

# Isabel Tibert

Interviewed by Cindy Graham, Nov. 3, 2000



Q. So, our first set of questions is just some vital statistics. What is your full name?

A. Isabel Marie Tibert. Do you want my other names? (Laughs)

Q. Sure, one at a time. What was your complete maiden name?

A. Ruggles, Isabel Marie Ruggles.

Q. And who were your parents?

A. Irving Ruggles and Hattie Gilmour.

Q. So your mother's name was Gilmour. And that's a family name from where?

A. New Brunswick.

Q. Aaah. And we would take names of your grandparents also, if you can remember them. Who were your mother's parents?

A. John and Caroline Gilmour.

Q. Okay, and who were your father's parents?

A. Sinclair and Phylida Ruggles.

Q. Okay. I think I've heard that name Sinclair today. And when were you born? This is going to shock me, I know!

A. (Laughs) March 14, 1910.

Q. Wow. And where were you born?

A. North Head, Grand Manan, New Brunswick.

Q. Wow. How long did you live in North Head?

A. My father was from Tiverton, and he worked in the factory, the canning factory, and I think that they moved here when I was about a year old. I'm not definite on that, but I think I was about a year old when they moved back to Tiverton.

Q. How long had he been living in Grand Manan before he...

A. I don't think he lived in Grand Manan. I don't know the story, how he met my mother, I don't know. But, in those times, I think they used to work in Lubec, Maine? from Grand Manan. And he was a can sealer in the factory. So I think, I just presume, that's where they met. We never were told.

Q. Nope? (Laughs) So were you the first, are you the oldest child in your family?

A. Yes.

Q. You were probably the only one born in New Brunswick.

A. Yes

Q. Okay. So how large eventually was your family?

A. My sister is three years younger.

Q. Your sister next door?

A. Yes. And she was born in Tiverton. And our brother, I was nineteen, and my sister was sixteen when he was born.

Q. And no other children in between then. (No.) Wow. You were the oldest, then your sister, her name is...

A. Phylida Leeman.

Q. Leeman. And then the last one's name is...?

A. Robert. Ruggles.

Q. And he is the one that's passed away.

A. Yes.

Q. So your father was a can sealer over in New Brunswick, when he came back to Tiverton what did he do?

A. He had a, he was a fish buyer. And they had, they used to can fish.

Q. Did he have his own company?

A. Yes, he and his brother.

Q. What was the name of it?

A. Ruggles Brothers.

Q. Ruggles Brothers. So he and his brother were partners for a long, long time?

A. Yes.

Q. What can you remember about having a father that did that for a living. What was that like?

A. (Silence.)

Q. Having his own business. Was he around very much? Or was he busy all the time. Or did you see him every day?

A. Oh yes. Oh yes.

Q. How about your mother's work day? Was she involved in the business also?

A. No.

Q. Not at all?

A. No. She was just a housekeeper, I guess. (Laughs)

Q. Yup. Which in those days would have [?] What can you remember her days being like?

A. Well, I guess each day had it's work. And she did have, board school teachers sometimes. She had school teachers to board. That was after I left home, I guess.

Q. Oh, I was going to say that must have been a good influence on you, but you were gone.

A. (Laughs) I was there, I can't remember, which, there was one that was there while I was still home, but uh, I was gone when I was seventeen. I went to Teacher's College when I was, at, I was seventeen.

Q. Okay, we'll talk about that a little bit later. So when you went to school, you went to a school in Tiverton? Which was a little school that just served the people in Tiverton, or...

A. Three rooms.

Q. Three rooms.

A. Yes.

Q. Three teachers?

A. Yes.

Q. That sounds big, for those times. We've mostly heard about one room school houses. So what was that school like? You had three rooms, they separated you by classes somewhat?

A. Well, yes. The first room would be from Primer to grade three, and then from grade four to seven, and then upstairs was the other room.

Q. Is there anything left of that school house now, or it's gone?

A. Mmmhmmm.

Q. But after that school was gone, they didn't go directly to this big new high school, did they? What came in between. Anything?

A. Yes, they must have.

Q. So what do you remember about school, back in 19... Ohhh... 16 and on. What was that like?

A. Oh it's certainly not like today. There's a difference. That's for sure. I don't think we did projects like they do now. I think they're smarter today. (Laughs).

Q. Did you like going to school?

A. Yes.

Q. I guess you must have, if you thought of becoming a teacher. Can you remember who your best pals were, when you were in school? Or in Tiverton?

A. It Oh yes.

Q. Are any of them still living?

A. No. Uh, there's one up there who is my age. Alberta Outhouse. And somebody has interviewed her. Yes. She's the only one.

Q. And then you have Phylida who's a couple of years younger. Were you two very close, growing up? Very special friends?

A. Yes. We were close. Yeah.

Q. So instead of projects in school, you had to memorize pieces and recite, and...

A. Yes.

Q. Can you remember any of the things you had to memorize?

A. Oh, no. Not right off. I remember being in the Christmas Concert and had to memorize something about this long... (laughs). I used to be able to memorize, I think that's the only way I passed some of my exams.

Q. That's probably the way it was though. You had to. I mean even doctors, to this day, got to memorize a lot of stuff, still. How about discipline in school, how were people disciplined?

A. Quite strict, I think. You had to observe the rules, and you weren't able to get up and run around like they do now. (Laughs)

Q. What were some of the other rules. Can you remember any of the other rules that might be different?

A. Not really.

Q. And was the discipline at home fairly strict? In your home, that you grew up in?

A. Well, I don't know that you'd call it strict, but we obeyed our parents.

Q. What was it like when you got off in the morning, and you came home at the end of the day, did you have to do chores as soon as you got home from school?

A. No, I don't remember doing any.

Q. Didn't have to help your mother any...

A. Saturday was the day we usually did little chores, like clean lamp chimneys and few little things...

Q. Of course you didn't have electricity, so lamp chimneys needed to be cleaned once a week. What did they burn in the lamps, kerosene?

A. Yes.

Q. And what did your mother cook on?

A. A wood stove.

Q. Yeah? What was, the home that you grew up in in Tiverton, is it still there?

A. Yes. it's next to the hall. My sister in law lives there.

Q. Okay, what colour is it now?

A. It's white, now.

Q. Yeah? So you felt that you had a fair amount of free time as a child? You didn't have such hard times in your family that you had some free time. What were your favourite things to play?

A. (Chuckles). Well we used to play house. Make mud pies and so on.

Q. Still popular!

A. And we used to have a crokinole board, and a Parcheesi board that we would play with. Our father would play with us. And I never liked to get beat. (Laughs). I didn't win very often.

Q. So what would you do when you didn't win?

A. I'd get mad. (Laughs)

Q. Did you ever get scolded for being a poor sport? Or you weren't that mad.

A. I don't remember what happened. I guess not much.

Q. Did you have any pets in your family? Dogs, cats...

A. We used to have a cat. Usually had a cat.

Q. Did people up in Tiverton have horses, or do any farming up that way?

A. Not at my house, not, no.

Q. Your father's business, your father and his brother's business, was probably one of many, compared to now? There's not much...

A. Oh yes, there were several fish plants, there buying. Fish buyers. They're all gone.

Q. What about other stores and merchants and things like that?

A. Yes, there were um, several stores, yes. Johnny Fisher's and Eldridge Outhouse, and the Small Brothers, and the Elliots are still there. Yup, they were the stores.

Q. Did your mother have a favourite one, your mother and father have a favourite?

A. Well there was one across the road from us. It was handy.

Q. Now you only shop once a month. How often would your parents shop?

A. Probably every day.

Q. Yup! Do you remember getting the catalogue?

A. (Chuckles.) Yes

Q. Was that cause for lots of excitement?

A. Looked through them. Which I don't do now. (Laughs)

Q. And your stack this high!

CC Yes. Every year.

A. They have one every week, now.

Q. When the catalogue arrived at your house would you look and hopefully be able to get something out of it, or was it just something you could wish for?

A. Well we probably did. I don't remember, really. I don't remember much about that, looking through them, but I guess we must have. Cause there wasn't any other place to get such things. We would have to.

Q. So there were things you could only get out of the catalogue, you couldn't get at the general merchandise stores? No?

A. No. Clothing and such.

Q. Where did you get your clothes, from the catalogue? Or did your mother do



some sewing?

A. Yes she did. She would sew some of our clothes.

Q. Would she also knit?

A. No. Made quilts.

Q. Yes. And so do you!

A. (Laughs).

Q. Did you have any spending money as a child, or have any need of it?

A. I don't remember having much money.

Q. Do you remember wishing you had a penny, for penny candies or anything?

A. (Laughs). I don't know whether we had much need for, I suppose we had pennies, probably, we must have.

Q. What was your family's religion when you were growing up?

A. Baptist.

Q. Yup. So then what were Sundays like in your household?

A. Have to go to church and Sunday School.

Q. Would the whole family go to church? Mother, father and children?

A. Yes.

Q. Yup. Which was walking distance away?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you all walk over together?

A. Yes. Usually we went with our Father, yeah.

Q. And he didn't do any business on Sunday?

A. No.

Q. Did you have a favourite hymn?

A. No, I haven't. (Laughs)

CC 'Cause she knows you'll ask her to sing it. (Laughter)

Q. And did religion continue to have an influence in your life?

A. Oh yes.

Q. Still the Baptist Church?

A. Yes.

Q. Only now, it's the Baptist Church down here.

A. Yes.

Q. Yeah. Being a fish buyer and a business person, how did your father, it must have been important for him to keep up with the outside world. How did your family do that? How did they get news?

A. (Long pause)

Q. Do you remember your parents doing much reading?

A. No. I was the reader.

Q. Yes? Did you have any trouble getting your hands on all the books that you wanted to read?

A. No. I don't think.

Q. Had plenty of reading material? Can you remember any of your favourite books when you were a child?

A. No.

Q. So your household consisted of your mother, and your father, and you and your sister, and shortly before you left home a teacher or two that you would board. Did anybody else live with you? Any grandparents, aunts, uncles?

A. No. No.

Q. That was your household. So your grandparents, one set of grandparents, your mother's parents, did you know them?

A. Not my grandfather. My grandmother. She had come to visit us sometimes, from Grand Manan.

Q. But never came to stay.

A. No.

Q. And your father's parents? Were they a part of your life?

A. I didn't know them. No. Oh, my grandfather, yes! Grandfather Ruggles, he was still, he was still living.

Q. And that was Sinclair Ruggles.

A. Yes.

Q. And he had a store? He had a big store?

A. Well, they had something, yeah. I guess.

Q. That would have been something to have a grandfather with a nice store.

A. I can't seem to remember too much about that, but he had a store or something.

Q. So your family didn't grow or raise anything themselves?

A. Had chickens. Hens. (Laughs) Had hens.

Q. That was for the eggs? Or the eggs and meat both?

A. Yeah.

Q. That wasn't one of your chores? To gather the eggs?

A. No, I don't think so. (Laughs)

Q. Did you trade those eggs for anything at the store, or did you just keep them..

A. Oh well yes, sometimes, you could take an egg to the store and get some candy.

Q. Yes?

A. Mmm hmmm.

Q. What about vegetables and your meat and everything like that, did that all come from the store or...

A. Must have. (Laughs)

Q. Do you remember your mother spending lots of time in the kitchen, preparing and preserving food?

A. Well, she did, she did do a lot of it, yes.

Q. Did she have to make bread every day?

A. I, no. Friday was baking day, usually, and um each day there was a certain amount of work to be done each day. Monday was washday, ironing on Tuesday, I don't know what happened on Wednesday or Thursday, and then Saturday was clean up day.

Q. Lamp cleaning and what else? The ashes in the stove, maybe? And...

A. Scrubbing.

Q. Yup. Was that the same way for all housewives? Would Monday have

universally been washing day for everybody.

A. I would say so.

Q. Yup. I must take that habit up. Can you remember when electricity came? Did it come to Tiverton before you left Tiverton?

A. Yes. Yes. I wonder what year that was. Hmm. I can't remember the year. Do you?

CC Umm. '28? Would it be that late?

Q. We've heard that from other people in different areas...

A. Yes.

Q. So you probably didn't have electricity to speak of in your childhood. Some people remember the moment the lights went on.

A. Uh, yes. But I don't remember.

Q. So living in Tiverton, I'm guessing, it was quite a little town up there. A busy little place. Didn't have a real rural feeling like even some parts of the neck have? It must have been a pretty busy spot.

A. It was busy, we didn't get off the Island very often either.

Q. Well you could see from your house practically, across the water?

A. Yeah.

Q. To East Ferry? Well, what was the ferry like in those days?

A. (Laughs)

Q. Could you go every day? Was there a ferry every day?

A. Yes. it went every day, but it went at certain tides. When the tide was a certain way, and it didn't run all night, just till dark. Was only a boat at first, pullin, like, a barge or whatever. MmmHmm.

Q. Where did your father take his things to be sold?

A. Well there was see a steamer, going from, to Saint John.

Q. Yup? From Tiverton.

A. Yeah, would stop at Tiverton and Westport and Freeport. And Yarmouth.

Q. Yeah. So maybe those connections were more important than, than getting connected...

A. It was good connections.

Q. What were those steamers like? Lots of things moved on the steamers, people, goods... Can you remember the names of the steamers?

A. I remember the Keith Cann and the Robert Cann.

Q. Yeah? Can you remember about the sad ending of the Robert Cann?

A. Yes

Q. What can you tell us about that?

A. Well, I know that was a terrible storm. And I think, of course that was after I was married, I think.

Q. Yeah. Around '46, I think.

A. Yeah.

Q. Were those steamers owned and operated by somebody from the Islands? With a name like Cann?

A. No, no, but the Canns, that's a Yarmouth name.

Q. We've heard a couple of people's reports of the wreck of the Robert Cann. Pretty tragic story. Did you ever go on either of those ships yourself?

A. Yes.

Q. Yeah? You've been on the Robert Cann? And the Keith Cann?

A. Well, I think, I think I was on both of them probably. Always seasick. (Laughs). Going to Saint John. Because, we would go to Saint John and get a Grand Manan boat and go to Grand Manan, for a vacation in the summer, maybe.

Q. Yeah? Was there a boat running between Grand Manan and the city of Saint John at the time? Now, now you have to go to...

A. Black's...

Q. Black's Harbour.

A. Yes. Yes. And, before that our father would take a boat, one of the boats, and take us over to Grand Manan in the small boat.

Q. Yup? Without stopping in Saint John.

A. Yes. Just go straight over. That was about three hours sail, then. But now I think they can go in about an hour. Or more. Not much more. That was a gasoline engine. And we would go over and stay a couple of weeks, and then we would come back. By steamer.

Q. Yeah? That was probably pretty exciting. Except for the seasickness. Would the boat go right from Tiverton, to, pull into North Head? On Grand Manan? When your father took you over?

A. Yeah he would take us right over, yes.

Q. It would be a nice place to summer. To spend your summer.

A. Yes. it's beautiful over there. I had hoped I would get over again, I don't know. Doesn't look like I will. (Laughs) I think it's been five years since I was there.

Q. Do you have any relatives over there now?

A. Well, a few. Seconds or third cousins, like.

Q. Yeah? Did you know the whole Island, when you went over there in the summer, would you roam the whole thing?

A. Pretty much.

Q. Umm. What, do you remember getting running water, or how you got water when you were growing up? When you were young, in your parents' house in Tiverton, was there a well, or a community well..?

A. We had a well in our back yard, and a pump, hand pump.

Q. So that made it pretty easy, relatively speaking, then.

A. Yes.

Q. Well it sounds like you traveled around a bit. You lived on an Island, but you got on and off a bit, some. Nothing like today.

A. (Laughing) No.

Q. But still, to go back and forth as much as you did, sounds...

A. Well, we didn't, uh, get to Freeport very much.

Q. No?

A. No.

Q. You were more likely to go to Saint John before Freeport because you could just go by water.

A. Yes. Yes.

Q. Going to Freeport would involve, uh, horse and wagon? Uh, what would that involve?

A. Uh, horse and wagon, I guess. Well, I don't know, after the mail used to come every day, and the mail driver, if we wanted to visit someone, say, in Central



Grove or here, we could come on the mail, with the mail car.

Q. Yeah? Did you have to pay him some money?

A. Yes, I think so, Mmm hmmm.

Q. What about across the water in East Ferry, what was happening over there? Anything exciting? Or that didn't interest you?

A. I guess not. Not until I got older. You know as a youngster that didn't, no...

Q. What did Digby mean to people in Tiverton in those days? Or Sandy Cove, or Centreville, or anything, did those have...?

A. Seemed to be far away.

Q. Pretty far away, yeah. Can you remember the first time you ever went to Digby?

A. No. I can't. (Laughs)

Q. Who was the doctor for the community of Tiverton?

A. Dr. Bishop was around when I was little. 'Cause I think Dr. Bishop was the doctor when my sister was born. That was 87 years ago. And then there was Dr. Weir. He was here quite a long time.

Q. Did he deliver the babies, they delivered the babies and made house calls everywhere they were needed. Did he do the whole Island? Did these doctors do the whole Island?

A. Both Islands. Yeah.

Q. Can you remember when your brother was born, or had you already left home?

A. Yes, I... It happened to be, must have been school break at Christmas time. Because he was born in January. But we, we were so naïve that we didn't even know that our mother was going to have a baby.

Q. I can believe that!

A. (Laughs) And at the time I was teaching in Waterford. And uh, had come home, must have come for... He was born the 9<sup>th</sup> of January, so, and we were home that day, and uh, Dad sent us up to our aunts' house that morning, and uh I guess we didn't know why. And it was kind of a shock to us when we found out we had a baby brother! But, uh, my sister was living home, anyway, and she's always said she's taken as much care of him as Mum did.

Q. Do you remember how old your mother was, when he was born?

A. 39.

Q. Yeah, well, still...

A. She was 20 years older than me, but....

Q. So was that kind of a learning experience for you? Were you a little less naïve after your brother was born?

A. (Laughs) Well....

Q. I'm sure that's the way it was. A lot of pregnancies they just weren't discussed...

A. No! No.

Q. But you got a nice little brother out of the deal!

A. Yes, yes, he certainly was.

Q. Was there a separate person that did dental work, or was the doctor also the dentist in a way?

A. There used to be a dentist who would come from Yarmouth, usually, and uh, he would come and put up in a house almost next door to us, well he was, really, and he would stay maybe a week. That was the same down here, at that time. There used to be, in fact, since I've been living here there's been a dentist used to come.

Q. Yeah, so people might be needing a dentist for a long time, but until he came they had to live with their toothache...

A. I guess the doctor could pull a tooth when necessary.

Q. What were, when you were a child there was no penicillin or anything, so what were some of childhood illnesses, and was it sort of touch and go for children to even survive to adulthood?

A. Yeah, we had the regular measles and so on.

Q. Can you remember any flu epidemics, or anything?

A. Flu, yes, yes, I remember having flu. And oh, I used to have a lot of sick headaches. I outgrew them.

Q. What about the whooping cough?

A. Mmm hmmm.

Q. Was that something everybody had to go through? Yeah?

A. (Laughs) Chicken pox and all the rest.

Q. What about when somebody died? How were funerals, customs and traditions different than today?

A. Ummm. We had our own undertaker here.

Q. Yeah? Do you remember who he was?

A. Alton MacNeill. Was the undertaker for the Island. Both Islands. I don't know whether there was one at Westport or not.

Q. Yup. But what was his job, just to... There wasn't a funeral home.

A. No, no. I guess the body would probably stay at the house, at the house, if there was sometimes.... I suppose a service might have been from the house.

Q. So the undertaker's job was really just to take you to the cemetery, maybe. In those days? What did they need an undertaker for?

A. To prepare the body, I suppose, and he would have, he would have the caskets.

Q. Okay, yup. Okay, when you got a little older, can you remember anything about your teenage years, and getting ready to leave home, and how far did you go in school? You had to go pretty far...

A. Eleven.

Q. Eleven? And then you could go right into, no, then you went to Teachers' College?

A. Mmm hmmm.

Q. Right from grade eleven. It wasn't necessary to go to grade twelve...

A. No, no. No, I was seventeen, I was going to go away for the first time, that was kind of exciting, I guess. Kind of scary.

Q. Yeah! So you were going to Truro...

A. Yes.

Q. Which was for two years? Or one year?

A. One.

Q. One year.

A. Wasn't long after that when they had to go for two years.

Q. Can you remember what that was like, leaving home, and how you packed and prepared to go, and...?

A. (Laughing) it all seems like a dream.

Q. Did anybody else that finished grade eleven, did any other girls go with you at the same time?

A. Yes. Evelyn Crock... Evelyn Finigan, she was then. She and I went.

Q. Just the two of you.

A. Yes. That year.

Q. Were you room mates together?

A. Yes. Yes, and um, and I had, I have a friend from when I was eleven or twelve years old. Rae Hankinson from Weymouth. And she went that year, but she only went the half year.

So they were my close friends.

Q. Yup. I think there's a connection between the Tiberts and the Hankinsons, isn't there?

A. Uh, yes...

Q. Florrie's sister married a Hankinson.

A. Right, yes. Well Florrie, that's where I met Florrie, was at Teacher's College, yes.

Q. So she would be, she's 90, 91 herself...

A. She's 91. And um, there were three "B" classes, and I was in B-2, and she was in B-3, on account of our names. The "W", she was. Wallis. So she was in B-3, so I didn't actually know her, until she came to the Island to teach, and met Melvin Tibert and settled here.

Q. Well, that's right, that's a friendship that goes back a lot of years.

A. Yes. Yes.

Q. So did you, was it hard to stay in Truro for that whole year, were you badly homesick, or you enjoyed it?

A. I don't think it was. A broken ankle, while I was there, and had to come home at Easter and stay over, a little over time, longer.

Q. Yup? How'd you break your ankle?

A. Going to school I just slipped on a little piece of ice, twisted it over.

Q. In those days were only women training to become teachers, or...

A. No. Oh no.

Q. Men and women. So they went to the Teachers' College also...

A. Yeah.

Q. So did you have a pretty active social life, when you were there? Was it fun and...

A. Yes. it was.

Q. Did you do any dating then? You were still pretty young.

A. (Laughing) Yes. Yes.

Q. Did they have dances and...

A. I never could dance. I never learned to dance.

Q. No? Did you want to learn how to dance?

A. Pardon?

Q. Did you want to learn how to dance?

A. Well, I don't know. I don't believe it interested me very much, I guess, or seems to me I would have learned.

Q. Were girls involved in sports in those days?

A. No. Not a sports person. I liked to skate, yes. I liked that.

Q. Did you start skating when you were a child in Tiverton?

A. Skating? Yes.

Q. Where did you skate in Tiverton?

A. Well, what we called the Lake. Half, part-way down the Island there's a lake...

Q. Yup?

A. Down. And we used to walk down there after school, like, well I was of course in my teens, then. We used to walk down there and, every, after school, in the afternoon, and stay the evening, and walk home. Couple, three or four miles, whatever. Yes.

Q. That would be fun.

A. So the first year I came out I was in Waterford. The next year, I uh taught in Tiverton, grades four, five, six. And seven, I guess.

Q. So as soon as you graduated from Teacher's college, that June, maybe...

A. Eight, yeah, 1918..

Q. And then the following, did you come back and spend the summer at home?

A. Yes.

Q. And then how did you get your first job teaching, did you have to apply, write letters, and...

A. Had to apply, yes.

Q. ...have interviews, and... Was Waterford a first choice of yours? Where you would like to go?

A. Well, you have a list, I guess, to go by, probably. Probably I chose it because it was closer to home.

Q. Yeah. So did you have to board with a family in Waterford? Who did you board with?

A. Yes. Uh, Mr. and Mrs. Vidito. They were an older couple. I thought they

were an older couple, maybe they weren't that old! Just the two of them.

Q. Yup. Was that in, ummm, I should know that house.

A. Do you know where Vincent Raymond lives? He was one of my scholars. And the house is just across from it. That white...

Q. I know that... it's still there.

A. Yes, it's still there. Yes

Q. Yes, I know the house. So where was the school in Waterford? I should know, I live in Waterford, but I don't know where the school was.

A. You know where the church is, well, down the hill, just down the hill, there's a man there that has a sign up, some...

Q. For the Autobody?

A. Yes! And the schoolhouse was right there.

Q. I never knew that.

A. No. And where do you live there?

Q. I live very close to the Vidito house. In Syd Westcott's old house.

A. Oh! Oh yes!

Q. Syd? Was Syd one of your pupils too?

A. No. His sisters. He was...

Q. Imelda?

A. And Daisy, and Alda.

Q. Were all students of yours.

A. Yes. Yes.



Q. And he had a brother Lee, but he would have been older. He would have been a bit older, maybe.

A. Uh, yes Lee might have been. Sydney was an old, he used to walk me home, sometimes. And I went with Aubrey for a while. Didn't know Aubrey, I suppose.

Q. No. That was a brother? No, I didn't even know of an Aubrey. They used to walk you home because that was what was done? You always walked the teacher home, or was he kind of courting you at the time also?

A. (Laughs) Yeah. Yeah I went with Aubrey for awhile. I know he went away, or I left, up there.

Q. Aubrey must have died at a younger age.

A. Yeah he died, I believe, he went away and I believe he died in Ontario.

Q. Yeah. So that was a one-year posting in Waterford, and then the opportunity to teach in Tiverton came up?

A. Yes. Yeah.

Q. So you would rather have taught in Tiverton, a bit closer to home, and then how long did you teach there?

A. Year.

Q. One year, yeah. And then what?

A. Went to Yarmouth County. Arcadia.

Q. Yes?

A. In Arcadi That was a good year.

Q. Yeah? That's far away from home.

A. Yes.

Q. Did you go to Arcadia to try something different, or... that was your choice?

A. That was the smaller, grade one to four, I think that was. And there were only two rooms, at that school. Just two.

Q. And then how long did you teach there?

A. A year. That year. And by that time it was 1921, and I got married. (Laughs).

Q. Yeah? So you were... you were how old when you got married?

A. Twenty one. 1931 it was.

Q. Yup! How did you meet your husband?

A. Well I guess when I was in Tiverton, teaching in Tiverton, I guess. That's when I first, he, 'cause he's only from Central Grove. Mmm hmmm.

Q. Yup! So you met him, but then you moved away for a year. When you were teaching in Tiverton?

A. Oh yes, yes, I did, yes, 'cause I remember him coming down to Arcadia.

Q. Yeah? So you got married at 21, and you never taught again after that?

A. NO.

Q. No? Never? Did you start a family?

A. Well, um, '31, '32, yeah, we were married in July '31, and Noreen was born in August '32.

Q. What was your, this was your first husband...

A. Yes.

Q. But he's no longer alive.

A. No.

Q. What was his name?

A. Ernest Powell.

Q. Ernest Powell. And his family was from Central Grove? He was from Central Grove...

A. Yes.

Q. So where was your first married home?

A. We, um, rented a house, it's gone now, up on the other road. it's gone now.

Q. In Freeport.

A. Yes. Yes. And we've lived here ever since. Sixty seven years.

Q. Wow. So what, his family was from Central Grove, what was happening in Freeport? Was he working here? How did you pick Freeport?

A. He's uh fisherman. He was a fisherman.

Q. Yup?

A. He was fishing.

Q. What kind of fishing?

A. Trawl fishing. And lobster, in season. Yeah.

Q. So there was a time not that long ago that you could fish [a lot more] much of the year than you can now. it would keep you pretty busy.

A. Yup.

Q. No farming? Did you have to farm also?

A. No. We didn't farm. No. His father was a farmer. They had a little farm up Central Grove.

Q. So you had a daughter Noreen, and then did you have any more children?

A. A son, Leslie.

Q. Leslie, Powell, yes.

A. Yes. Five years, between them.

Q. Yup. Any other children? Just the two children. Yup.

A. No.

Q. So do you remember how you met your husband?

A. No. No.

Q. Did you have an elaborate wedding?

A. (Laughing) No! No, no didn't have any wedding.

Q. Did anybody in those days?

A. We just went to the parsonage, the minister married us. My mother and the minister's wife were witnesses, and that was that.

Q. Yeah? That was the normal way to do it in those days...?

A. Well, a lot of people did it....

Q. Do you remember how much you had to pay for rent, for that first home?

A. Not really. I don't remember. I don't think, it probably wasn't very much. Uh, so much a month, and it doesn't seem to me it was very much. Not like now. I don't think it was a great deal.

Q. Do you remember it being difficult to make ends meet when you were young, a young couple?

A. Well, I don't seem to remember it being hard. Money went further then than A. does now.

Q. Yeah. Do you remember what you made when you were teaching? What your salary was, or how...

A. Four hundred and twenty five dollars. About.

Q. A year?

A. Yeah.

Q. How did they pay that to you?

A. Quarterly.

Q. And then, did you have to pay... You had to pay the people you boarded with...

A. Mmm hmm.

Q. ... something. Do you remember how much?

A. Oh, it was never very much. Don't remember exactly, but it wasn't much.

Q. So really, four hundred and twenty five doesn't sound like much, but you would have some money in your pocket...

A. (Laughs) Yes.

Q. ...at the end of the school year, wouldn't you?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you have any taxes taken out?

A. No.

Q. What do you remember about the Depression? Which would have been when you were, when you were married?

A. Oh yeah, I, no I....

Q. Didn't effect, uh...

A. It doesn't seem that it did.

Q. No, we keep hearing that it didn't seem to be that noticeable around here, but  
A. must have effected the price of fish?

A. (Chuckles) Yes, probably. I never knew much about what fish cost or anything.

Q. Mmm hmmm. Did the Second World War effect your family in any way?  
Robert would have been...

A. Oh, he wasn't...

Q. ...too young to be in it.

A. Mmm hmmm. I remember when it started, '39, when my son was only two years old, so, so... it probably affected us in different ways, like rationed, we had to be rationed, with coupons, and probably thought it was hard at the time.

Q. Can you remember families who had somebody overseas?

A. Yes. Yes, there were families... Wasn't anyone affected, like, in my family.

Q. No.

A. '39 to '45 that was.

Q. Yup. Do you remember avidly looking for news, or trying to get the news?

A. Mmmm, well, not really.

Q. No? What was your life like as a young mother? You were married to a fisherman, and you had two small children. Were you active in your community? You didn't teach anymore, did you do any other work?

A. Ohh, we uh, we had a sewing circle that we always had a quilt in, to quilt.

Q. Yes.

A. And we used to make quilts... and um, the money of course, we gave to the Church.

Q. Yup.

A. And there was a Home and School, and at one time I was president of that, I was President of the Sewing Circle, I've been Clerk of the Church for 23 years...

Q. Yup? Still are now?

A. Not now. I gave it up, two or three years ago. And uh, I've been involved in all these different things in the community. Lodge...

Q. What's the Lodge? Is that the Rebeccahs? What are they all about? I've never been sure what those are.

A. Oh, it's the Rebeccah Lodge. That's the Ladies' Lodge, for the Oddfellows.

Q. Mmm hmm? And I don't know what the Oddfellows are, either.

A. And we still have Rebeccah's Lodge, I don't know how much longer.

Q. You still go to meetings of the Rebeccah Lodge?

A. Yes.

Q. What was their main... what's the main purpose of Rebeccah's. Is it a fund-raising...?

A. Uhhh, well it's an international thing, [?], it's to uh, to help, help people, and ...

Q. The communities on the Islands were pretty self sufficient, they had, like did they have Village Commissions or something that took care of everything?

A. Yes, there are Village Commissioners.

Q. Are there, is there still?

A. Oh yes. Mmm hmm. That's for the community hall.

Q. I've seen in some history books they had officers like the Overseers of the Poor, so was there ever anybody in your community that was less well off than the rest? And how would the community take care of them?

A. Years ago they used to have Overseers of the Poor on the council, but I don't believe they have that anymore, do they?

Q. I don't think they have anymore.

A. No.

Q. No because they have Community Services and....

A. No because that isn't required, I guess.

Q. [?] can you remember if everybody seemed as well off as the next person when you were growing up, or were there some people that...

A. Well there were, there were perhaps some that had very little, didn't have very much, maybe.

Q. Yeah. Did people share with them, or what did they do? How did they go about helping those people?

A. Yes. People helped, yes.

Q. Do you remember anything about the Poor Farm, up in Marshalltown?

A. Well, I remember it

Q. Yup? Did it ever have anything to do with the Islands, or not?

A. Oh, there were some people from the Islands there. I don't know just who.

Q. Can you remember how important politics were in the old days?

A. (Laughs). I'm not politically minded.



Q. Was your father?

A. I don't think so, no.

Q. I'm interested in just getting a general picture of what Tiverton when you were a child looked like, and what Freeport looked like, now, then compared to now. Was everything a lot busier than it is now? There was obviously lots of fish being landed, but, seems like there were more stores... more everything. How would you say things have changed?

A. Well, we're not going to have a bank anymore. (Laughs). For one thing.

Q. What was there before there was the Bank of Nova Scotia What did they have here?

A. It's been here for eighty years.

Q. Wow! I didn't know that.

A. Yes. Was in a little building over on the corner there.

Q. And eighty years ago, did people put their money, all their money in the bank for safe-keeping? Did everybody do that, or were people scared to give it all to the Bank?

A. (Laughs) I don't know.

Q. What did you and your husband, this is your first husband, [??] second husband too, what did you do for a good time? Did you ever... sounds like you were pretty involved in your community, the Church and Rebeccahs, and...

A. Well, we had a group of friends, we used to have card parties and visit back and forth, and it was a good time. it was good time.

Q. Was it something that was in your minds that you lived on an island, or this was just where you lived. Were you always aware that you lived on an island, which most people do not live on an island?

A. Well, we always think it's the best place on earth to live.

Q. Yup. That's what they say on Prince Edward Island. They say "what other island is there?"

A. Yes, but uh, but now it's no problem to get anywhere, if you want to go.

Q. Yeah. Seems like people who live on islands make an extra effort to get together, and do stuff, though. Can you remember any Micmaq ever visiting this area? For fishing or trading or anything, or bringing baskets or anything?

A. Do you mean Indians? I remember there used to be Indians from Bear River come down here with baskets...

Q. Yes? Every year?

A. I think every year, I believe. Some of them used to come, loaded with, all they could carry. They walked, they carried them.

Q. All the way from Bear River. Yeah. And they would unload quite a few of them here?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you ever wonder anything about what it was like for them when they returned back? Were you interested in them? Or fascinated by them?

A. No, I guess, took it as a matter of course, I guess.

Q. Yup. Yup. Can you remember people having different superstitions?

A. Yes. (Laughs). Some people were superstitious. Walking under a ladder, or black cat crossing in front of them, I don't know what were any of the other things I remember. Yes.

Q. Was your mother superstitious about different things?

A. No.

Q. No. But people that were superstitious really, really were pretty serious about their superstitions, were they?

A. (Laughs) I think so.

Q. What's the worst weather that you can remember here, living on the Island all these years?

A. The Groundhog Storm.

Q. Yup?

A. So that was '76, so I can remember that. (Laughs).

Q. Yeah? Did it, you're right close to the water here, so what happened right along here?

A. There was a store out there that went down. And um, the water came over the road there, that the whole front road was a mess. Couldn't get down it. Boats went ashore.

Q. By that time your father's business...

A. Oh that was over. That was over. He didn't... I forget when his business ended, but...

Q. It wasn't taken over by anybody else?

A. No. No. Probably when he, he got probably too old to look after it, I, I don't know. He was still in business when Robert was still a young boy.

Q. Yeah. But Robert never took the business over.

A. No.

Q. What did Robert do with his...

A. Well, he drove a truck for Small Brothers for awhile. But Robert, he was a good mechanic, and he, he was worked as a mechanic. After he retired he repaired lawnmowers. That was his hobby. And uh, yeah...

Q. He was the Mayor of Tiverton. He always introduced himself to me as the

Mayor of Tiverton!

A. (Laughing))Yes! Yes.

Q. Can you remember any interesting characters from Tiverton or Freeport?  
Any sort of legendary characters you had that everybody will always remember?  
Any old hermits or recluses, or old bachelors? Or old spinsters?

A. Well, not particularly.

Q. So your first husband would have passed away many years ago?

A. '78.

Q. Yup? So he saw the Groundhog Storm.

A. After that, yeah, after the Groundhog Storm. '78.

Q. And this is the house you were living in?

A. Yes.

Q. And then at some point you remarried...

A. Then I was a widow for two years, and then I married again.

Q. A Tibert.

A. Yes.

Q. And what was his first name?

A. Robie.

Q. Robie Tibert. And he's no longer alive.

A. No. We were only married four years.

Q. Awww. So then he died in...

A. '84. We had some good trips, though.

Q. He liked to travel?

A. We went to Florida, and we went to B.C. We went to Ontario. We went to Newfoundland.

Q. Oh my goodness!

A. So we did all those.

Q. And did he die unexpectedly?

A. Well, not really, no, he wasn't sick very long, though, but uh... They both had cancer. Ernest and Robie both had cancer. And so did my daughter.

Q. So your daughter passed away also?

A. In '87.

Q. Awww. That's tough.

A. Yeah. Mmm hmmm.

Q. That's just about all the questions I can think of....

A. I was just going to ask you when you were going to come to the end.  
(Laughs)

Q. The only thing, if you have any good old photos, Chris would love to come and take pictures of them someday. She wouldn't take them out of your house, but if you have any good old photos that show what life was like in Tiverton or Freeport...

Q. Even of your house or the school, or yourself as a young teacher or.... anything that I could just come and take my camera and put them down and...

A. (Laughs)

Q. We'll give you a week or so to round some up.

A. Well, I've got so many albums, and I've said one day I must look in some of those old ones, but... I must have some.

Q. Yeah, the old black and white ones. I'll give you a call next week, Isabel, and see if you were able to find any. It would only take me half an hour.

Q. It won't involve any interviewing. No wires! Here, let me turn this off.

A. (Laughs.)

(Conversation continues,

