

Susan Shaw: Today is July 24th, and I am in Marstons Mills talking to Mrs. Marjorie Hamblin. Mrs. Hamblin, could you tell me how long your family has been on Cape Cod?

Marjorie Hamblin: Oh, my mother's [inaudible] lived on South Dennis. My mother married a (Warner?) who was a chief engineer on a lightvessel, and they lived on the shore. I would say my mother's family were the Kellys and Dennisons and Baxters and Youngs. I would say they were going back to the [inaudible] there is the picture from my grandfather's book.

SS: Oh, that is beautiful.

MH: So, I really couldn't tell you exactly how far back they go. They go way back from the sixteen, seventeen-hundred, late sixteen and early seventeen-hundred.

SS: Do you know the name of that boat?

MH: Yes, the *Starlight*. That went around the Horn [inaudible]. He was Levy Lincoln Baxter. He sailed out of Boston.

SS: Did you know your grandfather?

MH: No, but I had a stepdad.

Unknown Male Speaker: [inaudible].

MH: Not my real dad. He died before [inaudible]. His name was Levi Lincoln Baxter. In those days, everybody named their children after Lincoln. So, he [inaudible] he went around the Horn in that ship [inaudible] trade out to China. He went down around the Horn. They took handcrafted goods from here, sold it in China, and then used the money and bought all kinds of China and [inaudible] ivories horn and brought those back and sold them [inaudible] So, he made a profit on the [inaudible].

SS: He must have brought your grandmother a lot of things then.

MH: I have a few things. In those days, they didn't keep a lot of things [inaudible]. I have a lovely Japanese (shower?) box, and I have a Japanese [inaudible].

SS: You grew up in South Yarmouth?

MH: Yes, I was born in [inaudible].

SS: What did your father do for living?

MH: He was the chief engineer on the *Great Island Shoal* lightship. As the chief engineer, he had a hard life, in that they were on the ship – and then in the summer, they were home for two. But then in the winter, after Thanksgiving, they went back on the ship, and they couldn't get off until about, I would say – naturally, the earliest [inaudible].

SS: So, this lightship stayed in one place?

MH: Yes, it was in the [inaudible]. It had two big poles, and then they'd put lights on the poles. One time, when the fishing [inaudible] and they had their boom out, their sails up, and something happened. Whether it was the tides or whether it was the wind – anyway, they got off course. The boom went right straight across the lightship deck and took every last thing – all the light things, the [inaudible] everything, cleaned the deck right straight off. That was quite the experience.

SS: I guess so. The boat did not go down, I would think.

MH: No.

SS: The fishing boat was all right?

MH: Yeah, the fishing boat just smashed the boom. They got their mail quite often from the fishing boats that were going out in the [inaudible] so, my mother would write to him every day. Then when a fishing boat was going out, they would pick up the mail and throw them to lightship [inaudible]. In this particular day, it was snowing and foggy. When they got out there, they couldn't see the lightvessel. I don't know all of what happened. But in any case, their boom, the fishing vessel boom, came across and made everything [inaudible] (crack?) on the deck – the mast and the big foghorn and the lights on the lightship, everything just [inaudible].

SS: Do you know how the lights were operated?

MH: [inaudible] did you know?

Unknown Male Speaker: I heard that we were on the engine, above that engine, right on the ropes.

MH: With acetylene gas?

Unknown Male Speaker: Maybe.

MH: Maybe? I really couldn't, you what it was [inaudible] but they had big holes where the lights were. That was on a station, just like today. We have the automatic lights that run all day and all night. But my father, he also had a foghorn [inaudible] because that was the chief seaway into [inaudible] all the boats [inaudible].

SS: Do you know how many men would be on the lightship at one time?

MH: Let's see. Probably six to eight. Six to eight men. In the fall, [inaudible] he didn't get back until spring, [inaudible] then in the summer and late spring, they had a launch, a boat launch [inaudible] my father had his own boat.

SS: Did you know your father's pay for this job?

MH: He was paid monthly by the United States Fisheries. [inaudible] and in those days, of course, there was no refrigerator. So, my father said that if they had fresh vegetables and food in the fall, when the boats would bring something up to them, then during the stormy winter months, very often, [inaudible] corned beef that they used to call corned pots. They had that in the winter, and sea biscuits. So, he didn't have a very good diet. But he was always well, yeah. Apparently, [inaudible] than most. One time, he was home for quite a little while. He was out on deck doing something. Then a storm came, and the waves threw him against the railing and he broke five ribs. They had to send him home, especially [inaudible] the ribs set. He was home [inaudible] I knew that he was often cross at anybody – with kids, he wasn't used to children because he was on the boat so much. He would be [inaudible] and he'd yell at us to be still. I can remember that. [inaudible].

SS: How many children were in your family?

MH: Two. Two boys and me.

SS: Which one were you?

MH: I'm the oldest. Then I have a brother, (Norman Warner?). He is [inaudible] I have another one, (Raymond Warner?), and he was sailing on [inaudible]. He lived down in [inaudible] one died, and the other one is alive. She married Dr. (James Austen?) [inaudible]. They have four children, three girls and a boy.

SS: Did you ever go on your father's lightship?

MH: Yes, I went just to see him once. It was something [inaudible]. One of what they call tender was going out there, and I had a chance to go. So, I went out to see what the boat looks like. Small boat, not very large, and its staterooms were very small. It had a cabin, and that was [inaudible] they had all kinds of books in there. [inaudible] was particularly good for them, as their books were being discarded as being full, or everybody had read them or something. They would put it in boxes and sent out [inaudible] ship. So, they had told my brothers [inaudible]. Oh, they sent out all kinds of history books and English books and geography books. Everything that came were discarded, and [inaudible].

SS: Did you like to read about the sea?

MH: Oh, yes. [inaudible] the see much at night. They had one interesting experience. They got their mail very often by passing fishing boats that were moving out, because *Great Island Shoal* was the last of the land. From there out, it's all ocean. So, they were [inaudible] we were going by *Cross Rip*. That is another lightship, and it's between [inaudible] and where he is on *Great Island Shoal*. That one tosses day and night. It's never still, because there's a cross rip there. It keeps the boat jumping up and down. It's a very difficult one. He was on that for a little while. But he finally got off the boat eventually. It was just a little bit larger and a little bit out in the water.

SS: Tell me about the mail.

MH: Oh, yeah. They [inaudible] and got their mail by passing fishing boats. This particular day, it was kind of stormy, and they couldn't get up near enough to throw the bag onto the deck. So, in my father's story, the boat had some mail on, and they put them in a bag [inaudible] But he took on the lifeboats and four of the sailors into the water to get the mail. The fishing boat was towing a tug behind it. So, of course, there was that rope between the two. My father was steering it and watching the [inaudible] boat, and the sailors were rowing. He told them not to row over the tow line. But instead, [inaudible] then went over it. The depth, as they went over it, the fishing vessel [inaudible] and it pulled the tow line up. [inaudible] My father yelled at them all, and he said, "Stay with the boat." But two of them decided that they could swim to this other boat. They were both [inaudible] my father's eyes, and he never...

SS: What a difficult job that must have been.

MH: Yes. All those years that my father went to sea, he never learned to swim. Well, he stayed with the boat. The boat put out a small boat and it went and took them out. He picked up [inaudible]. Very often you say, "Oh, [inaudible] I yelled and yelled at them, stay with the boat, but they wouldn't [inaudible]." So, the boat was upside-down, right? They thought that they would be better off to swim to the other boat [inaudible]. He had another bad experience. He had a [inaudible] engine in the lightboat that – when they had liberty, they would leave their lightboat and get into this smaller boat. It had a [inaudible] (Haute Port?), or sometimes, [inaudible]. This time, when they went to go back to the ship, they got out into the middle of the bay, but [inaudible] and the engine stopped and they couldn't get going. Father was a very good engineer, but there was no (gold?). They couldn't get it going. They found out that it was a little spring that broke, and they had no other spring and no way to make a spring. So, they were out there, drifting around for a day and a half, until, finally, the passing boats found them and towed them in. From that day until the day he died, when I was getting out his best suit to him to have him fixed up for his funeral, in his pocket of his pants was one of those springs. He said he'd never be without a spring again as long as he lived, and he wasn't.

SS: That is remarkable.

MH: But they managed to get back to the boat. He had quite a few experiences out there [inaudible].

SS: Do you know how your father got his training for this job?

MH: Yes. His family immigrated to Brooklyn, New York, and he went to a navigation school in Brooklyn. He got his education in engineering and navigation.

SS: When he retired, was it from the lightship that he retired from?

MH: Yes. He always liked lightships.

SS: It must have been difficult for your mother.

MH: Very, because she had three children – myself and my two brothers – and we were all active. In those days, you had cold stoves. You had no running water. The pump froze every night in the kitchen. It was very difficult for her. But my brother – the older brother, Norman – he was very capable, even as a young boy. He did a lot. My father, in the fall, before he left, would go and get full barrel-loads of seaweed and bank up the house.

Unknown Male Speaker: [inaudible].

MH: Because, of course, there was no [inaudible]. So, it was very hard for her, but she remained. She was a person full of [inaudible]. He was a fine salesman. He worked in station in Boston [inaudible].

SS: What kind of chores would you have to do to help mother as a young girl?

MH: Well, my other chores was, of course, the dishes, which I used to hate, but I had to do them. Then my mother, in order to help with the money situation, took in boarders in the summer. I had all those mountains of dishes, too, one of my jobs. Then the other jobs, which wasn't impossible at all, was I had to make the beds and empty the pots. Boy, that was one thing I used to hate to have to do, but I had to do it. I remember one time – it's kind of funny – I was bringing the pots down the room [inaudible] and then I had to wash them out [inaudible] take them back to the rooms. Sometimes, I was in a hurry. So, [inaudible] stairs, they were across the stairs that went out. So, I would wash the pots and get them all cleaned, but I wouldn't take them upstairs, because I wasn't going like that [inaudible] left them on the stairs. My mother was always telling me, "Take those, Marjorie, upstairs and put them in the rooms." This particular day, I didn't. When I went upstairs, instead of taking them, as I should, I left them on the stairs. From the stairs was a door, and there was no lights, because we only had just kerosene lamps. So, it was dark. Well, I was in a hurry, and I came down and put my foot right into one of those empty pots, and down I just went. There was two more pots there, so there were three pots in [inaudible] all coming down to the bottom of the stairs. There was a great racket, and I smashed the pots and bumped up against the door. Of course, my mother went running. She says, "Well, I keep telling you, take those pots up when you go." So, she said, "Now, for that, you have to take all the money that you've been earning playing the piano, and you'll have to go and buy three pots." Well, I about died. First off, I hated to use my own money. The other thing was, I didn't want to ask this Mr. Taylor, who ran the hardware store, for three pots. So, I went up there, and I stayed around and stayed around, hanging on his [inaudible] and I'd talk about one thing or another. [inaudible] Finally, he says, "Marjorie, what is it that you want anyway?" So, then I finally had to tell him I wanted three pots. I had to run those pots home by hand, about half a mile [inaudible].

SS: I bet you never left the pots on the stairs.

MH: No, I did not. No, sir, they went up.

SS: Do you remember how much those pots cost?

MH: At that time, it seems to me that it was something like \$1.59 or 65, something of that sort.

SS: A piece?

MH: A piece, yeah. I had to buy three. So, that really took a lot of my [inaudible] I remember that very clearly.

SS: Did your family have animals?

MH: We had a cat. That was all. No, I had a dog for a little while, but not very long. That's all. Then we had a pig at one point too.

SS: But you did not have a horse and wagon?

MH: No. Next door, there was a farm. There, they had horses.

SS: How would you travel?

MH: Well, my mother had a very nice friend, Mr. and Mrs. (Buckley?). They had an older Maxwell Runabout. When they went to Hyannis, it was a big thing for us to do. They would take my mother, and sometimes, they'd take me. I had to put my feet on the running board and sit in right down by Mr. Buckley's feet, and that's where I went. There's a toolbox out there. Sometimes, my brother would go. He had to sit on the toolbox and hold on to the backseat while [inaudible]. That's the way we went. I remember the one time, something happened to the Maxwell, and it stopped right in the middle of the street in South Yarmouth. So, I thought, well, my father was an engineer. Let's get him out there to see what the trouble was. So, he looked at the thing all over, but he couldn't find anything out of it. He goes to [inaudible] other people what to make of it. Finally, somebody said, "Well, try to look to see if it got any gasoline." Sure enough, it was out of gasoline right in the middle of the street in South Yarmouth. [laughter].

He was [inaudible].

SS: More complicated?

MH: Yeah. [inaudible] and a horse. So, every spring, my father, when he was home on leave, would hire one of the sailors. They would all go to Boston. My mother would buy [inaudible] again, and that was five miles [inaudible] big excursion for us.

SS: You took the train out?

MH: No, we went on a horse in the summer.

SS: Oh, to Hyannis?

MH: [inaudible] he hired a horse in the summer, see. We went again in the fall and bought the

winter clothes. I remember one time, we were out, and my older brother, Norman, got a pair of shoes and a pair of (Lookbright?) on the side. That was the way [inaudible]. Oh, he thought he was really neat in that [inaudible].

SS: Where would you buy your clothes?

MH: In Hyannis.

SS: Do you remember the stores?

MH: Yes. One of them that I bought that coat was down in (hospice?). They had a big store there. That's where we bought our coats. We got things from Newport. My mother made all my clothes, all my dresses. – most all my clothes, even. But the boys, she couldn't – she did try to make the pants for them, but they never fitted very well. [inaudible] as the boys grew bigger, they were [inaudible].

SS: Did you have a sewing machine?

MH: Oh, yes. She had a threader. She practically made all the clothes in her home, the boys' shirts. But the pants was definitely a little bit too much. So, she'd buy pants [inaudible].

SS: Where would she buy her material?

MH: There was a dry goods store. Kelly's Dry Goods Store in Main Street in South Yarmouth. She bought a lot of material form there.

SS: Did they have a wide variety?

MH: Yes. It was a big dry goods store. In fact, I worked there [inaudible] for years. He was very particular that every [inaudible] just sold every single shelf. The only thing that I ever really enjoyed there was about once every twenty weeks, especially in the summer, when it was hot, I happened to eat a (candy cane?). If there was squashed chocolate, I'd stick it in my mouth. I think that [inaudible].

SS: [laughter] Oh, you would sell candy too?

MH: Yes, we had candy. [inaudible]. One time, one of the men that I knew that worked in a tennis court stand in the lower part of the village came in, and he wanted a pair of summer underdrawers. Mr. Kelly was busy or something, so I went to get them. I came back and I had the box in the right size, and he opened it. He picked them up like this and says, "Say, look at this, Marjorie." He says, "These are women's." I didn't know there was any difference.

SS: [laughter]

MH: I really didn't know there was any difference between men's underwear and women. I can remember that I was so embarrassed, and I went and hollered to Mr. Kelly. I said, "You'll have

to come out and [inaudible] I don't know what he wants." I probably was about fifteen or something like that. But I remember it clearly. I was so embarrassed. [inaudible] I went there on a bicycle [inaudible] stay all day. In those days, you didn't have any of the little automatic clips that you could put on for prices. The stockings, I hated to sew. I was more tomboy, because I was always brought up with my brothers, you see. I had no sister. You had to thread a needle, and then you had to put it through one part, one sock, and then through the other sock, then bring them up and tie a knot to cut it off. Boy, I hated and abominated that. Every time that I sat down, if I had a little time between customers or there was something else Mr. Kelly wanted – he was the owner of the store – he would bring me out a box of stockings. Now, he's a little bit lean, and he'd come along limping a little bit with his box of stockings for me to mend. I don't remember [inaudible] and I had so many of those little things. I used to hate that job. I've [inaudible].

SS: Was this about 1914 that you worked there, or '15?

MH: Yeah, right about then. One time, the Gypsy pack came through. Mr. Kelly was scared to death of them, because when they came there, they'd steal things. So, right away, he had me lock the door, and then put down the big curtain to make it look as though there was nobody there. Then we'd have to sit absolutely still and wait for them. They'd come to knock on the door, and we had to close the door when they knocked. Pretty soon after, they'd go. [inaudible]. Of course, I knew all the people in the village. They all knew who I was too.

SS: Were you afraid of the Gypsies too?

MH: No, I wasn't particularly afraid of them. But there again, I didn't want them coming in there and stealing stuff from him. So, we'd just make it look like we were closed up for the day. Then after they'd gone, we'd open up again.

SS: Did you ever see the Gypsies any other place in the town?

MH: Every year, the Gypsies used to come to the Cape. Because they were short of time, they didn't stay very long.

Unknown Male Speaker: [inaudible]

MH: Once every summer, the boys would play the girls. Of course, we always got beaten, but we [inaudible]. Then one year, we put upon a scheme to make it more fair. The men had to wear skirts too. So, they would borrow skirts from their sisters or their mothers or somebody. Then you see, they couldn't run too fast to get to the bases. It made it a little bit fairer. But we had lots of fun doing that.

SS: Did you ever win when the boys wore the skirts?

MH: No, the boys always won no matter. They were better than we were. They practiced more than us too. Then because we were right on Bass River, and they all had boats. So, [inaudible] down on Main Street. It was just a walk down to the water. [inaudible]

SS: Is it very difficult to swim the way bathing suits were?

MH: No.

SS: No?

MH: No.

SS: They were not heavy?

MH: No, they were just made of – what was it? It was [inaudible]. It was more like a satin. [inaudible] Ms. (Bainbridge Crystal?) was a very famous [inaudible]. She came in to buy some things. After she had left, I kept thinking about the – I think she gave me a \$10 bill. I think instead of giving her back a few ones – whatever the amount was, I've forgotten – I gave her a \$5 bill. After she had gone, I kept thinking it over, and I went to Mr. Kelly. "You know what, Mr. Kelly? I'm almost sure I gave Mrs. Crystal too much money." He said, "Well, do you know where she's gone?" I said, "Yes. she's going down to the baseball game." "Of course, get around on your bicycle and go down there and get it." So, I had to get on my bicycle and go down there. I found her. She was down there. I told her, I said, "If you look in your pocket, you'll see, you've got a \$5 bill, because I think I gave you a five instead of a one." "Most certainly," she says, "I will." Sure enough, the \$5 bill was right there. So, she gave it to me, and I brought it along with me to Mr. Kelly. I was very relieved because he would've taken it down on my pay.

SS: Really?

MH: Sure, because I'm the one who made the mistake. Of course, after that, believe me, I never made another mistake. He said, "I'm going to show you know exactly how to make change. Always start with the amount of money they owe and work up your money to the amount they give you, and then [inaudible]." After I did that, I had no more trouble.

SS: Do you remember how much you got paid for this job?

MH: Yeah, \$9. I worked for my 8:00 in the morning until 6:00 at night.

SS: Six days a week?

MH: Six days a week.

SS: Was that considered a lot of money?

MH: Well, it was pretty good for a kid. I was only twelve, fourteen years old. It was pretty good. For those times, that money [inaudible] I saved it, because I was very anxious to have music lessons. So, I [inaudible]. So, I saved it and paid for my music lessons.

SS: Oh, that is good.

MH: [inaudible]. So, I put my music lessons to that and play them on the music.

SS: Did you take lessons from someone in Yarmouth?

MH: Yes, there was a woman right there in South Yarmouth. Her name was Ms. Baker. She was an old lady, but she was a graduate of the Boston Conservatory. She was a good teacher.

SS: When did you start taking lessons?

MH: [inaudible] I couldn't use the fork. I took lessons until – I was still in high school. But in the meantime, [inaudible].

SS: You played in movie houses in Yarmouth?

MH: Yeah, in South Yarmouth. The hall was right there. Standish Hall was right there on Main Street.

SS: What was the movie called?

MH: All kinds of movies. There was *The Perils of Pauline* and all that type of music – or that type of movie in those days. Every time, they'd always have a serial, and they would leave it at some impossible position so you'd be sure to come back the next time. I can remember one time that Pauline was tied to the railroad track, and in the distance, here comes the engine. Then they left it like this. So, then of course, you wanted to find out whether the engine went over the girl or she was rescued. So, everybody goes the next time to see what happens.

SS: In the next night, they would have the next part of it?

MH: They'd have the next part and so on, yes.

SS: How many films would be in one series?

MH: Well, first, it was the old-fashioned movies. Every time the film spool ran out, they had to stop and put the lights on and rewind the spool and then start again. So, you always had – in between reels, you'd have probably fifteen minutes of break. That's when they would sell candy and popcorn and drinks and things to the kids. [inaudible] Then I'd get a few minutes off and could kind of rest my hands and figure out what music I was going to use next and so on.

SS: Was this in the evening they would have the movies?

MH: The show was about an hour and a half, and then there was half an hour intermission and then another show. So, I'm paid three hours.

SS: How much would you get paid for that?

MH: I got seventy-five cents a show. It was pretty good. I got two shows, so that was a dollar and a half. I wanted a wristwatch in the worst way. So, I had a little shoebox. Every time I came home, I'd put a dollar and a half in that shoebox. So, I finally was able to buy myself a wristwatch. I was so pleased with my wristwatch.

SS: Was it silver or gold?

MH: It was a gold (Lofoten?). Quite a large one in those days. There were quite round. I think I still have it around someplace.

SS: Where did you buy it?

MH: It was a jewelry store in South Yarmouth [inaudible].

SS: Where do you think it is?

MH: I don't know. I still have it around, I think, in someplace. But it was a big one and [inaudible] compared to the small ones that they have now.

SS: You kept quite busy as a young girl with all your different jobs.

MH: Oh, yes, I was. I worked all day at Mr. Kelly's, and then Saturdays, I played in the movie house. In Sunday, I played the organ in the church.

SS: Did a lot of young people have jobs like that?

MH: Not really. Most of them had their fathers [inaudible] my mother said that we wouldn't lose any time to get out in the world and learn how to take care of ourselves. The next door to us was a farmer. He had several horses, and he used to go out haying. My mother went with him, haying, and treading the hay, as they wanted the hay on [inaudible] he would have to tread it down. So, keep piling up as much as they possibly could on any one load.

SS: For the (street?) he would?

MH: Yes, for the street. He had a pair of sweepers, and he'd walk up and down on the hay. Then he got back to the farm, to the barn, and just would store it. But then he helped [inaudible].

SS: How old was he when he was doing this?

MH: He wasn't very old. He wouldn't have been more than twelve, I guess. He worked hard. One day, he fell off of the hay load, and Mr. (Sears?), who was [inaudible] didn't say a word to him, and my brother just decided he'd get back onto that hay load himself. So, by climbing up onto the wheel and then taking his hands and making little steps back in the hay, he got himself back up. So, Mr. Sears was so impressed with the fact that a twelve-year-old boy would figure out a way to get back up onto that hay load that he said, "You are like Bruce of Scotland. He

would never say that he couldn't do it, and but it always was something that he could do." So, he nicknamed him Bruce. To this day, he's still Bruce Warren. Nobody ever calls him by his name. His name is Norman.

SS: Isn't that something?

MH: Norman Allen Warren is his name, but he's always called Bruce Warren.

SS: As if that was meant to be.

MH: Yes.

SS: Who was Bruce of Scotland?

MH: Bruce of Scotland was one of the very famous men who was king of one of the tribes – not tribes.

SS: Clans?

MH: Yes, one of the clans up there. At one time, they had an engagement with another clan, and the other clan was much better equipped [inaudible] than Bruce's father did. But they were so persistent and they kept at it that they won. So, from that day on, you always talk about him, being that he's persistent. They're like Bruce of Scotland. So, Mr. Sears did in my brother, Bruce. He was Bruce from that day on because he was so stubborn. He said he [inaudible] that was it. He kept at it from deep down there. Those hay loads were high in most days. They piled on as much as they possibly could on their [inaudible]. He kept at it, though. They lived right next door to us. He had a big farm and horses. One time, I remember there was an awful noise over there at night. So, Bruce, he got up and went over to see what the trouble was and help Mr. Sears. One of the horses [inaudible] that cast he had laid down in his stall – and his stall was quite narrow. He was a big horse, and he couldn't get up. The noise was his hoofs hitting the side of the barn. So, my brother got up and went over in the middle of the night and helped to get the horse up.

SS: That must have been a job.

MH: Yes. That happened quite often, too. It wasn't just once. So, we knew, when we heard that noise, just what it was, that one of the horses was cast – and we called it casting – in the stall.

SS: You would think they would make the stalls bigger.

MH: They should have, of course, but they just didn't. They had the stalls, and they used...

SS: Same old way.

MH: Yeah, same old way.

SS: Could you tell me about the elementary school you went to?

MH: Yes, I went to the primary school. It was primary, intermediate, and grammar. There was a teacher for each one, and the one in the primary school was the principal. The teachers were all dedicated teachers and were really (partisan?). We had to behave. I remember one time – maybe it was the only time it ever happened. But anyway, it was a spelling bee. I was very interested [inaudible]. The word was embarrassing. Believe me, I was so embarrassed, because I couldn't spell it. I didn't know that it had two Ss or one R, or two Rs and one S. I couldn't remember. I was in the fifth grade. Finally, I looked over to the girl across the street, across the aisle, and she had spelled it. So, I copied hers, and got it wrong. I never forgot what [inaudible]. That teaches me a lesson to never depends on anybody else and learn everything yourself. So, I never did any more copying, and that was the only time in all those years. We had a central stove, airtight stove, a long chimney, and a pipe [inaudible] and they had clothes racks about that high. In the winter, when you went out in the snow and the mittens in your feet were wet, everything was put on those racks that were around the stove to dry it out. Then of course, we had just a pump. We got our water that way. [inaudible] it was about – oh, I'd say maybe thirty children. Again, it was grades one, two, three, all in one room, and four, five, six were in another. Then upstairs was the primary school, seven, eight, and nine.

SS: So, there were thirty children in each classroom?

MH: About that many, yes. Maybe twenty-five, I can't remember exactly. But most of the seats were filled.

SS: Did you start school when you were six?

MH: No. I had to walk a mile to school.

SS: Where is that school or was that school?

MH: Well, do you know the Main Street [inaudible]?

SS: Slightly.

MH: Well, you know where the (Kelley's?) drugstore is?

SS: Apothecary?

MH: There's an apothecary store there. It's kind of a funny building that's kind of like a triangle. That used to be the post office. The road goes down past (Rutherford?) Bridge. Well, you go down on Old Main Street. On the right is the big Methodist Church. Right next to it, sitting well back, with two sidewalks going up with the little green in the middle, that's the elementary school. I walked up there every day to school. Rain or shine or snow or sleet or anything else, we went to school, unless we were sick. If we were sick, we didn't go. But if we weren't, we had boots and raincoats and we had umbrellas and we went to school. We weren't getting out of

school. That was one thing that my mother said. [inaudible] you went to school in those days. Unless you were flat in bed, you went to school.

SS: Do you remember how long the school day was?

MH: Yes, it was from 9:00 until 3:00. No, 4:00. I think it was 4:00. We had a principal, a man, leading the primary school. Then the other two were in the primary room and the community room [inaudible].

SS: How was he?

MH: He was very good. We learned a lot. I can remember I [inaudible]. For some reason or another, I just couldn't read pints and quarts and gallons. This particular arithmetic problem I had to do had to do so with so many quarts at so much a pint and so much a gallon were sent to New Orleans. I was to figure out how many gallons there were, and how much it cost and how much the man had to pay for these gallons. I couldn't seem to figure it out. I got all but stuck between pints and quarts and gallons. So, the principal said [inaudible]. So, I worked the whole recess, and I still didn't have it. So, he finally says, "Well, I think your problem is that you don't realize the difference. How many quarts are there in a gallon and how many gallons are there, how many pints are there in a quart, and how many quarts are there in a gallon. That's where the trouble is. You get that all put into gallons, then multiply it by so much a gallon, and you can find the answer." Well, they're all running in, and I still didn't have an answer. So, when it came noon time, he said, "Now, all of us usually go out in the playground. Marjorie's going to stay here, and she's going to get that." So, I stayed there, and I finally learned how to change pints into quarts and quarts into gallon, and then multiply it by so many gallons and got the answer, finally. I can remember it so plain. I see all the other kids out there playing on the playground, and me in there figuring out what quarts and gallons are. It's funny how things will sit in your mind like that.

SS: It must have been all the more hard to figure out studying while everyone else played.

MH: That's right. I was being punished by it.

SS: Were they really very strict?

MH: Oh, yes. They had good discipline. They all did. All the (brains?) and good discipline. In those days, if you didn't do your work in school time, you stayed in recess, or you stayed after school, because there were no buses in those days. Everybody walked to school. [inaudible]. So, I spent my whole recess standing there, trying to figure out the gallons and pints and quarts and getting it straightened out in my mind.

SS: Did you have much homework?

MH: Up in the grammar school, we did, but not in the grade schools. Very little in grade school. Sometimes, if you missed in the spelling test, then you'd get about three words. If you missed the three of them, she'd make you take them home and learn them. She'd say it's a good idea

now, [inaudible] I'd go home and write these words in [inaudible] or something and really learn them. "At recess tomorrow, I'll listen to you and see if you know how to spell it," something like that – all while somewhere, the boys were getting into trouble. They'd do something they shouldn't do, [inaudible] they'd have to stay in recess or something or stay after school. But if they did anything real bad, they were sent to the principal. Sometimes, he had a little leather strap he'd [inaudible] slap some hands or on the buttocks or somewhere. But discipline was good. The teachers, [inaudible]. You did what they told you to do. There was no two ways about it. You did it and learned.

SS: Did they stress a lot of reading?

MH: Yes. They had you read out loud, too. Then she'd say, "Read the next three paragraphs. After you've read them, I'm going to ask you some questions. You're going to shut your books, and I'm going to ask you some questions." Then he marks the girls and he marks the boys [inaudible]. Everything was to do with that particular paragraph. You had to know it. If you didn't know it, sit down and read it again. You didn't read it [inaudible]. So, you sat down and you read it again. That was a [inaudible]. You were supposed to know it firsthand. Sometimes, you did, and sometimes, you didn't.

SS: Did you enjoy reading as a young girl?

MH: Oh, yes. Yes. We had a lot of reading in the house. We always read. Then we had a very nice public library [inaudible].

SS: What were some of your favorite books?

MH: Well, I kind of forgot the name [inaudible] books, to be sure. But I don't really remember exactly, because [inaudible]. My mother was a very astute woman, and very [inaudible]. She was so different from parents today. We had a big square dining table with a [inaudible] right in the middle. My brother was on that side, and I was on this side. My mother was over here in the rocking chair sewing or doing some crocheting or something. Nobody stirred until the homework was done. We had a *Book of Knowledge*. We had a set and we had a whole encyclopedia if we didn't know the answers. [inaudible]. She was very much a disciplinarian. She had to be with three active children, and her being home alone so much. But at least [inaudible] homework. That's all that they gave you. [inaudible], and she'd play along with us.

SS: What was Pitch?

MH: Pitch was a game of cards, and it was numbers. You had two [inaudible] and the cards had two and two, like this. Of course, that became a (chord?). Therefore, you had to have a chord in your hand in order to get that particular card. So, it taught you mathematics as well, this game. We used to play that a lot. She played with us. She used to like animals [inaudible]. She deserves a great deal [inaudible]. My brother was a very natural [inaudible].

SS: Tell me about that normal school.

MH: He was amazing. They had a lot of crosses [inaudible] psychology, pedagogy, English, literature, history. Every day, this was teaching you to teach. Every day, for the next day's class, you would be trained to teach and all, and you had to write out a lesson plan. The first was, of course, the aim of that particular lesson, and then what's the presentation of that lesson and then what's the conclusion of the lesson. Then you had to turn those into your supervisor. That goes out [inaudible] your existence, because it took long hours a day. You had a lesson plan to write every single night. Every weekends, you got a couple of things to do.

SS: You were nineteen when you started going to the normal school?

MH: Let me see. That would be after graduating from high school. When was that? [inaudible] I think I was fourteen or something, fifteen.

SS: For high school, did you have to go nine grades and then go four years to high school?

MH: Yes, I did. So, [inaudible] school at 6:00.

SS: So, it was about what, 1918?

MH: Yes.

SS: Did you skip a year before you went to the normal school?

MH: No, I didn't. No.

SS: You just went in the fall?

MH: I went to college in the fall, yes. No, I didn't skip any grades. [inaudible] I had to go through the ninth grade. The next year, they took it out, they abolished the ninth grade. It went eight grades, and then four. So, it always was a bane of my existence. My brother got one less year, though, because he was younger than me. When he came along, there was no ninth grade. So, he went from eighth grade. That's what we use today. But I went that extra year of time.

SS: How long did you go to the normal school for?

MH: Two years. It was a very fine course. They really taught you quality teachings. They were all dedicated teachers who had a [inaudible] had to do it for two years. It was a very [inaudible] class, but nevertheless, we learned an awful lot. We really did. [inaudible].

Unknown Male Speaker: Right.

SS: [inaudible] went too.

SS: Really?

MH: Yes. He taught for year. He didn't get much far. He didn't teach [inaudible].

SS: How did you get to Hyannis, to school?

MH: The only way that we could get there was to go on the train. It was so hard.

Unknown Male Speaker: The dormitory rooms.

MH: Huh?

Unknown Male Speaker: You stayed in the dormitory.

MH: Yes, we stayed in the dormitory.

SS: Oh, you lived there?

MH: Yes, I lived right there. We tried to get home, and it was really [inaudible] give us a ride down.

SS: Is that considered quite a distance from Hyannis to...

MH: Well, Hyannis to South Yarmouth is only five miles. But nevertheless, it was too far to walk. So, we'd try to get somebody that also was going, to go with them and ask if they could. If they couldn't, we'd just go on the train. But most of the time, I'd find somebody who was going, or very often, you stayed right there in the dorm room.

SS: Was the dormitory part of this main school building?

MH: No, it was a big classroom building like that – which is now the town hall, by the way, in Hyannis – like this. Then on this side, there was a big dormitory. But when you go downstairs, [inaudible]. Then on this side was the previous school, [inaudible] first year to ninth grade. They all [inaudible] They had a lot of children in South Yarmouth [inaudible]. The lesson plans were the bane of your existence, because every day, you had to teach class, and you had to [inaudible] room, and then remember. The women in the classroom [inaudible] because there were certain ways to present to these children that will [inaudible] and children learn, and in other ways, they just don't learn. So, you had to learn, and you had to apply psychology too.

SS: Where did you begin teaching after you finished school?

MH: Let's see. My first job was [inaudible] I was a mistress in school. I taught in the fifth grade. [inaudible].

SS: When did you come back to the Cape?

MH: When I married my husband. Do you remember when we married? Thirty-two, was it?

Unknown Male Speaker: Twenty-six.

MH: Twenty-six.

Unknown Male Speaker: I remember it was a Tuesday.

MH: [inaudible].

SS: Had you met him at the normal school?

MH: At the normal school, yeah. That's where I met him. [inaudible].

SS: Were you engaged to your husband when you went away to teach?

MH: No.

SS: Were you serious?

MH: I can't remember.

Unknown Male Speaker: When you came [inaudible] New Jersey, and then you came back Westport.

MH: Yeah, that's right. I came back to Westport, which was outside of [inaudible] because I wanted to be near him, because we were building this house. I wanted to be near [inaudible]. He was working as a mason [inaudible]. So, he was busy all week, and so was I. Then [inaudible] so we had to be there.

Unknown Male Speaker: You were there in the (old port?).

[end of transcript]