

Interview Log

Interviewee: Norman Stewart (N.S.) Tape #:
Interviewer: Shelly Drummond (S.D.) # of Tapes: 1
Jim Pickle (J.P.)
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Topic: St. Michaels businesses, Woodlawn Farm, Royal Oak, historic architecture on farm, barns, shoreline, hunting, Ware Point, lightning, businesses in the area, agricultural traditions
Theme: Place studies, shoreline, 'people, place and art'
Comments: Transcriber is occasionally guessing at speaker identification, especially among the wives present. All spellings of family names are phonetic.

Documentation:

As a moving interview, I recorded with the AT shotgun mike on cassette using my Marantz 420. Transfer to CD was done in the office.

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Slides:

Field Notes: Attach – see also the booklet on the Rowboat – Ephemera.

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BEGIN SIDE A

N.S.: This house right here was **Dr. Hope's** home. Then for a while, I don't know the – that's where **Dr. Sach's** home where the bank is, used to be a barber shop right there. Oh, anyway – and this is where we used to come to **Marshall's Grocery Store**, and that's where we would bring in two baskets of eggs on a Saturday evening. And when we'd go home, we'd just take things like corn flakes, sugar, salt, coffee, things like that. Not very much. I'm overwhelmed at what we buy now to take home. Even daily, we take more home daily than we used to buy for a week or maybe a month. This is our home we're going by right now, that right there. They're painting now and getting it ready.

S.D.: 705 or –

N.S.: 705 Talbot, South Talbot. And the town used to end just about here. All these are now houses that were built since we – Higgins went to school – I was two years behind **Alec Spencer** who had – Alec, school, and his brother, **Charlie Spencer**, both Royal Oak and high school. Alec Spencer, when we were in high school, he was a goalie for a soccer team. Back then, when we played soccer, you could rush your goalie. Now then, you know, you can't rush him. But if a goalie didn't get rid of the ball when he stopped it, they would rush him and just take him and the ball right on through, but they couldn't do that with Alec. Alec was a strong person. He was a guy that – I've seen people challenge Alec, and he held on. Of course, let's see, he was a senior when I was a junior, and I was just starting to play soccer, and I was playing what we call that a linesman, I don't know what they call it now, on the right end, I guess. So, and let's see what else? All this – oh, my **Uncle Ally** had his farm back there. We passed that. Okay. I always thought that was – man, that is great. My cousins live so close to town, they practically can walk in town every night, you know, and I thought that was a great thing. But then again, it would be hard for me to say I'd like to live here because they had a dairy farm. Thank heavens my father wasn't much for dairy. He liked sheep. So we always had a big herd of sheep, but only five, six cows just for ourselves. My mother made butter, brought butter and made butter for special people, she sold them butter. Railroad ran all the way down here on the right, you know. 'Cause at Railroad Avenue, that's where the station, where oysters would be shipped by rail out of. Although Marshall's Ferry – Marshall's Express, in town at that time, was getting a lot of business.

S.D.: Why do you think people were using Marshall's Express over the rail to ship oysters and crabs?

N.S.: Why were they using Marshall's Express?

S.D.: Uh-huh (affirmative).

N.S.: Well number one was the ferry was coming into Clairborne. So to get oysters to Baltimore by the truck was much quicker than having to go by rail. But if it was going to Philadelphia, then rail or anywhere else, that would be the thing. But it's a shame. See, when the railroad owned all that property over there on that right side that the county didn't get that property, then this could've been a dual highway, you know. But that's the **Pica's** home over there. Now we're getting ready to turn right – by the way, to go to Royal Oak. But that had a revolutionary war history to that home back there. When the railroad was running, we had to run over a little hump right back there for the tracks. I always thought that was neat. We're coming to a **Town of Royal Oak**. We'll go by left, a place left used to be called **Pasadena Inn**. That was a big inn. That was a big business. People would come down for weeks and bring their family. It was a family place run by a family, name of **Harper**. And they used to have a tennis court right out here, a clay court. I always thought that was really neat. But now, let's see, where we see it up here. Oh, we're not to it yet. Okay. All these are new homes. This wasn't anything here. All new homes. So this is where the Harper family place started. Now they're used to be little houses all along here on the right which I understood were slave quarters back in old days, and then they turned them, they improved them and turned them into little houses they would rent when the main inn filled up. **Jerry Harris**, at that time, had a hardware store, we had **Pasterfield's Post Office** right here. Right at that place, this was a **Pasterfield's dry goods store**. This is for meat and grocery store, **Seymour's Grocery store**. The Methodist minister, **Dr. Rood**, lived here. Here's the **Methodist Church**. And although we were Episcopalians, because of my **Grandmother Stewart** who lived in town, we went more to the Methodist Church here because this was closer, the weather was sometimes bad. So this is, so we went to the Methodist Church more than we did to Episcopal Church going in town. All along here, blacks lived at that time who helped with all the farms. All these were farms, and they were the labor force that kept everything going actually at that time. And they still live here, and they have nice looking homes, and they always were very good people, they were good people. Reliable, very good. We're coming to a farm up

on the right which is now all houses developed. But I'm thinking of the name on it here. Gosh, I'm thinking of the names of that houses. It'll come to me later. We're coming to a farm on the left, it's called **Plain Dealing Farm**. That was a very large farm. Goes out to the Tred Avon. This is a farm on the right also, goes on back to **Edge Creek**. This is all Plain Dealing Farm. And then next to Plain Dealing Farm was the – oh, he always was giving the weather report and the rain. His name – turn right here. No, no, no, not here. Going on down a little further. I'm not very good at this.

S.D.: No, you're doing a great job.

N.S.: This is the **Valliants** used to own this big farm. Raised a lot of tomatoes, of course, for the packinghouse. And then there was a packing house that was just set up temporarily over here on the right at that time, a small operation, but it – now the farm up here is on, used to be on the left, **Benson Farm**. **Perry Benson**, related to some of the old family of Bensons right back in here.

S.D.: The one that's called **Goose Neck**?

N.S.: That's what, yeah. Now here's where to turn. This is – here's where to turn. This is **Deep Neck Road**. Deep Neck – this was all the way down, we've been driving so far, was oyster shell roads, you know, oyster shell. And sometimes the county would have a road scraper that would just go over, give it, supposed to make it smoother, but it was kind of a rough road, little pots here and there, but cars didn't go fast, and this was – this wasn't even a good oyster shell road. It had soft places where you could get stuck in the wintertime. Particularly, we have a lot of freezing and thawing weather. That's the worst kind. If you have freezing and it will stay frozen, then it's good. But we have a lot of freezing and thawing. Woods on both sides. It's all flat in here. So the road is just a water sink, hold the water. Up here on the right, I turned my little car over because we had something – let's see where that little oak tree is. Here it is. No, that's not it. Where – here it is. See that little knot on that oak tree?

S.D.: Uh-huh (affirmative).

N.S.: That's where my front bumper hit. So embarrassing. When I was 16, my father bought me a little Chevy coupe, a 1934. Had a little, what do you call it, the little seats that open? Rumble seat. Had a little rumble seat. But it had this thing, it would only stay on those cars for one year. If you push a little button on your, down near the dashboard, it threw the car where it would just coast. Supposed to have been a big thing that would save gasoline. But when it's coasting, you don't have any control if the

car starts to spin. And that's what happened. We passed the school bus, and I hit in the middle, oyster shells that had been piled up there by a scraper, and the car started skidding, and it just turned over on its side. **Mr. Kenlock** was the school bus driver. Mr. Kenlock got out and all the school children, they turned the car back right side. Very embarrassing to me, though. (Laughter). Okay. Little gypsy lady who used to live right back there in a little one-room place.

S.D.: Where was she from?

N.S.: Well I guess in those days, gypsies used to travel around selling tin buckets and all kind of thing, but they didn't stay in any community very long, they just left. And whether she was an older lady that couldn't travel with them and was just leftover, I really don't know. Shipyards were -- back a way was **Shipyard Point**. Family up here, at that time, used to be **Dennys** on the right, but now it's owned by a family of **Leonards**. In fact, their children are all grown up and they have homes all around here. But oh, way back there, we used to walk to school. And then, finally, the school -- roads got good enough the school bus could come right down in here, and we had only about a little over, little less than a mile to walk to school. But this is where we wait for school bus. Now our farm starts right here at these posts right here.

S.D.: This is **Cedar Cove**.

N.S.: It goes on up here. And they still keep the name, **Woodlawn Farm**. That's just as it was then. And this is just about 440 yards, so I used to be -- in high school on a relay team where you had to run 880 yards, first was 880 then 440 then 220 and then the end, 100. But I used to run this back and forth. I think it kind of put my father on a little bit of edge because here's a boy that could run like anything, up and down this road, and be too tired to (laughter) do anything on the farm. We had, reason it was called Woodlawn Farm, we had a very formal boxwood place off to the right of this. And the lane that's going to the house now used to curve around to the left. Now this has all been changed and, in fact, we had a large drainage ditch that ran down to the right. So this is it, except they have added on one that -- see where that porch back there? That's been added onto it. Oh, and this entrance, it didn't have this. It just had the entrance that you walked up and went into the house.

MRS. STEWART: Do we need to say something to --

N.S.: Yeah, I'll go see.

(Off record.)

N.S.: You know how they grew over –

J.P.: Right.

N.S.: And, of course, at that time, went off to the barn was that way. Of course, there was a big drainage ditch through there. And out here, we had three buildings out here. One was the old carriage house, then next to the carriage house was a house we always called it a potato house where we kept potatoes. And then we had a two-car garage just about where this building is right in town.

(Off record.)

N.S.: He bought it. Now as I – now this is, my mother told me he bought it for \$6,000 at that time.

MRS. PICKLE: From **Mr. Skinner**?

N.S.: From Mr. Skinner, or from the estate, yeah. And I don't think anybody, from what my mother said, no one bid against him because he knew – so he lived here first when they were first married, he was a tenant farmer. And no one expected him to actually have 6,000 in cash. He paid for it, which at that time, was a surprise.

MRS. STEWART: Kept it in the mattress.

N.S.: Oh, yeah. He – none of us children ever had that type of thing. We never inherited how to keep money, but he could keep money. (Laughter).

J.P.: That's great. \$6,000, that's a heck of a deal.

N.S.: Yeah. So anyway, so –

MRS. STEWART: Well just take him, just start wherever you want to start with then.

S.D.: Well I tell you what. We have been going –

(Off record.)

N.S.: This together. This is all about the little rowboat that, when I was 10 years old, I've mentioned it here that our barn burned down. But not the barn. What we had was the barn and then back there, we had a stable. We kept all the horses in a stable. And then next to the stable was a shed that helped also, had feed and all in it, and that was struck by lightening. So a man from St. Michaels with two or three men built a new stable at that time, and I was the helper to pick up the nails if the man built it.

And so this is more or less a picture of me on this little boat right out in front catching crabs. That's right out here. You'll have a chance to read this later 'cause I'll give it to you, but anyway, there are other pictures. This is right out here dipping oysters. And this is the **Ware Point**, Ware Point here. And like I say, geese and ducks were always flying all over.

MRS. STEWART: Now tell Buddy the story of Ware Point.

N.S.: Okay. Ware Point, over here is **Neavitt** and **Bozman**. Now when the watermen would have to sail to Oxford to be able to buy fish line, fish nets, anything that goes for watermen to have they established a little warehouse right out on this point just as you go around, there's a little hollow place and then another little point. Now that must've been at least 100 yards out. A lot of that has been lost at that time, and they had a warehouse. Now they didn't go down what we call **Holland Point** then, they used to cut – after you come across your lane here, then there's a little road that would follow the cove right on around, and just about down at a little point there, there used to be pilings when I was a boy where this bridge went across there, and that's a warehouse so that the watermen could get canvas and whatever they needed without having to go all the way around to Oxford.

MRS. STEWART: And it's called **Bridge Cove** because of that, right?

N.S.: Ridge Cove?

MRS. STEWART: Bridge Cove.

N.S.: Oh, Bridge Cove. Yes.

MRS. STEWART: That's what it says on the chart.

N.S.: Yeah, that's right. Bridge Cove was because the bridge went right across. But again, when I was a kid, there was nothing left of it but the pilings.

J.P.: But the pilings.

N.S.: Yeah. And they were pretty rotten at that time.

J.P.: I think they're all gone now.

N.S.: I'm sure they're gone. Fact is, one time years ago before you bought this place, we went down to see if I could find the pilings, I couldn't find anything left of them. We used to find arrowheads all over this field over here. That was the greatest place. But you find arrowheads pretty good bit on the farm

on these other – but that was the greatest place, I guess because of that. And that cove is much bigger than it is now. It's kind of filled in a lot.

J.P.: Right.

N.S.: Yeah. All of this part was, like I was telling you the other day, then right down to where those bushes are all growing down there, there used to be a little drainage ditch, and then right in here was a whole line of chicken houses. But we were told, the boys, they was for slave quarters. And but they grew up all around there, rats were underneath of them, my father had them all burned d own.

S.D.: Where were those located?

N.S.: Just about, almost looking straight ahead at that house over there.

J.P.: Now when you were here, when you were living here, that house wasn't there, right?

N.S.: No. I found – but that was my first paying job that I got right out of high school. A man by the name of Mr. – I think his name is probably – isn't that terrible? Anyway, he made all the artificial leather for General Motors and all that, so he was a very wealthy man. And he bought this more or less as a hunting lodge. But then he ran across a big, something like a 100-foot yacht that had been used. In it's latter days, it was used to bring whiskey down – of course, prohibition was then, but bring whiskey down from Canada. And then the watermen ran the whiskey into the place, and into the different locals. Well he bought it and he put it up on shore there, and he dug a canal way out – well you can see where it goes. All that was canal built up. And I don't know how many times this place has been dredged out, you know, but it fills right back up. And anyway, so I had a job paying 25 cents an hour with wheelbarrow cutting marshland and hauling it up and dumping it around this boat. Well not just me, a whole bunch of us kids did.

J.P.: What year was that, do you think?

N.S.: Well that would've been '35.

J.P.: So 1935, 25 cents an hour. That's pretty good money in 1935.

N.S.: It was good, oh, yeah. It upset my father. And this gentleman down here really, well he upset my father terribly because my father paid a dollar a day plus meals, which a dollar a day included breakfast and dinner. Mid-day was dinner. And, of course, they had breakfast to be sure they'd be here. I mean that clenched it. And he got – had a good meal to start working, you know. And so he paid a

dollar. And although I got this job, it was in the wintertime when a lot of time, stuff would be frozen and you could wield it on the wheelbarrow. But because he was paid – he paid his help \$1 a day, and my brother and I got \$1 a week. (Laughter). And that would be a good week. That was if we did everything we were told to do, and we expect to do everything that we were told.

J.P.: That's right.

N.S.: And if we didn't do everything, and we knew we weren't going to get paid when we would go to town, we did this – if we knew we weren't going to get paid, we'd get – 'cause he always paid us by the car, we'd walk off as though it didn't bother us. (Laughter). And then we'd come back and catch a little money from my mother later.

S.D.: How has the shoreline changed?

N.S.: Well tell you the truth, the shoreline hasn't changed. Of course, we had more marsh then. See all this, the marsh washed away when the grass left here. And the grass started leaving here because this cove, when they were planting corn, they were fertilizing very heavy. And then it just filled up with weeds. And then the sunlight couldn't get to it and you had all this gook of grass floating out, but no grass regrowing. Now why did it happen when they – when my father farmed this land with corn, 35, 40 bushels to an acre was a good crop. Now they get 300.

J.P.: Right.

N.S.: I mean he could not believe that they could put that much fertilizer down and it wouldn't burn everything up, you know. And so that changed a lot all around. But then – let me go to another thing. You've got rock all around here.

J.P.: Now we do.

N.S.: You see, a lot of people were saying, some years ago, oh, we hate to see these wealthy people, you know, buying up these properties around here. And that was what the local people would say. But actually, if it wasn't for the wealthy people, you would have water right up to, right almost to your –

J.P.: In fact, there out there in the water, there is an old bulkhead that's been knocked down, and it's 20 feet even since the bulkhead's been knocked down. So, yeah, we'd have about half of what we have if there wasn't that rock there.

N.S.: That's right. And that's been all around the shore, Eastern Shore. If it hadn't been for the wealthy people to put the rock down, why we would've lost lots of land. Now what more can I say?

MRS. PICKLE: -- strawberry field?

N.S.: Oh. Cash crops was tomatoes and wheat. Corn was used for the livestock entirely, and to feed the geese and ducks, mostly geese. And – what did you ask, Jean?

MRS. PICKLE: Strawberries. Didn't you –

N.S.: Oh, yeah. So all of this was really gardens. I mean we called it truck farming where we had, oh, rows and rows of strawberries. People come in, pick strawberries, two cents a quart. Then we had lima beans, potatoes, string beans, sweet potatoes. Oh, asparagus was another big thing. Growing asparagus back there in a farm like – 'cause most people just pick asparagus growing around a field.

J.P.: Right.

N.S.: And we had asparagus fields. And that was what we did when we came home from school, 'cause this was – you start cutting asparagus sometime back in very early April, as I recall. And first thing you do, sometimes I'd run up that lane, but then you change your clothes, go down, cut asparagus, and have it ready to go to the market the next morning.

J.P.: Now was the school in Royal Oak?

N.S.: In Royal Oak.

J.P.: It's that brown building, right?

N.S.: Yeah, that little brown building.

J.P.: Yeah, somebody told me that that used to be the school.

N.S.: Yeah, we had – we went up to the sixth grade there. Two teachers, first, second and third, and then –

J.P.: And how did you get there?

N.S.: Bus. Now at first, when we were six years old, seven years old, we had to walk way out to the bus, and then later, we walked out to a lane and turned right when the road got so a school bus couldn't even get that far down. But I must tell you this. For three or four years when we were six, seven, eight, my brother and I never missed a day of school. And the reason for that is because, as I say, we were raised to be workers.

J.P.: Right.

N.S.: And if we missed a day of school, we were going to have a day of work. (Laughter).

J.P.: So you'd rather be at school, that's right.

N.S.: And the school was about – to us, that was a playground. So and even if it was, like some days it would be rainy and snowy, you know, and mother would even say, you know, it's too bad. Oh, no, no, no, mom, we can go, we can go. Because if we stayed home and it was raining, snowing, then we'd be down in this very barn, and we would be – he'd have harness to be oiled, and he had a little grind – we didn't have electricity, he had a little grind wheel, and he would sit there, and you'd have to turn this grind wheel like, and while he did axes and all types of more knives, you know. So we never missed any days in school.

J.P.: That's right. You were in school every day.

MRS. PICKLE: Buddy, Mr. Stewart was telling me he was the first person to paint that barn.

N.S.: Oh, yeah. That barn, the paint was bought from Mr. Valliant who had, in Bellevue, had – one year he decided that, he tried a lot of different things, one year to make paint as well as – so he got fish oil from the Menhaden Fish, you know, and ground it all up and put dyes or whatever and made the red paint. And this paint was smelly. And here I was 16, and I had this little car, and I'd be up on my ladder, and this paint drips down my arm, this dirty smelly oil, and you know, gosh, I couldn't get it off. (Laughter).

J.P.: So it was good paint.

N.S.: And that paint did, that paint lasted a long time. I know it's been painted several times. Now that barn, we had, that's where we kept our wheat for planting that fall. We kept wheat in there, we kept boat sides always in there curing. When we cut wood in the woods out here, we always had boat sides that local people, if they wanted to build a boat, they didn't know, my father – probably all of us have boat sides, and that's when they built this little boat out – I got more of those if you want – but anyway, let's see, what else I was going to say?

S.D.: I have a question for you.

N.S.: Yeah.

S.D.: You were talking about some of the activities that you did, like the fishing and the crabbing. Can you tell me a little bit about what you did with the rowboat?

N.S.: Oh, well the rowboat, we kept it two places. In the fall of the year, and once duck hunting, goose hunting came on, why we kept it right up on that point. And that point did go out quite a, oh, it must've gone out maybe as much as 100 yards out. And meantime, also, Ware Point must've lost a good 100 yards, if not more. But we kept the boat. But then in the summertime, we kept it right down here on the marsh, and we used it for crabbing and fishing. But as I mentioned in this little booklet here, everybody had a rowboat. You had to be pretty bad off financially not to have a rowboat because that was the thing that, for you to feed on, you had crabs and fish in the summertime, you had oysters, manos. Out here where those geese, where the swan are, there's a little sand – used to be a sandy flat. And on low tides, why that would be bare. You'd just go out there with a shovel and just dig up what we call manos, they're soft shell clams. And those, of course, those were used to put in eel traps as bait to catch eels, and the eels were salted down to make the crab bait, catch the crabs, they went in that way.

S.D.: How did you fish?

N.S.: Oh, we didn't have – just hand line. We didn't have any – fishing poles. No, we just fished, we used to fish a lot for Rockfish off of Ware Point, a little bit further around where it's a little deeper water. And most of the fish, of course, that was the way my father wanted it, not during the day when you should be working, but in the evening on a high tide, and I'd go around there with him. And, of course, he smoked a pipe, so the mosquitoes didn't seem to bother him, but they would eat me.
(Laughter).

J.P.: That's right, they'd get you. And that's still one of the best spots for Rockfish.

N.S.: Is it?

J.P.: On the **Choptank River**.

N.S.: Right on the point there.

J.P.: Yeah.

N.S.: Oh, yeah. In the evening, and that's where we would go. Oh, catch big Rock over there.

J.P.: Three feet, four feet, right.

N.S.: Yeah, right. And then in the fall of the year when we'd put out our net, our gill net, because we'd have to wait until the crabs went, otherwise crabs would get into it and tear it up. Well that used to be a job I liked to do because I could go out and tend to the net while my brother milked those cows. Gee whiz. I hope you don't put this in print. He would be mad at me. (Laughter). But anyway, that was it. And then on this building, I think this is where the old corncrib used to be, but I guess that's gone now. Yeah. But anyway, that's where we would hang -- when we would bring the gill net in, fish net in, we would hang it on the sides to dry. Now in the barn where you have those places, that's where we kept hogs. And then we had a cow pound. That's where we kept the cows, and the hogs. And then the back part of that barn is where we kept sheep. I think it was about 50 sheep or something like that. 'Cause he believed in sheep because the sheep always was fertilizing the field too. They were good on that.

S.D.: How about soft crabs?

N.S.: Yeah, oh and particularly on the moonlight nights, you know, they were plentiful. That's -- we went to buy two things. Number one is when the -- what trees when they start blooming, locust trees. When the locust trees bloom, that's when the crabs are ready to go, you watch for the locust trees. And whether they were here or not, we were out there. And then used to catch, oh, a couple dozen. To us, a dozen or couple dozen soft crabs waiting around was nice. And we would sell them to the Harpers who had the Pasadena Inn, you know. And that was sometimes -- back then in the early spring, she would give a dollar for a dozen. We never sold anything by the dozen, we always made it 14, no matter whether it was eggs. Anybody bought a dozen of something, they always got two extra.

J.P.: Well that's a good deal for them.

S.D.: So who was doing the selling, you and your brother, or was your dad?

N.S.: No, that was our little thing. We did that. And what else?

S.D.: You moved here -- the duck blind, yes. Let's talk about the duck blind.

N.S.: Okay. We had a goose blind down there, and then of course my father -- he has, what did Johnny have? Four or five of those muzzle loaders, didn't he? I mean he had double-barrel, eight gauge muzzle loaders, you know. It's against the law then. Ten gauge is as large as you can have. So he had a muzzle loader, and Henry Marshall who lived on the next farm had a single barrel muzzle loader, eight gauge. And then he had the first Winchester pump gun that was known back in the early 1934. Browning

came on with an automatic almost about the same time. But then – so we would go, we have a good northeaster blowing, and we would go down about 5:00 getting to the blind, you know, and get the decoys out and get ready. And we – my father didn't allow any, he didn't rent his blinds out because he loved to see – this whole thing would be black with geese in the mornings, you know. So we would always shoot at the first, and that was usually limit. If it was more than 25 came in at a time, we didn't shoot. But if 10, 15, 20 or so came in, then he'd shoot, you know. But sometimes they didn't come in at all, they didn't come in until night. And it seems like there were a lot of moonlight nights when this happened. So we would have – so with these muzzle loaders – my father, they could get 12, 15 geese. And then my father would go with his double barrel, double barrel 10, getting the cripples. Henry would jump into the rowboat and go out with his Remington and clean up. And then we would quickly gather all of them, put the geese in burlap bags and head for this potato house that was right back there, throw them in the back of this potato house, and then my mother would have coffee and cake in the kitchen. And then we – they would be sitting there talking about hard times. And if the game warden should show up, two old farmers just talking about hard times. And then, sure enough, you know, sometimes we'd go out to Royal Oak, pick up the mail, and someone would say, 'Captain Johnny, heard shooting down your way.' And he would say 'So did I,' you know? But he said, 'But you know how water – sound carries over the water. It could've been over Neavitt, Bozman, I really don't know.' (Laughter). Because we had a game warden who covered all of Talbot County. Jim. Anyway, and he had a Model T, and the roads were bad. So no one ever, never worried about him being able to make it. But it could be early and start freezing up. So it could get so he could get – he nearly caught my father one time. That was – my father sometimes would go to what we call big woods, down Holland Point. And there's a little cove over there. Oh, there's two or three tales about that. But one time, he was over there, and the geese didn't come in. So he's walking back through the woods with his eight gage, and the game warden said well, Captain Johnny, they didn't come in tonight, did they? But if they had, been caught. 'Cause that's what they really wanted was that double barrel.

J.P.: They wanted the gun.

N.S.: They wanted the gun.

J.P.: That's right. Especially in those days, game warden trying to get those big guns.

N.S.: And then straight across the road from you was an Englishman and his wife. He was an Englishman in World War I. Powell, Colonel Powell. And his wife was a nurse from Baltimore, and met him and they fell in love. And then when he had finished serving his service in the – he wanted to retire at some place. He traveled. He'd been in India, he'd been in China, he'd been all over with the British Army. He wanted to be where he could be alone and just – and he wanted to be able to build things. He loved to build furniture. So they were the very first people in this whole area that ever moved here and didn't have to work to make a living. (Laughter). So they were quite – but they were good for my mother too. But anyway, what was I going to tell you about him besides that? Nothing much.

J.P.: And now when did, when did your family get rid of the farm?

N.S.: Okay. Okay. Let's see. I've come back from the war, and that was '46. So it was sometime in the 50's. Sometime in the 50's when my father told me, he said, you know, this farm is getting a little bit too much for me to carry on. At that time, oh, I'll have to think of it. This man who, from Pittsburgh wanted to buy it, but my father wouldn't sell it to him because he was an outsider. He wasn't going to sell it to somebody who didn't know anything about farming. Oh, I'll have to tell you about farming, the type of things we learn. In the wintertime, sometime in January or February when it was raining, a good rainy – I mean slow, all day rains. Raymond and I had to walk with my father, 'cause this is flat lands, and we walk over the fields. Now what we're looking for, how the water runs, you know, because this is soil that can easily wash off with ditches. And he didn't believe in ditches. He believed in a log with the boards off on each side, driven behind a mule or a horse, and it makes a nice shallow little ditch. But you've got to study your land in the winter how the water runs so that when you plant the crops, you're not going to have any places that have been drowned out, you know. So that was one thing of our wintertime training. The other was in the wintertime to go out into the woods to find out what pine trees to cut down. We sold cord wood, a lot of our cord wood went to Bellevue by the cord. Oh, I guess we would cut 15, 20 cords of wood. Anyway, now we have to go through, and this – at that time, our woods was like a park. You go through and you look at the bark of the pine tree. If the bark is smooth, the tree isn't growing anymore. If it's rough, that tree's still growing. No matter what size, you could have one only 10 inches round. For some reason or other it wasn't going to grow, then the bark – so those were the ones we would cut and mark to be cut. You know, never cut a growing healthy pine trees.

MRS. STEWART: Did they use that wood for floors, or what did they use the wood for?

N.S.: Oh, we cut some for sawmills. Now he never allowed a sawmill to be on our place, but a sawmill used to be in here and all up and down. The — had a sawmill. Sawmills were used then, they had thrashing machines and tractors, and then in the wintertime, that's what they could use, this same engine to cut rough-cut boards. The most, a lot of our millwork, if you had to have it milled, went to St. Michaels where we had — where Chesapeake House, was a mill, milling house then.

J.P.: Were you living here when the bad storm came through here in the 30's?

S.D.: The Storm of '33.

N.S.: I guess so. I had to be because I was here '34 — yeah, I went to high school. But tell you the truth, it was just like the Depression that happened. I don't remember it.

J.P.: Yeah. That's good.

N.S.: You know what I mean?

S.D.: Do you remember any storms?

N.S.: Oh, yeah. We used to have bad storms. One time, must've happened in '89 or '82, 'cause oh, we would see big —

(END SIDE A.)

(BEGIN SIDE B.)

J.P.: They came across, usually it takes like 15, 20 minutes to come across the water, but last night came across in like five minutes.

N.S.: Yeah.

J.P.: It was terrible. So that's the way they did even when you lived here?

N.S.: Did that, yeah. Came right across. But last night — but normally, we would have thunderstorms make up here, and sometimes, depending on the moon and the tide, they go around.

J.P.: Right.

N.S.: You find that — we used to watch those from the road picking tomatoes and hope it's going to hit here.

J.P.: That's right, you wanted it.

N.S.: (Laughter). Yeah, we wanted it to come. And my father would know, we would say to him, Pop, looks like a bad – of course, the first thing he did whenever a thunderstorm came was turn the horses out into the field. I mean that was the first thing we did because, as I say, lightening did strike the barn once. Anyway, we used to wish, oh, I hope that storm comes. So now where are we?

S.D.: We had talked a little bit about storms. Did the storms change the environment or change any of the – do you remember any of that?

N.S.: No.

S.D.: How long did it take you to get to town from here?

N.S.: Oh. At first, we had an open Model T. And then we had a four-door Chevy coupe. And that must – let's see, the Model T must've been back about '26 or '27. I was still a little boy. And then the – and then somewhere – but it must've been around '27 when he bought the Chevy, and he bought the, my little car, let's see, the banks had closed up in '29. And then when they reopened in '33, I guess, or '34, I guess he decided, well, I'll give that boy a car. Oh, that's why he gave me a car. There was a family living on Denny Place at that time. They were sharecroppers. And they had a bunch of boys who could make things, make things from cars and do all kind – so they made a little racer from a Model T, and it had canvas, I guess, on it. And for \$25, it didn't have any tires that was any good. And a lot of it wasn't any good. And I bought it for \$25. And he made me take the car back to him and bought me a new car. And I don't know whether he did it because of that, or since the bank opened, that was St. Michaels Bank, at that time when they did open, and the banks really –
(Off record.)

S.D.: Okay, I rewound a little bit.

N.S.: But I will tell you this. I had a cousin who lived in Oxford who, when he came back from the war, this Drake Tail boats was very popular because of the rumrunners who were running down here, they had that of speedboat. So that's where this very slim, long boat used for oystering and crabbing with a Palmer engine, where you could, you started by turning the shaft over. When you wanted to back it up or stop it, you'd turn it the other way if you caught everything right. If you didn't, you pounded into the pier. Anyway, he bought one. Now at that time, that was after World War II, and the banks evidently changed their attitude because his father, I think he told me his father and a couple uncles had to go on the note so

he could get this boat financed. And when Victor, I guess he worked on the water 30-some years, he said that note never did really – I mean he just kept getting boats, but he said he owed money to the bank from then on.

S.D.: Now how about when they build the Bay Bridge? How did the folks here feel about that whole Bay Bridge?

N.S.: Oh, they didn't like that. No, they didn't like that at all. But, of course, it was a good thing. See, we were 30 years behind the Western Shore, actually. And so things started catching up pretty fast. But not really. Ocean City was a place to go because at Claiborne, the train used to meet the ferry and people went to Ocean City by train. But I guess that was really the start of people finding out about it. Yeah, that's when they find out about it, yeah.

S.D.: I have a question. The hunting parties that came, tell me a little bit about what you remember about the hunting parties, and the difference between them and the tourists that came over on the Bay Bridge.

N.S.: Well let me go back to the hunting parties and fishing parties. See, in Oxford, I had two – oh, I guess I had three or four cousins, and that was their business, taking out fishing parties in the summertime. They oystered in the wintertime and took out fishing parties in the summer. And they were people who would come down and, oh, it was a big sport for them. It wasn't – and my aunts used to prepare meals for them. But they – now the big thing in this area was, and that was mostly people from Baltimore or Philadelphia, they had duck blinds all around on that shore, all over there, and jumps out here. And they would have, that's when the Remington pump guns and the Browning automatics came out, you know. And we'd be out in the woods cutting wood, and we would hear them going pow, pow, pow. Or maybe we were doing something around the barn. And I would say to my father, I'd say oh, pop, man. Listen to the -- man, they're just – they're knocking those ducks out of the sky. He says pay no attention to that. He says once you shoot a double barrel, they're out of sight. He said you're going to hit anything you're going to hit with a double barrel. He said you don't need to worry about having a six shooter, said just slinging shot in the water. And we used to walk around this shore with our little 22 when we did get a 22, and shoot at Pigwitches. I don't know whether they have that duck around here called pigwitch anymore.

J.P.: I don't think so.

N.S.: But they would just dive under. As soon as you shot at it, it would dive. I don't think we ever hit one.

J.P.: Now was there ever a time when the geese didn't come? Because now they're back again. They're really back, but I was wondering if it got slim in the 40's or any time.

N.S.: No, back then never. Of course, they never used on land, you know, they were always in the water. But –

S.D.: How about decoys? How did you get your decoys?

N.S.: Oh, well, we did have two live decoys. And then we had six or so carved decoys. We never thought of carved decoys as being worth anything. Anyway, so the live decoys would be, they always had a little leather thing around, and they'd stay right up near the duck blind or goose blind, and then the decoys were just a few feet out. And then if it were going to – if it was a moonlight night shooting, and the – and it was a very much calm night, why they would swim in through the decoys. But, actually, because of putting out the feed, I don't know that decoys was that big a thing. They just got used to coming all the time.

J.P.: Now you mentioned that your father's name was **Captain Johnny**. How did he get that name?

N.S.: Oh. Well again, farming, all the Stewarts always bought farms on water. None of us had farms up inland, you know, because in the wintertime, you could always depend on the water for your, to oysters and – but my father used to tong oysters himself in the wintertime. He used to tong oysters, so I'm told, when it was too cold for the watermen to work on. They say the ice would be on the thing. He was a hard worker. He was a hard worker. We never took after that. (Laughter).

MRS. PICKLE: So is that how he got the name Captain?

N.S.: But that's show he got – so anybody who had a boat like that, I think he had a log canoe as his workboat, and just the one sail, you know, sail, but anybody who worked on the water, when they got a little older, were called captain automatically.

S.D.: So when did the tourists themselves start coming?

N.S.: Well they started really back in the 30's, but the bridge wasn't, what, 1950 some, wasn't it?

J.P.: Yeah, '56 or something like that.

N.S.: Now that's when they came, but the tourists were already buying property up like this man over here bought this farm. Oh, and then a fellow from Pennsylvania bought a farm back here, Shipyard Point. And now that's – **Henry Marshall** who I was telling you, that was my father's hunting buddy. And he came over. Well that farm fell in hard times, I guess, so **Mr. Stell** from Pennsylvania hired him to work on his farm. So now when my father got ready to sell it, why he did sell it to an outsider. But he sold it because his hunting party was working for him. But he didn't sell it to this gentleman. And then later on, this gentleman did buy it from Stell, and that burned my father up. Oh, it made him mad. Oh, he got mad because all this woods that he kept so good, it was like a park – oh yeah, what kind of wood did we burn, that was the other things. We didn't burn pine trees at all. We burnt these old crooked oak trees that grew out there. And cut it, and then it had a saw, had a tractor come around, and it sawed – and then we had to chop them too, and these old, what did they call that type of oak tree? It was – they would be so twisted that they wouldn't split. You could make hubs for tractors and all out of them 'cause they wouldn't –

J.P.: Oh, all gnarled up? Now how did you – was it cold in the winter, in the house? I know it was cold outside.

N.S.: Oh, yeah. We used to skate out here. Well, of course, this was a great place for skating because when the tide went low, the ice would be right on the flats. So we, we used to have skating parties right here. Yeah, in the wintertime. But we didn't, we would only hear from our mother and father how cold it used to be. So how cold it used to be must've been like last year down here because we never had any great snows, you know. We never had any great snows.

MRS. PICKLE: Just the wind though. The wind howls here.

N.S.: Now that's why, that's why when we have strawberries, asparagus, anything here, we would have it on the market one to two weeks earlier than anybody inland because the wind coming across here is also picking up warm air.

J.P.: Right.

N.S.: That's a heat pump out there. So we'd always have – and then we would have cabbage. In the fall of the year, we would make kilns out there, store the cabbage, put straw around it, and then a lot of soil on it. So we had fresh cabbage all year. And we had potato kilns too. The potato house was, we just opened the end of a kiln, potato kiln, straw all around it so they wouldn't freeze, but we'd only bring them in by – when we needed a basket of potatoes, bring them in too. And in the kitchen, you have, I don't guess it's there, we had what was called a potato hole in the floor of the kitchen. There was something that opened up, and you could store potatoes down there, but we never really – we always kept them in the – we had, when World War I was over, there were German PW's, and one of them, Rudolph, came to work on the farm. He worked here for four or five years, I guess, and he had what we call the kitchen stairs that went up to the back to our bedroom, and also to his bedroom. And that bedroom, outside of having his bed in there, that's where mother made wine, she made soap, soap was made there. We had a little work bench there. But the big time was – this wasn't added on, was it?

J.P.: No, that was, that's the original part.

N.S.: Okay, right. Now that was a vacant room. And we used that as a play room. When we would get a chemistry set one time, and we were going to try an explosive out there in the fireplace. And, gosh, it went off with such a bang, we ran out of the house, and then we saw a great big ring of smoke going up, and we thought oh, man, where's pop? (Laughter). And then we used to have that room. We took a magazine called Boy's Life. I think they're still printing it.

J.P.: Yeah, it sure is.

N.S.: Yeah. So they would show how you could build canoes, you know, getting saplings. So we were always on – we never finished anything. We would get all the, get all these saplings out to build this canoe, and then we had to get the canvas to stretch around it. And finally, we ran across things that began to cost money. I mean we could go up to – if you had to buy – we tried to find old canvas, you know, that had been left over from a sail, but we never did. And we built all kinds of things. We had two Bald Eagles down on big woods – oh, that was something we did. Whenever the winter was too bad that we couldn't go to church, we had a beautiful day, we'd take the rowboat, row right across to Ware Point and walk all around that shoreline all the way miles down there. And then we'd have to walk all the way back. And it would take a whole half a day or more 'cause we would leave in the morning when we knew

we weren't going to church. Mother would make us sandwiches, and we were always looking for something like a boat that would drift across from Bozman or Neavitt. That would be – oh, boy. And but we'd pick up things like ducks. It wasn't any unusual to find decoy ducks because the hunters from Philadelphia, they didn't know that sometimes the tides came up on the blinds and the ducks would drift off. And back, we had what we called the wash room. We had a shed on the back here where the washing machine was kept, and it had a big table to feed the hired hands there, next – in the kitchen, you'd just walk – and we would fill that up with old duck decoys. And my mother would fuss. Don't bring those things home and just throw them on the table. And, gosh, I think they sold for hundreds of dollars. I don't know, maybe they didn't. I don't know what they sold for, but we never thought that was anything. But we were always looking for a boat.

S.D.: What about any legends, like stories from the Civil War or ghost stories? Did you have any of those?

N.S.: Well it seems, you see we had two – we had -- the landowners were very sympathetic with the south. The watermen were all union, you know. And so I never knew that. I had no idea. I thought we were all southerners, 'cause my grandmother used to make a big point of telling us we were southerners. Until we went to Gettysburg, wasn't it, that we saw the Union – all filled with Union soldiers from Tilghman Island on up. And, of course, that's the way it was. I better not go into that 'cause there's things I could tell about that. I better not.

S.D.: How about any ghost stories or anything like that, about the place?

N.S.: Well the only ghost stories were down in big woods where every time we would walk down there on these – there were two pine threes together like that, in the wind, they would twist, but we didn't know what it was. But it sounded like it was making a howling noise. And an old man from Ferry Neck lived in just a little one-room shack, but he, it was said that he died there, and his ghost was there. Well when we would hear those things – it was, my brother and I, it would make us walk very, very timidly all around. And the big thing, though, the big thing about going all down around Holland Point, we would take a shortcut across, and then Mr. **Oliver Duke**, the canoe builder, we would go by his place where he was hollowing out a log to make the – let's see, he built several of the log canoes. I think several of – Oliver Dukes. He was, in World War I, he was a Naval architect, very prominent Navy architect. But he lived

down there, but he rented the place. Oh, this was another – oh, we had another wealthy family too lived all the way down. He was from Pittsburgh. His father was, his father and mother were in the Otis Elevator business. And everything in Pittsburgh, I've only flown into Pittsburgh. I've never – but they tell me they use a lot of brick, a lot of brick. So he tore down all their old buildings down there and built brick homes. And brick – a brick lodge, and so then in the, in '29, he lost everything. Meantime, he had such a big mortgage on it because – reason he had a mortgage on it was he could make more money putting it in stocks than what he had to pay the bank. So he had the big mortgage, but the mortgage was so big that nobody around here could buy that place, you know, 'cause he had all these brick buildings. He had a big, he had about a 50-foot yacht down there. And then his, he wasn't married. **Ralph Marshall** was his name. But his sister had two children our ages. And they had always lived in the city, and they lived there about a week. Evidently, they went out on the gord and the mother came hunting up. She heard that we were their age. So she came hunting up my mother. Well at that time, we had a little Shetland Pony with a little wicker basket that we didn't buy. It was given to mother by some family because Shetland Ponies, this Shetland Pony anyway, was that way. They're really horses. But when children are hounding them, they know they can do things with children. So this horse was a little, this pony was a mean pony. It would bite you if you didn't watch it. But we were used to horses. We had a mule here that gave us a lot of training, could be mean. So anyway, so this family then found out we had this Shetland Pony. So they would invite us down. So that did knock out a lot of our Saturday night going to St. Michaels because we'd go down and spend it, we'd spend it on their yacht, they would – when – they would have the regattas over. For two, just little farm boys, we really had a good life.

J.P.: You had a good life.

N.S.: We had a good life, you know. And I appreciate it very much. **Mrs. Powell**, another place. Whenever we would have another Sunday that we couldn't go to church, they built a sunroom. First time anybody around here ever heard of a place having a sunroom, where they had all the books. They had all the National Geographics, but they had the maps and where he had served in India and where he'd served here, and she would pull them down, and she would serve us hot chocolate. So that was a good thing. That's why I think we all like to travel. We've always liked to travel. Anyway, and then we used to cut, used to cut grass for her too on a Saturday sometimes.

J.P.: And what made you decide not to be a farmer?

N.S.: Well the – as I say, my father was a very hard worker, and he did love the land, and he loved to think. But either we were having a drought, or tomato crop didn't come in, strawberries didn't do right and everything, or else we had so much that you couldn't get any price for them. It seems like we were – we were never in want for anything, but it just seemed like it was a hard life to me. It just seemed like, gee, there's got to be something else, 'cause he never took off any time. He never took off time to really enjoy. The only time he ever went fishing was after almost sundown over there to Ware Point.

J.P.: Ginger's father's a farmer, or used to be, and he told me the same thing. Said you can't make any money. Either you work yourself to death and you just can't make any money. Do you ever regret it, not being a farmer?

N.S.: No, I haven't. My children say you let this farm get – fall right out of your hands (laughter). My son says that. But, no, I don't regret it because we've had a good life. All my friends who have been farmers are, you know, not around to enjoy it.

J.P.: They passed away, that's right.

N.S.: So.

J.P.: Now when did you all sell this farm?

N.S.: It had to be in the 50's, late 50's. Now before he sold it, of course, it was a formal boxwood.

MRS. PICKLE: It's over there.

N.S.: Yeah, but a lot of it is gone.

MRS. PICKLE: Yeah, the wind and the trees.

N.S.: Yeah, well my father sold a bunch of it to Annapolis for the state houses and all because they were large.

J.P.: Because they were big.

N.S.: They were big, see, and they could get a start. So he sold a lot of that. I was having lunch with a cousin who's my same age in Easton, and they would come down on Sunday to visit, you know, two little girls all in white starched dresses, you know, little patent leather shoes, and we would play. Well we had a little thing, or you put pictures in and you move it – what is that called? These pictures

would get three-dimensional. And then we'd play maybe checkers. But then we'd take them to the boxwood because that's where we played hide –

J.P.: Right, hide and seek.

N.S.: Hide and go seek, see. And we'd take – of course, if it was in the summertime, it would be dry. So here my Aunt Margaret brought those two little girls down in starched white dresses, and we ran them through those bushes a few times, why they were as brown as we were, and dirty. And then also, because of that big ditch that ran down there, we had – to keep this ditch from washing out, we had, my father dug like a little pond there, and then he had it dammed up. So we had a little place there that we played with, we'd have little bark for boats, you know, and we had a little log to cross, you know. One time, these little girls came down. And we were used to walking on a log. I guess we were probably barefooted, tell you the truth, because we were barefooted most all summer. And they, one of them went to walk across it. Of course, she fell in and then went up to her ankle in mud, and then we tried to clean her up (laughter). But anyway, I had, we had lunch with one of the cousins yesterday. A sweet little lady.

S.D.: How about power boats?

N.S.: Power boats?

S.D.: Putting engines on boats.

N.S.: Well outside – watermen were using power boats then, but I mean we never had, the first – oh, so that is one of the things we did have. When Mr. Marshall, when he went broke, that place laid vacant. And they had a Barnegat Bay Sneak Box, Marconi rigged, and we used to sail that over there with them. And he told me, he had a runabout, mahogany runabout. So that was a job for us to go over sometimes on a Saturday and just bail out the boats or see that they were okay. So he told us, so we were able to sail that little Barnegat Bay Sneak Box from Harris Creek all the way around, around up here. And we had a great time sailing.

S.D.: Did you hunt out of it?

N.S.: No. No, we didn't hunt out of it. Although we did, one time, took it to St. Michaels for when they were having a regatta, but we sailed up back creek, Sandomingo –

J.P.: Came in the back door.

N.S.: Came in the back door. And then a friend of ours, I was in high school, had a little truck and we hauled it across and sailed it in Miles River.

J.P.: I was going to say because that's a long way to go if you go the other way.

N.S.: Oh, my brother built our first boat right over there. That's right, I forgot about that. My brother built a lightening class boat, a 19-footer, built it right outside of the garage over there. And no electricity. We got it as a kit from Skinny Atlas, New York. And the deal was I'd furnish the material, and he'd furnish the labor. And we built that boat, and it was a good sailor. Only thing – well, wasn't anything wrong with that boat.

S.D.: Tell me a little bit about the regattas.

N.S.: Well that was a big event because to go to, as you enter St. Michaels where Rio Vista is, well that was all just plain farmland. And cars would go in there and line up all along the shoreline, pay something like 25 cents, and the wives would all pack lunches, you know, and you have a lunch. And that's the first time I ever rode – well, first time. My brother and I must've been, he's two years younger than me, so we must've been something like 10 and 8. We rode in a – my father let us ride in the barnstorming plane. Now why he ever did that, I don't know, except for one thing. From Annapolis back, from Annapolis, the Navy flew planes very low over here, and those were when they were flying those planes that were boats.

J.P.: Oh, the boat planes.

N.S.: The boat plane. And we would watch – of course, whenever a plane flew, we dropped the – or whatever we did, and we'd just stand and look at them and follow them all the way until they were out of site. And so I think he thought if I put those kids in that plane, they'll get enough of it, we'll never waste that time again. So I think that was the reason for that. But we were watching them fly over, and they'd fly so low, and we would listen for them, you know, man, maybe one of them will hang up and have a big accident over there, and we'll be able to run over to look at it.

S.D.: So they would have planes. Did they have anything else set up for the regatta?

N.S.: Oh, it was powerboats one week, sailboats the next week. Yeah. And it was always the same thing. You went over there – of course, powerboats were the most exciting thing for us, you know. Runabouts, they had these runabouts that raced. This gentleman down here, Marshall, outside of his

yacht, he had a couple runabouts that he didn't drive them, but he had, you know – they never won. They used to – what did they used to use instead of gasoline? They used something else instead of gasoline.

MRS. PICKLE: Diesel.

N.S.: Ether?

MRS. PICKLE: Diesel fuel?

N.S.: No, it wasn't diesel. No. Ether.

J.P.: Ethanol.

N.S.: Ethanol. That's what it was, yeah. So, yeah, that was one summertime we would go on a Saturday, and my father would take off on that day. Yeah, take off on that day because he loved to see the sailboats. Of course, we wanted to see the powerboats.

S.D.: What year was that started, that you remember?

N.S.: Oh, gosh. It must've started back in the 20's or 30's when the yacht club, Miles River Yacht Club started. When I was working in Washington in 1936 and '37 and '38, I was a member of the Miles River Yacht Club. Then as a junior member, didn't cost much, you know, part time. And another young man, Dawson Taylor and I, they had, for the powerboat races, a shore, they had stakes lined up so when you got them lined up with outside, that's where they dropped the buoys. Well Dawson and I would be ashore with flags. And when he moved the buoy and we'd be lining up these two, we were getting the flags set up.

S.D.: For the race?

N.S.: Yeah.

S.D.: What were some other events that you attended?

N.S.: Oh, Field Day. Field Days, oh yeah. Field Day was something that happened in April of every year at school. Talbot County, the whole State of Maryland had Field Days, and then the winners of each county would go to Baltimore and spend the night, and then the next day, we would compete to see who were the state champions. Now that was a big thing because to be able, for us to be able to go to Baltimore and – so we, I was in jumping until a senior, that I was too short. I had to go to running. I could run the 880, but I couldn't run the dash. But my brother was fast. He could run the dash. So we would always win every year. And we'd go – it would be a big event because we were practicing all year. I would

stand there, I'd wear out shoes probably just broad jumping, broad jumping, you know, just to be able to go to that, win first place.

J.P.: What did you think of Baltimore when you went over there?

N.S.: Huh?

J.P.: What did you think of it? Did you think, man, this is a big place?

N.S.: Oh, man. I'll tell you what we did. They had – it was like a stadium with seats all up. Well, you know, we don't have any hills here or anything. Here this little country boy, and I'm going to compete somewhere around 11 or 12:00 in the broad jump, or the hop-stepping jump. And I got so excited running up and down those – by the time they had an event, my legs were all – (laughter). But then, but yeah, we did that. And my father had the house painted one year, and in the bedroom just above this room was a guest room. And all of our little, you'd get a badge. Then each year you won, gold, silver or bronze, depending on first, second or third. And we had these – now we didn't always go in, we might go in two events, but one of them would be a winner, we had to do that, but we had some bronze, we had some silvers in there and other events, like throwing a softball on target or something like that. Anyway, but while the painters, somebody got in, my mother said, and stole those medals.

J.P.: Stole them?

N.S.: Stole them, yeah. They weren't of any value. It wasn't any gold to it, but I mean they stole them. And she didn't know it until after the house was painted. And she tried to inquire. Of course, nobody would've said they stole them. So anyway.

S.D.: You want to take a break?

N.S.: Yeah.

(Off record.)

N.S.: He had rabbits, he had chickens, he had all kinds of – 'cause that's the way people paid him off.

J.P.: Right, they paid him with whatever they had, right?

N.S.: Whatever they had, that's how he got paid.

MRS. PICKLE: What about **Trippe Creek**? Is Trippe Creek named after that family?

N.S.: Could be. Yeah, could be. 'Cause that was Dr. Trippe. He had – now he has a granddaughter living. I haven't seen her since I've been back. She's Shanahan, one of the Shanahan ladies, now mothers. Well she was mother of all those – but she was Dr. Trippe's daughter. She, oh –
(Off record.)

N.S.: -- back then – you know what, it went all the way high school. Did you know that? I said yeah, oh yeah, I knew her. But, you know, girls were normally smart. And smart girls didn't talk to any dummy boys. (Laughter). And some lady said it's still that way. (Laughter).

J.P.: Now where did you go to high school? Because I know you went to 6th grade up in Royal Grade.

N.S.: And then we went to St. Michaels by bus. And we had to change from – at Royal Oak, we changed from that bus to another bus that the Kirbys ran to go to high school.

J.P.: And were there any good looking girls in the high school?

N.S.: Yeah. There were those that didn't speak to me. (Laughter). Oh, yeah. We had –

J.P.: And are a lot of the same families still around that you went to high school with that you think –

N.S.: Some of the Camps are still around. Some of the – let's see, some of the Stewarts are still around. In fact, right in St. Michaels where you have that little triangle now we call Stewart triangle where my – I had an uncle who had a farm just outside of St. Michaels. He had a dairy farm. And then I had another uncle who, when my grandfather died down in McDaniel, when he died, she moved in town, had this little cottage built, why the family, Stewarts, still live there. And my father's brother, my father was the oldest of all the children. And when my grandfather died, he was 12, 13 years old, and according to what my grandmother said, he raised, he raised the other 11 children. And so that's – so he knew about the working part of it. But at the same time, my Uncle Carol, his brother, got a – got the Coca Cola franchise for selling Coca Cola way back at that time. And he came to my father about helping going in to – with the Coca Cola business. 'Cause at that time, Coca Cola was sending him the formula, and he and Aunt Margaret would mix it up in a tub, and then he'd leave in a Model T going around selling. That's how he got started. But now after he got started, he needed money. He came to see my father about it, and he said no, Carol. He said you're going to sell it, you say, for a nickel a bottle? Nobody's going to pay a

nickel a bottle when you can go right around the shoreline and cut Sarsaparilla roots and make Sarsaparilla tea for nothing. (Laughter). Would've lost a fortune there. But anyway, but Carol did very well because he put up the whole plant and everything before Coca Cola was even doing that.

S.D.: How about a little of the history of your grandparents going to Black Walnut.

N.S.: Okay. In the 1890'2 or '92, my grandmother and grandfather from Sweden came over. Now my grandfather could speak English at the time because he had jumped on a British ship on the way to Australia when he was a young man, only about 18 or 19, and he was supposed – and everybody in Sweden served a year in the service, Army or Navy or something. And whether this ship just happened to be in port and he thought I'll take it or not, what happened, but they disowned him because he didn't serve his year in the service in Sweden. So when he – then he was out there when they were putting a railroad up the outback of Australia and using camels. And but then he went back, he was from an island off the west coast of Sweden, Olin. At that time, we've been to it when we took a bus to it, it's about 7 miles, I guess, out to it. It's a long way. But he met my mother, grandmother, and she was so sick all the way over from the way I heard it, from her, that she was so sick, but he took care of her. But I don't know how you could find time to fall in love when you're seasick. That's terrible. (Laughter).

MRS. PICKLE: That had to be a long trip.

N.S.: Well it was a long trip, I guess. So anyway, she had a sister living in New York City taking care – I mean doing housework for a family in New York City, and that's where she had a job with her sister. And this family happened to own Black Walnut in Tilghman Island when Black Walnut was a big farm. So she wrote to my grandfather, they hadn't married, and said oh, if he would come back, there's a farm on an island where we could get married and live together. So he came back to New York, and this family who owned that farm, they went down there as caretakers just to look after the farm, you know. And it was a big farm, but it was washing away, washing away. And, finally, when my mother – my mother was the oldest of the children – it was 10 head in that family, 10 head in my father's family. Had five – she had five sisters and five brothers. So when the farm – what happened to the farm, you know, well it wasn't bought out – then he became caretaker for **Carol Lipskem** who owns that big farm as you're going to Easton but is now taken over by the mariners, place where – Merchant Marine.

J.P.: Oh, right up there. Right, right.

N.S.: Yeah. Now that used to be owned by a very wealthy man, Colonel Lipskem. Had all his money in cotton mills in, down in the Carolinas. And, of course, the cotton mills and all went up northeast and upgraded themselves so that they made a much cheaper product than they could make down there, and he went broke, he went broke. But anyway, that's where my grandmother and grandfather –

J.P.: There's a whole lot of that, a lot of people with money going broke that happens down here. You hear that a lot. A lot of people – then they lost the farm and stuff.

N.S.: Well some of the people who have bought this property and putting in all, doing all this dredging, didn't some of them lose money?

J.P.: I think two of them went broke. We're hoping that we – we're hoping to break that cycle if we can help it.

S.D.: I'm going to stop recording. Do you have anything else you'd like to add? I know you've been –

N.S.: No, I think I've done enough.

S.D.: Okay. Well thank you very much.

(End of Interview.)