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MSS 179 Robert H. Richards, Jr., Delaware oral history collection, Special Collections, University of Delaware Library, Newark, Delaware

Contact:

Special Collections, University of Delaware Library
181 South College Avenue
Newark, DE 19717-5267
302.831.2229 / 302.831.1046 (fax)
<http://www.lib.udel.edu/ud/spec>
askspecref@winsor.lib.udel.edu

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ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW WITH
PUSEY PASSMORE
EARLY BRANDYWINE HUNDRED RESIDENT
FEBRUARY 2, 1977

Transcribed by:

R. Herman

March 19, 1978

Interview with: Pusey Passmore

Wilmington, Delaware

February 2, 1977

Interviewed by: Yetta Chaiken

C = Yetta Chaiken

P = Pusey Passmore

C: We're interviewing Pusey Passmore for the oral history collection at the University of Delaware. Mr. Passmore, can you tell us where you were born and when?

P: I was born in Christiana Hundred on what is now called Snuff Mill Road, October 30, 1897. The family moved to Brandywine Hundred the following spring, following the trade. And I've lived within one mile of where I'm sitting all the rest of my life.

C: And what is your address?

P: My address here is Wilmington, 19803, which takes in most of Concord Pike and from the Concord Pike to the Brandywine.

C: What is situated around your land?

P: Today I'm living on the campus of the Brandywine College on land which I sold to the college in '68. We're looking out across the Brandywine Country Club golf course.

C: Was that all part once of your farm?

P: No, this wasn't part of the farm. I bought this in 1953 and built this house we're sitting in.

C: When your family moved to Brandywine Hundred, where exactly did you live then? What did your family do?

P: My father was dealing in cattle and Brandywine Hundred at that time supplied a lot of the milk that went into Wilmington and so

we came to Brandywine Hundred where the...where we had customers for our livestock. The farm we moved to...we never really farmed it because we didn't want anything but pastureland and hay. A real estate note of interest to posterity maybe...the farm we moved from my grandfather bought before the Civil War and paid twenty thousand dollars for it and when we sold it to move to Brandywine Hundred, we got seven thousand dollars for it. The depression in 1870 changed things. The thirty eight acres that we moved to was all sod. It had a square frame house, three story, no heat, no bath and cost us four thousand dollars.

C: What was life like when you were a boy here?

P: Very slow (laughter). Like any other kid living in the country, you had the usual pets. You went to the usual local country school which was a one room, eight grade school called Eight Square. Originally it was an eight square building but by the time I came along it was just a hum drum rectangular building.

C: What was the name of the school?

P: Eight Square

C: Oh, that was the name.

P: That was the name. It covered an area from the Pike to the Brandywine Creek and to Rocky Run and north to the state line. I walked to school naturally.

C: How far did you have to walk?

P: I had to walk about a quarter of a mile is all. Had the usual assortment of all ages in the school. As you grew older you got a bicycle and you went farther afield to the Brandywine and fished. There weren't any amusements of any kind to amount to anything.

C: What was your favorite recreation?

P: Well as I became older I suppose baseball and fishing and as I became older I joined the Grange which was the only non-sectarian non-political assembly in the Brandywine Hundred. The building is still in Talleyville, still intact and still in operation and I still belong. I joined that in 1911.

C: You've been involved in the Grange since 1911?

P: Since 1911.

C: What are the activities of the Grange?

P: The Grange is a non-sectarian, non-political farm organization and now there isn't hardly any farmers in Brandywine Hundred and really the farming community has vanished and the Grange here is very small. It still is strong in Sussex and Kent County and lower New Castle County but in our immediate locality here we've literally covered up the land with houses. And at times I don't think too much of it.

C: Were you the only member of the family? Do you have brothers and sisters?

P: I had...the family when we came to Brandywine Hundred was my father and mother, two sisters and an older brother and a bachelor uncle who made his home with us all his life and who had a tremendous impact on mine.

C: In what way?

P: Well, he was a forebearing man and put up with a brat. He was a self-taught civil engineer and I used to be in his room where he made his maps and everything and look at the Scientific American which had pictures in it at that time which was something else and he had a Webster's Unabridged Dictionary full of woodcuts of all the animals of the world which I used to pour over. I just

literally used to tag around with him a lot of the time.

C: So, he had a great influence on your life?

P: He had to the point that I named my first child for him. Wills Passmore who is now strong in the Delaware State Grange being overseer of the organization.

C: So obviously your interest was passed on to your children.

P: Yes.

C: You're still active in the Grange

P: Yes.

C: Are there any farmers left in New Castle County at all? In northern New Castle County?

P: Well, we would have to define northern New Castle County before we could say that.

C: Brandywine Hundred?

P: But in this area...western part of Brandywine Hundred there are literally very few farms. I only know of one property, the Ramsey's who were here when I moved to Brandywine Hundred and who still own the same tract of land about midway between Smith's Bridge on the Brandywine and Thompson's Bridge.

C: And they're still farming?

P: They are still farming.

C: Did you ever farm?

P: Not in the early times which is what I thought you'd be interested in. Yes, when your father is a cattle dealer and your older brother takes up the business. You had public auctions of cattle which he shipped in from the West and after the sale, you delivered the cattle to the various farms on foot; no other way. So, I have literally walked over I think every road in Brandywine Hundred,

except a few along the Delaware River. It was slow going and you had plenty of time to look at the country around you.

C: And so, you bought a farm?

P: Answer unintelligible.

C: Would you describe Brandywine Hundred when you arrived here.

P: When I came to Brandywine Hundred at six months of age naturally I wasn't concerned about what was here but as I became older and thought of what had taken place on this pike which was the main stream of the community; if you started up at the state line which is only about a mile or a mile and a quarter from where I'm sitting, a family of M lived there and farmed and made a little ice cream. I don't remember where they sold. You came down the pike and Beaver Creek crossed the highway. Understand, this is all farm; horse and buggy and the only thing of power on the highway would be a steam traction engine haul and a wheat separator during the treshing season. Everything else was horse, shanksmare, or a bicycle. Eber Talley had an ice cream business which was mostly in the summertime. He had a pond and cut ice and filled his own ice houses, made ice cream, put it in a two horse dearborn and took it and sold it on the Second Street and Market House in Wilmington between Market and King. None of that is there any more. When you come past that, little farm on the east and then we come to the crossroads of the Naaman's Creek Road and Beaver Valley Road and there stood Parry's Tavern which was a gathering place for the men of the community. It had a half-mile race track on the land it owned. It had a big platform scale where the farmers could weigh their loads of hay, or corn or whatever they were hauling to Wilmington. We come down the pike a little further from that crossroads about

a thousand feet to the house where I lived. At one time, we had the Brandywine Post Office in our front room. Across the pike from us was a little store and farm. A family by the name of Parry lived there. We go a little further and we find a family of Ryan's who had the job of taking care of the potholes that developed in the Concord Turnpike which incidently was a toll road and cost fifteen cents for a horse and buggy or a two horse carriage, to go to Wilmington and back. We go a little further and farmland on both sides you understand; come to Rocky Run which figured largely in my boyhood life. More farmland, that the Day family at one time owned and then we have Talleyville, the metropolis of the place at that time. Across roads, Silverside Road now to the east, Garden of Eden Road to the west; Garden of Eden Road finally washed out where it dropped off to go down to the Brandywine and was abandoned. Now, has a Holiday Inn at the intersection and further in the Jewish Community Center. We had a small store in that village. We had the Grange Hall. Across the street was a small businessman who made a practice of buying calves and slaughtering them and selling the meat around the community in a meat wagon.

C: What was his name? Do you remember?

P: Samuel Brown was the name of that man and I've forgotten, this side of the tavern and my home, there was a slaughter house there which wouldn't suit the environmentalists of today at all. In Talleyville, we again had a blacksmith's shop which was a very necessary thing. Farmland on down to the pike is one of the oddities there, I rememoer at one time one of the farms which in now McDaniel Heights, experimented in the raising of silk; planted mulberry trees and silkworms and tried to raise silk. It wasn't

successful. Continue on down the pike; nothing much of interest except farmlands and they were almost all of them had a few cows and made butter; took it and sold it on the King Street Market or wherever or took their horse and wagon and a can of milk and went to Wilmington and would ladle out a quart of milk into your container. That has certainly changed.

C: What did milk cost?

P: Milk sold for five cents a quart I believe, retail, in your container. At Blue Ball, we had a big wheelwright shop; would build farm wagons for you; would shoe your horse for you and the house standing on the right hand corner of the Rockland and Pike, belonging to the DuPont interest was at one time the Blue Ball Tavern. We go on down the pike and we come to McKee's Hill where my wife's forebearers bought land in 1760 from the London Company and gave the hill their name.

C: What was your wife's family name.

P: My wife's family name was McKee.

C: That became McKee's Hill?

P: That was McKee's Hill. At that time the grading was different. The road went over the B & O tracks and at one time when I was riding a bicycle to Beacon's College in Wilmington, we used to ride down that hill and if we didn't hear a train coming we laid flat on the bicycles and went under the gates which was highly illegal of course but was fun. I forgot to mention that in Talleyville we had the first toll gate and the second toll gate was just below the B & O at Concord Avenue and Broom in the right hand far corner of Concord Avenue and Broom.

C: And that was another fifteen cents?

P: No, fifteen cents took you there all the way but the gate was down until you established the fact that you had paid. At that time, Wilmington hardly came up above Eighteenth Street and Baynard, what is now Baynard Boulevard and Brandywine Village was an entity in itself. On the highway you didn't see anything when I was a kid except farm wagons, horseback riders, walkers. There was even a few peddlers with a pack on their back that would sell you the necessities that a woman had to have to do her sewing and a small quantity of dress goods of one kind or another. There was even men that walked along and picked up dog droppings to use in the morocco industry in Wilmington.

C: Why did men from the morocco factory...

P: Not the morocco factory...

C: The leather...

P: You might say a man who made a living.

C: Oh, a man who made a living, sell the droppings to the morocco factory...

P: For the sake of the hydrochloric acid in them; in the tanning of goat skins. Wilmington's always been a center of that industry.

C: You mentioned that your wife's family were McKee's. Can you tell us something about her background and the family?

P: Well, at one time after...I don't know the connection between the time they lived on the hill but at one time they lived right across the road from where I'm sitting and my wife's grandfather became interested in the growing of fruit and the drying of fruit. You must remember there were no refrigeration of any kind or no canning of any kind and dried fruits were a staple in the winter time. You went up to the attic and got your bag of dried apples and soaked

them and made applesauce and things like that. So, he moved to Kent County. Some of his grandchildren still live on McKee Road north of Dover down there. But it wasn't long after they got down there I believe when the canning became the thing to do and dried fruit disappeared. My mother...we had a porch around to the house with a tin roof on it which got hot in the summertime and she had racks laid across on them; peeled the apples; sliced them; put them out on the roof to dry. Did the same thing with sweet corn. It's hard to imagine today with all our refrigeration and everything, how dependent you were on what you had in the house. Well, of course you had a few pigs and you slaughtered them and you cured your own hams and bacon and ground it up into sausage and scrapple; fried the sausage cakes and put them in jars and covered them with hot melted lard to take out whenever you needed it. You lived where you were. You didn't run to the supermarket like they do now every time we want a loaf of bread.

C: Was it much harder living in those days?

P: I don't consider it was any harder living. You were isolated to a great degree but you knew all of your neighbors. There were no strangers in the community. You knew everybody up and down the pike and it made for a tight knit little community which we don't know now. In fact when I go up to the Concord Mall which is on part of the land we owned, I'm a stranger in my own home community.

C: Would you like to tell us how this land became the Concord Pike?

P: The Concord Pike way back was an Indian trail or so they tell me and I believe it is correct. The Indians from up in the great Chester Valley as they used to call it, when the fish ran in the spring; the herring and the shad ran in the spring, the Indians

used to come up and down the tidewater on the Brandywine or the Christina or the river to fish. It's high land and you can go from here clear up through West Chester to Pottstown before you hit any stream of any size which you would have to ford from the Christina to the Schuylkill. It's more or less a high ridge. When you traveled on foot it was very nice not to have to wade any deep water.

C: Alright, what happened to make all this change?

P: Well, with today's superhighways everywhere, it's very hard for today's person to picture how hard travel was when I was a small child. The Concord Pike which was a toll road when I came to Brandywine Hundred had been in existence for quite a while. I really don't know the dates. When you consider that the only paved roads in Brandywine Hundred at that time; one was the Concord Pike and one was the Philadelphia Pike; in other words, the extension of Wilmington's Market Street and the Wilmington's Concord Avenue and it was important to be able to get on a hard road; course hard road's hard on the horses' feet and along each side of it at places, there was what was called a summer road, which was a dirt road that you could take so that your horse wouldn't be pounding on the pavement. There was also up at the Aber Talley farm where Beaver Branch, Beaver Run ran along side of the highway for I think about two hundred feet. The creek ran down that and you could unrein your horse and drive through that water and let him take a drink and if your wagon wheels were getting dried out and rattling you could move through slowly and let the water swell them up so they didn't rattle so much. But the pike was important and when Father bought this land, he had seen Philadelphia grow so tremendously.

Incidentally the railroads used to place market cars as they were called in various places in the country and farmers could take their produce there; ride in on the train and in his case; the car was pulled into the basement of the Reading Terminal Market where he sold the butter and the poultry and the pork products and things that he had. It was a...it's just impossible to visualize what it meant and in the winter time mud was deep. It was hard going for the horse. It was hard going for you if you were on foot and you were so glad to get to a place where you know you wouldn't get stuck and bogged down. It's just impossible for today's kid to think of it. The Concord Pike just naturally developed because it was there. It didn't do it for a long time but it was bound to come and Father had seen Market Street in Philadelphia when it had.. well, there wasn't anything in west Philadelphia. At that time one of his friends said, "Harry buy land there." Well, Harry didn't have any land to buy but he remembered the advice. This interviewer is going to have a hard time of getting anything coherent out of me I'm afraid. (laughter)

- C: So actually Concord Pike became the jungle it is today because everybody used it and eventually you feel it had to have become what it is?
- P: To jump around a lot; after the first world war, Father bought the adjoining farm of a hundred acres. That gave him approximately a hundred and thirty eight acres or so and the Concord Development Company bought an adjoining farm and had a block of about two hundred acres. That was big enough that they brought in a sewer and they brought in water and then things exploded. Getting back to what we did; we made hay in the summer to feed the stock in the

winter if we had any on hand. If we needed flour we'd go down into Beaver Valley in Dusty Clark's Mill and buy some flour. Beaver Valley had any number of mills up and down the stream. There again you have to remember there wasn't any power except water power and every little stream that had any volume at all was literally worked to death. On that Beaver Creek at one time there was a little woolen mill; a little mill that forged axes and hammers....

Side one of the Passmore tape runs out at this point. The interview is continued on side two.

Side II

P: Beaver Valley...you must remember that most of Brandywine Hundred as I had said is level land and high land. We're very near as high as the high point which is over in back of Centerville and where that land drops off you have quite a bit of fall. Consequently you have water power. Now I've got to Dusty Clark's Mill but also down there was one of the smallest mills that ever made paper in the United States in the early times; made a thin wrapping paper like they used to wrap shoes in, put in the boxes.

C: Tissue paper

P: Tissue paper...and from Dusty Clark's Mill a race ran clear down along parallel of the Brandywine to Smith's Bridge where there was another grist mill and a sawmill. Water power was everything. Rocky Run didn't have any mills on it. But one little stream that entered Rocky Run, called Harrington Run has so little flow of water that they didn't do anything except in the spring when they had the spring rains to keep it flush. Come summertime, the mill

would shut down until we had a storm or two to fill up the mill pond so they could have some more power to do some more work. Of course Rockland tapped the Brandywine and the paper mills; Jefferson Moore Paper Company was a big employer for Talleyville and a lot around here. I said we had the post office in our home at one time. The mail came down the Reading railroad from Birdsboro; the Reading run from Birdsboro down to Elsmere Junction and at G which would be a good two miles from us. One man made it a practice to pick up the mail when the mail train came by and bring it to our house for the post office. It's really incredible how slowly things moved. I mentioned the Ryan family. They had the contract to keep the pot holes as I said filled up. You could go back on your farm with a one horse cart and pick up small stones and take them out and dump them in the hole and crack them up with what I would have to describe as a small sledge, called a napping hammer. Why a napping hammer, I do not know. They were Irish, friendly and when you had no communication much, naturally everybody that would come down the road they exchanged the time of day with and the news of the community and lots of people used to say well, they certainly do loaf there. But the sad part of it was they weren't loafing, they were paid by the perch. The perch is a measure of quantity of stone that they broke up so they really weren't chiseling it all. That kind of pike...talking about the development of the pike; in 1911 the state took it over and that was the end of the toll road and it was a good water bound M Road which again was alright until the automobile come along. And then the automobile would go fast enough to create a suction and a cloud of dust would suck all your stone dust out from among your other

larger stones and that just ruined things. As a small town before going to school which means about 1904 there were a few wealthy people scattered around the country who used to have point to point races with their car and I can remember hearing them coming because several of them had chain drives; foreign cars with chain drives and they'd go by in a cloud of dust and that was a big event.(laughter) At one point, Breaker's Hill, my uncle Will had a Elmore car, two cylinder and going down Breaker's Hill, we actually got up to twenty five miles an hour. It had three seats, two bucket seats and one bucket seat behind them and the front seats; each one had a hand hold so that the man in the back seat could hold on and I held on for dear life. Later on Uncle Will bought a Stanley Steamer and that was hot stuff for the time. It could fly. And it was just like a steam locomotive; you could put it in reverse and come back just as fast as you went forward if you were man enough to drive it and one of the times we went into Wilmington; this is before 1908 remember, a man walked into the side of our Stanley Steamer; it was so quiet, not looking where he was going.

C: Were you allowed to drive it?

P: I wasn't old enough to drive it at that time but Uncle Will taught me how to fire it up and get up the pressure. You had to keep pressure on your fuel tank and one thing and another and you had to work the steam through the steam engine very carefully. You had to open the valves on the steam chest that might have water condensed in them and would lock things. I don't know why he did it when I look back because I couldn't been more than ten or eleven years old at the time.

C: No one had to take a driving test in those days.

P: No, no you didn't. My first driving license, a man by the name of Guyer handled all the licensing in Wilmington. And it's inconceivable isn't it?

C: You mentioned that you used to go to the library.

P: I was always very fortunate in the fact that there was always some reading material in my home and Uncle Will used to take me to town with him in the Stanley Steamer. Some of the other folks didn't care to go with him too much because you were not certain of getting home. You might have a backfire and put your boiler out of commission for a while but I was...I would go with him and he would drop me off at the library which was on the second or third floor, I don't remember which of the northwest corner of Eighth and Market Street and I would roam the stacks there and as I told the interviewer I could always look at my work in the face if I had a book that I wanted to read.

C: Were your family Quakers?

P: Yes, my family on both sides was Quakers because my parents were both members of Meeting and I was what was called a birthright member. The Pusey part of the name comes from Caleb Pusey who has a restored house over on the Chester Creek. He was miller to William Penn. He moved from there up into the New Garden Township. On the Passmore side, my grandfather...he was a school teacher when he came out and tried to farm that great big old farm with horses and oxen.

C: Quakers have been prominent in northern Delaware from the time that William Penn came.

P: They've always been prominent in Philadelphia. To say you were a

Quaker gave you...well, it was a good name to be. When I got into the ice cream business myself and had to buy equipment in Philadelphia...I applied to...told the clerk I wanted a commercial reading and he got my name and took it upstairs and came down and he says, "You can have it. The boss says that's a good Quaker name."

C: Are you still a practicing Quaker?

P: Well, she asked me if I was a practicing Quaker. I pay my Meeting tax and don't interfere too much with the operation of the meeting. I can't really say that I'm an active Quaker.

C: But you're still proud to have a Quaker background.

P: It was a...to some extent it gave you a standing in the community. Yes.

C: Tell us about your ice cream business.

P: Well, let's go back to the Concord Pike a little bit more.

C: O.K.

P: Because of our father's cattle business, we had one of the first telephones to come up the Concord Pike. I actually don't remember it being installed but I remember it after it was there. It had two jars of chemical acids in the bottom of it and you had a crank and you had to crank the crank to call the central and that led to some interesting things. If anything happened around the country; if anybody got hurt, our local doctor at that time was fond of his spirits and he could be found at the Parry's Tavern quite often and I remember very well one day that the phone came in that a man had torn up his forearm in the treshing machine and they wanted Dr. Day right away and they sent Pusey up to the tavern to see whether Dr. Day was there. He was. Dr. Day was no fool. He

stopped by our house to talk to Mother before he went on to make sure that I had the story right and I will never remember...never forget watching him open his satchel; make sure he had all his curved needles; his black linen thread to sew the man up with. No hint of antiseptic; the man lived. So, in the course of time... this interviewer keeps prodding me...in the course of time when I got out of Eight Square School, eight grades, no high school, I went to Beacon College which was then in the DuPont building for a couple of winters. I can't say that I ever graduated but I did pass my spelling and my commercial law and my bookkeeping and tried to learn to type and it was a very valuable experience. Then served for a while in a cashiers cage in the Wilmington Traction Company when one man and me as an assistant took in all the money for the electricity. A little side note; the Mullen's Hotel when they paid their electric bill, paid it in golden eagles which is the difference from today and I worked briefly at the Wilson Line which at that time hauled down most of the produce from Dock Street in Philadelphia for the Wilmington Commission Merchants. But that wasn't for me. I went back to the farm. And from my association with the Quakers and going to the Quaker Meeting with Uncle Will, Fourth and West or incidently my three other brothers and sisters went to Friends School...I never made it. He became acquainted with or better acquainted, we knew him, with William Bancroft who is... started to buy land between the Concord Pike and the Brandywine Creek which ultimately led to Woodlawn Trustees Incorporated which is quite a factor in the development of that area. William had the vision of zoning way back then but his way of securing it was to buy up all the land yourself. Well, Uncle Will managed the land for

him until he died in 1912 and Father didn't want the job at that time and he brought in a young man from West Chester College; he died in the flu epidemic of '18. I had it then lightly and then Father went back to work for Woodlawn and we were casting around for ways to improve the income of the farmers who were renting the land and I hit on to the idea that we should go into the milk business; retail milk and did for them for several years. But they weren't really interested in milk business and that wasn't what they were interested in. So, I bought out their equipment and went into business for myself continuing the milk routes and because at that time at the state of agriculture at that time, the summer pasturage was the time when you made the cheapest milk and the best thing to do was to make it into ice cream. B

Farm, the Crebbs Estate had built a small place over on Lancaster Pike and was doing very well. So a farmer has always made ice cream in the wintertime when he could go to the pond and get the ice, so making ice cream wasn't anything striking, anything striking like new and that simply developed further than I ever thought it would. I made ice cream for thirty five years here on the Concord Pike and a good many of the people at least knew what Lennswake farm was.

C: Where did you get the name Lennswake ?

P: Everyone asks that name. William Bancroft coined the name, which means to take rocky, unproductive, brushy land, clean it up and make it tillable. It means rapids in a stream, the other part wake means I believe rapids in a stream, Lennswake farm. It applied very well to the old farm that it was applied to. We finally sold the land to Concord Development Company in...well, I'm

getting ahead of my story. The highway construction forced me to move twice; put up a temporary stand on the Faulk Road just for one summer so as not to lose my public and then in '53 they decided to widen and dualize the Concord Pike and that wiped out where I was and I moved up to a portion of the land my sisters and I owned and built the last stand we had; thirty five years in the business. So, I go from nothing until on a good Sunday my clocker showed fifteen hundred cars coming in and out which wasn't bad for our little ice cream place. But the Concord Mall, the racetrack come along; everybody says, oh, Passmore you've go it made. That will mean a lot of business for you. I says it won't mean a darn thing. They'll be in such a hurry to get to the racetrack, they won't stop on the way up and I'll be closed when they come home. And that's the way it worked out. I went out of business simply because zoning; We got in just ahead of zoning with our last store and zoning prohibited any expansion of the business since that location except just as a retail sales place. And the land had become so valuable. The Concord Mall started and everybody said again well, you have it made and in effect it ruined the place as a nice country place to go and sit on the lawn and enjoy some ice cream and the traffic as I said, smothered it. So, I sold it to the Brandywine College.

C: Well, was your land the Concord Mall also?

P: Yes.

C: You sold that too.

P: Well, my two sisters and I owned the Pike front from...the Sheraton Hotel is on where my ice cream store was. We owned from there almost up to Parry's Tavern, Parry's Hotel, the Talleyho in present things.

C: Tell us what part you played in building your present home.

P: Well, at the same time that the state highway decided to dualize the road, which wiped out where my store was; my son had gotten married and my wife and I decided we wanted to build a home of our own and bought nine and a thirty acres on the Concord Pike, not facing on the Concord Pike but four hundred feet off and built a stone...and the place was full of big boulders. I told the architect I wanted to use the native stone if I could. Well, he says that'll be very expensive so why not put both ends of the house and one wall of the stone and I says I want California redwood for the other. And having seen so many old houses exist for so long and I thought this would last for a good while and I wanted a date stone put up in the end. So, 1953 is up there and I have no trouble remembering it at all.

C: Did you help blast this rock?

P: Yes, in the course of a farmers life you learn to do a lot of things like plumbing and hydraulics of one kind or another and handling things and I learned to handle dynamite so we drilled where my lane comes in and there was a huge boulder extended clean across the lane where I wanted the lane. We blasted it out. The masons grumbled a little bit about the stone. They said it didn't have a good grain. It made it hard to work but about ninety percent of the stone in the house is from the land itself. When it came to building the chimneys they balked, said we can't work it. So they went to some(unintelligible)in Wilmington and found Wilmington curb stone like there used to be down on Shipley Street and one thing or another. That stone came from the Bellevue quarries originally and had a good grain as they say it. When I watched that mason shaping up the stones for the corners of those chimneys

I understood why the house was costing me so much.

C: One of the things you do...your house faces Brandywine College and you have a chance to see youth of today. How do you think youth has changed from earlier days?

P: Boy! now that's an afternoon's discussion. Well, I may have said in the beginning where we are living is now part of the Brandywine College Campus. Brandywine College...my neighbor Titus Geisey who I thought would stay there forever and I thought the Brandywine Country Club would stay there forever and I thought I had permanent neighbors. Well, Titus sold his land and that was developed as Brandywine College. In the incredible short time that it's been here, the boys have gone from a right decent jacket and hair cut and ties to anything they have in the closet. I have seen them go through a spell of being abominable litterers; throw their empty beer cans on my lawn as they walked down the lane to the dorm and things like that. But since this depression, this last two or three years, it seems to me they have sobered down and become a little more like they used to be. You ask me how they have changed, that's an utterly impossible question for me to answer. When you consider that in my youth everyone, literally everyone knew all his neighbors and knew whether he got drunk or whether he was a super citizen or things like that. That afforded a stabilizing effect on the community as a whole. Now days with the automobile and the kid can literally go anywhere; drive everywhere; get out of your sight in a minute, it had a kind of heady effect, it kind of went to their heads in my opinion for a long time. But I believe as of today; don't know what it will be tomorrow; when they walk up the lane now they will say hello and it seems to my...in my judgement a change

for the better.

C: What advice would you give in order to help them live better lives from your own experience?

P: That's one of those impossible questions. It used to be that everyone expected to work and work long hours and work hard. I don't think there's going to be much change unless we do have a really terrible depression. I think we'll have to have some more setbacks before today's youth will realize that he has to work to earn a right to live. I'm not going to try to answer that question really.

C: Is there anything you wish you'd done in your life that you haven't done?

P: As a whole, as I look back from '79, I realize that I have been extremely fortunate in my family, in my friends and the things I've been able to do. I have always been a great reader. I've always loved to get a hold of a map and pour over on that and want to see as much of the world as I could and I have been very fortunate in my opinion. A chum who lived in Beaver Valley was an automobile mechanic in the early days and his geography wasn't too good so he would let me lay out a trip and the first one we took in a Chevrolet touring car in which we had a spare set of bearings for a front wheel, a master leaf for a front spring. We went up to the Lincoln Highway and went west and at one point you could see down the Lincoln Highway for seven miles. That was a thrill. We camped and slept on the ground if the weather was good. Went down from Somerset Courthouse through the Cumberland...

The second side of the Passmore tape runs out at this point ending the interview.