

Male Speaker: This tape is a property of Tales of Cape Cod Incorporated and cannot be reproduced without their written permission. Today's date is June 21st, 1978. We are in the home of Alvah M. Barse of 310 Ocean Street in Hyannis, Massachusetts. Are you native to Cape Cod?

Alvah Barse: Yes, I am.

MS: Where were you born?

AB: I was born at 353 Ocean Street, about six houses down here on the west side of the street. When I was 1 year old, my mother and father moved to this house, which is 310 Ocean Street. My family have lived here ever since. I have lived here since I was 1 year old.

MS: What was your birthday?

AB: July the 29th, 1907. I want to interject something else here.

MS: Go ahead.

AB: On the site on which this house now rests was another house which burned to the ground in 1911. At that time, we lived with our neighbor next door and also across the street while this house was being built. This one was built in 1911.

MS: Do you recall the fire?

AB: No. I was 4 years old.

MS: There was no story handed down to you of how they fought fires in those days?

AB: Well, I don't think they did fight it, because they had – the only equipment they had at that time was hand-pulled equipment. I doubt very much if there was anybody here to help extinguish the fire.

MS: Mr. Barse, do you recall your grandparents and your great-grandparents?

AB: I recall my grandparents. My –

MS: Maternal or paternal?

AB: Both. My great-grandfather on my father's side was named Hiram Hamblin. He owned several boats, one of which was the Adrienne. He used that to fish and to carry freight up and down the coast. He died in 1905.

MS: What kind of freight did he carry?

AB: I really don't know.

MS: Was the power in the boat or just sails?

AB: I imagine it was power, but I'm not sure about that. But I have the original license that he had for the boat, Adrienne. It was licensed in 1900 and 1857 and [18]59. My –

MS: How big a boat was it?

AB: I have to think. It's on the license, but I think it was forty-nine tons.

MS: Did they land their goods on the Cape?

AB: I imagine they transported freight up and down the coast here on the south side. Now, you asked me about my grandparents. That was my great-grandfather. My grandparent on my father's side was Osborne Bearse. I have to make a correction here. Hiram Hamblin, who I said was my great grandfather, died in 1898. My grandfather, who was Osborne Bearse, was in the civil war. He died in 1905. That was the year my parents were married. I have a discharge from the civil war, which my mother has here. From his service in the civil war, my grandmother received a pension from the government. As I recall, it was \$12 a month from the federal government and \$3 a month from the state government.

MS: Where was he? Did he see much service? Were there any stories handed down of his experience in the civil war?

AB: No. No. I can't give you any stories because I don't know what they were, but he was called a landsman.

MS: What was a landsman?

AB: This is what I'm not sure about. Mother says that he was a cook. Now, what the connection is between a cook and a landsman, I don't know. But I'm sure of the fact that he's called a landsman because I have his discharge papers here.

MS: Can you tell us something about your grandfather after he got back from the civil war?

AB: Well, I seem to recall that – mother has told me that nobody is quite sure where Osborne Bearse came from. The legend is that a Captain Bearse – and I can't remember his first name at the moment – was a captain of a ship and traveled from the United States for ports in Europe. In one of the ports in Europe, he found this boy whose name was given to him by the captain of the ship, and that name was Bearse. Now, legend has it that he, the captain, Captain Bearse, landed in Hyannis Port. When they were all on leave here, Osborne Bearse –

MS: Your grandfather.

AB: – my grandfather, would walk from there uptown, from the Hyannis Port Wharf uptown, and walking by my grandmother's house, he might have seen and met her and later married her.

Now, the only other story I can tell you that comes to mind at the moment is that originally, on this street, there were five houses. The five houses were all owned and occupied by brothers and sisters, all by the name of Hamblin. Now, some were married so that their names were not Hamblin at the time they occupied the houses and during my time.

MS: Somewhat like the Kennedy compound?

AB: Yes. [laughter] One was occupied by Markus Baker and (Eliza Baker?), and that's the house adjacent to and south of 353 Ocean Street.

MS: Were the Hamblin family seafaring people?

AB: I guess they were locally. I don't think that any of them were sea captains that traveled to Europe or India or any of the foreign ports.

MS: What did your father do?

AB: Well, my father was Harry Bearse. He started to work for Howland's Furniture Store, which was on the site, now occupied by the Bass River Savings Bank. He started to work when he was 16 years old. He worked there about a year. After that, he went to work for (Myron?) Bradford, who had the hardware store known as the Cash Block. He stayed there the rest of his life. In 1933, he bought the business from Myron Bradford, who had died in 1933, and that's the time he purchased it. He also purchased his house in 1933.

MS: Is Bradford's Hardware still in your family?

AB: Oh, yes. My brother owns and operates it, and has for a good many years now because my father died October the 21st, 1968. But my brother was there and ran the business long before that and father died at age 93.

MS: Longevity in your family.

AB: Yes. My mother is now 95.

MS: Tell me, can you give us anything on your maternal grandparents?

AB: Yes. My maternal grandfather was named Sylvester F. Baker. He was a harness maker. His shop was at one time on the Main Street in West Dennis. He later moved his business to a small store, which was adjacent to his home. His home was on School Street, what is now known, I think, as School Street in West Dennis. It's right opposite what is now known as the community center. That community center was once a school. My mother went to that school. She is the last surviving member of her high school class of 1900.

MS: Bearse, I understand your mother was a graduate of the class of 1900 East Dennis?

AB: West Dennis.

MS: West Dennis. Could you tell us a little bit about the school she attended?

AB: Well, as I think I just said, the school was located on what is now, I believe, School Street. That same building is now the community center. It's directly across the street from where my grandfather and grandmother on my maternal side lived and where my grandfather had the harness shop. The school, mother tells me, consisted of two floors. On the lower floors were the lower grades. On the second floor, a portion of it was devoted to the intermediate grades. She went to high school there, graduated from there, she tells me, in 1900. There were fourteen students in her class when she graduated, fourteen high school students.

MS: Did she go on and pursue further education?

AB: No.

MS: Bearse, let us take a walk down Main Street, Hyannis, in the early 1900s. What was it like? What were the businesses involved there?

AB: Well, the period I'm talking to is approximately 1914 to 1929, or thereabouts. There were no businesses at all on Ocean Street, with one exception. That was a house located diagonally across the street from the training school. That was (Kaiser's Plumbing Shop?), which he had in his basement. Now, if we go to Main Street, there was a house on the corner of Main and Ocean Street on the southwest corner known as Martha Sowell's house. She married a man named Rich. Next to that, going east on the same side of the street, was the Ferguson house. Ferguson house previously was the Iyanough house, and one of the two full-time hotel – a year-round hotel, I should say, in town. That was run by Hugh Ferguson, Sr. Now, going on the same side of street and running east, next was a Masonic Temple, which would later move back and has long since been destroyed. That's where the Cape Cod Bank and Trust Company is now located. Next to that was the A&P Store.

MS: What was the A&P Store like?

AB: Well, it was a very small store on probably a frontage of 40, 50 feet, and maybe 7,500 feet deep. It was run by a man named John Eyre, E-Y-R-E, who was an Englishman. He later resigned from his job at A&P and set up his own grocery store on Sea Street. I believe the same store is still there. Not run by him, of course, but run by somebody else. Now, I may miss some going on through here, but the next place was Louis Aranofsky's large clothing store, which sold men's and women's clothing. Still going east, next to that was Ms. Guyer's Gift Shop. Next to that was what we call the 5 & 10 Cent Store, run by the Crowell girls. There were two or three sisters that were in that store. Next to that was a residence of a man named Nickerson. In connection with the house where he lived was a monument business, which was right there on Main Street. Monuments meaning gravestones. Next to that was a small block. The first store that one would come to would be a telegraph office.

MS: What was that? Western Union?

AB: Oh, sure.

MS: What was that like?

AB: It was just a very small office of 10 by 15 or 20. Then a telegraph key there.

MS: Did they have messenger boys?

AB: No. I don't recall any messenger boys. Then still going east was Sam Hallett's flower shop. He had a greenhouse on South Street, but he had a retail store right there. Next was a restaurant. The restaurant was operated by a man named George the Greek. All right. George's real name was spelled T-S-I-K-N-A-S, but always known to us as George the Greek. Next to that was (Peam?) Henderson's barbershop and a hangout for high school kids.

MS: What did he charge you for a haircut?

AB: 35 cents. Now, next to that was a railroad track, and just on the west side of the railroad track was a gatehouse. The gatehouse was where the gateman would stay all day and let down the gates when trains went across Main Street.

MS: Where was the station in relation to that?

AB: The station was north of that. Across the Main Street, there's a rotary circle there now. Then if we go across the street, it was Murphy's Store – Murphy's Bakery, I should say.

MS: Is that the Murphy family that had all the judges and selectmen?

AB: Sure, it is the same one. They were sons of – yes. Henry Murphy, who became the judge, and Tom Murphy, who became a selectman, were sons of the Murphy, who I'm talking about, who owned the bakery. I think the father's name was Patrick. I think one of the brothers was Jim, but I'm not sure about that. But anyway, one of them would drive down this street and all over town on a Sunday morning with a horse and wagon, selling donuts. But there was another Murphy in town. I don't know whether related or not, but he sold ice cream in the summer, driving a horse and wagon around. Now, if you go directly across the tracks was another barber shop owned by (Heman?) Pierce, another hangout. These barbershops had pool tables, and one could play pool in there for 10 cents a game or something like that.

MS: Always waiting for your haircut.

AB: Oh, yes, indeed. Next to that was Billy Lowell's Clothing Store. Now, Billy Lowell's Clothing Store was located at one time – sometime prior to that, that was a display room for our Buick automobiles, which Conley sold when he had the garage across the street, which I'll get to later, was a home occupied by John D. W. Bodfish. He was a blind lawyer, but a very brilliant man, well educated. He –

MS: Did he have any famous cases?

AB: I don't know what cases he had. I can't tell you anything about that except I used to mow his lawn and he always attended town meeting. As high school students, we went to town meeting until the voter selectman banned us and wouldn't allow students anymore.

MS: Why?

AB: Occupied seats, I suppose. I don't know. But it's all described in this book. Now, going east past Bodfish house were one or two other houses. The names of the occupants, I don't remember. But then we reached Pleasant Street. When we reached Pleasant Street, that's the Cash Block, which was once occupied by three stores. The first one was occupied by Ben Sears, and this was a dry goods store. He sold cloth and the cotton thread and needles and all that sort of stuff.

MS: Is that now the Sears Liquor Store?

AB: Oh, no, no. But his son laid around the liquor store. Next to that was Bartlett's Shoe Store. Next to that was Bradford's Hardware Store, where my father worked from age about 17 until about age 90. If you go past that was what was once the Congregational Church. During my time, church services were not held there but were converted into a recreation room. We played basketball and pool there. It was operated by the Federated Church as a recreation facility for the kids around town. Then past that was the Hyannis Inn, the second year-round hotel in town. Past that was a house occupied by Bradford. He was the brother of Myron Bradford, and he was a state detective. Next to that was a house occupied by an individual family named Toby, I believe.

MS: Were there any more businesses in that area?

AB: No. That's the end of all the businesses, with one exception. The one exception is Park Square Grocery. There's now a liquor store there. It's in Park Square. That's the end of all the business sections on the south side of Main Street.

MS: Very good.

AB: On the north side of the street was the Colonial Candle Company, which during my day was a great deal smaller than it is now. But lots of the high school kids used to work there part time during the summer and during the school year to make a few bucks.

MS: What would they pay a high school kid?

AB: Oh, I don't know. I suppose 25 cents an hour. Next to that was the Hyannis Trust Company, not known then as the Hyannis Trust Company. It was known as the National Bank of Hyannis. Their original location was in a portion of what was the Hyannis Inn. That inn, incidentally, was constructed in 1865. I think about 1925, the bank sold that building and moved out to its present location, which is directly across the street from the Federated Church. Now, let's go back. Okay. Now, next to the bank going west was a very small house occupied by

somebody unknown to me. But next to that was a Chinese laundry.

MS: Tell us about the Chinese laundry.

AB: All right. That obviously was run by a Chinaman. That's where all the men in town had their hard collars laundered and their shirts. I used to go there and take my father's shirts and get them when they were finished. What the charges were, I don't know. Maybe 10 cents a collar, but that's a guess. That was a Chinese –

MS: Did the laundry man live there?

AB: Oh, sure. He lived in the back of the shop. Now, next to that was (Judy?) Morin's Auto Supply Shop I suppose you might call it or perhaps a gas station, because I remember going up there when I was a senior in high school in 1926 and listening to the World Series. The reason we went there is because he had a radio inside with an amplifier outside. We could go there, and we could listen to the World Series outside of his shop. Of course, next to that, still going west, was the railroad station. Next to the railroad station was a freight depot. The freight depot obviously is where freight was received and distributed by Teamsters to wherever they went. One of the most famous Teamsters was Captain Allen. I think that's his name. Allen was a former sea captain, came back here and been here years after he went to sea. That's what he did for a living. Dr. Harris was the one who attended him during his last illness. From him, Dr. Harris learned all about these sea captains. The data we received from the captain, he wrote this book called *Hyannis Sea Captains*. The freight office, and then back was Conley's Garage. They're the ones that sold Buicks. On this side, originally, it was a stable, but it was later made into a garage and called Conley's Garage. Now, still going west, and on that corner, which is now occupied by Dumont's Pharmacy, was L. P. Wilson's Grocery Store. L. P. Wilson's son was Kenneth Wilson, who later married Harriet McGathin. Wilson was a lawyer. Now, going west from there, next was Walter Baker's Variety Store. He sold all sorts of things, like some sports equipment, baseballs, bats, and stationery, newspapers, magazines, et cetera. There was a delightful place called Andy's Candies. It was run by a very rotund man who obviously was named Andy. I never knew his last name.

MS: What kind of candy would he sell?

AB: Every kind you can think of.

MS: Describe some of it to us.

AB: Oh, he had chocolates and hard candy. At Christmas time, he always had candy canes and choice fruits like choice oranges and tangerines. He used to sell one kind of a candy, which I'll never forget, which he called ice cream candy. It came in two flavors, vanilla and chocolate. For a penny or so, you would break off one or two squares and sell it to the kids.

MS: Why was it not called ice cream candy?

AB: Well, because it was a creamy substance, somewhat like fudge now.

MS: Well, that was not frozen.

AB: Oh, no, no, no, no. Nothing was frozen. Andy's candy store was Keveney's upholstering shop. Wyville Keveney's father, during my time, ran that place. Long afterwards, Wyville ran it. Now today, as I speak here, it's the vacant lot that's on Main Street. Now, next to Keveney store was a meat market run by a person named Willie Pratt Bearse, a namesake of mine, but no relation as far as I know. Next to that was the post office. Each evening around 6:00 a.m. or 7:00 a.m., the townspeople would – the men of the town would walk down there to see if they had any mail. This was the chance to exchange gossip and see what was going on.

MS: The news of the day came out of the post office.

AB: Indeed. Now, there was no mail delivery at that time. That didn't start until about 1926. So, that's why they went to the post office to see if they had any mail. Now, next to the post office was Elisha Bassett's store, grocery store, similar to Wilson's store and very small. They, as well as Wilson's store, took orders and delivered the groceries, went around town, took orders, and delivered the groceries in horse and wagon.

MS: Would that be the same day or a day later?

AB: They'd take orders in the morning and deliver in the afternoon. Now, next to that was the great McGathin's Drug Store.

MS: Why was it called the great McGathin's?

AB: That's just my name because McGathin was so well known in the town. He was very active in politics. He lived on Main Street. He always walked from his house down the store, always walked, whistling as he went. Now, they sold ice cream, drugs, of course, candy, cosmetics. During the prohibition, they sold liquor under subscription. I should say prescription, not subscription. Now, adjacent to McGathin's Drug Store was a drive which went in back of the stores just west. That was called, as I remember, the Cape Cod Auto Company, and they sold Fords. There was an exit drive and an entrance drive. It was run by a man named Livesley, L-I-V-E-S-L-E-Y, Fred Livesley. Car on display, I seem to remember. In front of that, incidentally, the site of that garage is now a recreational building occupied by the Federated Church. That's the site. Now, in front of Cape Cod Auto Company was Guyer's Drug Store.

MS: Is Guyer the individual that got involved in the telephone?

AB: Now that, I don't know. But he ran the drugstore. He had a sister who, I forgot to mention, that ran a gift shop across the street. Next to Guyer's Drug Store was a shoe store run by a man named Jim Baxter. Going east from there was the Federated Church, much smaller than it is today. Then going west from there was a bakery run by John Newcomb. Then came Murphy's ice cream parlor. This was run by Will Murphy, who, I think, but I'm not sure, was a brother of James Murphy and Pat Murphy. Next to that was Panesis' fruit store. He sold just fruits and nuts. His name was spelled P-A-N-E-S-I-S. Next to that, on the corner of Main Street and

Ocean Street, was Howland's Furniture Store, which I mentioned earlier, directly across what used to be Barnstable Road. I don't know what they call it. It was a jewelry store run by Leslie Johnson. Then at one time, Carroll's antique shop and Kenny's harness shop. Now, Kenny later became selectman of the town for a long period of time. Next to that was Casey's coal company. They had a beautiful white house that faced on the street and in back of that, an office. The coal yards were down by the railroad track. Beyond that, everything was residents. No businesses of any kind, with one exception, and this was quite a number of years later, when the first shop on the west end of Main Street was a Japanese shop. I mean, they sold Japanese goods. The man's name, I'll have to recall it. I don't remember it now. Going across the street from Casey's was the Normal School – entrance to the Normal School. Then there was (Moore's?) ice cream shop, and later a bakery there. Next to that, going east, was the Idle Hour Theater. Now, we come to the corner of Main and Ocean Streets. That is the southwest corner. In that house lived a lady named (Ella Bacchus Baer?), who was an opera singer, I have been told. Except –

MS: That was the end of the business area?

AB: Yes. That's the end of the business section, Main Street.

MS: Mr. Barse, how many members to your family?

AB: I had two brothers, both younger than I. Thurlow, T-H-U-R-L-O-W, who now operates Bradford's Hardware Store. I have a brother named Basil, B-A-S-I-L, also younger than I, who now lives in California.

MS: What would be a typical day, say, when you were about 10 years old? For example, do you get up in the morning? Did you do chores?

AB: No. I always had chores to do.

MS: What were they?

AB: But that was usually after school and not in the morning. But a typical day would mean that I would get up probably at 6:30 a.m. or so. If it happened to be winter time, we always had a stove in the kitchen, which was used for cooking and heat. Now, dad always did what he called banking the fire, which meant let it burn slowly during the night so that he could open the drafts in the morning and the fire would burn brightly and he would come up and he could cook pancakes or cook an egg or make coffee. But if a fire happened to go out during the night, then he became very angry, and especially if it was during when the snow on the ground and we had to go out and get wood out of a pile in the back of the house because that took time. I suppose he was doing work at either 7:00 a.m. or 7:30 a.m. I said he got up at 6:30 a.m. Maybe he got up at 6:00 a.m.

MS: How would you get to school?

AB: Well, always walked, of course.

MS: How far was it?

AB: Oh, it was up about a city block before you get to Main Street. That was the only elementary school in Hyannis.

MS: About how far?

AB: Oh, probably half a mile. It's now on the site now occupied by the New England Telephone and Telegraph Company. That building was constructed as a telephone company building, in 1957.

MS: What was the school building like?

AB: Well, it was a brick school. On the first floor, there were four rooms and grades – oh, probably one to six or something like that. Well, I don't really remember the rooms. But I can tell you there were grades one through nine because we always had, during my time, nine grades plus four years of high school. So, you asked me what we did. So, I'd walk to school. Across the street from the school was a large ravine. The bottom of the ravine was a drainage pond. So, in the winter time, we'd go down there and see how thick the ice was and slide across the ice. Fence there, but that wasn't any barrier to us.

MS: What type of courses would you have in school? Anything unusual?

AB: Yes. The most unusual course in the springtime was gardening because every kid in the – oh, probably seventh, eighth, and ninth grade would have a garden plot about 6 by 8. A man would be hired to plow the field and harrow the field. Each plot would be laid out so each kid would have a plot to plant radishes, lettuce, and potatoes or whatever else you planted.

MS: It did not have flowers?

AB: Oh, no. No flowers. Then there was –

MS: Was there anything else unusual with the courses that you had from today's?

AB: Yes. One of the unusual courses was oral math every morning.

MS: What did that consist of?

AB: Well, it was always given – I'm talking now about the eighth and ninth grade and (William G. Currier?) was the principal of the school. Every morning, we would have what we call morning exercises. Included in those would be oral math. Oral math consisted of something like this. He would say, "Add 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, divide by 2, multiply by 3, and subtract 1. What's the answer?"

MS: Sounds like mental gymnastics.

AB: Indeed, that's what it was.

MS: Through the nine grades of grammar school?

AB: Yes.

MS: Did you continue on?

AB: I went through nine grades of grammar school. We had graduation exercises. All the boys in that class wore long pants, that is dress long pants for the first time on that graduation. Prior to that time, we wore short pants – knee-length pants with black hose except during the summer, when we would wear cocky pants to play around with.

MS: How many boys and girls graduated in that class?

AB: Oh, I guess probably twenty, twenty-five. That was –

MS: That was the town of Barnstable?

AB: No. That's a village of Hyannis, not the town of Barnstable.

MS: Did they have other schools in there?

AB: Oh, yes. This was elementary school. Each village had an elementary school.

MS: How many from high school?

AB: How many what?

MS: How many graduated from high school?

AB: Forty-four in my class in 1926.

MS: Was there anything unusual about the schools? What kind of discipline did you have?

AB: Well, the principal of the high school was (Louie M. Booty?). Best teacher I ever had. Louie M. Booty was the principal of the high school, and yes, he believed in discipline. But I must go back and tell you about grade school. I said William G. Currier was a principal. For discipline, he used a strap applied to the palm of one's hands. The –

MS: Known as the (rat's hand?).

AB: Yes. The number of strokes depended on the severity of the crime. Mr. Booty never did anything like that, but he enforced discipline. There wasn't any doubt about it.

MS: In other words, they used physical discipline when they acted.

AB: Yes.

MS: Did you continue on from school after high school?

AB: Yes. I went to Brown University. I graduated from there in 1930.

MS: What kind of endeavor did you pursue?

AB: Economics. From there, I went into business. I became treasurer and controller of several different companies in Massachusetts, New Jersey. At one time, I was with General Electric company early in my career. Then I moved to Niles, Michigan. That was when Curtiss-Wright Corporation transferred me out, transferred me to South Bend, Indiana. After serving as a controller of that plant, the plant closed, so I was out of a job. Then I became the treasurer of a Ford dealership out there. In the meantime, I became interested in teaching. So, one summer, about 1965, I came back here. The community college at that time was located on what was known as the Normal School campus. I went up to see Mr. Nickerson, who was, I believe, the first president of the Cape Cod Community College. Through him, I met another man. One stand is still there, and his name is Jim Cronin, who taught business subjects. So, I asked Jim why he wouldn't hire me. He asked me if I had a business degree – a master's degree, I should say, "And I'd like to teach here." He said no. He wouldn't hire me because I didn't have a master's degree. At that point and upon my return to Michigan, I inquired of several different colleges out there. In about 1966, I became matriculated at Michigan State University, their off-campus program, while I was working full time. I got a master's degree in 1969. For the past ten years, I've been a member of the faculty at Southwestern Michigan College in Dowagiac, Michigan.

MS: What motivated you to write the book *Physic Point*?

AB: Well, mostly because I have always been interested in the history of this area. I further felt that if somebody didn't record this, that it would all die out, and really, the children of today wouldn't have any concept of what kids did fifty years ago. For example, right across the street from this house is what was once a field. We called that the cow fields. It's now grown up. It's covered with bushes and trees, and the trees are now 50 feet high. But at one time, there was a pasture for cows. Over there, from the time I was probably 6 or 7 years old until I got into high school, well, in high school, we used that as a playground. We once had a homemade golf course there. We used to play baseball there. Earlier than that, we played cowboys and Indians. It was a great place.

MS: That would have been our loss had you not written about it.

AB: That's the way I feel.

MS: Tell me the –

AB: I'm now writing a second edition instead. Question?

MS: Did you receive any help from the local Cape Codders in writing this book?

AB: Well, very few. Virtually, the entire thing was written from memory. But my mother gave me a lot of help, and so did a cousin of mine, Mrs. Luther A. Tripp, and Mrs. (Katherine Moores White?), who lives right here on this street, was the person who suggested the name of this book. As the story connected with that –

MS: I would like to hear that.

AB: Well, the story is that Mrs. Markus Baker, we called her Eliza, lived down here, three to four houses, and her husband was what we would now call a teamster because he had a horse and wagon. He hauled gravel and freight and this other stuff around town. But Liza Baker – and real name was Eliza Baker – was a self-appointed curer of ills for children. When any children became ill, she, as I just indicated, was a self-appointed curer of these ills. One of her prescriptions was quite frequently a dose of castor oil. This section of the street then became known as Physic Point. This is the story behind that.

MS: I guess I mispronounced it and called it psychic point, but –

AB: No. It's not psychic point. It's Physic Point.

MS: Recall the advent of the automobile?

AB: Yes. I remember that during my early boyhood, all the transportation was by horse and wagon. I mentioned, I believe – if not, I'll do it now – that horse and wagons were used by O'Neill's grocery, which I didn't mention, and Wilson's Grocery Store and Bassett's grocery store to take orders and deliver them. Automobiles were used primarily for Sunday afternoon rides. The first automobile that my family had was purchased by my maternal grandfather for my parents in 1915, and it cost \$500.

MS: What kind of a car?

AB: It was a Ford touring car.

MS: What did it look like?

AB: Well, the dashboard looked like a buggy dashboard. It had a cloth canvas top, all black, of course, that could be put down in warm weather.

Female Speaker: Curtains?

AB: Yes. It had side curtains that could be put up in case of inclement weather, shall we say?

MS: Did you have any flat tires?

AB: I don't recall any, but I suppose we did. But interestingly enough, the history of the Ford Motor company and data that I have indicates that that same car, not very many years later, sold for \$290.

MS: When was –

AB: That was probably because Henry Ford I had installed all this labor-saving equipment, namely the assembly line.

MS: Do you recall the advent of electricity?

AB: Yes. Electricity, I recall, was installed in this house in 1922. In the bedrooms upstairs, we had one light with a single bulb hanging from the ceiling that was over the bureau in each one of the rooms. The first night that they were turned on, mother and dad were so delighted that they turned on every light in the house.

MS: Did you have meters in those days?

AB: Oh, heavens no. You could use all the electricity you wanted. It must have been for a flat rate.

MS: Did they charge –

AB: Because I know we didn't have any meters.

MS: Did they charge to install it?

AB: I suppose so, but I can't remember who installed it.

MS: What about the telephone?

AB: Oh, that's interesting. The first telephone on this street, I can't tell you what year it was, but it must have been – I know it was when I was a small boy. The first telephone on the street was installed in the home of Markus Baker. M-A-R-K-U-S is his first name; Baker, B-A-K-E-R. He is the husband of Eliza Baker, who I told you was the self-appointed curer of children's ills. That was the first telephone on the street. Mother would frequently send me down there to telephone dad at the store when she had forgotten to buy something at the grocery store or needed something for dinner that evening.

MS: Recall World War I.

AB: I recall just a little bit about it. Of course, I was much too young then to enter into any military activity. But I do remember this. A train came from Boston, I presume, and stopped right across Main Street to take back to training camps all the boys from Hyannis that had enlisted or were drafted. Some couple years later, I can well remember a man named Bonnie Brooks. Bonnie Brooks was the brother of Michael Brooks, who was a great athlete in high

school. The two of them were the son of John Brooks, who was a masonry contractor. Now, Bonnie Brooks was a marine. I can well remember going uptown and seeing him when he was home on furlough in his green uniform.

MS: What did you do for entertainment in the early 1900s?

AB: Well, of course, there was always movies Wednesday afternoons and Saturday afternoons at the Idle Hour Theater. At that time, that was the only theater in town.

MS: What did they charge you for a movie?

AB: 10 cents. The movies were mostly westerns. Some of the western stars were McCoy, and I think he already died recently. Tom Becks, William S. Hart, and some of others I could think of if I –

MS: Were these silent pictures?

AB: Yes. They were silent pictures, but they had a male piano player who always played appropriate music for the film. Then, of course, there was a serial called *The Perils of Pauline*. One of the typical scenes would be where she would have laid across the railroad track and the train was coming at a high rate of speed. She was saved just in time before she was killed.
[laughter]

MS: Do you remember any songs, popular songs in the days?

AB: Well, the three major dance halls here. One was called Bournehurst, and that was on the canal in Bourne. The other was called Mill Hill Pavilion, and that was in West Yarmouth. The third one was called the Mid Cape Pavilion, which was much smaller. In each of these places, the name bands came there during the summer. I know the Mill Hill Pavilion was opened in 1917. It was destroyed by fire in 1928. Bournehurst was destroyed by fire in 1933. Now, name bands like Paul Whiteman, Ben Bernie –

MS: Guy Lombardo.

AB: Yes, Guy Lombardo. Paul Whiteman, I mentioned. Guy Lombardo and his Royal Canadians. Ozzie Nelson, his wife, Harriet, was a vocalist. Ted Weems, Hal Kemp, Kay Kyser, Glen Gray, and his Casa Loma Orchestra, Rudy Vallée, and His Connecticut Yankees. You ask about songs, "Got a Date with an Angel," "Stardust," "Time on My Hands," "Sleepy Time Gal," "As Time Goes By," "Dancing in the Dark," "Who," and last of all, "Good Night Ladies."

MS: All good numbers.

AB: There were the three prime places to skate during my boyhood. One was a lily pond, which is located east of here and back of our house, about eighth of a mile or so. It was from the shore. It was called Lily Pond, surrounded by bushes. We skated there. Also, the creek known as Snow's Creek, which was down here, crossed on the west side of Wilson Street, still there. But

the most popular place was Aunt Betty's Pond. That is north of the rotary circle and across the street from the Sheraton – not the Sheraton, (Dumpeas Resort?). Those are the three popular places.

MS: Tell me, what were your skates like when you were very young?

AB: We always had to have a pair of shoes that would serve dual purpose for wearing and for skating because the skates were clamped to one's sole and heel either by a clamp or by a screwing device which held skates to your shoes. Now, if you want to talk about entertainment, one of the great entertainment possibilities here when the snow conditions were just right was to slide downhill, as we called it, from the golf club – club house at the Hyannis Port Golf Club down and back of the second tee. That was a distance of probably six hundred yards. But the snow conditions had to be just right so the crust would hold one up on the sled.

MS: Did you have ice boats?

AB: No, but they were around here. Vernon Bearse had one of the best ones. I can well remember of riding on his ice boat in Lewis Bay all the way out to Egg Island.

MS: Was the weather worse then, colder than it is now?

AB: I think it was. I think it was.

MS: You were talking about saltwater freezing over quite frequently?

AB: Yes. I can remember numerous times skating on the bay, on Lewis Bay. It seemed to me that there was much more snow there.

MS: You just mentioned to me that you caddied here on the Cape?

AB: Oh, yes.

MS: Where did you caddy?

AB: I caddied at Hyannis Port from probably the time I was 10 years old until a few years.

MS: Do you remember some of the people you caddied for?

AB: Sure. I'll give you that in just a minute. But then at the end of a couple of three years, they had boys down here from Boston, and they served the caddy camp in Hyannis Port. So, I rode my bicycle from the house here in Wianno to caddy up there. The reason was you can make more money. Because up there, we received 35 cents per hour. It usually took 3 hours or more. So, we'd earn about \$1.35. Whereas at Hyannis Port, the fee was originally 50 cents for eighteen holes. Then it went up to 75 cents. So, this is a matter of money. Several of us went up to Wianno to caddy.

MS: It was well worth the bike ride.

AB: Yes, indeed. I went up there and caddied several years until I was old enough to have a driver's license. Now, you asked me who I met. Well, now, you remember when I was a caddy at either Hyannis Port or Wianno, caddying for Mr. Wainwright. Mr. Wainwright was a partner in Wainwright, Hornblower, & Weeks, which is a brokerage firm. I also remember caddying for a man named Dunn, Harry T. Dunn. Harry T. Dunn was the president of the Fisk Rubber Company and owned a beautiful home in Hyannis Port. I also caddied for a man named Bernie Horne, H-O-R-N-E. Bernie Horne lived in Princeton, and his family operated a large department store. I'm not sure whether it's in Philadelphia or Pittsburgh, but it was in that area. You asked me what I thought about the Cape. First, I think we had an excellent education. If you look at some of the men that have left this high school and what they have done, it seems amazing to me that they have done so much having come from a little small high school. We have PhDs. I can give you the names if you want them.

MS: No, that is okay.

AB: PhDs. We have school administrators. We have school principal, principals of schools. We have lawyers. We have judges. We have lots and lots of businessmen. Somewhere along the line, they're motivated by something. I have documented several cases –

[end of transcript]