

Lelia Mae Tidd

Interveiwed by Susam Amero, Oct. 11, 2000



Q. O.K. Could I have your full name please?

A. Leila Mae Tidd.

Q. And is it your maiden name or your married name?

A. Married name. Gosson was my maiden name.

Q. And who were your parents?

A. Ah, Viona Bunker was my mother and Micheal Gosson, from Plympton, was my father. (pause) I guess.

Q. And your mother's maiden name was?

A. That's what her name was.

Q. Her maiden name?

A. Yep.

Q. And when were you born?

A. April the ninth, 1919.

Q. And where were you born?

A. Tiddville. (laughter)

Q. So, how large was your family?

A. I didn't have a family exactly. Um, my father and mother wern't married. She was

only a girl and ah, but they we had three children. But I never knew the father.

Q. O.K., so where did you fit in, in the three children?

A. The second.

Q. So, what did your father do for a living?

A. Well see, I didn't know him at all, but they said he worked on that plant up here used

to be up the road. They dug mud or something other got stuff out of it. White stuff.

Q. So, did your mother work outside the home?

A. Yes. just house work.

Q. So, what was a typical school day like?

A. Great. I justed loved it!

Q. So, what kind of things would you have done?

A. Well, we had the all of the grades rate in the old school house, rate here next door.

All of them from primer to grade ten. One teacher.

Q. So, who was your best friend at school?

A. I'd say Mary Theriault.

Q. So, what types of things whould you do with your friends?

A. Well, we didn't have much room, just a small area from the scho..., so we tried to play

ball. Yep, and a, I guess that was about all we could play because we only had a little

small area for it.

Q. So, what is your best memory of school?

A. I'd say everything, cause I just loved it!

Q. So, what was your least favorite memory of school?

A. Well I if I had to go into the things that we took, I'd say history. I didn't care for
history, but everything else I loved.

Q. So, what subjects were you taught in the school?

A. Everything, I think pretty well that they do today. Ah.

Q. Such as?

A. Reading, and writing, and 'rithmetic.(laughter) and chemistry and history and health.

It was called different then, that day, but it was to do with health.

Q. So, which subject was your favorite?

A. Arithmetic.

Q. And, why was that?

A. I loved it, I guess, and and I mean it was so easy for me.

Q. Which subject was your least favorite?

A. History.

Q. And why didn't you like that?

A. Well its where I was so young it didn't have any didn't seem to be anything to me.

Today, if I had to study it today, it would be so different. (laughter)

Q. So, what kinds of things did you have to memorize in school?

A. Well we had the Bible in our day when I went to school. And we used to have to say

a verse of scripture or something when they called our names early in, you know in

the morning, the first thing, and ah, well we had to ah study our lessons, but I didn't

have to study, that was the great part of it. I'd look at the book. I didn't have any

books, you know, I couldn't afford to but any or my somebody, who ever had me,

and so, we used to have to, people would give em to us. We walked, my brother and

I, way up to Centreville, to the lake, or to the end of Lake Midway there to a house.

They built a new one now, and we walked up there, my brother and I, in our bare feet

on dirt roads, to get some books for to go to school with.

Q. So, how were you disciplined in school?

A. Well, you were made to obey what the teacher said in our day and if you didn't well

you had to pay the consequences. They did give strapens in my day, yup. I didn't

get any. (laughter)

Q. So, how were you disciplined at home?

A. I can't remember much about it because I never had no home, whatever you'd call a

home, I don't no what. I stayed with grampie and grammie a little while and ah, and

then I went to other places, stayed wherever I could sort of work for my board and.

Q. So, what were your daily chores?

A. Well, anything that they needed to done, to be done in in the homes that I went into,

you know. Some I, you know I just worked for my board, ah the first place that I had to go was to ah Royal Tidd's, over to Whale Cove. The little boy had cut his had something done to his hand and the doctor had to come to lance it, and she was very nervous. I was about ten or eleven and ah so he come the father come and asked me if I would come to be with the doctor when, when he come because he's wife was nervous. He couldn't stand to have it lanced.

Q. O.K., after your chores were done, what would you have done with your free time.

A. Most always there was something to do, in them days. And I was only, ah nine, nine years old when I started cleaning Hake Sounds. That was over in the fish plant to Whale Cove. And they took the money from me. My mother had got married again. But, ah. (ha)

Q. What was your favorite holiday when you were a child?

A. Man, never heard tell of a holiday, that I know of. (laughter) Well, I mean, when school stopped, I used to cry, 'cause I didn't want it to stop. See that was the only thing I had to meet with people 'n see kids and things like that and so I don't know anything about a holiday.

Q. Not like Christmas or Easter?

A. Oh well, they was Christmas that used to come but, the Christm, the Christmas that my mother died I mean she died in November and the step-father was suppose to

take care of me. But he, he put me outdoors, you know, said I couldn't stay there any more. And Christmas Day I never even had a dinner or anywheres' to stay or anything. So, I didn't have a very good life.

Q. So, did you have a favorite toy?

A. Toy! Never heard tell of a toy. One time I when I was still with grammie, that I was young, probably seven or eight years old, they down to the store, next to us, they had a store there, and they had little watches, and they was fifteen cents, and I told grammie that I'd like to have a watch for Christmas and she said they was no money for watches. Other people use'ta sen, people from the Island even. Well my school teacher, the first school teacher I had, her parents was awful good. They used to send me things you know, clothes sometimes for to wear and and ah oranges and things for Christmas that I never saw before. (laughter)

Q. So, what pets do you remember having?

A. A cat.

Q. And what was his name?

A. Tabby.

Q. So, what was it like in your house when the when the catalogue would arrive? Did you get the catalogue back then?

A. I don't know whether we did. Well It wouldn't mean anything to us because there was nobody that had any money.

Q. So, where did you get the things that you needed?

A. Well, like I said, I guess that people gave it to me, anything that I, cause when my

mother died, he never, he wouldn't give me a thing that, not a thing not a piece of

clothes or anything. He got married in a two or three months afterwards again.

Q. So, what was your religion?

A. Nothing in that da. Well my grandmother was Baptist. I'm sure, even though I was

young, I didn't know. And then when I got old enough to know, some of my friends

the kids, why they used to go Sunday School here to the old school house, and I

went with them.

Q. So, did you have a favorite hymn?

A. Ah, "How Great Thou Art", I guess, but a that wasn't in them days that day but I mean

since I bin a Christian and bin goin to church and things for the last fifty years.

Q. Could you sing me a verse?

A. No I can't sing anymore. My throat is all balled up. (laughter) I miss that 'cause my

daughter and I sang in church, duets from the time she was fourteen and she is sixty-

five now.

Q, So, what influence did religion have throughout your life?

A. A big part! Yup. Told me how to live, you know what I mean, we didn't have any

principles to live by or anything before that, you did, didn't know right from wrong,

until ya got told and when you got so you could get told why then people would

tell ya you know what what you should be or some I never got out into anything

drinking or or smokin or nothing like that. I never had one in my life, either one.

Q. So, how did you keep up on what was going on in the outside world?

A. Well I was married four days before I was fifteen. Well, I needed a place to stay

and we didn't believe in common-law in that day cause even though I didn't know

my father or anything when, instead of taking him away, if they was gonna do it, they

should have done it when they had the first one, Johnny. He's dead. But they didn't

do it. They left him here until he had the three children and then they took him away

and forbid him to ever come on Digby Neck. See, they don't do that today, they

live common-law. We got so many here on Digby Neck now that you don't dare

say Mr. and Mrs. (laughter)

Q. So, what do you remember about your teenage years?

A Well, I didn't have any, in them, in a way because I until I got married I didn't have no

place to go or nothing to do or anything so I just had to work all the time to to keep

something to eat.

Q. So, how often would you have left this village?

A. Never!

Q. You didn't go to town?

A. Oh, no you couldn't get to town less you could walk it. Nobody had any cars.

Q. So, If you had got the chance to leave, where would you go?

A. I don't know. That's the sixty-four dollar question. They was sending me ma grand-
mother and them was sending me, they didn't want me around to much. I was only
eight years old and so they sent me up on a bus that usta travel here, Guy
More-
house's, to Digby, and I was suppose to go on a train to Annapolis to live with
a
aunt. And a so I got up there but, in the meantime, before I got there, they was
a
woman on that train, on that train, and she was very sweet and you know,
pretty
and nice dress and everything and she said "Where would you be going
today?"
She saw how ragged I was and and a I said "There sending me to my aunt".
And
she said " Do you know her?" and I said "No". And she said "Well, how come
you're going there?" And I said "I got no other home and they sent me up,
going
send me up to live with her." And she said that "Is she gonna meet ya?" And I
said "Well they tell me she is." She said "If anything should happen, that she
isn't
there, would you go with me?" (laughter) And I've often wondered what that
would
be, what that would have been if it had changed, you know, if she wasn't
there.

Q. What were the roads like?

A. Terrible! Had to take oxen and things for to haul the the bus out that brought
the mail
down, up in in Lakeside. It was just horrible there. Yup. Dirt roads.

Q. So, who would maintain them? Who would look after the roads?

A. I don't know to much about that, like I said I was less than fifteen when I was
married

so I, I mean they, they worked on 'em, you know, and and in the winter time they used
to work on them, shovel 'em and everything, they'd call all the men out in the morning
ta shovel the roads. Snow would be so deep.

Q. So, who were your screen idols? Your movie idols?

A. Never ever saw a movie or anything. No.

Q. What was your favorite outfit to wear? Did you have a favorite?

A. I didn't have no choice. Had to wear whatever they gave me. (laughter)

Q. What kind of music did you like?

A. Good music. I never ever went for that wild stuff, but I liked Hank Snow and I liked a
the other one that died there, not long ago, but.

Other voice: Wilf Carter

A. Wilf Carter.

Q. What kind of sports did you enjoy?

A. Well I never had any sports or anything because only what we played ball there around
the school house.

Q. So, what do you remember about dating?

A. Don't remember anything. (laughter) I was so young, I suppose. Well see the man that
I married he lived over there in the field. Well they've turned that, tore that all down
now and a I was with mama and lived right over next to the schoolhouse.
Now I was
there then because she wasn't very well, and so he knew mom and everything and he

used to come out here a lot you know when mom was married and and ah well I don't

think they was much dating to it. I mean I always liked him because he was good to

me, and everything and mama thought the world of him, see she had been born and

brought up with him here. He was a lot older than I was. Thirteen years old, older.

Q. So, how far did you go in school?

A. As far as I could go. (laughter) Had to take two years in grade ten because they

couldn't let me out, I was to young. Had no where's else to go, only to Digby or

somewhere's. See there was no way I could get there.

Q. So, how old were you when you left school?

A. Well I had to stay there 'til I was fourteen, cause they was against the law to. You

know you had to go 'til you was fourteen.

Q. So, once you left school, what did you do?

A. Well I was married then. You know I got married just after I left school. Yup.

Q. So, how did you meet your husband?

A. Rate every day. (laughter) 'Cause he lived here right in the same community.

Q. O.K., so what attracted you to him?

A. I imagine, a, security or somethin like that, you know, a know that somebody would

take care of ya, 'cause I hadn't had any stable place before that.

Q. So, what do you remember about your wedding?

A. Just that I was married over in his home after church one Tuesday night and with his brother and his wife to stand up for witnesses. That's all.

Q. Where did you go for your honeymoon?

A. Nowheres! Just stayed home. (laughter)

Q. So, how much did you know about the birds and the bees when you got married?

A. Not to much. I when I was married eighteen months before I had a baby. But I didn't have a clue where the baby was coming from or anything.

Q. So, how did you learn about that kind of stuff?

A. Had to learn the hard way. Twenty-six hours in labor with the first one. (laughter)

That was kinda hard. (laughter) Nope, nobody ever told me I didn't even know when I first menstruated I didn't know, I thought I was dying.(laughter)

Q. So, what happened when a girl got pregnant before she was married?

A. Well, it was a terrible thing.

Q. Such as?

A. Well I mean they was looked down on and everything, you know.

Q. So, how would people have treated the father, you know of a child who was unwed from an unwed family?

A. Well, we didn't have to many here this small area you know. Usually, they got married either after or just before or somethin, cause there wasn't very many that ever had you know to bring up a baby alone in them days.

Q. So, once you were married, where did you live?

A. With his parents. But he never, ever took me there to stay once, before we was married because we, we both knew it wasn't right, even though my mother had
went through that.

Q. So, how much did it cost for your first home?

A. I never had a first home. We lived in a little, ah, shop that Grampie Tidd had made,
built, for to do things there. He used to do tire or wheels for cars, carts and things
like that. So, that burnt down.

Q. So, when would people get together for a good time?

A. Well after we was saved, my husband and I, we used to get together a lot then play-
in the piano and singin and you know like that. That's the thing that we would do. All
of the ones that got saved in the church, The Pentecostal Church. I am Pentecostal,
ever since I been saved.

Q. So, what was a typical day like for you as a housewife?

A. I'm just about the same as it is today.

Q. What kinds of things would you have done?

A. Well, you get up and do yer wash yer dishes and sweep yer floors and get the old
washboard out and wash tub and things and try to wash a few clothes and and never
ever had a fridge or anything like that until my children was all growed up.

Q. So, what did you grow and raise yourself? Vegetables and that livestock, that kind of

stuff?

A. My husband had a horse that he used to carry the haul the wood out with 'cause he was

all we had was a wood stove in the old house. And a, we used to plant, you know, the

regulars, potatoes and turnips or something like that. The kids would help me when

they got old enough, because my husband had to work. Ten cents an hour.

Q. So, How much of what you needed, would you have made yourself?

A. I used to sew from, from the time I was a little girl they tell me. I don't know but I, I,

know after I was married I sew, I made everything that we had to wear, the kids and

men. Yup, and ah, sew for other people, you know, people that was just as hard up

as we were. They'd get boxes from the States from from some of their people there

and I make over clothes for 'em.

Q. So, would you have bartered for anything? Like traded? Like maybe your potatoes

for somebody's elses?

A. Nope, we gave 'em away if, if we had any extras. (laughter)

Q. So how did electricity trade, change things for you?

A. Well a lot, because we didn't have electricity till, men I don't remember how many

years it. We went all through the kids childhood and everything with no electricity,

or nothing, till we could afford to get the old house wired.

Q. So, when did you get running water?

A. I think it must have been after we moved out here, 'bout forty years ago.

Q. What was bath night like?

A. Well, had a washtub. Take turns of getting them bathed, the kids. And then all we'd

have would be just wash yourself. (laughter)

Q. So, how often would bath night occur?

A. Well, we did the kids every weekend.

Q. So, how did you take care of your teeth?

A. I don't really remember that. "Cause I don't remember brushing my teeth when I was

young, ever.

Q. So, how often would you have seen a dentist?

A. After I was married, I think it was when I was gonna have the first, Elsie, my first

daughter, and my her it hurt, it hurt so bad then they got me to the doctor, my husband did somehow, I don't know how but in the hauled it out and it was ulcerated. Oh it was some pain for day so many days.

Q. So, who delivered the babies in your community?

A. The women, ah the grannie woman, all but one and one was delivered in the hospital.

The last one I had in the hospital.

Q. So, she delivered all the babies in the area?

A. Well she delivered mine and um she delivered them all up and down Digby Neck and

everywheres. Yup. Dear ole soul. Then I delivered a couple after I got, you know, old

enough or with Old Dr. Rice. That was the old doctor on Sandy Cove, in Sandy Cove.

Yup.

Q. So, what personal memories do you have of child-birth?

A. That first one was enough to have. (laughter)

Q. How far away was the doctor?

A. Ah, Sandy Cove, what would that be from here? ten, twelve miles, or somethin other.

But we couldn't find him that day I was in labor so long. He was out lookin for a woman. That's what they told us. (laughter)

Q. So, when would you call the doctor?

A. Well, ah my water broke on a Wednesday nite and they went and got the old granny

woman so the baby wasn't born until Friday night. And she called the doctor. See,

she knew when he he should be called but they couldn't find him and so I had to stay

in labor so long with the baby there, ready to come, but it couldn't come.

Q. Do you remember the grannie woman's name?

A. Yes! Philene Frost.

Q. So, what were some home remedies that would have been common when you were

growing up?

A. Well, ah usually anything that you had in the house you could use it for somethin. I

know when the children use to have croup or you know, filled up so, we used to

heat up kerosine in a little bit of lard in it, so it wouldn't melt, put that on 'em.

Q. And put that on where?

A. On their chest. Ya for a that's fer when they had colds, you know, and everything. Ya.

Q. So what would what if they had cut themselves, how would you what would you have done?

A. I don't remember them ever gettin bad like that until you know, quite awhile after we

was saved. But I don't know what you believe and it doesn't matter, but I know what

I believe. We believed in havin the pastors or somebody pray for us. And I know when

Eddy, my boy that's dead now, he got cut and ah Lloyd Theriault was alive then, and

ah, we got Lloyd to pray for him and he was rate up 'round as good as gold in no time.

Q. When, when someone died, how was the funeral handled?

A. Usually in the home.

Q. The body was laid in the home?

A. Uh-hmm, Uh-hmm. Yup.

Q. And....?

A. People came to it, yup. And Con Gidney, from Mink Cove, used to be the undertaker.

Q. So, what happened to the body after?

A. I don't know where they took it. (laughter)

Q. So, do, do you remember how many days the body would have stayed in the home?

A. Ya, about three. Uh-hmm. 'Cause I never looked at mama 'til the second day 'cause

I'd never seen a corpse.

Q. So, what would happen in the winter if the ground was frozen to bury the body?

A. Yup, the men dug it, dug the graves.

Q. O.K. What year did you start your first job?

A. Well I never had no real job that carried on or anything because I had four kids. And

his mother, or his step-mother, so I had quite a family to look after at home, but I

youta work in between times and ah I was married then and had the children, had

some of the children, ya I had all the whole four children, when we useta pack Tuna

over to Whale Cove, for Joe Tidd, it was then. Old Joe.

Q. So, you you've mentioned once that you were, eight or nine, working in a fish plant.

A. Nine when I cleant, yup, when I, yup. See I was still a school kid then but that in the

vacation and things like that.

Q. So, could you explain to me like what you had to do, in the fish plant, at nine years

old?

A. Ya, cleaned Hake Sounds. Did you ever see a Hake Sound?

Q. No.

A. Well, it's somethin inside of a Hake, you know, shapped like that, kinna and it's full of

somethin, ah, that has to be discarded, so I'd have ta go in through that like that and

haul that out and let that stuff out and then you save The Sound, the other thing. That

went in the junk, and then we dried 'em. Had to dry 'em and put them on racks and
dry 'em.

Q. So, um, would you have gotten paid for that job?

A. Ya, fifteen cents an hour.

Q. O.K. so, did you have to pay any tax out of it?

A. No taxes then. Only tax on your home, if you had one. (laughter)

Q. So, how did your work change with the seasons, when you were, I'm talking about
when you were still in the fish plant?

A. Oh ya well, they only got the, sort of the same as it is today, kinda. My husband
worked in the fish plant for years, but in the wintertime you had a awful lot of time
off, cause see the boats could, they only had little boats and little dorries and things
to fish in.

Q. So, how dangerous was your work, as a child?

A. Well, not to dangerous with the fish, with the Hake Sounds because they were soft
and, you know, nothing sharp, you didn't have use no knife or anything, with them.

Q. O.K., so what role did the Company Store play in your life or was there a Country
Store?

A. Yes, there was a Country Store rate up over the top of the fish plant. Same men run
it, and, ah, he used to send me up a lot of times to wait on people that wanted some-
thin', and I was only a kid. (laughter)

Q. So, did most people who worked at the fish plant, did they shop at the Country Store?

A. No, not to many there because he didn't have to much, you know, just the main things
same as bread and crackers or something like that.

Q. What do you remember about war time?

A. I can't remember anything, well I wasn't born the first war. First World One, but I can
remember some about World War Two, because (that's only Elsie now that's only
Elsie.) (Hello, I didn't realize you had so much company) (laughter) (This is all set up
and there's things a goin here) (Oh) (Come in)

Other voice: Were're borrowing some of your mom's stories here.

(Oh! Oh right O.K. mom I just brought your pen.Well I'll go back home.) (Ya, but
are you coming over before you go to Digby or ?) (Yup) (O.K.) (laughter)

A. That's my oldest daughter.

Q. O.K. so what did you remember, sorry, about the Second World War?

A. Well, I can remember airplanes going over. We lived in a shack. Well we lived in a
fish house down on French Beach, for a while. That's were my second child was
born, in a fish house. And a, but then I had the third one, the boy that died with
cancer, 'n a, I'd the airplanes and things, I used to have to tie him out because we
lived that far from the road then, when he was little, and I used to have to tie him
out and I can remember the airplanes going over and him a screechin', I'd have to

go and get 'im, he'd been so scared of the airplanes. Yup.

Q. So, what affect would that have had on your family, the war?

A. Well, I don't know. I, we could'nt buy the things that you was allowed, you know,
because we couldn't afford them things, but, Arthur Harris, a man there that had a
little more, lot more than we had, he used to come and tade it off, something that
we really needed, you know, and we couldn't afford to buy, well he'd take that and
give us something that we could afford to have, off it, what, what was they called,
ah.

Q. With the stamps?

A. Ya, something sort of like a stamp, it would be, but.

Q. So, could you give me an example of something that you would of traded or with him,
do you know what I mean?

A. Oh yes, ya. We would trade butter, 'cause we couldn't afford butter and things like
that you know and, and.

Q. So, what would you have given him, in place of the butter, you know?

A. I'd take from him you mean.

Q. You'd take the butter and?

A. I'd give him the butter, you know, I'd let him have the butter and then I'd take if he had
margarine, I'd take that because that would be so much less in price and sugar, didn't

use a lot of sugar, and they did, so I'd let them have sugar and I'd take something else
maybe, pound of beans you could cook up quick and.

Q. So, what affect did the war have on your community?

A. Well, you know when you live way here, away from everything, no radios, no tele-
visions and no nothing, you didn't really know too much what was going on.
Only what you could see.

Q. So, do you, what do you remember about the Depression?

A. Oh, I remember that all right. We was married in it, in the thirties. The early thirties.
Yup.

Q. Can you tell me a story about the Depression?

A. Well, I mean, they was a lot of times that we didn't have anything. I mean, people
that had cattle or you know, farms or something like that, they could get by, but,
we didn't have any farm or anything like that and I, I only remember puttin' the old-
est child to bed once without anything to eat. But a we usually had at least some
bread or somethin' like that. And then we lived on like I said, we lived in East Ferry
down on, down by the shore and a we could get fish any time we wanted it. I wish
I could now. They would give us fish, you know, and things like that, and my husband
would go a fishin' in a dorry with his brother. And they'd get a few fish and they had to
that was in a dorry, and then they'd have to row 'em over to Tiverton and sell 'em for
fifty cents a hundred and take food out of the store, you couldn't get no money.

Q. Fifty cents a hundred, a hundred fish or a hundred pounds?

A. Hundred fish.

Q. So, how did you plan for hard times or for retirement?

A. I didn't plan, 'cause we was lucky to keep a goin' as we was. We never had anything

until after we got married and a , come up here, and he's wages went up from ten cents

ah hour to twenty-five, in a fish plant down in East Ferry. And so then we started to

get a little bit more to eat and one thing and another. And then his father had a sort of

a part farm. Had sheep, things like that.

Q. So, how did your parents pas on thier possessions?

A. I wouldn't know. I told you what my mother passed on. Nothing, 'cause he wouldn't

let her. I mean, he wouldn't give me a thing that she had and she didn't have many

more, much more than we did, and a, the old, the old home that we lived in that come

through his, mother, his step-mother and father and so they had to get us to come and

stay with 'em because they was old so we stayed there and then they passed that on to

us but after they passed it on to us we had to pay the other brothers and sisters their

share out of it.

Q. Do you have anything at all personal from your mom?

A. Not a thing! Nothin'. No. No.

Q. Then what would happen if a, if a woman was widowed in the community?

A. Well, the other people in the community used to always help 'em.

Q. And that would continue on for quite a while?

A. Oh ya. And then after I got married and and the kids grew up then I had a store, in my house. I had that for thirty-one years and a half, and had my kids 'n in the step-mother to take care of and she come with me here, out here to this place. Ya.

Q. Do you remember anything about the Poor Farm?

A. Yes, I mean I remember. We was there one time to see somebody there that I mean he was a retarded, sort of, him and his sister, and she couldn't talk or anything either. Just went in to see him, I didn't care to much about it.

Q. Do you remember anything about the insides of the Poor Farm?

A. I can't remember anything about what it looked like but I can remember that the one that the one we went to see, he was tied to a bed lounge or cot, or somethin' other. Yup.

Q. What do you remember about elections?

A. Well, I don't know, well I, I was able to vote after I got twenty-one or whatever it was you had to be but I never knew anything about it before. But I just done what my husband done cause he was older than me and I presumed that he knew more about it than I did.

Q. What is the worst weather you can remember?

A. I don't know. I mean we saw a lot of terrible storms when we was young. You know we had thunder and lightning storms perten near every night when we was kids. Awful

storms. But that Groundhog Storm, I presume would have been probably the worst,
that, that I saw that I could remember.

Q. What ghost stories do you remember from your younger years?

A. It wasn't the stories that I had to remember, it was the actions. (Ha) I was scared to

death all my life, I think of everything, still am scared of thunder and lightning every-

thing. (laughter) And a , but a they would do things to scare me, you know. And

that's awful! I never would allow anybody to scare my kids, because I think it's

terrible. It grows up with ya and your, your afraid. But, just for an example, we had

they were my mother lived, it was in another part of the house, that her husband's

father and mother lived there, and she had, they had the other part just and a they

they all slept upstairs in an open chamber and a they'd tell, tell a ghost stories and

things and then one of the men there he was, half retarded, maybe, but when I'd

start to go to bed sometimes he be laid, stretched out on to the one of the stairs-

steps going up with something over 'im and that would scare me to death. And then I

remember one night that he got under my bed and after I got in bed my bed started

to raise up, you know like.

Q. Do you have any superstitions or did you have any superstitions?

A. No, I never been superstitious. Mom was, grammie was, all of 'em were but I never

was. Nope!

Q. So, how did people know when to plant and when to harvest their crops?

A. Oh I suppose that their own common sense knew that if you didn't plant somethin' in the spring you wouldn't get nothing in the fall. (laughter)

Q. So, can you tell me about any shipwrecks in your in this area?

A. No, they was, they was the, what was her name. I can't never think of 'em. He come, they come ashore, the man, one of the men, come, the captain, come ashore over to Whale Cove and some of the kids was old enough then fer ta go over and see it. Ya, but what was that called the, hmm, I'm forgetful.

Q. What local stories can you remember?

A. No, not, not to many. Some, you know what I mean, from same, some of the areas around us, but, not knowing 'em personally, so they was a, a two or three that was drowned, in the August gale way back, quite a few years back and I knew that one of them but not personally, but she had been engaged to him, this the one that married my husband's brother and so when he got killed why she married my husband's brother afterwards I mean she fell in with him.

Q. So, how did your community police itself?

A. Well, it's, it's great to say I wish I could say it now you really didn't need any.

Other voice: Well, that's good.

A. I guess it is. I wish it was that way today.

Q. So, where did the "better-off" people live? People with money?

A. Well, in, in, mixed in. Mixed multitude. (laughter)

Q. So, did you belong to any organizations? You know, like the Knights of Columbus, or

A. No, just the church, when we got saved, yup.

Q. So, what do you remember about the tourists coming to the area?

A. Not too much, there wasn't to many tourists that ever came, this way. After I had the

store, they used to come once in a while, and a they would stop in, you know, not

knowing that, I remember one day they stopped in, two or three ladies, and a was

makin' a pickles and jam, had two things a goin' all at, always had to, on accout of

the store had to just get 'em in some how, and they said "What is that, that we smell

so good, you know?" So, they ended up, out in the kitchen, trying the stuff that I was

a cookin'. (laughter)

Other voice: That was good.

A. Oh ya, it was nice, ya.

Q. So, what were some of the colorful characters in your community?

A. What would that be, the ones that was half-cracked or somethin'? (laughter)

Hope you

don't play that in front of anybody. (laughter)

Q. Did you have any colorful people in your, your community?

A. No, see the two that was taken to the "Poor House" there, they, you know, they weren't

right.

Q. So, do you remember when they were taken away?

A. Oh ya.

Q. And for what reason?

A. No reason, just the father wanted 'em away, he didn't want to feed 'em.

Q. So, who took them there?

A. Some, somebody same, somethin' to do with a, well like today, you know, families

and things that they have ta, cause they come 'n', they come 'n' took me, I remember

the name of the man, that come and took me from my aunt's up there, 'cause she was

a bootlegger, and they said, and I hadn't been to school fer a year. So, they found that,

found out somebody must have reported it, up there. So, he come and took me away,

and brought me here ta, back to Tiddville, again, where I had lived. And they went to

mama and asked her if she, she could take me. Well she was livin' in that other man's

house, you know, with her husband, and a, he happened to be in there, in that part that

day, and he said "No more kids commin' here!" So Prozers, Mr. Prozers, see I can re-

member him, he said "Well we can't put a child where she isn't wanted." And my grand-

father, that was my mother's father, he happened to be in there that day too, and he said

"Well the other two boys is with me", so he said a "She can come there too, fer a while"

'cause he said "I don't want 'em to grow up and not know one another." So, he kept me

fer a while.

Q. He hit you?

A. He kept me.

Q. Oh, he kept you. Sorry.

A. So, what do you remember about "Maud Lewis"?

A. Nothing only what I'd hear, same as you or anybody, what we would hear on the news

and things. Ya. And I went by the house so many times you know and seen the things

that she always had out, all the pictures and things that she painted.

Q. So, how does this place, this area, look compared to when you were growing up?

A. Well much different, today than it was then. I mean, there is some good homes in

Tiddville now and East Ferry, you know, around, to what there was then, so there

wasn't too much, there wasn't too many rich people in our area. (laughter)

Q. So, how have people's attitudes changed toward the environment?

A. Well, they seem to be talkin' a lot about it, today. They never memtioned anything

about it in that day.

Q. So, how would you compare family values today with those of days gone by?

A. Well they're much better today, better off in a way, but I don't know, I, I,ve said so

many times I'd like to go back to the old days, because I, we never had to be afraid

of, you know, people gunnin' you down or killin' ya or doin' somethin' drastic. Every-

body could live, never had a door locked, never had a door locked. Only had a door,

I've only had our doors here locked fer about twenty years maybe or so. Yup leave 'em

wide open.

Other voice: We never did find out what Mrs. Tidd's husband name was.

Q. Oh, I'm sorry.

A. Millege.

Q. His full name.

A. That's, Millege Tidd. He had no middle name.

Q. O.K.

Other voice. And just Susan a little bit, Mrs. Tidd, you mentioned at the start of your conversation about somebody mining some kind of rock.

A. Ya.

Other voice. Just explain that a bit to Susan.

A. Ya, I don't know, see I don't what it was called.

Other voice. Right.

A. It was up here, well between here and that old house, that's up there. It was between there, on that right side, there's sort of, like a big lake it was a there, and they used to dig, dig stuff and they used to work nights and everything.

Q. That was that stuff, Derek.

Other voice: Diatomaceous.

A. Yes, ya, ya and they used to work nights and everything there. And dad, worked there, my husband worked there and my brother worked there. Ten cents an hour.

Q. Do you know what kinds of things they would have done there?

A. What, ya they dug it out of the earth, you know, and dried it, and then big trucks used

to come and get big bags of it and everything, and what did they say they made with
it, perfume or some. Well different things. See I can't remember that, what they made
with it, but, I've seen it when it was a workin', you know, I've seen it at night when it
was all lit up in there, you know, and everything was a goin'.

Q. So, how many people would that have employed?

A. I wouldn't know that, I suppose maybe, ten or twelve, maybe, or somethin'.
Not a big
crowd, you know.

Other voice. About what year would that have been?

A. Man, I don't know that either.

Other voice. The thirties do ya think, or?

A. Oh no, I think it was a little further ahead than that, cause I was married, and we could
of been the late thirties, cause I was married in the thirties. Yup. Your memory fails.
A good thing I remember things that happened way back.

Other voice. I think you got wonderful memories. (laughter) My goodness.

A. But it's hard to remember names.

Other voice. Yes

A. Ya, see I, I was eighty-one my birthday and.

Other voice. Were you?

A. um-hmm.

Other voice: And what are your children's names?

A. Elsie, Bessie, Eddie and Grace.

Other voice: And do the three girls all live around here now?

A. No, Grace lives in New Brunswick, but she they go down south every November or

some, she said that she'd goin' stay home fer Christmas this year or else. Yup, cause

she'd like to be home where the family is and then Eddie, my son, he died with cancer

of the brain. That was terrible!

Q. So, how old would he have been?

A. Forty. Had three boys.

Q. Oh, no.

A. And then Scott, that's my other boy, he, we adopted him, when he was five months

old. Yup, he was, they, 'im and his wife was down fer vacation fer thanksgivin'. Yup.

Other voice. Just ask Leila a bit about the store she ran.

Q. Oh, O.K. Sorry. Tell me about the store that you ran.

A. Oh ya, and I loved it. That was a job I had that I loved. Thirty-one and a half years of

it. All alone.

Q. So, what kinds of things would you have sold in the store?

A. Everything you, that you could want except cigarettes or tobacco of any kind. I never

had sold a thing of that line in the store.

Q. So, along with a goods, would you have carried clothes or anything like that.

A. Well, babies'. You know, little ones.

Q. Right.

A. Yup, things like that fer babies but not adults' clothes. Yup, all kinds of groceries and vegetables and everything like that. Ya, it was a it was the whole thing. The back part there they built it on there and it was the whole length. I ferget how many feet it was. It was a lot, 'cause my boy, the one that died, him and a Gus Thibodeau took one part of it there, and built that big room, there, living room there, and a, and then after, oh I don't know, twenty-five years, maybe, they built that, took that off of that, and a we still had all the rest of it there and they built another piece on fer to keep the stock when it came in.

Q. Right.

A. Ya.

Q. So, did you run the store yourself?

A. Yup, yup.

Q. What was the store's name?

A. Tidd's Grocery.

Other voice. One more thing I'd be interested in hearing about is you, you mentioned a few times about you and your husband when you got saved.

A. Um-hmm.

Other voice. Tell Susan a little bit about how that happened. How, how that came about.

A. Yup, well see I didn't know anything about anything like that, but there was people
around here that had been saved in the Baptist Church, you know, and I mean there
life was changed 'nd everything, and, and a I didn't have much to change as far as that
goes, 'cause I never swore or I never drank and I never smoked but, I mean you're
still un-saved until you get saved. And so a one of the old deacons, that lived here, he,
they was havin' special meetins' down in East Ferry in the old hall, and he come over
different times and he said "Leila, you should go down ta church, down there in the
old hall." He said " They're havin' special meetins' there, people gettin' saved." And he
said " It will be good fer ya." And I said, I laughed at him. I said I don't think I'll
bother, somehow like that. But, I was all alone and they, they was a Lloyd Theriault,
like the one I told you they prayed for my boy, well he was saved and a his father.
There was only two or three that had got saved, but a, Lloyd he begin prayin' fer us,
me and Milly, 'cause he thought a lot of us, he always come to us when we lived down
there in the fish houses and things. Used to come and talk, play cards and things. And
so he talked to us about it and it begin to bother me. Must have been him praying that
bothered me and I remember one morning, I was all alone, well grammie was in her
room, but I was alone there, and just somethin' just come over me and I said "I don't
know what's wrong with me," I said to myself. And I said maybe if I prayed, if I knew
how to pray, maybe, maybe there's somethin' wrong. So I went upstairs and I knelt
down in the second's girl's bedroom, Grace, and I begin to pray and cry. I didn't know

what to pray for and I didn't know how to pray or anything like that. But the Lord

saced me rate there, all alone and I was completely different. I didn't think I could be

any different, cause I didn't think I was real bad. But a I was completely different and

that night I had to, I wanted to go to church so bad. Never went to church. And old

people used to ask me to go to church, I said no, the walls would fall in if I ever went

inside of a church. But that night I got on the bus, there was a bus that travelled back

and forth, you know to Digby, and it was Guy Morehouse, and went down to the ferry

to church that night, and I witnessed to it, I told 'em that I'd been saved and everything.

And Lloyd Theriault and his father, they shook my hand and everything. Told me how

happy they was about it, so it was only a little while I went, I went back home and a

I told Millege, my husband, about it and everything. I never coaxed 'im to go or any-

thing, but I'd go every Sunday. Had to walk it over them bad roads and everything

mud and muck and everything and a I guess maybe it was probably six months or

more and a one night he used to go out and build a fire in the old schoolhouse fer 'em

to have meetins' here. And he went out one, that night and he took the wood with 'im,

he took the wood out to start a fire, made up his cigarettes, before he went out to have

the smoke went he come out, and a he got saved that night too, went to the alter and

give 'is heart to the Lord, come out, threw the cigarettes and everything in the stove,

never swore agin, never smoked another cigarette, rate from that night, never touched

one again. Yup, come, wonderful man. Wonderful man. I had the best husband that

there could have been on the face of the earth. Yup.

Q. So, do you remember how old you were, when this happened?

A. Ya, I was a around thirty.

Q. So, your husband would have been?

A. He would have been forty-two or forty-three. Yup and he had smoked from the time
he was a kid.

Q. Amazing.

A. Um-hmm. Yup and so we, we lived that way all the time. We brought up our kids that
way. We had family alter in the home, at night, with the kids around. We read the
Bible and prayed with 'em and they got into any trouble or never been to a,
never had
a police after 'em or anything, never even violated the laws. None of 'em ever
lost a
license. Yup, that's wonderful, most wonderful thing that ever happened.
And then
they told us, you know, different things that the Bible says, 'cause we didn't
know.
We'd never studied the Bible or nothin' like that and a they spoke about
tithing, you
know, giving ten percent to the Lord of what you make, so I remember the
first tithe
I had was ten cents. I got a dollar from, fer doing somethin' and the minister's
wife,
him and his wife they went every church they ever went to, they told about
that wo-
man that first tithe she paid was ten cents. (laughter) Yup, and then the Lord
seemed
to prosper us from then. It seems every thing that we would do, that a the
Lord would
prosper it and we'd get back a lot more than we ever gave. Ya, ya so that's,
that's how

much it pays ta give to the Lord.

Q. So, is that a practice that you've carried on through the years?

A. Oh, yes, all through my life, yup. Always, have done it all through my life.

Yup, even

on the Old Age Pension, I still pay my tithes to the church. Yup. And I worked fer the

Lord fer all the years I, I taught Sunday School fer over forty years, adult class and

I've preached so many times fer the minister, filled in fer him when he's go some-

wheres, and worked fer the Lord all the time. Done whatever I could. Yup. I was

always happy when I was working fer The Lord. My kids even tell me that. They said

mom you always was the happiest when you was on platform doin' somethin', teachin'

a class or leadin' a song service or havin' a preachin' fer some fer a minister. They used

ta go around, go away a lot, in them days, the minister's conferences and everything.

Now I'd fill in fer 'em 'till they come back.

Other voice. You must be worn out, are you?

A. (laughter) Well I worked all of them years and you know, not only that, but I had the

store to tend and everything too, and a we used ta work, you know clean the church

and everything like that, Mary and I, the one I said was my friend, all years, her and I

used to paper, a they had a , a parsonage rate on it then, rate on the church. Now we

got a nice parsonage, a, all by itself. And there's only ten, usually that goes to church,

now, I mean the young people all went away and everything. And we support that

church 'cause, us ten people we support that church and we don't owe a cent to any-

body.

Q. That's the main thing.

A. I guess it is. Everybody says that. Yup. They talk about it and now the churches, I mean

they got so many people and yet they get in debt and everything, but we don't, we've

never been in debt fer oil or anything in the winter or nothin'.

Q. Is your best friend still alive?

A. Oh, yes. She's eighty. A will be, Yup, ya. My daughter, I used to play the piano in

church fer all the years and years and years. And then a after a while we divided it up

'cause I had so many things to do, in a, Mary, I knew Mary could play. So I said Mary

you should take turns in so the minister's wife then she said well there you, you play in

the mornings ah, Sister Tidd, that's what they called me and a Mary will play at night.

And then we'd change around 'an I play in the morning and, and her opposite, anyhow,

yup. So, then Mary got old she had cancer and a few years ago and she had to quit fer

a while so my oldest daughter, the one that was here a while ago, she plays in church,

now. We never took a lesson, never studied a lesson, didn't know one note from

another, both of us, but we've played in church fer years. And her and I used to sing

too. All the time. Yup. It was a wonderful life, when you was able to do all those

things. I said if I could do all of that now I'd still be happy as I was then. But it's a

it's kind of gloomy once in a while, but a, you still know the Lord is with ya and that's

the main thing.

Q. That's true, very true.

Q. So, thank you so much for

Other voice. What wonderful, wonderful stories and comments.

A. Thank you.

Other voice. You know, the young people are goin' to be very interested to hear them.

A. Yup, yup, yup.

Other voice. Yes they are. What a different kind of a life!

