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ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW WITH
MARY HOUSTON ROBINSON
RESIDENT OF GEORGETOWN
JULY 11, 1977

Transcribed by:
R. Herman
April 12, 1978
Interview with: Mary Houston Robinson
Georgetown, Delaware
July 11, 1977
Interviewed by: Rebecca Button
B = Rebecca Button
R = Mary Houston Robinson

B: We are sitting here on the porch of the house called The Judges in Georgetown and Mary Houston Robinson who lives here today has known about the history of one of the women who owned this house, Ann Marvel duPont, and her bequests in Sussex County which include the Felix duPont Memorial House and a gift to St. George's Church in a way began here. Mary, could you tell a little bit about that history for us?

R: Yes, Mrs. duPont was Ann Marvel and first married Frank De Armond an architect from Philadelphia and then later in life married A. Felix duPont from Wilmington. When she was married to Mr. De Armond her father Judge Marvel had retired up in Wilmington as an attorney and they decided to build a home down in what is known in Rehoboth as The Pines. That is no lenlopen Acres but it was the first development around Lake Girard where the Irane duPonte have a big home and the Lairds from Wilmington and then Mrs. De Armond and her father bought the land and I do not know who owned it and built the home which is now A. Felix duPont Memorial Home. He did not have anything to do with the building of that home. Mrs. duPont had built it with her father and Judge Marvel had his special apartment downstairs with a bath and his bedroom. The house is rather unusual house at the time. I remember staying there a great deal and the bedrooms were all very large and I can remember
my father going in there at one time and counting all of the closets in the upstairs and he counted thirteen which was very fine for anybody's house that has so much room. The servant's quarters were in the back. It was rather strange that that summer that Mrs. duPont tried to rent...Mrs. De Armond tried to rent the house, it was during the depression and she had offered my husband who was her cousin and me to come and bring our two children at the time and spend the time at the cottage so to call, it's called but it's The Memorial House now and we stayed there all summer because it was the depression and she hadn't been able to rent it. The only person who really we thought was going to take the place was very lovely, was Libby Hallman who had married into the Reynolds family and her husband had died and she had a son just the age of our son, a year old and she had four detectives and it was the time of the Lindbergh when the child was kidnapped and she was so terrified that all the Reynolds money...that I think Mr. Reynolds had died...that this child would be stolen and so there weren't enough rooms in the house to give the detectives, the four detectives whom she employed around the clock and she didn't take the house. My father who came down every evening I think for the purpose of seeing that our house was well locked. He was very frightened as Mrs. Hallman was. The report had gotten around that Mrs. Reynolds had rented this house and at that time we happened to have a white woman who was very determined. She loved to wear her black uniform and white apron and cap and she would take the baby out for a walk on the boardwalk and everybody would stop and ask her if this was the Reynolds baby. So, my father would come down carefully and lock up all of the back wing of the house which was
for the servants and there were at least four bedrooms and baths
for the servants and it was rather in some ways an upsetting time
because of the report that this child was there and it was all
through the harrowing time of the Lindbergh kidnapping. When Mrs.
De Armond married Mr. duPont there were quite several additions
made and changes in the house.

B: Ann came down with her father and built that house after Mr. De Ar-
mond died. Was that what happened? Or was she divorced from Mr.
De Armond?

R: No, he was still around.

B: Oh, but she had divorced him.

R: No.

B: They were just separated?

R: Yes.

B: I see. And she came down and built the cottage and didn't you say
she had something to do with planning Henlopen Acres? How did
that happen?

R: Well, Mrs. De Armond as she was then was terribly interested in
Rehobeth and she felt that it was quite a great future for Re-
hibeth. Her father had been an attorney for Iraneel duPont and he
had built the home that his children now still own. Mr. duPont
then...it was during the war and Mr. Corcoran who had bought the
farm that is now Henlopen Acres was called into service. He had
been in the National Guard or something and I think had paid two
hundred and fifty thousand dollars for this farm over there and
Mrs. duPont decided that she could put her money and her father's
money...Mrs. De Armond then...should put her money and she would
have...she liked landscape gardening and her homes were always very
beautifully decorated and she loved that type of work and she
decided or persuaded her father to put all of his money and also
she put all that she had and they sold their home on Broom Street
in Wilmington and they paid a hundred and fifty thousand to Mr.
Corcoran toward the final settlement of Henlopen Acres. When she
had no luck, she went to the great expense of having all of the
roads laid out, the riding paths and all of the planting done over
at the Henlopen Acres. After this happened she was not able to...
because it was during the depression and of course the beach
homes and summer homes were the first to go. People did not have
the money to invest. So she had to lose everything of course that
she had. It was difficult to sell anything and she returned to
Georgetown to care for her mother. Fortunately the home in which
her mother lived was impale: and could not be sold without a case
in court, trying it in court. The vanks tried to sell her
Rehoboth home but nobody was buying anything at Rehoboth in any way.
Her father whom she had caused to lose everything came also to
Georgetown and lived with his two sisters, Lassie Anna and Ida
Marvel where he died first and then his wife died later at her
home, The Judges. Mrs. De Armond then went to Wilmington to see
if she could make her living. She had with her, her old nurse who
had been with her all of her life. She had helped bring her up
as a baby and fortunately she had saved some money and would help
in expenses and did the work for Mrs. De Armond in her home, in her
apartment, while Mrs. De Armond worked in a dress shop. Her
friends in Wilmington gathered around her and she had exquisite
taste in clothes and they helped her by having her go to New York
and buy all the dresses for the debutantes that were coming out and
also for wedding parties and things of that kind. And later she went in with a friend, Mrs. G. from Chestnut Hill who established a very fine dress shop in Wilmington which became the Byrd Speigman House. Mrs. duPont later of course met and married Mr. duPont and the house at Rehobeth had never been sold and Mr. duPont and she used it for their summer home and then finally their home all year round. They felt that...and at that time as I say there were additions made and a larger porch was added and it was their home and Mr. duPont died there and Mrs. duPont moved then to New York where she died years later.

B: How did she happen to move to New York and could you tell us something about your visits there when Mr. and Mrs. duPont lived there and did you also say that Felix duPont then after their marriage with his wife Ann, did he reinvest in Henlopen Acres, did he buy it back from Mr. Corcoran? What happened there?

R: He did not buy back Henlopen Acres but he did tell me one day that after he married Mrs. De Armond, the first bills he paid were the bills that she owed the landscape architects and the contractors who laid out and planted all of the trees and the shrubbery and so forth over at the Henlopen Acres so that Mrs. duPont no longer of course had any contact with Henlopen Acres. Mr. duPont was very fond of all of the life down at the shore. He built a place for his yacht and established a yacht basin over beyond Henlopen Acres and built a home over there for the captain of the boat, Captain Billsborough, and called it Snug Harbor and over there also is his beloved dog Jim and it's marked with a small, flat copper marker and after his death, Snug Harbor of course was sold and Mrs. duPont decided that she would probably go to New York and it is
there that she spent the rest of her life. Mr. duPont of course enjoyed yachting and his boat The Bucaroc. It was a lot of fun for him and all of his relatives and friends. Mr. duPont, I remember my husband taking him down, he had heard that Mr. duPont was very fond of eels. Nobody very much ate eels and my husband took him down to Hassay's Landing where Gary Hassay who looked exactly like Will Rogers and had exactly his same sense of humor and was unbelievably like him and Mr. duPont told him that eels was his favorite dish and Gary said, "Well, I didn't know rich people ate anything like that. I thought that was food for us poor folks." So, ever after that they would go down and eels, that was always one of the special dishes that he would have and for the first time I ate there and I found that they have a delicious flavor that probably no other seafood has. I understand now that our local people are shipping out eels to Europe because they're the most expensive food to buy in Germany and in Europe. Mr. duPont of course took special interest. He was the one who wanted Sussex County to have more chance to get money and have...able to live in a better way and it was he that forced them in a way, the DuPont Company to put their new nylon plant in Sussex County. He wanted it really to be over on the east coast near where he lived but there was no river there with strong enough tide and it had to be on a river of quite some width and much larger than any of the rivers around Lewes or Rehoboth and of course it was put in Seaford and is now made Seaford quite...I guess the largest town in the county and undoubtedly I'm sure the wealthiest except maybe Rehoboth in the summertime. He was active of course in the church and all the work of the church. He gave of course he was the one that established
and was interested in St. Andrew's and it was he and later his sister Mrs. Irance duPont and his niece, Mrs. May and all who joined with him in helping him build and add to the endowment at St. Andrew's where he's buried of course at St. Anne's Church there. The other thing about Mr. duPont, he was most friendly with all people and had a delightful sense of humor and was a great friend of everyone. He died at the Memorial House. During his illness which was quite a long one, Mrs. duPont purchased the house across the road and in there she had six trained nurses and she ran a separate household because Mr. duPont required at least two nurses. He was a man of very large frame and difficult to care for. The house...the addition on the I guess the west side was added for Mr. duPont's special office and another bath and those of you that have been in the house down at the Felix Memorial House, she gave it as a gift to the diocese and at first the diocese refused...of Delaware...refused to accept it because they did not have the money to keep it up but then Mrs. Irance duPont stepped in and gave an enormous amount of money to keep the house up as a place for meetings for the church and whatever need the church would have for it. Later Mrs. duPont sold the house across the street and she had really planned to live there but she felt it was too close to memories and I think that probably caused her to move to New York.

B: Did Ann live in this house when she was young? You said that her mother and father were divorced and she chose to live with her grandmother. Could you tell us about her grandmother?

R: Her grandmother was the daughter of Governor Burton who was the... known as the Civil War Governor and he had only one daughter. He
lived in Milford and he lived in a place called The Towers. His daughter married Judge Wooten's son and the picture of Judge Wooten's wife still hangs over the mantle piece in the library and Mrs. duPont had had a very interesting life. Her grandmother was very strict. She told me that she never went out of the house that her grandmother did not call her back and say that she hadn't walked with a proper grace and she insisted that she practice with a book on her head before she could go out again and lived with her grandmother after the divorce of her father and mother and was all her life devoted to her. Mrs. Burton was a very gentle lady. She saw that Ann was well educated. Ann graduated from St. Mary's in P____, New York and from there she was sent one year to Paris to school, another year in Italy. She was probably one of the most attractive women to look at, a very beautiful figure and very live and always was able to have an exquisite home and exquisite surroundings. Her own nurse who had her as a baby whom she called "Kingy" stayed with her all of her life and helped her when she was in need and helped support her. "Kingy" did tell me, she said, "You know," this was in late years. Mrs. duPont had always all of her life used a certain kind of soap and when she had no money at all she said, "I would take my money and pay twelve dollars for six cakes of soap." Because that was the kind she always wanted. So, "Kingy" stayed with her and she finally died down at the Memorial House and Mrs. duPont had her cared for by nurses and she died at her home down there. Mrs. duPont in her will left...she forgot nobody. All of the people who had worked for her were really left almost fortunes. Mr. duPont used to laugh when she said she had left a farm near Rehoboth to
her colored chauffeur and his wife because he said, "You know Ann, that is a very expensive piece of property." And I know recently that the Cooks sold the property for ninety thousand dollars. Her caretaker, she left another piece of land. She gave five thousand dollars toward the end, restoration of St. George's where her mother and her ancestors are buried. The Wootens are buried there as are the Robinsons and she left Milford Church where her grandmother Burton or rather her grandmother Wooter really lived, she was Governor Burton's daughter and of course the records show the millions that were left to the diocese of Delaware and besides the Memorial House which she left in memory of Mr. duPont. I don't know any other way to describe her except she was a woman of great charm and had many friends. Mr. Robinson was devoted to her and to Mr. duPont and they were always friends. I don't know whether I have time to tell but just a few weeks ago a man came to me and he brought a very strange wedding announcement. It was an announcement of marriage of Ann's doll, her oldest doll, Alfreida Wooten and also inviting guests for old Christmas Eve to a wedding reception and I've heard from people who went to that reception that it couldn't have been more elaborate if it had been a regular wedding. The doll I have now in my closet and I have the wedding announcement and she is still a beautiful doll. There are all sorts of memories of her in this house. She told me that she lived on the third floor. There were two bedrooms which were finished and "Kingly" her nurse would have one and she had the other. But of course she also spent a great deal of time with her grandmother at The Towers in Milford after she remarried, a Mr. Rhodebush from New York City. The whole house up at The Towers was done over in
Tiffany glass. It has all the chandeliers and the windows and this old house which was built out of brick around 1780 or even before, is all now elaborately covered with towers and fancy brick-a-brack and balconies with fancy lace work. It's quite a show place now. It's been made into an apartment house. The only place that anyone is allowed to see is the hall which was panelled and done over and it was according to the report in the Milford paper not too long ago, the said that she spent sixty thousand dollars in restoration and making that into a modern sort of Victorian place and of course is buried with Felix at St. Anne's Church near Middletown and near St. Andrew's School and I can say that they were most happily married couple through the many years that I knew them and my husband spent many hours with them.

This is the end of the first side of the interview with Mary Houston Robinson. The interview continues on side two.

SIDE II

B: Just before we begin this tape which is a continuation today, July 11, 1977, in Georgetown on West Market Street, The Judges. The house is called The Judges because there was a long history, generations of Judges beginning right after the Revolutionary War. Mary Houston Robinson now living here, the widow of Thomas Robinson. Did you say there were thirteen Thomas Robinsons burried at St. George's Church? Mary is going to start now after having said some of the things really aren't fit to print but she was editor of "The Sussex Countian" the Georgetown newspaper which belonged to her father and then to herself and her husband and is
now her son's responsibility. Mary as editor of "The Sussex Countian" was importantly involved in a long feud with William P. Frank and some of the difficulties she found were really involving the difference between New Castle County and Sussex County in attitudes and what we might call regional differences and some of them Mary, you were beginning to talk about when you discussed for example, the problem that the Delaware Chamber of Commerce had for Sussex County business when you had your own independent Chamber of Commerce.

R: And of course I used to write editorials asking if Wilmington was ashamed to use its name as being the Wilmington Chamber of Commerce and why it, the Delaware Chamber of Commerce should be like that of other states in which all of the main chamber of commerce bore the name of the state and all of the smaller member chambers had the name of the town in which the chamber was located and it did involve all mail going to Wilmington, all the new openings for business, nobody knew that Sussex County was here for anything except for what one woman said, "She thought it was just a place where you went hunting and fishing." And it did not help in any way in our growth. There were two members only from Sussex County who were out-of-staters who had come here and made a great deal of money and I think Johnny Rawlins was one and Otis Smith another and nobody else in Sussex County had anything to do with the Delaware Chamber of Commerce. I didn't get anywhere. I did have the embarrassment of sitting beside the president of the Chamber of Commerce and I didn't know that he was the Chamber of Commerce and a friend of mine sitting across the table started asking me all these reasons why I felt what I felt about the Delaware
Chamber of Commerce and then he introduced me to the president and I was most embarrassed to think that I had certainly expressed myself very much and then to find that I was talking to the president of the Delaware Chamber of Commerce. But then there were other differences. There was a difference about the colony again.

When Mr. Ennis was fired after many years of fine service and another man was brought here, I finally in research and all found that all of his papers were completely false. He had not graduated from the University of Maryland. He didn't have his B.S. or an A.B. or his master's and according to the records he was supposed to have had all of those from the University of Maryland and nobody with his name had ever attended there. I went to a meeting with Senator Tunnell at one time and Senator Tunnell turned to me and he said, "Isn't he saying he don't and he seen?" And I said, "Yes, he always says he don't and he seen and he done." And I said, "Nobody could have gone through a university using such language." Then after the scandals about all the stock was sold off down there; all the woodland...all the timber...rather and sold off and finally the commission awakened and they found out that all that I said was true. He was of course fired from his job but that was another fight with Mr. Frank. I couldn't imagine how all these very educated Wilmington people could imagine that a man who had a master's degree was using the English that only a very illiterate person would use. Then we had a lot of fun in some of our arguments, Mr. Frank and I. When he wrote an editorial saying that Sussex County was living on borrowed time and he said that our flock and our cower of the Sussex County Courthouse had been formerly in the old building of some kind in
Wilmington and that we must be embarrassed to think that we were living on borrowed time from Wilmington. I had a great deal of fun in that too because I finally found the man who when the courthouse was being restored with columns and that this man had been the one to fix the clock. He had removed it piece by piece with the help of an assistant into his clock shop and had repaired it and after it was over and he had returned it. Finally Mr. Frank found out that this person was wrong. That only the weather vane at the top of the courthouse had been...that Judge Conrad had brought down to Sussex County and placed at the top and I said, "Well, it was pretty bad too because it always pointed toward Wilmington. It never pointed east or west or south. It always pointed north towards Wilmington." So, our feuds went on indefinitely until my husband became ill and there wasn't time for me to do all the work at home and office and so forth. But now Mr. Frank and I when we had a parade here in town when peace was declared they insisted that Mr. Frank and I ride in the same carriage as the candidates who were elected and those who lost always rode beside. So, we headed the parade and we I suppose had been friends and he's been more cordial to Sussex County and he seems to understand the people down here in a much better way.

E: Aren't there some other conflicts? You mentioned the Delaware Colony. It was really begun by aid and aided by Mrs. Coleman duPont and Mrs. Deemer of the Deemer Steel family of New Castle and then you talked about the conflict between the man who had done such good work and tried so hard and then the man who you really took off the mask, the man who pretended to be an expert in that field and you talked about the editorial fight which was just about his
misunderstanding Sussex County pretty generally but are there some
other major not necessarily confrontations with New Castle County
but other important kinds of things for Georgetown itself that
you recall?

R: There are several things about Georgetown that...it seems to me
people do not know. They think that the people were uneducated
and I don't know what the opinion was but Georgetown was quite a
fine place in which to live. My whole childhood was most interest-
ing and delightful and Georgetown I remember well when we had an
old opera house here as it was called and they produced As She
Stooded to Conquer and some of Sheridan's plays. I remember going
to the first coming out party when I was only about sixteen. I
was not supposed to go, not old enough to go but I was a friend of
the family and they insisted that a coming out party here had
never happened before and I could go. It was the sister of the
rector of the church, Margaret Gateson who later became quite a
musical comedy star and all of the orchestra, the orchestra came
from New York and all the caterers and it was a very...white tie
and tails affair and the only thing that ruined the situation was
that the worst blizzard of the year happened the night of the coming
out party. The train of the caterers and all the young men and
the guests coming from New York and Philadelphia and the caterers
and the orchestra were all on the train. The guests had to be
called and told that instead of the dance beginning at ten o'clock,
the dance would start at midnight and I remember distinctly that
there were no cars available. There were a very few private cars
and I was awakened about eleven thirty and dressed for the ball. I
had long white gloves for the first time and an evening dress and I
had had dancing lessons because if we had a dance in school, Dr. Cooper from Wilmington used to come down all winter long once a week and we were taught all sorts of square dancing and as well as the waltz and that type of thing. So, I was awakened that night and the colored man who worked and lived with us put the horse to the carriage and I was driven through all the snow probably knee deep and to the opera house as we called it and to the ball. It was quite an occasion. This was only a few of the things...I mean one of the things is to mention. Georgetown had a very fine Browning Club and there were other clubs established. There were the Women's Club and which special studies and work was done. I can remember when Ezra Pound who, the very famous poet used to visit at a family of Henderson's here in town. I was quite a bit younger than Rex Henderson whom he visited but my father and mother used to be quite popular as chaperones. I remember one time when they called him Ray Pound in those days and one of the happy things here was...before automobiles...was to get a hack such as they had to meet...I mean a hotel would send to the train before the days of automobiles and the young people would get a hack and they would drive all the way to Lewes through the sandy roads and there were large sailboats to hire and Father and Mother went as chaperones and I suppose in those days there wasn't any babysitter for me or I was a little old for babysitting so I was allowed to go on the sailing party and Dr. Pound as I well remember him had very curly hair which in his old age from his pictures was very frouzzy. He was quite a cut-up. He teased everybody and it was a slow journey from the sixteen miles from Georgetown to Lewes through the sandy roads. There were two horses
with the hack and people became very tired and they would get out and walk along sometimes and Mr. Bound was quite a cut-up. He did all kinds of tricks on people and finally the men decided that they would get the best of him and they happened to have a rope in the hack and he was on top of the hack just lying up there and yelling over the side and so forth and they got on each side and they took the two ropes and they tied him flat on top of the hack and of course they only kept him there a short time but really he was quite a live wire wherever he went. I just remember that incident and then there was excitement here when they put the beautiful window in the St. Paul's Episcopal Church. It cost thirty five thousand. It was presented by Senator Salisbury in memory of his sister. The church hadn't cost anything like that much money but it was a very gorgeous window and the architects from Belgium or the glass I guess, the architect was from London. The men who worked on the window came from Belgium and the contactor and the architect and endless men all stayed here at the hotel. Another thing that they used to do in town here when they had benefits in the summertime for some welfare project at that time they didn't call it that and the whole circle would be decorated with Japanese lanterns and the tables were then set and that was the place for a beautiful spot and in the summertime of course people went down into the rivers and the bay and Kenothen and enjoyed the summer down there because the heat was so terrible. So, that life was never dull. We always rode horseback and there must have been probably fifteen of us in town who had horses and we rode almost every day. There were tennis courts and we didn't lack for things to do.
B: I noticed the harness racing track outside on Route Nine just as one approaches Georgetown and I wondered did the Dover Downs racing kill that Georgetown track?

R: I think that...well, the race track when it was put here, there was quite a question as to whether it could possibly be successful. There are not too many people here to attend a thing of that kind. They thought that maybe the Lewes Ferry would bring people across from New Jersey just as now New Jersey expects people to go to their gambling joints when that is done; I mean by the ferry. But the track was never successful. It was quite a beautiful track. So all the money and then of course they finally couldn't make a go of it and they rented all their days to either the Brandywine or the Dover Downs so it's just completely falling to pieces and vandalism. I don't know that anything would ever be done there. And...

B: Why don't they tear that down?

R: Well, I suppose it's a terrible expense to tear things down and it was probably in a state to build it and it's just one of those things that politics gets into and it wanted to please the local citizens here and...but the thing did not work. The only thing I haven't mentioned would be in my early childhood which I think might be of interest to people. I...my father was from Lewes. His father was a physician and his mother came from Lewes in which there were twelve girls in the family. I think two died; two did not marry and one son and I...it was a heavenly place to go each summer and I would get on the train the minute school had stopped. I'd take my bicycle and ride and spend the time at Lewes. My father was a very decided person and I thought it would be interesting to
mention his great aunts. He had two that were school teachers and they had taught him more or less. They wanted him to be very smart so that by the time he was four he could read and write and do arithmetic. He passed his Princeton exams when he was thirteen and when we grew up my father said that his children would never go to school until they were eight years old. Of course he was completely wrong. We missed all the time that, you know, should be the part at the time that children really learn and my brother had been very ill with typhoid fever and of course he didn't go until he was eight and when I grew up and all my friends went to school at six I was desperate. I was strong and healthy and every day I ran away. The minute they didn't know where I was, I had run away to school. The colored man would come with the horse and carriage and try to chase me and find me. I would see them coming and I would slip out and go and hide under neighbors tablecloths. I did it all winter long and all spring and finally in the fall they decided to let me go to school when I was seven and I missed it. It was entirely a wrong thing. But it just shows you how one parent, the influence and why he was so opposed to young children going to school but these aunts were great people and they would teach me. I can remember still, they taught you these enormous words and a great deal of their teaching they would sing and I would learn to sing about the longest river in Asia, St. Helena's Isle and then in monotone and then they had other things like the car going to the car and he said, "Joy, ex-
tribute this quadraged from the vehicle, stabulate him, donate him with an adequate quantity of nutritious elements and when the roar of the dawn shall have reached the Oriental horizon, I will
reward thee with pecuniary compensation for thy amiable hospitality."
That was the type of things that they insisted I learn. And I must admit that I've never forgotten it.

B: They were Victorian aunts.
R: That's right. And to think that I remembered that silly, you know, that silly thing all these years and I've forgotten...

B: It probably increased your vocabulary immensely.
R: Yes. And...

B: Did they read Dickens?
R: Yes and of course we were never allowed to have a novel. Father did not allow a novel in the house. We had nothing but history and finally we were allowed to have probably Dickens and Scott when we got in school and I was never allowed to go out until I reached eighteen without the chaperone.

B: That was understandable in those days.
R: That's right, in those days.

B: A young woman was not protected as she is today.
R: No, well, she's not protected today.

B: Well, I was really thinking of birth control.
R: Yes, I mean that's right.

B: At least she has a choice whereas then I think most fathers were protecting the virginity.
R: That's right. Yes I remember...this isn't on is it?
B: Yes.

R: Oh, is it? Well, because I know and as I said, Father was very strict but he never...I mean we had our horses to ride, our tennis courts at home. We went to the beach in the summer. We were always with the family. It was always a family group.
B: You had to be occupied.

R: That's right. He kept us occupied and it was a very happy youth that I spent between here and Lewis.

B: And this is what young people today reject and yet in a way want, that is control.

R: Yes.

B: Because sometimes the control was too severe and steady.

R: Yes. And there's no doubt but what ours was steady and I knew that if I had a date after I was eighteen even then there was a knock on the floor at ten o'clock. They hadn't gone to sleep and I knew that that was the signal, you know, to go home. So, it was a strict life but I never missed...I mean we had a good time.

B: Actually the rules were made to be broken and now with none, young people miss some of the venture for example, running away when you were supposed to be staying at home and you really wanted to go to school.

R: Yes I would run away to school and I never stopped.

B: No.

R: I was stubborn and was put to bed without anything but a glass of milk every night. But I didn't stop. I really wanted to learn or the desire to be with my friends, I don't know.

B: Your friendships, did people travel quite a distance from home with their horse and carriage? For example, did you have some close young women as friends growing up?

R: Yes. I always had many friends and we did a great deal of visiting. If it hadn't been that we had quite a bit of help in our kitchen as we call them, at my home we always had a colored man and his wife who lived in the house and they watched over us. They were
there at night as well as during the day and all of my friends had a horse and a buggy and we would drive around two or three of us together, we'd drive over to spend the day with friends in Milton. Milton had had a very fine preparatory school and before my mother went up to Newark to the academy, she attended the school in Milton. They lived there during the week and went home for the weekend. She was named...her name was Margaret White and in Milton there were three of the White girls who went and their three best friends were the three Black girls. Black was a very popular name in Milton area and then when their children were born, my mother's children, we still visited back and forth and would spend a week or two and then we'd go on to Lewis to visit our relatives and spend the time there and then we traveled. I went to Wyoming I think when I was ten and learned to ride. That's where I learned to ride out there on a ranch. It was forty miles from the nearest railroad and we had the life in a log cabin and many cowboys and ranchers and all of that.

B: Was that fashionable then to go out there to learn to ride?
R: No. It was just that my uncle had gone west and settled in Boxelder, Wyoming.

The tape ends here with Mrs. Robinson's statement. The tape runs out.