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073

INTERVIEW #

6/29/79

DATE OF RECEIPT

I, **Myrtle Talbott** do hereby give and grant to the **Baltimore Neighborhood Heritage Project**, as a donation to its archival collection, the material listed below.

I also authorize the **University of Baltimore** to use said material for the purpose of research, according to the educational and historical purposes of the Project. In the event the University decides to discard the materials donated, the donor (or his/her family) must be notified and the material returned.

Myrtle E. Talbott

Signature of Informant Donor

1322 Parkside

Address of Informant Donor

Ann Place

Signature of Interviewer/Collector

2205 Eastern Place

Address of Interviewer/Collector

7/10/79
Date of Agreement

Description of Materials: **1 hr. tape – restricted on side two, starting with “and I know the only reason,” to “I just worked for this young fella,”**

(page18 of transcript)

BALTIMORE NEIGHBORHOOD HERITAGE PROJECT
BIOGRAPHY FORM

Name:	Myrtle Crawford (Hamilton) Talbott		
Address:	1322 Morling Ave.		
Phone:	243-0458		
Date of Birth:	3/2/08	Place of Birth:	1322 Morling Ave., Hampden

Mother's Name:	Anna Julia (Bonn) Hamilton		
Date of Birth:	8/13/1882	Place of Birth:	Pikesville
Occupation:	worked in Mill from 12 yrs – 18 yrs.		
Religion:	United Brethren		

Her Father: **Bonn (from England) Lutz – Chestnut Ridge, Balt. County**

Father's Name:	William McLain Hamilton		
Date of Birth:	6/16/1880	Place of Birth:	farm around Park Circle where his
Occupation:	Iron Molder at Pooles – father was Groundskeeper		
Religion:	-		

His Father **Hamilton – Crawfield – North Irish (Orangeman)**

Brothers and Sisters: list	Dates of Birth:
Hazel	1901
Katherine	1904
Anna	1906
Helen – Emma	1910

Schooling and/or Other Training: list	Years:
Whites School #57	1914-1919
School #55	1919-1922
St. Paul's Commercial School	1922-1924

Occupation(s): list	Years:
Stenographer for Lawyer	May 5 1904-1941
Interstate Commerce	1941-1942
Office of Defense Transportation	1942-1947
European Central Inland Transport Organization	1947
Department of State	1947-1948
B&O Railroad	1948-1973

Religion: United Brethren (United Methodist after 1968)	
Church Membership: Otterbein Church (always)	
Membership in Clubs and Organizations (ethnic, religious, political, unions, etc.)	
Eastern Star	1950 –
Railroad Union	1965 –
Ministry Unit – Otterbein Good Works Club	5 yrs.
Otterbein Guild Secretary	at least 10 yrs.

Previous Residence(s): list	Years:
1322 Morling Ave.	birth – present

Spouse's Name: Russell F. Talbott
Occupation: book keeping – last job-Nut & Bolt
Date of Marriage: 1947
Place of Marriage:

Children: list	Dates of Birth:

INTERVIEW NOTES
Name of Informant: Myrtle Talbott
General Topic of Interview(s):

Date(s) of interview(s): 6/19/79
Total length of Interview(s): 58 min. Total Number of Tapes: 1

Name of Interviewer: Susan Haws
Circumstances of the Interview: (places, others present and their relationship to the informant, etc.) Interview was at home with her sister present. I was a little nervous about the quality of the tape which was winding oddly. The interviewee was pleased to talk and speaks well. She called me later to tell me she wanted one sentence restricted (not very important one). Otherwise, was not worried about discussing anything.

Particularly Valuable Parts of the Interview: (topics discussed in greatest detail, areas of particular expertise, unique information, etc.)
General Evaluation of the Reliability of Informant and Information Contained on Tape: very good

Possible Topics for Further Investigation:
Other Comments:

**Interview with Myrtle Talbott
Interviewed by Susan Haws
Interviewed on June 19, 1979
At 1322 Moreland Avenue, Baltimore, MD**

Baltimore Neighborhood Heritage Project

**Transcribed by Lauren Abrams and Rachel Fischer, Anthropology 448W –
University of Maryland, November 2004**

SH: Mrs. Talbott, you were telling me before, about your grandparents. I wonder if you could tell me again the story of your grandparents?

MT: I only knew my mothers mother. [unclear] my fathers father, too.

SH: The grandparents that you remember.

MT: Mmhmm, my grandmother on my mothers side lived with us, always. My my grandfather on my fathers side lived on Brook Hill on [unclear] a lot because we liked to be with them.

SH: Do you know where they came from? Your grandfather on your father's side?

MT: My grandfather on my fathers side came from the north of Ireland. North of Ireland. And ah my grandmother on my fathers side came from the north of Ireland too, but she was a baby my grandfather came over in a sailing boat when he was about 19 ...

SH: How did you grandmother and you mother come to Maryland and come to [unclear]?

MT: My ah grandmother on my mothers side was born in was is now Chestnut Ridge, out the Greenspring avenue way and uh, [unclear] raised out there. And then they eventually lived out in Pikesville and eventually came to Hampden to work in a mill.

SH: Uh huh, why did they- why did they come to Hampden in the first place? I heard a story about that, I think that your grandfather died...

MT: Ah yes, my grandfather on my mothers side had died when she was about 10 and then they eventually moved here I think when she was about 12 and ah...

SH: How did they manage here in Hampden when they first got here- how did they get along?

MT: My grandmother then took boarders as I understand it before, probably before my mother went to work in the mill. But then, and I don't know if they put boarders after

that, they may have. 'Cause then a lot of people kept boarders. People [unclear] work in the mill...

SH: And do you know, did they move into this house here...?

MT: No! My aunt said they lived in a moving wagon for a long time, they had lived so many places renting. And then they finally moved here maybe about, mm, 77 years ago or so and rented it first and then eventually bought the house. About 1904, I think, 1906, sometime around there or about. I think 6 or 700 dollars.

SH: Who did they buy this house from? Do you know?

MT: No I don't know that. I don't know.

SH: Do you remember the story of your mother's work in the mill, anything she might have told you? How old she was when she went to work?

MT: Momma went to work in the mill when she was 12, but if she talked about the work, I don't really remember, I'll tell you that. She talked about the people, but uh, um, not that I remember too much about the mill.

SH: What did she tell you about the people?

MT: I guess a lot of people she worked with eventually gave it up, you know. We had one lady that would come here and work every Sunday and stay for supper, I guess because she felt free to come here, you know, she was welcome. I could never understand it with so many children around, why she would want to come.

SH: Were there any other people who worked in the mill who you knew, or lived in this neighborhood?

MT: Yes, another lady that ah, who was a friend of mamma's, she uh, lived in Hampden. And she did, well she worked in the mill when she was little, and then when she got older, she worked at the bank. Um, her husband had died and I guess she kept borders and then worked at the bank, cleaning up, but eventually went into the Methodist town and I used to visit her all the time, she lived to be about 90. Then people didn't get any help, they helped themselves. Not like now

SH: Is the other one punched in too?

SH: Yea the red lights on, Um, could you tell me about your father's work, and how he...

MT: Yes my father went to work to learn his trade when he was 17, um, I've heard the tale that somebody wanted him to learn to be a florist, but he had to go and live with those people, and be an apprentice, but he didn't want to leave home, so he went to Poole and learned to be an iron maker. Worked, well worked different places, at Poole's, and I guess

depending upon the work, at Bartlett's, and uh During the war he worked at Martin's, that was light, that was different kind of work and after the war he was back at Poole's, which was only [unclear].

SH: Would he train at Poole's?

MT: Yeah, yeah.

SH: That would have been in 18...

MT: He was born in 1880 and he went there when he was 17, so that was in 1897.

SH: You mentioned a couple of different stories about your father's work that were interesting. One of them was how he got re-hired.

MT: Yes, when I was in Washington, the man who was the head of the Belmar, my father wasn't working at the time, who was the head of the Belmar, came in our office, and uh, we told him about my father's work and how he had worked there. Later one of the bosses comes from the Belmar company, came to my father. He went back to work. People there couldn't understand how my father would have know that. A pipeline to get you a job, huh?

SH: You said that he was a very good iron worker.

MT: Very good. He was excellent, he liked his work.

SH: Do you know of anything he worked on, specifically?

MT: I think they used to talk about making bells, probably church bells, was one of the things they talked about. But I don't remember which sound it would have been.

SH: Did he ever mention to you what it was like working at Poole's, if he liked it, the work?

MT: Yes, he liked his work, he was very happy with his work.

SH: Was he happy with the bosses, or was he...

MT: I think so, uh huh, one boss he was very fond of.

SH: Do you remember that man's name?

MT: Uh huh, Mr. Gartstein, Gartstein, uh huh, he was the head boss. He used to push dear or dad around.

SH: Seems like he was very proud of his work.

MT: I think so, uh huh, I think he liked it very much.

SH: Could you tell me about the neighborhood here, when you were growing up, what you remember most about it? What it was like?

MT: Course, when we were little, our street wasn't paved, it was all dirt, and, uh, our bathroom was in the backyard, our toilet, and uh, I was thinking after I talked to you the other day, we listened to the radio a lot when we were growing up, talking about things that you do. And that was a big thing, to listen to the stories on the radio. But we played on the street, and uh, had a lot of happy times, because there's always been a lot of children around here, when we were little, growing up.

SH: What do you remember about the neighbors?

MT: The neighbors, the way the girls were talking in church today, about how one neighbor helped another, and that's the way it was here. They were, as we used to say, it was like a family, people really worked together.

SH: Can you think of any times when that was particularly true?

MT: Well, just all the time. One time my grandmother had an infected eye, and uh, momma had all these children to look after, and one of the neighbors would come in and look after grandmamma.

SH: What about the jobs of the people who lived around here, do you remember what jobs most people had or where they worked?

MT: Well of course a lot of people worked in the mill and then a lot of people worked in the church, actually. The ladies did.

SH: Do you know which mill they worked in mostly?

MT: Well of course, in later years it would have been, like down at Mount Vernon, which was way down falls road, or Hooper's mill, because the other mills then were taken over by, uh, other businesses.

SH: Where's Hofackers?

MT: On Hickory Avenue and then years ago there was one on Elm Avenue, where there's a market now. A lot of the ladies worked up there. I think they all closed now.

SH: Did anybody work on the railroads that you remember?

MT: Yes there were a lot of people at Hamden that worked on the railroads, not especially, my uncle worked on the railroad at the Pennsylvania, but uh, not people that I

really would have known too much but there were, you could tell that by uh, when they would be off, and maybe have meetings, I don't know whether when they had strikes or not, but up at Redman's hall you would see crowds of them, probably where they came for meetings. So there were a lot of people, I think, who worked on the railroad, from around here.

SH: And there were strikes that you remember where people were laid off for a while?

MT: I don't remember that, I just remember the crowds being up there, I was on strike one day, one day. It wasn't a big time thing, it was a picnic. Just one day in all the years that I worked there, I was off one day.

SH: You worked at B & O how many years?

MT: Um, I went to work for B & O in 1948 and took my pension in 1973. About 25, almost 26 years.

SH: Were there people here who worked at Poole, besides your father?

MT: Uh huh, my older sister worked at Poole's for a while she was a secretary. That was back during the First World War because then I think the army or the navy had taken over Poole's, the way they did during war times. And um they all got their dinners every day, a hot dinner, and uh, she worked there, I guess, till she was married, which wasn't too long, cause she was young.

SH: Do you remember if your father had, if your friends were people worked at Poole's too, a lot?

MT: Yeah they would always have different ones, I mean the men in the neighborhood who worked at Poole. Different neighbors who worked along with him, worked with him in the shop.

SH: Um, do you remember what shopping was like when you were a little girl and you'd be helping your mother maybe?

MT: Um, most of the shopping then was done in the neighborhood. When we were little, um the order boy came from Hall's. Mr. Hall had a business on Falls Road. And, uh the order boy would come and get your order and send your things to you. Then in later years, after Mr. Hall didn't do that, we had a store right on the street, Cole's, where everybody dealt. And you would buy your things and pay for them each week. Something you couldn't do now in a supermarket. They wouldn't trust you that much.

SH: Did things come in the same kind of packages as they do now?

MT: No, things were weighed up then. The sugar was put in bags and the tea because when momma bought tea she bought half green and half black I think, they'd shake it up

in the bag. And uh, the cheese was cut, you know, it didn't come packaged at all. Course we didn't have a lot of soft drinks or fast foods then. We wouldn't have had the money for that anyway, for that. We had root beer maybe on the fourth of July, ice cream.

SH: Well that brings me to my other question, which was do you remember any big holidays that were important to you?

MT: Well, the fourth or July, the our church always had a Sunday school picnic in Duehill park and we would march out, dress the children up. I had a class at the time and we would dress them up in red, white and blue and uh, prizes were given for the best decorated and we tried to out do one another.

SH: Red, white and blue?

MT: Uh huh, Crepe paper, we'd get their petticoats and sew the paper on the petticoats and uh, we had a lot of happy times. Take our lunch to the park and spend the day.

SH: Was your church the only church that did that?

MT: No, all the churches in Hamden would do that, our trip to the park. Most of them went to the park.

SH: Do you remember any uh, kind of activities that you had there?

MT: Yeah they would play ball and races and different things they would have for the children. They still do that when they're having a picnic Sunday, but they go to a private property, now. They have a picnic, um hum.

SH: What about, were there any other events in Hamden that you remember? Could have been a one time event, or things that happened...

MT: We had a one time event in 32, wasn't it, when they had a big celebration in Hamden and had a big parade, but I don't know what anniversary that was. I remember Mr. Violets had an elephant, like a big elephant, because he was a republican and uh, had that in the parade and, um, that was a big year. I bet Margaret would have the book from that. You know Margaret said she had some of the books. And probably the book from that, but I know it was 1932 cause that was the year Richard was born, as I remember.

SH: Was it a big parade?

MT: Uh huh, big time in Hamden. Must have been an anniversary but I don't know what anniversary it would have been.

SH: Did it last a long time?

MT: Maybe several days, but that I don't remember either.

SH: What about with Armistice Day, uh, no decoration day?

MT: Yes, Decoration Day was a big time in Hamden. Um, they had a parade and then they would go to the graveyard in Saint Mary's, and uh, soldiers would be there and shoot the guns, you know, and uh, everybody would be there. They'd decorate the graves of course, and you'd see lots and lots of friends, people that you knew.

SH: Did, did the different groups and fellowships and uh, fraternal organizations participate in the parade?

MT: Probably they would be in that, I don't just remember which ones, but there would be a lot of them, I'm sure.

SH: What about amusements that you and, and your friends had? What kinds of things would you do?

MT: When we were little we used to go to Crawlands. Crawlands was new then and we would walk over there you know you'd walk down through Woodberry and Walnut and, uh we went there a lot. We went there one night especially, when Helen's son Kenneth was born, and my husband and I took, well we weren't married then, but we took Helen's other two children to uh, Crawland's to spend the evening and later they said, every time mommy goes home, goes to the hospital she brings home another baby. (Laughs) Kenneth is 43 so that was 43 years ago. But we had a lot of good times out there, that was the nice park to go to. And then to Gwen Oaks, they'd have a lot of picnics to Gwen Oak, we'd go there and spend the day, and you could take the street car there.

SH: What kind of things would you do here in Hamden?

MT: Well they would have carnivals here, a lot of the churches had carnivals or maybe some of the lodges would have them, I don't remember, but I knew Hamden church used to have one, I'm sure on Hickory, near 36, below 36, and uh, we would always be at those, and then we would go to the church tent meetings. Had a lot of good times there, meeting boys and uh, we'd be on the outside of the tents, but we had a lot of fun there, that was probably when we were in our early teens.

SH: Did you go to the movies?

MT: Oh yes, I loved the movies, um when I was maybe thirteen, or fourteen I would work to get every cent I could to go to the movies. I always loved the movies.

SH: How did you work?

MT: Well I used to go to the bank for people, and people had Christmas clubs, and I'd gather up the Christmas clubs and pay them and uh, different things that you would do to earn a little money, course we didn't have much money then. When I hear of children now

getting five or ten dollars spending money, it's amazing to me, I don't think it's good, children expect too much of life.

SH: Were, were there, uh, any sort of social events that you may have had in this neighborhood, any parties?

MT: We used to have a street carnival, Helen did a lot of work with that. Play bingo and sell things, things to eat, that, we had a nice time with that. Just neighbors mostly.

SH: When was that?

MT: Oh that would have been, gosh I don't know how many years ago, a good many though, I can't remember. I don't know, maybe in the early 40s, probably the early 40s

SH: Did you have parties, when you were younger?

MT: Yes, when we were real little, they used to have what they called pam parties, and everybody would take something.

SH: What was that for?

MT: Well it was a get together, but it just wouldn't cost the person having it much, we used to go to Simmon's, they used to have parties, neighbors who lived a couple doors from us when we were little. Yeah, we used to have, they'd call them pam parties, you know. Now everybody takes something but I don't think they call them pam parties. How did music get into you life when you were little?

Well we always had a piano when we were little, my mother had always enjoyed music, but uh she had said she had taken from a blind man when she was little. When her father died she had to give it up, and my mother would have been talented. And I think that the man she took them from was distressed that she couldn't afford it, but we took music lessons when we were little, didn't pay enough attention to it, but we took them. I can remember that so well, I was probably ten, because the lady that I went to first, the music on her piano would be First World War music. That's how, keep the home fires burning, things that were out during the first world war. Yeah, I've always regretted that, that you don't keep that up.

SH: Did people, did you ever sing?

MT: Yeah, uh huh, you know, you'd gather around the piano and sing. I think when my mother was growing up she said that would be the main thing. If somebody could play real well and that's the way that they would entertain themselves.

SH: Did you ever hear people talking about the mills when you were growing up or did you see people coming out of the mills?

MT: Yeah, you would see the people. I remember especially a colored lady who worked in the mills, who would come up the street and uh, we were little then, I don't remember how long. That was in druid mills, which was right at the bottom. I think there's a furniture company or something like that now. And she would go along humming and you know the children would be attracted to that but a lot of them lived in what is now cross key's. That was a settlement, and uh, that's where most of em came from.

SH: What about the people in the neighborhood, did you ever hear much talk about the mills, did people discuss it a lot, or?

MT: I don't think so, I don't know, not that I remember too much.

SH: You went to school?

MT: Yes I went to White's school. I guess that would have been, I was, that would have been 1914, when I was 6, which was on, what was then church street, which is now Evan's chapel, where the green spring is, up that way and um, that was like a barn. And uh we had stoves in the middle of the floor and we had outside toilets and we had marvelous teachers, people that you still remember who were outstanding people and then from 57 I went to 55 for the seventh and eighth grade.

SH: What do you remember about the teachers at uh, 67?

MT: I can remember every teacher from the first grade. In the first grade we had Mrs. Kate, who was, most people were interested in you then, that really was their life. In the second grade we had Mrs. Jenny and we learned to tell time in the second grade, she had a big clock that one of the father's had made for her. She would teach you to tell time. And in the third grade we had Ms. Ray, who was, they were all just outstanding people. In the fourth we had a younger teacher, I don't know what happened to the fourth that the younger one came, but uh she was a younger teacher, I don't just remember her name. Then in the fifth, they, we had a lovely lady, ms. Martha. In the sixth, ms. Adrienne, who was a perfect lady, lovely lady.

SH: Sounds like you enjoyed school.

MT: Yeah, I did. I would have been like Harry, I would have liked to have gone the rest of my life.

SH: What did you like about it particularly?

MT: Well I just enjoyed school, I enjoyed learning. And I always got along pretty good, so it wasn't too much difficulty that way. I liked it. I ask the children now if they had spelling bees. They'd stand you up on each side of the room, you know, and you'd compete. And then they gave you little kewpie dolls, which I wish I had now, but I don't have, but uh, that made it interesting for you, cause like I say that was their life's work.

SH: What was 55 like?

MT: Then at 55 I had, well, uh I think the best teacher they ever had, Mrs. Alice, she was so wonderful that she made it easy for you and she was always ready to compliment you and encourage you and they were all good teachers, but she was exceptional.

SH: What kind of things did you learn from Alice?

MT: Well for one thing you learned to put your blinds right. She said if you lived in a house, you wanted people to know you lived there and you always had your blinds nice and even, and not weird up (?) and she would teach the boys to dress and wear a tie, they don't teach them anymore because they don't wear a tie. But along with learning, she taught you other things. We try to teach you how to act, and how to act with other children. You know then they would have some Chinese children, their people had the laundry on 36th street and she taught you that those children were the same as you and you should treat them the same. She was a very, very understanding person. Like, you didn't make fun of them because they looked different. You treated them just the same as you treated your own people. She was an exceptional person.

SH: You say there were some black people, who came, who worked in the mill?

MT: Uh huh.

SH: Did any of those children go to school?

MT: Not then, no, uh uh, no, I don't know where those children probably would have gone. I think they had a little school of theirs.

SH: Was it more than just that one lady, who was black?

MT: Oh no, there would have been others, probably, but they, see I just remember her. And then she seemed old, but I guess when you're young, I probably seem awful old to people, the way they look at me on the street. I don't feel that ancient but they look at you like you're ancient. (Laughs) I don't feel that ancient

SH: You said there were a few people who you remember in your neighborhood who had accidents at the mill.

MT: Yes, one of our neighbors, course that was before my time, but uh, this young man had learned his trade and uh, the first day after he had learned his trade, he was killed. Momma said that was a terrible day because you could hear his people screaming and screaming. He was probably just 21 or very young. But the equipment in the mills, see they had just big things that you had to be careful. You just slip once, you know and you were hurt. We had an uncle, Uncle Pete, died over at the mill, but he wouldn't have been hurt, I don't think, I think he just died a natural death, but it happened in the mill. My mother's uncle. And then a lady next door to us, she had her finger off. And then of

course, you had your finger off, you didn't get compensation, it was just off. And that's it, yeah, she went around all her life with just part of a finger. Now compensation is a big help.

SH: Do you remember if there was anything that people talked about in the neighborhood that the mill did for them? Dances or holidays, or?

MT: If they did, I don't know. The only thing I ever remember was one time Poole's had an outing to Chesapeake Beach. And we took a boat trip to Chesapeake Beach and mom and I were sick all the way. Hangin' out the window [laughs] you know, we weren't used to goin' out. But that was a long boat ride! And we would take our lunch and then of course you had to take a street car to get home. Street cars always made me ill when I- I couldn't stand that odor! You know how that odor would be on—well you don't know 'cause your not that old... but the odor would sorta upset ya. I guess if you weren't used to riding, another thing that used to upset me was riding an elevator. OH my dear! I'd really be sick. --- There are some people these days who still can't ride 'em. One of the girls at church, uh she wont go up the apartment half because she wont get on those elevators that ya operate yourself...she wont do it. Hel and I went down to that building at two twenty two St. Paul Street to the foot doctor, see if we could go. When I got on that elevator I though 'Oh,' to the thirty forth floor? And the elevator was so dark! And uh, you just hold your breath till you get to the thirty forth floor.

SH: What was Christmas like, for your family?

MT: Well our Christmas was very meager. We had a baby doll who would have been dressed up every year. And we always had a tree which we probably left up till Easter. And uh, then we didn't have uh, heat- central heating. We had a stove in the middle of that room, and our tree would be back in this corner. And we had folding doors then, and they would be closed. And uh, we would have heat for Christmas. I guess the tree stayed up so long because it was cold in there, it would keep. But uh, we didn't get lots of toys we uh couldn't afford them, but we always had a baby doll.

SH: Was there any holiday that was more important to you or more fun than Christmas? In your family?

MT: No, we still had birthdays. When I was little my mom always fixed me a lemon cake, that was my favorite so I would have a lemon cake for my birthday.

SH: Was Thanksgiving an important holiday?

MT: Well, uh of course we would all be here but uh, I guess so. I don't think that would have stood out as much as Christmas though -----.

SH: What were the rules that your parents enforced in your life that were important, the things they tried to teach you?

MT: Well uh. Usually we had to listen, if we didn't we'd uh – I got a couple whippings -
- But not usually, um. I, I, you just did that. ([phone rings...]) you know, (you want to
get that Hel?) What uh, you were supposed to do. Like [phone rings] being in when you
should and being in on meal time. And um, when you went out your parents knew where
you were going. [long pause] (Oh there he is; thank you!)

SH: Can you tell me a little bit, you said that you knew- that you met boys outside the
uh-

MT: Yeah, at the – mm hmm, we used to go up to the Ten at thirty seven and...mm, I
guess that would be Chestnut. And uh, that's when we were teenagers. And uh, my
cousin was here from Philadelphia. She came for one week and stayed for three because
she met a boy up there and we really had a lot of fun.

SH: What kinds of things would you do with a boy, on a date or where would you go...?

MT: We'd go to the movies. Or um, went to Timonium Fair. We had nice boys, too. I
don't know, when you look back, it doesn't seem real sometimes, you know? It seems so
long ago. But uh, time goes by quickly. But we knew nice boys. And of course we
always had a lot people at the house, the boys would come here because there were a lot
of girls here. But my mother and father were always here, somebody was here we weren't
left alone. We were always chaperoned...

---- SIDE B of tape----
...never did.

SH: How did they feel about your education – [break in tape]

SH: What about the church? It seems like church was pretty important to your family.

MT: Yes, we uh, well we uh, my mother always saw that we went to church. We always-
from the time that we were five or six, she didn't take us when we were babies. Well, she
couldn't have. But from the time that we were probably five or six we never missed
Sunday school unless we had to. And we never missed school either. Never. We never
knew such a word as 'hookie'. I mean we just didn't do it, stay home. But uh, we always
went to Sunday school, too, always. And to the same one that my mother had started in,
you know, when she moved down here.

SH: Well how did you feel about going to Sunday school?

MT: Well I don't think you feel, I think that that's what you were told to do and it was
just a part of your life so that you did it. And it, I mean you would have missed it if you
hadn't gone because it was something you were doing.

SH: And as you got older? How did you feel about going to Sunday school?

MT: Well I've always gone except for some years that I couldn't go. But uh, we've always gone.

SH: What do you think that it did for you and for your family?

MT: Well I think it gives you faith. For one thing, you've got something to go on if you have difficulties. [pause] We were talking to a lady up, that lives up near church today, she used to go to our church. But she's up in years now, I don't think she goes anyplace. But she's very religious and she's there by herself and uh, but she says uh, the good lord is always with her. She doesn't have any worries. She's taken care of. She's by herself. But I think it give you faith and I think that's something you need to go on.

SH: Did your church, since you've belonged to it for so long, have you ever seen and instance where its done something for the community, for Hampden.

MT: Well our ministry that we have now is a great believer in H.W.R. Some of the people at church aren't...

SH: H.W.R. community council?

MT: Community center. It was room 37. And uh, the main thing that I see with that is feeding people who are hungry. And uh, every now and then, or a lot of time, all the time people give, take, uh canned goods or food to church and our minister takes it down to the center. And we've been in there when people have come in and asked for food so I know there are people who need food. And I-

SH: People in Hampden, do you think?

MT: Yes. And I believe in that. I can't picture anybody being hungry in a world of plenty. I just can't picture that. And then we've been up there at tax meetings up to the center. Talk- they've had different people there. And uh, that's about the only thing that we've really, personally that we've helped with. But uh all the ministers in Hampden are interested in it. And uh, I think they do a lot of good work.

SH: While you were younger and going to church, did you ever notice sort of the elders of the church and who they were and where they worked, when you were younger? Were you familiar with them?

MT: No...

SH: I wonder if they had anything to do with the mill.

MT: I had letter from a lady yesterday who um, was raised here. She -- she's up in Quincy Pennsylvania now. But I had sent her that write up that was in the Sunday paper about that meeting they had at Woodbury church, about the mill. And she said 'Oh, if I could only be there to talk with 'em' She said, 'my father went to work in the mill in

1987. And she used to help him, she said like after school and on Saturdays. I don't know what she had done, book work, probably. Until she went to work for the [unclear] yeah and she said 'My, I wish I could be there and talk about the mill'. And of course she's up in Pennsylvania now...

SH: I wonder if you ever noticed in the church if you ever noticed that there were people who thought they were a little fancier than other people [laughs].

MT: Oh, I'm sure. Yeah. The Bonton. But they aren't any fancier, they just think they are.

SH: Were there truly any people who were maybe a little higher up in income...

MT: Well they may have made more money, but uh... But as Mr. Christian says, nobody is any better than you are, they might be as good but they are no better. And that's the way I feel.

SH: Where-where- you mentioned a name, was that a name of your people?

MT: That, oh Christian on the talk show, he always says that. At night on—

SH: Now you said the Bontons?

MT: Well I just-no, that just means people who think – the Bontons, people who think they're different. But they're not.

SH: Were there any families that you remember, did they come from- were they doing something different from other people? Did they work- were they bosses at the mill?

MT: Well that, sure, they might've had they're own business. You know, maybe... I don't know. But you'll find people like that in any church I think.

SH: I wonder if you remember if you think back about it, were there any different places in Hampden where people lived who had different kinds of- maybe different kinds of uh, who thought about themselves differently or maybe there were people who were very wealthy, or the wealthiest people in Hampden. Do you know where they lived?

MT: Well of course [unclear] avenue was always considered nice, wasn't it. Nice place to live.

SH: What- where would people on ---- avenue work, do you think?

MT: I don't know. One man had a moving business and then this other man had a plumbing business they had a, a lot of different places, probably.

SH: Where there any places where people who were probably not so well off, maybe poorer than you considered yourself then, where they would live? If people said, you know so and so lives over in...

MT: I don't know. I don't know. I never think about people like that. Yeah, I don't know. Cause we didn't have much. I went to St. Paul's, I had two dresses I wore one one week and one—of course you took your dresses off as soon as you came home, you didn't play in them. And ah, one time one of the girls over at school said to me, 'don't you have any more?' and I said 'that's it.' But we had one girl who was in our class, very brilliant girl. She only had one dress, like a mini sailor dress. And the day she was 18 she went to the convent, so she wore the same dress the rest of her life. I guess I was pretty luck to have two! [laughs]. Yeah, I've often thought about that. She was so brilliant- well of course they weren't brilliant once... She's a nurse at St. Joes now.

SH: What do you remember about the depression?

MT: Well um. You saw my kitchen stove, I mean you went through my kitchen we still have our kitchen stove. My father never wanted it out, and mom never had it out so I just haven't bothered. But uh, one of my old neighbors called me just lately and said 'You still have your kitchen stove?' and I said 'yes'. But during the depression I think I made \$15 a week, my father was out of work and we had to use our kitchen stove because we didn't have the money. To heat the whole house. And my mother knew how to do, to economize; my mother knew how to save. And ah, we we had it rough. Didn't we, Helen did too. Raising a family.

SH: What about other people in the neighborhood? Did you—

MT: Yes, our store keeper across had welfare orders and ah, it was sad to see the people lined up there to get welfare orders who had- lived nice. But they didn't have anything then. And then people worked for the W.P.A. when they didn't have work you know, after Roosevelt got in. They had to do work like that. We had one man at the office who was absolutely a marvelous boss, at the B&O, and when he came out of college you couldn't get out of work, and he worked for CCC camps, you know the one that fixed the skyline drive. Until he finally got with the B&O. But people didn't have anything. The people these days I don't think can realize what that was. And so many people had bought homes up this way, like 41st, 42nd, you know and so many people lost their homes. So many of them. But people just don't realize how difficult that was. I was just lucky to hang on to my job, uh during then but I made \$15 a week.

SH: Did you notice when the depression started to sort of let up a little bit?

MT: Yeah, I guess it would have been the real late '30s, wouldn't it? Real late. And then I wasn't making very much and that's when I took civil service and went to Washington. To make more money. I had to do something, you know, you just can't sit still.

SH: We talked a little bit about what you thought the boundaries of Hampden and Woodbury.

MT: Yeah, well Helen's son was over last night and he said [unclear] and he said something about Rollin Park and he lives on Beach Avenue. I says anybody in 11 lives in Woodbury. And he just says that, we just kid about that you know. Cause Beach Avenue is very nice, he has a lovely home over there. But I don't know, course on the other side of the tracks would be Woodbury, I would think. But I'd say when we were little like at the bottom of the hill, we called that Druid Ville? And over here I guess would be Hampden. Up that way, where the [unclear], they call that Medfield. So- but they're all within the Hampden radius I think. Cause they're all eleven. [laughs]

SH: What would you say then? Would you say that, is Woodbury part of Hampden, do you think, or?

MT: I don't think it would be part, but its close associated with Hampden. I know some nice people in Woodbury too, very nice. People that have lived there —

SH: Did you have friends there when you were little or?

MT: Yeah, that's where we would go every Sunday over on Brick Hill to my uh, fathers sister's. And ah, we were little then and we'd go in the park. We went over to Woodbury church you know, a couple of weeks ago to the Ecumenical service and I hadn't been in Woodbury church for years. And it really was nice to go. And they have a lot of nice people who go to that church.

SH: Wonder if you could describe, just briefly, you work as, um for the B&O.

MT: My work for the B&O was very interesting. I worked in the claim department where we took care of the people who were hurt. And whenever you deal with people, you know that, its interesting. And uh the old B&O was the best place in the world to work. And uh yes, the office was small and I think we had the nicest office in the whole company.

SH: Where was the office?

MT: The Carleton Baltimore, the central building they called it. And uh, it was really nice.

SH: And there was—

MT: Then we finally went in with the C&O in 1965. Then you went in the union and you made more money. C&O paid a whole lot more money. But uh, there wasn't that home atmosphere that there was in the old B&O. The old B&O was like a family. It really was.

SH: Did you get to know any of the people who worked on the railroad?

MT: No, only in the offices. This was all office work.

SH: And there was no union? Was there ever—

MT: There was a union, but our office wasn't unionized, they called 'em. Different offices- the law department of our office, I don't know how many but they—I don't know why. But uh, we didn't belong to the union. But under the C&O it was compulsory. But we had all the advantages that the union people had which really isn't right either because uh they would get the raises then they'd vote us a raise. But uh, and we weren't paying union dues. So uh, maybe there was some inequity, I don't know.

SH: Do you um, have some opinions about unions?

MT: No, I – I think the unions do good and I think they do bad. Because I don't think anybody who's interested in their work has to be told to work or what not to do. But uh, I do think that they look out for people when they need to be looked out for. And that's what I uh, liked about the unions.

SH: What are your objections? What do you think is not good about the unions?

MT: Well I don't think you can have much initiative. You have to the rule, according to them and I don't think you can use your own head at all. Maybe I'm not right, I don't know. But uh, I have no complaints myself, the union was alright with me but then again I didn't need the help of the unions. I did my work. Paid my dues. And uh, was only off one day so I mean I don't have key quall about the unions at all.

SH: How did you manage to get work when you were 16?

MT: Well I had quite a time. You know I had finished school well I think our graduation day was June the sixteenth. And we went out- huh?- no, at St. Paul's, mm hmm in east Baltimore, and the sister would send us out early because of the high schools coming out. So she would get the children out earlier. And then, girls didn't fix up, you know, you didn't wear lipstick or fix up like girls do today. We looked like children. And uh, I had a terrible time until I finally got a job. With a lawyer.

SH: How did you find that job?

MT: Um, I think through the Royal Typewriter Company. That lady knew the sister at school and she would send you out on jobs and that didn't cost you anything.

<< It is agreed that the Baltimore Neighborhood Heritage Project will not authorize publication of the following tape section and transcript section relating thereto for all time. One tape number one, side two, starting with "and I know the only reason," to "I just worked for this young fella," >>>>

MT: ...I went loads of places. One place I went the man said “we couldn’t hire you! Why, the labor laws would be out after us”. But I was 16, but probably didn’t look 16. And uh, but I got this job and I stayed for 17 years. Then I took the civil service and went to Washington. But I still keep in touch with this young fella who had hired me. Still write to him at Christmas and uh... about 10 years older than me. And he’s still around [laughs]

SH: Tell me about, um what you’ve seen of politics in Hampden. Your aware of, a little bit of how people get things done in Hampden when you need things done.

MT: Well I’ve never really been into politics, much mostly everyone here is a democrat, except Tom-- . And uh, I’ve never really had to use politics. And if I had any complaints, I would call Mr. Nevin, who works in the mayors office. Mr. Nevin lives in Hampden, he doesn’t know me personally but I have called him, if I had any complaints, which I very rarely did.

SH: Has there ever been something that you or a group of people in Hampden thought was really important to bring to the attention of city hall, or someone, to get it done? And how did you take care of that?

MT: We used to have a neighborhood association but I don’t know, I wasn’t active in that so I don’t really know any uh, of anything that would have been done. I don’t know.

SH: What do you think are, um, the changes in this neighborhood? Or are there any changes in this neighborhood?

MT: Oh I’m sure there are. Because it used to be that most people owned their home. And then when, maybe when people would die at the house would be sell—and a lot of times you get people who rent. And I think that makes a difference. ‘cause I don’t think people are too interested then. I think when people own their home they uh...

SH: What happened to the children of the people who used to live here?

MT: Well a lot of them still live here, they’ve lived here for generations, you know. I’ll tell you the girl next door, why they’ve been on this street for four generations. And uh, ‘course ours was three generations wasn’t it. And uh, most of ‘em—a lot of them have lived here for along time.

SH: But the- the ones who now rent...?

MT: Well most of them I don’t know. I just don’t know them. Only the- most of the people you know you’ve known for a long time.

SH: What about the children of the people who, well I guess it was the children of the people who used to live here who sold some of the homes, or rented them?

MT: Uh yeah, people if they were dying maybe the property would have to be divided, sold and divided. Then uh, and the children had left.

SH: Do you know where they went?

MT: Well a lot of time when children get married and get their own place. Uh, they would go other places. Helen's, all hers lived in Ham—no, Robert lived in, her one son lives in Riderwood. But uh, and Barbara lives in Parksville. But uh, Carol and Harry and Kenneth, they all still live here.

SH: What about changes in Hampden itself? Have you noticed any changes in the Hampden area?

MT: Well I think 36th street is different from what it used to be. Look at all the empty stores. And I don't know why that is, what happened. The one lady that had the store on the avenue said she had to give it up because of her husband's health. But um—

SH: What store was that?

MT: O'Brian's. And they had a nice store there, but uh.. I don't really know. I don't know what happens to them.

SH: Is there anything else that you can—

MT: And then Grimm's, of course they were there for years and years. And they just sold out their place. I hope someone buys it though, so it can be opened.

SH: Is there anything else besides the stores, that you think is different—

MT: No then we used to have the movies on the avenue, we had the two movies but they are gone, I guess because I guess of the movies. And then when we were little they had the Omare movies, at 36 and Roman which we used to go to. I remember that so well because one night- and it was a treat for us to go to the movies, like to go to that. But this one night some girl had come to visit us and I don't know whether she had- something had happened in her home and she had come here. Somebody that my mother and father knew. And we all went to the movies up there. But the girl's mother and father came after her, and I think that broke up our trip to the movies, which saddened me but...I don't know what had happened with the girl, but uh... yeah, that was an Oamare movie. Just like they have drive-ins now, only they had benches in ...

SH: Do you think the changes are...

MT: Good? Well I don't know. According to the looks of the avenue I don't think they look so good. I think the avenue is horrible now, don't you? I hope it will be better when they get it fixed up. But of course we have the Rotunda which is a great addition I think.

When we were little that was lootin country. Then the Casualty built there. And uh, um when the Casualty had that old years back, they used to have concerts every Sunday that a lot of people would go to up there.

SH: Who had the concerts?

MT: Well different groups. They would have good concerts up there, every Sunday afternoon.

[Helen]: For free, too

MT: For free, uh huh. The Casualty would have- I remember so well that one singer who was a lawyer in the Calvert building, Mr. Harris. And hes a retired judge now, I saw a clip in the paper lately where they were going to bring him back to something. But he was a great singer. And I remember, he used to sing up there. I didn't know him only knew who he was. But uh, they had concerts up there all the time. And then they eventually tore that building down, yes, and built that new building.

SH: Did know a lot of people who worked for Maryland Casualty?

MT: Uh, no not too many. 'Course they had a lot of workers but they didn't pay anything. I remember one of the lawyers in their office said his son worked there. He was later killed in the service, but he said you cant start any lower. [laughs] The wages probably were, rock bottom. But now another company has that, Casualty doesn't have it now.

SH: Why have you stayed in Hampdon?

MT: I don't know. Why do you stay in a place? Because for one thing, I've always stayed home with my people and uh, I just never occurred to do anything else I guess. I wouldn't have it any other way. <<loud noise>> oh, I'm getting away, huh?

SH: Um, what do you like about it?

MT: Well, I think the main thing is that its home. I wouldn't want to live way out. I think its important to live where you can get to and from places, its on the car line. And uh, well I guess its just home, that's the big thing.

SH: What don't you like about it?

MT: Well, there isn't too much I don't like about it. If people were a little more careful in keeping the streets clean I think it'd be nice. No, I don't have any complaints.

SH: Some people have told me that they are upset about the security, the safety when walking around...

MT: Well we don't go out at night, not by ourselves. We're going to the concert tonight over Tudor Arms, the park concert. But then Helen's son will bring us home, we'll walk over but he'll bring us—oh! About... hmm... When Carrie was a baby, Helens little one, I was stopped by there one night and Helen says 'your not walking out by yourself?' I said 'yes, I'm not afraid' he says 'don't ever do it again, you might be made afraid. But uh, I really had never felt afraid. But I'd say I don't take any chances on going out at night by myself, wouldn't do that. But we've never had any difficulty.

SH: What would you hope for your nieces and nephews?

MT: Well I think of that. I think of the little ones and what do they have faith in, I don't know. Just have to pray that life will be good, they'll be able to face it.

SH: Is there anything special that you'd like for them?

MT: No, because they have their own lives to live, they have to figure that out. Not to interfere, huh. Only I'd like to see people learn more trade. I think that's good. We stopped in the store on the avenue today to get liver, they have delicious liver at the store, and I said to this fella, you learned to be a meat cutter? He said 'yes, I've been here about [unclear]', I said I think its wonderful. And I like to see things like that. I think things like that are important. More so then all those graduates at Johns Hopkins. [Laughs] I like people to learn trade because I think they're very important.

SH: What about the other kids who you went to school with? You think they all learned trades?

MT: Well the fella across the street, hes the same age as me, he learned to be a sheet metal worker. Hes very ill now, but uh... And then another boy who was in my class, who was a brilliant boy, he—well of course I haven't seen him since I went to school- but I understand he learned to be a chemist. He lived down south, but he was- you know, just exceptional, I thought.

SH: Is there something that you'd like people, specifically to remember about Hampden, that I haven't asked you that you think should be on this tape?

MT: I don't really know. Just that it's a nice place to live I think.

SH: Is there something about you that I didn't mention that you'd like to be on this tape?

MT: No...

SH: Why- do you think its useful to do history like this?

MT: I think its wonderful.

SH: Why is that?

MT: Well I think its- I was always interested in history anyways, so maybe that's why I think so, I like history. I like reading books about history too. Of course we keep the library going, we read all the books and keep the library going. [laughs].

SH: Whats one thing you learned in your life that you'd like to share with other people that you think is really useful.

MT: I don't know, I never felt like I was very useful. You know, just sort of hum drum. Maybe I – I don't know, I never felt like I was.

SH: Well think about something that may have helped you through rough times.

MT: Well I'd say having faith I think helps you through rough times, yeah.

SH: How do you have faith?

MT: I don't know that's something you can't see you just have it.

SH: If you had your whole life to live over again—

MT: Yes, it would be- you'd think it would be different, but then you don't know that, do you?

SH: Well what would you—is there anything that you'd add or anything that you'd do that you didn't get to do so far?

MT: I don't know whether its something that you do, but I think it's the way you live, you know, maybe if you'd lived different, I don't know.

SH: Would you have—

MT: I don't know. And sometimes circumstances uh, um are so that- maybe it isn't the way you want it, but it's the way you have to do it. I don't think everybody's life is perfect or the way that they would have everything. Sometimes these things just happen and that's it... can't change them.

SH: Thank you. Thank you very much.