

Carrie Kline: I need you to back up just a little bit and tell me where we are and what is in your hand.

Judith Haynes: We're in Hudgins House, which is in Hudgins, Virginia. In the days when this guest register was started, 1916, the front page of the book, the register book, is signed M. A. Hudgins Register Book of the Hudgins House, Cricket Hill, Virginia. In this book, people came from all over the United States, and they stayed at this house. Many of them, I think, probably, they were families that came on excursions from maybe Baltimore or the Washington, D. C. area. They came down on the steamboats on the Chesapeake Bay to visit this beautiful place. Some of them though are logged in as businesspeople, men, merchants, a couple newspaper people, who obviously came here on business. This is a great history of this part of the state at this time.

CK: Read us some of the entries.

JH: You'll make me put my glasses on. I'll go back to the beginning. I see someone spilled ink here. September 13th, 1919, Charles D. Benjamin of Bucks County, Pennsylvania. W. H. Beale of 18 Evergreen Avenue in Baltimore, Maryland. Here's a family of Palmers that came. The Mrs. Palmer was here from Portsmouth, Virginia in 1919. Here's a group, maybe businessmen traveling, D. C. Wilson, who was from Richmond, Virginia with the SP Company, R. M. McNeil of Valdosta, Georgia, A. A. Saxon of Savannah, Georgia, W. M. Hill of Timmonsville, South Carolina looks like and another Hill from South Carolina. But there are people in here who came from Arkansas. There's somebody who came from California. I like to imagine them coming in on the steamboat, coming over here.

CK: Talk about that. What do you imagine?

JH: Well, when Mr. Hudgins, Holder Hudgins was alive, whose family owned this property for, I don't know, two hundred years, three hundred years, he would walk me around in the yard. He would tell me what it used to be like. He remembered when it was a boarding house. You could see in here that people would stay. They could stay for the night, and they could eat for \$2 a day. They'd have dinner and a place to stay for \$2 a day. He told me that when you walk down to the corner of the land there, near where there's a bridge today, there used to be a footbridge. I know the steamboat wharf was over there. So, I imagine that people would get off of the boat. I know they had in those days a taxi, but it was a horse and buggy. So, they could either hire someone to bring them or maybe someone who operated the guest house went over there with a horse and wagon to pick them up. But I imagine myself, I imagine them with their valises, dressed in their maybe long dresses, and men in their business suits of the early 1900s coming across the – probably it was dusty then dirt roads, coming across that footbridge with their valises and coming to stay at the beach. At the beach, if they were on an excursion, just a place to stay if they were here on business.

CK: What did people do for pleasure on these excursions?

JH: Well, I think the steamboat in itself was a great excursion. My dad used to tell me when he was a boy, he would come down here from – that's how I got interested in it actually. My dad

told me that when he was a boy, he would come down here from Washington, D. C. You could get on the steamboat. It great being on the boat itself. It would be like today. We would go on a cruise ship. Well, that was their cruise ship, and you would come on the Chesapeake Bay. In my mind, there's no more beautiful place in the world than the Chesapeake Bay. I've done a lot of traveling and I always say this is the most beautiful place anywhere. Can you imagine being a child with your – maybe he traveled with his mother to spend the night on a boat and to come down to some of these places where there were in those days hotels, boarding houses. Some places had parks and amusement parks. It was a lively place. They maybe had gambling, Ferris wheel. Not here, but other places down in Hampton. I know they had a big park. It would have been a great thing for an adult or a child. Maybe drinking, gambling, who knows? All sorts of things might have happened on the boat. I've seen a picture of this house around the late 1800s. There is a row of straight back chairs in the yard, in the backyard. There are a bunch of women in dresses that have high collars and long skirts and they're sitting out in their straight back chairs. I think that's not like we would enjoy the beach and the water today. But they must have been that that would be their time at the beach. When you think about what Washington D. C. was like in the summer before air conditioning in the early 1900s, August in Washington, not a place where you'd want to stay. So, to get on a steamboat and go on the Chesapeake Bay with the cool breezes and to come a place like this where it's ten degrees cooler here in the summertime than it is even inland from here a half an hour. It's a very cool comfortable place to be. This house is built so that the rooms go all the way through. It's one room deep, in other words. So, you could open up all the windows on both sides and get great breezes from the water. Would have been very nice.

CK: What was this area like during that time? Can you place it in history?

JH: There was a man who lived here. He lived down the road. He's dead now. He died when he was almost a hundred. But I used to talk to him, and I asked him, "Do you remember?" He lived here almost all of his life. One time, he told me that he took the steamboat from here to Baltimore, and he went to Philadelphia to get a job. He didn't last there very long because he didn't like the city. He said, "I came back, and I never went back to the city. I stayed here." Well, I can't say that it didn't have jobs or that it wasn't developed because we did have a large fishery here and a boat building. At that time, there were probably as many people living here as there are today. But anyway, I asked this man, since he'd lived such a long time, did he remember certain presidents. He said, "No." I said, "Well, what about the war? World War I? World War II?" He said, "No." I said, "Well, do you remember the first automobile?" He remembered [laughter] the first car coming down the road up here, and he kept saying the wheels on that car were as high as buggy wheels. They were as high as buggy wheels. He described that car coming down the road for me, and it was like I was there. I could see the car with the buggy wheels. Wheels as high as buggy wheels coming down. Of all the things that he remembered in his hundred years, it was that first car in Mathews.

CK: What kind of car? Did he say?

JH: He didn't remember I asked him. No. He didn't remember. He remembered who the person was who had it. He didn't remember. Probably a Ford, thinking a Ford.

CK: Was he the only one who saw it, do you suppose?

JH: No. If you can imagine Mathews then with the steamboats coming, and they made a lot of stops. They would stop over across the way on the island. The Chesapeake Bay then had a wealth of fishes in it, fishes that don't exist in the bay anymore. I've had fishermen tell me that when they were pulling in their nets, they would need to take helpers with them to pull in their nets. Because they had so many fishes that they weren't strong enough to bring them in. So, we had a huge fishing industry here. The steamboat would stop over there on the island and pick up the fish. They would stop all along at all these different docks. It would be like today. It would be like a stop on the Metro in Washington or stop on the subway, except that here they brought supplies, and they took away things that people raised to bring to the city. They brought mail. They delivered mail. It was the way that people traveled. We weren't isolated by any means, but we traveled by water.

CK: You just bring it to life somehow.

JH: I would like to be there. You know how sometimes you wish, "If I could go back just one day in history." Maybe just one day I could be on that steamboat pulling up here or be at this house, which is, today it's a guest house again. But what if you were here when one of these people came and paid \$2 to spend the night. Of course, this house then had no indoor plumbing obviously. Was not easy to take care of a property when you – no heat, no air conditioning, no indoor – the house never had a central heat until my husband and I bought it about fifteen, maybe about twelve years ago. We put central heat in it. So, it was heated by wood stoves. The water, of course, you'd have to go out and pump the water to bring it in, outhouses, chamber pots. A long hard day, you probably worked from sun up to sun down, but it was beautiful.

CK: Describe that. Describe a day's labor.

JH: In my imagination? Well, we just recently went through a period here where we didn't have any electricity because of the hurricane. When you live in a place like this, even today, if you don't have electricity, you can't flush toilets. You don't have water. It's hard work. Well, say, now I have horses, and I have two horses. Every day during this period after the hurricane, I had to carry twenty gallons of water for my horses. So, I had to go to a pump and get the water and carry it for my horses. I'm thinking, it wasn't that long ago when people had to do that every day. Just to bathe in the morning, pump water. Maybe you would heat it up on the wood stove. Get your wood stove in the kitchen going, unless maybe it was already going from the night before. But all your cooking would be done on a wood stove. Your laundry, imagine that, doing that by hand with water that you had to pump by hand. Not an easy life, hard life.

CK: Tell me more about that kitchen.

JH: Well, I can tell you about the house – Peter Allen, who I talked to about what he remembered in Mathews and the first car. He never had indoor plumbing. I can tell you up until maybe ten years ago, I was in his house. He had an outhouse he used. He heated it with a wood stove. He would bring water, carry water into his kitchen, and use it. I know there were opportunities for him to maybe get some modern conveniences, but he didn't want them. He

liked it the way it was. I don't think I would like that. [laughter] I have all brand-new appliances. I love my new appliances. [laughter]

CK: But those women and maybe men, too, had to serve a house full.

JH: True. But they had chickens. I can tell from this book they had chickens and eggs. I'm sure they did a lot of farming here, that they raised a lot of their own. They probably raised a lot of food here themselves. I'm sure that in Mathews, they had a bartering system among the neighbors. There was enough cash to buy what you needed from the store, but maybe somebody who raised one item of produce would trade with somebody else. Everybody in those days had to be fairly self-sufficient. You could get some staples, probably especially in a place that was operated as a boarding house, probably not a lot of extra money.

CK: Staples?

JH: Maybe flour, sugar, salt, cloth, the kind of cloth you might need for sewing or whatever. Whatever they had in the general store that you could afford or that they might order for you from someplace, Baltimore, Washington.

CK: How would those goods come in?

JH: Steamboat or some other kind of boat. That was the only way. We didn't have roads. One time, I talked to this man in Gloucester. I feel embarrassed now, but to me he didn't seem that old. He said he remembered going to the courthouse, Main Street in Gloucester, where it used to be just horses and buggies there. I said, "You remembered horses and buggies?" He wasn't that old of a man. I said, "You remember going to Gloucester in a horse and buggy?" He said, "My dear, how did you think we got there?" [laughter] That's good. I don't know. I guess I never thought about it. But it's not that long ago in our past when people here, particularly in rural areas, that was the only way they could travel. If you can imagine, even if you had an automobile, driving on these dirt roads in a car, we don't get a lot of snow. But especially when it was rainy, rutted, muddy, dirt roads, you would go by boat. Be the best way. The only way, probably, in most circumstances.

CK: It is incredible to conceive of that life, is it not? Not so long ago as you say.

JH: No. To me, it sounds great. It was hard work, but can you imagine this place a hundred years ago? I'm sure these big, tall trees weren't here, and I'm sure a lot of it was farmland. But there wouldn't have been all the houses that you see over on that distant shore. Today, I saw a bald eagle here this morning. Today, the eagles have come back. But in those days, we know there were a lot more fishes, a lot more crabs, oysters. The oyster industry here was huge. It would have been beautiful. Beautiful. You just have to sit outside and imagine it sometimes. Sit out there, quiet, imagine it.

CK: I want to talk about the wharfs in a minute. But let us spend a little bit more time in this house. First, this \$2-day room and board, what were they serving up in the kitchen then?

JH: I don't know. I don't know what they would have had. She even put her menus in here. It's not that big of a house. It has the main, the central part of the house. You come in a main corridor and there are two parlors on the first floor. Each of them had a fireplace for heat. Then there's two rooms upstairs. There were vents that went from the first floor to the second floor. So, the heat from the wood stoves would go up into the second floor. Then there's another three-story part of the house where I'm sure people stayed there. Because one time, I saw a picture and a window was marked with an X. The room is a bathroom now, it's a small bathroom. But somebody had marked it with an X and said, "This was my sleeping room." So, of course, then in those days, they didn't have bathrooms. So, I'm sure that room was a sleeping room. It would be nice if you could just go back for one day and see what it was like, where people stayed here, how they arrived. Holder Hudgins told me that on the other side of the creek over there, there was a place where people who lived on the island left their buggies over there, When they would come across from the island, they would come across in small boats, skiffs. This was before there was no bridge. They would come across in skiffs, and they would swim their horses across next to their boats. They kept their buggies over here. So, they'd hitch up their horses to the buggies and go into town and do whatever shopping they needed to do, whatever. Then come back and leave their buggies and swim their horses back across. So, I'm sure that place was within view of this house. Probably the steamboat dock and the steamboat were within view of this house. The footbridge that you could go across to Cricket Hill to the steamboat dock was look out and see it. Unfortunately, there's no photographs that I know of that remain of that time. So, you have to use your imagination.

CK: You read some passenger names and the names of some people who stayed here, but you also said it referenced chickens in that book?

JH: Yes. There's a lot of pecan trees on the property. They would sell and ship pecans I know. There's part of it. Let's see, 1928, they paid \$10 to the ice plant. So, that was probably, I'm sure, for ice that they used here at the house.

MK: Can you turn it towards me?

JH: This looks like on a Tuesday, February 18th, a hen set on some eggs. There's a notation here. In May 1928, they paid Mr. Shipley for some cracked corn, a half a bushel of cracked corn, and some kind of maybe cornmeal, some kind of meal, \$1.40. Two anchors cost \$2.50.

CK: Two anchors?

JH: \$2.50 for two anchors.

CK: So, the people living in this house were buying anchors?

JH: Yes. See, if you would go to visit somebody, you would go by boat. That's where you got around. This county, even today, if you want to see this county, you have to go by boat to see this county. Because you drove in by car, but you can't see this house from the road. It's way back from the road. So, the only way for you to see most of the houses in the county is to go by boat, go around all the different creeks and rivers. It was built on the water because that's the

way you traveled. There's a downtown area, Main Street. Everybody had a Main Street, but the houses are on the water.

CK: So, what would this anchor have gone to? What sort of a family vessel, do you know?

JH: Well, they probably had a little skiff that they used.

CK: Would there have been a blacksmith making the anchor?

JH: Well, they bought it from somewhere. I don't know whether they would have. You mean here on the property? No, probably not. There was a chicken house out there. The steamboats brought a lot of merchandise. Remember here, three hundred years ago, we were getting merchandise from England. The ships used to cross the ocean and come here. So, it was hardly backward or backwoods. You could get things. Maybe they weren't all available here, but there were ways that you could get them.

CK: It is really a happening place, is it not?

JH: I think it was. Wish I was happening then. [laughter] Let's see. Some people that arrived to supper, they would say in the book. Mr. Howen arrived and stayed in the middle room and had supper. His bill was \$3, and he paid \$2.50. It said he had a 50 cent-balance on his bill here.

CK: So, they were running a credit line for him.

JH: Apparently, because there are other things in the book that look like notations that people maybe owed some money or hadn't quite paid everything. Let's see. Saturday, July the 12th, 1930, William Oliver Blincoe of Ashland, Virginia will be here July 14th.

DJ: Can you spell that?

JH: Blincoe?

CK: Yes.

JH: It looks like B-L-I-N-C-O-E. Arrived at 4 p.m. He's paid up to Wednesday the 16th, \$2.00. No, sorry. It says, looks like oars for a boat. Departed July the 20th at 6:00 a.m., paid in full, \$4.00. Mr. Tab and party of four will be here on Sunday for a fishing trip. Sure enough, on Saturday, the 28th of June 1930, Mr. Drake and three other people arrived from Norfolk.

CK: How long were these people staying?

JH: Just a few days, usually. Sometimes you'll see in here that they stayed for a week or two.

CK: Can you say that whole thing? They were staying for just a few days.

JH: Sometimes they only stayed a day or two. Sometimes they stayed for a week or more, a

week or two. Somebody came from the International Silica Corporation.

CK: Any clue what that was?

JH: Well, maybe they mined silica and sold it. Thomas Chadwick from Richmond, looks like he was an auto dealer, was here.

DJ: Do you have a date?

JH: Sunday, October 13th, 1929. Why?

DJ: That is right before the crash.

JH: On October 19th, 1929, Forrest got the something skiff for the oyster season. They owed Mr. Forrest, for crabs during August, \$4.50.

CK: I wonder, how do you compare these? If an anchor was \$2.50, does that sound like a lot of crabs?

MK: Pardon me.

CK: Say that again?

JH: In those days, crabs were plentiful on the bay. It's not like today, where the crab harvests have declined, even I remember that. I grew up on the bay up in Maryland. You could just walk around in the water and step on crabs. They were everywhere. It's not like today. Of course, then too we had lots of oysters here. Gone.

CK: So, why were they paying \$4 and some for – how much does it say? How many crabs are there?

JH: It didn't say. I'm sure they ran a tab, crab tab. I'm sure whoever kept this book had no idea that eighty years later we'd be looking at it for clues of what their everyday life was like. There are some people over here, the Trimpers came. I think probably they are the Trimpers from Ocean City, Maryland. I don't know whether you ever saw the amusement park on the boardwalk, Ocean City, Trimper. The old merry-go-round they have in there. The Trimpers were here. I think it's probably the same family. Also, Gilbert Klingel was here when he was a child. He became a famous photographer. He was a photographer for National Geographic.

DJ: Say again?

JH: Gilbert Klingel.

CK: The other fellow again?

JH: Trimper. Trimper family from Ocean City, Maryland.

CK: Tell us again what they are...

JH: I know there are Trimpers in Ocean City. Over by the boardwalk, they have an amusement park. If I can find where the Trimpers were in here, I'm pretty sure of that. Three fishermen from Norfolk arrived Saturday, the 28th of September. \$3.30, they paid. Pecan orders. So, we have pecan trees here, and they sent pecans to New York, shipped via parcel post. Looks like twenty-five pounds of pecans for \$7.50. Fifty pounds for \$15 shipped to New York, 311 West 23rd Street, New York. There's a whole list of people that bought nuts for a total of \$37.50, seven people.

CK: Bought nuts?

JH: From the trees out here. They just would collect the nuts and sell them, \$7.50 How much were the crabs? \$4.50? That's making some money there.

CK: Did you get some nice photos of the pages of the book?

MK: Yes.

JH: Want some?

MK: No. I do not.

JH: Mr. Bolton came here from Cleveland, Ohio, who worked for Warren Refining and Chemical Company. That would have been in 1924, it looks like.

CK: The company name.

JH: J. C. Bolton, I guess, Cleveland, Ohio, from the Warren Refining and Chemical Company.

CK: Do you want to get up close and try to...

MK: Later.

MK: I am guessing that most of these guests were Anglo-Saxon.

JH: I would imagine, yes.

CK: Say that in your own words.

JH: When you say Anglo-Saxon...

MK: White people.

JH: White people? Well, sure. Of course, in those days, we had legalized segregation.

Although here, in Mathews, I don't think it was like we didn't have segregated neighborhoods like you might have in a city in the 1950s, 1960s. The man that I talked about who lived down the road that I spoke with, he lived to be almost a hundred, he was a Black gentleman. When you leave out of here on the lane, you'll see his house right next to the road. His family, his parents built that house. People lived together, close to each other. They may have been segregated in the places they could stay, lodging; the places they could eat, restaurants; even the stores that they could go to, schools, obviously. So, yes, I'm sure all the guests that stayed here were White people. Because White people operated the house. The impression I had from talking to that man, the Black gentleman who lived down the road and other people here, is that they lived close together. The community depended on each other for things. If you could call it that, the luxury of not associating with people of a different race, everybody here had to count on each other. I think they did.

MK: Were there Black people employed here at the house?

JH: I don't know. I don't know. I'm sure they had someone to help them. But I don't know whether that would be a White person or a Black person. Don't know. You'll see when you come out around here, Mathews has like a church on every corner. Because, of course, they had Black churches and White churches, Black cemeteries, White cemeteries, Black funeral directors, White funeral directors, and a lot of that stays today. You'll see the churches have continued. It's not like with integration, everybody gave up their institutions. We still have Black churches, White churches. People choose to keep it that way.

MK: But the steamboat itself must have been a kind of metaphor for the society as a whole. That is that there were suites for people who had money, presumably White people. Then on the lower levels, Black people would be riding, who worked on the boat, who were the stevedores, who would put the loads on and off. Have you thought about that at all? Is that part of the picture?

JH: I haven't really thought about it. But now that you mention it, I'm sure it was true. But one thing I can tell you is if it was a good paying job on the steamboat, it would have gone to a White person. So, I don't know what you'd make being the stevedore on a boat.

MK: Maybe very little.

JH: But I would guess that Black people, if it's like today, some unions are still all White unions, blue collar workers. They make a lot of money. It hasn't been easy for African Americans to get good paying jobs anywhere, steamboat or elsewhere.

MK: So, I am trying to picture the steamboat coming up, drawing up to the wharf. Probably the lowest paying jobs went to those people who unloaded it, who took off the cargos, set them on the wharf.

JH: I don't know. I haven't seen...

MK: Well, I am just trying to imagine how the actual physical work got done and who did it.

JH: They're probably old pictures from those days, I would guess. I've never seen any.

MK: Dianne, maybe you can help me phrase this question a little bit.

DJ: I have seen a lot of photographs of the stevedores, the dock hand. They were all White.

JH: Where they?

DJ: Yes. I had a woman that I interviewed some time ago tell me that all the people below deck were Black. All the people above deck, in other words, the purser, the mates, the captain, they were all white. No exceptions.

CK: Where does that put the kitchen crew and the serving crew?

DJ: What I had heard was that the kitchen crew and the serving crew were all Black. That is what I have heard so far. Below decks, manual labor. The Blacks that traveled were below deck also. No staterooms available.

JH: Do they have signs like they used to have where it was colored only for whatever facilities they had? Yes. I remember that one was a little...

CK: You remember that from?

JH: I remember being on a bus when I was little and seeing on the top of the bus that colored people had to stand in the back of the bus.

DJ: Water fountains.

JH: Yes, water fountains. It really impressed me when I was little. I think because I grew up in Washington and I wasn't used to that. I asked my mom one time where I could have seen it because I was really little. She said it must have been in Danville, Virginia when I was there. Because Washington wasn't like that then. I don't know about Mathews, but in Gloucester, which is the next county over, there were separate movie theaters for Blacks and Whites. The new movies would go to the White movie theater first and then eventually they'd get over to the Black movie theater. Even when they got electricity in Gloucester, electricity went to the White neighborhoods, not the Black neighborhoods. So, I'm sure it was like that in Mathews, too. But I just happen to know about Gloucester. I know Peter Allen, the Black man that lived down the lane, his attitude, at least what he admitted to, was that if people didn't want him in their store, he didn't want to spend money there. So, he would go to the Black-owned country stores and buy what he needed from Black merchants.

CK: Are you familiar with where those were or what those were called?

JH: No. I don't, but if you come here, like here now, this book says that this house is on Cricket Hill. We had a lot of hundreds of post offices that were in country stores. Every little corner

here, like coming down, if you came down 198, every little intersection practically, it would have a name. Today there might no longer be a post office there. But that was where the post office was. It wasn't just a post office. It would be a country store. It would be a gathering place for people. Those names survive if you would look at a map today, those names of the communities survive, even when they no longer have a post office. The Postal Service has been gradually closing those post offices.

CK: You would think even this place being somewhat of a public facility might have had some entertainment and gatherings of its own?

JH: I don't know how much entertainment you could have if you didn't have lights when it got dark. [laughter] Say, you came down here from the city, from Washington, to come to the country and to come to the water. Probably you would enjoy just being outside and being in the yard, just resting. Like today, we would go to a beach. It would be like that. But this town where we are now, there used to be things here that we don't have now. I think there used to be a dance hall. I think there used to be a bowling alley. I think there was a skating rink at one time. There were things to do, but all those things are gone now.

CK: Do you have a sense of how old?

JH: The theater? That was a movie, yes.

DJ: How old?

JH: I don't know. I don't know when it was a movie theater.

CK: Do you have a sense of how many staff it would have taken to keep this place going?

JH: No, I don't. But I would guess that the people that operated it weren't wealthy people, and they probably couldn't afford very much help. So, I'm guessing that they did a lot of the work themselves, as I do. I do the laundry. So, maybe whoever operated this as a guest house, they might have had a girl to come in and help with the laundry, help with the ironing, maybe help in the kitchen, kitchen help. But it wasn't like they had a lot of extra spending money to hire people. I'm sure they didn't.

CK: What about in their own family? Do you know much about how many sisters and brothers, or whether there were a lot of kids helping out?

JH: No. I'm sorry, I don't. But it's not that big of a house, although there might have been other outbuildings. I think that there might have been. This was the main house. I'm sure they had a summer kitchen. The chicken house is still standing. There's an outhouse, which I don't think is the original outhouse. But there were probably other buildings here, too.

CK: Were they farming here or oystering?

JH: Yes, farming. I'm sure they did everything they could to make money, like everybody here

in those days. If they could make some money farming besides supplying this house, if they could make some money selling what they grew or trading it for something else, I'm sure they did that. Maybe they paid their doctor bills with it, who knows. It hasn't been that long ago that if somebody would go to the doctor they might pay with a basket of eggs or whatever, a couple pounds pecans.

CK: What about life on the wharfs? What images do you have of that whole scene?

JH: I don't really know what it would be like to be working there. I just imagine being on that boat, being on that steamboat and coming down the Chesapeake Bay. It's probably pretty noisy and festive, probably festive for the people that were on excursions. For people that were on business trips, it would probably be like going to an airport today. People reading their newspapers, maybe a little grumpy, [laughter] maybe a little uncomfortable in their wool business suits.

CK: Any other areas Dianne that...

DJ: No. I think you pretty much covered everything you can about this property. Do you want to say a little bit more about people traveling by footbridge because we have talked a lot today, but not so much the bridge.

JH: Well, all I know about that is that Holder told me, Holder Hudgins, when he was alive, that down in the corner of the property, there was a – it's beeping. There was a footbridge that went across to Cricket Hill.

DJ: Then you are going to show that to us in a minute.

JH: Well, the bridge is no longer there.

DJ: Where?

JH: But I can show you where it was. We can walk out on the property.

DJ: So, how far was that, approximately?

JH: From the house? From here? Maybe three hundred feet. It's not very far. But it wouldn't have been much of a walk to come over. If you got off the steamboat, say, you didn't have a horse and buggy to meet you, or you didn't hire a horse and buggy to bring you, it wouldn't be that far of a walk. Say, you got off where the bridge is now from the steamboat, or where the ice plant was there, half a mile walk, maybe. Nothing for those days for people that were used to walking long distances.

DJ: Do you think the people from this house could have heard the steamer arriving?

JH: Well, I think they could have seen it from here. Because if it was where the corner of the bridge is there, you can see there. I can see the bridge tender now.

CK: You think what then?

JH: Hmm?

CK: You think what then?

JH: I think they could have seen it. The people here could have seen the steamboat arrive, could have heard it. I understand they used to ring a whistle before they came. So, they could have heard it. I've been told that they were very punctual. So, it ran on a certain schedule, and it had certain stops that it made. So, say, you were operating Hudgins House and you knew that people had made reservations, that they were going to arrive on a certain day, four people. You could go over and meet it. You knew when it was going to get here, and you knew that you had four people coming. So, you just go over and pick them up and bring them back horse and buggy.

MK: Well, that was well said.

JH: Wouldn't that be neat?

MK: Hmm?

JH: Wouldn't that be neat?

MK: Yes.

JH: When I went to the newspaper yesterday to check some things, Elsa Cook told me that the steamboats would bring the mail. So, you could post a letter in Baltimore on one day and it would arrive that day or the next day. It wasn't like today where it might take two weeks. The mail would get here right away. People would send a letter and say, "I'm bringing a party of four tomorrow." Just go get them. Now, how they communicated if they didn't have vacancies, I couldn't tell you. [laughter] Wouldn't that have been neat?

MK: Yes. I am just interested in the whole social system it took to support that kind of pleasure traveling, who actually did the work, and where they lived, who they were. That side of it interests me too a lot, always been interested in.

JH: Well, do you know what it cost? Like my dad, when he would go, they were just middle-class people. They weren't wealthy people. They weren't poor people either. But to go on a steamboat overnight, what would it cost?

DJ: I do not know. I was too young. I do not remember.

MK: Well, it was affordable, I guess.

JH: Relatively speaking, it was probably a lot more affordable than taking your family to a movie today or Busch Gardens, someplace like that. Well, I just know from my father's family

that they would not have ever done anything extravagant. So, I'm sure it wasn't extravagant. If it was all there was to travel by boat, like these businessmen that came here, somebody come from California, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, I'm guessing that it was probably like bus travel or train travel. As far as the expense of it, it wouldn't be the most expensive way to travel.

MK: Of course, if you go on a plane, there are first-class seats.

JH: Well, I'm sure they didn't go for first class. I'm sure there must have been suites or staterooms like a cruise ship today. It's not that long ago. I have a tendency to think that anything that happened before I was born was like the olden days or like distant history or something. So, when I meet somebody like that, a retired school superintendent, who told me that he remembered going to Gloucester Courthouse on a horse and buggy, I'm going, "Horse and buggy?" Because in my mind, that's ancient history, but it's not that far distant. It's not that long ago. This is what? The 100th anniversary of the Wright brothers' flight?

MK: I think.

JH: This year? So, in a hundred years, look at what we've done. We couldn't even fly, and now go to the moon. Going to outer space in a hundred years.

MK: Not me, I am staying right here.

JH: This is like yesterday. Looking to see if that's my eagle. Let's walk around outside. [inaudible] [laughter].

CK: You have the best way of talking about this in such a beautiful voice.

JH: Well, thank you. I knew too, this will be good. [laughter]

CK: Would it not be neat if you could just transport yourself? Just wish yourself some place?

DJ: Time travel.

CK: Time travel. But just for a little while.

[end of transcript]