

Michael Klein: Okay. This is a recorded interview. We are recording this for the Steamboat Era Museum in Irvington. Today's date is October 30th. We are in Gloucester at the home of Louise Morgan. Is there any other information that you would like to get in at the beginning of this?

Carrie Klein: No, that is fine.

MK: The interviewers are Michael and Carrie Klein. (Diane Jordan?) is doing the logging and directing.

Harvey Morgan: It's Louise Bland Morgan. That's important.

MK: Would you start out by saying, "My name is?"

HM: Mom, he wants to do a mic test on you. He wants you to start out by saying "My name is Louise Morgan" or whatever.

Mary Louise Morgan: I don't know. I'm not familiar with what you do with those things.

MK: Could you say, "My name is Louise Morgan?"

MLM: Yes.

MK: Could you say it, please?

MLM: My name is Louise Morgan.

MK: Excellent.

CK: Can you say it one more time?

MLM: My name is Louise Morgan.

MK: Oh, that is much better. We never ask people their ages, but perhaps you would tell us your date of birth.

MLM: September the 22nd, 1903.

MK: Wow. That puts things in perspective, doesn't it? I do not know, maybe you would like to start out telling us a little bit about your people and where you were raised.

MLM: Oh, my goodness. I didn't know I was going to be in this thing. [laughter] I don't know what to tell you. You ask me some questions.

MK: Well, tell us about where you were raised, the house you grew up in, and some of your early childhood memories, the best you can remember.

MLM: That's too long ago. I can't on the spur of the moment like this.

CK: What kind of house did you grow up in?

MLM: I'm thinking.

CK: You are thinking. Take your time.

MLM: I don't remember.

HM: Well, you grew up at Cologne, at Buena Vista.

MLM: I didn't grow up there. I got married there.

HM: But I thought you were born there.

MLM: Me at Buena Vista?

HM: Yes. Weren't you born at Buena Vista?

MLM: I don't know.

HM: Papa had the store there?

MLM: Yes, but he was married when he had the store there, and I was an infant.

HM: Were you born in Gloucester or were you born at Cologne?

MLM: I don't remember. I would say it, but I don't remember which it was.

HM: I think your brother Harvey was born in Gloucester in, maybe, Virginia.

MLM: Yes. Maybe I was born in King and Queen. I think you're right. But is all that important?

HM: Well, I think it's important. What they want to know is a little bit about your background. I think Buena Vista is such a historic place that it would be interesting to know about that. The houses were about well over two-hundred years old or maybe three hundred years old. It's a colonial Dutch gable-roof house.

MLM: I don't remember all that. When I came along, that wasn't important.

MK: Can you talk a little bit about your father's store and some of the memories of that?

MLM: It was a general store. He sold everything from nails to ladies clothes. I don't know what else to tell you. It had all sorts of things.

HM: It had a post office.

MLM: Yes.

HM: Would you tell how the post office became named Cologne?

MLM: Yes. They wanted to have a post office there, and it was necessary to pick out a name. The village was Buena Vista, but there was already a Buena Vista post office. So, they couldn't use that. They had to think of something else. My father used to tell about these men sitting around the fire debating what they should name it. One man happened to look up on the shelf and saw, "Oh, it's Cologne." He said, "Why don't we name it Cologne?" So, it was known as Cologne post office. But they couldn't name it Buena Vista, which was the name of the village, because there was already a Buena Vista post office in the state. I think I've got my story right.

MK: So, they named it Cologne?

MLM: Yes.

HM: It was such a sweet place.

MLM: Yes. A lot of people used to have a big question in their minds when you see the name is Cologne. Why in the world would you name anything Cologne? Anyway, that's what they named it, because they couldn't think of something else that hadn't already been taken.

MK: Did you have brothers and sisters?

MLM: I had a brother and a sister.

MK: Where did you rank? Were you in the middle?

MLM: I was the baby.

MK: What were their names, your brother and sister?

MLM: My brother was Harvey Garner, named for my mother's brother-in-law. My sister was Virginia Frances. I don't know who she was named for. I'm sure it was somebody. I'm Mary Louise. I'm named from my mother who was Mary Louise.

MK: Who was your mother before she was...

MLM: She was Gayle, G-A-Y-L-E. She had taught school, and maybe she was still teaching. I don't know when they were married. She was a very fine lady, I would say, though.

MK: Do you remember your mother's kitchen? Did she cook a lot? Did she bake?

MLM: She didn't like cooking so very much. She'd much rather read a book. But she did cook. She was a good cook.

MK: What sort of a nature was hers?

MLM: She had a very pleasant attitude toward most things. Well, I'm her daughter. What can I say? We thought she was wonderful. I still think so.

HM: How many years did she teach Sunday school?

MLM: Oh, my dear. There, you got me. All the years I can remember. She taught men's Bible class, of all things.

HM: Your father was a treasurer of the church. How many years was he treasurer?

MLM: That, I don't know either. As many as I can remember.

MK: Which church was it?

MLM: Shackelford's Methodist Chapel, they called it.

MK: Where did you go to school?

MLM: Where did I go to school? I went to Frog Pond Academy. I went to the public school in the community, which my father named Frog Pond Academy. He went there too, some years before I did.

MK: Was that the official name of it or was that his name for it?

MLM: No, it was Buena Vista Public School.

MK: Do you remember much about your school days?

MLM: I remember as much as most people. When I first started at the school, there were all seven grades in one room. Some way along the line, they were broken up, and the first four grades were in one room and then the others went in the second. So, when you got past the fourth grade, you were promoted to this another building, which was a very great experience at that time. [clears throat] Excuse me.

MK: Did you have to learn a lot of recitations in those days?

MLM: Yes, a lot of memory work.

MK: They do not have that much anymore?

MLM: No.

MK: Do you remember any of those recitations?

MLM: Maybe bits and pieces, but not anything that I could recall.

MK: Did you and your brother and sister work at your father's store?

MLM: Not very much. We used to sit in for somebody who was out, so there would be somebody there on watch. But we didn't do much selling.

MK: Did you have any fun when you were a little girl?

MLM: Have what?

MK: Any fun? What did you all do for enjoyment?

MLM: Oh, we had lots of fun. We played croquet, for one thing, which was a great game at that time. I don't know. That's gone yesterday.

HM: Well, you used to ice skate at the pond next door to Frog Pond Academy.

MLM: The pond was very shallow. Not over three feet deep on anywhere, so it would freeze very readily. We used skate, ice skating. It was a great sport. I remember when my father taught me to skate. He built skates to fit my little shoes. He took me up there and taught me how to skate. I was a very special child, I felt. [laughter]

MK: Tell me more about that.

MLM: Well, more about that is that he spoiled me, I guess. I had little skates to fit my shoes. Hardly anybody else had shoe skates. But he was a merchant, and he could get these things. In that way, I was spoiled, I'm sure.

HM: I think it would be interesting if you would tell about how you used to make dolls out of the daylilies.

MLM: Well, that's not very difficult to do. You just turned the lily upside down. The bloom was a skirt, and then you added a little smaller flower, like a buttercup or a daisy, and put it on the end for the head. Then right there, you had a lady all dressed up. You'd find a bloom with an angled stem, and that would be the man. He'd have two legs. They were great days, great imagination.

HM: Your brother Harvey and Dick Collins used to play sawmill.

MLM: Yes. My uncle had a sawmill, and they used to think it was great if somebody could take them to the sawmill where they'd see the workings. So, they improvised one for themselves there in the backyard, and the sawmill would say [imitates sound]. You could hear it for some

distance away when the mill was running. [laughter] That mill, I mean, it was very loud.

HM: What did they use for horses to haul the logs?

MLM: It was corn cobs that had gone through the shell. Well, there was no corn on it, just a corn cob.

HM: How would they rig that up to be a horse?

MLM: He'd put nails in for its legs. I forgot what they did about the head. I guess they just ripped the – anyway, that's been a long time ago.

MK: Do you remember the days before there were automobiles?

MLM: Oh, yes. Yes, indeed. When you wanted to go somewhere, you had to get somebody to hitch a horse to the buggy, and you'd get in and drive the horse – if you weren't going very far. If you were going to Ware Neck where my mother's people lived, you'd go take a pair of horses and you'd spend the day. You didn't go and come right back. You'd give the horse time to catch up. It was a long trip.

MK: What other ways did people travel? I mean, they walked a lot, I bet.

MLM: Yes, and most everybody had a horse or horses or mule. The riding vehicles went from speed carts to buggies and carriages and carriages with a cover with – what is the one with something on top?

CK: A surrey?

MLM: Surrey with something on top.

MK: Fringe.

MLM: With a fringe on the top, that's right. Surrey with the fringe on top. Yes, we had one of those.

MK: What if people wanted to travel outside the area? What if they wanted to go to Baltimore, let us say, or to Washington?

MLM: Well, they went to Baltimore by boat. Most places, they went by boat. Of course, from shorter distances, they had a little motorboat that would carry them. When you went to Baltimore, you went on a steamboat and spent the night on the bay. It was quite an adventure to go to Baltimore on a boat. Now, you tell something.

MK: What did you say?

MLM: I said you tell the next one.

MK: Oh, you want me to tell the next one? [laughter]

CK: Better have a drink of water.

MLM: No, thank you. I don't care for any.

MK: Well, I have always been fascinated by steamboats myself. Of course, I have never seen a real steamboat in action. I guess they were...

MLM: They were just as glamorous as you think they were.

MK: They were?

MLM: Yes.

MK: Tell me about the steamboats you remember.

MLM: Well, the one that I remember went from West Point to Baltimore. We'd go to West Point and take the steamboat and travel all night up the bay, get to Baltimore early in the morning. It was a beautiful trip.

MK: What do you mean a beautiful trip?

MLM: Well, the river was beautiful, and the boat was – that was a nice boat. You could go out on deck and watch the water go by. Sometimes, you'd see another boat. That's been a long time ago. I can't remember all the details. But it was a real thrill to go to Baltimore and spend the night on the boat.

MK: Do you remember the first time you ever did that, or the first time you can remember doing it?

MLM: No, I don't remember the first time.

MK: What about the second time?

MLM: Well, I don't remember that either. [laughter]

If you wanted to go, that was the way to travel. That's the way it was.

HM: That's the way you went on your honeymoon, is it not?

MLM: Part of the way, yes. Part of it was train and boat.

MK: Well, that is interesting. Why don't we back up a step or two and ask about how you came to be married?

MLM: What do you mean, how did I come to be married?

MK: You had to have somebody to marry, I suppose.

MLM: Oh, yes.

MK: Where did you find such a person? How did you meet? Tell me about your courtship.

MLM: That's been a long time ago, too.

MK: Pretty memorable though, I bet.

MLM: I guess so too, but I don't even remember how we met now. But there weren't many – eligible bachelors, I think you'd call them. Where I lived, most of the men were already married or too young to get married, so the courtships were not too plentiful. I don't know. That's been a long time ago.

HM: Well, you know who introduced you to Happy.

MLM: I do.

HM: Aunt (Mary Russell?).

MLM: Yes, I guess she did.

HM: I think that's an interesting story.

MLM: Well, I've forgotten it. You tell it.

HM: No, you can tell it.

MLM: You mean that I went to spend the night with her?

HM: Yes.

MLM: Yes, and he came over.

HM: No, she took you to the drugstore and wanted you to meet him.

MLM: Something like that. I've forgotten. You'd know it better than I did.

HM: [laughter] Well, I've heard you tell it so many times.

MLM: I think so, too.



HM: You all went to the drugstore. You saw him and met him for the first time. What did you say? Not to him, but what have you said to me and to others?

MLM: That he didn't have a chance. [laughter]

Is that what you're talking about?

HM: Yes, that's what I'm talking about. [laughter]

MK: You said what?

MLM: After that, he didn't have a chance. After I met him, he was a goner.

MK: What did you mean by that exactly?

MLM: I meant that I was going to have him. Nobody else was going to have him, is what did that mean. [laughter] Oh, well, they were the courtship days.

HM: I think it would be interesting if you would tell about your school days after you left Frog Pond Academy and how difficult it was to go to the schools elsewhere.

MLM: It really was.

HM: Then tell about Happy's courting you when you were in Urbana.

MLM: Oh, well, that was a long time later. I was teaching when he courted me in Urbana.

HM: I know.

MLM: I would send in somebody else to school then. Let me see. I don't know, Harvey. Let somebody else tell a while.

HM: You went to Fredericksburg.

MLM: Yes.

HM: Which is now Mary Washington College.

MLM: Yes. I went in the fall and stayed until Christmas. I had Christmas at home and went back, stayed until June. I didn't have a lot of going back and forth in those days.

HM: That was your high school?

MLM: Well, yes.

HM: Then after Fredericksburg?

MLM: I went on into college. Fredericksburg was a junior college, which meant you went for two years of college work. If you wanted to just graduate, you had to go somewhere else for the rest of it. Mary Washington was the one that you went to.

HM: Then after that, you went...

MLM: After Mary Washington, you graduated from college.

HM: What college did you go to?

MLM: Mary Washington.

HM: I mean, didn't you go to Blackstone?

MLM: Yes. I don't know when that was. That was evidently before Mary Washington. I don't know how – that's been too long ago.

HM: But you had to leave Blackstone and then you went to Farmville.

MLM: Yes.

HM: Why did you have to leave Blackstone?

MLM: The building burnt. Is that what you're talking about?

HM: Yes. I think that's an interesting story. You all had gone to the movies.

MLM: Yes, we went to the movies. While we were in the movie, they – it was a very strict school to begin with. You didn't go out anywhere without a teacher or somebody with you. The teacher said that "Girls, the college is on fire." Every now and then, she'd come back and report something about the state of the fire. I remember she came in one time and said, "Girls, the college is in the last stages." This wail went up all over the school. Everybody was moaning, not only because the school was burning down, but because everything they owned was going with it. It was a very bad time. Now, have I told it all?

HM: Well, then you went on to Farmville.

MLM: Yes, I went on to Farmville and took the college work.

HM: What was the name of that school at that time? It's now Longwood College.

MLM: Farmville State College, I reckon.

HM: State Normal School?

MLM: Something like that. It must have been.

HM: That's where you learned to be a teacher?

MLM: Yes, the normal meant you can learn to teach. It meant you were a normal person – [laughter] when you started, anyway.

MK: So, you saw this remarkable young man. You said he has not got a chance now. What was it about him that caught your eye?

MLM: That's been a long time ago. He was just a wonderful person, that's all, and I was looking. I was on the market for somebody, and he came along.

MK: So, what did people do when they just met? Was there a parlor setting or was there church socials to go to? How did you get acquainted?

MLM: There were movies. They had movies. Sometimes, there were church parties or whatever they called them. They used to have entertainments put on by the churches. You'd attend those. It was like a private movie. Anyway, that too has been gone yesterday. It's been a long time ago. I've been to many movies since then.

MK: So, your honeymoon was a steamboat ride to Baltimore?

MLM: Yes.

MK: Now, tell me about everything you can remember about the steamboat and about the trip.

MLM: Just being out on the boat, it was a thrill. They had a wonderful meal for that first dinner on the boat. I'm sure there must have been amusement or some kind of entertainment. Him and me were just sailing along. That too has been a long time ago. Been on some other trips since then, and it wiped it out, I think.

MK: So, you docked in Baltimore the next morning?

MLM: Yes, that's right.

MK: Then what did you do? What did you do in the city that day?

MLM: We got a room at a hotel. That was our home then, I think, for several days. I was going to say a week, but I don't know whether it was that long. My father would visit wholesale houses and buy goods for the store. Then we would go to school with him. Wherever he went, we went. We means my mother and me, or whoever happened to go on that trip. You can't imagine what it was like. Now, things are so different.

MK: We are totally dependent on your memory to have any concept of it at all.

MLM: That's right.

MK: So, did you go shopping? What would you do in Baltimore?

MLM: We'd go shopping. We actually had movies and theaters.

HM: On your honeymoon trip, after the boat docked in Baltimore, didn't you go on to Niagara Falls?

MLM: Yes.

HM: How did you get there? By train?

MLM: Wait a minute. We have to back up a little bit. Let me see. We went by train, yes, to Niagara Falls.

HM: Then when you came back, you came back to New York and then you'd take a ship from New York back home?

MLM: That's right.

HM: I think there was an interesting story about being out in the ocean and the captain was visiting around on deck. Tell that story.

MLM: Well, let's see. The captain would walk around on the deck and visit with the passengers. So, we were meeting – or passing or something – another ship. Then the captain, who had been talking to Happy, my husband, said, "Now, this is very interesting." He said, "Here we are in the Atlantic, and there goes Captain Cassie" – Cassie, I think, Caffee, whatever his name was – "on his ship," which he knew the name of and I don't. "Here we are on our ship. We're going the other way, all out here in the middle of the bay. This is very interesting." It was, in fact. The boats would blow their horn – or what do you call it? Whistle? What kind of instrument does the steamboat have?

MK: A horn, I suppose.

CK: Whistle.

HM: They call them whistles. They call them horns.

MLM: Well, they saluted each other.

HM: But if I may interject, as I remember you all talking about it, the captain was from...

MLM: From Gloucester.

HM: He was from Mathews, I think. You were from King and Queen, and daddy was from

Gloucester. The captain on the ship that you were meeting, he said, "That's interesting. One of us is from Gloucester, one from Mathews, one from King and Queen, and there goes Captain (Guy Horsley?) from Woods Crossroads."

MLM: Yes, that's right, [laughter] and we were out in the bay.

HM: Captain Caffee was the captain of the *Mobjack*. One of the interesting expressions that they had about Captain Caffee, he was so talented as a skipper of a ship. We have expressions "Is New York big," or "Does a bear live in the woods?" The expression around here was, "Can Captain Caffee dock the *Mobjack*?" That was the way that we...

MLM: A measure of perfection.

HM: Right.

MK: What did that mean exactly?

HM: Well, "Could Captain Caffee dock the *Mobjack*?" The *Mobjack* was the name of the ship.

MLM: He was such a good captain.

HM: He was such a good captain, it was just obvious. Whatever you were saying would be so obvious. But another story, tell the story about Bobby Hicks when Captain Caffee would come into the dock down at...

MLM: Hicks Wharf?

HM: Hicks Wharf, right.

MLM: I don't remember.

HM: Well, Bobby Hicks was a young man. He would dive off the piling and swim to the boat as the ship was coming into the dock. He would swim to it and grab the bow of the ship and let the ship pull him along in the water. Captain Caffee would be so nervous that he would – he was afraid that he would get caught in the props. He would say, "Bobby Hicks, I'm going to tell your mother on you." Bobby would just laugh. [laughter]

MLM: They were some great experiences. That's a nice way to travel on a steamboat like that.

MK: Do you remember the names of any of the boats? Which was your very favorite one to travel on?

MLM: I don't remember right now. Do you remember, Harvey?

HM: No, we had the *City of Richmond*, I think. Depends on which line you were talking about.

MLM: One was the *City of Minneapolis*, wasn't it?

HM: Yes.

MLM: The different lines would run different boats at different times.

HM: In different routes.

MLM: In different routes, yes.

HM: Ones that would go up into the Piankatank wouldn't necessarily be the same ones that would go up into the York River.

MLM: That's right.

HM: The old bay line was the one that came from Baltimore down to Hampton Roads to Old Point Comfort. Then it would connect with the more local boats.

MLM: They were travel days, I'll tell you that. When you went some way, you then really had a trip.

HM: Was the soot from the smoke much of a problem?

MLM: No.

HM: Not like a train?

MLM: It carried it up above. It carried it too far away. More of a problem to somebody else than it was to our boat.

MK: So, were there different classes of travel? If you go first class on a plane, I know what that is, but what was it on a steamboat? What were the different classes of travel?

MLM: Well, I think it was pretty much the same as the train. I don't know. You'd have a private room, or you'd have a community sleeping place. Well, nobody went to bed. Everybody just sat up the whole time. But most of them had private bedrooms. Staterooms, they called them.

MK: Were they cramped, tiny, little rooms?

MLM: Right cramped, yes. Right small. Meet yourself coming and going. It was a great life, though.

MK: If you got on the steamboat to go to Baltimore from here...

MLM: What is it?

MK: If you went to Baltimore from here on the steamboat, how many stops would you have to make on the way, do you think?

MLM: You wouldn't make very many. You'd make them before you got going really good, and then you didn't make any – it was an all-day trip or an overnight trip. If you overnight, of course, they didn't stop in the night. You could choose your time most of the time. I've forgotten a lot of that, too. You knew when you left what time the next stop would be. You always arranged to be on dock or right near the dock so you could see what was going on when the boat lands, people coming and going. It was a great way to travel.

CK: What did people wear on the steamboats?

MLM: The vests you had. It was not necessary what you – whatever you would wear if you were going to take a holiday trip.

CK: Well, paint me a picture. What about you? How would you be adorned for the occasion?

MLM: Usually with a suit. You'd have a suit. If you got too warm you could take your jacket off. If you weren't warm enough, you could put your jacket on. The suit, they called them three-piece suits. It has a skirt and a blouse and a jacket.

DK: Did you wear a hat?

MLM: Not on the boat. I don't think so. I don't remember wearing a hat on the boat, because we sat inside as much as we did on deck.

CK: What kind of furnishings were there inside?

MLM: What's that?

CK: What kind of furnishings were there inside?

MLM: The kind of furniture that you'd have on a boat. [laughter] Very nice. Everything was very nice, just like home. They'd have – I can't call them that. Settees or buffets. Not buffets. That's not the word. Just like furniture you'd have in your home, they'd have the same sort of thing on a ship. Very comfortable, and it was nice looking. It was a great way to travel, if you didn't get seasick. Now, that's a different story. Those boats would rock sometimes so your body wouldn't take it. Excuse me. I've been sealing too long. [laughter]

MK: Do you remember any big storms that came up while you were on deck?

MLM: No, thank goodness. I don't remember any bad storms. That would be frightening, I think. But when going from Gloucester to Baltimore, you left West Point in the afternoon and you spent the night on the boat and got up early the next morning to be in Baltimore.

HM: Did the same boat go all the way from West Point to Baltimore or did you have to go to Old Point Comfort and transfer?

MLM: Well, on this line, we didn't go to Old Point. Mathews, people – or some places down that way – would have to change. But from ours, we went from West Point right on up the bay or down the bay, whichever way you were going. Nice trip.

MK: Diane?

MLM: Now, somebody else talk some. I've talked enough.

MK: Were there any areas you covered in your other interview that you would like to retrace?

Diane Jordan: We talked a little bit about the differences in accommodations when you were Black or White, and about some of the people who worked on the boats and description of people who worked on the boats. It might be nice to cover again.

MK: Do you want to ask for it?

HM: Mother, can you tell us a little bit about the people who worked on the boat? In other words, you had the stewards, you had the purser, and the different jobs.

MLM: I don't know enough about it, really, to tell you anything.

HM: How about the way they loaded the boats? In some cases, they had a donkey pulling a rail car to carry things to the boat. In other cases, the dock, like in West Point, the street went right to the dock. Can you recall the way that they handled freight?

MLM: No, not really. Put it on a wheelbarrow – not a wheelbarrow, what do you call those things? Maybe it is a wheelbarrow. You roll it from this one to that one. That's been a long time ago, boy.

DJ: Some sort of a wagon?

MLM: Something like that, yes. It wasn't pulled by mules, though. I don't know how they moved it. Maybe they did have mules.

HM: Well, I know it at Allmondsville, they had a mule, because there was such a long dock. West Point, they probably didn't have to do that.

MLM: Yes.

HM: Was everyone free to travel? Were there any racial barriers in those days?

MLM: Yes, there were.



MK: There were what?

MLM: If you were a Black person, you went in a certain area, sailed under a certain color.

CK: Under a certain what?

MLM: What did she...

HM: A certain color?

MLM: Yes.

HM: What do you mean?

MLM: You mean that they sailed under?

HM: Yes.

MLM: Well, it was designated. If you were a White person, you'd sail under this blue sign. If you were a Black person, you'd sail under another sign.

HM: So, you mean you were compartmentalized within the ship?

MLM: Yes.

HM: Segregated?

MLM: Segregated, that's right. I think I'm telling the truth there.

HM: How about meals on board?

MLM: The same way. They were separated just the same way.

HM: Was the food on board good? Did they have a nice dining room?

MLM: Oh, yes. Nice dining room and good food, nicely served.

HM: I guess that was an important part of the voyage.

MLM: Very much, yes.

CK: Who served the food?

MLM: The boat had people. They employed food service people.

CK: Were they Black people?

MLM: No, I don't think – as a rule, they were not Black.

HM: Do you recall some of the cargo other than passengers that the steamboats would carry to Baltimore and from Baltimore?

MLM: No, I don't recall what they were. All I know, from my head, [laughter] when it's going to Baltimore, it would be stocks, crops that would be shipped at certain times. Bringing in would be the finished product like flour and meal. Most of the meal was done on the shore. They wouldn't carry them over on the boat. But they'd have cornmeal.

HM: You had your own mills for cornmeal. But flour, there was more refining.

MLM: They would take it on in Baltimore and bring it back.

HM: How about other things like yard goods and furniture and that sort of thing?

MLM: Everything had its own little niche.

HM: That was about the only way that you could get merchandise of that kind, was it not?

MLM: Yes.

HM: Most of our communities in Tidewater didn't have a rail line. West Point had a train, but none of the rest of the Middle Peninsula or the Northern Neck had a railroad.

MLM: They'd come to their steamboat dock.

HM: So, virtually everything we received was received via boat.

MLM: That's right.

CK: It makes me imagine what life was like along the wars when these goods were being delivered here in the Northern Neck.

MLM: That was not a question.

HM: Was it an exciting time when the ship came in?

MLM: Oh, yes. If you lived anywhere near, you'd like to go and see the boat come in, see the people come off, get on and get off, wonder where they're going and wonder why. So, that gave you something to talk about.

HM: I've read stories that a lot of the fine homes along the rivers were inns. People from the north would come down for a visit and a vacation.

MLM: Yes, that's right.

HM: Like a bed and breakfast.

MLM: That's right. I'm whistling.

CK: Speaking of whistling, I keep wondering, tell us about music on the steamers.

MLM: That's my whistle.

HM: Can you turn your hearing aid down a little bit?

CK: Is it still whistling?

MLM: Has that got it?

HM: Yes. Can you hear us?

MLM: Yes.

HM: Okay. What kind of music did they have on the boats?

MLM: That's all yesterday, Harvey. I think they had orchestras, as well as I can remember.

HM: Did they do dancing? They have dancing?

MLM: Yes.

HM: Have a regular ballroom?

MLM: Yes. It would depend on the ship you were on. But the one that went to Baltimore, for instance, and the one that came back, they were overnight ships. So, in the evening, they would have dances.

MK: Well, you must have had to have a whole wardrobe with you to go on a trip like that.

MLM: [laughter] Well, I don't think they had as much to ride in a dress then as they do now. You could probably wear the same thing for breakfast that you wore for dancing.

MK: A little less formal, huh?

MLM: Yes.

HM: What about the economy in those days? In other words, did people have a lot of money and material possessions?

MLM: No, very little. There was very little way to spend anything if you had it.

HM: I know you've told the story about when you were working in your father's store and the little girl who came in and wanted one egg's worth of kerosene.

MLM: Yes. I thought I'd break the egg than have it there on the shelf. I didn't know how to find her an egg's worth of kerosene.

HM: Can you tell us a little bit about the bartering that was done then? Because people didn't have much money, how would they do that? If they came to the store and needed groceries, something they didn't raise on the farm, how would they pay for them?

MLM: Well, maybe they'd bring eggs. They might bring a basket of eggs. Sometimes, they would bring a crop, a corn, or some crop. Maybe a bale of hay. There was a certain amount that would be exchanged for groceries. Does that answer your question?

HM: Yes. I think the story that dad used to tell about the man who lived down at Clay Bank or Capahosic who would go out and get oysters out of the river and then walk with his bag or pack of oysters to the village and sell the oysters and then he would buy bricks and then he would carry the bricks back home – it's a nine-mile trip. He would walk with his bag of bricks back home. He did that through the years until he had enough bricks to build his house. It's hard to even comprehend those conditions today.

MLM: That's how living was in those days.

MK: Now, when we talk to people over in West Virginia and Ohio about the steamboats, they always like to tell about the showboat that came up the river. Do you recall any such boats as that around this part of the country?

MLM: Well, there used to be a showboat that would come in the summertime and had regular schedule on the steamboat – what do I want to say – line, I reckon. It was a showboat. It would have a theater.

HM: How long would it stay in an area?

MLM: Not very long. Maybe a week. Then that one would move on, and another one would come, have a different set of pictures or shows.

HM: How popular was that? Would people come?

MLM: Yes. It was right popular, because not only the people who lived temporarily on the boat, but other people in the village would come to the showboat show. Did I make myself clear?

HM: Yes.

MLM: Because I've been to ride many showboat shows, and I hadn't spent any nights in them.

MK: Do you recall any of the productions you saw?

MLM: No, I don't. It was usually some sad story about somebody. They always had tearjerkers, if you know what I mean by that.

MK: Well, not exactly. Can you explain?

MLM: They seemed to like sad stories. They were tragedies or something, and the stories didn't end very well. We called them tearjerkers. When the theater was over, everybody would be reaching for a handkerchief to wipe their tears in their eyes.

MK: Sounds like Shakespeare.

MLM: [laughter]

MK: Did they have Shakespeare? Do you remember any Shakespeare plays?

MLM: Hmm?

MK: Did they have Shakespeare plays?

MLM: May have. I don't remember particularly.

CK: Was there music in these performances?

MLM: What did she say?

CK: Was there music in the shows?

MLM: Oh, yes. They had their own bands.

CK: Were the boats painted up in bright colors? Tell us how they looked.

MLM: They were more or less in bright colors. It depended on the line and how extravagant they want it to be, I guess.

HM: Well, the smokestack or the funnel of each boat had a characteristic design, did it not? Striping and so forth?

MLM: Well, that depended on the line the ship was owned by, I think.

HM: I see. So, the funnel would be marked with distinctive lines for that line?

MLM: Yes.

HM: I see. Not for that ship?

MLM: That's right. They probably had a line for the ship too, but the main line would be for the line. I guess that's what I'm trying say. I'm whistling, I can't stop it. "Stop whistling you, I don't need you right now."

MK: Talk to it. Talk to it.

MLM: Yes. [laughter] I've talked enough. Now you all talk.

CK: I'm looking at a picture behind Harvey. It looks like it has been around in the family for a while. Can you talk about that?

Harvey Morgan: Yes. That's mother.

CK: Is it really? Could I take a picture of that?

HM: Sure.

MK: Do you have any time left?

DJ: Yes, I paused it so I would...

HM: This is a picture of you mother when you were – it might've been when you were married. It's a picture that Mary Louise has on her medal. And you have a pearl necklace on and a dark dress with – what do you call that, Diane? What kind of dress is that? What kind of neck?

DJ: Just a jewel neck.

HM: A jewel neck. It looks like you may be right after you finished college, it might have been in your senior picture.

LM: Could be, I don't remember. Could be.

CK: Can I have a closer look at it?

HM: Sure.

CK: Are there any other family pictures?

HM: We lost them.

CK: Memorabilia, lots of them.

MK: I do not know, any taken on the steamboats?

HM: No, I don't think so. I wish we did, that's my mother-in-law together in that picture.

MLM: This thing keeps whistling.

HM: I know, Turn it back the other way.

MLM: Stop for a little while and start again.

HM: I don't believe we do have maybe...

MLM: Maybe no.

CK: Set them up.

MK: There is a great picture of her father in his store standing in front of his counter with all the merchandise behind him, but I do not know where that is now.

CK: That would be nice to have.

HM: There's one that they used to have at the restaurant. Might have something in the other room here.

MLM: There it goes again.

HM: Are you getting light reflected on

MK: This is her home that she painted.

CK: That is so nice.

HM: Excuse me, mom. I'm sorry. I stepped on your foot.

MLM: It is all right; my foot was sticking out of the way.

HM: You want me to do anything with that?

DJ: Yes.

HM: This is [unintelligible] which is built probably 300 years ago.

CK: Is it still standing?

HM: Yes.

CK: Lives in it?

HM: Jackie Hart, Bobby Hart. Do you know Bobby Hart? He's my first cousin. Her sister's grandson lives here.

CK: That is nice is still in the family?

HM: Yes.

CK: Is it talking to you? It's talking. Let me see how, my goodness.

HM: Do you need me to turn it off?

CK: No, it is perfect. Actually, now, it counts down to about six seconds and then it will shoot [laughter] so, do not breathe. Perfect nice to go to a running start. Perfect. Thank you.

MK: Did you get these as well?

CK: Not yet. We will take these off the stand. Well, there are not a lot of people like you who can talk about this era.

MLM: Well, maybe you're right. I'm getting old now. Not many more like me. [laughter]

CK: Seems commonplace to you, but to us it is extraordinary.

HM: It's true, Mother tell them about this story when they suspected that someone was taking the molasses.

MLM: I love that story.

HM: They used to have molasses in barrels in the country stores. In the wintertime, because molasses pours slowly, they would put the barrel by the stove, and the stove was usually in the middle of the store and the molasses was disappearing faster than they were selling it. They thought they knew who was doing it, but they were not sure. This was her uncles in another store, not her father's store. They swapped the molasses barrel with the tar barrel [laughter]. They noticed that that people would come with a bucket, a quart bucket or two-quart bucket, and it had a top on it. They had a faucet on the bottom of the barrel. They noticed that this man had put his bucket down under the barrel. Every now and then he would look down at it. After his bucket was full, he reached over and surreptitiously turned off the faucet. But out of habit, he licked his finger with it. [laughter] He was so startling. His friend, his name Oliver, is so startled, just said, "Hi. Oliver it is tar." [laughter] The story was that they caught him red-handed, but that wasn't really accurate. [laughter]. It was more of a different color. [laughter]

MK: They called him black tongue.

HM: Black tongues, right? But she used to tell that story. Her grandmother, her mother, my grandmother would tell that story to us. Then she told...



MLM: Hi Oliver, it tar.

MK: Hi Oliver. It is this tar.

HM: Hi, Oliver it is tar. [laughter]

MK: Why are you shooting it sideways?

DJ: Fits in the frame nicely. Is that a poor idea?

MK: I do not know.

CK: Well, I am going to run along and try to find Mr. Kerns and I will come back.

MK: Leave this here for you.

CK: Hi, Oliver. It is tar. [laughter]

MK: What else would you say if you were caught, you were caught in the Tarbell? [laughter]

CK: I bet everything tasted funny.

MK: I bet in the molasses put in that can tasted fun too.

CK: Dismal, yes.

MK: I hope I was not too intrusive on this.

HM: No, no.

CK: You were perfect. It is great. Do not tell me that, do not tell me it is perfect. I will be back in minute.

DJ: When Michael says I shouldn't take strange angles. I will come around.

HM: Well, sometimes it will.

MK: We can also turn the picture.

DJ: I thought of that, but then I must be dyslexic or something. I have to turn my head and wonder. [laughter]

HM: Would you want a different background?

MK: Yes, that would be better than that flowery background.

HM: Maybe you are focused in so you're only getting the picture.

DJ: I thought it was nice on the flowers.

HM: Are you getting the frame too?

DJ: Yes. I love this frame.

MK: Well, I bet you are happy he had the same idea when he first saw her.

HM: Yes, I think he did.

MK: She had not got a chance.

HM: One of the stories that they – hi, Conner. One of the stories she used to talk about happy was, he would drive over to her van. She was the principal of the school over there. It was her first year of teaching. There were only four teachers, mother, and they made her the principal [laughter]. He would drive over in his model T Ford to visit her. One night, when he was starting back home, there was an old bridge in Urbana. It was a wooden bridge and as he drove over the bridge onto the and all the roads were dirt roads, there was a bump. As he hit that bump, his headlights went off and he drove all the way back to Gloucester with no headlights. It's twenty-three miles, I think. Of course, in those days there was no traffic either. He said he didn't think he met a single car coming home. Had a moonlight and he drove home without lights. Another night he was going to visit her and it was wintertime. They were having to drive in the ruts in the road because it just followed the car ahead of you because you couldn't get out of the rut. The car ahead of him along the way on a hill was stuck. He couldn't get around him and he just had to spend the night in his car. The next morning, they found a farmer with a mule or a tractor to pull him out. But, in those old cars, they didn't have any heaters. They just had a hole in the floor so that the heat from the manifold would come up. They just opened up that hole and had a blanket. They put over and they just sat there and waited till morning. [laughter]

DJ: A lantern or just a blanket?

HM: A blanket. Yes, he had an old horse blanket. They used to have these heavy blankets that they would, and he may have had a lantern too, but he just didn't need that. He would run the engine occasionally and get some heat and then turn it.

MK: What kind of a car would that have been?

HM: It was an old Ford model T.

MK: Model T. Because we heard another man who was old enough to have driven those, say that in the wintertime they would light a lantern on.

HM: I see and put those between your feet.

MK: Your knees and Drape a horse blanket over there.

HM: Right, right.

CK: But that was in the mountains of West Virginia. I imagine it gets cold around here too.

HM: We didn't talk about the telephone operator system. In those days you had a central operator and you had a crank phone. There were lots of party lines. The operators frequently had to make the connection. They frequently were listening to the conversations. But the operators here knew my dad very well, and the telephone operator office was right next door, almost to the drugstore. One night dad had called mother while he was waiting for her to come to the phone. He was singing, "Yes, sir. She is my baby. No sir, don't mean maybe." The operator came in and said, "Well, everybody knows it." [laughter] We could call other people in the village or in the county. We're usually in the village. We would just call the operator and say, "Ring Mrs. Lawson," or "Ring Mrs. Brown." The operator would say, "Well, Mrs. Lawson is over at Mrs. Smith's house today." [laughter] Or "She's going to Richmond for the day, she's not home." [laughter] It was a wonderful way to communicate. [laughter]

MK: Command Central.

HM: We had had party lines and would be maybe a dozen phones on one line, and it would ring a certain number of rings. Everybody would hear it ring. If it rang long or short, it would be at one house and three longs would be another house and so forth. That's how you knew whether it was ringing to you or not. People were forever picking up the phone and listening in on conversations. Well, every time an additional person would pick up the sound level would diminish and so, you would not have as good a connection. There's one story that this doctor lived down near the York River. You remember who the doctor was mother? No, I don't, but anyway, doesn't matter. But he was trying to hear what his patient was telling him, and he couldn't hear her. He said to this other person on the line, Mrs. So-and-So [laughter] and I'm not going to call the name [laughter] would you please hang up? I know it's you because I can hear that old Red Rooster crawling in the background. [laughter]. There is another story up in Farmville area from folks I knew. The man was talking and, and he was trying to take down some instructions or a message that was being given. He couldn't get the number and he knew his sister, who always listened in, must be on the other line. He finally said, "Did you get that essay?" She said, "I got it, Harry." [laughter] It was just a great time.

MK: The good old days.

HM: It was just a great time.

MK: The good old days.

HM: Our drugstore phone number was 67, and our home phone was 672. That is all the number we had to have, didn't have to have all these number of digits. I remember that. One day, right next door – this was a vacant lot, my father and mother lived two doors away. Dad was coming home for lunch one day, and the house next door had caught a fire. He could see smoke coming out of the upstairs windows. He ran home – my mother tells this story because my dad never

cursed. Only time I ever heard him use a bad word was when he was quoting somebody else. Anyway, he rang the phone and called the operator because they controlled the fire siren. He said, "Ring the siren, Mr. Hall's house is on fire." She said, "Well, Mr. Hall doesn't have a telephone." "No, ring the siren, his house is on fire." "Mr. Morgan, you know, Mr. Hall doesn't have a phone." Daddy says, "Well damn it, ring it anyway." [laughter] Mother used to kid him about that, he always denied that. [laughter] He was a great man.

CK: True gentleman.

HM: Yes.

MK: They do not make them much like that anymore.

HM: I know. We had company one day, after lunch we were standing out in the yard and we were talking to our neighbor across the street. The neighbor had just told dad about a rabbit having run across the yard. My uncle came out and daddy was then telling the man about the rabbit having run across the yard. He says, "Frank here says that rabbit just ran across the yard like a batter out of hell." [laughter] That is not exactly the way we would say it. [laughter]

MK: What was your dad's livelihood then?

HM: He is a pharmacist. He had a family pharmacy. The store was started in 1911, by a man who was really a jeweler, but he had a drug store. He was not a pharmacist; in those days you could do that. In 1922, he asked my dad to come and interview to come and take over as a pharmacist. He did that, and about three or four years he bought the store. He practiced pharmacy from 1922 until he retired. I think it had been 68 years. He was maybe what? 90? Is that right? He actually practiced for 68 years. At one time, he was in the volunteer fire department. He had six or eight of these big soda acid fire extinguishers, brass – these big brass things. They can stand up at this high. He kept those in the drugstore. Whenever the fire alarm came out, he would take those out and put them in the car and drive to the fire and just turn them upside down. The soda and the acid would mix and force the water out and put out the fire. One day he was going to a fire and he went around a curve too fast, and all of them turned over and they started squirting [laughter]. He had to stop and turn them back up. [laughter] There was a little bit left when he got there, he put out the fire. [laughter] The only movies we had were at the local school, the high school student showed the movies. The film got hot one night and it caught a fire. They called him at the drug store, and he went out there and put out the fire and saved the school. It has lots of interesting stories.

MK: Where exactly was his pharmacy?

HM: It was about half a block this way and one block that way on Main Street, right here in village.

MK: It was called?

HM: It was called the Gloucester Pharmacy until he changed it to Morgan's Drugstore, I think in 1933, he changed it. We moved from the original building to another building about next door.

The owner of the building built that one for him. That's when he changed it to Morgan Drugstore. I helped him move that year. I was two years old and he let me carry the ice cream dippers [laughter] I could say that I helped move the store.

MLM: You do not remember, do you?

HM: No. Heard about it so many times. I feel like I remember.

MK: It is this one?

MLM: It was mine.

MK: It was yours?

MLM: Yes. Making distracting sounds. I'm whistling too.

MK: What were the other businesses on Main Street at that time?

HM: We had J H Martin and Company Grocery store. That was like maybe 40 feet wide and 60 feet long. Within that building was a 20-foot-wide building, that was the first drug store, that later became a hardware store. He built a new building that was 33 feet wide and 50 feet long, I think beside it and that became the second Morgan's drugstore. There was a dry cleaner. The Gloucester men's shop. There was the Bank of Gloucester. Before that, there was another bank across the street, that during the Depression went under and sold out to the Bank of Gloucester. The post office, the telephone company was there. It later became East Coast Utilities because it was both the telephone and the power company. We had Vaughan's store, which was a general merchandise store, and WC Tucker, Five intensions store. We had a hotel, we had two hotels actually. We had one hotel, the other one had some rooms, but it was not a hotel. It was – what was the original store mother? On the corner of the Court Green, where Woodford Chapman took over. It was near the Daily Press building.

MLM: Harvey, I do not know.

HM: I cannot remember the name of that store.

MLM: No. I do not remember.

CK: Not Tuckers?

HM: No, they were on the other side of the Court Green, those were Tuckers. On that corner was a well-known store. Every time I think of that store, I think about Reverend William Barry Lee. He was such a tradition in Gloucester, an Episcopal minister, wonderful old man. He would walk up to a perfect stranger and say, "I know something good about you." They said, "You do?" He said, "God loves you and he loves you with a great big heart." [laughter] One day, Mr. Lee, who was sort of an imposing looking fella. He had bushy eyebrows. He was in his buggy one day, and he picked up a salesman walking along. They called them drummers in

those days, and he had all of his gear with him, his bags of wares and so forth. They were riding in the wagon behind the horse. Coincidentally, they were just entering a deep dark area of the woods and the Reverend, Mr. Lee turned to the salesman and said, "Are you ready to meet your maker?" [laughter] The man was scared to death. He jumped out of the wagon and ran off [laughter]. Mr. Lee was so embarrassed and he knew where the man was going. He took his bags to the store and left them with his apologies. [laughter] I cannot remember the name of that store.

Unknown Male Speaker: Do not worry, it will come to you.

MK: Where was the Gloucester wharf? How far away? This is my first trip here.

HM: I see. We did not have any wharfs really close. We had what we called the Warehouse landing. That was not a major wharf. The water probably was not deep enough. Rhoons Wharf was probably the closest, and that is probably about seven miles away by road. No more than five miles, if you go to Warehouse Landing then take a small boat over Rhoons Wharf. Most people who came to the village came by water because people in Ware Neck, which is a nearby community, almost never. It is about seven miles by land, but it is only about three miles by water. They would row a boat over or sail over to the warehouse landing. And then they would walk up about a mile and a quarter to the village, mile and a half, something like that.

MK: When your parents set out on this famous honeymoon? They had to...

HM: My mother lived at Cologne, which is seven miles from West Point, that is fourteen miles from Gloucester, west Point being twenty miles from Gloucester. They were married at her home, they were taken to West Point, that is where they got on the boat and sailed from there. Interestingly, the man who was my dad's best man was also quite a practical joker [laughter]. He drove them up and down the streets of West Point blowing the horn. He had garbage cans, large tins and big cans, shoes tied on the back of his car. He would stop in front of people's houses. They would be sitting on their porch. These people just got married. [laughter] They were so afraid they were going to miss the boat. After he saw them off on the boat in West Point, he got in his car and rode back to Gloucester and got a bunch more friends. They drove to Gloucester Point, which is another twelve miles down the road. By the time the boat got to Gloucester point down the river, they were all on the dock cheering and [laughter] and the boat stayed there for quite a while. Did they come aboard? Some of them come aboard?

MLM: I think so.

HM: [laughter] They had another party.

MLM: We would not let them get away.

MK: They used to call that?

HM: You would not let them get away.

CK: What did he say?

HM: They would not let them get away.

MK: They used to call that belling? When they would beat pans on the wedding night.

HM: I do not know. You know that expression? Belling

MK: Belling.

HM: Belling.

MLM: What?

HM: Belling?

MLM: No.

MK: Where they beat pans on the wedding night outside the bridal home. It sounds like the same tradition.

HM: I think you were to tell them what George the Hart did to Daddy with his pajamas.

MLM: I do not remember.

HM: Yes, you do.

MLM: Daddy's pajamas.

HM: Yes.

MLM: He sewed them up. The long way from the top to bottom instead of Crossways. Is that what you wanted to know?

HM: Yes, that is the story.

MLM: Yes. We had to rip all that out before we could go to bed.

HM: [laughter] Mother was so nervous; she went into the bathroom and did not want to come out. Just wondering, could not try get up nerve enough to come out of the bathroom. She was getting ready for bed; daddy was getting ready for bed in the state room. Finally, she heard him fussing, "That George the Hart." [laughter] That gave her nerve. She came out to see what was wrong, and the pajamas were sewn up. [laughter]

MLM: From top to bottom.

HM: She had to spend time getting the stitches out and that broke the ice.

CK: Where were you then?

MLM: Where were we?

CK: Yes.

MLM: On our honeymoon.

HM: They were on the boat.

MLM: On the boat.

MK: What a story.

CK: [laughter] There is a steamboat story. [laughter] According to you, nobody went to bed on those, hardly. Stayed up all night. Is that right?

MLM: I do not know. I have forgotten about that part.

MK: That must have been great.

MLM: I have got the burps.

HM: Yes, I hear that. They are like a volcano.

MLM: I know. I am so sorry.

MK: It was from downtown Gloucester to Gloucester, Gloucester to the Steamboat, Wharf was about a seven mile...

HM: Yes.

MK: Was it stage coast or a wagon trip or...

HM: We had a number of docks. If you go toward Gloucester Point, it is twelve miles. If you go to Rhoons Wharf, it is about seven miles. If you go to...

CK: [inaudible]

HM: [inaudible] was nine and Clay Back was about nine. To the North River...

CK: Hicks Wharf?

HM: Hicks Wharf, was that in Matthews or Gloucester?



CK: Matthews.

HM: That's across here, but on Dixon Dale.

CK: Dixon Dale at Ellington.

HM: Ellington is a beautiful home there. Thomas Dixon, who wrote Birth of a Nation, used to live there. Dixon Dale was quite a popular dock. That is one of the places that people in that part of the county would go. It took a long time to go from ten miles. Dixon Dale is probably about five miles from here. You had to go five miles in almost any direction to get to a big wharf, that is when you had horse and buggy, that took a while.

CK: Even with a Surrey, I suppose.

HM: Yes. Even with a Surrey with the fringe on top.

MK: The fringe made them go a little faster.

HM: Yes. The perception was there anyway.

CK: [laughter]

MK: Any other details, Diane, that we should ask about?

DJ: I do not think so. I do not want to plough her out too much. I think she is getting tired.

CK: Harvey has had a nice turn. You are a wonderful storyteller. [laughter]

DJ: He has a great memory too. He was thorough. He has heard all these stories so many times.

MK: I know.

CK: You are the keeper of the treasure trove.

MK: We might be back for another session with you. If we can schedule it sometime.

HM: I would enjoy it. There is so many stories. I love the stories about the old folks and I've heard them so many times.

DJ: We cannot see Mr. [inaudible]. You guys rescheduled him.

MK: Okay.

CK: I tied up with (stima?).

MK: I see.

DJ: Isabel.

MK: Yes. She is not a very nice girl.

[end of transcript]