BACK OVER THE YEARS

Reminiscences of Mattituck in the early years of the Twentieth Century

VOLUME VI

Friends of the Mattituck Free Library

1986

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INTRODUCTION

We must explain where the material contained in these volumes comes from.

In 1978 the Friends of the Mattituck Free Library undertook to record an oral history of Mattituck. The project was carried on under the federal Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA). It was begun by Richard Mack and then developed by John Traversa, and it was intended to bring up to date the 1906 History of Mattituck written by the Reverend Charles Craven, Pastor of the Mattituck Presbyterian Church.

The work began with the recording of interviews with Mattituck citizens who recalled life in the early years of the century. Unexpectedly, work had to stop when the local CETA support was terminated.

The Friends were unable to carry on the project, and it became apparent that our goal of a history could not be achieved in the foreseeable future.

Into our files went the taped interviews, unedited and many incomplete, several hundred slides and a series of audio-visual tapes of groups and individuals. Some years later the Friends decided to make the contents of as many of the taped interviews as possible available as background material on the history of the community.

The tapes contain the voices of Mattituck citizens speaking about a time and a place they knew intimately. The authors of the tapes found it pleasant "... to look back and think back over the years", and the Friends are offering these plain spoken, sometimes humorous or touching accounts of 'how it was in those days'.

The material has been transcribed just as it was given to the interviewers with only repetitious and non-pertinent matter omitted. We have added a few notes, some information from conversations with the authors,

and have included several written pieces. Where pictures were available we have reproduced them together with articles from the Suffolk Times.

We express our gratitude to the authors whose interviews are recorded here as well as to those whose interviews we have not yet been able to transcribe. Our thanks to our volunteer proof readers, Nancy Duryee and Mary Flanagan, and to those who graciously loaned or gave us old photographs.

Many thanks go to our typists, Dorothea Delehanty, Kathleen Reeve and Rose Costello, who were dedicated in their efforts to transcribe the sometimes difficult recordings. And heart-felt thanks to the Mattituck Free Library whose Directors and Staff have been consistently helpful and patient as we carried on our work in their midst.

The Friends of the Mattituck Free Library
Katherine Lascelle, Project Co-ordinator

July 1986

MATTITUCK ORAL HISTORY

Contents of Tape: 16-ANP-1 Date of Interview: Autumn 1978

Oral Author: Arthur N. Penny Interviewer: John Traversa

From Chickens to Newspapers

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Persons mentioned:

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MAPS, PICTURES

MATTITUCK ORAL HISTORY

Contents: Tape #16-ANP-1 Date of Interview: Autumn 1978

Oral Author: Arthur N. Penny Interviewer: John Traversa

FROM CHICKENS TO NEWSPAPERS

I. Start with your family background, and then your memories of Mattituck as a child and young man, the kinds of things you used to do in town or at home on the farm and so forth, and then getting into your education at Colorado University and Columbia. Wait a minute, I know you went to the Columbia School of Journalism. You also went to Colorado.

A: No, that's my dad. I guess I'm one of those vanishing species, a native of Mattituck. I was born here in 1907. Incidentally, the house I now live in was built in 1907, so the two of us go very well together. I was a farm boy as most kids were at that time, grew up on a farm. My dad, also named Arthur, had intended to be a mining engineer but unfortunately his matrimonial aspirations were in conflict with his job ambitions, and the result was he came back to Mattituck, worked for awhile in the lumber and coal yard that my grandfather, George L. Penny, had established in 1892, which I believe is now the oldest business here in Mattituck, and then later embarked on a farming career, largely with chickens although we also grew corn and several other crops on our farm on Westphalia Road.

It was a relatively small farm although we had a rather large laying flock for those times, in the neighborhood of 5,000 white leghorn hens, and and we had our own incubators. We grew chickens from the egg up, so as to speak, and our principle products were baby chicks, which we sold to other

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PENNY LUMBER AND FLOORING CENTERS, North Road, Mattituck, 298-8559, and Main Road, Greenport, 477-0400. The Penny family has owned and operated this business since 1890; the Greenport facility was purchased from Greenport Lumber in 1961. Penny's is the oldest lumberyard on long Island under continuous, single-family ownership. George Penny IV and his brother, Geoffroy, are fourth-generation family members active in the business today. Penny operates two full-service yards, offering everything for building a new house or renovating an old one. The company's planning service can draw blueprints for a new home or addition. The carpeting departments in both Greenport and Mattituck offer sales and installation of a wide range of carpeting and vinyl flooring at reasonable prices. Penny's has 33 employees and serves both the North and South Forks, Shelter Island and beyond.

Suffolk Times 3/28/85
1985 Honor Roll

growers, other poultrymen; eggs which largely Dad sold wholesale, never had an egg route or anything like that, but he did sell to some hotels and boarding houses and so forth.

And broilers, I recall that we had some very rather fancy customers for those including people in Southampton, socially elite people who insisted that the broiler be absolutely perfect. There couldn't be a rent in the skin or a pin feather left on the carcass. I became quite adept at chicken picking. As I recall, I could wet pick a broiler in about thirty to forty seconds, and dry pick a broiler in about two or three minutes, which wasn't bad. The thing I enjoyed most on the farm though was harvesting corn. I loved to husk corn for some reason or other. I don't know why, but I really did enjoy that job.

I: Did you enjoy it as much as picking chickens?

A: I think I enjoyed it a lot more, to be honest with you. Less enjoyable was the fact that one of my summertime jobs, you know, while we were out of school, was hoeing over the corn fields. I didn't particularly enjoy that. At that time, a number of the farmers around here grew a variety of corn known as Luce's Favorite, and it was grown for seed. There was a cooperative in Mattituck, and the farmers cooperatively marketed this corn, and for some years they did quite well with it, but eventually other varieties were perfected, and Luce's Favorite apparently dropped out of the picture entirely. At least, I haven't heard of it for many, many years.

As all kids did in those days, we walked to school, we had no buses or anything like that. It was a matter of a couple of miles for me, which

wasn't bad, but probably closer to one and one-half miles actually. This was the era for boys, knickerbockers and black stockings. The girls never thought of wearing anything that didn't fall well below the knees, and of course, pants of all kinds were completely out for the female sex. We were just average country kids, I guess. We enjoyed ourselves pretty much. In those times, of course, we had school sports, varsity sports. Basketball and baseball I think, were the only two that Mattituck engaged in because it was a relatively small school, but as a grade student and then later in high school, there were other things that we had a great deal of fun out of. I remember that we built our own tennis court. It was a rather crude affair, but we enjoyed it tremendously. Earlier, when I was younger, I liked such running games as Hutchuck and Prisoner's Base, which I wonder if anybody plays today. I doubt it very much.

I graduated from high school in 1923 at the age of 16, and I turned out to be valedictorian of my class which is not saying a great deal, because the class was very small and my average wasn't very high. As I recall there were I think, ten or eleven in the class. That can be easily checked of course, but that's the best to my recollection. And then I went to school; in fact, I went to several schools. I went to Citadel at Charleston, South Carolina. I went to Presbyterian College and ended up at a graduate school in Columbia University, School of Journalism, better known, I guess, as the Pulitzer School.

I: How come?

A: Well, I'd always liked to write, and even when I was in school I did a little bit of writing. We didn't have a school paper, but I did a little bit of writing for our year book, and I enjoyed English composition and things of that kind, probably more so than anything else with the possible exception of history. I always enjoyed history very much. Anyway, I thought I'd like to be a newspaperman, and so after I left Columbia, I got a job. I was on the Brooklyn Daily Eagle for about one and one-half years and also at one time on the Brooklyn Standard Union. Both of those papers are now history; both have gone out. The Eagle in its time, was quite a famous paper, and a very good paper. The Standard Union was more or less of a, oh a political rag, although it had some pretense to being a fairly good Brooklyn newspaper. The Eagle was much more widely known, much more widely circulated. Also, for a time, I did some work for the New York Times. They had a Brooklyn-Long Island section at that time, and I did some writing for them, but that was on a stringer basis, not as a staff, and I think it was in 1929 , I guess it was about a year after I got married, in 1928.

Incidentally, I married Lucille Slate, who was a librarian in the Brooklyn Public Library System, and who eventually became, as you know a trustee of the Mattituck Free Library. I got an offer from the Lee Publishing Company Headquarters at Riverhead, which at that time published free newspapers, to come and work for them, and since Lucille and I were expecting our first child, we decided that we'd come back to the country. She was

actually more a city girl although her family lived in Huntington, which at that time was much more countrified than it is today. Anyway, when I got to Riverhead, we moved out. We rented a house in Mattituck. I discovered that the job wasn't quite ready for me, and so for awhile, I think it was just a matter of two or three months, I worked for my Uncle, Harold R. Reeve of H.R. Reeve and Sons, Builders.

I: And what did you do for them?

A: Well, just plain labor work, digging ditches, that type of thing, which didn't do me any harm because after two or three years in the city with not too much exercise, I needed a little hardening up. Then, I became what they call Associate Editor of the County Review, which was the number one weekly newspaper on Long Island, and at that time had the largest circulation of any weekly newspaper in New York State. The editor was a gentleman by the name of Baron Lewis, who had been Managing Editor of the Philadelphia Bulletin. Unfortunately, he had an affinity for the bottle. He was a very brilliant man but he did have this weakness, and one of my duties was to get him out of the bars of Riverhead and back on the job. I should have said speakeasies because at that time, of course, prohibition was in effect, and nobody was supposed to be able to legally buy a drink, but he managed to do so quite regularly. Anyway, his health failed on him, and I did a good deal of the work, and I was sent to Huntington for a couple of years to become editor of the Huntington paper, which was known as the Suffolk Bulletin, and then I was called back to Riverhead to become editor of the County Review, which was the flagship

paper of the group, the other paper being the Bay Shore Journal of Bay Shore. I held that job until 1940. During that period, we engaged in a number of campaigns and crusades. We fought the Republican County leader, W. Kingsland Macy, unsuccessfully I might add.

I: No relation to the store?

A: No relation to the store whatsoever. But he was the cousin of a Macy who had a string of papers in Westchester.

I: Why were you fighting him?

A: It was a matter of more or less East End against the West End. I think there were two or three causes for it. One was that the East End, two supervisors were opposed to Mr. Macy's plans to erect bridges between Greenport and Shelter Island, and Shelter Island and Sag Harbor. We went along with the East End supervisors and the people of Shelter Island, who very strongly opposed the idea of having their island thus connected, and I suppose they feared an influx of people they didn't particularly want to have on their island. But, anyway we fought that.

It is interesting we were the first to decry the duck pollution of the bays and the waters. I remember one of the people who was interested in this type of thing. His name was Tyte, Mr. Tyte of Riverhead; I don't recall his first name. Anyway, he was known as "Professor" Tyte because, I think, he had been a music teacher at one time and possibly still was. He took me out on one of the little streams which feed into Peconic Bay in that area and said, "What do you think of that little island over there?" It was just a little tiny island, probably not more than five X ten feet.

However, it did have some greenary on it. It was grass-covered. It had two or three little wild shrubs on it, and I think, some flowers. He took out an oar and pushed the island down the stream. There was floating manure which had coagulated. That convinced me that something should be done, so that was one of our crusades. There were a number of them.

In 1940, I decided I had had it with the publishers of the papers and resigned. We had kind of a squabble. I wanted more money which I thought was coming to me, and they were reticent to give it to me, and so I stepped down. I'm afraid I lost my temper, and I stepped down. Then, for awhile I was associated with the late Lewis Breaker on a Mattituck paper. He called it the North Fork Life. It was the first offset printed newspaper in the eastern part of the Island, and possibly the first in Suffolk County. Offset equipment wasn't readily available then, and as I recall, the paper had to be taken into New York to have it printed, there being no offset presses anywhere in the county. But that lasted only two or three years, and fortunately it was a period just before and just after this country got into the war and the tail end of the depression too, and consequently money was hard to come by and we didn't do very well, so finally we gave up on that. Lou went into the service, and I, who had at that time four children with another on the way, took a job with the Suffolk Consolidated Press papers.

For the next four years, I was Editor of their papers in Smithtown and Huntington, the Huntington Times and the Smithtown Star. I also did some county seat coverage, courts, water, supervisors, that type of thing. Then, after the death of Mr. Lewis Austin, who was Editor-Publisher of the

Riverhead News, I came back to Riverhead as editor of that paper at the request of his son, Carlisle Austin. I held that job for about an equal time, four or five years. I think it was in 1950 that I decided I should do something to possibly make a little money for my growing family. So, I set up a newspaper service. For a time there, I had as many as twenty newspapers, and later four or five radio stations taking my copy which was largely county government, courts, and other top stories out of eastern Suffolk.

About the same time, with two other people, I started Academy Printing Enterprises at Southold which was the first commercial printery that had offset equipment, and which now is quite a successful business. Along the way, in ensuing years, I engaged in several different enterprises and sometimes I felt like a juggler trying to keep half a dozen balls in the air at one time. I was Executive Secretary of the Long Island Agricultural Marketing Association for a period of about ten or twelve years, and did quite a lot of publicity work for the Long Island Potato and Long Island Cauliflower. I also set up an Advertising Agency in partnership with late David Morris, who had been an advertising man in New York, and we represented a number of banks, several commercial enterprises, a number of institutions including hospitals and public health organizations and the like. I continued that for a number of years, carrying on the newspaper service and the printing until 1972, when I decided it was time to retire, having put in the better part of well, forty-five years in these varied types of work. Mr. Morris was not only a very good friend, but he was also a very brilliant man in advertising, much more so than I was. So, I sold the Advertising Agency,

and sold the Printing Company in which I was the majority stockholder, - sold my stock actually, and decided it was time to quit.

You asked about newspapers in Mattituck. The first newspaper that I can recall, and I think I'm correct in this, was a paper that was put out by Mr. James Hagen, - I'm sure his name was James. Anyway, there was a printery on the Main Road just about across from where the Route 25 intersects with Wickham Avenue, in that area anyway, on the south side of Route 25. He put out a tabloid newspaper, which if I remember correctly was called the Mattituck Reporter. He also put out a monthly magazine, the Long Island Agriculturist, which was the first, and I think the only independent agricultural paper ever published in Suffolk County, at least I don't recall any others. Now there is the Suffolk County Agricultural News at the present time, but that's a publication of Suffolk County Cooperative Extension Association and is, of course, supported by government funds.

Now the second newspaperman that I can recall in Mattituck was the late Carl Levalley,* who was a Mattituckian from way back, and whose house where he and his wife lived, was one of the oldest in Mattituck.

I: So, Carl Levalley.

A: Levalley. L-e-v-a-l-l-e-y.

I: And he was with James Hagen?

A: That's my recollection. I'm pretty sure. Now, if I'm correct, that would be in the late teens and the early 1920's. I recall that the printing house was destroyed by fire and was never rebuilt. And later Mr. Hagen and Mr. Levalley both worked for the Riverhead News in Riverhead. Now, the second paper that I recall in Mattituck, and this can be easily checked because there are people who know more about it than I, was the Mattituck

* Correct spelling, LeValley.

Watchman, and that was, as I recall, a revival of the old Republican Watchman of Greenport. It was edited and published by Spencer Wickham, who was an uncle of Hull Wickham and Parker Wickham. After Mr. Wickham's sudden death, as I recall, it was carried on, I believe, for some years by Hull Wickham. Hull and Parker, as you know, are sons of the late Cedric Wickham, who was one of Mattituck's leading citizens for a great many years. I recall at one time, that the office of the Watchman was on Wickham Avenue where Mr. Cedric Wickham at one time had a coal business, and it is now occupied by this refuse collection.

I: The sanitation department?

A: No, it isn't a department. It's a private business. I can't think of the name of it at the moment. It's right near the railroad tracks on Wickham Avenue. Now, those are the only, with the exception of the paper that Mr. Breaker and I attempted to put out during the late 30's and early 40's, that's the only two newspapers that I can recall that were closely identified with Mattituck and were published here. Now, of course, the Long Island Traveler assimilated the Mattituck Watchman, and the Long Island Traveler, for many, many years, has given substantial space to Mattituck, to Mattituck news. I recall that when I was a boy, the late Charles Gildersleeve, who was a Station Agent at the time, wrote for the Long Island Traveler, and then later, his nephew, I believe, Donald C. Gildersleeve, better known as Tip, did some very interesting and brilliant writing actually about Mattituck affairs for the Long Island Traveler. Mr. Gildersleeve, Tip Gildersleeve, Donald Gildersleeve, has a particular gift of humor, one of the few country correspondents that I ever met that does have that ability, and he wrote some very, very readable copy for the Long

Island Traveler over quite a few years. In fact, I'd say until the last three or four years, he was a contributor to the Traveler Watchman.

I'm sorry I can't tell you more about newspapers here. Of course, the County Review, the Riverhead News also devoted considerable space to happenings in Mattituck and vicinity. So, Mattituck was well covered by newspapers over a long period of years, and still is for that matter, today by the News Review in Riverhead, the Long Island Traveler-Watchman, and the Suffolk Times in Greenport, all very good newspapers by the way.

I: One of the things I'd like to know from your point of view, what do you see are the most significant differences in the importance of newspapers, or the impact of newspapers or the way they're conducted today, as opposed to when you first got involved with newspapers. Let's say, for instance, when you were young and at home, did your family subscribe to newspapers, did they get one regularly? What did it mean to your family?

A: Well, my family did. Dad was a college man, and he was very much interested in not only local events but also national affairs, and even international affairs. I recall he was an assiduous reader of the Tribune and then it later became the New York Herald Tribune, and also of a local paper. I think if I remember correctly he took the County Review, I'm pretty sure he did, - that's my thought anyway. Yeah, we were brought up on newspapers to a large extent. In those times, I think newspapers probably had more impact than they do today, at least on Eastern Long Island, because they were virtually the only media that we had. There was no radio, and there was no television. These imitation newspapers, the shopping guides were unknown.

Consequently, the county newspapers, such as the County Review or the local newspaper such as the Mattituck Watchman pretty much had the fields to themselves, and most of them took reasonably strong stands on public affairs. It is true they were business enterprises, and so some of them without question engaged in politicizing of one kind or another in order to increase their revenues.

I: Do you have any specific examples of that?

A: Well, of course, one thing out here in this county as in all the New York counties, I guess, with the exception of possibly metropolitan New York, is the county printing so-called, which consists of the tax sale and redemption notices and which is a very rich plum, at least it was in bygone years. This is awarded each year to one Republican paper that declares itself in accord with the principles of the Republican party and to one Democratic paper which adheres to the principles of the Democratic party. Consequently, there is great competition between newspapers to get this plum and actually many of them couldn't have existed without any occasional, as they call it, tax sale although it was more than just the printing of the tax sale.

I: What do you mean it was more than just the printing?

A: Well, it included other county legal notices and the redemption notices. I believe some of the state notices that came out of Albany had to be published in the official County papers of which there were two each year. They were designated by the Board of Supervisors, and then later they were designated by the Suffolk County Legislature after we adopted a charter form of government, and the Board of Supervisors went by the board. The Republicans of the Board of Supervisors or the County legislature would designate

the Republican paper, and the Democratic members would designate the Democratic paper. Unfortunately, that was kind of like a carrot in front of a rabbit. A lot of the papers pursued that to such an extent they lost what you might call their editorial independence, but for the most part I think they were honest and they certainly didn't countenance anything that was corrupt or crooked. But sometimes they were a little too loyal to the parties of their choice in my opinion. It was something that irked me for many years, but there was very little that could be done about it because newspapers are business institutions. They have salaries to pay, payrolls to meet, taxes to pay. So they have to try to swim and keep afloat, just like the corner store or whatever.

I: And as I understand it, this end of the Island is pretty much Republican and has been Republican for a long time.

A: That's true. The Republican enrollment I'm sure still greatly exceeds the Democratic enrollment and years ago on a percentage basis it was even more so.

I: Do you have any idea why that is so, and did the newspapers have anything to do with it?

A: Well, I think probably they had something to do with it, the papers, but I think it is more because, I don't know, from the time of Lincoln on this section has been very strong...you know, the country areas -- farmers, small business people, they were more inclined, I think, during the 19th century and into the 20th to go along with the Republican party. Teddy Roosevelt was a popular hero in his time, and of course, we had some very weak Republican presidents in the 1920's but somehow or other this has

always been a Republican area with a few exceptions. I mean we have had Democratic supervisors of Southold Town, and in fact, Riverhead. Riverhead, incidentally, is probably more Democratic in enrollment than any other town on the East End, although Democrats have been very successful in other towns, Shelter Island, East Hampton; - I'm talking about the East End towns now, and of course, they have done very well in the West End of Suffolk County.

I: Did you feel any kind of pressures politically when you were in newspapers?

A: Oh yeah. There was no question about it. It was something that, as I said, irked me very much but the Lees had more independence than the average newspaper. In the first place, they had three newspapers. The Lees that I worked for and worked with, were Myron and Robert Lee. Their father, Harry Lee, had been the Republican leader of Suffolk County at one time. They were steeped in political lore. I mean through their father they knew the political game. Although neither of them ever ran for a political office to the best of my recollection -- I'm sure they didn't, and neither of them held any party position that I can recall -- still they were very much interested in politics and they knew enough about it to engage in a fight with W. Kingsland Macy, the millionaire Republican leader who ruled this county with an iron rod for many, many years. They were among the very few neswpaper people who had that much guts.

I: You were Republican also?

A: We were Republican also. Later, we more or less fell into line, and in fact, we got a tax sale, I think in 1938 or 1939, when it was quite badly

needed because we had gone through depression years. I can recall in the 1930's when a farmer would come into the County Review office in Riverhead with a bushel of potatoes and say "will that pay up my subscription until next December?" We were taking all kinds of things. We got chickens and potatoes and fruit and everything else.

Money was very scarce, of course. So, when the time came that the Lees could get a tax sale they took it, and they took it, I guess, by virtue of making peace with the Macy group of the Republican party.

I: Do you feel that they seriously compromised then, or what?

A: Well, that was about the time I left because I was getting fed up, to be honest with you. I was supposed to be Managing Editor of the three newspapers and Editor of the County Review. A lot of things I wanted to do weren't done. We were in almost constant daily bickering with one another, and then they refused me this raise that I had been promised. So, I said the dickens with it. I was young enough you know, to try something else at that time, thirty-three years of age.

I tell you one thing I think about newspapers in those days, and that applies to most of the country papers as well as the urban papers, the New York papers, the Philadelphia papers, whatever. They were more objective in their reporting than they are today. The subjective reporting was unknown virtually. You gave both sides of the story, and if you didn't, you soon heard about it, either from your boss, your publisher, your editor, or your reading public, one or the other. You didn't give your own opinions and your own interpretation in your news stores, that was reserved for the editorial page or for columns. There were columns in those days as well as there are today, which I think is a better way to report the news. Of course, that

may be an old-fashioned viewpoint.

(Tape interrupted and unclear) in those days what they called the gossip columns. Now the gossip columns in New York, Walter Winchell and the like, were much different from the gossip columns of the country press. The rural press, the gossip columns were visits, Mr. and Mrs. Jones went to see his sister in Kansas City, was entertaining guests from Maine or whatever, or they had a wedding anniversary or a new baby or whatever. People used to kind of look down their nose, some of them at least, at this type of reporting, but people enjoyed it very much, and I think, to a certain extent, they still do, although that type of local, so-called gossip column has pretty much gone out of style. Some of the papers still have it, but not as much as they used to. Each paper in those days had a correspondent, and each village of the area that they covered. For example the Traveler would have a correspondent, I guess, all the way from Orient to Riverhead. I remember at one time the Review had, I think thirty-five correspondents scattered around Suffolk County, all the way from Huntington right out to Montauk.

I: Were these all paid?

A: These were all paid on a space basis, and the space wasn't much. I think they got something like a dime an inch or something like that. The Review was a standard size newspaper. Its columns were twenty inches. So, anybody who wrote a column of copy would get $2.00 which was pretty poor pay, but in those days a dollar would buy a lot more than it would today, of course.

I: Comparably, what would you say that it would be worth today, about twenty dollars?

A: Well, I think a minimum of fifty cents an inch, and probably more like one dollar an inch. The few papers I know now that still pay space rates, I think, pay fifty to seventy-five cents an inch. Incidentally, most of that copy was hand-written, and some of it was very poorly hand-written. One of the big jobs of the Editor or his assistant or somebody in the newspaper office was to edit that copy which was not an easy task.

I: When you first started out with your own newspaper -

A: I never had my own newspaper.

I: Your first position as an Editor. Did you have to do a lot of . . .

A: Yeah, when I came to Review as an Assistant Editor to Mr. Lewis, Baron Lewis, who was the Editor, the staff consisted of three people - he, a girl, and myself. The girl and I had the drudgery of going all through that country correspondence as we called it, and trying to eliminate the bad English and the misspellings and make some sense out of it. Some of it was very poorly written. On the other hand, some of it was excellently written. We had some correspondents that qualify, I guess, for writing for the New York Times. They did it more or less as a hobby, I think, rather than for the money.

You know, some of the things that were commonplace in newspapers then you wouldn't think of seeing in a newspaper today. For example I remember the County Review, this was during the depression, it ran a list of new car owners which we got from the Motor Vehicles Bureau. Every week, we had a list of new car owners and the type of car they bought. You'd never think of such a thing now. We also ran a lot more real estate transactions. Some

papers, the Long Island Traveler does it I believe, still has conveyances of real estate properties, but we ran not only conveyances but we also ran mortgages and assignments of mortgages, lis pendens, and some business names, corporate names - a whole raft of stuff that we got out of the office of the County Clerk and which took hours and hours to copy from the records and reduce to such copy so that the line-o-type operators could set it without screaming, of which they did a great deal, I must say.

I: The line-o-type people were people that typed with hot lead...

A: That's the hot type process, yeah, which has pretty much gone out. Mergenthaler and (unclear) machines are about a dime a dozen today, and probably eventually they will become antiques and become very valuable. Right now you could probably buy one for a few dollars if you wanted one. Everything today is offset.

I: Did you start out with a typewriter yourself?

A: Oh yeah. In the first place, my longhand is so horrible, so terrible, that even I can't read it if I let it get cold. When I take notes, I have to do something with them within a matter of a few hours or else I will have difficulty in deciphering my own handwriting. So, I was a typist from the start, not a good typist, but a typist.

I: Did you teach yourself to type?

A: Yeah, hunt and peck, I only use two fingers. But, you know, in Riverhead, I had a couple of secretaries. That was when we had the Advertising Agency and I was doing the work for the Marketing Association. I could keep up with any of my girls with my two fingers, believe it or not. Of course, I made more mistakes than they did, but I guess I must have lazy fingers because they're the two that did the work.

End, first side of tape.

I: Okay. Still comparing newspapers then and now - you said they were really the only communications media that were around and therefore had a lot more impact perhaps than they do today.

A: I think they had more influence and more impact because today, of course, you have radio and you have television, although television doesn't really reach out too far into our area here, that is, in the coverage of local events, although occasionally you see something on T.V. Maybe it will be during a political campaign, such as Carey Came to the Vineyard in Cutchogue or D. A. is running for Governor and he makes visitations here and there. But we do have a lot of, I think, very excellent radio stations which seem to be on the ball. Then, of course, some of the shopping guides pretend to be newspapers, and some of them do a fairly good job of news. They tend towards shallow but sensational type of story, but they make headlines - one kind or another.

I: Do you think that newspaper people back in the early 1900's were aware of how much influence they had?

A: Well, I can't go that far back, of course.

I: But when you first started out, did you have the same realization that you have today about the impact that newspapers have as a communications media?

A: The same what?

I: Realization. You know, looking back now you seem to be aware of how influencial newspapers could be back then.

A: Well, I think the main reason they are influencial is because, as I say, they are about the only type of media that people had, the only communicator that the people had access to. I mean the New York papers, the more or less suburban papers which follwed, such as the old Island News which was an offshoot of the Brooklyn Daily Eagle, and then later papers in Nassau County, dailies, and Queens, and then finally Newsday which, of course, is probably the most successful suburban newspaper in history, at least in this country. But back in the 1920's and I presume before that and in the 1930's as well, radio wasn't fully developed and it was just in its infancy. T.V. hadn't come on the horizon, so people leaned more on newspapers, and they were influenced by them. I mean they trusted them, and they shaped decisions by what they read in the newspapers to a large extent, probably more so than they do today, because they have other avenues of understanding and communication, many more.

I: We were talking about newspapers and politics before. I would think that if I had been, let's say, a corrupt politician or a politician who was really after a lot of power, back in those days, I would tend to go for controlling the newspaper and therefore controlling . . . .

A: Well, that's true. Now, for example, W. Kingsland Macy - he wasn't corrupt in the sense that he stole anything himself, but I'm very much afraid that he countenanced some thievery on the part of others in the party at times, in order not to make waves and to hurt the party. On the whole, I think he ran a pretty clean operation, and I think if anybody stole too much or got too much out of line he would do something about it, and he did

something about it. Macy himself accumulated a group of newspapers, and that was one of the reasons he stayed in power so long, because he had newspapers. He had none on the East End but he had newspapers all through the West End on both the South Shore and the North Shore, from Port Jefferson west, and from Islip west, he had newspapers in practically every village, weekly newspapers.

I: Do you think people were aware of this?

A: Oh yeah, sure, well aware. He didn't try to conceal his ownership of them in any way.

I: I would like to know about any influence of the newspaper on family life, let's say particularly in a town like Mattituck.

A: Yeah, I think we should come back to Mattituck rather than get too far afield. Yeah, I would say so. Now it may be in a kind of homespun kind of way. Of course, we didn't have the big social problems that we have today. We didn't have problems with drugs, for example. And we didn't have the problems of super speed on the highway, that type of thing. We were still somewhat in a horse and buggy era. The automobile was still . . . not too many of them, not too fast, and people were, I think, generally more cautious in their operation of the automobile. So, there are a lot of problems that we contend with today, that didn't exist at that time. Now newspapers influence people in a variety of ways. In the first place, the newspapers give notice of what is happening, what is coming up, for example, events, church affairs, fraternal affairs, social affairs of all kinds, all the philanthropic and benevolent enterprises and projects and campaigns. Newspapers always gave them a great deal of space.

Newspapers then, I think, gave more coverage to school affairs than they do now. Now everything seems to be centered, or focused on sports. I'm talking about in the public prints. They give much more space to the football team or the soccer team or whatever it may be than they do to academic accomplishment or that type of thing. Usually we only get that at graduation time when they announce the honor students and that type of thing. I think in those days we gave more recognition to excellence in school off the athletic field, and probably less to excellence on the athletic field than they do today.

Newspapers in those days - they did conceal some things, I must say. For example, a lot of the newspapers, if there was a suicide, if there was a sudden death, they didn't come out and say, so and so took a shotgun and shot himself today or yesterday, or hung himself or something like that. They would say, Mr. John Doe died very suddenly on Thursday. They were a little gentler in that respect, maybe not as open, not as truthful in a sense, but they didn't give big space to scandalous goings-on, somebody running away with somebody else's wife, that type of thing.

I: I'd like to know how you would explain particularly something like the suicide, for instance. Why call it a sudden death instead of a suicide?

A: Well, there were smaller communities then and the people were closer together.

I: The people would know anyway.

A: They would know anyway, and probably from word of mouth. So, I mean the common feeling was why make it a federal case, or why make it any more obvious, or publicize it any more than it will be publicized just by people telling each other about it.

I: Do you think that they were concerned about the reflection on the community, for instance, if there were a suicide in Mattituck?

A: That could be.

I: (Unclear) embarrassed to find out.

A: No, I doubt if there is that feeling, but there was considerable pride in community I think, more than there is today, and anything that hurt the community, people didn't like to have overplayed at least. They would understand if some reference was made to it, but they didn't like to have big headlines on it, let's say front page position, that type of thing. As far as the country papers were concerned, most of them went along with that theory, the gentle approach to the news you might call it.

I: Do you see a big difference in the approach today?

A: Well, of course, yellow journalism goes back to the time of Jefferson and beyond, so-called yellow journalism, in other words, the accent on the sensational. But I think it has been much more marked and much more obvious in urban areas than it has been in the country. The country press for the most part has been, I don't know just how to describe it, but I'd say more charitable, more compassionate of people's feelings and so forth, because of the intimacy that exists in a small town. I mean through friendship and intermarriage and so forth, everybody is related in one way to everybody else practically. At least that was the case in those days. It is less so today, I grant you.

I: Everybody is not related to everybody anymore because of the influx of outsiders, right?

A: Yeah. One observation I'm sure that you've noted, that intermarriage, of course, leads to things that are not too pleasant at times, but we've

always had an influx of fresh blood in a way, through ministers, school teachers, other people who come into the community. That goes way back because teachers, in particular I think, have kept our blood stock vigorous and healthy. So many teachers, female and male both, they come into the community and they marry here, and it's good. Hybrids are always the strongest, you know.

I: Can you tell me if newspapers had any influence on opening the local people's minds and relaxing their attitudes about inter. . . .

A: Yeah, I think so. Newspapers, because they are a business institution are usually for progress, and in those days there was less emphasis, of course, probably there should have been more emphasis on environmental and ecological situations and issues. It seems to me there was more on the progress of the community, and I don't mean just in a business way or agricultural progress, although that was very important out here, but also to a certain extent cultural progress. I can remember when a traveling troop of players came to the North Fork every year, and a very good troop too, the Traherne Players. They put on plays in the Library Hall, and they went on to Greenport and put on plays, I think, in the Greenport auditorium. They put on plays at Riverhead in that old hall, I forget the name of it. I did a feature story on it too, over the Leavitt's store. In Mattituck on Peconic Avenue, and other places. Today, of course, we have play groups, the North Fork Players, for example. They had play groups then. They had several Literary Societies in and about then. There was one on Sound Avenue. There was one in Mattituck. I believe there was one in Southold. They gave little playlets and put on entertainments of one kind or another.

They had these more or less philosophical types of society groups who would come together and discuss, oh, topics of the day, historical, social, otherwise. They were always given space in the local newspaper. So, the arts and humanities were not neglected even in those times. I think the newspapers, more so than they do today, nurtured community pride in a variety of ways, everything from embellishing the town with plantings and parks....Our own local park system started back in the 1930's during the depression times, and we've got probably one of the best park complexes of any village on Long Island, I'm sure you are aware of it.

I: Yeah. So, you feel that newspapers played a significant.....

A: Oh, I do, I do. I think editorially and with their news stories they certainly promoted and encouraged this type of community advancement. Papers like the East Hampton Star at East Hampton did so much to preserve the historical features of their community. The Long Island Traveler has done quite a lot in that regard too. I remember when the Old House in Cutchogue was moved where it is today and practically rebuilt from the ground up, the local newspapers had a lot to say about it, helped raise money for it. You know, during the Hurricaine of what was it '38 or '39...

I: '38.

A: It took off the top of the steeple of the Old Steeple Church in Aquebogue, Congregational Church. Well, somehow or other that building which had been there for a long, long time - I can't tell you exactly how long, looked very strange without a steeple. So, the County Review - - I was Editor at that time - - we started to campaign to raise money. I think we raised three thousand or four thousand by public subscription, and the

steeple was rebuilt. Newspapers did a lot of things like that in those days. They might have been small things compared to the million dollar parks that we read about now, the County votes to buy some piece of park-land for a million or two million, but in their way they were very solid achievements, and I think the newspapers had a lot to do with it. In the first place, usually the owner or publisher or editor or what was pretty much one and the same person in the small papers anyway. He was quite an influential man in the community because he had this voice, this vox populi, you know, and so he had influence. When he spoke at a public meeting, Board of Trade, Chamber of Commerce, church meeting, whatever, Veteran's meeting, people listened to him. So, he not only had the newspaper, but he had the power of his own prestige which was a considerable factor.

I: Do you feel that there has been any change in people's own interaction with the newspaper, for example, sending in letters or voicing disagreement about things that are stated in the newspaper, fighting the newspaper, expressing their own opinions?

A: It was done in those days, and it is still being done. Letters to the Editor has always been a popular feature of any worthwhile newspaper, I think. I know I have heard of newspapers that when they didn't have any they'd write their own just to stir up something, you know?

I: Yeah?

A: I don't think any paper I ever worked on, I don't recall we ever did such a thing, but I've heard of it being done. Of course, people today are either smarter, or think they're smarter, I'm not sure which it is, but they are more cynical about things probably than they used to be, and less willing to accept on faith. Of course, newspapers as a whole, I think, are less believed today than they were then. There seems to be a kind of a suspicion of

the press. I think it applied more so to the big city press than it does to the country press, but it exists nevertheless. I think people then were more trusting, and I think probably actually because of their objective type of reporting. I think maybe the newspapers were a little more open-minded and fair-minded than they are today.

I: How about Mattituck as an East End town, somewhat in opposition to the West End of the Island, or in conflict with, conflict of interest. Do you feel that newspapers played any significant role in that?

A: Well, I don't recall that there has been any, what you might call serious conflict of interest, except occasional efforts like the Shelter Island bridges where a West Ender, a political leader, tried to force on the East End something apparently they did not want. That has existed. I can't recall any particular situation here in Mattituck that fits that description. Of course, there was some. I remember when Norman Clipp arranged for the dredging of the Mattituck Creek, there was some criticism, but I think on the whole people were awfully glad that it was done, because it surely opened up new vistas as far as Mattituck business is concerned. I mean it resulted in a great deal of boat traffic which has been very helpful to the community. I would think there is some question about the pollution of the creek by careless yachtsmen and boatowners, but aside from that I can't think of anything that is really deleterious about it, that has hurt Mattituck. Oh maybe a little noise on occasion, a little roistering on the boats at (unclear) and so forth.

I: A little what on the boats?

A: You know, a little drinking and jollification and so forth, - noise.

Mattituck in a way, I think it's a very nice community and I think it's on the whole a very pretty community. Nevertheless, in comparison with Easthampton or even Southold, I guess many people would consider it more or less of an ugly duckling. But I think it is a very vital town. Mattituckians always seemed to be able to get along together and work together and do things together, as exemplified again by things like our system of parks, our excellent fire department, our other community assets of one kind or another, the public library being one very good example, the playhouse here, the churches, excellent schools. We've always taken a great deal of pride in our schools, and again, I think, the newspapers have something to do with it.

I: How? Tell me more about it.

A: About schools? Well, I recall in the old days we used to run honors lists. I don't think it's done today. Maybe it shouldn't be done. But, you know the kids that did best got their names in the newspaper, and not only for one grade but for all grades. I don't say this applies to all newspapers and all villages, but I do recall that it applies to Mattituck. Of course, as I said before, any school event was always announced and usually covered, whether it be a high school play, or a basketball game, or a school meeting or whatever. I remember that we used to give a lot of space to P.T.A. news and things of that kind. I notice that the Traveler is running a column now on the Southold School which I think is an excellent thing. I'd like to see it have a similar column on the Mattituck School or some other paper have it because school news was something that was really played up in those days. Usually, it either came out of the school itself or the village correspondent

would do it. I don't mean to infer that it isn't being done to some extent today, but I don't think it is being done nearly as much as it was in those days.

Of course, then, the budgets were adopted almost as a matter of course. Mattituck has never defeated a budget, but many of the other school districts have gone on austerity, you know, Riverhead and others, and I think possibly the fact that papers in those days, as they do to some extent today, explained why this was so - - they needed a new school, new equipment, more teachers or whatever. I think that had a lot to do with it. I remember, back in the 1930's,you know the school at Mattituck, the school I believe at Greenport, and the school at Riverhead, the old school at Riverhead, the old brick school - were all built during the 1930's as Public Works Administration projects. Don't confuse that with W.P.A. - it was P.W.A. I recall that the County Review took a very strong stand on urging that the school be built, running stories pointing to the need for it and so forth. And I'm sure that probably the Mattituck paper did the same during that period, because that was a period, if I remember correctly, when the Mattituck Watchman was being published. No, I think the newspapers have made a considerable contribution to improvement of secondary education out here on the East End, in Mattituck too.

I: What about newspapers and religion?

A: Well, I think newspapers and religion has been largely confined to running church notices. I remember that when I was on the Riverhead News I tried to get the ministers to write a sermonette, you know each minister would have a crack at it and they would circulate in the ministerial group. Well, I think

we got two or three, and then it kind of died on the vine because you know I had to limit the amount of wordage, I think it was five hundred words, and that was their excuse, that it was too short. Besides publishing the church notices and recording and announcing church events, social events, and so forth, special services, I don't think local newspapers have made any great contribution to religion, and for that matter I don't think the dailies have either.

I: How about the reverse of that. Do you feel there was any pressure from local churches for things like censorship or...

A: No, no I never felt that. The only quarrel I think I ever had with a clergyman was at Riverhead, and he had a point. We listed them alphabetically. He said his church always ended up at the bottom of the church notices, you know, the column of church notices. So I said you've got a legitimate point. So after that, the last was first the next week, and then it went down. It worked beautifully. Everybody got a chance to be at the head of the column.

I: I'd like now to go back to your childhood and get a little bit into your family history if you don't mind, like maybe starting with your grandfather.

A: Well, I can't go much beyond that because I don't know as I told you, (unclear). If you really want any family history, she's the one to give it to you - - Mrs. Phyllis Moore.

I: Then, I'd like to focus in on things that she wouldn't know too much about, let's say in particular your father.

A: Well, I don't know. This seems kind of vainglorious or something when you talk about your own family. There are things in my family that I'm very proud of, my grandfather who started the business which is the oldest in Mattituck, for example, even though I have nothing to do with it now, have no ownership

of it or management of it or anything.

I: You are talking about George L. Penny, right -- who started the lumber business?

A: George L. Penny, Sr. in 1892, I'm pretty sure. He was a farmer before that, and at one time he'd been a sailor or shipped on a coastwise schooner or something, but again Mrs. Moore can tell you more than I.

I: Can you tell me about your father, and maybe his father, things that she probably wouldn't know? What I'm interested in, is some history of the families in town and particularly . . .

A: Well, the Penny's were not Mattituckians from way back because I think they were in Peconic, and before that I believe they were either in Shelter Island or the South Shore, but again Mrs. Moore could tell you more definitely than I because I have never taken too much interest in family history. I probably should have, but I haven't. As I understand it, Grandad came to Mattituck in about the year he established the lumber and coal business over on Sound Avenue, where my first cousin, George L. Penny III still runs it with George L. Penny IV, and he's got a son I think, George L. Penny V. We've had some Arthurs on my end of it, but we've always changed the middle initial so we don't run into juniors and seconds and thirds and fourths and fifths and so forth.

I: I think that would be confusing. Your grandfather's name is....

A: George L. Loudwick, I think it is spelled L-o-u-d-w-i-c-k, my cousin, Mrs. Phyllis Raynor Moore has the Penny history, I think.

I: Can you tell us more about your father then?

A: Dad was a frustrated person. He really was. He set out to be a Mining Engineer. He went to Colorado for that purpose after going to Williams for I think three years. He met my mother out there she came from Wisconsin, the city of Oshkosh. Her name was Annette Naumer, N-a-u-m-e-r which is my middle name, Naumer. I've been kidded about it all my life. Everybody thinks it's Norma. He got married, and that's where his college career ended. He came home with his wife, his bride. I don't know, for some reason or other he didn't stay with the lumber business very long. There was another son, the second George, George Jr. Maybe it wasn't big enough for three people. So, he struck out for himself. He had a squab farm in Laurel for a short time. You know, squab is a pigeon, just a young bird. You've surely heard of squab. That's a connoisseur type of dish, epicurean. That was only a few years, and then he came to Mattituck on Westphalia Road and established the Mattituck White Leghorn Farm, which got quite a reputation, because Dad did some things that were very rarely done in those days. I think I told you before. He imported breeding stock from England, where a poultryman by the name of Tom Baron, I can still remember it, had made a big reputation. Dad imported sires, cocks, from England, and I think he also imported some hens, if I'm not mistaken. Through the years, he brought up some very heavy laying stock. We were the first down here to trap nest. That's the kind of a nest that when a hen lays an egg, it closes the door on the nest. They keep records of the hens, they are all banded, and how many eggs they lay so you can pick the heaviest laying hens as breeders. He did that through the years. He built up a very fine strain of white leghorns with the result that he was able to sell eggs for hatching and chicks. We had electric incubators. We had more

incubator capacity, I guess, than any other poultry farm on the East End of the Island anyway. So, he sold eggs for hatching, chicks. He sold eggs for eating, and he sold broilers. Of course, he sold the old hens after they had seen their best days. They were soup stock, so as to speak. He ran that farm from, I think it was 1912 to his retirement in, let's see, 1946 or 1947. He ran it for about thirty-five years roughly. He did quite well with it.

In those days, they had what they called egg laying contests. Poultrymen would enter pens, I forget how many hens were in a pen, about eight or ten, something like that, and then send them to Yucon, the University of Connecticut at Storrs, or down to Pearl River, New Jersey, I don't know what school it was down there. They had agricultural colleges at these places, and the hens would in a sense compete. If you won an egg laying contest, that gave you a big lift, you know, and you would advertise your stock, your chicks, if you were hatching eggs, as bred from these winners. So, he did quite well on the farm. He made a reasonable amount of money and was able to retire after about thirty-five years at it.

He bought a house in Florida, he and my stepmother. My mother, Annette, died when I was seven years of age. Dad remarried Amy Van Cleve, who was a friend of my mother's. She died in 1939. Then, he married Julia Craven twenty-five years ago last month, which would be 1963, wouldn't it? No, 1953. Dad died seven years ago this coming December 31st. He died at the age of eighty-seven which is the age of my stepmother now. It's been a long lived family. My grandmother died at the age of one hundred three. I just ran across a clipping about her death the other day.

I: This was your father's mother?

A: Yeah. That's about all the family I can tell you, there isn't much else to tell. Dad always felt a little bit frustrated in life because he thought he'd have liked to have been an engineer or a teacher, and he ended up as a farmer, a poultryman. He didn't hate it, but I can't say he really enjoyed it either. He did some innovative things though. I remember we were the first also to use artificial lighting in the henhouses, you know, the laying houses where the layers were, which increased the egg production. I remember when I was a kid, one of my jobs, I had help, of course, from either one of the hired men or somebody. We used to use these damn gasoline lanterns with these very fragile mantles. I don't know whether you've had any experience with them. They were the bulkiest, damndest things that ever were. We used to have to trim those, or whatever you did with them, and fuel them, get them started and hang them up from hooks on all the different pens of the laying houses. We had four laying houses. One of them, I think, was six-hundred feet long. It was a long house. We used to call it the "long house."

Another thing, in those days, feeding the chickens was quite a job. Well, we put trolleys all through the thing, and had these carriers that ran on this overhead rail, ran right through the house and would scatter the feed or whatever, you know, and carry mash to the mash hoppers and so forth. He was also one of the first, I think, to use additives, both in the feed and also in drinking water to keep the chickens healthy and so forth, you know, supplementary additives of various kinds. I can't tell you what they were now, it was so long ago, but I remember they used to come in little brown jugs, about so high, which antique dealers want anywhere from five to ten dollars for today. We had them by the hundreds. We used to throw them out. They went to the dump.

I: I'd like to just call it for now, and get together with you once more, I think it's getting kind of late. All right?

A: Whatever you say.

End of tape

Arthur N. Penny, Journalist

Mattituck native Arthur N. Penny, well known Suffolk County newspaper editor and public relations man, died Monday, Nov. 18, in Spring Hill, Fla. at the age of 78.

Mr. Penny was born April 4, 1907, in Mattituck, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur H. Penny. He attended Presbyterian College in Clinton, S.C., and graduated from Columbia University Journalism School.

Mr. Penny enjoyed a long and varied career in the communications field. His first newspaper job was as drama critic of the Brooklyn Eagle. Later, he was a reporter for the Long Island Press and served as correspondent for the Eagle, the New York Times and the New York Daily News. He also edited several Suffolk County weekly newspapers, including The Riverhead News and The County Review of Riverhead (which later merged to become The News-Review), and papers in the Macy chain in western Suffolk.

He founded Academy Printing Services in Southold and A.N. Penny Associates, a Riverhead public relations firm. Mr. Penny also was the former executive secretary of the Long Island Agricultural and Marketing Association.

He is survived by his wife, Janina; two sons, Arthur H. of Riverhead and Laurence of Sag Harbor; three daughters, Marjorie Dickson of Cutchogue, Amy Applebaum of Arlington, Va., and Mary Gwynne Slade of Independence, Ore.; a sister, Esther Ecklund of West Lake Weir, Fla.; five stepchildren, 11 grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

A memorial service is to be held at 10 a.m. Saturday, Nov. 23, at Mattituck Presbyterian Church, followed by graveside services in New Bethany Cemetery in Mattituck. Memorial donations may be made to the Mattituck Presbyterian Church or the Boy Scouts of America.

L.I. Traveler Watchman
Nov 21, 1985
PAGE TWENTY-ONE

A. N. Penny

Arthur N. Penny, a lifelong resident of Mattituck and well known local journalist died suddenly of an apparent heart attack on Monday morning. He was 78 years old.

Penny, who was stricken at his Spring Hill, Florida home was rushed to a local hospital where he died.

Mr. Penny attended the Citadel and Presbyterian College of South Carolina; graduated from Columbia University's School of Journalism.

He was a drama critic for "Brooklyn Eagle" and editor of many newspapers including the Long Island Daily Press. Additionally he wrote for the L.I. Traveler/Watchman newspaper; was founder of Academy Printing and A.N. Penny Associates. He was also the editor of several local weekly newspapers including the Riverhead News and the Suffolk County Review. He was also a former secretary of Long Island Agriculture and Marketing Associates.

Mr. Penny is survived by his wife Janina; a sister Esther Eckland of East Lake Weir, Florida, two sons, Arthur S. of Riverhead and Lawrence of Sag Harbor; three daughters, Marjorie Dickson of cutchogue; Amy Applebaum of Arlington, Virginia and Mary Gwyne Slade of Oregon; five stepchildren, eleven grandchildren and one great grandchild.

Funeral services Saturday 10 a.m. Mattituck Presbyterian Church. Graveside service will follow at New Bethany Cemetery, Mattituck. Memorial donations can be made either to the Mattituck Presbyterian Church or the Boy Scouts of America.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

name: Arthur N. Penny

birth date: 4/4/'07

place: Mattituck

father's name: Arthur H. Penny

mother's name: Annette Naumer

childhood: Spent on a farm in Mattituck, typically a country-type childhood involving plenty of work but good times as well.

education: Mattituck H.S.(Valedictorian, 1923): The Citadel, Charleston, S.C.: Presbyterian College and Pulitzer School of Journalism, Columbia University.

work: Space "stringer", NY Times & NY Daily News. Staff reporter Brooklyn Eagle. Assistant editor, County Review. Editor, Suffolk Bulletin. Managing editor, Lee Newspapers. Editor, Riverhead News. Riverhead bureau chief, L.I. Press and other Newhouse publications. President-founder of Academy Printing Enterprises. Suffolk County News Service, Arthur N. Penny & Associates.

official positions: Publicity Director Suffolk County War Council, Publicity Director Suffolk County Red Cross Campaigns.

Member of: In Mattituck presently, only Friends of the Library. In Spring Hill, Florida, SH Methodist Church, Boy Scout Troop 803 Committee, Spring Hill Alert Residents Patrol. projects, hobbies_Editor, Boy Scout Newsletter. Retirement gardening and farm radio programs (WRIV, Riverhead) Suffolk County Extension, NYS Master Gardener Group.

spouses' names: Lucille S. Penny (deceased 1968) Janina K. Penny

children's names: Arthur S. Penny, Amy P. Appelbaum, Marjorie Dickson, Laurence T. Penny, Mary-Gwynne Slade.

major turning points in Mattituck: The new School and the new Library: the public beach and park program. (I helped here with publicity).

my fields of interest: As parent and as editor I supported my first wife' active role with relation to the Library. She was a Trustee on the local Board and then a Truste in the Suffolk County Library System.

for me, Mattituck was: A quiet, pleasant, sea-surrounded country communit ideal to grow up in and to live in.

Mattituck is: Changed in some respects, but not hugely or dramatically.

I'd like Mattituck to become: I hope it stays pretty much as it is.

MATTITUCK ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

No. 49-EHY-1
Edith Horton Young

Old Mattituck Memories

Table of Contents

Persons and places mentioned: Young, Horton, Tuthill, Wickham Terry, Dickerson, Hallock, Wells; Indians' Canoe Place; Christian Endeavor; Mechanics Lodge Hall; James Rambo; Tom Pearce; Art and Craft Guild; American Agriculturist, Rural New Yorker; Pennsylvania Farmer; Reverend John Young and Barnabas Horton; Eliza Lupton Mather; Gildersleeve Store; Lahy's Drug Store.

Autobiographical Sketch

MAPS, PICTURES

MATTITUCK ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

No. 49-EHY-1
Edith Horton Young

Old Mattituck Memories

When Mrs. Young was approached about an interview she said she preferred to give a written account. She began with the settlement of the village around 1649, the first settlers being Young, Horton, Tuthill, Wickham, Terry, Dickerson, Hallock and Wells, families still living among us some three hundred fifty years later!

The following is her account of the Mattituck she has known since her childhood.

"The population of Mattituck in 1900 was 1,200.

I remember my Father saying a few years before he died in 1937 that he used to know everybody who lived in Mattituck,but at that time there were many more people whom he didn't know than the ones that he did.

Recently, in my genealogy correspondence, I heard from a man in Ithaca who wrote that he had heard they got new blood in Mattituck by hiring upstate school teachers. He said they claimed a single teacher never had a chance. There was fierce competition.

I know when I was going to school, most of the teachers were from upstate and most of them married local men after they had taught a few years.

It is said that Westphalia Road got its name because some of the early settlers along the winding thoroughfare were in the Pork Business and named it after one of their pet products "Westphalia Hams".

Westphalia Road was originally called Shirley's Neck after the people by the name of Shirley who lived at the top of the hill on what is now Westphalia Road.

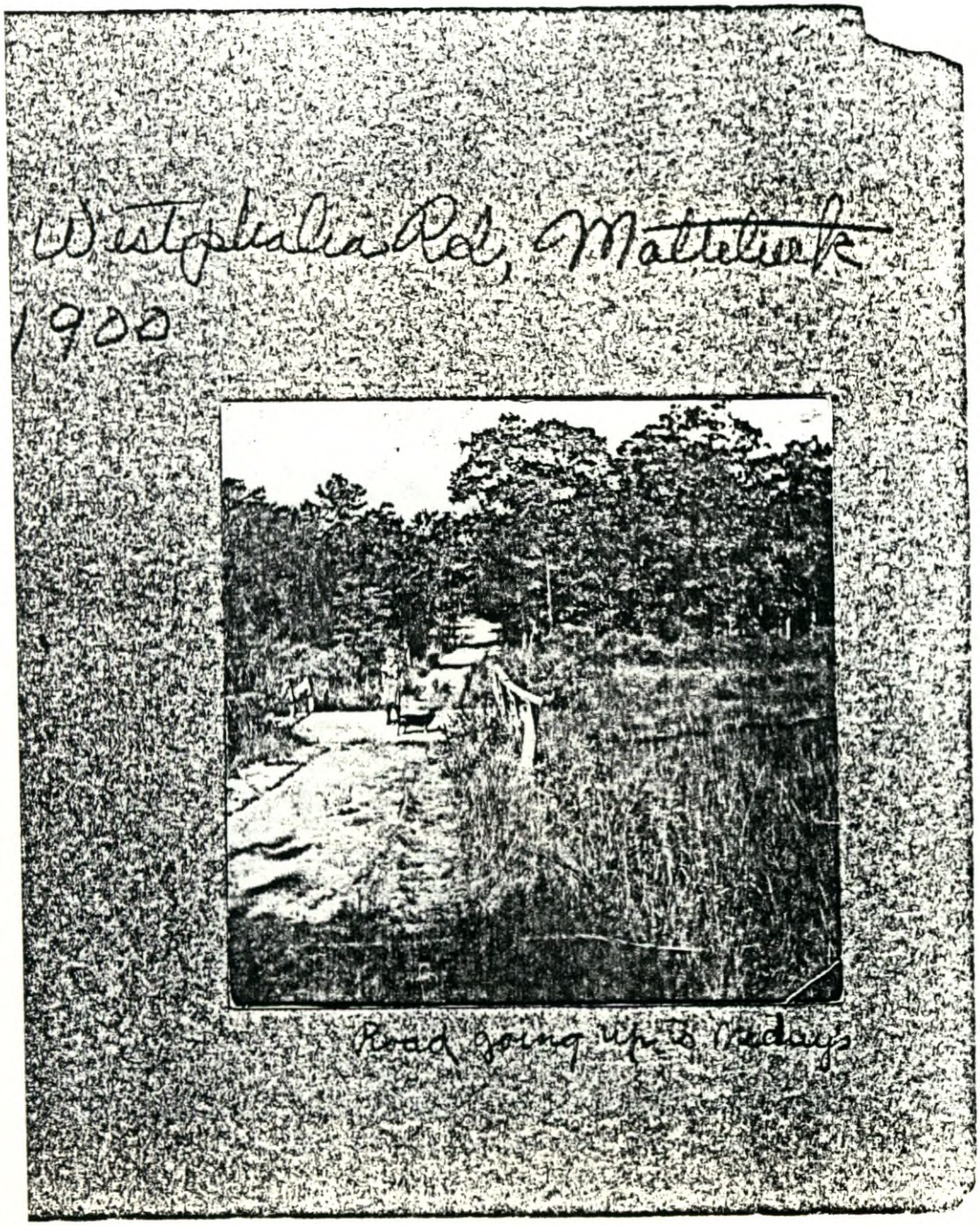


Photo kindness of N. Duryee

The big building in the middle is Library Hall

Photo kindness of N. Duryee

In November, 1917 work was commenced on the steel and concrete bridge over which the Westphalia Road crossed. This bridge was made much higher than the wooden bridge had been. Especially high tides filled the Mattituck Creek and at one time the water was two feet deep over Westphalia Road south of the bridge. The new bridge was very substantial and completed in 1918.

I can remember when a car broke through the old wooden bridge. I was with my Father, George Horton, in the box wagon and held the reins of the horse after my Father stopped before going over the bridge, so he could get out and help the people in the car.

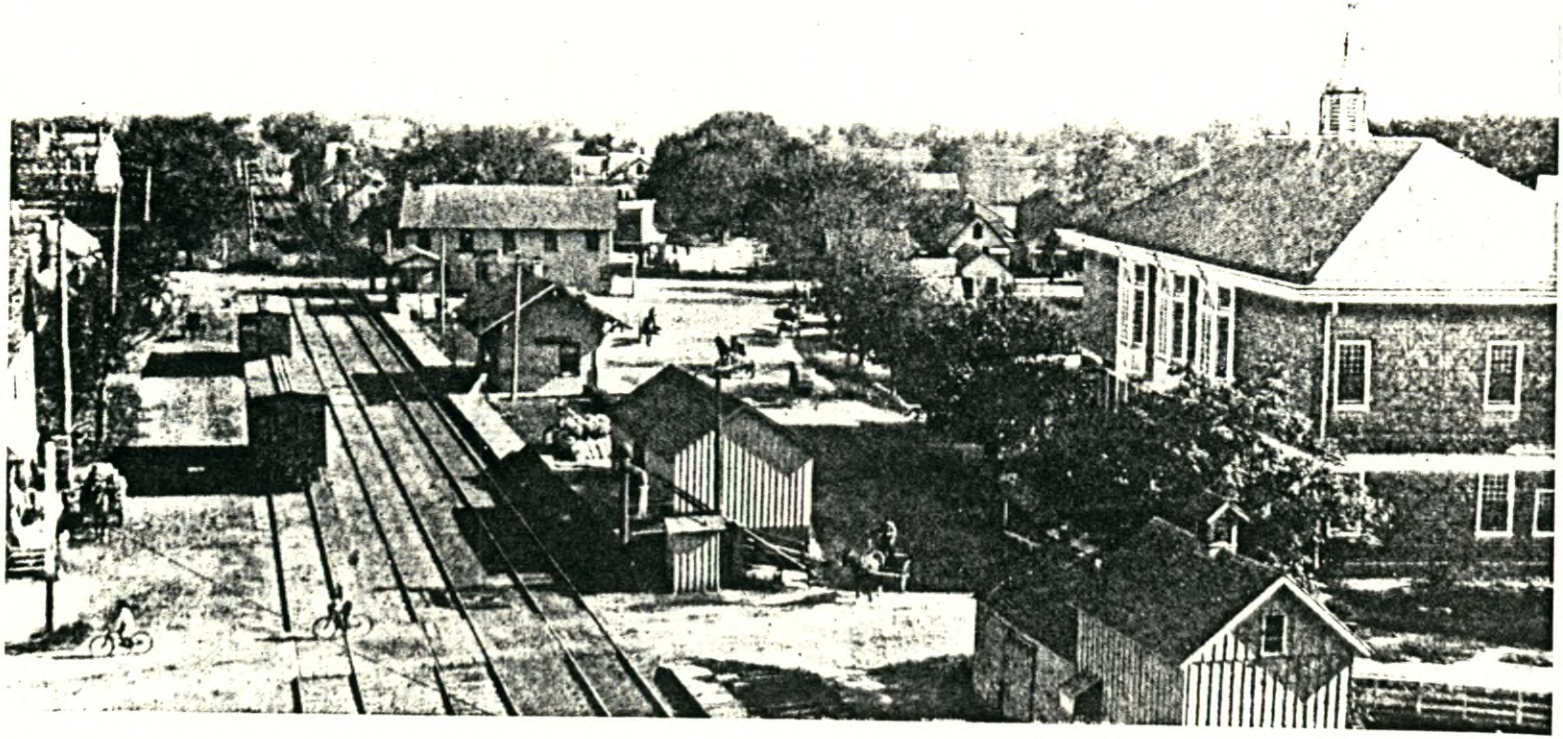
In 1942 the end of Westphalia Creek where the Indians many years ago used to take their canoes (Called Canoe Place) was filled in and made into a road. That was the end of the old Westphalia Bridge.

I now live on this Westphalia Road on land which was once my Father's woodland, but I was born in the same house in which my Father was born on the Sound Avenue Road, then called West Mattituck Road. The house has since been torn down and another built in place of it. Part of the old barn blew down a few years ago, making it beyond repair, but the old carriage house which used to contain the old sleigh and surrey, the corn crib, shop and pump house still remain on the property.

In my early days in the summer months I would often walk to the Library. It was then located in Library Hall in the village. Then I would spend most of the entire afternoon stretched out in a hammock under the black walnut trees in our backyard with a book and a box of cookies.

There were many local talent plays and entertainments put on in the upstairs part of Library Hall. Below it was the Drug Store and the Library all in one building.

On Sunday evenings there were Christian Endeavor Meetings in the Social Rooms of the Church, put on by the Young People of the community.



d's-eye View of Mattituck, Showing the Station in the Centre and Lupton Hall and Library Building to the right

The men had their Lodge Meetings in Mechanics' Hall (now the North Fork Playhouse and formerly the Methodist Church.) Once a year they had their annual Banquet to which the ladies were invited, also the children to the big supper with dancing afterward.

Once,in 1916, it snowed so hard that twenty-six people stayed all night in Mechanics Hall until the storm let up.

January 4, 1918 was the coldest weather ever recorded here by the Weather Bureau. It was 13° below zero.

The men often had their meetings with Oyster Stew suppers and ice cream afterwards. The ice cream that was left over was divided among the men afterward to bring home, so on nights when my father went to those Lodge Meetings, I would try to remain awake until he came home, then I could have a sample of the ice cream. I remember the Tutti Fruiti ice cream, especially.

In order to keep things cool we had what they called a dumb waiter, which was a box fixed with shelves which held food which we let down into a well until we needed it.

When I was about ten or eleven, I was allowed to deliver milk to a Boarding House a short distance away. I would hitch the horse to a small wagon and we would deliver milk in a large pail.

Old Tom was a slow dependable horse when we started off, but on the way back once, as soon as we had turned to go home he at once started lickety split around the corner. I lost my straw hat and the empty pail from the wagon. The man, James Rambo, who lived on the corner stopped the horse for me and rescued my hat and pail. I was scared but I never told my folks about it, for fear they wouldn't let me deliver any more milk.

The event looked forward to the most was the Riverhead Fair. We rode to that with a horse and wagon and took along our lunch and also some hay for the horse, which my Father tied under a tree on the Fairgrounds.

One of our neighbors, Tom Pearce, had a three-legged chicken which he took to the Fair one year. He won a prize and a picture was taken of the chicken. He thought we would make a lot of money on that chicken but, alas, it didn't live very long.

I remember the many Clam Bakes and Family Picnics with our relatives and the many times our relatives who lived near the city would visit our house and we would go to the beach to go bathing. How we enjoyed every minute of it!

Knitting was an occupation I took up after I was married so I could knit baby clothes for my children. A neighbor taught me to knit. Since then I have sold my knitted articles through the Art & Craft Guild and Gift Shops.

My Aunt taught me tatting when I was going to High School and I loved to do embroidery which my Mother had taught me years before. Some of my pieces I took to Riverhead Fair and I still have the blue ribbons that they won.

My Father seldom went visiting on account of having to attend to the farm animals but once in awhile he would visit his Sister in Connecticut for a few days and he would always be glad to get home again and would say: "Good Old Mattituck. There is no place like Mattituck". I can remember him saying that a great many times.

I don't think I appreciated it in those days. I sort of envied some of my friends who could go to other places, especially after my best girl friend (Muriel Reeve) moved to Connecticut.

But my Father always said: "If you ever go some place else, always keep your home to come back to."

In later years I look back on Happy Memories of Childhood life in Mattituck on the Farm. "

"True friendship, like the ivy, clings
To olden times and olden things."

Edith Horton Young

Mrs. Young added some 'Additional Notes' to her original account of early Mattituck.

" "I became interested in taking pictures when I was about ten years old. My first camera was a box camera which I got by going around to get subscriptions to a farm amgazine. I think it was the American Agriculturist. I know my Father subscribed to these farm magazines: The Rural New Yorker, the Pennsylvania Farmer and the American Agriculturist. I took pictures of the farm animals, the family picnics, parades, my school friends and teachers etc.

I first became interested in Genealogy when I was in High School as I thought I would like to join the Daughters of the American Revolution. My mother went with me to libraries and cemeteries. After finding I could join by several different ancesters on the Horton side and other branches, I never did join the D.A.R. because I didn't know anyone who was joining at that time and the meetings were held in Riverhead.

It wasn't until some years later, after I was married, that I began looking up the Young family and found that my Husband was descended from Rev. John Young, one of the original settlers of Southold Town and that he and my ancestor, Barnabas Horton, were very good friends. Later I found I am descended from at least fifteen of the early settlers of Southold Town.

World War I. Those were exciting days. Everyone was talking about the war and some people were knitting sweaters for soldiers overseas. I was in school and didn't knit at that time. I remember being in a school play at Library Hall in which I was dressed as a Sailor Boy.

My future Husband was in the Navy but I wasn't interested in him at that time, although I knew him when he was a clerk in Gildersleeve's Store before he joined the Navy, and I used to go to that store to buy candy and cookies.

My Father delivered eggs to that store and bought groceries. I often rode in the box wagon with him and then I walked over

to Lahy's Drug Store in Library Hall where I liked to buy strawberry ice cream cones for 5 cents each. I would finish one cone before my Father was finished shopping at the gracery store. Then I would ask him for another 5 cents so I could go over and buy another cone. I guess I got my fill of strawberry ice cream at that time because now, I prefer any other kind rather than strawberry.

Marriage was a turning point in my life as I gave up being a telephone operator and I also gave up the idea of studying Journalism.

After not being allowed to go to college, I was interested in taking a correspondence course in Journalism. After answering an ad in a newspaper and taking a test in Journalism by mail, I was asked to come into the city for an interview, but that was the end of that. My folks wouldn't allow their only child to go away from home.

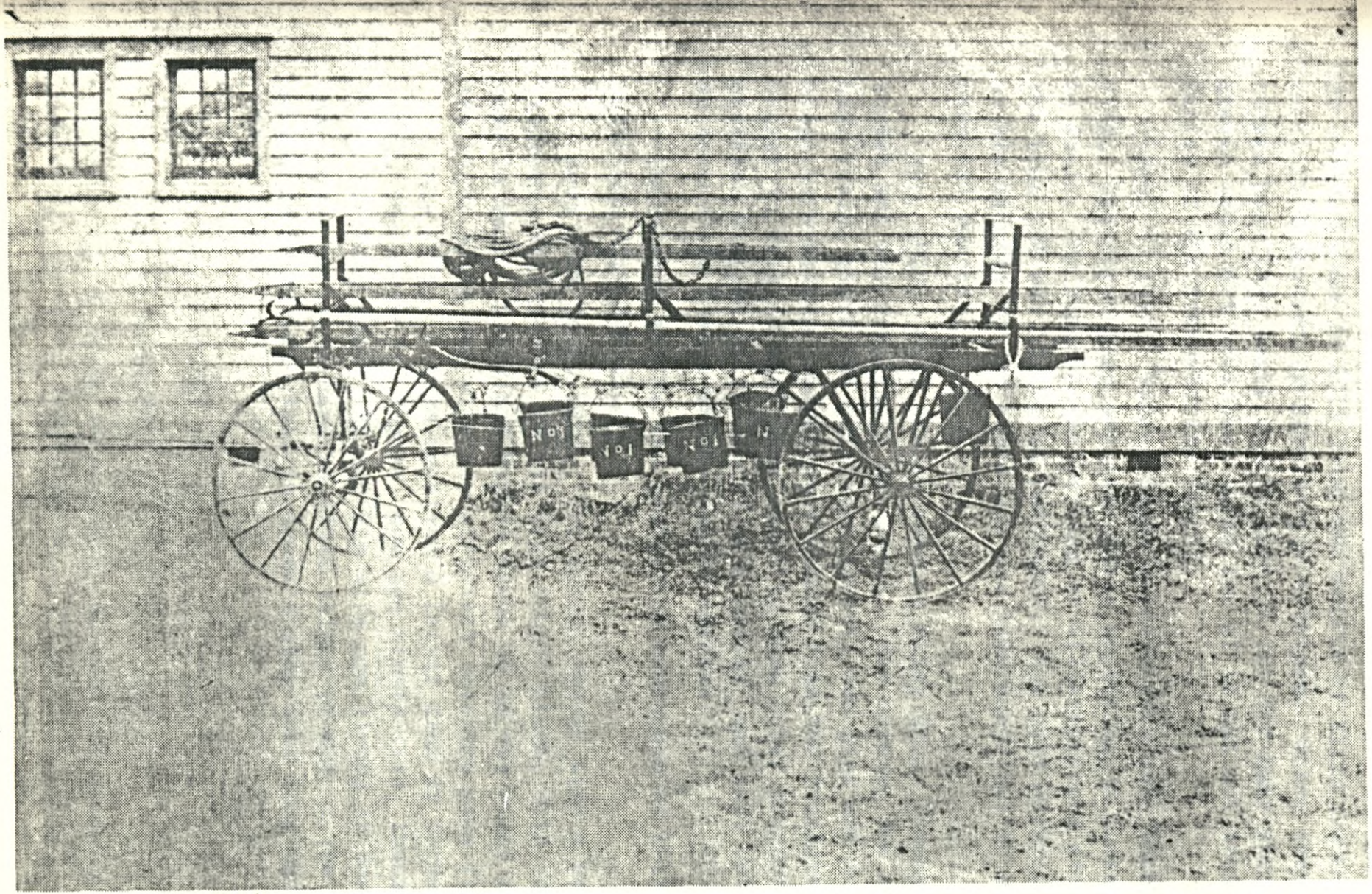
My Father had wished that I had been a boy so he could leave the farm to me but I don't know what he would have done if I had been a boy and been drafted into the army.

The birth of our first child was a long looked forward to event as he was born four years after our marriage. Before that time, I had been busy raising Persian kittens. In fact when the doctor came to see me soon after our son was born he asked jokingly: "How many babies do you have?" He knew I had a litter of kittens born about the same time.

Our daughter was born on October 13, six years later -- a couple of weeks after the hurricane of 1938. I had picked up our son from school and had just got into the house when a large tree blew across the driveway. My Husband was doing carpentry work on the Westhampton School when the roof blew off of it. Luckily none of the carpenters were hurt but my Husband was late getting home on account of the storm.

In April 1907 the Mattituck Fire Department was organized by an enthusiastic group of young men who got a thrill out of racing about the village streets with a homemade hook and ladder truck.

For two hundred years a free burying ground was maintained



Mattituck Fire Department's first hand drawn Fire Wagon, built by regular contributor, Judy Mengeweit's Great Grandfather, Conrad Grabie, who was a blacksmith. This picture was taken circa 1900. Courtesy Walt & Judy Mengeweit.

Peconic Bay Shopper
Nov. 6, 1984

here, as far as we know the only one of its kind on Long Island, free to all sects and creeds. The first money ever left for its support came in 1916 from the estate of Eliza Lupton Mather who left a bequest of $100 to its trustees. Since then many others have left money to its support but for many years many graves would not have been cared for if it had not been for the Parish of the Presbyterian Church.

Feb. 6, 1916. Sunday night Gildersleeve barn burned about 9:30. Destroyed barn and storehouse adjoining, 2 horses burned to death. My Husband was working at Gildersleeve's store at the time and was living in Cutchogue. The next morning he rode on his bicycle to the store and was much surprised to see the barn had burned.

Mar. 1917. 8:20 Sunday evening Riley Bros. Livery Stable burned and was completely destroyed. Six housee, one cow, hay, grain, straw and carriages burned, two pigs and an old stage were saved. Worshippers rushed from the Presbyterian Church to help do what they could to save other property. The minister stopped in the midst of a prayer and went out to help. My Mother and I were at the Church service.

There were six in the graduation exercises of 1917 in Mattituck High School.

News Item Sept. 1919. Our school opened with a big attendance, thirty-five in the High School alone, with more to come in soon. Principal Hughes seems to be the right man in the right place and with his efficient teachers gets fine results.

July 1978. I have received a letter from my former principal, the above Mr. Hughes, now age ninety-five, thanking me for a birthday card. He and his wife are living in Harriman, New York. He wrote that he often thinks of all of the friends he had in Mattituck, that it doesn't seem that long ago."

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

No. 49 Memoir

208

name Edith May Horton Young

birth date Jan. 11, 1905 place Mattituck, L.I., New York

father's name George Horace Horton, (born in Mattituck)

mother's name Carrie May Baylis, born in Greenlawn, L.I.

childhood Spent in Mattituck on my Father's farm.

education Graduated from Mattituck High School. English was the subject that I liked best. Would like to have studied Journalism or Proofreading but never did.

job training

work About three years in telephone office in Mattituck. It was then located above the Post Office, west side of Love Lane.

official positions Secretary of Circle II of Mattituck Presbyterian Church Women's Association.

member of Mattituck Presbyterian Church, Mattituck Historical Society, Suffold County Historical Society (Geneology Section), The Scudder Ass'n., Inc., Old Town Arts and Craft Guild, Women's Ass'n. of Mattituck Presbyterian Church.

special activities, projects, hobbies Used to raise angora kittens, cocker spaniels and poodle puppies. Geneology Research, Knitting for gift shops.

spouse's name Herbert Ellsworth Young

children's names Raymond Lewis Young

Ruth Louise Young Rayburn

major turning points in:

Mattituck		my life		my field of interest
World War I	1	Marriage	1	Geneology
Hurricane '38	2	Birth of my children	2	Knitting
	3		3	Photography
	4		4	
	5		5	

for me, Mattituck was always my home town

Mattituck is a pleasant town in which to live

I'd like Mattituck to ~~become~~ remain a rural community and preserve some of its old houses.

(feel free to expand on any of the above;-your opinions are welcome!)

Continued

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EDITH MAY HORTON YOUNG

My activities were:-

Before my marriage some of my embroidery and tatting won blue ribbons at the Suffolk County Fair in Riverhead.

After my marriage some of my angora kittens and cocker spaniel puppies won prizes at the small dog and cat shows in Connecticut and Westbury, Long Island. I raised twenty-three (23) litters of puppies besides several litters of angora kittens.

I also baked cookies and other baked articles for our small vegetable stand.

I am now more interested in Geneology and knitting small articles for gift shops.

E.M.Y.

MATTITUCK ORAL HISTORY

Tape No. 17-MH-1
Oral Author, Matilda Habermann
Place of interview: Author's home on Camp Mineola Road

Early Days in Mattituck

Table of Contents

People and places mentioned: Perry Butler, Jack Zenzius, Frank and George Tyler, VanRyswyk, Mr. Wyler, teachers-- Miss Ryan, Miss Statey, Miss Armstrong. The barber Mr. Greese (spelling?), DePetris, Dr. Morton, Henry P. Tuthill, Inez Robinson Vail, Liedlich Bakery, Lineas Allen, William Mott, the Deputy Surrogate, Bert Silkworth, Judge Strong, Judge Pellitro, Eddie Thornton.

Library Hall, Mr. Lee's drugstore, Dr. Peterson, Dr. Jones, Dr. Bergmann , Clem MacMillan, George and Frank MacMillan, May and Bessie Zenzius, Dolly Bell, Ray Nine, Slats Reeve, Apples Kirchgessner, Mr. Kelsey, Mr. Norris, Mr. Walgo the tailor, Octagon House, Mr. Wickham.

MAPS, PICTURES

MATTITUCK ORAL HISTORY

Contents of Tape No. 17-MH-1 Date of Interview: Nov. 14, 1983

Place of Interview: Author's home, Camp Mineola Road
Interviewers: Katherine Lascelle, Edna Schaedel

Author: Matilda Habermann

Early Days in Mattituck

M: I have to think back, way way back....my days in Mattituck. It seems I was a sickly child, and the doctor told my father I would have to get out in the country. So my father immediately looked all over for a place and a business. My father was a barber, and he wanted a business near our house, and he went to Westchester, to Jersey, and all over, and he found no combination of a business and a house. And finally the doctor asked him if he had ever heard of Long Island, and he says, "I don't know anything about Long Island." But it seems that it was just a matter of days that my father and mother were reading the German paper called the Stats Zeitung, my parents being German, and there was a man by the name of Perry Butler who advertised a barber business and a home five minutes walk from each other. So, my mother and father got on the train at Flatbush Avenue Brooklyn and came out to Mattituck, and oh my father reminisced many a time about the ride to Mattituck. He felt it was endless and said he felt as though the train was going to go off the precipice.

He met Mr. Butler, and the man was so amazed to think he had a customer to buy his place and his barber business too, and so it seems that they made an arrangement, and my father immediately came to Mattituck but had no house to come to.

So there was a hotel in Mattituck on the Main Road by the name

of The Glenwood and it was run by Mr. Zenzius, and I can remember my first day in Mattituck. It was the second of October. I remember the date because it was my mother's and father's wedding anniversary and Jack Zenzius, the son of Mr. Zenzius, he met us at the train the night before and brought us over to the hotel. My brother, Joe, he was only a year old then and my sister was three and one-half years older than he, and I am three and one-half years older than my sister Madeline. I can remember standing in the bedroom that we had. It was at the front of the house, and it was pouring rain. I always wanted to roller skate so badly when I lived in the city. My mother said, "No, when we get to the country you can have roller skates." But here I'm looking out of the window at mud. There weren't even sidewalks. This was in 1910 and I was 10 years old. Then after awhile Mr. Butler vacated, and we moved onto Pacific Street in Mattituck.

I: You told me it was the third house on the right as you come up from Route 25.

M: That's right. I went through my whole childhood until the day I got married, I lived there. So, I've seen quite a few changes coming into Mattituck. I remember across the street it was all woodland on Pacific Street. But on Pacific Street was a little house, and people by the name of Tyler lived there. Frank Tyler, George Tyler--they're in the Fire Department here in Mattituck to this day and I think George Tyler for awhile was Chief of Police, and I think his son is Chief of Police now. We were neighbors and then they cut a road


HOTEL GLENWO

through, Legion Avenue, and I think a man by the name of Van Ryswyk bought that Tyler house eventually and he moved it back, and he built it all over and rented it.

So I remember going to school in Mattituck. I came out of a German American Parochial school, and I was quite taken back when I found myself in the Methodist Church in Mattituck from my first day of schooling. It seems that Mattituck High School was being renovated then and they had separated all the classes into the different churches. Across the street the school was in....I'm trying to think of the name of the church.

I: The Redeemer church?

M: Yes. The Holy Redeemer, yeah, the Episcopal church and the high school was in the Presbyterian church. That was a temporary arrangement while the school was being renovated.

I: That Methodist church is the one that is now The North Fork Theatre?

M: That is right. They had just horses with boards on for the desks and benches without any....big long benches and that's how we had to go to class. I don't know if I should tell the incident of the principal coming in that first day.

I: Yes, what was that?

M: That very first day, this very tall slender man came in. I remember he was a little bit bald and he started to pace around in the classroom there. Incidentally, that classroom was the Sunday School room for the church and finally he stopped in front of one of the boys and said something and all at once, the boy made a pass at him and he grabbed the boy by the back of the coat, and he threw him to the floor. That

The Old Four-room Schoolhouse 17-MH-1

New Schoolhouse which Matilda Remembers

principal was, I didn't know he was the principal, but he was Mr. Wyler. I was very upset and I ran home at noontime and told my mother I wouldn't come back to the school. Later on, I learned that this boy had broken a seal on a freight car to get into it, and he kept denying it until Mr. Wyler lost his temper and the boy did make a pass at him, as young as he was. He probably was as old as I was, ten years. That boy really grew up a criminal.

I: Oh?

M: He's dead now. I might think of his name. But they used to live on Bay Avenue. They were a poor family but the boy was in trouble with the police all the time. So, that was my first day at schooling in Mattituck. But after awhile we moved into the school building and I remember my first teacher's name was Miss Ryan. In the wintertime, I used to bring my sled to school and she would pull the sled home. She lived down towards my home and she'd give me a sleigh ride and she would also wait for my little sister after she went to school, and we'd put her on the sled with me. And then I went into high school. I only had two years of high school, and I got sick, and I had to stay out. Then I went to Southold Academy. But meanwhile the years passed by, and there were always changes. Coming back through my growing years as a child, I remember the parades they had on Decoration Day and they always used to come through Pacific Street. So we stayed home and watched the parade go by and after awhile my sister was in the parade. They are nice memories.

I: And your father was very active in the --

M: My father's business was in the middle of Love Lane,

probably just this side of where the gift shop is now and then there was a house there with a porch in front of it but the lady and her daughter had an ice cream parlor in there. Then there was another barber, Mr. Greese (spelling uncertain). I don't think Mr. Greese liked it much to have the city people coming out and opening a business so close to his. He let my father know about it, but after awhile they became good friends. Across the street from the barber shop was a young married couple who came to Mattituck by the name of DePetris. They opened up - well they had fruit and vegetables, produce, it probably was mostly produce. After awhile Mr. DePetris had a back room there. It was quite a good size room and he had an ice cream parlor there and I remember when I was about 15 years old, I worked for Mr. DePetris at the fountain. He taught me how to make ice cream sodas. And so life went on until I became of an age when I had to know what to do with myself. Then I worked in Riverhead at the County Building.

I: You mentioned that your father had friends who played checkers with him?

M: Oh indeed. That started not long after my father came to Mattituck. He was always a great enthusiast for checkers and it got to be quite a thing. All the Reeve's and the Tuthill's, they'd all congregate in the barber shop toward the back of the shop, and he had that table set with a checkerboard and, in fact, I still have his checkers and checkerboard right in that closet there. They had regular tournaments. I always thought my father never should have been a barber. He was too smart. He could have been a doctor, and he could have worked with figures.

Standing in my father's barbershop, he had a big cigar case just as you come in the door. He'd stand me behind with my homework, with Math. I hated figures. I was really scared of the subject and I'd come, and I'd have to read the problem to him and he'd say, "Well you'll have to figure it out." All the while he was cutting hair or shaving and I'd stand there so embarrassed. I wouldn't be getting it. "You mean to tell me you haven't got that yet?" I can remember when I took Regents arithmetic. I never prayed so hard in my life. I was something like 88 on my Regents arithmetic, and I ran all the way from school down to the village to my father's barbershop and I was all out of breath. I said, "Pop, I passed, I passed!" and he said, "What did you pass?" and I said, "I got 88 on a Regents." He put his hand in his pocket, and he took out a couple of dollars and he said, "Well, take this for now, and the next time your mother goes to the city you can go with her."

I: How often did your mother go into the city?

M: Well, she went every two or three months, I think. She used to visit my godmother who lived in Jersey, and she'd always do the shopping. She'd go in January for linens. My grandmother always lived with us, you know, so we were always taken care of.

I: But you went on then to Southold Academy?

M: Well, then I had some kind of a--old Doctor Morton called it rheumatism of the heart. I had these attacks but this particular day I was coming back from my lunch hour, and I really had the pains very bad and I passed out. And when I

came to, they had me....what they call the drawing room. They turned a table upside down and laid me on that. There was no place to lay me. They called old Doctor Morton, who used to make his rounds on his bicycle. He was very nearsighted, and he'd be riding the bicycle with a paper right up to his glasses, and riding along, and going on his calls that way. I don't remember Dr. Morton being there but they gave me something to drink, I think. They had already called my father. Across the street from my father's barbershop also where probably the Drug Store is today was stables, and they used to rent horses and carriages. My father dropped his work, ran over there, and I think Rudy Armbrust drove him up to the school. I do remember my father coming into that room. As sick as I was, I was embarrassed. He was so upset he forgot to take his cap off. That was in my mind and then my father took the glass that was by me and he smelt of it. He put it down almost with a bang and he said, "That's nicotine. What did that doctor give her?" It was a heart stimulant. They had to get my coat on and the teachers had to practically dress me. I was limp. My father just put me over his shoulder, and my hands were dangling down on his back and they brought me home and Dr. Morton followed home right to the house. He came up to the bed and he said, "Young lady, no more school. You are to be out of school two years. We gotta build you up." So, I used to do little jobs like opening scallops, bunching asparagus, whatever I could find, babysit, whatever. I spent my time that way. Then when it was time for me to go back to

school, my father reminded me. He used to call me "Girlie." "You know pretty soon it's time to go back to school." I said, "I'm not going back." "Oh yes, you are. You have to graduate from high school." I said, "No. Papa, my class is all ready to graduate, and I can't face that." And he said, "You're just as old now as they are, as the class you're going in with," Because I was only 13 when I was in first year high and he said, "What do you think you are going to do?" I said, "Well, I'm going to take a business course," and he said, "Over my dead body. You ought to find work to keep you out in the air now."

But I won out. I heard all about Southold Academy. There were a number of us girls. Inez Vail--she was Inez Robinson then. She went, and a girl from Jamesport went. There was like a little jitney that would pick us up and took us down. It wasn't a bus or anything. It was like a jitney bus, you know. Then when I took the year's course, I was still too young to go to work. So I stayed like post-graduate. Meanwhile Mrs. Henry P. Tuthill, whose husband was the County Treasurer, used to have me come in and write her letters for her. She was a person who detested writing, so she would make notations through the week, and on Saturday I would come up to her house and compose the letters.

Her husband would come in, Mr. Tuthill, and he used to call me Sissy and he said, "Sissy, when are you going to be through down there at Southold?" I said, "Well, I'm going to be through this June." And he said, "Well, I've got a job for you." So I went to the County Treasurer's Office, and I

wasn't there very long, when it came in October or something like that and my father came home from work, and he said to me, "Do you know a man from Riverhead by the name of McGrath?" and I said, "Yes. He's a title searcher." He said, "Well he stopped me in my shop, and he wants to see you. He wants you to come up." It happened to be Columbus Day and I said, "Well the offices are closed." And he said, "He knows that, but he'll be there waiting for you. He wants to talk with you." So, I got on the train and I went up on Columbus Day. He wanted me to learn title searching. He used to talk with me when I was in the Treasurer's Office because his business brought him over into the Treasurer's Office. You know, when they had to get ready for the tax, when they sold houses because of back taxes and all, and so I thought it was kind of nice to make a change.

I: (Unclear) Mattituck then?

M: No, I commuted by train. I commuted to Riverhead every day.

I: On the train?

M: Oh yes. In fact, it got me up there a little early in the morning because I used to be the first one in. But anyway, there was a train to take me back, too.

I: You had worked in Mattituck before that for--

M: Oh well, yes, one of the things I was doing when I was going to the Academy. I had been working in the baker shop for Liedlich. Liedlich Baker Shop was across from where the railroad was, probably where the Coffee Pot is now.

I: How do you spell that?

M: L-i-e-d-l-i-c-h. I don't know how I came to go there. They came and asked me to work for them. I used to take my homework, and in between customers I'd do my homework behind the counter.

I: You were very ambitious.

M: I had to do my homework. There used to be a man by the name of Bert Silkworth, who had his real estate office just a couple of doors down from Liedlich's Baker Shop. He used to come in to buy buns or rolls or bread or what, and he said to me, "How are you doing in the Academy?" I said, "Oh, I'm doing all right." He said, "Do you suppose you are far enough along that you can take some dictation? I'd like to have somebody....I'm going to dictate to have it transcribed." I said, "Yes. I get two hours off at suppertime." So I'd take the first hour to go home and have my supper, and then the second hour I'd go back into the real estate office and Mr. Silkworth would be there and dictate his letters, and I would transcribe them at my own time. That was very nice because I was always anxious to earn a buck.

Also there was another customer who came into Liedlich's. I can see him now, Lineas Allen. He lived in Cutchogue. I didn't know where he came from or anything, but he used to talk with me quite a lot. He said to me, he saw that I was doing my homework, and I told him I was taking the business course. And incidentally, those courses were far beyond anybody's imagination. We had bookkeeping. We had business law. We

had everything complete. You couldn't have gone into a college and gotten a more complete business course. And only one teacher in little Southold Academy. I believe it's a printing place now.

So, this man said, "We're opening up a building. You see the new building across the street, across the tracks?" I said, "Yes." He said "That's going to be a potato grading place, and I need somebody in the office. How about working for me?" And I said, "Well, I don't know whether I can leave Mr. Liedlich but eventually I'll have to leave because I want to get into my own line of study." He said, "Well you will be into a line of study." So he said, "It's only seasonal though. In the wintertime, we're closed down." Well, I took the job and I had a little bit of an office. The farmers brought their potatoes there to grade them and in my office, in my little room, they had* a testing machine, and it tested the potatoes for moisture*. The farmers were paid according to the moisture in the potatoes. I don't know whether it's for more moisture or less moisture that they got the highest pay. That I can't tell. But I used to watch Mr. Allen do it. I was very interested in it. He showed me how and after awhile I did the testing. I did all the bookkeeping. I remember Mr. Allen had asthma very bad. Sometimes he couldn't even come in and he would dictate to me from Cutchogue on the telephone, and I could hardly take my notes because it would hurt me so to hear his breathing. He's dead now, but he was a very nice man.

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*We might note here that there was a corn testing service run by Duryee in the hardware store building at Westphalia and the railroad tracks. This was earlier than Mr. Allen's service.

Then came a job with Mr. Tuthill. After I was through at the Academy I went into the County Treasurer's office, from there to.... Mr. McGrath was the title searcher's name. I really didn't know what the problem was but I found out later on that the libers that you have to handle in title searching, they're a good three feet wide and they're half a foot high, I'm sure, and to roll them out from morning to night, it got my stomach so I couldn't even keep my breakfast in my stomach anymore. I remember in the old County Clerk's Office there was a back stairway that you could go up into the Surrogate's Court and this man came down those stairs and talked with Mr. McGrath. So one time Mr. McGrath introduced me to Mr. Mott. He said, "This is Mr. William Mott. He's the Deputy for the Surrogate." So one day Mr. Mott said in front of me, "I'm going to take this girl away from you someday." And Mr. McGrath, he....he always had a wad of tobacco in his face, and he said, "Like hell you will." So, Mr. Mott waited his chance when Mr. McGrath was in the city. He came down, and he said, "Well, I've got a fine opening upstairs in the Surrogate's court. Think about it." But by that time, I was feeling so bad with a stomach condition and this was Surrogate's court and it sort of attracted me and I took the job. I saw two Surrogates. Judge Strong was the Surrogate when I went up there. Then came Judge Pellitro. He was from Patchogue and I was there for about six or six and a half years.

Meanwhile I got the wanderlust. I thought I was in a rut, and there was a lawyer who came in from New York that woke me up to the fact that I was in a rut. He said, "Anytime you want,

why don't you come into the city and work? You will go much further if you come into New York." And he gave me his card.

(The author worked in New York City for a short time, and then married and lived in Mineola, Nassau County. After the death of her first husband she remarried and came back to Mattituck with her second husband in 1946.)

I: You had said that while you were working in Riverhead you didn't have clubs or such things in those days. You'd have house parties?

M: Yes, we'd have parties in our houses. It grew. Everybody would bring their friends in. We danced through plenty of rugs. Well, we got to be 60 people.

I: How could you do that in a house?

M: Well, we didn't have it then, but after we decided to rent a hall, then it really progressed. And I used to go right from work and put up the decorations. One of the boys that was a friend and belonged to the bunch that used to go on the house parties, Eddie Thornton, he had his own orchestra. He played the piano, and so we were never in want of music. We had good times and even would have masquerade parties, Halloween parties, or if somebody became engaged we turned it into a party for them. And it was in the old Odd Fellows Hall in Riverhead. I think it was probably next door to where the Discount Drug Store* is, on the corner of Griffen Avenue.

I: Did they have things like that in Mattituck?

M: All we had in Mattituck was once a month at Library Hall. That should be quite a memory, Library Hall. I have very fond

*The Thrifty Drug Store which moved in 1984 to 136 E. Main St.

memories of Library Hall because they had the drug store downstairs and the movies were upstairs and there was a stage there. They'd get up little skits, the young folks. The parents would come and then there would be a dance afterwards. It was very nice and many times my sister and I stood on that stage with some silly skit. I remember Madeline and I singing, oh what was that now, "Mr. Gallagher and Mr. Sheen." Then another time I had been in a play by the Knights of Columbus in Riverhead--or was it then....? No, we got that up for Library Hall.

Oh, I went to a Girls' Camp when I was single, you know, up in New Hampshire. They used to get up plays and things. They were all college girls that waited on table and everything. These college girls would get all these kids that were, you know, boarding there and put us in it. They had a skit. I wasn't in it, but I watched how it went. They'd have two girls of the same height, and they'd be dressed somehow with a shawl or something and a mask. They did that for a farmer up there. He was burned out....(tape unclear)....one person would be there, you had an umbrella. The other one would be tall. And you could write up your own material if you wanted to. In the course of the conversation gradually the one that squatted goes gradually up and you'd act like, well maybe you had something to drink, and it did something magic to you. And the other one gradually would come down. So it was reversed. It was quite clever. It was done with two bed sheets and then over that would be an old-fashioned shawl. I can

remember sewing those bed sheets together. We did that for Library Hall, my sister and I.

And so many things now, as I talk about Library Hall. We were always in something. So, then, of course, after awhile Mr. Lee had that drug store downstairs. But then the doctors moved into Library Hall. They had three doctors, Dr. Peterson, let's see now Dr. Jones, and Dr. ....* Isn't that funny, I can't think of the third doctor. They were the three of them together. And people would come, you know, for appointments. Library Hall went on a long time that way. The movies were still upstairs. Now, there's no more Library Hall.

I: Well, during that time, were there theatrical companies that came out here?

M: Yes. That was very good. But I don't remember that I ever attended their plays. I think that must have been when I was in the city.

I: But that's about all there was to do in town at that time?

M: That's right. It was more like maybe you'd have a dozen friends. Like I'd have a dozen girl friends. And on a Saturday we'd get into one jalopy, that's all they were, and ride around a little bit. I can remember coming down to the Bay in December. There was a bunch of us in a car. There had been an easterly storm. This was in December. The whole bay was pulled out. And there, well you'd have to wade in the water, were scallops as thick, as you can't imagine how thick they laid there. And we immediately drove to some farmer,

*Probably Dr. Bergman. Ed.

and we offered to buy bags but he gave them to us, big potato bags. We took our shoes off and went into that water. We had those knickers, you know, and we pulled the knickers up and went in the water and I came home with a half a potato bag of scallops. My mother, she almost lost her eyeballs. She said, "Where did you get those?" and I said, "I picked them up out of the water." She conveniently got a pan and made a mustard foot bath and made me put my feet in it. She was scared to death I was going to get pneumonia but I didn't.

I: I'll bet those scallops were good.

M: My father opened them then. He didn't know how to open them. You know there's a dark side and a light side to a scallop. You put the dark side on the palm of your hand. And then across the street where I told you was this little house that Mr. Van Ryswyk moved back and remodeled. Mr. Tyler was a Bayman. In the back yard he had a scallop shop. Imagine doing that today on your premises. And I went over, and I watched how the scallops, and they let me open scallops. You always had to wear rubbers because they had the table where the scallops were dripping, and then there was a trough right in front of you where the barrel stood and you opened the scallops and put the stuff in there. I think we got 50¢ a gallon. You had to open a gallon of scallops for 50¢. I used to pay for my books with it.

I: I think you mentioned a Bessie McMillan?

M: Betsy, Betsy Carney (? unclear) Betsy was the daughter of Mr. Zenzius in the Hotel Glenwood where I spent my first

night. She was about sixteen years old then. Her father had two daughters and his son, Jack. May, her sister, she had charge of rooms and Betsy was in the dining room. She was a cute thing when she was young. She had red hair, beautiful red hair and she stood there that first morning, I'm jumping way back again, sort of pushing the tray against her legs while we were having breakfast. My brother was in a high chair then. He's seventy-three years old now.

I: What about that big house on Love Lane that's across the railroad tracks on the right?

M: Well, that was the old Clem, I'll say old, well to me he seemed old, Mr. and Mrs. Clem McMillan. They had a boarding house there. They were there and then Mr. McMillan died, and Mrs. McMillan had two sons, George and Frank. Because the same people would always come to that boarding house, they were like a family in the summertime when they came together. They come from all parts, would meet there and spend their vacations. And then George married a schoolteacher. I don't know where she came from. Because I've only known her as Margaret McMillan. Then, George made apartments downstairs. He made three apartments and the upstairs they kept for themselves from front to back. I used to go to see Mrs. McMillan, and it was very nice. Mrs. McMillan only died this year. Yeah, I always remember her. Then, they rented out these three apartments.

Poor Betsy. She's really had no life. Her father would never let her have a boyfriend even, because he wanted them

in their hotel. Then, Betsy left home. The father built that house on - would that be Pike Street by the Fire House - well it's just this side of the Fire Department and her father built that house. He was still in the hotel. She finally left a note and it said, "I am leaving." Because she got tired of living that way. He had both girls under his thumb. Well, May got married and lived out in California. That left Betsy alone. She went to her Aunt Agnes in New Rochelle. She got a job there and everything. Finally, Jack, her brother wrote and said, "Betsy, you have to come home because Pop is very sick." He had cancer of the throat. So she gave up her job, and came back again to her father and took care of him until he died. She lived there with her brother for quite awhile. Then she met - Oh, she must have been thirty-nine or forty years old when she got married and became pregnant. She nearly died when Maureen was born. Now she's living with her in Cutchogue. She's ninety-one years old.

I: Did you know Dolly Bell?

M: I knew Dolly Bell. She was quite a girlfriend of Jack Zenzius.

I: She was?

M: No, for his father. He used to rig her up with a horse and a buggy and ride in style. She was an artist. Yeah, I know where she lived, by the Greek there. She was in the hospital. And nobody could understand why her hair never changed. She even brought the hair coloring into the hospital and had somebody put it on for her. She was quite a gal. She got in

very poor health. And Ray Nine, you know Ray Nine, he was very good to her. He had the garbage collecting then. She had cats by the hundreds. She fed every animal that came to her house. She'd keep them in the cellar and Ray Nine would clean that cellar and exercise the dogs for her. I never realized after she died and left the will that she left him plenty. That's what put Ray Nine on his feet. But Ray is that way.

I: Well, Dolly Bell was living in Cutchogue in the late sixties.

M: Well, that I don't remember her for being in Cutchogue. I remember her in Mattituck.

I: At Blashaks, the old peoples' home there.

M: Oh yeah? Well, I sort of lost track. I know she was quite a character.

I: She must have been. I understand the little building that she used as a studio is still there.

M: Probably. It probably is.

I: Over on North Road there.

M: Well she used to go all over with her easel and paint different scenes.

I: I understand she had students.

M: I wouldn't be surprised. She was a person of very few words. She'd speak when she was spoken to but she'd never have anything to offer--like me for instance.

I: Were there any other characters in Mattituck like that? Outstanding characters.

M: There could have been. For the moment, I can't seem to remember but there must have been. I remember people like Slats Reeve. They were a character in their own sense. He was a very unique person. He was.

I: And he was the one who found this house for your husband?

M: This property. Every time when Slats would want to go down another street Fred (Mr. Habermann, Ed.) would say, "Come back to that Camp Mineola Road." And he'd say, "There's no sense in it. The man won't sell." He says, "I've had plenty of people come to me wanting to buy property down there." So then my husband went there on his own.

I: That must have been around the end of the 1940's?

M: Oh no. Oh wait a minute. Oh yes, that's right. It was in the 1940's. 1946 he bought the property.

I: 1946. This was all woods then?

M: All woodland. Except where the stucco house is. That's the house that Apples' husband built, and that was just about being finished. Meanwhile Apples' sister, who was in New Jersey, and her husband had to vacate for some reason and they always liked it here and they wanted to buy it. But Louie, he bought all that property right adjacent to this property and they wanted to buy a piece of property from them, but Louie wouldn't sell on the street. But he sold them what is the front of the house in the back. It faces into what used to be my garden and they built the house there. They were just building that house when we used to come down and pull the huckleberry bushes.

I: Now Apples' name is what?

M: Apalonia. But her mother named her Apples from a child. She's never been called anything else. And she hates Apalonia. Oh she hates that.

I: Her last name is what?

M: Kirchgessner, K-i-r-c-h-g-e-s-s-n-e-r. Her husband built that place himself.

I: I remember seeing her in the window of that house at the time she had that accident.

M: Oh yeah. She had a hospital bed in her living room. For a year, she was in a body cast.

I: I think there are a lot of such interesting things that you've told us about Mattituck.

M: Well, it seems to me there should be somebody that would be more worded than I am with the olden times. It might be a nice thing to remember Wolf Pit Lake. I think every kid that had ice skates....

(Interruption. The second interviewer, Edna Schaedel, arrived.)

I: We were talking about your father's shop.

M: Yes. Speaking of my father's shop. When he was still on Love Lane, a Mr. Kelsey bought a lot. Whether he bought the buildings, I don't know. But it involved that he was putting up false fronts on the buildings and so forth. And old Mr. Norris, he was a customer of my father's and he happened to come in to my father, and they were talking. My father said, "Well I own that building but I have no ground to put it on. I would move it rather than go in on what Kelsey is gonna do." And Mr. Norris said, "No worry, Joe. I own that piece of ground next to Roy Reeve's Real Estate."

He said, "That shop will just fit in there." So my father had the shop moved there. He did a good business there too.

I: Is that on Route 25?

M: On 25 just as you come around the bend (south side Ed.)

ES: It's got a music box up on top of it now. It had a music shop in it for awhile.

M: The first thing that it was after my father died was a liquor store. Then, I don't know, it was something else. Then, that John that fixed televisions, they moved over there for awhile. It became a fish store too. They were doing pretty good but they had a problem with the parking. It's very bad for parking there.

But I remember my father's last days in Mattituck. So Lois called up and said I'd better come over, and he was sick. He had vomited on his pants. He had cirrhosis of the liver. So he said to me, "Go over across the street to Mr. Walgo. He knows my measurements. See if he can get me a pair of pants." And I did.

ES: That's Mr. Walgo, the tailor who was in the Octagon Building?

M: Yes. He was grandfather of the Walgo...she's married to I can't remember his first name, Dickerson. He's affiliated in Reeve's Real Estate, Dickerson. This is his wife's grandfather. He was a little short Polish man. He was a tailor and a good one.

Then when I went to take my father home, I tried to hold him by the arm and he said, "I don't want anybody to see me do this." So, he said, "You get in the car. I'll come." But

he stepped out of the shop, and he had his back to me, and he stayed at that lock for an eternity it seemed. He just stood there. Finally he came, and he got in the car. I went on down 25 by the Catholic Church. When we got to the Catholic Church, he broke down and cried. He said, "I'd give anything if I could go in there once more." I brought him home and he went to bed. Then he called me in the room. He said, "You still have Mrs. (unclear) car. Would you go over to the shop and get me my tin box?" He'd always, when he would come home, have his bunch of keys, and he'd put them on the kitchen cabinet. So I looked, and they were not there. I went back in the room, and I said, "Oh, do you still have your keys in your pocket?" "My keys," he said, "Oh you just go over there. The door might still be unlocked." He left those keys in that lock. He couldn't bear to turn the key in the lock. He never went back.

You know, when he wasn't too sick, he'd come home and have his supper and light the cigar. Then he'd smoke half of it and he'd douse it. The next morning as he went to leave the house he'd light that cigar again and smoke it on the way over. Finally I noticed that he'd put the cigar in his mouth but he didn't light it and I said, "Pop, do you know your cigar isn't lit?" And he said, "Sh. I don't want anybody to know the difference." But (unclear) about the shop.

I: Just about Mr. Walgo, the tailor.

M: Yes, he was our tailor.

I: And the barber shop was across the street from there.

M: Yes, that's right. It was on Love Lane till, I don't remember what year Kelsey or whatever his name was came in.

I: Well then did Mr. Norris own that property on the corner where Grabie was?

M: He did. And I think Harry DePetris, he built that place. He must have leased the ground from Norris. And it was a restaurant.

ES: Which one was a restaurant?

M: Where Grabie's is. That was DePetris' restaurant.

ES: You mean right next to where your father had the shop then, there where Grabie's have their appliance...?

M: That was the original building. It was built (unclear) and it was all Hawaiian. He had Hawaiian musicians there.

ES: A Hawaiian restaurant!

I: In Mattituck!

M: Oh yes. It was supposed to be the place from far and wide. I was living in Mineola then. That was in the 1930's. But he might have built in the late 1920's. But I don't know whether it was when--did I give you the write-up about the burning to death in the DePetris family?

I: You showed me that.

M: It might have been after, yes after that happened that Mr. DePetris had to give up the restaurant. Well he was badly burned himself. He wasn't even at the funerals. But he survived enough to open that little delicatessen store which is dead-end to Bay Avenue, which is now a bigger deli. It was

Sept. 18, 1939 The Daily News

Four Die in Flaming Wreck

Family of six were in car above bound for Fair when it crashed with truck near Riverhead, Suffolk, yesterday afternoon. Three women and a man were trapped in wreck and burned to death.

HIT BY TRUCK, FOUR DIE IN BLAZING AUTO

Four persons, members of a family party bound for a day's outing at the World's Fair, were burned to death at 12:45 P. M. yesterday in their sedan after a collision with a truck on Northville Turnpike, a mile north of Riverhead, L. I. Two other passengers in the car were in critical condition from burns.

Police said the sedan, driven by Mary De Petris, 27, a Chicago school teacher visiting her parents in Mattituck, L. I., was struck at an intersection by the truck of Frank Krystoff, 49, a Bridgehampton farmer. The automobile hit a curb, turned over three times and burst into flames. Neither Krystoff nor his companion, Walter Dunn, 24, of Westhampton Beach, was injured.

The dead, whose bodies were charred beyond recognition were:

Mrs. Jennie De Petris, 49, of Mattituck; her daughter, Mary De Petris; a brother-in-law, Joseph Schiavoni, 65, a Greenport, L. I., fruit dealer, and his wife, Louise, 60.

Harry de Petris, father of the girl who drove the car, escaped from the flaming sedan and dragged out his 25-year-old niece, Mrs. Louise Schiavoni Manniello of 1776 E. 13th St., Brooklyn. Both were hurried to the Eastern Long Island Hospital in Greenport, where they were not expected to live. Mrs. Manniello, a Syracuse University journalism graduate, was assistant editor of a short story magazine until her marriage last July to Frank E. Manniello, a produce importer.

Krystoff was arraigned on a charge of automobile manslaughter before Justice of the Peace Henry M. Zalerski in Riverhead and held in $2,500 bail.

a little bit of a building he put up. He had a little vegetables and fruit and (unclear). He struggled along, I don't know, maybe two or three years, but then he got very sick and he died. His mother-in-law always lived with them and she stayed right on, old Mrs. Cateli.*.

* A member of the DePetris family tells us that the name is Cantelmi.

End of Tape

Long Island Traveler-Watchman September 19, 1985

Matilda Habermann (nee Sonntag) Autobiography

I was a "June Bug"—born on June 29, 1900. My natal place was Willett Street in Manhattan; my parents were Emelie and Joseph Sonntag.

When I was a year old, my parents, my dear Grandma Gamm, and I moved to Franklin St., Brooklyn, near the East River. From our apartment, which was over my father's barber shop, we looked out at a large athletic field. Beyond the field, a large Hemp factory bordered on the East River. No matter how hot a summer day might be, we could always count on a delightful breeze from the water.

Trolley cars ran along the main streets and delivery wagons were pulled by horses. When I walked to school, I would often carry a few sugar cubes in my pocket to feed the horses, which might be tied at the curb.

Sunday was Family Day and, as a group, we might visit relatives in the area, or in New Jersey, or as a special treat, have a trip to the Zoo.

When I reached the age of ten, my six-year old sister, Madlyn, my one-year old brother, Joseph, my parents, my grandmother and I all moved to a little town named Mattituck. My father had seen an ad in a New York paper, placed there by Perry Butler, offering a house on Pacific Street and a barber shop on Love Lane (which was Mr. Butler's business) for sale. Everyone in my family was happy about this transactoin as we had been advised by our family doctor to move to the country because of my poor health. The sale was consummated so quickly that Mr. Butler had not yet vacated the house; consequently we stayed at the Hotel Glenwood on Main St., which was run by John Zenzius, for about a week. His two daughters, May and Bessie both worked at the hotel for their father. In later years, Bessie became Mrs. Joseph Kearney.

In 1910, when I was in 4th grade, it so happened that the Mattituck H.S. was being renovated. All the students were scattered to the various churches, including Mechanic's Hall (our present Mattituck Playhouse), the Presbyterian Church, and the Episcopal Church. My remembrance of my first day at school found me seated at a "desk," which consisted of boards on "horses." When construction was completed, we all moved back into the Mattituck H.S. on the Main Road, where our library now stands.

While in my second year of high school, I developed what was then called Rheumatism of the Heart (diagnosed by old Dr. Morton) and had to remain at home for two years time. Since, at the conclusion of that period of time, I felt uncomfortable about rejoining my classmates, I decided to take a complete Business Course at Southold Academy. The school was located in the building where Academy Printers is now and was taught solely by Miss Bertha Stoddard. I can safely say that I would defy any college to offer a better business course.

My first job (part time) called for composing and typing letters for Mrs. Henry P. Tuthill, wife of the Suffolk County Treasurer. Mr. Tuthill frequently asked me to accept a job in the County Treasury (at the conclusion of my course). From this position, I went on to work as a Title Searcher. Sometime later, Mr. Mott, who was then the Deputy Clerk to the Surrogate Court, offered me a job in that Court, where I worked for six and a half years. Meanwhile, through elections, Roger M. Wyley became Deputy Clerk, I then decided to try my luck in New York City. Being under Civil Service, I may have developed "wanderlust" and felt the urge to travel to a new area to seek employment. An attorney referred me to the Grey Bar Building, where I was offered and accepted a position as Secretary to the Attorney for the German Consulate. Being of German extraction, I found it wasn't especially difficult.

During this time, I became engaged and eventually left my position to marry a Nassau County Patrolman. When my husband became ill, we moved to Mattituck, where we built a house on Camp Mineola Road. Eventually my husband died and I remained a widow for seven years before remarrying.

So, here I am, now 85 years of age, still in my Camp Mineola home. I have two daughters, Margaret and Elinor, the highlight of my life, eight grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Tape 17-MH-1

name Matilda Habermann

birth date 6/29/1900 place New York City, New York

father's name Joseph Emil Sonntag (died 1939)

mother's name Emilie Ganim, who came from Germany at 16.

childhood Came to Mattituck 1910.

education Mattituck: Southold Academy for two years.

job training

work Secretarial

official positions

member of

special activities, projects, hobbies member of Sacred Heart Church

spouse's name Frederick Schwartz & after his death, William Albert Habermann.

children's names Margaret (Mrs. Edward Heine, Penna)
Elinor Schwartz

major turning points in:

Mattituck	my life	my field of interest
1	1	1
2	2	2
3	3	3
4	4	4
5	5	5

for me, Mattituck was

Mattituck is

I'd like Mattituck to become

(feel free to expand on any of the above;-your opinions are welcome!)

MATTITUCK ORAL HISTORY

Tape No.: 36-DRG-1
Oral Author: Donald R. Gildersleeve

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MAPS, PICTURES

MATTITUCK ORAL HISTORY

Tape No.: Vol. 36-DRG-1 Date of Interview: Spring 1978

Authors: Donald R. Gildersleeve Interviewer: Richard Mack
Alice Gildersleeve

Early Mattituck

(When this interview was given, Donald was eighty-five years old and had been totally deaf for some years. His wife, Alice, helped with the interview. Part of the tape was about pictures and maps which we do not have.)

I: Could you ask Donald to describe Gildersleeve's Store and the operation and the kind of things they sold?

A: General merchandise. Everything from soup to nuts. They sold food, shoes, clothing, corsets--oh, all things. They had some things pertaining to medical. It was general merchandise, hardware, paint.

I: Did you have an ice house?

A: No.

D: No. There were two ice houses. One on the Main Road and one on Maratooka Lake on Suffolk Avenue.

A: Where did they store it, over there in one of those barns?

D: There was one on the Main Road just across from where the schoolhouse is now.

I: Yes. And where was the other?

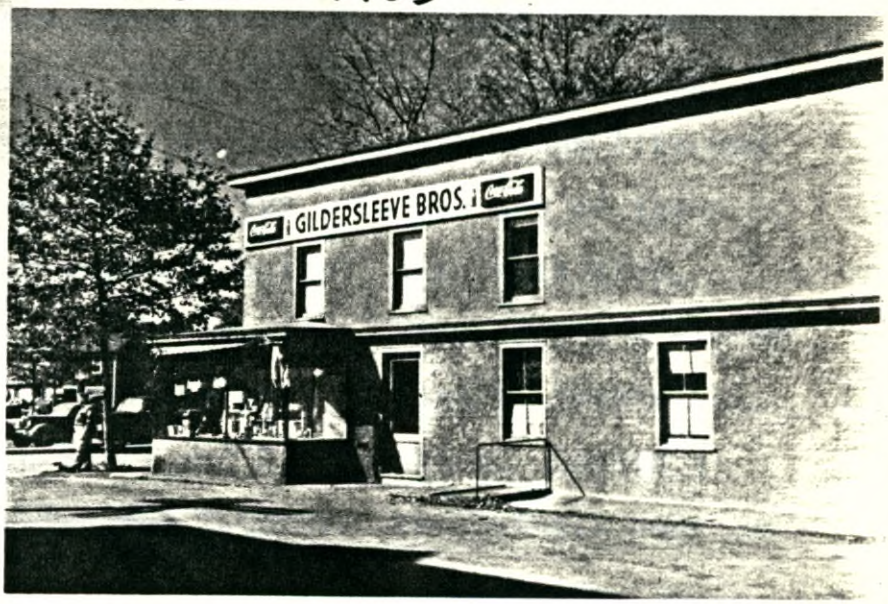
D: Right on the lake.

I: There was one right on the lake, yes. Parker Wickham told me.

.....

D: After I left school, I worked in the Gildersleeve Store. I didn't finish high school. I was in first year high, I think. And I went to work in the store. I liked it there. And

Fall 1953



after about....I think, it was in 1912, I took a job with the railroad station as a clerk and I was there until 1922. Then the railroad started to go to pot, and I got out and went back to the store. In 1954 or 1955, the store went out of business. After a few months, they wanted me to work in the Duryee Hardware Store. That's where Raynor-Suter is now, on the corner. I worked there until I retired.

A: Will Duryee owned the hardware store. Donald's older sister married Will Duryee. They had that great big brick house down the street here (on the east side between Pike and Main Rd. Ed.) Will Duryee built that. He was one of the important businessmen of this community. When Will died, John Duryee ran the store with his wife. When Donald's sister died in 1968, then John owned the store. Then he became ill, and he sold it to Martin Suter and Henry Raynor. Donald's oldest sister Annie married Nat Tuthill. Nat Tuthill came from Wading River. Nat Tuthill and Will Duryee were prominent businessmen. After the Gildersleeve's.

D: The Polish came over here around 1900, around the turn of the century. And, of course, they couldn't speak very good English. There was always something funny turning up. There was a man come in there. He couldn't speak much English. He came into the store, and he wanted bran. At that time, we also sold grain--we had the bran in bags out in what we called the grain building. They didn't have such packages of bran like they do now in the stores. We tried to ask him about the bags of bran. But "No, no, no," kept repeating 'bran'. We thought of everything that sounded anything like bran.

Pretty soon, he got kind of discouraged. He said, "Moo". Magnolia Brand condensed milk!

I: I see. That's good.

D: We had horse and wagon delivery. Our house was right next to the store not so much as a yard or so in between. Then there was a big barn, hayloft, a hog pen and a cow shed. A man worked for us. They called him Norm. We called him 'chore boy'. He milked the cow, fixed the horses and took care of things like that. One night, it was getting along towards dark, and he went in to milk the cow, I guess. He looked in where the cow was, he couldn't see very good. There was something white hanging down from the cow. He got excited and called my brother out. He saw the same thing. He didn't know what it was. When they tried to go in to see, the cow went after them. And finally he called up a veternerian who lived in Peconic. His name is Case. Had to drive up about 5 miles in horse and wagon. He carried a kerosene lantern and a lasso. He threw a lasso around the cow's neck, pulled him out and pulled something off. The next day, my brother got a bill from the vet written in Latin. My brother, Jim, took the bill over to the doctor, Dr. Morton, and said, "You can read Latin. What does that bill say?" He said, "Manure off the cow, $5.00". We got kidded for that.

I: That's good.

D: There was always something happening. These early Polish, they're all Americanized now. Some of them become lawyers and doctors and professional men and a few

of them still stick the farm.

A: The Polish people were so poor that they'd save the wash water to take a Saturday bath.

D: This incident happened in a section called Oregon. It is strictly a farming section. And when the Polish people came in, they worked for somebody on the farm. And eventually they got their education and so forth. The farmers were making what they thought was pretty good money, and ready to retire. They all prospered. But in those early days, they were very crude. One time there were a lot of, I guess, they were just laborers at the time, in Oregon, and were quite a lot religious and some of them pretty hard drinkers. You'd get all kinds, and (unclear) good people. One day, the Polish people were having what they called a christening in the old Oregon schoolhouse. It was quite a big occasion. All the (unclear) were all dressed up and everything. They all drank a lot of beer. There was quite a lot of going to the bathroom. There were two ladies, I knew the name of one of them but I won't repeat it. They got the idea....and painted a ring around the seat. The next day, a very irate Polish woman came in to Barney,one of the original old-timers up there,and complained about it. He was quite an old man at the time. He was a school trustee. "Can't hardly believe it, can't hardly believe it." She pulled up her dress and said, "You don't believe it? Look at that."

A: That's one of the worse ones.

D: Quite a number of years back, I started writing a column in one of the papers, anything that would come up in my head. That was one of the first stories I wrote, and boy, I began to hear from the Oregoners about that. I got one snappy letter I think was written by a school girl who thought it an insult and said I ought to be writing a book like - I've forgotten - some book. What was that book, years ago, that they tried to ban? Some kind of off-color book had a big circulation. So the next time I wrote a little apology that I had a very high opinion of the Polish people and I didn't mean that as an insult. But I said whether it was English or German or American or Indian, I thought the incident was worth writing down. I never heard anymore about it.

I: What about Pol Freeman?

A: He was a black fellow. He had a street named after him up here. He drank quite a bit.

I: How do you spell it?

A: F-r-e-e-m-a-n.

D: P-o-l. He was a comical colored man. Everyone knew Pol. He was pretty near always drunk. But he was very witty and funny. He liked to dance. At the station, we had a wooden platform you could dance around on it. He was just a local character. He said funny things naturally. One day he came into the station. My uncle was the station agent. Pol came in there and talked to him. "Mr. Gildersleeve, I don't want you to call me Pol anymore. Henceforth I want to be known as "Paulus G. Freeman,"(a famous colored singer and evangelist.) "Forty years in the darkness and just emerging into the light."

He had been married once. He had two daughters. He came in. "Mr. Gildersleeve," he said, "Do you know I've got the notion of getting married again?" Pol got the notion but not the devotion.

.....

D: They had quite a series of fires around here. I think it was around 1908 maybe, I'm not sure. One of them was our store. That was just about the time the automobile was coming in. We built a small brick garage for three cars. Then there was right on Pike Street a fellow named Mr. Zenzius had a big barn, and that burned down. I think the same year the Riley barn on the Main Road near the old Mattituck House burned down. One big fire was Harold R. Reeve, Reeve Lumber Company. Burned down to the ground.

I: How did your store catch fire?

D: Well, I'll tell you confidentially. We thought it was an incendiary. There was kind of an old fellow who came into the store for a loan that day. He had kind of a bad reputation. My brother wouldn't give him any money. So, he went out muttering. That was the store fire. Just one entrance burned. This one with the barn, it burned down. It was right on the railroad tracks.

A: They had some very bad railroad accidents here. (unclear) school up here and go home, (unclear) said she was going to try to race the train home. The train comes through around 3:15. Around about that time school was getting out. She didn't make it over the track. She was killed instantly up here on Mary's Road. Then there was a Negro fellow here who used to be around here (unclear) drink. It was a terrible thing.

.....

D: The canning factory on Sound Avenue.... Yeah, I remember very well. Hudson and Company. They came here from Glen Cove or somewhere up on the Island and had another plant in Holley, New York. It's still here, but, what is it now?

A: Agway.

D: Agway... (unclear) business up there. Their principle crops were tomatoes and asparagus. H-u-d-s-o-n, Hudson and Company, William and Joseph. Left side of the road. (Sound Ave. going west, Ed.) It changed hands several times. There used to be an open lot there. They used to have medicine shows and circuses on it. John Donovan, I think owned that lot.

A: Right across the street from Agway, that old building, it was called the Funn house. F-u-n-n. Two brothers, and Mamie Funn worked for us. Her husband died. And Liela Funn lived downstairs and her husband died. On the right side was Reeve property, Dwight Reeve.

.....

D: On the street across here (east side of Love Lane north of the tracks. Ed.) used to be old boy MacMillan, had a saloon and a boarding house and that lot there, quite a big lot, used to have entertainments over there more than they did at Donovan's. Medicine shows, Minstrel Shows, no not Minstrel Shows but traveling shows of different kinds.

A: Carnival? When I came here they used to have Carnivals.* You know, wheels and throwing balls, and they had fish ponds, so many chances and they had the cotton candy and ice cream

*Alice Gildersleeve visited her sister in Mattituck from time to time beginning in about 1938. Later she taught school in Mattituck. She and Donald were married in 1962.

McMillans At one time the Eureka House

cones, and they had the hot dogs too. Fire Department usually had care of the hot dogs. They had an open stove there.

I: I'd like to find out what the early medicine shows were like.

D: They were worth going to, believe me. They pitched a tent on the lot, pretty good-sized tent. You sat around on seats like grandstands and they had entertainment, farces, singing, dancing and so forth. And in between the acts they'd go around selling their medicines, you know. Over at MacMillan's lot.

I: What kind of medicine?

D: They'd have a lot of different kinds. Oh they'd cure anything. I can remember one fellow going with a worm medicine. "Don't let the worms eat you up".... I don't know what they couldn't cure. They went around with spiels and then they sold them. They'd run for a week. Fellow'd buy some medicine one night. Probably well liquored up. And the medicine cured him. And he'd get up and give a testimonial. And the shows, they were funny. They were farces, you know, Ghosts in the Pawn Shop, and Over the River Charlie. I don't know what else. There were generally ghosts. Be a colored fellow, you know very dumb and the other was a slicker. There'd be a ghost, shoot a man, you know, and stand him up against a wall, like this. Then they'd just carry him away (unclear)

I: Where did these shows come from?

D: They were traveling shows. A lot of them were Indian shows. Hondoro was one, H-o-n-d-o-r-o or -d-u-r-o. Kickapoo, I imagine.

A: Did they have any animals?

D: No, no. Well, once in a great while there'd be a circus. They hadn't too many of them here. The town wasn't big enough. Just a Merry-Go-Round. They'd do quite a business. Round come around. Just a small one.

A: They had carnivals down at the Polish church and up at the Greek Church when I first came here. Small. Wheels and gambling games. Make money for the church.

I: Where were you when Hurricane '38 happened and what happened?

D: Well that was a very bad hurricane. I think it was the worst one. We've had, I think, five or six since I've been living here and the house stood up fine. We didn't have a leak in it. But over on the ocean side around Westhampton, it caused a big tidal wave. A lot of people lost their lives there and a lot of buildings went. But down here it did rather queer things. One person said she had only one garage. She says the next morning there were two in the back yard. And it took things off the Sound beach and swept them way up inland you know. We didn't even know it was a hurricane, a terrible day. I was, we were in the store at the time, and Brother looked out and said, "I never saw it rain that hard before." Blew and pretty soon I noticed right next to our store there was a big limb of a tree from our house, dangling. From roof to roof there was a place about so big. I jumped across the roof, we got a rope around the tree and some fellows

come out and helped me pull the tree down. I was afraid that it would go through a window. And another thing, I had my car and my brother's car out in front the store and I thought, "Well, better get those in." There was a garage there. We had a lot back the store where we kept the horses and cows and a big wide door like that. It was open. I went to get the car in, it was all full of branches of trees and I had to chop them out with an ax to get the car in. I got my brother's in all right, an open shed. And my own, I got the car in and the door, I couldn't get it shut--the wind. I tied a rope to the axle of the car and tied one to the door and tried to pull it. I couldn't do it. Next thing, in the morning, I looked out and that door was out in our garden, great big wide door.

I: Donald wants to tell me about the special sale.

D: That's another story. Has to do with the Polish again. We had some writing paper we wanted to get rid of. Sid says, "Put it on the table there, put a sign, 'Special Sale, Writing Paper.'" One afternoon a fellow came in and says, "Want a pair of eye glasses." We said, "We don't keep eye glasses any more." We used to, you know, have a little tray of them. "What for you gat sign up, 'Speckle' sale."

Another funny story about the station. They put the chickens in the baggage car. You know, in the old days we had a lot of summer boarders out here. They sent trunks out in advance, and they'd check them on their tickets, and we delivered the baggage, bus driver and myself. And you could check trunks and suitcases and bicycles, and nothing else. One day fellow came in and he was moving up state, and he had a crate of chickens, 'bout so wide and so long, and about

twenty or thirty chickens in it, grown chickens. And he come in here and got his tickets and he wanted to check the chickens, you know, same as you would the baggage. You could send it by express and he did not seem to understand. He was determined we could check them chickens. And there was four of us in the station and he went to each one of us separate and we told him it just couldn't be done. Baggage went in one car and express stuff went in another. Finally, the train pulled out and the Station Agent says, "Chub, what'd that fellow finally do with those chickens?" Chub says, "He put 'em in the parlor car." Whatever came after that, we never knew. There was a vestibule there and he shoved them on the vestibule and they went in there.

End of tape

SECOND SECTION

The Suffolk Times

April 28, 1983

SAVE

Donald Gildersleeve Recalls Mattituck, Circa 1900

DONALD GILDERSLEEVE

north fork oral history

(EDITOR'S NOTE Donald Gildersleeve was born and raised in Mattituck, where his family owned and operated a large grocery/department store. He was interviewed in his Mattituck home by staff writer Maria Parson.)

I was born in Mattituck on December 17, 1892. Mattituck was a small town then. My father, James Andrew Gildersleeve, had a job in Port Jefferson and that's where he met my mother, Frances Hawkins. They had three or four children while they were living there and three died in infancy. Later they moved to Mattituck. Altogether, my mother had 12 children and I was the baby. The only thing I remember of my father – he died when I was three – was one day when I was just a little child, and I toddled into his store, where I wasn't supposed to be. A man with a black moustache swooped me up and smiled at me – that was my father, and it's the only memory I have of him.

I started school in Mattituck when I was four years old and went from the first grade through my first year of high school but by then I was already getting very deaf. My mother, she was deaf, too. She had a long ... what you'd call a speaking tube, and that helped a lot. Me, I went through every type of hearing aide ever made. The first one was what you call the carbon type. It had a big receiver that hung from your chest. I tried all the rest after that, but I guess for about six years now I haven't heard a thing.

My grandfather, Andrew Gildersleeve, was from Middle Island. He lived on a farm and by the time he was 12 years old he was already doing farm work. Then he learned the shoemaker's trade and later apprenticed out for several years as a carpenter. After he'd finished his apprenticeship, he bought a good suit of clothes and a chest of tools and started a business as a journeyman carpenter. The highest he ever got paid at that time was 71 cents a day. Eventually he got out to Cutchogue and Mattituck and raised his family there.

'We Sold Everything'

My grandfather built several buildings in Mattituck including the Presbyterian Church. In 1854 he built the Octagon Building on the corner of Love Lane. At that time there was a store on Pike Street owned by Barnabas Pike. It was a big store, a long two-story. My grandfather bought it and went into business with a Mr. John Wills. Then my grandfather died and my father and his brother, Arthur, took over the store together. You know where all those new shops are now on Pike Street? I mean the hairdresser and those other shops? Well, that's where the Gildersleeve Store was. It took up a whole block. We sold everything from groceries to overalls to workclothes to ladies wear – even corsets! There was also shoes, notions, hardware – and that was just on the first floor.

When I was a boy there was no fire department. There was bucket brigades. One night the store across the rail road tracks from our store burned down. 'Course there was no organization. Between our store and our house there was an old fashioned water pump with a wooden handle and the night of the fire they pumped it dry. After that, there began to be a demand for a fire department and one was organized in 1905, I think. They bought an old second-hand pumper, the handle was about so long, and you had to pump from each side. I remember pumping it once or twice.

When I was 19, I joined the department and the first night I joined the annual meeting for election of officers and so forth was going on. A chum of mine, a fellow by the name of Wickham, had been the secretary-treasurer for the company and when he came up for nomination he said, "Oh, I nominate Donald Gildersleeve." He was sick of the job and he was my chum so he picked on me! I held that job for 33 years. And then in 1932 or so the whole thing was reorganized and they had to have a board of fire commissioners with five commissioners and a secretary-treasurer, so they offered it to me. I had that second job for 32 years.

Making Friends with Roses

I remember several big fires – one of them in our own barn. Our store did deliveries, you know – took orders and delivered them. We had four horses, with six stables and a storage shed. Upstairs was a hayloft and next to that was a cow shed with one cow. Next to the cow shed was a hog pen and we kept two hogs in there. We lost them all in that fire. After the barn burned down there was a big bare strip and my brother says how'd you like to grow some vegetables in there? So I did, but they didn't turn out, except the carrots. After that I saw an advertisement for tulip bulbs so I bought some and they come up just like that. Then I saw an ad for rose bushes. I'd never raised them before but they thrived. Before long I had near 100 bushes. I had a wonderful time. Our house was next door to our store so I'd go out and cut a few roses and put them in a vase on the counter and then give them to customers to take along. I made a lot of friends through those roses. When I married I moved and I dug up most of them by hand and took them with me.

The Mattituck Literary Society was organized in my father's time. It was on Pike Street, just east of where "The Coffee Pot" is now. Every Tuesday night they'd have a program followed by dancing. The programs might be music or short plays and skits. It cost 25 cents for members and 50 cents for non-members. You ought to have seen some of those summer people crabbin' because they had to pay 50 cents. One thing, if you didn't have a program, then no dancing.

I remember one day a woman, she had tried hard to get a program together and wasn't having any luck. Some people liked to take part and some didn't. Anyway, she came around with a little skit and asked me if I'd take part in it. It was just a three-page script, and that night me and two of my friends got up there and performed it. We got through the first page just fine. Then we lost track of where we were. I was deaf and there was a girl standing in the wings trying to prompt me. She kept giving me a cue, but the only line I could think of was "I must catch that train." Finally the curtain came down and she stormed up to me and said, "I hate you!" Well, that wasn't in the script at all. When it was over, me and my friends grabbed each other and laughed and laughed. Literary Hall kept going until around World War 1, but then there weren't enough fellas around for the dancin' and some years later it was torn down.

Even though my hearing's gone, my eyes are still good, though my right eye's getting weaker. They used to have a song around here that went:

"Left little eye is a good little eye,
But my right eye likes to roam
If they don't stop making them so beautiful
I'll have to leave my right eye home"

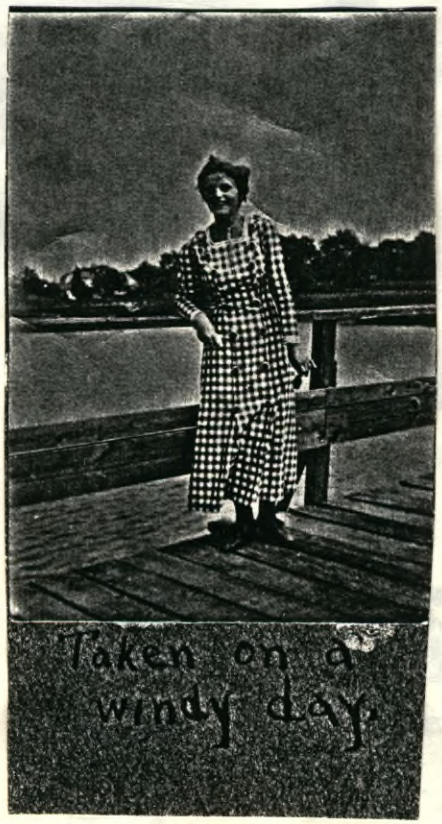
Did I ever think I'd live to be 90? I never gave it a thought. You come and you go.

The North Fork? I think vineyards are the coming thing. Potatoes seem to be going out. 'Course Alice and I, we're temperance people, but the farmers gotta make a living, don't you think?

Continued

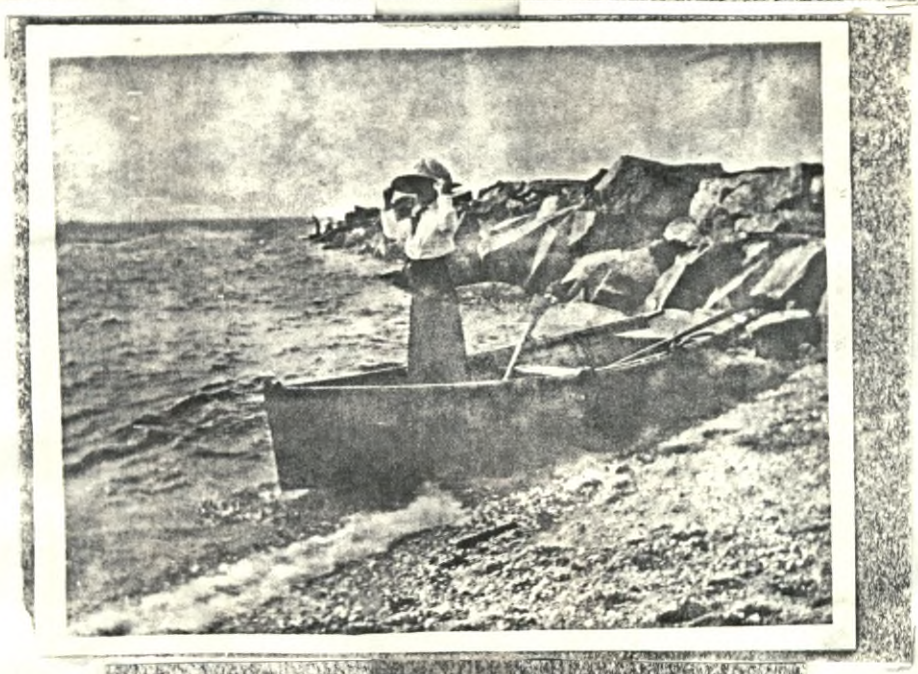
The following pictures of Donald and other young people are from the photograph album of his first wife, Vivien Duryee. Pictures in the album date from 1910 to about 1915.

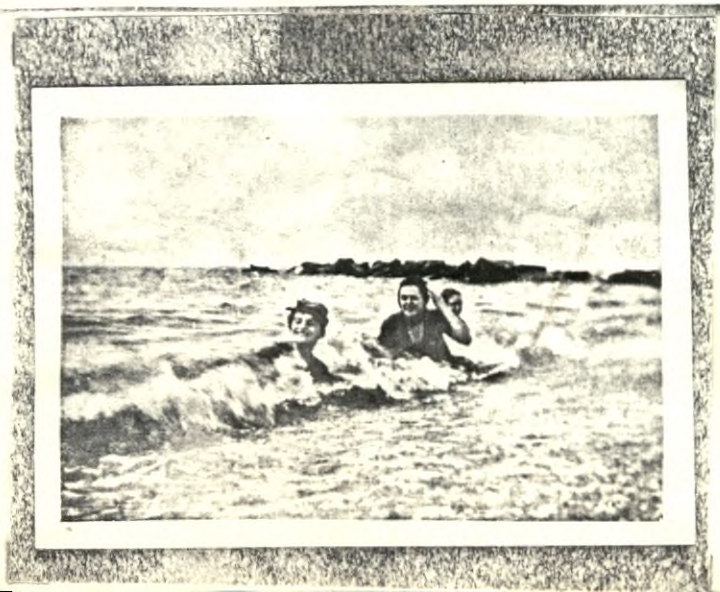
Photos kindness of N. Duryee



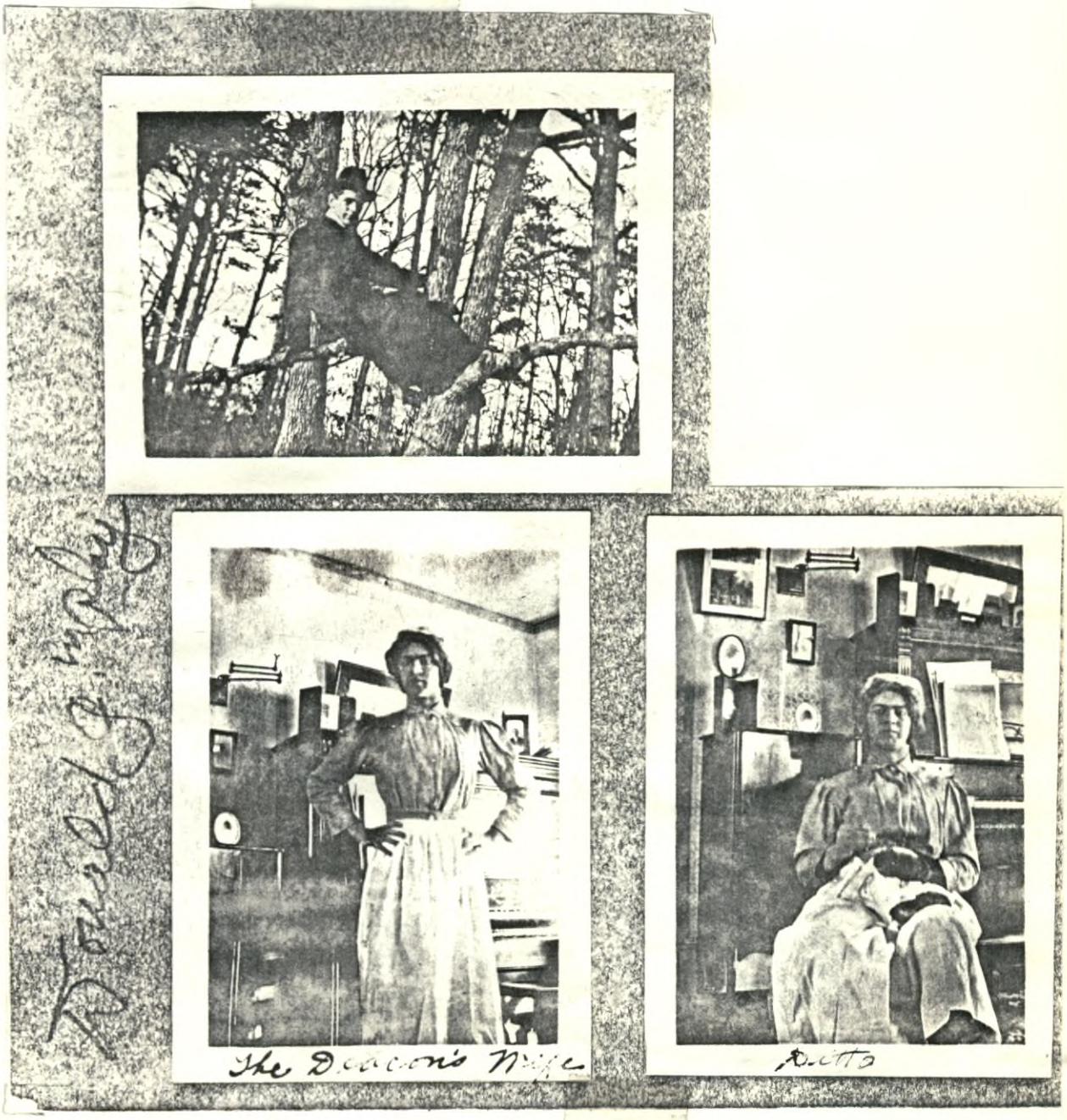
Vivien Duryee

(Photos kindness N. Duryee)





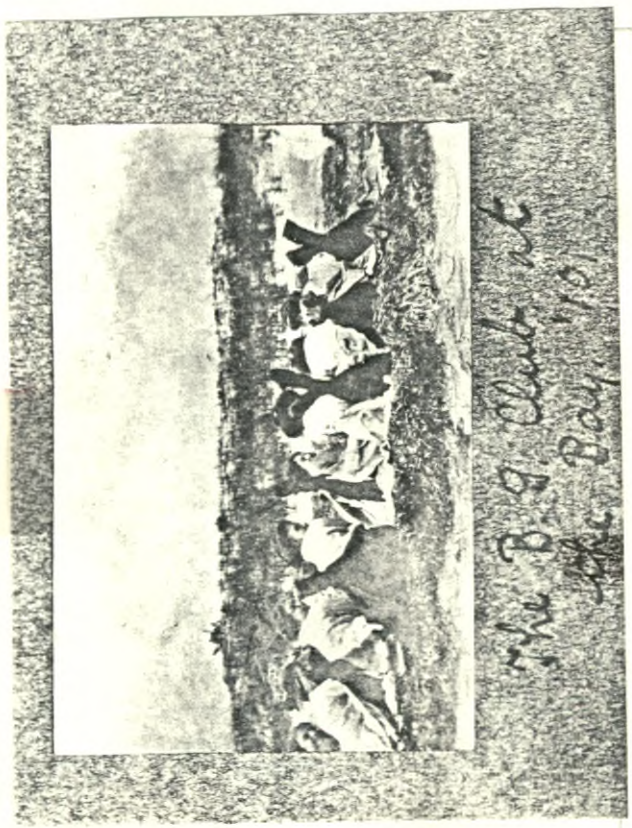
(Photos kindness N. Duryee)



When copies of the above pictures were sent to Donald, he replied: "....The snap shots bring back memories of perhaps around 1915. The play was a crazy one-act farce "The Donkey and the Wood Dealer" given at "Literary". I was Mrs. Deacon Darbey Deeker and Frank MacMillan was my henpecked husband. The Wood Dealer was John Pollack. It was full of laughs and made a hit".

36-DG-1

(Photos kindness
N. Duryee)



The names on the left side of the page:

Isabelle C.
Doll
Mildred
Evelyn
Mary Brady
May C.
Isabelle J.
Gertrude R.
Vivien D.

Photo Kindness of N. Duryee

See over page

Isabelle O.
Pearl
Mildred
Evelyn
Molly Brady
May C.
Belle J.
Gertrude R.
Theresa D.

At the Bay.

Decoration Day
1910.

"The Happy Nine"

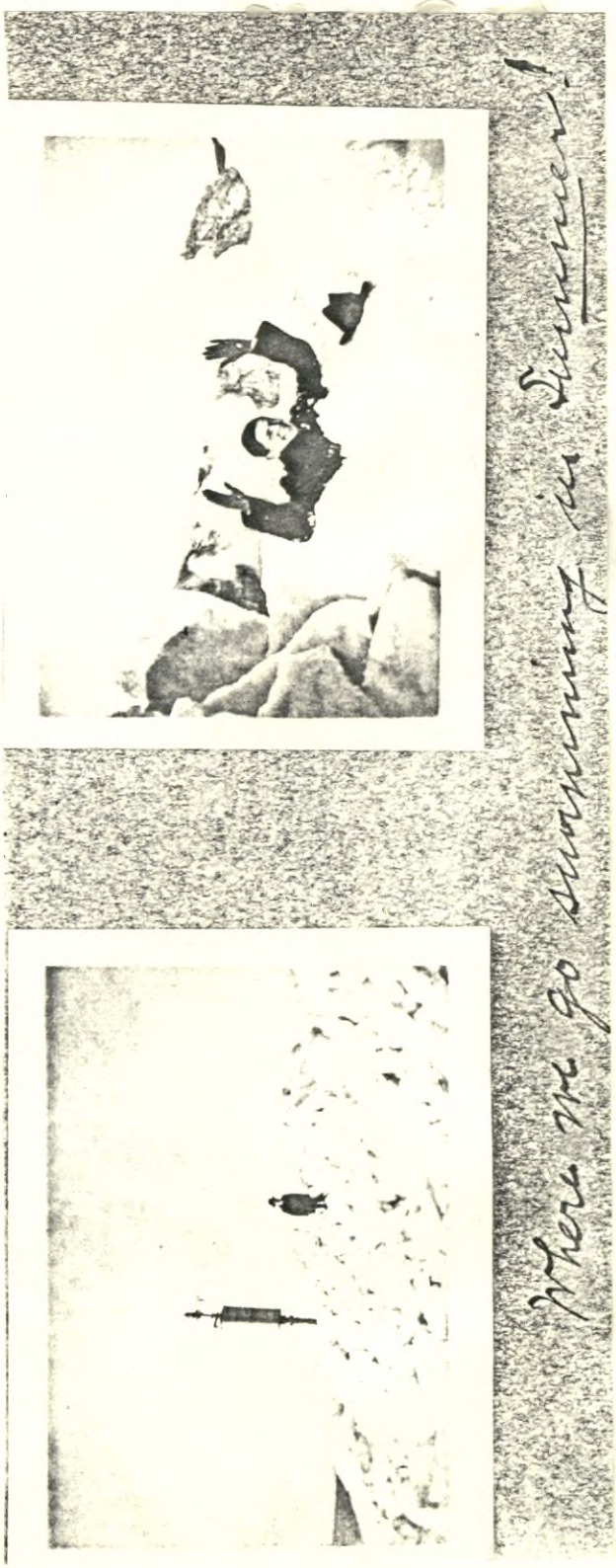
First meeting
of the D.G.'s

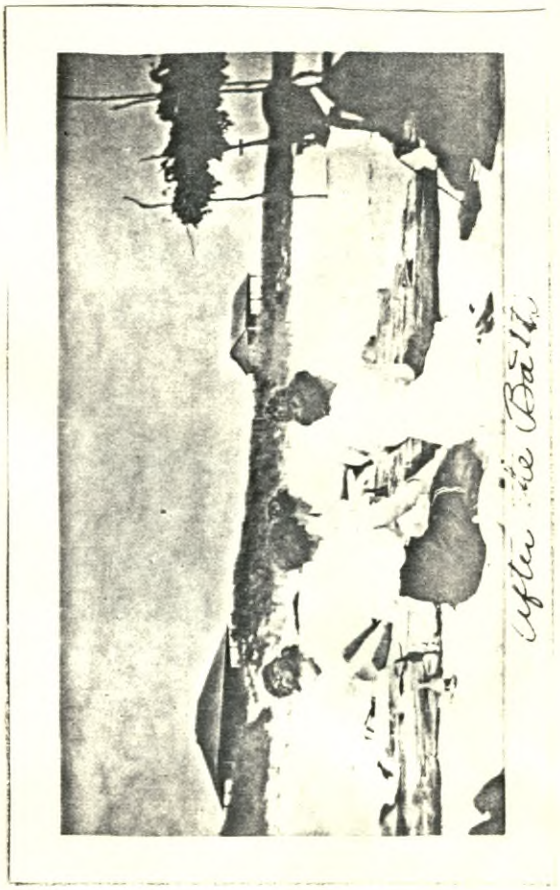
"Waisting Time"

"Feet"

See Over

Photo Kindness of N. Duryee





BIOGRAPHY

In March of 1982 when Donald Gildersleeve was eighty-nine years old, his wife Alice expanded on the autobiographical sketch, giving a brief biography. The following is exerpted from her account.

Donald went to Mattituck School which stood where the Library is today. He worked for the L.I. Railroad (station and freight house). Working in the Gildersleeve store with his brothers Sid and Jim, Donald clerked and carried mail to the Post Office and deposits to the Bank. He ordered the candy for the store and delivered the store orders by horse and buggy. Later Donald worked for the Duryee Hardware Store.

Donald married Vivian Duryee, daughter of Peter Harvey and Beulah Hallock in 1942. Vivian died in 1958. He was a widower for four years and then he married Alice L. Bolles, a public school teacher, the daughter of Lee and Ruth Bolles of Plattsburg, New York.

Donald was a member of the Mattituck Presbyterian Church and became a member of the Session, an Elder. Donald's grandfather James Wickham Reeve had given the property, and his great-grandfather Andrew Gildersleeve built the Sanctuary. Donald wrote the History of the Mattituck Presbyterian Church from 1715 to 1965. (It is in his Personal Scrapbook in the Library. Ed.)

When Donald was nineteen he joined the Fire Department. He was secretary-treasurer of the Department for thirty-two years. He then became secretary-treasurer of the Board of Fire Commissioners. He had this position for thirty-three years and in 1968 gave the work over to Arthur Fanning.

Donald has been a member of the Mattituck Chamber of Commerce, Mattituck Literary Society, Order of United American Junior Mechanics, Mattituck Free Library Associa-

tion, Mattituck Historical Society, Eastern Long Island Hospital Association, Long Island Council of Churches, First Parish Church of Jamesport and the American Bible Society.

His favorite spot in town is the Breakwater Beach. He loved to swim after work in the cold water of the Sound. He loved baseball, basketball and bowling. He always had roses. He had a garden out back of the old house and seventy-five in the ground on Wickham Avenue. He played Bridge with Herb Reeve, Carl LaValley and Cliff Hallock for many years.

Donald always had an interest in the Library and the Historical Society. (It made him happy when I crocheted afghans for them to raffle off.)

Donald used to write for the newspapers, the Riverhead News, the L.I. Traveler Watchman. He continued right up to this year to clip Mattituck news items for his Scrapbooks in the Library.

The following is taken from Donald Gildersleeve's Personal Scrapbook.

MATTITUCK IN THE '80's AND '90's

(Talk at the Mattituck Historical Society April 24, 1967. Repeated at Men's Brotherhood February 13, 1968.)

For those who wish to go way back in the past for Mattituck's early history, I recommend C.E. Craven's History of Mattituck, published in 1909.

To-night the subject is Mattituck of the 1880's and the 1890's, and a bit as I remember the early 1900's, with a brief preview of events leading up to it.

Among the most important happenings of the very early period was the founding of the Presbyterian Church in 1715, the coming of the railroad in 1844, the spread and development and improvement of farming and farming methods through the years.

We have had an established Post Office since September 25, 1802. Until around 1890 the office was generally in the store or establishment of whomever happened to be Post Master at the time. The first real Post Office building was built while Sidney P. Tuthill was Post Master. It was located where the Duryee Hardware Store now stands.* A few years later it was moved across the street to the corner where the Bank is now located. The vacated corner became the site of George Fischer's meat market. This sort of brings us up to the period.

Going South from Fischer's, on the east side of Love Lane, was a Chinese Laundry, Reeve and Hall's, Con Grabie's

*In 1984, the Raynor-Suter Hardware Store.

blacksmith shop, Dick Cox's ice cream parlor and store, a barber shop, and the octagon house on the corner. This was owned by John Wells, and the corner was always known as Wells's Corner. Directly across, going North, was the old Mattituck House, Riley Brothers' barn, a harness shop kept by "Harnessmaker Reeve", and the Post Office on the corner. Opposite Fischer's, on Pike Street, was the Gildersleeve store. Across the street, on Love Lane was the Reeve and Tuthill store. This is now on the Main Road, and became Jim's Diner.* At one time a Dr. Hubert Klein had a drug store west of Reeve and Tuthill's, and a bit further west was the Long Island Railroad Station.

Now from the Post Office west on Pike Street, next was a small shoemaker shop, a "tinsmith store", an Abraham and Straus agency, a barber shop, and a wooden arch under which passengers from the railroad trains could take a short cut to the Mattituck House. Library Hall was not built until 1904. This territory was and still is, Mattituck's principal shopping district.

Not that there were not other industries. The 1880's and early 1890's were, I believe, some of Mattituck's most progressive and productive years. Without going into research of exact dates, a few of which I have, let's consider some of these Mattituck ventures of the time.

There was the Hudson canning factory on what we called the North Road, (now Sound Avenue) which gave employment to a goodly number of men and women at satisfactory wages. They

* In 1984 the Wishbone Inn, recently redecorated on the outside.

specialized, I think, in canning tomatoes and asparagus. The Hudson label, I can see it now,--a bearded man wearing a ruff--was a mark of quality. Mrs. Adelaide Tuthill spoke in some detail about this factory in a talk to the Historical Society. The factory still stands. Since the canning days, it has changed hands and businesses several times.

Another factory that came into being about the same time was the Hallock and Duryee fertilizer factory, built near the L.I.R.R. tracks and on a road that still retains the name Factory Avenue, though the building was destroyed by fire perhaps forty years ago. This was a fertilizer manufacturing enterprise established by P. Harvey Duryee and Otto P. Hallock. They were both members of the Mattituck Cornet Band, and the band played at the opening, which was said to be an occasion of great jollification. A newspaper reported that some of their product was produced by grinding up horseshoe crabs for which they paid 75 cents per 100, and sold the manufactured product at $15 per ton. One of their problems was to procure a sufficient supply of the crabs.

The George L. Penny lumber business came into existence in 1890, and has flourished and prospered under the ownership and management of three George L. Pennys, George Sr., George Jr. and George the 3rd, with a George the 4th to carry on the good name. Now under the management of George the 3rd, the business is still expanding, with a second plant at Greenport.

Like the Penny Company, the Mattituck Greenhouses on both sides of Suffolk Avenue have carried on under three

generations of the Reeve family. Its founder was Thomas E. Reeve who began the business in the 1880's. "Tom Ed" took into his partnership his son Halsey H., the firm being known as T.E. Reeve & Son.* Later it became H.H. Reeve & Sons, after the senior member died. The sons, Herbert and Elwood, carried on the business after the death of their father, and Herbert carried on alone after the death of Elwood. Just recently (1967) the management has been by John Wickham of Cutchogue. During the nearly eighty years of the industry the Reeves have raised and sold such varied products as tomatoes, lettuce, cucumbers, cauliflower, radishes, carnations, snapdragons, and chrysanthemums.

Mention of cauliflower recalls a news item in a local paper of the 1880's that a Mattituck farmer once received $12.00 for one barrel. (It was originally shipped in barrels). I have also read that a New York City commission man, John Duryee, was largely responsible for cauliflower becoming a major Long Island crop.** While visiting his Mattituck agents he saw and tasted cauliflower for the first time. He was so enthused about its taste and qualities that he advised and encouraged local farmers to increase its production.

There must have been a fairly good acreage in the late '80's, for Alart and McGuire, a west end firm, sold stock and erected a factory on Wickham Avenue for the pickling of this commodity and cucumbers. The ownership and management has changed hands several times, and at the present time is

* Herbert Reeve told me that he thought that his father, Halsey H., was really the one that organized the business, but that he and "Tom Ed" operated it together.

** According to Hope Furnivall Duryee, this 'Cauliflower' man was her grandfather, John W. Duryee, who settled in Oregon (north of Mattituck).

a potato packing plant operated by Henry Jacobs. Other operators before Jacobs, S.W. Tuthill & Co., Cedrick H. Wickham, F.H. Vahlsing.

Another boon to local farmers was the raising of cabbage for seed for the J.M. Lupton firm, who found a worldwide market. Another man who found the foreign markets beneficial was a young man, Theodore F. Miller, who came from Brooklyn and specialized in the breeding of fancy poultry. He was said to have built up a large business, and the hatching eggs were shipped to many parts of the country, and abroad. He was so enthusiastic about his feathered friends that everyone knew him as "Chicken" Miller.

Mattituck also had a creamery, located near Marratooka Lake. It was established by Charles W. Wickham, and had a capacity of 500 pounds of butter daily. This was but one of his interests. Another was the harvesting of ice from the lake, and retailing it in the summer months.

Another Wickham, J.Wood, was Mattituck's plumber. He had a store on Pike Street which supplied the neighborhood with coal stoves, kitchen ranges, base burners, and "pot-bellies", and accessories. Everyone burned coal and wood. The lumber people and the produce dealers supplied the coal. At one time $5.00 per ton.

The undertaker was Sidney P. Tuthill, who was later succeeded by his son Henry P. and later by his grandson, the present Sidney P. The Tuthill family has been leaders in the fields of produce, coal, farm machinery and insurance. Henry P. became an influential Republican leader in Suffolk County.

One of the most popular places in town was "Dick" Cox's ice cream parlor and candy store (remember Lowney's?).

Mr. Cox had started it in the late 80's as a bakery, but made the change. The ice cream and sodas had a greater public appeal.

It was the horse and buggy age. Needless to say, Con Grabie's blacksmith shop nearby Cox's was always one of the busiest places. Mr. Grabie plied his trade even as the automobile began to supplant the horse. There was plenty other iron work besides horseshoeing.

There were two meat markets, or butcher shops as we called them, George Fischer's and Reeve and Hall's. The latter won fame for its sausage, a special recipe of their own. In addition to their local customers, they supplied some New York City hotels. The shop was also noted for years for its "little back room" where business and professional men gathered daily to discuss the affairs of the day, and to smoke and play cards. They were all representative men of the community, and helpful in many ways. People generally referred to them as the Butcher Shop Crowd, sometimes Gang. But not at all in the sense we consider present day gangs.

Abraham and Straus of Brooklyn had an agency here, on Pike Street. It was a small store, where one could go and place his order. The merchandise would be shipped out in big packing cases by L.I.R.R. freight,and orders would be delivered to his door by the A & S representative.

An almost forgotten store was the grocery store of Abe Brown on Hamilton Avenue. Mr. Brown did a greater part of his business by loading his "peddle wagon" and selling from house to house. Like other grocery stores of the

period, he accepted eggs in lieu of cash, and shipped the eggs to market.

The Gildersleeve store was established back in the 1850's or 1860's by Andrew Gildersleeve. His sons, James and Irad worked with him, and in time ran the store as Gildersleeve Brothers. After the death of James, his sons, James, Jr. and Sidney carried on, using the same name, until they retired in 1954. The building was razed in 1955. It had always been the policy to take orders and deliver, first by horse and wagon, after by automobile. Orders were solicited in the morning and delivered the same afternoon, or in some cases, the following day. Not only groceries were sold, but merchandise of every description. Old time customers still remember their famous old cheddar cheese. Sometimes they called it "strong cheese", sometimes skipper cheese, and often "rat trap" cheese. There was a special brand of coffee, New Orleans molasses pumped into your brown jug from a fifty gallon barrel, and samp. Ladies liked the hundred patterns of percale, the hosiery, ribbons and laces. Men could find most anything in the clothing line.

Just across Love Lane was the Reeve and Tuthill store, also carrying groceries and general merchandise. Upstairs was a hall, opened in 1879 as Apollo Hall. This was the place for dances and plays, which were presented with great frequency by the dramatic club, meetings of the Literary Society, and political rallies. The members of the Jr. O,U.A.M. held their meetings here, with annual banquet every year. Library Hall was built in 1904.

The schoolhouse of the period was a four room building, with four teachers for the eight grades. It was located where the Free Library is now. Just east was the Mattituck Athletic Grounds with its quarter mile race track circling it, and the baseball field in the center. Mattituck had at the time one of the best baseball teams on the Island.

These were summer boarder days. City dwellers with a week or two summer vacation came out on the trains and found Mattituck well equipped with boarding houses. Three of the best known places were located on Mattituck Creek. On the west side were Ingleside and Shady Point, two large homey places where the boarders were generously fed and lodged. Both places were generally filled to capacity, and when there were not enough beds neighbors would "put them up" in their spare bedrooms. Ingleside* was owned and operated by Mr. and Mrs. Seymour H. Tuthill; Shady Point by Mr. and Mrs. William DuBois. Across the creek, on a point was Dr. Hubert Klein's Mattituck Harbor Inn, likewise enjoying a good patronage.

In the village was the Mattituck House, dating back to colonial times, then owned by the Riley Brothers; the Glenwood Hotel, owned by John Zenzius, and the Eureka House, owned by Mr. and Mrs. Clement MacMillan. All of these places had some of their regular visitors, some of whom came

* Ingleside boarding house. T.E. Bay, who boarded there for years, once told me that he had sometimes paid as low as $8.00 per week for room and board, and that Mr. Tuthill, the proprietor, had said that he made more money in those days than in later years when board and expenses were both higher.

year after year, and quite a number made Mattituck their permanent home. At the foot of Love Lane on Mattituck Creek was a boarding house conducted by Mrs. Mulroy. Later it became the "Anniston" and still later, The Old Colonial Inn conducted by Mr. & Mrs. Tyson Hamilton.

Much more could be told about this era and its people. Mattituck had its share of standout characters. Some have been noted for their business acumen, some for religious influence, some for all-round good qualities, some for their personality, and some for always providing a laugh by their antics or funny sayings.

I've lived here all my life. I think Mattituck is a pretty fine little town, with an interesting past, a live present, and a progressive and wholesome future.

POEMS

From the Personal Scrapbook
of Donald R. Gildersleeve

Mattituck History Project
Friends of the Mattituck Free Library
1984

TO THE AUTHOR

Dear Donald,

The Friends of the Library are very grateful to you for the gift to our Mattituck History Project of your Personal Scrapbook. The documents from World War II, the newspaper clippings and the copies of your talks at Literary make a valuable addition to our historical collection.

But what is delightful is your poetry. This spring the annual poetry meeting of the Friends will feature your poems. The meeting also celebrates the completion of the INDEX to the 23-volume Gildersleeve Scrapbook, a happy occasion made more enjoyable by your poetic reminiscences of life in Mattituck when Dr. M. and Dr. Jones took good care of you.

So thank you again for your gift. We send our kindest personal regards to you and to Mrs. Gildersleeve.

Friends of the Mattituck Free Library

May 1984

"Magazine Cover Girls"

Written by D.R.G. and Read by Mrs. E. K. Morton at "Literary." (Girls posing in costume) Date not known. Probably before World War I.

McClures, Red Book, Saturday Evening Post,
Cosmopolitan, Hearst's, Photo Play. Most
Ev'rywhere I roam, whatever girls I see,
The magazine cover girl is the one for me.

School Girl

First comes the young school girl, blitheful and gay-
Or oftentimes petulant, rubbed the wrong way.
Her immature mind full of sorrows and joys,
Of vexatious algebra, Latin, and boys,
Geometry, fiction, historical names,
Dances and picnics and basketball games.

Riding Girl

The riding girl comes next, with healthy, ruddy, face.
Athletic, sportively inclined, always eager for a race,
And as she gallops away along her winding course,
My heart cries out "A horse! My flivver for a horse!"

Society Girl

And in her exclusive set, the society girl holds sway;
A debutant by night, an idler by day.
Skill'd in the correctness of manner and speech,
She seems to some a prude, but she's really a peach.
A slave to formality, a conq'ror of style,
This competent miss is as good as her smile.

"Magazine Cover Girls"

Written by D.R.G. and Read by Mrs. E. K. Morton at "Literary." (Girls posing in costume) Date not known. Probably before World War I.

Aeroplane Girl

Upward the course of the airplane heads its nose,
Its dashing young pilot in calmest compose-
Upward and onward, mid breezes that chill,
Looping the loop for occasional thrill,
With her at the wheel, then what could be sweeter
Than soaring aloft like an overgrown skeeter?

Oriental Girl

Far away in the East, there lives the Oriental miss,
Enjoying in her native way a life of constant bliss,
Her greatest charms - being dainty, quaint and nice.
Her fav'rite foods - chop-suey, rats and rice.

Skating Girl

The winter's dreaded days are naught but days of joy
For she who skates. The cold does not annoy.
Lithe, supple, graceful, a confident thing,
With ease cuts the grapevine and elephant's wing.

School Teacher

And in her noisy mansion, skill'd to rule,
The village schoolma'am has her little school.
Feared by her pupils, for to heed not her command
A deftly wielded ruler is felt across the hand.
And they tremble, fearing, wond'ring, as each rebuke occurs,
How one small hand could hit as hard as hers.

Sweet, Innocent, Girl

Vain, very vain, my weary search to find
The quiet, unassuming, innocent of mind.
To find one such, in vicious times like these
Requires the scrutinizing search of a keen Diogenes.

"Magazine Cover Girls"

Written by D.R.G. and Read by Mrs. E. K. Morton at "Literary." (Girls posing in costume) Date not known. Probably before World War I.

The Vamp

Ill fares that land, 'tis going to the bad,
Where vamps accumulate, and men are snared
By whispering lips, and eyes that talk,
Her shimmying dance, her sylphlike walk.
Depart, Oh vamp! From thy flirtatious mood
And learn the luxury of being good.

The Movie Actress

Most highly worshipped of her sex, the motion picture queen,
Portrays our lives, our sorrows, joys, our passions on the screen.
Skilled in her art to thrill, to make us weep or laugh,
We love her face, her form, her hair, her very lithograph.

The Bride

What other day in woman's life gives greater joy and pride
Than when the organ's solemn tones announce "Here comes the bride"?
The cynosure of all eyes as she comes into the room,
Totally eclipsing the insignificant groom.

Bobbed Hair Girl

The traditional glory of woman is robbed
Since fashion decreed that her hair must be bobbed.
The first glimpse in the mirror brings tears and regrets,
The thought that it's style the consolation she gets.
And even while fashion's brightest arts decoy,
The heart, distrusting, asks if this be joy.

Nurse

And to cheer the hospital's fearful gloom,
As welcome as the rose's bloom,
The nurse, in dress of spotless white,
For the patient's eyes a glorious sight.
A smile she gives, and strokes the fevered brow
With tenderness, Oh, hospital were paradise enow!

Mike

(A Spider)

Written by D.R.G.

Poor Mike is gone.
Was killed. Is dead.
A heavy blow across the head
Killed him--
Completely. Absolutely...
He fought against death
Resolutely.
Freedom for ye, ye flies and skeeters.
Nevermore will his sticky web greet yers.
His life is o'er,
To death he yields--
But there's plenty more
In Flanders fields.

A Gift to Mother During Her Illness

Written by D.R.G.

This little set of finest glass
You can plainly see is full of class.
It ought to last a year or longer
If used for grape juice--nothing stronger.
For dear knows it should be much thicker
To hold a dose of bootleg liquor.

In days when Doctor M...

Above was written after an attack of "flu," probably in the 1920's. Rewritten from memory February 10, 1975. Not quite the same as the original. D.R.G.

In days when Doctor M. used to cure my ills
His fee was low and he sent no bills.
His voice was sharp and his manner rough;
It seemed that he always was in a huff.
"Sore throat? Yes, you've got it" and his eyes would glower
"Take this medicine, spoonful each hour."
Then, wiping his hands on his coat, in lieu of towels,
Would inquire, solicitiously
"How's your bowels?"

But now I go to Doctor Jones
Who speaks in calm, unruffled tones,
Pokes a thermometer in my mout'
While he stethoscopes me round about.
"Take a spoonful of this,-the bottle says when,
And stay right in bed till I see you again."
Then, wiping his hands on the whitest of towels,
Inquires solicitously
"How's your bowels?"

L'Envoi

So doctors come and doctors depart.
But whether friendly or cross
They're all good at heart.
They may advise kindly, or scold you with growls,
But always solicitously
Inquire "How's your bowels?"

FORECAST FOR 1916

Written by D.R.G. and Read at Literary.

January

The New Year comes around again
As it's always done before,
And we hope before its over
That they'll end the doggone war.

February

As it's Leap Year, February
Gets an extra day and night,
Which gives women one more day to talk,
And men one more to fight,

March

The girls will have their parties galore,
But the fellows will not care a rap-
For they don't have to bother with fashions or frills
To go out at night to shoot crap.

April

About a hundred years from now
(This is confidential information).
The Long Island Railroad will build
A brand new Railroad station.

May

There'll be an ocean liner sunk
With great American loss.
And the Kaiser will say "I'm sorry,
"But you should 'nt come across."

June

The warm sunshiny days of June
Will bud the fragrant rose.
And a number of young men will mourn
That this month school will close.*

*Teachers were very popular with the young men. D.R.G.

(Continued)

(Continued) FORECAST FOR 1916

July

The summer boarders will come now
To show us how things should be run.
But though we've ideas of our own
We'll let them have their annual fun.

August

By this time the Mattituck Ball team
Will be put to the midsummer test.
And will not be last with the small teams
But up at the top with the best.

September

September will usher in the Fall
And its gentle Autumn breezes
Will have us all a-snuffling
With hay fever's tears and sneezes.

October

The melancholy days have come,
The saddest of the year.
For stoves will have to go up soon
And house-cleaning time is here.

November

Election time looms up again.
You may be sure it will inspire
T.R. to throw his hat in the ring
And call somebody a liar.

December

The farmer will say that times are hard
That the country is run by a crank
But he'll pay up his bills and buy a new car
And put some more kale in the bank.
And he'll say that it's the worst year
That ever he has seen.
And the outlook is no better
For nineteen seventeen.

Resolutions

Written by D.R.G. and Read at "Literary," January, 1917

Resolved to make new resolutions
And start the New Year right.
(This stuff, I know, I can't make go,
I do it just to make a show.
It may last a day and night.)

Resolved to aid the suffragettes.
The dears should have their vote.
(This'll please the wife and quell a strife
That we've had all our married life.
But the whole blamed business gets my goat.)

Resolved to quit the poker game.
It's too demoralizing.
(This game last year did cost me dear,
It soon would have me broke, that's clear.
My losses were surprising.)

Resolve to talk preparedness
And advocate my rights.
(But if the war comes to my door
I'll take back all I said before-
I don't believe in fights.)

Resolved to take the family
To the movies twice a week.
(For anyway, though I said "Nay,"
They'd take the dough and go anyway,
So I can't even make a squeak.)

Resolved to swear off smoking.
This pledge won't be forgotten.
(At an early day I'll give away
The cigars wife gave me Christmas Day-
They certainly were rotten.)

Resolved to go to church more.
I'll go there every Sunday.
(The family goes to look at clothes
While I drop off in a peaceful doze
That rests me up for Monday.)

Resolved to be economical
And try to save some money.
(I'm a lucky gent if I save a cent,
For a penny saved is a penny spent.
If the wife doesn't spend it, it's funny.)

1931--1932

REGENERATE!

The worst year we recall to mind
  Is nineteen thirty-one.
We're more than glad to leave be-
  hind
 Old nineteen thirty-one.
The whole darned world was sick,
    depressed,
Affairs domestic badly messed,
And Gandhi went around half
   dressed
 In nineteen thirty-one.

The earth just loafed upon its axis
 In nineteen thirty-one.
We sold our farms to pay our
   taxes
 In nineteen thirty-one.
Famine and flood stalked side by
   side:
Our faith in statesmen flopped
    and died;
Santa Claus committed suicide
  In nineteen thirty-one.

The Japanese started another war
 In nineteen thirty-one,
With the last one still to be paid
   for
 In nineteen thirty-one.
Ten millions had no work at all.
There was panic in the street call-
    ed Wall.
And only gangsters made a haul
 In nineteen thirty-one.

(Continued)

(Continued) 1931--1932 REGENERATE!

Grant us, Lord, grant us a change
In nineteen thirty-two.
From graft and greed and ethics
strange
In nineteen thirty-two.
Give us an era of good feeling,
Of sweet content and honest deal-
ing;
Let us all enjoy free wheeling
In nineteen thirty-two.

Make nations here and over seas
In nineteen thirty-two.
Disperse their fears and jealousies
In nineteen thirty-two.
Let Christians rally to their
church,
Gloom and despair leave in the
lurch,
And knock the demagogues off
their perch
In nineteen thirty-two.

May the county fathers quell their
guile
In nineteen thirty-two.
But build that bridge to Shelter
Isle
In nineteen thirty-two.
Let Diogenes the whole world scan
And turn up with an honest man!
Lets unite on a worthwhile plan
In nineteen thirty-two.
--D. R. GILDERSLEEVE
Mattituck, New York.

This is a newspaper clipping. It appears that it was published in another paper than those on the North Fork.

THE LITERARY SOCIETY

In November 1984, Mr. and Mrs. Gildersleeve moved to an adult home in upper New York State. They wrote a number of letters to the Library and to friends. The following excerpts from several of the letters give a good description of the Literary Society so often mentioned by our oral authors.

"The Literary Society was organized in the early 1900's. Society members, men and women, bore the well known names of the period, Reeve, Tuthill, Wickham, Morton, Young, Horton, Hallock, Gildersleeve.....It was really a wonderful thing for Mattitucck, also had members from far away as Southold, and an orchestra in later years, from Greenport.....Meetings were every other Tuesday evening from 8 to 12, with a program selected by a committee of 3. Dancing till 12, very popular.....One rule-- no program, no dance.....Members (male) paid 25 cents for dancing-- visitors 50 cents. Visitors were general summer boarders. Some would howl at the half dollar charge.....The association lasted till World War One when few men were around for the dancing. Mrs. M. was secretary for many years. Father, Uncle C. and I active."

(Mrs. M., the wife of Dr. Morton. Uncle C., Charlie Gildersleeve.)

A letter from Donald printed in the Peconic Bay 'hopper gives a good description of how the Christmas tree was lighted.

Peconic Bay Shopper December '83

The following is a letter from
Mr. Donald Gildersleeve of Mattituck

Dear Friends,

My friend Goldie's Thanksgiving verses reminded me so much of the same holiday dinners at my own home around 1900 to 1905. The same crowded dinner table, squeezing in possibly 25 family members, and about the same varied and generous array of chicken and turkey with the fixins. With the same pies of course.

As for Goldie, I had always admired him as a baseball star, and also as an amatuer actor, and knew he taught school. But until now, I never knew he was a poet, what a man!

So I began to reminisce about Christmas in The Mattituck Presbyterian Church (again the same circa). Christmas Eve was the really big celebration. It was the night for the Sunday School's Christmas program, which I think, every member of the school's 200 enrollment took some part in. The youngest boys and girls were naturally the stars. You can't beat them for entertainment.

The real thrill of the evening was usually the Christmas tree. A few days before, a crew of husky men located a huge and perfect Cedar tree, lugged it to the church and mounted it in what was then called the right wing. Usually the tip touched the ceiling of the tall church.

The ladies of the parrish then took over. Three or four of the fussiest women aided by three or four of the meekest men had, in time, every candle and ornament in exactly the right spot.

Then the wonderful entertainment ensued, Santa Claus, sleigh bells, and the lighting of that Mammoth tree. The candles were of varied colors, placed approximatley three inches apart and held on the branch by a spring clip. All were lighted and the great applause was heard. Every now and then a small fire was noticed, but there was never any worry, the men were prepared, pales of water were placed at the base of the tree and long poles tipped with sponges were raised to each tiny blaze as we kids kept a sharp eye out to report any fire.

Then followed the distribution of presents. Sunday School teachers to children, children to Sunday School teachers. It was often said that no Sunday School teacher ever needed to buy a handkerchief after christmas!

Reverend Charles E. Craven was the minister at that time. The Sunday School superintendent was Henry J. Reeve. Benjamin Kirkup was the assistant.

A NOTE ON THE GILDERSLEEVE SCRAPBOOKS

Donald Gildersleeve kept scrapbooks of newspaper clippings about Mattituck covering the years from 1912 to 1982. He gave these scrapbooks to the Mattituck Free Library as he filled them. In all there are twenty-four scrapbooks. They have been indexed and are on the reserve shelf of the Library. In order to preserve the material, they have been microfilmed.

In addition, the Library has on reserve a copy of his Personal Scrapbook which contains some of his writings and many interesting historical items. Some of the material from this Scrapbook has been included with this transcription.

Mattituck History Project

418

Tape: 36-DG-1

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

name: Donald Gildersleeve

birth date: December 17, 1892

place: Mattituck

father's name: James Andrew Gildersleeve, born Cutchogue, Mar. 20, 1845

mother's name: Frances Rogers Hawkins, born Pt. Jefferson, Dec. 28, 1846

childhood: Siblings: Frank, Fannie, Anna, Henry, Esther, James, Helen, Robert, Sidney, Cornelia, Louis.

education: Mattituck school

job training:

work: At Station and freight house of Long Island Railroad, Gildersleeve General Store, Duryee Hardware store, Wrote for local papers for many years.

official positions: Elder, Mattituck Presbyterian Church. Treasurer for thirty-two years of the Fire Department.

member of: Mattituck Presbyterian Church and of First Parish Church, Jamesport, Fire Department, Chamber of Commerce, Mattituck Literary Society, Mattituck Historical Society.

special activities, project, hobbies: Sports--baseball, basketball and bowling, Rose gardening, Mattituck Historical Society. Compiled the twenty-two volume Gildersleeve Scrapbook of local newspaper clippings, now at the Mattituck Free Library.

spouses' names: Vivian Duryee, Alice L. Bolles

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MATTITUCK ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

38-R&AT-1

Old Days

Table of Contents

Persons and places mentioned: Gosman-Tuthill's Dock; Apollo Theatre; Roy Reeve; John Donovan; Pete Aldrich; Frank Tuthill; Ernest Tuthill; Clarence Tuthill; Tessla's Tower; Austin Tuthill; Old Mill at Peconic; the Hamptons; Raynor Wickham; Brooklyn Central Business School; Frank Lupton; Elmer Tuthill; Ben Tuthill; Barkers; United American Mechanics; Christmas; Salvation Army; Boy Scouts.

Autobiographical Sketches

T

MAPS, PICTURES

MATTITUCK ORAL HISTORY

Contents of Tape No. 38-R&AT-1
Oral Authors: Raymond Tuthill
Ann Tuthill
Place of Interview: Authors' home on Deephole Creek

Date of Interview: Winter, 1978
Interviewer: Richard Mack

Old Days

(Looking at photographs)

RT: This was a picture off an airplane taken in 1925. See, here's my house, here's an old scallop sloop. They used to go scalloping, you know. The reason this is all dark, those days we had seaweed here. All this is seaweed. Here, of course is a sandy beach. That's Deephole Creek. Yep. There's more houses down there now. That's mine where we are now.

I: There were fewer trees then.

RT: Oh yes, yes.

(Interruption)

RT: I don't know, but you're thinking about this year's snow, this year's snow we think's so terrible. This is a picture I took, March 24, 1916. Look at that, with the bob-sleds. Probably had three tons of oysters on that. And here's March 28, up at the Cutchogue station. Look at that snow, snow bank. The snowplow brought up that.....This is old Cutchogue baseball team, back in 1913. They're all dead except me. I took them down there in a sloop, a sailboat.

(Interruption)

I: What years were you in the banking business?

RT: Why the bank opened in Cutchogue, the First National Bank of Cutchogue, in 1924. And I was there until I retired, say about forty-two years.

I: But you were living here then.

RT: Yes.

I: What position did you have?

RT: I was cashier, until we merged, and then I was the

Secretary-Treasurer of the North Fork Bank..... There's a snowplow that came off of a morning train and the engineer didn't know it was off until they stopped in Cutchogue. And two fellows, two men, jumped and weren't hurt at all, I guess.
I: Is that your boat?
RT: No. No, no. That's a big three-masted schooner, brought in the lumber off the Gosman-Tuthill's Dock.
I: You took that baseball team to Cutchogue. How big was your boat?
RT: That was just a catboat with power.
I: What kind of engine?
RT: Gasoline.
(Interruption)
I: Were you ever in the Apollo Theatre?
RT: Was I in it?
I: Did you dance there?
RT: Oh sure.
I: Do you remember any films you saw?
RT: No. Wasn't much movies then.
AT: Look, around 1912, 1913.... What was that song you know? 'Poor Pauline'? The series. Did you ever hear of that, The Perils of Pauline? Every single Friday --
RT: No Ann.
AT: Every Saturday night in Riverhead they had it. And I suppose they had it in Mattituck. I didn't live here then.
RT: I don't think so. I don't believe they had any movies at that time. Oh, I remember they had one movie of the train, went from Buffalo to New York. A famous name. T'wasn't New York. It was the Broadway Limited, I guess. Just shows that train. That's the only movin' picture they had.
I: What were some of the dances you did then?
RT: Oh, we had a waltz. We had, yes, three dances. Square set --
AT: Fox trot...
RT: Waltz and two-step..
AT: One-step...
RT: And Lancers. Those three dances.
I: Lancers?
AT: That's a square dance.

I: Was it a country band?
RT: Oh, just a country band.
I: About how many members would you say were in the band?
RT: Weren't much of a band.
AT: Generally, wasn't it usually we had a piano and a violin to dance by?
RT: Generally it was Roy Reeve and John Donovan.
AT: Yes.
RT: Roy Reeve played the piano and John Donovan played the fiddle and Pete Aldrich, he played the cornet.
AT: You're not talking about as late as 1915?
RT: No, no. We go back, 1905.
AT: He's ten years older than I am, so he goes back ten or twelve years, around there.
I: Would this be Saturday night that you'd go?
RT: Oh, different times. They had the Literary there. Used to have the Literary there every other Tuesday. Had to have a little program, and then they danced.
I: What kind of program?
RT: Oh anything they had around.
I: Just a little play type of thing?
AT: Yes.
RT: I sang in the sextet there one time.
I: Do you remember the names of the sextet?
RT: Why sure. There was my brother Ralph, Philip Tuthill, Terry Tuthill, John Downs, myself. I can't remember any of the others. I think we had a lecture course there, too, once a month. *
AT: They came from (unclear. away?) you know. They had entertainments, different things. They let you buy a ticket for the whole season. And they'd have all these different shows. You paid for them to come, didn't you dear?
RT: Yes sure.
AT: And they came out on certain dates they fixed.
RT: In the wintertime.

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*See next pages for copies of the Mattituck Lecture Association program for 1909 -1910 .

Mattituck Lecture Association

15th Annual Course
1909-10

Eastern Lyceum Bureau
101 Tremont St., Boston
Pitt F. Parker, Manager

CALENDAR

NOV. 26, THE COLLEGE SINGING GIRLS and WALTER ECCLES, Reader

NOV. 27, THE DODGE CONCERT CO.

Carl Welster, 'Cellist.
Barthold Silberman, Violinist.
Ernest W. Harrison, Pianist.
Edna Goodell, Lyric Soprano.
Mildred Sheldon Bass, Reader.

DEC. 8, MATINEE: THE KATHARINE RIDGEWAY READINGS

Miss Evangeline Bridge, Pianist.

JAN. 13, THE WALTER CLUXTON CO.

In original Musical Comedy in Three Acts
"HER AMERICAN HUSBAND."

JAN. 20, MATINEE: VICTOR'S VENETIAN BAND of 26 Pieces

and Miss Caroline Lewis, Contralto.

FEB. 16, ROLAND DWIGHT GRANT

"Rome With Michael Angelo."

MAR. 4, JUDGE WILLIS BROWN

"Manufacturing a Man."

MAR. 30, HON. GEORGE B. ALDEN

"The Needs of the Hour."

OFFICERS

A. L. DOWNS, President — R. W. WELLS, Vice-President
J. G. DOWNS, Treasurer — MRS. C. W. WICKHAM, Sec.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Mrs. J. W. Tuthill	Mrs. Harry Fleet	H. P. Tuthill
Mrs. H. G. Tuthill	G. B. Woodhull	James Wines
Mrs. E. O. Boutcher	Chas. Aldrich	J. M. Lupton
Mrs. G. O. Hallock	Chas. Gildersleeve	A. W. Young
Mrs. M. A. Taft	Rev. C. E. Craven	N. S. Tuthill
Mrs. Benj. P. Young	O. P. Hallock	LaMonte V. Gould
	J. T. Young	

Scale of Prices

Course Ticket, including Reserved Seat for the Entire Course	$1.75
Single Admission for Lectures	.25
Reserved Seat for Lectures	.35
Single Admission for Concerts	.35
Reserved Seat for Concerts	.50
School Children's Reserved Seats	1.00

Sale of Course Tickets and Selection of Seats begins on

Saturday, Nov. 13 — At the Library Hall

The Committee will be at the Hall from one o'clock to three, to conduct a drawing of numbers INDICATING THE ORDER OF SELECTION OF SEATS. Selection of Seats at 3 o'clock.

Further information may be obtained from any member of the Committee.

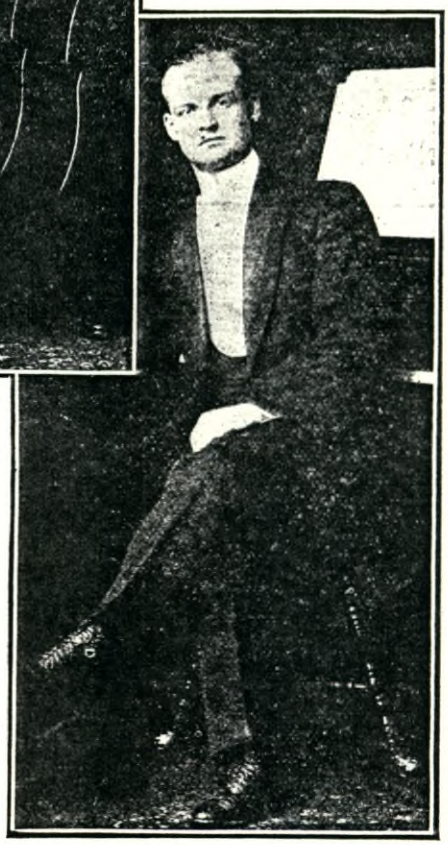
After Nov. 13, tickets may be bought and seats selected at Lahy's Drug Store.

Sale and selection of Children's Tickets between one and two o'clock on Nov. 13.

The College Singing Girls

and Walter Eccles

The Dodge Concert Company



Carl Webster
'Cellist

Barthold Silberman
Violinist

Ernest W. Harrison
Pianist

Edna Goodell
Lyric Soprano

Mildred Sheldon Bass
Reader

Exclusive Management

EASTERN LYCEUM BUREAU

101 Tremont Street, Boston

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EDNA GOODELL

LYRIC SOPRANO

¶ MISS GOODELL has a pure, lyric soprano voice and a charming personality, which have achieved for her a career of marked success in the musical world. Her repertoire includes works from Grand Opera, Oratorio, and piquant selections of a lighter vein.

¶ Miss Goodell's voice is a pure and sympathetic lyric soprano, and that it met with the approval of her audience was amply attested by the enthusiastic encores which she received.—*Musical America.*

¶ Miss Goodell, of Boston, added most elaborately to the program, and was a rare treat to all who were fortunate enough to hear her. Miss Goodell has a rich, sympathetic soprano voice, which she uses with thorough understanding, this together with her dainty selections, made her singing far above criticism.—*Salem Evening News.*

MILDRED SHELDON BASS

READER

¶ MISS BASS is a reader whose name is known as an interpreter of the best in literature. Sincerity is perhaps the keynote of her reading, but she possesses also the gift of expressing the most delightful humor and tender and delicate pathos. Her reading lingers with one as a pleasant memory.

69 Bay State Road, Boston, Mass.
January 5, 1909.

Miss Bass's work is exceptionally pleasing. In fact it is the general opinion that she has not been surpassed by any one of the numerous readers who have entertained us. I consider Miss Bass to be the possessor of exceptional gifts. She has excellent taste, a perfectly natural delivery, and an attractive personality.

(Signed) HERBERT S. JOHNSON,
Pastor Warren Avenue Baptist Church, Boston, Mass.

Miss Mildred Bass is an able interpreter of great literature.

Yours sincerely,
LELAND T. POWERS,
Principal Leland Powers School of the Spoken Word, Boston, Mass.

The Katharine Ridgeway Readings

R&B

REDPATH-SLAYTON. Boston, New York, Columbus, Chicago, Cedar Rapids, Kansas City, Denver, Butte, Portland
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R&B

SEASON OF 1909-10

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Her American Husband

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FULL CAST - COMPLETE PRODUCTION
SPECIAL SCENERY - MAGNIFICENT COSTUMES

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Victor
and his
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For eight years a successful Band Conductor.
CENTRAL-ROCHESTER, N.Y.

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Victor's Celebrated Brass Sextette

Probably no one feature of the Victor's Band Concerts has been more warmly received than his Brass Sextette. They have received two and three encores as an almost nightly experience. Their rendering of Donizetti's "Lucia di Lammermoor" is almost the perfection of execution and never fails to enthuse their audiences.

Vocal Soloist for the Season of 1909-1910

Miss Caroline Lewis, Contralto

Miss Lewis was discovered in the West, on one of the tours of the Manager of the Band, and he was not long in deciding that she should be their Soloist for the coming season. Her voice is an approach to the marvelous in quantity and not often surpassed in sweetness as to quality.

BUREAU BAND EXPERIENCE

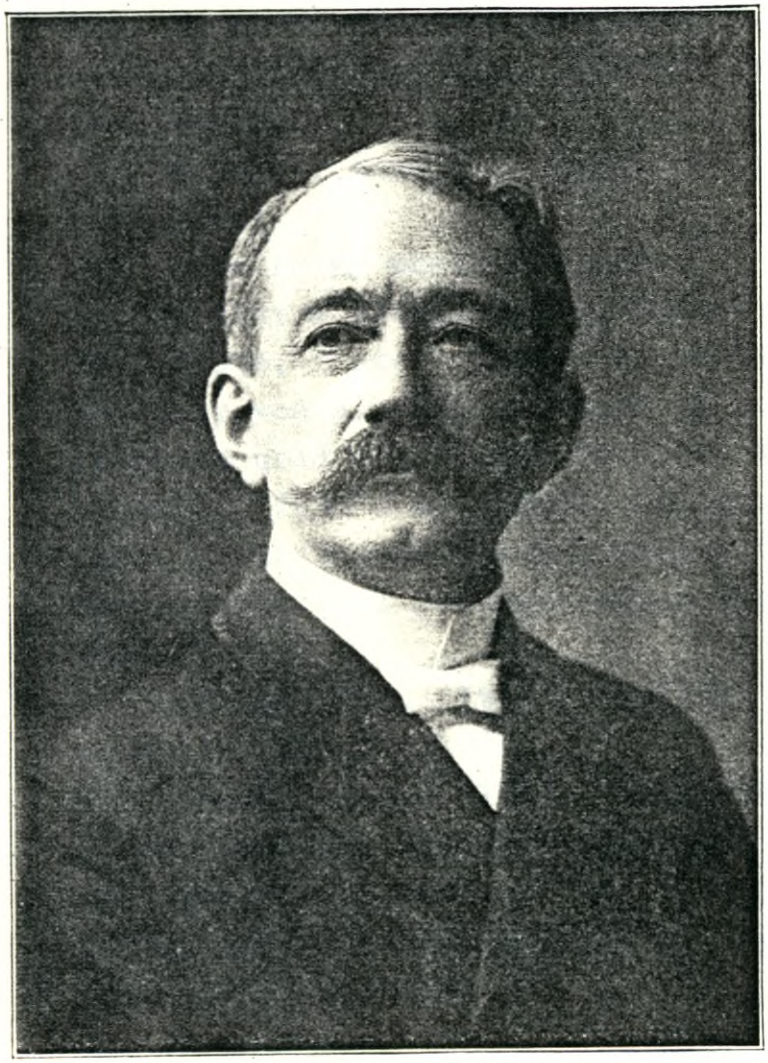
We have presented to our patrons many of the leading Bands of our own and other countries, such as Brooke's Marine Band, Banda Rossa, Phinney's U. S. Band, Rosati's Italian Band, but we have never offered to our friends, an organization of this character in whose ability we have had greater confidence than the one here announced—Victor's Venetian Band. We are confident that we will continue to deserve the favorable consideration of those committees who place this attraction on their Course through any of our agencies.—American Lyceum Union.

Direction of
The Eastern Lyceum Bureau
191 Tremont Street, Boston
Pitt F. Parker, Manager

Roland Dwight Grant

HIS LECTURES

PROFOUND THINGS MADE PLAIN ... PLAIN THINGS MADE BEAUTIFUL



ROLAND DWIGHT GRANT, A.M., D.D.

DR. GRANT'S PLATFORM

READ THIS AND COME EXPECTING ENTERTAINMENT

THE ART OF LECTURING

¶ The art of entertaining must ever stand at head of list among all arts.

Even the good conversationalist can command any place he wills in the social group.

¶ Lecturing as an art at its best, is the purest conversation. The silent response of the audience is in their keen appreciation and real pleasure. But their pleasure can never equal that of the artistic speaker, for his sometimes approximates a real mental intoxication.

¶ The truly Artistic Lecture is the one that gives delight and entertainment while it is being delivered, and forces mental and educational stimulus the days following. But the choicest entertainment must predominate during the Lecture. Entertainment now, and mental stimulus to-morrow. These two elements—and without these two the Lecture is not a success.

¶ Successful is the Physician who can make his patient smile while he takes his medicine and to-morrow is healed. There is no reason why an audience should not laugh and be happy to-night, if to-morrow it is to be glad and inspired.

Roland D. Grant.

Lecture Titles

Trees of Eden; or, Snakes in Paradise
Story of a Spade — **Evolutionism a Failure**
Birth of Art in Europe — **Rome with Michaelangelo**
Yellowstone — Scenic and Scientific
Wild Life in the Selkirks — **Job's Wife Vindicated**
How the Daisies Made the Sun — **The Mighty Columbia**
New England Gardens, Garrets and Kitchens
Wrinkles, Cracks and Erosions

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America's great thinker, says: "There is very little to be added when Dr Grant has done with the discussion of any topic."

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"If you have a good story just tell it to Dr Grant, and let him tell it over to you so you can appreciate it."

Dr. O. P. GIFFORD says:

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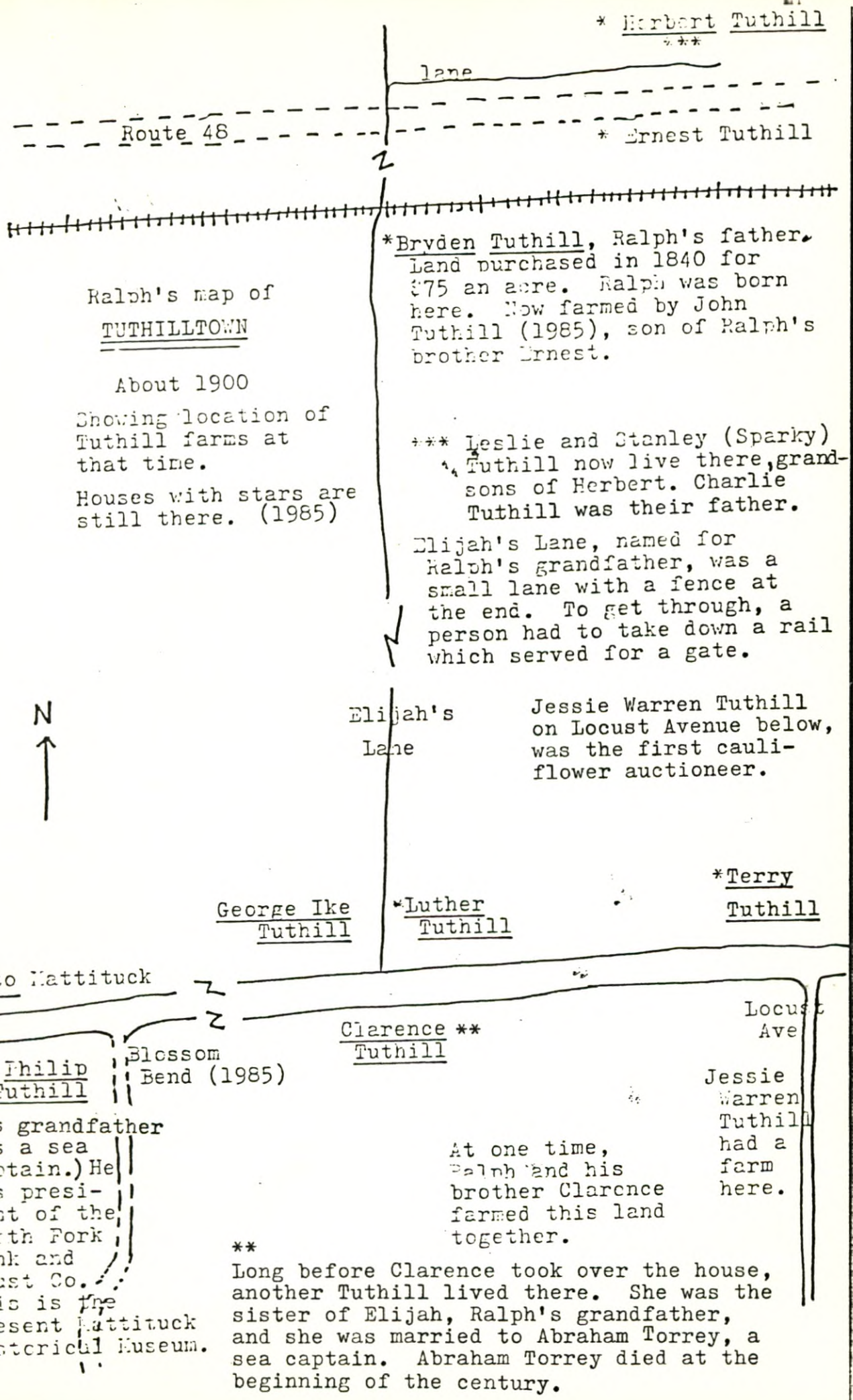
THIS CIRCULAR IS PREPARED FOR THOUGHTFUL PEOPLE

AT: And they traveled around, see, putting on entertainments of different types. Some of them would be beautiful piano players and others would be able to do something else.
RT: There'd be a male quarter, or something like that.
(Interruption)
I: What's this one?
RT: Oh my brother and I wrastling. (sic) Brother Frank. He's dead and gone now. Gone to heaven long ago. We were just foolin'.
AT: Raymond, Raymond. That's on tape! Watch your language.
(Laughter)
RT: This is my music teacher.
I: Is that a clarinet or a flute?
RT: Flute, flute. That's my brother Ernest, ran a milk route for many years. His nickname is Inky. And the first day I think he sold six quarts of milk, and I think, got five cents a quart. That's my brother Clarence, Tuthilltown Athletic Club. Tuthilltown had a baseball team and a hockey team. Ralph could tell you more about that then I could. He was home then.
I: Look at that. It's a cartoon. Raymond Tuthill, drawn by an artist at...
RT: Coney Island. 1907. (Laughter)
(Interruption. Confused talk about a tower)
RT: That's...I can't think of the name. It's..Tessler. Remember Ann? (Tessla's Tower at Rocky Point? Ed.) Well, that's what he built.
I: Is that your boat: The Spray, you called it? Did you ever go scalloping?
RT: Oh yes. Taking parties out and go scalloping.
AT: When I came home from school I'd go out in the Bay if it was low tide, and fill a clam tub up. It's what you'd call a wash tub. There's many scallops out here, as Raymond'd be able to open and manage to give away arond here. We didn't sell them, but we gave them away. And we used to have the seaweed then, you know, so we had scallops, but then something happened to the seaweed. The seaweed became diseased. And


* Herbert Tuthill
***
lane
Route 48
* Ernest Tuthill
*Bryden Tuthill, Ralph's father. Land purchased in 1840 for $75 an acre. Ralph was born here. Now farmed by John Tuthill (1985), son of Ralph's brother Ernest.
Ralph's map of
TUTHILLTOWN
About 1900
Showing location of Tuthill farms at that time.
Houses with stars are still there. (1985)
*** Leslie and Stanley (Sparky) Tuthill now live there, grandsons of Herbert. Charlie Tuthill was their father.
Elijah's Lane, named for Ralph's grandfather, was a small lane with a fence at the end. To get through, a person had to take down a rail which served for a gate.
N
Elijah's Lane
Jessie Warren Tuthill on Locust Avenue below, was the first cauliflower auctioneer.
*Terry Tuthill
George Ike Tuthill
*Luther Tuthill
to Mattituck
Clarence ** Tuthill
Locust Ave
Blossom Bend (1985)
* Philip Tuthill
(His grandfather was a sea captain.) He was president of the North Fork Bank and Trust Co. This is the present Mattituck Historical Museum.
Jessie Warren Tuthill had a farm here.
At one time, Ralph and his brother Clarence farmed this land together.
**
Long before Clarence took over the house, another Tuthill lived there. She was the sister of Elijah, Ralph's grandfather, and she was married to Abraham Torrey, a sea captain. Abraham Torrey died at the beginning of the century.

then, without the seaweed the scallops disappeared (unclear) .....We were married in 1921. And, too, on our beach we had soft shelled clams. They spit up through the sand. They're all gone too. I don't know what happened to the squirters. But the scallops went and the seaweed went, and then the squirters went too.

I: When was that?

RT: 1930, I would say. The blight took the seaweed away.

AT: The 30's, back in the 30's I'd say.

RT: That's my son, Austin when he graduated from banking school. He's in the Bank in Mattituck, Assistant Vice-president, North Fork Bank. That's my brother Clarence, with the horse we owned down on the farm.

I: Is that a trotter?

RT: Yep, yep.

I: Did you ever enter him into any trotting races?

RT: No. But we had (unclear) Riverhead Fair.

I: Once a year?

RT: Yeh. This here's the Old Mill in Peconic. They had a windmill there for when the wind blew to grind wheat. A blizzard in 1898 blew the windmill down. That's my brother Clarence up to the top. That's o'course all gone now.

I: Do you remember being in that blizzard?

RT: Oh sure. That's two days after Thanksgiving. Terrible storm.

I: Do you remember the hurricane of '38?

AT: Yes, I remember that one. We were, it was in the summertime, and we used to live in the cottage. We were in the cottage.(Out on the shore of the Bay. Ed.) It came at two o'clock in the afternoon, It started by the ocean, you see. They got this terrific high tide, and they came from the, oh Hamptons, Quogue, over in there. They came to Riverhead, Hotel Perkins, who put 'em up. They'd been killed if they stayed there.

I: Who's 'they'?

AT: Well, all these people who were... you see this was September 21st, wasn't it Dearie?

RT: Yes.
AT: Most of 'em had gone back. The kids and all, you know. They had gone. They'd be out over the weekend after that for awhile. But these people were warned. When this tide came, the police, everybody...You know the bridge. They had to get across that bridge. A few of them were stranded there. I think the reason there weren't more people killed was because it was during the week. They hadn't come out for the weekend. They'd gone back because the children had gone back to school.
I: Where were you when all of a sudden the wind started getting really strong?
AT: Well, I was in the cottage. My children were up here in school. And my mother was living up west of Mattituck with my sister. And my sister in Riverhead rang her up and she told her all about these people coming over from south side. So I, I just thought it was a miserable day, my mother's alone, I'll spend a couple of hours with her, just stay with her. And I hardly got there, when all of this began to come. And I said to my mother, "Well I've got to go because I've got to pick my children up at school." I left my sister's house and came to Mattituck School, which was about a mile and a half. And all the way down I could see in my mirror in the back, I could see trees falling back of me. I got to the school and never a tree went down in front of me.
I: You could see them going down behind you?
AT: Not so many. But everyonce in a while I'd see one and, my gosh, there's another tree! And I got to the school and I thought, well, I'll go in and ask the teachers to excuse my children. They've got to go with me now!

We'd been warned in the morning that there might be a hurricane. Raynor Wickham had been down in the Carribean. He came past our cottage, and we were out there, and we were talking to him. He said, very drawly sort of a fellow he was, he said, "If I was in the Carribean I'd say we're in for a hurricane." The sky was so pink that morning. He'd seen the pink sky this morning, earlier. And then, see, we just laughed

and didn't think any more about it. I picked up my boys and I went down about a mile east, and that's where Raymond's brother Clarence lived. I drove in there because I didn't dare drive on the Main Road. Everything was, well you could see so much devastation around. I drove in. I parked my car in a shed he had there. And my two boys and I got out of the car and ran to his back door. And the wind was blowing so I could hardly stand up against it, you know. And on the roof of his barn he had a big cupola. And we got in the house and we no more got in his kitchen, when BANG, something went. We looked out his kitchen windows. And there on the ground right where we had come in from, there was this great big cupola. Oh, it would have killed all of us if it had come anywhere near us. We got in there just in time. So that cupola landed in his backyard. Boy, that was somethin'.

I: Once you were all in there, about how long did it rage?

AT: Oh...it was about five o'clock when we came home from there. You see,a hurricane, you know, goes all four directions. And it was all around like this. It always does, if it's a true hurricane, if you're in the eye, as the eye goes over. And we came down here and of course there was more woods coming down our roads, you see. And when we came through, the boys had to get out of our car and yank things out of the road for us to get through. And we got here about five o'clock.

Raymond had come home from the Bank earlier because we had a big dock out there where our boats were tied to, you know. He was gonna take the boards down, the planks down, from the dock for fear they were gonna go. He didn't know it was a hurricane but he planned on coming home because it was bad. He never got anything done out there at all. (At the cottage). He got home here and he put a great big plank -- we had French doors in our dining room. We were just getting ready to move in from the cottage. We moved in here for the winter. Anyway, he came in here and he took a great big plank and Nailed it with great big nails right inside this house. We always had a winter door on it, but we didn't have any winter door on it as yet. Oh, here we were so careful of the wood-

work and everything, and here he had great big, I don't know what size nails, but he hammered them, a great big plank across the doors to keep it.
I: Did the dock go?
AT: (Laughing) That went.
(Interruption. Interviewer reading)
I: "Central Business School. Low rates. Brooklyn, May 28, 1917. To Whom it May Concern: This is to certify that Mr. Raymond E. Tuthill, who was a student in this school some years ago, is a most capable young man. He comes of an excellent family and is trustworthy in all respects." Signed, The Principal, Charles Edwards. Brooklyn Central Business School.
RT: Yeh. See here's my brother Ralph and me, jumping over a fence. This is my kid brother/ay....I was gonna tell you something about the Library.
I: Yes. Please do.
AT: Who was the first Librarian? You know, Raymond?
TR: Huh...I'll tell you in a minute. I was just thinkin', you know that Library Hall was given by Frank Lupton, 1905. He's a local person here. And ... I remember when I was workin' in New York I was riding home one night on the Lexington Avenue elevated in Brooklyn. I was reading a newspaper, and all of a sudden I came to an article where Frank Lupton had committed suicide, cuttin' his throat. Y'know why? 'Cause he had plenty of money. I think he was editor of the Ladies Home Journal or Ladies World, or somethin'.... that (Library) was opened I think, in 1905. 'Course the Library and Bank was opened at the same time. And the manager of the Library was Elmer Tuthill. He was a cripple. I suppose 'twas..
AT: Paralysis?
RT: No, no. Polio, I imagine. I don't know. He had braces I think on both, below his knees. He could get around with a cane. I don't know whether he had any crutches or not. But he was a very nice fellow, and I read lots of books in the old Library when it was opened, for years. And I know his father was Ben. His home was up on Mattituck Creek on..uh..east side of the Creek, almost to the old bridge. His father's name

was Ben Tuthill. I went over there one time with my brother Clarence, and my father. Mr father bought a cow from Ben Tuthill. And he (laughing) named it Ben. And I loved old Ben many years after that. And Elmer Tuthill's brother, I can't think of his first name, he had a shipyard in Greenport, building ships and so forth. Elmer himself built a boat. His brother might have helped him. But he could get around with a crutch or cane or something. He built a boat big enough so he took a party across the Sound and back one time. So it must have been quite a nice boat.

But the day that the Hall opened, I think,I walked up the track with my sister,* and when I came to get my overcoat why somebody had stolen it. And I waited until the last coat was there, and it fit me pretty good and I wore it, but it wasn't nearly good as mine. So I think maybe the fellow made a mistake. I never did find out. But I had quite a nice overcoat.

I: Was there a ceremony for the opening of Library Hall?

RT: I can't remember what they did. They had some kind of, I suppose, a dance afterwards. I don't know. Of course there was a tremendous crowd, as I remember. But the fellow in charge of the drugstore was Lahy -- L-a-h-y. He was the head (Unclear) for a number of years. Mr. Lahy. Very nice. Very nice man.

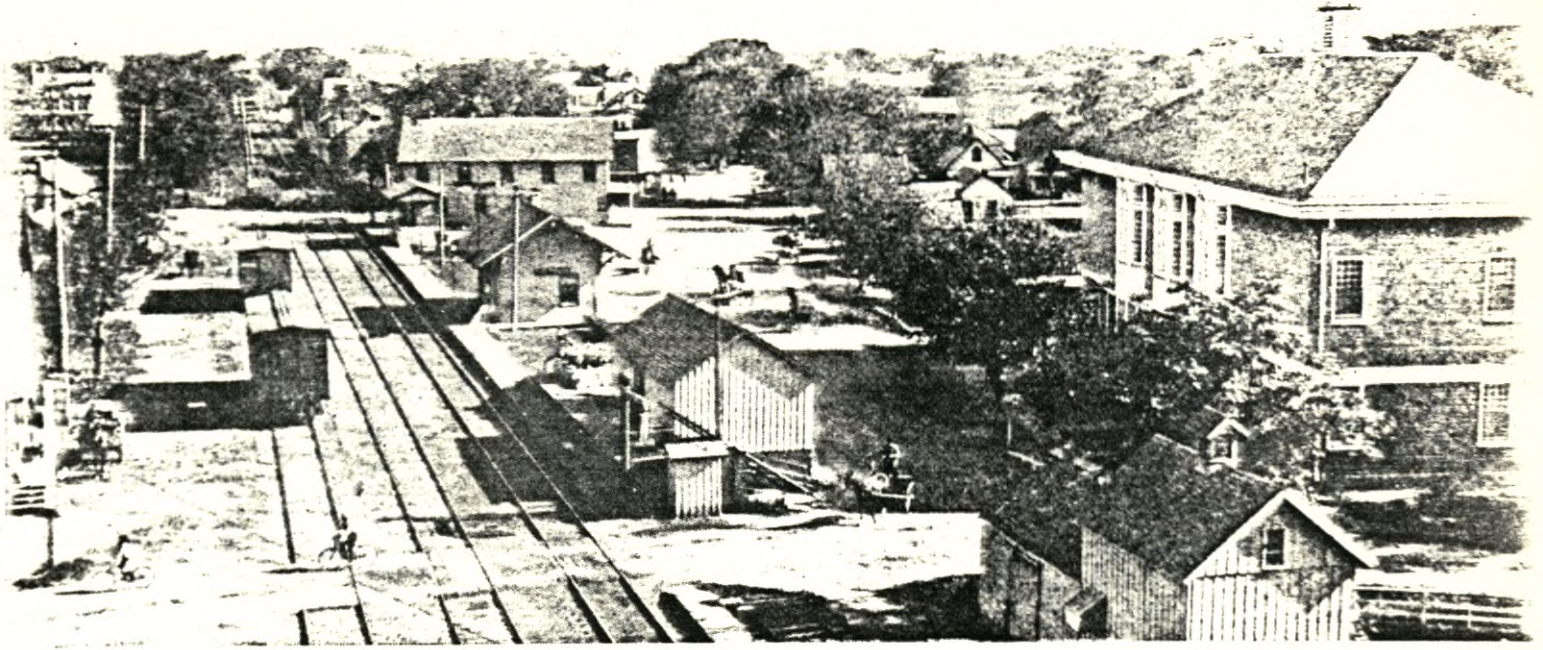
I: Did they already have the Library stocked with a few books when it opened?

RT: As I remember, yes. There were certain sections, I remember, certain authors that I liked. I would always go to the same section. There were lots of books, and 'twas very comfortable and very quiet and nice.

AT: Well don't you believe you had a Library somewhere else, a small one? I believe you must have because we had one up on Sound Aveenue when I was a kid. Because when I was in High school, I used to --

\- - -

*They lived on Elijah's Lane, near the railroad tracks



d's-eye View of **Mattituck,** Showing the Station in the Centre and Lupton Hall and Library Building to the right

RT: Maybe you got from the church. I know the Presbyterian Church in Cutchogue had quite a nice Library, and I read many many books from that Library in Cutchogue. Very nice books, so maybe then--
AT: No, I think they had a nucleus before the Library. That was a big, big building in those days. Every little place had a small library, you know, before that. Once a week.
I: At Library Hall, do you remember various events, ceremonies?
RT: Oh yes. 'Course they had movin' pictures later. But then the lecture course was there that we just spoke about. Once a month, in the wintertime. And dances. All kinds of things were held there. That was very nice. And then our local plays. Ann and I had both been in lots of plays there, locally, you know, but some professional would come out, and put these plays on.* We'd rehearse for weeks and weeks.
I: At the Hall?
RT: Yes.
AT: Yes
I: About how many people would come?
AT: It'd be packed.
RT: Packed, of course.
AT: we'd sell tickets for three nights in a row, like that.
I: How did you sell the tickets?
AT: Well, everybody sold them.
I: The store, the merchants?
AT: Oh yes. They'd have them, but we'd also sell them. Anybody could sell tickets. I 'd be in the paper, you know. Go to Barker's just like they do now.
I: Did you put them on for a couple of nights in a row?
AT: Three nights in a row.
I: How many people?
AT: It'd be full, whatever it held. It'd be packed.
I: Was this the main floor of Library Hall?
AT: No. No, no. Upstairs.
RT: Oh sure. On the first floor was the drugstore, the Bank, a doctor and the Library.
I: On the second floor?

- - -

*One or two professional actors came out and coached the local people in supporting parts.

AT: The Hall. I mean that's where we danced.
I: Was there a stage?
AT: Oh yes. They had movies there, later, much later. See, the movies there were not like that until the entertainments and the lectures and all this business was pretty much over. When you put the jazz into the movies, youre all.. that ended the other, you see.
RT: Then United American Mechanics, they held their annual....
AT: Dance.
RT: Er...what did you call it now? Banquet, Mechanics Banquet.
I: Did they feed them there too?
RT: No. They'd eat over at the Presbyterian Church. The ladies'd put on, to eat... and then they'd go over to the dance. They'd dance 'till one or two o'clock. One time they got into a blizzard, and lots of people stayed there all night. Couldn't get home. I got almost all the way home, then got stuck in a snowbank and walked the rest of the way. That's about 1912 or '14. Oh, that was nice, nice times we had there in that little Hall.
(Interruption)
AT: And the heat, you see, had to heat all the downstairs and the upstairs.
RT: 'Twas heated by radiators. I don't know whether it was steam or hot water. But it had a big cellar and a big heater.
I: With something like that would you have a coal chute?
AT: They'd dump it through an outdoor window down into the cellar.
I: And was that done by wagon?
AT: Yes. Everything was horse and wagon.
I: Do you remember any holidays? Like Christmas or Easter or Halloween?
AT: No. Christmas was always definitely a home thing. Just like now. You can't buy dinner around here on Christmas Day. You can't go to a restuarant, I don't believe.
I: So everyone at Christmas was home with the family?
AT: Oh yes.
I: Were there any kind of charitable organizations for the poor, like the Salvation Army?
AT: Raymond, you've been in the Salvation Army. When you were

in the Mattituck Bank, what were you in the Salvation Army?
RT: I was Treasurer of the Salvation Army for thirty-five years.
AT: I don't know when he began the Salvation Army, but Boy Scouts and everything else, Boy he was in it!
I: Were you a Boy Scout in Mattituck?
RT: (unclear) when I was a'Boy Scout,'there was no such thing.
AT: Well Tom Reeve, he's gone now, he's the Reeve Brothers up here. He's their father. He was a Boy Scout worker in Mattituck. I would say he was the leading Boy Scout (unclear) sons of his own, you know.
RT: He wasn't a Boy Scout. He was a leader. He didn't go camping with them in that way. He did an awful lot for the Boy Scout drives they had. Now you know how they have the Community Fund. Well, it didn't used to be under Community Fund. They had different drives, separately.
I: I see. About Library Hall. Do you remember how long it took to build it?
RT: No, I have no idea.
AT: Who built it, Dearie?
RT: I don't even know that. I guess probably a New York firm but I'm not sure. Have you talked with Ralph?
I: Yes, but there's a lot we haven't talked about.
RT: 'Course he was only a kid when that first opened, 1905. Maybe seven or eight years old.
I: How old were you?
RT: Seventeen or so. I'm ninety now.
I: Congratulations! Tell me, how about dating in Mattituck?
RT: When we were about twelve or fourteen, some of us boys would get a note from a girl saying, "You are cordially invited to attend a surprise party, so and so, and meet certain place. Please bring lemons or please bring sugar". They'd make the lemonade and the girls would bring a cake and then we'd meet some place. One of the favorite places was the old Grabie house across the way from Hansen's Garage. Oh I had many, many good times in there. And we met in my house one time and

and at Terry Tuthill's one time and where the Historical Museum is now and (unclear) we met in there. That was something, that was.

AT: You never went to those parties when you were twelve. If you were fifteen or sixteen, it'd be nearer it. Twelve-year-olds went to bed around here.

RT: When I was going to school now...

I: How old were you when you left Mattituck School?

RT: Fourteen, fifteen. We were just young kids. I remember if we was asked to spin the platter and kiss the girl, by Gosh I was scared to death. Ceasar's Ghost! One time playing Post Office a girl (unclear) get set for me for a letter. I was scared to death. I didn't know whether I was supposed to kiss her or she was supposed to kiss me. I don't know how it turned out but I was some scared, I know that. (unclear) Nobody smoked cigaretts, girls or men, boys. Didn't drink anything. Not a boy in school smoked cigaretts.

I: How old were you when you got married?

AT: I was twenty-three and he was thirty-three.

End of tape.

Mattituck History Project

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

name Raymond Elijah Tuthill

birth date 1887 place Tuthilltown, Mattituck Died 1980

father's name George Bryden Tuthill born 1856

mother's name Carrie Case Tuthill

childhood Farm life, chores for all children

education Mattituck High School; Southold Academy; Central Business School, Brooklyn

job training, work Work Office work in New York briefly; New Suffolk Livery Stable; on stemaboat between New York and New England; World War I 77th Division, Trench Mortar Battery; Rambo's produce business; Cashier First National Bank of Cutchogue; Sevretary-treasurer North Fork Bank and Trust Co.

official positions Positions held: Trustee and Elder, Cutchogue Presbyterian Church; Charter Member Raymond Cleaves American Legion Post; Member Masons and Junior Order United American Mechanics; Chief observer World War II Aircraft Warning Service; Chairman Red Cross and Salvation Army; President, treasurer of Cutchogue Chamber of Commerce; Treasurer and Trustee Cutchogue Cemetery Association

member of

special activities, projects, hobbies Sailing, took our sailing parties

spouse's name ~~Annie Luce (married 1921)~~

children's names ~~Austin~~, Bruce

major turning points in:

Note: Information for the biography sup lied by his brother

Mattituck	my life	my field of interest
1	1	1
2	2	2
3	3	3
4	4	4
5	5	5

for me, Mattituck was

Mattituck is

I'd like Mattituck to become

Mattituck History Project

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

name ~~Annie Luce Tuthill --Ann Luce Tuthill?~~

birth date _____ place Western Long Island Died 1984

father's name The Luce family lived on Sound Avenue, in Riverhead near ~~Annie's Uncle~~ Ced Luce.

mother's name Lillie Benjamin Luce

childhood Farm life

education Riverhead High School, Teacher's college upstate

job training _____

work Taught in the Mattituck Elementary School

official positions _____

member of _____

special activities, projects, hobbies _____

spouse's name ~~Raymond Tuthill.~~ They were married at the home of J. Trowbridge Kirkup in Mattituck in 1921

children's names ~~Austin, Bruce~~

major turning points in:

Note: Information for this autobiography was supplied by a friend

Mattituck	my life	my field of interest
1	1	1
2	2	2
3	3	3
4	4	4
5	5	5

for me, Mattituck was _____

Mattituck is _____

I'd like Mattituck to become _____