

Tape 1, Side 1  
[000]

I ~~This~~ is Virginia L. Smith, interviewing Mildred H. Ritchie, of  
Arlington; and I want to ask her about her early years. She is a lifelong  
resident of Arlington County, and I want to ask her about her early years  
in Barcroft.

~~[Pause]~~

N This will cover some of my recollections of places, people, and  
events in Arlington.

My father, Walter K. Handy, and my mother (Grace) bought a home  
about a month after their marriage (in 1908) at the corner of Arlington and  
Glen Avenues (now Buchanan and 8th Road South) --in the then-new subdivision  
of Barcroft.

His father, Major F. A. G. Handy, was already living in the big  
white house next door; and his elder brother lived a block to the south of  
them.

My father and grandfather owned but all four lots of their block,  
and for about 50 years theirs were the only two houses there. The block was  
a lovely woodsy area where birds sang. Dad's garden was down near the cool  
spring that bubbled up in the center of his place--flowing southwesterly  
through other properties until it entered Four Mile Run, on the other side  
of nearby Columbia Pike. This was called the Dolley Madison Spring.

I was born there, as were my brother and sister.

The village of Barcroft is along Columbia Pike, where Four Mile  
Run crosses, in Arlington County. The Alexandria spur of the Washington  
and Old Dominion Branch (of the Southern Railway) crossed the Pike just east

A Correction .....

It wasn't until the electric trains arrived that transfer to the St. Elmo station was used to reach Washington at the 12th Street Station.

In the early days, for Barcroft commuters to reach Washington, they boarded the steam engine train in Barcroft, which switched tracks in Alexandria and on to Union Station in Washington.

I can remember waiting in Union Station for the Barcroft train to be announced over the loud speaker, it went something like this " Ready to board, train leaving for Alexandria--- Bluemont and Way Stations". Barcroft name was not mentioned. We would then board, travel through the tunnel and on our way to Barcroft. My father, Sydney Marye, used this mode of Transportation, he had only a block or two to walk to the Government Printing office where he worked.

Mrs A.M. Robertson

[028] of the Run, with a small three-sided station at its crossing.

Dad's office was at the Potomac Electric Power Company, in Washington, then on 14th Street. Transportation to Washington at that time was by steam train, toward Alexandria to the little station of St. Elmo, where one could change to the electric railway, operating between Alexandria and Washington. The total ride took about an hour.

There were about three passenger trains each way, on weekdays, and a number of freight trains on the steam line. If the train for work or appointments was missed, one could walk a little over a mile--east, along Columbia Pike--dusty and rocky in dry weather; muddy and full of ruts in rainy weather--to the Columbia Station and the trolley line to Rosslyn and Georgetown (in the west end of town).

Walking along Columbia Pike became quite a familiar habit to us over the years. My father, an ardent Christian, had been a member of the Church of the Covenant (in Washington). Soon after he became a resident of Barcroft, he and my mother joined the newly organized Arlington Presbyterian Church, then in its new edifice on Columbia Pike (in what is now the 3800 block), west of Monroe Street. We walked to church every Sunday for years-- where Dad was Sunday School superintendent for about 50 years.

Across the Pike from the church lived Dr. Henry Corbett, our nearest doctor. His wife was a sister of Mrs. Thomas DeLashmutt, who (with her husband and family) lived near Columbia Station. These families were also members of the church, as was the related Munston family nearby.

East of Glebe Road, the land of the present Westmont Shopping

→ old Columbia  
Community

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Center and subdivision was part of the large dairy farm of the Snoots family. Across from this, on Columbia Pike, lived Albert Dye; and nearby were the Brewers, former Barcroft residents.

Until about 1924, when the present school was erected, Barcroft's two-room school (now known as the Community House) could accommodate only the first six grades--three to each room--and heated by a large pot-bellied stove in the middle of the larger room.

Upon completing the 6th grade, students either walked to Columbia School <sup>located at Walter Reed Drive + Columbia Pike. Elizabeth Wright Stathers taught school here after graduation.</sup> or went to Washington (to the 7th and 8th grades).

Until 1925, Arlington had no high school; and all students went to Washington for that part of their education.

My father, always interested in civic affairs and in improvements for Arlington, suggested to friends in the Department of Agriculture (then in charge of building roads) that Columbia Pike would be a good road for a testing program. Concrete was then being tested for use in road-building; and, after due consideration, the Department agreed.

~~[Pause]~~

As a result, the Pike was laid--with a two-lane strip of concrete, in sections of varying types, from which cores would be taken from time to time for examination and testing. This was completed in 1926, I believe. Its construction, beginning at the lower Alexandria road (now Jeff Davis Highway) and stopping at the top of Palmer's Hill (where Taylor Street enters the Pike)--and Barcroft.

One chilly Sunday afternoon (in about 1925), we received a call:

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the church was on fire, ~~and~~ help was urgently needed, as there was no fire department. *See the history of Arlington Presbyterian Church for more detailed account.*

By the time we reached the scene, a few of the pews had been dragged out. The fire was burning fiercely and spreading so rapidly that little could be saved. Some pews were carried across the Pike to Corbett's yard, and some of us youngsters sat there watching as the belfry caught fire. The heavy, mellow-toned bell (that could be heard for miles) soon fell with a clatter, amid a shower of sparks and flame.

The Arlington Methodist Church (then on the corner of what is now Walter Reed Drive at Columbia Pike, across from the station and Norton's Cafe) offered the use of its building; and for a year or so, services were held there on Sunday afternoon. A small wooden chapel, erected on the back of the present Arlington Presbyterian Church lot, later served for five or more years, until the new church could be built.

During this early period of the century, many areas of Arlington County grew rapidly in population. Some 150,000 houses were erected in Barcroft between 1914 and 1925--many by Walter O'Hara, a new builder resident. Alcova Heights (at Glebe Road, on the farm of J. Cloyd Byars) came into being and mushroomed.

Other areas along the Pike also expanded. With the growth in population came the need for more efficient transportation. Robert L. May, a former Washington policeman ~~who~~ had lived for a time on a tract along Columbia Pike near the Fairfax County line (where he cut and sold wood). ~~He~~ moved into Barcroft <sup>about 1920,</sup> ~~houses~~, across from the two-room school, ~~in] about~~

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1920. He equipped two trucks (similar to those in which he hauled wood) with long benches along each side, a tarpaulin roof, and steps at the back. He drove one (and his wife, the other), with regular schedules from his backyard garage in Barcroft. From this small beginning, he soon graduated to two buses, affectionately called by patrons the "pie wagons." These, also, were entered from rear steps, but had hard-topped roofs and windows--and were more comfortable. Suburbanites could now even attend an evening theater show in Washington, provided they could catch the last night bus at 11:15.

Thus was born our AB&W bus line, <sup>which</sup> with ~~eventually~~ <sup>had</sup> ~~over~~ special school buses direct to and from several Washington schools attended by area children.

Later, quite a protest was raised when the regular fare was raised to 16¢ one way.

I I can tell you how important Mr. May's buses must have been: everybody that I have talked to on tape has mentioned his bus service. It must have ~~just opened up such entertainment and such shopping--made it so~~ much more easy--

N It did. It did.

I To have everybody remember it.

N ~~Uh-huh.~~ It is an important part of the County, I think. And it grew from this small beginning. He had a gasoline pump installed right there in his backyard, so that when his buses drove in they could fill up with gasoline and go right on ~~out~~ again.

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~~I Be ready to go out.~~N ~~Uh-huh.~~~~[Pause]~~

Palmer's Hill (on Columbia Pike) was a source of delight to the young at heart, parents and children alike, for miles around--in wintertime snows. The Pike from Taylor Street East (for a distance of three long, downhill blocks) ran in an S-curve to the little bridge over Doctor's Run at the bottom. Few (if any) cars traveled in snow or ice at night, and the hill was always filled with sleds as soon as the snow was deep enough. Bonfires were kept going at the top, for warming frostbitten fingers and toes--and storytelling. Sometimes, too, we could use Palmer's Hill--cow-field hill--a long, sweeping stretch--wonderful and fast when there was a crust on top.

The swimming hole under the old bridge at Four Mile Run was popular in summer. Many a young one learned his first dog paddle there and could later dive from the big rock into deeper water. The turning of the huge wheel, on which we used to swing at the mill nearby, was music to our ears.

I How deep do you think the water would have been?

N Where, in the swimming hole?

I Yes--to take a dive and--

N Oh, it was 9 or 10 feet deep in the deepest part. You didn't go into that until you knew how to paddle.

I ~~Going on a waterwheel--that wasn't particularly safe, was it?~~

[184] N No, it wasn't. But it was a lot of fun.  
I You didn't tell your mother, did you?  
N Oh, yes, she knew about it. It was a lot of fun.

~~I [Laughter]~~

~~I~~ We used to crawl over where the water came down from the sluiceway. We'd crawl over that to get on top of the wheel and catch hold of the other side as it went down and then jump off at the bottom.

I Did you ever have any serious accidents?

N No, no.

I So tell me about your father, then.

N About my father?

I Uh-huh.

N Dad was a charter (and an active) member of the Barcroft School and Civic League. My grandfather, a Congressional correspondent and a charter member of the Gridiron Club (in Washington), was for a year or so the League secretary. I still have his Graham-shorthand minutes of its early meetings.

Dad was on the committee to choose a site for the County's first high school, erected in about 1925 or '6. About that time also, he was one of the committee to select a route for the present Arlington Boulevard. Starting at the river, they walked three different routes all the way through the County to the Fairfax County line--finally choosing its present location. /They always came home tired, too, I can assure you./

I That was a good walk, wasn't it?



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N Then, however, it was a rough and rural route.

I Well, who else was on the committee? Or who was selecting--who was it that was selecting people?

N I really don't know. I don't know. They were people appointed by the County, as a committee to select the site. And they considered several different *routes,*

I ~~Uh-huh.~~ What was the Civic League, then?

N The Civic League was one formed for that particular area. We still have civic leagues all over the County.

I Just for the Barcroft area--it wasn't a County-wide--

N That particular one was for the Barcroft area. Dad was also a member of the Chamber of Commerce and various other organizations over the County.

I But the Barcroft was--

N But this--this was just the Barcroft <sup>*School & Civic*</sup> League; and there is still a Barcroft League, just as there is an Ashton Heights Civic League--and I suppose this one over there at Columbia House still.

~~I Uh-huh probably.~~

~~[Pause]~~

N Among ~~our neighbors in Barcroft~~ in those early years were the families of Marye, Head, Wright, Pepper, House, Bridges, Payne, Klenroth, and Hale. Some of the members of those families are still living in the area ~~and~~ may also have information that might be helpful.

Haring's Store at Barcroft was later Gemmel's. Seigel's Store at

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Columbia was later Sher's. We had one of the first six telephones in Barcroft--the kind you crank.

~~I Uh-huh.~~

N And we usually walked to the--to Gemmel's Store, which was at the foot of the hill from us; but for Sher's we could crank up the telephone and order, and they would bring our order--

I They'd deliver it to you?

N They delivered.

~~[Pause]~~

Some of the early families along the Pike and at Columbia were those of Wibert, Gray, Craig, Tapp, Sheffel, Floyd, MacPherson, Ernst, Lyle, Coe, Figgins, and Floyd--and Howell.

~~[Apparent interruption in the interview.]~~

I ~~That sounded good.~~ But I'd like to ask more about Haring's Store. Was that--had it changed hands before you--

N No--

I In your--

N Haring's Store was the first--not the first building, but the first store, in Barcroft. It was right at the railroad track on Columbia Pike and ~~[pause]~~ was one of about the first four buildings in the area. The ~~Millers'~~ home and the home of his assistant were nearby. ~~[Pause.]~~ The Haring's came from Fairfax County. Mr. Haring had married a Miss Doremus, whose family had come from New Jersey; and he and his wife had the store in Barcroft. Our post office was also in that building. And his wife and her

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sister acted as postmistresses--and knew everybody in the area, so--all sorts of addresses--even though they were mixed up, they got to the right place.

One of the sisters married a Mr. Marye, and they lived within a block of us. Another sister married a Colonel Pepper, who had lived in Glen Carlyn. Apparently, his first had died; and he had had two children. He later had two others; and they lived in Barcroft.

(2)

Near the store there was a large white house. It had been about the first house built in Barcroft, right on Columbia Pike.

To go back to the store: it was a regular, real old-time store, where you could dig pickles out of the pickle barrel; and they had big boxes with glass tops, where you could fish out the kind of cookie you wanted. It was a very interesting place. And they had an old stove in there, and people who were waiting for the train in cold weather always sat around that stove until they heard the whistle blow; and they had to run for the little station.

I What else did they sell?

N They sold meats; they sold ~~unintelligible~~--groceries of various kinds. They had vegetables. You could even buy yard goods and thread and needles--just about anything.

I Hardware items?

N ~~A few~~, Yes--some hardware items.

I ~~Un-huh~~--An early department store, wasn't it?

N A regular department store, not much bigger than a small--the

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room was not much bigger than a small bungalow.

I They really got everything in.

And ~~the son~~ <sup>Eddie</sup> their son was the one who started the newspaper,

~~Eddie.~~ The Barcroft News?

N Yes.

I Tell me about that.

N I don't know anything about Eddie because that was before my time.

But he had--his uncle, Mr. Marye, worked in the Government Printing Office and was interested in printing; and he had a small printing press, that he let Eddie work on. And Eddie conceived the idea of starting the little newspaper.

~~[Apparent interruption in the interview for an outdoor sign to stop.]~~

Mr. Marye suggested that he would help Eddie to print up a little newspaper; and for a period of about a year, each <sup>MONTH</sup> week Eddie would gather the news and write it up, and they would print it on a little--oh, about a 5-by-8 sized page, folded over. Usually it was about four pages. And some of those are still in existence in the County. *SEE BSCh file for copies.*

I Well, if everybody was meeting around the pot-bellied stove, and ~~if they had the gentleman and the two ladies at the store with all the news--~~

N He could print plenty of information, couldn't he?

I Almost--why did they need a paper telling who visited whom and--?

N Well, that was an important part of living in the country in those days, I guess. He not only printed news of Barcroft, but up and down the

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Pike; there were frequent articles <sup>about</sup> ~~in the~~ of people down at Columbia or out in Fairfax County or at Baileys Crossroads.

I That would really be the reason for doing it--not for telling what the Barcroft neighbors--but for telling what the Columbia neighbors--were doing.

N This is true. But it was like a little gossip column.

I I bet they loved it.

N I'm sure they did.

I And there was a blacksmith shop there?

N There was a blacksmith shop across the Pike from the store. I can remember that; and I remember when I was in school I used to think of that when I had to learn the poem about the village blacksmith under the chestnut tree.

~~I Uh huh.~~

N The oak tree, under which that little blacksmith shop stood, was one of the biggest I ever saw. It was huge.

I don't remember the smithy himself too well, but I remember--

I Maybe they were the Hoffman Brothers?

N <sup>Possibly, do</sup> ~~Uh huh~~ I remember [seeing them over there and] watching them shoe the horses.

I ~~Uh huh~~. When would the need for a blacksmith have ended? When did cars pretty much replace horses?

N Oh, not for years after that. I suppose not until 1918, somewhere around there--or 1920. That little shop disappeared, but there others in

[385] the area; there was one down on Glebe Road--at Columbia Pike.

I There was a blacksmith down there?

N Yes, on the southeast corner of Columbia Pike there was a blacksmith shop.

I Where Bauserman used to be--

N No, Bauserman was on the--

~~I Southwest.~~

N Southwest corner *SOUTHEAST*

~~I Where Rosen~~

N There's an ~~Esso~~ [Exxon?] station there now.

~~I There's an Esso station there now.~~

N But for many years there was a blacksmith shop.

~~[Pause]~~

I [Did] anybody have Civil War stories for you--when you were growing up?

N Not that I can recall. I once had a record of Sheridan's ride ~~[pause]~~ that we played on the old Victrola; and I used to love it, because you could hear the horses galloping. I was playing it one day; my mother called to me and said, "Here comes Mama" (her mother). "Turn that off."

I turned it off, and I later learned that my record would have broken. (had Mama heard it, because she spent the Civil War years up and down the valley, moving from one place to another).

I You mean the Shenandoah Valley.

N Shenandoah Valley, moving from one place to another to keep out of

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Sheridan's way when he was riding up and down the Valley.

I I can see where that wouldn't have been her favorite [record].

N They lost their home. They lost everything.

I Uh-huh. Then she finally settled in Berryville?

N And when she married, she settled in Berryville--yes.

~~[Pause.]~~

I What was the Corbett subdivision?

N The Corbett subdivision?

I Uh-huh.

N I suppose you are talking about the Barcroft area?

I Yes.

N Well, Barcroft itself was first named Corbett.

I Uh-huh.

N Corbett owned a farm. His family had come here in 1850; and a brother, Sewell, had bought a number of farm areas--both at Columbia and in the area of Barcroft. One he sold to his brother, Cooper; another one he sold to a brother, Frank; and one he sold to his father--I think it <sup>was</sup> ~~may have~~ been his father, ~~(I have forgotten)~~.

~~[Apparent interruption in the interview.]~~

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[End of Side 1; tape flipped without resetting counter.]

Side 2 [007]

They had bought the farms back in the 1850's. Sewell's father went back to New York to live, apparently; and, eventually, Frank became the owner of the farm near Four Mile Run, on Columbia Pike. His home was called Cedar Hill, which would have been a much prettier name for Barcroft.

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However, he later decided to subdivide it--and began selling lots--sold a few. And some of the people that I have mentioned (like the Maryes and the Harings and various others) moved to the area; but he died before selling more than five or six houses, and the property was later sold to another family, who resubdivided it--changed the streets and the names.

And when Corbett subdivided it, he called it Corbett; the station at Barcroft was named Corbett (for him). *Deed Book N number 4 pp 488-489 December 9, 1892 Alexandria County*

But when it was resubdivided, because of the Barcroft family <sup>(who</sup> ~~which~~ was living across Four Mile Run, on Columbia Pike) the place was re-named Barcroft.

I ~~think~~. And who were these people who were resubdividing it after Corbett? *Deed Books 110 pp 52-53-54 Alexandria County APRIL, 1904*

~~[Pause.]~~

N It eventually became the property of S. P. Wright. <sup>(ABBIE G. FOX</sup> ~~His mother-in-law~~) had bought the property from the Corbett estate, and ~~[pause]~~ he was probably a better businessman than ~~[pause]~~ she thought she was; so he took it over.

I I have an ad here from the "Barcroft News." It says: "Buying lots in Barcroft is now speculation. Next spring they will have doubled in value. Buy one now. S. P. Wright, Barcroft, Virginia."

What would the size of the lot--or what would the cost of it--be?

N I have no idea what the cost was. I know it was practically nothing compared to what we have--

I Compared to now, certainly.



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N <sup>Indeed,</sup> ~~[Now--yeah]~~ But the size of the lots ran--oh, approximately 50 by 100. Some areas were--they were a little larger than that.

~~[Pause.]~~

There's another one here in the "Barcroft News." It says: "Mr. S. P. Wright is making many improvements in the property, recently purchased by Mrs. Fox." Mrs. Fox was his mother-in-law. "He is building a beautiful cottage, east of the lake, on Cedar Street; and has sold two lots adjoining 'Miles Away.'" That was the name of one of the homes there.

~~I Uh huh.~~

~~[Pause.]~~

~~Did you~~

N The lot ~~on~~ that is mentioned here <sup>was</sup> on Cedar Street, <sup>facing</sup> ~~located on~~ Columbia Pike; and Cedar Street was in the original Corbett subdivision, but it was wiped out in the new subdivision, under S. P. Wright. It would have gone right through our property, right beside our spring, had they kept it there.

~~I Uh huh.~~

N So we were fortunate

~~I Yes.~~

N ~~S~~ that was changed.

I Did Wright conceive the whole plan by himself--to this thing? Or did he have to get any ~~government approval~~ <sup>government approval?</sup>

~~N I~~

~~I Government or --~~

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N I really don't know--have no idea.

I ~~Uh-huh.~~ Did you feel any safer, having the sheriff live around you?--having Mr. Palmer live so near?

N No, it didn't mean anything to me, because I was just a youngster ~~[unintelligible]~~ at that time.

I What about cemeteries at this time? Where were people buried at their deaths?

N Most of the people were taken back to where they came from. My family was buried at Herndon, Virginia. Some, of course, were being buried in Arlington then, but

I Where in Arlington would they have been buried then?

N Arlington Cemetery.

I ~~Uh-huh.~~ What about the cemetery on--

N There were no big cemeteries anywhere around. Columbia Gardens wasn't here then.

I ~~Uh-huh.~~ I was thinking that people might <sup>be buried</sup> ~~bury them~~ in their own backyards.

N Oh, no--~~[unintelligible]~~--very few ~~[unintelligible]~~.

I ~~What about the cemetery in Abingdon Street~~ /--around 13th Street?<sup>2</sup>

N ~~Where--that's north of Arlington--~~

I No, ~~No. No.~~ excuse me, not Abingdon [but] Monroe Street.

N Oh, that was a Corbett cemetery.

I A family cemetery.

N That was a family cemetery--of the Corbetts--but people were

[083] buried there back in the 1800's, not after that (to my knowledge).

~~I Uh-huh.~~

~~[Pause.]~~

N There were a number of the early Corbetts who were buried there.

~~[Pause.]~~

I What was Arlington Heights?

~~[Pause.]~~

~~N Arlington Heights?~~

~~I Uh-huh.~~

N I don't know.

I ~~Uh-huh~~--I think that was another section or subdivision.

N That was another area--I think, over toward the Courthouse.

I Uh-huh. Well, tell me about your father, as a PEPCO employee wiring the Barcroft houses--wiring them for electricity.

N Well, because Dad had graduated from Bliss Electrical School, he knew about electricity--knew how to handle it, of course, although he was not ~~[pause]~~ in the electrical business as such. He was the manager of the Commercial Department (for PEPCO) for many years; but we used oil lamps in most areas in Arlington, when the houses were first built and for many years after that.

Dad decided that he'd like to have electricity; so he asked the electric company, which had run lines about as far as Columbia, how much they would charge and how many people they would have to have, in order to agree to run lights to Barcroft--run electricity to Barcroft.

[107] And they told him /that/ at least six houses in Barcroft would have to agree to it.

He got some 10 or 12--and went to work wiring the different houses. He wired our own first, and he also wired the new little school building that had been built--and wired at least seven or eight of the others. Some of the people later dropped out; they decided it would cost too much, ~~and [pause]~~ but that was the beginning for us for--of electricity.

We had, later on, the telephone company--ran lines farther along. And we were one of the first six subscribers for a telephone. We had the old crank-up type--on the wall. We could pick up the receiver, and we could call anybody on our line--any of the other five--if we knew what their ring was. ~~we~~ For instance, we called the store; /say, that was three rings; we'd crank it three times, and that would give the store three rings. It also rang at everybody else's house, every time we rang the thing; so everybody else knew that somebody was calling the store/.

But that was an interesting phase. I wish I had kept that old telephone, just for the fun of it.

~~I Just for the fun of it.~~

When was it that your father did the wiring? About what year was that?

N About 1912 to 1915.

I And when did you get the telephone?

N The telephones we got about 1918--'17 or '18.

I They were two nice changes in your life, though, weren't they?

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N Wonderful, ~~uh-huh~~. We also had our first car about that time, so I didn't have to walk the Pike every *day*.

I ~~[laughter]~~

Tell me about the coming of Barcroft Apartments.

N Well, that we all hated to see, because we had enjoyed the ~~[pause]~~ the lovely woods and the forest that were destroyed when they came through. I was in school at the time (or working), so I didn't know much about it or see much of it except in going or coming.

I ~~What--was it~~ about 1935?

N Just about.

I ~~Uh-huh~~. And who was doing all this?

N The DeLashmutt brothers built the Barcroft Apartments.

I They bought the land from Sheriff Palmer?

N I don't know where they bought the land. Well, he didn't own all of that land; they bought--

I But it was Palmer's cow-field, wasn't it?

N Yes, that was--that was a part of it.

I Oh, then there is some more--

N ~~There was much more--~~

I West of there, isn't it?

N Beyond that--south of that.

I South of that, going back--

N South of Columbia Pike. It went all the way back to the railroad and included a part of the Deuterma farm. They were dairy people that

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lived along the railroad track--D-E-U-T-E-R-M-A-N.

I Deuterman, yes.

N We had a lot of funny names then. Another family that lived down there was the Peturso family, an Italian family.

[Pause.]

I But, anyhow, the DeLashmutts put together the amount of land that they wanted to use for Barcroft Apartments--

N Uh-huh.

I And went ahead with it.

N ~~Uh-huh.~~ YES,

I Was there any active opposition, do you think?

~~N Any what?~~

I Active opposition against it.

N No, I don't think there was any active opposition to it.

~~[Pause.]~~

We were being flooded with people that needed homes and needed places to live, because of the build-up in population. And, of course, Arlington (as I said) was expanding all over--

I Yes.

N First one area and then another. Colonial Village, I think, was the first in the country.

I Of its size, yes.

N Uh-huh.

~~[Pause.]~~

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This and Arlington Village were very much similar.

I And did they turn out to be good neighbors? It was fine once it got started.

N Oh, yes, it was all right. As I say, it destroyed hiking areas; and it took a lot of the birds. One of the interesting things to <sup>those of us</sup> ~~us~~ <sup>of who</sup> ~~for who~~ lived in ~~the~~ <sup>that</sup> area was [that] before the Apartments were built there were many areas that had been used as trenches--or dug as trenches--during the Civil War. And frequently in our hikes we would find Civil War relics in those trenches. I've even found Indian arrows all through there.

~~[Pause.]~~

~~I [If] Barcroft is going to be there a while longer [unintelligible].~~

N ~~Yeah.~~ <sup>Yeah.</sup> And ~~across from~~ across the Boulevard from Barcroft, <sup>where</sup> Arlington Forest is, there were also many Indian relics to be found--all through the woods.

I And then when Barcroft came, that generated more shopping area, didn't it?

N Yes; of course, it did--and more traffic.

I ~~Which.~~ What were the shops that opened up after that--that had been there for a while?

~~[Pause.]~~

N I don't know, really; I haven't kept up with the area as much as with other areas. When I married, I went to town to live for a year--and then moved to this area.

I <sup>To</sup> ~~Which~~--the Pershing Drive area.

[200] N And most of my shopping is done over here ~~[unintelligible]~~.

~~I Yes--uh--huh.~~

N ~~So that~~ <sup>Then</sup> Westmont, of course, was opened--<sup>to serve</sup> ~~and~~ all of these little houses in the Westmont.

I ~~That was the war years;~~ That was during the War.

N That was during the War, yes.

I And then the next shopping area down, say, right at Monroe Street (on the southwest side of Monroe Street, where the bike shop used to be--

~~N Yes, there's a--~~

I There's now a Toddle House; they've been there a long time, I know that).

N Yes, they have.

I Then, farther on down, they had the Quebec Apartments.

~~[Pause.]~~

That's a good-sized group of apartments in there; and then--

N They are built about where the Craig family lived--in the earlier years. A good bit of that was vacant land, but there was a family named Craig that lived along there.

~~[Pause.]~~

~~Back~~ Beyond that (what was now the George Mason Drive)--oh, about four blocks south of the Pike, there was a very small house, where a family named Coles lived. This was on property that was owned by Palmer, and it was <sup>partially</sup> on the edge of his cow field ~~(actually); but~~ In the early days, the Coles (who had come from ~~[pause]~~ one of the islands; I have forgotten



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whether it was Dominica--somewhere <sup>else like</sup> ~~down in there~~--Haiti)--she and her husband had both been professors at the university there, and they had a daughter (the husband was dead at this time)--they had a daughter who was deaf and dumb; she could neither talk nor hear, except that she could make sounds and she could read lips (they had taught her to read lips). She had a good education; her parents had seen to that.

But the Coles (the mother and daughter) owned a horse and a buggy; and when I was a youngster, when Mother and I wanted to go visiting we would rent the horse and buggy from the Cole family. And we could have the horse for a whole day, if we wanted it.

Mother had an aunt who was the matron at the Episcopal Seminary, out beyond Baileys Crossroads; ~~and she~~ /Mother/ liked to go to visit her. So we frequently rented the horse and buggy for that; and it took about two hours to get there from Barcroft. The horse were very slow. It never trotted or ran; it took its own time.

~~[Pause]~~

I Then, right from George Mason Drive, you start into Barcroft, don't you? You go up the hill--

N Yes.

I Up to St. Thomas Street, down the Thomas Street hill--down Columbia Pike at Thomas Street--and then that shopping center on the south side, where Mazor's--

~~N Yes.~~

I Furniture Store is--now that's been there--now that shopping

[260] center's (little shopping area)--has been there about as long as Barcroft.

N It was about the early '40's, probably.

I Uh-huh. Now the next thing down is [pause] what you know as the mill and what I remember as the icehouse; the mill became the--

N Right. The foundation of the old mill ~~(I understand)~~ is still under the icehouse.

I <sup>That's correct; it's</sup>  
Under the icehouse.

N Yes. Of course, at that time, too, Columbia Pike made another S-curve there. It crossed the railroad track (which is not there any more), just beyond where the shopping center with Mazor's is; it crossed the railroad track and bore to the left (for some extent) and went around the front of the mill, which (I suppose) would be the front of the icehouse. ~~I really don't know how that [unintelligible].~~

But there was an S-curve there--going all the way around and then ending up at the top of the hill.

I ~~Uh-huh.~~ Now I'm still on the south side. I'm trying to reconstruct it as we go along (between us). There are a whole group of apartments, including Frederick Courts--

N Now that place where Frederick Courts is--is the area where Bob May lived--

I Hm!

N When he cut and sold wood. That house was way back up on the hillside, on Columbia Pike but along Frederick Street--

I Uh-huh. Then Frederick Court, and then maybe some more apartments;

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and there's a gas station--

N Well, ~~there's not [pause]~~ there was a nursery there, just beyond the Mays' place, that was owned by the Goins family--

I A child-care center?

N No, no--plants.

I That kind of nursery.

N That kind of nursery--G-O-I-N-S.

~~I Uh-huh.~~

N And beyond that lived a Payne family, which later--a family of-- part of the Baileys.

~~I Uh-huh.~~

~~[Pause]~~

Where did--what is now where the--?

N [Unintelligible] about to the Fairfax County line.

I Where is the Fairfax County line? Beyond Carlin Springs Road, isn't it?

N Just beyond.

I Just beyond Carlin Springs Road. Well, ~~there's some area now~~ there's another little shopping area (shopping center) where--

~~N Where the TV~~

~~I There's a Mom and Pop Restaurant, Mom and Pop Italian Restaurant--~~

N On the south side.

I On the south side.

N Well, that is where the Goins Nursery was.

[315]

I That's where the Goins Nursery used to be.

N Yes.

I Then there's a massive high-rise complex, still on the south side.

N That's where the Payne family--later the Bailey family--

~~[Pause.]~~

I It's just that we are talking about--people had enough acreage of land that *when it was subdivided, it covered*

~~N Yes.~~

I ~~They can cover~~ a couple of blocks.

~~[Pause.]~~

Well, if you would, let's try ~~[pause]~~ Columbia Pike, north side, from George Mason Drive. On the north side of Columbia Pike, say, to the east is the Arlington Trust Company in a small shopping area there.

N Okay.

I Okay?

N And you are going west?

I [I] wanted to go west. You start going up to--

~~N All right, go up--~~

I Grand Union.

N Nothing at the bottom of the hill. That was where Doctor's Run went through; at the bottom of the hill there was the edge of Barcroft.

~~[Pause.]~~

One family that lived along there at the bottom of the hill--I don't know the name of the street now, but it's back of where the bank is

[341] (the street east of the bank)--a family named Piper had dammed up Doctor's Run and built a lake, which became a wonderful swimming pool for [pause] neighbors--only if you were invited though.

Then going up Columbia Pike, going up the hill from that point, there were no houses and a little woods on the hillside (where the shopping area now is, with the grocery store and drugstore~~ing~~),

~~I Uh huh.~~

N ~~And~~ We used to cut through that little woods, going home--rather than walking on Columbia Pike, which was hot and dusty in the summer. At the top of the hill (on the right, going west)--

I [Where] Wakefield Towers is now.

N I haven't come to Wakefield Towers yet, but at the top of the hill lived the Pepper family. And across from them (where Wakefield Towers is) lived Ashton Jones [pause], the only house in that block.

Then halfway down the next hill [pause] lived the Head family, in what had originally been the Sewell Corbett--I mean the S. P. Wright place, that was spoken of as "a cottage just east of the lake" on Cedar Street. This was the Head house--later.

Next to that was the W. W. Wright home, which had been owned by a Judge Pelham, from Alabama--P-E-L-H-A-M--and it was he who had named it "Miles Away." Apparently, he was connected with the judiciary in Washington and had come here for that purpose.

~~[Pause]~~

Then across the street (or road) from that, the present Buchanan

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Street, there was a stretch of open field, which was the lower end of my uncle Fred's property--he lived at the top of the hill. And that field was his cow field.

Next to that was a little carriage house, where the ~~[pause] area~~ helper-man lived; and he is spoken of in other records as "Old Tom Foley," and he was the delivery boy for the Harings, who had--

I The general store?

N The grocery store right next door. They also owned this little carriage house, and Tom Foley lived in that.

So that now you are down as far as the store, which was along the railroad track--

[Pause.]

And across the railroad there was a long, low building, that was used for a time by the builder who was brought in to build houses in Barcroft. He used that to house the men that he brought to help him; and his name was Ferrow (P-E-R-R-O-W). That building was also later used for a store, by a man named Cleveland.

I What kind of store did Mr. Cleveland run?

N A grocery store.

~~[Pause.]~~

Beyond that, at one time, there was a small blacksmith shop--after the old shop was torn down. But it was only there for a few years.

And across the creek from that (across the bridge) was the big old mill, which had been built originally by George Washington Parke Custis.

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~~[unclear]~~

~~And~~ It was destroyed during the Civil War.

I You are calling this "north of Columbia Pike," because at that time the S-curve did make it north? ~~Uh-huh.~~

~~[unclear]~~

~~Now~~

N <sup>YES</sup> Next to that--

I Going up the hill now.

N Going up the hill was the S-curve; and this would be where the road goes through now.

~~I Uh-huh.~~

*||*  
N All the <sup>old</sup> houses were torn down to build the present road going [unintelligible]; but there were at least three very large houses there. One was the miller's house (next to the mill), occupied at various times by families of different names--a man named Noland was the first one there (about 1885, according to the historians); and it was he who first lived in the house called "Miles Away"--that was his home. But he was the miller, and he did live next door to the mill for a while.

*||*  
Up above his house lived the Payne family and the Barcroft family-- Dr. Barcroft, who had bought the area there and rebuilt the mill after the Civil War.

[505]

[End of Tape 1, Side 2.]

Tape 2, Side 1  
[000]

Up above where the Barcroft house was--it was ~~approximately [pause]~~-- ~~but~~ on a hill that was then higher (where the shopping center <sup>is</sup>) ~~That was~~ were several houses. They were

[005]

all ~~cut~~ <sup>farm</sup> down when they built the new road.

~~Beyond that there were several houses.~~ The Bridges family at one time lived on top of the hill, approximately where Magnolia Gardens is; and just beyond that lived a family named Burke. He had been one of Mosby's men. And that area later became the farm of the--I believe their name was Kaldenback--family; and that ran approximately to the Fairfax County line on that side.

Dr. Barcroft (and also Mr. Burke) opened up a quarry, on the back of their places (up in there); and many of the rocks from that quarry were used when the mill was rebuilt--and also used for other structures that were going up along the area.

I They must have had--all that it took--you know, many of the natural things that it took to live there: they'd have a quarry to build with; certainly, clay to make brick with, ~~(we know, didn't we?)~~ they had a--

N Well, I don't think they made their own bricks there.

I No, but they did have the wherewithal. Look at my garden.

N ~~The West family--if you've done~~ the east end of Columbia Pike <sup>A</sup>

I ~~Uh-huh.~~

~~The~~ The West family had a very large brickyard ~~down~~ there for many years, and much of the brick of the area here came from that--those brick kilns.

I Uh-huh. Well, that sounds very good. You've given me Barcroft pretty well. It must have been a nice place to live, ~~[unintelligible]~~.

N It was, <sup>in fact,</sup> ~~it was.~~ It was a wonderful place to grow up--a friendly



[032] place.

I ~~On-trak~~. Arlington's nice today.

N Yes, it is.

I Thank you.

N It is still a nice place. You are <sup>most</sup> welcome.

[034] [End of Tape 2, Side 1.]