

Transcription of Conversation between Dr. Catherine Oglesby

And Margaret Elizabeth Broxton Lanier,

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By: Jake Graffeo

INTERVIEW BEGINS AT 1:44:00

CATHERINE OGLESBY: Ok...I am here, this morning, October 4th in Manchester, Georgia, talking with Ms. Margaret Lanier, whose going to tell us a little bit about, a little bit more about her life. A Manchester resident for a long time, she's going to answer a few questions for us, and I hope we make enough progress today that we can finish this up this trip. Ok, Mrs. Lanier, my first question is about your, about memories of childhood, it starts with memories of childhood. What is your first conscious memory of your childhood?

MARGARET LANIER: (long pause)...well, that's hard to say. (Long Pause) I know I went to Callaway School, I remember going to school, Callaway School, I remember that, and my teacher, Ms. Jewel, and Ms. Willie Smith...and my friends...that I played with.

CO: Ms. Jewel and Ms. Willie.

ML: You remember them?

CO: Well, those names are legendary, so...

ML: They were the first teachers, you know, that I remember. Well, I remember the first ones, but they were the first ones that taught, starting at the First Grade at Callaway. It's gone, now

CO: Right. Can you refresh my memory on where the school literally, physically was?

ML: You know where St. James Church is?

CO: ...I'm sure I do.

ML: Yeah, the mill's over here, and you go straight out that road to St. James Church, you know where it's at?

CO: Yes, ok.

ML: Ok, there was a railroad track that went through there, and there was a house there Sam Cox lived in, and then in the next one was the school. It had a long walkway to...you know, wasn't sitting right on the road, you had to walk a long driveway to the school; it was sitting kind of back...was the school.

CO: So your first conscious memory is of that school?

ML: Uh-huh.

CO: Ok. I'll come back to your education, because that's...that may be very telling that your first conscious memory is of school. Would you describe yourself as a child?

ML: Well, let's see...I was kind of on the quiet side back then, ha ha. We weren't allowed to...you know, go and play with the other children. They could come play in our yard but we weren't allowed to go out of our yard to play anywhere else. We had to play in our yard. Of course, Mommy and Daddy both worked, and we had a maid that stayed with us. She came when Agnes was 9 months old, she stayed till when Agnes was 18 years old, so she was part of the family, but she bought us stuff; we played games like jump rope, checkers, I mean, jack stones, we made up our games, and hopscotch, things like that. We didn't have all this modern stuff.

CO: So you describe yourself as "quiet," does that mean that you were also shy?

ML: A little.

CO: Ok...because your childhood, you lived a somewhat insular, isolated...

ML: Yeah, uh-huh.

CO: ...existence as a child, ok...

ML: My parents were strict on us, you know. They didn't really know, who would, um, slip up and go nowhere, we had to stay at home and play, but...and they just...were real strict.

CO: Yeah, ok. The next question is about your siblings, how many children in your family?

ML: There were four.

CO: Ok, can you tell me about them and the birth order, where you are in that birth order?

ML: Ida Lou was the oldest, and then Quinn, there was one boy, and then me, and then Agnes. Four.

CO: Ok. How much older was Ida Lou than Agnes?

ML: I believe 10 years, I think that's right.

CO: Ok, alright. So you were third? You were a middle child? Ok...can you say something about your siblings, what kind of relationship you had with your brother and sisters?

ML: Well, um...we played together, we got along. We didn't fuss and fight, nothing like that. We all got along, played together, but Ida and Quinn was older than we were, they were 3 years and 1 day difference in Agnes and my age, so we were closer...than the others.

CO: Ok, and how much age difference between you and your brother?

ML: 3 years.

CO: Ok, alright. Besides your immediate family, how large was your extended family? Grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, that sort of thing?

ML: Well, I only knew my mother's...parents, and they lived in Rome, Georgia, and they didn't visit a whole lot, though, so they didn't have, you know, they didn't go that much, and I didn't know my Daddy's people. I know he had two sisters, he was an only boy.

CO: So cousins and aunts and uncles were not a big part of your growing up?

ML: No.

CO: It was mostly your nuclear family, your parents and your siblings.

ML: Yeah.

CO: Ok, alright. I think you've already told me you spent your childhood in Manchester; did you all move around within the town of Manchester itself very much or did you...

ML: Not a whole lot. I was born on 1 Perkins Street, and I don't know how old I was when we moved into a larger house on Truitt Street, the middle house when you come

down the bridge, the middle one. And then we moved from there up on Johnson Avenue, next to the St. James pastorum, and from there we moved to Nebula Road...

CO: In the house next door?

ML: Uh-huh.

CO: Ok. So if you, when you were born, it was on Perkins Street?

ML: Uh-huh.

CO: That's in the Mill...Mill Village?

ML: Uh-huh.

CO: Were your parents mill [workers]...did they work in the mill?

ML: Yes...and then he worked on the railroad and he worked on the police force, Daddy did.

CO: Ok. Where was he for most of your childhood? Was he in one of those occupations more than the others for most of your childhood?

ML: Yeah.

CO: Which one?

ML: Um...I remember the mill more than...I knew he worked as a night policeman, and he worked on the railroad when they had the strike, you know. He went down and guarded the trestles, they called it. But I remember the mill more. (1:35:50)

CO: Um...could you tell me about the strike, the strike on the railroad? And when it was and... (1:35:35)

ML: I can't remember what year it was, you know, I was little, but I can remember...

CO: So you were a child?

ML: Yeah. I was real small.

CO: Would it have been in the '20s? Were you that small?

ML: I believe so.

CO: Ok. Alright. And your father...but it left an impression on you, apparently.

ML: Yeah, because they would burn the trestle, you know, they were destroying things, the ones that struck, and...I remember my mother standing about, they'd burn somebody's house down, you know, in the business where they were, if they struck, and when they'd send somebody down to guard the trestle, you know, the next morning when they'd go down there, somebody would be done killed him. But my Daddy was a big man. He was 6-foot-something tall and weighed about 250 or 260 pounds, and he knew everybody in town. And he knew everybody, all white and black, and they, the blacks was afraid of Daddy, and they respected him, and when he was on the police force, you know they didn't ride it all the time, they [police] walked the streets, up and down Main Street, and shake the doors to see if they were locked to the building and all. And then they'd get in the car, him and Uncle Jim **Kellum [1:34:13]**, and they'd ride...up and down the back alleys and over town.

CO: So, when your father... he worked on the railroad in the daytime and then he had a job...?

ML: No, he worked mostly at night on the railroad. But that's before he went to the mill.

CO: Now, um, so your father was not a part of the...can you explain what separated the people who went on strike from those who...did not? Your father was not part of the strike? (1:33:50)

ML: Uh-huh.

CO: No, ok.

ML: Or the mill either, you know, when the mill struck, he...wasn't a part of that either. And they all...they ones that did strike, they tried to talk him into striking with them, and he told me, he said, "Now you do what you want to do, but I've got a family to feed and I've got a job, and I'm going in on my job, and you do what you want to do." And so, that day...when they all got ready to come home at quitting time, they all waited for Daddy to lead the way. And they all got behind him and they were all right there at the gate with the picket signs and all, and when they came out they didn't say a word to any of them, they didn't say anything and they didn't do anything.

CO: Because your father was...

ML: He was leading them and they wasn't going to say nothing to him.

CO: Ok. Now do you remember that strike? Do you remember...we're talking about the mill, now, right?

ML: Uh-huh. I just remember just a little of it. I remember when the...troops came in to keep law and order, and the Army trucks and all came down the hill, I remember when they came in, and they stayed over at the "Y"...that's where they put them up.

CO: Uh-huh. So...would that have been 1934, do you think? Would you have been roughly...would you have been a young teenager?

ML: ... I imagine it would have been about like that.

CO: Ok.

ML: I don't remember a whole lot about it, and I listened to what they said.

CO: Right. Ok...

ML: But the troops stayed here a long time. There wasn't anything bad done, you know ...but they didn't accomplish anything, those strikers. Only they lost their jobs and they had to move away, most of them, you know, had to vacate their houses because they got their house rent free, never owed utilities, everything, but they had to move out and go to a different place to find jobs.

CO: OK. Ok, that was in 1934, and the railroad strike was in the '20s, probably.
(1:31:19)

ML: Yeah, I...I don't remember that, I just heard them talk about that.

CO: Ok. But your father was not involved, he had no interest in a Union, being part of a Union.

ML: Uh-uh.

CO: Ok. Um...do you think that influenced you...the way you thought of...your own role when you worked...well, I'm getting ahead of myself now with your jobs, but since we are talking about your father, it sounds like he had strong convictions about that.

ML: Oh yeah. He didn't take any foolishness off [anybody], and my Daddy was one...your word was your honor...

CO: Uh-huh.

ML: ...and if you agreed to do something, you shook hands, that was all he needed. That was...that was it, the way he looked at it. You were a man of your word, and you stuck by that.

CO: Ok. Um...I want to come back to your Daddy...when did he die, by the way?

ML: ...(NO ANSWER)

CO: Were you an adult?

ML: Uh-huh.

CO: Ok. So...

ML: I want to say 1957.

CO: Did he ever see your son?

ML: Yes. Jeff was about 3 years old, so I think it was '57.

CO: Ok. Alright. We'll come back to that, he sounds like a very strong person and someone who left an impression on his children. (1:29:29)

ML: Oh yeah.

CO: Ok, um...when you were a child, what did you want to do for your own...what did you dream of doing as a child? (1:29:15)

ML: I was always the nurse. I always took care of cuts and bruises and what have you, I was...I played the nurse.

CO: So even as a child...

ML: Uh-huh,

CO: ...you had that sense of mission as a nurse? Ok, alright. So that didn't really change, when you became a teenager, you were still determined to become a nurse? Ok. Did you have heroes as a child? Were there people who you really looked up to or...and it doesn't have to be famous people, it can be, you know, local parents, it can be anybody, but did you have someone that you really admired...wanted to emulate? (1:28:25)

ML: ...(long pause) No one in particular I can think of. . . .

CO: Ok, that's ok. Um...as a child, do you recall struggling with any issues, anything, whether they were...you know...anything you would regard as a struggle? (1:27:47)

ML: My school, schooling. I was terrible in arithmetic. I just could not make good grades.

CO: So you struggled with arithmetic?

ML: Uh-huh. That was the worst one.

CO: Ok, ha ha. Would you rather be outside playing...?

ML: All the time.

CO: Ok. Alright. Now this is question that some people have a hard time with, but...and if you don't want to answer it, that's fine: What was the most significant event in your life up to the age of about 12, so in your childhood? (1:27:10)

ML: ...(long pause) Oh, let me think. Up to 12...? I can't get that one.

CO: Ok. Alright. Well, if you can think of anything, even as a teenager, a significant event, as an adolescent, even...?

ML: ... I know there was plenty if I can just think of them.

CO: Well they might come to you, so it's fine. Well, you, as a child, it sounds like you...you lived pretty close to home. You had trouble, maybe, in school, you would rather be playing...as you become a teenager, an adolescent, is there a marked...memory of that change, becoming a teenager, or was that kind of a seamless transition between childhood and adolescence? (1:25:51)

ML: I just kind of slid on in.

CO: Ok, alright. Well, you know, now we know too much to suit us, I think. So much psychology about that transition to adolescence that...psychologists make a big deal out of that, so it's interesting to me to talk to people who live before psychologists had really come up with all these theories about adolescence, so for you, you just slid on into it.

ML: No big change that I can think of.

CO: Ok. Um...do you recall any difference in your relationship with your parents, especially as a girl with your mother, as a teenager, from what it had been as a child? (1:25:00) Was there conflict between you and your mother and your sisters and your mother...when you became teenagers?

ML: ...(pause) The main part was we weren't allowed to...you know, we wanted to, you know, there was some boys who lived next door to us, and we wanted to play over there in their yard, but we weren't allowed to go out of our yard to play with them, and we were playing "Jump Rope" and we got...a whipping for going over there and doing that.

CO: So you went to your neighbor's yard to jump rope...

ML: ...right next door, but they were so strict on us, but we couldn't go anywhere by ourselves, and if...we did go somewhere, you know, they went with us. I know I used to love to go over to Lane Street (UNCERTAIN OF STREET NAME, 1:23:50) to see Wilma Jones and Estelle Roberts, used to be, [1:23:46-44], and Mama and Daddy used to walk over there and tell me it's time to come home. I wasn't over there long, but they were just real strict on us. And I reckon its best in the long run, because they knew where we were all the time. We weren't allowed to go to parties and dances and things like that like a lot of children did.

CO: So how long did that last? Was there a point, did they say, ok now, when you become 16 or 17 or whatever, you are allowed to go off without your parents or your sisters or your brother?

ML: We were teenagers, yeah.

CO: So you...do you remember what age that was? When your mother would let you actually out without...? (1:22:49)

ML: Well, it was probably 16, 17, 18, something like that.

CO: Ok, alright. Um...how different was the experience in your household...for your brother, as a boy, and you and your sisters? Was there, did your parents make a distinction between what they expected from him because he was a boy and what they expected from you girls? (1:22:20)

ML: Yeah, we always claimed they thought more of him than they did...of us, because he...

CO: Because he was a boy?

ML: Yeah, he was the *only* boy, and Daddy took him along to get him some clothes and shoes and all, and when he got home, he put on his shoes and went across the road and come back and pulled them off and said he wasn't wearing them things no where. You know, just threw them away...he got his way, pretty much, whatever.

CO: And you girls thought that he was able to do that because he was the only boy?

ML: Uh-huh. We always accused them of thinking more and doing more for him than they did for us.

CO: Did they deny that?

ML: No.

CO: No? Ha. So...did your brother react to that in any way? Did he deny it?

ML: He knew they were; he used it. He got away with things that we couldn't do.

CO: So was he allowed to go to neighbor's house or go off away from the house...and you girls...

ML: Yeah, because the boy could get by with things that girls couldn't.

CO: So he had a different set of rules?

ML: And they always...told us that people would talk about us if we...you know, went with the wrong crowd or if we were seen somewhere...something like that. But boys could get by with it.

CO: Do you recall resenting that? Did you and your sisters resent the fact that he could get away with stuff...? (1:20:442)

ML: Yeah. Uh-huh.

CO: Ok. Um...do you have any recollection of a time when you disagreed with your parents' values, those values, for instance, that a boy could do and go and get away with a lot more than girls could? Do you recall a point when you questioned that, or did you just simply accept it, this is how things are? You might resent it but you didn't really challenge it or question it. (1:19:57)

ML: That's true.

CO: So you didn't challenge it, you just accepted it?

ML: (nods, probably)

CO: Ok. Were your sisters that way as well? Did either of them...?

ML: Yeah.

CO: They did? Ok. Any other beliefs or values of your family that were things that they held as important that you questioned at any point in time when you were living at home? (1:19:27)

ML: ...yeah, I remember a whole bunch of things. Daddy always made us get up early, you know. "Get up, the sun's shining all around the house." And I'd be in the bed and he'd make us get up and we'd be so sleepy, and we wasn't going to do anything, it was just time for us to get up, you know? We said when we got grown, we was going to sleep as long as we wanted to, ha ha!

CO: Did you do that when you got grown?

ML: That was Agnes and I when we were growing up. But he would come in and wake us up, "Get up, the sun is shining all around the house." Ha ha.

CO: So you wondered why you had to get up, it was because the sun was shining?

ML: Yeah, and just had to get up and get up and sit up. We had a maid that did all the work, we didn't do anything, we just had to, you know, we wasn't in school, Saturday and Sunday and all, but we had to get up.

CO: You mentioned your maid a couple of times, what kind of relationship did you have with her? (1:18:20)

ML: Oh, she was good. She was just one of us.

CO: Do you mind telling me her name?

ML: Ada Stinson.

CO: Ada, Ada Stinson, ok. And you, was she working for your parents when you were born?

ML: No, when Agnes...

CO: When Agnes [was born], ok, alright. How old a person was Ada when Agnes was born, or when she came to work for ya'll?

ML: I really don't know, you know, you can't tell about blacks' age.

CO: That's alright. Did she have her own children?

ML: No, she didn't have any children, didn't have a husband...and I remember where she lived when she was hired. She didn't have...she had a sister...I think she lived in Woodbury.

CO: So did she ever marry?

ML: No.

CO: No. Ok. But did she live here in Manchester?

ML: Uh-huh.

CO: But the sister lived in Woodberry, but she lived in Manchester.

ML: Uh-huh, yeah.

CO: Ok. Um...Ms. Lanier, I'm going to turn my telephone off... (continues). And everybody got along with Ms. Ada, she...?

ML: And back then, we had 3 meals a day, we had breakfast, we had dinner, and we had supper.

CO: Did she cook all 3?

ML: All 3, and at breakfast we did not know what a loaf of bread was. They didn't even make bread back then. We had biscuit for breakfast, homemade biscuit. And then we had...not rolls. And at lunch time we had biscuit and cornbread. And at supper time we did too, we had 3 meals a day. And she cooked on a wood stove...

CO: (softly) oh my gosh.

ML: ...but I can remember...and then she'd make a...back then you bought mill and flour and sugar in cloth bags and when she would lift them up into cans, she'd pull a string out of the tops of them when they are pulled together, and she would wash them and have them cleaned and then she would make us tea cakes, little thin tea cakes, and put them in them bags, and hang them up, and when we'd come in from school, that's what we would have. We'd have a tea cake. I can remember tea cakes...

CO: How did you all keep from being just grossly obese?

ML: We were all big! You have never seen a small Broxton, ha ha! We were all big-framed.

CO: So what time would she get to your house?

ML: She came before Mama and Daddy went to work, she came early.

CO: So she got herself to your house?

ML: Yeah.

CO: Did she drive or did somebody bring her?

ML: She walked...from over in Greentown. [UNCERTAIN OF PHRASE, 1:15:07].

CO: Ok, I see.

ML: But they was a lot more that walked [UNCERTAIN OF WORD, 1:15:05] people lived across in front of us. Turk and Eva Kirbo, [Ellen????] worked with them and they all walked together and some of them went on to different jobs, but they had to be down before our parents went to work.

CO: Roughly what time was that?

ML: They'd be there by 6:00 o'clock I think.

CO: Oh my goodness, wow. Their day started early. Ok...did you eat Cane Patch syrup on your biscuits?

ML: Yeah, we'd come in from school with our dirty fingers and we'd get a biscuit and bore a hole down in it with that dirty finger and pour some syrup in it! Dirt and all!

CO: Oooh...ok. As a teenager at home, did you, were you aware of anything that went on outside your household, like did you ever hear the news, were you ever interested in the news, anything that went on outside your household? Or you just lived it...(1:14:04)

ML: No, we...some neighbors had a radio, and every Saturday night they turned on the Grand Ole Opry, and they turned it up so loud everybody on the street could hear it. That's about all, we didn't have television.

CO: So your daddy didn't talk about the news, get the newspaper and talk about what was going on? (1:13:44)

ML: Well, yeah, back then the Lindburgh Case was all in the paper and he kept up with that, I remember that most, and the killing up at Greenville, you know, the...Coweta County... [UNCERTAIN OF TOPIC, 1:13:17]

CO: The Coweta County Murder, that was made into film back in the '80s, I believe?

ML: Yeah. He kept up with that.

CO: Ahh. Did he have opinions about that?

ML: I imagine so, because...he always, you know, would say something about it and what his belief was. I know he did, because he said all the time, "They killed him," you know and put him in that well. Of course, he knew Sheriff Collier and all of them that worked up there.

CO: Did...do you think your father...that most of your...ideas, most of your beliefs and convictions came from your parents? (1:12:40)

ML: Uh-huh. My Daddy was a smart man, he didn't go through school but he was smart. You couldn't outbid (???) him or anything. He was sitting on the porch over there at the house, and he was in a wheelchair because he had a leg amputated...and I went over there and I was sitting out there talking to him, and he was sitting there studying, and he said, "Baby, I might not see it in my time, but you probably will." And then that's when he told about integration, you know, in blacks and white going to school. He said, "They are going to be going to school together and starting all that," and I thought, "what's wrong with Daddy? What is he thinking about?" You know, to come up with something like that. But he could see that, back, way back before it ever started. (1:11:50)

CO: Do you remember roughly what year that was that he was reflecting on that?

ML: ...well, that was before I ever married, and I married in '41, so it had to be in the '30s.

CO: And he was already, in the 1930s, anticipating the Civil Rights Movement, anticipating some fundamental changes?

ML: He said it would happen. He said, "I won't live to see it, but...you will." And I said, "Well what in the world would make you think something like that?" He said, "It's coming. It's coming." And I thought about that a lot, after it happened, because he could...

CO: Did your mother reflect on things like that?

ML: No, she wasn't a ...all my mother thought about was cleaning house. Oh goodness, we had Spring Clean and Fall Clean. I mean, take everything out of our room and clean the room and everything, the windows and the curtains had to be washed and starched, and the windows cleaned and then, sun everything. And the pillows...everything done. And then put it all back in, scrub the floors, and that's all she enjoyed doing was housework.

CO: So did...Ada helped her, obviously, with that, but you all had to help too?

ML: We had to help too. Gosh...

CO: Now how did she...because I know this is your story, not hers, but her life influenced hers, how did she handle a full-time job and then all that...being so meticulous about the house and...

ML: She was always obsessed with having her a clean house. And before you went to bed at night, everything was put up. You didn't leave any papers or books, magazines or nothing out, you straightened up everything, put it in its place before you went to bed. You didn't leave clothes on the floor or in chairs or something like that, you either hung them up or put them in the...laundry room, something like that. You didn't leave no mess, and she'd always tell us that somebody might get sick during the night and we we'd have to call the doctor, and I said, "Well gosh, he won't be coming in here looking to see...where the book and papers and things are," but she was bad about that, cleaning house.

CO: Now, was your brother, did he have to...?

ML: No, he didn't have to do nothing.

CO: He didn't have to keep he things cleaned up? Did you all have to clean up after him?

ML: No.

CO: No. She did?

ML: Well, she or Ada or one did, but he wasn't bad at...keeping a mess like that.

CO: Now did you ever rebel against that, that strict...keeping everything in order?
(1:08:59)

ML: Well, sometimes I would want to go...with a crowd if they were going to Columbus on a Saturday or something...and she'd have something already planned. We'd have to sweep the yard or sweep up pecan leaves that were out in the yard or we had to...sweep the yards or something like that, she always had something planned for us to do, you know. And I wouldn't get to go, I would have to stay there and do things like that. And they'd go on without me. I thought, you know, that wasn't right, ha ha.

CO: Did your sisters, were they able to go?

ML: Well, Ida Lou was married, you know, by then...

CO: Oh, ok.

ML: ...and Agnes never did want to go nowhere. She was more of a stay-at-home person, she...she just never did like to...go and visit or go and...see nobody or nothing, she just satisfied at home.

CO: Did Agnes eventually date and marry?

ML: Uh-huh.

CO: She did, ok. So at some point she became interested in...have her own...

ML: She wasn't married but just a short time, though. She took her name back.

CO: Oh. Ok, so...that's very interesting. I hope we can come back to that.

Um...were you at home with your parents until you...married? Ok, so you didn't, there wasn't a time when you lived by yourself and had your own...?

ML: No.

CO: Can you tell me what it was like to leave home? (1:07:15)

ML: Well...not really. We weren't married...not even...let's see, we married in August...and then they bombed Pearl Harbor in...December? And then...the next year he went into the service, so I had to...

CO: So you had not moved, you had not moved out of the house?

ML: I had but I...they wouldn't let me move, they wouldn't let me live by myself, and so I had to move back in with them...and he was gone 3 years...and when he came back we built this house.

CO: This house?

ML: Uh-huh.

CO: Ok...I'll get to that in a minute, let me see if I can finish talking about your...you knew you wanted to be a nurse as a child and as a teenager, you wanted to be a nurse. Did you ever feel constrained? I mean, it was ok for a woman to be a nurse, so you didn't feel any...conflict in that ambition? Did you tell your parents, did your parents know you wanted to be a nurse? (1:05:43)

ML: Uh-huh.

CO: Ok, alright. And did they...were they ok with that? For you?

ML: Uh-huh

CO: Let's say you had wanted to be a doctor, would they have been ok with that?

ML: No, because... I never could have gone to school that long. You know, we didn't get to go to college...we just had to go to school that we could afford. We didn't have people getting a college education back then. We didn't have no HOPE.

CO: But if you became a nurse, you had to have some kind of special training...

ML: Uh-huh.

CO: ...tell me about that. That's our next subject, education. How did...you had problems in elementary school, did that continue through high school? (1:04:54)

ML: Well...some but not as bad. Then...I went to Upson Tech, in Thomaston...and graduated from over there...

CO: Now is that before you married? (1:04:30)

ML: Uh-huh, [no] after. ...And Merle Mc??? and I were both working on the weekends and holidays out at Warm Springs, and when we had a day off, and so when we got through training, we were capped and then after we got, you know, was graduated we took our state board, passed it, and...Rachael Chapman was Director of Nurses at Warm Springs, and she had us down when we worked the weekend, and after that she had us down for the next week, you know, to work. I said, "Merle," you know, and the next week was like that, and we just kept going, and I said, "Merle, did you intend to work here when you graduated?" She says, "No, I hadn't thought about it, but I don't think it's bad," and I said, "Well, me neither." I said, "Rachael's got us down to keep working, we hadn't been interviewed," you know. Well, they did...Roy ???? came from

Royal Elaine, you know, in Lagrange and tried to hire me, and he said I'll roll out the red carpet if you just come over there. And then the Foundation, the thing I did wrong I didn't go to the Foundation with state benefits. And we stayed at Warm Springs so...one day we was all talking, I said, "Rachael," I said, "You can't fire me, there's no way you can fire me." And she said, "And why not?" "Because you never did hire me." You got to hire anybody before you can fire them. She said, "I know too much about you already, so get out of here."

CO: Well now, ok, did you go to Upson Tech while your husband was away?
(1:02:29)

ML: No, he was out of service.

CO: Ok. Did you work in those 3 years that he was off in the war?

ML: (nods, probably)

CO: What did you do those three years?

ML: I worked in the Mill then.

CO: You worked in the Mill, ok.

ML: We worked double shifts, you know, trying to make the cloth for the...

CO: ...Sure

ML: ...for the service and all and...that's the way we started the house, and he send me so much money out of his check every month, and I would put some much in it and put it in the bank, so we had enough money to build a house when he came out of service. (1:01:53)

CO: Hmm, ok.

ML: He was in 3 years, 3 months, and so many days.

CO: What was mill work like?

ML: Well, it was hard work. Because different people that would hire anybody after they had struck, you know, they worked for Callaway, they said they knew how to work and they'd hire anybody that worked at Callaway because they knew how to work. But I was an inspector and I could weave and... make the cloth. I could do either one of them and, what you call, "pick out," you know, when a bad place comes up in the cloth,

I can do that. We enjoyed it, we had a good time, all of us that worked down in there.
(1:01:27)

CO: So this was in the years, the early '40s, '42,'43...?

ML: Uh-huh.

CO: ...'44, that you worked in the...for Callaway? Ok. And then, did you quit when your husband came home, or did you quit before then?

ML: I quit after he came.

CO: Ok, alright. Um...can I ask you a few things about marriage...and romance and that sort of thing?

ML: Well, we went together 5 years. (1:00:34)

CO: Whoa. Ok. How did you meet him?

ML: ...Church.

CO: You met him at church, alright.

ML: And we knew the family.

CO: Um...what did you call him?

ML: Hugh.

CO: Hugh, alright. You met him at church. Let's talk about religion for a minute, can we talk about religion for a minute? Was that the...well, you're at Macedonian now, right? Were you a member of Macedonia as a child? (1:00:01)

ML: No, I joined Macedonia...in '42, I believe it was.

CO: Oh my goodness, that's a long membership. Where before Macedonia; where were your parents?

ML: They were at West End.

CO: Ok, and that's where you met Mr. ...

ML: No, I met him at Macedonia. We, all of us in the Mill Village used to go to St. James but I never did join. That a Methodist, I never did join over there.

CO: Did your parents have a problem with you going to a Methodist church?

ML: Uh-huh.

CO: No. Ok.

ML: Because there was one house between us and the church.

CO: Ok. But it didn't matter to them that it was Methodist and not Baptist?

ML: No.

CO: Ok. Because West End was Baptist, right?

ML: Uh-huh.

CO: Were your parents ardent, uh, ...were they church-goers? (59:03)

ML: Not...not regular.

CO: Ok, alright. Did you have yourself, it sounds like you went to church, as a young girl, as a teenager when you could go and your parents would let you go to St. James because it was close by? Was that kind of a social thing for you? Did you go to church because it was a way to be...? (58:30)

ML: Oh yeah, we had a BIG crowd, all the teenagers.

CO: So St. James was a...young congregation?

ML: Yeah, church would be full every Sunday. They had what they call the Epworth League, I believe it was. Hugh Smith was in charge of that, and we'd have a room full on Sunday night, you know, we would just have the best time.

CO: What did you do? What was a good time at St. James on Sunday night?

ML: We just all buddied together and then they'd have a lesson and they'd sit around and talk...

CO: Did you have food?

ML: Sometimes. We'd have an ice cream party.

CO: Did you talk about things of a religious nature or was it mostly a social occasion?

ML: Just social. All the [UNCLEAR PHRASE, 57:35-30], you know, all the people went there all of our lives, we all knew each other all of our lives...we just enjoyed going.

CO: Did you ever...was it ever an issue for you, not so much an issue for you, but did you ever distinguish between the...Methodist and the Baptist Churches? Any...did you ever question the differences between the Baptist and the Methodist Church? (57:03)

ML: No, not really.

CO: So...can you talk about your spiritual values, your religious values? Is that important, has that been important to you throughout your life? (56:45)

ML: Oh yes, yes.

CO: Have those values changed over time? (56:44-51:39)

ML: They get stronger. Because the older you get, the more you...you realize how good God is to you. Because I'm 90 years old. He's been good to me, and he's helped me in so many ways, and like I told you, I just lost my sister, you know, the 15th of June of this year, just a short time back, so I'm the only one left. If he hadn't have been with me during that time I couldn't have never made it. Because I went every day, I kept her as long as I could, but she had a stroke...she had a hip replacement 20 years before, she had to have it replaced again, and then they moved her to Warm Springs to have therapy, and they moved her one night...got there after dark, and they called me and told me she was having not me to come out there, that I'd come the next day to sign her in. Next day they called me and they had x-rayed her and her hip was out of place...so that had to turn around and take her back to Houstons, and when they was putting it back in place she had a stroke on the operating table, and she was in...on the respirator for several days...that left her paralyzed ...partially on the right side, and she was much larger than I was. I tried to keep her here with me, but it got more than I could handle, and after I had open-heart surgery, then that stopped it, you know, they wouldn't let me pull or lift. I had to, doctor called and told me, one night I had to have the police out here, 3 or 4 times, to get her up out of the floor. She went, you know flopping around the bed and all, and I couldn't get her up, and I'd have to call them and Dr. Collins came out that morning, he said, "Now Margaret, I've already told you, you've got to do something about it. You can't do it, you've tried and now you've found out you can't. She's going to have to go in a Nursing Home." And that just broke my heart, me working there but still I didn't want to have to put her in a Nursing Home. Agnes was a very private patient. She was one, now, I get up in the morning, I look like this, I put on my blue jeans, my old shirt, and do my housework or whatever I'm going to do, but she got up in the mornings after she was sick, and...after breakfast she

would fix her face, fix her hair and dress and I'd think she'd be going somewhere. She was just getting ready for the day. She fixed herself up all the time, she had so much pride. And after she got out there, you know, everything was against that, and she just never could get adjusted to it ... and it just hurt me so bad for her to be there. But I went every afternoon, and helped her with her supper, and then got her ready for bed and fixed her water where she could reach it, and I take her sandwich every night so if she got hungry before she went to bed, you know, I mean, went to sleep, she'd have it. I put her call light where she could reach it, everything I'd fix before I'd come home, I'd come home about 9:00.

CO: This was at Warm Springs?

ML: Uh-huh. And she was out there a little over 4 years...and then that was really a blow to me because I wasn't expecting it, as quick as it was. And then Hospice, you know, they took over. They were so good, I could really recommend them to anybody. But I didn't...they said she had another stroke...I don't know...but she was out of it for a day and a night, you know, she didn't know me. But I sat there by the bed.

CO: Now, is this, you're talking about recently? This June?

ML: Uh-huh, this past June. And if God hadn't have been with me, I prayed and asked him to please let me hold out to look after her because she didn't have nobody but me. And I said... "I don't want her to suffer." I said, "There's too much medicine on the market for anybody to be in such much pain and all." And I don't think she suffered a whole lot, but I asked her, sometimes she would...say "No" for "Yes" and "Yes" for "No."

CO: But you knew?

ML: Uh-huh. That...I'm not over it, you know, yet, but God has helped me through it so far. Because he doesn't make mistakes.

CO: Ms. Lanier, there are so many things about what you just told me that I want to know, but if I get started...we'll never get through. I want to hear about Ms. Agnes, I especially want to hear...about her...you know, you describe her as being very different from you, and she married but she wasn't married a long time. Did she ever remarry?

ML: Nuh-uh. No.

CO: No. So she really didn't have children or anybody, you were kind of her only family.

ML: Jeff was Power of Attorney, and they were calling him, giving him a report on her, and then he had called me and the morning he called me, about 6:30, he said, "Mama, they called me at 5:00 and told me that Aunt Agnes had had another stroke and they said usually when it's like this, they don't last about 24 hours." I said, "I'm on my way to Warm Springs now." He said, "I didn't call you that early, though." I said, "Well, I'll go on out there." So we were with her, the chaplain, our preacher, and **Barbara Glazier** **[UNCERTAIN IF THIS NAME IS ACCURATE, 50:30]**...and I think that was all, and myself. She lived until 10:00 that night.

CO: You were with her?

ML: Oh yeah. I had my face right up against hers when she got her last breath.

CO: Did you...did she know you were there?

ML: I hope she did. I told her I was there...she tried to open her eyes one time, but that was all, during that day, but at the very last, she just...her last breath, because I had my head there and was listening when the last breath, you know, she didn't even make a sound. Not a one. I said, "Call the nurse." They called her to come down there, and I told her, I got up and kissed her and I said, "Well, good-bye, and it won't be long before I will be with you again." But she was the prettiest thing, Agnes was a beautiful person. And she was so pretty. But our...you know, I look back now, and a lot of things I don't remember what happened and why I did this or why I did that, who was here, and who was at the funeral...I just can't remember. God just takes all that away from you.

CO: Did...have you been with other people at the moment of death? (48:50)

ML: Oh yeah, yeah. Some of them struggle, some of them gurgle, you know, and we called it the "Death rattles," you know, old people used to call it that. But some of them just struggle and just...make a sound, you know, something like that when they gone, and you don't...you don't even know it, because when they do that, you hear that, but she didn't make the first sound. Not the first one, but I had my hand right there on face by hers and...she was...they were giving her something every 30 minutes because her heart was working so fast and so hard, putting out so hard, and they were slowing it down. But I had been with her through so much, her 3 hip replacements...Lord, I don't know what all she had. She had her feet operated on several times, she had hammer toes and...gall bladder...hysterectomy...

CO: Did your sister have a strong religious faith?

ML: Uh-huh.

CO: She did...so you shared that...? (47:30-45:25)

ML: She wanted to go. She looked at me, she said, "I don't know why the good Lord don't take me?" I said, "Agnes, for the simple reason, he's not ready." I said, "Me and you, you want, I'm 3 years older than you," and I said, "When he gets ready for us...he'll take us." But she was ready. Because she had told me...that she wished she could go on, because she just...she wasn't enjoying being like she was, and...being paralyzed like she was. She couldn't do for herself, although she got to the place where when they got her up in the wheelchair in the morning, she would take that left hand and put her makeup on. She sure did. I never failed to get her hair fixed every week, I'd tell Patsy, I said, "Don't fail to...do Agnes' hair whether I'm out here or not," because she always wanted it done and always made her feel better. But she...and Patsy did it at the funeral home and it was so pretty. And I said, "I hope that I didn't leave anything undone, I hope that I did everything that I could. I tried." Everything she wanted...I tried to get it for her, I don't care what it was. She'd say something... "I wished I had so-and-so and so-and-so," and I'd go see if I could find it for her, whatever it was. I said, "I don't want to think that I didn't do all that I could," and they said, "Well, you don't have anything to regret because you did everything that you could for her," and I said, "Well, I wanted to. I really did." Because she's all I had, and I didn't have anything to...They'd say, "Don't you go up to that Nursing home tonight, it's too bad or too cold or too rainy" or something or another...I'd go right on.

CO: Now, did you...you obviously had been retired for a long time from the Nursing home when she...was admitted...

ML: Yeah, uh-huh.

CO: ...did you know the people out there?

ML: Some of them. They had...most of...there wasn't but a few CNAs that I knew and...all the nurses were practically new. I knew some of them, some of them in the kitchen I knew...

CO: Ok... Would you consider the experience of being with her, her last hours, was that for you a spiritual experience? Did you have this sense that she was moving on? (44:35)

ML: Uh-huh.

CO: Well, I want to ask you, what was the most profound spiritual...moment in your life? It's kind of hard to...to follow that story about your sister, which is very...poignant and resonates for me because I lost my sister in February, so it speaks to me at many different levels, and that was a...there were so many things about that experience that were...you just felt like you were in a different dimension of time, you know. It's just like things just aren't the same and you have this sense that there's....you're being sort of protected, or something, that's...things just aren't normal. That was definitely a turning point in my life, and it sounds very much like that was so....

ML: It was. (Speaker continues, discussing what she would bring her sister to eat as well as some of the other nurses who cared for Agnes, 43:33-42:50)

CO: So how have you filled that void? What have you done instead of...getting ready to go out and share with all those people at the Nursing home? (42:40)

ML: Well, since that all happened, and I've had 3 bad falls, I had 1 here at the house about 3:00 in the morning, and that really stove me up. And then...I fell out there on the driveway and broke my arm, right arm at that....

CO: ...Now all this since June?

ML: Well, since she got sick. But since then...the fall, here in the house, happened since then, since she died. And then I...fell at Dr. Lamberts, in his parking lot, since she died. And then I fell up at Jeff's, across the bathtub, since she died, so I've been...you know, where I couldn't hardly get around. In fact, I stayed up there longer than I intended to, but I couldn't come home, they had to help me up when I would sit down, from my waist down, you know, I must have cracked my pelvis, because when it moved it was torture. And they waited on me hand and foot, begging me to stay on, and I said, "Well, I need to go home, there are some things that I need to do." And he said, "Well, if you go home, what day can I come get you and bring you back?" I said, "Well, we'll see about that." But they'd keep me all the time if I'd stay, and I do realize that I am going to have to make some decisions...because I, if I keep falling, I can't stay by myself, and he said that I am not going to a Nursing Home, and my daughter-in-law said, "I'm going to take care of you." And they got me a bedroom and a bathroom already furnished up there.

CO: Now, you...you worked in a Nursing home? (40:33)

ML: I worked in a hospital first; I worked in OB and Delivery. When it first opened up, we had a “Black” nursery and we had a “White” nursery, and I loved that. I worked with Judy Gooden...

CO: Oh! I remember Judy!

ML: Uh-huh. She’s still working. She’s already had her 50th Anniversary.

CO: She was with my...when my baby brother, Wade, was born.

ML: Well, she’s still there, but she came by one day last week...she comes real often and says, “If you ever need me you call me.” There won’t never be another Judy Gooden. She’s one and only. I’ve seen that girl work, my, we delivered more babies, the doctor wouldn’t even be in the hospital. We’ve gone out in the parking lot to deliver babies, they couldn’t make it in the hospital.

CO: That’s a big difference, going from OB...to the Nursing home.

ML: I didn’t want to go. But Mr. Jeffries was the administrator then, and he called me to come to the office one day, and I was making my “med” pass, and I went with another nurse, and she said, “What does he want with you? What does he want?” I said, “I don’t know.” And when I went in there, he told me...they weren’t completed with the Nursing home, they were still working over there, the carpenters, electricians and plumbers and he told me that he wanted me to go in the Nursing Home and be in charge of all 3 shifts. And I said, “Well, I don’t know whether I like that type nursing or not. I’m satisfied with OB and Delivery, I love that, and I love working with Joe Thomas and Judy Gooden.” And he said, “Well, I want you to go over there and, and then if you get dissatisfied, I’ll let you come back to OB and Delivery.” So we had an Open House on a Saturday and a Sunday, and on Monday...we admitted 11 residents and Maudy Lofton and Elmer Lofton’s mother, was the first one to be admitted. I remember her...and...he never did let me go back. We were so busy so I was stuck over there.

CO: Did you try?

ML: I was in charge of all 3 shifts, I was a “Charge Nurse,” and Richard Buchahan, he’s the CEO now of the hospital out there, and he was my Orderly...ha ha...He told someone not long ago, he said, “I used to work for Margaret.” And they said, “What do you mean?” And he said, “I did. I was the Orderly over there in the Nursing Home.” They didn’t, none of them believed that, you know, because that’s been so long, that’s before he ever went to college. And every time he sees me, he’s got to hug me and kiss me, ha ha. He’s a mess. So that’s the reason why I never did get to go back, Mr.

Jeffries wouldn't let me go back, he said I was doing a good job, he wanted me to stay on longer, and longer and longer. And he left and never did come back, and then they got another administrator, and another and another so...I never did get to go back. Paul Barnes said one day, "We are going to have—no Bill Daniel," he said "We're going to have a Margaret Lanier Day one day and have refreshments and everybody come in and just...reminisce and all that," and I said, "No, I'm like Judy Gooden, I don't want *nothing*! I don't want *nothing* planned." I just don't go in for that.

CO: Now, you...what was it about that work? Was it not gratifying or was it just difficult to be around...can you talk about what was...why you felt stuck there, and was it simply such a contrast to delivering babies? What was it about doing that kind of work? (36:26)

ML: I didn't...I didn't mind it, I mean, I got used to it. They said, "How do you stand it? It's so depressing?" But you didn't look at it that way, you look at it, if you are going to be in that shape when you got that age, you know, you didn't think about that, and when you lost one...and you know, that didn't enter your mind and all. But I just liked the OB and Delivery because I'd...try to get the doctors to let me go out and let me tell the...Daddies what they had and all, you know, they always had to do that and all, and they did let me, one day, go tell somebody, I can't remember who it was. It tickled me to death because I got to go out there and tell them what they had. But I was the one who, when the baby came, they handed me the baby and I had to do its prints and put the [UNCERTAIN OF WORD, 35:35] nitrate in its eyes and clean it up, you know, and carry it to the Nursery and weigh it and measure it and all stuff like that. And then I had the rocking chair in there, and I always had the curtain pulled when I first carried the babies in, there at the "White" Nursery, and...somebody told me one time when I came out, they said, "You've been rocking my baby." And I said, "What you mean?" They said, "I know you have, I could see every time your feet would down and you'd go back and forth, I could see your feet under that curtain." They were right, and they could tell I was rocking that baby. I said, "That's what they're made for." I rocked every one of them. I said, "You quit when you take it home, but when it stays out here it's going to be rocked." (34:46)

CO: So when did you...when were you moved from OB and Delivery into the Nursing Home? (34:45)

ML: Um...I stayed in there about 3 years, I believe.

CO: You were in OB for 3 years?

ML: 2 or 3, I forget.

CO: And then...do you remember when that was?

ML: '64 and '65, '66, sounds right in there.

CO: And then...you were the first...director at the Nursing Home...and were there for how many years?

ML: 35. Well, no, let's see...35 in all, counting the 3 years in the hospital, so...35 years.

CO: How different do you think your...your career would have been had you stayed in...Delivery?

ML: Well, see, they don't have Delivery now. They quit delivering babies. I know when Dr. Jackson, we called him, and he'd have one and he'd come out there and it wasn't quite time, and he'd...walk the delivery room floor, you know, back and forth. I said, "Well, you make me nervous, I wish you'd stand still." And he'd say, you know, he cussed all the time, he said, "When I get through with these that I've got, I'm getting out of this, I'm not doing any more. I'm not delivering any more babies." And I said, "Awww, that's what you think." He said, "No, I mean it." He said, "You worry about them for nine months and blood pressure and the kidneys, you know, and up all hours of the night delivering and all," and sure enough, when he delivered the ones that he was already seeing then, he quit then. He didn't deliver any more. I told him that not long ago when he was in the Nursing Home...

CO: Dr. Jackson was in the Nursing Home?

ML: Uh-huh. Robert, a colored man that looks after him, he was riding him down the hall and I went out and stopped him and I said, "You remember?" when I told him what was said and all that, and he said, "Yes, but I took care of them, didn't I?" I said, "You did, you did." And then, see, after I was over there and Betty [Dr. Jackson's wife] came into the Nursing Home...and he would call me at night after he'd go out there and go home, he'd call me and he'd say, "Margaret, does Betty ever call my name, or ever say anything after I leave?" I said, "No, she never has. Not since the accident, she never has called." I said, "The only thing I have ever heard her say, one day said, 'Bill...Bill,' real fast, real sharp like," and that was the baby boy, she had four children, two boys and two girls, and he said, "Well, you know, that's strange; they was just a little bit of something...Bill was just a little bit special...about him." But that's the only time she ever did, and when they get her up, she was in way down at the end of the hall, and

they'd bring her down there and put her in the Nurse's Station with me, and I'd talk to her while I was working, and I said, "Betty, you remember when you asked me to do all this over-writing on these charts and all?" And she looked like she knew what I was talking about. She had Alzheimer's bad, she didn't know none of them, she didn't know Dr. Jackson, her children neither. And she look at me so hard, I said, "I want you to see if this one's right," and I'd put a chart there and she'd sit there and look at it just she was working, you know. She'd sit there for hours. And he told somebody not too long ago, before he retired, he said, "I always loved Margaret. She was so good to Betty. I'll never forget her." He's told me. (30:50)

CO: Is Dr. Jackson still living?

ML: Uh-huh.

CO: He is? Is he out at the Nursing Home?

ML: No, he was. But he stayed...about 6 months or something, I don't remember how long he stayed out there

CO: Is he back at home?

ML: He's at home now, and Robert, this colored man, he goes over there and stays with him all day. They get out and just ride and ride and ride...and he went to the funeral home to see Agnes. He can get around pretty good now by himself, and Dr. Smith's been out there, I don't know whether he's gone home now or not, but he's in and out all the time. He's in bad shape.

CO: Yeah. I wonder what that experience was like for them? I mean, they were the doctors there and then they're the patients, I wonder what that must be like that?

ML: I never did hear anything, you know, that he said or...anything he didn't like or something. He was still the same doctor, he was still...talked just he always did whenever he'd see you.

CO: Was he confined to a wheelchair?

ML: He was for while...but then he got to where he could walk with a walker.

CO: Is he on a walker now?

ML: I think so, but Robert gets him and they just ride all the time. Faye [UNCERTAIN of last name, 29:27-24] lives out at Windsor Park, and she told me, I take her to church

on Sunday, and she told me that he came by one day last week and she was sitting on the porch, and she said, Robert stopped and said, "Faye, come out here and hug my neck." And she said, "I'm not in the habit of hugging your neck!" And she got up and walked out to the car and talked with them a while, she said they was just riding around.

CO: How far back does Robert go?

ML: He used to work with Joe Butts out there at Joe Butts's store. He goes back...and he's been with Dr. Jackson, I don't know how long he's been retired...but he's been with him a number of years and he is good. He's a stout person, he can handle him. He can handle him easy.

CO: ...Well, when Dr. Jackson was out there, you weren't there, right?

ML: I was with Agnes. I'd go out there with Agnes. No, I wasn't working there.

CO: You weren't working there.

ML: Uh-huh, because that's just memories of them, you know, a couple of years.

CO: But you retired from there...when? What year did you retire?

ML: ...'98? I believe it was in '98. (Pause)...seems like that is right.

CO: You talked about...working as the OB nurse, the fun part about that was the rare occasion when you would get to go and tell the father what he had. What else was rewarding about that? (27:30)

ML: Well, it's just really something when you see one come into the world...and it's healthy [27:20]. Nothing wrong. And it's so...bad to have to see one come into the world...deformed.

CO: How often did that happen?

ML: Not often, but...it was bad.

CO: And what about...yeah, that probably is the answer, what was the least rewarding thing about that job? (26:57)

ML: One time there was one born, it had an extra finger...on its hand and they put a cord around it, you know, and took it off. Cut the circulation off and they pulled it off.

And then one was born with his head, the top of his head was sunk in...that was...depressing. (26:30)

CO: And so what about...the nursing home? What was...was some of that rewarding? (26:18)

ML: Yes, when the families would, you know, come in and thank you for what you had done for them and appreciate, and you knew that they did, you know, just talking with them. And families were so good to us. They really were good to us. Of course, some of my CNAs worked 20 and 25 years there, they were regular. They loved them people. They really did. And they took care of them. You didn't have to check behind them, I'm telling you, they did their work and cleaned their unit...and when they'd get through with them, they'd look so pretty. They'd put makeup on them and dress them and bring them out in the wheelchairs and they'd look real pretty and then they cleaned up the whole room, you know. Have it cleaned and all, and now...

CO: ...If you were asked to be on a ... Council that could address issues of aging and in homes and facilities where people go when they are not able to take care of themselves, what would be some of the first things you would, you'd like to see addressed in nursing facilities? (24:57)

ML: Keep them clean...and...dressed and fix them. When you get old, you still have feelings, and you want to look your best...and they like putting on their makeup and fixing their hair and make them look nice, because they still want to do that. But they don't take time to do that anymore. So...if your family don't do it, you don't get it done.

CO: Yeah. Have you been in these...facilities that are...sort of high-end retirement homes, assisted living, independent living facilities where people go? Have you been in some of those and...you know...noticed the difference in the care those individuals get from the care of individuals at this, for instance this nursing home? (23:50)

ML: Yeah, I have.

CO: And what do you think about that?

ML: Well, the...Vista Care people, they're are wonderful.

CO: Who is this?

ML: Vista Care, the nurses and all of them that work in that...because the last week of Agnes' life, they did not give her a complete bath and change her bed like they're

supposed to, and all she got was her face washed and...all I could do, and I couldn't hold her over and do that. You can report it all you want to, but it won't do no good. Because I went to the Director and the Administrator about it, and when she went under...Vista Care, the next day the nurse came...and she came in there and she started at her head and she went to her feet. I mean, she soaped her and bathed her and rubbed her back and I know she felt so much better. Changed her bed, cleaned her up...and I said, "I wished that all these CNAs could have come in here and watched you today."

CO: Now can you tell me what that is? I don't...know what Vista Care is. Is that something that all Nursing Homes have?

ML: No. They just started this...so many years. We didn't have it when I worked. I didn't know anything about it. And they have it in Columbus and Lagrange and...

CO: Are these itinerant nurses who come through...?

ML: Well, if you sign up with them, you know, to take care of your resident or when...well, like when you know they can't...they won't be here much longer and all...

CO: So families do this? Families sign up for it, is that what it is? You sign up for your sister?

ML: (discusses Vista Care, 21:54-20:57) Yeah...well, I didn't, Jeff did. But I was telling Jeff what was going on on Sunday night when they called him, so on Tuesday, he told his wife, he said, "I'm not going to work today, I'm going down to Warm Springs to see what's going on." So he came down here and I didn't even know he was here, and he was out there talking to the Director of Nurses and the Administrator...and so they told him about Vista Care and what all it did. They got them on the phone and he talked to them, and they told him what they would do and so he came on by here on his way back home and he told me about it and I said, "Well, you did tell them you wanted them to take care of Agnes?" He said, "No, I didn't because I wasn't going to do it until I talked to you." I said, "Well, I think it's the thing to do, wonderful." And he...the next morning he called them and told them.

CO: So who...how is that paid for?

ML: Medicare.

CO: Ok. So...could any family have that for their loved one if...does the loved one have to be, or the resident have to be at a certain stage of...of care to be eligible for that kind of...?

ML: I don't know about that, but...one of them, a Social Worker, told me that they had one out there that had been on it four years...so it must not...

CO: Ok. I wonder why that's not more widely known?

ML: It's just...

CO: It's new?

ML: (discusses Vista Care, 20:18-16:15) Yeah...and they had a memorial service...for all that died in a year's time that was under them. And it was real sweet, I went; had it in the dining room out there. And all of them were there, the social worker, the nurse, the chaplain, and the...a lot of them that I didn't know the title, but there was 8 or 10 of them. And they called their name, like me, "Margaret Lanier and Agnes Broxton was my sister," and they gave me a long white candle...and I lit that candle on the table, you know, there was already one burning, and then I walked down to the end of the table and then they would put it out and put it down there. It was real sweet, the way they carried it out, they had some singing...and people...if they had anything they wanted to say, anything to recount, and they told me, they said, "You'll be hearing from us for a year." They said, "We don't leave you just when you lose a loved one."

CO: This seems like...is it sort of along the lines of hospice?

ML: Uh-huh.

CO: It's connected with Nursing homes, is it? Is that...?

ML: Yeah.

CO: Ok. Vista Care...ok.

ML: In fact, they had a service several weeks ago, and they sent me a letter wanting me to come and bring a picture of Agnes to put on a table, they was going to have a table set up for them. That was in the First Baptist Church in Columbus. And that was when I was going to Jeff's that week, so I had to write and tell them that I wouldn't be there and why I wouldn't be there, so I have a letter from them, and she thanked me for letting them know that I wouldn't be there, but they'd miss me but said it was real sweet, and I know it was.

CO: Does Vista Care, does that sound like something you might have liked to do if you had been...?

ML: Yeah. It's rewarding, it really is, because like she said...I don't know how many times I heard from them, you know, since this has happened, and they sent me a sympathy card and every one of them signed it and had out beside it what their title was.

CO: So they...there's a sense of...I've think I've read about...there's a sense of the need for continuity, for keeping up, so the family is as important as the patient...

ML: Absolutely

CO: ...to these people, that does sound...

ML: Each one of them come and ask me what could they do for me, of course they couldn't do anything else for her, but what could they do for me? "Anytime you need us, we are just this close to the telephone." And they said, "You are going to be hearing from us for a year. We don't get rid of you when you lose your loved one, we hang on to you for a year," and I said that's nice.

CO: So these, the nurses who take care of your sister, are out of Coumbus?

ML: Uh-huh. And they were so nice, they were just...and you could tell they were dedicated.

CO: Were they young people, or were they middle aged?

ML: Middle-aged, uh-huh.

CO: What do you think draws people into that kind of work?

ML: They just love to help people, that's all I know. Because you have to have a love for it or you couldn't do it. But she...now Hospice in Lagrange, my older sister died over there, and she had cancer, and they, they never have had anything that I know of for her, and they didn't let me know if they did. And...I don't hear from them, you know, at all. They were nice, they had nice places right there at the hospital, but they are not like Vista Care. I love Vista Care, and I said I could recommend them to anybody.

CO: Yeah. They probably need you as their spokesperson.

ML: They have a lot of them out here in the Nursing Home, under them. They're there, some of them, nearly every day.

CO: I'm so glad to hear.

ML: Ollie Chapman, one of them out there, told me, she said she saw one of the nurses the other day and said she told her, she said, "I was talking with Margaret, and she said she sure appreciated everything ya'll did for Agnes, her sister." She said, "Well, we thank her, we appreciate that." They're the same way to all the rest of them that they look after out there.

CO: Um...Mrs. Lanier, we've got just about 20 minutes, can you last another 20 minutes? Can you talk another 20 minutes? We are still talking about your work...you did what so many women have done who work outside the home and then work inside the home...what was the most difficult part of that, being full-time employed and also taking care of home? Did you have help with that?

ML: Uh-huh.

CO: You did have some help? So that made a difference?

ML: Yeah, it wasn't...it wasn't bad.

CO: Ok....you just talked about Vista Care, which is, of course, a medical field, but if you could go back and train for any job or profession besides the medical field, is there any other that you ever wondered what that would be like and thought, you know, if you had two lifetimes you might want to do that sort of work? (13:45)

ML: (pause)...not really.

CO: Were there, are there any jobs that you think women ought not to do? (13:29)

ML: Yeah, I don't think women ought to be policemen.

CO: Ok.

ML: That's a man's job, and I don't see women working on railroads. You know, we've got some women...on railroads, from Shiloh, or did have. That's not a woman's job.

CO: Is that because it's physically too demanding for women?

ML: Well, yes, and it's too hard a work and...I just, you know...when I was growing up, we weren't used to something like that, women policing and all.

CO: Do you know any women police here in Manchester?

ML: I did, but I don't think she's policing now. What was her name...(pause)...I can't think of her name now, but she did for a number of years. But you know, they have them in all big towns...

CO: Oh yeah, yeah. Um...you had a son, you didn't have a daughter. But if you'd had a daughter, would there have been, besides policing and working on the railroad, would there have been jobs you wouldn't have wanted a daughter to do? Would you...do you think you would have encouraged your daughters, or daughter, to do whatever she wanted to do? (11:42)

ML: Whatever she wanted to do, I [would] back her up and encourage her.

CO: So if she wanted to be a lawyer like your son...that would have been ok with you? Or a doctor or a...

ML: Yeah.

CO: Do you think that you would have...expected that she would...be more suitable to be a nurse than a doctor? Have you ever worked with any women doctors? Did you work with any women doctors when you were actively working? (11:09)

ML: Yeah, in fact...who was...I can't think of her, but she and her husband both Myrtle had, from Columbus...I can't remember their names...

CO: I don't know, I don't know...

ML: Not many, not many...We've got one in Woodbury now, a woman doctor. They say she's really good, I don't know her... But Jeff said from the time he entered high school that he was going into...that he was going to be a lawyer, he didn't make up his mind at the last minute. I told him one day, I said, "Well, you had the right profession," I said, "because you can stand and argue with a sign post without a word on it." Because he'll ... " 'Well, why? Why? Why do you want to do it?' " Well...I don't say, "No, why do you want to do that?" I say, "Lord have mercy, don't say 'why, why and what, what', you know, like you on the stand and they drilling you, asking you questions. Take it and go on." And now his son's following right in his footsteps, this is his second year at Georgia.

CO: And your son went to Georgia?

ML: Uh-huh. Yeah, he went to college at Georgia and he went to law school at Georgia. And then he was sworn into the Bar in...well, I forgot the county now, because his daddy had had a heart attack, and he was in bad shape. I said, "Dr. Smith, do you think that he is going to be able to see Jeff graduate?" He said, "Uh-huh." He said he was looking forward to this, this was his lifelong dream, and that's what Jeff wanted and that's what he wanted and he said the Lord is going to see that he gets to see him graduate. And he lived from May or June when Jeff graduated until October, but he did get to see him. And he said he was afraid...he wanted to be sworn in at Meriwether County, but he said he was afraid his daddy wouldn't be able to do it. So the day he graduated law school, he was sworn into the Bar at the courthouse, and they let us...

CO: In Clark County?

ML: Clark County.

CO: Yeah, yeah. Oh. So your husband was...you all traveled up there for that?

ML: Uh-huh. We went the day before and spent the night because we thought it would be too much for him to go and come the same day. We stayed at the Holiday Inn and...

CO: Well, that would have been in the '70s?

ML: ...'78?

CO: Yeah.

ML: Me and my dates....

CO: Well, no, that's ok. Just because, I know roughly his age, about what age a professional degree would have been completed. So your husband's been gone for some time?

ML: Uh-huh. Died in '78.

CO: And then...you worked a good...you really worked most of your adult life...

ML: Yeah, uh-huh.

CO: ...and so when you retired in '98...most of your life had been work outside the home. What was retiring like? (7:42)

ML: Well, it's not what you really think it is. You (are) lonesome. You talk... "I'm going to go see what they doing, I'm going to see them and all," and you think 'Oh, I can just do everything when I retire'. It doesn't seem that way. I mean, you don't that done, that's a whole new ball game.

CO: So what's been a good part about that, a good part about retiring? What do you like most?

ML: Well, your time is your own, you can do things at the time that it suits you or something like that. When you work, you have to make time for different things and you can't do this today because you've got to do something else, and all. Well, when you retire, you just pick your day that you want to make an appointment or something...

CO: What is the most...significant thing that...your life kind of centered around at this point, since your retirement? Do you have a...some community group you're involved with or some church group that you're involved with? Is there something that kind of moved into the place of work?

ML: ...well, not since Agnes died. Well, you know, something else happened to keep me from it, really.

CO: So, really, Agnes was a central part of your life after retirement because you were taking care of her?

ML: Yeah. Because I wanted to take care of her and the Lord gave me strength to do it and hold out. And I'm thankful....And Jeff's been so much...help to me, because I didn't have to go see about...anything because he could probate the will, he could pick out whatever had to be done, him and his wife, and I let them handle most everything.

CO: I'm going to ask you a couple, 2 or 3 questions about aging, and then we'll stop for the day, is that ok? You've got about 5 minutes left? What has been the most difficult part of aging? (5:20)

ML: ...Well, you know, I would think when I had a birthday, 'I'm getting old, but I don't feel it.' I feel like I'm still in my '20s or something and I could do things that I did back then and I just didn't feel old. But I knew I was getting older. And until...this last year or so, I still felt that way, and I said, "It's strange," and I heard other people say that, say, "You know, I'm so-and-so old and I don't feel it. How are you supposed to feel?" I said,

“I don’t know.” You just...know you’re getting older, you just don’t feel it. But now...I do, because I can’t do like I did since...

CO: So, physically, you’re constrained?

ML: Yeah.

CO: But emotionally and mentally, intellectually, you don’t feel old?

ML: No, that’s right. But I just can’t hold out. One thing that bothers me, I can’t run the sweeper and I can’t mop like I did because I go to hurting...in my shoulders, and I give out of breath and all, but other than that...

CO: So what are the benefits of being older? (4:02)

ML: Well, you sit down and wait for your check to come every month, ha ha ha.

CO: And when it comes, do you spend it?

ML: Yeah.

CO: Is that fun?

ML: Yeah.

CO: Ok. So that’s a benefit of aging, is that you don’t have to work for your money necessarily, ok.

ML: That’s right.

CO: What advice would you give to younger people on how to age well? (3:33)

ML: Well, there was an old saying, “You can grow old gracefully or you can grow old heinous, so grow old gracefully.”

CO: Could you tell us how to do that?

ML: I think I went the other way, ha ha. Yeah...go to church and love the Lord, and do something for somebody. You know, I thought when I retired that every week I would do something good for somebody...help somebody in some way, and I try to do it now in a way but I don’t do it every week. You know, I just...if I can help anybody in any way...I enjoy doing it. And, you know, it’s now work and it’s not trouble to me, but to them, they appreciate it. I have a dear friend, and she’s in, 93 or 94, and she’s in bad shape. Now she’s all grown over so bad and she can’t stand at the stove and cook

none and she loves rutabaga, so I try every so often to get rutabagas and dice and peel them and dice and cook them, and I take her some cornbread muffins and some rutabaga, and she just had, she just appreciates it so much, and I enjoy doing that. She said, "You do for me all the time and I don't ever do nothing for you." I said, "Yes you do, too." I said, "You told me last Sunday at church you loved me, and that was enough."

CO: So that's kind of your recipe for the best way to age is to help others? (1:43)

ML: Yeah. You know, they said, "If you meet somebody and they don't have a smile, give them yours." And you see people, grouchy-looking, don't never smile and look like they just down on the world and all; we do have a lot to be up for, be thankful for. Every day that we can put our feet on the floor, I say "Thank you Lord." Because you could be bed-ridden and not be able to get up.

CO: Yeah. Well, I'm going to end with this question: If you could...remain at an age, like, this is kind of a two-fold question, at what point in your life do you...think was the best time, and hence, that's the age, if you could choose to be an age...forever, that would be it?

ML: Well...maybe 50.

CO: Ok.

ML: Go half-way.

CO: Ha ha. Well, that suggests that you are going to make it to 100!

ML: Ha ha!

00:28: Tape ends with CO promising to revisit topic of religion on next visit.

*******Start with Margaret Lanier 3, 4, & 5*******

**Quick Reference Guide to
Important Topic Relating to the
Interview of Margaret Lanier**

Railroad Strike Mill Strike Key People/Events Early Dreams Early Struggles

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1:35:35	1:01:27	Childhood: 1:28:25;1:27:10		Cleaning, 1:08:59
1:31:19		Father, 1:12:40		

Transitions Per. Relations Coming of Age GenderIssues/Expectations

Child/Teen 1:25:51	Mother, 1:25:00	Out W/O parents, 1:22:49	boys v girls, 1:22:20
Retiring, 7:42	Maid, 1:18:20	Leaving home, 1:07:15	Resentment of, 1:20:442
Nursing, 1:05:43			

Values Awareness Racial Issues

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Education Employment Relationships Religion/Spirituality

General, 1:04:54		Mill, 1:01:39	Before WW2, 1:04:30
	1:00:01		
	Nursing home, 34:45-30:50		During WW2, 1:01:53
	Parents, 59:03		
	OB Nurse- 36:26; 27:30; 26:57-26:30; 26:18		Socializing, 58: 30
			Differences, 57:03

Aging Aging (cont.) Death

42:40-40:36;	4:02	48:50
36:26; 24:57;	Advice on, 3:33;	47:30-45:25
23:50; 5:20	1:43	

C. Oglesby: Okay, we are back with Mrs. Margaret Lanier at 821 Nebula Road. Is that right?

Margaret Lanier: Yes.

CO: Manchester, Georgia. It's been several months since I started Mrs. Lanier's interview, it was actually October 4, 2011, and today is Sunday. It's Sunday afternoon, January 29, 2012, and we finished...Margaret talked a little bit about her childhood and about her family and I said that we would start with... She talked about her work, a lot about her work, and her education and I think about her early married life. And I said as we closed, last time I was here, that we would talk about...we would start talking about religion. But, I think what I'm going to do is go back and let Margaret say a few things about her son, Jeff, because I don't recall when I listened again... Do you recall talking about Jeff?

ML: I don't think so.

CO: So could we start, could we say a few things about... I know you talked about your husband a little bit, mostly what we talked about last time was your family of origin and then we got into your own work life, and you talked about the nursing home and we got off talking about Agnes, your sister, who recently died. And so we didn't get to your family of origin. You did talk about your...when you all married. Let me be sure that I have that. You know I did not get your marriage date. Why don't you give me that when you and Mr. Lanier married.

ML: August the 16th, 1941.

CO: Okay. And now I do remember that you said...did he wind up serving in the military?

ML: Mmhmm.

CO: Yes. Right.

ML: Three years.

CO: When he was...you either went to school or you worked in the mill while he was away.

ML: I worked in the mill.

CO: Yeah, okay. Alright, so he came back in '45? '44? '45?

ML: Oh, '44 or '45, I'm not really sure.

CO: Well, that's okay. But then it was still sometime before Jeff was born, right? He was born in '54, so you were married ten years before...

ML: Thirteen.

CO: Thirteen years? Oh my goodness. Well, yes you were. So, you were married ten years after Mr. Lanier came home, so okay. Did you plan that? Was it planned that you would wait that long to have children or?

ML: No, we just...

CO: That's just how it happened.

ML: Never did happen.

CO: Okay. Alright. Did, well when you were growing up, I know we talked a good bit about your...you described your parents as being pretty strict, and you weren't allowed to go off and have...just leave your own yard as a child, and then you didn't go off as a young girl until you were in your late teens. Did we talk about...I don't think we talked about romance, about your ideas about romance. Did we? Do you remember talking about that?

ML: No.

CO: No, do you recall having any strong images of what dating would be like? What falling in love would be like? Any of that when you were a teenage girl?

ML: Not really, cause you know there were so many of us girls right there together that we enjoyed each other's company. You know, we played together and...

CO: You weren't really all that...you didn't think a lot about dating?

ML: No, uh uh. I wasn't boy crazy, cause some of them are.

CO: Oh yeah. Were either of your sisters...was either one of them [boy crazy]?

ML: No, they dated, but they was like I was, they wasn't...after...running after no boys or nothing like that.

CO: Okay, alright. Well you have Jeff, your son, who's an attorney practicing law at the capitol in Atlanta. Did you envision just having one child? Did you want more children?

ML: Yeah, now I wish we had more.

CO: Oh, you do.

ML: Cause I would've enjoyed them, you know, now.

CO: How about your siblings? How many children are there in the family? Cousins and all...Ida Lou and Quinn.

ML: Well Ida Lou had three children, Quinn didn't have any, or Agnes didn't have any.

CO: So it's just Jeff and his three cousins?

ML: Mmhmm.

CO: Okay.

ML: And only one of them is living.

CO: My goodness. What happened?

ML: Sidney had a cerebral hemorrhage when he was 30, and June...it's been about three or four years, she was in her 70s when she died, and Ken's the only one left of her children.

CO: So they were older than Jeff?

ML: Yeah.

CO: Okay.

ML: All but Sidney. Sidney wouldn't have been older, but Ken and June were.

CO: Okay, alright. But, you did work outside the home after Jeff was born?

ML: Mmhmm.

CO: I think you told me you had help at home, so you didn't have all the domestic work to do.

ML: Oh, no. Uh uh.

CO: Okay. What was your relationship with Jeff like when he was growing up? Was it pretty harmonious?

ML: Yeah. Jeff was not a problem child. He loved to stay at home. He loved for the children come play with him, but he didn't want to go play. He didn't want to go to their houses. He wanted them to come out here. And he didn't...you know children now want to go spend the night with different children and all. He didn't. He didn't want to go spend the night with nobody, he wanted to stay at home.

CO: Now how was it for him when he went off to U.G.A.? To University of Georgia?

ML: Well it was something he had been looking forward to for so long because he didn't have to make up his mind when he got in high school what he wanted to be. You know? Well, where he wanted to college at. That was just something that he had looked forward to, and he was an honor student when he graduated from high school. We got to see him graduate from high school, and he went on to Georgia and he graduated from Georgia and then he graduated from law school, and then was sworn into the BAR. And he was sworn into the BAR in Clark County, which is Athens, because his daddy had had a bad heart attack and we didn't know whether he would get to see him sworn into the BAR or not and that was his lifelong dream for him.

CO: Yeah, now I remember you telling that story. So, Jeff knew as...before he even went to college that he wanted to be a lawyer?

ML: Oh yeah.

CO: So, okay. So, yeah. You talked about Mr. Lanier was actually sick...

ML: yeah.

CO: the whole last year...so

ML: He got to see him though, that's what he wanted. He lived from May until October, so Jeff got to be with him the rest of the summer.

CO: Yeah.

ML: And I've always been glad of that because...I mean they were inseparable. The only time they were away from each other was when Jeff was in school, Hugh was at work. Cause wherever you saw one you saw the other.

CO: Oh my.

ML: I could go anywhere I wanted to and do what I wanted to, just as long as they were together.

CO: Uh huh. Well now, was Jeff married when his father died?

ML: No.

CO: No, okay. So he didn't have anything to take his attention away from his father. That must've been good.

ML: Yeah.

CO: So when *did* he marry?

ML: He married in 1990.

CO: Okay. And you told me you've got four grandchildren.

ML: Mmhmm.

CO: How different is being a grandmother from being a mother?

ML: Well, you know grandchildren are special but you know your own child, you're with them all the time just about, and trying to set an example for them and teach them right from wrong...take them to church, and make them behave. You know, grow up to be a good person. And your grandchildren you can play with them, when they get to crying cutting up you can go home.

CO: That seems to be a universal story. It's much easier.

ML: I don't get to see them that much, and when they were little, see, I was working and I didn't get to see them as much as I'd like to. Looked like they just grew up so fast. Oh, they were grown...

CO: Now what is their age span now?

ML: Leslie is 17. She's a senior in Keegan Hill Christian School at Lilburn, and Jeffery was 20 last Monday, and this is his second year at Georgia. Susan, she teaches school in...North of Atlanta. I don't know exactly. She's been teaching about three years, and she's going to get married. She's 28. She's going to get married in August of this coming year. And then the oldest one, she works for a **Judge** in Lawrenceville at the capital. No...

CO: The county seat?

ML: Courthouse, I'll get it right in a minute.

CO: And she's an attorney?

ML: No, uh uh. She's a more of a legal secretary...something like that, you know.

CO: Alright.

ML: Cause see, Julia, my daughter in law, she had been married before and she had two girls. The two oldest girls. And then Julia and Jeff had the two young ones. One boy, and three girls.

CO: So the two oldest are by her...

ML: First marriage.

CO: By her first marriage. Okay.

ML: But Jeff adopted them when they married. Well they wanted to. They said they wanted to have the same name as Julia did, and their daddy did. They call him Daddy cause that's all they know, they were little. But, he adopted them on account of school and insurance and everything you know. If you have to go by them being one name and them another name...it was too complicated and all.

CO: So did he...was her husband dead? Was she a widow?

ML: No, he just walked off.

CO: Oh okay...

ML: And you know they don't have anything to do with him even now, the oldest one once in a while she will, but this one that is going to get married in August, someone asked her was she going to invite him, it's going big church wedding...huge thing, and was she going to invite him. She said no. He left her when she was little and he didn't care anything about her. He wasn't around, so she didn't care anything about him.

CO: Yeah.

ML: She don't even see him. She don't talk with him or nothing.

CO: So they were little bitty girls when...

ML: But they love Jeff. You wouldn't know that he wasn't their real daddy, but he certainly educated them, give them a good education, and got their college degrees. You couldn't tell that they didn't belong to him.

CO: Yeah.

ML: They're all real, real close.

CO: If you could go back and do the whole mothering thing again, would you do anything differently from what you did? Everything seems to have turned out just fine.

ML: Yeah I would, I would...you know I would go to everything that Jeff...had a party or anything at school and church, cause I didn't. There were a lot of things that I missed, you know, not going. Cause I was going to school at night and working too.

CO: Yeah.

ML: And then after Hugh got sick and all we couldn't go like we did. I would do more and be with him more.

CO: So you'd just spend more time with him?

ML: Uh huh.

CO: Okay, but in terms of...it sounds like you didn't have a whole lot of choice. That you weren't...you didn't *not* go because you didn't *want* to, you were just so involved in...

ML: I didn't have the chance, you know?

CO: Yeah, yeah. Okay

Beginning of Log (49:13)---ML talking about how close her son's family is, and how the parents have done everything to be an active part of the children's lives.

Talks about Jeff being the band, not able to play football because of an early injury.

About Jeff following Blue Devils, and coaching his children's sports.

CO: If you had to describe what a good mother is, what would you say? What makes a good mother? 46:34

ML: To listen to their children, and take them to church, and to participate in the things they have at the schools. Always volunteer to help whatever they're making up for and doing for, and be...talk with your children, you know? Now people don't take time to sit down and listen to them.

CO: Is there anybody you can think of that you would say is an ideal mother?

ML: Yeah, I'm pretty sure there's a lot of them. I could think of them...cause...but you know, like I say back then when you worked you didn't have much time.

CO: Oh yeah, right. Do you think it's different today raising children than it was when you were raising Jeff or when your mother was raising you? Do you think it's harder or easier today to be a mother?

ML: It's harder. You have to put up with drugs and alcohol, and people just...goodness gracious...killing. That's all they do now. Fighting and killing and all. I think it was bad when they took the authority away from the teachers...that they couldn't correct children in school. They couldn't have the Lord's Prayer, because we were told that if we got a whipping in school, when we got home we were going to get a whipping, cause the teacher would not whip us...spank us unless we needed it.

CO: Yeah.

ML: Cause that was just how strict the teachers were, and that's what they believed in, and I think if that would be the case now, they'd have better children.

CO: So you think that discipline in the schools...that's important?

ML: That's very important.

CO: Okay. I usually ask women what is the thing they admire most about their children. What do you admire most about Jeff?

ML: I told him, he says "Yes Ma'am and No Ma'am," to his elders and no.. And I told him, when he was little, I admired him for doing that, and we taught him to do it, and now he still does. He says yes ma'am and no ma'am to his elders, and I told him I didn't never want him to say, "yeah, and no, and naw," things like that. And to be polite, always be polite to people.

(43:18) ML: The biggest thing now is parents aren't teaching their children. They're not telling their children how bad [things will be: drinking, smoking, etc.]

(43:00) CO: So, manners are what you admire and respect about your son.

(42:30) **Moving to Religion:** CO: What is the core value that has shaped your life? The one most primary principle that you have lived by throughout your life. . . . a driving principle for you.

(41:54) ML: To always try and do my best at whatever...my best might not be what somebody else's is, but when I do my best that's all that's expected of me...I hope.

(41:17) CO: Did your parents go to church growing up? Were they church goers or did they take you to church?

ML: No, uh uh. Not until later years.

CO: Were they Baptist? I know you're Baptist now.

ML: Yeah.

CO: They were Baptist. Was religion a subject that they talked about when you were at home?

ML: Not a whole lot. I know Mama would repeat something about the hairs on your head are numbered, and you don't know whether you promised tomorrow or not.

CO: So what would make her bring up that scripture? Just to get you to do best?

ML: Yes. And I told somebody one day, I said, "I can't find it in the Bible, I've read the bible through time and time again, but it says when Gabriel blows his trumpet." And I've asked people if it was in there, and they said no... but that was one of her sayings.

(39:22) CO: Would you say that church was a big part of your life?

ML: Oh yeah, it was.

(38:15) CO: Could you tell me what your spiritual or religious beliefs are?

ML: Well, I believe that when you live the best life you can and you go to church... Church is not going to carry you to heaven. You believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. That he died for your sins, and he's alive. He knows what you're doing. He answers prayers. You think sometimes he doesn't because he doesn't answer them like you want them answered, but he does in the way that he sees it. And I believe when you die, if you're a Christian, I believe today you'll be in paradise.

CO: So you believe in an afterlife?

ML: Uh huh.

CO: What do you think it will be like?

ML: Well they say the streets are paved with gold. They say everybody's so happy and there's no tears in heaven. No sickness. You'll have a full body. You won't be minus a leg or an arm or something. And when the spirit leaves the body, if you're ready, and a Christian and all, I believe you'll go to heaven.

CO: Okay. Do you think that what has sustained you through....well you've lost your husband and all your siblings. Through that does that help?

ML: Oh yes.

(34:48) ML talks about the difficulties of caring for Agnes once she had a stroke, became immobile, and began falling

(34:32) CO: So you think God blocked out the harsh reality for you or for her?

ML: Well it could be for both of us. She had told me that she was ready to go and didn't know why the Good Lord was leaving her here.

ML talks about how Agnes had pride in her appearance and kept herself well-dressed and made up. Talks about how she was with Agnes when she died.

(32:10) CO: So when Agnes died you felt sustained through that, where you would've thought you might have been grief stricken you could hardly bear it, but you felt like the Lord sustained you?

ML: I was and it was a feeling that just comes over you, and He just takes care of it.

(31:10) CO: Other than times of loss when you've had...just needed support through grief, do you remember a time when you felt a strong presence that wasn't associated with grief or loss?

ML: When anything happens I say, "Lord help me," cause I know he's the only one that can.

[Talks about falling and the efforts to get up without calling the emergency number. Talks about a fall as recent as two weeks earlier than the date of the interview. Talks about what happens when emergency help is summoned. Talks about the problems with Agnes once she became immobile.]

Talks about the status of nursing home care in Meriwether County, and how there were no assisted living places nearer than Columbus.]

(21:00) CO: When you talk about that feeling you do have a sense of a spiritual guide within.

ML: Mmhmm.

CO: You do. Okay, alright.

ML: You know, it didn't bother me after [Agnes] passed away because I knew she was better off, and I knew she would never get any better, and she couldn't do for herself and I just knew she was ready to go. And I could give her up then, and I could see her like she was.

(20:15) CO: Have your religious beliefs changed any over time?

ML: No. Since I was baptized and joined the church, I feel like that...I knew what I was doing, and that's the way I wanted to live. That's the way I wanted to be. When the good Lord gets ready he's going to take us. Regardless of whether--if we're not ready, we better get ready.

(19:27) CO: What experience in your life has given you the greatest joy?

ML: Well, I imagine Jeff would be that...

CO: Your son.

ML: Uh huh, he's so good to me.

Talks about what good care Jeff and his family take of her when she visits them.

(17:15) CO: Do you feel at peace with yourself today?

ML: Yes.

CO: And how did you achieve this peace?

ML: Well, you know we all got our faults, but I just try to do the best I can each day, and I love to give. I'm not much of a receiver. I'm a giver, and I like to do things for people, and when I was able I did a lot more than I can do now. [Talks about ways she tries to keep up with a nearby aged neighbor whose health is compromised. Talks about how Barbara Glazier calls every night to check on her.]

(14:36) CO: Are you certain of anything?

ML: Am I certain of anything? Well I know we're going to be here until the good Lord gets ready for us, and then he's going to get us...take us in.

CO: So you're certain that you're going to die?

ML: We're going to die. We're going to pay taxes and die.

(13:55) CO: Would you say [the loss of your sister] was the most difficult loss you've experienced through death?

ML: Well Hugh...

CO: Your husband.

ML: Uh huh. Well... [talks about Ida Lou and how central she was to the family]

(12:49) CO: So your faith really sustains you through those losses.

ML: I'll get to see them again.

CO: Yeah, yeah. Did any of those experiences of grief or mourning have a silver lining to it? You know, you just really said that... For you, you know you'll see your loved ones again, you believe, in an afterlife. So is that the silver lining to the whole grieving process?

ML: Yeah, you'll get to see them again.

CO: Okay. Have there been some other losses in your life besides death? Death is the most final loss, but are there other losses that you've had to grieve through, like health? You know you lose mobility...whatever.

ML: I've done that, cause I've had a lot of surgery, and I've had to have help during some of that cause I got so depressed. I didn't think I was ever going to be any better.

CO: Tell me about one of those times, when surgery led you into a depression.

ML: I believe it was when I had my open heart surgery. I had a hysterectomy and I had gall bladder surgery, and I had a mastectomy, and that open heart surgery, the hip replacement, and it just took so long, you just think, "well, I'm not going to be any better. I'm just not going to get any better."

CO: You've had a lot of health issues.

ML: Uh huh.

CO: As far back as when? When did you start having these health problems that required surgery?

ML: In '67.

CO: Goodness.

ML: That's when I had a hysterectomy. And then it's been...you know.

CO: So, and then was depression afterwards, cause I'm hearing that a lot from people...

ML: Yeah, you know, cause I could work in a hospital 16 hours and I could work from one vacation to the next vacation without even being off, and I was blessed cause I never was sick. But just putting me in the bed for me to stay? That's depressing.

CO: Yeah. So what did you do to get over that?

ML: I was on medication.

CO: And did that help?

ML: Mmhmm.

CO: So were you able to...

ML: I got to where I wanted to cry. I just wanted to cry and cry and cry.

CO: What I'm hearing lately from people, and these are not older people. These are, you know, middle-aged people, that the anesthesia really...they have a hard time getting over what that does to you.

ML: It takes something out of you.

CO: Yeah, it actually leads to depression.

ML: It does. And you imagine things, and seeing things. When I was at St. Joseph, . . . the rooms were circle-like, and I could look out at the nurse's station at the window, I thought there was a man there, at the far side, with a cap on. And when they'd bring the food carts up, he would always be standing there. And I'd think, "Now what is he doing standing there, he keeps looking right at me." And Jeff came that night, and I said, "Jeff, you see that man standing over there, and he got up to see," and he said, "I can't see." [Finishes telling the story of seeing someone who wasn't there. Tells other

stories of how she learned later of things she did while recovering from surgery and from the anesthesia that she could not recall.]

(07:39) CO: Well that's definitely loss. I mean when you lose...you lose your capacity for everything [when you're anesthetized].

ML: Yeah.

CO: It takes a long time to get back. [CO asks about recovery and ML talks about it further.]

(06:10) CO: Do you remember being a young adult thinking about you know...30s was old.

ML: Oh yeah. Goodness 40, they ought to knock you in the head, you know? That was terrible, but I worked until I was 75. Without any...you know..pretty good health until 75 and that's when I hit the bottom and everything started happening.

CO: So what is old now? What do you think about?

ML: I don't really feel that I'm as old as I am.

CO: Well you know everybody says that.

ML: Up until recently I just couldn't believe it, I'd be as old as I am and not feel it. I just can't do like I used to could do and all, but I...

CO: In what ways? Okay, mobility's a problem, but what makes you feel that you're 90 ...what? How old?

ML: 90.

CO: 90.

ML: I'll be 91 in June. But now whenever I start to do anything I can't do but just a little bit, and I got to go sit down and rest.

CO: So energy.

ML: Energy. I sit down and rest a while, then I get up and do a little bit more and then I sit down and rest a while. It's just you know...a little bit like that. Other than that...I mean now trying to walk and fall like I am, I have to be mighty careful. I got a cane that I use, and then I have that chair over there, but it don't help me because it won't roll on this carpet.

CO: You don't want a walker?

ML: I'm going to have to get one sooner or later, I imagine.

[Tells about the clever way she avoids falling when she takes out the garbage.

CO talks about how her ideas about aging have changed after interviewing senior women, especially her recent interview with a 106 year old.

ML talks about memory loss with age]

(01:09) CO: Well last time we talked you said, "I don't feel [old] 90. I feel like I'm in my 20s."

ML: Yeah.

CO: And that...but you see that's what people say. I mean it's...

ML: That's the way it is. You just feel like you could get out here and do anything you want to do, but you can't.

CO: So your mind and your heart really, not your physical heart, but your mind and your soul...you just still feel like a young woman?

ML: Mmhmm hmmm. I think we all feel that way, cause I've heard other people tell me that they...I said, "I know I'm old, but I don't feel it." Well that's the way I was. I knew I was getting the age on me, but I didn't feel like I was.

CO: Yeah, yeah.

ML: They kept saying, "You're gone have to slow down cause you're getting age on you," and I said, "Well, when am I going to know when to slow down?"

CO: Yeah, they don't send you a letter.

End of Part 3 of 5

CO: That's a great way to put it. Getting old is inconvenient, and also that it's not for sissies, it's not for wimps, it really takes a strong constitution to age.

ML: Yeah.

CO: Well can we switch to another subject now? And I don't even remember if I talked to you about...well except. Let's go back. An age...I think I asked you this. What age would you go back to if you...what would be the prime of life for you? What age do you recall most nostalgically?

ML: Maybe in the 20s.

CO: When you were in your 20s? So that would've been your early married life, wouldn't it?

ML: Uh huh.

CO: Yeah, you were...

ML: Cause I was 21.

CO: Well you were 20 when you got married, you got married in '41. You had just turned 20, actually.

ML: Yeah, mmhmm.

CO: So that first decade of your married life was a good age.

ML: Mmhmm.

CO: Okay, alright. This next category of questions is about regional identity, or southern identity. And some people know exactly what I'm talking about when I ask about that and other people don't have a clue, so if I need to explain it let me know. If you had to explain the difference between people in the southern states from people outside the south, if you had to explain it to somebody from outside this country, how would you describe the difference between southerners and people from other parts of the country?

ML: Well they say you can tell a southerner from anybody else the way they talk.

CO: So accent?

ML: Uh huh.

CO: Have you traveled outside the South very much?

ML: Not a whole lot.

CO: Have you ever wanted to?

ML: Yeah, at one time I had a chance to go to Hawaii, but I didn't go. That's when I think Hugh was sick. I've always wanted to go there, but you got to fly.

CO: You don't like to fly. Oh ok. Well, have you ever been to New York or anywhere in New England, anywhere northeast?

ML: No.

CO: Okay, so the language is different. Is that primarily what you hear?

ML: And the food, you know the food's different. They don't have food like we have. They're not used to that.

CO: Have you ever...are you proud of being southern? Or do you even think about it?

ML: I don't think about it.

CO: Just don't think about it. So it's not a real issue for you. I mean a lot of people they're either ashamed of it or they're just so proud of it that you know it's like sort of an in your face kind of, "I'm southern and..."

ML: Well, I'm glad I'm southern, but...

CO: But that wasn't a factor in your household? You talked, actually quite a bit, about your father's strong opposition to unions, which is a trait of many southerners. It's something the South is identified for is being strongly anti-union. Where do you think that came from in your father?

ML: Well he just seemed to think that he didn't know of anybody that belonged to a union that would strike would get any results from it.

CO: He thought it was a waste of time.

ML: Waste of time and he said anybody that had a job and a family to raise, they didn't need to be striking. They ought to consider that. He just didn't ever see where it helped anything.

CO: Okay.

ML: Of course he was on the railroad when it struck here you know.

CO: Yeah, we talked about that. I remember you talking about that.

ML: He just never did see no sense in people striking.

CO: So working conditions and salary, was that an issue for him ever?

ML: I don't think so.

CO: Cause mostly when the people went on strike did your father....your father didn't feel like they had a reason?

ML: That's right.

CO: Alright. You know the South, at least outside the region, is known for its very troubled race relations. I am interested, and a lot of scholars are interested in how we, in the South especially, actually anywhere, but particularly in the South because it's been an issue in the south, when we become aware of race difference. Like when we become aware that skin color. What the means. That my skin being white means something, someone with darker skin, black or brown, means something else, and I remember vividly when I first realized that. Do you have any recollections of becoming aware that it means something to be...that skin color means something? Do you remember that as a child at all?

ML: No cause when Agnes was some eight months old or nine, Mama hired this black woman to come to work for her and she stayed with us til Agnes was 18 years old, and she was just like a member of the family. We took up for Ada. We thought Ada was . .

CO: So you were only two or three when she came?

ML: Mmhmm. We was raised, you know, with her and she stayed all day and took care of us. She cooked three meals a day, I remember that.

CO: You told me about those three meals. Having biscuits with breakfast.

ML: Uh huh, we didn't know what a loaf of bread was. We didn't have that. We just...when they integrated I had a black woman, she lived out here in this little house, she stayed here with Jeff, and Lord he thought she was the grandest thing in the world. She took care of him, but she was the cleanest somebody I ever did see. She was an older lady and she wore her hair in a ball, you know, in the back, and when we turned on the light for her to come in in the morning, so we could go to work, she'd have on her clean apron and her hose, and her Oxfords and we had the **prettiest** print dresses, someone had across the mountain made her dresses for her that was kin to her, and she stayed here for me for seven years. She got sick and then she...

CO: So she lived back there, but she stayed here to keep Jeff?

ML: Uh huh. And so Jeff was, you know, more or less raised up with them too, so when they was talking about in the schools they was going to put the blacks and whites together and that was just woo! Terrible! Hugh asked Jeff what he wanted to do, said, "do you want to keep going to school up here where you are or do you want to go to that private school?" He said, "Daddy, I got some good black friends over there and just like I have white friends." And he said, "They're not going to run me away from my school, he says I don't want to go to **Woodbury**, I want to go to school right out here." So we give him the choice, you know, what to do. So he was more or less raised up to, so it wasn't too bad, cause I've got some good black friends, right now, some good ones.

CO: You know you told me a story about your father that was really, that was kind of like...he said, when this was....well you were born in '21. This was in the 30s. Actually, you remembered when it was. I'm pretty sure it was in the thirties, and he was sick. He said that one day...something about...he predicted a dramatic change in race relations. So I said you think he was predicting the Civil Rights Movement? And you said yes, and this was back in the 30s that you know you said that you couldn't figure out what in the world he was talking about, and you weren't old enough to really even ask about it. But what do you think was making him in the 30s foresee that?

ML: He was sitting over there on the porch, in a wheel chair, and I went over there or either before I was even married, I can't remember. But I went out on the porch and he was sitting there. Whichever one he was talking to, Agnes, Ida Lou, or me, it was baby.

He said, "Baby, I won't live to see it, but you will. The blacks are going to be going to the same school with the whites. They're going to be doing everything where the white people do now. They're not going to be separated."

CO: Well, what do you think made him think that?

ML: I don't know, unless a school bus came by or something, but he...I don't know where he'd been that day, but when he said that and I looked at him and I thought, "What in the world is wrong with him." You know something's happening to him. Him making a remark like that. That they're going to put the blacks and the whites in the same school and same restaurants and the same whatever. I couldn't believe that. I said, "What makes you think that Daddy?" He said, "I see it. I see it coming. It's coming. It won't be in my lifetime, but you'll see it." And I thought about that a lot.

CO: Well now he died in 1970...no, he died in '57. So he didn't actually...well he lived through the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954, and then he lived through the Montgomery Bus Boycott, so he did...he was beginning to see some of that. Now was he scared?

ML: No. Cause Daddy knew practically all the blacks around here, you know all over in Greentown, Johnstontown...you know being on the police force. Daddy wasn't afraid of any of them. Daddy was a big man. They all called him Mr. Charlie. They knew when Daddy said anything to them, he meant what he said. He wasn't afraid of any of them.

CO: So did Jeff...cause he went to school through integration cause it...I remember it myself when I was at Manchester High. Did he come home and talk about any problems?

ML: Uh uh.

CO: No?

ML: No.

CO: So but you don't remember yourself realizing your first consciousness of being...of what it meant to be black or white in a region where it's such an issue?

ML: No.

CO: No. Okay.

ML: We played with the little blacks when they'd come up and down the road. We'd holler at them, you know, and we just...I mean...and then when...in the afternoons

there was one black woman that worked for another family close by, and she knew the one that worked for us and we'd go to walk and they'd walk us over to Johnstontown or Greentown, and there was a woman down there. She run a beauty shop, and they called her Aunt Jenny. I can remember her. Very big black woman. And we'd go down by there and we'd walk all over in there and they'd holler and talk to everybody.

CO: So they walked you because you were a child?

ML: Yeah, in the summer time we'd get out and walk in the afternoons and have the best time and holler at a lot of them. One of them told me, she said she'd have me by the hand and **Ada'd had Agnes** by the hand, and said I looked up at her and said I said, "Elizabeth, you better no let me get hurt my Daddy will kill you."

CO: Oh.

ML: She told me that up until she died. She lived...turn there at...oh..the first street, anyway, went out that road. That's where she used to live. I used to stop by there and talk with her. She'd be sitting on the porch. She said, "Lord, Ms. Margaret I can remember you. When you'd look up at me and tell me I better hold your hand, not let you get hurt, that your daddy would kill me."

CO: Did your parents know they walked ya'll over there?

ML: Uh huh.

CO: And they didn't care?

ML: No cause see you wasn't afraid of nothing. I wouldn't even go over there in the daytime, much less at night now, but we wasn't afraid of anything. People left their houses wide open. They didn't shut no door, didn't lock no door. Go wherever they wanted to go, and do what they wanted to do and come back. Wasn't nobody robbing and stealing and going in plundering. It just...you didn't have all that. You can't imagine that now.

CO: I know. Right. When you had people, well you said that your mother also had somebody work for her when you were at home? Didn't you have a black woman that worked for your mother?

ML: Yeah.

CO: Yeah. Did...a lot of people talk about, and I remember this myself, that a black person was not supposed to ever come to the front door, always to go to the back

door, and never could eat...cause I remember when we had someone working for us, I love her dearly, she's out at Warm Springs now, and I've been out to see her but she doesn't remember me. Rainy. Do you...

ML: Rainy Buchanan?

CO: Yeah.

ML: Lord, have mercy.

CO: Yeah.

ML: Yeah, I know Rainy.

CO: She was so good to me. She was really good to me when she worked for my mother, but now Rainy, she would come in the front door, but the man that did the yard work, he would come in the back door, and the big thing was that they could never...the etiquette was that they never ate with....never ate together. Was that observed in your household? Either when you...in your family of origin or your own household...was that something, or was that ever even an issue?

ML: No, cause we never did eat together, but it wouldn't have bothered us.

CO: But I know that it got ingrained because I used to try and get Rainy to come and eat with me, you know watch television and eat with me, and I don't think she ever would. She just wouldn't.

ML: She was a mess. She hollers at me every time I'd go by. She'd holler, "Hey, how are you today?" Had a loud voice, and it just carries and vibrates.

CO: Yeah, I know. I couldn't get over how much her mind had gone when I...

ML: She lost somebody here recently. I didn't know Rainey's children.

CO: [I hope it wasn't Flea.]

(42:14) CO: Do you think your opinions on race are different from your mother's and father's? Do you think over time that has changed, any? Do you feel differently...have you felt differently over time about issues of race relations? Cause you know it's part of what being a southerner is. Cause certainly throughout your working life you had that experience....when in fact did the work place in the hospital and the nursing home, when did that integrate?

ML: I can't remember when they started putting them in the rooms together. You know they used to keep them separated.

CO: Yeah.

ML: We had a black nursery and a white nursery, and they started putting them all in the same nursery.

CO: What about work...staff. When did that integrate? You know you had...

ML: When we opened up the nursing home, you know, we was working....

CO: So you had both black and white nurses...

ML: Yeah.

CO: Okay, alright. Okay, do you think that having a black man in the white house has changed people's opinions about race? Has it made them worse or made them better or changed at all?

ML: Well I tell yah, I believe if the good lord wanted us all to be one color he would have made us all one color. I believe I'm white and they're black, but I believe we're supposed to stay that way. We're supposed to stay within our own race and all colors, cause I don't believe in this black and whites marrying and intermarrying and all that. I don't like that.

CO: Yeah, okay. So intermarriage is an issue for you. But do you have strong feelings about integration? The integrating schools, restaurants....

ML: No, they need an education just like the rest of us.... We can't help why we're here. ??? 39:42 I mean, you know, we have nothing to do with coming into this world.

CO: Yeah.

ML: At least what we want to make of ourselves is up to us, and we can do it...you don't have to be black, you don't have to be white..

CO: So that's...you don't see there are barriers anymore to being whatever it is you want to be.

ML: No, but I just don't understand why a white person wants to marry a black one, or a black one marry a white one. I don't see that. I don't know why they...

CO: Do you think that...is there a lot of that here in Manchester? Do you find racial marriages here?

ML: I don't think so...

CO: Yeah. I hadn't seen.

ML: But in big cities....

CO: yeah yeah. So do you feel that way about Asians. Do you think that white and Asians marrying, is that...do you have a strong feeling about that? People from...

ML: From another country?

CO: Japan, China....

ML: I think they ought to stay within their own people. Japanese ought to marry Japanese.

CO: Okay.

ML: American marry American.

CO: Okay, alright.

ML: We got too many people coming over here now. They ought to stay over there in their own country. Let these have the jobs over here, and let them keep the jobs over there.

CO: So you would vote for a strong policy against immigration? Okay.

ML: [nods] I know they want to better themselves but let them work at it over there, and do what's right in getting it that way.

CO: Yeah...

ML: A lot of this killing and all that's going on in Atlanta and all is foreigners. You know that's up there and...oh there is so much of that eww wee.

CO: Does that bother you that Jeff and his family live in the city?

ML: No, cause where they are and all is...whoever lives there owns their house and they aren't renters moving in and moving out.

CO: So you feel like they're safe.

ML: Yeah.

CO: But he has to drive into the city every day.

(36:31) CO: Do you mind if we talk about history? You don't have to remember dates. . . . Do you remember anything about the Depression and how it affected the family?

ML: No.

CO: You don't remember that being an issue for your father?

ML: Uh uh.

CO: No, okay. What about the war? Obviously it affected you, because your husband wound up in it. Did you keep up with the news when he was...

ML: Oh yeah, but it was so long that we didn't even hear from him, not a letter or nothing.

CO: Where was he? Was he in the European theater or the Pacific?

ML: European.

CO: Mm, Okay. Yeah that was very common not to hear...

ML: Mmhmm. He was with the Red Cross Division, and it was months sometimes before we'd ever hear from him.

CO: Well did you stay, do you remember reading the news to try and keep up with what might be going on?

ML: Yeah.

CO: Did it worry you?

ML: Yeah. Cause there was so many of our boys getting killed then.

(35:02) CO: What else do you recall about the 1940s, besides the war?

ML: Well that's when we built our house.

CO: Built this house?

ML: Mmhmm, it was '45 or '44...somewhere along there, after he came out of service.

[CO asked about the house, if they added on any since it was first built. ML responded that the house burned in 1990 due to hot water wiring malfunction, and had to build back. CO queries about the quality of life in the 40s and ML says it was good, a good decade.]

(33:23) CO: What about the 50s?

ML: Well that was when Jeff was born.

CO: Yeah.

ML: That was good time.

CO: Do you remember the Cold War, the fallout shelters, and worrying about nuclear bombs and...do you remember that at all?

ML: Yeah, where people were buying stuff, and digging cellars and tearing stuff down in the basement and storing it to..you know if they had to go down there. 2,000 and what was going to happen then..

CO: Were you worried?

ML: Not really. I've got a basement . . .

CO: So you weren't worried about having a fallout shelter.

ML: No.

CO: Okay. What about the 60s? So Jeff would've been a teenager...an adolescent in the late 60s. What do you recall about that decade? Tumultuous decade. Do you...how do you remember it?

ML: I can't think about 60s...the 70s is when he went to school and graduated.

CO: He graduated from high school in what...'72? Probably...it would've...

ML: I think he graduated college in '72.

CO: Well he and I are close [in age]...I'm one year older than he is, and my high school graduation would have been '71, so it's likely his would've been '72, because he graduated from UGA, I believe you told me in '78. I mean from law school in '78, because that's when his father died, and so...he would've been in law school two or three years. That would've been...he might have graduated in '71.

ML: I think it was '72.

CO: Well in any case. So you don't recall the 60s or 70s? Do you recall anything about the Civil Rights movement, the Vietnam War, the...all those social movements. Do you recall any of that, in any way? Did that have any effect on your home life at all?

ML: Not that I can remember.

CO: Okay, do you remember JFK getting shot?

ML: Yeah.

CO: How did that affect you or your family? Did ya'll talk about it?

ML: Oh yeah. Um...

CO: That was in '63...

ML: Yeah, I was in school and they announced that he had just been shot and they let us all go home.

CO: Everybody says they remember where they were when they heard it.

ML: I know I was in Thomaston.

CO: Did you come home and watch the news coverage of it?

ML: Mmhmm. Yeah.

CO: And then...let's see. Martin Luther King was killed in '68 and then right after that Robert Kennedy is killed. Do you remember that?

ML: Yeah. Yes, I remember that.

CO: Do you remember Martin Luther King's death? Did that have any effect in Manchester, because I just don't recall that having a....

ML: Not that I know of. In fact, his birthday the other week I didn't see nothing going on. I didn't see no parades or no...

CO: Has there ever been a parade in Manchester?

ML: Not that I know of.

CO: Yeah, okay. What about the War in Vietnam? Did your family have strong feelings about it at all? Did you ever worry about, well Jeff was really too young, but anybody in

your family like your sister's children? Wasn't your sister that had three children...that was one of them a boy that might have.... Did you know of anybody that had a son in Vietnam or a husband?

ML: I probably do, but I don't...can't remember.

CO: Okay, what about the Women's Movement, Margaret? Did you have any feelings about the Women's Movement? Did you ever hear of the book the *Feminine Mystique*?

ML: Uh uh.

CO: No? Did you have strong feelings at all about women's rights? And the movement for women's rights?

ML: No.

CO: Do you ever feel constrained by being a woman?

ML: No.

CO: Well, you didn't feel like you were discriminated against in the work force.

ML: No.

CO: You pretty much ran the nursing home, didn't you? Didn't they put you in that nursing home when they opened it to...

ML: Before they opened it, while they were still working on it. I was over there with the plumbers and electricians, etc. The administrator would say, "Go on over to the nursing home and see what's going on over there. I was over there weeks and weeks and weeks, doing nothing, drawing a pay check for nothing."

CO: Waiting on it to open?

ML: Uh huh.

(27:25) CO: So you didn't think much about [the women's movement]? What do you the legacy of the Women's Movement has been? Was it a good thing? Was it a...do you have any thoughts about it at all?

ML: No.

CO: So you just don't have an opinion on it?

ML: Not really.

CO: Okay, alright.

[CO announces they are at the last category of questions]

(26:09) CO: In your life, what has determined who you are and where you are today? Has it been more circumstances beyond your control or has it been more the right decisions or whatever...the decisions you've made? Does that question make sense?

ML: I think it was the decisions I made, I thought they was right.

CO: And what would some of those be?

ML: Well when we played when we were little we'd play playhouse, and I was always the nurse. So, I grew up with wanting that to happen.

CO: So you chose the right profession.

ML: Yeah, and I stayed at it for 35 years.

CO: Seems like you chose the right husband.

ML: Yeah, he was one good man. . . .

[CO asked if ML ever considered remarriage and ML said no. ML said she was too concerned about marrying someone who was not as good as her husband had been, or someone who would abuse her, recounting stories women shared about domestic violence, neglect, etc. CO asked if ML thought it was such stories that had led to the women's movement. ML answered, "I think so." ML talked about the fiscal responsibility she and her husband practiced, one thing she thinks explains their successful marriage---they avoided debt and buying on credit.]

(22:40) CO: You talked about your 20s, which would've been in the 40s as the happiest time of your life. Would you say that?

ML: Mmhmm.

CO: What about the unhappiest. What time was the unhappiest and why?

ML: Well, I imagine that would be when he went into the service and was gone for a long time and you know they was begging us to work two shifts and ???22:10 they made tents and everything out of, whatever you call it for the military. And you know when you would be tired, you didn't feel like working another shift after you'd already made one, they'd make you feel bad about it because they'd say, "well the boys over

yonder are tired too, but they can't quit," and that's the way we built this house. He sent me so much money per month out of what he drew, and then I'd be working double shifts down there and I'd match it, and I'd put that in the bank and we had enough money to build our house on when he came.

CO: So that was three years. That was a good long time to have that kind of pressure.

ML: Yeah.

CO: Okay, what about the saddest period of your life? You talked about being depressed from your own health, [from] surgeries. Would those be the saddest times or?

ML: Losing the members of the family would be that saddest time.

CO: Okay. And the next question is, what were the crucial decisions in your life, but you've already said that. Choosing nursing and choosing the right partner, and I think I told you when we first started, one thing that life review is about is for people to reflect on what were turning points in their life, you know which...and maybe those were the turning points for you. The choice you made to be a nurse, and the choice you made to marry the man you married, but can you think of other times in your life when it just shifted, things shifted from going a certain way and it was different after a certain either decision or event or whatever? So, the question is, what were the most important turning points in your life, and I asked if you could name three?

ML: [Long pause] I can't come up with *one*.

CO: Well the last time we talked you talked about how difficult it was for you when you went from the OB [obstetrics] to the nursing home. You helped delivering babies, and that was a turning point, at least in your career, cause you enjoyed so much being in the...

ML: I did. I enjoyed delivering, OB and delivery, and I didn't think I was...well I knew I had worked in **geriatrics** and I didn't know whether I'd like that type of work or not.

CO: Yeah, but would you say that that was a turning point for you?

ML: Yeah. Mmhmm.

CO: And then what about when you retired? Was that?

ML: Yeah. That was ...I would not have retired then if I had...you know I had to have the hip replacement, and I wasn't able to walk up and down them halls all the time that I did, so I just couldn't...then from that it went on to the next surgery, and the next

CO: So have most of your major surgeries been since retirement?

ML: Yeah, the open heart surgery and the hip replacement.

CO: So retirement kind of catalyzed these changes, that you really had a lot since you retired...to deal with. That and then your sister's decline. Okay. Are you satisfied with the life choices you've made?

ML: Yeah.

CO: Okay. Have there been any mistakes in your life?

ML: Mistakes?

CO: Regrets or mistakes?

ML: Oh yeah, I'm sure there have. I don't think anybody could say they hadn't made mistakes and all, but what's the saying, "You profit by your mistakes."

CO: Yes, yes, yes.

ML: That if you could go back you would do it different.

CO: But you say you feel like whatever mistakes you made you learned enough from them that it was worth...

ML: Yeah.

CO: So if somebody asked, "What were your major regrets?" Could you say, or just kind of moved on and don't think about it?

ML: I would like to have gone on and gone higher up in nursing.

CO: And what would that have...would that have required more school?

ML: Yeah.

CO: And what would have been the possibilities? Columbus College? Or would you had to go to Atlanta?

ML: Yeah, I could have gone to Columbus College, but that's when Hugh had his heart attack and I was taking several courses, RN courses then, and I completed some of them, but then I supposed to have gone and took a test on Monday morning when he had a heart attack on Sunday night. So....

CO: And what would that have been? A Master's in Nursing? What degree would you have had?

ML: I would just have been a regular RN.

CO: And how would that have changed?

ML: But I would like to have gone even farther than that if I could have.

CO: You would've? And so how would that have changed your work? The actual work you did?

ML: Well it wouldn't have had a whole lot to do with my work, because we had to do everything like an RN does anyway.

CO: It would've been more money?

ML: But you specialized if you did private duty or something like that, you could just about name your price and all, and I told them, "as long as the world stands, there will be a demand for nurses." **Sickness, and people in** the hospitals, doctor's office, and things like that.

CO: Have you seen the profession, I know you have, that's a silly question, but how has the profession changed in your working years? The nursing profession?

ML: Oh, it's changed. It's changed so much. Now it's just eight hours and pay day. They don't care about whether they see about the patient or not. You might go all day and you might not see your CNA one time, or if they bring your tray in the room, you might see them that time in the morning. They don't go around and see if you need anything done. You want your pillows fluffed up? Do you want a drink of water?

CO: Remind me what CNA stands for?

ML: Certified Nursing Assistant.

CO: So, and you think that even though now they make a good bit of money...

ML: Still they worse...oh gosh, I can see the difference out there at the nursing home. We got some out there that we wouldn't have let stay out there when we were there for nothing in the world like they do. They look like, when they walk in the room they say, "What do you want?" You don't go in the room speaking to a sick person like that.

CO: Right, right.

ML: Go in there, "What do you want?" and I have been told that some of them tell them say, "don't you turn on that light no more." Well, that's what they're there for, turn on the light, if they're sick and they need somebody. Eww wee, and we didn't have....they weren't like that. . . .**[ML continued to talk about the ways nurses used to care for patients with more compassion and concern compared with how she believes people nurse currently. She believes most people go into the profession of nursing just for the money.]**

(11:30) CO: Besides going further in the [Nursing] profession, is there some other change you would make in your life, if you could go back and do it over again?

ML: I reckon I could try to be a better mother and a better wife.

CO: Who couldn't? Now how would you have done that? You said you would have gone to more of Jeff's things, gone to more events.

ML: Somebody called here one day and he answered the phone and they wanted to speak to me and he told them I wasn't at home, and when did he expect me to be back, and he said he didn't know, and then they called back and I still wasn't here, and said, "When do you expect her back?" And said, "When she drives in the driveway."

CO: So you were gone a lot because you were either working or in school or both?

ML: Yeah, uh huh. He knew that I was in town at school or at work or wherever I was, but he didn't know what time I was gone come in, because I never did have no certain time.

CO: So, do you ever wonder how in the world you would have done it differently, though?

ML: Well, I would...I see now Jeff and Julie, they call each other every day...if one goes to the store and while they're gone they'll call see if, "do you need anything while I'm out?" and then they'll check on....just got a letter from so-and-so today, you know just calling and checking in on...the children do too. "I'm leaving school, I'll be home in a few minutes." "Okay, be careful. I love you." And then when the next one calls in, "I'm

gone stop at the store and get something and I'll be home in a few minutes." "Okay, I love you." That goes on all the time, and I never did anything about doing something like that, and letting them know where I was.

CO: You think part of that has to do with the fact that we have cellphones now?

ML: That's the thing, we didn't...

CO: You think if you and Mr. Lanier had had cell phones you probably would've called?

ML: Yeah, I think about that now, whenever they're doing all that. You know that sure would've been something if I had had one when I was off somewhere and could call and see if everything was alright or . . . or how long it'd be before I'd be back.

CO: Do you have a cellphone?

ML: No, I don't have one. They've been after me to get one. I said, "That's just something else for me to hunt. I'd be a huntin' it all the time. It'd just be in the refrigerator, or the microwave or the stove, one, . . . I said, no, I can't be bothered with a cell phone. . . . [Continues talking about the benefits and the drawbacks of having a cellphone.]

(06:50) CO: Has your life been better than you envisioned it what when you were younger and you'd think about what you wanted in life and you got grown...is it better or worse than you thought it would be?

ML: Well, it's better. I can't complain. I've had a good life.

CO: And what would you consider, in all that you've been through, to be the most valuable lesson that you've learned in your life?

ML: Try to live better, you live a good life.

CO: Just to strive to be better?

ML: Yeah, and when the Lord gets ready, you won't have any regrets.

CO: Has there been a single individual or even more than one, who has had an influence on your life. It could be anybody from...you don't have to have known them personally, or just anybody who's influenced you?

ML: Well friends. I have some mighty good close friends that's....been influence by them and different ones that I've worked with. Betty Maley. She's been a role model and you know...

CO: Betty Maley?

ML: Mmhmm.

CO: I don't know that name.

ML: She's dead now, but she was a wonderful person.

CO: So was she kind of an example?

ML: Yeah, mmhmm she was so sweet. Good.

CO: Was she a nurse?

ML: Uh huh. You know Sidney [Maley] Hale?

CO: That name sounds familiar.

ML: She's a beauty operator it was her mother.

CO: So other people, doctors...do you know doctors that influence you?

ML: Well Dr. Collins, he was always so good to me. And Dr. Whitworth, from Greenville, he was good to me. Took up time with me, explained things to me and all. And, Dr. Robertson from Greenville. No, he was from Woodbury. Most all the doctors, you know I had good relationships with all of them, and they made rounds twice a day. They made rounds every morning and came back when they closed the office in the afternoons and made rounds. And now they make them once a week.

CO: Oh my goodness.

ML: If you lucky.

CO: What gives your life meaning or purpose today, now?

ML: Meaning?

CO: Mmhmm, right. What gives your life meaning now?

ML: [Long pause] Well, I don't know. I know I'm getting to the place that I'm gone sooner or later have to make a decision, cause I have no one here but...no relatives

whatsoever, and I don't want to be a burden to nobody, and I don't want to go to no nursing home.

CO: Yeah.

ML: But I...and it's sad that you think about you might have to give up your home and everything...you know...surroundings, but it's coming, and I'm sure it is. Just all of us, but I hope I can do it gracefully. They say you can grow old two ways. Graciously or hellious. I hope I can accept it...

CO: Hellious? Is that the word?

ML: Helliest. H E L L I E S T or something like that, you know mean, helliest.

CO: Well I think we can't see you doing that, but...

ML: So if I can just accept it.

CO: Do you feel like you will eventually move in with Jeff and his family?

ML: Well he says so and she does, but....

CO: Other than being away from Manchester, what is it that concerns you about that?

ML: Well that's the main thing, because I was born here. Been here all my life. See I haven't ever lived nowhere else.

CO: Yeah.

ML: And I don't have that many old friends, because they've about all died. They're all gone, and it's just people living all around up here that I don't even know. You know people's not like they used to be.

CO: Yeah.

ML: When we was all growing up, what with...everybody...if anybody got sick, everybody was concerned.

CO: Right.

ML: And if anybody needed anything, everybody was concerned. Everybody tried to help everybody.

CO: Yeah.

ML: And now it's just altogether different.

CO: Is there no such thing as a home health care, where somebody could come and stay with you for some time during the day, that would...

ML: Yeah, they're out of...well some of them are from Columbus and some from LaGrange and some of them are from Thomaston, and they'll come so many times a week. Three I think it is. And they'll give you a bath and...

CO: So is that perhaps something that might prolong you being able to stay here in Manchester?

ML: But then at nights when you need somebody, you don't have that service at night. They can come give you therapy and do whatever you need done in the house, to a certain extent...

CO: But your chief concern is overnight?

ML: Yeah, and you know somebody you need to go by you groceries and do your business. Things like that

End of Part 4 of 5

ML: You do better than anybody else.

CO: Well if you move to Jeff's, do you...would you wind up selling this place? Would you have to sell it or?

ML: Yeah, it'll all be sold. . . .

(16:16) CO: So is that what your biggest worry is now? Making that decision?

ML: Mmhmm.

CO: Okay. What has been, for you, the greatest source of inspiration? What makes you feel inspired? Or what has, if not now, something in the past that has made you feel inspired.

ML: Hmm... [long pause]

CO: Or that just makes you feel good, makes you feel happy.

ML: [Long pause] Well, somebody just walk up to you and tell you they love you.

CO: Mmm.

ML: I had a lady do that the other day and it shocked me so bad. I didn't know nobody was in the store but me and the reason I was there...I think I had just come home from Jeff's and I don't go to the grocery store on Saturdays, but it was Saturday morning and I had to have some milk and bread or something, and I was in the grocery store, and nobody hardly in there, and I had gone over to the egg section, over that way, I was looking at cottage cheese or something like that, and somebody put their hand on my shoulder and it kind of frightened me just for a minute and I turned around, and this lady was there and she said, "Oh, I didn't mean to scare you." And I said, "I didn't see nobody." And she said, "I just wanted to speak to you, and tell you I love you." And I said, "Well, I appreciate that." And she said,

CO: Did you know who it was?

ML: Yeah.

CO: You did.

ML: And I worked with her a while, she was just part time, she lives down the road from here, but she's a strange person you know. In a way not a real likeable person, and she's one that has an air about her that...you know just...you've seen people like that, but it's just not in her to go up and tell nobody she loves them.

CO: My goodness.

ML: And that shocked me so bad, you know I stood there and she said, "Well I had company for lunch today, and I might have them again tonight, so I had to run to the store." And I said, "Well, I've been gone and I just got home and yesterday. I had to come get some things. I don't come to the store on Saturday." And she said, "it was good to see you." And I said, "Good to see you too." And she walked off. I stood there just like an idiot staring at her. Watched her walk the whole length . . . [ML goes on to say how out of character it was for that particular woman, who otherwise never spoke, had "airs" about her, etc.; so her forwardness on this day in the grocery really took ML by surprise, but it also inspired her. She recounts how she (ML) has begun to speak to everybody, "black and white," now because she knows how much it means to her for people to take time and acknowledge her.]

(11:52) CO: Well that sounds like that inspires you to speak to people.

ML: Mmhmm.

CO: And to be spoken to.

ML: Yeah.

CO: That's what I'm talking about.

ML: I like to be friendly with everybody.

[Return to talking about the odd experience in the grocery store that Saturday and how totally out of character it was. ML said how she continues to come to mind.]

(10:10) CO: What do you think you're proudest of in your life?

ML: Well I would have to say Jeff, I imagine.

CO: Okay.

ML: What he's accomplished and what he's turned out to be a good Christian person.

CO: And successful.

ML: Raised his children to be Christians and sets the example for them. He didn't send them, he took them to church and taught them right from wrong, and now they grown.

CO: How do you want to be remembered? What do you want your legacy to be?

ML: [Long pause] I better be thinking about that, hadn't I?

CO: Well, you know...it's certainly...nobody...I don't think we think about that, but when I took a training to work with Hospice, one thing you have to do is you have to answer all these questions, and that's one of them. And it just floored me you know? Cause I...you don't think about it, you know, even though I study history and that's all about peoples' legacy, but I haven't thought about my own, so it does take you by surprise.

ML: Yeah.

CO: Actually, it's a good exercise I think. How in the world do I want people to remember me?

ML: That they enjoyed being around me, and I was likeable, and... Ida Lou said one time, we was in Columbus somewhere, she said, "Just look at all these people down here. Don't many of them know me."

CO: Did that matter to her?

ML: She'd speak to them whether they spoke to her or not. She'd speak to everybody.

CO: She was friendly?

ML: Uh huh, oh yeah. She had all her pall bearers picked out [for her funeral] and everybody. Then she outlived them all.

CO: [Laughing, asked] So what happened?

ML: We just had to get a new crowd. Marion Hale and Yancey Butler and Roy Gilson, and I think Elmer Loftin, ones she went to school with and grew up with . . . [they continue to discuss the people Ida Lou had chosen to participate in her funeral service who died before Ida Lou, including the preacher.]

(05:32) CO: Is there anything that your son and his family or anybody that you care about, is there anything they don't know about you that you'd like for them to know?

ML: I don't think so. I think they know everything they need to know.

CO: Alright. Well is there anything that we've left out that you'd like to address. I know one woman told me she would have liked to have talked about books that had an influence on her, and I didn't ask you about that. Are there any particular books or movies or music or anything like that that influenced you? I haven't given you a chance to say.

ML: Well, I read a lot, but I couldn't really say which one influenced me cause I...

CO: You read fiction?

ML: Well I read things, [laughing] anything that's got words on it.

CO: Oh okay. You're a reader.

ML: Yeah, and I did...they was *Thorne Birds*. You remember that?

CO: Oh yeah, sure.

ML: I seen it time and time again.

CO: You liked that?

ML: Mmhmm, and *Sound of Music*. That was two that I liked. I'd liked to see them over again. You know you forget a lot of it.

CO: Yeah yeah. Well those are two epics. *Thorne Birds* takes a long time, how many hours is that?

ML: Four, I think.

CO: Yeah, that's a long...

ML: But nothing's on T.V. now, but sports and killings, killings killings, and this horrible pictures they put on there with great big animal looking things and I just... I just turn it off and read.

CO: I know, me too, me too. Well finally, this one is gone be harder than the others. You don't have to answer it. Everybody has a hard time with this, and I can see why, but what would you title your life story? What would....it would be *Margaret Lanier*...and then what would be the rest of it?

ML: *Gone but Not Forgotten*.

CO: Alright.

ML: Let's see. That *is* a hard.

CO: It *is* hard, I know. Cause you're trying to say something about...to capture the essence of your life, it's pretty...

ML: Well what would you say about you?

CO: Let's see, well something to the effect that...oh I know, *The Cost of Following Your Heart*. I always follow my heart. Sometimes it costs though. Yeah, everybody has a hard time with that, and a lot of people won't come up something, but usually I go back over things that were important to them. Like you said, it's been important to you all your life to do your best, you know, and to be remembered as somebody that people enjoyed being around and so I think it would have to have something to do with your role in contributing to other people's lives. But you don't have to come up with that now. Well the *Gone but Not Forgotten* is...you want to be remembered in a certain way though. You want to... Well we don't have to come up with anything. If I'd been thinking about it while we were talking, I would have thought, "Okay, that would make a good title."

ML: Just fish one out of there.

CO: I will do that, I will do that. Well, is there anything about this experience...like the last time I was here for over three hours, so I've been here over two hours now. Does it tire you out to talk about your....

ML: No, uh uh. You've been here that long? That clock's not right.

CO: I got here before 2:00, and I've heard the clock go...yeah it's 04:30. I've been here way over two hours.

ML: It don't seem like it.

CO: I know it. So you're not tired?

ML: No.

CO: Good, good, some people they just get exhausted.

ML: If I could just come up with the good answers.

CO: Oh, the answers are your answers. There's no such thing as a wrong answer. It's *your* life.