

Conrad Franklin

Interviewed by Jennifer Whalen, Oct. 25, 2000



Q. We'll start with, what is your full name?

A. Full name?

Q. Yes.

A. Conrad Duvarnet Franklin.

Q. And who were your parents?

A. Joseph Franklin and Duetta Franklin.

Q. And what was your mother's maiden name?

A. Nichols.

Q. Who were your grandparents?

A. This is a hard one. I know but my grandmother on one side died in eighteen eighty-four. That was my grandmother. There was James Franklin and what was her name? On the other side it was George Nichols and Mary Anne Nichols. That other name will come to me in a minute. I'm slow on some of those things.

Q. When were you born?

A. Nineteen thirty-five.

Q. And where were you born?

A. Digby hospital.

Q. How large was your family when you were growing up?

A. I'm number ten. I was the last one.

Q. And what did you think about that?

A. We got along well with one another. Oh, you had your little scraps and stuff like that but I was quite a bit younger than some of them so, I always figured I had protection from all of the rest of the brothers and

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sisters. Of course, by the time I was born some of the older ones were married and out on their own. My oldest sister is still alive and she's eighty-six. She's in Stony Creek, Ontario. We're a pretty happy family.

Q. What did your father do for a living?

A. Everything was woods work then. Working in the woods. Logging and stuff like that. Going back and working the mills. We had a little small farm here for some of our food and stuff.

Q. What would your mother's workday be like?

A. Do you really want to know? (Laughter) Well when I was born, that's the year they put electricity in the house so everything was done by hand for the whole ten children. You lugged your water, everything was done by hand. All the cooking, everything was done. You didn't buy anything so she had a busy day plus bringing up ten children. It would be very hard to really say. It would be hard work. They were very strong people. They had to be in those days. They were very, very strong. Raise ten children and do everything by hand.

Other. (Conrad's wife) Even to carry in the water, baking bread, washing clothes by hand.

A. It was all done by hand.

Q. So how would you say, when you got electricity how did that change things for you?

A. I guess probably the first thing, you got an electric washer instead of doing it all by hand. (Laughter) and a few lights in the house, you didn't use the lamps and candles and stuff like that. You still, to do the work outside the barns and stuff you always used lanterns and whatever. It was an inconvenience. Today it would be an inconvenience but that's what you grew up with, it was just natural. It was just natural to do that.

Q. Tell me about a typical school day for you.

A. I started school down here, you just come up by the Hillgrove Baptist Church and there's a Christian Center right beside it, that's where we started school. I guess I started, probably in nineteen forty and we had a lot there. It was quite a chore. I used to love getting in the ditch and falling asleep. Half the time I didn't get to school. (Laughter) I enjoyed that but in nineteen forty-three, they took us to town school. I think we were probably one of the first in Canada that was bused to a town school in nineteen forty-three. I've heard rumors to that effect. I wouldn't, I can't swear by it but they did take us to town school in nineteen forty-three. During the war you couldn't get teachers. Everybody was in the services. It was quite a shock for us to go from the country into a town school. The Academy in Digby, of course it's closed now but it was the Academy right by the court house and the jail and that's where we started school in Digby or really went.....

A. Is it still standing there today?

A. It's still there but they haven't used it in quite a few years. They built a piece on it in nineteen forty-three and we were the first school from any area around to go to town school and each year after that, they started bringing other little communities in. That was in nineteen forty-three.

A. So how do you think you adjusted to having to go in town for school?

A. It was very, very hard to start off with. We were used to the country and you got in town, they had lot more luxuries than we did and things like that in the school and it took some adjusting to get used to it but we managed. Well, once you'd been there a year or so, everything was fine but it took a while to adjust coming from the country right in. There used to be a few scraps here and there along the way, (Laughter) but it was different.

Q. What would the bus rides be like going there?

A. Well, actually there was no such thing as school bus. They took us on the Acadia Lines which I think it's called Nova now. Irving bought it out so I don't know what's it's really called but it was the Acadian Lines. They used to call them the clippers. The bus was the same in front as it was in the back and they were the same buses that went from Yarmouth to Halifax. That's what we traveled on to start out with. We still had to walk to the old school. They didn't pick us up at our homes. We still had to walk down a mile, sometimes we had to walk to Rice's corner, a mile and a half to pick up the buses. They didn't come up here 'till nineteen forty-seven before they come up here. So we still had to walk, we wait at the old school where it used to be or somebody's home down there. Uncle Tom's, we used to go down there sometimes for a year or two until the buses started coming up this way but they were fantastic buses. They were luxury buses at that time and of course we knew the drivers, the different ones that were from around here. They were Acadian Lines drivers but it was nice.

Q. Neat. Do you remember who your best friend would have been at school back then?

A. Everybody's really your friend in them days, I guess. I used to chum around a lot with Frankie Wilson and Carl Smith. They were good. Your best friends sometimes didn't go to the same school. See the Catholic school was right beside it but yet, they weren't allowed to go on the buses. They would go to a different school but they would have to walk to Digby. Things were different then.

Q. Now, why was it that they couldn't go?

A. Well, you were under a separate school, so, now my best buddy up here was Dickie Grifton, we were chums all our lives but they went to the Catholic school and they weren't allowed to go on our buses. That's the way things were in them days. I don't really understand why and I remember going to school and I'd feel so sorry. We'd pass by kids, they had to walk to town because it was a public school and yet they were going to the Catholic school which would be Saint Pats. I don't know what it is now. I think it's apartment buildings but there was a Catholic Convent there and they went to the school in there and I don't what year they started picking them up but it was quite a while after that because they had to walk, and I, my buddy walking to school, he'd always be late 'cause it was pretty close to five miles and we had a ride. I never thought that was quite fair.

Q. What types of things would you do with your friends?

A. We were always down the woods. Down the woods or the fields and we enjoyed that. Country kids, there was really not that much for us in town. We'd get to go to town on a Saturday night to go to the movies when we got older. You'd be well up, fourteen, fifteen before you got to go to town to a movie. If you could scrape up fifteen or twenty cents to go to the movie but it was nice. It was something you looked forward to. There was no such things as television or any of those things. We'd have an old battery radio, that's about all you had. You made your own entertainment and stuff like that.

Q. What would that battery radio have looked like?

A. The old one we had almost looked like a car battery but it was an old radio. Just an old cheap thing that half the time didn't work but we'd get a few things. Don Messer and his Islander's.

Q. What is your best memory of school?

A. Well, I think one of the nicest things I ever had, we had to, if you were an honors student you didn't have to write your exams and one year I had to write my exams, I was never an honors student, I had to write my exams but I got the highest mark. I think that was quite a highlight, I guess I was in grade nine, eight or nine.

Q. And what subject was that in?

A. Well it was, it would be all of my subjects put together, your average and I had the highest mark in the class. On our final exams but anybody that had a seventy-five or eighty average didn't have to write exams. We had four sets of exams each year so one year even though I had to write my exams, I had the highest mark. I think I got a dollar for a prize. It was good in the forties. A dollar was a lot.

Q. What sorts of things would you grow and raise yourself?

A. Around here? Well the first thing, you had to have a big potato patch, turnip patch, all those things so you could fill the basement. At that time, years ago we had an orchard down below but those trees are long gone, they were gone so we put as much of that in for the winter as we could. In fact we still do. She's already done up a hundred bottles of stuff this year for our winter but we had to do that 'cause there's a big family and you didn't have the extra things to eat. You relied one hundred percent on those potatoes and you'd raise a pork. Now it's not like pork you would buy in the store today. You'd buy a pig in the spring and you'd feed that as much, anything you could get. It wouldn't be boughten, you'd have a little bit of boughten food but not that much. You'd get that pig up four or five hundred pounds, well the fat would be that thick on it. That's what you lived on in the winter. You relied on that one hundred percent. You'd salt the meat and it was salty. You'd have to soak it out before you could use it but you had to have something like that to rely on through the winter because you didn't have things as they are today. If people saw what it was back then they wouldn't understand. I mean we survived, I'm not saying we didn't survive and stuff like that but you could be guaranteed you'd have potatoes six days out of the week. Oh, yeah. On Saturday, you'd have big beans.

Q. How much of what you needed would you make yourself?

A. Everything. Everything. I mean, the family wise. (Laughter) When we'd buy flour, it used to be in hundred pound bags or a barrel and I think that was two hundred and fifty pounds in the barrel and it wouldn't take us long to use that. A big family. A hundred pounds of flour is not very much when you have a big family. Mom made bread every day of the week. That's them bid loaves, everyday she'd make it except Sunday and even the bags they come in, the flour bags, that was one of your main sources of material. You used all of those flour bags, you've probably heard tell of it, they'd use that old lye soap, kill your hands. They'd get all the markings off they could. That's what all our clothes were made of. Our underwear's, all of that stuff was made out of flour. Oh yeah, yeah.

Q. Who would make those for you?

A. Mom. We were self-sufficient. You had to be.

Other. Was that really common back then to have such a big family?

A. Oh, yes. Very much so.

Other. Basically, everyone was one of ten or one of twelve?

A. Yeah, well you had a place in your family when you were big enough to walk you were big enough to work. I mean, by the time you were five, six, seven years old you were cutting the kindling, lugging the wood, working in the barn, doing the barn chores, all that stuff, you know. I just heard a little piece on the radio a couple of days ago, how it was going back then and it's so much harder now, you don't have the close knit relationship that you did have then. You had to rely on that. That was nice. If you had a little gut that was having trouble getting to school, you had a bigger sister or brother to help you. It was different. It was certainly different.

Other. Do you think it's better?

A. When they say the good old days, the good old days is right now. You have food on the table, you have a good warm house, you have all the convinces and luxuries and everything but the good old days that I remember as far life is now but in those days, the good old days was everything you did, you relied on other people. The community was close knit, everybody was close knit. I mean your brothers were just, if I was a little one, if I got in trouble I had a big brother there to help me or the sister to do this for me and you know, you worked on a social system right that way and it was nice. You don't have that today. You don't have any of that today. Not like it was then. You relied on one another. It was just natural.

Q. What sorts of things would you barter for?

A. Barter?

Q. Yes.

A. Another thing we'd have all winter, we'd get two or three hundred pounds of dry fish. We would trade squash, pumpkin, potatoes, all that kind of stuff, yellow eyed beans, all that stuff you'd trade back and forth for different things for the house.

Q. Who would you trade with?

A. There would be fisherman come around with big trucks of dry fish and they would trade for vegetables. They had fishing, we had vegetables. Fire wood, different things like that and that's what we'd barter back and forth there.

Q. How would you take care of your teeth back then?

A. (Laughter) I always remember one thing. I don't think it worked but everything was cooked in a woodstove and sometimes a loaf of bread would get burnt a little bit on top and mom would say, "You eat that black 'cause that's good for your teeth, that'll clean your teeth" I always

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remembered. I don't know whether it worked or not but it would be burnt a little bit on top and that's good for your teeth and you know today, if there's bread that's burnt, if she happens, I love it. It's what you grew up with. Growing up as a small kid it was very, very hard to get toothpaste 'cause it was going to War and you couldn't get a new tube of toothpaste unless you turned that old tube in 'cause you used to have the Rawleigh's man and the Walkin's man that is what they were, yeah come around in cars sellin' stuff and you'd have grocetas in those days. The grocery store drove up by and I remember mom saving those tubes if we had any to, and if you didn't have that, you'd use salt or you'd use soda.

Q. Would you have toothbrushes?

A. I don't remember that one. I think you just used your fingers and whatever, as I remember. After the War, we started getting things yeah but then we were all getting grown up then.

Q. So how often would you see a dentist?

A. Never. Unless you had a tooth that would ache so bad that you had to have it out. You didn't go to the dentist, you didn't go to the doctor.

Q. Do you have any memories of going to the dentist?

A. Yes I certainly do. I went in, I had a tooth that grew the wrong way. It grew out and it started poking a hole in my jaw so I went in to get it out and the doctor pulled five. No freezing in those days. He sat there and pulled it out and then I had to walk home from town. I was sick when I got home. That's a long walk.

Other. The freezing was from his knee pushing into your chest. (Laughter)

A. We, yeah that was all. You just sit there top pull 'em out and you didn't cry. Not in them days.

Q. Now what sorts of tools would he have used to do that?

A. It was just whatever he has to pull them out with. I'd call them a pair of pliers but whatever they had to pull 'em out with. That's all. I'll never forget that episode. (Laughter) We went in on a school bus 'cause dad went in with us, they let dad on the school bus and we thought I was going to have one tooth out because it was killin' me but he pulled five but they didn't freeze them then. Not in those days.

Q. Who delivered the babies in your community?

A. That part I don't know. I'd be the youngest one. The last three in our family were born in the Hospitals in Digby. The other seven were born in the house. Now, I, that'd be, I wouldn't know on that. I suppose my mother's mother would be here. You neighbors, they all got together on that stuff. All communities got together. If there was a big snowstorm, somebody had to go to the hospital, your neighbor would hook up his horse team and take you to town or whatever. Your communities were that way.

Q. What were some home remedies that you would remember being common when you were growing up?

A. If you got a cold it was always vinegar and onions. Raw onions and vinegar. I like 'em, they're good. (Laughter) You don't have to eat 'em. It's o.k. when you don't have to do it. Oh, yeah you'd have that. Oh, mustard plaster. I'd like to know how, get the recipe for that again. I used to get the coup something terrible and I'd go out for five minutes and I couldn't breath and I'd come in and I'd actually ask for that mustard plaster and mom knew how to do it. You'd do it on the wood stove with flannelette and you put mustard and flour in there some how and you'd heat it up on the stove right to the burning point and put that on your chest and within five minutes that would break everything in there. Don't go out for a while afterwards, and don't get too strong 'cause you could peel the hide right off of your chest but it worked at all times. It was good but it's called a mustard plaster.

Q. Now do you still use that remedy today?

A. I don't know the remedy. I'd give anything to have that remedy and another thing, in the summer as soon as frogs started croaking we were out in our bare feet. That was it. You didn't get shoes every time you needed a pair of shoes. You just didn't get 'em in them days and you'd always have a nail hole in your foot or glass or something like that. You always did, going in your bare feet. You want to tramp hay when there's briers in it in your bare feet but anyhow we always had a poultice made out of pork. Fat pork. See you'd have the fat pork in the basement in the big barrels and that would always work to keep the infection out. I'll tell ya, one thing that really, we'd worry as a kid, you'd get polio from that. These infections and stuff and as a kid there was no cure for polio. Then they come out in the late forties or something with a vaccine for polio, I think that took a lot of pressure off of all of us 'cause we were all afraid of that. You know, you step on a nail, a rusty nail and they're around. You always had a cut foot somewhere's. All of us did. You went out in your bare feet. Not to work or anything like that. The older ones didn't do that to work but around here on the farm kids always had bare feet.

Other. So that was the real scary disease?

A. To me it was. It was a very scary disease, polio. You'd seen so many people died and crippled and stuff like that. It was terrible. They had no cure whatsoever for it and then they come out, I think they started with a vaccine in England during the War sometime. I'm not sure of the details on that but I'll tell you I was glad when we knew that was out and you didn't have to worry anymore. I can remember the first needles we got down here at the old country school. That was probably in forty-one or something like that. They just line us up in the field and take the same needle and a shot in the bum. Whoop (SFX) Next one, whoop (SFX) next one.

Q. Now would you go with your school to do that or with you classmates?

A. No, they just took us all out, we were all in the same room. Ten grades, so they just took you out in the yard, there was lots of room and lined you up and you just went in the line to get your needle.

Q. So, all of you were in the same classroom at school?

A. Yeah. Ten grades in one room.

Q. How many teachers would there have been?

A. One. This is a small community. There was probably about forty of us going to school at that time when they took us to Digby.

Other. In one class?

A. Oh yeah. All different classes you'd have from one to ten, kindergarten, primary. We called it primary, primer. That right up to grade ten. Grade ten, eleven and twelve, if you wanted to take that you had to go to Digby.

Q. Now, how would they divide up the teaching to all the different grade levels?

A. She taught 'em all. You'd be getting your own lessons and probably someone else's. There was one person there to do it.

Other. Did any of the higher grades help out with the younger?

A. Not on the teaching part. No, not that I can remember. Of course I only went to primer, one and two here and in grade three we went to Digby, like I said in nineteen forty-three.

Q. So how would you have been disciplined at school?

A. With the strap or a stick. No if's or but's. Even right up into town school and in high school. Oh, yeah.

Q. Now do you have any memories of ever being strapped?

A. Yeah, we all got that. One teacher had a long pointer. You know what I mean by the pointers? She could be six feet behind you and she could get you right there on that bone on the back. You'd cry, that would hurt. Oh, yeah. It was a little different then. You'd get a back hander.

Q. Do you think that the discipline back then would be a good thing to reinstitute up here now?

A. Certain parts of it, yes. You would get the odd teacher who'd go overboard. I understand that and that was wrong but the strap didn't hurt me. I knew enough not to do it again and if you told when you got home, you'd get another lickin' 'cause you shouldn't have been bad in the first place. It didn't hurt us. It hurt your feelings maybe for a little while but no, that was part of school. No, there's nothing wrong with discipline. I mean, I don't mean like go beat people or stuff like that. There's nothing wrong with a little discipline. We must have it 'cause if your not disciplined and things you just do whatever you want and we sure didn't 'cause if we got caught we, you could be sure you got a strappin' and you'd get a good one.

Q. How old were you when you left the second school that you attended?

A. Well, we started at the Academy in Digby in nineteen forty-three and then in nineteen forty-six with all the veterans back and there was a lot of children then and they didn't have a new school so in nineteen forty-six they started putting us in the Cannon Banks. Do you know what I mean by the Cannon Banks? Down by the water, down by the wharf there's some beautiful apartment buildings there, scenery, that used to be the air force base during the War and that would take grades seven and eight. Right by the Catholic School where the parking lot is, there was a great big hall there. It was known as a scout hall and they'd put us in there. The United Church had a, the church hall at the United Church up in back of the old station, we went to school there, so that would be the last part of forty-six, forty-seven and the first part of forty-eight. That's when they built the new high school and opened the high school in nineteen forty-eight and that would take to high school. That took from seven to twelve. That was in nineteen forty-eight.

Q. Now, some of the people that I've talked to said that you only had to go to school up until you were fourteen years old. Was that the case when you were in school?

A. It probably was. I know the day I was sixteen, I was out of school and out to work so you didn't get the schooling that you really should have had. Whatever grade you happened to be in. I mean, I certainly never went through school, no.

Q. Now, what was the reason you left school?

A. Well, I was the last one at home then. Mom and Dad would be well up, they were quite old when I was born. See I was number ten so Dad was fifty some when I was born and mom was about forty-five. By the time I was sixteen, they were up in their sixties and seventies, getting close to their seventies so I got out and went to work. I went to work when I was sixteen. You almost had to in those days. You had to help out. In those days there wasn't an old age pension at sixty-five and stuff like that. You got no help from anybody. No government help.

Other. Was it hard to find a job back then?

A. It wasn't hard to find a job. You could always go into Tupper Warrens and get a job but you never got any money. You know what I mean? When I started out to work in nineteen fifty-one I made seventeen cents an hour. That's a long walk to Digby and back home, a ten-hour shift, seventeen cents an hour. That was not the best of wages. No, I remember that.

Q. When someone in your community would die, how would they handle the funeral?

A. Basically the same as today only sometimes you'd have the body at home instead of the funeral homes and things like that. A lot like today only they didn't have all of the facilities they have today and things like that but well, mom passed away and I was only what, twenty one, you know it was quite a few years ago. It was in nineteen fifty-six when mom passed away. It would be a funeral as, like is to now only not so elaborate or a few things like that.

Q. How often would you leave your town?

A. I never really went to town, only to go to school. On a Saturday night, you'd go to a movie if you could. If you had the money or anything like that and you were a little older but at the time there was nothing for me in town and you just walked in town. I liked to go in, I used to go in on a Sunday night 'cause they had the Salvation Army would always play and you'd go in and watch them and listen to the music and stuff, (continued on next page)

on a Saturday night and a Sunday night. Saturday night they'd march right down the whole street. They'd block off the street for 'em. The band, the Salvation Army band and they'd go through. Oh, yeah and they'd have a service right in the Senate Half right in Digby and that slowly went and then they'd have it Sunday nights until slowly the Salvation Army's not in Digby but that'd be sort of a highlight for ya because that was before we had our t.v. before t.v's were around.

Q. They wouldn't do that every week would they?

A. Oh, yes. Every Saturday. Oh, yes. You sort of looked forward to that, to have 'em come down and there'd be quite a few of 'em. Fifteen, twenty of them. There's still people in Digby that was in that band and stuff like that. The Salvation Army.

Q. Now would the community all get together to go and watch?

A. On Digby Street on a Saturday night you couldn't get through it'd be so jammed with people. They'd be all be in doing their shopping. You shop one day a week and that was Saturday night. You couldn't walk through the street of Digby it'd be so...., It'd take a long while to walk through. It'd be jammed from one end to the other, people. Yeah, all your friends and relatives, yep, oh yeah. See, things were more, like family orientated, community oriented, everything was on different principals completely than it is today.

Q. How would the roads have been back then?

A. It all depends on what time of, from the last part of February to April forget it. We'd missed a week of school in the spring. You couldn't get the bus through. Oh, no. They'd all break up. They'd all break up. Frost come out through all the roads. Now if you could get down to Rice's Corner, then you'd have pavement from there but any of these back roads here, oh it was, you'd have trouble walking in them.

Q. Who would maintain the roads?

A. The Department of Highways but going back then, I remember the grater going up and down by here. John Murley would drive the horses to pull the grater and Reg Murley, do you know Bruce Murley, Digby?, he's work manager in Digby, his father would turn the wheels to put the grater up and down. You're going back, you're going back quite a few years. As a kid that's the way it was, it was done by hand and there'd be a crew come along with forks and shovels and pick the big rocks off and throw 'em in the ditch.

Q. What do you remember about your teenage years?

A. You had a good time in school but nineteen forty-eight, I'll see how old I'd be then, I'd be thirteen, yeah I was born in thirty-five, you had a school, a new school. You'd have good and wonderful friends in there. They'd have a dance once and a while at school. They actually had a gymnasium, I never even knew what a gymnasium was until they built that school. Beautiful gymnasium and that opened in nineteen forty-eight so you'd have a good time there. They used to really go out for basketball and things like that and they'd have the buses going to Annapolis, Bridgetown whatever and you had a good teenage life.

Q. What would the dances be like?

A. Those were different dances than they do now, I'll tell ya. It'd be a lot of fun, really enjoyable. We'd have a good time. There'd be a big crowd there, there was always a crowd.

Q. What sorts of decorations would they have?

A. Oh, they'd put up their streamers and different things like that. They wouldn't have the elaborate decorations they have now but sometimes you didn't have decorations. You didn't need them, you went there for a good time.

Q. Who were your screen idols back then?

A. Road Riders, Jean Audrey, along that line. I forget some of the names. That's going back a few years. That would be two of the closest ones I would think of and of course if you had a movie in town it would be the Lone Ranger or the Shadow or different things like that. Probably some of those names you've never heard but I think probably Road Riders, Jean Audrey, along in there. Dale Evans, that'd be a lot of it in them days.

Q. Now would most of the films back then be a lot of Western?

A. Yeah. Yeah there was. You had two theaters in Digby at that time. You had the Capital and the Bijou.

Q. Now where would they be at?

A. Right on Front Street. One would be right there, do you know where's there's a flower shop, what's the name?, Gabrielle's, well just beside is about where the Capital was and up, probably where Jim's Furnishes is, is where the Bijou would be. So you had two movies, you could have your pick there.

Q. What kind of music did you like back then?

A. You didn't have that much music. You'd go to different homes, this is a musical part of the country, everybody played, well I didn't or my family but like back here the Freddy's, they'd play the fiddle and the banjo and everything and you'd get a lot of that. Different, the French went to the dances and different things like that. We didn't have a radio on that much to listen to music. You'd have certain songs, yeah but it would be more what you would call real oldies now, in those days. Long before Elvis.

Q. Do you remember what stations would come in on your radio back then?

A. About the only one you could get was Saint John, CHSJ.

Q. What did you expect to do when you grew up?

A. Oh, I always thought I'd get into the Mounties's or Army's but it didn't work out. I was too young for the Second World War. I was only four and a half when it started and I went in to sign up in the Korean War and they wouldn't take me unless mom signed for me and mom wouldn't sign because my brother's been overseas so I kept right on going for Ontario. I was just turned seventeen then because you had to have your parent's signature. I was too young to go in.

Q. Now how did you feel that your mother wouldn't sign that for you?

A. I would hold no, I wouldn't hold resentment or nothing like that. She had her reasons, no. I remember the War well. Dad couldn't really read or write so every night mom read the newspaper so we could actually hear it as kids and we knew everything that was going on in that War, who was killed, who wasn't, everything because mom would read it. It was a little bit scary, I was only a kid but I knew what was going on in the War so if mom said, "No" and she wasn't signing well that was final. You never questioned your parents anyhow. When they said, "No", that was no. There was never a second time. They never ever told you, "No", twice and they didn't abused you or they didn't hit you. If you deserved it, they did but when they said "No", you know they meant no. Yep.

Q. What different things do you remember about dating?

A. (Laughter) You'd have the odd date along the way, here and there. I wasn't that old when I was married. My wife was eighteen when we were married. You got married younger in those days. I was twenty-one. I had gone to Ontario for a couple of years and come back and I was just back for a little while and met Marie and we went together for a long while before we were married. I met her in September, the middle of September and we were married the first of March. We went together what, three or four months, four or five months.

Q. Why was it that you had gone to Ontario?

A. I went there, I got tired of working here seventeen cents an hour. Nineteen fifty-two I was working in the mills and a big fire went back through back here and the Mounties come into the mills and this is law and I think it's probably still today, they conscripted all of us to go fight fire. I was a seventeen-year-old kid back there fighting fire. I never even, I didn't know what a fire was back in the woods and when I come out of that I said, "I've had enough of this", and I just went to Ontario for a couple of years.

Q. Now were you working up there in Ontario?

A. Oh, yes. Oh, yeah I took over this company, down here it's the same company, Lob Laws owned superstore. I worked for them fifty years now. I saved a couple of years and I come home. Mom and dad was getting along in years and I stayed for a while, about another ten years and then we went to Ontario for a while. That's where all my kids were born and brought up and live up there but it was very, very hard. The working conditions were very, very hard. One thing I regretted, I didn't get a trade or anything like that, the, nothing to complain about it but we survived always managed to find work. No complaints.

Q. Good attitude.

A. Well, there's no good in taking the other attitude 'cause it will only cause yourself problems.

Q. How did you originally meet your wife?

A. (Laughter) We differ on that. Her sister come down here and help us look after mom the summer before she passed away but I didn't really know Marie but I met her in at the Co-Op here where, it used to be where the Country Fair was. I met her that night at the fair in here in Conway so needles to say the next night I was up there. (Laughter)

Q. Could you tell me her full name please?

A. Yes but I always get it backwards. Marie Gertrude Franklin but, and I've always said it that way but it's backwards isn't it?

Other. (Conrad's wife) Yes, my name is Gertrude Marie Franklin but I go by Marie.

A. I don't even call her Marie. I've never called her Marie, I've always called her Ree. Yep. I've always done that.

Q. Once you were married where did you live?

A. Right here. The old house that used to be here.

Q. How much did it cost for your first home?

A. I had had this home at that time. It was mine. It was very hard to survive in those days. You didn't medical care, you had no, nothing, everything you done on your own. We lived, you know what I mean, we had the groceries on the table and stuff like that but it was very, very hard so we lived here what?, seven years and the children started coming along at Ontario, I knew I could find work and I did. I went to one mill, the steel mills and I stayed there twenty-five years in one mill.

Q. And what was it like working in the mill?

A. It was a lot different that I was used to here. Those mills are big. When I left there, there was thirteen thousand in that mill so it was a fair size mill. They stretch out for a long ways, you can soon get lost. It's big heavy machinery, it's not like you'd imagine here. The building I worked in, you know, probably about three times as long as from here to the road out here and that was one building. You talked to one another on phones 'cause you couldn't see one another, it was that long. It was what they called a pickle line. It sounds strange, a pickle line in a steel mill but you were pickling steel, cleaning it, cutting it, cleaning it, oiling it and there was a lot of good people there. I, really I enjoyed it there. This might not go over too big on one of the, if some of the right people see it but I was on a non-union shop and they used us good. They used us good. They still, I got a big letter from a big book from them today, they still class an employee there in one sense you know, even though I've been away for ten years. I get the benefits as they get and stuff. They've used us good. Very good. Michelin patterned their operations after Dofasco.

Q. So what was the name of that mill?

A. Dofasco. What it is, Dominion Foundry and Steel Company of Canada. I'll show you the quarter century picture I have up there.

A. How much taxes would you have had to pay back then?

A. For here?

A. Yeah.

A. Nineteen fifty-four, I come back and I was still with mom and dad and the tax bill come in and I think it was eighty dollars 'cause my income tax from Ontario come back and it was eighty dollars so one paid the other. I remem., I do remember that. I do remember that.

Q. What role, if any did the company store play in your life?

A. What do you mean?

Q. There was a lot of people that had, you know, that have worked in, lets say for Tupper Warren or something.

A. Oh, yeah. I worked there. I worked in that store.

Q. Now would you have to, would your pay be groceries, do you know what I mean?, or would you....

A. No, I got my pay but at seventeen cents an hour it wasn't too big a pay. It was a little different that your stores now. You learned to figure there 'cause you didn't have cash register's that done it for you. Everything was basically done by pencil and then you'd just ring in the money. So you got to do it quick in your head. They at that time, pretty near everything was charged there. All the men working there, at one time they had as many as three hundred people working there. That would be in the store and the mill. They'd have a lot of men out in Lumber Camps logging, cutting the logs and bringing them into the mills and stuff, so I've heard they've had as high as three hundred working there at once and most of them would charge all of their, whatever they by so there'd be a lot of five, ten, fifteen cent deals and you'd make a little bit and out it there and then that'd come off their pay at the end of the week but you got to know a lot of people and that was my first experience in the store's. I worked in the mills for a while too. That was a little different. I was kind of small when I left school and out to work. I was very, very small. I'll tell you, when you got on those jobs, you soon, you soon grew and when I left school at sixteen, I went out to work at five foot two and I weighed ninety-eight pounds. You get in those mills, some of that stuff is pretty rugged work. Within a year I was a hundred and sixty pounds and I was five foot ten and a half. All's you could do was walk to work, work and in between when you got a chance, eat and that's all I done for a year.

Q. Now, was that the common thing for people to do back then? Leave and go to work like that?

A. Well, you had to go to work. Gotta have work, gotta have groceries so I worked in Tupper's there. It's only four and a half, something like that, miles away so, but I lived at home, so I lived at home so then, but then even living home you gotta pay your board 'cause mom and dad had no income. Like I said, they didn't have the income, you had to be seventy before you got the old age pension there and it wasn't very much. It was only about forty dollars.

Q. What things do you remember about the Depression?

A. Actual depression, I wasn't born in it. The Depression started in what?, well the claps was in twenty-nine or whatever but I would be born at the end of the Depression in thirty-five but the Depression would last a lot longer for us with a big family. Things were hard. There's no getting around it. Now don't get me wrong, I'm not complaining. We had a good life. You know, the first thing, I go to bed every night I have to sat, "Lord, thank you for a bed to sleep in." We slept on straw. That was very common then. We were not a

(continued on next page)

rich family. With ten children there's no way you could be. Even if dad got a job it would only be for a dollar a day. Ten kids, no. Things were very, very hard in the Depression. You did live on your potatoes, your salt pork, we always had bread and we always had a porridge but it would be corn meal or bran or whatever for, you'd use the stuff that the, there was, we had in a barn for the cattle feed. We'd use the same as them. It was perfectly clean. We had all that. When anything turned green in the spring we had it and we cooked it. No matter what it, dandelion greens, beet greens, marigold greens, turnip greens, marsh greens, everything that and of course you picked the wild strawberries, raspberries, everything. We survived on stuff. Things started to turn a little better going to War. There was more work. Some of the families out to work, there was still quite a few of us in school but some of the family was out to work and I remember George overseas and at that time they didn't get much money for being in the army but where he was not married, twenty dollars a month would come home to mom. So that was a lot of money, twenty dollars. Yep, so things started picking up a little bit.

Q. What sorts of things can you tell me about Wartime?

A. It was a little bit scary. I remember the, just wave after wave after wave of planes going over here. I'm not sure where they'd be going. They could be going to Newfoundland and that would be the first leg of their journey. You could see the troop trains going through here. The big Army base in Yarmouth. Digby would be just swamped with sailors, that's when they built Cornwallis. It opened in nineteen forty-two. See I could watch it right from here. It's about ten miles away but I can see it from my place here and at one time they had ten thousand sailors there and that's a lot of them. Sometimes it would be a little scary going to town. You'd see things you didn't especially want to see but I was only a kid, it would be kind of scary, you know. There's the odd little fight in town and things like that although it wasn't that bad but it would be a little scary for kids. I remember all that, I remember you couldn't, of course we didn't have the money to but it really anyhow but you couldn't buy things like banana's or, mom wanted a stove and we couldn't get a stove all through the War.

Q. Now, why was that?

A. Your, all metal went for War supplies. You couldn't get it. You just couldn't get those things. I remember the first banana's I seen was after the war and I don't know where I got a quarter but I bought a quarters worth of banana's and I don't like 'em ever since 'cause I got sick I eat so many. We never seen 'em before. See there was rations. We done all right with sugar 'cause we knew people in town that run a restaurant and they wanted butter and we had a lot of butter. We churned our own butter, we made our own butter and we'd trade stamps so we could have a little bit of sugar so that mom could make a cake and a few things like that then or whatever she was using it for. It mad a big difference on that 'cause we'd just give her our butter coupons 'cause she run the restaurant in town. There's a lot of good memories of the War, there's, oh wherever you look you'd think nothing to see soldiers marching up the street here or everywhere's. It was War, everything was War. The big boats that come in into Digby. I went through one of the German submarines they captured out here and it scared me half to death to go through them things. They had them here at the wharf. They'd captured it just outside the gut here.

Q. Now when was this?

A. Durring the War. There were so, you get in there and it's creepy. You got to bend over here and bend over there. I was only a kid but I didn't really enjoy it, I was sorry I went on it but I did get to go through it. Yeah they, well I mean there's ships that sunk right out here. A lot of them.

Q. How would the War have had an effect on the community, like as a whole?

A. There was people killed here, people come back wounded. It would be normally scary for us kids but with the adults it would be their families that was lost. I remember Gerald Porter coming back from overseas with shrapnel all through him. He lived up the road here, just a beautiful young man. I mean, he was a lot older than I was, he was in the War and I was only four or five. I remember I'd be walking home from town or anything as a kid and he'd pick me up you could stand on the running board and drive home. Some of the people didn't come back. There was people killed here and of course my brother was over there and mom didn't like that, well it's her boy, her oldest boy was over there, George so it could be very hard on the family and you'd hear this one was killed and that one was killed. You knew all these people. They were people that the older ones in our family knew. Some would be boyfriends, some would be girlfriends and they were killed and there was a lot of them from here that were. Many. That's why I work with the Legion now. I work with the Legion, I'm the chaplain in it and do different things. I figure if I can work there a few years maybe I can pay back a little bit of the debt I owe. That's why I'm in there. It's not for little medals or any of that stuff, that's not it. If I can work a little bit and help 'em out, why not? I owe 'em that, more that owe them that 'cause we have a wonderful country. We have the best country in the world and we have a free country and I love my freedom and every thing. I love my freedom and them men and woman paid for it. That's why I work at the Legion.

Q. Now what memories would you have of the Second World War?

A. Well, this is the Second World War that I'm talking about. I was born in thirty-five and the War started September thirty-nine. I remember the day it started. I remember all that stuff. I remember the day it was over, VE day, that was the name. We planted potatoes out there and I would still only be ten years old and my brother and me Uncle were talking to one another and he lived over in Shelborne Road where I showed you. Of course it was more open then and they were hollering to one another back and forth, it would be over a mile across and you could hear it just as plain as anything. Yep, we planted potatoes out there.

Q. Now, how would you have heard that the War ended? Through newspapers, radio.....?

A. Oh, it would spread like wildfire. Probably a phone call although we didn't have a phone, somebody else would have a phone and run and take you a message 'cause I remember the day my brother come home from overseas and mom didn't believe us. We was over to the neighbors and they got a phone call that George was coming home and of course mom broke down. George was coming home 'cause she never knew whether they were going to live or die or what and the neighbors over here had a phone, so as kids we were probably over there 'cause they had a little more than we did and we used to go over for treats and stuff if we could get it and they told us that George, there was a call that George was coming home. Yep, yeah I remember that. I was scared to death, I didn't really know him 'cause I was only four years, five years old when he signed up. By the time he got home he was twenty-seven years old, you know he was twenty-three when he went in, he was seventeen or eighteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen years older than me. So I really didn't know him well.

Q. How would you plan for hard times or retirement?

A. I'm retired and the company give us several days training on retirement but I see retirement as a time to get busy. There's not enough hours in the day now. There's so much to do out there, you never could do it before. You had a family to raise, get through school, work, extra jobs and all that kind of stuff, get 'em through. Now, there just don't seem to be enough hours in the day. The only thing is, what I really appreciate now if I want a nap through the day, five or ten minutes, I can go do it where I couldn't 't work but, so I didn't have to plan for retirement but I do enjoy it.

Q. How did your parents pass on their possessions to the next generation?

A. I have the place here. In those days there wasn't that many possessions. Each one got different little trinkets but we were not a rich family. There'd be a few nice pieces of China, family bible, a few nice quilts, maybe crochet stuff, stuff like that. They all had their share, a few pictures.

Q. Would it be that the older person would get the things or....?

A. No, no, no. Well I was here looking after the place and looking after mom and dad.

Q. How did people help each other out in days gone by that would be different from now?

A. If you had a problem your neighbors were there to help you. Like this time of year, if a man were sick and he couldn't get his fire wood in for the year, all his neighbor's would get together, go cut it, hull it out, saw it, split it, and out it right there. If the barn burnt, you had a barn raising to get it built again. All that stuff was done. If there was sick people in the home, you'd have different neighbors come in and help out here and there and everywhere. It was altogether different than it is now. Everybody worked together. Yep.

Q. What different things do you remember about the Poor Farm?

A. I, I'm not saying that. I don't remember good things there.

Q. What do you remember about elections?

A. Oh, man. They used to get excited, I'd think they'd kill one another. (Laughter) Oh yeah, you'd have open votes then 'cause mom always insisted that she had an open vote. I remember that part but boy, they'd get, they would get excited them days. There'd be a lot of fights there, oh yes. They took it, they took it pretty serious.

Q. What ghost would you remember from your younger years?

A. Ghost path.

Q. What's that?

A. Down the valley here, you know where the church was down here, you go down there, down the valley, go across the bridge and there was a little path just past the bridge that went under there and Mertle Finigan's got a house down there now and there was a path through there, we were always scared of that. That was a ghost path. Mom, I don't know who would tell us, no mom wouldn't tell us that kind of stuff but they found a mans, found a head in a well or the body in the well or something like that but anyhow we was always scared to go by that. The ghost path. I don't know why, It's silly but it's a joke now but boy it wasn't then.

Q. What about superstitions?

A. I don't believe in that whatsoever. None, none whatsoever. There's lots of them out, Friday the thirteenth, but I don't believe in none of that.

Q. What is the most, worst weather you can remember?

A. We've had some violent storms here. What year was it you were in the hospital, blew the roof off the hospital when you were in there?

Other. (Conrad's wife) Oh that was hurricane Edna.

A. Fifty-four?

Other. (Conrad's wife) That was in fifty-five?

A. Fifty-four or fifty-five. I forget which year. She was in the hospital in Rossway, Shelborn, took the roof right off the hospital. That was a violent storm. Very violent storm.

Q. What was the name of the storm did you say?

Other. (Conrad's wife) I think it was hurricane Edna.

A. Yeah, she was in Rossway hospital down in Shelborn and it took the roof right off.

Other. (Conrad's wife) Of course I didn't know him then.

A. Yep, she was only fifteen or whatever. The storms I'd mind would be the winter blizzards. We used to have a lot of snow here. We used to have a lot of snow. We don't get it that way like we used to. I mean you've heard people say you don't get snow like you used to, that's fact. We do not get the snow we used to.

Other. (Conrad's wife) The year we were married, we were married in March and in April we had such a bad snowstorm up here that is was way above the cars, the drifts.

A. The Fire Marshall from the South Shore never came home for two days. Yep, you don't have a lot of snowstorms and blizzards. They're a little scary. If you got a problem, you can't get out. That's the only storms that bother me.

Q. Now what would people in the community do, let's say if someone was, if a doctor needed to get out or something?

A. Well, I'll tell ya when I had to go to the hospital, I've heard 'em talk about it, down below, Goudy Nicholes got his horse and lugged in the big rouges and took him up to the hospital but I suspect they're still out there. If the snow gets too deep the horses can't get through, you go out and shovel. That is law. You have to shovel, you must shovel to get the people through, sickness or any of that stuff. Yep.

Q. What different things can you tell me about shipwrecks around here?

A. The worst one I remember is the Nova Dock. Gypsum boat out there. I just said a few words ago about Gerald Nicholes come back with the shrapnel all through him, he went down on that. The guy that just come and got the quinces, his brother went down on it. Two of the Francis boys over here went down on it, there was two Broom brothers went down on it; my sister, well one of them was her boyfriend at that time. They're all people you know, they all went down on it. It was a violent, violent storm and of course gypsum is heavy and they were warned not to go out but the Captain said take her out anyhow and they, they have found that boat a year or two ago off of Boston somewhere's along there but that's very, very common here every year someone, there's boat after boat after boat that goes down. You know that, you hear the news.

Q. How did your community police itself back then?

A. We had the Mounties. I remember the first one I ever seen, I was scared to death. I was down the field plowing and the Mountie come down and he was looking for my brother to sign up in the army. Somebody had made a mistake and mom was not very impressed. My brother was already in Italy. They'd made a mistake. They left sooner than they come. Somebody, somehow somebody made a mistake. He was already overseas. In those days, I mean they didn't do it very often but, or I don't know if they ever did but it was shoot on sight if they want to.

Q. Could you paint me a picture of this community when you were growing up? How bustling it was,.....

A. It wasn't, it was a beautiful community. This was all farms up here. As a kid I remember all farms, beautiful farms. This would be the Goudy Nicholes farms. They'd all go over with their horse and buggies as a kid and some of them at that time were starting to get cars and little pick-up trucks and whatever but they'd be going in every day with their produce. Every day of the week it was all, we were one of the poorer families but all the farms up here, even the farms next door, there wasn't bushes there. It was all farms. Big white fences, it was, it was a busy time and if you knew where Jordantown is, there's crossroads down there in Jordantown and one goes out to, down to Marshalltown and the other one comes out right by the garage over here and the other one comes out right down here in Acaciaville but if the forth road come through, it would come right up by my house here. So down below Jordantown was a completely, it was all a colored settlement. There was a lot of people there at that time but ther'd be five, ten, fifteen, twenty men come up through there every morning, walk up through and work on the farms and you got to know them all. It was a beautiful little community down there but they would all come up through here so things would be exciting and we'd all go out and talk and get to know everybody but it would be busy, everybody going to town each day with their produce but it was a farming community. A big farming community.

Q. What do you remember about Maud Lewis?

A. I can just remember, I remember where her place was and I'd see her outside painting. For one year I drove a school bus, that was back in sixty-two, I drove that rout from Digby to the Barton Road where it comes out in Barton and you'd see her out there painting and stuff. I didn't really know her but I would see her everyday 'cause she would sit out in the sun and do her painting out there but that part I remember of her. I didn't realize her hands were so crippled and stuff, you couldn't tell by driving the bus and stuff and you'd see her husband out there too but I remember that. I'd see her everyday.

Q. What different organizations did you belong to?

A. Myself, none. I never belonged to any organizations. The first organization I ever joined was the Legion.

Q. Could you tell me some things about the legion?

A. I enjoy it there. Like I said, I went there for one reason. I'm a Chaplain there. I find certain things very hard now, I've got to make a lot of friends. A year or two or three down the line I have the funeral services for them. That's very, very hard but I enjoy working there. It's coming along now, it's a nice friendly bunch in there. Sometimes people give the Legion a little rough name, it's not that way. They don't have that roughness in there. It's not allowed there. It's a nice, it's a place, even though I don't drink or smoke or whatever, I did at one time, I'd go in there and sit down and relax and have a good fellowship with all those people in there. There's some beautiful, beautiful people in there. I love 'em all. I enjoy it, I really do, it's a part of my life now, I enjoy it.

Q. How important do you think the Legion is to your community?

A. It's very, very important. The Legion is, everything is a volunteer. It's all, if we get a few dollars here and a few dollars there, it's all put out in the communities and different places. We just gave Tideview a brand new wheelchair. There was a little bit of money left in one spot so we used it for that. It's good, the Legion, the Veterans are all getting old now. A week or so ago we drove up to Kentville to visit one there, Olgie Sprawl, he was happy to see somebody from home to come visit him and talk to him and stuff. He'll be eighty-two his next birthday. I think it's a good organization. It's the same as anything else, you have the odd one that will have a little problem but basically the Legion is a good organization and it does do a lot for the Veterans. It can keep us busy. That was the Legion calling now, wasn't it?

Other. (Conrad's wife) Yes.

Q. When would people get together in your community for a good time back then?

A. Row call would be one of the biggest at the church. That was a, we looked forward to that. All you wanted to eat. Like I said, we were from a big family and sometimes you didn't have quite enough. There used to be a old hall down here. We called it Indian Hall, I think the Indians lived in it years and years ago before my time and then there'd be the exhibition. It would be fantastic going to the exhibitions. You really looked forward to that. All of the different things, the good food, everything that was there. That would be two of the main ones I would, I would think of right there and of course the church would have suppers and different things like that and of course there used to be all the time, there used to be pie auctions. Remember that? The woman make the pies and then the guys go out to a home or to a community center or whatever and bid on the pies. Now if somebody was biddin' on my girlfriends pie, (Laughter) guess what that pie would go for. Oh, you started real rivalry there. You're not getting my girlfriends pie. (Laughter) They'd do that quite often if somebody had a little problem and needed, they raised the money for somebody if they'd lost a barn or a house or anything. Have a little pie sale, it's a lot of fun. You've never heard of that before?

Q. No.

A. Oh, that was common. Yep, that was common.

Q. How would you compare family values today with those of days gone by?

A. Family values has really gone downhill. It's really gone downhill. We have a very close family ourselves. We try to keep a very close family. Even though I'm not in Ontario, Easter my kids are together, all of them, Christmas, all occasions their together and their very, very close. One's got a little problem, the other one's in helping them. One's got to go to Toronto Saturday to help the other daughter to fix the steps in the back of her house and stuff, she's not a carpenter so he's going. My families close that way. So, we, I sort of specify that. I mean, you can't force anything but you can specify that and it really works but as far as family values community wise and county wise, they've really gone downhill. It's not like it used to be. That's sad, it's so sad because to me, them were the good old days. The rest of it now is the good old days but in those, the family, that was the good old days. I miss that part. I miss it. You don't know your neighbors if you happen to meet 'em but then you don't, it's just not like it used to be. Everybody knew everybody, they're friends. Talk, laugh, help one another, everything. It was enjoyable.

Q. What was your religion?

A. Baptist.

Q. And what would Sundays be like at your home?

A. Left over beans at dinnertime. Oh no, you went to Sunday school and Church every day as a kid. Mom was a Christian lady, I really remember that and her family the same way. Baptist, so we were brought up with that but *****, she didn't but I did. I got away from it and fifty-six years later I'm back to it, so we have a good, we have a good church life, yes. In fact I have had a pastors license to fill in at different churches. I fill in different places. I've probably been to about probably fifteen different churches here that have different services or if they, and of course I go into Tideview and have services there. I enjoy it but no there was churches in those days, sometimes on a Sunday you'd have trouble finding a seat. They'd be full. I don't know where they all came from, well, you take a family like ours and even if only half of them home, it would be mom and dad and say five of the kids, there's seven right there. Even if only half the kids was home and all the families were big like that but when her family went to church it was about twelve or thirteen going to church all at once.

Q. Now is the church still standing today?

A. Oh, yes. It's right here. Let me show you a picture, the picture's right around the corner here, well show you. Yeah, it's the Hillgrove Baptist Church even though this is Acaciaville.

Q. That's one thing that I had to ask you that I wrote down. Tell me about the difference you had told me about Acaciaville and Hillgrove?

A. Going back a long, long while ago a lot of these places was, oh really going back about three or four hundred years ago was Joggins, this land here, I had my land surveyed about five or six years ago here on this, on the North-West side and in order to survey that he went right back, he had to go way back in the early seventeen hundreds where the land all come from, Everett Hall is this man in Digby and he brought me some papers that he had to dig up and I'll show you a couple of maps here. This at one time back in the early A. seventeen hundreds, from Jordantown up over here which is Acaciaville and down the other side and quite a

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ways up towards Hillgrove was a grant from the Queen to the black men, the black people. I'm not exactly, it was just black so and so got this piece and that piece and that was all black at that time. Over the years the white people had bought it out so there was such a mix-up that it had to be all straightened out to get, 'cause in those days, "Well I'll sell you an acre of land", you just go measure up with a measuring stick and sell them an acre of land but most of it was never, ever recorded. At that time and even in my time there was quite a bit of segregation here. I was brought up under that. Now myself, I'm very, very fortunate. Like I said, the road, the old Woods road went through here and all the colored folk would come up and work on the farm and stuff so I had an extra community where I could have all the friends. I could run down through the woods here, it's only about four or five minutes down through the woods and I could run down. I had fantastic friends down in Jordantown. The Syms boys used to come up, Vincent, Vernon, Harold, Carl, Billy, Barbie, Jean, all of them. We had a good time so segregation did not bother me at all but even when I went out to work at Tupper Warrens it was segregated there. The bunkhouses were separate, the cookhouses were separate and all that stuff. It was brought up that way and as far as, when this church down here was originally built, it's what a hundred and sixty-one years old now, a hundred and sixty-one or sixty-two, it was a white church and the coloreds used to sit upstairs and about fifteen, twenty years later the colored, some people say I'm saying the wrong word but we said it for respect, colored, I think now you're supposed to say black or something, I don't know but with us with the old school that's the way we did it but they were segregated. Very much so. They had their own school in Conway. It was up, It had to be in the fifties before they started, Jordantown started going to the Digby School. There was quite a bit of that at that time. I don't really know why people down the road call themselves such and such Hillgrove but they're not, they're not Hillgrove.

Other. (Conrad's wife) Hillgrove starts up the road.

A. Oh, another half a mile or more. There's a great big sign, Acaciaville, Hillgrove. Whether they wanted to distance themselves from people or not, I wouldn't like to say.

Other. (Conrad's wife) But the church is, there's Acaciaville Church.

A. There's Acaciaville Church, which is the colored church. You'll see two churches when you come up by. The one right here on the corner is the big one, well you go down about a half a mile below that and you'll see another one. Acaciaville Church.

Q. That must have been hard for those little black children as kids.

A. It was. It was very hard, it was very hard.

Q. It's hard to believe that it was like that back then isn't it?

A. Well it was. They worked in the same Mills we did and all that stuff but, like I said it didn't effect me because my friends were black and white both. I've always had good friends, black and white.

Q. Do you think it had an effect on the community if black people would, you know come over here or lets say be at the other church?

A. Well, they were, I don't think that part would effect then but you must remember going back a hundred and fifty, there was a colored lady used to come up through the woods, a good friend of mom's,

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Mrs. McLeod, we didn't call them black or anything, Mrs. McLeod, she was a great old lady, fantastic. She was a great friend of mom's and I remember her coming up here, she come up and visit mom and stuff, mom couldn't walk down 'cause she had heart problems and stuff but she come up and visit mom and it was not, it was never an issue made of it whether they were brought up, she just said she remembers something about slavery, now I couldn't quite figure out what she meant by that, of course I was only ten but they'd have the same food at the table but she would always sit at a different table than us at the, at the mealtime. That's not 'cause mom would sit here there, that's not so but I've gone to homes down here, down the road where the colored be sitting at one table and the white at the other right in your own private home but it was that way, I don't think it was a big issue here but it was done, whether it effected some of the families, whether it didn't, I don't know.

Q. So there would have been no black children in your school classes?

A. No, not here. No, oh absolutely not.

Q. Were they allowed or....?

A. No they weren't allowed. They had to go through Jordantown and walk out to Conway, there's a Conway Center over there. That was known as the colored school. I think there was probably a few in Digby but not that many. Now when you go up to Smith's Cove and up that way I would suspect they would probably all went together because there was no colored school up there. Of course there wasn't that many people up there, black people up there but around here, right down here was a whole community. There was a lot. They've ran south or everywhere now but I think they almost had to stay in one community at that time. I think if you go back and check some of your Digby laws and you'd find some shockers in there.

Q. Well, thank you very much. I've got through my questions. (Laughter)

A. Well I probably talked you to death in an hour and a half. (Laughter)

Q. Thank you.

