

Catherine Oglesby: Ok. We're here today. I'm with Mrs. Jane Shelton at Langdale Place in Valdosta, Georgia. Mrs. Shelton and I share something in common. She's taught in the Valdosta---was Valdosta State College at the time---History Department---did you not Mrs. Shelton?

Jane Shelton: Yes, I did.

CO: Before I start asking you specific questions, I will say I'm interested in turning points in your life---you know events, or circumstances, things that happen that you regard very definitely as a turning point. So if you---if that comes up in your mind as we talk today or probably we won't finish today and---but this will job memories and you might think of it next time we talk.

JS: All right.

CO: Might bring that up. First off---what is your first conscious memory as a child?

JS: My fourth birthday party. I remember going from my bedroom to my door to meet the little boys that was first there and I had a pale blue net dress on and I thought I was very dressed up.

CO: Do you happen to have a picture of that occasion?

JS: I don't have it here. No.

CO: But there was one?

JS: There was a picture of me on that day.

CO: Yeah. Your fourth birthday party. Was that here in Valdosta?

JS: Yes.

CO: Ok. All right. And you had on a blue dress. And you remember the little boy---what do you remember---why do you think you remember---well, because he was the first visitor?

JS: He was the first visitor and I remember going down the hallway to go to the door to greet him. We played out of the yard. Ring Around the Rosy and such childhood games.

CO: Ok. All right. You remember going down a hallway?

JS: Yes, to the front door.

CO: Yeah. Hallways look very different in a child's mind don't they?

JS: Oh this one was very wide.

CO: But did it look wide after you got grown. And did you go back to that house ever?

JS: Oh yes. I did and it still seemed as wide.

CO: Ok. All right. Ok. Can you describe yourself as a child?

JS: I was plain. I was active. I had blonde hair with bangs which I of course cut at one time. I liked to read very much because I was an only child and therefore I was by myself for a great deal of the time.

CO: How did you feel about being an only child?

JS: I didn't mind at all. My mother, my three aunts an uncle, my grandparents, all spoiled me. Although I certainly didn't consider myself a spoiled child.

CO: What about cousins and---

JS: There were none that lived in Valdosta. We saw them on holidays like Christmas and I was fond of them and they seemed to be fond of me.

CO: Ok. How big was your extended family?

JS: My mother had five sisters and one brother. My father had only one sister. But her husband was a second father to me and I named my son Richard William for him.

CO: Ok. So you you've already told me your father died not long after your parents married?

JS: Yes.

CO: So you never knew him?

JS: No. No, I had no memory of him.

CO: All right. Ok. How old were you when he died?

JS: Two. Two years old.

CO: Ok. All right. Do you recall anything about your mother's experience of his death?

JS: No.

CO: No.

JS: No, I don't except that she never married again and I don't think I considered it.

CO: Yeah. Ok. So, your first memory's really of being four ----- so you don't recall being at all affected by his death?

JS: No, I wasn't. No.

CO: Before your memory---ok. So, and you've already told me that you spent your childhood here in Valdosta. Your mother didn't move around?

JS: No. We stayed in the same house that my father had bought before he died.

CO: Ok. All right. What would you consider the most significant or memorable event in your life up to say the age of 12 as a child?

JS: My mother worked for the WM Oliver Company ready to wear department and she went to New York on buying trips. So when I was ten

years she took me to New York, which of course I had longed to go,` and I had a wonderful time, and I think that would be my most vivid memory.

CO: So you were ten? You went to New York---I think that was big for a little girl from Georgia. So, are we talking New York City?

JS: Yes. We certainly are. Only New York City but I went to Macy's, which I thought was a wonderland. I saw the 1927 Yankees play with Babe Ruth and Lou Gehrig and I went to Coney Island.

CO: Oh my goodness. Wow. That would certainly be a significant event.

JS: Yes.

CO: Ok. So, now tell me again where your mother worked here-----what was the name of---

JS: WM Oliver Company. The building is still there. It was a restaurant in the first block on Patterson Street. It was a department store and upstairs was the ready to wear and the millenary and she was head of the ready to wear and of course chief buyer.

CO: Ok. Did she work before your father died?

JS: Yes. There and so did he.

CO: He worked there as well?

JS: Yes.

CO: Oh ok. Doing what? What was his job there?

JS: I think he must have kept the books. I don't remember being told exactly what but I think that's what he did.

CO: Ok. How long was that store---when did it close?

JS: When Mr. Jack Oliver died.

CO: So, was your mother retired by then?

JS: No, she went to work for Freedlander's in the gift shop there. And worked until, I guess she retired, '65 and lived to be 98.

CO: Oh wow! And where did she spend her---

JS: Here in Valdosta.

CO: Ok. All right. So, you're really a Valdosta girl aren't you?

JS: I am in deed.

CO: Wow.

JS: But I happily was able to travel. I got out of Valdosta some of the time.

CO: Well I want to hear about that in a few minutes, that's certainly---that is an education in itself that---

JS: Yes indeed.

CO: Ok. When you were a child did you have any particular ambitions for what you'd like to do when you grew up?

JS: Yes, I wanted to go to New York and work at Macy's.

CO: Ok. All right. And you had some experience there.

JS: Yes I did!

(Both laughing)

CO: Did you talk to your mother about that?

JS: Oh yes!

CO: So you all talked openly about the day you would grow up and go to New York? How did she feel about that?

JS: Oh, that was all right with her.

CO: Ok. Would give her somebody to visit?

JS: Yes. If I wanted to do it I could.

CO: Ok. Growing up in the Deep South were there---did your mother have or her family express strong opinions or just opinions on gender roles? Like there would be a certain expectation of you as a girl that if you had been a boy---if your mom had had a boy?

JS: I don't think that ever came up. I don't remember any conversation like that.

CO: So if you had wanted to do anything you wanted to do your mother would have supported---

JS: I think so.

CO: Ok. All right. Who were some of your heroes as a child? People who you really looked up to? Admired?

JS: My mother, and as I said, my uncle, Dick Stevens, that's about all.

CO: So, from your reading---you said you read a lot when you were a child? You didn't have fictional heroes or?

JS: No, I liked all the books. *Black Beauty*, fairy tales, of course, when I was younger. I guess I savored books like *Anne of Green Gables* and *Jane Eyre*.

CO: Ok. All right. What were some of your struggles as a child?

JS: I don't remember any of them.

CO: So you recall fairly carefree childhood?

JS: Yes. Yes.

CO: Do you recall---nostalgically thinking about your childhood?

JS: Well, I remember it pleasantly.

CO: Ok.

JS: I must have been a good child. I was not punished much. Although my mother did have a switch on the mantle. You know what the switch is?

CO: Oh I know from personal experience.

(Both laughing)

JS: So that could really sting if I did this but I don't remember what I did.

CO: That's interesting, you remember the switch---you remember that experience but you don't remember what you did to get it.

JS: No, no.

CO: Ok. But it didn't happen often?

JS: No, no it didn't.

CO: Ok. All right. But one switching's enough?

JS: That's memorable.

(Both laughing)

CO: Yes, I agree. What about becoming a teenager? Was that a big event?

JS: Not a big event, I just sort of slid into it. I was not pretty at all and I wasn't too crazy about boys, I guess, thank goodness. And so, I just became a teenager.

CO: So, you just---was your opinion that you weren't pretty, is that something you---

JS: Oh yeah, I never talked about it.

CO: You never talked about it.

JS: No.

CO: But did---this is your opinion, so?

JS: Yes.

CO: And that's what kind of---well, how was being a teenager?

JS: I didn't have any stress or any crying or anything like that about it. I had pretty clothes, and I could drive a car at fourteen, so I had a wide range of friends. So I guess I got through my teenage years fairly well.

CO: So you don't recall that as a troubled time with your mother?

JS: No, not at all.

CO: Ok. Do you think that you and your mother were close because your father was gone?

JS: I think so, yes.

CO: Ok. And did your mother rely on you for moral or emotional support or---did she seem pretty self-sufficient person?

JS: She was a self-sufficient person and I think I was too.

CO: Ok. And you think you sort of got that from her?

JS: Yes.

CO: She modeled that?

JS: Yes, I do.

CO: Ok. Do you think that shaped your ideas about---well about everything? Education--

JS: Well, I think so.

CO: Ok. All right. Can you recall something significant, similar to what you described as a child going to New York and, is there an event in your teen years that---

JS: I think the most significant thing in my teen years was I had to wear glasses. I was near-sighted and so I had to put on glasses, and I went to

VSC for two years and then went to the University of Alabama, and was only 18 when I graduated from college, which is young these days. And in September I did go to New York to begin my career. Which did not come to anything, and I only stayed a year. I came back to Valdosta.

CO: Now what did you do?

JS: I worked at variously----I modeled in a dress shop. I worked at Altman's, which was a big department store. I worked at a bakery and I gained weight. I just---War was coming, I could see that---and I decided that I didn't want a career after all, and come back home.

CO: So roughly what year was this?

JS: '39.

CO: Ok. All right. So you were in college---you started college in '35 at VSC.

JS: I got started college in September '34.

CO: Ok.

JS: Two years there and two years at Alabama

CO: How did you---and why did you choose Alabama---University of Alabama?

JS: The University of Georgia was having trouble with its accreditation, and I had a male cousin in Mississippi, and he said the place he would go was University of Alabama, and I went.

CO: Ok. What was that like?

JS: Oh I liked it! I liked it very much! Had a very good time there. Joined a sorority and was chosen for the Phi Beta Kappa. So, I kept up my grades.

CO: Was it difficult for your mother---your moving?

JS: No, I don't think so. She had an unmarried sister who lived also with us, and so she was not alone.

CO: Ok. So did that sister live with you and your mother throughout your life?

JS: Yes, yes, she did.

CO: So, was she like a sister to you or was she an aunt?

JS: No, she and I were --- both of us tried to get attention of my mother.

CO: Ok. Which one of you usually won?

JS: It was about even.

CO: Oh, ok.

(Both laughing)

CO: Was she younger than your mother?

JS: Yes.

CO: Ok. How much younger?

JS: Ten years I imagine.

CO: Ok. That's considerable. And how old was your mother when you were born?

JS: She was 30.

CO: So, a mature woman?

JS: Yes.

CO: How old was she when she married?

JS: Well, married a year before --- she was 29.

CO: Ok, so she had a lot of her young adulthood as a single woman.

JS: Yes, she did.

CO: And so she had---was she then---would you call her a career woman?

JS: Yes, I would.

CO: I wish I could interview her.

(Both laughing)

JS: She could probably tell you a lot.

CO: I'm sure she could. Do you recall---I want to get back to career and education and all that but I'm gonna finish some questions on your childhood. Do you recall disagreeing with or questioning your family's beliefs, your family's values at all as a young person?

JS: No, I don't.

CO: No.

JS: I went along with them.

CO: Ok, all right. When you were a teenager or a young child were you conscious of the world outside your household?

JS: Yes. Partly because my mother went to New York so much.

CO: All right, so did you all keep up with the news?

JS: Yes. I remember the---when Calvin Coolidge became President, I remember that. And when Al Smith ran on the Democratic ticket, but I couldn't vote except for the second term

CO: And why was that?

JS: I wasn't old enough. You see you couldn't vote at 18 in those years.

CO: Right. Right. Ok. But you were aware of politics?

JS: Yes.

CO: Was your mother?

JS: She was just aware of politics. She didn't join in any campaign or anything like that.

CO: Ok. All right. Do you think your mother's traveling to New York and--- did she travel to other places---did she travel to Europe?

JS: She didn't go to Europe, but she did go to Cuba on one trip and to Nassau on one trip, but that's the only places I remember her going.

CO: Okay. Do you think that had something to do with your later interest in the humanities, history and English?

JS: Probably so, but I just really liked them. I certainly didn't like math or the sciences.

CO: Well, that's typical of most people

JS: Well that's it; you either like one or the other.

CO: Right. Did you have pets growing up? Any pets?

JS: No, no I had a little dog for two days, but that was it. I didn't take care of it and they certainly didn't.

CO: What about friendships? Do you recall strong friendships as a child and teenager?

JS: Yes, I did. In fact all my life, directly across the street from us was two sisters. One a year older than I and one eighteen months younger than I; and we were very good friends throughout our lives really.

CO: So you went to school with them?

JS: Uh no, I went to the college, to the training school. They went to the public schools.

CO: Was there, what was the reputation of those two schools in town?

JS: The training school was an elite school.

CO: So that was considered a better education?

JS: Yes.

CO: Okay, alright. What did your family of origin do for fun or recreation or entertainment? What kinds of things did they like?

JS: I'm sorry I don't remember anything they liked.

CO: No sports?

JS: I would say visiting relatives in West Virginia and Mississippi was their main interest.

CO: Okay alright. What about music and or dancing? Did it draw?

JS: We danced, but we were not musical.

CO: Okay.

JS: I can't carry a tune.

CO: What about art? Anybody, any artists in your family?

JS: No, no artists in the family.

CO: Okay alright. So you weren't athletic, didn't have athletes in the family?

JS: No I did not like athletics.

CO: Okay alright.

JS: Like we would have a field day out at the college, and I didn't like that.

CO: Okay alright. But you liked to dance, what kind of dance did you do?

JS: Oh yeah, uh ballroom dancing. This was before the shag and the lindy hop, and I could do them but I danced fairly well but that's my music. I don't dance too well unless I'm led.

CO: Ok. All right. So, ok, you've already talked about your educational background. What about your mother's educational background? What was that?

JS: She did not finish high school.

CO: But she was very successful it sounds like?

JS: Yes.

CO: What about your father?

JS: He was in the first graduation class in the public schools in Valdosta.

CO: Ok. All right. And you went---you got a B.A. at the University of Alabama and then you got a Master's degree at Valdosta State?

JS: Yes. In '69.

CO: All right. 1969.

JS: And I was going to the University of Florida to get my Ph.D. and write the second half of a History of Lowndes County but my eyes gave out. I had cataracts and couldn't read the microfiche.

CO: That microfiche is difficult.

JS: I know. I know. And I didn't want to depend on somebody else to read it for me.

CO: Right. Well, that would have been costly as well as time consuming.

JS: Yes.

CO: Ok. So, a few things about your professional life. How many jobs outside the home did you have?

JS: My husband and I operated a motel for four years. And then, as I said, I was a bookkeeper for his oxygen service.

CO: Was the motel here in Valdosta?

JS: Yes.

CO: Was it out on---

JS: South 41 just before---

CO: Before the interstate?

JS: Yes.

CO: Ok. Is it still there?

JS: The building is there but I think it's converted to small apartments now.

CO: Ok. All right. So, you worked as the bookkeeper for your husband's business until you went to---until you started teaching?

JS: That's right. But I gave it up entirely.

CO: So, which job was most rewarding to you?

JS: I think the teaching was. I felt that I did know most things and I would like to pass them on.

CO: All right. In which of all the jobs you did which one was least rewarding?

JS: My year in New York, I suppose of the various jobs I had.

CO: Do you think it was the job or do you think you just didn't feel like---felt like you weren't---that wasn't for you?

JS: I think it was the latter.

CO: Ok. All right. If you could go back and train for any job or profession what---would you train for something? Have you thought about that?

JS: Well, probably would be bookkeeping.

CO: Ok. So, would you want a more advanced degree for that?

JS: No.

CO: No. Even though you liked teaching more than bookkeeping?

JS: But I never had tried teaching before.

CO: Ok.

JS: I didn't know I'd like it.

CO: But ok---So, if you had gotten a Ph.D. Did you *want* that?

JS: Yes. I would like to have had it. Although, I was two years away from retiring but I would have liked to do the second 75 years of Lowndes County history.

CO: Yeah. Are there---Now or at any point in your past, do you think to you there were certain jobs that women should not do?

JS: No. Anyone that is capable of doing, I think a woman should been allowed to work there.

CO: Ok. So you weren't taught by your mother to avoid any particular job?

JS: Oh no! No.

CO: Ok. All right. When your children were growing up, you had a daughter first? Your daughter was your oldest?

JS: Yes. My first child.

CO: Ok. Did you teach your daughter differently from your two sons about education and---?

JS: I don't think so. I've expected to all of them to finish college.

CO: So that was a given in your household?

JS: Yes. And my husband certainly agreed with me.

CO: Ok. I'll ask you some questions about him, shortly.

JS: All right.

CO: Is there some significant accomplishment in your work life that caused more sacrifice than it was worth?

JS: No. No, I had all the family's assistance in writing the book and I figured that was my chief --- accomplishment in life.

CO: Yeah. Ok. Is there an accomplishment or achievement that you wanted but were denied? You've already talked about how you wanted--- you were considering a Ph.D.

JS: That's the only thing.

CO: Ok. All right. What would you have made---what would have been your major?

JS: Dissertation---

CO: I'm sorry?

JS: I'm sorry I interrupted you.

CO: I was just gonna say what would have been your major field if you had gone on for a Ph.D.?

JS: History.

CO: Right but what---

JS: From my dissertation I intended to write the next 75 years of Lowndes County History.

CO: Ok, so you would have---your major would have been Modern America?

JS: Yes. Yes. That's right. Although I liked to teach the ancient world when it came around.

CO: Yeah. Well, I'm sure there would have been plenty of opportunities to do that.

JS: I know. Nobody else wanted to teach it.

CO: Yeah, well there're so many different fields now, public history would have been an option.

JS: Yes, that's right. So many more than when I was teaching.

CO: Yes and local history. What was retiring like for you? Retiring from work?

JS: I regretted having to retire but I looked forward to it very much because my husband and I had some travel plans.

CO: Ok so you were looking forward to retirement to travel?

JS: Yes.

CO: Had you all been able to travel in all these years?

JS: Yes. We used my money to travel. He made the money for the family and so we had what we considered extra to travel, so from the very beginning we did travel.

CO: Was this while your children weren't home?

JS: When they were –let's see 13, 11, and 9, we drove to California to Disney World. Or is that Disney Land? And it was quite an enterprise. We all saved money to go. We were not able really to make the trip unless we consciously saved for it. So, the children got what I considered a good lesson in saving for a goal. And we left in a new car, and went to the Alamo, and then we went to California.

CO: What kind of car did you have?

JS: A Ford.

CO: Ok. All right. But you said that you regretted having to retire. What was it about---What did you regret?---What made it a regret?

JS: Leaving the students.

CO: Ok. So, the activity itself is what you mean?

JS: Yes.

CO: Ok. So that's really---is there anything about the work that you missed? But you missed the students but you didn't miss the grading and the---

JS: No. No.

CO: Ok. And so how do you feel about life now many years after retirement?

JS: I feel that I'm very lucky to still be alive and in fairly good health.

CO: Ok. All right. Just a question or two about money---you've already said that your income was a sort of a luxury.

JS: Yes.

CO: And you could use it for travel. Did you and your husband---did you all achieve what you considered your financial goals in your life?

JS: Well, I guess you could always want more money, but we were able to do essentially what we wanted to do.

CO: Ok. All right. And would you---can you describe the role money has played in shaping your life---have you felt most of your life that you had enough money?

JS: No one ever does that.

CO: No.

(Both laugh)

JS: No, but I certainly lived comfortably.

CO: Ok. All right. So did you---some people are---money is a major issue in their lives. Would you say that it---other than simply wanting a little more has it been---

JS: Well, we always wanted it to be there to come but I wouldn't say that it was a major movement in my life.

CO: Ok. All right. Can we talk a little about marriage and children?

JS: All right.

CO: What value---you lived in a household with two women: A mother who married, and then wasn't married a long time, and then lost her husband. Did she ever have another relationship afterwards?

JS: Yes, she had relationships. She dated.

CO: But just never got serious?

JS: That's right.

CO: Do you think having a daughter may---

JS: Possibly. And having a job too. She didn't have to depend on marriage for money.

CO: Ok. That's certainly an issue, and we know---

JS: Yes, but I probably mattered more than the money.

CO: Ok. And what about your Aunt who lived with you all?

JS: She---Well she had one boyfriend, but that was all.

CO: Ok. So, romance as a---

JS: Daily affair, no.

CO: There was not much expectation for a lot of romance in your family of origin?

JS: No. No.

CO: Ok. Did you have romantic notions yourself about---?

JS: Oh yes!

CO: You did?

JS: Yes.

CO: Where do you think those came from?

JS: I think a little girl just picks it up. Another Aunt made me a wedding dress when I was about eight years old with veil and all. So, I played bride, I played dress up. So, I certainly intended to marry or hoped to marry.

CO: Ok. Yeah. All right. So, as a child growing up certain images of what romance would be like, once you started dating, did it live up to that image?

JS: Yes.

CO: It did. Ok. Did you have many boyfriends as a teenager?

JS: Not many.

CO: No. Ok. Did you when you were growing up, I think you just said when you were growing up you wanted a family. Did you think about family and children as a teenager?

JS: Yes.

CO: And did you want children as a girl as a young girl?

JS: Yes.

CO: And did you have a number in mind? Did you think you wanted---

JS: (Laughs) Yes! Six!

CO: You wanted six children?

JS: Every time I had one the number came down.

(Both laugh)

CO: Ok. I totally understand that.

(Both laugh)

CO: Did you ever consider not having children? It sounds like---

JS: Oh no!

CO: No. Ok. What about---you had a job before you married right? You had a job when you met your spouse?

JS: Right.

CO: When did you meet your husband and how did you meet him?

JS: We were in high school together. He was a boyhood----He was a high school friend, we did not go together then but he was in my class in high school.

CO: Did he go away to college?

JS: Yes, he went to Emory in Atlanta.

CO: Ok. And what did he do there?

JS: He got a degree in business.

CO: Ok. All right. And so---when---how did you all then become romantically involved?

JS: When I returned from New York I lived with an Aunt in Tallahassee, and worked down there. I would come home on weekends, and we would date on the weekends. And then, he joined, you know a man could join the Army for a year and then be discharged.

CO: Yes. Mm hmm. So, this would have been what years?

JS: (laughing) He would of been discharged in January '42.

CO: Oh my.

(JS laughing)

CO: So did he join?

JS: He joined for his year's training in the Army.

CO: All right. And then he was out in '42?

JS: He was not out before Pearl Harbor occurred in December. He would have gotten out next January but of course when we declared war, he was in and he was sent to the South Pacific that January.

CO: And this was before you were married?

JS: Yes.

CO: So, you---would you say that the experience of war shaped so many people?

JS: It definitely shaped our romance.

CO: Yes. Ok. So what was your correspondence like? Do you still have it? Your correspondence with him?

JS: Yes.

CO: Did he keep yours?

JS: Yes, I've got it, and of course he complained that I didn't write to him enough, and I probably didn't.

CO: Oh. And why was that? Did you not like writing?

JS: I didn't like writing, and I didn't like to tell him what I was doing, just didn't.

CO: Ok. Were you doing things you thought he wouldn't approve of?

(Both giggling)

JS: Yes, like going to Moody Field for dances.

CO: Did he ever find out about that?

JS: Oh yes!

CO: Ok.

JS: Then he came home.

CO: Was there anyone at Moody Field you were interested in?

JS: No. It was just---the classes lasted three months, and we would go to dance on Friday nights, and get a date on Saturday, but the boy was gone in weeks and so, no, that's it, never!

CO: But did you go out like you go dancing on Friday and have a date on Saturday?

JS: Yes.

CO: Ok.

JS: Which is one reason that I didn't write him.

CO: Yeah. Ok. All right. So, how did---when he found out about it---what was the outcome?

JS: We were well married by that time. So it was all right.

CO: Ok. Oh, that's an interesting story.

(Both laughing)

CO: So, when he complained about you not writing---did he write frequently?

JS: He---Yes.

CO: Ok. Was he ever in any---in a position where he couldn't write you about where he was?

JS: Yes. Oh yes. He was a chief warrant officer and he censored the men's mail. So, he was very careful about what he wrote, but I could tell from what he did say where he was which was Guadalcanal.

CO: Ok.

JS: He was in the Judge Adjutant Section so it was---he didn't run on the front line.

CO: Right. Ok. So, when did he come home? What year was he out?

JS: In---he came home to go to OCS in 1944

CO: Ok.

JS: We were married and went to Oklahoma to artillery school. They said, "Oh we closed this down, you'll have to go back to Fort Benning, Georgia." So, he---we went to Fort Benning. He had malaria twice. I was very grateful to malaria because if he had graduated he would have gone to the Battle of the Bulge. So, he stayed in the Army in Judge Adjutant Section and we were in Memphis, Tennessee when Jan was born, and he got out of the Army 3 days before she was born.

CO: So does that mean the Army didn't pay for her?

JS: Yes, I think they did.

CO: Ok. All right. So, when did you know that---did you know that you---were you and your husband engaged when he---when the war started?

JS: We had an understanding.

CO: You had an understanding.

JS: The family knew it too.

CO: Ok. Did you---at what point did you know you were in love with him and you knew that---

JS: Oh before he went off to the South Pacific.

CO: Ok.

JS: And he said he loved me too.

CO: Yeah. So, I'm still interested in those weekends at Moody Air Force Base.

(Both laughing)

JS: Oh they were fun! Because everybody wanted to dance with the girls. We wore long dresses.

CO: that was a real dress up occasion.

JS: And went out to Moody Field and took the city bus, and when we came back home which was 11:00, we went to the restaurant and had dessert and coffee before the girls went home.

CO: Which restaurant?

JS: It was The Lindbergh and The White House. There were two together there on Patterson Street.

CO: The Lindbergh and the White House. Ok.

JS: And incidentally you could get a steak for \$0.75.

CO: A good steak?

JS: A good steak!

CO: Oh wow. Did you all do that sometimes at eleven o' clock at night?

JS: No, we never did do anything but dessert.

CO: Ok. Wow. Ok. Did you---did you stay in touch with any of those men? Make friends with them?

JS: No.

CO: Ok.

JS: They were definitely here today and gone tomorrow.

CO: Sure. Yeah. All right. Ok, so you married in '44 and your daughter---

JS: My mother took him aside when he got home, and said, "Now don't have a baby right away." And of course we just couldn't wait to have a baby, which of course we did.

CO: That was the thing to do wasn't it?

JS: And it was all right because it was a girl and my mother sewed a trousseau.

CO: Aww. What was in it?

JS: Long dresses with tatting on them, and lace.

CO: Do you have pictures?

JS: No I don't have any pictures of them, but they were so pretty, and there was something in it that my mother bought had a tea to show them off.

(Both laughing)

CO: Did you daughter have --by any chance have any of them?

JS: I don't think so.

CO: No.

JS: She probably wore them out.

CO: Oh. Ok. Yes, children do that.

JS: Yes they do.

CO: Ok. So, you had your daughter Jan and then just before she was born your husband got out of the Army. Then do you all move to Valdosta?

JS: We came to Valdosta and he went into the pulpwood business. Did you know about pulpwood?

CO: Just that it's very hard work.

JS: And it really didn't pay, so he went to the motel.

CO: Oh that 's when you started managing the motel. Ok. So, your children really are Valdosta?

JS: Yes they are and the two boys are still here.

CO: Ok. All their lives you worked outside the home?

JS: But I would go home when they came home from school.

CO: So working for your husband gave you that benefit?

JS: That's right. It was certainly an advantage.

CO: Did you ever have domestic help so that you didn't have all that work?

JS: I had someone to press the clothes. That was before nylon.

CO: Ok. And how was it negotiating a job, family---because your children were born relatively close together.

JS: Yeah. I never had any problems. I don't think we had any problems with it.

CO: Ok. All right. So it wasn't difficult to juggle family, job---?

JS: No, no.

CO: Ok. What about any volunteer work or?

JS: No, I didn't have any time to volunteer for anything.

CO: Ok. All right. What was your relationship like with your children, when they were children?

JS: I think it was all right.

CO: So you don't---did you and your daughter---let's see she was born in '45---did she experience any of that '60s unrest.

JS: I don't think so. No.

CO: No?

JS: No. We were very close, and we would go do a lot on the shopping trip and all that, and as soon as she finished college she went to Washington where she worked in the archives.

CO: The National Archives?

JS: The National Archives until she married, but then she continued working.

CO: So, where did she go to college?

JS: Emory, like her father.

CO: Like her father. Ok. And what was her degree in?

JS: Liberal Arts.

CO: Ok. All right. Would she consider herself an Archivist?

JS: Well, yes, I guess she did because she had the job when she went to Washington.

CO: Ok. And did she stay in The National Archives for most of her working life?

JS: No. The man she worked for went to the Smithsonian so she went over there with him until she retired.

CO: Ok. All right. And how many children does she have?

JS: Three. Three boys.

CO: Ok. And what about your sons? What were their educational---?

JS: Davy---Thomas Davis Jr. finished at VSC, and he works in the advertising part in the *Valdosta Times*. Dick went to Mercer, and he is the Solicitor General of Lowndes County, the DA of Lowndes County.

CO: Ok. All right.

JS: And they all have children.

CO: How many children do your sons have?

JS: Davy has two, a boy and a girl. Dick has four, one boy and three girls and five grandchildren, so I have five great---grandchildren.

CO: What's grandmothering like compared to mothering?

JS: A smooth sail.

(Both laughing)

CO: What about great-grandmothering? What is that like?

JS: Oh that's even easier!

CO: That's even easier?

JS: Yes. Yes.

CO: Are you close to your grandchildren?

JS: Yes, I am. In fact, they all called to wish me a happy birthday and one of them sent me flowers.

CO: Oh those are beautiful. And now are they close by?

JS: No.

CO: No?

JS: No, none of them are in town. Atlanta is the closest. Baton Rouge, Minneapolis, and Washington.

CO: Washington State?

JS: No. D.C.

CO: Ok. Have you ever visited the one in Minneapolis? Have you been up there?

JS: No. They married too late. I've went to the older one's wedding in Davenport, Iowa but I have not been to Minneapolis.

JS: Ok. I think they're expecting a tough winter.

JS: Yes. I am sure it is. I think they're crazy to live there but they seem to like it.

CO: Well, I guess it's what you get used to.

JS: Yes.

CO: We've certainly had our share of extreme weather here. Do you think mothering played a role in shaping you into the person?

JS: Yes. Oh yes.

CO: How so?

JS: Well it made me more tolerant. An only child had a certainly belief in herself, but I had to give way to the children and deal with the time.

CO: Do you think you were prepared for that when your daughter was born?

JS: I don't know what I was prepared for or not but I adjusted rather well.

CO: Ok. When you came back with her---obviously your mother was very pleased with making all those little dresses. Did she play an active role? Was she---

JS: Oh yes. She would keep her if we wanted to go out of town for the weekend, with her sister's help. She couldn't do it by herself because she didn't have that much experience in taking care of a baby.

CO: Yeah. So, did they spoil your daughter? Was she typically indulged by her---

JS: They spoiled her, but it didn't faze her.

CO: Ok. All right. If you could go back and do the mothering thing again, would you do anything differently with your children?

JS: I don't think so. No.

CO: Because they turned out well.

JS: They turned out satisfactorily.

CO: Ok. All right. What lessons did you learn about mothering and from mothering that you pass on to another generation?

JS: That you have to share.

CO: Ok.

JS: Because I never had to share.

CO: Yeah.

JS: But I find that one had to learn to do that.

CO: So, did you find that difficult to teach your children that they had to share?

JS: No.

CO: No?

JS: No.

CO: And so what does it mean to you to be a good mother? How would you define that?

JS: I'm happy with it. I'm satisfied. I don't think I would have changed anything.

CO: So, that being the case could you define what it is to be a good mother?

JS: No, except to try to have a happy home for your husband and children.

CO: Ok. So, mother's and wives are the---

JS: The same thing, yes.

CO: Ok. All right. How different do you think mothering is today from what it was when you raised your children?

JS: It's a lot easier.

CO: It's easier today? You think?

JS: Yes. Because I had to do more of the work when I was a young mother.

CO: Ok. And so you think it's easier now because there's just so many technological conveniences?

JS: I think so.

CO: Ok.

JS: Even TV helps entertain them, helps to teach them too.

CO: Ok. Yeah. Did your---well your children wouldn't have, but your grandchildren grow up on Sesame Street and Mr. Rogers and those programs? Do you know about those programs?

JS: Yes, and they watched them too, but I try not to let them watch them all day long.

CO: Sure. Ok. And what are the things you admire most about each of your three children?

JS: That they are good parents.

CO: Ok. Can you think of something individual about them? About Jan and--

JS: No, I can't, although she certainly did well in her career.

CO: Ok.

JS: And the boys too for that matter. No, I can't think of anything.

CO: Are you tired?

JS: Oh no.

CO: You ok?

JS: Yes.

CO: Ok. Moving on to a category of loss, the experience of loss and that can be anything from death to separation to help to just any way that you can experience loss. What's the most difficult loss you experienced?

JS: The loss of my husband.

CO: The loss of your husband?

JS: Yes.

CO: Ok. Remind me now, you were, so how old were you when he died?

JS: I was 75.

CO: Ok. So you all had lived together for---?

JS: 49 years.

CO: Oh my. Ok. Did you learn lessons about grieving and bereavement and that sort of thing through that process of loss?

JS: Yes. I think I did that I had to keep on myself; that I couldn't stop.

CO: Ok. How long did that take you?

JS: Six months, nine months.

CO: All right. Did the experience of loss or grieving or bereavement---did it have a silver lining at all to it?

JS: Well, I appreciated the---my children and the rest of the family very much because they supported me during this period and of course have since.

CO: Ok. All right. Besides loss through death or any other death what was

JS: No, I can't think of any.

CO: Ok. But besides loss through death, can you recall other significant losses, separations from your children, or separation from others that you loved, or illness or some other?

JS: Well, I did miss Jan when she went to Washington because we had been very close but I also was proud of her for going on and making it---live on her own. So, it didn't bother me any.

CO: Ok. All right. So, there haven't been any other major illnesses or accidents?

JS: No. We've been lucky in that way.

CO: Ok. All right. What about aging? What has been the most difficult part about aging for you?

JS: Not being able to get around.

CO: Ok.

JS: I didn't bother about my looks but I fell and broke my pelvis, so I have to have assistance to and so that has been hindering---a hindrance I should say.

CO: Ok. How long has it been since you were driving or how long has it been since you drove?

JS: Three years at least.

CO: Ok. You miss that?

JS: Oh yes.

CO: Ok. Yeah. What has been the most rewarding part of aging?

JS: Being able to look after myself and having my own mind. I think that's really gratifying.

CO: You know what you think.

JS: I know what I think, and I know people.

CO: Ok.

JS: I know. I can recognize them.

CO: Ok. So, do you feel that age has given you the quality of being able to judge much---not judging much in the negative since but to discern people's character and that thing?

JS: Yes, I do.

CO: All right. So, is that---would you call that a benefit of aging?

JS: Yes.

CO: And so would you say that's what you like about being the age you are now?

JS: Just being sane is the best thing about it.

(Both laughing)

CO: Ok. And what advice would you give to younger people on the best way to age?

JS: Don't fight it.

CO: Don't fight it.

JS: It's coming. There's no need to fight it.

CO: Ok.

JS: Don't even dye your hair.

CO: So you haven't dyed your hair?

JS: Don't even dye it.

CO: Well, it's remarkable. It looks beautiful. I sure wish people would bottle that color if they could.

(Both laughing)

CO: Ok. What age do recall most nostalgically or most favorably?

JS: Most favorably, I think the first fifteen years of my marriage, decidedly, I guess my childhood.

CO: Ok. All right. And is that because you described your childhood as being carefree, is that---what is it about your childhood that makes you think of it nostalgically?

JS: I didn't have any cares. I wasn't really concerned with anybody.

CO: Ok. And---

JS: I didn't have any worries.

CO: In reflecting on it now do you have a sense that life was simpler not just for you because you were a child, but that life was simpler then than it is now?

JS: I do.

CO: Ok. All right. So, if you could choose an age at which to remain---God forbid---to choose an age what would be the age that you would stay?

JS: I would say 30.

CO: Ok, so 30.

JS: I was married and had two children.

CO: Ok. So, let's see now, you recall now the first 15 years of your marriage the most favorably, and the childhood most nostalgically because it was being relatively carefree?

JS: Yes.

CO: Ok. Anything you want---anything else you want to say about---

JS: I can't think of anything. You've asked a lot of questions.

CO: I know. If you're tired we can stop.

JS: Oh no.

CO: All right. One of---a very popular field in history as I'm sure you're aware is Southern Studies or Southern History. So, regional identity has been practically studied to death. You know that it's a field all its own. Has southern identity been something that's been valued by your family? Have you---

JS: I think so.

CO: Ok.

JS: I know we like the way we talk.

CO: You like the way you talk, southerner's talk?

JS: Uh huh.

CO: Ok.

JS: And I dare---I feel a neighborliness about it.

CO: Ok. So, if you had to describe the differences between people in the southern United States and people outside the region, typically we want to say north vs. south, but every region is different you know. If you had to define or describe those differences to someone from another country, say who moved here and you know, I think people certainly in Europe are very conscious of the difference between the south and other regions. But if you

could---if you had to describe to somebody who wasn't aware, how would you---how would you talk about the differences between the south from the rest of the country?

JS: I would say we were friendlier and more caring, but the Australians are very very friendly too. I do like the way we talk I do like the drawl rather than the clipped syllables the north say.

CO: Well, when you were in New York, certainly those were---did they point out that yes---

JS: Yes.

CO: And did they make an issue of your being from the south?

JS: No they didn't and incidentally when I was teaching school my students couldn't tell where I was from. I never did know why.

CO: Hmm. So they never did think you had a southern accent?

JS: No.

CO: Hmm.

JS: And most of them were southerners themselves.

CO: Sure. Yeah. Was it something that your family was aware of and talked about?

JS: No. No. I don't think we ever brought it up at all.

CO: It was never brought up. Ok. What about your own nuclear household, in your own family with your husband and your children, was there an awareness of---?

JS: No.

CO: No?

JS: No.

CO: Ok. So, you've already said for you being southern means being hospitable, neighborly, caring.

JS: Kind of being aware of other people.

CO: Ok. When you were outside the south, when you---especially when you were in New York, were there any conversations about southerners?

JS: I don't remember any.

CO: Well, the reason I ask is I lived six years in Michigan. I completed my Ph.D. at Michigan State, and they were---there was a lot of awareness of regional differences there and so, and they had very negative opinions of the south.

JS: Did you try to change them?

CO: Well, not directly, but I did---I remember being offended you know, and even though you know southerners can be the harshest critics of the south, but you don't want---

JS: You don't want anybody else to say something.

CO: Right. And so I had that experience but I did feel always on guard. Although they had that classic---they wanted to hear you talk. So, I tried not to have such a distinct southern accent but if you get angry or if you forget that you know you're you know---have the façade then it comes out and so they would say something about it then, but I've always been curious. The woman I wrote a biography of was Corra Harris, she died 1935, a lot of her writing was about her experience in New York, and there were such sharp and stark decisions---

JS: Well, I imagine back then there really was more than there is now.

CO: Yeah. Yeah. So, it's---and because I've done so much of my work is on New South, that I'm just steeped in that regional identity so it's interesting to me how other people perceive it.

JS: Yes.

CO: so, what about being a Georgian? Do you identify heavily with the state of Georgia?

JS: Not particularly.

CO: So, you would say you identify more as a southerner than as you do being from the state of Georgia?

JS: Yes.

CO: Do you recall your first conscious awareness of being a southerner or being different---you said a time or two that you like the way southerners---you like the southern accent?

JS: Probably in New York but I don't remember any particularly incident.

CO: Ok. All right. Do you believe that more people take pride in their southern heritage or that more people are embarrassed by it?

JS: I think they take pride in it.

CO: You think more people take pride in it. Ok. And do you think it means more to men than it does to women?

JS: I have no opinion on that. I just assume no. I haven't thought of it.

CO: All right. Ok. All right. You---do you want to stop now---I will go from-

JS: Is it 3:30 or 4:30?

CO: It's probably 3:30, I expect. Let me take a look.

CO: It's 3:30. 3:35.

JS: Ok. Let's go on then.

CO: Ok. All right. What is---moving to history---some questions about these historical moments in your past. What is the most important historical event you either participated in or lived through?

JS: I suppose World War II.

CO: Ok. That was---you were definitely involved in that with the---fiancé---

JS: I definitely was. I was bookkeeping for the cotton mill her so I was involved really in supplies for the citizens as well as being engaged to Thomas and of course movie theatre was here so we were conscious of the war going on.

CO: Ok. All right. What historical or political event has had the greatest impact either directly or indirectly on your life personally? Would you say that too was World War II?

JS: I think so. Yes.

CO: All right. What do you recall about the '40's? The War, ok. Would you say that was a good decade?

JS: I lived out of Valdosta for two or three years, and I was not married all of them, but I think it was a very important decade for me.

CO: For you. Ok. What about the '50's? What do you recall about the '50's?

JS: Not much. I don't really certainly in not any of the rest of the '50's and '60's didn't touch me at all.

CO: So you didn't feel---fear about nuclear war, the Cold War didn't---

JS: No I didn't. I trusted the government, the president, to use it wisely and didn't worry about it.

CO: Ok. All right. Speaking of presidents did you have---was there a president from those---

JS: Roosevelt I admired greatly---Franklin.

CO: What about him did you admire most?

JS: His ability to take charge and bring about change which was definitely for the better as it turned out.

CO: So the New Deal---

JS: Yes, the New Deal, the jobs, you see women got more jobs as the war went on, and so and I liked his ideas.

CO: Did you have an opinion about his wife, Eleanor Roosevelt?

JS: Yes, she came to Valdosta, you know that.

CO: Yes.

JS: I admired her very much. And by the way she went to Guadalcanal when Thomas was there and had dinner with her.

CO: Yes, there's a documentary that has footage of her visiting. Maybe you should see if your husband was in that---

JS: Yes, I would be very excited if he was in it.

CO: It's about---nearly about three hours but it's excellent though. It doesn't drag at all.

JS: I'll have to have my son see if he can get it.

CO: It's a PBS, their American Experience Series. It's excellent, it's very good. They consult historians, biographers, and family members, so it's a good assortment of people.

JS: That'd be very interesting.

CO: Yes, it is.

JS: And I did see him one time. He was in Atlanta and I went up and saw him, and I didn't see another president until Bill Clinton.

CO: How did you see Bill Clinton?

JS: He came to Valdosta before he was elected.

CO: Yeah. Yeah.

JS: Shook hands with him.

CO: I saw him in East Lansing on his campaign.

JS: Yes.

CO: Ok. So what about the Depression? Do you recall that---we're going back in time now but---

JS: Yes. I recall the Depression very much because everybody suffered.

CO: Mm.

JS: My Mother had a job so we were certainly never hungry, but many times people would come to our back door and ask for a meal, offered to bring in coal or mow the lawn or something like that. But on the other hand we didn't lock the doors, and it was an easy time, everybody helped everybody else.

CO: So you had that sense of community?

JS: Yes, definitely.

CO: Was there a---you read a lot about in the era a lot of "tramps" and "hobos." Was there a scare of that here?

JS: Not a scare but we had them. They would go to Florida for the winter and as they passed through, they would stop at houses and ask for meals.

CO: So did you have any at your back door?

JS: We always had leftovers and so we would give them that whether we had something for them to do or not, didn't matter.

CO: Do you recall the Bonus Army going to Washington?

JS: I remember reading about it, yes, which I---Seems to me I thought it was rather silly that---if the government had it to give them the money they would have.

CO: Do you remember reading about that in the newspapers?

JS: Yes, yes.

CO: Ok. All right. Did your family have---did they talk about that or---

JS: Not that I remember.

CO: Ok. All right. So you don't have memories of the Cold War? Like when we read about it now it's---you know you read about people being afraid and---

JS: I remember of course the Cold War but I was not afraid.

CO: You didn't---you didn't feel personally affected by it?

JS: No. No, I did not.

CO: Ok.

JS: Even though Valdosta was in the arc from Cuba to Washington.

CO: You're talking about the Cuba Missile Crisis now?

JS: Yes.

CO: Ok.

JS: But I didn't worry about that.

CO: So you didn't---do you remember having bomb drills, bomb alerts where---

JS: No, I don't remember that, and I don't remember anybody who had a bomb shelter.

CO: You don't, ok, all right. How do you recall the Civil Rights movement as a movement?

JS: I thought, "What on Earth are they so upset about?" I wasn't terribly involved with it. I have nothing against Black people and I guess I thought they should have rights, but to sit at a drug store counter I couldn't see it.

CO: Ok. All right. So are your impressions of the Civil Rights movement that it was much ado about nothing or how would you---

JS: It was something that they didn't have to do all that. That's very badly put---

CO: Ok. So you agree in principle?

JS: Yes, in principle.

CO: Ok. But you thought that perhaps it might have been accomplished in another way?

JS: Yes, it was so loud, and marching and all that.

CO: Ok. You didn't like protest?

JS: I'm afraid I didn't see the need of it.

CO: Ok. All right. What about the experience of desegregation? How was that regarded in your family?

JS: I think I thought it was inevitable that it was to come and we just as well adjust to it and I certainly didn't approve of Russell and Georgia's leadership in the center. They were so against it, formed the Dixiecrats. I thought they were all wrong, and said this is the law and you are going to abide by it.

CO: Do you remember strong personalities like Lester Maddox and George Wallace?

JS: Oh yes, I thought Lester Maddox was a fool.

CO: (Laughs a little) Ok. All right. Did he ever come to Valdosta?

JS: Not that I remember.

CO: Cause he traveled about a good bit.

JS: Yes he did.

CO: Yeah. Ok.

JS: And so did Gene Talmadge.

CO: Yes. So you don't---this would have been taking place when your children were---

JS: They were a year ahead of the segregation, of the **d**esegregation.

CO: Desegregation, ok. And so do you recall it in any way affecting them, that experience?

JS: No. I think they just accepted it was the way things were going to be.

CO: Ok. So they didn't have strong opinions about it one way or another?

JS: No. No.

CO: Ok. What are your most prominent memories of the 1960's?

JS: The 1960's? I don't have any. We were traveling in the summer time. I was teaching in the winter time and that was all.

CO: So you were teaching at VSC by then?

JS: Yes, in 1965 I started.

CO: Ok.

JS: But we started our overseas travel, oh, that wasn't until 1969. I don't have any memories or impressions of the '60's.

CO: Ok. So you---from your perspective was that a good decade for your family?

JS: Yes.

CO: Ok. But what about for the country? Do you feel---I'm sure that studying history you---

JS: Well, maybe I thought it was all so unnecessary, but I don't remember any definite feelings.

CO: Ok. Do you recall---you just had a statement about the sit-ins, you didn't think---you had an opinion about that and the freedom rides, the--- what about the violence, the murders that took place in Mississippi.

JS: I regretted them very much especially the little boy---

CO: Emmett Till.

JS: Emmett Till. I was so sorry that happened.

CO: So you recall Emmett Till murdered.

JS: Oh yes, I recall. I had relatives in Mississippi and they were very very against desegregation, so I got---I heard from them but I didn't agree with them at all. I thought well, it ought to be.

CO: Yeah. What was that like? Did that cause conflict of any kind?

JS: No, I didn't try to argue with them.

CO: So you didn't express your opinion?

JS: Not to the relatives. No.

CO: Ok.

JS: But they expressed theirs to us.

CO: Ok. What about your mother? Did she have any---

JS: No.

CO: Your husband?

JS: No. No. He had worked with Blacks all his life, really. So he was all right.

CO: Ok. All right. Do you remember the assassinations that took place in the '60's? JFK, Malcom X, Martin Luther King?

JS: Indeed I do.

CO: Robert Kennedy? Do you remember all those?

JS: I had a night class when ML King was killed, and we were really aghast at that, my students and I were that it lead to assassination. I was surprised that Robert Kennedy was not protected better and---

CO: Yeah. Did you have strong feelings about the Kennedy family?

JS: Yes I did. I was very filled with admiration for all of them, and I really was sad about John Kennedy being killed.

CO: Ok. And then Robert of course was killed shortly after Martin Luther King.

JS: Yes, he was.

CO: How did that affect the community? Did this community have much response to that?

JS: I don't remember any expression at all.

CO: Ok. All right. Have your ideas on race relations changed over time? Have they---

JS: I never thought about it when I was young, but once that the civil rights movement did occur, I agreed with their goals.

CO: Ok. All right. So the movement---my next question was---what do you think catalyzed the change in your thinking---you went from not having thinking about it---

JS: They brought it to my attention.

CO: Ok. So they brought it to your attention. So being sort of forced to think about it, you began to---

JS: I began to agree.

CO: Look at it differently? Ok. All right. And did you---you said you didn't care for Georgia's leadership at the time?

JS: No.

CO: No. A lot of---

JS: I thought they failed the people.

CO: Ok. All right. When you think about a lot was going on after the Civil Rights movement, or kind of you know to some extent, along side it, and then the '70's really erupted with the Women's Movement, the Black Power movement, which was also you know part of the Civil Rights movement, but the Women's Movement, the Native American movement, the Ecological Movement. How did all of that---how did you process all of that?

JS: I just read about it, and didn't bother to think about it very much.

CO: Not even the Women's Movement? Did you have strong feelings about that?

JS: Oh more power to them, is what I thought but let them do it. I wasn't going to do anything about it.

CO: Ok. So you didn't feel the need---you didn't feel constrained yourself?

JS: No. No.

CO: Ok.

JS: (Laughing) I did my part.

CO: Ok. All right. But personally you didn't feel---could you relate to what some of the women---

JS: Yes.

CO: Do you remember the book *The Feminine Mystique* that was published?

JS: Yes, I did and approved of it.

CO: So did you happen to read it at all.

JS: Yes.

CO: Ok.

JS: I think I even reviewed it for my book club, and got a reaction from some of them against it too.

CO: Against it? And had they read it?

JS: I don't know. I don't know whether they had or not.

CO: Yeah. Ok. Do you remember---I mean that book radicalized the generation of women.

JS: Yeah. No I don't remember much about it.

CO: Ok. All right. What about ecological awareness? Has that---

JS: That doesn't concern me much. I can't do anything about it, and I'm not concerned with it.

CO: Ok. All right. When that surfaced as an issue, Walter Cronkite you know used to talk about---

JS: I'm sorry I didn't listen to him.

CO: You didn't listen to him---to Walter Cronkite.

(Both laughing)

JS: I stood with NBC.

CO: Ok. All right. Which would have been---who were their main anchors in the '60's?

JS: Tom Brokaw I think.

CO: Well, he's a little bit later.

JS: John Chancellor.

CO: I believe, yes, yes. And then there was Brinkley.

JS: David Brinkley.

CO: Yes.

JS: Huntley & Brinkley.

CO: Huntley & Brinkley. Yes. Ok. Has having an African---American in the White House altered your ideas?

JS: I voted for him.

CO: (chuckling) All right. Do you recall if you or anybody in your family had strong feelings about the war in Vietnam?

JS: No. It didn't touch us as a family.

CO: So you didn't have relatives in it, close friends with sons, whatever?

JS: No.

CO: All right. Did you have strong feelings about the cause itself in Vietnam?

JS: I felt Americans should have been there.

CO: You did?

JS: Cause I thought that China would over run the peninsula if we hadn't gone to Vietnam.

CO: Ok. So did you have feelings about Johnson's involvement, L.B. J.?

JS: I don't remember.

CO: Ok. All right. What do you believe has been the legacy of the Women's Movement?

JS: Acceptance by men that women *can* do things that men think they couldn't do, or didn't want to think they could do.

CO: All right. So you think it's had really a bigger impact then on men than women perhaps?

JS: Oh no! It's had the biggest impact on women, but men have been impressed too.

CO: Ok. All right. And do you believe it has had a greater benefit for women than it has a draw back for women?

JS: Oh, yes.

CO: Some women believe that it's been---

JS: Oh no.

CO: That it's hurt women.

JS: Let each woman decide for herself.

CO: Ok. All right. Do you feel up to talking about religion?

JS: Oh yes.

CO: Ok.

JS: (Laughing) It's not very strong.

(Both Laughing)

CO: That's an enticing statement. What was or is---this was just on NPR program the other night. They asked people to write in what's the core value that's shaped their lives, and so they would read from these accounts

and some of them are really interesting. What would you say has been the core value that's shaped your life?

JS: Belief in God and moral values. There is a right and wrong.

CO: Ok. All right.

JS: Is that enough?

CO: Well, if you want it to be it certainly can be. What would you say is the most right thing that a person can think or do?

JS: I guess "do unto others."

CO: Ok. So the golden rule?

JS: Yes.

CO: Ok. Was religion important in your household growing up?

JS: Oh yes. I went to Sunday School every Sunday and stayed for Church.

CO: So your mother---did your mother take you or did she send you?

JS: I was in four blocks of the Church, and my mother did not go because she had worked all week, six days, so she preferred to stay home but the two friends that I said were across the street, we went to Sunday School every Sunday morning.

CO: So you went together?

JS: Yes.

CO: You walked?

JS: Yes. It was only four blocks.

CO: Yeah, yeah, sure. What about your Aunt? Did---

JS: No. She was a Baptist.

CO: Mm. So---

JS: My mother joined the Methodist Church with her husband and remained a Methodist so I grew up a Methodist. So when I married I joined the Baptist Church with my husband. But we did not like the fundamentalism of the fundamentalism of the Baptist Church so we went back to the Methodist Church.

CO: Ok. But you're family of origin was Baptist?

JS: Yes.

CO: Your father was Methodist so your mother converted---changed?

JS: Yes.

CO: Converted is a little strong but she---

JS: She joined the group.

CO: Ok. Can you---could you tell me about your religious beliefs or your spiritual values? You said the Golden Rule but when you---you just said---

JS: I believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and I suppose I believe in the Holy Ghost, and that each of us has a soul. What more? And I do think I know the difference in right and wrong.

CO: Ok. All right. Have those values governed the way you lived your life?

JS: Yes.

CO: Have that---to start with, you said they weren't strong but so they---have they---how have they changed over time? Your religious values?

JS: I suppose they've gotten stronger, and I certainly tried to teach my children those same values.

CO: Ok. All right. What---have you ever had a profound spiritual moment, something you could identify?

JS: No.

CO: No. Ok. Have you ever felt the presence of the Holy Spirit, a spiritual guide?

JS: Yes. Yes. I don't remember the incident, but I have. It seemed quite natural to me.

CO: But it didn't seem like anything out of the ordinary?

JS: No. No epiphany or anything like that.

CO: Ok. So when you feel really drained or down or depressed or whatever, what do you do to renew yourself?

JS: I don't know. I don't feel like that very often.

CO: You should write a book.

(Both Laughing)

JS: Nope. They're just not feelings.

CO: So have you experienced anything that you would consider a miracle?

JS: No.

CO: No. Ok. And you said that your religious values have really---have not changed over time but they've gotten stronger?

JS: Yes.

CO: Ok. Are you certain of anything?

JS: No.

CO: Ok. Are you at peace?

JS: Yes.

CO: Ok. When you meet God what do you want to say to God?

JS: I never thought of it. Here I am, I guess.

CO: And what do you want God to say to you?

JS: Welcome.

CO: Ok. And this sounds repetitive but the most vital spiritual value for people to observe, would you say anything different from what you've said?

JS: No.

CO: Just do unto others?

JS: No.

CO: Ok. All right. Well, I just got a few kind of wrap up questions. Do you feel like doing that?

JS: Yes.

CO: Ok. And again, some of these are repetitive. So, but often times you might think something different then you did a few minutes ago.

JS: I might.

CO: Ok. What period of time, anywhere from a year to a decade, even a week, whatever, was the happiest most gratifying, most pleasantly memorable of your life?

JS: Oh. When I married, from my marriage to then on.

CO: Ok. And what period was the most difficult, most trying for you?

JS: After my husband died.

CO: Ok. All right. And what were the crucial decisions in your life?

JS: I don't know...To go to University of Alabama, to go to New York. There's never any decision about marrying Tom. Maybe to come over here, but circumstances brought me here, so really no outstanding decisions.

CO: You don't recall ever really having to deliberate over a decision in your past?

JS: No. No.

CO: Ok. All right. And what about the most important turning points, when we started, I said that's really what---kind of what I'm looking for, turning points in women's lives.

JS: Well, I think it's certainly my marriage, and coming to Langdale, that's all. My life has gone rather smoothly, I guess.

CO: How do you feel about that?

JS: I'm very happy with it.

CO: Ok.

JS: I don't regret not having some real high lows and low lows or high highs and low lows.

CO: So your life you interpret as having been pretty even keel.

JS: Yes.

CO: All right. So it sounds like you're satisfied with the life choices you've made?

JS: Yes.

CO: So if I ask you had there been mistakes or regrets---

JS: No.

CO: No. Ok. If you could live your life over again would you do things differently?

JS: No.

CO: No. You wouldn't choose to pursue a Ph.D. or do something?

JS: No.

CO: No.

JS: No, I wouldn't. I wouldn't have married Tom before he went overseas and I wouldn't have got, well, my eyes prevented me from getting the Ph.D.

CO: So did you say you wouldn't marry Tom before he went overseas? Is that what you just said?

JS: Yes, that was the right thing to do.

CO: To not marry?

JS: Yes.

CO: Ok. So that was perhaps---

JS: It probably was.

CO: So was there pressure on you to marry before he went over---

JS: No.

CO: No. But you could have?

JS: Yes. He didn't know where he was going, and he was very uncertain then.

CO: But it was certainly an option that you both were aware of---you could have?

JS: We could have, but we didn't think about it very much.

CO: Ok. All right. Has your life been better than you thought it would be as a child?

JS: Yes. Yes.

CO: Ok. And what do you attribute that to?

JS: (Chuckling) Life. Just the way things happen.

CO: But you don't--- you think it's sort of an external thing, it's not really from making right decisions, you were just sort of quote, "lucky?"

JS: That's right.

CO: Ok.

JS: I wasn't called upon to make them, to have any great influence.

CO: Ok. What do you consider the most valuable lesson you've learned in your life?

JS: To get along with people. Being an only child I learned to get my way a lot. I learned to adjust to other people's opinions too.

CO: What do you think---I think I know how you're gonna answer this but I'll just let you answer. What do you think was the most important thing in bringing that about in you?

JS: Tom, my husband.

CO: Ok, so he had siblings?

JS: Yes.

CO: Ok. All right. What gives your---has there been a single individual or more than one that's changed your life?

JS: No. I don't think so.

CO: Ok. All right. And what gives your life meaning or purpose now?

JS: It was a satisfactory one, it was a happy one.

CO: Ok. All right. And what's your biggest worry now?

JS: The health of my children.

CO: Ok. In what way do you want to be remembered, or what do you want to be your legacy?

JS: Being a good mother, grandmother, and great---grandmother.

CO: Ok.

JS: One that they remember.

CO: And what do you think it would mean to be the good of those things?

JS: Loving and caring, I suppose.

CO: Ok. All right. What has been the greatest source of inspiration for you? Inspiration or motivation, whichever one of those words---what has inspired you?

JS: I have no idea.

CO: Ok.

JS: Just my inner self, I suppose.

CO: Ok. All right. And would are you proudest of in your life?

JS: What?

CO: What are you proudest of in your life?

JS: The three children.

CO: The children. Ok.

JS: All my children.

CO: Yeah. Is there anything that you would like, your children and grandchildren and great---grandchildren to know about you that they don't already know?

JS: No.

CO: No?

JS: No.

CO: Ok. Is there anything that we've left out or not covered?

JS: I don't think so.

(Both Laughing)

CO: Ok.

(Knock at the door)

JS: Yes?

Person: Oh I'm sorry, I thought---

CO: Just a few minutes. Ok. Finally, what would be the title to your life's story? If somebody wrote your biography what would be the title?

JS: I think just Jane Shelton, not even the Life of Jane Shelton.

CO: Ok. All right. Ok. What's this been like for you?

JS: Very interesting.

(Both Laughing)

JS: And you have reached down deep and brought out a lot that I haven't even thought of before.

CO: Well I hope that if you have access to them maybe you can access some pictures, however many you would like to share. I can have them scanned and bring the originals back to you at some point.

JS: All right. Of me?

CO: Yes. Yes. Of course. Yeah, so.

JS: I was thinking I've got relatives over there.

CO: Yeah, well I would like to have pictures of you maybe you and your children or just you.

JS: Would you come and open this drawer over there?

CO: Sure. I think I'm gonna turn this off