

James & Mary Bergey Interview by Neady Harris
June 27, 2006

James: I grew up right down on...

Neady: On Mt. Pleasant Rd

James: Yeah

Neady: Your whole life? So were you born in that house?

James: That little house across the road. Actually, the little house across the road, the house is not there anymore, but it's where I was born.

Neady: Was it beside the church? The black church?

James: The black school, you mean.

Neady: Oh, there was a school there?

James: Yeah, the black church is (on) the canal road, where you go down the canal. I was born over there.

Mary: That little house was right across from where the farm is now.

James: Well, yeah, but it was the black school over there. You don't remember that.

Neady: I would have never heard it.

James: Yeah, that was the black school over there.

Neady: Different buildings? Completely different building than what's there now? The school?

Mary: Well, the house where you were born isn't there anymore.

James: Yeah, the house that I was born in has been gone for quite a while. Dad built it, '28, '29, something like that. He was working at the Ford plant.

Mary: Your parents were married in '28?

James: Yeah.

Neady: So this was before babies had come along? It was just the two of you? You built

that house?

James: I was the oldest, and I had two younger brothers.

Neady: Clyde and Byard. Is that the right order? You, Clyde and Byard? So when it was time for you to go to school, we didn't have Mount Pleasant (Christian School) then, did we?

James: No. I went to Great Bridge, uh, first five years, I think it was. Five or six, I forget. And that's when they opened the school up there. The first school was there, right across from Harvey, Pauline & Harvey (Miller).

Neady: Right. Well, not too far from where we are. Let me get my bearings here. Let's see. When I look out the window, I'm looking at Kenny & Ruth's (Kurtz)... So your dad had the farm already by the time you were born, didn't he?

James: Well, actually, no. I was born, and he was working at the Ford plant and in about, I think, let's see, I was probably two or so when he rented this farm.

Mary: The Kemp Farm. That was the Kemp Farm, where the store (Bergey's Bread Basket) is now, was the Kemp Farm. Naomi, his mother was a Kemp. They lived there.

Neady: Did they call it Kemp Farm? Did they have home delivery?

Mary: No, no, they didn't have anything. I just mean the land.

Neady: So, uh, then you worked on the farm, I guess, your entire life. Ever work anywhere else? Besides mission work?

James: Well, not except besides mission work. We spent several years in Albania, and, uh, that would have been, I guess, about the only time that I didn't work on the farm, yeah.

Neady: Well, things are a lot different now. Can you remember when you were working the farm when you were young, what kind of equipment you used? Were you still using horses? And I don't mean to be insulting, but I don't know, you know. They had tractors, I guess?

James: I'm sure Dad had horses, but I don't remember about it. Uh, first I remember was, he got a Case tractor and that would have been... I was seven, eight, nine years old, something like that when he got that first Case tractor.

Mary: I have a question right now about how did Grandpa, your dad, get the Kemp Land at home? Did he buy it?

James: Well, he rented it until the house burnt down, and then they wanted to go ahead and sell it, so he bought it and built the house that's there now.

Neady: And did all the people in the neighborhood, the young ones...I know when my boys started coming up, the first job they had was at Bergey' Dairy. Was that the case back then? Was it the community employer?

James: Yeah, the young, fellas. First job probably? Ivan (Miller) worked there. Of course, that would have been a little later on. I don't remember who all else. A lot of 'em.

Neady: So what year were you born?

James: Thirty.

Neady: 1930?

James: Yeah.

Neady: So by 1940, you were a full-fledged farmer probably.

James: Full-fledged farmer. Well, that's about all I've done all my life.

Neady: Getting up early and, I guess, going to bed early.

James: Talk about...it would have been a little later on, but we had the milkers then. Anyhow, Sandra helped me.

Mary: Oh, that was a long time after we ...

James: That would have been quite a long time.

James: And, of course, we'd milk fairly early in the morning. I don't remember. It wasn't like 4 o'clock, but it was, I don't know, 6, 7. I don't remember exactly. Anyhow, what I remember about her, and I still tease her about it, she was good help, but the minute she'd have me give her something to do, she was in the back sleeping. That barn had a little space at the back, maybe about as wide as this table is long, but it wasn't big enough for a cow stanchion, and she'd go to sleep just like that.

Neady: Those early mornings weren't agreeable with her. Well, along in what year did you all go to automatic milkers as opposed to doing it by hand? Was that while your dad was still running it?

James: Oh, yeah. It was pretty early, yeah. We had milkers, let's see, "40, 1940 or early "40s. It was, we had milkers, I think, maybe earlier than some of the others around.

Neady: And then, of course, you attended, now it wasn't Mennonite Church your whole life.

James: Yeah. Except for the time that we were at Deep Creek. That's right.

Mary: You were on 6 years at Deep Creek. 4 years with Dove (Fellowship). Yes, that's right. 2 years, 3 years without English, yeah.

Neady: Wow. So when you were coming up to either of you, I'd like to say teenage years when you were teaching Bible school and Sunday school and reading and singing, or..

Mary: James was always, he was always involved as treasurer, beginning treasurer, all the time treasurer. And then, you know, we was treasurer at Sunday school when we got married, and we had a separate Sunday school in the church. So he started out just as treasurer at Sunday school, then he went on, and he was treasurer for everything there for years. I don't know how many years, it was a lot.

Neady: Well, when I was a girl I remember him getting up on Sunday mornings and giving a treasurer's report. But why did they have separate treasurers?

Mary: I don't know. I don't know why. But then they put it all together then.

Neady: So people would go to church in the morning and give in the Sunday school class, and then they'd go to the sermon and put out more money?

Mary: That's right. Separate money.

Neady: Now which offering would wind up being the largest?

Mary: Oh, I don't remember. I just remember wrapping the pennies for him. Helping with the deposit. That was really early on, you know? But we lived back there in the house, you know, where, you remember the old house, that was Grandpa Clayton's?

Neady: Where Polly lives now?

Mary: No, where Leonard's are now. (Wenger Rd)

Neady: You know, Doc Dickerson had a little house there when I was a little girl. That's the first house I remember back there.

Mary: This is before that. This is where his Grandpa Clayton bought. No, he built it, didn't he?

James: He built it, yeah.

Neady: You're talking at the end of Wenger Road.

Mary: Yeah. Yeah, and that's where we started out and lived five years after we were married. But anyway, that house was definitely, they had the Bergeys and Clayton, I stored a lot of his things up in the attic for years and years then when he married Maude and started living on the Miller property with her, yeah.

Neady: Which is where Polly is now.

Mary & James: Yeah.

Neady: Okay, so he doesn't build where Polly is now. Uh-uh.

Mary: No, that was the Miller house. That was the Miller house.

Neady: Oh. Well, how did he wind up over there? Because of Maude?

Mary: Yeah, because he married Maude.

Neady: And she was a Miller?

James: Yeah.

Neady: Now, who's her family?

James: Dwight and Clarence. Oh. Marvin.

Neady: I don't think I knew that.

Mary: Yeah. Dwight, Clarence, Marvin.

Neady: No kidding.

James: Was she the only girl? Marvin, I mean, Ernest, Dwight, Marvin, Clarence.

Mary: And Maude.

James: I guess she was the only girl.

Mary: And Maude was, this is another interesting thing, but maybe you don't want to use it, but his dad, Titus and Maude had dated for a while.

James: Oh, yeah, that's right. I forgot.

Mary: Well, I said it because it was very near when he started going with Naomi. That's when Clayton started dating her and then marrying her.

Neady: Was this Clayton's...wasn't Clayton widowed before?

James: Yeah.

Neady: So this was his second...

James: Yeah, he, yeah. And dad's mom died fairly early, I think.

Mary: Yeah, they were young, because he lived alone for quite some time with the boys. Five boys. Clayton had five boys and they lived back there. Like I said, he built that house back there where Leonard's are. And anyway, and she died and they lived without a mother up until their teen years, you know. No, they didn't have a mother. I forget what year she died.

Neady: So that was when Titus and his brothers and sisters lived without a mother.

Mary: Yes.

Neady: How many brothers and sisters were there?

James: Oh, let's see here.

Mary: No sisters, just four brothers.

James: John and Will and Titus and Abraham, is that it?

Mary: William, did you say?

James: William.

Neady: No. You hadn't said William, so were there five?

James: William was one. William and Titus and Abe and John, is that it?

Mary: There was just four. I think there was. I think there was.

Neady: So none of them went into the farming business?

Mary: No.

James: None of them were interested. In fact, Abe is the only one that stayed in the area. The rest either were in Pennsylvania, California.

Mary: What is so thrilling and interesting is that these families were not, I mean, Titus is the only one that stayed in a Mennonite church. And what's so interesting is that just this year, Ray Bergey led Bill Bergey to Christ, before he died, and that was Uncle Abe's son.

Neady: He came to church a time of maybe twice before he died.

Mary: So this is Titus's brother, Abe's son.

Neady: Oh, okay. kind of completes the circle.

Mary: But then to have Ray walk so close to him that whole time.

Neady: So you're talking about Ray, one of the twins, right?

James: Yeah.

Mary: He was there by his side through everything that he went through. I've never seen anything like it.

Neady: He's sort of that way with Freddie (Keffer), I think. I think he's really a crutch for Freddie.

Mary: I mean, he got a Bible, and let him to Christ, showed him where to read, and disciplined him.

Neady: Well, we had the Good Care Committee send him some plant or something when he had his leg, was it, amputated? So shortly before he died.

Mary: I saw that list of Good Care, and I couldn't believe it.

Neady: Well, part of it is that I haven't gotten that list out in a long time.

Mary: But it's been quite active this last year.

Neady: And we're still very...Velma's husband is in the hospital right now with blood clots or something in his leg.

Mary: He was in intensive care the other day.

Neady: Oh, wow. I know he's supposed to have surgery today. Velma had her 50th birthday at Nina and Merv's (Troyer) on Saturday evening, and still was on crutches then. So how did you two wind up together?

James: (Laughing) Well...

Neady: And did you get married young, or were you 23?

Mary: Well, I would say young for James was 19, and I was a few years older. So I was 21. But we met through the church and through the young people meetings, and that's how we met. But my parents were divorced, and so when I was in these teen years is when my dad told me that my brother and I got to the church there and introduced us at Mount Pleasant and at Deep Creek. We went to both at times. I remember when they brought me to Deep Creek.

James: Her younger brother?

Mary: My younger brother. But he never was, never got, what would you say, really tied in with the youth and everything, and kind of went his own way, which is really sad. But anyway, that's where we met, with the youth.

Neady: Did they have youth activities like we do now?

Mary: They did, really. But I will tell you something that I wish, that is very, very unusual for any young person, that is, James was very unusual, because...guess where we went for dates?

Neady: To church.

Mary: One of his first choices would be a prayer meeting on Wednesday night with Brother Wenger.

Neady: Really?

Mary: Before we were married. Now it blows my mind.

Neady: Well, you know she really liked you. She went, didn't she?

James: And then the literary, and he liked to go places, he liked to take me places, like down to Knott's Island, or just take a drive, or, you know, he always liked to go see new things, new places, you know. But, I mean, it was just, the first time that we took Harold to church, it was to a prayer meeting on Wednesday night with Brother Wenger. And, you know, anyway, I think about it now, and I just think it's so different. Oh, yeah. It's so different.

James: And he was just really young then. How old was he?

Mary: He was four weeks old. His first outing, he went to prayer meeting. Back then they kept him at home a little longer, because now, in four days, the women are taking their babies out and about. A little bit dangerous, probably, but I think they do it. I was thinking the other day, you know, and James, we used to, I used to get

teased pretty bad by some of the girls about marrying a preacher, because he was so different. They just knew he was going to be a preacher. That wasn't very popular. Being married to a preacher.

Neady: Well, it's hard work, I can tell that. You never know when they're going to bring somebody home and you're going to have to feed them. I know Beverly, over there, you know Beverly and Sam Skagg. She gets thrown in the window like that once in a while. She just goes with the flow, but I guess it's just a way of life for her anymore.

Mary: Yeah, but we met through the youth.

Neady: Did you all double date with anybody special? Or was it...

Mary: Hey, this is really interesting.

James: Oh, yeah.

Mary: Johnny Keffer...

Neady: My dad?

Mary: Yes, came to me and said, there's somebody that would like to take you home after church on Sunday night, ah James Bergey, and could we go double date? Would you go with us? With Dana and I?

Neady: And that was going to be your first date with James?

Mary: He was 15.

Neady: No kidding. So my parents must be a little bit older than you all. Because Mama's 83 now.

Mary: Yeah, I'm 78 now.

Neady: And my dad was three and a half years younger than her. He was 19 when they got married. Mama was 23.

Mary: Really?

Neady: Yeah. They got married in April and he turned 20 in August.

Mary: See, it was great to ask me or something.

Neady: Leave it to Daddy to get the job done.

Mary: So, where did we go?

Neady: Did you get to Doumars or something?.

Mary: No, we went to (unintelligible).

James: No we went out to...oh, well, maybe that was another time.

Mary: We first went to deliver something and then we went out.

James: And then we took you to where your mom lived there.

Mary: At that time, we lived in Great Bridge.

James: Yeah.

Neady: So, that was before you lived on... Didn't you live on Centerville Turnpike in a house that your parents built?

James: Yeah, but this was before that.

Mary: Yeah. Just for several years, Mom had moved up to, at Great Bridge, to a Heritage place taking care of a chicken farm.

Neady: So, Heritage was a person's name?

Mary: Yeah, a name. Uh-huh. And we called it the Heritage place. It's a man's name, and that's where he came and took me home.

Neady: So, what's sitting on the Heritage place now? Where would that be?

Mary: There is a... It's all surrounded by homes. You know, it's a...

James: If you go right...

Mary: Chicken farm before, yeah, at that time. I hardly recognize the house anymore when I go there.

Neady: But is the house still there?

Mary: Oh, yeah. Yeah, it's still there. I think the house is still there.

Neady: Is it on Battlefield Boulevard, or...

James: No, if you go right to Great Bridge to...You're going to see the road. And then

take...And go to the stoplight at Waters Road and turn left. And it's the... The first drive. The first drive then.

Neady: Washington Drive?

James: Yes. Yes it is, yes. And it's the first... And you turn on Washington, and it'll be the first house on the left.

Neady: I'm going to check it out. I don't remember a house that age being. That would be a good old house. Is that house still there?

James: I think it is, but you know...

Neady: I'm not sure of that house. Is it a two-story or one-story?

Mary: It was a two-story.

Neady: Two-story house?

James: Yeah.

Neady: I'll have to check that out.

James: It would have been the first house on the left after you turn on Washington Dr. Yeah.

Neady: So did everybody have cars back then, or was there a lot of carpooling, or... I can't imagine...

Mary: No, we didn't have a car. Because we didn't even have a car when we got married. So no.

Neady: So how did you get around?

Mary: His dad's car.

Neady: Oh, he loaned it to you, and you took it home, and kept it, and...

James: Or, we used one of the...

Mary: farm vehicles.

Neady: So how long were you married before you could afford a car?

James: When did we get the first car. I don't know...

Mary: I don't really know..., but I know it was at least...

Neady: Before the babies came? Before you had children?

Mary: I imagine then... I don't know for sure. Isn't that something? I can't remember right for sure, but I do know that we had a baby a year later. Harold...

James: You know who that is.

Neady: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah, I know who that is. Were you working on the farm with them at all, or did you just stay at home and quilt and clean and cook and bake bread?

Mary: I started working down there mainly in gardening to help. We put up food together and did butchering together.

Neady: After you were married?

James: Yeah.

Mary: And then I made butter a lot of times in the home to sell, and just things that I could do like that. And we lived there back there five years, and then we moved right down on the farm next to his house after we were married five years.

Neady: In the house that's still there?

James: Yeah.

Neady: Okay. What kind of jobs did you have before you got married, before you were hitched?

Mary: Just before, I was working for Dr. Venner and Dr. Hill in this big house down at Princess Anne. Both doctors, and they had three children, Mandy and Bob and another little girl. And I took care of those children.

Neady: So you were like a nanny?

Mary: Yes, I did all the cooking, all the cleaning, everything. I even dressed chickens in frozen form.

Neady: Now, would you stay there day and night? Would you live with them?

Mary: I lived with them, except at night I walked across the way to John Miller's because they had another house that they rented to John and Catherine, and I stayed with them at night.

Neady: Was that Red Face John?

Mary: No, it was another John Miller. I can't say which one. But Catherine, Catherine Kramer. He married Catherine Kramer. They had never had any children, and Freddie (Keffer) stayed with them a while too. Freddie and I both, I remember Freddie coming and playing the guitar and being there. But that's when I got to know Freddie better too, by living there, being there at night. Then I'd go over in the morning about 7 o'clock and start the breakfast and taking care of the three children and doing everything. I remember it used to get (unintelligible) I didn't get all the cobwebs down. I didn't clean the house. The food didn't go away. Oh, \$20 a week.

Neady: Wow.

Mary: \$20 a week. And we thought we really... we got married and we saved \$500 between us, and that's what we had. \$500.

Neady: Well, that is a good savings if you're getting it out of \$20 a week. That took a while. When you stayed there with that family, did the lady of the house work out of the home, or was she in there with you all day?

Mary: No, they both worked out of the home.

Neady: Okay.

James: Doctors.

Mary: Both doctors. And the offices away from, I forget where their office was. I think it might have been Virginia Beach.

Neady: A lady being a doctor was unusual, wasn't it?

Mary: She kept her maiden name.

Neady: Oh, okay.

Mary: He was Dr. Bennett and she was Dr. Hill.

Neady: And they had two separate offices?

Mary: Yeah. They had two separate offices.

Neady: Wow. Doesn't look like that would work out, does it? Probably better than the other way, though. Probably better than working together.

Mary: Let's see. Prior to that, I did a lot of city market work.

Neady: I was going to ask you if you ever worked down there. Mama worked down there.

Mary: Oh, marketing. Oh, my. It was always a thing with our parents.

James: Well, then you worked for Curly, too. Curly Byler.

Neady: Did you work with Mama? Because she used to work for Curly Byler.

Mary: Really?

Neady: Selling chickens, I think.

Mary: Mm-hmm. Well, it could be. I don't remember that. I know Fannie and I worked with Curly at the same time in that market because the customers would get us mixed up. They thought we looked so much alike.

Neady: Oh, you're sisters. Yeah. Oh, I can see that.

Mary: At that time, we really did. And so they could (unintelligible), and they'd come back out. We could have them totally confused.

Neady: You could have some fun with that, huh?

Mary: But, yes, there was a lot of marketing, yeah.

James: And we had a stall right just almost across the aisle from them.

Mary: But it's interesting. At that time, though, we didn't even know each other that well.

James: Well, we knew each other. We didn't pay much attention to each other.

Neady: So you really noticed her when she started coming to church.

James: Yeah. I guess so.

Mary: Yeah, because we dated on and off. I mean, see, he was 15 then, and then we didn't start going seriously again until much later, three years later maybe.

Neady: Did you have a special girlfriend you ran around with a lot?

Mary: Leona. (Miller)

Neady: Leona was your buddy?

Mary: Oh, my.

James: Yeah.

Mary: We were so close.

Neady: Really? Yeah. Now, she lived up here on Mt Pleasant Rd on the curve?

Mary: They lived also in Kempsville. I remember going to a home that they had in Kempsville. Where was that place where Joseph, her brother, drowned? No, he shot him(self). He accidentally got shot in the boat. Joseph.

James: Yeah.

Mary: That was over...and I cannot remember. You'd have to ask them where they lived at that time. But that is where, you know, for a while. I went home with them a lot for Sunday dinners, you know.

Neady: So they came out here to our church?

Mary: Yes.

Neady: I guess this was the only Mennonite church around here, wasn't it?

James: At that time, yeah. There would have been an Amish church over at Kempsville, but there was really not much interaction between us and the Amish except working together down at City Market. We were good friends with quite a few of them at the City Market.

Mary: You'd have to ask someone else that question, how soon they moved down. But it started because Roy Melinda, Roy was Bill's brother. And my sister Melinda.

Neady: Oh, okay.

Mary: And they were responsible for getting Leona and I corresponding together and becoming friends. We wrote letters to each other.

Neady: Like pen pals.

Mary: Long before we met. And then when they moved, they moved to that area, and I cannot think where it was. It was not Kempsville. Lynnhaven. Lynnhaven. It's in the Lynnhaven area, right close to the water. And anyway, they lived there. And then, yeah, later moved up here. But I remember going there to their home for meals. But she was a really good cook, and I went there a lot with her.

Neady: So was Merlin on the scene then, or was she not dating him?

Mary: Not Merlin. She went with this pilot, Ralph Weaver. He had a plane of his own.

Neady: Mennonite boy?

Mary: Harrisonburg. She dated him quite some time. I have a picture of her getting out of the airplane.

Neady: She flew with him?

Mary: Uh-huh.

Neady: Oh, I wouldn't be that brave, I don't think. I've never flown in my life.

James: You've never flown? Oh, yeah, that's a lot of fun.

Mary: But then I guess she started going with Merlin. They got married a year before we did, exactly a year before we did.

Neady: Well, James, did you have a particular buddy that you palled around with?

James: Well, Merlin and I were probably about as good of friends as there were, because, you know, we lived right beside each other down there. Merlin grew up...

Neady: Oh, yeah, where Marvin lived?

James: Yeah.

Neady: Right beside Bergen's dairy, actually.

James: Yeah. Because I was just telling Mary this evening, I remember we played together out in what is now in front of the dairy. We played together out there, and at that time there was a community line that just went from... a community telephone line... went from Roy Wenger's place down there, where it's all developed now, where it's all built up, there to Dwight's store back where Polly is. There was a community line through here. So Merlin and I would get out there in front of the store, and we could hear my mom and his mom talking.

Neady: Really?

Mary: Because the yella-phone, not a telephone.

Neady: I like that.

James: They called it the yella-phone.

Neady: So wasn't it a Mennonite telephone company or subsidiary or something? Francis Miller, when we interviewed him, he said something about that.

James: Grandpa had something to do with it. He had worked in it or something.

Neady: Which was he? Clayton?

James: Yeah, Clayton.

Mary: He signed some papers. I think we've got them somewhere. He had signed some paper or something.

James: About the phone?

Mary: About the phone, yeah.

Neady: Did you all get together and have community baseball games, like we did?

Mary: Yeah.

Neady: Was that sort of a loose-knit every Saturday night thing?

Mary: Yeah. Even after, first after we were married, Saturday night, that would be the thing to go up there and play a long time.

James: Well, we played back at...

Mary: Tommy Tennefoss.

James: Tommy Tennefoss. You know where that is. We played there, and then we also played right across the road here.

Neady: Oh, really?

James: Well, it's this one. We played in that field. And then we also played for a little bit in the field down there by the school across from Kevin and Melinda.

Neady: Oh, Crowlings? Winnie and Melinda?

James: Yeah, where they live. In that field. We played in that field for a little while, I remember.

Neady: Well, do you remember anybody being an outstanding ball player? Who the big

gun was or who could hit at the farthest or anything?

James: No, I don't particularly remember.

Neady: And you can admit it if it was you.

James: Well, I wasn't the worst ball player.

Neady: I've seen Harold hit the ball. He can hit the ball.

Mary: No, I don't remember that for sure either. But you were a good player.

James: I played on, I remember, I know we played, but I remember playing on the team of the EMHS well, EMS it was then.

Neady: What position did you play?

James: Usually first base.

Neady: Oh, yeah, tall. Somebody tall to be over. That's why I never got to play it. So did they let the ladies play, Mary, or was this a guy thing on Saturday night?

Mary: The ladies didn't play. Although we played for fun back at, with boys and girls, it was back at the Teneffoss'. We used to go back there a lot for Sunday dinner when I was 13, 14. Very young. Dad would bring me up for church, and we'd stay and eat dinner with the Teneffoss'. Then there was ball games and lots of fun. You know, Ivan (Miller), Sam Brunk, there was a bunch of young people would gather there and just have a good time.

Neady: Be enough to have two teams with no problems?

Mary: Yeah.

Neady: Did y'all choose up, or did you do the one-two-one-two thing?

Mary: Well, uh, yeah. Oh, thank you, Mike, my goodness. That's a job for you, James, tomorrow.

Neady: I'm definitely bringing somebody from work.

James: Come in, Mike.

Neady: Hey, Ed.

Mike: This is for the pressure washing.

Mary: Thank you so much. We're going to do our lawn furniture.

Mike: You all right?

Neady: Yeah, we're doing interviews for the book me and Alan are writing. If you were old enough, I'd come see you, but you're too young.

Mike: I'm glad I'm not.

Neady: Nobody under 60. Because I can just about remember that. I'm 50, so.

Mary: Thanks, Mike.

Neady: Is that a pressure washer?

Mary: Yeah,

Neady: I thought it was a vacuum cleaner. Let me look at my little list and see if I've got some questions. Of course, I am old enough to wear these.

James: Yeah, you need them.

Neady: Yep. That's very inconvenient.

James: Well, Mary just got another pair the other day, and that really helps her out.

Neady: That's right, because I can remember when you were teaching Sunday school and you had to just about have a magnifying glass or something, so you've been able to put that aside?

Mary: No, I have, for recipes especially, I have to use a magnifying glass. But they are so much better, so much better. The best I've had any time, he operated on this eye, and that has just opened up a new world. Yeah, so it's a lot better. I still don't think that I can really study and teach so like I used to. That's one thing James and I always did. We were always teaching, always. Bible school, Sunday school, and I remember having...

James: Talking about Bible school makes me think, we taught over at the colored schools, I don't know if you...

Neady: You were superintendent?

James: Yeah.

Mary: He was superintendent they year.

James: I was superintendent over there a couple of times, and Orpha (Miller) was one of the teachers, and she had back-to-seventh grade boys, and you know what they could be like. I don't know how many times she called me back there to get 'em straight.

Neady: Was Rosie Lehman involved in that?

Mary: No, I don't remember. Who else taught over there?

Neady: I went with Rosie, I think it was Rosie, and we had Easter eggs at some colored church.

James: Oh.

Mary: I wouldn't be surprised, I'm sure she was involved. We taught at the Bible school at those black churches for a long time. We had a long-standing relationship with them.

Neady: Wow. Yeah, how did you do it all? So many children and a farm...

Mary: Yeah, I had the Sunday school and had Nancy, Nina, and that whole gang, Olin, and Carol, Scott, I mean Carol, but anyway, that age group, the aged girls, and had a whole gang of them that I taught for a while. And you know another class I thought about just recently that I just couldn't believe? Ray Lehman, Brian Deal, Johnny Zook.

Neady: What was it, the bad apple basket?

Mary: And nobody else would take the class, so I took it.

James: Oh, boy.

Mary: Brian Deal, that whole gang that now...

Neady: Was Philip Keffer in there maybe?

Mary: Yes, yes he was. He mentioned he stayed here that week at the funeral, he stayed here the whole week. Three or four days here.

Neady: For Joyce's funeral?

James: Yeah.

Neady: Really?

Mary: Yeah. Yeah, anyway, I think he just asked, and I'm losing my thought here.

Neady: We were talking about the different boys that were in that group.

Mary: Yeah, he just mentioned it, because he remembered those guys very well, you know. He was with them, yeah. That was quite a group.

Neady: Yeah. You know, I think I substituted one night at Bible school. I know Brian Deal was in my class. And I had taken a watermelon for, that's when you took your own snacks. You know, each class had their own snacks, if they had snacks at all. And my dad was superintendent that year, and I was just a young teenager.

Mary: You must have been.

Neady: I was cutting the watermelon up, and my dad came and helped me, and he kept checking on me because he thought I couldn't handle these rowdy boys. But I have to say, Brian was a model student that night. I don't remember the rest of them, but I remember going in there scared to death. But he did fine, and well, daddy was going to make sure it went fine, because they weren't going to mess with me, you know. And I was thinking, I don't need any help. I got it, you know. But if I needed help, and he wouldn't have been there, you know. It would have been the other way around, because I would have had him and not need him. All right. How about your first car? Well, you told me about your first car after you got married. You told me about your first date that daddy helped line up, and your first home was on Wenger Road.

James: Yeah. Where Leonard lives now. It wasn't the same house, but...

Mary: Yeah.

Neady: So Doc and Mildred, the house they had back there, was that actually on the same foundation?

Mary: The same property.

Neady: So they tore down the old...

Mary: They built a little house back there.

Neady: The one Byard (Bergey) lives in now.

Mary: Yes. Yeah. So then that was moved when Nelson decided to move back there. Yeah.

Neady: And I'm old enough to remember that. I do know that. And your first job would

have been at the farm.

James: Yeah.

Neady: And yours was with the doctor's children. Was that your first paying job?

Mary: No, because I had worked for Curly and, you know, Byler, and marketing and, but that was, I took that job though I'd worked there the longest, and that was just before we got married. They did not want me to quit when I got married, and I said I would have to. I would have to. So that was just before we got married, yeah.

Neady: So who in, particularly in this neighborhood, would you think was a big influence on your life as you were growing up? Did you have a special teacher or... Well, Brother Winger must have made an impact on him if he was taking you on dates to prayer meetings with Brother Winger.

Mary: Well, you think about it, I can tell you right off. Lydia Miller.

Neady: Marvin's Lydia?

Mary: She had come from a mission background, a mission family, and she took us girls on in the girls' class, and she could be, she was an artist. She could draw. She held our attention. She had us, we had a club. We not only had the class, we would go to her home and do things there, and I can't remember all the details of it, but she really influenced my life.

Neady: Well, she must have been your generation's Dorothy Wenger that we had. It sounds very similar to Dorothy Wenger.

Mary: Yeah. Yeah.

Neady: Spent a lot of time in that lady's house.

Mary: And we did with Lydia. She was a real special friend.

Neady: Didn't she, like, draw birds and things even on envelopes when she sent letters?

Mary: Oh, she could just draw like you would not believe. She had some of the, she made these pictures, you know, that she would draw, art you know, with paint, with paint pictures on, glass. That was really pretty. She really had a real good gift, you know. But she was, really gave us some, a lot of memory work, but a good mission emphasis in reaching out to others, you know.

Neady: Now, she also was a second wife, wasn't she?

Mary: Uh huh.

Neady: So, she's not Merlin's natural mother.

Mary: No, no. That was Katie.

Neady: Now, what happened to his natural mother?

Mary: Katie. She had a...she was a good friend, the best friend of his mother.

James: Yeah, my mom.

Mary: They lived right next to each other. They were best of friends. You see, we have pictures of them in each other's arms, you know. But she had a tubal pregnancy.

Neady: Oh, really?

Mary: Like that, she had, I mean, to die from that. Probably something that she, of course, would never die from now. Yeah, it was really sad.

Neady: That must be horrible. That must have been awful sad.

Mary: Two little children, Mildred and Merlin.

James: Oh, Mildred, where did she ever go?

Mary: Yeah.

Neady: Was Lydia already in this neighborhood?

Mary: No, no. She was from Michigan. She was a Moyer from Michigan. I really don't know. That would be interesting to know.

James: I don't know.

Mary: Marvin and her met.

James: Have to ask Merlin that.

Neady: I have to try to get an interview with Merlin.

Mary: Yeah.

Neady: Exactly.

James: He'd be about the only one around anymore that could tell you that.

Neady: Yeah, I bet you're right. If he even knows.

Mary: Yeah. I wonder, I'm really curious to see how they met. But she was a very special person. Artistic and good. She really moved the attention in them. Yeah. Hmm.

Neady: Anyway. So when you worked the farm, I guess your dad was always your boss or your granddad.

James: Well, granddad helped us a lot, but he didn't ever try to run things.

Neady: Oh, that's right. It was a Kemp farm. I keep thinking that your granddad is the one that started it, when it really was your dad. Titus, that boy over there. Yeah, that's right. I keep putting Clayton in there. I don't know why.

James: Yeah, me neither. He was working at the Ford plant.

Neady: Titus was working at the forage plant?

Mary: Yes, and he decided he wanted to, he had this dream of having a farm for his boys and working together. So he quit the Ford plant and started buying cows to start up.

Neady: Do you have any idea how long he worked at the Ford plant? Was it a short time or?

James: It was several years.

Mary: He had a good job there, didn't he?

James: Yeah, he had a real good job. That was an excellent job in those days, especially.

Neady: Oh, it still is.

James: Well, yeah.

Neady: For at least another year. Well, a name kept coming up with the Ford plant with both Ivan and with Francis (Miller) when we talked to them, Wiley Brothers. Did you know him?

James: Oh, yeah, sure. They rented our house back there for years. (Wenger Rd)

Neady: But they weren't Mennonite, were they?

James: No.

Neady: Just some neighborhood...

Mary: Wonderful, wonderful couple.

Neady: Really?

Mary: Mm-hmm. And it's interesting that their daughter or granddaughter, which is it, lived on the same street with Joy in Chattanooga, and Joy and Mike lived down in Chattanooga. And they became good friends, yeah.

Neady: Didn't know each other at all before then?

Mary: No.

Neady: And then they got connected. Wow. Isn't that something?

Mary: Yeah. But they were a very special couple. Yeah, they did not want to move from back there. But they moved so that we could move in.

James: Yeah, they moved out to, oh, you know, Mount Pleasant Road, just before you get to the interstate, the underpass, there was a, well, there was farms. There was a truck farm on the north side of the road and a dairy farm on the south side of the road. And the dairy farm had closed down for whatever, I don't know, I don't remember the reason. But anyhow, there was a house there for rent, a big old house, a southern house, and that's where Wiley Brothers moved when we got married and moved back there in that house.

Mary: And you said that at one time there was 70 dairy farms in this area.

Neady: Really? And now there's, what, 70 garage door companies? That's the new Mennonite occupation. With all the houses, I guess it can support it.

James: Well, in over in the Kempsville area, there was a whole lot of Amish dairy farms. I don't know, there must have been.

Mary: That's what I was adding, that 70 would have been a lot of these Amish farms, you knew there were.

Neady: Now, was Yoder Dairies here before Bergey's or after Bergey's?

James: Before Bergey's started a couple years before, some years before, but then they were, it wasn't so many years, but then they were bigger right to start with because they had, oh, I don't know, 15 or so dairies.

Neady: Yeah, it's like a co-op or some magic word like that.

Mary: They had all those dairy farms, Amish farms. To furnish all that, provide all that milk?

Neady: Did most of those farms just keep the family working or did they hire outside help?

James: I don't remember exactly, but I imagine that was most of the family. That's what I think.

Neady: Yeah, sort of like, well, y'all probably for a long time, and Kurtz', once in a while, well, Joe Turner, I guess. Y'all remember Joe Turner, I'm sure.

Mary: Mm-hmm.

Neady: Yeah, that was neat having them back there. We didn't spend much time with them back and forth, but I always liked it when they would come up and play ball in the front yard. Didn't happen very often, and I still remember all of those kids and their names, and I was so intrigued with that big family down the lane.

James: I wouldn't remember the others except Tick, of course. He worked for us, you know.

Neady: Tick had two brothers right close to him, Larry and Ken.

Mary: Oh, wow, I wouldn't know that.

Neady: And then there was a young, Michael was probably Lynn's age maybe. But, you know, Geraldine, she just passed away about, what, 4, 5, 6 months ago. Linda Overholt and I went over to the viewing hoping that some of the family would be there, but none of the family except her daughter was there.

Mary: Geraldine?

Neady: Yeah. Yeah.

Mary: Yeah. That's really something about how we have...I don't know. William Vaughn has kept that, you know, but that's where Joe Turner ended up at the church, where William Vaughn was.

Neady: At Norview?

Mary: At Norview, yeah.

Neady: Didn't Harold Buckwalter, wasn't he real instrumental in planting that church?

Mary: Yes, he was a pastor there.

Neady: Right. Yeah, and he used to take the school bus or a bus or something and pick people up, because I went with Beverly one time and I was just a little thing. And we went to Foundation Park. By then, the Turners had left Maxwell Street and were living, I think, in Foundation Park. Isn't that where they went?

Mary: I'm not sure, but somewhere in there.

Neady: And Harold Buckwalter drove the bus over there and they all piled on and we went on, them and some others, and we went on to Norview for a service one Sunday night. I will never forget it, because I thought I was really living on the edge. I'm on a bus, I don't know any of these people, and I'm trusting Harold Buckwalter to get me back home. He did. He did fine.

Mary: Harold has been one faithful person. He really has been a saint when I think about how he started that whole church spirit there at Landstown, amazing.

Neady: And he's still, I mean, he's still going out to Seaman's house. And then Mr. Chandler, I guess it is, goes with him. So did either of you ever do the jail ministry? You did jail?

Mary: James is there all the time, yeah. We're the ones that started the cookies.

Neady: Really?

Mary: Yeah, we started that. And then, of course, they got away, but they wouldn't do it anymore because...

James: We weren't the ones who started it, I guess Charlie Miles, I mean, Charlie Warfel, and who else? Somebody else.

Mary: I remember I started baking them, though.

James: Yeah, oh yeah, you started that.

Mary: I started baking them and putting it together and getting people involved.

James: But I was involved here, especially when the jail moved over here more. Because I knew, I'm not sure why, but I knew the sheriff well, still know him. And we were up here. They just gave us just about freedom to go anywhere in the jail. You know, they could trust us and anything like that.

Mary: You were on the Virginia Mission for 12 years, but then you were in the jail ministry forever. I remember Lynn, he was a little tag-along, born in 1970, after all the others were, Joy was nine, whatever. But, so you went on into jail. I was thinking that he paid to go along, and you let him go with you at that one time, and you went in because you wanted to see what it was like.

James: I forget about that.

Mary: He must have been 10, 12 years old when he went to jail with you. So anyway, that was a long time. I bet you went 20 years.

Neady: So who were your partners that went with you? Was Jerry Kephart one of them? Didn't he go to jail?

James: Yeah, Jerry, Abram Wenger,

Neady: Chester or James Mast?

James: I'm not sure about Chester.

Mary: I saw Merlin on one of the pictures. Merlin, Abram.

Neady: Were you still going when Menno Yoder started going?

James: Oh, yeah.

Neady: Robert Mast?

Mary: Robert started just a week before you.

James: Yeah, Robert.

Mary: He was a pastor. Wasn't he a bishop for a while?

James: Yeah.

Mary: So you know, he was, I was just trying to think if I could find that picture of the jail ministry. Oh, I've got some pictures. I'm trying to remember who all was in there.

James: And I'm trying to think now why, but I knew John Newhart real good. That was before, early on.

Neady: You mean he's been around that long?

Mary: A long time.

Neady: He still is. He's still out there.

James: Yeah. Yeah, I learned to know him. I think, if I remember right, I was going to the jail before. Yeah, sure was, because when we first started going to jail, there was no Chesapeake.

Neady: It was Norfolk County?

James: Norfolk County, and the jail was over in Portsmouth.

Neady: Really?

James: Yeah, Portsmouth had it.

Neady: So they didn't have one even in south Norfolk?

James: I don't think so. And then when they first moved out here, I think, I'm trying to think if I knew Newhorn before or learned to know him then when they first moved out here. We were good friends. I hadn't seen him for quite a while. But anyhow, we were good friends, and he just, you know, just told us to go do what we want to in there. Well, you know, we had sense enough to know what to do, but we pretty well had the run of the jail. Now they don't have quite that freedom.

Neady: Oh, I know. I did a thing at Christmas, and you've got to give your driver's license to him while you're in there, and go through a metal detector.

James: Yeah, it's a different story. And like I say, I faintly remember we went over to the Portsmouth jail just a few times before this one was built here. Because Norfolk County is all there in the major over at Portsmouth jail.

Neady: So is that the same Portsmouth jail that's there today? Way over there on the water?

James: Yeah. Well, to tell you the truth, I'm not sure. It's been so long since then. I'm not sure if the jail has changed or not.

Neady: Well, I know when I have to go to court over there, it's right on the water. And I see the jail. I mean, it says it's the jail right there with all the court complex, you know?

James: I wonder. I don't know. It's been a while. I don't remember where it was. The years kind of flip around. That would have been quite a while ago.

Neady: So I guess you consider yourself retired by now, right?

James: Oh, yeah, I'm retired.

Neady: So what do you do with your days now?

James: Oh, work when I want to.

Neady: You probably still have a huge garden.

James: Yeah, we've got a big garden out here. And, of course, mowing yard. And then keep the place mowed down there at the dairy. Then the kids, I think they're going to try to work up into working for them down there.

Neady: Well, they slip around. They used to work for you, and then you get to work for them.

James: Oh, man.

Mary: I've got a picture of him. I'd like to show it to you. Oh, I had Abram Wenger on there. Oh, no.

Neady: Oh, you mean from going to the jail?

Mary: Yeah. But I can't. I have a picture now of all things. We had so many pictures.

Neady: Now, was your dairy started before Wenger's Dairy or Kurtz' Dairy? Was this the first one around here?

James: Well, no. I don't know.

Mary: Roy Wenger. He bottled for you all. So he started before you did. I know because I know he did some bottling of his cream for you.

James: Yeah, we just sold cream for quite a while. Skim milk, nobody would buy that stuff. Feed it to the pigs. Now you've got to feed the cream to the pigs.

Mary: Yeah, so Roy Wenger. I think we even have a bottle in there, a glass bottle with their name on it.

James: I think so.

Neady: Really?

James: And then talking about bottling, for a while then we went up to Ernest (Miller),

had his processing plant to bottle milk and pasteurize before we did. So for a little while we took our milk, well, it wasn't milk, it was cream, we took our cream up there and pasteurized it up at Ernest's place before we cleaned(?) the process and placed it up here.

Neady: Were the inspections real tight back then or was it much more relaxed?

James: It was much more relaxed.

Neady: So Mary, where did you get your education? Did you go to Mount Pleasant Christian School?

Mary: No.

Neady: No?

Mary: No. No, I only went to the seventh grade at Moyock, North Carolina, and my mom made me quit school to help at home.

Neady: Oh.

Mary: Like the Amish always did.

Neady: Oh, okay.

Mary: So, but then after we got married and he started working in the business and started the office, he had taken business at EMHS in his high school and he helped me. We worked it out together. He taught me a lot.

James : I set up the bookkeeping.

Mary: He set up all the bookkeeping system and later insisted that I learn the computer. When we changed our program to all-star computer with Terrell Country, we learned that together and brought that into the office, that bookkeeping system. But then I decided to take my GED.

Neady: Did you really?

Neady: Went back and studied and took that test and I passed.

Neady: And by then you had a whole block of kids?

Mary: Yeah.

Neady: I never knew that.

Mary: And then I thought, well, I'm going to take some college classes, one or two. So I did. I took accounting and then I took music with Elsa.

Neady: Did you really? Did you go to TTC?

Mary: Yeah.

Neady: Did you like it?

Mary: Yeah, I really did.

Neady: So when you went to school, you enjoyed school?

Mary: Yeah.

Neady: Even up in seventh grade?

Mary: Even if my mom didn't tell me, I quit because I was too boy-crazy.

Neady: That sound like what my mama would say.

Mary: But it was really the work. We were always hard-working. I'm telling you, Mom worked so hard and she taught us how to work.

Neady: The work ethic was different back then, wasn't it?

Mary: But I think, wow, I just wish I could have had the opportunity at school. But anyway.

Neady: Did your children enjoy school or was it a chore getting them up in the morning to school?

Mary: Some of them, it was harder than others. Daniel never liked school. Joy was always really sharp and good, but Daniel didn't like school. And they lived in poor grades for a while. But it was okay. They all graduated from high school. Of course, Harold, he kept right on going and going to get his, and then Kathy too. She's got her master's. And anyway. Then who else?

James: They're not as dumb as we are.

Neady: They're more educated, that's all.

Mary: Lynn, of course, went to two years of college in Heston to take flying. And then from there went to a lot more school to get where he is now, flying and flying. But then I was trying to think about Leonard, who's been through high school.

Most of them just went through high school. And Floyd went to EMHS two years. Leonard went two years for the last two years. Kathy didn't. She finished at Great Bridge so that she could go to college.

James: That's right. She wanted to go to college.

Mary: Her choice to go to college.

Neady: Well, when you said you went to Harrisonburg for high school, wasn't that sort of unusual back then or not?

Mary: No. No. That was a regular thing?

James: Quite a few. A lot of them did that.

Neady: Did they?

James: Quite a few of folks, young folks, went to those, especially for the last two years.

Mary: Then the last year, his graduating year, I was up there for a short time for six weeks and took all kinds of courses. That was really helpful, too. Then most did Bible courses, but then some other, too, music. Then I went two years for six weeks up to Harrisonburg.

Neady: What, before you got married?

Mary: Yes. Yes. They don't even have that anymore, that short time. That was really a nice thing.

Neady: Now, I've never heard of that, like you're talking about.

Mary: A six week Bible term. I mean, soul winning, personal evangelism class, music, church history. I mean, just a lot of different things.

Neady: Now, this music class you took with Elsa, was that to read music or sing music?

Mary: Both.

Neady: How about directing?

Mary: No.

Neady: No directing?

Mary: I didn't really take any directing, but I took basic rudiments in music. Okay. I was

trying to learn, because I'd always learned guitar and things by ear, just by ear. Then I wanted to know the real music.

Neady: Well, you've always played guitar ever since I've known who you were. How long have you been playing guitar?

Mary: I started playing when I was just 12, 13 years old.

Neady: Just got you a book and learned it?

Mary: No book, by ear. Everything by ear. And then when I, after I dated James that time, I started going with the youth and went with this Bobby Campbell for several years, and I was engaged to him. And he was a guitar player, and we played guitar together. He taught me a lot about guitar.

Neady: Now, that doesn't sound like a Mennonite thing.

James: It wasn't.

Mary: And I was going to get married to him. He bought me a watch. I didn't believe in rings, so he bought me a watch. But then James changed all that again, because he didn't. And I'm glad he did. Well, actually, Bible reading is what changed it a lot, brought it all about, because I really decided that I didn't want, I mean, I wanted a Christian home more than anything else. I didn't want to take any chances.

Neady: Bobby wasn't into the Christian scene?

Mary: No, and he was so upset that he came to the church and stood up in revival meeting and accepted Christ and then asked me to come back, but I just, no.

Neady: But you felt like it didn't you?

Mary: No, I just knew it wasn't the thing. Yeah, it wasn't the thing. And I know now God has really protected me.

James: It's an old story.

Mary: Well, just, you know, when I think about it, I never met his parents, never met his sister. They didn't really like me. What kind of situation could I have gotten into? Oh, wow.

Neady: Your interview would sound more like Avis' at that point, probably. We interviewed Avis. She put old Harold on the choppin' black on her interview.

Mary: Bobby was a nice person. He was a wonderful guitarist. I mean, more than he was

wonderful. He was very good.

Neady: Did he go on to have a musical career?

Mary: You know what?

Neady: Or do you even know what became of him?

Mary: Years later when Kathy and Joy and I were buying groceries, I met him in the store. He came and put his arms around me and they just...

Neady: I bet they did. I'm telling Dad. But he still was all that.

Mary: No, he was. And then when I found out what he was doing, playing the nightclubs.

Neady: No kidding.

Mary: He was a wonderful guitarist but playing the nightclubs.

Neady: If Joy was alive, that wasn't that long ago. In the last 20, 30 years. How old was Joy?

Mary: She was born in 61. She was just real little then. But Kathy was bigger. I think one of the boys was along too. I have them in the grocery store and they were. "Who is that?" But anyway, that's just. I just say that just because I know in my heart what God did in my life. I said more that came to the decision for what I wanted more than anything else was to make a home with family.

Neady: Your priority list.

Mary: Yes. And it was the right choice.

James: You know one thing else we haven't told her?

Mary: What?

James: Bible school in Kentucky.

Mary: Yeah. That's the last time we really committed ourselves to each other when we were both teaching Bible school.

Neady: Before you were married?

Mary: Yeah. We started dating back then.

Neady: What in the world took you all the way to Kentucky? It was like a little mission trip.

Mary: Well, he graduated in '47, right? And I was still in Bible school. That was my second term. And it was the same time he graduated.

Neady: At EMHS?

Mary: Yeah. And Fannie and I had been, and Fannie was there too, and we had revival meetings there by Kaufman. What was his name, first name?

Neady: Raymond?

Mary: No, not Raymond Kaufman. But anyway, we went to him for advice. Fannie went to him and said, we want to go to some type of mission service. We want to do something. And do you have any advice? So he spent a lot of time with her and said, I have just the place for you out in Kansas City in the children's home. And that's where she went and that's where she met Norman.

Neady: Oh, it is?

Mary: And then at the same time, I got a letter from Brother Wenger, and I was just getting ready to come home for the short term, and he wrote and he asked me, would you consider teaching Bible school this summer in Kentucky? And I just said, yes, yes, yes. And he was saying, yes, I would say yes. And that's when we got together, yes. We both got together.

James: Actually, we were going with somebody else when we went down there.

Mary: Yeah, we both were.

Neady: Oh, you had other boyfriends and girlfriends?

Mary: Yeah.

Neady: So who was the other girlfriend, James? I know I said that. It wasn't my mom, was it?

James: You would probably know the person.

Neady: It was my mom's sister, wasn't it?

James & Mary: It was Twyla.

Neady: Oh, Twyla. Well, that's nothing to be ashamed of it. In fact, I think I have heard that from Beverly when I was growing up. Oh, because Twyla has said it.

Mary: I get so embarrassed sometimes because I don't care what kind of meeting I'm in, Harold brings it up. I mean, you know, he'll bring it up and he'll say, thank you, James. Thank you, James, for taking.

Neady: To thank Mary that Mary took James away. Oh, that's funny.

Mary: Anyway, it's just to show how God does lead. And, you know, it was during that time of commitment and Bible school and things that I had told God that more than anything else in the world I wanted a Christian home, a Christian family.

Neady: Now, you have how many sisters, three sisters?

Mary: There was five of us girls and two boys, so it would be Lizzie, Melinda, Edna, Fannie, and I.

Neady: And did you have a sister that you just ran around with more than the others?

Mary: Fannie and I were, and then Leona was in with us and the Tice twins.

Neady: Is that related to Verna Mae (Miller)?

Mary: They're sisters. See, that's where we spent a lot of the time. Fannie went to short term the same year that I did that last year. And then we were invited out. We were with the Tice twins a lot. We were invited out to their home to Verna Mae's mom.

Neady: And that was in Harrisonburg?

Mary: In Harrisonburg, yeah. And we'd go out there every weekend when we were up there for short term. So, anyway.

Neady: Did y'all have a good old time? Did you really enjoy each other?

Mary: I have pictures where they went with me down to Moyock, and I cannot figure that out, whether we just went down for the fun of it. I really don't know. I have pictures taken of us in a cornfield together down in Moyock. That just shows how long we were friends, you know, friends. Anyway, it goes way back, yeah. But it was a wonderful, wonderful time. Yeah. I never regretted that decision. That's for sure.

Neady: Well, when Clyde drowned, he was in his 30s maybe?

Mary: 27.

Neady: 27. With five children. And I remember that night. Mama took us down there when it was still that night, you know, and when him and Donnie both were missing, I will never, ever forget that.

Mary: Nobody will. Never. James and I, when we rode out there, I was pregnant with Joy. Six months pregnant with Joy at the time. But then I just remembered when we rode out there, and we stopped at the police with one section of the road before you get right to Mundon, and James stopped and asked him if they've heard anything. He said, no, we haven't found him.

Neady: So you knew before you got in the car and went there that he was missing.

Mary: Yeah, we just knew he was gone. And it was so heartbreaking.

Neady: And didn't they do a double funeral for them? I'm thinking they did.

James: I think that's right. Donnie and Clyde.

Neady: Yeah, because they would have been. Well, no, they aren't related. Helen was the link, but Clyde wouldn't have been related to Donnie.

Mary: No, Helen was the link.

Neady: And Donnie was, what, 14?

Mary: 10. Oh, no, see, 10. Harold and him were good buddies, and Harold and him were both 10.

Neady: Oh, okay.

James: It seemed so, I don't know what, because where he drowned, you could stand up.

Neady: Really? Panic.

James: Because Doc (Dickerson) was out there. Doc went out there and got the boys.

Neady: Oh, okay, got the boat.

Mary: Yeah, he was about to get the boat. So you know, you know. Walked out to get the boat.

Neady: Well, maybe the boat drifted away.

James: Well, that's possible. I don't know. I haven't figured that out.

Mary: But then they couldn't find him that night. The next day, they found him.

Neady: I remember Daddy went with, you know, to look for it, and he wasn't in the boat that actually found him. But I remember him talking about it at supper, but he was kind of glad it wasn't his boat that actually did find him. I remember he was on the search team or whatever you want to call it. Yeah, if I had to think of some tragedy in my life, you know, that was just horrendous for this neighborhood, that would definitely be it. But I know when we interviewed other people, the thing they talked about a lot was the Smucker boy that got killed. Yeah, yeah, that was also...

James: Christmas morning.

Neady: Oh, it was Christmas morning?

Mary: See, and David Smoker was, he dated Leona (Miller) some, and he had a motorcycle. He was killed on a motorcycle too. So that was another real tragedy. That would have been Leona and the brother to Dan.

Neady: Wasn't he going to find a milk truck on that motorcycle when he got killed too?

Mary: I don't know.

Neady: I want to say somebody told us that he got to the dairy to go on the route with somebody and they had already left, so he went looking for them.

James: Oh, that might be. I don't remember the details.

Mary: No, I don't remember the story. But, yeah, there's really been some tragedies, I think, about it. Like that in the community.

Neady: Really, when you think of how many there are of us, you know, when you can count on one hand the really bad tragedies. We're really fortunate.

Mary: That was so devastating to Grandma, to all everybody. And I know she said, I remember one time we were picking peas together, and a Virginia Mast was picking with us. So they had extra peas.

James: Yeah, they were good friends.

Mary: We were picking peas together, and Grandma was crying, and she just said that she felt that one day Ray and Roy, she said maybe they would even be missionaries. You know, she felt like ...

Neady: Really? After Clyde had died?

Mary: Yeah. That God would have a ...

Neady: And then Ray did go on the motorcycle trip.

Mary: Yeah, he went on the motorcycle trip, and both of them were just such a whole family.

Neady: They are. They sure are. They are really great. They're good people.

Mary: And I know she would be so happy.

Neady: Yeah, I think Helen did what she could while she was here and got them going on the right path, evidently.

Mary: Yep.

Neady: I know even my husband has commented about how nice Ray and Roy always are. He'll say, I know they always talk to me. You know, because he sort of stands off a lot, and he waits for people to approach him, and then when they don't, he thinks, well, they're stuck up. And I'm like, well, did you talk to them? Well, they didn't talk to me. Well, you know, you can take that both ways. When a guy doesn't have any friends, there's usually a reason. Have you been a friend?

Mary: Exactly.

Neady: That's what I like to say to him. Let me check my list one more time.

Mary: You're probably kind of deviated here.

Neady: We always do, and that's usually when you get your best story, you can tell me the truth. I'll just ask this, yet, because I'm probably getting pushed on time. What events in your life bring you great pride?

Mary: What events?

Neady: What events, what things in your life bring you great pride? It would have to be your family, I'm sure.

Mary: I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

James: Yeah, that's about what I was going to say.

Mary: That's a statement in the Bible, but that's what I've thought of and talked about in

my life. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth. God said that.

Neady: I do remember when me and Annie were in instruction class. The very first night, it was, like, snowing, and Daddy carried us down there to drop us off, and nobody was there. And I don't know if they were getting a late start. I don't know if he needed to be somewhere and took us early, but the church wasn't, there was nobody there. So he took me and Annie to you all's house, because Floyd was going to be in the class. So you all invited us in, and me and Annie sat in the living room while the rest of you all got ready for church, and Kathy got to stay home that night. For some reason, she was doing the dishes. I think she volunteered, I'll clean up the kitchen or something. She was going to stay home that night, and I remember her, I don't know why I remember this, but she was out there washing dishes, and she had, like, a ketchup bottle or something, and I would always just put the lid on it and put it away. She had taken your dish rag and had wiped all the stuff off of it and then put the lid on, and I thought, oh, wow, she's doing such a good job. I don't do it like that. And then we all got in the station wagon.

James: That sounds like her?

Neady: It sounds like her?

James: Yeah.

Neady Then we got in your all's station wagon. And it was your silver blue '68 Ford station wagon. Is that right?

Mary: That I wrecked, I think.

Neady: And Harold drove. Harold was doing the driving.

Mary: Oh, my goodness.

Neady: And we all rode to church together. And he made a joke about he had washed the car that day, or if he had washed the car that day, then that's why it snowed. There's something about washing the car. But you all put me and Annie up there, and I was really glad because I didn't want to sit in that church by myself. And he made us so welcome, so thank you. Something I will never forget.

James: And who did you say... did Harold drive?

Neady: Harold was driving, and you and Mary were riding, and me and Floyd and Daniel and Joy and Annie, my sister Annie. And Beverly Wenger had been through instruction class already, but me and Annie didn't want to be all by ourselves in

there, so she came and took the instruction class a second time.

Mary: Wow.

Neady: Just as a good friend. Oh, Beverly Wagner was always, you could count on her for anything.

Mary: My goodness.

Neady: And we were growing up, you know. . Beverly Wenger and Beverly Buckholder. We had Beverly Wenger and Beverly B. That's how we kept them straight.

Mary: Well, that last question, did we answer it good enough? But then what was it?

Neady: What events in your life bring you great pride? And then I put on here, but this is kind of morbid, so I don't usually ask, what would you like people to remember about you? But that sort of...

Mary: Well, anyhow, I still think that family and knowing that our children are serving the Lord would be the, give us the greatest...

Neady: Because you have sort of put your whole life and heart and soul into it. That's obvious.

Mary: Definitely.. Yeah.

Neady: Oh, now it's going to rain. Oh.

James: Harold's serving here, and Kathy's in Chile, and Daniel's down in Moyock.

Neady: Now, how are Kathy's boys doing?

Mary: They... we don't know where Matt is. He's still in the service, but he doesn't really keep in touch. But Jay just wrote a real nice letter, and he said he can't wait to get out.

Neady: He doesn't plan to make this a career now.

Mary: Oh no. He wants to be a veterinarian, he says, and he wants to, then he's supposed to get out by September.

Neady: Is he really?

Mary: Four years. I can't believe that.

Neady: I can't. I can't believe that..

Mary: Four years. And so anyway, and then, well, Matt's time will be up too, but I don't know how he feels about getting out. But Jay's married, and he wants to get back with his wife and live down in Florida. But Kristin lives right here in the area.

Neady: She got married too, didn't she?

Mary: Yeah, she's married Kelly Chips, a really nice fella. And they want to start a family soon. And in fact, we, Julie, I had such nice calla lilies, and I knew she liked them. So on her birthday, she turned 30, just the 15th of this month.

Neady: Oh, wow. That's unreal.

Mary: And so Joy took her, went in to see her at her work, and took her this beautiful bouquet of calla lilies, and she just, she just loved it.

Neady: Now, does he work at Geico?

Mary: Yeah. And she was so pleased to see, for Joy to bring Titus and Nadia in to see her too. Yeah. So Joy's really good at that, doing that.

Neady: Joy has her hands full now, doesn't she?

Mary: Yeah, she does.

Neady: With two of them.

James: He's a live wire too.

Neady: He is.

James: Hands full.

Mary: And Dave(?) is good for him, because he's just, he's calm and, you know, doesn't get riled up at anything.

Neady: Yeah, and they sort of know who will and who won't. It doesn't take long to figure that out.

Mary: That's so good. We're helping her out what we can.

Neady: Well, I got Matt's e-mail address from Kathy last time she was here. You know, he ran around with my oldest one, Danny.

Mary: Oh, okay.

Neady:A And I e-mailed him after I got it, and he e-mailed back. He was just blown away to hear from me, you know.

Mary: Oh, good.

Neady: But I think he's only written to me like once, maybe twice.

Mary: Well, that's good, though, for them. That's good. I mean, it seems like they just, if you hear from Matt much, he's done good.

James: He is safe where he is.

Neady: He told me he was, I think he was in Iraq or going to Iraq at that time.

James: We kind of heard around the boat. I mean, both of them were there, according to what.

Neady: And he said he's got a girlfriend, and I think she's from California.

Mary: That sounds right. He likes California.

Neady: He likes horses. So I think they want to do something with horses. It sounded like he planned to be with her, you know. He didn't use the word marry, but I kind of was reading between the lines. That's what it sounded like was going to happen. He went to the retreat center one weekend when we had the retreat, church retreat. He went with me and Danny and Randy. It was just the three of us. And all weekend his favorite phrase was, that's right, baby, that's right, baby. So I e-mailed him. I would put in his, that's right, baby. And when he e-mailed back, he said his favorite phrase, that's right, baby. We had a really good weekend with him that weekend. And I'll never forget that.

Mary: Oh, look at this place.

Neadh: We don't need any more of this rain, do we?

Mary: Oh, my.

Tape ended