Steamboat Era Museum Oral History Project
Eliza Lillian Crosby Nutt Oral History
Date of Interview: November 13, 2003
Location: Unknown
Length of Interview: 01:35:21
Interviewer: CK – Carrie Kline
Transcriber: NCC

Eliza Nutt: My name is Eliza Lillian Crosby Nutt.

Carrie Kline: What's your date of birth?

EN: Date of birth, March the 23rd, 1912.

CK: All right. Here we are. Today is the – what is it? The 13th?

EN: What is the date today?

CK: 13th of November 2003, here in Ditchley, Virginia.

EN: Ditchley, Virginia. Want me to say all that?

CK: In your living room. No, that's okay.

Michael Kline: No, that's okay.

CK: Now, will you just take your time and tell us about your people and where you were raised.

EN: Right here on this land. I was born in Bluff Point, Virginia. At an early age, my mother, they moved up here to Ditchley. This is where I've been ever since I was a year old, I think, she said I was. Been here ever since, thank you, Lord. I hope to continue to live a while longer [laughter].

MK: You look pretty healthy to me.

EN: Yes, I was really healthy. In fact, I am healthy to consider some people. But my greatest complaint now is arthritis and gout because that's going to have something.

CK: Yes. Well, who was your mother?

EN: My mother was Anna Jackson, and she married – my father was Charles Crosby. She – I don't remember the year she was born. I don't know.

CK: What kind of a person was she?

EN: Oh, to me, she was the greatest [laughter]. But everybody said she was like every sort of [inaudible] of her. She was raised in Bluff Point and then basically lived there until she moved up from Bluff Point up here in Ditchley. I think it was – I was born in 1912. I think she moved up in 1913. That's basically it until she moved to Portsmouth.

CK: How'd she meet your dad?

EN: Indeed, I don't know. It was [inaudible] was three. She had three children. Charles Anthony Crosby and William Reverend Crosby.

CK: Where are you in the lineup of the three?

EN: I'm the oldest. I took myself and put myself over there. I'm the oldest one.

CK: What was that like back then? What did the oldest girl have to do?

EN: At that time, the children didn't do hardly anything but go to school and get their lessons. Sunday, make sure to be in Sunday school. We attended church every Sunday.

CK: Church?

EN: Calvary Baptist Church in Kilmarnock. I joined Calvary at the age of 12, and I still remain a member of that yet, until today.

MK: Is that light too bright in your eyes?

EN: No, it isn't. I wish there was something that we would really do your eyes some good.

MK: How's that?

EN: I wish there was something that they could find to cure for glaucoma, but they said they had never found it.

CK: Well, what did the church services used to be like back then?

EN: Church service was just like they are now. Every Sunday, we had Sunday school in the past. Then we'd go on to the service after Sunday school was over. But you didn't have any cars at that time. Children would be walking to Sunday school. Their parents would come later on in a buggy. You would drive horses and have buggies or cars. Quite a few people had wagons because they had large families [laughter].

CK: Wagons?

EN: Yes, a wagon, like you see pictures of them now – wagons. But I used to walk from here to Calvary. I remember that. I was about 10 years old. Now, in this day and time, children don't want to walk too hard to get in the car [laughter]. It's too far if you're not parked right close to the house. I remember when horses, when you'd be sitting in – and your parents would have you in the buggy, a carriage, you'd put double horses to a carriage. But they had two seats to carriage. Take you to church or wherever they were going. Very few cars were going hardly at that time. The horses were afraid of cars. I remember my father had to get out of the buggy and hold, go up to the horse. He had to hold him by his bridle. When the Model T cars, Ford, was starting, they would be driving very slow coming through. I don't know what the horse thought it was because they hadn't been used to them. The horse would rear up in there many times. I don't remember what year that was, to tell you the truth. [Unintelligible 00:08:21] back.

MK: So, the car must have been kind of unpopular with some people.

EN: Very few people had a car. Model T Fords.

MK: If they scared the horses, they must not have liked the cars very much.

EN: No, they hadn't been used to seeing no cars, you know.

CK: Model T Ford, you say?

EN: Yes. Have you seen them?

CK: No.

EN: But I wonder why – you them on television now or something.

MK: Tell us about the old-time preaching style. The old-time preaching, is it just like it is now?

EN: Just like it is now. The only I remember preaching is that some preachers were better than others like they are now too. You'd be at Sunday school by around 10:00. After the Sunday school was over, they had you taken for church service. Prayer service first, and then they'd start the preaching. They had a choir singing. They had a junior choir and a senior choir. They didn't have two or three different choirs at the same time. On Sundays, that's when many folks would meet their friends. Everybody was happy to meet each other, but didn't see each other hardly but once a week [laughter], Sunday at church. Now, they have a way to go to church and very few of them don't even want to go to church now. They don't.

MK: Too easy, I guess.

EN: Yes. It used to be all the young folks, the girls, and boys. Everybody used to be at church. They'd be at Sunday school. Then they stayed for service at the church building. Now, you've got almost [inaudible] Church.

MK: Do you remember any of the old songs they sang back at that time?

EN: Yes. I remember some of them. I know we used to sing *Amazing Grace*. I don't know. I can't hardly remember. There were so many different pieces. They sang a lot of songs we sing today. But we still sing some songs. But they used to sing quite a few of them.

MK: You're singing the same style today that you did?

EN: Yes, some of them. Some haven't changed.

MK: Do you remember how your grandmother sang *Amazing Grace*?

EN: [laughter] No. I never heard grandma sing. Different people would sing about it in the

hills, leading. Anybody in church who wanted to lead a song, they'd do it at that time. Now, most of the singing comes from choirs and choruses and different groups. The junior choir, they have now. Senior choir at our church and the gospel chorus are what they had.

MK: But in those days, people might just start singing something in the congregation.

EN: In the congregation. We had more congregations singing than they do now. You could hear folks singing before you get to the church. During the month of August, different churches had their revival meetings, different Sundays. That's what they do now. They used to have revival meetings every day, which was in the morning, used to have the dinners in the church and feed the people at church under the tree. There were tables under the trees and feed the folks there. Everybody would come and stand around the table and get a plate. It was good food cooked too, back in those days.

MK: What do you mean good food?

EN: Food would taste – it tasted good to all of us. I guess probably now, some of them cook differently from what they used to cook, I guess.

MK: What did they used to fix? What were the main dishes they used to fix?

EN: All the vegetables, cabbage, and some other different kinds of greens. Lima beans or fried chicken. Some had baked chicken, hams, puddings, rice pudding, or cakes. There wasn't no sodas. We had water there, ice water. Or mostly, they would serve with Kool-Aid. There'd be containers full of that, and they'd serve the people. Lemonade. That must be my –

CK: Here's your son. You want to come and sit here?

Male Speaker: I'm okay.

MK: So, was your mama a good hand to bake a cake?

EN: Oh, yes. Mama was a very good cook.

MK: Tell me about her cakes.

EN: Well, you know they were good to us anyway at the time. But everybody [laughter] else said folks would bring pies to church, and cakes and serve them. In the afternoon, after we finished eating, everybody would go back to church and have the evening service. Most people didn't look like they really enjoyed the service more so than they do now. It seems to me that – not only to me, I guess everybody there could tell it. People could be rejoicing during the service. I don't remember the last time I saw anybody do that now [laughter].

MK: Get happy, you mean?

EN: Yes. Yes. I don't remember the last time I saw anybody get happy. But they used to then.

MK: Shout?

EN: Yes, they'd shout. Some folks were passing out, and people would go there and fan them and bring them back around. Anybody in the audience who wanted to sing would lead a song.

MK: Can you start *Amazing Grace* the way they used to sing it years ago?

EN: No. I can't say I can start it again because I was – you want to start a song?

MS: He told you.

EN: [laughter]

MS: Yes.

EN: You were just singing now, but I'm not when I'm at home.

MS: What?

EN: You were just singing now when I wasn't –

MS: He want it the old time, the way like you did years ago.

EN: Do they sing it the same way?

MS: No, most of them don't.

EN: They don't?

MS: No. You know, the older folks used to get down.

EN: Oh, yes. They singing –

MS: They used to have this church running.

EN: Yes, they did. Like, *Amazing Grace*. Do they sing most like we sing it nowadays?

MK: Sing a little of it.

EN: I don't even remember the verses on that one.

MK: Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound.

EN: Amazing Grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost but now I'm found. Was blind, but now I see.

MK: You're good.

EN: This is me singing now. This is me always with him singing.

CK: Oh, you have a beautiful, beautiful voice.

EN: Thank you, always singing. Damn, [inaudible]. That wind is really getting on my nerves today. Feels like I can do something about it than nothing I can do.

CK: [laughter]

EN: The folks would confess religion. Up at the front, they always said they had a morning bench. They called it a morning bench. Folks would go there, and they step up to that bench, old or young. After preaching was over, then they would get up and go around and shake hands with everybody, confessing religion, saying, I found it all out. They were all like that. Good people there. They were shaking hands of people. They went down the rows of the benches. But you don't see that anymore now. Now, they go up there. The preacher would talk some and ask them different questions, and they answer. Then after all revival meetings, we used to have baptizing.

MS: Did they used to have those in the river?

EN: Yes, they'd go down to the river.

MS: Tell us about that. Were you baptized that way?

EN: Yes, I was.

MS: Can you tell us about that?

EN: I was baptized down at the Harveys – down at the place down here. What is that place called? I mean, [inaudible]. Harveys. Down at Harveys Wharf. They called it Harveys Wharf down here. That's where you used to go on. We had, on the third Sunday in September, because they'd have a revival meeting always was on the third Sunday in August. Then whatever the week, that Sunday you had your revival where you have your baptizing when September came. That's the way they did. Now, they have a, what you call a pool. That's my oldest daughter coming in. I know it is.

CK: You know her step? She says that's my oldest daughter coming in. I know it is.

MK: Should we pause things and get acquainted here?

CK: Sure.

EN: They're my two oldest, oldest son and oldest daughter.

MK: I asked you if you'd be willing to remember for us your own day you were baptized, did you have a special dress you wore? Tell me about the whole day.

EN: We just had to go down and have the baptizing down and go back to the church and had the service. We had the regular morning service after the baptizing. Then after the service, we'd go over there to serve communion like they do now.

MK: But in the baptism, did the preacher lay you over in the water? I mean, can you tell about the whole thing?

EN: There would be a deacon on one side, and the preacher would be on the other. They dipped you down [laughter] in the water in a creek.

MS: You were baptized in the church, wasn't you?

Female Speaker: No, no, no. Baptized in the church since my children came along.

MS: Where were you baptized?

FS: Mama, where were you baptized, mama?

EN: Down here in Harveys Wharf.

FS: Harveys Wharf?

EN: Yes.

FS: Where is that?

EN: Down at the – you know where Harveys is as you go –

FS: Oh, okay. Down here on Apple Grove Road.

EN: Yes.

MS: [inaudible] first time I've heard of that.

FS: I don't know [inaudible].

EN: Never heard talk of that?

MS: No.

FS: I thought it must have been down Ditchley, down past Miss DuPont's.

MS: Then the road down there where the old dock was at.

FS: I thought it was down past where Miss DuPont's place is.

EN: No, we were –

FS: Were you baptized down past Miss DuPont's?

EN: No.

FS: Were you baptized down this road here?

MS: Yes, they went down this road.

EN: Didn't go down that road. It wasn't there. But we'd come from Goodluck Road and go right on down that road beside the recreation center. That's where the road was. The road's still there I guess. It's closed up?

MS: Yes.

EN: Well, (Conklyde Dunwoody?) used to live back there, no?

MS: The street, that's been rolled up. He didn't find no other way to go over there.

EN: I don't.

FS: I thought Conklyde Dunwoody lived on Goodluck Road.

EN: No, Conklyde used to live over there behind there. But you remember Aunt Currie used to live [inaudible]?

FS: I got an idea.

EN: What?

FS: I have an idea, but I don't know.

EN: Yes, back up there. That's where she used to live. In that same, that's where her children were born.

FS: So, anything else you can tell about it? Mother?

EN: What?

FS: Is there anything else you can tell about the baptism?

EN: Tell you what?

MK: At the baptism, do you remember the dress you wore or anything about it?

EN: No idea.

MS: No, you don't remember the dress?

EN: No.

CK: Did they do any singing?

EN: Yes, they were singing around the – you know.

FS: A show.

CK: What'd they sing?

EN: They don't show, I don't think. I don't remember the songs they were singing, to tell you the truth.

MS: Most of them sang Wade in the Water.

EN: Yes, I guess they did.

MK: Can you sing a little of that for us?

EN: I don't know. I don't even remember that.

CK: What song?

EN: I was 12 years old then.

MK: Wade in the Water?

EN: I guess they sang that. What song did they sing?

MS: Most of them always sung.

EN: What song they were singing when I went out there, I do not know –

MS: I don't know what they sang back then, though.

EN: – to tell you the truth. Some churches, we had twenty or something different ones to baptize.

CK: Would they be wearing robes?

EN: No, we didn't have no robes. They just had their ordinary clothes on.

FS: Well, they wore long dresses, though, didn't they?

MS: Way back then, yes, they had long dresses.

FS: Back when I got baptized, [laughter] they had had on long dresses.

EN: They had on long dresses. I don't remember what they had on.

FS: Some people had on pants, but pants –

EN: You know, you didn't see no women with no pants. Oh, you don't know them though because you weren't even here [laughter]. This bitch here started wearing pants.

FS: Now, she sang – Mama, when was the last song you sang at church? About two years ago? She sing in the choir.

MS: She told them that.

EN: Yes. I joined the – I sang on that –

MS: She sang for them *Amazing Grace* a while ago.

EN: – four to six years.

FS: She did?

MS: Yes.

FS: Her song.

EN: I used to sing on the choir too before they had [inaudible].

MS: [inaudible]

CK: Was your mother's favorite song?

EN: I can't even remember.

FS: I heard you say that too.

EN: Yes.

FS: I can't think.

EN: I always sing all the time.

FS: What was it? Get Ready to Go, mama?

EN: Oh, *When the Saints Go Marching* in?

FS: Oh, yes. That's the song.

CK: Oh, will you sing that?

EN: I can't remember. It was a little bit of it, I guess. I haven't seen particularly anybody even try to sing that song for so long.

CK: The last one came out really nice.

EN: *Amazing Grace*. That used to be my father's regular piece of playing on accordion.

CK: Accordion?

EN: Yes. He used to play the accordion.

MK: How did he happen to have an accordion?

EN: He said when he was a boy, he had one. He knew how to play. When he was a boy, that's what they used to have. He used to play at parties for people, they say. Just like the folks in our days, they'd go and play guitar. They used to play the accordion; he was playing.

CK: Just the accordion?

EN: What?

CK: Just the accordion alone?

EN: That's what he told me.

CK: But your mother's song was When the Saints Go Marching In?

EN: Yes. She used to like singing that. Once in a while, mom would sing it. She did sing it too often at church.

CK: How would she sing it?

MS: Oh, when the saints go marching in. When the saints.

EN: Oh, when the saints go marching in, oh, when the saints go marching in, Lord, I want to be in that number, when the saints go marching in. That's the way she used to sing it. They didn't have no music, but everybody would just sing, help out. So, it just sounded good, I can tell you, at that time.

CK: That sounded good.

EN: Thank you.

MK: So, you mentioned traveling to church in a wagon.

EN: Yes, I did.

MK: What other ways were there for people to travel? Did they travel by boat some? How else did they travel? Walk?

EN: By their feet [laughter].

FS: Oh, with a horse and buggy?

EN: Yes. Horse and buggy. I told them one time about the people – if they had too many children, folks had a big crowd, but they was in a wagon. Or some of them had a carriage because grandma and them had a carriage.

MS: But a horse still pulled it in.

EN: Two horses did.

MS: Yes.

EN: Mrs. Maggie Moore and (Mrs. Isaiah?), they had one down Ditchely Road.

CK: Did they ever travel by boat?

EN: Boat? No. I don't know, but see, we didn't live near no water. We lived right here.

CK: Did they used to have big steamboats?

EN: Oh, yes. They had steamboats to go from here to Baltimore.

MS: They used to fire it up with coal.

EN: What?

MS: They used to fire it up with coal.

EN: Run it by coal?

MS: Yes.

MK: Tell me everything you can remember about going on the steamboat.

EN: They'd come to different places down here in Ditchley in the Harveys Wharf, where I said I was baptized. They'd go there. Then they go to Eubanks Wharf. I don't even know how many places it did go. I think we used to go to catch the steamboat at around 3:00 p.m., I think down here in Ditchley. They used to have calves –

CK: Calves?

EN: Calves. Everything was on the steamboat, sheep and horses and whatever. They'd take them to Maryland. Some would take them up from the Light Street wharves where they'd take them and stop in Baltimore, Light Street. I guess they – I don't know whether they got out there and killed them or whatever they were supposed to go. You'd sleep in a room and rent a high room every night when you're on the steamboat. It was only one night, a week and a half. Then you get on there. The room was $3. I think it was $3 for a room for one night. They had bunk beds. I don't forget that. You had chicken. Everything you ship on trucks and carry on trucks now; they used to carry on a steamboat. They had it in at night. Even old grown-up folks, they had a good time. They had the guitars on there and playing them. They'd be dancing [laughter]. They'd stay up as late as they wanted to because they'd paid for it to sit in there in a room where everybody was. People really enjoyed themselves. Older folks did. I guess the young ones too. People crossed along with truckers. They'd have a – it looked like we had a field valve. They'd put the things in there and push them off from the track off to the wharf to their boat and roll them on there, on their boat.

MK: So, you traveled overnight on the steamboat yourself?

EN: Yes. That's the only way I could get to Baltimore.

MK: How often did you go to Baltimore?

EN: Not too often because I went to school up in Baltimore one year. I went to Douglas Junior High once, yes. Then after that, I came back home. No, I didn't come back home. I worked. I had to work. I worked in Baltimore. I stayed up there until I was eighteen then I came back home.

MK: What did you work at there?

EN: I was doing the housework.

MK: In what part of town? Do you remember?

EN: The first job I had was at Catonsville, Maryland. It was out there.

MK: I'm sorry?

EN: At Catonsville, Maryland. That was the last place I worked. First place was somewhere in Maryland. I forgot. It was so long ago.

CK: You got to go up to junior high school there for one year?

EN: You go until you graduate. But I didn't go but that one year. [Unintelligible 00:35:54] Avenue and Junior Hill Avenue in Longstreet, that's where it was.

FS: Then you all graduated from seventh grade. You all didn't go up until the 12th grade. You all went to seventh grade, right?

EN: You graduated from seventh grade down here and up there too.

FS: Then they go teaching.

EN: Yes.

FS: I thought I heard you say that.

EN: That's right. You teach. Teachers used to be – they could teach me in the seventh grade.

MK: Did you teach any?

EN: No. Some of them would go high. They'd go to the Northern Neck Academy up in Richmond County.

MK: What was the name of it?

EN: Northern Neck Academy. I don't know how many years they went there.

CK: Who went there?

EN: No, I didn't go there.

CK: Who went there?

FS: Then you have your Aunt Estelle and Aunt Pauline go there?

EN: Yes. I had two aunts –

FS: Mama's two sisters.

EN: – go there, Estelle and –

FS: Pauline.

EN: – Pauline. Pauline Morris and Estelle Inman, I-N-M-A-N.

FS: Where'd they go?

MK: Did they make teachers?

EN: I think, yes, Estelle did. I guess she did. They were before my day. Not my aunt Pauline wasn't, but Estelle. Then she left here. She went to Jersey. I don't know what kind of work she did because I wasn't born. But she stayed there until – I don't know how many years ago she was down in Portsmouth.

FS: She died about three years ago at 106.

EN: She died two years ago?

FS: Well, I think around three or four years ago.

EN: It'd been that long?

FS: Well, your mother died in 1993.

EN: 1992?

FS: Ninety-three.

EN: Ninety-two.

MK: Three.

FS: Ninety-three. Aunt Estelle lived –

MK: She was how old?

FS: Grandma was 102. My mother's sister that died a little prior, I can't remember. I think around three or four years ago. She was 106.

EN: Yes. It hasn't been all that since she died.

MS: You are ninety-one now?

EN: Yes.

FS: Really, the youngest one that died in the family was eighty-seven, mother.

EN: Who was that?

FS: Aunt Betty.

EN: What?

FS: Aunty Betty. Betty.

EN: Grandma's sister?

FS: Yes.

EN: How old was Aunt Betty?

FS: I think she was eighty-seven or eighty-four.

EN: I guess she was.

FS: That was the youngest, I think I'm right.

MK: So, you went up to Baltimore on the steamboat to junior high school for a year.

EN: Yes.

MK: Then you went out there to work?

EN: I went to work. I get to the first place I worked.

FS: I thought you stayed there after school.

EN: I did stay there.

MK: Did you find a room to rent, or did you stay with relatives?

EN: No. With daughters?

MK: No, with relatives?

EN: Well, I stayed at the place where I worked. At that time, you'd have to stay in jobs.

MK: What was it like working in White people's homes to clean?

EN: It was no problem. Just like [laughter] after you get there, and you find just like you had a home with the people.

CK: What's that?

EN: One of the girls was my classmate. She and I were the only two that was in that class. First school I went to was Jonesville Run right here, right down the road here in Ditchley, Jonesville Run School.

FS: That's down there now? Right around the corner?

EN: That school there right now, someone bought it for a home [inaudible]. A home was bought for it, and they're still living in it, part of the family. All of them are dead except two who used to live in that school.

CK: So, the two of you were the only ones who went up to Baltimore?

EN: We were raised together, went to school together, church together, everything. We went to Baltimore. We got to find jobs up there. We didn't work together. She worked in one place. I worked another, but essentially, we're the only two down here now that are still alive. She's 92, and I'm 91.

CK: Did you ever get to see each other when you were up there?

EN: Oh, yes. We had a room together at her aunt's house. You know it was a long time ago because we paid $3 a month.

MK: Were conditions on the steamboat – were they segregated as far as dining or anything like that?

EN: No one did.

MK: You could go into the dining room and order a meal if you wanted?

EN: Meal.

MK: Is that right?

CK: What's that now?

EN: On the steamboat, you'd go down and eat just like they eat at lunchrooms here now.

FS: What? The White and the Black ate together?

EN: Well, I don't know because I didn't go down there.

MK: I wouldn't think so.

EN: I don't know.

MK: I said I wouldn't think so.

FS: Me neither.

EN: I don't know. I didn't go down to where they ate.

CK: You never ate a meal there?

EN: No, I never ate a meal. I carried my lunch with me. Most of everybody would take their lunch with them.

CK: You were already renting a room.

EN: Yes. You rented a room to sleep in.

CK: For $3.

EN: Yes.

CK: Was that a lot of money.

EN: [laughter] At that time.

CK: It sounds like a lot of money.

EN: $3 is a lot back at that time.

CK: Because you were only earning maybe less than that in a day, even back then.

EN: A day, indeed, you won't get much more than that in a day. The first job I had was $10 a week.

FS: All month?

EN: All week.

CK: What was that job?

EN: Just a job about taking care of the house, cooking and cleaning out and taking care of the little baby. You do everything. Some girls wouldn't more than $5 a week. I had every Thursday off.

CK: Every Thursday off?

EN: Yes, you had days off. My day was Thursday. Most everybody's day was Thursday.

MK: What'd you do on your day off?

EN: Went to the room where I rented. But I stayed there during the week on the job. Weekends and days off, I'd go up to the room where I rented. We'd go to church, go to either St. Jude's mass, and go in there.

FS: How did you all go to church? Walk?

EN: Yes, I did. Or if it was a long way, you'd get on a streetcar.

CK: Was the church different from the church's back home?

EN: No, it wasn't. Right now, I have a daughter that belongs to that church, Enon Baptist Church.

CK: How did you know how to find a church or find anything in a strange city?

EN: [laughter] Well, the older folks there who did know would take us. We used to go with them, get on a streetcar, and go to the church if it was long distance. If it wasn't too far, folks would walk.

CK: Did you look forward to coming home?

EN: Yes. I'd come home. Not only me, everybody had a certain amount of time off. Sometimes, you had about a week, I guess, or about ten days, somebody had, you can come home. If you lived down here within the city, you'd just be at home.

CK: Tell us about that, from when you'd leave your job all the way until you got to your parents' home again.

EN: But see, you didn't leave no job. You'd be off.

CK: When you were off, I mean.

EN: A certain amount of time.

CK: So, you'd leave the house in Baltimore, you –

EN: You'd go back down to the Light Street Wharf where you'd get on a boat and come back home and stay. Like you had two weeks or something like that. Some people might have longer than that. Then you'd get in time for you to go back to your job. You'd go back and catch the steamboat and go back to Baltimore again.

MK: To the Light Street Wharf?

EN: Yes, Light Street Wharf.

MK: Then how did you get from there to your apartment?

EN: There would be cabs down there. People around there looking for passengers to take you where you wanted to go. Didn't have no regular cabs like you see now with cabs and things and all. But there'd be folks standing around there if anybody wanted a cab or wanted to be home.

CK: So, what was the name of the steamboat that you would take from Light Street?

EN: From here to there?

CK: Yes.

EN: [inaudible]

CK: What were all the stops that it would make on the trip?

EN: Well, it would go everywhere where it had a – I don't even know just how many places it did stop. Everybody that had a wharf would go there. People would stand there waiting to get on the steamboat and go to Baltimore. Some people would catch a – I guess they got on a train really. But I never even go nowhere further than Baltimore.

CK: So, coming back home, where do you get off?

EN: Right back down where you got on at. Come back to Ditchley Wharf and get off.

CK: What's it called?

EN: What?

CK: What is this one called?

EN: Ditchley.

CK: Get off Ditchley Wharf?

EN: You get off right down at Ditchley where you got on to go to Baltimore. When you come back, you get off –

FS: I thought you said got on Harvest Wharf.

EN: What?

FS: I thought you say you was traveling from Harvest Wharf.

EN: Me? No. I travel from Ditchley. I said I was baptized at the Harvest Wharf.

FS: Oh, I'm sorry.

CK: So, they called it Ditchley Wharf.

EN: Ditchley Wharf.

FS: D-I-T-C-H-L-E-Y.

EN: Yes.

MK: What did that wharf look like? Do you remember what it looked it?

EN: What the wharf looked like?

MK: Yes. Was it a long wharf or a short wharf? What did it look like?

EN: Those big wharves used to have fish boats used to fish there. There was a big place down here. I remember it was four or five boats onboard. That's the first place that we went because we got one of my brothers down at Ditchley. My father and my husband –

CK: So, tell us more about the Ditchley Wharf. I can't even picture all that would've been going on.

EN: [laughter] Down at Ditchley Wharf? Fish boats used to fish there and tie up there at that factory too, big boats that people fished on. I think we used be twenty or thirty-something men out on the boat. We could hear the boats come in. When the boats come in, you hear them blowing the whistle right from Ditchley up here.

MK: Were the whistles all different? Could you know the boat by the whistle?

EN: Well, I guess I did at that time. I forgot. It was so long ago. I walked down there many times. The post office was down there. We had a store down there, a grocery store, from here down to Ditchley. You heard me talking about Mrs. DuPont? I know you heard me talk about her.

MK: I've heard mention of her, but I don't know anything about her.

EN: No, you don't know anything about her. She had a big brick building down there now between here and there in Ditchley, Mrs. DuPont. The place is there right now. She built a lot of places for different people and helped out many persons. She did.

MK: She was good, huh?

EN: Yes. Built houses for people. That woman was a [laughter] millionaire.

CK: So, I can't quite understand how it was all laid out on this steamboat. I mean, you say there were calves, and there were people.

EN: They were down. They caught it down in the hole, down the bottom. It had stuff where you'd go, and people going on upstairs. Up there, it looked just like a regular house. Carpet on the floor and everything. Pretty good, where everybody would go and sit up there. People had their music playing, and they had a good time. Don't think they didn't because people – some of them would be just as high as kites [laughter]. I have never seen a time that somebody wouldn't be high.

CK: You talking about White people?

EN: White and Black.

CK: But not together?

EN: Yes, they were together on there. Up on that steamboat, they were.

MK: So, they'd be sitting, playing music together?

EN: I guess, who would play the guitar and everything.

CK: Who would be playing?

EN: Different men, people who – they had their own music, their own guitar, and everything, taking them on the boat with them.

CK: Oh, the passengers?

EN: Yes, the passengers had their own.

CK: So, would those be White people playing?

EN: I didn't see either one. No, I didn't go onboard all the time. I mean, going too often that you'd be going back and forth. But when you did go, that's what you'd go on.

MK: Did you ever work at any of the oyster houses or the crab picking houses?

EN: Yes, every one of them. I did.

MK: You did?

EN: Yes, my love.

MK: Tell me about that, which one you worked at, what that was like.

EN: I first started picking – we used to work at – remember when I told you the Ditchley boat used to come in? We used to peel tomatoes down there way back when I was young. First around twelve years ago, I guess some of us would be down there. My own mother was down there, and a gang of people peeled tomatoes. Then they put them in a can, and they'd cap them. We'd peel tomatoes down there and cut herring fish. Right down, this is the place where we used to do down there. Then I shucked the oysters. First place I was shucking oysters was Carter Keane's place down at Ditchley Road.

MK: Was whose place?

EN: Carter Keane.

MK: Carter Keane?

EN: Keane, K-E-A-N-E. You ever heard talk of Keane's?

CK: So, that's the first place you shucked oysters?

EN: Yes, that was the first place I shucked oysters at Keane's, between here and Ditchley.

MK: What was it like working in those places? Was it hot?

EN: No, it was just amazing. A crowd of people being there. I reckon twenty-five or thirty they head or more.

CK: So, you were talking about working in the oyster house?

EN: Yes, working in the oyster house.

MK: You said there was twenty-five or thirty head working in there?

EN: Yes, the shuckers. I shucked oysters and cut fish. I was around 12 years or something like that peeling tomatoes down there.

MK: I'm sorry, I can't hear you.

EN: Peeling tomatoes down there when I was around about 12 years old. Mothers and the children too would be down working, doing that.

CK: How did you peel the tomatoes?

EN: We peeled with a knife.

MS: They scalded them first, mother.

EN: Yes. They scalded them first because it was so long ago.

MS: Yes. They steamed to get the skin off.

EN: What?

MS: They were steaming them so you could get the skin off and peel them.

EN: Yes. Then we'd do it with a knife.

MS: Tell them about it. They can't hear you.

EN: What?

MS: Tell them what they were doing.

EN: What?

MS: Tell them what they were doing.

EN: Oh, yes, they'd peel the skin off.

MS: They'd steam them first.

EN: Steam them, put them in a clay pot.

MS: Hot water.

EN: – in a clay pot with hot water and steam them. Then they'd bring them around and pour them in a – you had something to pour them in. They had something, then you put them in a bucket. We did over there, up at Browns Store, somewhere we'd peel.

CK: Bucket of cold water?

EN: No, hot water. They'd be in the water and put them in there. Then they had to take them out of the water.

MS: They had a big tank to scald them in.

EN: Big tank, yes. That's what it was. It's been so long.

CK: Wasn't it pretty hot to touch then to peel them off?

EN: But see, the skin would be – you took the tomatoes out of there. They wouldn't be staying in the water. The tomatoes didn't.

MS: Then the skin would slough right off.

EN: Yes, the skin would come right off. Then you'd cut that stem off at the bottom.

CK: Mothers and children working there?

EN: Oh, we'd work together. So, we did. Had a big table where you'd work at.

MK: Would they get to sing then when they were working?

EN: I don't remember them singing, to tell you the truth. People laughing and talking and kidding. I shucked oysters at more than one oyster house. The first was Carter Keane's. Then I shucked oysters at (Dyes?), J.P. Dyes – shucked the oysters down.

MS: [inaudible]

EN: Yes, before [inaudible] went down to James Atkins. We shucked the oysters down there and picked crabs.

CK: Picked crabs?

EN: Yes.

CK: What's that mean?

EN: Crab meat, just how you get – do you eat crab meat? Have you ever had any crab cakes? Anything like that?

CK: Not too much.

EN: Don't care too much for them?

CK: I don't know too much about it. I'm –

EN: [laughter]

CK: – not from around here. Tell me about it.

EN: I can't even explain to you how to pick – you steam crabs. His wife still works at the crab house. She picked – Ada packed crab meat or something?

MS: Picked.

EN: She picked?

MS: Picked and packed.

EN: Oh, she picked and packed too. Across the river over [inaudible] there.

CK: So, you say they steamed them first?

EN: Yes, crabs got to be steamed.

MS: Had to cook them.

EN: Yes, you cook before you picked them. Pulled the backs off them and the claws off.

MS: You steamed one day and picked them the next day.

EN: Yes.

CK: What's that now?

EN: He said you steam them one day. Then you pick the crabs the next day. You haven't seen nobody pick them? I picked them – picked crabs, shucked oyster, cut fish. We used to skin sugar toads.

CK: What's that now?

EN: A fish called sugar toads. You haven't seen them either? Everything that's done in Virginia, I did it that I know of. There may have been a place called James. James Lewis is over there at Warner's Point, I've cracked claws. Every kind of work around here to do, I was doing. Used to pick tomatoes. I think it was about five cents a basket.

MK: Five cents a bag?

EN: I was picking tomatoes; it's been years ago. But he was a baby only yesterday [laughter].

CK: How many baskets could you pick a day?

EN: I don't even remember now, to tell you the truth. It's kind of what we had to do around here, [inaudible]. You'd set up tomatoes too. Set tomatoes up.

CK: For whom?

EN: For different people.

CK: Did you live with them then?

EN: Live with them?

CK: Live on their land?

EN: No, I didn't. I lived at home. That was their land.

CK: So, your parents owned their own land then?

EN: Yes. People owned their own land.

CK: None of this kind of sharecropping around here?

EN: No, we wasn't sharecropping around here that I know of.

MS: Not in this section.

EN: What?

MS: Not in this section.

MK: Not in this section. That's interesting.

CK: Yes.

MK: So, this place here is old family land, did you tell me?

EN: This was my father's. He bought this, he said. Before I was born, he was building, but he had never finished building it. Not this house. My husband had this house built. But that was my father now. So, I don't think my husband was born then himself. He wasn't. He was born about two, three years on after.

CK: How did his father acquire the land?

EN: My husband?

CK: Yes.

EN: Or you mean my dad? I don't know. People were selling land by acres ago. I think for us, we had seven or eight, wasn't it?

MS: Eight acres here.

EN: Eight acres here, it was. It still is eight acres.

CK: It'd be hard to get much money if you're getting five cents a basket of tomatoes.

EN: [laughter]

MS: Didn't make much of it.

EN: You didn't make no whole lot.

CK: Take a lot to get a piece of land.

EN: I don't know how he got it – how my father got the land. That was before I was born.

MS: It was cheap back then during that time.

EN: Yes. I guess land was kind of cheap back then. I imagine. Had to be.

MK: Who used to fish?

EN: My husband.

MK: Tell me about his fishing.

EN: He fished on the boat like my brother did.

CK: Who's that now?

EN: My husband.

MK: His name was?

EN: Riley Nutt, Sr. That's Riley Nutt, Jr. I have six boys and five girls living now. Had to be in the house because there wasn't going to no hospital at that time. They had midwives to take care of you. They too, they took care of all the other smaller children and cooked for them. Cleaned up and did everything, washed. So, he's like a second daddy.

MK: You were telling me about the midwives. What was that about?

EN: I said the midwives would go to the house when a child was born. There wasn't no hospital around here nowhere. That hospital hadn't been in Kilmarnock too many years. Kilmarnock Hospital, they hadn't been there too many years. But midwives would be at your house. They used to come in and take care of each of your baby about eight or nine days old. That's the way we used to have to do it. You stayed in the house in your room for a month [laughter] before you went outdoors. Hot or cold, you stayed in the room. That's the way they did. You never heard talk of that?

MK: What?

EN: You never heard nobody staying in the house a month after a baby was born?

MK: No, I never heard of that.

EN: [laughter] These young ones, they broke that because now, sure, baby is born today, and tomorrow, you see them at the door.

MK: In the old days, they kept you down.

EN: You better not be going out no door.

CK: But you were still taking care of the other babies, weren't you?

EN: How were you going to take care of them? They had to get somebody to come in and do it. They'd keep the curtain down because they said the light would mess the baby's eyes up. That's what we did then. Sure, now, the kids' baby on the door' looking at the moon right there [laughter]. Everything going to change.

MK: Yes.

EN: He isn't looking at the moon. He's looking at the light. Now, that's the truth. Because I have a great grand baby that was born down at this hospital. I was there with her mother. The nurse and doctor, after that baby was born, they washed her. They had her up on the table, and the light shined right down on her, before they dressed her. But at that time, putting no light on the baby. They said this little baby was blind. It was blind, had been blinded by the light looking at him then. Another thing, you can't go into no hospital when the child was born. Your baby was born at home. You had – like a told you, a midwife would be there taking care of the mother and the baby.

MK: How did somebody get to be a midwife?

EN: How you get to be?

MK: Yes. How did you get to be a midwife?

EN: Somebody had to show you. A doctor showed them, I guess. I know I went up to Heathsville because I was going to get a license to be a midwife. I didn't go back up there to get my license. [laughter] Men folks are funny because he kept telling me – I said, "I want to do it." "Why don't you go on ahead and do that?" There wasn't too many midwives around at that time. I said I want to – so, one day, he said, "You talking about being a midwife; you'd have to forget that. Because men would be coming here after midnight a little so different than how they come. You'll not to be going up here all time of night with somebody." I said, "Why do you keep persuading me to go up there and try to get my license, and now, you're talking something crazy?" I said, "Forget it." That's how I come out. I didn't get no license for the midwife. You know that I couldn't stay at home and be a midwife. You all men got a funny head [laughter].

MK: Not worth the paper we wrote on really.

EN: [laughter] The same thing as being a barber. But I really didn't. I was a beautician. I don't know how many a hundred people here do their hair. So, I said I'll stay home with the children,

be at home around here with my babies and all. So, I like doing the women's hair and trimming the men's hair. I could do both. My father was a barber. I said, "All right. Why don't you ask that lady?" There was a lady across the river named Mrs. William Augustus. I asked her one day about it. I said, "I would like to be a barber." So, he said, "You would?" I said, "Yes." But I said, "Why don't you ask her?" She said, "I would love to have this set because I had all those men come there who fish on fishing boats. It's sad to say all day she's cutting men's hair until night." But I said, "Why don't you ask her?" His name was Riley too – Riley, Sr. So, he said, "Why don't you ask that lady?" She said, "Yes, I'd love that." I said, "All right." Go down there and said, "I'll help you out." That had been on for a couple weeks until it was time for me to go over there and go work in the shop with her. One said – because well, he'd like to have his drinks when he wanted to. "Now, there's no need for you to think going over there because I would rather stay at that place that's filled up with men." I said, "That's what she wants me to do, cut men's hair." I didn't know the women didn't go to get their hair trimmed." I said, "I'm supposed to go over there next week." He said, "Just forget it." So, I didn't try to go nowhere but stayed at home. I used to do women's hair at home.

MK: He didn't want you to go out to cut the men's hair?

EN: That's what I was going to do, but the place filled up with men, boys and men. Women won't come to get their hair cut off. He knew that when he told the woman that actually, would she give me a job?

CK: But you wanted to work there.

EN: He didn't want me to work. He told the woman to give me a job. Then he got two straight drinks then he got another crazy mind. I knew that I wasn't going to fool with that stuff. So, I just stayed at home fifty something years. Because you can't guarantee and guess what no man is going to think. He tell you something in this room and go in the next room with something else. It is what it is. So, I did hair all the time until this arthritis stopped me about – it's been about six years ago since I stopped. Arthritis in my hands.

CK: Since you stopped fixing hair.

EN: Yes.

MK: Would you sing us one more song before we go? I absolutely adore your singing.

EN: Thank you.

MK: I love old-time singing. Is there another one that you could do? *Sail Away* or *Someone that You Like*?

EN: We sang a whole lot of different songs but with a piano.

MK: I like to hear you sing offhanded.

EN: [laughter]. I don't have no piano. I don't have it here to play. I'm trying to think of some words what I could think of. I'm trying to think of a song. I sang it on his birthday in June this year. But I'm used to singing with music, but I haven't got nothing. Let me see what I can sing. There's a bright side somewhere. There's a bright side somewhere. Don't you rest until you find it. There's a bright side somewhere. If you cannot sing like angels, if you cannot preach like Paul, you can tell the love of Jesus. You can say he died for. There's a bright side somewhere. There's a bright side somewhere. Don't you rest until you find it. There's a bright side somewhere. The first thing I did was sing over at Shallow Church across the river. You all ever been over to Greensville?

MK: We passed through there the other day.

EN: He lived at a place called Sunnybank over across the river.

MK: That's a beautiful song.

EN: Thank you.

CK: I love how you sang that.

EN: What?

CK: You put so much rhythm into your singing.

EN: That's the way we have to. The teachers had to sing from time to time. Now, since I joined, it's forty-six years ago.

CK: Joined what?

EN: Gospel chorus at our church. I've been singing on that for forty-six years.

CK: You still sing with them?

EN: I was until I got sick. Having this arthritis struck my legs and you can't hardly walk around. I've got to have a cane or something.

CK: You sure can still sing.

EN: I try to do the best I can. My friends who were the head leaders of that chorus at Calvary, don't you know, they all have passed and gone. They was on there before I was because they organized it before I joined it. Because one of my girls was two months old when I joined that gospel chorus.

MK: Have you got another one of those old-time songs?

EN: I'm trying to think of something, but I can't think of them. We used to sing with music. It's

hard to sing [laughter].

MK: Did they used to have tent meetings?

EN: They used to.

MK: Years ago, did they have tent meetings?

EN: I guess they did. I didn't go to them.

CK: Camp meetings?

EN: Camp meetings. We used to go to the people, but we wasn't singing then. I was younger then when they had camp meetings years back. Mom used to go and take me.

MK: What were those like?

EN: I don't know. I was just a child. I don't remember the songs they were singing then. But I just tried to learn some songs singing with a group of kids. I started singing, and there's a girl that used to play the piano for us. I was 14 years old. She was playing the piano then. She just died here. This year she died. Lived on top of the hill. She and her sister, [inaudible], they really had beautiful voices. So, when she and – I sang a solo, first time, at Calvary. We sang a duet together. She played the piano, and she and I started singing then. I was around 14 years old, young for a sober mind and a body. I'm trying to think of – there's two more girls who joined the singing. We sang together sometimes. I'm learning to lean. Yes, I'm learning to lean. Every day, I'm learning to lean on Jesus. Finding more power than I have ever dreamed. I'm learning to lean on Jesus. I was sad and broken hearted at an alter I knelt. I found peace, oh, serene. All that he asks is a child-like trust and a heart that is pure and clean. Yes. I'm learning to lean. I'm learning to lean. Every day, I'm learning to lean on Jesus. Finding more power than I've ever dreamed. I'm learning to lean on Jesus. I think that sometimes at our church we used to sing.

CK: That's beautiful.

EN: Thank you. I like that too. I used to lead that song.

CK: Well, I think way, way back in time, I think about the days of slavery and all these people who were held against their will. Then I think about all the water that was around, and I wonder if there were means of escape for people to find their way up to freedom.

EN: I heard old people talk – older people, somebody who was back in slavery time. But my mother wasn't in slavery.

CK: But you heard the old people talk.

EN: Yes, about slavery time. When I was a child, they'd be coming up to visit my mom then. A

man, which used to preach – Henry Jessop and all the older people.

MK: Who was that?

EN: His name was Henry Jessop. Jessop. He's been dead now for a long time. But they were friends with my mother and father. I used to like to hear him talk about things, what did happen way back then.

MK: Do you remember any of the stories that they told?

EN: No, I didn't.

CK: What'd he say about life back then?

EN: He used to talk to them. But I was a child myself. I didn't see how people lived. They didn't have no clothes to put on, like they have now, they said, then. Some kind of old boots or something on. I really don't see how people lived. They'd tell us – we'd be sitting down and talking to them what they went through. They didn't have no stove to cook on. They say they cooked on fireplaces. I haven't seen anybody cook like that. I hear my aunt talking about how they used to cook bread and everything on a – they had to build a place like a fireplace. Because they said they must have had something like a big pan or something to put it there [laughter] to cook the bread in. I don't see how they did it. But some of the people are still living. They worked hard.

MK: Well, when you were a little girl, there must've been people around who'd been in slavery, weren't there?

EN: Yes. When I was little girl. I used to hear them saying when I was a little child. They'd be sitting out and talking to my mother. We'd be in there. Mama wasn't no slave. My mother wasn't either. This man, he was an older man. My father wasn't no slave. They would slave, but under their own people. Like, mothers and children, they had to do things what children now don't do. Because a whole lot of children would kill their mom and dad now. Before they do things like the other people had to do, they'd kill them. You read about it. You hear them talking about them killing them now, don't you? They don't treat them like they used to treat children. Children go where they want to go now and do what they want to do. Some of them do and they tell you what you're not going to do.

MK: It wasn't like that when you were a kid.

EN: I never told mom what I'm going to do. She'd tell me to do something, I go ahead and do it.

CK: By the time you finished seventh grade, you already knew how to cook and clean?

EN: Yes, because mom let me do it here. Help her. I used to help mom. Mom didn't have but three children. But she'd go to work, and we'd be at home. I'd take care of the very brother of mine who you all talked to today when he was a baby. He was six months old up here when

mom had to have an operation at the hospital. My grandmother kept us down until mama came back. Go to the hospital.

CK: What was your grandmother like?

EN: She was nice to us. My father was fishing on a fishing boat. He'd bring food down for us to eat and come down to check on us every time the boat come in. Because nobody never – they didn't beat us, grandma and my grandfather neither. Because he said if they told about it, he would've got bad on them and took us away from that [laughter]. He would too, because I never remembered him beating me in his life. He didn't like to see nobody beat children. Mama used to beat you. She'd have us go and get a stick and beat you with. She didn't put no scars on, no bruises on and all that. But I'm glad she did correct me. If you didn't correct them, children would be in bad hands now.

CK: Well, now, your grandparents could have been old enough to be in slavery.

EN: No. They wasn't old enough. She wasn't. Grandfather wasn't here. I read some older people told them things which they used to tell us because they wasn't all that old to know those things which happened way back then. Somebody had to tell them.

CK: Do you remember anything that they told you?

EN: No, I don't remember what they told me. We just sat there and listen to them. They didn't have no clothes – I heard them saying that – like people have nowadays. We don't have like children have now because children have anything they want. They do.

CK: What kind of work did your grandparents do?

EN: Gardening work and cooking. We used to crab. We'd eat crab, meatballs, and all that kind of stuff, soft shell crabs. Pushed around the shore and caught crab. We raised gardens. This farm had pigs, chickens. On weekends, they'd get buckets of eggs just to buy food with. They had all kind of things.

MK: You could use the eggs like money?

EN: Yes.

MK: Tell me about that.

EN: When I used to go with grandma, I was around 7, 8 years old. We'd go to the store with them sometimes. Just like, you haven't seen raise chicken and carry the chicken to the store and buy food with it? People used to. Mama did, and I did myself. I'd take chickens in, and grandma just gave so much a pound, those chickens. Take meat and go buy meat [laughter] with.

MK: What do you mean?

EN: The chicken was meat too. But you could sell the chicken so much a pound up to that store. They gave you money, and you buy whatever you wanted with the chickens. Eggs, and people carried butter to the store and sell it. Have you seen people print butter?

MK: No.

EN: It used to be around. It'd be a pound. You just made butter. Put the cream in a jar, and you shake it, and shake their cream until it turned to butter.

CK: You say you print it?

EN: Yes, we go to print butter. It had a round thing that would hold a pound. Put it in there.

CK: Oh, sounds so good.

EN: Yes. Country butter used to taste good. Today, it would taste good if I could find some. Been many days since I had some. Down in South Carolina now, you can find butter down there because I have a daughter, her husband is from South Carolina. In fact, I've been down there with them one time. You can find somebody who's selling it for so much a pound.

CK: Is there anybody living now who worked on the steamboats?

EN: Geez, I don't know nobody because they wasn't around here. I think those men who worked on that came from Maryland, somewhere. There wasn't nobody around here that worked on a steamboat.

CK: Except loading.

EN: What?

CK: Except working at the wharves loading, I guess.

EN: Yes. Nobody around here wasn't working on them.

CK: Not even to wheel things on and off?

EN: No, no, no. I think those folks, they'd come from Maryland or somewhere.

CK: They were on the crew?

EN: Yes, they were crew. It was crew people doing that. A lot of folks and women would be going back and forth. Just like people come down here in their cars now and stay a week. If they don't stay a week, they stay some days. They go on back to Baltimore in the car now. People used to go back on steamboats. A whole lot of them, in the summertime, they had children living in the city. Used to come down and bring their children. They'd leave them out

with their mothers and different people [laughter] until it was time for school to start, they'd come back and take their children back and went back up to Baltimore.

CK: White children?

EN: I don't know about them. I know the Black people did because that's how come up to be with my cousin. Stay went with her, and I'd be at home while she go and work in the evening or whenever she worked. I'd help with her children until she came back from work.

CK: Did the White people and Black people have rooms side by side then.

EN: I don't know. We'd go into that room and lock the door. I don't know who was in the room next door. You couldn't see them. I didn't know who was in the room.

CK: But the children would come down for the summers?

EN: Yes.

CK: Get out of the city.

EN: Gosh, is that the wind.

CK: That's the wind.

EN: It don't be no [inaudible] the other day [laughter]. To me, it sounds something like [inaudible].

CK: Do you remember that big storm in 1933?

EN: Was that Hazel?

MK: No. No. That was the big storm in [19]33 that knocked out all the steamboat wars and everything.

EN: It did?

MK: 1933. Seventy-five years ago.

EN: I don't remember.

MK: Yes, your brother made mention of it.

EN: He did?

CK: You remember that?

MK: You might have been away when that happened. You might have been up in Baltimore or something like that.

EN: Yes, but I'm six years older than he is. Somebody told him, I guess. I don't know.

MK: Well, this sure has been a pleasure today to get to sit here and visit with you.

EN: Yes. I enjoyed you all.

MK: Loved your singing.

EN: Thank you. I try to do the best I can.

CK: You explain things so well too.

EN: I try to do the best that I can [inaudible], see. I wish I was able to go to work now. Shuck oysters and things like that. I'd like that.

MK: You'd like to go back to the oyster shucking house?

EN: Yes, indeed.

CK: How come?

EN: If I could, I'd like to go.

CK: You would?

EN: Yes. Well, you just sit here and look at the walls and television.

CK: You liked working in the oyster house?

EN: Yes. It's a big crowd. Everybody knows everybody practically, but don't you meet them while you're there. I never saw nobody have an argument or a fight or nothing in the oyster house in all the times I was working there. Everybody was jolly and just having a nice time, laughing and talking, and kidding. That's the way we used to do it. We left until 1:00 a.m. or midnight. The bus would come along, pick me up, and carry down to the crab house. It was so dark outside, I told my husband, I said, "You know what I'm saying?" I said, "It's too dark for me to go there just to go get a light." He used, "Why don't you tell the light man to come here and put a light up?" So, I had a cousin working there. I told him about it. He said, yes. He said he'll come put them up.

CK: 1 a.m., you were going to work?

EN: Yes. You've got to work earlier than that. The children would go to school. They'd go and crack claws. But some evenings, they'd go early.

CK: Crack claws?

EN: Crack crab claws. You ever hear talk about crab claw meat, regular meat, and lump meat? The three-graded crab meat. Soft crab, you fry them. You don't have to – just take them, and you clean the crab.

CK: Clean it?

EN: You ever ate a soft crab fried? They are delicious, I think. They're hard too.

CK: How do you fix them?

EN: I can't hardly tell you how to clean them. You put that piece on the stomach side of them. Then you pull the skin off. It isn't too hard to clean out a soft crab. You can buy them right – I think they still buy them down at the [inaudible].

CK: But a hard crab, you have to clean more?

EN: Yes, you do a hard crab. You pull that back off [inaudible]. Then you've got to clean it with something on crab called a [inaudible]. Pull all that off. A whole lot of cleaning. Some people can clean them fast. Next thing you know, they've got a pound of meat.

[end of transcript]