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ORAL HISTORY DEED OF GIFT

The oral history collection of the Baltimore Neighborhood Heritage Project includes taped interviews with significant Baltimore-area citizens who can provide first-hand accounts of some aspect of Baltimore history which would otherwise go unrecorded. Our goal is to supplement and enhance the more conventional archival materials held by the Baltimore Region Institutional Studies Center of the University of Baltimore.

You have been asked to give an interview for this collection. A tape recording of your interview will be made by the interviewer. In some cases a verbatim transcript will be made. In every case an abstract will be made of the tape. All materials connected with your interview will be deposited with the Baltimore Region Institutional Studies Center and copies will be sent to the Maryland Historical Society. This material may be used for research, education, scholarly publications and other purposes according to the educational and historical objectives of the Baltimore Neighborhood Heritage Project, the Baltimore Region Institutional Studies Center and the Maryland Historical Society. Specifically, this material may be used by the Theatre Project in the preparation of dramatic presentations.

I, [Name of Donor], have read the above and, in view of the historical and scholarly value of this information, I knowingly and voluntarily permit the Baltimore Region Institutional Studies Center, its Baltimore Neighborhood Heritage Project and the Maryland Historical Society the full use of this information. I hereby grant and assign all my rights of every kind whatever pertaining to this information, whether or not such rights are now known, recognized or contemplated, to the Baltimore Region Institutional Studies Center, the Baltimore Neighborhood Heritage Project and the Maryland Historical Society.

Date of Agreement: April 18, 1981
Date(s) of Interview: April 18, 1981

Signature of Informant Donor: [Signature]
Signature of Interviewer/Collector: [Signature]

Acknowledgement of Maryland Historical to abide by the terms of this agreement:

Date: [Date]
Signature of Curator/Director: [Signature]

Gloria Aull
Chairperson
W. Theodore Dürr
Project Director
Ben Primer
Project Administrator

A project of the University of Baltimore and BRISC

847 North Howard Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201
(301) 396-1515
Name of Informant: Mabel E. Brown

General Topic of Interview(s): Old West Baltimore
Royal Theatre / Pennsylvania Am.

Date(s) of Interview(s): April 17, 1981

Total length of Interview(s): 50 minutes. Total Number of Tapes: 1

Name of Interviewer: Brian D. Peterson

Circumstances of the Interview (places, others present and their relationship to the informant, etc.):

in her kitchen

Particularly Valuable Parts of the Interview (topics discussed in greatest detail, areas of particular expertise, unique information, etc.):

Old west baltimore. "Pep's place."

General Evaluation of the Reliability of the Informant and the Information Contained on Tape:

Very reliable and honest
good recall for information

Possible Topics for Further Investigation:

Old West Bath

Other Comments:

she wouldn't give age
things we heard 60s
RELIGION/CHURCH MEMBERSHIP: Garrison UMC, United Methodist


MEMBERSHIP IN CLUBS/ORGANIZATIONS (Ethnic, Religious, Political, Union, Social, etc.; Include Dates of Membership and Offices Held or Duties Performed)

Methodist Women, Garrison United Metho
Stewards

PREVIOUS RESIDENCES: 827 W. Franklin St
YEARS: 18
OWN OR RENT:

SPOUSE'S NAME(S): Art Brown
DATE OF MARRIAGE: 6-13-36
PLACE OF MARRIAGE: Baltimore Md

SPOUSE'S OCCUPATION(S)
YEARS IN OCCUPATION:

NAMES OF CHILDREN:
DATE OF BIRTH:
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Name (including maiden name):</th>
<th>Mabel E. Brown</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>3219 Preston St</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of Years in Residence:</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Own or Rent:</td>
<td>Own</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date of Birth:</td>
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<td>Place of Birth:</td>
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<td>Mother:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Name (including maiden name):</td>
<td>Alice E. Kentley</td>
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<td>Date of Birth:</td>
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<td>Father:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>John Willie Cohen</td>
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<td>Occupation(s):</td>
<td>James</td>
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<td>Religion:</td>
<td>Methodist</td>
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| Mother's Place of Birth:      |                |
| Father's Place of Birth:      |                |

| Brothers and Sisters:         |                |
| 5 Sisters                    |                |
| 2 Brothers                   |                |

| Schooling and/or Other Training: |                |
| Nov. Grade                    |                |

| Dates of Birth:               |                |
| Dates of Schooling:           |                |

| Occupations:                  |                |
| Secretary                     |                |
| Years in Occupation:          | 26             |

| Interview Number:             |                |
| Date of Receipt:              |                |

Mabel Brown

3/14/81

(Michael Peterson)

Well, when I was growing up as a child was in Bel Air that's where I was born at but my parents moved to Baltimore. I don't know how old I was when they moved here but I can remember far back as when I was 4 or 5 years old we lived in what we called a little street, Heaver St. Now that was over in E. Baltimore an the East side. But we didn't stay over there to long because by the time my mother got ready to send me to school we had moved on the West side. We moved to a street called Sue Ann St. This is in Baltimore. Once we moved from Bel Air my mother never went back there to live she continued to live in Baltimore. Now Sue Ann St is a street down there between Saratoga and Lexington. Between Mulberry and Saratoga. We lived over there for a while, I don't know how old I was at the time. By the time I got around about nine years old I knew where we lived then we lived in the 900 block of Jerden St. Now, the 900 block of Jerden St. is in a section of Baltimore that used to be called Richmond Town. Well there was the Richmond Market and the people that and there was Butaw Place that's where the rich people lived and they would come down to the Richmond Market with their chauffeurs and their limosines and what have you and pick up their marketing and that was one of the "high markets" The rich people were White. and they would got to Richmond market They even had men to deliver it. That's why this section of town was called the Richmond town. We lived over there around there in Mason St. for a while. I moved from Mason St. to the 900 block of McCulloh St. Well when we moved to the 900 block we lived there for awhile. That is when my father died I was around about 13.

We moved from there to the 400 block of Orchard St. One of my mother's sister in laws had that house on Orchard St. This is the size of Momma's family It was a bigger place needed. Aunt Jenny said let's move down to the 500 block because there is more space down there and so we moved down to the 500 block of Orchard St.
Aunt Jenny went on back to Bell Air but Momma didn't ever go back.

For a while it was her and Aunt Lizzy' but it got to be a strain so Momma decided to get a house for her self and we moved to Rose Place and we stayed there for the time I was 14 up until I married.

Rose Place is off of, its a little small st. off of the 900 block of Butaw.

I don't know if education was a must in my family or not. My mother seems that her children went to school and she used to send em out there well, most of us went And we did have truent office at that time if the truent officer came by after you and she knows she had sent you out, You know you are in trouble. In those days the parents didn't have no trouble beatin you infront of people. So the truent officer didn't have to worky if you were going to get punished or beat for it.

Uh-huh.

Well most of us went on to school. Except for one Grover, He went to school but never the less he took the beatings.

I remember my mother to me I thought she was a beautiful lady cause ah, she always thought of her children She was never.... I'll say one thing she never went out other than to work where you leave you children in the house and let them fend of themselves. She came home from work and she fixed our meals she washed clothes at night she ironed at night and her day off she cleaned even though the bigger ones of us had to help out with the cleaning. Never the less mother always stayed with us and when she went out she went to church she carried all of us right along with her. She knew where we were at. Then her recreation in the later years after we got a couple of us got married, that's when Momma would go places like Atlantic City, a one day tour trip.

Momma, well now she would be doing weeks work.
And when you are working
doing that weeks work like a maid or a cook
sometimes you had Thursday off and half a day Sunday off.

She worked for a private family
She worked for years at the 3200 York Court.
Now that is out there on Greenmont Ave.
She worked out there for those people.
Then later on she did days work.
When she was doing days work she worked alot of different places.

Well, Rose Place is the place I remember best of all.
That's where alot of happy memories are at
Well, your friends you could have in
we had one of them old time Victrolas at that time
and you had records
but the Victrola had a handle on the side that you would wind up.
We used to do dances like the Charleston
and you could have you company right there at home.
Even though I will say one thing for Momma
when we had our company she was right there too.
Even though she may be in the kitchen, she was at home.

We would take long walks out Druid Hill Park.
Walk around the lake
But my
there were a lot of things that you could do then
that you are afraid to do today.
You are afraid to take a walk nighttime out to Druid Hill Park
and a lot of other places
because there is so much robbing and muderin
and muggin going on.
We could walk any hour of night.

We played games
skate
and there's another thing I can remember
I used to like
Richmond St. up there the Richmond Market
it's called Read St now
but when I was coming up it was Richmond St.
And the ice truck would go down Richmond St
and I used to like to run and hop
you know they had that tailgate on it
run and hop on the tailgate.
Of course the driver didn't know this was going off
because when we would get down there a little way we would jump off.
And then a lot of times in the Winter time
we would get on the sled
a lot of us on one sled and we'd go down that hill.
And we liked to skate too.
Around that hill.
So, to me,
this was all happy times.

The neighborhood was predominately Black
Now on Streets such as Eutaw Place.
that was white
and the 900 block of Eutaw St
but once you crossed Lanvale St it became Eutaw Place.
And that is where all the White people was at
and lot of them were the rich white people.
the other ones they didn't live up that way
the poor ones.
Otherwise it was all Black around Lindon Ave 3-400 block of
Biddle St. that was all Black.
200 block

I used to like the B AND 0 square.
that hill at B and 0 square
we used to go down there
at night time
of course we were cautioned against it but we did it anyway
We would roll down the hill.
You know what a hill is?
We would simply get at the top of the hill
and lay down on the ground and roll down the hill.
But when you rolled down the hill you had to be careful
to try to stop yourself if a car happen to be coming
that's why the parents didn't want the children to do that
because it was dangerous.
But for some reason or another we did it.

We lived within walking distance of the Band C square.
Well now it was only about four or five blocks
form there it wasn't that far.

At that time there wasn't a whole lot of places to go
No the movies were open (not opt) on Suidays
and the best you could do was go get ice cream or snow balls
take walks, sit in the park.

Blacks were only allowed
the only place we had was the B and 0 square/
the only near bly place.
Now the next place was Perkin's Square
now that was over at Myrtle Ave
Sometime when children from over there in Richmond town
would leave Richmond Town and come over to Perkins Square
sometimes you better be with you gang.
You might have to fight, um-hum.
It is like you cross a line or something.

That didn't happen all the time
but it did happen some of the time.

Blacks fighting Blacks
Yes.
I always was with a crowd, always with the crown.
there would be enough of us--we'd have four or five of us
we would not go one or two.
I left home when I got married
that was 1934
because I always felt like, If you go out there on you own
before you got married
you got to pay your rent
and Like I say, when you do that work....
because when I was working I always gave Momma half of my salary
sometimes I gave Momma more than that half.
She didn't have no set amount
and it didn't hurt me
cause I ate there and I would sleep there.
And when Momma washed, if she had the time,
she would wash my clothes.
Other times I would have to wash them myself.
I was working.
But just the same I felt
why should I go an pay some landlord the rent
and worry about the Gass and Electric.
and don't have no furniture,
I may as well stay home.
As long as I am staying home, my mother's got the furniture
in the house
and that house we were in didn't have no gas.

The orchard St. House had electric and no gas.

Around Rose Place that is where I stayed until I got married
when I was 23.
We moved there when I was 14
and stayed until I got married when I was 23.

Marriage was something that I didn't on my own
Well--I just happened to take a walk one day and he was
around my cousins house
I met him when she introduced me to him.
He happened to be around and she thought he would make a nice
boyfriend for me
That was Eva.
That is how I met him.
One of the tings that I liked about him is
he was working on the road
on the B and O Road.
He was a cook
and when ever he come into town he always had something lined
up and this was one of the things that I liked
a man on the road.
This is one of the things that he liked
always some place to go
Parties, Dances, Movies
but never sit around somebodies house.
To this day he doesn't care too much for that
unless you're going to a dinner or something like that.
Other wise he liked to dance at the Good Hope the Strand
other Odd Fellows, Elks, Iknight of Pippens (?)
all these different Ballrooms would be like then
that was down my alley.

Well the way I felt about it
This man wants to go
This fellow likes to go places
this is what I am after
I don't have the money
he did.
You meet other people and they want to take you for walks
I don't need no walk
I can walk myself

I guess being married was like I expected
I came
by him being out of town I couldn't see
much difference.
Except for where I was living there was no difference
I lived on the same street
He was still working on the road
He was still outta town
and by that time I was working down at the Emerson Hotel
I was a linen distributor

Now for recreation
while he was outta town I'd go visit my girlfriends
and then I used to
a group of us women used to get together and sew.
Wedidn't have a sewing machine
but we would sew anything
all by hand
a sewing Bee
we would try to get together once a week or one
every other week.
We were sewing for ourselves because it was cheaper to make
alot of you own things than it was to go downtown and buy them.
It's just about the same like some people right now
money is scarce and you do a lot of t'ings yourself
rather than hire somebody to do it
or pay somebody to do it.
You do it yourself
or learn to do it
or try to do it.

Oh yes I went to the Royal
I would always want to go on Saturday Nites
when the big main bands were in Baltimore.
But if one of the big name bands wasn't in Baltimore
then I would go up to the Regent that was up in the 1600 block
of Penn Ave.
The Regent was slightly different.
they didn't have a stage but they had the different type
pictures
and once in a while I might go to the Lincoln
but very seldom Lincoln cause that was mostly westerns.
Let me tell you like Matt Dillon (Laughs)

The Royal
the seats were nice
and at one time we had carpet on the floor when we would
walk down the aisle
But ti was the biggest theatre that we colored people had
In fact it was...
The Lincoln had a stage but it was an entirely different type than the Royal was.
The Royal had a better class of shows than what the Lincoln did.
Lincoln would have them smaller shows.

I can't quite remember the price to get in but
seems like it was in
if you'd sit in certain areas
it was 35¢
something like that it wasn't very much
there was a time later on the price went up to 75

A big name band would be up there such as
Fats Waller, or Jimmy Lunstford
Slappy White, (well he was a commedian, didn't have a band)
Mr. Clean head Benson
Each week there would be a different one.
Charlie Barnette,
But naturally you were going to work the next day
you can't run the street every nite

(Laugh)
Specially when you are due at work 7 o'clock in the morning
and I don't mean leave home at 7, I mean be there....
And at that time alot of bosses didn't fool with you if
you couldn't make time, somebody else could.
If you really want your job
you be there.

Any type of person went into the Royal
anybody that gots the money together.
You didn't have to dress fancy.
I was one of them kind of a ...
I didn't care if it was a starched dress
make sure it ironed nice
make sure it fit me nice
didn't make no difference what the material was.

They had them little night clubs that you could go in after hours
such as such a place like Bill Langley.
This is on McCulloh St, Bill Langley.
They used to have these places
but you had to be twenty one to get in
and you almost had to know someone to tell you
but I got in once before I was married
I knew someone.
It was more like a private place.
They had singing,
local talent.
Yes, these were ALL black places
now every once in a while they would get raided.
Police would clear the place out
sometimes they would catch someone in there who wasn't twenty one.
I think it is just about the same way today some places isn't it?
um-hum.
Other than going to the movies...
I felt a little queer about eating in those restaurants along the Avenue.
I don't know lots of places used to have fish fried in advance and you had it paled up there in trays.
I don't know if it was completely fried or not but it was up there in trays and they'd take them tongs and put it down in the hot grease.
Well, I didn't like that.
I thought they would fry my fish while I wait.
So, I didn't bother with those restaurants.
I liked the Chinese places.
I didn't see what was going on in the kitchen but never the less I know they was getting in together.
I'm sitting out there waiting so I liked them.
Then I liked around on Howard St.
Used to have a place called Dunlap's and for $0.50 you could get a box of fried oysters and they was outstanding.
We used to go down there a lot times and get some oysters.
It was carry out.
At that time Dunlap's was like this place on Orleans St.
The crab place they were noted for oysters the way this place on Orleans is noted for crabs.

Well when I was rather small up until maybe I was 14
Momma took me to Sunday school.
Because if you didn't go and she found out you got punished.
"Couldn't go to Sunday School, can't go out to play."
"Couldn't go there, couldn't go no place else."
Now after I got older and sort of on my own
I didn't go to no church no more.
I thought it was more fun out there in the street.
I thought when you went into church you can't go here you can't go there.
so I went to go all these places.
I went back in church in 1952 and people in church they can these days have a nice time and as well as people otherwise.
In the church they have things to try to be attractive it depends on what type of things it is but you take the Catholic Church, they have a lot of things going to attract the congregation.

There was a time that conditions for Blacks were quitedifferent than they are today.
Well, when I was coming up there was lots of different places that you didn't buy clothes.
You could buy them, you didn't try them on.
They just didn't have it.
The Hecht May Company on the corner of Howard and Lexxingtons t
You could go in there and buy
if you knew you size
but you could not try them on.
They would tell you they did not have any fitting rooms.
Because you know there was a time when they had toilets
that were marked "Colored" and others that were marked
"White."
And this was in lots of places that you went
It might be--you know--all the dept stores
and if even in the Ford Theater, you could go there
but if you went to the Ford Theatre you sit up in the
balcony you didn't sit in the main auditorium.
I went there, I been there
you definately sit up there in the gallery,
balcony, or what ever you want to call it, peanut gallery.
What's you all call it now?

They had stores where you could buy clothes
but we would buy at the smaller stores.
Oh, this is what I grew up with
I didn't know no different
this is what I come up with
but once the ice got broke
If i can't try it on, I don't want it.
I'll fling it back
"I a want to know what you mean I can't try it on"
and there was a time when you would go buy hats
and they would have a piece of tissue paper,
especially if they had the Whites,
and they would make you put that on you head
if you want to put that hat on it.
THEY DIDN'T WANT ANY GREASE ON IT.
Now a day I don't think they would try that trick
I really don't

I know I was offered papper
and I know nobody better offer no paper today.

Mostly what I knew was places I couldn't go
stores that I couldn't try clothes on
and I would byy on Penn. Ave because you know that
that belongs to the Blacks.
You could travel all along Penn Ave from the beginning to the end.

I went down to the May Co. to get a skirt, that's when the
wrap arounds came out. and that when, I couldn't try it on.
So I wouldn't put it back on the rack
I tossed it across the rack andy old way
I was angry
The saleslady told me I couldn't try it on
I could buy if I knew the size
I slung it on the rack and walked off.
It was still May Co at that time
I have never experienced it since it has been Hecht.

There were stores that you couldn't go in like O'Neals
unless you were going in for the lady you worked for.
You may be somebodys maid such as I was at one time
and maybe they had something on lay away
such as a table cloth
and they want that table cloth and they sent you down to get it
they give you a note or the sales slip rather
and you could pick it up.
You could go in there with you Madame they called it
den side one)

One of the things that I used to do since you brought up
marble steps when I was 11 and 12 yrs old
you try to get this moving picture money together
maybe it is 15¢ maybe @20¢
or you might see some sox
white sox with the pretty cuffs on them
Well my momma wouldn't buy me no pretty sox
so I decided that I would buy my own
You know that little children get their little weekly allowance
Momma had too many children to give them no allowance.
I used to scrub steps.
You used to go up there around Bolton Hill
Park Ave. Eutaw Place you might be get 35¢ for some
steps others you might not get 1but 20¢
They would be marble steps
or maybe somebody might let you come in and do ther
kitchen and bathroom
(but you could get tied up in that one place)
You would try to get places that didn't want nothing done but the steps
You might make as much as two dollars that day
You make as much as two dollars that Saturday
that's more than some of the wormen was making working all
day long.
Because at one time women wasn't getting but a dollar and
half a day/some getting a dollar and quarter a day
I had worked for that money myself
I worked for a woman on Chester Ave
I scraped the bathroom
I straightened up her living room
of course with them when you go there to clean and they stick
some of that ironing on it
then you duck seem of that cleaning
because when you getting but a dollar for that eight hours
quarter for car fare
If they want all their ironing don then you don't do no
cleaning hardly, you maybe sweep out front.
Of
Money was always a crunch with some people
but today salaries are so much different
you get paid differently
I know the rents were cheaper an house four dollars a week
but you may not be making over eight dollars.
You are making eight dollars and your rent four you ain't going
to have enough money left over for clothes food and heat.
You still needed two salaries
I know food was cheaper
because if you went down to the market with four dollars you at least come back with something.

The depression
to me, the way I see it today it was pittyful.
But the way I saw it at that time
all I could think about was
"I am sorry for that man"
"I feel sorry for that lady, I wish I could help 'em"
I ain't got nothing myself
I was working down at the Emerson Hotel for seven years
as a linen distributor
I had a job and down there I got my breakfast and lunch
hours 7 am to 3:30 in the afternoon.
They give you a nicle in food and you got the fresh coffed
You got two hard rolls, those roolls wasn't all that hard.
For lunch you got left overs from yesterday.
I got to eat
I was making $40 a month
which was...
and they also allowed me to bring my own clothes down there
and wash
I couldn't bring the family's clothes down there, but mine
I was working there
Of course when you got ready to check out
you put that bundle so the man, the time keeper could see if you
had any lsheets and pillow cases in there.
?Finally they cut that letting you bring you clothes down
when one lady brought a comfort down there and that mad
too big a package going out. Cut it out.
I felt sorry for those people picking out of garbage cans
going around the market trying to find what was laying on
the ground.
For myself lthough, I did have a job.

Momma had a couple of days work
My brother worked down Sparrows Point
what he did I don't know
and later on he did contracting work
We weren't as bad off as some people
they had it harder.
We never were set out, we didn't have to move
neever had to experience that.
We always had something to eat even if it was a pot of soup
And my mother used to put up her own potato leek soup
Everybody wanted some of that potato leek soup.
And that hot bread she'd make.
I thought she was outstanding in that.
That was one of her specialties.

I dimly remember WWI
that was the war Uncle Harry was in
I remember Grandma crying but that was the only son she had
here in Baltimore.
I remember them funny suits they wore
with them old wrappa around leggings
the
They wore the pants commin
knickersbocker styple
and you seen them ace bandage they have
well, that's what they wore
they wasn't "Ace" They was kaki
colored anyway they wrapped them aroug around their legs
and the old heavy soled shoes
But I don't have too good a membry of WWI

I remember WWII real good.
How was that?
People were getting more money
I am out here on hill Chester Ave.
working for nine dollars a week
I gave that job up
as nice as she was I went home cause I want more money
So I went down to Edgewood
try and get one of these Gov Jobs
they gave you six minutes to put a gas mask together
Well I say I got the gas mask together
but I didn't have a pair of pliers
and I didn't have a part twissteed around there tight
enough where they could pull that thing off.
Well I failed that test
but I could come back and take the test over
but I had to find somebody to take me back
needed a car.
So in the mean time since I gave this job up
on HillChester Ave. I need money now
I went up Elite Laudry
and I got on the fast machine
I had worked in the launegy before
so naturally I knew how to catch
and I made sure I asked for catching
I told the man I could feed andcatch
I don't want shaking.
I couldn't took shaking.
He put me on the middle maching, on the fast machine.
On piece work.
A lot of times I mad 34, 35,36 dollars a week
and to me that was a far cry from $9 a week.
If I make overtime I make pretty close to $40
I lived on Franklin St
and that was much better.
But I didn't like the lines I stood in
I stood in many a line
Every saturday.

You stood in a line for your butter
another line for you meat.
You had food stamps
Wasn't food stamps, it was stamps to get you sugar with.
Couldn't buy but five lbs of sugar.
OK well I got three stamp
I could get ten lbs sugar sometimes
and maybe I know somebody wasn't using much sugar
I could get their stamps
Such as a lady named May.
Maybe I give them something else that they can use

I stood in meat lines
like you want a piece of pork
or roasted beef
you don't want to eat the same meat alll week
so you get in this meat line
maybe you get a piece of port and a piece of beef here
maybe this piece of pork or veal or something
anyway you'd go stand in some other meat line

I stood in stocking lines
I started wearing anklette
I got so sick of stocking lines
so I bought myself a pair of loafers
I worked at the Elite, yeah laundrey (she says E light)
and I bout/ght anklettes
and Monday through Friday I wore ankelettes
I saved my stockings for Sunday
cause stockings was too hard to come by.
Yes sir.
Me and my husband's aunt Irene
even went over there on Gay St.
we heard that you can get stockings over there
We went and stood around in the stocking line by the
alley and by the time we got to the window
they was gone in our size
they was game (?)
and what we were doing is taking any color
we could get,
we didn't care if they was real light
like light beige
cause we come home and boil some coffee
and dip them stockings in coffed
or takwe a couple of tea bags
and boil them couple tea bags
and dip them light stockings
in tea bags and make em darker.
We done did many a thing with them stockings.

Even sewed stockings
Yes, afraid to put them in a laundry
Afraid they'd rip
and you know like if the wind blewed
if you washed yours % stockings and
rolled them in a towel
and hang em % somewhere in the bathroom
don't % nobody dare get near 'em either
"Don't snag them stockings, might make em run."

There were cigaret lines
but I wasn't smoking them.
No use getting in cigaret lines.

Yes sir.
Never forget it.
Cause I been a many a line.

We would go to Lexington Market
g in different lines down there at
different meat stalls.
Maybe Mr. Schaeffer might be handling beef
Maybe another store there is handling lamb
Nother store got pork and chickens
Nother man selling cold cuts thing like that
Any way you were still in lines.

He was alright
He was on the rode. 9(road)
He had two brothers living with us at home
and his Grandmother was there
and his aunt was there for awhile
so there was six of us
living in that house.
We had to eat
we didn't want to have to get out there and
So hen Irene and I would go out there and
to the market,
once we would get down theme to the market
we didn't act like we was together

Well, she goin to get some meat
and I am going to get something to eat
we would act like we were different households
but we were the mame household
we weren't together
(laughs)
we were together after we get out on the streey
but in that line Nope
This man might buy me five lbs of somethin
or this man might buy me seven lbs of somethin
they didn't allow me no ten lbs.
So I go over and get my peice of meat
and Irene
and get out of line
and Irene she come up there
and gets what she is getting
and I come up and get the same thing.
Maybe Irene would get a piece of pork, like around
three lbs and maybe I get on about three and a half lbs
put them together and you have a nice pork loin.
His grandmother knew how to manage food now
like we had roast pork on sunday
she would slice some of that roast pork off
so she could wrap up for lunches
and then all the trimmings of that pork
she would stream y' it and have it on toast
and get another meal out of it.
Some goes for roast beef
when the beef gets low lyou make hash.
I don’t know how long that war last
a few years
and the lines eased up
I think it went on long enough.

I left the Elite laundry in 1945

The television
we got a television in 1953, 1954
we had a record changer
the remains of it are down there
it don’t
It goes around byt you can’t hear it
and it goes around real slow.
I am thinking of giving it to good will
so that’s why I am thinking of getting it fixed

I remember the assissination of Martin Luther King
I felt numb
I felt like that he was somebody related to me
I never saw the man in person
but I just felt sad
like I could scream or cry
but sometimes I don’t always cry.
When I got to my second sit down to think
I wondered who would do a trick like this
you know one of those sort of things
How can you hate somebody that bad
that you would want to kill them
I wonder how you hate people like that
I feel like a person who does something like that
has got to have a sick mind
because him going around and demonstrating
that fellow didn’t hurt him.

But I have felt that way over other people
I felt bad when Sonny Boy West
you would have thought he was my brother
Sonny Boy West was a fighter
and he, it was in the ring, and I thought the fight should
be stopped
but it wasn’t stopped
and he died
You would have thought he was my brother
I never met the man
I seen him
I never met him to shake his hand
I had been to washington and seen him up close in the ring
that is the only way I seen Sonny boy that
but he was a young fighter and he can good
and you would have thought I was related to him
I was sick.

I would go out on the street now
If I just wasn’t scared
I am scared of how hard they are going to hit you
hit you in the face
break a piece of glass in my eye
hit
They can hit me so hard in the mouth
that they knock these dentures down
my throat.
These are the things that bother me now.
Because I have had a man reach after me
I was on my way to work
I was working down town
I was due to work at six o'clock on New Years morning
and I was walking to work
I wasn't scared then
the man had something in his hand
and he was by the light
and he raised his arm up and
that lamppost cast his shadow on the ground
and I took off screaming
and there was a 30 bus on Penn Ave.
I jumped on the bus
had an old big pocket book
that I am still carrying now
but I didn't have but 38c
I don't know who he was and I didn't get a good look at him
I didn't find out - just took off.

Martin Luther King
he used to fight violence with nonviolence
I never did figure that one out.
I thought if somebody hit you
you supposed to hit them back
this is what I think
How do you feel?

I believe in a lot of things
that he said
but I can't see the things that he went through
like them throwing those stones
when I stop to think of it sometimes I think
now when they would hit him, throw things at him.
If they would
if he would have picked something up and threw it back at him
that is what they probably wanted
so they could have moved in on him and tryed to kill him.

He probably was doing it in the best way
I don't think of it at the time

Riots in 1968
I was living right here
had a strange feeling
Well, I was wondering such as riding the bus
Now Holly Murdoch coming to work on the bus
she came with a swoled up lip
because somebody throw a piece of brick
and it came through the window
and it hit Holly in the lip
I thought of these things and I said
now when I get off of this bus
coming home
I am not scared once I get in my neighborhood
It is the bus riding through the other neighborhoods
and all the things that they are going to throw at ti.

Once I get off the bus
We would be a little late getting to work sometimes
and the man he offered to take us home on day
We had the National Guards posted all around

I didn't want them to take me home
Celie came on out with the truth.
Celie told Mr. Bachman
"No, Mr. Bachman, I don't want you to take me home
because there are people, fools out there in the street
and they got guns like the Guards got
you don't get too.
No, Mr. Bachman, you white and I'm Black
and you get up there in my neighborhood
and they see me getting out of your car
with a white man,
and they kill you and I both."
She said
"So I get home the best way I can and
I'll be home tomorrow"

Nobody paid no tend to what she said,
the could get away with anything.

Looking back
there is one particular thing....
I wish I had went to night school.
Before I got so old I wasn't interested in it.
Before I got to the age I figure I didn't get it done
so I don't have to have it now.
I got this far and the aint no reason to go now.
I have thought of several things I would have taken
Now seeing is one thing
but I thought of things that make more money
know more than one things
you can get a job doing one things
get a job doing something else.

It is always nice to know how to do more than one thing
Except for the type of work  I did.
The type of work I did is domestic work
laundry work and hospital work

I didn't like a maid at a hotel
I only worked two weeks as a hotel maid
I didn't know that guests leave the room in the conditions
that they did
So in the bathroom and use the toilet and don't flush it
That's on of my pet pervers
I can't stand it
I mean if you have to have a Ed. for God's sake use the

Now I don't like that
and another thing
they have a party in thei room
and they git sick and they use the bathtub
head bath
any thing to upchuck

I didn't know people did that
until I was a maid for two weeks in a Hotel
that took care of them, I couldn't make it.
I can't clean this kind of room
cause I'll be sick.

I didn't know people did that.

I think of night school
and I always think of money wise
that's on my thoughts
Honey,

Honest Honey,
I never thought of how you get money doing alot of different things.

When I was coming up they had these house parties
house rent parties
they would let their teen age
because I was one of them
they would have them roll up screens
and they would put that sheet music up there
and you would pump it
and we would dance
and you would pay to get in
lot of ox would go to drink and dance
and a lot of them grown ups would let those
teenagers in
just like they do today
let the teenagers in.

You tried to go to them places out of your neighborhood.
So nobody would tell your parents.

At my age I don't even try to think 15 20 years from now
what I am going to do
I think of my health sometimes
and at my age what am I going to do?
There is something out there to do now.
I could go down there to the Winter Center
they got lots of them old people down there doing
lots of things.
They have parties down there
they dance
they sing
they crochet
they knit
and I keep saying
"I am going down there to join."
I haven't did it yet
too lazy I guess
don't have no set up.
Sit around
Look at TV

There are a lot of places I would like to go
some of those people are still working
Like I am retired and They're not
And some others that are retired are living too far.