

RICE-CORNELL-BROWN PROPERTY ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

INTERVIEW FOUR

NARRATOR: MARY JANE SCARBOROUGH PEARSON **INTERVIEWER:** REBECCA SEARS

DATE: JULY 26, 1998

I: Okay. And if you can just first just state your name on the tape.

MJSP: Mary Jane Scarborough Pearson. I'm going back to tell you a little bit about the Rice family. The girls married here and when they... when they were married they each got a plot of land. So they lived... there was... there was all of the kin people and still some in this Beaverdam section. There was a number of families. On Rice Branch Road, there was my grandfather, my grandmother—William Burnet Scarborough and Myra Ann Rice. There was Sarah Rice McClain next to our property and her husband and family, and on the other side of the road was one of the... the oldest girl, I think. Jane Rice Jones and her family. Those, and then Mary Matilda that married the Cornell that lived in the old cabin. And it was... they were real close girls to each other. My father and Mrs. Cornell's daughter were about the same age and they played together all the time. And my father

remembered when he thought the house was two stories. Eleanor said that someone she had looking at it said that it was just a story and an attic. But he remembered being there when they took the big logs off of the top of the house and the kitchen was in a separate building and the barn was across the road. During the war, the men were all gone—the two sons and the father—and it left everything for the girls to do. And they had a very hard time because most of the... a lot of the... they had to go to Tennessee to get a lot of the

foodstuff like salt and flour that was homemade and things of that sort that they couldn't raise on the farm. And of course they couldn't go. There was no men to go. So they had to work and plant gardens and plow and do men's work on the farm. And the mother must have been a very strong person because she kept them all together and did that. The Rice kin people that lived across the mountain in Bull Creek helped a lot, too. I don't know whether there was any men in the family that were not in the service—I think most of them were. But the older people, they were good to her. I remember them telling... they've told me these stories when I was growin' up of Myra... of what was her name? I'm sorry but at my age I don't remember very well, names. Mary Elvira. Mary Elvira Rice was the mother. She road a horse and went across the mountain to visit the Rice kin people

Rice family history following the Civil War deaths of the Rice men

The Cornells

The physical structure of the cabin

Hardship for the Rice women following the Civil War and their strength

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Stories about the Rice women, passed down orally

over there. And they gave her a bag of meat scraps to make soap with, you know. They made their own soap back then. And when she was coming back across the mountain, a panther got after her. He smelled the meat. And she threw out this meat a piece or two at a time until she got across the mountain where the dogs heard her coming—her dogs—and they came to meet her and ran the panther off. I don't know whether she had any meat scraps left or not, but she got home safely. And another time during that awful time they ran out of salt. And they went into the meat house where they had cured meat before and got the salt—the dirt from the floor of the meat house that had salt in it, and boiled it some way and got the salt out to use. So they had a really... a very, very hard time. But my grandmother and her sister Matilda were very, very close. They went to the same church, they raised their children together and it was just like one family, almost. And my Grandfather Scarborough farmed here. Now, my daddy was really a dairyman, more that than he was... But he did have crops. He raised wheat here and the people would come to thresh the wheat and he raised corn and things to feed the stock with. And he had apple trees and raspberry bushes and different things, and gardens. He always had gardens. It was a good life.

0426

Information about the Scarborough farm and dairy

I: What sort of livestock did you have?

MJSP: Cows and horses. And chickens.

I: And then did you have some hogs?

MJSP: Yeah. They raised hogs to eat. Cured them in and had the meat.

I: Now did you have any particular duties related to any of that? Did you have any particular chores you had to do?

MJSP: I was a younger child. I didn't have very many duties. My mother didn't like me to get in the kitchen with her. She liked to be... to do her own work. I cleaned up after, you know. I washed dishes and did things like that. Every child has household things that they have to do. I didn't have any hard... I didn't get out and work in the garden or anything like that.

0542

The duties of the narrator as a child

I: And how many brothers and sisters did you have?

MJSP: I had two brothers, older. And I had two cousins. My daddy's sister died and my mother and daddy took these two boys and raised them. They were older than us. They took them soon after they married. And my grandfather had a little house across the road over here. And my daddy's brother who was... had rheumatoid arthritis had lived with us all the time. But he didn't live in the house. He didn't want to live in the house with us. So where we had lived before my daddy

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The Scarborough family composition

built this little house. Well, it was just one room for him, back of our house. So he could be quiet. And it had glass all around so he could see out. And he was bedridden for thirty-four years. But when we moved here we built a room for him, but he didn't want to be in the house with us. So he went into my grandfather's house with him.

I: Now when did you move here? Do you know?

MJSP: I don't remember.

I: Were you alive at that time?

MJSP: Yes.

I: So you have memories of moving here.

MJSP: We had a dirt road up here, then. It was not paved. And it ran a little bit different and it ran in front of Eleanor's house and down that way and then up and across the creek and came up here. And there wasn't too many people that lived on this road at that time.

I: Do you remember other... other families, other neighbors that you were close with?

MJSP: Yes.

I: Could you tell me a little about those people? Friends you had.

MJSP: Well, a lot of them, you know, were just... we called them "aunt" and "uncle" and they were no kin... The Stradleys, the Carters, the Williams' and there was not many... There was more young boys than there was girls. I really didn't have girls to play with very much. Mr. Brown's sister, whose husband was a minister, spent the summers in the cabin some and they had an adopted daughter about my age. And we played together in the summer. And the

McLartys. And there was several families that had lived in that cabin—the Edwards' lived there, rented—and after Mrs. Cornell left, she rented it for a while to different people. And then Mr. Brown bought it. I think he bought it in '36 was it?

I: I think it may have been late twenties but I'm not sure.

MJSP: Eleanor was a little girl and Hugh was born in town. And Edwin was born here when they lived here. Edwin and Mary Ida.

I: Now what was the relationship between your family and the Brown family?

MJSP: Just friends. Just friends. Very dear friends. And then I worked after I got up in high school, I worked at the Three Mountaineers for Mr. Brown in the antique part. He had antiques at that time on College Street. I was there several years.

I: Was the Brown family part of the Beaverdam community?

MJSP: Mm hmm.

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*The Rice
Branch Road
community
and local
families*

0749

*The Cornell's
use of the
cabin for
rentals*

*The purchase
of the cabin
by the
Browns*

0820

Beaverdam Valley as a mixed community of farmers and townspeople

I: They were? Did a lot of other people that lived here go into town? You know, Mr. Brown went into town a lot and spent most of his time in town, I understand. Were a lot of other people farmers who stayed here?

MJSP: Well, they had... a lot of them were farmers and other people worked in town and worked at different places, just like any community.

I: So it was a mix, then?

MJSP: Yeah.

I: Did other people in the area that you remember have a car?

MJSP: Yes, they had cars. I had a car when I was sixteen.

I: And did you work in town?

MJSP: Yes. I worked for Mr. Brown. I started work the summer that was the last year of high school. I worked for him and I worked there I don't know how many years. Until after he died. And Ms. Brown took over and I was there about a year after that. And then I went into the military. And I was never back here very much. I married a military man and we moved around a lot.

I: And when did you come back to Asheville?

MJSP: Now dates are my bad point. It's been about... we've been back about twenty years because my husband's been dead about eighteen years.

I: And so... have you lived here, off of Rice Branch Road that entire time?

MJSP: We worked the house over and added to it. Took off rooms and put on rooms and all that. And my daughter married and lived in Tennessee and they were divorced and she had two small children and she came back to live with me. Then later she built her house in back of me over here on the property. And she is the one that really has the records for genealogy. I was never that interested and I'm still not that interested.

I: To your knowledge, does anyone in this area still farm?

MJSP: Not really, I don't think. It's grown up so.

I: So, both Eleanor and Mary Ida had very vivid memories of the slaughtering of the hogs and the way that your mother would prepare the meats afterwards. Do you have any similar memories?

MJSP: I remember them taking care of it. It wasn't a big thing.

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Working at the Three Mountaineers and movement to and from Asheville

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Farm life and the slaughtering of the hogs

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Neighbors help neighbors...

I: It seemed to me that...

MJSP: Neighbors help neighbors. They always have out here. Now... of course now we have so many new people and people from other places that have moved in that it isn't like

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How the women of the Valley helped each other and others

it used to be at all. But Ms. Stradley used to come and my mother would go to her house when they had something to do like maybe canning or something of that kind. They did that together. And Ms. Williams would. And if anybody was sick people would come in to help. And it was a neighborly place and you knew everyone. It was a safe place to live. And people just got along. I remember when they built... paved the road here on the last. They had convicts that worked out here in the striped clothes and all. And, of course, children were not allowed to be out around them. But all the women in this road... up this road, decided that they had been polite and they had done, you know, hadn't bothered anybody or anything. And they put up tables and cooked dinner for them. Had a big, big dinner for them. And that's the kind of people we had. And if anyone died people came in and brought food. They were just good neighbors.

I: How did your family help the Brown family or vice versa? Specifically, if you remember anything about how your families interacted with each other.

MJSP: You know, we just loved them. Loved the children. We helped them and they helped us. They were good people.

I: Do you remember threshing day?

MJSP: The what?

I: Threshing? The day that the threshing machines would come and thresh the wheat fields?

MJSP: I don't remember a lot about it. I know that the neighbors would come, too. This group would bring the machinery from somewhere else, I don't know who they were, but the neighbors would come in to help—the men would. And they went, you know, they went to each farm when they'd come into the Valley. They'd do work here and then they'd go somewhere else. I don't know where they stayed at night because they never stayed with us. But they ate with us. They would have to have as many meals as they were over here working. And a lot of times, well, Ms. Stradley would come and help mama, you know, get everything done. Or some of the other neighbors. And then they would do the same thing when they'd go to their house because it... usually there'd be a lot of men. Maybe twelve or fifteen men. And it took a lot of cooking and all that for them.

I: I can imagine. Did you ever spend time at the old house, at the cabin, when you were a child?

MJSP: What do you mean, spend time?

I: Well, did you... did you visit with...

MJSP: Yes. When the Edwards' lived there, their children...

1134

Threshing day

1210

Playing in and around the cabin as a child and attending square dances and apple butter-making parties

their girls were, well, they were little stair-steps. But we played together. And my father and mother had known them before they moved there so they were just real good friends. And we played all the time together.

I: Did you ever attend any of the square-dances or apple butter-making parties that the Browns have had?

MJSP: Yes. The apple butter particularly.

I: What was that like?

MJSP: It was fun! It really was. A lot of work. We peeled the apples the night before and then cooked them all day, almost, outside. Eleanor probably told you how they did that. And people would come that had never seen that. Just like one year one of my cousins that my mother and daddy raised decided that he'd make molasses. And they lived over off, well, where the condos are now. And he had—I don't know what the equipment looked like—but he had a horse or a mule or something that went around and around, you know, to grind it. And people came up from all around to see. There was a lot of bees comes to that.

I: When you went to those gatherings, was it usually a mix of family, you know, the Brown family or the Ramsey family and then friends? Were there lots of people at the gatherings?

MJSP: Yes.

I: Do you remember any changes being made to the cabin?

MJSP: No, I don't remember that. Yes, I do. I remember the kitchen being taken off and a new one put on. And the things that Eleanor has done for it. But I don't remember back.

I: I think that they had plumbing and electricity put in around 1927, I believe, in the cabin. Was your... do you remember, did you always have plumbing and electricity?

MJSP: No.

I: You didn't?

MJSP: We had no lines up here until... And the Browns and we were the first ones. We had to buy our own poles when they put the electricity up.

I: How did both the cabin, which I know was used more as a, you know, a summer house or a vacation house...

1312

Electricity on Rice Branch Road

1361

BREAK

(BREAK)

1365

The narrator's relationship to the Browns

MJSP: They were like family to me. And I was very fond of her mother and her daddy. And I don't know if there's anybody I think more of.

I: So you see both Eleanor and Mary Ida?

MJSP: Yes. And Hugh and Edwin. And Mary Ida's children and Eleanor's children.

1392

The uniqueness of the cabin compared to other structures in the Valley

I: Oh, I was asking how... how the cabin and the Brown's house, you know, across the road, compared to your house. I mean, was the cabin real different than the kind of houses that were up here then or not?

MJSP: Well, our house was new when we came here. My daddy had built it. He didn't build it, he had it built.

I: Right. Okay.

MJSP: And their house was new when they came. The cabin was old when they came here. Very old. And my grandfather's house was old. It was a small house.

I: How has the land off of Rice Branch Road and maybe even in the larger Beaverdam Valley area changed over time?

MJSP: It's gone up in price (Laughs). And in taxes. It's changed. We hated to see too much change, you know. You'd like to remember it as just a friendly, close-knit little community. People helping people and all that. And just a country place. And I hate to see the mountains torn up because I think the mountains are a beauty of Asheville. And they're getting too many... building too much on it and clearing the trees out and all you see is houses and lights and things like that. But of course people have to live somewhere. That's what happens.

1430

Watching the Valley change over many decades and concerns about environmental impact

I: When did... I know you were away from Asheville for a long period of time. During that time did you come back here to visit? Did you have friends...

MJSP: I came back when my family was living.

I: So when did these changes start to happen? Or when did you start to notice them? Were they more recent, or...?

MJSP: It just came on gradually. I mean, people sold out and left. A lot of people left Beaverdam. And people died and all that.

I: Did you ever spend any time at Rice Branch Creek playing in the creek?

MJSP: Oh, yes. We always played in the creek.

I: Tell me about that.

MJSP: Well, we waded in the creek and we made dams in the creek and we played in the water and in the winter it used to freeze over and we'd slide on the ice. We had fun in the creek. That was part of it. We had bridges across and these big storms would come and bridges would wash away. And it was... the creek's still there.

1506

Rice Branch Creek

I: Who did you usually play with when you were a child?

MJSP: Who did I play with?

I: Mm hmm. Your brothers, or...?

MJSP: No, my brothers were older. I played with them when... I didn't play much with them but I hung around with

1553

Relationship between the Brown children and the narrator; a lack of young girls in the community

them. They didn't like it, but I did. And I played with the Edwards children when they lived there and the Browns were younger than me. I was with them a lot but I didn't baby-sit for them or anything like that. But I would go with them, you know, Mrs. Brown would take us all maybe somewhere and I would tell stories to them and read to them and things like that. But I never... They were... Really, I didn't have anybody much to play with. I played by myself a lot because there was no girls right close. Now the Stradleys were down off of Beaverdam Road, over... And Carrie and I played together some when we were young. And several people down in that section. The Carter girls. But you knew these people always and sometimes you went to the same church and we did things like that.

1615

Playing on the mountains on the adjacent Scarborough and Brown land

I: Do you remember when the Brown land had more of a cleared area—a pasture?

MJSP: Mm hmm.

I: So you remember the layout of the land before? Did you ever play on their land up by where that new cabin is now?

MJSP: Yeah.

I: Okay.

MJSP: We played all over the woods because it was cleared out. And now this was cleared across the road here.

I: Do you ever remember finding Indian artifacts?

MJSP: Yes.

I: What did you find?

MJSP: Arrowheads. I was just telling the boy that was here this morning working for me. And I had him pick up some rocks across where they had bulldozed for... to plant the grass. And they left some rocks that needed to be moved. And I told him that we had found—every time in the spring—they used to find arrowheads over there when they plowed. And I said, "You might look for those." I didn't ask him if he found any. I think he would have told me, probably. But we'd always find arrowheads along through there. It was near the water and I guess the animals probably came to water or somethin' and I maybe they hunted through there. I found some other rocks that I thought might be Indian rocks but Laura took them to somebody and they said they were just naturally shaped like that. But I still have them. They're interesting.

1638

Finding native American artifacts

I: Was... was the land and the fact that a lot of it was either forested or open and there weren't as many people in this area something that you ever took for granted at any point in your life or something that the value of it has changed for you?

1703

Problems with flooding in recent years

MJSP: Oh, yes. I just finished going in to the latest assessment. It was so high on mine that I had to go in. We have a wet streak through—Eleanor probably told you about that.

I: I don't think so.

MJSP: Floods streak through the back of...the back of my house and all the way through her part and up through here that you can't build on. My daughter wanted to build right across the creek from me when she built but it was too wet through there. They couldn't do it. And she had to go up to where the ground rolls up a little bit.

I: How has the general attitude of people living in Beaverdam Valley—their attitude toward the land and use of land changed?

MJSP: I have no idea. You'd have to ask them.

I: Okay.

MJSP: A lot of people walk up this road, you know, just exercising. And some of them are very nice. And I've met several people over there. Some of them go to our church. And they're just nice people that wanted...like the...I guess the view and everything.

I: If you could repeat for me again, did your parents...did both of your parents live in Asheville? Were they born in Asheville?

MJSP: No, my mother was born in Arkansas.

I: Okay.

MJSP: And my father was born in Asheville.

I: That's right. And when did your mother come from...

MJSP: When she was a child, she came here.

I: And came straight to the Asheville area?

MJSP: Yeah. And her father died when she was very young and her mother married again and she lived in Asheville.

I: Do you remember...or if not you, if you remember stories that your parents or your father may have told you about, you know, the wildlife and the animals living in this area?

MJSP: No, not offhand I can't think of anything. We had, well we still have... Occasionally we see a fox around here.

And possums and raccoons and a lot of birds. I can't think of any other. Oh, squirrels, of course.

I: Do you feel like you see more or less animals now?

MJSP: I hadn't thought of that, really.

I: Do you have any memories of when there were chestnut trees?

MJSP: Oh, yes.

I: Could you tell me...?

MJSP: This was all clear in here. All these trees and things

1740

An influx of non-natives to the Asheville area

1770

The origins of the narrator's parents

1799

Flora and fauna

1837

Memories of chestnuts, fruit trees and grapevines

have come up. But around the edge of the woods up on the mountain up there, there was great, huge chestnut trees. And in the fall you could go over, you know, when they fell on the ground and pick them up. And we had friends from town that would come out and pick up chestnuts. And we used to get them and at night in the fireplace we'd throw them in the... bury them in the coals and they'd roast. And that was real good. They'd pop out. And I think mama used to make dressing a lot. The chestnut dressing. And then cook them. But I remember the chestnut trees and we had plum trees and quince and I don't think we ever had grapevines. My grandpa, I believe, had grapevines, but we never did here. Eleanor... there was grapevines on that place.

I: Did you go up on mountain a lot when you were a kid?

MJSP: We played up there on these mountains.

I: What did you do up there?

MJSP: Oh, we just played. When I was little we'd make playhouses. And then we used to hike a bunch. I belonged to the hiking club here in town. But before that a bunch of girls would—maybe on Saturday afternoon or Sunday afternoon—we would start and hike up to the Parkway. Where the Parkway is now. It wasn't the Parkway then. Up to... and then down Elk Mountain road to Beaverdam Road and then back home. Long walks! Long walks. But we really enjoyed hiking in the woods. You would be afraid to do it now because it's not safe. But we never had any trouble. Nobody ever bothered us. And I was older, then, when we did all this hiking. And we'd go up on picnics and things like that. I've never camped out much because I don't like that. But we did love hiking.

1903

Memories of girl's weekend hiking trips

I: Do you remember what it sounded like here at night? Or what it looked like? Was it real dark?

MJSP: It was dark. But I... you know, when you've lived that way before streetlights or anything you don't miss it. I mean, you don't miss what you've never known. It didn't bother me that it was dark at night. The moon would shine. It was beautiful then. And it didn't bother me. In fact, when they started wanting to put streetlights along here, I didn't want one here at the house because I thought it would be too bright in the windows and all. But I finally have one and I kind of like it because I lived alone for a while after my husband died, and it's nice to have a little light outside. But we never had trouble with... Nobody'd ever lock their doors. We never had trouble with anybody breaking in or anything like that.

1952

The Valley at night and ambivalence about street lights

I: Do you remember what it sounded like here at night and

2004

Night sounds

maybe if that's different at all? Could you hear frogs in the creek or...?

MJSP: We had owls at night. Screech owls. I love to hear them. A kind of lonesome sound, but it's nice. I like them.

I: Do you hear them now?

MJSP: What?

I: Do you still hear them now?

MJSP: Yeah, occasionally. Where are you from?

I: I'm from... California. And I go to school in Rhode Island.

MJSP: In Rhode Island. What part of California? What's the name of the town nearest you?

I: Goleta. It's close to Santa Barbara.

MJSP: We lived in Fresno; we lived in Los Angeles; we lived in Long Beach; we lived up in San Joaquin Valley; and we lived in Las Cruces... that's New Mexico, wait a minute. And we lived in... Oh, what is the one right out of San Francisco, across the bay?

I: Santa Rosa?

MJSP: Hmm?

I: Santa Rosa?

MJSP: No.

I: San Jose?

MJSP: San Rafael. So we've been... we covered California pretty well. We've never lived in Rhode Island. We lived in Massachusetts.

I: And what makes Asheville and, you know, even Rice Branch Road special?

MJSP: Hmm?

I: What makes Asheville and Rice Branch Road and this area so special to you?

MJSP: I don't know. It's kind of home, I guess.

I: Do you remember people coon hunting in the area?

MJSP: I remember them fox hunting. You could hear the dogs at night, you know, chasing the fox. But we don't hear that anymore. It's too built up, now. They can't do that.

I: Did your father hunt?

MJSP: No.

I: Did you know anyone around here?

MJSP: My cousins that we raised, one of them used to hunt. Daddy used to go, I think, occasionally with them. They'd go and build a fire and take something to eat and make coffee and just sit there and listen to their dogs. And they all knew the sound of the dogs. Which was theirs'. I don't know how. But daddy used to go some. But not in late years.

I: Do you know if there's been any mining that's been done in this area?

2073

Memories of
coon and fox
hunting

2120

Mining in the area and Mr. Scarborough bringing boulders down the mountain

MJSP: No. At one time they looked at mica up on this hill. There's a mica mine up there but it wasn't enough to really pay to do it. And there's a lot of iron ore in the rocks over in this mountain, but still not enough to mine.

I: Eleanor remembered when your father brought some large boulders down from somewhere because they were going to build a stone house. Do you have any memories of him doing that?

MJSP: Yeah, I remember him getting the stone and piling them up. They piled out from the cabin, there. Nobody's ever used them. But I don't know...they weren't any particular kind. They were just huge boulders. Like I have in my creek now. They've washed down from somewhere. We were talkin' last night. My daughter said the church is doing some landscaping and they need some boulders and I said they can have these if they'll come and get them out of the creek!

I: How did...how did people that lived in Beaverdam Valley spend time with each other? Did you...did people, you know, visit each other?

MJSP: Oh, yeah. We visited back and forth. And, you know, you helped each other. You'd come and do help and things like that. And the women had garden clubs and things like that. I guess they had quiltin' bees way back but that was before my time. I don't remember anybody going to a quiltin' bee.

I: Were there any, you know, barbecues or parties or things where a lot of people would come together at once or was it more of a...?

MJSP: They had square-dances around different houses but I was never allowed to go.

I: Why was that?

MJSP: I don't know. I don't think it was their objection to dancing... Well my uncle that was sick, the one that was sick, he was very religious, and he didn't believe in dancing. And I know one time my mother was gonna let me go to one of them. And I was about fifteen year old and it was a neighbor, you know, or something like that, up the road. And he found out that she had told me I could go and he would... He objected. And when he didn't want us to do something he would not eat. And so mama wouldn't let me go.

I: So did you ever get to go to one of the...

MJSP: No.

I: No, you didn't. Well, according to Eleanor, the Scarborough family was one of the, you know, the best loved families in this area because everybody was always...you were willing to help people out when they needed it.

2182

Different social events including mention of garden clubs, quilting bees, barbecues and square-dances

2208

Not being allowed to attend square-dances

2254

Sharing special occasions like Christmas with the Browns

MJSP: We always had a lot of company. I remember Hugh askin' his mother one time if he could move out here when he was a little boy because there was always so many people here. They'd come visit on Sunday afternoons or holidays like Christmas Day. It was just open house all the time. And we'd have about twenty for dinner and then all afternoon we'd have people comin' in and out. So mama would have coffee and cake and things out for them when they came. And it was...it was a good time. I remember my first year after I married and we were in California in a little apartment at Christmas and we couldn't come home because Ray couldn't get away. And I just...I was so homesick. I was so awfully homesick because I knew the whole family would be here and there'd be big crowds come in and everything, and a big dinner. And I got a package from my mother and she sent me a cake. She sent me spare ribs that had been cooked and canned. She sent me a ham. A fruitcake and another cake. Just a whole Christmas dinner, actually. And in it, of course, were presents, too, you know. But this was special. And she must have known that I would be homesick or something.

I: Do you have any memories of the Great Depression and how it affected families?

2334

The Great Depression: helping neighbors and those who didn't have gardens, etc.

MJSP: Well, you know, it really...we were fortunate because we raised a garden and we canned. We had plenty of food; we had a dairy; we had milk and butter. The only thing that we had to buy would be...we had corn that was...we made cornmeal and I think we had wheat at that time that was ground and whatever they do to it. And we had plenty to eat. We just didn't have any money. Everybody was that way. And we had a lot to help other people with. So I didn't really miss any of that except the fact that...

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END SIDE ONE

(END SIDE ONE)

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The Great Depression, contd. and the bank failures

MJSP: There was just no money at all. And so many people had lost what money they had when the banks failed. And really it was people that lived in the city that were really worse off. 'Cause I can remember our kin people and friends would come and get food here—get things from the garden and get things from the... Everything. Anything that we had to share—eggs and milk and butter and things like that. We shared. I can remember my mother fixin' a basket for me to carry down to an old lady and her daughter. The daughter was not well and the woman was old. And she would fix this big basket up. She would have a chicken in it and she would have butter in it and milk in it and vegetables in it. It was all I

could do to carry. I must have been about twelve years old... eleven or twelve years old. And I would take it once a week to these people. And it wasn't a charity thing, it was just a friendly thing to do because they had lost all their money and they had no men in the family and it was... they were just really hard up.

I: What do you think about Eleanor's... all the hard work Eleanor has done and all the decisions she's made about trying to, you know, preserve the cabin and the land?

MJSP: I think she's wonderful to do all that. And it's been... oh, she's worked so hard on it. I worried about her doing too much.

I: Do you think it's important to try to save?

MJSP: She loves it. She loves the place. Now you know it belongs to her and her brother.

I: Right. Would you consider doing something similar to your land? Do you think that there's a need to, you know, save places and land in this area that's been developed so much?

MJSP: I need to what?

I: Do you... is it... what Eleanor's doing to try to make sure that a lot of houses aren't built on her land or to try to save the cabin, do you think that that's something that...

MJSP: I think it's a worthwhile thing. I'm sure some time they'll build across from me. I just kind of dread it. But they can't build on me because I don't have enough property anymore. And... I had thirteen or fourteen acres. But I gave my daughter that and then she sold part of it to a neighbor of ours who is just trying to protect his place from having anything built near it. So, it's really... I don't think we'll have too many houses right here unless the man next door decides to build some more over there. Up on the... up the road, they're building them up there.

I: Well, I think those were just the last couple questions I wanted to ask. I want to thank you for your time and for doing this interview.

MJSP: Well, I've enjoyed it but I'm sorry I haven't been more helpful 'cause... you know, when you're young you don't pay attention to what's happened before. You're thinking about what's going to happen in the future.

I: Well, I think you've been very helpful.

MJSP: When you get old, you live back in the past a lot. I'm getting there.

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*Thoughts on
Eleanor's
hard work
and
dedication to
preserving
the cabin*

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*Concerns
about further
development
in the
Beaverdam
area*