

QUONOCHONTAUG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Oral History

W. MUNROE HOXIE

With Commentary & Assistance from Daughter Marjorie Carsten

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Interviewed by Anne S. Doyle

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DOYLE: I am talking to Willard Munroe HOXIE—OK; so where shall we start?--

HOXIE: Better known as Munroe--

DOYLE: Oh – better known as Munroe, right!

HOXIE: Well, let's go back to the beginning of the settling of Quonochontaug Neck, East Beach Road, West Beach Road--

DOYLE: Yes.

HOXIE: I understand it was granted from King Charles in --what did he call it – it was a grant, a land grant—

DOYLE: M-hm.

HOXIE: And where-- the old road, between Mike's and Wilcox Tavern – that big house right there is the original foundation for the Stanton home –

DOYLE: OK, now I'm going to have you explain that to me again. Exactly where is that?

HOXIE: Well, you got to go back before. It should have been on the neck because he had seven daughters. And he had a grant from King Charles: as far as he could see from that view—

DOYLE: Way to the ocean.

HOXIE: In all directions. And he gave each daughter a portion when she married.

DOYLE: OK.

HOXIE: Now, the Wilcox Tavern was not the first marriage. But that was when – the families – their family --went toward Westerly, almost over to the town line, the grant that they received. It included the saltbox, which was not in existence then. But that's where the Wilcox Tavern comes in.

HOXIE: Herb Wilcox and Howard Wilcox and Governor Wilcox all came from that family. And that's why the monument. And Howard Wilcox was-- at one time he had charge of running the Coast Guard –it wasn't the Coast Guard then; it was the Life Saving Service along the Rhode Island coast. He later moved to Idaho—if you can imagine going with the Coast Guard to Idaho!

DOYLE: [Laughing] What did he go to Idaho for?

HOXIE: He was a two-career – Idaho and eastern Washington and that area --of course, there was lakes and freshwater [fishing] up there. That was Howard Wilcox. And John Wilcox – he was the sheriff of Washington County—as a matter of fact, he was sheriff of what was more than what's now Washington County: it wasn't divided then. And the jail was in Kingston! And if you come over Kingston Hill, the old part of Kingston Hill, the Congregational Church-- the next building--

DOYLE: Yes --?

HOXIE: --was the jail. And that's where Howard Wilcox was – John Wilcox, I mean.

DOYLE: I see.

HOXIE: He was the sheriff of –all get-out! Now, come to go down the West Beach Road – you live on the West Beach Road--?

DOYLE: Well, I live off of West Beach Road – yes.

HOXIE: Not off the East Beach Road --?

DOYLE: No; kind of in the middle--

HOXIE: Yeah; Central Avenue goes through there –

DOYLE: And Sea Breeze --yes.

HOXIE: The first place you come to there is the Bowen Briggs place, which is--

DOYLE: Yes; that's what I 'm really interested in; if you could tell me about that, please.

HOXIE: xxxxx And that's where the Briggs family came in.

DOYLE: M -hm.

HOXIE: And Bowen Briggs' wife's name - I've been trying to think of ever since you got here. But I haven't come up with it yet. But she was a daughter - one daughter--

DOYLE: Oh, she was a daughter of Stanton! Ohhh--

HOXIE: Oh yes; she was a Stanton daughter. And that portion around there was given to her when she married.

DOYLE: I see.

HOXIE: And that includes where—oh-- Bob -

DOYLE: Frost?

HOXIE: Bob Frost -- Bob Frost has built his houses and his tennis court and stuff like that. That come off the Briggs property. And that went to the shore—pond shore. And went over as far as what we call Deacon Hill, which is halfway to East Beach Road --

HOXIE: —That was number one. You go down a little farther, and as you go-- Sunset Drive--

DOYLE: Yes, m-hm?

HOXIE: There's a little old farmhouse on the right-hand side comes in off East Beach Road -uh—West Beach Road—

DOYLE: Hmm. OK; do you know —

HOXIE: The house that I'm referring to doesn't enter Sunset Drive.

DOYLE: I see.

HOXIE: -- XXXX it comes off from way back down West Beach Road.

DOYLE: Who – who is it owned by?

HOXIE: Just after you go over the brook there; changes xxxx

DOYLE: Yeah.

HOXIE: Well, that property comes to the Kenyon property.

DOYLE: Oh, I see what you mean. OK.

HOXIE: That house was part of the Kenyon property, and Sunset Drive was put in years and years later. And this property went to the pond, too. And as you go by Sunset Drive, there's an old building still remaining, back from the road, which was the laundry and cookhouse and I don't know whatnot because Kenyon's had a hotel, the Kenyon House hotel, which is gone now.

DOYLE: Yes, I know.

HOXIE: And that property went down as far as the second road off to your right, which would bring you to the breachway. Right?

DOYLE: Yes, m-hm.

HOXIE: And that property went as far as that road and to the pond. That's the Kenyon –

DOYLE: That's the Kenyon – Now can I interrupt you? Is it OK to ask a question?

HOXIE: Yes—

DOYLE: OK; I had heard that the Kenyon House was also known as the Gordon HOXIE Farm. Is that correct? Do you know anything about that? A long time ago; this was before Kenyon.

HOXIE: [Negative gesture?]

DOYLE: No? OK; I just wanted to ask.

HOXIE: It was given to the daughter who married a Kenyon—that property there. Gordon HOXIE – I don't know where he comes in. He was a relation— Well, you go around toward the breachway —Whistling Chimneys? Was the Babcock family—also a grant from Stanton, to a daughter. And that went through toward the breachway. But the breachway was not where it is now; the breachway was farther this side.

DOYLE: I think I know. I've walked that road, and it was further east.

HOXIE: You go down that main road, and there's a road to [where] Tom Clarke had his barn –

DOYLE: Yes –

HOXIE: But just beyond that there's two cottages – old-built cottages –

DOYLE: Yes?

HOXIE: The beach road was this side of those cottages. They're very much where they were when they were way up to the ocean.

DOYLE: Is it true that ships could come in there?

HOXIE: A three-masted schooner has been known to come in there.

DOYLE: Wow –

HOXIE: “Three-masted” doesn't say it was a tremendous big boat --but a lot of sail.

DOYLE: Now this must have been-- like in the early 1700's—

HOXIE: Well, I don't remember. The breachway was in. It's got to be – well--the early '80's maybe. Because the breachway -- my grandfather knew where the old breachway was, and he was born in the early 1800's.

DOYLE: So what made it –is it just natural? The storms changed it?

HOXIE: The storms keep – the tides rise west before east: the outside [ocean, as opposed to pond] tide zone. We can have a storm, a northeast storm or a southeast storm, and the rising tide-- the tide will bring sand up the East Beach direction and choke because -- the rock right out there and into the breachway.

DOYLE: Oh, I see.

HOXIE: And when we finally got tired of opening up the breachway--and just for small boats you could come out the trickle almost--we went the other side of the rocks and opened up the breachway—where it is now.

DOYLE: I see. So did they artificially do that, do you think?

HOXIE: It was put in there. Man-made.

DOYLE: Man-made!

HOXIE: Yeah. And on the opposite side of that breachway, the old breachway now, used to bend around the corner and go up toward Weekapaug instead of going right into the pond. The Coast Guard station was there –

DOYLE: Yes. I see. Lately, the foundation is exposed. Through erosion.

HOXIE: Yeah, so you can see where they took the boats out in the breachway. Now: what property I can't tell you (except the Babcocks') went to the old breachway. What all was owned on the other side would have to come, would ship from Weekapaug, Weekapaug site. As you go around the corner now, you've gone in the old road to the Babcock property. But as you come back from the breachway now, you're looking right straight at the Sheffield House.

DOYLE: Yes.

HOXIE: And that led from there to the ocean. Large tracks from there to the ocean. And how far on the ocean front I don't know. But then you come to where the Quonochontaug Inn is now. They don't call it that now. There is a group of houses, the Ashaway Group—

DOYLE: Ashaway Group; m-hm.

HOXIE: And that's where Briggses came in again. Lloyd Briggs's family came from there--

DOYLE: So, they were all --that was the same Briggs family that had-- Bowen Briggs was part of the same family.

HOXIE: Related – but not directly from the family. This is the Dr. Briggs family, from Ashaway: Alexander Briggs. If you ever knew Denny, Denny Briggs who sold his property down here –he was with that family. And my grandmother, and Asa HOXIE's wife, were Briggs, from that family in Ashaway.

DOYLE: OK. All right –Let's see--

HOXIE: Now: Sheffield Farm. Fresh Pond Rock. More or less a division of the Sheffield Farm.

DOYLE: Yes.

HOXIE: When you go across Central Avenue, which wasn't there then, you had to go onto the beach. And you came to a road heading north from Fresh Pond Rock, to the Buddington Farm.

DOYLE: Did you know Mr. Buddington?

HOXIE: Oh, I knew John Buddington, but not the one before him. They said that when his wife died, you could have two bags of peanuts now! She was so stingy you wouldn't have but one!

DOYLE: [Laughing hard] Oh dear!

HOXIE: That was John Buddington, and they adopted two daughters.

DOYLE: Yes—Ernestine and--and

HOXIE: I was going to say Christine but it isn't—

DOYLE: Gwendolyn I [believe]—

HOXIE: Yes, Gwendolyn. I knew them.

DOYLE: My mother knew them.

HOXIE: Well, your mother was who?

DOYLE: Helen Seamans

HOXIE: Helen Seamans. . . .

DOYLE: Do you know Henry, my uncle?

HOXIE: Yes I did.

DOYLE: Know him well?

HOXIE: ' Course I did. Now the Seaman's family were related to —

DOYLE: The Fishers.

HOXIE: Fishers; right. OK. All right, now we're getting back in the world again!

DOYLE: Yeah!

HOXIE: Well, when you go by Buddington Farm, you're looking past West Pond. And that's where they used to cut ice. And we had an ice house there as big as a barn! Like a hay barn.

DOYLE: Right there where Sea Breeze Avenue is now?

HOXIE: It was on the south side of the pond.

DOYLE: South side –

HOXIE: Because it was nearer the beach. We supplied the ice for the beach.

DOYLE: Oh –

HOXIE: They used their head a little bit, you know; you can't frame it! The chute into the ice house was on this side--from the pond into the ice house. And when they took the ice out-- of course you understand how they stored ice?

DOYLE: No, you'll have to tell me, because I don't know much about it.

HOXIE: Well, they saved sawdust from the sawmills. And as they put the ice in, they packed it so far from the row in sawdust. And the ice was cut-- depending on how thick it was, it was usually about three feet wide – and depending on how thick it was, how much it would weigh, it'd probably sometimes be four feet long. And you could pull those rocks up that chute with a horse on the other side and pack 'em in sawdust. And when they'd lift it down, they put so much sawdust in between and they'd start another row. And that's the way you took the ice off the pond.

DOYLE: Now were they doing that when you were young?

HOXIE: No, the ice house never was used; it was there.

DOYLE: It was there.

HOXIE: Because a friend of mine--ahem --in my mischievous [sic] days--the Fourth of July, we wanted so bad to set fire to that ice house! What a celebration that would have been, you know!

DOYLE: Oh, no! [Laughing hard] Sooooo—what did you do?

HOXIE: We never did though!

DOYLE: Oh! Oh! [Still laughing hard]

HOXIE: But even then all the way by the ice house was just a sand road. To get through -- you might get through with a Model T, but today's cars never would have gone through there. I had to go through there peddlin' milk, see —

DOYLE: I want to hear about that too.

HOXIE: Now; from Fresh Pond rocks now, you're going north to Buddington's. And after you go about halfway along the north side of the pond, you come to Burdick property. There was three Burdick houses. There's only two of the originals, Hazard and Horace. But the big house, where Zabel lives [further north, on East Beach Road], was built by Hillyer— the son of one or the other of them, I'm not sure which.

DOYLE: Yeah, I think -- I'm trying to figure that out now. I think it was the son of Horace Hillyer; he was a junior: it was Horace Hillyer, Junior that built that.

HOXIE: Hillyer Burdick was a fisherman; he sailed Point Judith. That's where he made his money. He got away from the farm. But above that the road [where you're] driving by a goose pasture would be a Horace Burdick property. And as you go up East Beach Road, the "firehouse" would be where I recall a family—Austins, Austins lived on that property. But the old farmhouse] was way up there also.

DOYLE: Are you -- it's not the one that the -- you mean -- it's not there anymore— or--?

HOXIE: Oh no; no, no. The barn isn't even there.

DOYLE: It's near where -- do you know where Charlotte --

HOXIE: If you go in the goose pasture, over to the pond -- now you'd be on Burdick property.

Horace Burdick property would be north of that. Then you come to [the Ed] Hoxie Farm! In front of the road going to Burlingame. And that came down to -- the Horace Burdick property had an opening on the pond. And then Hoxie Farm and that's where Dennis Briggs' mother owns now. Quick point xxx— that's nothing to do with Babcock. A little farther up the [East Beach] road was Alfred Burdick—

DOYLE: Oh yes! Was he related to the other Burdicks?

HOXIE: He was not a native.

DOYLE: No; that's what I heard.

HOXIE: He came there and he bought some property from Horace Burdick. And with it, he bought some property over on East Beach, and he sold a number of lots over on East Beach to people.

DOYLE: Right on the road –East Beach Road, you mean?

HOXIE: On the --well, let's see: If you were to go on East Beach Road [from the beach] the first *old* house you'd come to would be the Aldrich house. Small – it was red; I don't know what it is now, but so many of them have been built down there since then and washed away, see; so, I know the house isn't there. But then there was Tillinghast that built houses down there xxx that Alfred Burdick saved.

DOYLE: Oh, OK.

HOXIE: And then Howard Thorpe took over the beach down there, and developed it, to a degree—he put a road to the breachway.
xxx [And then it passed to] Stanton farmers. And how they ever acquired it and who from, I have no idea. But all these farms around here had rights to the ocean. Seaweed rights.

DOYLE: Now where were the right-of-ways?

HOXIE: Well, Fresh Pond rocks, the end of East Beach Road,--

DOYLE: The end of East Beach Road, um-hmm –

HOXIE: And if you went down there after seaweed, xxxxxx [voices muffled by tape sounds] a load of sand, maybe, 'cause they'd want sand for their hen houses, and to make cement – mortar-- for chimneys and stuff. But they could get a load of sand and a load of seaweed.

DOYLE: Do you remember going down to get seaweed?

HOXIE: [Talking over her question] Now, as you're going up East Beach Road, now--going down from Central Avenue--you come to Burdick Lane.

DOYLE: Yes?

HOXIE: That's the present Burdick property. And you go down toward the xxx there, the cement-block building there --which was probably the submarine cellar [during WWII]-- across from Blue Shutters —

DOYLE: Oh yes, the bunker, yes –

HOXIE: Across from Blue Shutters. Those Walcotts', Thorntons', Whipples', Parrots' and Howe houses were all washed away from the beach and put over there, on the Burdick property.

DOYLE: Right.

HOXIE: The rest of the houses had been built there. And I knew—when those houses were moved over, I can just remember the storm.

DOYLE: You actually remember them being moved over there?

HOXIE: Well, I remember when— my sister Lucille was . . .four years older than I, and so she drove the Model T. I peddled the milk—out of a two-quart measure and a can --ten-quart can; she drove the car. While I was fifteen, she got tired driving and was going to high school, so I drove without a license. And peddled with a two-quart measure and a ten-quart can. And those houses were there then.

DOYLE: They were? All right – so that was – let's see --when were you born?

HOXIE: Put 16 or 19--18--1912 --between '28 and '27; they were there before '27 and '28. But the other houses have all been built since then. And Hazard Burdick, which is grandfather to Jean Babcock, Phylis Reynolds, Gibby Burdick, and Howard Burdick lived there in that little cottage right at the head of the road. And the barn to the farm is somewhere still there, I think, as you go on Burdick Lane, on the left-hand side.

DOYLE: On the left-hand side? Because -- uh, I talked to Phylis; and she said that her grandfather's house, that he built in 1906, is still right there on the pond.

HOXIE: Yeah, yeah. But that was the only house that was in there until they moved them up off the beach.

DOYLE: Yup. I see.

HOXIE: So his property went to the ocean so to speak—the Hazard Burdick Farm. And Hazard and his son Alan, who was father to these kids xxx, were painters. Interior, exterior; they mixed their own paint in those days: xxx [in a?] white lid, different colors of paint.

And this house was built over here in 1930, after everything was wiped out in a fire. (Fire squire.) [Munroe Hoxie was known to some as "Squire."] The only thing left was the outhouse; that was across the garden, so to speak, so it didn't burn. But in front of it (the house before

the fire) were two tremendous big fir trees. And one of them was a hundred and twenty-eight feet; the other one was shorter than that. But the stumps were tremendous. Now the fire come over the hill and caught the needles of those trees – and there was no such thing as putting out the fire. It burnt right to the pond.

DOYLE: Wow. It burnt right to the pond!

HOXIE: xxxxx

DOYLE: Oh.

HOXIE: It didn't burn across the middle; it caught the grass on the pond shore. That's how much the wind was blowin'-- and how high the fire was goin' xxxx [with leaves]. Now when they were rebuilding this house in 1930, Hazard and Horace, and Alan were doing the painting. And they went to work. Hazard Burdick in the wintertime lived opposite the Bradford School in the old farmhouse, up there, and xxx [had been] renovating it. And he'd walk down and get Alan, in rubber boots, and they'd go paint all day. And he'd walk home from there to Bradford.

DOYLE: Oh, my goodness.

HOXIE: In the summertime, he lived down here, see. The biggest part of the year he lived down here.

DOYLE: Yeah, yeah.

HOXIE: One day they got into quite an argument—and that was quite frequent -- they had arguments. And Alan said to his father, “Did you ever make a mistake?” And he says, “Yes, I have.” “Like when?” “When I ‘put’ you, in total darkness,” he says!

DOYLE: [Laughing hard]

HOXIE: That's not Burdick humor; that's Burdick—what would you say--! And they carried crackers and sardines for lunch day after day after day. Of course, it's convenient to have them, you know.

DOYLE: So, they painted your house when it was rebuilt?

HOXIE: They painted the house when this was rebuilt, xxx, yeah.

DOYLE: Um-hmm.

HOXIE: Yeah. Now, we were talking about the Stanton family, and we got through the whole length of the settlement through there. This family was out of Quonochontaug, so to speak. But my grandfather and his brother Asa bought this farm here, from a daughter of Stanton, whose name was – it'll come to me—

CARSTEN: [Munroe's daughter] Clarke? Was it Clarke?

HOXIE: Clarke. Clarke. Right. Clarke Farm. And my uncle Asa was in the Coast Guard service at the time; he wasn't married. And my grandfather was married. And they bought the farm from a sister—aunt—Clarke—who was the last one of the daughters to be married. And when she got married – the old man – she was late getting married; I say late—in those days they weren't so young gettin married as they are today, but I'm gonna say she was in her forties maybe—And she wanted to get married, and the old man [Stanton] objected—terribly. Well now, her being any of the age of the youngsters, xxx kids, and her age on top of forty, she xxx [knew] how old he was and still with convictions of his own: “Why do you want to marry him?” he said. “Why?” she said, “Oh he's quite a go-around,” she said, “but oh, I'll change him; I'll make a man outa him.” He said, “When you get through with David Clarke, xxxx [you were well warned] that you took on the devil himself.”

DOYLE: [Laughing hard. Marge Carsten also laughing.]

HOXIE: And I heard my grandfather say, “Premium quote from Aunt Martha.” So the HOXIEs – this Asa HOXIE later married Aunt Jenny, who was sister to Joseph HOXIE's wife Lucy. [Joseph and Lucy were grandparents to Munroe.] They were Briggs, from Brian Briggs. You get the tie-up in there.

DOYLE: Yeah.

HOXIE: That's how Asa got down to Brian Briggs' property, 'twas through Aunt Jenny. Now the Hoxies up the other way, through the Wilcoxes-- maybe Gordon --maybe this is where Gordon comes in, but I don't remember Gordon HOXIE. He would be a generation –

DOYLE: Before that –

HOXIE: Before that. Well, he could be my grandfather's generation. Xxx he'd be Asa T. and then there was Asa T., Junior. And Asa T. Junior was father to these Hoxies that I'm talking about. So, Gordon was a generation ahead of that. Now he would come down to the old house – you see that house up in that picture up there? The right-hand picture?

DOYLE: Yes –

HOXIE: That was at the end of [Route] 216; you must remember it—Martha Crandall—

DOYLE: Martha Crandall’s—oh yes, yes!

HOXIE: My wife Betty drew that, from a picture. She went up the road and took a picture; and she drew that, of that house. It’s all disintegrated now.

DOYLE: Yes, it is, now.

HOXIE: Then there was an Alfred Hoxie born there. And Alfred was the same age as Uncle Asa HOXIE; they used to go bird-hunt—pheasant huntin’ together. And A. Alfred had Sarah, who was an old-maid school teacher (with all respect to an old-maid) [and] Martha Crandall; and Ethan Crandall married Martha. That’s where the Crandall name –But the Hoxie – it was the Alfred Hoxie place.

DOYLE: I see.

HOXIE: So that’s about as far west as the Hoxies went, from the Stanton family. The rest was Wilcox’s right up that way, up as far as the town line—or where the town line is now.

DOYLE: Oh yeah-- where did the Hoxie’s come from?

HOXIE: Shall we xxxxx [annotate]the book? You mean came here?

DOYLE: Yeah; I’d kind of like to –

HOXIE: The original Hoxie’s landed in Sandwich Mass., And from there they went in all directions; but before they came down here, to Exeter, West Greenwich, Richmond, Charlestown, and then here [Quonochontaug]. And basically, they came from –oh, the nearest in Massachusetts would be HOXIE, Rhode Island, near the airport. They come in from that direction. And the rest of them went into Massachusetts—they were the same family but different strain. So, we call it-- the Joseph HOXIE family-- came down by way of well, Hoxie Rhode Island, then West Greenwich and East Greenwich, and then down here. They smelled the salt water here, you know---

DOYLE: [Laughing] Once you smell it, you can’t leave it!

HOXIE: So –

DOYLE: I want to hear about your experiences in – you know: going around in your car and -- I want to know about your farm a little bit. I know you went in and sold milk to people around Central Beach and East Beach and the breachway.

HOXIE: You want to know how long we farmed?

DOYLE: No – first of all, I want to know: What was it like working on a farm here, and then I'd like --

HOXIE: Stoney!

DOYLE: Stoney! [Laughter]

HOXIE: Somebody said when we bought the farm down here, “My God you’re buying a stone heap” and he [Munroe’s grandfather] said, “Listen: you get more hills of corn in a crooked row--”

DOYLE: Did --um-- but it was Asa’s wife’s--

HOXIE: Jenny--

DOYLE: Jenny –her family that built that house [old farmhouse on left, W. Beach Rd. across from pond] right? Or did he build it?

HOXIE: No; he didn’t. That I can’t tell you. I think Peleg Briggs built the house—no; not Peleg, Bowen. Bowen Briggs built the house.

DOYLE: Bowen.

HOXIE: But it could have been built by his father, whose name was Peleg. I’m not sure.

DOYLE: Oh, OK.

HOXIE: I’m not sure.

DOYLE: Yeah, I didn’t think Asa built it.

HOXIE: Oh, no, no, no. It’s the Bowen Briggs house as far as anything I ever knew. And my uncle Asa lived there. You see they built--bought this in 1892, and they separated and he [Asa] went down there in 1894--no; 1894, he built a new barn. In 1897 he [Asa] married Aunt Jenny. She was married to Arthur Munroe’s father in Providence, and she was a school teacher, taught school up there. And he was there long enough – this is Arthur Munroe—her daugh—son-- was there long enough to get his

education at Brown University before she headed home. Her father [husband?] died; if I'm not mistaken, he died of influenza. Well, she [Jenny Briggs Munroe] came down here and married her sister's --

DOYLE: Brother--

HOXIE: Brother-in-law;

DOYLE: Brother-in-law, yeah--

HOXIE: And they had one child, who was mute – deaf and dumb.

DOYLE: I've heard something about him--

HOXIE: Asa the Third.

DOYLE: All right; but did he spend much time there, on the farm?

HOXIE: No; he was one of those that --well, as I remember it at the time, he got so that no one could do anything with him. In other words, bewilderment in his own mind; you could see that. He didn't know who to trust, he didn't know who he was talking to; he didn't know all these things. And there was only one person --and that was Hannah Greene. If they had any trouble with him, they'd go get Hannah Greene, and she'd quiet him right down. Something about the two--they understood each other. But then he went into the institutions, and he died at the institutions.

DOYLE: Oh, I see.

HOXIE: But he went to that --oh what's that deaf and dumb school up in Massachusetts?

DOYLE: Perkins --Perkins!

HOXIE: Yeah--And he learned to play the piano. If he heard a piece of music once, he'd go right through it. And he read Braille. And he had hearing enough so that if you talked good and spoke right up-- and if somebody told a joke or something, he'd laugh and laugh and clap his hands. Oh, it was something to see the actions he'd go through--because it was so seldom that he could penetrate, see--

DOYLE: But he really had a lot of talent, and underneath all that--

HOXIE: Yes, but he had a tremendous temper.

DOYLE: Oh.

HOXIE: And he couldn't control the temper, and he was bewildered. Dr. Briggs came down here and said, "Now there's only one place to -- he's got to be put somewhere where he's away from anything that he ever knew." So, they put him up in the institution. And as far as we ever knew, he seemed to be perfectly happy—still played the piano and got quite a reception in the old –Howard they used to call it years ago, the institution, Howard.

DOYLE: What kind a farm did Asa have?

HOXIE: Stoney –

DOYLE: I know--besides stoney? [Laughing]

HOXIE: Cows.

DOYLE: Cows; but did he also sell his milk and did he have chickens – at the beach?

HOXIE: At the beach, in the summertime.

DOYLE: Uh-huh.

HOXIE: And he made butter, in the wintertime and sent it to people just like he did here.

DOYLE: OK. I see.

HOXIE: These people would take orders for their butter, and put they'd them in one-pound xxx or crocks, crocks, so-many-pounds, and ship it to them.

DOYLE: But you also brought some of *your* milk here, down to the beach, too.

HOXIE: Oh yeah; but we were more inclined to go, when the summer season was over, to the cheese factory. The Italians had cheese factories up on Mechanic Street. Christina his name was –family's still around there.

DOYLE: Hmm. So, most of your milk went there.

HOXIE: Yeah; m hmm; yeah. And if it was a stormy day, we didn't have to go every day, because it was so good for the cheese, you know, cold weather.

DOYLE: M hmm.

HOXIE: So, from the middle of the day on, we went to Westerly with our milk. And I'm not so sure –we picked up Tom Clarke's, too, at the head of the road.

DOYLE: Yes. Yeah.

HOXIE: He had some cows that he used to move up in the wintertime; [to a] barn that he built there, and then he tore down the barn, didn't he! And built that Disney-Land in the backyard!

DOYLE: Yeah, yeah. [Laughing]

HOXIE: Well, you must have known their nephew there--

DOYLE: [Hesitating] No; no.

HOXIE: Tom Clarke's wife?

DOYLE: I've heard about her; I've heard about -- Dick Hutchins told me a lot about her! [Laughing]

HOXIE: xxxx [She had a lot of guts]

DOYLE: "Big" lady.

HOXIE: Tremendous. Smart --very smart person; school teacher. Why she married Tom we never could guess.

DOYLE: But Tom also had a piece of his farm down on West Beach Road.

HOXIE: That's where the barn was; he moved the cows down there in the summer. Of course, he peddled his milk on the beach, too.

DOYLE: Yeah. So, you had enough people to sell to that everybody –

HOXIE: Well, we had at the most -- in the old barn, at the most, we had 12 cows. Now they wouldn't all be giving milk because there'd be some [bird] depression periodically during the year to keep the xxx [crow?] even. So, we're talking about 10-quart cans instead of 40-quart cans. So we probably had three or four cans a day.

DOYLE: Did you get orders? And then – or did you just—

HOXIE: Oh no; we went down and fought for customers. They'd leave their pitcher out in the back, xxx, you'd pour the milk in the pitcher, and if it rained, you'd put it inside for them.

DOYLE: Was there any competition amongst you all? Tell me about that.

HOXIE: Aunt Effie! [referring to Tom Clarke's wife, Mary Alice, who was known as Aunt Effie]

DOYLE: Oh, Aunt Effie! [Laughing]

HOXIE: She'd do anything to get a customer away from either Uncle Asa or my grandfather. Of course, my grandfather only—I only went down there when I was eight years old. We won't go into that. My grandfather only lived--see I was 20; he only lived until '22. And then my father and my sisters came down. And my father ran the farm—so to speak. Very poor manager. And of course, the fire, in '30, the hurricane in '38, and both times—of course I wasn't married in 1930, the fire --and both times --insured – I felt like –throwin' in the – quit—as far as the cows were concerned. But my grandmother was still living. And --

DOYLE: Hm mm. And you had to keep –

CARSTEN: When did she die? [Question from Munroe's daughter]

HOXIE: When? I'll have to look on the stone down there.

CARSTEN: After you were married?

HOXIE: Oh yes, yes. Yeah. Then they had to cook up all the beans and cook up two pies, because my grandmother was the xxx every Saturday. Xxxx. Ah yes, we were married when --in '36?

CARSTEN: M hmm –

HOXIE: And she [Grandmother] was here in the '38 hurricane. And not too long after that. 'Cause she was sitting right in front of that old kitchen stove, and that wind was blowin' and the smoke was comin' right out of the stove! Couldn't get her to go anywhere, you know. The '38 Hurricane. But Betty and I always agreed: There was no reason Grandmother was leaving; we were going to take care of her.

And of course, the girls [Munroe's siblings] all got an education—my sister [Lucille] was a trained nurse, graduated from Rhode Island; Eleanor was graduated from RICE (the College of Education); and Natalie graduated from [Johnson &] Wales; and she was working with the [homeopathic] hospital office before she even graduated! And she lived with Lucille, who was living in Mount Pleasant, Providence; that's where

she [Lucille] was married--when she had time to get married--[around] 40! And she had two children.

DOYLE: [Laughing] Oh did she?

CARSTEN: [Addressing Anne Doyle]: Did you know Lucille Scanlon?

DOYLE: Uh – I don't --no.

HOXIE: She was almost 40 when the kids were born. And her husband died with angina, at an early age too. So that's when she came down and got that house next to the big house off the Navy base when they were closing it out; brought it up there and built a house for her. And she came down, and she was a nurse at Westerly Hospital for years and years and years: Lucille Scanlon. Now you must have run across LouAnn Scanlon and Teddy Scanlon, if he was around here much in the summertime.

DOYLE: No; I don't – I just—It doesn't --I don't have a memory of that.

CARSTEN: Probably not, Dad. Probably not.

HOXIE: Oh.

DOYLE: Well, who do you remember, in the summer, when you were delivering your milk — in terms of Quonnie people?

HOXIE: It's hard to do quietly.

CARSTEN: Who was – who had all the houses down there?

HOXIE: Well, let's see. There was Walcotts, Fountains, Parrots, uh—

DOYLE: Howe's?

HOXIE: Rowes, MacLeod, Howes, Peckham's, Dr. Stark, Mr. Speed-

DOYLE: Mr. Speed – I heard about him. I've heard the name.

HOXIE: She had a monkey! You wouldn't dare go in the house because the monkey'd be up in your lap xxxxx [and you'd get peed upon]

DOYLE: [Laughing hard]

HOXIE: That was Burdick property; the Burdick kids--the Burdick farm was there.

DOYLE: Yeah.

HOXIE: Then there was Ben Moulton, the David Moulton family, Max Peabody family, the Larkins. In Central Beach there was Briggs—

DOYLE: Did the Peabodys—were they just here in the summer? I've heard about that name, that family name; I don't really know that much about them. Or were they down here all the time?

HOXIE: No; they were here just in the summertime. Maybe more than just the summer; they'd come early in the spring after their kids were grown up. But they commuted to work for a long time.

DOYLE: Didn't Hazard Burdick have a farm too, with milk? I mean did he sell his milk?

HOXIE: Well, he had a farm, but I don't remember that he had any more than one or two cows, for his own use.

DOYLE: Oh. OK.

HOXIE: He wasn't a competitor in other words. But he'd have a garden there, across the road from ... where Davis built his house-- that was where the Burdick garden was-- Davis from over in Central Beach. And of course, along the beachfront, then came some new names—uh—who gave the money for the Sunday School room? [Question directed at daughter? Not answered]

HOXIE: Her name was Jordans, and she was a Burdick and had the next house in the lane -- Mrs. Pickup house, the Blackwoods; and now when you come down to Fresh Pond Rock there was Bailey and McCabe.

DOYLE: Um hmm. I remember them.

HOXIE: Jessie Fuller, Masons –

DOYLE: Sayer – [do you] remember Sayer?

HOXIE: Yeah: Thayer.

DOYLE: Sayer.

HOXIE: Parsons, Thurstons, McCabes, Butlers—Buffums—

DOYLE: Bunce – do you remember that name?

HOXIE: Bunce: two Bunce houses.

DOYLE: Oh really?

HOXIE: They were on--- Central Beach was not open then.

DOYLE: That's right! Yeah!

HOXIE: When Thorpe took over Central Beach and settled it, there was --uh-- Thorpe & Trainor had houses on the front: Spray Rock and --oh what was the other one?

DOYLE: Vars was in the front, too.

HOXIE: Yeah -- several from Ashaway came down there. And Harris Taylor and Curly Saunders built most of those houses. He built a house for \$1000.00 a room, including a toilet--bathroom--and \$1000.00 for an attached garage. So that would mean a two-bedroom house--a living room would be three, the kitchen would be four--maybe the fifth room--including the bathroom would be six; so \$6,000.00 built the hood.

HOXIE: They bought those houses over there --all those people there --for sixty, eighty, a hundred thousand dollars; tore them all to pieces, and put down much more like manure. And still, Curly Saunders and Harris Taylor built.

CARSTEN: [Daughter] Whose house--? 'Member when we used to go swimming at Fresh Pond Rocks?

HOXIE: Yeah.

CARSTEN: Where did we park? Whose house did we park at?

HOXIE: Well -- Ben Moulton --

DOYLE: The Tunxis?

[All talking at once]

HOXIE: There was a roomin' house there--

DOYLE: The Tunxis. The Tunxis? Do you remember Bess Williams?

HOXIE: Yeah. Yeah. We used to go in there [when the Tunxis was on the beach before being moved back], and the next stone building was the Moultons' bath house. And then you could park right in there.

CARSTEN: But that-- you gotta come up to my time now. When we used to go down with the Pinkhams, we used to park in somebody's yard. When it became private, we used to park in somebody's yard. About the third or fourth house down-- second house down toward Fresh Pond Rocks. One of those big houses. Whose house was that?

HOXIE: Well, it could have been Masons'. It could have been Parsons'. I don't know which one it would be. Thurstons'? I don't know; are they the Thurstons used to come to church?

CARSTEN: Could be.

HOXIE: Probably. It was pretty well down on the end.

CARSTEN: Yeah.

DOYLE: I'm going to turn this [tape] over in a second -- right now.

[Begin second side]

DOYLE: Do you remember Mr. McGlone?

HOXIE: Jack McGlone!

DOYLE: Yeah.

HOXIE: And when they got married. . .the old folks were huge Catholics, you know.

DOYLE: You know, I didn't know that. [Laugh]

HOXIE: And he built that house and moved it, after the storm.

DOYLE: Yeah. And he was sittin' on the roof—

HOXIE: Over to Central Beach. Yeah.

DOYLE: He's right down at the end of my street now, in that house.

HOXIE: You know where Mary -- oh, what's her name? [Phillips] -- There's two or three built now right up in that section, early— early in the development of Thorpe's--

DOYLE: Uh --now the Watermans --

HOXIE: Oh, I'd remember some of the names if you repeat 'em, but --

DOYLE: When I was married, Mrs. McGlone gave me four spoons that were in the house when the house went across the pond during the Hurricane.

HOXIE: Oh yeah?

DOYLE: So I have them! I just love them!

HOXIE: Ida-- Ida McGlone.

DOYLE: Ida – yeah. . . So tell me about –

HOXIE: Did you –uh—did you ever know the old people?

DOYLE: Sure!

HOXIE: Her father and mother?

DOYLE: Oh no; I didn't. No. No.

HOXIE: Well then you didn't know the Cobalts?

DOYLE: Uh-uh.

HOXIE: Her father and mother were the McCabes.

DOYLE: OK.

HOXIE: Burkes, Bunces, Thorntons, McCabes, Parsons, and Thurstons—

DOYLE: Mm-hm –

HOXIE: Two Mason houses – well, only one; and the other one she sold. And then Jesse Fuller. And that's the original string along there. [Probably the oceanfront] And the Cobalts built a house across the road. And John McGlone built one across the road from the old folks, and someone else built across; I don't believe –

DOYLE: So, was he -- was his house right on the pond? On the other side of Surfside Avenue?

HOXIE: He did not go back to the pond; he was more on the road.

DOYLE: On the road-- OK. I was trying to figure out where he used to be before it got moved from-- .

HOXIE: Well, the old houses were half the distance from here to the road, from the road, on the ocean side. And they'd probably be the same distance. Of course, the road [along the shore, behind the dune] ended down there -- before Central Beach was --

DOYLE: Oh, I see what you mean. It didn't keep on going.

HOXIE: No; I can remember when Thorpe started to develop Central Beach. And he came to the roads -- otherwise, they had to go clear around by East Beach Road.

DOYLE: I see. So did you know Mr. McGlone? Did you know Jack?

HOXIE: Oh yeah; sure.

DOYLE: What was he like?

HOXIE: A very talented person; a very quiet person. He worked on the trolleys, in Westerly, Moore's trolleys.

DOYLE: Huh.

HOXIE: Yeah; yeah. Never questioned xxx much.

DOYLE: Did you know Mr. Pendleton?

HOXIE: Which Pendleton?

DOYLE: Do you remember Palmer?

HOXIE: Oh yeah. Albert, Clifford, Jessie, Helen --

DOYLE: Yeah. Do you know who his --Palmer's father-- do you know what his father's name was? Palmer's father. Palmer was supposedly born in the old Sheffield farmhouse.

HOXIE: Uhhhhhhh--

DOYLE: Was it Alfred, by any chance -- his father --Alfred?

HOXIE: Well, I can't be sure. It was before my time; I can't be sure.

DOYLE: OK.

HOXIE: But there was Palmer and Louis -- brother Louis, and Olive -- Olive Pendleton, who never married and [raised] a lot of state kids--brought

home. And Scott's father was Louis Pendleton, and then Palmer. But that's about as far back in the Pendleton family as I can go. From Clifford and Albert and Helen –Jessie—'course Helen moved that house right there in front of the Palmer house. She married William McQuaide Bliven.

DOYLE: Well, let's get back to your farm here. You had cows—Did you have chickens? And what else did you --

HOXIE: It was a general farm. We had a few chickens and maybe one, two sow pigs, and the little pigs, every year.

DOYLE: Did you slaughter them?

HOXIE: Well, we'd sell the little ones in Bradford, to the Italian people. You know, they couldn't have a female—and eat them --

DOYLE: They couldn't?

HOXIE: No. The only the little pigs we could sell in Bradford were the males.

DOYLE: Huh!

HOXIE: Of course, they were castrated --

DOYLE: Yeah.

HOXIE: They'd do it when they were young.

DOYLE: Young, yeah.

HOXIE: Betty's father used to do a lot of his castrating for a farm down in Matunuck, and he really raised sows. Sometimes in the spring or fall, he'd probably have a dozen or 14 had to be castrated. And Phil Peckham worked for him--a real gentleman. Or I'd call him one: xxx [someone named] Peckham should be, you know. And he'd help him. And they'd have a trough; and they'd take a little pig, this big, turn him upside down, stick his nose underneath that creek that was there, and throw a pecker and hold his hind legs, while Betty's father would cut and take the--castrate him ---

DOYLE: [Somewhat unenthusiastically] Yeah --yeah—

HOXIE: And all they'd get out of him, was --lard usually, all mixed up with salt; and he'd go click click click, and then he'd go and squeal at you!

DOYLE: He *would* squeal, I'm sure--

HOXIE: And Phil Peckham – “I know, I know, little fella,” he’d say, “I know, I know. “ And Betty’s father stood it ‘bout as long as he could and said, “ Phil, do you really know?”

DOYLE: [Laughing hard]

HOXIE: [Laughing also] “ Oh yes, I know, little fella “–

DOYLE: [Continuing laughter]: Oh, that’s good!

HOXIE: [Recovering from laughter] Well, with a two-cutter [a two-row planter] he could get, he raised –he [Munroe’s father or grandfather or Betty’s father] raised probably a half an acre of white turnips. And there might be—oh-- 40 or 50 bushels go to Providence; [got him] some income. And then they’d cut wood in the wintertime and he’d put in fireplace wood and stove wood at the beach. And usually, it would be a cord or a half cord at a time. Take it down in the horse and wagon.

DOYLE: So, you had horses, obviously. I mean, how many horses did you have?

HOXIE: Two--two.

DOYLE: Did you have oxen too?

HOXIE: No. Ed Hoxie up the way – he had the pair of oxen. You might remember them when they were down on the beach. He used to go down and clear the yard and so on. xxxxx [get seaweed?]

DOYLE: So mostly it was your milk that you sold.

HOXIE: Well—yes; yeah. Whatever. And eggs. We used to -- when we were peddlin’ along the beach, we never had eggs enough. But in the wintertime, we put these eggs down in water glass; it’s a fluid that keeps ‘em fresh. To a degree, I mean – fresh. So we sold fresh eggs and – winter eggs. And there’d be maybe ten cents’ difference, a dozen. So they’d salvage their winter eggs that way, through water glass.

DOYLE: Huh! I’ve never heard that. How did that [work]?

HOXIE: Well, some kind of a preparation you’d put in water; and you’d put ‘em in a New England crock and pack ‘em down.

And then of course, when you butchered you made salt pork; but my folks never made bacon. With a smokehouse and everything, but they never made any bacon. And yet they’d smoke the hams, but they used them for

their own use. Salt pork was a staple in those days; salt pork for breakfast every day, fried salt pork.

Kevin Rathbun, Kevin K. Rathbun: xxxx [Had religion] go to argument, you know. Worked in Bradford Mill; had some kind of a live-in job up there so he did it very well, whatever it was. He'd walk down here to go to church, 11:00 service. So, someone said to him one day, "Kevin, what's the 'K' stand for?" "I never could find that out," he said, "unless it was 'skunk'."

DOYLE:]Laughing hard] This good!

HOXIE: Remarkable memories of kids: He had the first odometer I ever saw – walking odometer, you know. You could adjust it to your steps. You could tell how far you went. He was not stupid -- he wasn't stupid. He just was dumb, you know; dumb like a fox. Yeah: Kevin K. Rathbun.

Another character that uh -- Speaking about farming--.XXXX from the Senior Center, "Bud" [Godden?] says—he was talkin' [to a woman] about these stone walls in here, and so he told her how the stones were taken out of the middle of the land to clear it and taken away and put into stone walls. But he didn't say that these people got paid fifty cents a day for helping them dig the stones out, and then they had to transport them over to where the wall was going to be; and then they got fifty cents a day, or fifty cents a rod, for putting up stone walls. A rod – that's sixteen and a half feet! But you had to bring stones there. And that's the way these stones [walls] were built. –

And so somebody asked –Tom Harvey was his name – he had an [entry?] farm, two-wheel--about the size of an egg box--two wheels and a hen. And he moved from one farm to another; everything he owned was in there. And Tom Harvey come up the road one day. And he always called my grandfather "Deacon." He was a deacon in the church up here for years, they only had one. So – no competition. And so --"Well, Tom, are you headin' out?" "Yeah; you got a job for Tom?" he says. "I thought you were helpin' Chapman down there." "Yeah; I was," he says. "Yeah. Fifty cents a day; paid you every day. Takes a half a dollar out of my pocket and hung it on the bedpost and give it to me tomorrow." "'Twon't kill me much that way," he says.

DOYLE: [Laughing hard.]

HOXIE: So, he quit!

DOYLE: [Still laughing] Is that a true story?

HOXIE: Well, my grandfather told him: “ Say, Bud, you haven’t held down a job for xxxxxx.” As long as he was mowin’ and hoein’ [he] stayed anywhere. And then he went up to where Ernest Greene’s –the old farmhouse there [off Route 216]--and he died up there; he stayed there until he died. Tom Harvey. There was a number of characters like that around. I said to Betty, “Gee whiz” -- one time-- “these characters are all gone.” And Bob Crandall was sittin’ there and he says “No; they’re not all gone.” You know Bob Crandall!

DOYLE: [Convulsed with laughter]: Yeah! I know--

CARSTEN: Dad! Who’s still around --about--? Who’s still around that was involved in the Grange? When it was built--?

HOXIE: Who’s still around?

CARSTEN: Except you?

HOXIE: I’m the last one of the committee. Ben Gavitt, xxxx, Clifford Pendleton--

DOYLE: Did you actually help build it? Did you actually help build it?

HOXIE: Well, I was on the committee xxxxx: Charlie Ross— uh--

DOYLE: Do you remember when that was? Was it in the early forties--? Wasn’t it? Or in the forties, sometime—the new one--

CARSTEN: It was about the same time as this road [Route One] --was built, wasn’t it?

HOXIE: No; when they were working on the grav [el]—the road had got as far as the Grange Hall. So we could show the [surveying] lines up from there. And this road was finished in 1941.

CARSTEN: No; that [road] was finished in 1941.

DOYLE: That was --Yeah.

CARSTEN: This was finished in ’48. This end; our end.

HOXIE: Well, can’t tell you for sure what year-- I’d have to look. Of course, this Grange grew from the old barn over in back [of a store on the north side of Route One, near Route #216].

DOYLE: Well, Dick Hutchins was telling me a little bit about that, so we went over to see the old one [Grange building] as well. He pointed it out to me.

HOXIE: Imagine putting a supper on in the basement down there and serving a hundred people?

DOYLE: Oh-----

HOXIE: I moved from there over to the new hall as chairman of the supper committee. And we had a \$13,000 mortgage, and we paid off the mortgage in eleven years with just suppers – at a dollar and a half a plate, family style, turkey suppers. I’ve still got the old turkey out here in the shed! One dollar and a half, family style.

DOYLE: Yes, I –

HOXIE: Yeah. They come from far and near.

DOYLE: Uh –all year round?

HOXIE: Well, we had an agreement with Cross Mills Fire Station, when they were building the fire station. So – I’ve forgotten now -- I think they had the first and third [Saturday] and we had the second and fourth during the summer. And in the wintertime, we didn’t run the suppers, so we had xxxxx. And we were with the Alton Fire Company after that; so we were alternating every other week.

CARSTEN: But we didn’t have too many in the winter though, did we?

HOXIE: Hmm??

CARSTEN: We didn’t have as many in the winter.

HOXIE: Oh no, no. Probably got down to one.

CARSTEN: We got down to none! It was just summers.

HOXIE: After the mortgage was paid off, then it was for my clambakes here. Oh boy!

DOYLE: So, you all actually worked –you did all the cooking,

HOXIE: [He talks under her] xxxxx

DOYLE: No, no; I mean you did all the cooking and all that –you did all that.

HOXIE: Yeah –

DOYLE: Wow, I should come to your house for dinner sometime! You could be a better cook than I am!

HOXIE: I'm afraid my cooking days have come to an end, about last year--a year ago. I used to cook stuff and take it up to church for friendship hour and all that. Xxxx cooking. [Per daughter: Munroe loved cooking and was excellent at it.]

[Buzzing interruption on the recording; continuity lost]

DOYLE: 1940 or something.

HOXIE: 1940. Well, I came down here from Providence when I was eight years old, so that was 1920.

[Buzzing again; voices can be heard but not loud enough to understand words except "church."]

HOXIE: Not interim pastors, but-- visiting. **[Buzzing]** For years, they never had a permanent one, you know. Reverend Crowley would come down for a period of time, from Seventh Day in Westerly. And Davis would come from Seventh Day in Ashaway. And so we had a pastor every Sunday, [preached] a respectable service. And my grandmother was treasurer of the church, and my grandfather was the deacon. And there was a time when --I just faintly remember--when my grandfather was bass; my uncle Ase was tenor, a real tenor; and I joined as alto, and my grandmother was soprano. And to hear --**[Buzzing again xxxxxxxx]**

HOXIE: Xxxxx sing. And I xxxx choir--

DOYLE: Just the four of you did it together?

HOXIE: Yeah, yeah. And so my grandfather was bugging me until Charles Brightman came. Now Charlie Brightman came and bought the xxx [monument] place. No, his brother Henry bought the xxx [monument] place; he [Charlie] bought the saltbox farm. And he came from Fourth Baptist in Providence. And he came down and he more or less took over the music. And then he [felt] Mrs. Pickering was . . . that played the organ, you know--And she was one for wearing a hat with flowers, and you know--

DOYLE: [Laughing]

HOXIE: I sat there --xxxxxx **[Buzzing]**

DOYLE: Oh yeah!

HOXIE: Yeah, sure. So then Grandpa Ross [Charles] came--

CARSTEN: Addie Crandall —don't forget Addie Crandall!
Addie Crandall used to play--

HOXIE: Yeah, she played some, yeah. Addie Crandall. She was a Bliven, too.
Addie Bliven; Blivens from Hope Valley. When Charlie Ross came, [we]
lost the roof [of the church] in the '38 Hurricane.

DOYLE: Oh, you did?

HOXIE: And so a friend of his down at the beach let him use their house because of
the Newberry group and stoves in the front there. And—uh-- Rich, his
name was. And he invented the Gilbert measuring device on fuel pumps,
like gas pumps--stuff. Gilbert – lived up in –oh, Pomfret, I guess. He was
a maverick, anyway. He was at the beach, talking to Mr. Ross and he said,
“You know, if you're thinking about something you could do for the
people; you could put a new roof on the church.” So he did!

DOYLE: Oh!

HOXIE: So we had a new roof and --Rich was his brother-in-law. Gilbert was the
one who put the xxx. Well, after that, we were workin' around at the
church, there, and I guess Arthur Akers and Mr. Ross and I, and he said
good morning, his [Ross'] wife had passed away. The second wife. And
she'd left to the church \$5,000 in trust. First trust we ever had—xxx.
Well, we were doin' something up there xxxxx the service and whatever.
We used to have a big heating stove, in the back end of the church, that
took fireplace logs. Well, my grandmother was treasurer, and she had a
\$5.00 bill every Sunday for the minister. Whether there was money in the
treasury or whether there wasn't, he got a \$5.00 bill. And when we
needed wood, my grandfather said, “We'll keep the wood box filled.” So,
we'd fill where the entrance room is now; that was the wood box.

DOYLE: Mm hm.

HOXIE: Two front doors in the room, but there was a chamber-like there. So we'd
take a half a cord of wood up whenever we needed. And Sarah Hoxie
would walk from [Route] 216 down there and build a fire every Sunday.

DOYLE: Oh.

HOXIE: The old-maid school teacher.

DOYLE: Yeah.

HOXIE: And we'd sit around -- And I've seen the time when there was twelve or thirteen sittin' around that stove.

DOYLE: Oh, wow.

HOXIE: Happy memories! Well, it got around to the time when my grandfather got kinda lame— probably was not the last year, but it could well have been his last year going to church. So he said to Uncle Ase—I can see him just as plain as if I was sittin' right here side of him—he said, “Ase, I think you'd better take up the collection; my legs are getting' so it hurts me to get out of here.” Those pews, you know. So Ase said, “Why don't you let Bud do it?” and tapped me on the shoulder like this. So from then on, I took the collection!

DOYLE: Oh! [Laughing]

HOXIE: But sometimes--I could tell when it jingled because there was no green stuff those days, you know —quarters. Sometimes I wanted to shove that catchy doodle xxx!

DOYLE: [Laughing] Yeah.

HOXIE: But my grandmother made me put my hand in my pocket! The other hand. It had a handle that long, on a square box –

DOYLE: Uh huh—yes—

HOXIE: That they took the collection in –

DOYLE: And you held it there for -- until—

HOXIE: Yeah! I knew how long to say a xxx prayer!
But in the summertime, you'd get some green stuff. The Waltons and the likes of them, from down East Beach—

DOYLE: Uh huh, uh huh.

HOXIE: Then we had, every year--at the Kenyon House now, there was a bowling alley.

DOYLE: Yes, I heard something about that.

HOXIE: Ever since --It's all been taken away. And down at the breachway, Eldridge had a bowling alley, and Wilson had a bowling alley, on the corner there.

DOYLE: Did you ever go to the bowling alley --?

HOXIE: Oh yeah. xxxxx.

DOYLE: Why did they have so many bowling alleys?

HOXIE: Well, what else was there?

DOYLE: Well – I mean, did they – did they have enough ---

HOXIE: They had a bowling alley for the Kenyon House. That was not public.

DOYLE: Yeah, right. Now the Wilson bowling alley and the -- I remember going down to the Quonnie Casino and all – the Eldridge, the old Eldridge bowling alley—

CARSTEN: That went down in the '54 hurricane didn't it? Carol?

HOXIE: Yeah; that storm –

CARSTEN: Carol? Wasn't it [Hurricane] Carol?

HOXIE: Yeah; yeah.

CARSTEN: Was that '54?

HOXIE: Yeah.

DOYLE: Obviously; the Wilson bowling alley went out in the '38 [Hurricane]

HOXIE: The man who lived next door used to keep horses downstairs to go to Bradford **and** bring the trunks down --

DOYLE: Downstairs?

HOXIE: Oh, yeah!

DOYLE: What was the difference between the Wilson— like, what was going on at Wilson's bowling alley versus the Eldridge bowling alley? Were they about the same?

HOXIE: Same thing. Like you said, they had a dance hall in back of Eldridge's, a casino in back there; and they used to have dances in there. That was beyond the bowling alley, at the back end of the building. And next to that was the garage, the Worcester House garage. And that was run by the

Worcester House--Blakeleys. And Jim Lynch sat there in his chair and entertained the young folks from the beach. Took care of the cows, you know.

DOYLE: OK; Now looking at the – facing the entrance to the bowling alley, was that garage on the right side; is that what you're talking about?

HOXIE: Yeah; yeah.

DOYLE: Oh, OK.

HOXIE: Just beyond those two old houses that are still there. And the breachway ran right down through there. I don't remember it, but that was the original breachway.

DOYLE: Yeah; yeah.

HOXIE: So, you had the St. George, a rooming house, and then the Breakers--that [would be] Tom Clarke—

DOYLE: OK; what did they have to do with the Breakers?

HOXIE: They owned it; they ran it--sure!

DOYLE: Oh they did? I didn't know that.

HOXIE: Sure. They saved the steamed clams from Sunday and had clam chowder the next day. For their boarders.
[Laughter and comment from daughter-xxx]

HOXIE: And then Blakeleys had the Worcester House, and beyond that, they had the cottages, several cottages there. And then the Eldridge House.

DOYLE: The Ocean View and then the Eldridge; yeah. Now, what kinds of things went on in these hotels? They had entertainment and ---you know?

HOXIE: Well, there were lots of card games. But at that time of day, when there was supposed to be anything entertaining, I was peddling milk. So I didn't get [to the hotels] very often. But our treat for the day, after we got through peddling milk. was to go up to Sweet Briar (you know where the gun shop is now?)

DOYLE: Yes; yeah.

HOXIE: And get a hot dog and a can of soda – and cooled off for the day.

DOYLE: [Laughing] Did you know Mother Brindley?

HOXIE: Oh yeah! Sure.

DOYLE: Tell me about her.

HOXIE: Somebody told us if you got a bottle of ginger ale and four aspirins, you could get --woozy. So, there was four or five of us down on Mother Brindley's porch in the front there. So, we go in one at a time and ask for a bottle of coke. And she was eyein' us, and we were sittin' around the table out there. So, after the fourth one come in for a bottle of coke, she come out and she had two in this hand and two in that. And she says: "Take your aspirins dry."

DOYLE: [Hearty laughter]

HOXIE: She knew what we were up to. Now Ed Greene, Dunn's Corners, used to peddle Warwick beverages. (Truckload from Warwick when you come down.) Xxxxx Mother Brindley was one of our [and his?] customers. And he saved the bottles, too; returned all the bottles then. Oh, she'd count the empty bottles going out and she'd count the bottles comin' in.

DOYLE: Now what else-- what was her store like? I mean, what did people go in there for? I know ice cream and that kind of stuff, but what --

HOXIE: Well, she had ice cream and soda, yes, but --

DOYLE: Were there gambling machines or something in there? Is that true?

HOXIE: Rather, what she had would be balloons for kids, knickknacks -- postcards-- what people comin' to the beach might be interested in. Penny stuff, you know.

DOYLE: Somebody said that there were slot machines upstairs; is that true?

HOXIE: I never knew them to be up there.

DOYLE: Oh; I don't know. That's what I --

HOXIE: No; I don't think she would have stood for it.

DOYLE: No?

HOXIE: I think she was a--I don't think she'd hesitate xxxxxx [to say she made] a mistake making change or anything like that ...I think she was a very honest person.

DOYLE: Oh, I don't know whether -- it was dishonest; but I just heard that there were—

HOXIE: Of course, they weren't legal –

DOYLE: Oh that's true.

HOXIE: Right--any more than the nail boards, you know – actually-- the candy. You'd push on it [a nail on the board] with a quarter, down; you'd push on it, remember? And if you got the lucky number, you'd get a box of candy. Remember?

DOYLE: Oh.

HOXIE: They weren't legal either, you know. But everybody had 'em around.

DOYLE: Did she—did she go around and peddle her ice cream?

HOXIE: No; she didn't. She lived right upstairs, so --

DOYLE: She didn't. Oh; so it was just inside the building. OK.

HOXIE: Yeah. Yeah. There was quite a string of houses around xxx; clear over to Moulthrops'. And then you came to the stony point, and that's where that breachway was. And the St. George—

DOYLE: Yeah; yeah.

HOXIE: And Groves built a lot of houses right down through there, where the breachway was.

DOYLE: Who was that?

HOXIE: Groves.

DOYLE: Groves.

HOXIE: From Westerly.

DOYLE: Now, did you know the Kings?

HOXIE: Yes, I did. They used to come up here for eggs. And I'm not being – gossipy at all--but –humorous—funny picture: Mrs. Currie's father and mother.

DOYLE: Yeah.

HOXIE: They owned cottages. And they had people that came there year after year after year. They could almost assure a full house after a certain date. So many families.

DOYLE: Uh-huh.

HOXIE: But they come up here for eggs. And they didn't have milk delivered to her because they could buy it two cents cheaper by going to the farm for it, or something like that. But this day there was two double-yoked eggs on the table at my grandmother's. "Oh," she said, "I'll take those two." She said OK; so she put them right in. And took four eggs and she put eight more in her container. "Oh," she said, "They're double yolks."

DOYLE: [Laughing]

HOXIE: Well, she couldn't make change one day. And this is the old man. She lacked two pennies. "Well, I don't know what we're gonna do," he says, "It's only two pennies but they're ours."

DOYLE: [Again laughing]

HOXIE: I think I've heard that myself! At any rate, they had those cottages right on the breachway across from the Coast Guard Station. And you had to go by them to get to the dock to get across to the Coast Guard Station.

DOYLE: Yes. M-hmm. Did you know the Finlayson family?

HOXIE: I knew Bob. He built a house, later. But I never knew the older family. He was the only one that I knew; he worked for Electric Boat. He belonged to the Grange for a while. But he was too much of an intellect to us. He'd start talking electric and all these things and xxxx.

DOYLE: I've been having letters back and forth a little bit with Judith.. Finlayson -- Dorsey, her last name is now.

HOXIE: Well, let me—is that Bob's family?

DOYLE: Bob's sister.

HOXIE: Sisters; yeah. OK.

DOYLE: She's just been telling me about the hurricane, and what it was like. during the hurricane ----Where were you during the '38 Hurricane?

HOXIE: [Laughing] I was up in North Smithfield getting some parts for my tractor.

DOYLE: And you stayed up there!

HOXIE: No; I come home. And when I came through by King Tom Farm on the old road down here, the state crews just got through cuttin' a hole so that you could get through the trees down there. And when I got home here, the crab harvester was lying in back of where the Hitching Post [restaurant] is. And the water come in and settled that thing. Xxxxx settled right down in the mud. Lost that.

And the tractor was up there in the yard. And I'd said to Betty, "I think it's going to rain; make sure you keep that tractor covered." It rained all right, and she was outside I don't know how many times, tying that canvas over that tractor. Finally, she just had to give up --when the wind blew, and the chair went out the window, and I don't know what. So I got home just after the worst part of the storm had gone by--when I came all the way down. Windows were coming out of the stores on Reservoir Avenue: suction. There was more -- the pressure inside was greater than the pressure on the outside --it was a hurricane, of course--a vacuum. That's why so many things went out of the house.

DOYLE: I see.

HOXIE: A vacuum; low pressure. When the storm went through here --xxxxx; it didn't blow in; it sucked out.

DOYLE: Oh, I see what you mean. What happened to your house?

HOXIE: Oh, we lost a window and a few shingles; that's about it. Of course, the house was relatively new. Well, we lost --

DOYLE: Animals?

HOXIE: I lost the [hay] cutter, the crab harvester, and the xxx-- the crab harvester was hardly worth salvaging it was so old. And that should have been the end; it was really, 'cause we had to let go in two/three years. It makes me wonder now why-- why Betty ever stuck with it all. I have a family tradition xxxxx just do it--boy, she was true blue, I'll tell you; true blue --

CARSTEN: They would have lost that house; but [didn't] because of windows in the attic, at both ends --and they both went, so the pressure was equal.

HOXIE: Upstairs, you mean.

DOYLE: Upstairs.

HOXIE: One went out, and the other one went in.

CARSTEN: So that, they got a lot of damage up there, but they didn't get any –they didn't lose their roof or –

HOXIE: I was upstairs one time, closing windows because it was going to storm; thunderstorm comin.' I got upstairs, closed the east window, and went around and closed the west window --OH BING! And on that slate roof that we had, there was a roll down the middle of the roof. And underneath that, there was a battin' strip, like this, where it sealed the paper underneath the shingles the whole length of the roof. And lightning struck the end of that roof, and it peeled those long pieces of tile rrrrrrrrrrr! I don't even remember going downstairs.

DOYLE: [Laughing]

HOXIE: Three sets of stairs!

DOYLE: Yeah!

HOXIE: Xxxxx. The doors must have been open 'cause I do not remember opening em.

DOYLE: You were lucky you didn't get –

HOXIE: That's all it did was just rip that cinder block. So, I needed to put that strip down and seal it and seal it again. Instead of putting 'em back on – the shingles xxxxx.

DOYLE: You mentioned knowing my uncle Henry Seamans. What do you remember about him? You can say anything you want.

HOXIE: What was his sister's name?

DOYLE: His sister? was Helen – that was my mother.

HOXIE: Helen. I remember more about Helen than I do about Henry–

DOYLE: Oh, you do? Tell me about my mother! [Laughing]

HOXIE: Oh – I never found out half as much as I wanted to!

DOYLE: Oh, you're so nice. [Laughing]

HOXIE: Well, I wasn't blind in those days.

DOYLE: Let's see; when was she born. . .she was born in 1914. So, you were born in --1912. Oh —OK!

HOXIE: I want to tell you: it was close; it was close! But she was always occupied.

DOYLE: Oh; she was, huh —

HOXIE: She was, yeah; oh, she was a nice girl.. I knew Henry when we went to Westerly. Now, where did your mother go?

DOYLE: Go —where? I mean --

HOXIE: When she got married.

DOYLE: Oh; well, they lived outside of Boston.

HOXIE: I was going to say they didn't live locally here.

DOYLE: No; no.

HOXIE: Henry married. . .

DOYLE: Betty-- Cheevers.

HOXIE: Cheevers—yeah. They lived in Westerly. Her father worked for Goodgeon's [jewelry store].

DOYLE: I don't know much about her. They were divorced.

HOXIE: They were?

DOYLE: Yeah; did you know that?

HOXIE: No.

DOYLE: Yeah; I don't know the story behind that, either. The story was — My mother died many years ago, and there's a lot I don't know about my family. I wish that I had asked a lot of questions.

HOXIE: I didn't know that they were divorced.

DOYLE: Yeah.

CARSTEN: Seamans?

DOYLE: Mmm. Seamans.

HOXIE: She was very friendly with Jerry Duhamel's wife—uh Jerry Duhamel's mother—uh--

CARSTEN: Hattie. Hattie. Was her name Hattie?

HOXIE: I went to school with her – high school.

CARSTEN: Was her name Hattie?

HOXIE: No.

CARSTEN: Hattie – no?

HOXIE: Oh—yeah.

CARSTEN: She used to bake great pies; I remember that.

HOXIE: Yeah –well, no; you're thinking about –She was a Barnes; not that one. Jerry's *wife* –

CARSTEN: Choinier; Choinier.

HOXIE: Choinier.. But that was her married name.

CARSTEN: No; Helen Choinier. What was her mother's name? I don't know; I can't remember. Uh – Jerry's wife's name was Helen. I can't remember her mother's name.

HOXIE: Oh. So I've got to the point where my memory and forgettery—if they're --like on a scale of justice, you know? —

DOYLE: Yeah –

HOXIE: Well, they wouldn't balance anymore!

DOYLE: [Laughing] You're wonderful!

CARSTEN: I think you've got a good memory—

HOXIE: Well, no --

DOYLE: You're fantastic!

HOXIE: My sister Eleanor is four years younger than I. And about two years more—ago—I think it was a Christmas card—it might have been something different, I don't know. But anyway, just before Betty and I went to Florida, they had a family doings. And we of course were invited; we were always invited to the HOXIE side, which is Eleanor; and we were always invited to the Browning side, which was Betty's side. We felt kind of guilty sometimes because a great many times just Betty and I were invited! Other brothers and sisters and so forth weren't. So, we went to this family doings. And she sent me a card afterwards. And we went down by the first of November, so [it was] a Thanksgiving card, maybe. And she said she had such a wonderful time at the party. And she said it always brings up a question when you go to a party like that: Why? Well, she said, I've come to one conclusion, and I have no reason to doubt it: the Good Lord leads me there hoping you'll do some good. But I sure don't want to continue with you up There!

[DOYLE and CARSTEN: Much laughter]

HOXIE: That's my own sister!

DOYLE: Your own sister!.. [Laughing] Is there anything else that you want to relate, because I think the tape is just about ready to run out. This has been a wonderful afternoon.

HOXIE: Well-- Central Beach--the way it is now, and the way it was: you'd better thank two people, two men: Howard Thorpe—when he developed it, and re-developed it—he did a wonderful job. In those days he wasn't stingy. In other words, xxxx, **the** roads were put down through there, the water was put down through there. And another person who had a lot to do with helping him was Brad Fisher.

DOYLE: That was my mother's cousin.

HOXIE: Yeah. And then Brad and his wife moved away. And I knew Brad's father.

DOYLE: Oh.

HOXIE: Xxx [And a brother] who run trolleys in Providence. Oh, what was his name?

DOYLE: Arthur--

HOXIE: Arthur?

DOYLE: Arthur.

HOXIE: OK. And I was eight years old before I left Providence. And he was on the Hope Street---the Methyl Street-- run, from downtown Providence; went through the tunnel clear up to Methyl, which was in Pawtucket. Xxx [and met with the Hope] **Streetcar**. Well, Hope Street was three miles, four miles long. So coming out of the tunnel, I used to stop once in a while and get acquainted with him down here, see--seated on the control box--going out toward Pawtucket. So, coming back one day, we got almost to Hart Street, which was where the trolley switch was then, before Forest Street, where it is [now]. And he looked out and there was an inspector. So xxxx [I had to get off--quick]. And when I jumped down, I landed right on the brake pedal.

DOYLE: Oh no! [Laughing]

HOXIE: I never rode a trolley anymore! [Laughing] Well, he explained it to me.

DOYLE: I was going to say, what did the inspector --?

HOXIE: The trolley inspector?

DOYLE: Yeah; so what did the trolley inspector do?

HOXIE: He was waitin' for me to get down at the next stop.

HOXIE: He was a person who I argued with one time --how to pronounce "Chevrolet."

DOYLE: How else would you pronounce it?

HOXIE: "Chevro-lett."

DOYLE: "Chevro-lett." [Laughing]

HOXIE: Xxxxxx. Matter of fact, I knew him more than I knew Brad's father and mother! I knew him better . . .

DOYLE: Oh, you're talking now about Brad's—

HOXIE: Uncle.

DOYLE: Oh, his uncle?Francis? Francis was---

HOXIE: I don't remember his first name.

DOYLE: Yeah; that would be Francis.

HOXIE: Xxx he was brother to Brad's father.

DOYLE: Francis; yeah, Francis. He was the youngest.

HOXIE: He was on the trolleys.

DOYLE: Yeah; OK.

HOXIE: I was, for a while!

DOYLE: I want to thank you so much; you have just been--this has been a wonderful afternoon.

HOXIE: [The tape isn't the end to my] questions.

DOYLE: Oh, it isn't? That's good because---I haven't got very much.

HOXIE: The only information I've got, I wrote from a child. And sometimes I wish I had the answers to some of the questions they asked me, like even the Burdick kids. The Babcocks—

CARSTEN: Jean's--

DOYLE: Jean's

HOXIE: Two or three things—

[END OF RECORDING]