned Columbia and then was going to join McClellan supposedly in Virginia and

we stopped him, he never got through North Carolina. And Grandpa would (unintelligible) when he was thirteen.

GA: He left home sometime in that period and then he came up—

NA: After that, what happened I think is his mother died and then this Yankee colonel I guess put a guard to protect the, you know, his (unintelligible). Cause there were hidens in the woods that Grandpa used to talk about and this was the end of the war (unintelligible) if Grandpa wanted to (unintelligible) he called it “scallywag”. I think that that was some of the lower (unintelligible)...

GA: After you were born did your mother practice law anymore or once she was married did she practice law?

NA: Well just kind of on a friendly basis.

GA: Ok, she didn't try to maintain her office then?

NA: I don't think so, she was going back in (unintelligible) and Dad, you know, didn't try to stop her. They had a very happy marriage; I have beautiful love letters from both of them. Some from Mother I think are kind of interesting because she'll talk about seeing Ellard (misunderstood/misspelled??) that night in the next one she'll say so and so (unintelligible). I guess an old woman never wrote a love letter...

HW: (Unintelligible) interesting.

NA: Yeah.

HW: What were your parents (unintelligible)?

NA: My father (unintelligible). He has been (unintelligible), well he actually belonged, they called it the cavalry then (unintelligible) isn't that a shame? My cousin has eight daughters and one son and I, you know, used to (unintelligible/inaudible)...

GA: (Inaudible)... came to Oteen for recuperation?

NA: Yes, and Aunt Nancy was a (unintelligible) she introduced (unintelligible), oh Mother had many many suitors. The last duel that was fought I think here (unintelligible) they always say you know who it was. I know who the two men were.

GA: They weren't fighting over your mother were they?

NA: Well, they were and Mother said, "What am I supposed to do, go off with the winner?" Everybody thought that was so romantic and she was insulted (?).

(Unintelligible) became a lawyer here...

GA: But they didn't kill each other?

NA: No, I think one of them shot the other one's hat off. They had the whole business, the Severes, one of the Severe brothers and there were two doctors here (unintelligible) he was heir (unintelligible) except they forgot to ask mother about whether she (unintelligible) I don't think she was interested in either one of them!

HW: (Unintelligible)

GA: Let's see I told Helen you said that you had a diary of your mother's that you know her words—

NA: Gwen, do you know where it is? Do you know where mother's diary is...?

HW: When she kept the diary did she record personal feelings and responses or was it just sort of—

NA: It was just mainly (unintelligible) not anything about (unintelligible). She (unintelligible)...

GA: Tell me about the (unintelligible) that you gave to (unintelligible).

NA: Now we're getting into Aunt Nancy now the museum's are interested, she was one of the first carver. Miss Vanderbilt started the school.

GA: I wanna know a connection to, cause I always see occasionally that your mother was encourage by Mrs. Vanderbilt, it says.

NA: Yeah.

GA: So Mrs. Vanderbilt started the school...

NA: And brought two sisters down here and the...I thought (unintelligible) so carving was pretty much a man's deal and Aunt Nancy with her pretty little hands and little wrists (unintelligible) carver. This is ...(inaudible and unintelligible).

HW: We were fortunate to have the Biltmore Industry's Collection and we started putting those up on our website for special collections and I was really taken by the (unintelligible) Bruce Johnson...

NA: Boy he's got the greatest collection of anybody, he hounded me for years...

GA: I was starting to say, I bet he's followed your footsteps.

NA: He even tried to ask if after I died would I sell the collection... I was gonna show you some of the pictures in here. Speaking of the (unintelligible name) everybody always corrected me and said (unintelligible name), I says I know what I'm saying, you're the one (unintelligible). But the people are still running around asking me if this is (unintelligible, maybe she says "mosque") basically since what's happened you know the last years couple of years, they're sure it's a mosque (?). Well shoot Gwen, where are all those pictures of ...the furniture just out in the hall...Did you have any luck with the diary?

Some one speaking (I'm not sure who), inaudible and unintelligible

GA: So your Aunt Nancy carved this and learned at the Biltmore School and the box that you gave had been carved by your Aunt Nancy—

NA: Had Mother's initials on it.

GA: Your mother's initials.

NA: Yeah.

GA: And I said (unintelligible) ...dropped me like a hot potato...(inaudible) I never saw the video they took, now we have (unintelligible)...(inaudible) here is ...and the chest in the hall is the (Unintelligible) Museum just brought that back it's been on tour with them. This is the (unintelligible)...

GA: Right there?

NA: Um-hum. (unintelligible) that's out in the hall, I'll show you.

HW: What's amazing is the work (unintelligible) art and I think there was some walnut pieces which were—

NA: Oh, a lot of the smaller pieces were walnut.

GA: It's amazing—

HW: It is amazing.

NA: Now here is Aunt Nancy.

GA: Right there?

NA: Yeah, and here is Miss Vance (unintelligible)...have you been in the little museum down there in Biltmore?

GA: Not in awhile, so I've got to go.

NA: Well we lost (unintelligible) and they crowded over in one little place across from the church.

GA: Upstairs.

NA: No, it's down on the (unintelligible)...all you have to do it just (unintelligible).

They still have a good deal, they have Mother's confirmation dress, that's a pretty cool thing (unintelligible).

GA: So when they relocate to the school house.

NA: We just keep moving (unintelligible). The woman who really started this is from Chicago and she, I'm on the board (inaudible) such as it is and they've got a nice display of stuff out there (inaudible) the museum is closed for the winter. We can't get anybody except one fellow that used to be (unintelligible) he likes to come but the others (unintelligible) nobody would come by anyway (inaudible).

HW: When your mother was (unintelligible) she was carving in the Biltmore village.

NA: Yeah, Aunt Nancy—

HW: I'm sorry your aunt. Did she also go to trial with—

NA: (Unintelligible name) didn't go to trial until they were (inaudible) ...but they left, went down there and started (unintelligible and inaudible) and Aunt Nancy, course they had (unintelligible)...

GA: They didn't follow them down?

NA: No, oh no (unintelligible).

GA: Now did your aunt Nancy ever marry?

NA: No, but it wasn't because she couldn't have chances. One thing at Oteen all those years, gosh when Aunt Nancy was about eighty years old she'd still have suitors and she was only ill about a week or so (unintelligible) but Aunt Bertha who was the first one

(unintelligible) Association of Alabama (unintelligible). She (unintelligible) when (inaudible)...

Laughter

NA: (Unintelligible)

GA: So you and (unintelligible)—

NA: Both of them...

GA: (Unintelligible)

NA: I think it was, they deserved it (unintelligible) it's just hard to imagine now a days (unintelligible) but this was the big house. We had the only phone in the neighborhood, we had the only radio. We had these beautiful (unintelligible) trees...(unintelligible)... And so we had neighbors across the street, there were three houses in the space of our lawn and they knew my grandfather, you know it was that kind of set up. They (unintelligible) grandmother and then mother and me and then my son was raised here in this house too. (Unintelligible).

HW: Your son's name is...?

NA: Well his name is Edmund (Unintelligible) Jackson, it was supposedly the ideal marriage. The Jacksons had the money and (unintelligible) and it was a wartime thing. Everybody in I think in my class married about this time and I don't think one of them lasted. I can think of maybe one out of (unintelligible and inaudible)... We were very proud of him, he did most of the time when I (unintelligible) during the war, I had it a lot better than most people because he would get (unintelligible) and locked up on (unintelligible). I remember one time he (unintelligible) a very interesting old man

(unintelligible) and they were talking about stuff like (unintelligible) and a fellow named (Unintelligible)—

HW: (Unintelligible)?

NA: Yes. (Unintelligible).

GA: Were you all class mates together in school?

NA: We were, we knew...no, not ever in the same class but we both went to Asheville-Biltmore College.

GA: Oh, that's a nice connection to us. And your son died?

NA: Oh no, he's very much alive, I guess (unintelligible)...

GA: But you don't have contact with him?

NA: This is a little different. I'm a very strange mother, I got a (unintelligible). You know, usually everybody is...they have preconceived ideas of me, and they start to sympathize with me or (unintelligible) ...my son is (unintelligible)...

GA: Cause you said you had no heirs, so I had made a jump to that conclusion.

NA: Well it's just one thing after another. He married a, when he was eighteen he married a girl from (unintelligible) family and they had a beautiful little daughter, beautiful and of course he abandoned her and then he started with a, he's very handsome, really he was, you have to give him credit for that and he got mixed up with another one. And I warned him. I said, "I hope you're taking care of yourself." Because he told her that he was still (unintelligible) and he you know, could tell a girl that. I could even see his (unintelligible) in the heat of the moment or something even though that would be pretty low down. (Unintelligible) and any way she went to New York with him and the poor girl (unintelligible) but women seem to never learn. So I want (unintelligible) he

managed to convince her that I was jealous of their relationship, well anyway they went to New York and he got her pregnant and he abandoned her and she came from a very strict (unintelligible). Poor girl, she was a mess. Later, I asked her, “Why did you not come to (unintelligible)...” (Unintelligible).

GA: Well, we didn’t mean to pry, it was just that was kinda—

NA: Well, it’s a fact, everybody knows it and it seems a little strange and it’s been a very sad thing. I hate for it to end this way (unintelligible and inaudible).

HW: Where did you go to school?

NA: Just the public school here.

HW: Here in Asheville?

NA: Yeah, oh yeah. I didn’t leave until the war, when I married (unintelligible). I enjoyed Boston very much and (unintelligible)...

GA: That’s an intriguing connection that you and Mary...Asheville people, go to Asheville-Biltmore College and then you know, I don’t know why I think it’s so intriguing, but it is. It an interesting connection.

NA: Well we enjoyed that part of it. We didn’t have the usual (unintelligible) even though I think he was very (unintelligible) and certainly claimed to be. But I just simply came home and brought my son and that’s the way it was for a long time, see I didn’t know how to cook until Grandpa died. We had the same people that had been working for us (unintelligible). We, well now Edmund when I was first married to him had a maid when I left him I didn’t have anything to eat so I had to learn.

GA: Was your grandmother, no your grandfather had died by then, so when you came back here—

NA: Yeah, he died while I was gone.

GA: You had Aunt Nancy still here and Aunt Bertha too?

NA: Well, no it was some time before Aunt Bertha was retired.

GA: Ok.

NA: And I don't know, I think Aunt Bertha really should have stayed in (unintelligible), because they make such a big deal over her. I have a folder on her too. And all (unintelligible) she should have stayed. But that's where she was for years and years and so she didn't know anybody here anymore except a couple of old nurses, you know. And the people she had known were (unintelligible) they still were running the (unintelligible).

GA: So the cousin that you have that has the children that you've given some things...they don't live here either?

NA: No, they live in Falls Church...

HW: (Unintelligible)

NA: Fairfax, VA. She married Bill Pisdale who was a, what did he end up? Brigadier General? He was, now I'm not positive about that, you'll have to be sure, cause the military gets real excited (unintelligible).

GA: (Laughter)

NA: He might just be top Colonel or general or something else. The Pisdals have all died out (unintelligible). Now the first stage (unintelligible) that's a long story. Mother said, "That's what you use (unintelligible)..." (Unintelligible) went down to see me in the hospital. Oh, I've got one claim to fame, I was Asheville's first incubator baby.

GA: That is a claim to fame.

NA: I think that should go in the article. And anyway, (unintelligible). Mother was such a hard headed woman, she read some silly novel while she was pregnant with me about (unintelligible, possibly: switching) babies. She was very very worried about this. So Aunt Bertha came back and said, “Maybe she didn’t get one of her own but she sure got of (yours (?))”

Laughter

GA: (Unintelligible)

NA: Yes, (unintelligible). Do you know (unintelligible)... He wept (unintelligible), he cried! He wrote a fine article on mother. Have you read that?

HW: No, I—

NA: I think the best one was when—

HW: Through the Asheville Citizen Times?

NA: Yep.

Unintelligible voices in the background.

NA: He, uh, oh here’s one. This is Miss Jones that’s interested in the Burnetts, here are the two little boys that (unintelligible).

GA: One of those is your—

NA: That’s my grandfather.

GA: Grandfather.

NA: And Uncle Will. (Unintelligible). Here is (unintelligible). This is Uncle Will and Aunt (Unintelligible)’s house. I think that’s mother holding me. This is my wonderful cousin who was (unintelligible).

GA: It’s a wonderful house, isn’t it?

HW: Oh yeah.

NA: Wasn't it? Oh it was so great inside you can't imagine.

GA: Now where is this?

NA: Under water (?).

GA: (Unintelligible)

NA: I'm so glad.

GA: Where is that?

NA: On the north fork.

GA: On the north fork, that's right.

NA: Here's an early Dan and that's will the well dressed lawyer there and my grandfather.

HW: You know, sorry, this house belonged to your cousin?

NA: Yeah. You know I'm kinda confused about which cousin is which, there's a woman doing some wonderful research, Miss Goodson. Have you read her book? The People (Unintelligible).

GA: No, but I'll tell you— Jill Jones told me about that. I knew that that sounded familiar that Goodson had written a history of the (unintelligible).

NA: I found out where (unintelligible) and here's a (inaudible)...She loved—

GA: You were pretty and looked like that.

NA: I was good looking.

GA: Um-hum.

NA: I started to tell you this (inaudible). Mother looked out her law office window and saw a girl sitting on a bench (unintelligible) finally Mother went down and talked to her,

found that she had, she was (unintelligible) and she'd gone to work for a wealthy family here and gotten (seduced by a (?)) son in the family and of course they threw her out and then she went home and tried to go back home and since these people were stranded with debt they said (unintelligible) but they threw the daughter out cause she was pregnant and so Mother took her to (unintelligible). Faith Cottage...

GA: Faith Cottage, and that's mentioned in there.

NA: And so then when I was born and Mother nursed me (unintelligible) she brought her home (unintelligible) and so she (unintelligible) but I think that's the strangest (unintelligible), you know she saves the gal. The girl ended up in a fairly good marriage, she married an Indian boy from Cherokee, but they didn't feel the same way about (unintelligible) illegitimate child.

GA: And Faith Cottage now was a home for unwed girls, founded by your mother.

And where was that?

NA: I don't know. I think somewhere on Victoria Road. Now see, I'm forgetting a lot now, because I forgot to ask (unintelligible)...

GA: Would you like for us to come to you?

NA: (Inaudible)

HW: Yeah, why don't we do that.

Tape stopped

Tape started again

NA: Now I think Aunt Nancy is really prettier than Mother but gosh you know, everybody raved about how beautiful mother was and this is the one that they lied about

at the court house when Governor (inaudible) and all that stuff. We've got (unintelligible) more publicity in other places than Asheville.

HW: Asheville's strange isn't it?

NA: I said I don't know whether it's the fact that they just don't like women or—

GA: Well, I think it's taken a long time for women to finally get to where they're doing the research.

End of tape #1.

Side B of Tape #1 is empty.

Side A of Tape #2:

Unknown person speaking (possibly Wingate Anders): I've just talked to Zoe Ryan, she's making us a map of this area so that you could number it and point things out, a pre- 240 map and she's gonna call me back in just a few minutes and I thought if you wanted to mark questions on that map we could blow it up if you want to...

Another unknown person (possibly Nancy Stafford Anders (?)): Yeah, but you have to go get it don't you?

Unknown (WA (?)): Well, I'd have to go get it but that's ok, I don't mind doing that.

Unknown person (possibly Gwen Ashburn (?)): You don't have to be our errand person.

WA: Well, what I was thinking is I may be out of line, but I'm just throwing this out, is if you had a map of this and could mark numbers on it and then say this was this and this was this and the other, the things that she's gonna tell you then you would know. You know you were talking about drawing a map but—

Another unknown person (possibly Nancy Stafford Anders (NA)(?)): That's great, and tell them that's where they had the, did they still have—

Unknown person (possibly Gwen Ashburn(GA) (?)): See I didn't ask her that specifically cause I didn't know to ask her.

WA: Stafford, I swear my memory of what was here when I first came I don't, I came here in nineteen sixty. I was captured and brought here—

Laughter

WA: And as a slave I didn't know or see any landmarks. I can't remember a lot of these places you're talking about.

NA: No I don't expect you to remember some of them.

WA: Cause you're the native, I'm the interloper.

Laughter

NA: Yeah, you know when Miss Jo died the other, you know, last month and then we lost another lifelong friend and Miss Mary, you know, is home from the hospital that's good. We're getting thin, I mean, you know, it's kind real spooky to me. College Street was a wonderful street and I think it was from the beginning.

Helen Wykle (HW): And if I could stop you just one second here and I'm just gonna do a brief introduction so that when someone picks up this tape they'll know who's seated around the table.

NA: Yeah, you might get in jail if I don't agree to do it or whatever.

HW: Well we also need to stop and do that. This is an interview and the interviewees' interviewers are Gwen Ashburn and Helen Wykle and we're interviewing Stafford Anders and we're going to be taking this interview for approximately an hour, on May,

this is May twenty second of two thousand and two. And we are located at Hollywood, 34 Hollywood Street in North Asheville at the home of Mrs. Stafford and Winfred Anders.

NA: Wingate.

HW: Wingate, Wingate. I am...

Tape stopped

Tape started

HW: I wanna get this on tape so.

NA: Really?

HW: Um-hum.

NA: Well, Grandfather who came from Davie(misunderstood(?)) County was, you know, his family was terribly patriotic, this is before The War Between The States started and so the revolution was the big thing. And Benjamin Nixon was a patriot most people are familiar with the Swampfox and people like that and everything but this William Exum was something. And my grandfather's name was George Washington Clement. Mrs. Cox, who lives in Washington and came to see us much to my surprise to talk about Mother, she was interested in laws. But she put her finger right on it she said, "By gosh they were patriots (unintelligible) the revolution."

GA: So William Exum then was the source for your mother's name—

NA: Name, uh-huh.

GA: And it's because he was so admired as a patriot that it came by your grandfather...?

NA: Uh-huh, yes. Now Grandpa when he came here after The War Between The States, this was the frontier and he came up here with the railroad and this was wild country and met the widow Burneet for the first time and the first time he saw her he said, "I'm gonna marry her." And she was good and shocking though, she was riding astride and he'd never seen a lady...

HW: And when he came here what attracted him to the area?

NA: Well I think to get away from, see the plantation was completely destroyed. At one time they had owned I think it was a hundred slaves and his mother died of I think typhoid and her new baby. You know Sherman after he burned and started this way Grandpa was in the home guard when he was thirteen.

GA: And he met widow Burdett and the Burdetts—

NA: Burneet

GA: Burneets were from Charleston—

NA: B U R N double E T. Yes, that country.

GA: They'd come up here earlier. And so had your grandmother been married before?

NA: Yes, uh-huh. She had one son, who later fought in the Spanish American War. He was one of the ones that took the flag down from (Unintelligible) Pass. He was a good looking fellow, I have pictures of him.

GA: And your relationship with your grandparents was always really good, they really raised you after your mother's death?

NA: Well, they certainly helped. My grandmother though died when I was about five. My mother's sister who had been in Oteen since before the and was a Red Cross Hostess

there and they used to have a full time one and she gave up her career and came home to take care of me.

GA: Is that your aunt Nancy?

NA: Uh-huh. She was some (unintelligible). She was quite something in her own right.

Bob Brunk has a nice new book out, *Remember When*, has some of her carvings.

GA: Her carvings, yeah, she was (unintelligible)...

NA: You asked...and she taught at All Souls for years.

GA: Oh, she did?

NA: At one time we had fourteen members I think it was. I'm the last.

GA: We read that your mother married in Hendersonville at St. James Church over there. Was there a particular reason for going to Hendersonville to get married?

NA: Well, you wouldn't believe even in my time if you went to Hendersonville it was about the same thing as going to Boston or something now. Win and I have been talking about this, he says he remembers when it was a dirt road to Asheville and it was an all day trip and it wasn't quite that bad during my day but St. James is a beautiful church. And at that time a man who became later, oh gosh I can't think of his name, isn't that awful, see? And well anyway, he was living proof of my legitimacy. I ran into him about once a week and he'd say, "I married your mother and father."

Laughter

HW: Oh, that's great. Now St. James was quite a picturesque church even in those days and would be a place that you would want to have a wedding, I would think.

NA: I think so. Ever been to St. John's?

HW: No.

NA: Now that's the one.

HW: Maybe I'm thinking of St. John's.

NA: There are people buried in that graveyard that—

HW: Ok.

NA: fought at Waterloo.

HW: Oh, for goodness sakes. In those early years with your mother she, did she keep up quite a correspondence did she keep up quite a correspondence with— in her early years before she was married did she keep up quite a correspondence with other people while she was preparing for the bar or—

NA: Well, I think so, what started this whole thing. She worked for the Sherriff's Department which was a kind of a strange thing in those days anyway to have a lady working as a secretary. She finished secretarial school.

HW: Ahh, ok.

NA: And so that opened the door to all kinds of things for a woman in those days. And she, I think that was the first then when the war started I think she was already a lawyer, wasn't she Win? ... No I guess not. She was with something on the board, now I forgot what they called it, I think they picked out the ones that we (unintelligible)—

GA: Yeah, she served as chief clerk of the exemption board or something like that.

NA: Yes, I've heard the family talk about (unintelligible)...

HW: And did she start keeping a diary early or was that something that happened—

NA: The diary was just for me, it starts, "You were born today" and it ends—

HW: So she didn't keep personal journals over the years.

NA: Oh, no, I don't think she really had time. She was a very busy lady, had all kinds of things and one thing that people seem to be surprised, and I am because I know no situation like this except older people, the family spoke of her like she was practically still alive I have her books where I read all those and they would say, "Exum would like this or Exum would like that". They never quit grieving, in fact the last thing Grandpa said was, "Here's Exum".

GA: It had to be tragic to lose her so young and having accomplished such a great deal—

NA: Well such a terrible thing for a woman to die that young.

GA: Yes.

HW: And pneumonia is so curable.

NA: Oh, now.

GA: Now.

NA: And it just was very swift she was only ill I think they said about two or three days and then—

GA: One of the newspaper articles says that she was already weakened by the birth of a premature daughter or...is that true? I just question—

NA: No, I've learned something about history, as a historian I bet you've run into this many times, but I was reading a wonderful in State Magazine, I'll show it to you if you're interested...

GA: I'll just...Billy Arthur?

NA: Yes, that's it, we got—

GA: You mentioned it to us.

NA: Well it ends up with saying that my mother, that I have a sister and that mother died in childbirth. This isn't right, it didn't happen this way. Mother was going back into politics, she just took a little time off, you know, to have me. And I was a primi.

GA: You yourself were?

NA: Yes, that was my one claim to fame. I was Asheville's first incubator baby. They had just gotten one down here at the old Mission Hospital and I was the first one in it. I've gained a little from 3 ½ pounds.

GA: You mentioned to us before that you were cared for by a wet-nurse. Was that when you were first born?

NA: Yeah.

GA: Because you were so tiny?

NA: Um-hum. And this was a girl that Mother had rescued that they had kicked out of where she was working here I think probably as a servant, but anyway she got seduced by the wealthy son of this family and when she went home to her religious fanatic people they kicked her out. And she was just sitting down there on the bench. It's kinda hard to imagine that there was no place to go, that there was no...you had two kinds of women, the ones that stayed home until they married and not-nice ones set on the bench you know, especially a woman with a (unintelligible), oh yeah, that's why Mother was accused of contributing to the delinquency.

GA: Did her law office still exist when she died, do you know, or had she closed down her law office once she got married?

NA: No she really didn't close it, gosh the party was going to run her for congress, you know, when she died. It's on College Street.

GA: It's on College Street.

NA: It was, now the old, I'm sure you've seen pictures of the old courthouse. It was on College Street, it faced College.

HW: Right.

NA: And then there was a little street that came there and then there was this real neat brick building. Mother's law office was upstairs, right next to the corner.

HW: So if you were in the courthouse facing on the front steps and looking down toward where the monument is now, here office would have been on the right hand side?

NA: It would have been on the left.

HW: On the left hand side. Ok.

NA: Right. Was up until a few years ago when they widened the street.

GA: Do you remember as a child, that office still existing, I mean do you remember people saying to you this is where...practiced law?

NA: Oh, yes. See this is another thing, Asheville is a small town, every time we went uptown or anything we knew half the people on the street and I'm accustomed to people picking me up and crying over me. I remember the minister who's name was Bennett at All Souls... Mother was young to be in legislature and all these old boys, they'd have to come home every once in a while and stand on some street corners and preach and they all, everybody knew her, but the neighbors of my next door, my neighbors on the end of the street were friends with my Grandmother, now we don't know any of them really.

People cross the street and (unintelligible).

GA: Wonder what happened to her law records and things like that. Do you have any idea?

NA: I don't have them, no. This is one things I regret so much, even though my people talked constantly about Exum and her clothes hung in the closets and everything, they didn't really say much about the laws. I learned more from this woman that just showed up from Washington.

GA: You talked to us about her last time cause she was doing the (unintelligible).

NA: I knew about the home for unwed mothers because Rebecca of course was my wet-nurse. She, and I told you what happened to her and this is not on the record, so...

HW: I can turn this off. Hold on, I'm turning this off.

NA: I told you she married this Indian fellow—

HW: Just one second, I'm turning the tape off.

Tape turned off.

Tape turned back on.

NA: ...interested in the Cherokee Reservation. He was a blood brother of Chief Al. And I went out there one time and mentioned it to somebody in a shop where I was shopping and he wouldn't take my money, (unintelligible). They were serious (unintelligible). He did a lot of advertising as it were, not per se, but it was articles about the Indians and dance that they did. You know at one time they wouldn't allow them to speak the language?

GA: Right.

HW: How did your father become a blood brother, what circumstance—?

NA: Well they held a ceremony.

HW: What were the circumstance that—?

NA: I don't really know the details. And I was inclined to just kind of brush over it, but after all, my father died when I was young too and the family knew this but I didn't know how seriously to—

GA: I read that your father had attended Wake Forest.

NA: Yes.

GA: And was from North Wilksborough. So essentially, do you have any form of documentation left about when you're mother passed the bar, these article keep saying she made such a high passing mark and all that—

NA: Win, honey do we have anything to actually show when she passed the bar?

WA: (Unintelligible)

NA: Well, do we have a copy of her law degree?

WA: Yes.

NA: Could we show that to the ladies?

HW: I would love to see that.

GA: The original documentation is always real interesting to us.

NA: The people who signed it (unintelligible) but they tell me that they can bring it back out, I don't know whom I talk to, or should talk to about that. Maybe I'm gonna leave all this stuff to the historical society and maybe they can figure it out. But it seems to be fading.

GA: So no one, she was in a sole practice by herself so she's notable for being the first woman only law firm. After she died did someone take over her practice?

NA: No.

GA: No, it would have just—

NA: Years later a very close friend and the guy that owned the mansion down on college street there, his name was Sam (Unintelligible), was in the same office she was, but she'd been dead awhile.

GA: What are your earliest memories then of this neighborhood, as a child? You probably at that young of an age do not remember your mother's death, but when would you have remembered, obviously growing up in the house and now living here would bring back some memories.

NA: Well, always, I was always here and Lula who was my nurse, her name was Lula Erwin, and

HW: And that's E R W I N?

NA: I don't know.

HW: Um-kay.

NA: She was black. Now one of the most influential people as I was growing up we had was a woman named Maggie Creeson, she lived on College Street, she had been born a slave. The kids are always like, "You knew somebody that was a slave!" And she was quite elderly when I knew her but she was something, she bossed everybody, if anybody was gonna give a party anywhere, the Greens, who had a place on Pack Square for years, a hardware store, Otis Green, if any of these people the old families were going to give a real party they got Maggie. And she came and bossed the other darkies and they all called her Miss Maggie. Our land almost joined hers, it was a goodly sized lot and so she was a part of the household. Then my grandmother had a stroke, so we had some one always here needing (unintelligible) who wore a white turban and skirts dragged the ground. She and I didn't get along too well. Grandma lay up there two years, practically helpless and

she bossed that (unintelligible). Then the earliest person that I remember who was here besides my grandma was her sister who was Rebecca who was a widow and she was in the room across the hall. And she suffered horribly from rheumatism which seems to be the (unintelligible). And we fought terribly. One thing they told me was I was mean I think, the poor old woman's hands hurt all the time so she had, in her lap a rubber thing full of hot water. So one time I stuck a pin in it and water shot out.

GA: But you were the only one, just one little precious girl growing up in this household with all these—

NA: Oh I was a pain, I mean, if people didn't jump fast enough I said, "My mother is dead" and that would start them all crying again. But later see Mother's oldest brother had five boys and they were a (unintelligible). And he was a preacher, now how this happened in an Episcopal family for generations I don't know but those preachers sons are famous for, anytime I told anybody this they'd always say, "Uh-huh, I know". So they must have been difficult. I think what is so wonderful is that it says "he", it never said anything female...

GA: Oh because that's the way it was—

NA: It says "he" cause nobody had been.

HW: That's right.

GA: (Unintelligible)

HW: (Unintelligible) legislature and House of Representatives

NA: I used to say, "I think Mother is ugly" and that would start a family riot.

HW: Oh dear.

NA: No, I think she tried to be, see she tried to look older. She was so young that they didn't take her seriously.

GA: That is *wonderful*.

HW: Isn't that something?

NA: Tough looking old bunch huh?

HW: That's an amazing picture.

GA: You see none of them are smiling.

NA: Would you like a copy of it?

HW: I would love a copy of it, do you have...?

WA: I have a Kinko copy.

HW: That would be wonderful.

GA: That's wonderful documentation. One of the articles said 1917 was when she got her degree and the other said 1916 so now I know (unintelligible).

NA: I think we went into the War in '17. Did we go in? No, we didn't go in—

HW: 1913, 1914.

NA: Oh you mean when we went in?

HW: We didn't go in until it was already under way in 1913, 14, so we went 15,16, maybe 17.

GA: The Armistice was 18. So I wanted to ask you, and this is sparked by one of the comments at the Black Mountain Presentation, but your mother became very well educated, she went to Asheville Normal School, I read, for one year, then she went to a Business School then she—

NA: Well, this was education for a woman in those days.

GA: Absolutely, but that is pretty remarkable that she had that much education—

NA: Well—

GA: She did not marry real young.

NA: No.

GA: As a young educated woman she worked and she said that she was always—

NA: Well she had a bunch of suitors, she was not (unintelligible).

GA: But one of these articles talks about her being ambitious, wanting to be a lawyer, wanting to work. Did your family ever comment on that? Did they realize that she was special, she was not just a practicing Southern belle but a—

NA: Well they were all special. Aunt Bertha ended up as chief nurse of the Tuberculosis Association of Alabama, and that was just as unusual—

GA: So she chose a profession.

NA: They did have a wing of the Jefferson named for Bertha with a life size oil painting, I don't know whether it's still there or not, I haven't been in Birmingham in thirty years.

GA: Nancy had worked out at the...

NA: Oteen.

GA: Oteen, but she came home and cared for you.

NA: Well the first one was John. That was the preaching uncle, now we never understood how he got started, and he had the five boys. And he was (unintelligible), he was sort of a Billy Graham of his day, I mean one time after I was I guess thirty years old, I had a woman when she found out I was his niece ask if she could kiss my hand, I didn't know what in the dickens you did that for.

GA: He was kind of an evangelist preacher?

WA: This is rather exaggerated but there's a copy of it. I had it made poster size.

HW: Oh, my.

NA: Well, I wish you could have gone to this wonderful thing they had at the court house—

GA: Oh when the monument was dedicated.

HW: Thank you!

NA: Some of those women who spoke, they weren't from around here most of them, you know, and oh they—

GA: Betty McCain.

NA: Yeah, oh yeah, she's something. And, you know there was hardly anything in the paper about that and yet a couple of reporters were there.

GA: Right. I have one—

NA: (Unintelligible) got into politics there for a little bit cause the governor was there, no he didn't come that time.

WA: No, he didn't come, he was supposed to be there and they had that flood down at—

NA: Yeah they had a couple of (unintelligible).

WA: They had a flood down somewhere and he had a farm—

GA: Oh, yeah, a hog farm, that was that article where I had clipped. Yes, but, *finally* some recognition came. One of the other questions that I had was, why do you think it took so long for your mother's accomplishments to be recognized? Is it simply because women have not been recognized for their accomplishments—?

NA: I think there was still a great deal of prejudice against it. So after her death it just sort of drifted along for awhile. A lot of these old boys that were in the legislature would have died. Now when I said I knew everybody in town when I was growing up it wasn't much of an exaggeration. But then when they left, you see, the people who replaced them, they really weren't terribly interested, then the depression, then the war. Every now and then somebody would discover her, somebody would call. During the war we had a young man come up from Chapel Hill who wrote his thesis and it's called "Lady Lawyer" and it was really very good and I probably lost it.

HW: We can find that.

NA: I bet you can, coming from Chapel Hill.

GA: Do you think that was—

NA: His name was Raymond Harwell.

HW: Great.

GA: Thank you, that helps, Raymond Harwell did his thesis on...

NA: He was in love with her. Oh I've had a couple of people that were, you know. Mister Newhope (misspelled/misunderstood??), you know when I showed him the diary and he went, he's a very gentle man, I meant to bring that and show it to you, it's not anything about politics, just "You were born today" and the last entry is right before she died. But it's in the safe down at the store and I didn't get around to getting it out.

GA: Do you have other letters of your mother's? Other writings of your mother at all?

NA: You mean to who?

GA: Ones she received or ones that she sent back to her family. We were wondering if she would have written her family while she was down in Raleigh, that kind of thing.

NA: Oh, yes. They were all very close and I have letters.

GA: Oh, you do have letters.

NA: Win?

WA: I can't (unintelligible) right now.

GA: Yeah, don't worry him to death, we were just wondering.

NA: Some of them are real interesting, they would say, "I had dinner with so and so" and "I think somebody just (unintelligible)". I didn't think you'd want those but I'll find them for you.

HW: We would be very interested and we could make copies with your permission and...

NA: Well now, I have kind of a problem. Not having any heirs, my, I have a beloved cousin and her family has all died and her husband's family Tisdales have all died out here too, but she has beaucoup children but I haven't even met most of them, you know the guy, what did he end up, Win? Brigadier? General or something, anyhow, he died when some of the children were small, she had to fend. All girls but two and they really don't know. She would be the only one to leave things to and I probably, the diary, I would leave to her. I've met several of them, they've all done real well, but gosh high ranking good looking men like that, they all (unintelligible) except for one and course he was (unintelligible). (Unintelligible). One of them is a lawyer, one is doctor, a couple of nurses. There is one in Washington (unintelligible).

HW: Which party, I'm just curious.

NA: Oh, Democrat.

HW: Democrat, yeah I would think, were there any defectors in your family, that...

NA: Yes.

Laughter

NA: Yeah, I've got a cousin (unintelligible).

GA: When we ask you about letters though, when we're looking at women's lives, some of the things we take for granted were very hard, for your mother to have to go live in Raleigh, away from her family, work with—

NA: Well, she (unintelligible) loved them.

GA: And that's kind the things we're interested in, is how women coped with those difficulties.

NA: Well, I've got them.

GA: Mrs. Ray talked with me about it and some of Lucy Herring's information she left behind talked about, you know just traveling is hard.

NA: I don't understand why Julia didn't tell you about living there.

GA: I probably didn't ask her the right questions. I asked her some things about integration of schools, I asked her some things that I knew and she talked with me about. But I talked with her mainly about their work and her work on the hospital boards and she wanted to tell me more about her husband but I kept steering her back towards her—

NA: Well, he was quite a land breaker, to do this and of her children, Buddy was my favorite, he used to sit on my lap all the time.

GA: That was the baby.

NA: He was the one, yeah he was the one was in France for quite a while. And I think, now don't quote this, but I think married a French girl. She was very disappointed about that cause she said she wanted them to stay here and I said, "Well the French don't have

color line that maybe somebody else would have.” But anyway, Wilma, the only daughter married a lawyer named Bledsoe and at one time when I was in Biltmore, (unintelligible), I had a picture of the Buffalo Soldiers and most people really didn’t know appreciate it and he bought it so it’s somewhere in Michigan and it should be here.

HW: And they were called the “Buffalo Soldiers” because...

NA: The blacks.

HW: Because of the hair, the wooly, I think I remember—

NA: Well, the Indians meant it as a high high compliment, they were brave too, they were very brave soldiers.

HW: And from Asheville, was there say a regiment that was specifically black? Not a regiment or a group, there was a large group...

GA: You could only join, you know, as a black soldier, certain regiments (unintelligible).

HW: Interesting.

NA: Well the Indians started calling them that. We were, I think, the first state to let them vote, the black vote, without any trouble, I know when they first so called integrated uptown I was sitting right there next to them and it was an open war.

GA: So you remember those changes.

NA: Oh, I was in Selma, my son was born in Selma. My cousin I just mentioned lives in Montgomery, I was in the March from Selma.

HW: How long were you in Selma, were you there for—?

NA: Just about six months. My son was born there, then we moved Birmingham and all this mess (unintelligible).

HW: The church...Now I remember when we were here that you had a picture from Harper's Magazine that showed, what did that depict in Asheville? I can get it for you.

NA: Right there.

GA: We could not remember what it depicted but we thought that was so interesting.

NA: Who was it that saw this recently? They almost had a fit. They said they'd seen copies of it but it's the real.

HW: It says "Registration in the South Seen in Asheville, N.C."

NA: Yeah, registration. Yes, but it still went on down there at the High School, just around the corner from me, they stopped one woman and asked her to recite the first, I'm sure none of them could, recite the first few lines of the Constitution and she threw back her little nappy head and did it. No my people were always on the wrong side, supposedly on the wrong side, but that remains to be seen.

HW: So this was the first step in suffrage is the way they describe it here, "Registration in the South". The "Seen in Asheville" may indicate that it's one of many scenes that may have been similar in other cities in the South.

GA: And the fact that suffrage was applied to both the black cause and the women's cause is why a number of Southern women would never say that they were suffragists, because it became so conflicted with racial issues—

NA: Still is.

GA: Yes, it still is, it was very difficult the (unintelligible) of using that term was hard on women. You know some of the articles will tell you that Mother said, "I'm not a suffragist", but what she did for women—

NA: It had a different meaning.

GA: It had a different meaning.

NA: I saw that article too, I don't know that she said that.

GA: No, you see I hate to totally depend, that's why I was asking you about letters—

NA: (Unintelligible) quote anybody.

GA: Yes, and as you and I know, journalists make mistakes.

NA: Well, some of them do when they don't mean to—

GA: Right.

NA: And then, now Mr. Arthur, when I called Mr. Arthur he was a bit snippy in the beginning and finally he said, "And who might you be?" and I said, "Well I might be her daughter." And so he said, "Oh my goodness gracious I didn't know (unintelligible)." So he turned out to be just wonderful and I asked, I said, "Where did you get this information?", I wanted to stop it there cause you know historians (unintelligible). He couldn't remember, you see he's almost ninety years old and he couldn't remember where he read it. And I thought well (unintelligible) to them.

GA: Well I have, you know, just as you have a packet of newspaper clippings (unintelligible) Pack Library. I think it is very important that you don't repeat somebody else's mistakes over and over and over again. When you're looking at a—

NA: I think that's how these things, you know, somebody else coming along just copies it. I didn't blame him, I do think that the magazine should have been printed (inaudible) trash. Oh, her name is in the, they have a little thing... Win where's that magazine?

WA: (Inaudible).

NA: Yeah, that mentioned mother yesterday.

WA: (Unintelligible).

NA: Well another thing, his mother was from a family that was (unintelligible) I think they were a middle class family. Most women that did much were just, most of them had money, I mean that was the rule. We were comfortable but that was about it. All families in my walk of life had the servants.

GA: Your grandfather did what for a living?

NA: He was a building inspector.

GA: Building inspector, that's right.

NA: Asheville, for years had his office in City Hall.

WA: He came here to work on a (unintelligible).

GA: And then made a career here. And so in this neighborhood would you, you know, as I look around I would have considered it upper middle class.

NA: Yeah, well you wouldn't believe it to look at it now, Frank Hill who was a member of All Souls and owned a business on College Street was my neighbor on this side all my life, most of my life until they all died. Then we had a large figure between my house, Maggie's house and Rita B. Lee, Stephen Lee's widow. Then on the end up here, we've always been integrated but they've always been very very fine blacks. And on the end corner up here the Montigues and their ten children, then what is now Cameron up here was just a little dirt road and that one house (unintelligible) the Rodger's house. Well let's do Hollywood first before we go around it.

HW: And we will get a map at some point, I'm just very curious.

NA: Across the street that was Mother's honeymoon cottage right there. Then next door was a little bungalow, then the Niland (misspelled/misunderstood ?) house. Those

two women were interested in Asheville and politics and worked here and everything for years. A woman and her daughter, Niland.

HW: N Y L A N D?

NA: No, I think it's N I.

HW: N I.

NA: Um-hum. Next door were the McClouds. And they had one daughter. Then on the end of the street was the widow, well at that time her name was Toweel and she had six children and her husband was killed driving a milk truck on the Biltmore Estate.

HW: I'm sorry her last—

NA: T O W E E L.

HW: T O W E E...

NA: Then there was a large field, we always called it the Jeffey Yards, I don't know why or anything about it. It had gorgeous oaks, this is the end of Hollywood coming into (unintelligible).

GA: (Unintelligible).

NA: That's across the street. Now on this side was our driveway then our lawn, and it was a pretty lawn, it really was, Grandma's roses and the lilac bushes and all this, I can't believe they took it away from (unintelligible). And these great big trees, had a big dogwood and big crab apples, people came from all over town to get crab apples in the (unintelligible). Then we had a field that wasn't planted but it kept pretty good and a big willow tree in there (unintelligible). But on the corner of College and Hollywood on this side there was a two story building that I've been told used the mayor's home, I don't know that was long before my time. Because it was Phyllis B. Wheatley. And we're real

proud of Phyllis B. Wheatley. And next door to that was a big wooden sided building and about once a month they had a dance and that was before they sounded like a bunch of guys in a vice or something. Oh those were the great swing bands and boy could they play and we all enjoyed it, you know.

GA: You could hear the music?

NA: Could we hear it? Try not to. And next door there was a two story house that belonged to Nelly Martin, now I don't know anything about her I just knew her when I saw her and she (unintelligible/inaudible) and then Maggie's place (unintelligible) which was a large (unintelligible). Now after Maggie's death there was a family named Jones who bought that property.

GA: Were they a black family also?

NA: Yep, um-hum. And the fields were big enough for her to have a cow and we didn't object. I remember my so went out there one day. He said, "How the cow Miss Jones?", she's five years old (unintelligible) age.

GA: Where was Polly Shuford, she was down on College Street, Dr. Shuford's big old house, the Shuford house...? Was she down on that college street?

NA: The only Shuford that I know that lived on there was the wife of Sam Pigran (misspelled/misunderstood) who was *the* lawyer here in town really. There will never be another thing like him. He's very much like (unintelligible), you know, he was past his time when I knew him, I mean you didn't see much of it but it still went on.

HW: But he knew everybody.

NA: He knew everybody and he took care of everybody, he had some (unintelligible) blacks that worked for him, lived on his property. It was a gorgeous house, it really was.

He was so afraid that something was gonna happen to it he said if you lit a cigarette in the place blinkers came on, you know.

HW: And what happened to the house? It was taken down for the car dealership?

NA: Well no, Win, when was the first one built there? The telephone company...?

WA: (Unintelligible)

NA: When they took (Unintelligible name)'s house down... Now that was a mansion, that was one of the last ones in Asheville.

HW: How do you spell Sam's last name, is it P I—

NA: P I G R A N... I beg your pardon?... Samuel...everybody called him Boodgy.

He's buried right on the hill above mother there and all his relative they had their pet names, there is Moovoo and Diedie and stuff like that, you know. He was a sentimental old cook.

GA: Well, when I talked about those women in healthcare, you know, I talked about a woman named Shuford, her father was Judge Shuford and her—

NA: That's the family alright but she had that house by marriage.

GA: She did?

NA: Unless it's before my day. Now College Street was there a long time before I came along.

GA: And her brother was George Shuford that—

End of Side A

Beginning of Side B

GA: ...you were going to Claxton—

NA: Yep and then in my day you had, everything was different there was no so called middle school, you left what... seventh grade and you went on into the high school.

HW: To the high school.

NA: Uh-huh.

GA: And, do you remember that all the streetcars...were the streetcars gone by the time you were a child?

NA: Hum-huh, I remember going, one of the first times I went to Claxton, Grandpa got me on the wrong car. He meant to put me on the Merrimon and his office as I said was just down (unintelligible) the cutest little park between the square and the City Building and I don't know why they destroyed it cause it was very attractive, there was a fountain there and you went down these steps. Anyway, so he walked up from his office to the square, put me on the Montford bus instead of the Merrimon and so I begin to look around and I say (unintelligible) Montford...pretty streets, but I know I'm wrong. So everything was so different they, I went up and spoke to the guy that was driving the streetcar and he said ok and so when he went back to the square he put me on the other one and he called to the fellow and said, "Her Grandpa put her on the wrong one, she's coming on." And you know, all this was just, everybody knew you, you know.

GA: And could take care of you. That's interesting, I'm so sorry we don't have streetcars anymore, I just (unintelligible)...

NA: Well, we, when Grandpa moved up here and built this house in 1912, (unintelligible) had always been in Biltmore before.

GA: Ok.

NA: So we still had a close connection with All Souls and we went down to Charlotte Street here and got on the car and went up to the square and got a transfer and got on and went to the (unintelligible) was on the other side of the bridge as you go into Biltmore where one of the pizza parlors is now and it was kind of interesting to see (unintelligible) the tourists, oh gosh, when I had the shop down there the tourists used to come in (unintelligible) anything to do with history, at least most people like money while (unintelligible)...

GA: Was your shop in that same complex where John Crown is now?

NA: No, no.

GA: No.

NA: My son owns those two buildings.

GA: That's right, you told me that.

NA: Where the old depot used to be and it was (unintelligible) as a white waiting room and then that building next to it the naturalist is in there now.

GA: Yeah.

NA: And then I had an aunt, my uncle's wife that had a flower shop in that little building that was the first post office on that same side. David owns that one and he's done ok, that was his first (unintelligible) in real estate. He lost his shirt in the first one but the second one worked out pretty well because after that they began to pay the interest. And I was one of the first ones that went down there. My friend Nancy Brown had a bookstore across the street—

GA: Is she still alive?

NA: Oh gosh yes.

GA: Because there was a writer in Asheville named Olive—

NA: Olive Dargen.

GA: Yes and someone said—

NA: They've recently discovered her too.

GA: Yes.

NA: Just everybody is carrying on about... She and her mother used to be real good customers to Nancy. Nancy was there forty some years.

GA: Yeah, someone said that she would have none—

NA: I've none Nancy since I was a teenager. We still saw her a least once a week, went for dinner. She was from Erwin and her story is kind of interesting too.

GA: This is Nancy Brown?

NA: Uh-huh. You won't have any trouble finding anything about her in the Erwin (unintelligible) the Browns owned the town.

HW: And that's Erwin, TN?

NA: Yeah. Nancy's grandmother starved to death after the War Between the States, her family stood and (unintelligible). Her grandfather was killed when the Sultana sank, you know the river when they were bringing the prisoners home and the boat sank, it was terrible. And he had been a prisoner of war. He was a Unionist sympathizer so when it, as I understand, she just really did starve. She had about five children and nobody would sell her any food, not that most of the Confederates had any. But what was left had to take out their frustration on somebody and so the Widow Brown starved. And I think that the children, her father I believe might have been the only, couple of them all had TB including Nancy's father, but he's supposed to have told them one time that

(unintelligible) by gosh. So when the railroad came through there they started buying, when I said they owned the town I meant it. They owned the grocery stores, the what are some more things Win? The hardware store...

WA: (Unintelligible)

NA: Clinchville Pottery... Everybody collects that Clinchville Pottery now, you know, and it has (unintelligible)... I had a man come into school one time when he found out I knew Nancy he started talking, I think I told you about him, must have told somebody else, anyway he was a big strapping good looking fellow, tears started down his face, he said, "My family would have starved to death if it hadn't been for the Browns." And I said, "Well they starved to death at one time."

HW: So they understood that.

NA: She paid a dollar a day for them to paint those brown potteries.

GA: So Mrs. Brown— So you and Miss Brown were merchants down in Biltmore and were there, who else was there?

NA: Well she was there quite a while before I was.

GA: She was.

NA: And then lets see, who, who, who... There was hardly anybody down there then. And I hear some mighty wild stories about (unintelligible) somebody told it was a colored area and it was so run down. And I said no. All these people were friends of mine (unintelligible)... The (unintelligible name) owned two or three of them and you know (unintelligible)—

GA: Were you in the antique business then?

NA: When I had the shop down there?

GA: Uh-huh.

NA: Yeah for ten years.

GA: So that's always been an interest of yours since you came back to Asheville?

NA: Well, I've always sorta interested in it. You wouldn't think to look at this, I've (unintelligible) what am I gonna do with it, all the silver, I mean gosh leave it piled up there, you wouldn't believe it. We've been living off it and when I'm gone (inaudible) to fix it. (Inaudible) it would.

HW: It would be a shame, yes it would.

GA: Helen, I know you had to leave at three thirty. I seem to have dominated, what else do you—

NA: Well, we don't seem to have talked much about College Street.

HW: We haven't, and when the road came through and cut—

NA: Well, the first thing I remember is when they built the tunnel. I remember the blast when they built the tunnel. Now that's pretty far over and it was on the street called Poplar Street and it really didn't have much to do with College Street.

HW: And it was called, I'm sorry, Poppy...?

NA: Poplar, Poplar Street. And that was sort of mostly colored when I moved.

GA: Ok.

NA: But it was a main drag. It went into Valley was a big deal and into College. Now College, let's see, we got the Boodgie's wonderful place, now across the street from Boodgie's were one, two, three, four Victorian cottages, oh and they were darling. They burned one of them and (unintelligible) those big oaks. And that was a dear little cottage,

it was so pretty. The (unintelligible name)s lived there at one time. And then the Blacks, and you probably know Joe, Joe Black.

HW: I don't.

NA: Not as active as he used to be, but he used to (unintelligible) down in the parks, songs.

HW: Shindig on the Green?

NA: Yes.

HW: Ok, I have heard his name.

NA: And then little section called College Park which was on one side, you left College and went around the school, where the big school was, and there was Knickerbocker (unintelligible) Center and before you got there, Billy Graham's father in law, Dr. Bell had his office there. A friend of mine had an apartment upstairs. She worked for Bell. And there were four other nice looking houses on College Street.

GA: Was it mainly residential?

NA: Oh, yeah. Until you crossed what is Oak Street now, where the church is and started uptown and then you got to buildings, the uptown College Street. And one of the first ones was (unintelligible) used to be. Then the funeral home which is now (unintelligible) regular home.

HW: And did you know Mrs. Hall? Eleanor Hall and her sister who ran the Three Mountaineers, her father—

NA: I did not know them personally, I think my family did though. Course they started out in Biltmore at one time.

HW: And the Brown, there was a Brown publishing here as well. Were they related to the Brown that you spoke of earlier?

NA: No she was from Erwin.

HW: She was from Erwin and they didn't have any other individuals in the family?

NA: I don't think they had any connections here to my knowledge. I knew Nancy well, I mean she was friend for years. Lets see and then that building that Mother had her law office in and then there were a lot of interesting things in there, two or three offices, big building. And the Hills had a meat market, they were my neighbors up here and they had fabulous voices and sang in the choir. They had no children. She worked for a dentist who had his office on the square.

GA: Would you have walked to these places (unintelligible)...?

NA: Oh, it was easy, see that one reason why they built, Grandpa built here was, see it was oh just a hop and a skip to Mother's office. And his office in the City Building and oh yeah it was a nice walk.

GA: So the invasion of 240 really made the division—

NA: They say eighty four houses but can't count that many. I've talked to other people who would know, the (unintelligible name)s. College went on up the mountain though kind of. And there were three Victorian houses across the street from Rita B. Lee and (unintelligible name). All I remember is the woman was named (unintelligible). And then the (unintelligible). And see what is now the, what's the name of it Win?

WA: Name of what?

NA: It went on around the tunnel, didn't it Win, just that the Loughton house, it went over what later was (unintelligible) and on up the mountain and I guess ended up on the

other side. But there were just four houses on the mountain, and we used to...besides it was the (unintelligible) against it and we all used to play there and Town Mountain Road was just a dirt trail. When I was about ten years old I went up there with some neighborhood kids, we were about the same age, and a boy that Aunt Nancy was keeping for awhile, she knew all the Oteen people and the patients (unintelligible). And often their people would come down here and they wouldn't have places to stay, so we kept several. I know one family named Wadsworth, they were patients and we kept two of their children here for awhile. Then she was always doing something like that. But anyway, we went for a walk up the trail and before we got to the top the two little teddy bears came sliding down the bank and stopped in the trail and looked at us. And they were so wonderful and we started running to them, you know and everything, and that older boy said, "No, no, no, don't, don't., don't. Mama is somewhere around." About that time all these twigs and rocks and everything started coming down from the right hand side, where's mama? Mama was coming fast. And he said, "Run, run, run. She'll claw you to pieces." And I don't guess we had to be encouraged to run.

(Laughter)

GA: That's a wonderful story.

NA: You know this All Soul's had an Episcopal bear the other day, it was in the paper.

GA: Yeah, he went right into the village (unintelligible) just leave that poor bear alone, he'll wander on off.

NA: Well, he probably came from the estate.

GA: Well, they say though that there's a regular bear route that crosses the Nature Center (unintelligible) that they cross and they are traipsing through and they generally will walk through at night and not bother anybody.

NA: Now, my (unintelligible) I'm sure followed that regular trail because see that place wasn't even paved, it was just a trail. But then they had one on the golf course not awfully long after that. Then we had one down in the tree on the corner of Charlotte and—

HW: I remember that one.

NA: And that hadn't been too long ago.

HW: No it hadn't, in ninety two I think.

NA: And now we have the one (unintelligible). But I feel awfully sorry for them, we're taking their habitat.

HW: Yeah, it's true.

GA: And fragmenting it so that they cannot walk from one area to the other without encountering people. So when you remember Town Mountain Road as just a dirt road—

NA: Yeah.

GA: Were there houses up there at all, anybody building up there?

NA: Yeah there wasn't anything until you got to Sealy's and I understand we used to see tracks, street car tracks that went up to what had been a park on the mountain but that was gone before my time.

HW: There is an account of that and it went somewhere beyond where Grove Park Inn is now, because they used the road bed to lay the tracks for the trolley that went up to the Grove Park. Wasn't there one that went around on Allen Drive?

NA: Yeah, there used to be that, I've been on that, but that—

HW: That was later.

NA: I don't know what happened to that one that was supposed to have gone up to the park. They had one on this mountain and then another big park on down the river where, it got washed away in 1916—

HW: I think Preston Arthur talks about that, that short line in his book and describes it.

GA: Was it for tourists to come in or ...?

HW: No, I think it had a purpose that was transporting lumber in—

NA: There were two movie theatres in town and things like that and so people got (inaudible). We used to play, all of us, here on this street at night and things like kick the can and London bridge is falling down and all that. I had a very good childhood. We had the only phone in the neighborhood and we had the only radio I think for awhile. And I know now that some of these people had a real tough time, but I didn't know it at the time. I remember when the banks failed Grandpa, we looked out one morning and Grandpa was plowing the back yard, no he had a man plowing it, you know. And Aunt Nancy was out there yelling about them tearing up her flower bed. But he planted vegetables. He said I've been through this once before, you know, and somebody asked him, "Oh, after WWI?" and he said, "No, between the states." We helped feed the neighborhood I guess. The family that lived next door to us, they had five daughters and he'd been an interior decorator and during the depressions an interior decorator was like a cat (unintelligible). And I know the oldest girl worked for the WTA (inaudible). There was no place to work (unintelligible) worked uptown at a furniture store, strictly commission, made about fifty cents a day.

GA: Oh it must have been (unintelligible).

NA: We were lucky, what was left of, you know, my uncle the absentee ballot came, worked for the state and (unintelligible).

HW: And your Grandfather is recorded as having been a telegraph interpreter or a telegraph editor, or am I confusing...I'm sorry, your father.

GA: For the paper.

NA: Uh-huh, well that's what he started as anyways.

HW: And would he have continued to work during the Depression. Was he still living during that time?

NA: He became feature editor, finally, and he'd gone about as far as he could go.

When he was drowned he was the feature editor of Quincy's (misunderstood/misspelled??) Sentinel in Winston-Salem. (Unintelligible)

GA: But you had remained here.

NA: Oh, yeah.

HW: And he moved to Winston right?

NA: Well, I saw him, he came often and everything.

GA: Sure. And he lived with the family for about three years actually after Mother died. But, you know, he was much in demand I think, he was a very very charming man.

HW: And he died in 19... 40...?

NA: Yeah, around there. He went up to, he and a bunch of newspaper people went on a camping trip and they probably all got, well they didn't get stoned in those days, so drunk. And spoke of one thing or another (unintelligible) they were all supposedly going out on this yacht, I mean to the yacht to where the party was to be held or something and

the boat turned over, guy named Butler and Dad was in it and a man who later became Supreme Court Justice Archie Ellidge and when the boat turned over he got Mr. Ellidge back to the overturned boat, Dad did and he got his hands on him and went back for Mr. Butler and he didn't come up for awhile...

GA: Where was this?

NA: In the Gadkin River.

GA: Gadkin. And he had remarried by then.

NA: Yes, he married Sue Bierly.

GA: And he had more children or...?

NA: No.

GA: No more children.

NA: No they were just married a couple years before he died. And the Bierlys are a...her mother, Sue's mother was a (unintelligible name, possibly Scales), that was an old family around there. There's a Scales Street in Reedsville and (unintelligible). And they were tobacco barons. And I would never leave, I mean this was my family, but you know, Sue and I kept in close touch all the forty years that she was (unintelligible). And one thing that always kind of puzzled us was, (unintelligible), I mean really, that was nobody's business. And she didn't seem to be the type that would have preferred (unintelligible). She kept his room just like (unintelligible), well you know, but it was her house. A beautiful home down on (unintelligible) Avenue.

GA: Where?

NA: In Winston-Salem.

HW: Winston-Salem.

NA: She died several years ago and a very old woman.

GA: Never remarried?

NA: No, huh-uh, she never married. She was secretary to Hanes, who had a one horse operation that made silk stockings. And I remember, they kept in touch with them always the third generation, usually people when they start getting that rich kind of forget, but (unintelligible)...

HW: (Unintelligible).

NA: Yeah.

GA: We must stop today, Helen's daughter is depending on her to be picked up at four o'clock, so I know that you—

NA: Well, I know I talk too much—

GA: No!

HW: No!

GA: You're fascinating, I wonder sometimes if we're making sad, dredging off details, but on the other hand if you don't tell us nobody will.

HW: And it's such wonderful history.

NA: I'm worried about this being dead. Now with Miss Mary, catch her, if she's still bright as a dollar—

HW: We need to do that. We need to go over—

GA: Phyllis Lang from UNCA has worked with her some on the letters and all and has found her a—

NA: And her family has been here a lot longer than ours. And I tease her all the time, I'm gonna black mail her, you know. I say, I know what your family did. Of course,

everybody did, that was slavery. But, anyway, somebody, they got the three of us together one time and we were all talking about Charlotte Street. Course I didn't remember as much about Charlotte as who?

GA: Peggy Carter.

NA: Peggy, oh, I don't remember as much about Charlotte as they do, but I remember a lot about it and oh it has some wonderful history right up till fairly recently.

HW: Maybe we can figure out a time to have an afternoon tea and get you and Mary together.

NA: When she feels better, she—

HW: When she feels better.

NA: She's got so many relatives running in and out, she's worn out.

HW: Yeah, Peggy said she was in great spirits—

NA: Oh, she's sharp as a tack and I told her, I said, "Saturday, I'll be seventy eight." And she said, "Well, you're just a child." She's ninety something.

GA: Well thank you for letting us come and I at some point would—

NA: I just feel like I'm not giving you information that you ought to have, I'd get a map of the—

End of Side B