

BACK OVER THE YEARS

Reminiscences of Mattituck in the early  
years of the Twentieth Century

VOLUME III



Friends of the Mattituck Free Library

1986

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## INTRODUCTION

We must explain where the material contained in these volumes comes from.

In 1978 the Friends of the Mattituck Free Library undertook to record an oral history of Mattituck. The project was carried on under the federal Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). It was begun by Richard Mack and then developed by John Traversa, and it was intended to bring up to date the 1906 History of Mattituck written by the Reverend Charles Craven, Pastor of the Mattituck Presbyterian Church.

The work began with the recording of interviews with Mattituck citizens who recalled life in the early years of the century. Unexpectedly, work had to stop when the local CETA support was terminated.

The Friends were unable to carry on the project, and it became apparent that our goal of a history could not be achieved in the foreseeable future.

Into our files went the taped interviews, unedited and many incomplete, several hundred slides and a series of audio-visual tapes of groups and individuals. Some years later the Friends decided to make the contents of as many of the taped interviews as possible available as background material on the history of the community.

The tapes contain the voices of Mattituck citizens speaking about a time and a place they knew intimately. The authors of the tapes found it pleasant "... to look back and think back over the years", and the Friends are offering these plain spoken, sometimes humorous or touching accounts of 'how it was in those days'.

The material has been transcribed just as it was given to the interviewers with only repetitious and non-pertinent matter omitted. We have added a few notes, some information from conversations with the authors,

and have included several written pieces. Where pictures were available we have reproduced them together with articles from the Suffolk Times.

We express our gratitude to the authors whose interviews are recorded here as well as to those whose interviews we have not yet been able to transcribe. Our thanks to our volunteer proof readers, Nancy Duryee and Mary Flanagan, and to those who graciously loaned or gave us old photographs.

Many thanks go to our typists, Dorothea Delehanty, Kathleen Reeve and Rose Costello, who were dedicated in their efforts to transcribe the sometimes difficult recordings. And heart-felt thanks to the Mattituck Free Library whose Directors and Staff have been consistently helpful and patient as we carried on our work in their midst.

The Friends of the Mattituck Free Library  
Katherine Lascelle, Project Co-ordinator

July 1986

## MATTITUCK ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Contents of Tape No.: 14-JCP-1  
Oral Author: Julia Craven Penny

Date of Interview: 10/27/78  
Interviewer: John Traversa

### The Reverend Craven and Memories\*

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Elmer Ruland; Leon Hall, butcher shop; Geroge Fischer; Mrs. Conklin; Mrs. Wells and the Octagon House; Conklin house; Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Conklin; John Wells; Mr. and Mrs. Bryant Conklin  
Mattituck House; Glenwood Hotel; Eureka House; Nathaniel Tuthill and Annie Gildersleeve Tuthill; Charles Wickham; Philip Bronson Tuthill; Charles Gildersleeve; Mary Greeves; Mr. Cox, candy store.

#### Autobiographical Sketch

\*Dr. Charles E. Craven, the author of a History of Mattituck, Long Island, N.Y. Published 1906.

\*\* The Reverend Epher Whitaker is the author of a History of Southold, now out of print. A 'substantial reproduction' of Whitaker's work called Whitaker's Southold was published in 1983 by Amereon House, Mattituck, N.Y.

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MATTITUCK HISTORY PROJECT

Contents of Tape #14 JCP-1  
Oral Author: Julia Craven Penny

October 27, 1978  
Interviewer: John Traversa

"Reverend Craven and Memories"

I: What I am going to ask you about is your father, and your earliest memories, from 1900 on...

A: I can tell you one thing, but I mustn't...

I: Why?

A: Because it would be quite a shock to you if I told you. It mustn't go on the recording, because I was told I should keep my mouth shut about it and not say it again. But I get so mad about it.

My father had a very nice pastorate down in Pennsylvania, near Philadelphia, and there was a fight in the church, because there is always one man in the church that likes to be boss, and his daughter sang in the choir. And there was a discussion as to whether the choir should be in the front of the church or the back of the church, and there was quite a fight about it. So Father said that the only thing to do was to put it to vote, and it went against this man and his daughter. It got just the opposite from what they wanted. They were so upset at Father over that that Father resigned and left. And he had some very good places that he went to, one in Pittsburgh, and they liked him very much; they said that he would hear from them, and he never heard a sound. Then he got a chance to preach in another church, and they liked him there, but nothing ever became of it. So finally a friend of his was out in Acuebogue in a church, and he said, "The Mattituck church is vacant, why don't you go out there

and try that." He said, "It isn't much of a salary, but it would at least give you something." Father had four children, so Father came to Mattituck, and they liked him, and they asked him to come as the Pastor.

Dr. Whitaker--I don't know whether you've come across him at all, in Southold--he was a grand old man, if ever there was. Even after he was absolutely blind and deaf, he still went to church every Sunday, and he never went to sleep during the...and he got well along in his eighties before he died. So after Father had been in Mattituck for awhile, Dr. Whitaker said, "I've got something to tell you. After we got you to come to the Mattituck Church..." - he was the head of the Presbytery in those days. "...a man wrote to us from Pennsylvania, and said not to have you, not to trust you, that you weren't worth trusting, and not to accept you as the minister." And Dr. Whitaker said, "I said to the people in Mattituck, we'll do as we please. We'll try him out, if we like him, we will have him." That is what had happened with these other churches, the Pittsburgh church, and the other church. This man had written to them, "Don't trust Dr. Craven, don't accept him." Therefore they hadn't. So he came to Mattituck on the salary of nine hundred dollars.

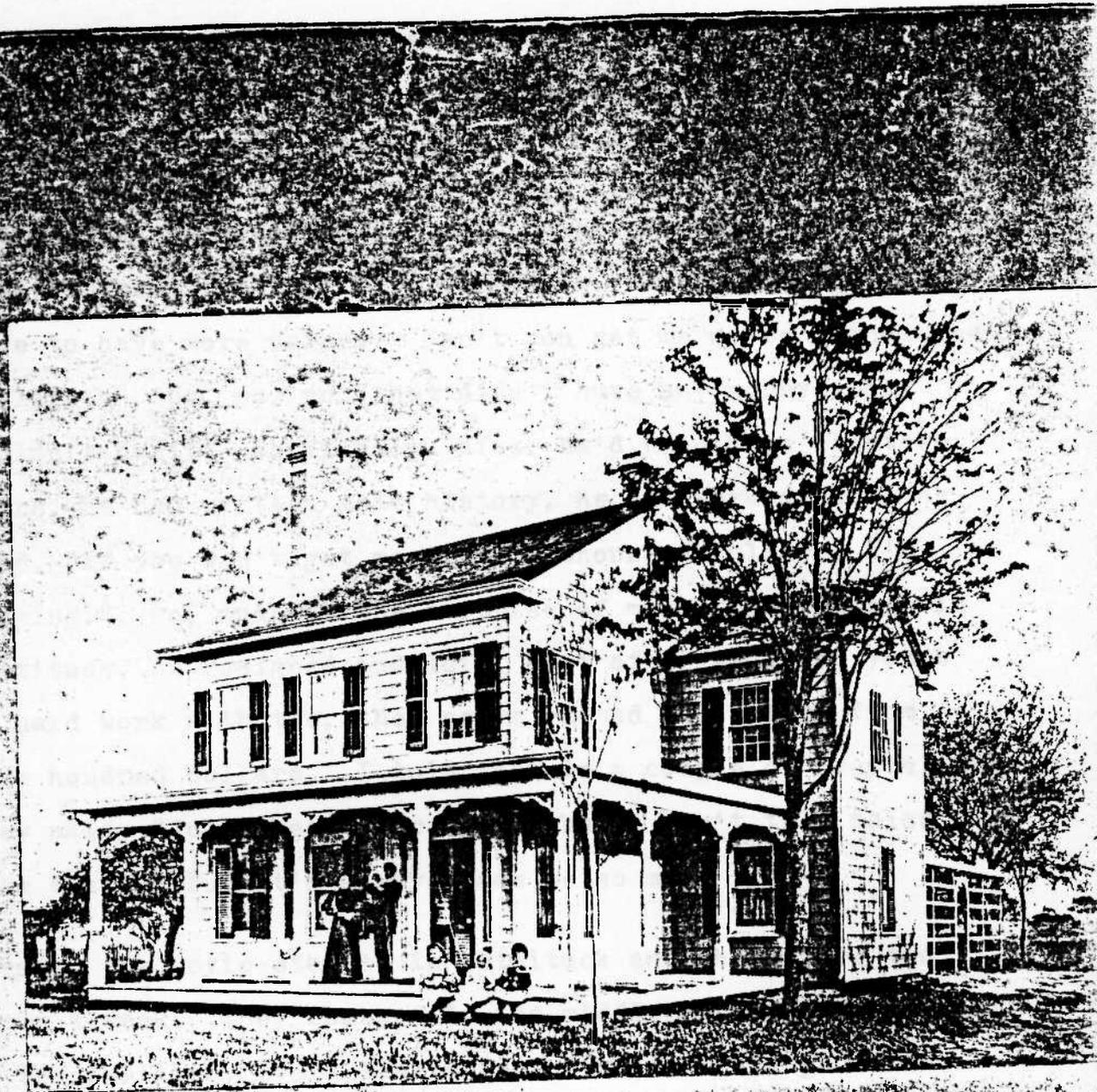
I: That was around what year?

A: Eighty-six I guess\*.. yes, that's right. It was before my youngest ....My youngest brother was born out here in Mattituck in eighty-seven so it was eighty-six that Father came out here. And he worked hard. He had only a bicycle because when we first came they didn't have automobiles. He tutored people

\* The date is actually 1895 when her father came to the church in Mattituck. The author is in error here. The brother, then was born in 1896 or 1897.

Presbyterian Parsonage 1895

The Reverend Craven and family



in the summer, not because they were stupid, but because they wanted to get ahead of it. He had some very wonderful people that he liked very much.

I: What did he tutor?

A: Whatever they wanted, even Greek. The man who was later my husband studied Greek with him, not that he needed to, but he wanted to do something.

And he stayed on and stayed on, and he got the church up, and most of them liked him very very much. But he said, "I will have to have more salary. Can't you get me up to a thousand dollars." No, no, no, they didn't have any money, they couldn't do it! So finally, after he'd been here eighteen years, he had written this history, he had worked hard, he said, "If you won't get me up to a thousand dollars, I'm leaving." So, much to the surprise of many, many people in Mattituck, he resigned and left. But after eighteen years of hard work with the, they never raised his salary from nine hundred dollars. I told that to a couple of people, and they said, "Julia keep your mouth shut. Don't tell tales like that." But it's always made me so mad.

Because the movie started in Mattituck and there were two shows a week. They changed in the middle of the week. Some of the families, every single one of them, would go to the movies to see the first picture, and see the second picture. Of course it didn't cost much to get in the movies, but if it was a family of four and it cost them 25¢ to get in the movie, that would be a dollar, and twice a week, that would be two dollars. The Cravens couldn't go to the movies, they didn't have two dollars to do it. Just to get shoes for

seven people cost more than the two dollars but lots of them went twice a week, and took the whole family to the movies. So that's one thing that I don't tell outside, because it shouldn't be.

I: I personally think that it should. I disagree with you because it's something that happened, and I don't blame you for being angry. I would be angry also.

A: Now Donald Gildersleeve used to write up some of the back things in Mattituck, and he wrote about Mrs. Taft, who was the principal of the school, and that she came in at a ridiculously low salary to start with, but she gradually got to a higher salary in the school. But I suppose there was sort of competition with the school. There were more teachers to be gotten, and if the teachers under Mrs. Taft required more salary then they had to give Mrs. Taft more salary, but there was no one under Father to push his salary.

I: Mrs. Taft was the principal?

A: She was the principal of the school for several years.

I: Was she principal when you went to school?

A: Yes, but I never was in her room at all. I started when I was seven years old. We lived right next door to the school. What is now the Catholic Church was the athletic grounds. We had a grand baseball team, and then we lived where the parsonage is now. It was torn down and this new house put up. Then we just went right across the athletic grounds to the school, where the Library is now. When the bell started to ring, we'd just run for school, and get there.

But don't you record that and put that around or I'll be in Dutch. But it always made me mad.

I: Well, I don't blame you, but I think it should be known. In fact there are a lot of ....

A: He had to tutor and he had to write a history, and he had to do things to feed us.

I: What would you say was an average working man's salary around 1900?

A: I don't have any idea. Most all of the people around were farmers. Of course, some did better than others.

I: I just want you to know that there are some other people in town who know about this, who know that your father....the story about your father, and his salary, and the reluctance to raise the salary.

A: Of course, there's not many of the people left around here who...Donald Gildersleeve is one. Now I wish I knew where that was, that I found it the other day, something written by Donald about Father and how he was liked so much by everyone around. Of course, he had to go by foot or by bicycle everywhere, and he went to call on all of the sick and all of the shut-ins and all of the such. But if I go into the hospital now, the minister comes to see me. But I haven't been able to go to church in two years, but the minister never comes to see me, never. He's never been inside of this house, except for the time of my husband's death. But I don't understand why it is, that the sick and the shut-ins don't get called on at home, but they always do, if I'm in the hospital,

the minister comes to see me frequently. Well, what do you want to know?

I: I'd like to know a little more about your father, for instance why he decided to write the history of Mattituck. Whose idea was that?

A: He himself. He got interested in the whole thing and the history of the church, mostly. You've seen one of the histories, haven't you?

I: Yes, I've read it.

A: I had never read that preface or forward until just the other day. He tells about one of his biggest jobs was to put down every name of every grave in the old (unclear) Cemetery. That was a big big job. Everyone of them, he's got recorded in that history.

I don't know whether you've come across Channing Downs. He calls himself, Dr. Downs now. He has written a couple of things, just pamphlets and things of that kind. He has differed with Father about things, which is perfectly all right. Father may have made mistakes. It took an awful lot of going up to Riverhead to the county offices to look over things, to go to the cemetery itself and to get all the names and all the.... so forth. It was a terrific job, terrific job, and it wouldn't be surprising if he did make mistakes because they dated way, way, way back to about the 1600's.

He wrote a pamphlet. See there's always been a discussion as to which was founded first, Southold or Southampton. And he wrote a pamphlet on that, and he made all his friends in

South....He must have said that Southold was started first because all his friends from Southampton got so mad at him they would scarcely speak to him, because they felt that they were founded first, but it's hard to say. Both around the sixteen hundreds.

I: Was it Frank Lupton who financed the writing of the book?

A: Frank Lupton did the publishing of the book. I should say the printing of the book.

I: He didn't finance it?

A: No. Well, it didn't cost Father anything to have it printed. But you see Father's picture in the history, everyone of them, Father's picture was upside-down, and they all had to go back to Brooklyn and have that picture taken out, and the bindings have never been good since. They all go to pieces. It's a shame, because I suppose in a thing like that they would all be turned over. It's just every one was wrong. Oh I'll never forget that day, we youngsters were so excited when the big boxes came of the histories. And to open them up and find Father's picture upside-down in every one!

I: I'm surprised that they didn't just cut the page and turn it.

A: Well they weakened the binding, and they've never been the same since. They all go to pieces very quickly.

I: Can you tell me a little bit more about his resignation? I suspect that he felt rather angry.

A: Well what he did, he started a school in Mattituck, a

school for boys, but sadly the War came along just at that time. The school never succeeded because of the war. He got a few pupils. If this is being recorded I don't want to say anything...well most of the pupils he got were the dumb ones. But we did have,..had a lovely house down on Marratooka Lake, the Wickham house, it faces the Lake. It was much, much bigger than it is now. After we got out of the house after the school went because of the war, why Cedric tore off a great deal of the house. Cedric got married and lived there in that house.

I: Who's Cedric?

A: Cedric Wickham. He's dead now. That was the Wickham house, that was the house that all the Wickhams were brought up in.

I: So you moved into the Wickham house?

A: For the school, we started the school there. It was a beautiful place for a school, and Mother certainly fed them well. We had some day pupils and some boarding pupils. But it was sad, because as I said, the war came along then and that just smashed everything. Then Father was the head of the Draft Board out here and, of course, he had some enemies over that because the mothers would come and plead that their sons not be sent to war. And if they were strong and husky and able, they'd have to go. But Father was the head of the Draft Board and he'd have to go up to Riverhead every day. He never left home until the train was just about at the station. The conductor used to stand on the platform with his watch in his hand, watching for Father to come around the

corner by the Octagon house there, but he always kept the train for him, or else he sprinted and made it. He had long legs, he was over six feet tall. Then my brother, they couldn't decide whether to draft him or not. They sent him into Brooklyn to a doctor, and the doctor would say no, he had a heart condition. And they'd bring him out here and the doctor would say no, he didn't have a heart condition. So it ended in my brother going into uniform, and being clerk for the board.

I: Which brother is this?

A: My brother, James, always called "Mac". My mother was a MacDougal and his middle name was MacDougal, and there were so many James or Jims in the family, we always called him Mac.

I: So he worked alongside your father?

A: Yes. They took the train every morning. Came back every afternoon. They had to walk from the Wickham house way down to the station every day. But they didn't think anything of walking in those days, everybody walked.

I: Where is this Wickham house?

A: On Suffolk Avenue. You know where the lake is, it would be the south side of the lake. It's a beautiful big house, but it's only about half as big as it was when we had it.

I: It's still standing?

A: Yes, yes. I guess Cedric Wickham's son must live there now. Cedric and his wife and his two sons moved there after we moved out.

I: Where did you move to from there?

A: We moved to another house right on the lake, facing the lake, the Reeve house, right along the same street, only a little bit further to the west.

In those days--I left home for training, I'm a nurse--I went into training for 3 years. I'd do a little nursing out here, then I'd go into the city to my own hospital, and do some nursing there. I worked in the Greenport Hospital when it was just a big old fashioned home, and then they made it into the hospital. This was before they had all the hospital buildings that they have now. But there were five of us, we had five children in the family. There are just two of us left now, my youngest brother and myself.

I: Can you tell me, is this the Reeves house that the Pims live in now?

A: No. I don't know who lives in it. That was an Isaiah Reeve house, and where we lived, it was a George Reeve house.

I: What happened after the war was over? Was your father still in charge of the draft board?

A: He was called to a church in Montclair, New Jersey, and he was there for five years. Then he retired, on a pension of forty-five dollars a month. You see the church pension was regulated by how much your salary had been, and because his salary had only been \$900.00 a year. Of course, those five years in Montclair he had a bigger salary, but...

I: Can you tell me how much?

A: I don't know what it was. I don't remember. I was nursing at the time. But I do know that when he retired he got forty-five dollars a month pension. When he died I had given up nursing to come out here with my mother to take care of her.

I didn't nurse for six years, then I had to put her in a nursing home. I couldn't take care of her any longer after five years.

I: Wait a minute. When he retired did he retire here?

A: No. In Montclair, New Jersey.

I: Where was your mother at that time?

A: With him, we all lived in Montclair. He died there.

Mother and I came out here to New Suffolk.

I: How long was he retired before he died?

A: He was eighty-seven when he died. I don't know I would have to figure it out.

I: Then you and your mother moved to New Suffolk?

A: Yes. I gave up nursing to take care of her and she got very, very, very difficult until finally I couldn't take it any longer. Putting her in a nursing home, then I had to go back to nursing to help pay the bills. You don't get into a nursing home for nothing. Back then it was nothing like it is today.

I: You were nursing in Montclair, right?

A: Uh-huh.

I: Then after that you nursed over in Greenport?

A: I worked in Greenport, I worked in Riverhead, or some homes around. The longest home case I ever had was here in Mattituck.

I: Did you like nursing?

A: Oh yes. I liked it very much, I don't think a girl could ever take it up if she doesn't like it.

I: How did you decide to go into nursing?

A: Just because I liked to be a nurse, I liked nursing.

I: Was anyone in your family a nurse before you?

A: No.

I: Did you know anybody, friends?

A: That were nurses? Well, yes, not when I was too young, but the nurse who took care of anybody in the family who was sick. She took care of my aunt in Newark, and took care of my sister when she had....my sister had seven children, she had the same nurse. But even so, I would have been a nurse even if it weren't for her, I like nursing.

I: And where did you study nursing?

A: Montclair, Mountainside Hospital. You don't know Montclair at all?

I: No I don't. Can you tell me how nursing has changed?

A: Nurses were more dedicated to their work then than they are today. Today lots of them only care about the looks of their uniform, how they look in their uniform, and when they get their paycheck.

I: Can you explain that for me?

A: No, I don't know as I can. But you don't find the dedicated nurses that you used to when I was working.

I: What did you like the most about being a nurse?

A: Oh, I don't know. Of course there are some cases that you like better than others.

I: Do you remember anyone in particular?

A: That longest case I enjoyed very much. The Rulands. Elmer Ruland just died, just this year. His wife I took care of...

I: Do you remember when that was?

A: I don't know. I'd have to look it up.

I: Was it after World War II?

A: World War I is when I was in training. I never did nursing in WWI because I was in training at that time. I graduated in 1919.

I: Can you tell me why you enjoyed Elmer Ruland's wife in particular? Was she nice to you?

A: Oh, she was always nice, but it wasn't her. I...I had great times there. The daughter was just graduating from high school, and the boys were younger. We couldn't seem to get a cook or anyone to come in, so the daughter and I did the cooking. I used to make strawberry shortcakes. I invited Mother over for shortcake one day. She said to Elmer, "I hope this is all right, Julia asked me to come over and have some shortcake." He said, "As long as she makes the shortcake, she can invite who she wants." I had a very, very, very sick person, but she got well.

I: How long did you take care of her?

A: I think it was sixteen weeks. I'm just trying to think of how many people who are still alive, who would have known Father. Donald Gildersleeve is one, and Gertrude Reeve Raynor. She knew him, she's only two days older than I am. We were both raised here in Mattituck. Her birthday is August 5, and mine is August 7. so she would know. Have you seen her at all? She might be able to tell you some things. Her father, Reeve and Leon Hall....

I: What was Reeve's first name?

A: Well, Will Reeve, and Leon Hall, they had the butcher/shop which is now, I guess L&L, right along in there. Reeve & Hall

had the butchershop of the whole place. That George Fischer also had a butchershop down there. But Gertrude could probably tell you some things.

I: Were you good friends with Gertrude?

A: Oh yes, very good friends. We were both old maids. I married when I was sixty-three. I married a widower, and she married a widower when she was just around the same age, around sixty-three. Now we're both widows. But it's funny, I was sixty-two and my husband was sixty-nine when we were married. But Gertrude could tell you. She lives alone down on Freeman Road, I don't know whether you know where it is. You know Wickham Avenue. Well you go right along down Wickham until you come to Freeman Road. For years hers was the only house on the street, but now it's just in the last few years, the whole street's built up. Hers would be the farthest house along from Wickham. But she was born and brought up in Mattituck. I was not born in Mattituck. I was born in Pennsylvania. Father had his church in Pennsylvania. My brother who lives in Connecticut was the only one of the family who was born in Mattituck.

I: You were about six years old when you came here, or seven?

A: I must have been only five, because I was six the day my brother was born. He was the only one born in Mattituck, and he was not born until the year after we came here.

I: I would like to ask you about your earlier memories. When you first came to Mattituck, what you saw, how is it different now?

A: Oh, of course, it's so very different. We lived there in the parsonage, and there was a whole row of black cherry trees,

the whole length of that road there. Of course, we spent many hours eating black cherries, and we would go into the house with our clothes filled with black cherry stains. That was the athletic grounds right there, and then the school next to it.

The church looks very different. Have you got a picture of the church? I was so provoked because a friend of mine found, in a second hand store, a book of churches on Long Island, a book of older churches. But the picture in there was more like the church is today, it wasn't the old church. We didn't have any stained glass windows. We had the small pane glass. I know when stained glass and all that came in, we didn't like it, because it wasn't the old church. Now what they call the Octagon House there on the corner, was a big boarding house, a wonderful boarding house. Mrs. Conklin and her mother, Mrs. Wells, ran a wonderful boarding house there, and my grandmother came out there every summer. There was a Methodist church where the North Fork Theatre is now. It was quite an active little church, but so few people that it was hard to support it, and pay a minister. And it was while Father was there that the Methodist Church was closed, and Father took all of the Methodists in to the Presbyterian Church. And then it was used for the Mechanics, and then the Episcopal Church was quite active back in those days. Mr. Wasson was the minister for quite a few years.

I: Was there much interaction between your father and Reverend Wasson?

A: Oh yes, yes. They were very good friends and got along very well, and there were several Methodist ministers that we

liked. It was pretty hard for them to struggle along with no one in the church who was, had no wealth at all. The Methodists were mostly poorer people, but quite staunch in their beliefs and all, but then they were all taken in to the Presbyterian Church, and the Methodist was closed. And what is now DeFriest's was another very good boarding house.

I: What was it called?

A: Well it was the Conklins who ran it, but all of them are gone now. The last Conklin girl died about a year ago. But again he was a Conklin that cooked in the Octagon House, and there was a Conklin, a cousin, who had the one up there just across the street from the school house.

I: Did it have a name, or did you just refer to it as the Conklin house?

A: Yes, we just called it the Conklin house, and I guess the one on the corner, the Octagon House, I guess that was known as the Wells'. Mrs. Conklin's mother and father were Mr. and Mrs. Wells, who lived there.

I: Do you remember their first names?

A: John Wells, and Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Conklin. The ones up the street, where DeFriest is now, were Mr. and Mrs. Bryant Conklin.

I: Any other early memories of Mattituck?

A: Yes, the night that the Livery Stable burned. My, that was exciting that night. Everybody was in church, and here was the fire--I don't know what they had in those days, it wasn't a siren, it was something or other,--and most of the men just went out of the church. Father stood up and said we'll sing one verse of such and such a hymn, and then he

said, "No we won't. Rise and I'll pronounce the Benediction." He pronounced the Benediction and then he went over and helped pump the man pump. It took four men and the papers the next day read, "Preacher leaves pulpit to pump fire engine." The horses were running all around, it was quite exciting.

I: Whose stable?

A: Zenzius.

I: Did they build a new one after that or was that the end of it?

A: Oh I guess it was built again. I'm not sure. That's right in back of where the Glenwood is. Now I guess Louis Dohm has his plumbing office in the Glenwood, but the Glenwood was owned by the Zenzius. We had three hotels here in the town at that time: the Mattituck House, and the Glenwood, and the Eureka House. The Mattituck House isn't standing anymore, it's been torn down, but the Glenwood and Eureka House are still standing.

I: Where is the Eureka?

A: Well....it's on Love Lane, over the railroad, the white house that stands up there, the lower part of that has been made into apartments, and the second story is lived in by the people who own it. You know where Dr. Urist is?

I: No, is this just north of the tracks?

A: Yes, just north of the tracks on the right hand side of Love Lane. It's a white house.

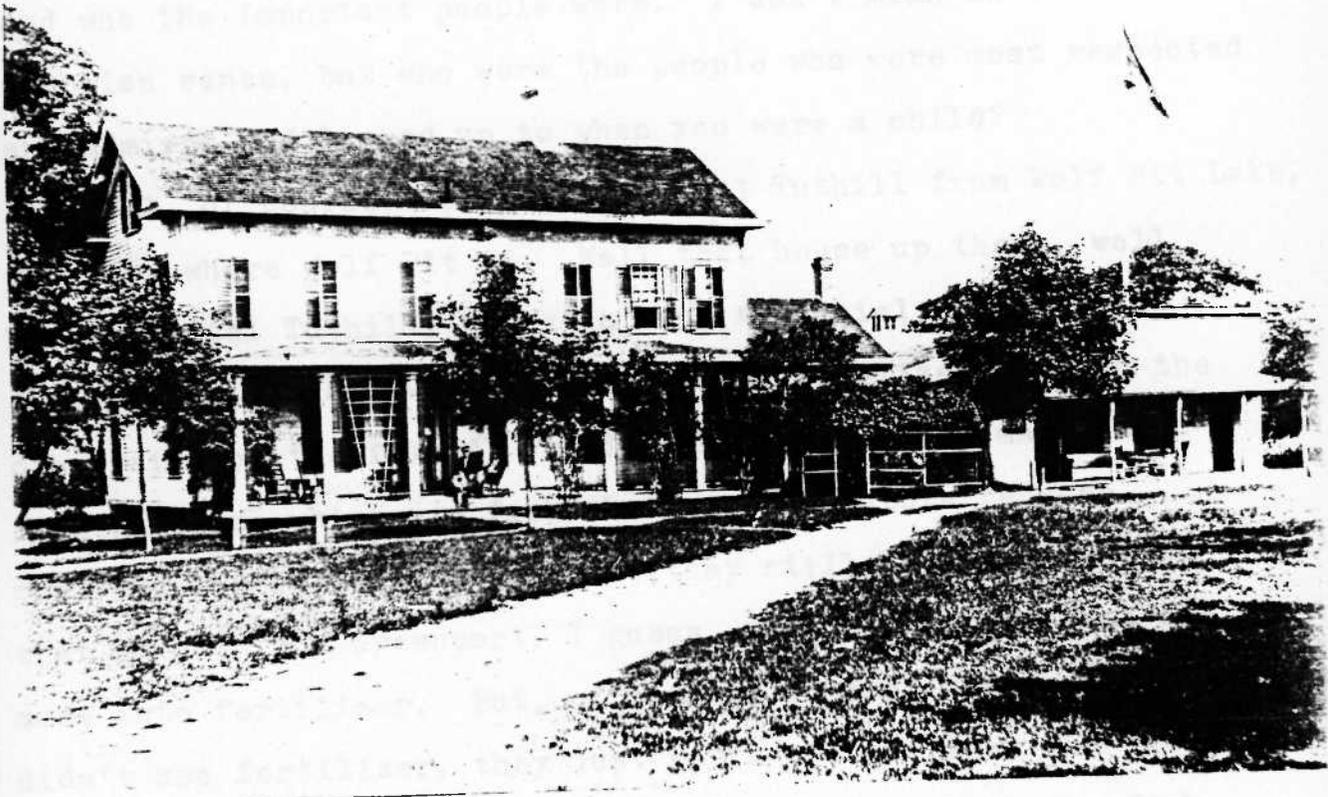
I: Who owned the Eureka House?

A: Well they were <sup>Ma</sup> ^ cMillans in those days, but I don't know....I imagine these owners now are decendants of the <sup>Ma</sup> ^ cMillans.



MATTITUCK HOUSE. MATTITUCK, E. I.





The Eureka House, now the McMillan home (1978)

I'm sure they must be, but <sup>Ma</sup> Millans ran it in those days.

Yes, I can tell you more about old Mattituck than....I think I've talked too much about the Craven family that I shouldn't have. It's alright.

A: But anything else....

I: Well, I would like to know anything else that you can think of from your early days, what things were like then, and who the important people were. I don't mean in a snobbish sense, but who were the people who were most respected and admired and looked up to when you were a child?

A: Well, of course, there was Mr. Nat Tuthill from Wolf Pit Lak you know where Wolf Pit is. Well that house up there, well Mr. Nathaniel Tuthill, he had a son, Nathaniel, but I think that Nathaniel, Sr. was a....They made fertilizer over on the other side of the island, Promised Land, and they made it from bunkers, which are fish that are not edible because they are too full of bones. But they still have the boats that go out from Greenport, I guess, getting bunkers that are made into fertilizer. But, of course, some of the farmers didn't use fertilizer, they just got a bad of fish, and put the fish right on the land, and then you knew where the fish were alright. Mary Estelle, what do you remember about Mattituck?

M.E.: (Author's companion) Well, there isn't too much I remember 'cause I've only been here 54 years.

A: What was the factory up there on Factory Ave. Was that the fertilizer factory?

M.E.: Yes.

A: Yes, not far from where she lives now.

I: What kind of factory?

M.E.: Fertilizer factory. It wasn't there when I came. They named the street after it, Factory Avenue.

A: Then there was a pickle factory over on Wickham Ave, what's now...well now they use it for the garbage man, and his trucks and all. But that was a pickle factory over on Wickham Ave. right by the tracks. Which of those burned? Did the fertilizer factory burn down?

M.E.: I guess so. I came here in 1924 and it wasn't there then.

A: 1924, you say? Well I went away for training in 1916 and I think it was there then. I guess it was after I'd gone away that the fertilizer factory burned down.

I: Getting back to the people who were respected then.

Nat Tuthill...Why was he respected?

A: Well, I suppose because he had a big place, he had money, and he had one of the first automobiles in town. He married a Gildersleeve. The Gildersleeve family was big. I think Donald is the only one left.

I: What was Nat Tuthill's wife's name?

M.E.: Annie....

A: Oh yes, Annie Gildersleeve Tuthill. Probably all the pictures that you find in the history are houses of people that were more respected and all.

I: Did they respect everyone that had a lot of money and a lot of property?

A: Yes, but some who didn't have so much, but still were....

I: Can you name somebody like that?

A: Of course, there was Charles Wickham, whose house we lived in, we had the school in later. Cedric Wickham, the son, did quite a little bit for Mattituck...he bought the property and gave it to the Historical Society, Cedric did. The people that lived in that house were Tuthills. Of course, that part of Mattituck then, was called Tuthill Town, everybody about down there was named Tuthill. The man that last lived there was Tuthill, was head of the Bank for awhile, president of the Bank for quite a while.

I: What was his first name?

A: Phillip...Phillip Bronson Tuthill.

I: Is this the North Fork Bank?

A: Uh-uh, Uh-uh.

I: I would like to know more why Charles and Cedric Wickham were respected?

A: I don't know. Cedric started the airport. He did a good job up there starting the airport.

I: I thought Parker Wickham started the airport.

A: His father was Cedric. His father owned the property. Parker didn't. But Parker does now. Cedric is dead. Parker and another brother, Jay.

I: You said that you think they did a lot for Mattituck...Can you tell me what besides donating the property to the Historical Society...

A: That was Cedric.

I: Do you remember anything else that they did for Mattituck?

\*\*\*

lane \*Herbert Tuthill

Route 46 \* Ernest Tuthill

Z

Ralph's map of  
TUTHILLTOWN

About 1900

Showing location of  
Tuthill farms at  
that time.

Houses with stars are  
still there. (1985)

\*Bryden Tuthill, Ralph's father.  
Land purchased in 1840 for  
\$75 an acre. Ralph was born  
here. Now farmed by John  
Tuthill (1985), son of Ralph's  
brother Ernest.

\*\*\* Leslie and Stanley (Sparky)  
Tuthill now live there, grand-  
sons of Herbert. Charlie  
Tuthill was their father.

Elijah's Lane, named for  
Ralph's grandfather, was a  
small lane with a fence at  
the end. To get through, a  
person had to take down a rail  
which served for a gate.



Elijah's  
Lane

Jessie Warren Tuthill  
on Locust Avenue below,  
was the first cauli-  
flower auctioneer.

George Ike  
Tuthill

\*Luther  
Tuthill

\*Terry  
Tuthill

to Mattituck

Clarence \*\*  
Tuthill

Locust  
Ave

\* Philip  
Tuthill

Blossom  
Bend (1985)

Jessie  
Warren  
Tuthill  
had a  
farm  
here.

(His grandfather  
was a sea  
captain.) He  
was presi-  
dent of the  
North Fork  
Bank and  
Trust Co.  
This is the  
present Mattituck  
Historical Museum.

At one time,  
Ralph and his  
brother Clarence  
farmed this land  
together.

\*\*  
Long before Clarence took over the house,  
another Tuthill lived there. She was the  
sister of Elijah, Ralph's grandfather,  
and she was married to Abraham Torrey, a  
sea captain. Abraham Torrey died at the  
beginning of the century.

A: Oh I knew plenty of the men back there who were... Charles Gildersleeve was the Station Agent. He never married, but he was treasurer of the church and was one of the ones who was bound he would not give my father a bigger salary, ever, ever, ever. So I wouldn't say he did much for Mattituck, because I never liked him.

I: Was he the one that was mostly responsible for deciding the salary?

A: Yes, he'd say, "Haven't got any money. Haven't got any money. It has to come out of my own pocket if I pay him any more." Seventy-five dollars a month for seven people. Of course, food didn't cost like it does now today, and father had a garden, we raised chickens, and we ate chickens, and we had the garden. But one of his parishioners saw him in his garden. Father never smoked on the street, or in public, unless it was in somebody's home where they expected him to smoke. But he was out in his garden working one day, and smoking a pipe, and well the letter he got from this woman, who was a Methodist, because the minister was smoking, very very terrible. Oh what a letter she wrote, and yet she wasn't a Mattituck person. She was a sister of a Mattituck person, but she lived in Cutchogue. But she wrote that the minister in Mattituck was smoking outdoors where he could be seen. Awful, awful!

I: So that was a big "NO, NO" in those days, for a minister to smoke a pipe.

A: Well a minister wasn't supposed to do anything. You'd think a minister wasn't human. Father did not play cards, but

he did play dominoes - and, of course, sometimes he was criticized for playing dominoes. But as I say, my father was human, and he liked to have recreation, as well as anybody else. He never smoked a cigarette, but he did smoke a pipe. I don't think he could have written a sermon without his pipe going. He sat in his study and kept his pipe running, and his mind running. He did his best sermon, I think, after we'd all gone to bed at night and the place was quiet. He never wanted to go to bed until about one or two o'clock. Then he never wanted to get up in the morning. Mother was quite the opposite. Mother went to bed early, then was ready to get up and get <sup>on</sup> the job in the morning, but Father hated to get up.

I: Did he use to practice his sermons on you or your mother?

A: Not at all, never. He always wrote notes on them, he never wrote out a whole sermon, but just notes. No, he never practiced on any of us. But he had a very wonderful young mens' Bible Class, and that was really quite noted. Every year they would go out on a sail, rent a boat, and each one take his girl along with him. But sometimes they'd get becalmed out on the bay. Of course, in those days they didn't have any engines. There was nothing but sails. They would get becalmed out there, and there they were, no getting home. But he really did have quite a...if I find that paper that I found the other day of something that Donald Gildersleeve wrote about father. Where would that be? That's my trouble, my papers get all lost, and I want a paper or something and I don't know where it is.

I: Was it published in a newspaper, or was it in a book, or...

A: No, I think it was something in the church, that Donald wrote about Father.

I: Was Donald one of his students in the tutoring...?

A: Yeah. No, Donald, I guess, was a little younger than...His brother Sid would go. You see Donald would be just about the age of my brother who was only four years old when we came to Mattituck. Donald and Mac were contemporaries. But Donald's still living, with a wife, Alice. They've moved up to Laurel. Donald didn't want to marry her in the beginning. His wife died and he was living alone and doing his own cooking and getting on beautifully. He had a brother and sister-in-law here in town and he was fine. But Alice made up her mind that she was going to marry Donald. So he married her, and I guess she has taken good care of him, very good.

I: Who was Donald's first wife?

A: Vivien Duryee. Her mother died of cancer. Vivien died of cancer. The next sister Clara died of cancer. The brother\* died of cancer and John's son died of cancer, the whole family. Vivien was just about my age. That whole family, just one after another -- Oh there is one daughter left. She's never had any cancer.

I: How do you spell Duryee?

A: D-u-r-y-e-e.

I: Would you say it was difficult for you, or for your family, the children in particular, to be in a small town, and being the minister's family...you always had to be on your best behavior...

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\* A member of the Duryee family tells us that the brother died of a heart attack.

A: Yes, but it didn't bother us too much. Yes, we were supposed to be, to be perfect.

I: Were you?

A: Oh no! Of course not...what youngsters are?

I: Are you now?

A: Perfect? No!

I: Do you remember any interesting stories or funny incidents related to being a minister's daughter?

A: No, I can't think of any now.

I: Was it any problem for you to make friends in Mattituck?

A: Oh no, not at all. Not at all. There were about five of us that always played together, Miss Gertrude Reeve and May Conklin--which was right across from the school--my sister Sarah and I, that's four. There was another girl who was with us sometimes, but not always. She died a good many years ago.

I: What was her name?

A: Greeves...Mary Greeves (spelling ?) They used to live there next to the Conklins.

I: As children you used to play together?

A: Oh yes. Of course, we usually played over at the Conklin's because that was the big place with the barns and all of that. You could play hide and seek, and do all kinds of things. One of the things that we had was...my brother Charlie was riding a bicycle down to Mattituck to get the mail, you see he always had to go for the mail. And when he got to the corner there by the Octagon House, he was coming in

the road, and here was this big oil truck with two whopping big horses on it, running away. So when he saw it coming along the road my brother turned up on the sidewalk, and just as he got there by the Octagon House, the horses turned up there, and here he was, this little mite on a little bit of a bicycle, and this great big oil truck and all. And they had a slanting cellar door there, and fortunately the cellar door was open, and my brother slipped off the bicycle and down those steps, and the team and the things smashed his bicycle all to pieces. He came home after awhile and we were all eating dinner, and very calmly came in--it was my older brother's bicycle--and he says, "Where is my bicycle?" "Smashed," says Charlie. So then after we had got it out of him, that he and the big oil truck had met there at the corner. But he slid down those stairs. If that hadn't been opened, I don't know what would have happened because the slant door would have been too slippery for him to stay on.

I: Is that door still there?

A: No, because you see, all those stores have been built along that side of that Octagon house. That was all house in those days and the cellar door was right there on the sidewalk. Right along Love Lane there, where all the little stores are, was an ice-cream parlor and candy place and we always went in there, and we only had a penny, and we'd get a penny's worth of candy. And poor Mr. Cox, he'd have to wait and wait and wait until we decided whether we'd have one penny of this or one penny of that.

I: What was the name of the store?

A: Cox's. C-o-x.

M.E.: My husband used to tell me how he'd save up three cents and he'd take half an hour picking out candy. It was what, three for a penny...

I: Was it just a candy and ice-cream store?

A: Yes. I went over to play with the Methodist minister's daughter one day, and we found a penny in the church, - so we immediately went over to Cox's to get some candy and then I had an awful guilty feeling after that, - to pick up a penny in the church and go buy candy.

I: Did you ever tell your father about it?

A: Oh yes.

I: What did he say?

A: I wouldn't know, I wouldn't remember that at all....I don't think he was very much upset about it.

I: Was he a stern father, or was he lenient?

A: Oh, he was very lenient.

I: How about your mother?

A: She was too, except when we wanted to buy something that we didn't have the money for...and we'd insist we wanted it, but there was no use. There wasn't any money so...

I: Was she upset that you had to struggle for money all the time?

A: Yes, I think so. Of course, Father was more upset, that's the reason he did so much tutoring and writing of history and he spent so much time over this thing of whether Southold or Southampton was the older. He spent a lot of time over that. But everybody was so provoked and mad about it...I don't know, we threw them all away years after he'd gone...

Then once I wish I had one...the subject came up, but he never sold one of those.

I: Did your father have friends in town, Mattituck?

A: Oh yes, oh yes, and especially this young men's Bible Class... yes, there were lots of those fellows that they'd come around the house and play dominoes with him, or Croquinole\*. They used to play Croquinole a lot in those days.

I: What's Croquinole?

A: Well, I don't know. You have a board...

I: Like Chess?

A: It was a smaller thing than pool. You didn't use a stick to push them. I think you snapped 'em with your finger. It was just a big, square board up on a table. You had to stand up to play it. I think you just knocked 'em into pockets on the four sides. Dominoes and Croquinole were the things that they played when they'd get together, the Class.

I: I'm quite surprised that the friends or the people in town who were friends with your father and who were supportive of him didn't push harder to get an increase in salary...

A: I don't know. I don't know. It's queer, I don't know why they could have....

I: Can you tell me why you decided to move back to Mattituck yourself?

A: Well, I have relatives here. You see my sister had seven children and some of them are married and live here, and it's home to me. I've lived in Mattituck more of my life than any

\*The spelling of this game is uncertain, Ed.

other place. My sister bought a house in New Suffolk, and Mother and I moved out to it. And then I stayed in it until I got married. Then soon after that, my sister had to go into a nursing home. She was two years older than I. She lived in New Jersey, and came out for weekends. And she was very, very, very much opposed to my marrying Arthur Penny, had a good bit of disruption. But then she did sell the house to one of her nieces and her husband and the great nephew lives in it now.

I: Can you tell me what you like the most about Mattituck?

A: I don't know, it's just home. I knew everybody. When I was there taking care of Mother those five years, I had a woman come in one day a week, on a Tuesday, and I'd get out that one day a week. Then I'd go to see my various friends around Mattituck. I never stayed in when I had a day off. I don't know whether you've ever come across, in Cutchogue, the Wickham fruit stand. That's my niece, my sister's oldest daughter. So I'd often go down there for lunch, or somewhere else for lunch on a Tuesday. I could call up anybody in Mattituck I knew and say, "I'm off today, can I come down to your house today and have some lunch?" And they'd say, "Yes, come on." They're all my friends.

I: We're almost out of tape.

A: I haven't said anything that's really worthwhile, have I?

I: Yes, you have. I find it very interesting.

A: Things I had no business to say.

I: I think everybody has the right to speak his mind, and I'm thankful to you personally and for the Friends of the Library for sharing your memories and your point of view.

A: They say that when a person gets old, they remember more about the things in the past better than things right off in the present. But my mind has kept up pretty well. I'm blind in one eye and I'm deaf. But I get around. Even with my one eye I can still play bridge. I play every Monday, sometimes on Wednesdays. I can't drive a car anymore, that hurts...Have a car right there in the garage and can't drive it. Mary Estelle comes everyday and she drives me any place I have to go, go marketing or go to the library. I sit in this chair and read large print books. I read about three of those a week. I don't watch television much, except when there's baseball. I have to see all the baseball games. Very sad this year, very sad. First the Red Sox got out. That was awful. That last game, the last man up in that Red Sox game, hit the ball and he only hit it up in the air....

End of Tape

name Julia Craven Penny

birth date Aug. 7, 1891 place Downingtown, Pennsylvania

father's name The Reverend Charles E. Craven

mother's name Anna McDougall Craven

children Virginia, Sarah, Julia, James, Charlie  
~~children~~

education nurses' training, Mountainside Hospital, Montclair, N.J.

job training Nurse

work \_\_\_\_\_

official positions Night supervisor (Mountainside Hospital Montclair, N.J.)

member of \_\_\_\_\_

special activities, projects, hobbies Bridge

spouse's name Married 1954. Arthur Havens Penny

children's names \_\_\_\_\_

major turning points in:

Mattituck	my life	my field of interest
1 _____	1 _____	1 _____
2 _____	2 _____	2 _____
3 _____	3 _____	3 _____
4 _____	4 _____	4 _____
5 _____	5 _____	5 _____

for me, Mattituck was \_\_\_\_\_

Mattituck is \_\_\_\_\_

I'd like Mattituck to become \_\_\_\_\_

(feel free to expand on any of the above; your opinions are welcome!)

## MATTITUCK ORAL HISTORY

Contents of Tape: #15 -JCP-2

Date of Interview: November 9, 197

Oral Author: Julia C. Penny

Interviewer: John Traversa

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## Autobiographical Sketch

MATTITUCK HISTORY PROJECT

Contents of Tape 15 JCP-2

November 9, 1978

Oral Author: Julia Craven Penny

Interviewer: John Traversa

Some Mattituck People

I: I would like you to tell me about the Luptons. You said that your sister, Virginia, married a Lupton...

A: Bob Lupton, yes, and they had the seven children.

I: And Robert Lupton was John Lupton's son?

A: Yes, and John was Frank's brother.

I: And how did you come to know the Luptons?

A: We lived right here in Mattituck, and they lived right here in Mattituck. Virginia and Rob were just about the same age. They used to come and play tennis at our house. (unclear) Virginia and Rob getting married.

I: Do you know why the Luptons came out here?

A: Oh they lived out here, the mother of Frank and John and Harry--there were three brothers--she lived right here in Mattituck. Her old house is down there in West Mattituck\*, almost down to what they used to call "Tuthill Town", because there were so many Tuthills down there. - The east part of Mattituck we always used to call "Tuthill Town". You see, John Lupton was an assemblyman in New York State, up in Albany, but he also had this seed business, this cauliflower seed--I don't mean cauliflower--cabbage seed. They sent cabbage seed all over the world. They got the different farmers to grow cabbage seed for them, and they took it back and priced it and bagged it and all of that. Rob could tell

\*The Author must have meant to say east Mattituck as that is where Tuthill Town was.

you by just feeling a cabbage seed, what kind of cabbage it was.

I: Was Rob in business with John?

A: With his father, yes.

I: Who was the first Lupton out here in Mattituck, do you know?

A: No, because it was before my time. Have you looked in Father's history? ....He made a map of all the farms, probably told where the Lupton farm was. You see, after Rob Lupton and all of his family got out of the house there, out of the big house...It went right across the railroad track, and they had a bridge over the railroad track to be able to get across to the other part of their farm. I don't know how far back it was, because Grandma Lupton...John Lupton's... They didn't call him John Lupton, they called him Matt. His name was John Matthew Lupton, John Matthew Lupton. Then there was Frank Lupton who had the publishing business. He had this great big house on the bay. But they used to have among the first automobiles out. They had a Locomobile and they had a Pierce Arrow. But there weren't any long drives that you could take from around Mattituck. They used to go out driving most every afternoon. But if you drove to Orient or if you drove to the south side there was no variety about it. There wasn't any drives to take and he had no hobbies or anything and he was simply bored to death. So he slashed his wrists just before Virginia and Rob were married, almost stopped off the wedding. But they didn't, they went ahead, the invitations were all out, and everything was

all ready. So they went ahead and had the wedding just the same even if he did kill himself.

I: Do you think he committed suicide just because he was bored?

A: I think so.

I: Was he sick?

A: No, not that I know of.

I: How old was he?

A: Well I don't know, it was 1910, so I don't just know how old he was.

I: Was he a good friend of your father's?

A: Frank Lupton? We didn't see much of him, no. He lived in Brooklyn. He had a beautiful big place in Brooklyn, just came out here for the summer. They had this place on the Bay for the summer. We were never terribly well acquainted with Frank Lupton. But Harry Lupton and Matt Lupton, yes, they were here all the year round, and their children were great pals with us. Edmond Lupton was Harry Lupton's son.

I: What did Harry do?

A: Farmed.

I: Would you say the Luptons were considered outsiders?

A: Oh no, a local family. Absolutely, no. Now, Frank Lupton, that building's torn down now, he built a large hall here in Mattituck where they had concerts and lectures and this and that and the other thing. And there were times when they had basketball up there. You would think the whole building would shake down. But on the lower floor of that building

was the Library and the drug store. Then, I guess after the drug store there were doctors' offices in there. But that stood for years and years and years. That was given by Frank Lupton to the village. And it was a very handsome hall there, and very nice for the Library, except it got too small.

I: Did you used to go to Library Hall, yourself?

A: Yes, yes, - every Tuesday. I guess not every Tuesday night, every other Tuesday night, they had what they called the Literary Society. And there was always someone who got up a program, different things for entertainment, and after that they always danced. But the Literary Society was quite a something. My brother, who was very musical, he used to play a piano sometimes and they would get up a little, oh, I don't know, a little play. I know we asked my brother one night if he was going to play at the Literary that night, and he said, "How can I play if I'm not even going?" He was only a youngster then. He played from the time he was...he couldn't sit on the piano bench at all. He had to stand up at the piano to play, because that was the only way he could reach it.

I: Which brother?

A: That was my brother, James, but he was always called Mac. You see, my brother Charlie and I are the only ones left now of five children...Charlie, he must be eighty-one, if I'm eighty-seven.. 'cause I'm six years older.

I: Do you know how Frank Lupton got the idea to give the Library Hall to Mattituck?

A: Well, I guess he thought he was a son of Mattituck. He had the money. They needed a hall. He went ahead and gave it.

I: Did he have any friends?

A: Friends around here? I don't know, he never seemed to, so much.

I: He was kind of a loner?

A: No, he and his wife down there, and they had a married daughter. I don't know. I never really knew him. I knew the other two much better, Harry and Matt Lupton.

I: How would you describe the town peoples' feelings about having Library Hall donated to them?

A: Oh they were quite pleased. I suppose Matt Lupton really had a lot to do with that. Maybe not, but that's the feeling I have. But this History of Mattituck would tell you more about the Hall. There's a picture of it and there's,...

I: I read the history, well, then subsequently Library Hall went into disuse, and was torn down.

A: Yes, yes. Well it was used for years and years and years. I think those basketball games that they used to have up there had a lot to do with it wearing down. My, how it used to shake the rafters when they played basketball up there.

'Course that's just a woman's idea. I don't know.

I: Would you say that was the center of activity in the town?

A: Yes, it was. That's where they had all their dances, and all their Literary Society things, and all their concerts.

I: What happened to change that?

A: I don't know. Maybe the younger generation, when they came along, weren't so interested in it.

I: What were they interested in?

A: I don't know. I guess more in sports than in literary things. They had very good basketball teams. They had very good baseball teams.

I: So your generation used Library Hall for cultural things. Then, after World War I in the twenties, did they start using it for basketball and sports?

A: Yes, I think so.

I: What happened to things like the Literary Society?

A: It just petered out and just stopped. The older generation that ran it and was so interested in it, they practically all died and the younger generation apparently weren't as interested in it. I moved away. You see, I went in training in 1916, so whenever I came back here at all, I just did some nursing. I went to baseball games. I was very much interested in baseball, and we had a very good team out here.

I: Do you remember any of the players?

A: Oh yes, I know all of the players.

I: Okay, tell me who.

A: Well, Fred Pikes, Lou Pikes. (Did she mean Lou Tuthill? Ed.)

I: Can you tell me the positions that they played?

A: Lou Tuthill (or Lou Pike? Ed.) was a catcher and Fred Pike was an outfielder and Roy Reeve was a short-stop and John Barker, he was younger than all there, he came in as a pitcher and Terry Tuthill was a pitcher for a while. And Connie Bullock,

B-u-l-l-o-c-k. He's about the only one of the whole lot that is still living. He was a pitcher for years. Slats Reeve, Leroy Reeve, was a short-stop for as long as I ever remember. He was a short-stop for years and years and years. They called him "Slats", I s'pose because he was so tall and thin.

I: And he's dead now, right?

A: Yes.

I: And these baseball players, they had a team in the 1920's and 1930's?

A: Yes... I wonder if you'd let her in... Come on Baby, hurry up. Come on. She's not expecting to see a man come to the door. Here Kitty, Kitty.... (meow!) That's a good girl. Alright, lie down nice, lie down in Mama's lap, lie down....

I: Maybe she wants to say something...

A: Come back here...

I suppose you've heard all about Katherine Phillips who was the Librarian for so long. She was down in the Library when it was down in the Hall, and my sister was Librarian down there for quite a little while,

I: Sarah?

A: Yes, - I say, for quite a little while, not as long as any of these others. I s'pose she filled in for just a few years.

I: I wanted to get back to the baseball.

A: That baseball diamond was where the Catholic Church is now. And you see, we lived in the house just to east of it there, the manse. So we never thought of going around and coming in the gate. We always just came right through the

hedge and over to the baseball diamond. And that's where I learned everything about baseball. I was only a youngster when I started going over there, but I learned baseball from the bottom up and I wouldn't miss a baseball game now on television if I could help it. Because I listen on radio and television so much, going to a game, big New York game, means nothing to me. I've gotten so used to their, on radio or on television saying who's batting, and who's so and so. And when I go to a game I can't tell one man from another. Of course back in those days, it was radio. I went to a Yankee game in New York. It was a shame. One of my nephews took me, and he didn't have much money, and he took me out to lunch, and he took me to the game, and the whole thing was lost on me. I couldn't get one thing from another. If I'd stayed home, and listened to the radio, it wouldn't have cost so much.

I: Did you ever play, yourself?

A: No.

I: Was it taboo for girls to play baseball back then?

A: I don't know. They never seemed to want them to at that time at all.

I: What kind of sports did girls get involved with?

A: Basketball. We played quite a bit of basketball. I never played much of anything. I never was awfully athletic. I never could skate. Nursing is what I liked, and that's what I got into. And I worked a twelve hour day. You'd get home after seven o'clock at night, and you'd wash out your white stockings, and press your uniform for the next day, then you would go to bed. Your alarm goes off at six o'clock the next morning, and you do the whole thing

over again. So you never got much chance for doing anything when you worked a twelve hour-nursing day. You'd get a bad heart case or a bad pneumonia, and you were kept busy for that twelve hours. Nowadays they wouldn't think of doing anything more than eight hours.

I: Tell me more about sports and baseball. Were the people in Mattituck very interested in sports?

A: Interested in the baseball, yes, and I guess a good many of them back in those days went to, oh yes I know they went to basketball games. That's when they used to play up there in Library Hall. I went to a couple of games up there, but those fellows are all gone now. And, of course, they did an awful lot of skating in the winter, up there, Wolf Pit Lake where Nat Tuthill lived. And, Marratooka Lake, of course, that was the best. The ice got quite thick there. They used to cut the ice there for the ice-houses. My brother was chasing a puck around, and came to the part where the ice was cut. He went in. He got out all right. He came home... and my mother never knew it. He went up the back stairs and put on his best suit, and Mother said, "Why are you so dressed up?" Well he was going to Virginia's for lunch, that's my sister. My mother said, "You never dressed up like that before." But he got away with it.

I: What would her reaction have been?

A: Oh she would have been quite horrified. She would have thought he couldn't go out on the lake again for fear if he'd go in and wouldn't get out too easily. If he'd gotten under that deep ice it wouldn't have been so nice. But he didn't. He got out.

I: Would you say that peoples' attitudes about sports have changed very much?

A: I don't know about it out here nowadays yet. They may have some baseball now but not like it used to be. There were about five teams out here, in Mattituck, in Peconic, in Greenport and Shelter Island and Sag Harbor. If our team was going to Sag Harbor, I went to Sag Harbor. If our team was playing in Riverhead or Greenport, I went along with the team whenever I could. I don't know how much there is now, it's mostly at the school. Of course, the Mattituck school is very active in sports, soccer, I believe, they're quite high up in soccer. But that's all school teams, that isn't a... Of course, this team we had, the Mattituck team and all these others, they were older than school boys. Most of them were married.

I: Was it unusual for men to have that kind of time to play sports?

A: No. This whole league, they all played. Of course some of them were farmers, not all of them. But the games were always on Saturday.

I: I would think that most farmers would have been too busy digging and hoeing....

A: No, they had to have their baseball on Saturday afternoon. Well most of the farmers today, let their men off Saturday afternoon. We don't have so many farmers out here now as we used to, used to be farms and farms and farms. But they found that by selling their farms to a man who wanted

to put in a new development, they got a lot more for that farm, getting that ready cash, than they did when they farmed it. It was harder work everyday in the week on the farm. Two or three new developments that have just gone up in Mattituck now. They get about a half a dozen houses on it, and then that peters out, and somebody comes along and starts another one. I saw one yesterday that I had never seen before.

I: Where?

A: Oh, down east of Mattituck. You'll find there's people out here, - maybe they don't do it quite so much now, but they always did. Everything is east and west or north and south. If you ask them how to get to a certain place, "Well go east a mile and then turn north or south..."

I: Do you see a lot of change? You said that in Mattituck there used to be a lot more farm land.

A: Oh, there used to be much more farm land, ...yes, yes. Things are changed. Right in Mattituck proper you won't find any farms now. Of course John Wickham, well that's Cutchogue, John Wickham has his fruit farm there. But not many right in Mattituck that do have a farm anymore, hardly any. Yet Dave Cooper still has his big farm...

I: Would you like to see the farmers sell more of their land, and more developments come, or would you like to have the farmers keep the land?

A: Oh I would like to keep some farms. It seems awful to see a farming community like we had here, to all go up

into little developments, little houses. Some of the homliest houses are going up now. They're not like the old farm houses, the big farm houses. You don't find many of the big farm houses anymore.

I: What do you like about the old farm houses?

A: I don't know. They were big and roomy and comfortable.

I: Can you think of one in particular that you got to know?

A: Over there on New Suffolk Avenue, the family all died. They sold this to a man, and now he has died. And I heard the other day that they are thinking of making it into a nursing home. That wasn't a farmhouse, they didn't have a farm. But they only had three children, three sons but they built this big house the way people did more in those days. They had big houses.

I: Why?

A: I don't know, they just did.

I: Is this house on New Suffolk Ave. called the Wickham house?

A: It was the Hudsons that lived there. Will Hudson had a canning factory, that canned tomatoes and asparagus. And they both died, and then they sold it to this man from New York. I guess he was more or less of a stockbroker. And he has died, and his wife's in a nursing home up in Riverhead.

I: And what was their name?

A: Munz. M-u-n-z, I guess. Maybe it was s. I knew him when I passed him on the street, I never really knew the man. Of course I lived in Mattituck all those years, and then I

went down in New Jersey when I trained, and nursed down in New Jersey. Then I came back here with my mother after my father died, and my sister bought a house in New Suffolk and I gave up nursing and took care of mother for six years -- six hard years. She got so she didn't know me at all. She was a very difficult case.

I: What was it, senility?

A: Yes. She was in a wheel-chair. It was very hard, and then I simply couldn't take it any longer, and I put her in a nursing home. Then of course I had to go back to nursing to pay for the nursing home. Of course I had brothers and sisters that could help also, but they had their own problems. So then I married one of my patients. But the joke of it was that I had known him all my life. He had been born and brought up here, the Penny Lumber, his father had started. I didn't know when I was called to that case that morning down in the Greenport Hospital, I didn't know who it was going to be. When I got in there and saw him... we hadn't seen each other in a good many years. His younger sister and I were great pals in our younger days, Marjorie Penny, but she died a good many years ago. She died during the war. She went into New York to get war work. She wanted to get into it in some way and died rather suddenly in New York. I don't know what happened. But the sister that lived out here that I kept up a friendship with all the time, we played bridge together a lot, his older sister, was May Raynor, May Penny Raynor. Her daughter now is married

to John Moore who has the Silkworth Real Estate place. But all Arthur's brothers and sisters have died now. He was the last one...no he wasn't either, one has died since he did. But I had know Arthur for years and years and years. When I was a little bit of a thing I knew him and I remember the day that the one you call Arthur Naumer, the one that was here this morning - I remember the morning that he was born. I guess I saw him as soon as anybody did. Marjorie said, "Come on, come on, you got to come see the baby." So we went and saw the baby. That was in 1909, I guess when he was...no, I don't know, I can't get figures right anymore.

I: So Arthur H. Penny, what does the H stand for?

A: Havens.

I: It's not a local family, is it?

A: They came mostly from Shelter Island.

I: How did you decide to get married, if you don't mind my asking?

A: Well I took care of him there in the hospital and old acquaintences. We'd known each other, as I say, for twenty or thirty years. He had had two wives, both had died. He'd been a widower for several years. So he just decided it'd be a good thing if he and I get married, so we did. His mother was just over a hundred when we got married. Her mind was clear on some things, and she remembered me. He went down to see her and told her that he was going to marry Julia Craven - and then he also told her that he was going away for a little trip. And she said, "Are you going to take Julia with you?" He said yes he was taking me with him. So then we drove down to

Florida, we went down for twenty-three years, I guess. I've been going down there since he died. I think this will be my last year if I get down there this year. I can't find anyone to go with me, and I can't go alone.

I: Tell me about George Penny and the Lumber...

A: Well that was Arthur's father. They were living in Peconic in the beginning and then they moved to Mattituck, and he started the lumber business, and Arthur, being the older son worked with him. But he went away to college, and George Jr. did not go away to college. And George, Jr. sort of wiggled himself into being the father's assistant. Then Arthur did something, which in those days wasn't liked particularly in Mattituck. He married an outside girl. He married a girl out in Colorado.

I: That's where he went to school, right?

A: Yes, he went to Williams College for a few years, and then he went out to Boulder, and he married this girl out there. He wrote home, he had a good job out there, "Shall I stay out here, or shall I come home?" And they wrote him, "Come home." But he was very unfortunate with the wife, because in those days people didn't like outsiders. They wanted everybody in Mattituck to marry a Long Islander. But soon after that all the young men started marrying schoolteachers. All these girls were coming in from the outside to teach school, and they all married local fellows. So then after that they couldn't laugh at outside wives. Oh, there must be twenty wives here in Mattituck who were school teachers. Well, a good

many of them who married here have died. Let me see, Naumer's over seventy now. In those days, you see, they hadn't started marrying schoolteachers. Well they didn't have many schoolteachers. They just had the two room schoolhouse for awhile. Then they built an upper story, and they had four rooms, but they didn't have the outside teachers so much. Then, when it began to get bigger, they built a bigger school. They had more outside teachers coming in. Why then, they were snapped up quick.

I: Who was considered an outsider?

A: They weren't Long Islanders.

I: If you were from anywhere on Long Island, then you were okay?

A: Well, pretty much but of course, they preferred the east end of Long Island, local girls marrying local men. But it very soon got so they were marrying teachers, and then that was all right. My Arthur's wife was not accepted, because she was from out West.

I: Were you considered an outsider?

A: Oh, no, no, no. I came to Mattituck when I was five or six years old, brought up in Mattituck. If you walked along the street in Mattituck and met somebody you didn't know. "Who is it? Who is it?" You knew everybody. Now I could walk down the street, and I wouldn't know anybody. But there is not as much walking as there used to be. People used to either ride bicycles or walk. Then along came the automobiles and...

I: You know it strikes me as ironic that outside people were not accepted very well. But the ministers in the church were always outsiders.

A: Yes, but (unclear) here he comes with four children. We all go to Mattituck school, we were known with all the youngsters around. Only one was born here, my one brother that is living in Connecticut now. He's the only one in my family that was born here. But we just fitted right in and went to the Mattituck school and Sunday school along with all the other youngsters.

I: Why do you think that there was a resistance to outsiders?

A: I don't know, I don't understand it at all.

I: Do you think there still is?

A: Oh no, no, no.

I: What happened to change it?

A: Well, so many outside schoolteachers were coming in, and then of course with the war, there were a lot of soldiers that came in and quite a few around married service men. Then there was much more mixing up that time with the service men and with the schoolteachers, there was bound to be more outsiders naturally come in.

I: When did the service men come in here, World War I or World War II?

A: World War I.

I: What were they doing in Mattituck?

A: Well of course a lot were drafted from Mattituck, and

they often brought home friends with them. My sister, Sarah, went overseas during World War I, in Occupational Therapy with the soldiers. My brother was put into uniform, and worked for the Draft Board. They couldn't decide whether he had a heart condition or whether he didn't. Sent him to New York and the doctor said he was all right and another doctor would say he had a heart condition. So they ended by letting him get into uniform and living at home, and working for the Draft Board. Father was at the head of the Draft Board.

I: Would you say that the people here first were all Presbyterians?

A: Yes.

I: Then other sects like the Methodists started coming in?

A: The Methodist Church closed up. They didn't have enough to support a minister. So it was during Father's time that all the Methodists were brought over to the Presbyterian church. The Methodist church was used for the Mechanics Hall.

I: Was there any resistance from the Presbyterians towards the Methodists?

A: No, none at all.

I: What about Presbyterian and Catholic, was there resistance?

A: Oh the Catholics always had their own church in Cutchogue.

I: Did you feel there was resistance or friction?

A: No, there never seemed to be. If there was, I never noticed it.

I: Did your father ever meet with a Catholic priest or a bishop?

A: They never did in those days, no.

I: Were the people in the town also apart, Protestants and Catholics?

A: No, not necessarily, no. Back in those days I went to a couple of weddings in the Catholic Church, who were friends of mine, neighbors, and I was invited, and went.

I: Do you remember their names?

A: Yes. Tom McGuire married Mame Brodrick. The Brodricks lived right next to us, and when they got married they built a house right across the street from us, and funny, the priest, the best man or someone dropped the wedding ring-- they said that a very bad sign. It meant the bride wouldn't live long, and it was true, she didn't. She had tuberculosis, and she soon died. Then Tom married again.

I: Were there any intermarriages, Protestants and Catholics?

A: Well of course there are today, many, many, many of them. Because there are so many marrying Polish, and the Polish are all Catholics. But there are more intermarriages between the Protestant and the Polish, than anything else. I'm always so glad when it's a Polish with a name that long, when she marries a man who has a little short name. Now Arthur N., the one that was here today, his son married a Polish girl, an awfully nice girl. Her name was Personowski. So it's for better, Personowski to Penny.

I: Do you remember any resistance to the first Polish who came in?

A: There was some in the beginning. Yes, quite a little.

I: Why?

A: I don't know. The Polish people would come in here penniless. But they would, they worked. The children, as soon as they were old enough to get out in the field, they were out picking up potatoes, or working. The wives worked, everybody worked. And the first thing they do, they were buying an automobile. He would just pull his money out of his pocket, and buy an automobile. They all got along very well, because everyone in the family worked. There's Sidor, now in Mattituck. Every son of his has a farm or something. It's amazing how all the Sidor boys have their own farms, I think, more than any other man around Mattituck.

I: Do you think the resistance was because of religion?

A: No, no. It was first... Well they were coming in and buying up the local farms and making money.

I: So do you think that it was envy?

A: I don't know what it was, I don't think they feel that way about them anymore.

I: When they first came out here, weren't they just farmhands?

A: Oh yes, yes, and of course, they didn't immediately buy their own places. They worked for the other farmers and held on to their money and got a place of their own very soon. Of course the little Polish kids worked harder than the local farmers' kids did. They wanted to go out and play. They

didn't want to go out and pick up potatoes.

I: I would like to know more about Nat Tuthill.

A: Well he and his father, Captain...I forget his name. He had a fertilizer factory over in the south side, over in Promised Land. They got the bunkers which are fish that nobody will eat, but they made those up into fertilizer, and he had a flourishing plant over there. I'm not sure whether he...no, I don't believe he did it. I guess Ralph Tuthill started the dairy business.

I: Are you getting tired? Do you want to lie down?

A: I think I'll have to.

I: Well, thank you very much.

A: You're very, very welcome. I don't think anything I've said is worth saying but...

End of tape

name Julia Craven Penny

birth date Aug. 7, 1891 place Downingtown, Pennsylvania

father's name The Reverend Charles E. Craven

mother's name Anna McDougall Craven

children Virginia, Sarah, Julia, James, Charlie  
~~childhood~~

education nurses' training, Mountainside Hospital, Montclair, N.J.

job training Nurse

work \_\_\_\_\_

official positions Night supervisor (Mountainside Hospital Montclair, N.J.)

member of \_\_\_\_\_

special activities, projects, hobbies Bridge

spouse's name Married 1954. Arthur Havens Penny

children's names \_\_\_\_\_

major turning points in:

Mattituck	my life	my field of interest
1 _____	1 _____	1 _____
2 _____	2 _____	2 _____
3 _____	3 _____	3 _____
4 _____	4 _____	4 _____
5 _____	5 _____	5 _____

for me, Mattituck was \_\_\_\_\_

Mattituck is \_\_\_\_\_

I'd like Mattituck to become \_\_\_\_\_



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## MATTITUCK ORAL HISTORY

Contents of tape Vol. 25-GRR-1

Date of Interview: Jan. 19, 197

Oral Author: Gertrude Reeve Raynor Interviewer: John Traversa

Early Mattituck

(Note: Much of this tape concerns conversation about pictures and documents. The following is a transcription just of the historical comments and descriptions.)

.....

A: This was Mrs. Shear and her daughter. That was Mr. Shear, the minister. That was Mrs. Duryee, Doll Gildersleeve, we called her, Donald's sister. This was Isabelle Conklin. This was myself. I remember there was a short girl by the name of Wells, Ethel Wells and I forget who else.

I: Was he the minister?

A: Yes, he was the minister that was here in the church in 1917, '18. And oh boy, he was awful.

I: Awful, why?

A: I didn't like him at all and many people (unclear). He was rabid. He had a son and a daughter. And the son was studying to be a doctor, and he was, of course, very much afraid he'd be drafted in the service. 'Cause a lot of the boys were. My brother was drafted in the service. And one Sunday I was in church and he preached a sermon that you would never believe. And he called the boys everything that was degrading, and I don't know what should say, just everything against them. He was perfectly awful. I pretty

'near got up and walked out of the church. I couldn't...

I: You mean about the boys going into the service?

A: Boys going into the service, and what kind of boys they were and all those sort of things. He was awful. And his son was the only one that amounted to anything. And he was studying for ministry and he was the only one that was fit to live or do anything anyhow. And the boys of that age, a little younger than my brother, and didn't get into the service, they made an effigy, finally, and hung it up in the street there in the four corners in the village, and burned it, because of the way he talked and carried on so.

I: I assume he didn't last very long.

A: No. And his wife was as nice as could be and his daughter. As nice as people as you'd want to meet.

I: How long was he at the church?

A: I couldn't remember...Oh here, this book from the Anniversary, (reading) "Dr. Craven was followed by Reverend Lincoln Shear, a forceful and eloquent preacher who began his work in December 1913". I say, you never heard anything like that. It was all I could do to stay in church.

I: Did anyone get up and walk out?

A: Not that I remember, but it upset me terribly. (reading)... "in 1918 Mr. Shear took up work for the YMCA in the U.S. Army."

I: Julia (Julia Craven Penny, Ed.) told me that her father never got a raise for all the fifteen or sixteen years he was here.

A: I didn't know about that, but I know he wanted very much to be installed, and they never installed him.

I: Like a teacher gets a permanent position?

A: In the ministry it's called...something. Oh shoot. ... They're installed and they can't be fired. But they never would do that to Dr. Craven. They never did it, and he felt bad about that, I know. Yes, I remember that.

I: Do you know why?

A: No. I don't know why. But they only hired him from year to year.

I: Since we're talking about the church, I'd like to ask you what the church has meant in your life.

A: Oh, I worked in the church, I'd say, until I was grown up. I taught Sunday School. Adeline Reeve and I, we had the Primary Class, the littlest ones, and then, I say, I had to give it up. I worked.

I: When did you teach Sunday School? How old were you?

A: Well, I was in the twenties, I suppose. I was brought up in the church. My mother had my brother and I baptized when we were, what, oh..twelve to fifteen, I suppose. She said she didn't believe in infant baptism, because then the persons didn't remember it. She wanted children baptized when they were old enough to remember their being baptized and would know. Then they wouldn't have to go back to the records to find out. And I remember that, and I say, I can't... and I always went to church and she did too, and we... we..., I remember several of the teachers I had in Sunday School as I was a (unclear) growing up. I don't know when I took a class, except I say, when Evelyn and I, they started a Primary Department and they used the old chapel and we had several

different teachers, girls, a class that we divided up into five or six pupils. Oh, I think we had twenty to thirty children at least in there every Sunday. And we had... but I... can't remember who they all were. There was a Gildersleeve boy, kind of pest, and there were two Lupton boys that were pests and we used to have trouble with....I can't think...there was Chub Gildersleeve's son. What the dickens was....I've forgotten what his first name was. He didn't stay here in Mattituck after he was grown up.

I: Did you say Chub or Chuck Gildersleeve?

A: Chub was Charles Gildersleeve, but his uncle was Charlie Gildersleeve, so they always called him Chub, lived on Pike Street after he was married. He was one of the large Gildersleeve family.

I: Was he one of the Elders of the Church?

A: No. Charlie Gildersleeve might have been. He was the Station Master and he didn't marry. He lived on Pike Street and he and an unmarried sister lived there together, Charlie Gildersleeve. I can't seem to recall any of the girls who were in that Sunday School.

.....

A: I was working in the Post Office at that time....around 1932 when all the banks closed.... I think Father had that stroke....it was around 1936 or '37. I think it was six or seven years after before he died. My mother was sick most of the time too.

I: So you were living with your parents?

A: Yes. I had to give up the outside things altogether. I gave up going to church because I didn't have anyone to stay with them and I couldn't leave them alone. I was very much disappointed that I couldn't go to the World's Fair that they had up on the west end of the Island. I remember that. I couldn't get anybody to come and stay with them. One died in '43 the fall and the next one died in the spring of '44.

A friend was talking to me one day, stopped in to see me. She'd married one of the Gildersleeve boys. They lived close by.

I: Do you remember your friend's name?

A: Sid Gildersleeve's wife, Ruth Aird. She was a teacher. And she came in and we were talking out on the back porch. And she says, "How do you stand it? How do you do it day after day?" "Well when things get too bad, I go out in the flower garden." When I couldn't take the thing, I'd go outdoors and dig in the dirt. That kind of relieved the tension. Mama was so bad near the end, I couldn't get my full night's sleep. She lost all control, and I'd get up in the night and go downstairs and find things in a terrible (unclear). Have to clean the bed all up and everything and I got worn out. So I had a cousin from my mother's side of the family and she had a summer home in Maine. And this Howell, there was another cousin lived there and she wasn't married and she wasn't too well.

I: What was her name?

A: Caroline Howell. And she was going to Maine, going up

there in June and my parents had died in spring and she said, "Oh, come on. Go up to Maine with me." So off we go to Maine. So she says, the cousin that was coming to get her, she'll take you in her car. So I drove to Maine with them as far as Portland. And that was during gasoline rationing so that was far as I would go. Then I had to take the train from Portland to Pemaquid where my cousin lived. My cousin couldn't come to meet me 'cause she didn't have gasoline enough. So I stayed there for a couple of months and got straightened out, rested up.

I: Then you worked in that Home in Laurel, taking care of sick people?

A: For a few weeks I went to the Nursing Home, helped take care of an old lady who was there that the nurse couldn't take care of. Then I came home and nearly had pneumonia, because I went up there and stayed nights. Got tired out. And then my husband came to see if I wanted a job as a housekeeper. That was before I got married. He was a widower. His wife had died in the spring and he wanted a housekeeper.

I: What year was this?

A: The spring of 1950. He died in 1972, December 1972. I went up there in April and we got married in October, 1st of October, And I stayed there till 1972, in Aquebogue. The Homeside Florist, they bought it afterward. There'd been a florist had bought the land and built the house and he gave out. The bank took the mortgage when he failed. And they divided...they took the greenhouse was in one section and the house in the other section. And my husband bought the house

and we lived there, our lives together, until he passed away. I stayed there one year after he died. And it was such a big house and great big lawn and trees and I couldn't take care of it. Too much for me. So my niece insisted that I come and live with them in Islip, 'cause she was the only one in the family left, except her mother. Her mother was still living, and she says, "You're not going to any nursing home, or anything of that sort." So I went up there and lived with them for two or three years and she died. And I came....this house was mine. My cousin lived here and she got a bad spell and wanted to have somebody come and stay with her and I said, "NO." There was only two bedrooms and one of them was a little bit of a room. And I said, "I've got to come back there and live because Connie (?) is very sick and I've got to leave, I can't stay." Well, she went across the street with Mrs. Van Ryswyk, 'cause she'd been looking after her and helping her out. So Sarah couldn't find any place for her to go so she took her over there and now she's in a nursing home. And she was ninety-one the first week in January. And I was eighty-seven last August. So, we're the only relatives in this part of the country. Been intimate friends as well. She's got some cousins on her father's side. That's all.

I: What families is she related to?

A: Her father was a Wines. The Rulands were related to the Wines. That was the Wines farm down there.

.....

A: That old restaurant next to where I lived, next to

Hansen's Garage, that was my Grandfather's grocery store and Mr. Grable moved it from the village...

I: Where was it, on Love Lane?

A: It was on Love Lane and Pike Street.

I: Was it right next to the tracks...

A: Yes, and Gildersleeves' store was on the other corner and he had this store...on the north side of Pike Street.

That was my grandfather's grocery store... and the upstairs -

I: What was your Grandfather's name?

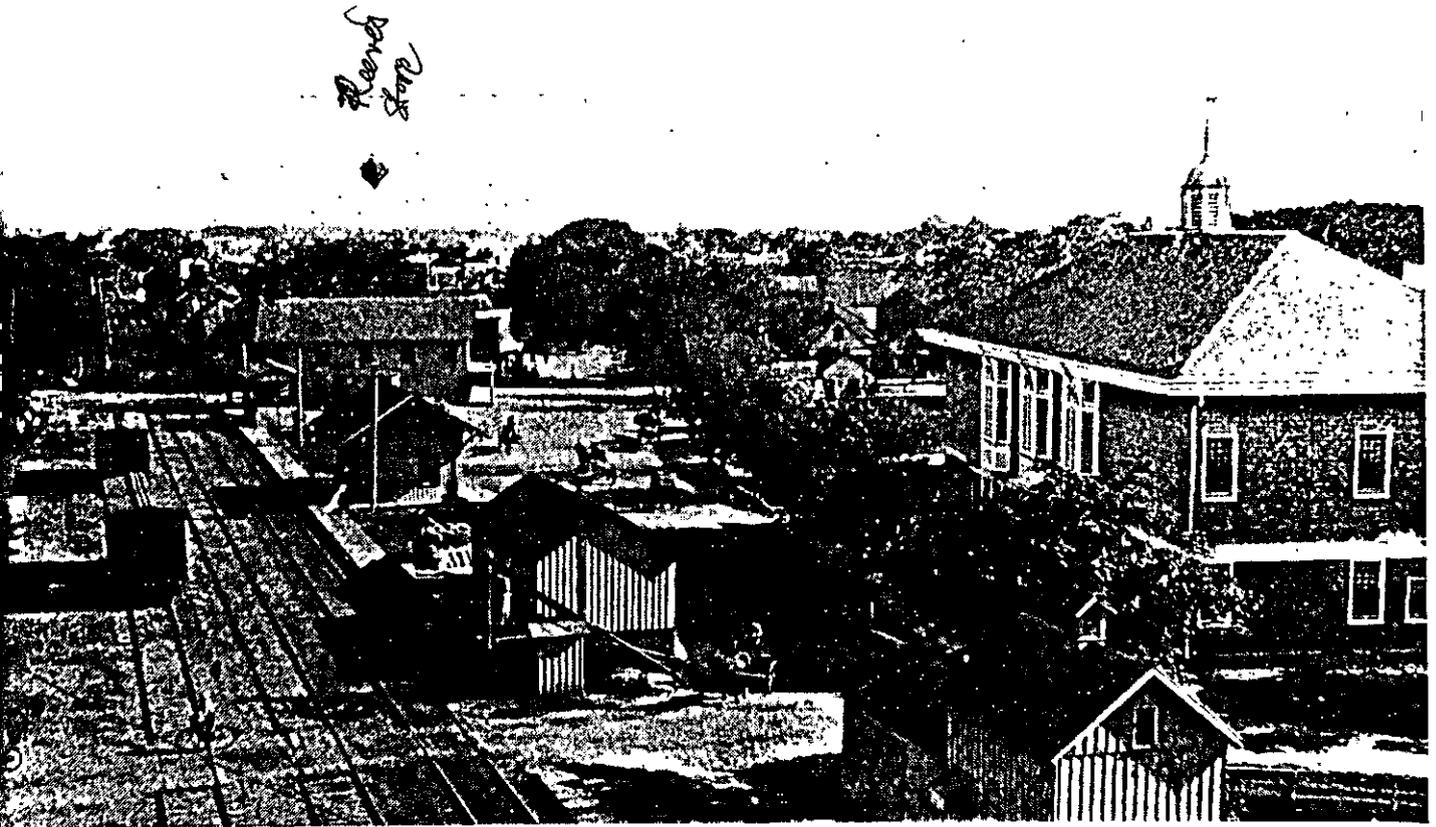
A: Thomas Reeve and he had a partner by the name of...I think it was Warren Tuthill. And the second floor was the dance floor they had, and the entertainment room. It was one big room and the stairs went up at the back end of the store, and an entrance on the outside went up the back end. And it was heated by an old stove that stood in the corner in the back of it. And on the south end of it they had a little platform and dressing rooms and things where they had entertainments.

Irene: (Author's companion) And you know from the kitchen what they had to take the food up, they had a pulley and it's still in there. Then it was a restaurant. Alvin had a restaurant in there first, then there was Clarence Davis.

.....

I: When you worked in the Post Office, do you remember this Post Office? (showing picture of old Post Office)

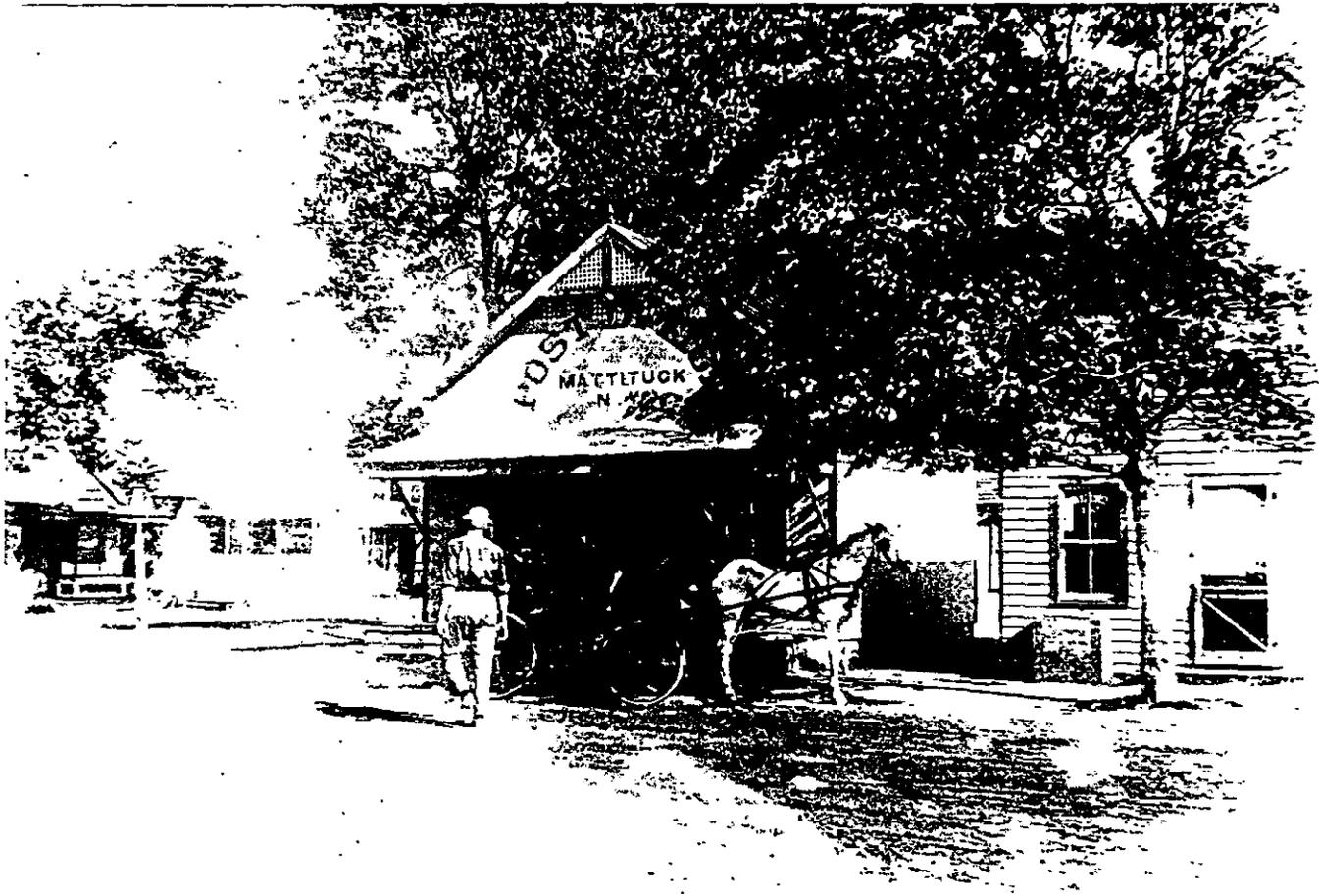
A: On the corner where the bank is now? Yes. I worked in there a little while. My father's brother was Post Master for a short time and I worked with him in there.....James L. Reeve. Oh, I didn't work steady, just off and on. Miss Lizzy Tuthill



**View of Mattituck, Showing the Station in the Centre and Lupton Hall and Library Building to the right**

The large building beyond the two railroad buildings was Thomas Reeve's grocery store. On the second floor was the dance hall, Apollo Hall.

Now (1986) located on the Main Road, it has been refurbished by the present occupant, Savan's Continental Cuisine.



The old Post Office at Pike and Love Lane



Pike Street, looking west when the Post Office was on  
the corner of Pike and Love Lane



← Roessler  
(tailor)  
R.W.T.

The Post Office on the west side of Love Lane

The telephone exchange was on the second floor

Photo kindness of Gertrude Reeve Raynor

was in there too. Her brother was post master afterwards for a long time....Henry P. Tuthill. She was assistant and did all the work...He never came in the Post Office at all. And that was while we were on Love Lane in the elder<sup>(2)</sup> building.

I: How old were you when you worked in here? Roughly, in your twenties?

A: Yes, easily.

I: Were you a clerk?

A: I suppose you'd call it that. Helped him sort the mail, that's all. Here, this shows Fischer's old store... on the corner there. (picture of Fischer's old store on the corner of Pike and Love Lane). Then the hardware store was built there.

.....

A: Yeah, that's a good picture of the house. We had vines around for shade 'cause we didn't have blinds and those. We used vines, we used Virginia Creeper and Wisteria.

.....

I: ...next to the Post Office. It says Stationery.

A: But there was a shoemaker in there. Name of O'Roark and and he was grandfather to the present Post Master. I think he was in a little place there. And there was another shoemaker one time by the name of Klein (spelling?) and he was on Love Lane in a little bit of a shack and the kids always used to put red pepper on his stove. You know what that will do when the stove is hot? It will BURN and you

\* The Author refers here to heavy vines all across the front of the porch. Pictures of the house show these vines hanging down one to two feet below the edge of the porch roof.

will sneeze your head off. They used to do that, teen-aged boys! I think there was two little boys, Johnny and Jimmy Klein. He had a pot bellied stove.

I: Was that just for fun or...

A: Oh just for mischief, torment him, like all boys do. It was just a little room, probably half as big as this room.

.....

I: ....Fischer's Market.

A: On Pike Street (and Love Lane, Ed.) there wasn't anything next to it. On Love Lane was the only buildings. There used to be a little building in there, Chinese Laundry, for a few years.

I: And next to it?

A: That was our shop in there -

I: I heard that the man in the Laundry was kind of driven out of town, because he was...you know, different.

A: I don't remember. I just knew he wasn't there. I don't remember any particulars.

I: It was right next to your store?

A: I think so. ...And then our shop was moved a little way to the south, and we bought the land.

I: ...a little gasoline station.

A: With a pump in front of it.

I: With Tydol in front of it.

A: Yes. And that was there for several years. And there's where Mr. Grabie's blacksmith shop stood on that land first. That land was all owned by the Gildersleeve family years and

years ago.

I: So you worked in here. This is on the west side of Love Lane. Is the building gone?

A: The bank bought it and tore it down and next to it was the drug store building. Bob Barker's. His father built the drug store there. Upstairs in the Post Office, was Central. The first telephone office was in the building that's the DeFriest's Funeral Home. It was the Conklin House, one room.

.....

....We had a lot of money orders. People used to send for things at the stores. And some registered mail. They started parcel post, and it had to be a certain size.

End of tape

## MATTITUCK HISTORY PROJECT

Contents of Tape 28-GRR-2

Date: August 1979

Oral Author: Gertrude Reeve Raynor

Interviewer: John Traversa

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 Suicide of Warren Tuthill  
 Appendicitis - home operation  
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 Ice Harvesting

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 Kohler Betts, Charles Reeve, Slats Reeve, Betts Ranch, Merkel meats  
 Isabelle Conklin, Selina Wells Reeve, William Hubbard Reeve,  
 Bohacks, old Hall House, Reeve and Tuthill grocery store,  
 buttermilk paint, Joel Howell, Silkworth, Grathwohl, Cory Ponser,  
 Robinson, Bessie Zenzius, Irma Reeve, Donald Gildersleeve,  
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 Mr. Gibbs, school principal; George Gildersleeve, Bergen Family,  
 Clifton G. Raynor, Wolf Satterly, Richard Cox

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William Hubbard Reeve ..... 315

## MATTITUCK HISTORY PROJECT

Contents of Tape 26-GRR-2

Date: August 1979

Oral Author: Gertrude Reeve Raynor

Interviewer: John Traversa

Early Mattituck

G: Miss Tuthill's brother was the Postmaster but he never came in and she did all the bookwork and took care of everything.

I: Why didn't he come in?

G: Well, he had another business and she was capable. And say, she was an older woman and not married and she was the Assistant Postmaster. Of course, I guess he had to sign papers. .... (Author looking at photographs)

I didn't get dizzy spells but all of a sudden I'd just topple over....He said, "That's old age." But now I'm better. Pills and pills. They're keeping the old folks alive too long. So that's the way it goes. I can't seem to place that boat. I knew Raynor Wickham. He used to go on the water quite a bit and he went to Florida a lot. Not on his own boat, but on some big yacht or something with other people. He lived down on Marratooka, Cedric Wickham's brother. Cedric and Raynor, and then there was another brother and there was a couple of sisters too, Charlie Wickham's family. They lived just east of Norrises.

I: On the bay?

G: Uh huh. But they had a farm. They didn't have any house on the bay.

I: That's the airport now?

G: Yes.

I: We were talking about the Post Office before. Do you

remember why the Post Office moved?

G: The Bank started in the Library Hall. Now, maybe they bought that corner and put the Bank up there next. I think it must have been....The Riley brothers--you've got pictures in the Library there of the Mattituck House. That was built by a man by the name of George Betts. And Riley brothers owned the Mattituck House last and they owned that whole block there and I think probably the Bank must have bought that land and put the Bank up on that corner where the Post Office was.

I: Then the Post Office moved across the street? Do you know why they moved?

G: I suppose there was no more room to put any boxes in that place. You see, that was after I had to leave and go home and stay with the folks.

I: Well, tell me about your meat market. Reeve and Hall, which is now the Love Lane Shop. When you started the store, the building was already there?

G: That I don't know. I think at first it was Reeve and Conklin. I think for a short time after father was married, he and Mr. Conklin worked together. Mr. Conklin lived to be an old man but he didn't stay in there. Then Leon Hall, I don't know when they came in together. But I have the impression that Mr. Conklin was in there first with him.

I: Did it start out as a meat shop?

G: Yes. Just as a meat shop.

I: No groceries?

G: No. My brother put a few groceries in later after we took it over after my father died. And they made a sausage. It got

to be quite popular and famous.

I: Did you have a secret recipe?

G: Well, we had a recipe. Yes, and <sup>we gave</sup> the recipe--L&L's bought out what we had left. It was after my brother was quite ill. And he gave Mr. Long, who was the butcher in L&L's the recipe for that sausage. And Bill, he was too lazy to bother with it. He just made his sausage as he felt like it. So what happened to the recipe I don't know. I know the ingredients but I don't know the proportions.

I: Tell me what the ingredients were.

G: There was the meat, pork meat, and then the seasoning was salt, pepper, nutmeg and a trifle of sugar. The sugar made it brown when you cooked it.

I: Brown sugar?

G: White sugar. When the cakes were cooked they browned easier having that little sugar in them.

I: Just pork meat?

G: Just pork meat. That got to be quite famous, and we used to send it in to the City.

I: Was it mostly shoulder pork or...?

G: It was shoulder. They would buy extra shoulders. They wouldn't have enough from the regular porks that they would buy from the farmer. They'd get extra shoulders from the meat trucks--Merkel. I think it was, used to come out here--and buy those and cut it up.

Well, a whole hog they'd cut up in strips, about so wide, and you'd have to skin that skin all off. And when it got real

bad weather and cold and snowy and bad, it got so in later years, father would bring home a big bundle of it in his arms and mother put it on the stove in a big kettle and heat it all up good and hot and soften it up a little bit and throw it out on the garden and the gulls would come and get it. The Bay got frozen over and the Creek got frozen over and they couldn't get anything to eat. So every once in a while we'd get a pot or two of hog skins and fix for the birds. And one day, it was after father had his stroke, he was home watching out the windows, and the gulls were eating and I had in my flower garden and vegetable garden, I had been using some wire stakes that were oh about the size of your pencil to support some of the plants. Well, they hadn't all been taken out of the ground. One gull came down, and he caught his wing here over this pole as he came down. I went out and picked him up, brought him to the house and showed him to my father outside. He was as quiet and tame as could be.

I: He must have known you were friendly.

G: Yes. He seemed to be friendly and in no mood to struggle at all.

I: So did you make sausage yourself?

G: My brother and I used to make it, yes. I remember once I fixed up the recipe, measured it out. Of course, we measured it with the scales, how many ounces for so many pounds of meat. And one day I made a mistake and I put too much pepper in it. We had a job, had to fix more pork and fix it all so as to try to get some of the pepper out. I remember doing that.

I: You used black pepper, right?

G: Ground pepper, black. I don't know whether I could get that recipe or not. I think they gave my uncle in Oregon the

recipe.

I: What's his name?

G: His name is Betts-Kohler Betts; K-o-h-l-e-r. They said it is so far away that it wouldn't have any effect on somebody trying to make it out here. The neighbor across the street here, he keeps asking me, "Don't you know the recipe for that sausage?" I said, "No, I don't. I don't know the proportions."

I: Kohler - lives in Oregon here in Mattituck?

G: Oh no. Oregon state. He lives in what they call Adams, Oregon. They have a wheat ranch. He's over 70 now.

I: So you said that eventually the store closed. Your brother died? What was your brother's name?

G: My brother's name was Charles. He died in November 1949, and I closed the store at the end of the year, December 31, 1949. I couldn't get any butcher to take care of it. Help seemed to be very scarce and I couldn't find anyone that I could trust.

I: Whom did you buy your meats from?

G: Well, I think it was New York butchers. There was a salesman who came. And then the Merkel truck came from Jamaica. I think they brought the pork. I think the other meats were bought from the New York butchers. That came by train.

I: Was your brother Charles older than you?

G: No younger, a year and a half. My birthday was in August, and his was in January.

I: Did your brother Charles learn how to be a butcher from your father?

G: Yes. He went in there as a young man. He thought he wanted

to be a machinist of some kind. He went to Newark and worked for a little while in a shop of a friend of ours. My brother got so homesick he couldn't stand it. He came home and then went into the store. He was drafted in 1917. He was in Europe for 2 years. Seventy-seventh Division.

I: Did he wind up marrying?

G: He married a girl by the name of <sup>u</sup>Agusta Conrad. She came from Brooklyn. They were German people and they had a summer place in New Suffolk.

I: Was there any kind of resistance from local people at that time about marrying outsiders?

G: No. You could marry who you pleased. And when you pleased. I guess.

I: You got married when you were sixty-three?

G: I got married in 1950.

I: So you were fifty-nine?

G: Yeah. I was born in 1891.

I: So you were fifty-nine when you got married? Were you surprised?

G: Rather. Always after he had his breakfast in the morning he went right upstairs and went to the bathroom with a magazine or newspaper and he stayed in there for awhile and then he shaved and got dressed. He came down the stairs. I was in the kitchen doing my breakfast work. He said, "I don't know if I ought to say this or not," but he says, "Will you marry me?" I said, "Oh, my goodness, I don't know." So I hesitated over it for quite awhile. It was several months before I gave him a decided answer. We seemed to get along very well together and I thought, well that's all right, I've got to have a home (unclear) And we did. We got along very well, twenty-two years, I think it was. He

died in December 1972. I was housekeeper for a few months until, I say, we were married. And I continued to be a housekeeper.

I: Right. But you didn't get paid anymore.

G: Not real pay, but I didn't get much pay for being a housekeeper because wages weren't much in those days.

I: Do you remember what the going wage was back in 1950?

G: I don't know for sure. He gave me \$15 a week or something like that. Plus my board. But that's all. They didn't pay anything for those sort of jobs. But you had your home and your board. I couldn't find any kind of work after I had to close the shop, and I didn't have enough money to live on. I had bought this little place, and I didn't pay next to nothing for this, but it was in awful condition. I bought this in 1945.

I: Whom did you buy it from?

G: Her name was--she was a widow and she didn't live here.... Cory Ponser (spelling?) Her husband had died. They built the house. They had 2 daughters. When the girls grew up, they went away from here and she was living away. My cousin, the one they call Slats, he was real estate. I kept saying to him, "Slats when are you going to find a place for me to live? I've got to have a house. I've got to live somewhere." And he sold the big house.

I: The one on the Main Road?

G: The Main Road. They wanted it, and I had to get out. So I said, "You've got to find me some place." I said, "And it's got to be within walking distance to the village. I have no car."

Well finally he found this. But the hurricane had been in here. It was tidal water and during the hurricane the water came way up. It got in the cellar and everything. There was a pipeless furnace and that was pretty near gone. The floor had been upset, the pumps and things. It was just awful. So I bought it, and then I was there (Aquebogue, Ed.). My cousin, she got tired of being alone in Connecticut so she came and stayed with me. Then I say I got this place, and she helped me fix it up. She lived here all the time I was in Aquebogue. And she furnished it as she was a mind to. I brought some things back with me when I came back here. So I have my home here now. It's all clear. I have my income from my husband's estate to live on. I've got a little bit of my own but mostly his. My income has covered me so far (unclear) my troubles unless I have to go to a home or something of that sort. Oh, they cost terrible, those homes. But as long as I can stay here why I will.

I: What have you done for fun during your life? I know you haven't had a whole lot of time with taking care of your parents.

G: Oh, I haven't done much. I crocheted. I did quite a little sewing for my niece and her children when they were little. Now I can't see to do any of that. I've got a cataract in one eye and retina trouble on this eye.

Dr. Wiessen said, "Well I'll operate on it if you want." But he won't guarantee that it will come out any better. It might be worse. I said, "At eighty-seven I'm not having any operations that I don't have to."

I: Can I see this?

G: I haven't quite finished it. It's a little baby cape. I have to make it a little bit longer. When I was there in Aquebogue, I did for the hospital, I made a great many of them. And I made shawls and all sorts of things. And I crocheted baby blankets. I went to the church with the older women, and they had what they called, the Ladies Aid or something, and we knitted quilts and made patchwork quilts and things, and sent them to the missions. Some we made for local people. But I haven't had any other special recreation. As I say, when I was home, my mother was always sewing, and she did crocheting too. And oh, I made the afghan over there. And I made quite a number of afghans for different ones. This little one here, I made this. I think I made five or six of these last winter and gave to some of the older ones that need their knees covered up like I do. Some of my friends play cards all the time but I can't do it. I don't care so much for cards, and I never got in the habit of playing. When all my friends were learning to play bridge and that, I was working, and I didn't have the time to go out and play cards. So I just stayed home. I did have one trip in nineteen what...My uncle came on for a vacation from Oregon and he took me back with him and I was gone 6 weeks. That was in 1926. My brother was married in November 1926. I came home the last week of October because he was going to get married.

I: Did you like that?

G: I liked it very (unclear) like the country out there. They are on the wheat farm. And it's all rolling hills and there

wasn't another house you could see anywhere. There was just the one highway that went across the bottom part of the ranch and that was all.

I: Is that called the Betts Ranch?

G: The Betts Ranch, yes. They've got a son who is grown up and runs the ranch now.

I: So this was your mother's brother?

G: That was my mother's half brother.

I: Is that where you got the name Betts?

G: I think my mother's father must have died when he was very young. My grandmother married a second time, and she married a Betts. That was from Cutchogue.

I: What was your mother's maiden name?

G: Wells. She was a Wells but I don't know his first name. In this envelope....See, I don't know who some of these are. That was my mother and the neighbor's girl, Isabelle Conklin. I think that was Aunt Laura.

I: Oh here. It's written on the back. This says Reeve and, what is it Selina?

G: Selina Reeve.

I: Your mother?

G: Yes. Selina Wells Reeve.

I: And you spelled it with an S?

G: Selina, S-e-l-i-n-a.

I: And your father's name was William?

G: William Hubbard Reeve. (looking at pictures) That was my Grandfather Reeve, Thomas Reeve. He lived in Mattituck where the Bohack's store (unclear)(referring to Bohack's store on Route 25 across from Wickham Ave. Ed.) next to the house up on the rise there, the old Hall house. They had

a garden in there. The house was torn down. We had sold the place, I think, to a man by the name of Horton. And they sold it to Bohack Corporation.

I: And what did he used to do? (Her grandfather, Ed.)

G: That was the grocery store.

I: Right. On Love and Pike.

G: He had a stroke. I think he was in his middle 60's when he died in 1900. I say, there were a whole lot of things happened in the middle of 1900 that I have never forgotten. He died in June and my uncle went to Oregon. My grandfather lived about a week after he had this stroke. My mother was across the street helping to take care of him. Her mother had come to live with us. So she was at the house doing the housework. I came home from school one noon, and my old cat was crying agony. Grandmother said, "I can't find the cat but he's crying terribly." Well I went out the back porch, and I found him. Mr. Zenzius had the Hotel next door, and that was a pasture lot in there between us. We had this old cat and we had a rail fence on our edge of the lawn and he'd go over on the outside of that rail fence and make a nest in the summertime up against the fence in the long grass. Well, they used to mow it in June for the hay. Mr. Zenzius said afterward, "I went all over that lot thoroughly, right ahead of the mowing machine." Those long blades went so far out. And he said, "I looked for every cat, and I thought I got everything out of there." But the end of that blade must have just caught him on the side. He was in the high grass right up against the fence and he was all curled up asleep. It had cut a three cornered piece in his

side and turned it over. He had crawled from there to our back porch, and he couldn't get any farther. I was oh, so upset because that kitten belonged to the house before I was born, and he was my cat. I was about nine years old. All that, grandfather dying and the whole thing, that has always stayed with me. I was running across the street to my mother. I said, "The cat has been hurt." "Oh," she said, "I'm sorry but I cannot come, and you'll have to wait for your father to come from the store." He always came home for dinner. So when he came, of course, he immediately put him out of his misery. He knew just where to strike his head and all from being a butcher. I can see that cat now laying right there at the end of the porch with that cut in his side. That was one thing I never would forget.

I: (unclear) grocery store. You said that he was in partnership with -

G: Mr. Tuthill. His name was Warren Tuthill. He drowned himself.

I: Why?

G: Because he had been helping himself out of the produce in the store and hadn't paid for it, hadn't kept track of it, as near as I can remember.

I: Did that happen in 1900 also?

G: Right. When grandfather was sick, before he died. Grandfather lived for about a week, I think, after he had the stroke. And then Mr. Tuthill disappeared, and they couldn't find him and they were pretty sure he had drowned himself and he had. Of course, the body came up after, as they all do,

after a certain temperature. So my father and his brother had quite a job straightening things out, business things. They didn't talk about those things before children in those days, so I don't know too much about it. But I did gather, I was old enough, nine years old, quite a bit of it. He drowned himself in the Creek. He was a married man, had a family and why he did such things I really don't know.

I: Was your mother involved with the grocery store?

G: Oh no. She was home. She just kept house. She didn't go into any business at all. Women didn't go to business in those days, didn't want their equal rights as they do now.

I: When did you first become aware of the women's movement?

G: Oh, I don't know. I haven't paid too much attention to it, though I think as a whole, poppy-cock a lot of it. I think they are going too far. I said the other day, I thought Mr. Carter did the right thing when he went after Abdel...

I: Bella Absug?

G: I never have liked her, anything I've read or heard about her. Of course, I don't read an awful lot of serious material. But I don't know, I can't quite see what they expect to gain by it. It's all right if you need to be able to take care of yourself. That's all right. But if you get married and have a family, I think your place then is to your family, not in business and pushing it off onto somebody else. Bring up your children and take care of them. I couldn't...I didn't have a good education, and there was no question about that. I wasn't too well. They took me out of school and told me to stay home and keep quiet, and if I didn't I'd wind up like being an old maid sitting on the front porch drinking a cup of tea. Well, I had to leave

the public school at fourteen. Then I went to a little private school for half a day that the doctor's wife had, four or five pupils for a couple of years.

I: You mean Mrs. Craven?

G: No it was Mrs. Morton. The old doctor. Then when I was taken sickly, the years I wasn't well and I was having a lot of indigestion and stuff, mother spoke to the doctor about it. He was a queer jigger and he said, "Well, if she worked out in the fields she probably wouldn't have it." That was the satisfaction we got. If you were really sick and needed attention, he'd give it to you and devotedly, and do everything he knew how to do. My father had appendicitis. I don't remember the year. I was grown up. And he didn't want to go to the hospital. They had started the hospital in Greenport. But we couldn't persuade him to go. No, they freeze it out. They used to use ice packs then and once in awhile it did prevent it. I suppose to a certain extent it delayed it anyway. Well, he wouldn't have it done. And he kept running this temperature (unclear) had pain in his side and everything. The doctor came every day, you know, and finally he said, "You've got to have an operation. We'll have to do it here." And there was no surgeon out here. We had to send to Mineola to get the surgeon. There were no automobiles and he came in on the six o'clock train and I gave him his dinner. He brought a nurse with him and they operated that evening. Mr. Gracie's son had a little automobile, one of the first ones that was around, just a two...a one-seated,

and they used acetyline gas tank on the running board for light. He brought that tank over because we had no electricity in those days and put it on the table. The nurse took the old-fashioned wooden table we had in the kitchen and she scrubbed it (unclear). They operated that night. The appendix had broken, and the surgeon didn't expect him to live at all. That nurse stayed with him all night and she fed him teaspoons of hot water every fifteen or twenty minutes or something, however was the regulation. And he came out of it, but it was a close call. And every time after that any friend of his had appendicitis, my father said, "You go to the hospital." They had to leave a tube in and all, and it took a long time for it to heal. But that nurse was a wonderful girl. She was a Canadian, I believe. I say, those things stay by you. That chair you are sitting in was my father's chair. And it evidently had been in the family for years and years. That was his kitchen chair and he sat at the kitchen table. I got a man that lives down in Peconic to re-finish it.

I: I feel privileged to be sitting here.

G: I don't know how old it is, but it must have had a new back on it because you can see where the spindles were cut off and new ones put in. It had two coats of paint on it that were pretty well worn off. This upholsterer said it had been on there for years. He said, "They called it buttermilk paint." So he took it all off for me and got it refinished. And it's as solid as it was when my father used it.

I: During your lifetime, do you think that anything has happened that has made a big difference to the town?

G: Well, I don't know. The only thing is that, of course, it has grown with the people coming in. The school where I went to

William Hubbard Reeve  
Gertrude's father



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is where Library is. There were four rooms in it. And that was the only school. And I say, I don't know of any big changes. I say, it's just a natural growth as years go on.

I: Do you think it is much different from when you were little?

G: Well, it's different in this way, that there are so many more people. I hardly know anybody that's left here now. There's a picture in here. This was a picture of my brother's class in school. This was Uncle Joel Howell. He was the caretaker of the school. He was the one that lived across the street, my father's uncle. Now, I think there's only three or four are in that picture that are living now. This boy, Silkworth, I don't know where he went. He was one of the brothers. And there was a Grathwohl boy in here. I don't know where he went. This was a Robinson boy. I'm not sure whether he died or whether he went. This girl is living, Bessie Zenzius, and this is Irma Reeve, Miss Reeve. That was Donald Gildersleeve.

I: So you went to school with him?

G: No. My brother was a year and a half younger, and Donald was three weeks older than my brother. That was my cousin, Carleton Wickham. (unclear) my father's sister. And her name was Alice Penny. Her father's name was oh, I can't think of it just this minute. He was Mr. George L. Penny's brother. That was Irma Reeve. Her father was Henry Reeve. He lived in West Mattituck. That (unclear) his name was Gibbs.

I: Oh, Mr. Gibbs, principal.

G: I wrote that on there later. This boy, he grew up and was a plumber. He married in Mattituck, had a nice house there on

the road going to Riverhead on the south side not far from the cemetery but he died.

I: What was his name?

G: George Gildersleeve. He wasn't the same family as had the store. And that was one of the Silkworth boys. And then, Johnny (unclear). He was from Laurel.

I: And Joel Howell was your uncle?

G: He was my father's uncle. He was the custodian, as they call them now, of the school. He was too old to do much of anything else. This was the front of the school.

I: Is this the one that was where the Library is now?

G: Yes. This was on the northwest corner of the building. And then there was a room here and then a room back up here. Then there was a stairs went up in here, in the entry here and there were two rooms upstairs.

(Discussion about pictures)

I: Tell me about your husband.

G: Oh, he was born in Brooklyn. He was the youngest and only boy of five children, and his mother was a Bergen, I believe, one of the old, old Bergens that first came over to this country. They lived in Flatbush or New York or something. They have a Bergen genealogy.

I: Was his mother related to the Bergens here?

G: No.

I: Raynor is not connected with the Raynor Suter Hardware?

G: No. His family were all down the west end maybe Freeport but not any further east than that.

I: He was a widower?

G: Yes. He had one daughter. And she married a Fletcher that used to live in Rockville Center. He was a bookkeeper.

And he came out here I don't know first whether he worked for the Long Island Cauliflower Association or another one of those firms. And then he came to Mattituck Cauliflower Association. And then there was--I don't know if it was Long Island Produce. He worked in Southold, and then he worked in Mattituck. He had worked down on the South Side. He had worked in a big garage down there that he told about. I just knew him slightly when he lived here in Mattituck for a little while because I was still working in the Post Office so I knew all these people. I just met them casually that way. His wife was not at all friendly. She didn't make friends with anybody around here at all.

His name was Clifton Raynor. A lot of people think that it was Clifford but it wasn't. Clifton G. I think it was Grover. He was born in Grover Cleveland's time.

I: I asked you before about what have been the biggest changes in Mattituck, and you say people, the growth.

G: The growth of the town, I can't think there's anything else.

I: Did you ever imagine that that was going to happen?

G: No. Those things are bound to happen, I think. If the community and if the land is usable. It's bound to happen, if you can use it. Of course, many of the farm lands have changed hands and they began to import the Polish element to come to work on the farms. We didn't have young people who would work on the farms.

I: Why not?

G: What young people there were, I suppose they went away and got an education and other jobs. They didn't want to work on the farms. Because that's hard work, no question about it. My mother's sister married a farmer, Wines. Well they had a good

sized farm. He made a good living. You see he knew how to do it. There's a difference in people, capabilities of being able to make a living on a farm. Some man won't make a living on that farm, and another man will take it over and make a good living.

The young people, what there were, they didn't have so many big families and such things at that time, they all drifted into more modern things. And then the Polish people came in. When I went to school, there was one black family here. They lived at the end of this road. That's how they got the name. The old house still stands there.

I: Freeman Road?

G: Yeah. Freeman, they called themselves. My grandmother told me the old gent was a coachman when they came up here, and he used to sit in the carriage as straight as a ram rod. I don't know when he died. I don't remember him. But he had one son that I remember that was the town character. He had two daughters and Aunt Hannah his mother took care of them.

The church used to help because Paulie, Paulus Gamaliel she had named him, he spent most of his money on liquor if he earned a few dollars. He'd go clamming, crabbing, fishing or something like that. Maybe he'd do a little odd job for somebody. He must have been married. I didn't remember her. But she had two girls, Mary and Jennie. They were about--Jennie was a little older, Mary was about my age and the church used to help support 'em. And the farmers would take them vegetables and all sorts of things. They didn't have any welfare in those days. The collection in the church on communion Sunday was for the poor of the community that needed help. And she used to get

quite a lot of it. On Christmas we always had a Sunday School entertainment on Christmas Eve. My mother had a Sunday School class of girls my age. I was one of them. Mary Freeman, a little colored girl, was another one. We must have been eight, nine, ten years old possibly, not over that. We were in church sitting on the front row because we were kind of small and they had a Christmas tree that went to the ceiling.

We always had a great big tree. It went to the ceiling, and of course, there was no electricity. So, the man used the long poles and sponge on it to take care of any trouble from the lighted candles. Well, Mary was sitting there, I think she was quite close to me and she began to cry. And Mother was sitting next and she said, "What's the matter, Mary?" Well, her feet hurt and she had to go to the bathroom. Well, the bathroom--it was snowing and sleet outside. And the bathroom that they had in the church way around outside of the chapel. Mother took her out in the chapel room and she said, "You go out and squat there in the snow." She said, "It won't make any difference. You just go right there." It was by the chapel door. So she did that. She brought her in, and she took her shoes off. (unclear) had given her a pair of shoes. She had tried to put her feet into those shoes, which were not large enough. And her feet had gotten so cramped, and with the cold and everything, that they pretty near killed her. She could hardly hobble. Mother left the shoes off of her and then she stopped her crying and was all right.

But that was the only Christmas, of course, that those children had, was a box of hard candies that we used to give out with an orange. Everybody had one of those, every kid in the school. So that would be her only Christmas. Mr. (Wolf Satterly?) lived on the farm up here on Mill Lane and he was good as gold.

He wasn't a big talker but he'd do anything for anybody. He used to take them back and forth to school. He'd bring them produce and stuff. So, he took the child home when the entertainment was over and looked after her. He was a very, very nice man. He had a farm on the corner of Mill Lane and Middle Road. That was an incident that I never forgot.

I: What would you say has been the biggest change in terms of shops on Love Lane?

G: Well, when I was a child there was a barber shop and a candy store, and meat stores and the blacksmith on that Lane. The candy store is where L&L's store is. It was a two story building. The man and his wife and a daughter lived upstairs. They sold candies and cigars and ice-cream. It was divided. There was a parlor with tables and chairs to sit in the back. Go in there and have a dish of ice-cream. His name was Richard Cox. He had one daughter, Myra. There was a kind of porch on the front, a couple steps up. We used to go there and sit and talk a while, socialize a little. Mr. Cox was a great big stout man, tall and big frame. And then there was the roadway that is there now.

(confused voices) that little alley. That was there at that time.

I: What was in the back there, stables?

G: We had a barn because they had three horses. They used to go on the road. My father went, Wednesdays and Saturdays, up through Laurel and Jamesport with a wagon, and they had a covered wagon, and they had a box in it that they could put the meat in. I suppose they put a little ice in it in the summertime. He used to go way down to South Jamesport in the summer because there were two hotels down there then. They wouldn't get home until two or three o'clock in the afternoon.

Get up at five o'clock in the morning because they had to feed the horses. They had three horses. They had to feed and harness them, load the wagons, and leave the village around, I suppose, half past seven or eight. Then Mr. Hall, he went east, and he had a team of horses. Father had an old black horse, we called John, and he'd plod right along. You could leave him, and he would plod home of his own accord. But the team of bays that Mr. Hall owned, they were different and he used to go to Cutchogue and New Suffolk. The houses were beginning to be built down there for summer people and then they had an extra man in the store that stayed in the store as a clerk. And he went, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.

I: Did they have a big ice box in the back of the store?

G: No, it wasn't in back of the store. It was built in in part of the store. There was a side door not too far from the front, and then there was this big box in that northeast corner you might say. And then there was the front door, and then there was another little room where they had storage stuff. And then when they made sausage there was the grinder in there, in that little room. And we had big wooden boxes, and those wooden boxes had to be scrubbed to beat the band at times and put outdoors and dry in the summertime. And then there was another little back room where he had his desk and small safe. And then when they got, the (unclear) or who it was that started that stores all had to have toilets and things. So they put in a little lavatory in there. And the ice box was a big box in that part of the store.

I: Was it a walk in type?

G: Uh huh.

I: And how did they keep it cool?

G: Local ice. Mr. Wickham used to harvest the ice from the Maratooka Lake, and he had a big ice house on the edge of the lake. And stored the ice in there. Then in the summer he had a wagon.

I: How did he get the ice to last for that long?

G: It just did. They still do it. Down in Southold and Peconic, they still harvest ice. They did the same thing.

I: So you would get ice from -

G: Charles Wickham. It was a big house he had. I think they put straw or something between the layers as they cut it. Of course, you had to depend upon the weather in the winter how good of ice you got. Whether you got three inch ice or whether you got six inch ice. We had the same thing home. We had an ice box, and it would hold a hundred pounds of ice in the top. That had to last us. I think in July and August he came twice a week. But he came once a week anyway, with the ice wagon and brought ice. They put in whatever it would hold. Sometimes it would be pretty nearly gone. And the cellars were used as coolers.

End of tape

name ~~Gertrude~~ Reeve Raynor \_\_\_\_\_

birth date 1892 place \_\_\_\_\_

father's name William Hubbard Reeve

mother's name Selena Wells Reeve

~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ Note: Grandfather Thomas Reeve had grocery store on Pike Street west of Love Lane. His home was on the site of Bohack's store. (1984 Country Time) Thomas Reeve died in 1900

education Mattituck school and Mrs. Morton's School

job training \_\_\_\_\_

work Post Office, Meat Market and domestic work.

official positions \_\_\_\_\_

member of \_\_\_\_\_

special activities, projects, hobbies \_\_\_\_\_

spouse's name Clifton (Grover) Bergen Raynor (Bergen family from Brooklyn and Reepert) He was bookkeeper for the L. I. Cauliflower Association.  
children's names \_\_\_\_\_

major turning points in:

Mattituck	my life	my field of interest
1 _____	1 _____	1 _____
2 _____	2 _____	2 _____
3 _____	3 _____	3 _____
4 _____	4 _____	4 _____
5 _____	5 _____	5 _____

for me, Mattituck was \_\_\_\_\_

Mattituck is \_\_\_\_\_

I'd like Mattituck to become \_\_\_\_\_

Mattituck History Project

Contents of Tape 27-GRR-3                      Date of Interview: 1978  
Author: Gertrude Reeve Raynor                  Interviewer: John Traversa

Early MattituckTable of Contents

Smoking meat  
A&P, Fischers Market, L&L  
Ice skating  
Author's garden  
Living in Acuebogue  
Duryee Hardware Store, Peter, Harvey and William Duryee  
World War I

Places and people mentioned:  
Tropica (?) family, Chub (Gildersleeve), Harold (Reeve),  
Mrs. Bergen, Miss Jennie Wells Tuthill, Agnes Cox Young,  
Charles Betts, Fannie Gildersleeve, Isabelle Bedell,  
Dick Bassford, Anna Gracie Young, Evelyn Reeve, Murray Wines,  
Vivien Gildersleeve

Autobiographical Sketch

Contents of Tape 27 GRR-3  
Author: Gertrude Reeve Raynor

November 1978  
Interviewer: John Traversa

### Early Mattituck

A: We smoked hams and the bacon. People would butcher their own pigs and bring in the hams and bacon and they were smoked. We had a six by ten, possibly, building on the northeast corner of the Main Road and then they would bring them there and smoke them.

I: This next to your house?

A: Yeah, back of our house (unclear) at the end of the bacon they'd make a hole and tie a string in it, the hams the same, in the shank of the ham, and then you hang those over the rails. They had rails with hooks in the smoke house, and papa used to tend that. They preferred hickory wood, but we couldn't always get hickory wood and we used apple wood. Hickory would make it the best smoke, the best flavor.

I: Did you learn how to smoke meat?

A: No, I didn't ever do it but brother did. You had a little fire in a pit and you put in logs. It got too hot once and had a fire. That was after my father had a stroke and my brother was tending it and we had excitement for awhile. It happened in the middle of the day. The fire got going too fast and I think one of the strings broke on one of the pieces of meat, ham. It dropped into the fire and that made it worse. And father kept saying, "Don't let them put any extinguisher in there! Don't let them put any extinguisher in there." (Unclear) firemen came and he was looking out of the back window. And he said "Use some water". But they saved quite a little of it. Didn't burn entirely,

but some of the ham and bacon was lost but not all of them.

I: Did you have any problems with competition?

A: When we got to having groceries there was competition but not until then. My brother had put in a few groceries thinking that that would attract a little more, but after they came in there was competition from the chain stores. The A&P came in first. It was on Love Lane, I think, where L&L's is. All that land belonged to the Wellses, with the big Octagonal House. It must have been that they sold out to the A&P store. There was quite a bit of competition as far as meat went.

I: Before the A&P you were the only meat store in town.

A: Fischers, he kept it up. He got to drinking and he'd go to Jamesport with his wagon and the horses brought him home. He had a little meat store on the corner. Well, he didn't do as much as we did. He came here as a telegraph operator and he married a Gildersleeve girl, Donald's cousin.

I: So when the A&P came in did they attract mostly the summer people?

A: No, I guess it was local people too. They could keep their prices lower.

I: .....  
Now you said you didn't like Wolf Pit....

A: Maratooka was the lake we wanted to skate on, but we could not go on that lake until Mr. Wickham said it was safe. Because I think that when my father was a boy, there was a next door neighbor, the Brown boy, he fell in. They got him out but father always said after that not until Mr. Wickham says so. And when they cut ice they always had a rope and marked off where they cut (unclear) his side.

Usually we skated on this side, near the Main Road. But of course sometimes somebody wanted to take a long skate (unclear) but we didn't go on. I don't know whether it was two or three inches it had to be at least before (unclear) go on that ice.

(Discussion of pictures)

A: ....and they used to go over there and torment her and throw sticks and stones. I think they called themselves an army and they used to torment this little old Italian woman, think that was great sport, throw sticks and stones at the house to get her to come out and yell at 'em.

I: Who was the woman?

A: Her name was Tropica (spelling?) They went to Greenport after. He was a railroad section man and that was their sport I don't know how long. A short time in the summer I suppose. Didn't know what else to do with themselves like all kids.

I: Where did she live?

A: It was on Pike Street between the Gildersleeve house and where (unclear) Barker lived -- I don't know whether he was there then or not. Just a small, one story little old fashioned house. It belonged to the Gildersleeve family.

I: And the Tropica children went to school with you, didn't they? In the same class?

A: I don't know. Maybe they weren't old enough to go to school. There was one called Frank and I think there was a girl called Rosie.

I: Was there a leader in this group?

A: These two boys, Chub and Harold. They were older.

I: Did they go to school with you?

A: They must have been older than that. Harold died just a few years ago but I don't know how old he was.

I: Did he have the lumber business?\*

A: Yes, he started it. He was a carpenter by trade. He was my own cousin, all the same family. His two sons, Larry and Harold, carried on and now it's their sons that are carrying on.

(Picture of her mother)

A: She had a grand piano.

I: Did she play?

A: No, she had me take lessons but I could not learn, to amount to anything.

I: Was that common in those days?

A: Yes the square piano was. I guess they went out after that because afterwards we had an upright. It was kind of get to the end of the square piano age, I guess.

I: Who was your teacher?

A: One was Mrs. Bergen and another was Miss Jennie Wells Tuthill. They lived here locally. I learned enough to play hymns. This was my mother and my father's sister and a friend. Her name was Agnes Young. Her husband was an oculist she married. I think she was Agnes Cox, Agnes Cox Young.

.....  
I: The flower garden. When did you start it?

A: He used to help me, my father. After he got where he couldn't do it I had to do it. I started the garden. He

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\*Harold Reeve, who was also known as Tom Reeve, had a contracting business and then added the lumber business. Ed.)

dug it up for me. We had a long (unclear) three foot wide... (unclear) came out to a point, a triangle. He didn't like to mow around flower beds. Didn't like any flower beds in the way, shrubs or things, didn't want 'em.

I: How'd you get interested in gardening?

A: I liked flowers and I started from small things and kept going, mostly perennials. I bought a few plants at a time and kept adding to it.

I: Where did you buy them?

A: Different greenhouses around. On the roads and things, Mattituck, Cutchogue, Peconic, somewhere along. It was flowers. I didn't have any vegetables.

I: I see tulips.

A: I had two great big baby breaths. My mother liked roses so we had roses along the fence. I used to make great big bouquets and take to the church on Sundays to put on the platform for quite a number of years. And we had madonna lilies. I got those from the house where my grandmother lived, on the road toward Riverhead just out of the village. There was some madonna lilies came up in the yard, so I dug up the bulbs and took them over to my garden. I started with that and I think I had over a hundred before I got through. Father had two grape arbors, various kinds of grapes.

I: Were the Gildersleeves related to you?

A: No, well my uncle married a Gildersleeve, Charles Betts, my mother's half-brother, he married Fannie Gildersleeve.

(Picture of Author's home in Acuebogue)

A: The rooster was a stray. Someone put up a trailer park house across the street and someone gave those boys some chickens and this one got away from them. And he came and got across the road. Next to us was a woodland and a lot of undergrowth. Well he got in there and they never did find him. He was in there all summer, made his own livin'. When it came fall, along September and October he came out. And he came around by our garage looking for food and the florist still had some sweet corn in the garden that had gotten beyond eating and I went out and picked some off and brought to him and I got him tamed so that we could pick him up and everything. I'd throw him the corn a little bit closer to me and a little bit closer and got him so he would come to me.

I: You have a way with animals.

A: Maybe. I like 'em. Oh he was beautiful. He was the color, a game cock, yellow feathers and red and black. He was a very pretty bird. Connie and Earl had a camera and he came over one day and took these pictures.

I: Was there any difference between the people in Aquebogue and the people in Mattituck? Did you feel as if you were in a different town?

A: Well, of course for a long time I didn't see anyone I knew. There was no stores. There was only the grocery store. There was nothing that you could go shopping. I didn't want to drive, I didn't want a car. I did go to the church there and got acquainted with some of the people. I didn't care much for cards. I joined the Hospital Auxiliary and I worked for them, crocheting and knitting and things for them. Things to sell. - Riverhead Hospital, - that kept me occupied.

I: How did it feel coming back to Mattituck from Aquebogue?

A: I was living in Islip then and she had cancer and she was so bad she didn't want anyone around and this house was mine. My cousin was living here. She had a bad spell like old people do and the woman across the street looking after her comin' in every day.

I: What was your cousin's name?

A: Isabellè Bedell. She was a Wines. And the lady across the street was Sarah Van Ryswyk. I'd known her for a good many years. Now my cousin's in the nursing home, between Southold and Greenport. She's ninety-one now.

I: How was it coming back to Mattituck from Aquebogue?

A: Well, not very good. I..there's no one I know, practically. Very few. I know Sarah's family. She was a Gildersleeve. Her mother was a Gildersleeve and I knew her always.

I: What was her father's name?

A: Sarah's father? Dick Bassford. His wife was a Gildersleeve. So I knew the family. A woman on New Suffolk Avenue I knew, but they play cards and I don't care a cent for playing cards, never did. So I don't go out much and I don't see many people. I went to church a few times but I couldn't hear the minister good and they didn't seem to be very friendly, so I said, 'Alright, I'll stay home.' Let it go at that. It's as much my fault probably as anybody's. I don't blame it all on the other side. I don't walk so well and I can't get out... When you get to be over eighty you stay pretty well put.

.....

I: Tell me about the hardware store next to your store. Did he

have furniture for a while?

A: Yes, he had a little furniture upstairs.

I: Where did the Duryee family come from?

A: I believe they originally came from Flatlands... or Flatbush, in Brooklyn.

I: Who would know about the family?

A: I don't believe there's anyone left. I guess the youngest daughter lives in Riverhead. They lived on Oregon Road when they first came here. I don't know, there was Mrs. Duryee and Peter, Harvey and William <sup>and Clara (Ed. note)</sup> Those people that took that farmland there came from that section in Brooklyn.

(Pictures) These are friends. We used to meet and everybody had to make a patchwork quilt.

(Picture)

I: It says here, Happy Land.

A: I don't know what he called the place. I think that was Will Duryee. He had an old shack up there on the bluff, and we used to go up there and have picnics.

I: You said you never made a patchwork quilt.

A: Not the whole thing.

I: Can you place any of these women in the patchwork quilt....

A: I think that was Anna Grabie Young. Her name was Barker, she was Bob Barker's sister-in-law, the one had the drug store. Evelyn Reeve must be in there somewhere and Fay (?) Kirkup.

(Picture of Murray Wines boat)

I: This is Murray Wines, his wife....

A: She broke her pelvis, fell in the kitchen. That was about three weeks ago. That's a very sad situation. She's all alone, she has no family left....She'll be 91.

I: How was Murray Wines related to you?

A: His mother and my mother were sisters. And she was sister to the one who lived here. Isabelle and Murray. They were brother and sister.

(Picture of Donald Gildersleeve)

I: What happened to Vivien?

A: I think she had cancer too. She died, and Donald married again. She's a good hearted soul in lots of ways, but she's got some very, very, very, VERY peculiar ideas. There's no gettin' around that. She's nothing like his first wife. She was a quiet girl. She worked as a stenographer in New York for a big law firm. And he never went with any other girl. When they were young she wouldn't get married. Finally they did marry, then she was taken sick. Her mother was a cousin of my father's, so there was a little relationship. We always were good friends. He (D. Gildersleeve, Ed.) used a hearing aid for years and years and he got along pretty well with it. I think his niece told me recently he lost completely all his hearing.

(Looking at pictures)

I: (Unclear) he went to Camp Upton and that's where most of the local boys went.

A: These boys that came from New York City they used to take Aspirin as a stimulant, regular, just like dope. And my brother used to see the effects of it on 'em. And afterward you couldn't get him to take one Aspirin for anything. He said them boys, when they got overseas, they couldn't get the Aspirin and the effect that it had on them, he had no use for it.

I: Did they mix it with alcohol?

A: Maybe they did. He never talked a great deal about it.

I: Do you think World War I had much of an effect on Mattituck?

A: I wouldn't think so...except the year or two years, not many of the young boys around.

(Pictures)

I: If your father wasn't a church man, how was it you...

A: How was it I went to church? We went to church regularly, but he wasn't a church man. But he was upright and honest and truthful man. I say it doesn't take church people to be all you ought to be. There's some that, you could (unclear) around the corners. They'd go to church and say one thing but maybe the next day they do something else. Father used to tell about one old Priest that used to be, I think it was in the Episcopal Church here in Mattituck. The young fellows used to go to the church services cause they served the wine at communion every Sunday and they served the wine in the big round bowl. Well it wasn't always all quite finished and they used to accuse the Priest of finishing it up. And, I've forgotten his name now, said "Father So-and-so said, 'Don't do as I do, but do as I say'." Sometimes there'd be quite a bit left in the cup and he'd finish it.

End of tape

name Gertrude Reeve Raynor

birth date 1892 place \_\_\_\_\_

father's name William Hubbard Reeve

mother's name Selena Wells Reeve

~~childhood~~ Note: Grandfather Thomas Reeve had grocery store on Pike Street west of Love Lane. His home was on the site of Bohack's store. (1984 Country Time) Thomas Reeve died in 1900

education Mattituck school and Mts. Morton's School

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work Post Office, Meat Market and domestic work.

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spouse's name Clifton (Grover) Bergen Raynor (Bergen family from Brooklyn and Freeport) He was bookkeeper for the L. I. Cauliflower Association.  
children's names \_\_\_\_\_

major turning points in:

Mattituck	my life	my field of interest
1 _____	1 _____	1 _____
2 _____	2 _____	2 _____
3 _____	3 _____	3 _____
4 _____	4 _____	4 _____
5 _____	5 _____	5 _____

for me, Mattituck was \_\_\_\_\_

Mattituck is \_\_\_\_\_

I'd like Mattituck to become \_\_\_\_\_

MATTITUCK HISTORY PROJECT

Contents of Tape 28-GRR-4

Date: December 1978

Oral Author: Gertrude Reeve Raynor

Interviewer: John Traversa

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Reeve and Hall meat market

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The A&amp;P

The Breakwater

Changes in Mattituck

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John and Henrietta Wells, Herbert Conklin, Mr. Lutz at

L&amp;L, Wood Wickham, Kelsey's Block, Jim Norris,

Andy Gondola, Bailey Beach, Julia Craven Penny,

Octagon House, Library Hall, Elmer Tuthill, Librarian

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MATTITUCK HISTORY PROJECT

Contents of Tape 28-GRR-4

Date: December 1978

Oral Author: Gertrude Reeve Raynor

Interviewer: John Traversa

Early Mattituck

(Note: There were interruptions on this tape when they discussed pictures)

I: Do you think it's much different for old people now from what it was when you were little?

A: Well... Of course out here there weren't so many people, and my grandmother, my mother's mother, lived with us from 1900 to 1913 or 1914. My father's father died when he was only 66 years old. There were older people around. My father's aunt and uncle lived across the street until they were very old and they had one son and his wife come live there with them like that. But of course we didn't have any hospitals, and we didn't have any nursing homes. There weren't so many people and I suppose there wasn't so many old people around. Now the woman that stays with me, Irene, they were Polish and the Polish people began to come here. When they first came the men came as farm workers, and the women would come and do household work. And then of course they married different ones. There was none of them in school when I went. Irene's husband's just fifty. He was born and went to High School here. So it might have been the early 1920's when there started to be so many of them.

(Tape interrupted)

I: Now about your shop, Reeve and Hall. How did it start?

A: The people that own the big Octagonal House, Mrs. Wells, Mrs. Henrietta Wells, I think her husband was named John. She had just one daughter and she married a Mr. Herbert Conklin. And I

think that he and my father started in business together. And Mr. Conklin didn't stay long. But I would say Mr. Conklin started in the business and my father went with him, so I understood.

My grandfather was in the grocery store as long as he lived.

I: His first name was Thomas, right? What happened to the grocery store?

A: Yes, that is right. The grocery store was bought by Mr. Grable and moved on to the Main Road, and it is still there.

I: Jim's Diner? (1984, Wishbone Inn)

A: Yes, right next to my old house.

I: Reeve and Hall were famous for their sausage, right?

A: They got patronage for that sausage. I didn't remember the recipe when they sold the shop out to L & L, Mr. Lutz. My brother gave the recipe to him. We had the meat and spices figured out for a hundred pounds. We had the recipe for as long as I can remember.

I: How far did you sell it?

A: Only thing I know they used to send it to one or two restaurants in Brooklyn and New York. We packaged it and put it on the mail train. It was packaged in these round cartons like they have now, a pound, two pounds.

I: Did you put it in ice cubes?

A: We didn't have any ice cubes. All we had was ice out of the lake, so you couldn't send it too far. We always put it on the afternoon train between three and half past. Got in there that evening. Sometimes people would bring in their own pig and we'd make it, twenty-five or thirty pounds. We'd figure out the amount of spices and things to put in. People weren't so fussy as they are now.

I: Do you think people are fussier now?

A: Oh yes, in the way of being more conscious of sanitary conditions and health conditions. We used to put it in big wooden boxes, and of course we used to have to take them outside and scrub them with a pail of water, soap and a brush. That's the way we cleaned them then, out in the sunshine to dry.

I: Do you think they have become too strict today?

A: Well I don't know. Possibly a little more than is necessary. Because you take, there's hundred poor people who...wouldn't make a bit of difference to them. People that didn't have much to eat, they wouldn't stop to think where it had come from or how it was made.

(Tape interrupted)

I: How has Love Lane changed over the years?

A: Well we had one store on the corner. There was another little store, the Chinaman had the laundry. Then Reeve and Hall's, the blacksmith shop. Then there was a road that's there now. Then there was a two story house. Downstairs was a candy store and ice cream parlor. And the people that run it lived upstairs.

I think there was another small shop there that my uncle had a tinsmith shop in there, Wood Wickham. He was my father's brother-in-law. There was two or three things in there. They'd last a while, then move out. There was a barber shop in there, then there was an open space, Mr. Conklin's back yard. There's nothing there that was there when I was a child in the store line. The buildings, but the rest of it is not still there. L & L's would be the one with the longest duration except for the Love Lane Shop. It was called Kelsey's Block because he bought the whole property. And you see Kelsey sold that property to young Jim Norris. And the

other side of the road, I think Norris bought.

I: After your father died, your brother took over Reeve and Hall?

A: The property went to my brother and I equally, the house and the business. I didn't go in the butcher shop till he was taken sick.

Then I went in and helped him. That was during the Second World War and you couldn't get any help.

I: What effect did the depression have on your store?

A: Like anybody else's, rationing came in there, got your meat rationed. You could buy just so much. According to the amount you sold was what you were allowed to buy.

I: Who was your first competition?

A: Fischers, I suppose. There was no other butcher shop but his and ours. I don't remember if there was a butcher in the A&P or not.

I: When Fischer was doing business, was there any antagonism between you and him? Did the farmers come to your shop to have pork processed?

A: Yes, he didn't do any of that kind of business. He didn't make sausage.

I: He didn't do smoking?

A: In the winter time we did that. We worked with the pork in the winter time. We didn't do that in summer. Pork spoils very quickly.

I: Where did you get your ice?

A: From Wickham's ice house at Maratooka Lake. He had a big storage building there. He sold it through the summer. We had ice-boxes that would hold about a hundred pounds. They deliver two or three times a week, according to the weather. In the

store we had a big walk-in ice box in the corner. So the whole corner was stone. Now the gasoline engine that we ground meat with--we didn't have any electricity (unclear).

I: What would you say is the biggest difference now-a-days in running a butcher shop?

A: I don't think there is any more small butcher shops out in this country. Might be out in the Middle West (unclear) all these chain stores around now. They don't do any butchering or anything.

I: Do you think it was better back then with the individual butcher shop?

A: I don't think people ate as much meat to start with. Farmers usually had a pig or two of their own. They would have a cow maybe that would have a calf in the Spring. Then they had chickens, used chickens and eggs. My father wouldn't buy any chickens because he said they were wasteful, they cost too much.

I: Cost too much? Why?

A: Because there were too many bones in them, too much waste. We used to have chicken only two or three times a year. We had mostly pot roast. My sister lived on the farm and they had chicken every week and I used to think, Oh, if we could only have some chicken. We lived on pot roast, it was economical and there was no waste to it. When it was fresh cooked you could have it for hash and chopped up and different things (unclear) sometimes much to my disappointment.

I: Do you think that meat is now more expensive than it was then? I mean proportionately.

A: I don't know if it is any more expensive proportionately. We used to pay five or six cents for a quart of milk. Bread was only ten cents a loaf, so when you figure that milk is fifty cents a quart now, that is expensive. Of course meat is terribly expensive too. Of course I don't know how to figure out percentage. I don't know if it has increased any more.

I think the other day when we were in the store, Irene picked up large-sized eggs. A dollar and five cents, she said, I don't know as you could say that it is any more expensive than the other things.

I: There was one time when your store was called the "Pleezing Food Store".

A: Well, what was it....it was supposed to be like an A&P grocery chain. I think they were run on that same principle and my brother thought - well, maybe that would pay, it was during bad times. It didn't pan out and they were only there a very short time. It must have been during the depression. I think it must have been a little cheaper than the standard goods being sold.

I: About the A&P. You said the A&P moved right in next to you.

A: As I remember it, it was a small, small store. The manager, I think he had one clerk. The manager's real name was Gondola, G-o-n-d-o-l-a. After he went over to Southampton and married a Brooklyn girl, he started a little store of his own. He changed his name to Gardner. Andy Gondola (unclear) in Mattituck. He was very good friends with my brother. They were the same age.

I: So there was no competition?

A: No, I don't think so. All good friends in the town.

Little barber shop  
next to Pleezing  
Food Store  
RWT.  
5/25/88



Most everybody knew who the other one was and where they came from and everything else.

Irene took me for a ride one morning. We went up to the Breakwater on the Sound, and my goodness, I wouldn't know the place. When we were girls we walked up there on a Sunday afternoon. That'd be our recreation. And there wasn't a house anywhere on it. And now it's full. You wouldn't know it. It's nothing like it was then. Now it's a town. On both sides of the road, there wasn't a house in sight up there, all the length of that road.

(Tape interrupted)

(Picture of Author's old house)

A: There was a lot of lawn to mow. We didn't have gasoline mowers then, either. You had your own muscle, the only thing you had. I pushed it many a time.

I: Do you think people were healthier back then, stronger?

A: I don't think they were any less so but of course it's hard to tell. There's so many more people around. We didn't have any hospitals and we had one doctor and he came to the house. I think he did have sort of an office but not much. That's all we had.

I: Tell me how you think Mattituck has changed the most.

A: The number of people, expansion of the population.

I don't know...the Bank is quite different (unclear) a small building. Well it started in Library Hall. I'd say the hardware store is larger than it used to be. The town is much more crowded. Breakwater Road was completely empty, the whole two miles. The east side was the same, Bailey Beach we called it. I think there was one house up there that was

owned by people by the name of Bailey.

I: Did you like it better that way?

A: Oh, the Sound was much nicer. Of course the Breakwater now is all completely covered with sand. I remember when they first built that. That's nature that did that. The inlet to the creek had stopped up and they got after the government to send engineers here to build the breakwater. (unclear) was in my teens. There wasn't a house in sight up there.

I: Are you glad there are more shops, more convenience or would you rather have less?

A: Well, if you're going to have country living, I'd say less. I'd say it was more friendly. There's too many outsiders have been here maybe five or ten years. I don't think you make the lasting friendships you had when there was fewer people. Maybe it's just me.

Irene took me to Cutchogue on the North Road. She knew the names. There wasn't a single English name on the whole road except the Tuthills at this end. Every one of them was Polish. So you can see that it can't help but be different 'cause you got different nationalities. Of course they all go to the Polish, Catholic churches. And the other people that moved in, they go to the Greek Church. All those places that we didn't have in those days.

I: You think that the church was a kind of central meeting place back then?

A: Much more so. My mother and I always went to church. Of course Julia Craven Penny's father was the minister here for

over thirty years. So everyone knew him, and most people liked him.

I: If you could leave one closing thought for the present generations, what would you say to them?

A: Oh golly, I don't know. Of course I went to Aquebogue.... around 1950. I've been gone all these years.

I: Were you glad you were born and raised in Mattituck?

A: I guess I was! Good as any place, I guess. Our family for two or three generations have been born here and it just seemed natural.

I: Do you wish you could go back to your youth in Mattituck?

A: In some ways. Of course we didn't have the conveniences, the easy things that we have now. If you cleaned house, you had to clean it with a broom and dust pan, and soap and water. But now-a-days you can take a vacuum cleaner and get through in fifteen minutes. In the old days you scrubbed and you used a clothes beater and a carpet beater, whatever you call it. You had to pick up the carpet and take it outdoors to beat it and all that. So there are many more conveniences.

I: What was nicer about the old days?

A: I think maybe it was because our families were all here. There's so few I know now. People were much more neighborly. These people next door, they don't speak to me.

(Tape interrupted)

A: The first Library they had here in Mattituck was started in the Octagonal House. And then there was Library Hall.... I

remember the first Librarian. He was very lame. Elmer Tuthill. They lived on the creek up this way, on the east side of the creek.

End of tape

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