

MEMORIES OF NEW BERN

AGNES FOY BARDEN
(MRS. GRAHAM A. BARDEN)

INTERVIEW NUMBER 101

I am Mary Barden the interviewer. This is going to be an interview with my mother-in-law, Agnes Barden at her home on Trent River. She is 91 years old and has led a very eventful life and I hope she will have something to contribute. The date is April 9, 1991.

Ok, now, that's ok. We'll take notes as we go. Now, why were you born in Morehead Aggie Dear?

AGNES BARDEN: Because it was a very hot summer and Granddaddy had rented a cottage and he wanted the family to go down there. And that was the time that they had dances in Morehead and Aunt Agnes and Aunt Annie were at that age, and so they took that part of in it.

MARY BARDEN: They were Pop's sisters?

AGNES BARDEN: They were Pop's sisters.

MARY BARDEN: Aunt Annie Vick and Aunt Annie Rhem.

AGNES BARDEN: No, Annie Vick and Aunt Agnes Pollock.

MARY BARDEN: They were all Foys and Aunt Agnes Pollock. Ok.

AGNES BARDEN: They were all Foys.

MARY BARDEN: And they were taking the dances and MaMaw was about to have you?

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah.

MARY BARDEN: Ok. Now what did Pop do at that time to make a living?

AGNES BARDEN: Papa, let me see. What was papa doing. He and, now check this with him, or check it with mother, both of them are dead.

MARY BARDEN: Both of them are dead. Ok.

AGNES BARDEN: You know I can't accept it.

MARY BARDEN: Sure you can. Let's don't worry about it. Come on.

AGNES BARDEN: Where was I?

MARY BARDEN: You were talking about, what did Pop do? Was he a salesman?

AGNES BARDEN: Papa was with the BPS Paint Company and mother ought to be here.

MARY BARDEN: Well, don't worry about mother. We just want your memories today.

AGNES BARDEN: Gosh, they've got to be accurate too.

MARY BARDEN: Then you lived in New Bern for, until you were about six?

AGNES BARDEN: I lived in New Bern?

MB: Uh huh and you moved to Charlotte.

AGNES BARDEN: I know I was ten years old when we moved to Charlotte.

MARY BARDEN: I thought you were ten years old when you moved back from Charlotte. You were ten when you moved to Charlotte?

AGNES BARDEN: Well, maybe I was. You see these things I haven't thought about them in a

MARY BARDEN: Well, go ahead. You'll think about them.

AGNES BARDEN: And let me see. We lived in Charlotte for four years.

MARY BARDEN: Uh huh. I think you were about six when you moved to Charlotte. Tell me about the gypsies. That was funny.

AGNES BARDEN: Oh, they used to pass through New Bern. And they told us that when ever we saw them coming down the street, they walked,

MARY BARDEN: That's gypsies?

AGNES BARDEN: Gypsies. To come in the house. So every time we saw them, we ran in the house to our parents.

MARY BARDEN: What did you think they were going to do to you?

AGNES BARDEN: There's wasn't any telling. Some had been, I think there had been some disappearances of some, of the children. Well, they take them along and train them.

MARY BARDEN: You were afraid they would steal you.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, I was afraid they'd steal me so I ran in the house.

MARY BARDEN: Ok. I don't blame you.

AGNES BARDEN: I was living in Charlotte, but we were visiting Grandmother at that time.

MARY BARDEN: I thought it was the gypsies came through in Charlotte and you ran in the house.

AGNES BARDEN: No, it was in New Bern they came through, yeah. And we were visiting Grandmother on Middle Street. See she moved, when the house we used to live in was torn down and Grandmother and Granddaddy gave that lot to Aunt Agnes and she put her house on it.

MARY BARDEN: So that's where you lived was where the Pollock house was on Middle Street. At first and then they tore it down?

AGNES BARDEN: The Pollock house?

MARY BARDEN: Where Aunt Agnes' house was.

AGNES BARDEN: No, where our house was.

MARY BARDEN: That was across the street.

AGNES BARDEN: That was across the street from Grandmother. She lived in the house mother's living in now. And they all started out in the Munger house.

MARY BARDEN: Right. I knew that.

AGNES BARDEN: You knew that. And, so,

MARY BARDEN: Did they have any sidewalks in New Bern then?

AGNES BARDEN: No, they were dirt.

MARY BARDEN: Dirt.

AGNES BARDEN: They were put, New Bern, the main streets were put down first.

MARY BARDEN: And what kind of streets where they, brick?

AGNES BARDEN: No, they were concrete.

MARY BARDEN: Concrete? (She is evidently talking about sidewalks)

AGNES BARDEN: Uh huh, and they in front of Grandmother's house. That's all I had to skate on when I came from Charlotte to visit.

MARY BARDEN: Oh did you roller skate?

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, I roller skated. Oh, yeah, Honey. I was a star, and Mrs. Harrell's house was on the corner of Johnson and, who lives there now? Dr. Duffy has his, had his offices in part of it for a long time. And we used to skate down that hill. There's a slight hill there, and Katherine Patterson lived next door to them on Johnson Street. So, now where was I?

MARY BARDEN: You were roller skating. That's good.

AGNES BARDEN: Rambling. And we skated on that block a whole lot, 'cause it was down hill, you see, we could gain a little bit of momentum.

MARY BARDEN: Who were your other friends? Katherine Patterson and who else?

AGNES BARDEN: Oh, let me see. There was Margaret Hollister. Katherine Patterson. Dolly Hyman. Catherine and Elizabeth Catin. I said Pete Hollister didn't I. Margaret Griffin, Margaret Hollister she was.

MARY BARDEN: Ok, well you called her Pete.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, but I think in writing, I would think you would want to put her real name in. And, let me see what else.

MARY BARDEN: Now did Pete live in the big house with the columns where the old sisters lived?

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah. But it didn't look like that then. They had it renovated and put the big columns up.

MARY BARDEN: But they still had the porches when you were a girl, 'cause you all slept up there.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah. No, that was after they put the columns up.

MARY BARDEN: So they renovated it between the time you were a little girl and the time you were a teenager.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah. And we had permission to do that. (Sleep on the upstairs porch) Mrs. Hollister, and we tied our feet together

because if one waked up and started to walk, it would wake the other one up and then we'd realize we were on the roof.

MARY BARDEN: So you were sleeping on that little roof over the porch on the Hollister house, and you tied your nightgowns together.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, so one would wake the other up if, because we could have walked off that porch, you see, the top of that porch.

MARY BARDEN: Well, did you have a bicycle when you were little?

AGNES BARDEN: No, they wouldn't let me have a bicycle. I rode Dolly Hyman on hers.

MARY BARDEN: You rode with Dolly Hyman. Well, did you ever learn to swim?

AGNES BARDEN: Never have.

MARY BARDEN: And why didn't you go swimming?

AGNES BARDEN: I was always afraid of the water.

MARY BARDEN: But your mama wouldn't let you learn to swim.

AGNES BARDEN: No, mother never said not to, but every time we went to Vandermere, papa would drive us down in a horse and buggy. The train didn't run from Washington.

MARY BARDEN: Would you go from New Bern to Vandermere in a horse and buggy?

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah.

MARY BARDEN: How long did it take?

AGNES BARDEN: Oh, Mary. I've forgotten.

MARY BARDEN: Half a day.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, every bit of a half a day. And papa would

stay down there the weekend you see and then come on back to New Bern.

MARY BARDEN: Well, did it have a top on it?

AGNES BARDEN: Mother ought to talk to you.

MARY BARDEN: Mama can't talk to me.

AGNES BARDEN: Oh no. That's true. And I'll never accept her death.

MARY BARDEN: So you'd go down. What did you do when you went down to Vandermere.

AGNES BARDEN: Sit around and twiddle your thumbs and wish you were home. Dolly and all of them up here having a grand time and I was parked down there in Vandermere.

MARY BARDEN: You must have been about 14 then, 13 or 14.

AGNES BARDEN: I wasn't that old.

MARY BARDEN: You weren't that old. You were younger.

AGNES BARDEN: I was about 12 or 13. I was near 14.

MARY BARDEN: Well, when did you first ride in an automobile?

AGNES BARDEN: The first ride we had in an automobile, somebody came to town. I remember this. And they charged so much an afternoon to rent the car and they would drive it. And that was the first automobile I ever rode in.

MARY BARDEN: Well, did the horses rear up when they saw the car?

AGNES BARDEN: No, not that I remember.

MARY BARDEN: They just accepted it.

AGNES BARDEN: Sometimes they would, you'd have to get out and hold the bridle. And I remember one time, what was it going on

downtown?... and I was driving a horse and buggy and I had to get out.

We usually had blinds on the horses, and I got out and held him right in front of the Episcopal Church.

MARY BARDEN: Because a car came by?

AGNES BARDEN: Because it just, it was a parade of some kind. I didn't mean to run into it, and so I had to hold that horse until it got by. And I have forgotten what the occasion was.

MARY BARDEN: You didn't ride on the backs of horses. Mostly you rode in a cart or a carriage.

AGNES BARDEN: No, in a what we called, what did we call that thing. It had four wheels and a buggy.

MARY BARDEN: And it had a top on it?

AGNES BARDEN: Uh?

MARY BARDEN: Did it have a top on it?

AGNES BARDEN: No.

MARY BARDEN: Open

AGNES BARDEN: Open, 'cause we weren't suppose to be out in the rain in that rig.

MARY BARDEN: Well, did it ever run away with you? You told me once about something running away with you and

AGNES BARDEN: Gosh, I certainly am having to pull on my memory. Did they run away with us. It seems as though they did on the road that Mary Bray lived on. Now Mary lived out in the country and we used to go out there and spend the weekends. What became of Walter Bray?

MARY BARDEN: I don't know.

AGNES BARDEN: He was Mary's brother. Walter must have died.

MARY BARDEN: I 'spect so.

AGNES BARDEN: Huh?

MARY BARDEN: I imagine so by now, but what did, tell me about the time

AGNES BARDEN: But they lived out in the country. They lived out about two miles.

MARY BARDEN: Tell me about the time that horse turned over with your cart or something and you fell in the ditch.

AGNES BARDEN: Now when was that? You remember better than I can.

MARY BARDEN: No, I can't remember. You told me.

AGNES BARDEN: And I fell in the ditch?

MARY BARDEN: You can't remember?

AGNES BARDEN: Well, it had to be on that Oaks Road. Is there something crawling on my forehead?

MARY BARDEN: Uh huh.

AGNES BARDEN: It had to be on the Oaks Road, because we were allowed to go around that road. You see, we could go out one road and circle and go around another.

MARY BARDEN: That was a long ways.

AGNES BARDEN: Not too long. It was, what is there. There used to be a house on top of that hill, and we'd turn there and come on down to New Bern on another highway. And, you see, I've forgotten

all these details.

MARY BARDEN: Well, think about them. They'll come back.

AGNES BARDEN: Well, it does you good to think about them, because other things come up that you hadn't thought of in years. And let me see. I can't think of

MARY BARDEN: Well, you told me you started driving an automobile when you were 14. Whose car did you drive? You were 14 years old when you started to drive. Whose car did you drive?

AGNES BARDEN: It was papa's car. Yeah, he traveled in a car that BPS Paint Company gave him. I think. Mother ought to be here.

MARY BARDEN: Don't worry about mother now. Tell me about the parties you went to. You went to a lot of parties didn't you.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, we had a lot of parties.

MARY BARDEN: Down at Mrs. Stewart's. Tell me about that. You had a party down at Jane Stewart's house. Did you have a party room?

AGNES BARDEN: We had a, oh, I'll tell you a visitor that was here and what, I don't know whether she's dead or not. She used to visit Mrs. William Dunn and they lived out on McCalamire's Road.

MARY BARDEN: Out in Riverside.

AGNES BARDEN: They lived, now where did they live. I've forgotten.

MARY BARDEN: The Dunns, didn't they live out there in Riverside? Build that great big house? The first house out there.

AGNES BARDEN: Who was that?

MARY BARDEN: William Dunn. You were talking about Mrs. William Dunn.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, it was a brick house, no, it was the house we later lived in. And then they built the brick house.

MARY BARDEN: Oh, they lived in the house you lived in on National Avenue.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah.

MARY BARDEN: Oh, ok.

AGNES BARDEN: See, I lived on National Avenue for how long? Five years.

MARY BARDEN: Oh, about twenty years.

AGNES BARDEN: Was it that long?

MARY BARDEN: Yeah, it was.

AGNES BARDEN: Gosh, that seems a long time.

MARY BARDEN: Weren't you living there when Aggie was born?

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah.

MARY BARDEN: Ok, weren't you living...

AGNES BARDEN: Bardie was born in the little bungalow down on....

MARY BARDEN: Corner of Change and Craven.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, Change and Craven. It faced Craven. And I'll tell you who lived next door and she would give you some good pointers too. Or is she dead?

MARY BARDEN: Annie Kinsey. She's dead.

AGNES BARDEN: Annie Kinsey Cook and Miss Katie.

MARY BARDEN: Well, they can't help us so you got to help us.

AGNES BARDEN: Is Annie Kinsey dead?

MARY BARDEN: So you had, Uncle Ray was your doctor when Bardie was born?

AGNES BARDEN: I had two doctors.

MARY BARDEN: Two doctors. Who was the other one?

AGNES BARDEN: Uncle Joe Rhem.

MARY BARDEN: Oh, was he there when Bardie was born?

AGNES BARDEN: No, Uncle Ray was there when Bardie was born.

MARY BARDEN: And he was born at home?

AGNES BARDEN: Uncle Joe didn't have to practice. His family left him enough to live on, but don't put that in there. It wouldn't do to put that in there.

MARY BARDEN: That's all right. That's all right.

AGNES BARDEN: And Miss Richardson. Do you remember her? She lived in the, who lives in the corner of, I remember Miss Jane McQuirtor lived there awhile. We used to go to see her. Who lives on the corner of Craven and Johnson.

MARY BARDEN: Oh, Pop Beasley. Pop and Duff.

AGNES BARDEN: Didn't they tear the house down and rebuild. Is it a long two apartment house?

MARY BARDEN: No, you know where Pop and Duff live, the old Duffy house.

AGNES BARDEN: Oh, that's over on the other side. This was on the, Craven Street.

MARY BARDEN: Maybe Dr. Hand built a house on that lot.

AGNES BARDEN: I don't even know who lives there now.

MARY BARDEN: Well, tell me about how you used to go around on Sunday afternoon to places and they'd fix you.(refreshments)

AGNES BARDEN: Oh, they would give us, we'd

MARY BARDEN: Tell me who went. You and Pete Hollister.

AGNES BARDEN: Margaret Hollister was one. I'll have to put their maiden name and you can put the married name.

MARY BARDEN: That's fine. You can put the maiden name.

AGNES BARDEN: Margaret Hollister and Helen and Catherine. We used to have to nurse them on Sunday afternoon.

MARY BARDEN: Oh, this is Helen Hollister Swan now.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah.

MARY BARDEN: Ok.

AGNES BARDEN: Catherine married somebody away from here in Greensboro. Didn't she?

MARY BARDEN: I don't know.

AGNES BARDEN: Well, Catherine and Helen, we nursed them on Sunday afternoon, and we'd take them to the cemetery to see the Frog Pond.

MARY BARDEN: Take her to the Frog Pond. All right.

AGNES BARDEN: Is it open now?

MARY BARDEN: It's still there.

AGNES BARDEN: It's still there.

MARY BARDEN: Yeah.

AGNES BARDEN: And, we'd walk them up and down. And then we'd walk by Grandmother's and she'd have something fixed for us. Then

we'd go on up to the Hollisters. The Hollisters house is still occupied by them. Who lives there now?

MARY BARDEN: I think it's been sold now.

AGNES BARDEN: Has it?

MARY BARDEN: Uh huh. The Gradys live there now. Debbie Grady. That's ok. Come on, tell me. What would you do, you'd go from one house to the other get...

AGNES BARDEN: And eat something at each house. They'd fix it for us because they knew we'd be there. And you see we had Sunday school, and now when did we have Sunday school. It was in the morning before church. Then we had Sunday afternoon to ramble like we wanted to.

MARY BARDEN: You went to the Presbyterian Church? And who was your Sunday school teacher? Can you remember?

AGNES BARDEN: Now you are going way back. Who was she? I remember she was good. Yeah, I declare I've forgotten.

MARY BARDEN: Well, you went to school at the academy building.

AGNES BARDEN: I went to school in the first grade to Miss Molly Heath.

MARY BARDEN: So did I.

AGNES BARDEN: She taught half the people in New Bern.

MARY BARDEN: Did you like her?

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, I was crazy about her. And Dolly Hyman was my desk mate. We sat two...

MARY BARDEN: Two in a desk.

AGNES BARDEN: Two in a desk. I wonder what they've done with those old desks.

MARY BARDEN: They're restoring one of the rooms in the academy building like a school room. Maybe they've used them then, there.

AGNES BARDEN: Like the school in the academy building? Well, you had a desk mate and let me see what else was interesting. Oh, the water closet. You had to go up the steps and there was a rest and then you went up the steps again and the water closets were on that, those steps where you had, the boys had one. Now where were the boys? I don't know where, I've forgot now where they were. But the girls was on that rest. I remember that, but you couldn't put that in a paper you had to read in public.

MARY BARDEN: We're not going to read it in public. You can put anything you want to, you can tell me anything you want to.

AGNES BARDEN: And, that was on the rest that you went this other steps, crossed over and the water closets were back of the here and then went up another, finish going on up stairs. Haven't they made that a one story building now?

MARY BARDEN: It's been torn down. That first building.

AGNES BARDEN: Was it torn down? Well, they never should have done it. Pete Hollister had a brick there that she sharpened all her pencils, you know, put a sharp point on them and we, she always sharpened it with a knife in the room and then she went out and get the part. You ought to talk to her. She can remember a lot too. And, then we, then I moved to Charlotte, and I went to school in Charlotte.

And you know, I don't remember much about that school.

MARY BARDEN: Well, you didn't see the people after you left. That's not surprising.

AGNES BARDEN: I didn't have any friends. We went up there as strangers. Papa could be home more if we moved to Charlotte. And I remember we lived in, across the street from Margaret Washburn and her father had horse and buggies and drivers to drive him to work and what not and then I remember there was a Marjorie Jones that lived up the street from me. And Grace McNinch. And her father was the mayor of Charlotte. And she's the one that I went to school with and college. She was one of the first girls I saw when I got there, and I haven't seen her in ages.

MARY BARDEN: Well, tell me about when you came back to New Bern and you went to high school. You played some teams. You played basketball.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, I played basketball.

MARY BARDEN: Did you go to town, out of town to games?

AGNES BARDEN: Not as well as I remember.

MARY BARDEN: What other teams did you play or just played with each other?

AGNES BARDEN: I played basketball and that's about all. I think that's about all I played.

MARY BARDEN: I bet you were good, because you're tall.

AGNES BARDEN: And then we had shows. We had home talent shows. They never have those.

MARY BARDEN: Well, tell me about the home talent shows.

AGNES BARDEN: Oh, I couldn't remember all the details of those things.

MARY BARDEN: Well, what did you do in it.

AGNES BARDEN: I was somebody. I've forgot now who I was. And who was it, and we played a duet on the piano. And who was that? Mary Louise, Ann Louise Kehoe. Does that ring a bell?

MARY BARDEN: Not with me. Well, did you, where did you have the shows Aggie Dear?

AGNES BARDEN: Where'd we have the shows? In the auditorium.

MARY BARDEN: The school auditorium.

AGNES BARDEN: There... two auditoriums?

MARY BARDEN: The school auditorium.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah.

MARY BARDEN: The school. Ok.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, the school auditorium. It had a raised stage. Is it still there?

MARY BARDEN: The Griffin building? No, that's not there.

AGNES BARDEN: It's the building that the, that was the Griffin Building, and we played...

MARY BARDEN: Well, what year did you finish high school?

AGNES BARDEN: Gosh, then I went off, I didn't finish high school.

MARY BARDEN: Oh, you didn't?

AGNES BARDEN: No, I went on off to Peace.

MARY BARDEN: Without finishing?

AGNES BARDEN: I don't remember finishing.

MARY BARDEN: That'd be about 1916 I guess. You were 17.

AGNES BARDEN: It was earlier than that. I went to Raleigh and papa used to have to walk me up to the train with a suitcase.

MARY BARDEN: Oh me.

AGNES BARDEN: Of course, I carried a trunk the beginning of the year and I just locked it and let it stay up there and I'd bring home what I'd need.

MARY BARDEN: You came home on the train?

AGNES BARDEN: Uh huh. Yeah. We didn't have cars then.

MARY BARDEN: How many girls from New Bern went to Peace. Who went up there with you?

AGNES BARDEN: I was trying to think. Peace was a church school.

MARY BARDEN: That's right.

AGNES BARDEN: And Granddaddy sent me off to school.

MARY BARDEN: So he paid for it?

AGNES BARDEN: Uh huh. Because papa had three other children to....

MARY BARDEN: This was C. E. Foy that paid for it.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah. And 'cause papa had three other children. The two boys, Patey and Loudie and Sis came along and there's ten years difference in Sis and myself. And I was the oldest and I was born in Morehead.

MARY BARDEN: You told me that. Is that where you met ...

AGNES BARDEN: And when I say I had, you know how school girls

get together on the school green and talk you know, and they say well, Aggie, where did you live, and I said I lived in Morehead City. I was born in Morehead City. They said, good grief, did you have to live down there. 'Cause it was dirt street you see, it was just...

MARY BARDEN: Just a village.

AGNES BARDEN: Just a village. That's all it was. But I remember they were so alarmed because they thought I had lived there and it wasn't anything but a mud hole. So...

MARY BARDEN: Well, you met your Happy through one of your classmates at Peace.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah. I went to school with Mary.

MARY BARDEN: This is your husband's sister, Happy.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, Happy's sister. And I met him up there and then he came to New Bern to teach.

MARY BARDEN: And looked you up.

AGNES BARDEN: Huh?

MARY BARDEN: And looked you up, when he came to New Bern

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, he called me. Mary told him to phone me.

MARY BARDEN: How long did you know him before you got married?

AGNES BARDEN: About three years.

MARY BARDEN: That's a long time.

AGNES BARDEN: Huh?

MARY BARDEN: That's a long time. Well, who were your other beaus before Happy?

AGNES BARDEN: Well, I went with Marshall Speight and if you went

with one boy they just knew you were going to marry them, and you couldn't walk down the street with a boy but what they thought you were going to marry them. And I went with Marshall Speight and Charles Ives was in our group.

MARY BARDEN: Take your hand off your mouth and talk. Charles who?

AGNES BARDEN: Charles Ives. Is he dead?

MARY BARDEN: Charles Ives. I don't know. I don't know where he is.

AGNES BARDEN: They lived around the corner and the thing about, the thing we used to have a lot of fun with was, I was put in the dining room because it was, Granddaddy and Grandmother had the house heated with a furnace, but we didn't use it all and they just had a big stove in the dining room which we sat around the dining room table and studied, got our lessons, and I was assigned to the dining room. Patey and Ludy were assigned to Mother's room and then Martha who lived next door to us, Martha Mengle. Is she dead?

MARY BARDEN: I think so.

AGNES BARDEN: So many of my friends are dying.

MARY BARDEN: Well, you're getting to be a right old lady.

AGNES BARDEN: I know it. And so, they would throw something on the window and I'd raise the dining room window and they would climb in and mother would be in the room with Patey and Ludy teaching them their lesson.

MARY BARDEN: And didn't know. I believe you had more fun than

you'd had studies, Aggie Dear.

AGNES BARDEN: I did.

MARY BARDEN: Studies were beside the point, huh?

AGNES BARDEN: Well, I got good grades, but I didn't waste much time studying. I had to study in the dining room.

MARY BARDEN: And it was cold.

AGNES BARDEN: You see, Granddaddy and Grandmother had a furnace, but Papa at that time was traveling and we used the dining room at night with the kitchen, you know, right adjoined, and then I was studying in there.

MARY BARDEN: Was that the house where MaMaw and Pop Foy lived when I knew them?

AGNES BARDEN: They lived in the Munger house first.

MARY BARDEN: But the house next to it, they built...

AGNES BARDEN: The house that was built in their back yard.

MARY BARDEN: And you lived in that house?

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, I lived in that house. I didn't live in the, I was a baby in the other house, you see, and then the Mungers, Mr. Munger built, bought a lumber mill here and they are not original.

Ma Munger was reared in Washington, NC, near there, I know that, and she was a lovely old person. I was crazy about her. And mother, when Ma Munger chastised Martha for something or rather she didn't switch you, she just, you know, punished them. She would come over home to mother and I'd go over to her house when I got punished to her mother.

MARY BARDEN: When you were born, MaMaw had an awful lot of milk.

Didn't you tell me she nursed the neighbor's baby?

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, she nursed, who was it she nursed in town.

MARY BARDEN: I don't know. A couple of babies sides hers.

AGNES BARDEN: It was one I think it, who was it she nursed? Yeah, mother had a lot of milk, and I can't think of who the other one she nursed to help out. That's just gone.

MARY BARDEN: That's all right. Well, going back to when you met Happy, and you were courting. Where did you go when you had a date or court?

AGNES BARDEN: I had the living room where the fireplace.

MARY BARDEN: Oh, in your living room with the fireplace.

AGNES BARDEN: You know, in that front room. You know, you enter a reception hall, and that living room was to the end, Aunt Harriett's end. Aunt Harriett Harrell lived in the house next to us. She was a great aunt of Papa's. She died there.

MARY BARDEN: You'd go to parties together?

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, but we had parties, we didn't go with boys. I mean, we just went. We didn't have dates until we got older. No, I was, I reckon I was around, before I started having dates, I went with Marshall Speight. He was a friend of his and he has since moved to Norfolk. They were Virginians, and every time he comes down here, he comes around to see me, and so, we've held our friendship in that respect, but I think I was going with Marshall, and then I was going with Clay Carter from Washington, but he was a distant cousin. I went to New York with Grandmother and Granddaddy when I was about, I reckon

I was about 14, 13 or 14, and coming on the way back, there had been a storm here. One of these equinox storms.

MARY BARDEN: Oh, a hurricane.

AGNES BARDEN: A hurricane really, and so we got as far as Little Washington and Cousin Walter met the train and carried us to his house and that's where I remember Clay and then Clay used to come over to see me and bring some Washington boys. Now they had a car. And that was before I met Hap. Hap came after that.

MARY BARDEN: Well, tell me about the hurricanes. Did you ever get in a really bad one?

AGNES BARDEN: Well they weren't delightful. Any of them. They were, let me see now. I've sort of forgotten how they were, but they were bad. And we hit them in September. And the rivers would rise and what was, it was a mess. And we always sort of stood in awe of them.

MARY BARDEN: Did you have much warning when they were coming? Did you have much of a warning that the hurricane was coming?

AGNES BARDEN: Well, September was the month they usually came in. We don't have them like we used to.

MARY BARDEN: Let's hope not.

AGNES BARDEN: No, they were, they sort of eased up. I don't know why, but we don't have them now like we used to. Honey, they were terrific. Scared to death. The water would rise. I've seen the water come up to Craven Street. Not deep, but it was water. I was so glad when September, the latter part of August, and the first

of September passed.

MARY BARDEN: Without a bad one.

AGNES BARDEN: Without a bad one. Yeah.

MARY BARDEN: Well, Aggie Dear, tell me about you and your girl friends used to go riding out and looking to see who was visiting houses.

AGNES BARDEN: What you mean, see who was calling on who?

MARY BARDEN: You know what I mean.

AGNES BARDEN: No what.

MARY BARDEN: You were talking about the, how you, girls used to ride out and to see who was going to fancy houses on the Country Club Road.

AGNES BARDEN: Mayor Bray lived out there.

MARY BARDEN: No, that's not what I'm talking about.

AGNES BARDEN: Oh, oh, you mean park? We used to say they'd park an ark and have a party.

MARY BARDEN: Park where?

AGNES BARDEN: We used to say they would go out there and park an ark, make love, and have a party. That's what we said.

MARY BARDEN: Was that at Pembroke?

AGNES BARDEN: No, it was a road that Fred Bray lived on. Who lives out there now? The city's gone that far now. Well, Mary lived at least two miles out in the country and we used to go home with her after school and spend the weekend. And Mrs. Bray was so good to us. She's dead now. And I've never seen Mary, rarely ever. Once in awhile I run into her downtown. Is she living?

MARY BARDEN: I don't know Aggie.

AGNES BARDEN: And I've forgot now who she married. We sort of lost track of each other. You know, when you get married you sort of pick up new friends.

MARY BARDEN: Well, tell me about you and Happy getting married. Where were you married?

AGNES BARDEN: We married in the Presbyterian Church, nine o'clock in the morning. You had to marry according to the way the trains ran.

MARY BARDEN: Arrange to the train schedule.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah.

MARY BARDEN: So you got married at nine o'clock in the morning. Well, who was in your wedding?

AGNES BARDEN: Mary, Hap's sister, Mary, and I think Pete was in it.

MARY BARDEN: And you got married around Christmas time.

AGNES BARDEN: I've got a copy of it somewhere.

MARY BARDEN: You got married about Christmas time?

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah.

MARY BARDEN: And where did you go?

AGNES BARDEN: New York.

MARY BARDEN: Went to New York.

AGNES BARDEN: Uh huh. We caught the train out. You had to get married either, when the train left and the train pulled out of the station about 9:30. So we got married before then and we were on that Norfolk. We went to, the train went to Norfolk. Yeah. And Marshall

met us there.

MARY BARDEN: Oh, your old boyfriend met you on your honeymoon.

AGNES BARDEN: My old boyfriend, and we went, carried us to the other station. I think there were two stations.

MARY BARDEN: So you went by train all the way to New York.

AGNES BARDEN: No, yeah. Yeah. We went to Norfolk on one train and Marshall met the train and carried us over to the other train. Norfolk was a big city. And so, I don't know how we came home.

MARY BARDEN: How long did you stay?

AGNES BARDEN: We stayed a week.

MARY BARDEN: Stayed a week. Have a good time?

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah. Had a good time. We saw some plays and of course, New York was the city and we saw plays and enjoyed it.

MARY BARDEN: What year was this that you were married? 1921? 1920 or '21?

AGNES BARDEN: It was '22 I think. Don't tell me I've forgotten that Mary.

MARY BARDEN: Well, that's all right. Twenty two because Bardie was born two years later wasn't he? He was born in 1924.

AGNES BARDEN: And that makes him right.

MARY BARDEN: Were you married to Happy when the big fire of New Bern happened?

AGNES BARDEN: Was I what?

MARY BARDEN: Were you married to Happy or you were about to get married when the big fire came?

AGNES BARDEN: I was about to get married. Mother had everything right ready to move out of the house 'cause we were in the path of the fire.

MARY BARDEN: Now tell me about what happened with Happy that day. He was a football coach, he'd come to New Bern to be a football coach or a teacher?

AGNES BARDEN: He came to New Bern to teach and to see if he wanted to put his shingle out.

MARY BARDEN: Oh yeah, because he had a law degree.

AGNES BARDEN: You see I was in school with Mary, his sister, and I had met him there, and he came to New Bern to teach.

MARY BARDEN: And he was coaching football too wasn't he.

AGNES BARDEN: And he was coaching football. He was athletic director.

MARY BARDEN: Ok, and they had the state championship in Raleigh that day.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah. Who did they play against?

MARY BARDEN: I don't know. But why did he, what did he do about the newspaper. What did he do about the newspaper that was telling all about the fire. Tell me about that.

AGNES BARDEN: Tell about the fire.

MARY BARDEN: You know, he didn't want all the boys on the team to be worried. He didn't want his football players to be worried that New Bern was burning up.

AGNES BARDEN: He bought up all the newspapers. So they couldn't

read it.

MARY BARDEN: My goodness.

AGNES BARDEN: News boys came around, you know, shouting New Bern burning up, and he knew if the boys got it, it would destroy their morale 'cause they were up there and the parents were home.

MARY BARDEN: And this was the state championship football game.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, and so, that's the reason he bought all the newspapers. So they wouldn't get a hold of it.

MARY BARDEN: Well how did the fire affect you?

AGNES BARDEN: I went on that trip. We had a special train to go on.

MARY BARDEN: Oh, you were there.

AGNES BARDEN: I was there.

MARY BARDEN: So your mama back home was afraid her house would catch fire and she had all your wedding things to move out at the last minute.

AGNES BARDEN: That's right because I was being married in December. What day in December? Was it the 20th?

MARY BARDEN: I think so.

AGNES BARDEN: I think that was the day. And we spent New York..., we spent our honeymoon in New York you see. And ...

MARY BARDEN: Well, how about the depression. Didn't that affect Happy, who became, stopped teaching school, and became a lawyer, who was he a partner of?

AGNES BARDEN: He was in the law firm of Emmett Whitehurst. Emmett

was smart as the devil.

MARY BARDEN: Well, he didn't make much money at first did he?

AGNES BARDEN: No, uh uh, and Emmett was just as smart as he could be and Happy went in partnership with him. And that lasted for four or five years I think, and then Happy wanted to get out on his own.

So that's when he started practicing, I mean, he was, he left Emmett and went on his own. Isn't that funny. You can't remember things...

MARY BARDEN: Well, you're remembering real well. I think you're doing fine.

AGNES BARDEN: I know, but there was so much that happened along that time that you just, you don't remember the details like you did when....

MARY BARDEN: Well, first he went into politics and went up to the state, right. Is that right? He went to the state legislature?

AGNES BARDEN: Didn't Happy go to the state legislature, yeah. And I had, I stayed home, because it paid to have somebody in the district.

MARY BARDEN: And Bardie was a baby, wasn't he?

AGNES BARDEN: And Bardie was a baby.

MARY BARDEN: Now tell me about when Happy decided to go to Congress.

AGNES BARDEN: Go to what?

MARY BARDEN: Go to Congress. Go to Washington to run for office.

AGNES BARDEN: Didn't I stay home or did I move up there?

MARY BARDEN: You didn't move to Washington. You did one time.

But I mean, with Aggie was just a baby when...

AGNES BARDEN: Nine months old.

MARY BARDEN: Aggie was nine months old.

AGNES BARDEN: And Bardie was on...

MARY BARDEN: About 1935, when Happy decided to run for Congress.

Did he have a hard time, a hard campaign?

AGNES BARDEN: Did what?

MARY BARDEN: Who was he campaigning against?

AGNES BARDEN: Well, after he got in there, he didn't have to campaign much.

MARY BARDEN: I know, but when he first got in, didn't he have to campaign against Mr. Abernathy?

AGNES BARDEN: Oh yeah, and then didn't Charles run against him the second time?

MARY BARDEN: I think so.

AGNES BARDEN: Well, he whipped him then. It was a big majority.

MARY BARDEN: A big majority. Well, he pulled some kind of dirty tricks on you didn't he?

AGNES BARDEN: Who, Charles?

MARY BARDEN: Uh huh.

AGNES BARDEN: He would. What's become of that boy?

MARY BARDEN: Oh he's long gone.

AGNES BARDEN: Did he die?

MARY BARDEN: Yeah. His wife did too.

AGNES BARDEN: Huh?

MARY BARDEN: And his wife did too.

AGNES BARDEN: And she was, I liked Sarah. And I liked him alright. We were all reared right here in the same town, but Charles was crooked.

MARY BARDEN: I know he was. They caught him with some ballots didn't they?

AGNES BARDEN: Huh?

MARY BARDEN: Didn't they catch him with some ballots he shouldn't have in his car?

AGNES BARDEN: Some balance?

MARY BARDEN: When he was running against Happy, wasn't he trying to get extra votes he shouldn't have had?

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah. Yeah. Oh, you had to watch him like a hawk. He died didn't he?

MARY BARDEN: Uh huh.

AGNES BARDEN: And Sarah died? Sarah was a nice person. She was from South Carolina. A South Carolinian.

MARY BARDEN: Well, tell me about Washington. Did you go up there with Happy some or did he just come home.

AGNES BARDEN: Well, now the first, I carried that lame nurse I had.

MARY BARDEN: Who was she?

AGNES BARDEN: She was a colored gal.

MARY BARDEN: A black woman. Ok.

AGNES BARDEN: And, of course, getting out in a city is different from a smaller town and she stayed right there in the house with me. And then we came home when that session adjourned. And didn't I go up there two sessions?

MARY BARDEN: I don't know. I wasn't there.

AGNES BARDEN: I have forgotten so much 'cause I did the best I could while I was going through it and never thought of it after I got out of it.

MARY BARDEN: Well, you were a real asset to Happy 'cause you knew so many people.

AGNES BARDEN: And how did I know them?

MARY BARDEN: You probably went around with him campaigning some.

AGNES BARDEN: No, Papa never ran for anything.. it was Granddaddy.

MARY BARDEN: No, I'm talking about your husband. You went around with Happy when he was...

AGNES BARDEN: Oh, yeah, yeah. Running around the district. Bardie was how old?

MARY BARDEN: Well, Aggie was three you say when he ran for Congress, went to Congress?

AGNES BARDEN: She was three?

MARY BARDEN: I'm asking you. I don't remember. I don't know.

AGNES BARDEN: I remember we lived in a house in Washington. One of those houses you had to know which one you lived in.

MARY BARDEN: Because they all looked alike. Row house, ok.

AGNES BARDEN: Row houses. And I mean, we could rent one from them. I mean we could rent one of them, but we didn't want a house up there. Shoot, I came home every chance I had.

MARY BARDEN: And then pretty soon you just came back and stayed?

AGNES BARDEN: And then I came back to stay.

MARY BARDEN: And Happy went back and forth on the train, usually.

AGNES BARDEN: No, he did that at first, Mary. And then I stayed, I went back and forth with him until he decided to come home. And we had an apartment house.

MARY BARDEN: Well, that was after the children were grown. You went and stayed up there with him then after Aggie went to college and up there.

AGNES BARDEN: Where did Aggie go to college, Goucher?

MARY BARDEN: To Goucher and first to Sweetbrier and then to Goucher. And so you stayed up there at that point and you had an apartment. You went to a lot of White House functions and things.

AGNES BARDEN: Lord have mercy. I lived in a suitcase. That's the way I termed it. 'Cause, didn't we have an apartment up there?

MARY BARDEN: Uh huh. Yeah. You had an apartment at the Wardman Hotel and then you had one in another building. A nice apartment. 'Cause I went up to see you then.

AGNES BARDEN: I don't even remember it.

MARY BARDEN: So you're glad to get back to Trent River. You were glad to get back.

AGNES BARDEN: I was so happy to get back home. It was living

in a suitcase practically, and it's a life, it's a hard life to live.

So what, Hap was making good, so, I supported him, but I was glad when it was over. We built this house out here.

MARY BARDEN: Right. By that time Aggie was married. You moved in right after she was married.

AGNES BARDEN: The next day. I started moving in. I remember that, 'cause that was ordeal. And we lived on National Avenue at that time. I go by that house every once in awhile. I lived out there alone.

MARY BARDEN: You had all kinds of ponies and deer. Tell me about the deer you had.

AGNES BARDEN: The deer? Well, I was scared of 'em.

MARY BARDEN: How many did you have, Aggie Dear? You had a buck and a doe.

AGNES BARDEN: You know what. There was one of those deer that wouldn't let me in the back yard, 'cause I, one time they opened the gate and got out and I ran after the little one. And I didn't hit him, but I took a stick and that big deer resented it. They've got a lot of sense. And Honey, I couldn't get out in that back yard after that until they locked them in the wire, we had a wire fence put up and I mean, by their part.

MARY BARDEN: From your part. Ok.

AGNES BARDEN: Our part. We had to have it. I couldn't even get in the yard. What was it? Did I leave, that pony could open that gate just as good as you could. And he got out and he let those deer

out. And that deer got mad with me about something, about getting that deer back in the yard. I forgot now the details of it, but anyway, he wouldn't let me in that back yard. He had to be shut up. That was a deep yard too. And we had it wired off, part, for the deer.

MARY BARDEN: And you had rabbits and all kinds of things.

AGNES BARDEN: Rabbits. Bardie had rabbits.

MARY BARDEN: Pony.

AGNES BARDEN: Aggie was too young to have them. And we keep those, where did we keep those? We kept those, we had a house for 'em. And then the furnace was under the house and it was, the Dunn's had it put in, and it was one of those central heat. And I remember that that deer would get inside that dark place down there and I'd have to get him out. Hap would get him out when he was there, but he wasn't there all the time. And so we had, how long did we have those deer?

MARY BARDEN: I don't know.

AGNES BARDEN: They were Bardie's.

MARY BARDEN: Well, did somebody catch them, I mean, and give them to you?

AGNES BARDEN: Happy brought the first one home.

MARY BARDEN: You had a buck and a doe and they had a fawn. They had a baby deer.

AGNES BARDEN: We had a baby deer. We had the back part of the yard where the garage was, we had that wired off for them. They didn't come up near the house, but they would get under the house and get

in the furnace room. The furnace was one of those pipeless furnaces and, Lord have mercy, I really should have written notes, 'cause now it's passed me. But, those deer used to worry me to death.

MARY BARDEN: Well, tell me about, that your MaMaw, when, one time you told me it was so cold that they pushed her across the river in a rocking chair.

AGNES BARDEN: The ice was deep enough to do that.

MARY BARDEN: Across the Neuse River?

AGNES BARDEN: Neuse River. And the winters got very much warmer. I think it was nine inches very deep?

MARY BARDEN: Nine inches of ice? Very deep.

AGNES BARDEN: Well, that's what she was on. I wouldn't have gone out there for anything.

MARY BARDEN: Now, what did her parents do?

AGNES BARDEN: Huh?

MARY BARDEN: What did her parents do? MaMaw?

AGNES BARDEN: Well,

MARY BARDEN: Their name was Fowler.

AGNES BARDEN: Papa was, I called him Papa, he was a born farmer. They are born. They are not made. And...

MARY BARDEN: Where was his farm?

AGNES BARDEN: His farm was on the other side of the river.

MARY BARDEN: Over in Bridgeton area?

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, no. It was the Bridgeton area, well it was down, was up the river further. This was right across from the river.

I mean, from the New Bern. You could see the New Bern at night plainly.
How long did Papa live there?

MARY BARDEN: I don't know.

AGNES BARDEN: Papa and Mama, they lived in New Bern. They came from Pamlico County and they lived in New Bern for awhile and then they moved across the river and it was called Fowler's Ferry. Papa had two Negroes that ran a ferry. They had no bridge. And these Negroes, old Caesar and Martin.

MARY BARDEN: And they were the only way you could get back and forth across the river?

AGNES BARDEN: That's right. They had to row. They had to row them over and row them back.

MARY BARDEN: Well, the bridge was built when you were little.

AGNES BARDEN: The what?

MARY BARDEN: Wasn't it, there was a bridge when you were a little girl?

AGNES BARDEN: I was, I was just real, real young.

MARY BARDEN: Tell me, do you remember when the bridge was built?

AGNES BARDEN: Uh huh.

MARY BARDEN: You don't remember? Well, tell me, you told me one time that you knew when there was a lynching on the bridge.

AGNES BARDEN: When there was what?

MARY BARDEN: A lynching.

AGNES BARDEN: Oh, yeah. We lived on East Front Street then. We had moved back to New Bern. We had been in Charlotte. Well, I

was an older girl.

MARY BARDEN: You were about ten or eleven then.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah.

MARY BARDEN: And what happened?

AGNES BARDEN: And they used to take them down and open the draw and lynch 'em.

MARY BARDEN: Who?

AGNES BARDEN: People that did wrong. Negroes and people that were put in court and tried.

MARY BARDEN: Did you ever see it?

AGNES BARDEN: No 'mam. Mother wouldn't let me go.

MARY BARDEN: Well, you knew about it.

AGNES BARDEN: I knew about it, and we could see the people go down there to watch it.

MARY BARDEN: They opened the draw bridge and hang. That didn't happen much, I hope.

AGNES BARDEN: No. Didn't help a bit. It was a barbarious way of even treat a...

MARY BARDEN: Person...

AGNES BARDEN: Person. They ended that though. And what did they do. They put them in jail.

MARY BARDEN: Well, tell me about, did you go to any circuses when you were little?

AGNES BARDEN: Did what?

MARY BARDEN: Did you ever go to a circus?

AGNES BARDEN: A what?

MARY BARDEN: A circus!

AGNES BARDEN: Oh yeah. Granddaddy loved them.

MARY BARDEN: Ok.

AGNES BARDEN: So on circus day, he'd come by and pick all of us up and out to the circus we went. And that's when they made one day stands. There's one coming here, isn't it.

MARY BARDEN: Uh huh.

AGNES BARDEN: He loved a circus. So we knew we always had a way to go. He'd take all of us. Sis wasn't even born. See, I'm ten years older than she.

MARY BARDEN: I know you are.

AGNES BARDEN: And, it's been an interesting life, because we've moved to a city. We lived, Charlotte was a city.

MARY BARDEN: Well, you've gone from the, seeing the, I guess, did you use oil lamps when you were little or gas?

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, we used oil lamps.

MARY BARDEN: Oil lamps and gas.

AGNES BARDEN: Oil lamps and gas. I remember that we had lamps on East Front Street. And I remember Mother got, I was about, the house that we lived in...

MARY BARDEN: The one Joe Pat Patterson lived in.

AGNES BARDEN: Who lived?

MARY BARDEN: Joe Pat lived in it for awhile.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, Joe Pat lived in it for awhile. And it had

a side hall. The living room was on, we called it the parlor then, was on one side. And it had, seems to me it had bay windows in it. The house is still standing.

MARY BARDEN: Oh yeah.

AGNES BARDEN: And it adjoined the Hollister's yard.

MARY BARDEN: In the back?

AGNES BARDEN: In the back. And we pulled a plank out and we'd cross through the plank.

MARY BARDEN: So you could play with your best friend, huh?

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah. So, and we lived there until Aunt Agnes, the house that we lived in, it was a cute place, before we went to Charlotte was sort of a, it was low, it was a low built house. And we left and went, moved to Charlotte. And then when we came back, Aunt Agnes had married and moved to Dover. Uncle Ray started practicing in Dover. So when they moved to New Bern, Grandmother, Granddad gave them that lot and they put their house on it. And when we came back from Charlotte, I loved Charlotte, I lived right across the street from Margaret Washburn and when I got to school at Peace there Margaret was. But she went with her Charlotte group and I went with my New Bern group, most of the time, but we were still friends. And, but wasn't that unusual? 'Cause Charlotte's a long way from here.

MARY BARDEN: Well, you went to fairs in New Bern, you went to county fairs in New Bern?

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah.

MARY BARDEN: Did you have many, did you go to church picnics?

What were they like?

AGNES BARDEN: Oh we came to Morehead.

MARY BARDEN: How'd you get there?

AGNES BARDEN: On the train.

MARY BARDEN: On the train. Ok.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, we got here on the train.

MARY BARDEN: Well, how did you get from Morehead to Atlantic Beach?

AGNES BARDEN: Mary, as well as I remember, we hired a boat.

MARY BARDEN: Oh, went by sail boat?

AGNES BARDEN: Huh?

MARY BARDEN: Went by sail boat?

AGNES BARDEN: No, it wasn't a sail boat. It was a gasoline boat.

MARY BARDEN: A little launch.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, a launch.

MARY BARDEN: So it was a real treat to get over to the beach.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, it was real expensive too.

MARY BARDEN: Did you go to many dances at the old Atlantic Hotel?

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah. Now that's where, Grandmother and Granddaddy went two weeks every summer down there.

MARY BARDEN: And stayed at the hotel.

AGNES BARDEN: And stayed at the hotel. And, I remember Patey got mad at the table once and threw a fork I think at Granddaddy, and he was punished enough he never did it again. And he was just a little thing. Patey and I went there. Ludy was too small. So they'd take

us down there for a week. And that's where I learned to dance, on that ballroom floor down there. And we enjoyed it. They'd take us a week and leave Ludy home because he was too young. So, I've had an interesting life. And as much as I've lived in the same place. Most of the time.

MARY BARDEN: Well, tell me about when World War I came along and they had a big flu epidemic. Did anybody you know get the flu? That was scary.

AGNES BARDEN: Huh?

MARY BARDEN: There were a lot of people that died with it.

AGNES BARDEN: I know it. It was terrible. It was awful. And, I was thinking, I was trying to think, oh, honestly, it was so bad, Mary, that when they'd get the flu and it was pronounced flu, everybody just got worried to death, 'cause a lot of people died.

MARY BARDEN: Did you get it?

AGNES BARDEN: No. I didn't get it.

MARY BARDEN: What did you do to help with the war effort?

AGNES BARDEN: With what?

MARY BARDEN: With the war effort. Did you knit?

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, I knitted and what else did I do. We had regular uniforms we wore and it got so we'd attack the men for money to put in the certain accounts you see to help with the effort of the war and it got so that every time. They were red blouses, I think, and they were over white skirts.

MARY BARDEN: Oh, me.

AGNES BARDEN: And every time they'd see us coming down the street, they'd duck in a store.

MARY BARDEN: 'Cause you all deviled them so.

AGNES BARDEN: 'Cause we were going to attack them.

MARY BARDEN: Oh my.

AGNES BARDEN: We made a lot of money for them. It was, not a soul out there, is it? Who is it?

MARY BARDEN: That was just Nell talking. I didn't want them on the tape recorder.

AGNES BARDEN: Was who?

MARY BARDEN: Nell has come back. So she was just talking to Lucy.

AGNES BARDEN: Over the phone?

MARY BARDEN: No, to each other. Well, tell me about these uniforms. That sounds funny.

AGNES BARDEN: Well, let me see now. We had the tops were red and the skirts, white skirts.

MARY BARDEN: And you would have meetings and knit together and that kind of thing?

AGNES BARDEN: From World War I?

MARY BARDEN: Uh huh.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah. We'd knit and what else did we do. I was about 14 years old then.

MARY BARDEN: No, you were older. You were born in 1899, and the war year was 1917 so you were about 17 or 18.

AGNES BARDEN: Was I that old?

MARY BARDEN: Yeah.

AGNES BARDEN: Well, anyway. We did a lot of work in that one.

MARY BARDEN: You were at Peace, I guess, during that time.

AGNES BARDEN: Uh huh. No. No. I stopped at 18. I didn't finish at Peace.

MARY BARDEN: You didn't finish at Peace?

AGNES BARDEN: I don't think I did.

MARY BARDEN: I thought you did. You went two years.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah.

MARY BARDEN: I bet you graduated.

AGNES BARDEN: I reckon I did. Lord have mercy.

MARY BARDEN: Well what did you learn at Peace, Aggie Dear, besides a good time?

AGNES BARDEN: Well, we didn't have such a good time 'cause they made us work up there.

MARY BARDEN: Did you take art?

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, took art, and...

MARY BARDEN: Did you take..

AGNES BARDEN: And Mrs. Ruth Huntington was my teacher and she was a yankee. I adored her though. I had the best time with her. And then there was a real tall woman. We had to have women chaperones to go downtown.

MARY BARDEN: I'm sure.

AGNES BARDEN: And now, my Lord, they scatter everywhere.

MARY BARDEN: Well, did you, did you learn anything you could use to make a living?

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, because I worked when I came home. Who did I work for? I worked for Bud Fowler.

MARY BARDEN: What did you do for Bud?

AGNES BARDEN: Office work.

MARY BARDEN: Well, you didn't take secretarial work at Peace did you?

AGNES BARDEN: I don't know.

MARY BARDEN: You just picked it up.

AGNES BARDEN: I must have. I took a domestic science course. It came in, it was called a course, but it embodied many phases of it.

MARY BARDEN: So that was your main thing, was domestic science at Peace?

AGNES BARDEN: Domestic science at Peace, 'cause I remember we had to fix a meal, make our own place cards, paint them. I remember I did that 'cause I was an art student too. And invite Miss Graham and Miss McClellen and we had a round table talk and had them, everything on the table, we prepared. That was our examination, see. So, we had everything fixed up. Place cards and everything. I enjoyed my stay at Peace.

MARY BARDEN: And that was as far as you went. You didn't go to school after that?

AGNES BARDEN: Uh uh.

MARY BARDEN: You came home and worked for your uncle.

AGNES BARDEN: I worked for my uncle. What did I do when I got home? Didn't I work for Bud Fowler?

MARY BARDEN: That's what you said. Said you worked for Bud.

AGNES BARDEN: But that was office work.

MARY BARDEN: That's alright.

AGNES BARDEN: I worked for him. I was just the, what was I called myself, the, everything they didn't want to do they put on me and...

MARY BARDEN: Well, he was, did he have a real estate business, what kind of business did he have?

AGNES BARDEN: He had an automobile business.

MARY BARDEN: Automobile business.

AGNES BARDEN: Bud made a lot of money. I think people, one thing, I think they were sorry for him.

MARY BARDEN: 'Cause of his crippled leg?

AGNES BARDEN: Huh?

MARY BARDEN: Because of his crippled leg?

AGNES BARDEN: Because of his crippled leg? No.

MARY BARDEN: Of his crippled leg.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah. Yeah. He had to walk that way. And mother said he was one of the loveliest children she'd ever seen. And he was six years old when this hit him.

MARY BARDEN: He had polio?

AGNES BARDEN: I think he did. It wasn't pronounced then, but I think that's what caused his, his illness.

MARY BARDEN: What did you all do at Christmas. Did you have Christmas trees?

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah.

MARY BARDEN: Where did you go to the grocery store?

AGNES BARDEN: When did I go to the grocery store?

MARY BARDEN: Where did you go when you were little?

AGNES BARDEN: Lord have mercy. I don't know. Different ones. I don't remember. What grocery store did we do our, it was Mr. McGee and he had the, oh, it came to me. It was Mr. McGee and he had his store on the corner of Broad Street and the railroad street, Hancock. That was his store. And I remember we'd go down there and get things and charge them to our parents. They ran a charge account. And stores don't do that now do they?

MARY BARDEN: Not much. Not many of them.

AGNES BARDEN: And when we'd get to Middle Street we'd have to go down, we went about three, two or three or four in a crowd. We'd have to pass Mr. Hugh Lovick's house. You remember where he lived? Well you know where the Methodist Church is.

MARY BARDEN: Yeah.

AGNES BARDEN: Well Miss Carrie Roberts lives at, where are those houses. I reckon...

MARY BARDEN: I don't know. I don't know, Aggie Dear.

AGNES BARDEN: Miss Carrie Roberts lived in one. Mr. Lovick lived in one. Do you remember Mr. Lovick?

MARY BARDEN: No I don't.

AGNES BARDEN: Well he was part owner of the Athens Theater and we used to go there and go up in the boxes. Privileged characters. You know they had those, have they taken those down?

MARY BARDEN: They may be restoring 'em. They're working on it.

AGNES BARDEN: Well anyway, they are working on it? Well, that's where we'd sit. And sometimes we'd sit downstairs.

MARY BARDEN: Well what did you see, movies?

AGNES BARDEN: Huh?

MARY BARDEN: Did you go to movies? Or were they plays?

AGNES BARDEN: Some of them were Vaudeville plays, and some of the, they'd have the movies then they'd have the Vaudeville.

MARY BARDEN: Did you ever see any show boats in New Bern?

AGNES BARDEN: Show boats?

MARY BARDEN: Uh huh.

AGNES BARDEN: Uh uh. I don't believe I did.

MARY BARDEN: Had Vaudeville. Ok.

AGNES BARDEN: And Mr. Lovick, he's dead now, isn't he?

MARY BARDEN: Yeah.

AGNES BARDEN: He lived on Middle Street. On the same street we did. We passed his home and he was the one that used to, we'd go to Mr. McGee's store. He ran a grocery store on the corner of railroad street, Hancock Street, and Broad. We'd go there and load up. Everybody would charge so much to the family. Then we go, start eating it after we, we wouldn't eat it downtown, but after we got where, up in the neighborhood. I don't even believe the Methodist Church was built

there then.

MARY BARDEN: It may not have been.

AGNES BARDEN: And we would start eating. And Mr. Lovick used to tease us about, all of us were skinny 'cause we were growing, and he'd say, yes, you stop eating all that trash you would get, put a little meat on your bones. But said, every time you pass my house, you're stuffing something down your throat. And said it wasn't anything but trash. I never will forget him. What is built there now? He had a nice little house there.

MARY BARDEN: I'm not sure.

AGNES BARDEN: I'm not either, but I think they tore his house down. He lived in, there were three houses I believe on that street. The Methodist Church took up some of it. You see, that Methodist Church used to be up on New Street. Mother was married in it.

MARY BARDEN: I know. I've seen a picture of it.

AGNES BARDEN: You have?

MARY BARDEN: Uh huh.

AGNES BARDEN: And, Lord have mercy. I've forgotten a lot I mean. But you know what, just sitting here reminiscing brings a lot of it back.

MARY BARDEN: I'm sure it does. Did you go to the fairs?

AGNES BARDEN: The fairs? Oh yeah. Dirt road, dust, and all.

MARY BARDEN: Were they fun? Tell me about them.

AGNES BARDEN: What the fairs? Well they had exhibitions. I won one exhibition I remember. It was a cake I baked and then I

MARY BARDEN: They had a lot of cooking and preserving things for prizes, right?

AGNES BARDEN: And then they had a lot of sewing too.

MARY BARDEN: Did you sew?

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, I sewed. And I won something on, won a blue ribbon on some of that. But, Mary, it's right funny sitting here thinking about the things you used to do, and really and truly I haven't paid much attention to it, but...

MARY BARDEN: Well it's been awhile, awhile ago, Aggie Dear.

AGNES BARDEN: It's been awhile ago. And then, well moving to Charlotte and coming back is the only move we ever made out of town. And yet Mother and Papa after they were married they, Grandma and Granddaddy stayed near Pollocksville. Granddaddy owned about a...

MARY BARDEN: Was this C. E. Foy, you're talking about?

AGNES BARDEN: Uh uh. Yeah, two or three farms out there and most of his money was invested in farms. And they made good too. Then he sold those off and then he went to a farm on, he owned on, what road was it. There's two ways of getting there.

MARY BARDEN: Was that that back road to Pollocksville you're talking about?

AGNES BARDEN: Uh huh. Uh huh.

MARY BARDEN: That's the one that MaMaw and Pop lived on for awhile.

AGNES BARDEN: But Papa's not a farmer.

MARY BARDEN: Your granddaddy was a farmer.

AGNES BARDEN: My granddaddy was, but Papa wasn't, uh uh. And Granddaddy tried to take him and make a farmer out of him, but you can't do it. They are born.

MARY BARDEN: Well what do you especially remember as being that you did when you were little that was so much fun.

AGNES BARDEN: The what?

MARY BARDEN: That you particularly enjoyed when you were young. What did you especially do that you thought was most fun.

AGNES BARDEN: Well, I liked, I liked most everything that we did. We had progressive house parties. Now you never hear of 'em.

MARY BARDEN: Tell me about a progressive house party. How did you do that?

AGNES BARDEN: We'd spend a night and a day in each house. There'd be about four or five of us together.

MARY BARDEN: These were girls?

AGNES BARDEN: Huh?

MARY BARDEN: Just girls?

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, just girls. And we used to do that a lot. And then, I did a lot of civic work too. I was just trying to think of some of the things that we did. In fact, we wore these costumes. It was, was it World War I?

MARY BARDEN: Yeah, you were telling me about that.

AGNES BARDEN: Wore these costumes. The red tops and the white skirts and every man would duck in a store 'cause they know we, they knew we were going to pull them for something.

MARY BARDEN: 'Bout like the poppies. When they were selling poppies.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah.

MARY BARDEN: Well, during World War I, didn't you take in roomers? Happy was so instrumental in getting the bases here.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah.

MARY BARDEN: And you took in a lot of Marine couples.

AGNES BARDEN: Happy did most of that.

MARY BARDEN: No, I'm talking about in your house, in your home, you rented rooms to Marine couples and made good friends.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah. And I was just trying to think of some of the friends that I did make.

MARY BARDEN: Micky, wasn't one named Micky?

AGNES BARDEN: Who was Micky Gunnerson?

MARY BARDEN: Well that was one of Aggie's friends. A young girl. That wasn't what I was talking about. But you knew all the Marine generals that came through Lejeune and Cherry Point. You and Hap knew all the big brass.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, because we had seen them in Washington.

MARY BARDEN: And you entertained them at home.

AGNES BARDEN: Uh huh. But, Lord, those days are gone forever. I hope. I hope. I hope. I hope we don't have any more wars. But it's been interesting. But then I moved, and I'm the one in the family who would never live in the country. No sir. They'd say well now we want to move out on the farm when Papa gets a certain age you know

and retire. No 'mam. You're not going to move me in the country. And here I am parked out in the country just about as far out as I can get.

MARY BARDEN: Oh now, come on. But you love it.

AGNES BARDEN: I love it. I certain do.

MARY BARDEN: This beautiful porch and the view. Azaleas blooming.

AGNES BARDEN: And the quietness.

MARY BARDEN: And the river.

AGNES BARDEN: And the quietness. Well it was right funny though that I'm the one that...

MARY BARDEN: Well tell me about when they were beginning to put Cherry Point down there and you knew about it, but you couldn't tell anybody. Tell me about that.

AGNES BARDEN: Cherry Point. Happy got that thing here didn't he.

MARY BARDEN: Yep, he did.

AGNES BARDEN: And he got another one in Goldsboro, wasn't it Goldsboro?

MARY BARDEN: Seymour Johnson.

AGNES BARDEN: He got that one for the district.

MARY BARDEN: And Camp Lejeune.

AGNES BARDEN: And Camp Lejeune.

MARY BARDEN: And Camp Davis.

AGNES BARDEN: I don't remember Camp Davis much. Where was it?

MARY BARDEN: Down near Wilmington towards Wilmington.

AGNES BARDEN: On that Wilmington Road?

MARY BARDEN: Right.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, he got that one. He had three, I think, for his district.

MARY BARDEN: Well the three big ones were Cherry Point, Lejeune, and Seymour Johnson.

AGNES BARDEN: Cherry Point's still in existence.

MARY BARDEN: Yep, they're all going strong. All three of the bases are still going.

AGNES BARDEN: Are they? Well they brought a lot of people down here. A whole lot. Well Happy worked on those, especially, I think it was Lejeune. Isn't that on the Wilmington Road?

MARY BARDEN: Yes.

AGNES BARDEN: And what happened down there one day? Anyway, he said I have got to go to down on the Wilmington Road. Which one is on the Wilmington Road?

MARY BARDEN: I think that was what happened at Camp Davis. They were having some kind of strike or something.

AGNES BARDEN: They were having something down there, and he said these campers were going to move across the road. They couldn't come within, they were building...

MARY BARDEN: They were building Camp Davis and they were union strikers weren't they?

AGNES BARDEN: They were what?

MARY BARDEN: Weren't they strikers that belonged to a union.

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah, and they had parked across the road. I said well if you go, I'm going. They had said they were going shoot up the dining room or something.

MARY BARDEN: And you went down there. Well they could shoot at you.

AGNES BARDEN: Sure I did. I didn't want to be a widow. I would have hauled him out. If it had come to that, but it didn't come to that.

MARY BARDEN: Well he helped defuse the situation.

AGNES BARDEN: Huh?

MARY BARDEN: Happy helped to defuse the situation.

AGNES BARDEN: Uh huh.

MARY BARDEN: I think it was a confrontation with the highway patrol and the union strikers.

AGNES BARDEN: Anyway they set up their camp. They couldn't come within so many feet of the camp we were in and they never fired a shot. What happened? Didn't the government send some people down there?

MARY BARDEN: Yeah, it's written up in that book about Happy, but I don't remember the details.

AGNES BARDEN: Have you got that book?

MARY BARDEN: Yeah, you have too.

AGNES BARDEN: I have too. I was going to say you could, if you have to give a paper or something like that on it.

MARY BARDEN: I don't. I don't have to give a paper.

AGNES BARDEN: You could get a lot of information out of that book.

MARY BARDEN: Well, Aggie Dear, did you all make a whole to do about birthdays when you were growing up?

AGNES BARDEN: Yeah. We did. We had birthday parties and I remember Grandmother gave me one. Mother never was much on birthdays, and Grandmother gave me one down there. She was living in the house Mother's living in now. And I don't remember so much to do over them though. I think that was the only celebration I've had. Mother never had been too much on parties.

MARY BARDEN: Was there anything else you wanted to remember about long ago in New Bern before we say farewell?

AGNES BARDEN: Well, it's a good place to live in. Every, there's a lot of good people here, and I've enjoyed being here. I think everybody sort of likes everybody else. Don't you. They're very few people that have fights and no speaking and things of that kind.

MARY BARDEN: Yeah, its a friendly town.

AGNES BARDEN: It's a friendly town. And..

MARY BARDEN: And you think it's changed a lot since you were little?

AGNES BARDEN: Oh my land, yeah. I remember when the streets were dirt. Sidewalks were dirt and I was trying to think. We had some celebration and that's when the city paved the sidewalks and the streets were bricked first, downtown.

MARY BARDEN: Brick.

AGNES BARDEN: Brick. And those streets down there, when they paved them, what was the celebration we had when they got to work and paved them all?

MARY BARDEN: I don't know.

AGNES BARDEN: It was something.

MARY BARDEN: How long did they have trolley cars in town?

AGNES BARDEN: Huh?

MARY BARDEN: How long did they have trolley cars in town?

AGNES BARDEN: Not too long. I think McCarthy, the McCarthy

END OF INTERVIEW