



Berkshire Historical Society at Herman Melville's Arrowhead
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Invisible Community Project
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Housatonic Heritage Oral History

Margaret Hart
Recorded: March 2, 2000
0:00:00 – 1:00:01

Speaker 1:	00:03	Margaret, I thought you would maybe start by just talking to us a little bit about teaching since that's what you did for-
Margaret:	00:10	40 years.
Speaker 1:	00:13	... 40 years.
Margaret:	00:14	Mm-hmm.
Speaker 1:	00:17	Can you give us maybe some tips for new young people who are going into teaching? Do you think you could give us any advice about that?
Margaret:	00:27	<p>Well, I really think you have to like it and want to really do it, not just think of it as a job. Of course, you have all kinds of situations that come up. But I was very fortunate, even when I said in the end that I was not going to Otis to stay up there for a week, or I guess it was two weeks we had to be up there. I said I wasn't going to go. But you did, you had to go. And so finally the president told me, "If you don't go, you don't graduate. So there's nothing else to do, but decided I had to go.</p> <p>I said, "I didn't want to go. There are no blacks living out there and no black children in the school." And I just wasn't going.</p> <p>Finally, the president said, "Well, if you don't go, you don't graduate."</p>
Speaker 1:	01:35	It was part of your student teaching when you were-
Margaret:	01:42	Mm-hmm. Part of it. So you had to go. And of course the girls, a few of them said, "Well, I'll go with you." Those who hadn't already joined up with one of their friends. And they said, "Well, [inaudible 00:01:59] go." And in the end, I did go.
Speaker 1:	02:01	So how many people went out there with you?

- Margaret: 02:05 Two. There was just the two of us.
- Speaker 1: 02:06 And who was the other person?
- Margaret: 02:07 Well, the other girl who went was Margaret Gross, and she was from Adams, but it just so happened that she developed impetigo, which is a skin infection. And of course, then we went there, the Bartons couldn't have been nicer to anybody than they were to us. Every night they'd bring us great big oranges, as big as a grapefruit, for us to have, as we were studying.
- Speaker 1: 02:43 And the Bartons were? You lived with them?
- Margaret: 02:47 The Bartons, I lived with, or we lived with. They did everything to make it pleasant for us. And when I said that I liked trout, the next morning Mr. Barton got up and got fresh trout out of the brook and we had trout for breakfast.
- Speaker 1: 03:10 That's great. How many children were out there in the school [inaudible 00:03:14]?
- Margaret: 03:21 Well, I don't think there were more than... I really don't know. Have to count in one of those pictures. There's a picture of them.
- Speaker 1: 03:27 So the children were okay? I mean, you got along with the children just fine?
- Margaret: 03:32 Yes. They were very well behaved. And they weren't the best as far as students were concerned, but they did all right as far as I was concerned. And one little boy had his mother make me a hat, and I kept it for a long time, and I don't know... I probably have it around someplace. It may be down [inaudible 00:04:03]. But it was a little knitted hat, much like what people wear now. And as I said, [inaudible 00:04:21], she made it for me. He was the one who had asked her to make it. And she didn't volunteer to do it, because [inaudible 00:04:27] children had someone to make them for them or else they had something else. But he thought it would be fine for me to have one that she made. And I did that. [inaudible 00:04:48] so I guess now.
- Speaker 1: 04:51 Describe the North Adams Normal School when you were attending there. How was it like?
- Margaret: 05:01 Well, a little bit. Ask Rose. She's another person who helps us here.
- Speaker 1: 05:03 Yes. I met Rose on Sunday.

- Margaret: 05:06 Oh, that's right. Yes. Some of [inaudible 00:05:09]. Well, you said, what was it?
- Speaker 1: 05:15 What was it like?
- Margaret: 05:20 Well, we had classes that... We didn't have a chance to choose what we would have. It was already scheduled that everybody would take the same thing, and so therefore I had the same classes that others had. We had physical education and we had English and math, just regular courses that they felt would've helped us in our teaching. And of course now it's different over there and you do have a chance, but I didn't mind it. It was all right.
- Speaker 1: 06:16 Where was the classroom building? Was that Murdoch?
- Margaret: 06:19 Murdoch. That was the one building where we had the classes. And the other building, of course, to the... Well, we stand in front of it and to the left of it. That was where the gymnasium and the classes that we had where we worked with plants and things like that.
- Speaker 1: 06:47 So how many people were in your class a year?
- Margaret: 06:51 I can't really honestly remember, but I ought to know. And I did have, but I don't know where it is right this minute, where it is, but I have one of the books that had the pictures of all the members of the class in it. Well, I don't know that you'd know.
- Rose, you don't remember seeing a book, my yearbook that would have the pictures in it?
- Speaker 3: 07:23 [inaudible 00:07:23].
- Margaret: 07:23 You don't? No, I don't.
- Speaker 1: 07:27 That's fine. We probably can get those pictures. So after you finished your practice teaching at Otis, where did you go next?
- Margaret: 07:36 From Otis, I came back and went to... Or maybe that was the end of the year, so I got, oh, an appointment to teach at Hampton. And this is the way that happened. One of the teachers from over here had applied for a job teaching summer school, and it so happened that she was selected. And when she got down there, she found out that they were going to need a teacher in the training school. She suggested that she knew a person that she thought was good, and that's how I got the job.
- Speaker 1: 08:35 Oh. And who was that teacher?

Margaret: 08:37 The teacher's name was Batchelder. So it worked.

Speaker 1: 08:43 And so what did you do at Hampton? How was it?

Margaret: 08:48 I taught elementary school in the elementary school, and we had... I don't remember now exactly which grade. Isn't that funny? I didn't realize that I should know this, but I don't. But anyway.

Speaker 1: 09:11 So how many years were you there?

Margaret: 09:12 I was there for four years in the Normal School. And two, I think, was when we did the teaching actually, otherwise we observed and we practiced down in the Mark Hopkins School, which was a brick school down the hill. And we used to have to practice and talk about writing. Boy, we practiced making all the exercises that you had in writing. And then you had to go down to the training school and practice sometimes during the day or night.

Speaker 1: 10:15 Oh my goodness.

Margaret: 10:17 And we didn't have to stay. We managed to do it during the day. But that's what we had to do.

Speaker 1: 10:24 And then from Hampton, you went to Indiana, or did you go to Alabama?

Margaret: 10:30 I went Indiana. And the person who is now the president of City College in New York was then at that time the president at Talladega.

Speaker 1: 10:56 Oh really? And who was that person?

Margaret: 10:59 His name's Bill Gallagher. And he had two little girls, Muriel was the older, and Barbara with her beautiful little baby curls, and she got so... The older sister, Muriel, got tired of hearing about those beautiful baby curls, and one day she took the scissors and chopped them off. And so when she did that then she was told that she would not be able to spend the money that had been given her for a bicycle until the curls grew back to the length that they had been.

Speaker 1: 10:59 My goodness.

Margaret: 10:59 And that was really a lesson.

Speaker 1: 11:55 Yeah, I bet you. So how did you leave? I mean, how did you go to Indiana? How did they recruit you from...

- Margaret: 12:01 Well, Indiana, I had this girl... Oh, Wise. What's her name, Wise? Can't think of her last name now. But she had been in my class, and I did do a demonstration at Columbia in the school there not far from the campus, I think. It's silly, I haven't thought about it in a long time. But anyway, I gave a demonstration there. And so when she was made, Helen Weil, was made supervisor of the special classes for... Anyway, she asked them to find me, asked that is, people at Columbia, and they did. Of course the names don't mean much, but I had Dr. Franton and Dr. Raul, they were big names in special education at that time, and they found me.
- Speaker 1: 13:25 And she was one of your classmates at Columbia.
- Margaret: 13:27 She had been a classmate at Columbia, Helen Weil, W-E-I-L.
- Speaker 1: 13:33 Now, Margaret, let me understand this, after you graduated, you went to Hampton first and then you went to Talladega next?
- Margaret: 13:41 Talladega. Let's see.
- Speaker 1: 13:49 And then to Indiana? Is that the way?
- Margaret: 13:55 I think that's the way it was. I think the last place-
- Speaker 1: 13:56 ... was Indiana.
- Margaret: 13:56 ... was Indiana.
- Speaker 1: 13:59 And at Talladega, you did a similar teaching there that you had done at Hampton.
- Margaret: 14:02 Yes. Special people. And in the training school.
- Speaker 1: 14:10 But you took a break between Talladega and Indiana to get your master's at Columbia?
- Margaret: 14:17 No, I got my master's from Columbia by going summers.
- Speaker 1: 14:26 Summers. Okay.
- Margaret: 14:27 But the last year, I did not teach.
- Speaker 1: 14:36 Okay.
- Margaret: 14:36 Seems to me. I can't remember now. Haven't thought about it. But as I said, Helen Weil was responsible for me going...
- Speaker 1: 14:51 To Indiana.

Margaret: 14:52 ... to Indiana.

Speaker 1: 14:56 Then you came back home because of... Was it 1949?

Margaret: 15:02 I believe so.

Speaker 1: 15:07 And then your dad was sick.

Margaret: 15:08 Yes. And I was offered at that time a job to teach someplace else, but because my father wasn't feeling too well and I thought, "Well, if I'm ever going to go back, now's the time to come back this way." And so I accepted and I taught. I was on the payroll there just 12 days and my father had a heart attack and died.

Speaker 1: 15:38 This is in Pittsville?

Margaret: 15:39 In Pittsville.

Speaker 1: 15:42 Only 12 days.

Margaret: 15:43 12 days.

Speaker 1: 15:45 Did you know that it was a big to do that you got a job at Pittsville, being the first black?

Margaret: 15:55 Yes. Yes. Because they had made quite an issue of it, and that they wanted a black teacher in Pittsville. And Reverend Nevers... Now, his wife's picture is in... I don't have a picture of him. I have a picture of his wife in one of those pictures that you'll see. And they had talked with the Englands, who were big people in the community. They owned England Brothers store, which was right on the corner there where... What is it now? Some other business. But I don't know. Do you remember England Brothers store?

Speaker 3: 16:50 Yes, I do.

Margaret: 16:53 It was right on the main street.

Speaker 3: 16:55 Yeah.

Margaret: 16:55 And it was right on the corner. They owned that whole block.

Speaker 3: 17:00 Do you know where it is?

Margaret: 17:00 That's the doctor.

Speaker 3: 17:06 Oh, you remember?

Speaker 1: 17:07 Yes. Yes.

Speaker 3: 17:08 Well, she asked me a little about it. I don't know. [inaudible 00:17:12]

Speaker 1: 17:12 Oh.

Margaret: 17:14 Yes. Those are places [inaudible 00:17:16].

Speaker 3: 17:16 I was young.

Margaret: 17:18 It was in North Adams.

Speaker 1: 17:19 Oh, I see.

Margaret: 17:20 Candyland.

Speaker 3: 17:22 In Paramount Theater.

Speaker 1: 17:22 Oh.

Margaret: 17:22 That was a theater.

Speaker 3: 17:25 You didn't live around here then?

Speaker 1: 17:28 No.

Speaker 3: 17:28 Oh, okay. A lot of history.

Margaret: 17:30 It's below it.

Speaker 1: 17:33 And so Mr. Englander and his... they had been pushing for a black teacher in Pittsville.

Margaret: 17:38 Yes. What was the name of the organization? But anyway, the Englands were behind it. And they worked along with black people who were trying to get a black teacher.

Speaker 1: 18:02 And it was [inaudible 00:18:03].

Margaret: 18:03 I happened to be the one.

Speaker 1: 18:06 So what was your reception in the schools?

Margaret: 18:09 Well, very nice. Made no difference at all except for one, two, three of them that I had. And boy, they let me know that they were here, had been some time, and they were political appointees, and so they had some pull. Well, we used what I had too. And when [inaudible 00:18:44] and one of them was letting

me know what I would do if I wanted to stay in that system. She went on to the principal, come out to the principal, the superintendent, and talked to him. And so the next thing I knew, he came to the school where I was and... Winter Street, I think. But anyway, he came in and said that if I were going to stay in that school that I would have to abide by the rules. And he was shouting and I was very quiet. I said, "I certainly have no intention of doing anything else."

- Speaker 1: 19:40 They had complained to him about you.
- Margaret: 19:42 Oh yes. This woman here, this principal. And she couldn't have been nice enough before I left there.
- Speaker 1: 19:54 Oh.
- Margaret: 19:54 She was nice. But I was nice to her too, because one of the projects that I had and had planned to have, I had looms, just two harness looms, and I had intended to let the children make rugs so each one of them would have a rug.

And I had talked to the man at the mill on, I think, [inaudible 00:20:30]. I can't know now whether that's the name of it, but anyway, one of the mills there. And he had told me that he would let me have the material for the children to make a rug, each one. And there couldn't have been more than 10 or 12 children. But at first she wasn't too happy about it. But in the end she got the bright idea that it would be wonderful, and she decided that they would make a rug for the teacher's room. And I said I had mentioned them doing something like that. And she marched in one day and said that before they could make any rugs for themselves, they had to make the one for the teacher's room. I said, "Then you do it." And you know, that's the way I'd get back and do [inaudible 00:21:41].

Anyway, we didn't make the rug. I don't think we ever made a rug for that. I think they just made their own later when we moved to another school.

- Speaker 1: 22:00 Is that the first school that you taught in Pittsville, what was the name of it?
- Margaret: 22:06 I started to say Winter Street, but I can't remember. It's as you come in the city, I think it was the Winter School.
- Speaker 1: 22:13 Okay. And then you moved from there to another school?
- Margaret: 22:20 Mm-hmm.
- Speaker 1: 22:22 The junior high school?

Margaret: 22:24 [inaudible 00:22:24]. And then I think I moved to three, and about that time they built the new schools [inaudible 00:22:33] schools. That would be North Junior High and South Junior High in the southern part of the city.

Speaker 1: 22:48 Did you have any black children in your classes [inaudible 00:22:51]?

Margaret: 22:51 [inaudible 00:22:51] Oh, they were something. They really put you through. It was as bad as what Brenda had to put up with when she was the captain in charge, Brenda, of Elaine and Tommy. And they put her through, but she lived, and so did I. But they were kind of nasty, but in the end they turned out to be all right. And if you go to the park... What's the name of that park? [inaudible 00:23:37] Park? Where they have the stencils or have the paintings on the side of the building?

Speaker 1: 23:45 I don't know pictures [inaudible 00:23:47]?

Margaret: 23:48 None of you do? Well, you look them up. Look it up.

Speaker 1: 23:51 Okay.

Margaret: 23:51 And there is a picture of me.

Speaker 1: 23:53 Oh, really?

Margaret: 23:55 That's one of the pictures.

Speaker 1: 23:56 Oh. Okay.

Margaret: 23:56 And then there's pictures of... I'm not quite sure. But when you go into Pittsville from here, it's right near the hospital.

Speaker 1: 24:08 Okay. Yep. That's Reed Middle School now, right?

Margaret: 24:11 Yeah. Well, Reed Middle School is about here.

Speaker 1: 24:16 And then next... Right on the left is a park. Is that the one?

Margaret: 24:16 Mm-hmm.

Speaker 1: 24:18 Okay.

Margaret: 24:22 I think that's the park. But anyway, there are these pictures. And Lafayette Walker, Frank Walker, they were working with us in the city for different things that we wanted to do for the children and the community. And they were helpful.

- Speaker 1: 25:01 So do you, during your teaching time there, what do you think was one of your greatest accomplishments as a teacher?
- Margaret: 25:11 I don't know. As I said, of the youngsters, some of them did go back into a regular class, but then some of them didn't. And only one, I think, ever graduated from high school of those first people. And part of it was that they just wouldn't give them a chance. They figured they'd been special and so special they were going to be. And so that was the way it was.
- Speaker 1: 25:58 So it's kind of different now because they kind of integrate them into the regular classes.
- Margaret: 26:02 Well, that's what they should've been doing then, and that's why I gave it up, because they would not let... They may have been deficient in one or two subjects, but they didn't have to just stay there where there were children who were sitting there with their mouths open, looking around in the room and doing nothing much except being quiet and coloring or doing a little reading that most of them do.
- But there was one boy, Martin Weinberg, and he's a member of the family of Weinbergs that had some connection in the Jewish community. But poor Martin, it seemed like it took a whole year for him to learn, when he came in the door, to answer when I'd say, "Good morning, Martin." And he'd look at me and he'd say, "Good morning, Martin." And I don't know. I was starting to see if he ever got to the place where he said, "Good morning, Miss Hart," but he might've in the end. But those are the kind of things that you had to put up with.
- Speaker 1: 27:18 So then your entire career in Pittsville was spent in special education.
- Margaret: 27:27 Special education. I was just trying to remember. I'm pretty sure.
- Speaker 1: 27:38 That's a pretty tough teaching field. I mean, just teaching period would... The special ed kids, it must have been pretty tough.
- Margaret: 27:51 Yes. But isn't that funny, I can't remember whether I taught anything else.
- Speaker 1: 27:55 Social studies, I understand-
- Margaret: 27:57 Oh yes, I did. And I also taught arts and crafts.
- Speaker 1: 28:00 Right. Right. Yes you did.
- Margaret: 28:03 So good thing you mentioned it. Yes.

- Speaker 1: 28:06 Yeah.
- Margaret: 28:08 And then any of the people in the whatever year school it was would come to spend time. Mr. Nugent was the principal there at North Junior High. And he made every effort to let them know that they were supposed to [inaudible 00:28:37] ever was outlined. And we did. But yes, they did do other things. And the school we worked with made things out of clay and made leather. And the people in the mills not only gave me the woolen material for the rugs, but they also gave me leather.
- Speaker 1: 29:04 Oh.
- Margaret: 29:04 And then we made I don't know how many simple sandals that were used for our production of, I think it was [inaudible 00:29:22] and there are about 500 or 400 slippers.
- Speaker 1: 29:32 What do you attribute your family's success in education to, Margaret?
- Margaret: 29:40 Well, my father always wanted us to get an education. And of course his people, his uncles, J.Y. Eaton... There's a school in Henderson named for him.
- Speaker 1: 29:54 Oh.
- Margaret: 29:55 And I don't know if he... It's the Eaton Johnson, I think, school. But he, J.Y. Eaton and Thomas Eaton were two to graduate early graduates of Shaw.
- Speaker 1: 30:15 Oh.
- Margaret: 30:17 So they went there to school. And the reason that the story goes that J.Y. became principal was that he was really quite an intelligent person and he had been thinking of going into law, and in order to keep him from going into law, the good people saw to it that he'd be given this honor as being made principal of the school. And that's how it happened.
- And it was too bad because his children, and he had three children, two girls, Clarice Eaton was the oldest or the older of the girls, and then the other, I can't think of the child's name. But anyway, it was sort of a reward for him, but it was really keeping him so he would not interfere with what might've been progress that could've been made. And so that's the way it went.
- Speaker 1: 31:42 So Tom was talking about on Sunday that [inaudible 00:31:46] really encouraged him to go on [inaudible 00:31:50]-

Margaret: 31:51 My brother Tom wanted to go to... Not to Hampton. That's where he ended up. He wanted to go to Springfield College, but they had their quota.

Speaker 1: 32:05 Quota?

Margaret: 32:09 They had a quota in many of the schools up here, and so therefore he'd had to wait for another year, so he didn't want to do that. So he came on down to Hampton, where I was, and went to school there. And then from that, from Hampton, he went on to [inaudible 00:32:35]. Terrible. I should've figured all this out before. But he went on to New York [inaudible 00:32:45]. Finished New York. He finally got his... Went on and he got his doctorate. I think that was after he had worked for Westinghouse.

Speaker 1: 33:02 Mm-hmm. So are you and Tom the only one who got higher education, and the other brothers started working in the business?

Margaret: 33:10 Yes, they did. And Tom worked during the summer in business, just like Kenny. And he built one house that he has now. Stone house.

Speaker 1: 33:26 You mean the one that's set off in the back there?

Margaret: 33:31 Oh no.

Speaker 1: 33:32 No, not that one.

Margaret: 33:34 No. I'm talking about a [inaudible 00:33:36] houses on Maple Street in [inaudible 00:33:40]. And it's you go down Maple Street, and it's the only stone house there.

Speaker 1: 33:48 Oh.

Margaret: 33:48 And it's on the left hand side. And I think there's one other house, two other houses, before you get to the end of the street.

Speaker 1: 33:59 And does he still own that house?

Margaret: 34:02 He still owns it.

Speaker 1: 34:02 Oh.

Margaret: 34:02 And he rents it.

Speaker 1: 34:07 So when did the Hart camp first start?

- Margaret: 34:12 There again, I just can't tell you. Well, it started, Brenda and Elaine were small, and Edna. Who's back here? Alan? Hi. Hi. Brenda and Elaine, the babies. And in the pictures there's a picture of the two of them sitting right in front. They were little bit of things. Right in front of the group of campers. And boy, I used to get after them there. But Brenda listened, but Elaine didn't. And Brenda, I'd say, "Look, I don't want them picking you up and hugging you and kissing you. No kissing you. Remember?" And then the next thing I know, the little boys were so glad to see a little one that could be like a little sister, because they had left their little sisters at home. But I was so afraid they were going to drop them. But Brenda wouldn't so much as Elaine, but Elaine, they'd pick her up and they'd hug her and they'd kiss her.
- Speaker 1: 35:34 So Tom actually started the camp.
- Margaret: 35:38 Oh yes.
- Speaker 1: 35:38 Yes.
- Margaret: 35:38 We had talked about it when they... Way back. And then we finally did.
- Speaker 1: 35:49 The camp was first kind of a summer camp with riding horses and being on the farm.
- Margaret: 35:55 Yes.
- Speaker 1: 35:56 When did he introduce the golf?
- Margaret: 36:00 Well, that's just within the last few years.
- Speaker 1: 36:04 Oh.
- Margaret: 36:05 And it's just not a big deal except that Tommy... I think it was mostly Tommy who wanted that, but I can't remember. But yes, before, we didn't have golf. I mean, just that they would play it there, just like they played the other games, basketball and volleyball and the rest. But then, well, it has been since say Tiger Woods was doing so much, and Tom knew Tiger's father. And anyway, that was part of what they decided they'd do, and so they did. And I guess they got a grant or something to do that, to encourage youngsters to play golf.
- Speaker 1: 37:09 What about the farmhouse now? How long have you all had that for, the house?

- Margaret: 37:13 Well, that went with the whole thing. We got the [inaudible 00:37:22] farmhouse. We got the farm. And that happened through [inaudible 00:37:26]. And he came along that road one night, and I think this bull from that farm went out in the road and got knocked over. Seems to me it had something to do with that. And the people who owned the farm were the Fitzgeralds, and they were people who were friends of ours that we'd known for years, the Fitzgeralds. And that's how we happened to get that farm. And, well, that was it.
- Speaker 1: 38:07 It must have been a lot of work though, you guys, with the farm, and then you were teaching.
- Margaret: 38:14 Well, I didn't do much.
- Speaker 1: 38:15 You didn't do much?
- Margaret: 38:17 No. Only in the summer when I'd be there. And I taught arts and crafts to the campers. And they made little leather purses and things like that out of leather. And I got the leather at the mill. They let me have scraps. That's what I used.
- Speaker 1: 38:17 Talk to me a little bit about your mother's mother. She seems such an interesting-
- Margaret: 38:44 My mother's mother, my grandmother was interesting. The picture of her in with those pictures. There's a picture of her with her big raccoon fur coat on. A beautiful thing. Cost \$500, which was a lot of money then. And she got it because she was going to go to Florida and they were driving through. This fellow who drove, was driving... It wasn't his car, but I think it was Mr. Morris's car, Morris, Samuel F.B. Morris, his relative. I don't know what their connection was, but she was related, and her name was Mrs. Margaret Morris. And she, as I said [inaudible 00:40:01], was [inaudible 00:40:03]. So you're sure they'd be warm driving from up there, going down there. And they went in the fall of the year. So that's that.
- Speaker 1: 40:19 And so did your grandmother live with your family?
- Margaret: 40:24 My grandmother did not live with us. It's my grandmother who owned the property on Maple Street, and she owned it for quite a while and didn't do anything with it. So finally, one day, my father said, "You might just as well put a building there." So he took the horse and the... What do they call those? It's like a big scoop that scoops up the dirt, and dug the cellar for the house, the second house on the street. And there wasn't any other house on that property that they owned. And so that's how they happened to build it.

Speaker 1: 41:16 So Maple and Hall Street are just... There's Hall and then Maple is right next to it. So where was she living before she built the house on Maple?

Margaret: 41:27 Well, she was living where she worked.

Speaker 1: 41:31 Oh.

Margaret: 41:32 And usually there was a room. Yeah. She had a room. She was a cook.

Speaker 1: 41:45 So then she built her house on Maple Street, and that was right over from you all's house on Hall Street. That was at 26 Hall Street that you lived?

Margaret: 41:53 It was 29. Yeah.

Speaker 1: 41:54 29.

Margaret: 41:55 Today, I think it's 60.

Speaker 1: 41:57 Oh, they changed them?

Margaret: 41:58 The numbers.

Speaker 1: 42:00 The numbers. So who is on that street now? Is your brother [inaudible 00:42:03]?

Margaret: 42:03 Yes. He has property there.

Speaker 1: 42:10 Okay.

Margaret: 42:11 I think it's 60. And that's where he keeps his car and cars and trucks, because he's retired and does very little.

Speaker 1: 42:31 It's his son who mostly does-

Margaret: 42:34 Yes. Mostly Steven who does [inaudible 00:42:38] the office and...

Speaker 1: 42:42 So how many other properties on Hall Street does the family own, besides...

Margaret: 42:56 Except the house that was 29, where we lived, when I say lived and born on the same property, but not the same house.

Speaker 1: 43:09 Okay. Because it burned down.

Margaret: 43:10 Burned down.

- Speaker 1: 43:11 Okay.
- Margaret: 43:11 That's when my mother came out with her nightgown on, no shoes or slippers, and me under one arm and [inaudible 00:43:28] under the other, through that snow. And of course all the neighbors were yelling, "Come on over this way, Katie. Come here, Katie. Come on in here with us." And she went on.
- And then later there was an empty apartment in the house that's still standing there almost directly across from us, from our property. And there was a vacant apartment, and so they went in there the next day or so, and that's where they lived until my father put enough together in the house that he was building so that we moved in there.
- Speaker 1: 44:17 Okay. So did you ever find out the cause of the fire?
- Margaret: 44:22 Yes. My mother and father sold eggs, and they raised the chickens in a little... They hatched them in a little incubator that was about that wide, say square, about that square, and the next day they were supposed to be hatched. And what happened, they believe, is that one of the little chickens hatched and got close to the little flame and caught on fire, and then that just burned up the whole place. [inaudible 00:45:06]
- Speaker 1: 45:08 Well, I was going to ask lastly about the school systems, because you all walked up to school, right, from where you lived?
- Margaret: 45:21 Yes. Just up on... You know where School Street is?
- Speaker 1: 45:23 Oh, School Street. So not very far.
- Margaret: 45:23 No.
- Speaker 1: 45:26 And how-
- Margaret: 45:26 Two minutes to walk.
- Speaker 1: 45:28 Did you feel any discrimination when you were going to school [inaudible 00:45:33] public schools?
- Margaret: 45:33 I went to public. We went to public schools. Yeah.
- Speaker 1: 45:36 Did you feel any discrimination?
- Margaret: 45:37 Except Alan. Alan went part-time or one time to [inaudible 00:45:44].
- Speaker 1: 45:37 Oh really?

Margaret: 45:45 Yes. He was-

Speaker 1: 45:47 You and your brother is Henry, who was-

Margaret: 45:50 Henry. Two years younger than I. And then later to that same school there, which is now the club, the boys' club.

Speaker 1: 46:08 That was a school before?

Margaret: 46:10 That was a school.

Speaker 1: 46:11 That was a school.

Margaret: 46:13 That was a Station School we called it.

Speaker 1: 46:14 So is that where you first went to school?

Margaret: 46:17 That's where we first went to school.

Speaker 1: 46:19 And then from there you went up to school [inaudible 00:46:22].

Margaret: 46:22 Yes. And that was high school.

Speaker 1: 46:26 Mm-hmm. The School Street was the high school in this. The boys' club was the elementary school.

Margaret: 46:30 Yes. I was trying to think.

Speaker 1: 46:39 Were there other blacks in the school?

Margaret: 46:44 At one time there were... Sometimes some [inaudible 00:46:50] came, but then most of them didn't stay, their parents would move on to another job someplace else. But mostly it was just we were there.

Speaker 1: 47:02 It was just the Hart children.

Margaret: 47:03 Mm-hmm.

Speaker 1: 47:07 So did you ever work? You never worked in the [inaudible 00:47:10] business store that James runs now.

Margaret: 47:13 Yes. Yeah, we took turns. And he [inaudible 00:47:17]. Well, when we had the camp, especially, we'd sell gasoline. And also we had a lovely... Wish we still had it. They took and broke it up. You know, the big long counters that you see in some stores.

Speaker 1: 47:37 Mm-hmm.

Margaret: 47:38 And I think oak for the frame.

Speaker 1: 47:43 Frame with the glass?

Margaret: 47:44 Mm-hmm. Glass in the front.

Speaker 1: 47:44 Why did they break it up?

Margaret: 47:44 They didn't want it.

Speaker 1: 47:44 Oh goodness.

Margaret: 47:56 I say that, now I'm trying to remember whether they really broke it up or whether the fire had burned up in the fire. I don't know. I know it's gone.

Speaker 1: 48:10 Did you ever regret having to come back, that you really kind of think that you wanted to go and peak someplace else?

Margaret: 48:20 No.

Speaker 1: 48:20 No regrets?

Margaret: 48:26 No regrets. As I said, we visited when I was where I was. And every summer during the first week in August, my father would try to have his hay done by that time, he and the boys. Thomas and Buddy would help in the hay field, Sneaky too. And we'd pack our things and away we'd go to be down to my aunt's place in North Carolina.

Speaker 1: 49:00 In North Carolina.

Margaret: 49:03 Down at... Well, not too far, I guess, from where you live.

Speaker 1: 49:03 Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

Margaret: 49:05 We went to near Flat Creek Church. [inaudible 00:49:14] at the Flat Creek Church that they attended. And there's a monument out there.

Speaker 1: 49:05 Oh.

Margaret: 49:25 It's about that size. So high. Just a slab. Where they have the...

Speaker 1: 49:40 So almost every summer you guys would [inaudible 00:49:43] to North Carolina?

Margaret: 49:40 Yes.

Speaker 1: 49:40 Yeah.

Margaret: 49:40 Quite often.

Speaker 1: 49:40 Yeah.

Margaret: 49:49 But I won't say that we did it every single time, but just about. We tried. Because that was the only time when we could go. Because you see, we'd be out of school and so that would be it.

And I think of the things that we did to raise... to help make the money so that we could go.

Speaker 1: 49:49 Oh yeah.

Margaret: 50:09 And we'd help with the day [inaudible 00:50:17] papers so that they can use [inaudible 00:50:19] or gasoline.

Speaker 1: 50:26 What kind of cars did they have? Do you remember?

Margaret: 50:29 Well, we had the [inaudible 00:50:32]. First, we had Steven's [inaudible 00:50:36], which was a car, and that's the one that is my... One of the pictures [inaudible 00:50:48] picture of my grandmother and friends of hers with their... They wore scarves across their head and tied them under their chin so their hats wouldn't blow off.

Speaker 1: 51:10 So how long have you been here, Mom, in this house?

Margaret: 51:15 This house was built for my brother Henry.

Speaker 1: 51:17 Oh, okay.

Margaret: 51:18 He built it.

Speaker 1: 51:19 Okay.

Margaret: 51:20 And his family, his first family, that was Anne. Those pictures and that wedding. And he was going around with her and finally they got married. And she was sent to school for the last year to finish Smith. And she finished early, and then she got a job after [inaudible 00:52:13] at Edmund Lewis School. And she taught at Edmund Lewis [inaudible 00:52:21]. She liked French and she taught French. That's true.

And he tried to encourage her, one of the professors at Williams, Professor... [inaudible 00:52:41] his name. Tried to tell him if she would talk French, that Binky, was their little boy, would begin to pick it up and would be able to learn two languages. But

my feeling is that she just was not interested because Buddy wasn't interested. People like that. But anyway, she didn't. Although Binky did learn... I don't think they ever sent him [inaudible 00:53:17] school, but he finally did go to school. I don't ever think he went to elementary school here. I think [inaudible 00:53:35], she had decided she'd go on. And she went, as I said, taught at Edmund Lewis, but she also taught in Amherst, and [inaudible 00:53:49]. Then he finished... When did he finish? [inaudible 00:53:58] Betsy did.

- Speaker 1: 54:03 Certainly his sister did.
- Margaret: 54:05 Mm-hmm.
- Speaker 1: 54:05 Betsy.
- Margaret: 54:07 And he did too, I think. Because he went on became... and graduated finally from Amherst. And that was... [inaudible 00:54:49] Amherst. I remember because I remember going to Amherst.
- Speaker 1: 54:07 For his graduation?
- Margaret: 54:54 I'm starting to say yes, but I don't remember. Whether we [inaudible 00:54:56] we were invited, [inaudible 00:55:00]. But he did graduate from Amherst, and then from Harvard. And he became a lawyer, and the wife [inaudible 00:55:13] children.
- Speaker 1: 54:54 And his sister-
- Margaret: 54:54 And they live in-
- Speaker 1: 54:54 Philadelphia?
- Margaret: 55:25 [inaudible 00:55:25] and Thomas stopped and tried to make him understand that we'd like to be closer. Betsy is an anthropologist and he is a lawyer.
- Speaker 1: 55:34 [inaudible 00:55:34].
- Margaret: 55:33 I think I [inaudible 00:55:36].
- Speaker 1: 55:35 Yeah. Yes. I figured that you did. Where's...
- Margaret: 55:35 Rose.
- Speaker 1: 56:10 [inaudible 00:56:10] Because Jatasha's going to Boston, so she [inaudible 00:56:22] always going something [inaudible 00:56:24].

Margaret: 56:24 Oh, Natasha?

Speaker 1: 56:24 Jatasha.

Margaret: 56:35 Jatasha. She's going to Boston today?

Speaker 1: 56:35 Mm-hmm.

Margaret: 56:37 This was [inaudible 00:56:39].

Speaker 1: 56:37 I don't know.

Speaker 3: 56:37 What do you need?

Margaret: 56:39 Hi there, I need to go to the bathroom.

Speaker 3: 56:39 Well, I don't know if I want to let out.

Margaret: 56:45 Oh, geez.

Speaker 3: 56:52 [inaudible 00:56:52] Burt, are these your glasses?

Margaret: 56:55 Those are mine.

Speaker 3: 56:57 Okay. Wait, wait, wait, wait. Got to get you out of here.
[inaudible 00:57:02] Okay. Now [inaudible 00:57:08].

Margaret: 57:08 Elias. Elias. Bless the Lord. Don't you know the day's abroad? If you don't get up, you scamp, there'll be trouble in this camp. Think I'm going to let you sleep while you earn, while I make your board and keep? That's a pretty how di do. Don't you hear me, Elias, you?

If I come across the floor, you won't find no time to snore. Daylight all are creeping in while you sleep, why it's a sin. Ain't the candlelight enough to burn out without a snuff? But you [inaudible 00:57:50] morning through, burning up the daylight too.

Elias? Don't you hear me call? No use turning to the wall. I can hear that mattress squeak. Don't you hear me when I speak? This here clock done struck off six. Carolyn, bring me that stick. Oh, get down somehow. You're down. Look here. Don't you dare to frown. Wash yourself and wash your face. Don't you spatter all the place. I got something else to do besides just cleaning after you. Take that, come and fix your head. Looks just like a feather bed.

Look here, boy, I'll let you see, you can't roll your eyes at me.
Come here. Bring me that there strap. Boy, I'll whip you till you
drap. You done felt yourself too strong and you surely got me
wrong. Sit down at the table there. Just you whimper if you dare.
Every morning on this place seems like I must lose my grace.
Fold your hands and bow your head.

And he's reaching for a roll, she says, "Wait until the blessing's
said. Lord have mercy on my soul, our soul. Bless the food. Oh
don't you dare to touch them rolls. Bless the food they're going to
eat. You sit still, I see your feet. You just [inaudible 00:59:46].
You just try that trick again. Give us peace and joy. Amen."

1:00:01

[Recording Ends]