



City of Alexandria
Office of Historic Alexandria
Alexandria Legacies
Oral History Program



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Interviewer: *Kerry Casey*

Transcriber: *Jo-Ann LaFon*

Abstract: Margery Fawcett's father was rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Alexandria, and she was very active in the affairs of the church. These activities are discussed in this interview. The interview also includes memories of World War I and World War II, stories of her great-grandfather and older brothers, as well as her experiences as a Red Cross nurse and driving a Model-T.

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St. Timothy's Church, Catonsville, Maryland, 1904	
Margery Fawcett:	[Tape begins in middle of interview] St. Timothy's church, Catonsville, Maryland...by my father on Whitsunday in 1904. The [inaudible] of St. Timothy's church was executed by Bataldi of Carrara marble and he had it nearly finished and he found a flaw in the marble. So he sent it back to Italy and did it all over again. But it's an angel holding a scallop shell—it's really beautiful.
Kerry Casey:	Wow.
Margery Fawcett:	Some years, fifty years later, they had chimes up in the Baptist Street tower. The weights fell down and just missed the angel by about an inch—made a hole in the tiles in front of the floor.
K.C.:	Oh my goodness. Now what year were you baptized?
Margery Fawcett:	I put 1904.
K.C.:	1904.
Margery Fawcett:	But that has nothing to do with Alexandria.
K.C.:	[Laughs]
Margery Fawcett:	That's just a little preface.
K.C.:	You said you had something you wanted to start with.
Brief History of Alexandria	
Margery Fawcett:	Yes. Alexandria, actually they have found in the last ten years, goes back to the Iroquois Indians 2500 years ago. There's a quarry right back here at Stonegate just back of us and they found stone implements and the archaeologists came and they took what they wanted and they said "Now go ahead and build these houses." That was not over ten years ago they discovered that. And the other old thing in Alexandria is a piece of Solomon's temple, which is in the Masonic Temple. That was brought here from the Bibleland. So, they're the oldest things in Alexandria.
K.C.:	That's amazing.
Margery Fawcett:	But it celebrates his birthday in 1749 and my husband, Lawrence Fawcett's family—Hoff—John Hoff—came from Pennsylvania to make covered wagons for General Braddock to go to Fort Duquesne—he was killed there. And they saved Alexandria. [inaudible]...St. Paul's Church. [pause]
Margery's Arrival in Alexandria in 1921 and Her Scholastic Background	
K.C.:	Do you want to tell us how you came to Alexandria?

Margery Fawcett:	Well, my father was called to be the Rector of St. Paul's [Episcopal Church]. They didn't have a rector and they chose him—he was an associate rector at Epiphany on G Street in Washington and we came over from Washington—moved over here and...we came officially in May 1921 but the rectory wasn't ready for us to live in...it needed repairs...until October so we actually moved in October.
K.C.:	And were you—you were 17 then—is that right?
Margery Fawcett:	I was 17.
K.C.:	Were you going to school? What were you doing?
Margery Fawcett:	I had graduated from a private school in Washington. I went to school with Anna Roosevelt whose father was Franklin, and my brother earlier had gone to Episcopal High with Theodore Roosevelt's son, Quentin.
K.C.:	I see.
Margery Fawcett:	And my Dad came over to see my brother, and the master said to him, "Quentin wants to go to the White House for the weekend. He doesn't have an escort. Will you see that he gets back on your way back to Baltimore?"
K.C.:	[laughs]
Margery Fawcett:	So father said yes. So when the time came, Quentin came in with a little pig about as big as a dog with a harness. Someone had given him this little pig and they walked down Lloyd's Lane to the trolley track on Russell Road and rode it on the trolley to 12th and Pennsylvania Avenue and—ah—walked up from the Avenue to the White House toting the pig. [Laughter]
K.C.:	Oh, that's funny.
Margery Fawcett:	But when I went to school with Anna, her father was only the Assistant Secretary of the Navy at that time.
K.C.:	Do you remember her?
Margery Fawcett:	Oh yes, I remember...
K.C.:	And what did you study in school? What subjects?
Margery Fawcett:	Oh, I just went to the high school and then I had a year at George Washington University. I studied a year of Spanish and English. I had three subjects. And then my mother walked off the back stairs in the Rectory in the dark—bump, bump, bump—and hurt her back and from then on, she was kind of an invalid. So I stayed home. And my Dad didn't have a paid secretary; we had an office in the Rectory; we had to answer the telephone, arrange for meetings and be witness to weddings. So I had a busy life. And then I did a lot of Red Cross

	work. I worked for the Red Cross for free for 44 years. But the history was kind of a hobby.
Margery's Life as a Minister's Daughter	
K.C.:	A hobby? I can tell. Now my grandmother—both of my great-grandparents—were ministers. I know it was hard to be part of a minister's family.
Margery Fawcett:	Yes, yes, I know. You can't get away with things [laughter]. Other people can do it but you can't.
K.C.:	So, was it—
Margery Fawcett:	Are you a minister's family?
K.C.:	No, but my uncle and my aunt actually and my great-grandparents were all ministers in the Methodist Church.
Margery Fawcett:	You have to be careful how you dress, what you say and what you do.
K.C.:	That's what my grandmother talks about. Were people coming to your house to visit all the time?
Margery Fawcett:	I witnessed 75 weddings.
K.C.:	Oh, my goodness. What were weddings like then?
Margery Fawcett:	You didn't have to give three days notice at that time. The law was more lenient. And people would come and ring the doorbell and say they had come to get married like going to the Justice of the Peace. So they needed two witnesses. So I looked in the church register and I counted 75 witnesses.
K.C.:	[laughter] Wow.
Margery Fawcett:	Well, now what do you want to know about St. Paul's—well, not St. Paul's particularly—but about Alexandria?
K.C.:	Well, what was it like the end of World War I? What was it like when you came?
Margery Fawcett:	There were 24,000 inhabitants and it was largely laid out in brick and the cobblestones were dug out of Four Mile Run here by the Hessian prisoners in the Revolution and cobbled the streets and they are under asphalt now. But the curbing—a lot of it was taken up since we lived here and the Washington Cathedral bought the curbing at \$2 a foot for the Bishop's garden to mark the paths in the Bishop's Garden.
K.C.:	And what did people your age do for fun? Were there dances? Were there bands? What did you do for fun?
Margery Fawcett:	Well, I played tennis and we went on picnics; we had a picnic down at [inaudible] land in Mount Vernon. And we went down on a boat which we hired at the foot of Duke Street but it got becalmed and the

	captain of the ship didn't have any gasoline on board so we got becalmed. And there were students and some young people and some parents; it got to be nearly eleven o'clock and we were sitting out in the swamp down there south of Jones Point and—stuck. So there was a little island and in those days they had bootleggers and a bootlegger lived on the island. One of the seminary boys was [inaudible] a missionary in Liberia but he was quite scared that time...he'd get shot up. Anyway, we waked up the bootlegger and he rowed us across a little stream and we caught the last trolley back from Mount Vernon. [laughter] But the seminary boys spent the night at the Rectory and then I had to drive them up there to the Seminary. They were scared they'd be seen coming in but I insisted on dropping them at the gate and wouldn't drive them in. They didn't get caught coming in.
K.C.:	Was it against the rules for them to be out?
Margery Fawcett:	They didn't [inaudible]. We used to have good times.
K.C.:	And what was the church service like? Do you know?
Margery Fawcett:	Well, pretty much what it is today...not too different.
K.C.:	Was it long?
Margery Fawcett:	Except we'd never call God "you"; it was always "thee."
K.C.:	Do you remember what time church would start?
Margery Fawcett:	11:00 o'clock. They'd have Sunday School first at 9:00 or 9:30. And then certain Sundays of the month, there was an 8:00 o'clock morning service and there was an evening prayer service at 8:00 o'clock in the evening.
K.C.:	And you went to all of those?
Margery Fawcett:	Well, we didn't go every time.
K.C.:	[laughter] How many people were members then?
Margery Fawcett:	There were 25,000 inhabitants in Alexandria and there were 325, I think, when we came; when we left there were 525 members...
K.C.:	...and when was the church started?
Margery Fawcett:	It was built in 1809. [pause] Then it belonged to Christ Church and the minister for some reason decided to resign. He stood up in the pulpit and resigned and a lot of them said, "Oh, we don't want you to resign. Please stay." So half of them stayed and half of them left. And the ones that left came over and formed St. Paul's in 1809. The rest stayed at Christ Church...and then they hired Benjamin LaTrobe as the architect to build the present building. They rented a church from the Presbyterians at Fairfax and Duke first to let them build. And later, our librarian, Alexandria librarian, Miss Alice Green, lived on that

	route with her brothers and sisters and they played around and they found some bones. And they used to have a rag and bone man who gathered rags and bones and sold them. So they began to collect these things and somebody said, “Hey, those bones were people that were buried in the cemetery.” [laughter]
K.C.:	Oh no.
Margery Fawcett:	She was a very strict lady but she said, “I think it was nice our bones helped people.”
K.C.:	[laughter] Wow. Did the church do lots of volunteer activities? What kind of things did the church do?
Margery Fawcett:	Well, the main thing was they started a Seminary—a theological seminary. And the first classes were held in the Rector’s study up on...I think it’s in Ruth Kaye’s book—on South Henry Street or South Madison—one of those; and after they got started, they moved up to where they are now. But Dr. Roemmer went down to William & Mary, I think, to become president of the college and he only lived a year or two and he died and he’s buried down in Williamsburg. But the Wilmer Clinic at Johns Hopkins is some of his descendants. And he had a grandson, Wilmer McLean, who lived in Fairfax. When the war came in the 1860s, the soldiers came out from Alexandria and the Battle of Bull Run was on Wilmer McLean’s property.
K.C.:	Right.
Margery Fawcett:	And then when the war ended, they had refugees. So it was his property too.
K.C.:	It’s a very good story.
Margery Fawcett:	You’ve been reading the history.
K.C.:	Some of my favorites.
Margery Fawcett:	All of the churches were hospitals in the 1860s. They were closed for service and used as hospitals and they put some kind of boards laid on top of the pews and they made pallets which were a good height to nurse people. But I often think of those poor sick soldiers in the hospital during the war. The last couple of years, we found somebody who was a grandchild of one of those men that was there in the hospital. She called me up from over at [inaudible] I think it was, in Maryland. She’d been over to St. Paul’s to see the church. [long pause]
K.C.:	And that was in the 1860s...that was during the Civil War?
Margery Fawcett:	Yes, yes.
Memories of World War I	

K.C.:	Do you have memories of World War I?
Margery Fawcett:	Oh yes, I had three brothers in the Army in World War I. But I lived in Washington. The war was over. We came here in 1917 and the war was 1914–1918. It was all over by...see we came in May of [19]21.
K.C.:	Oh, but I'd like to hear about it anyway.
Margery Fawcett:	Now my husband's brother was killed in the war, but it was an airplane accident in training. He wasn't overseas.
K.C.:	Were there lots of soldiers who'd come back living in Alexandria?
Margery Fawcett:	The main military outfit was down at Fort Belvoir, which was then known as Fort Humphries...some of my friends went horseback riding with some of the soldiers. One of them had to have new stockings; she thought if she was thrown off or broke her bones...so she wore new stockings to ride horseback [laughter]. She lived across the street from the Rectory on Duke Street. Oh, and there used to be ailanthus trees along Duke Street that were granted by General Washington...he introduced ailanthus trees to Alexandria...now Alexandria was laid out east to west...supposedly Cameron Street and then on the south side would be King and on the north side Queen and...Princess; but for some reason, it just got ziggged over to one side [laughter], so King Street is the main street. And then the streets going north to south are named Union, Fairfax for Lord Fairfax, Royal for the royal family, St. Asaph for the Bishop of St. Asaph who was favorable to the Revolutionary cause, and that's as far as it went in the old days. Then it went Columbus and Patrick and Henry. [long pause]
The Hoff Family	
K.C.:	Now you talked about the Revolutionary War? Your husband's family was in Alexandria then? Do you have stories about that?
Margery Fawcett:	The Hoff family...I have a very good story about that family. My husband's sister worked for the Archives—the National Archives. So she knew about old papers and she was having a vacation or something and she decided to clean up the attic. They lived at 517 Prince Street, which at the time it was built was just outside the city limits. Pitt Street was the western-most boundary, and they lived between Pitt and the new St. Asaph. And she went up in the attic and she found this old letter from my great-grandmother...no, great- great-grandfather to what became her great-grandmother and he said, "This is a proposal." She'd gone to Richmond to visit a cousin and he wrote to her. And he says, "If you're not going to accept me, tear up this letter." But she thought she'd think about it and she did marry him later. So this was the letter and it was 1846 and 1846 is when the first postage stamps were issued and they were issued by different towns, not by the U.S. Government. So there was one known as the Blue

	Boy. And on this envelope was a Blue Boy 5-cent stamp...so she thought, "This is worth some money," and she took it to a cousin who took it to some government friend and got \$2500 for the five-cent stamp and my husband's tuition at the University of Virginia was paid by that stamp.
K.C.:	That's wonderful! [laughter]
Margery Fawcett:	Today that stamp is in Switzerland in a safe deposit box and it's valued at well over a million dollars...they didn't find any more. They looked all around but they didn't find anymore. But I heard somewhere along the line that somebody from the Caucasus in Russia thought it was a good idea and he wrote to his family over there and they issued a similar stamp. It's not as good as that one but it's expensive.
Margery's Marriage	
K.C.:	Now how did you meet your husband?
Margery Fawcett:	Well, his mother was head of the Army Guild and after Sunday morning service, she looked at me and said, "I have a nice son at my house; I'd like you to meet him." She brought him around and introduced him. I knew him fifty years before I married him.
K.C.:	How many?
Margery Fawcett:	Fifty. He married my best friend after some years. We all were friends together; I knew all his family; he knew all my family; I never thought of marrying him. He walked in my house at Rosemont one night and said, "When are we going to get married?" He'd been a widower going on a year...I was shocked. [laughter] I thought he was kind of boring [laughter].
K.C.:	That's amazing.
Margery Fawcett:	He had a sweet disposition, but he wasn't the kind of person that was showy. He was very kind and very nice. We got along fine; it worked all right...but that's how we met. My mother met my father pretty much like that. She played the organ in a little country church up in New York State and my father went to hold a service. And she said, "These are the hymns I picked out." And he looked and said, "They don't go with my sermon very well; I picked out these. Well, I'll tell you, let's sing some of yours and some of mine." And that's how they met.
Margery's Three Brothers and World War I	
K.C.:	Did you have any brothers and sisters?
Margery Fawcett:	I had three brothers—they were all in the war.
K.C.:	What did they do in the war?

Margery Fawcett:	Well, one was in France for two years. They were all Medical Corps...the one that was in France was in an Army base hospital. The other one who became a minister was in charge of a 30- or 40-patient ward at Walter Reed Hospital when he got to be 21 before the war was over. He was shot—shell-shocked with these crazy men. One of them says, “Don’t look me in the eye or I’ll shoot you.” He was batty from his experiences. Not my brother but the patient...my uncle—he also was in the war; he was in the Marine Corps. First, he was with an ambulance corps in France and then when the government took over, he was let go and he enlisted in the Marine Corps. And in World War II, he was in charge of Guam for the Marines...but he was in World War I too.
K.C.:	How did you follow the news of the war? Did you listen to the radio or did you read the newspapers?
Margery Fawcett:	We didn’t have a radio in World War I...radio came in about 1921 after the war was over...so we read the paper.
K.C.:	Did it come out once a day? Or...
Margery Fawcett:	They had morning papers and evening papers. [pause]
K.C.:	Do you remember how much they cost?
Margery Fawcett:	About three cents I think...three cents a paper and five cents... <i>Washington Star</i> , <i>Washington Herald</i> , <i>Washington Times</i> ; I don’t think the <i>Post</i> [<i>Washington Post</i>] started in the beginning.
K.C.:	So did you get a radio when they first came out?
Margery Fawcett:	Yeah, we had a crystal set. It was about 3–4 inches wide and a foot long and then had a little what they call it—a cat’s whisker—a little piece of metal wire on a crystal and the crystal was fastened on this board and you put the little cat’s whisker on it and put headphones on and you heard the voice...and there was no battery, no electricity; it was a crystal set.
K.C.:	What did you think when you first heard the radio?
Margery Fawcett:	Oh, I thought it was wonderful. ’Course, I can’t remember before telephones. We had a telephone way back before I could remember. [pause]
K.C.:	Did your houses have running water?
Margery Fawcett:	Yeah, we had running water and we had gaslight rather than electricity. Until Catonsville, we always had gaslight. We had electricity in Alexandria...and I’ll go back over...electricity in Alexandria [laughter].
Margery’s Red Cross Work and Driving Experiences	

K.C.:	When did you start working for the Red Cross?
Margery Fawcett:	[pause] I guess about 1922. Miss Sady James used to come over from Washington, conduct meetings, and we went to them in a little room behind a store on St. Asaph Street and King...the southwest corner in the back of that building. And we had chairmen of different committees. And then we had two nurses that were paid for by two nice families in Alexandria—a visiting nurse association—and they were run under the Red Cross and—what was her name?—it wasn't Birdsong but something like that and this [pause] I don't think of her name right off but anyway, they had a little coupe. And they'd go around make visits and one of them didn't like to drive. And I used to drive from 10 in the morning until lunchtime for her to make her visits and I'd sit in the car and never read.
K.C.:	How did you drive a car then?
Margery Fawcett:	Oh, we had a Model-T.
K.C.:	How did those work?
Margery Fawcett:	Well, you cranked them by hand. We just began with a thumb starter when we got our second car. Our first car was in Catonsville 1913. But we didn't have a car in Washington; we didn't need one...[inaudible] by walking and streetcar...but when we came to Alexandria, we had a Model-T.
K.C.:	Did you like to drive?
Margery Fawcett:	Oh, I loved to drive. That's why I learned to drive. I didn't drive 'til we came to Alexandria.
K.C.:	Did many girls drive? Was it unusual...?
Margery Fawcett:	Yes, yes. But you had to crank the car. After we got the car sometime they had cloth tops and the top across the front—above the windshield—began to rot out. Mother had older sisters who had black petticoats and they died. We took one of the black petticoats and made a lovely top for the Model-T car. [laughter]
K.C.:	That's funny.
Margery Fawcett:	Later, I had a friend that wallpapered inside of the car. They used wallpaper. My brother invented cutting down the back of the front seat—so that it would go flat—back in that space where your feet went in the back seat?...And it made it like a bed and they'd go camping and use that to sleep...they didn't get very far with a patent but it was a good idea.
K.C.:	It was a good idea. Where did you drive around here? Did you stay in Alexandria or were there places...

Margery Fawcett:	We drove to Washington, down to Mount Vernon...we didn't go very far as a rule. We used to have rumble seats—open seats. We loved to ride in the rumble seat. That was sporty.
K.C.:	The George Washington Parkway—was that the name of the road to Mount Vernon?
Margery Fawcett:	No, the Parkway wasn't built until 1932. We just rode into Washington over Route 1.
K.C.:	How did you go to Mount Vernon?
Margery Fawcett:	On Route 1. Memorial Highway was built in 1932—centennial of Washington's [inaudible].
K.C.:	Do you remember...?
Margery Fawcett:	[interruption] Alexandria promised to keep Washington Street like it was—full of beautiful, old family homes. They have ALL gone!
K.C.:	They said it was going to stay how?
Margery Fawcett:	They didn't keep their promise.
K.C.:	Were people angry when the road was built?
Margery Fawcett:	There were a few. There's the Fendall house...the Edmond Jennings Lee house...and possibly one or two others and all the rest have gone. Beautiful old brick houses—federal-type. It's a shame because, you know, that's part of the Memorial Highway—between Washington and Mount Vernon. Now, my father attended the laying of the cornerstone of the Masonic Memorial and that was in 1932. That's when the Highway was put through—1932.
The Masons and the Masonic Temple	
K.C.:	Was your father in the Masons then?
Margery Fawcett:	Yes, he was Chaplain of the Alexandria-Washington Lodge—I don't think 50 years but nearly. My husband was a member for 50 years. Masonry is quite active in Alexandria.
K.C.:	Can you tell me about it? I've always seen the Temple but I don't know anything about it.
Margery Fawcett:	You've never gone into the Temple?
K.C.:	I've never gone in.
Margery Fawcett:	Oh, it's quite interesting. You can go to the top and get a nice view and the elevators go at an angle. That's why they are wider at the bottom than they are at the top. The first ones to do that were the Eiffel Tower in Paris and my mother's cousin designed those in the Eiffel Tower...but you can go from the main floor up to the top and

	get a lovely view; you ought to go.
K.C.:	I should go. Was it exciting when it was built? Was it always that big?
Margery Fawcett:	Well no, for a while, it only went up about a third of the way and they finished it up. It rained hard the day they laid the cornerstone. They have a beautiful library and a nice auditorium with a very good organ. And they have a marvelous rug; it was given to them from some Asiatic potentate. Beautiful rug. The children had to make it [inaudible] small fingers making 80-some knots to an inch. And this rug was made for Persian royalty. And a Mr. Wahijian [spelling uncertain] came over here with carpets on his back to sell. And he went as far as Chicago and he made a good thing of it and he gave that rug to the Temple in thanks for what America had done for him. But that was made for Persian royalty—it's a beautiful rug. And under the different Masonic colored lights, it glows different ways. It's quite interesting. You ought to go in the Temple. It's really quite a lot to see.
K.C.:	I never knew you were allowed to go in it.
Margery Fawcett:	And they have a table with little figures and you push a button and they march around to music—Scottish rite in their uniforms marching around. My grand nephew says, "I'm going home and get some figures at the five and ten you can play with. You can't touch these." [laughter]
K.C.:	That's wonderful. Now was that train station there—when the Masonic Temple was built? What was that area like?
Margery Fawcett:	It was just a hill. And a golf course. Oh, they used to play golf up there and the Wright brothers flew a flight from there. My husband as a little boy went and saw them take off from Shuter's Hill.
K.C.:	Wow. So there wasn't a train station there?
Margery Fawcett:	And we went to Catonsville and watched them fly around the field; they just went up and went around the field and came down—the Wright brothers. [pause] We had a picnic lunch and a horse and a two-seater wagon and we went to see them. First airplanes.
K.C.:	Wow—what year was that? Do you remember?
Margery Fawcett:	Oh about 1908 or [190]9—somewhere around there.
K.C.:	Wow; you were young.
Margery Fawcett:	We've gone all the way from horse and buggy to space in my lifetime!
K.C.:	Has that been strange for you? Have you ever used a computer?
Margery Fawcett:	I don't use a computer [laughter]. My family uses computers; my

	stepdaughter uses a computer; she's very good at it. My hearing aids are on a computer.
K.C.:	That makes sense. Do you like all the technology that has developed? Do you find it useful or would you rather...
Margery Fawcett:	I used to write with a typewriter but I don't anymore. I got rid of the typewriter. I just write in long hand [pause]
Shopping in Alexandria and Margery's Trip to Europe	
K.C.:	I wanted to ask—if there weren't stores along Washington Street in Alexandria...
Margery Fawcett:	No, there didn't used to be...there were private homes...Not even offices. There were lovely homes all up and down from Franklin all the way up to the north end of town.
K.C.:	So what area were the stores in? Where did you go to shop in Alexandria?
Margery Fawcett:	King Street!
K.C.:	Just up and down King Street?
Margery Fawcett:	All the shops were on King Street. We had a Hot Shoppe, and Mrs. Bradley and she had an assistant and she would always say, "As you say." I didn't say anything but "As you say" so we always called her behind her back Mrs. As-You-Say. And then we had a fruit store and Tony was from Greece. He worked for the boss and his father was a banker in Athens, knew the royal family in Greece. When I was going to Europe in 1926, he wanted to know would I take a little package over and give to the Queen of Greece who was in exile in Italy. So I said I would. So he arrived with a bunch of red roses for me and a 5-lb. box of chocolates and some chewing gum for the little princess who was about ten...I got the measles from a little girl on the ship so when we got to Italy, I went to the [inaudible] American nursing home instead of to the city—I think it was either Milan or Florence where she was living in exile. And the rest of the family—people in the group—they knew about this but they wouldn't take the candy. When we got back, the queen wrote to Tony and he says, "What happened? I told my servant that the daughter had met the ladies and they didn't come." And they were furious that they didn't meet the exiled Queen of Greece. [much laughter]
K.C.:	What else did you do in Europe? Do you remember your trip well...were you sick the whole time?
Margery Fawcett:	Oh no, I was only in the hospital 12 days. I was over there three months. I had a lovely trip. I had later trips too—that was the first one in 1926. There were various Alexandria ladies; there were five mother's age and five my age...and one in between and we had a

	Thomas Cook & Son guide to take us. Oh we had a good time.
K.C.:	That's wonderful. Would you travel on trains or—
Margery Fawcett:	We went on a ship and we went by train after we got over there. We landed in France and went down into Italy and went back up to Switzerland and Germany and Holland and Belgium and then to England. And my father was born in England and he had a sister over there. I met thirty-some cousins there. In all, I made six trips over there over the years.
K.C.:	When you first went, was it unusual to travel to Europe?
Margery Fawcett:	No, but people went by boat; they didn't fly. I saw Lindberg come up the river the time he flew over solo—he stood on the front of the ship they sent for him; came right up the Potomac River. We stood down there in the park you know—the little park between the tunnel and Jones Point.
K.C.:	What do you remember about it?
Margery Fawcett:	Well, it was a nice day and he was standing on the prow of the ship; there wasn't much to see. Everybody was very excited that he made the trip.
Alexandria in the 1930s and 1940s	
K.C.:	What was happening in the [19]30s in Alexandria? You said the Parkway was being...
Margery Fawcett:	Well, the Temple was being started. That was sort of one of the big things—the Masonic Temple. [pause] I'd have to think about the [19]30s—I don't know.
K.C.:	Were people worried about the war starting? Were people concerned about what was happening in Europe?
Margery Fawcett:	Well, I was busy with a sick family and parents during the World War II. I didn't do much. Made bandages; did little things. We were all rationed. I remember chasing up in the Model-A car behind a truck that was full of chickens—the government had bought all the chickens. I followed them all the length of Prince Street from down near the river all the way up to Union Station. They finally stopped and I got a chicken from them. Oh, that was a feast.
K.C.:	What were the rations like?
Margery Fawcett:	Well, we used to send ration boxes over to England and to Italy. Our Rector, Mr. [inaudible] was a chaplain in the Navy and when the American troops landed in Italy, Castel Gandolfo was the Pope's summer home and next to it was Mrs. Smoot's daughter's home. Mrs. Smoot and her daughter came from Alexandria and Father [inaudible] landed right there on Mrs. Smoot's property. [laughter] She kept a

	diary and after the war was over, she kept it hidden in her mattress; she sent it over for us to read. We used to send them Care packages. But it was unusual...
Daisy, the Family's Maid	
K.C.:	So, in World War II, you were taking care of your parents? Is that what you said?
Margery Fawcett:	Yeah, but I was lucky. I had two practical nurses and we had the same colored Afro maid for 44 years. She came from a little place called Bunah—from a very nice family. And she loved being in the rectory, answering the telephone and doing things. She got to be like one of the family; she's buried in the family plot in the cemetery.
K.C.:	What was her name?
Margery Fawcett:	Daisy. She knew everybody in the family. And when one would go, she's say, "Well, who's going to be next?" [laughter] She had a vocabulary of her own. We had a vestibule and the vestibule was a "restiview" and then you have to learn to be "payshable" in this life. [pause] She had quite a vocabulary; but she really was a wonderful woman. Came to us when a good maid had to leave because she was having another baby and needed to be at home. And I did not know what in the world we were going to do. And a neighbor across the street called on the telephone on a Sunday afternoon and said, "Would you know anybody that would need a good maid? She's come down here from a funeral. She's been working for my niece in the country and she wants to stay." I said, "Send her right over." And she stayed with us for 44 years.
K.C.:	That's amazing.
Margery Fawcett:	'Til we came out here and she died.
Margery's Daily Routine and Nursing Experiences	
K.C.:	So what kind of things did you have to do to run a house? Do you know? Did you go shopping certain days? What time did you get up to start breakfast? Tell me about that.
Margery Fawcett:	Oh, I wasn't an early riser. Daisy did not live in. She came at 7:30 and got breakfast so I got up when I felt like it. I didn't get up except when I had to taxi people—you know that kind of thing. But I didn't have to have a stopwatch...in Red Cross I worked as a Gray Lady; I worked on the Board of Directors; I was secretary and so on—took minutes. I worked five years at Fort Belvoir during the Korean War on weekends and holidays in the hospital. And then I worked as a nurse's aide in Alexandria Hospital for 12 and a half years 'til they moved up there on Seminary Hill. Then I stopped. I got married and stopped. I worked weekends and holidays and I was very welcome;

	<p>they were always short. There was always plenty I could find to do. I did all sorts of things. I had one man that was very fussy. He wanted to get up and he was terribly weak. I knew if he stood up, he'd fall down. He died the next day. I wouldn't let him. I kept telling him he had to stay in bed but I'd rub his back and fix his water and get him ready for the night and he looked at me and he said, "My goodness, I hope I don't have to look at you when I get to heaven." [laughter] The next day, he was dead. [laughter] Then on another day, I went in and a man was having DTs from liquor. So I asked the nurse what I should do and she said to get him some orange juice. So I got orange juice; 15 minutes went by and he still was crazy. "Look at all the soldiers—see 'em, see 'em, they're going to shoot you." So I went to the nurse and said, "There isn't any more orange juice so what should I do?" She said to go to another floor and get it. So I went to another floor. When I came back, he had disappeared and the bed had disappeared. There was just a hole where he had been. I thought I was getting DTs. [laughter] The man in the room with him said, "You didn't really see those little soldiers going around, did you?" I said, "No, but there was no use arguing with him." Well, he said, "They have some water bugs in this place and I have been swatting them with my hands. Would you bring some water for me to wash my hands?" I said, "Yes, certainly," and went and got him some water. He was so tickled, he called the Red Cross to tell them how nice I was. [much laughter]. You have all kinds of experiences.</p>
K.C.:	So you kept busy—you didn't mind not having a job?
Margery Fawcett:	<p>No, I kept busy. One lady told me, she said, "You just made Christmas for me." I was there Christmastime; she was in the hospital. It was very satisfying work. We had a little boy who had crawled under the sink—a little colored boy—while his mother was socializing. And he got hold of a can of Drano and ate it. And his mouth was all raw all the way down into his stomach; it took him a year and a lot of operations—he got so he knew what he could eat like mashed potatoes and ice cream. We used to feed him. I often wonder what finally happened to him—Bootsie! A cute little thing. [pause] So, I had plenty to keep me busy.</p>
K.C.:	Did you know any girls who worked during that time? Did all women stay home? Did any women work after they were married then?
Margery Fawcett:	Yes, I think some of them did. Yes. Most of my friends had jobs...some were married and some weren't.
K.C.:	What kind of jobs? Did they nurse and teach?
Margery Fawcett:	Well, several of them worked for Better Homes in America. They had an office in Washington and kind of a Good Housekeeping sort of thing...shortcuts...how to keep house; how to make a proper bed.

	They don't know how to make a bed in this house; it's just full of wrinkles...we wouldn't have been allowed in the Red Cross to get away with the beds they make in this place...
Civil Rights Movement in Alexandria	
K.C.:	Do you remember the Civil Rights Movement then—in Alexandria—with Martin Luther King and all that. Civil Rights in Alexandria?
Margery Fawcett:	The what?
K.C.:	Civil Rights Movement.
Margery Fawcett:	Oh, yes, but they were very quiet. Obviously, [inaudible] was very long on keeping things the way they had been. You know. Separation in the schools and so on. There was quite a company that fought and I remember Tom Frasier—we had a minister that was connected with the Chapel and they delighted...he was quite like getting into a restaurant on the way to Richmond when they were on—which I didn't think was totally square, but they thought it was very smart to get this colored man to eat among white people going down to Richmond to the meetings, which now, of course, would be quite all right, but it wasn't in those days. He became a trustee for the University of Liberia—Dr. Davis. And he was quite liked; he lived here, died here. He had two wives in all and they both died here.
K.C.:	What else do you remember about segregation?
Margery Fawcett:	Well, yeah. Oh, goodness. Everything was segregated when I was small...and Union Station had two waiting rooms—one for the colored and one for the white.
K.C.:	And St. Paul's was only white?
Margery Fawcett:	Well, we had a letter, I don't know what became of it, from Edmund Jennings Lee in 1839...along there...to our Rector and he says, "I have tried every way I can, but your school for the colored is going to have to close down or you will go to jail." They were taught English and sewing and knitting and a little arithmetic and they had to close this colored school...run by St. Paul's Church!...he was not a member of our church; he was a member of Christ Church, but he was a lawyer and he was interested in helping the church; he was a good churchman.
K.C.:	What about women's rights? Do you remember that? Were you a supporter of those movements—the feminist movements? Did you like that?
Margery Fawcett:	Well, I couldn't...I was a minister's daughter. I did wear riding pants. I stood on my head on Duke Street the 500 block in a snowdrift dressed in riding pants. But we didn't go around in slacks. We had beach pajamas in the summer to put on over a bathing suit. I don't

	wear pants now. I used to but I'm too big; I don't look nice. I'm not against them but I'm so tired of looking at people's heinies.
K.C.:	[Laughter] What other things would you like to tell me? What else would you like to share about Alexandria?
Margery Fawcett:	Well, his work was...Insurance Rating Bureau—the Insurance Rating Bureau and it had an office at 14th and New York Avenue. He had to go to the big government buildings and put the rates for insurance on these buildings—fire insurance and so on. And his brother worked for the gun factory—the Naval gun factory over there by D.C.
K.C.:	I just thought...was the torpedo factory used to make torpedoes? The torpedo factory in Alexandria?
Margery Fawcett:	Oh, it was active all during the war—yes. We had a nurse where the mother whose son worked down there and she had to be quite secretive about what he did. She had a bad heart and she didn't come to work one morning and they went down and the house door was locked. Got the police and went in; she was dead. She had a heart attack. But her son worked at the torpedo factory.
K.C.:	Did lots of people work there?
Margery Fawcett:	Oh, yes, it was quite a big operation—yeah. They built ships too—in World War I. They had a shipyard down there on the river near Jones Point—where the Woodrow Wilson bridge is.
K.C.:	What else would you like to tell me about Alexandria? Do you have any memories you'd like to share?
Margery Fawcett:	Well, you know the one about the little girl saying, "Hoorah"?
K.C.:	No.
Margery Fawcett:	Don't you know that?
K.C.:	I don't think so.
Margery Fawcett:	Well, in the [Civil] War—1860s—they had picket guards in front of the church just walking back and forth guarding. So the house on the north side of the church has high steps that are still there—great high steps—and the little girl that lived in that house—Connie Bush—was about six and she come out and waved a Confederate flag at the picket; it was a Union picket. And she said, "Hoorah for Jefferson Davis and the South" [inaudible] and he says, "Hoorah for the devil." She says, "That's right. You hoorah for your side and I'll hoorah for mine." [laughter]...That's one for the casebook. [laughter] But I knew the lady. I'm the one that dug that story up.
Discussion of Politics and Guns	
K.C.:	Do you have a favorite President from when you were alive?

Margery Fawcett:	No. No. [pause] I don't like politics much. I don't like all these people carrying guns around; they're shooting each other. I think it's dreadful! [Pause]
K.C.:	But when you grew up, weren't guns more common—or not?
Margery Fawcett:	Guns? Yes, people used guns to go hunting and I had a first cousin that had four little boys and the grandfather wanted to give them a BB gun and the parents said no. And he kept after them. And he said, "They'll only take the gun out when I'm with them and we'll be very careful." So he gets the gun and he takes them back behind the house and one boy gets in front of the other boy and he was maimed for life. He wasn't killed but he was maimed for life; never walked without crutches again. I'm NOT for guns!... You have wars and I guess you have to have guns for that, but I'm not a gun person. My mother's family worked with guns—invented guns for the Civil War—they were gun people up in New York State. But I am NOT for guns!
K.C.:	I understand. [pause]
Margery Fawcett:	We ought to be able to live in some kind of peace. I grant you in the old days, you had to go hunting for food. You know in the pictures of George Washington as an aide-de-camp, he's wearing like a sash? Well, that's a campaign sash and they opened out like a hammock and if a man was wounded, he could be carried from where he was wounded to where he could get help. That wasn't just for looks; it was a really useful part of the uniform.
Margery's Great Grandfather, John Fabyan Parrott	
K.C.:	That's interesting. I've been looking at this picture right here...
Margery Fawcett:	That's my great-grandfather. He was a United States senator in the time of James Monroe.
K.C.:	What was his name?
Margery Fawcett:	John Fabyan Parrott...he was a New Englander.
K.C.:	What state?
Margery Fawcett:	New Hampshire.
K.C.:	Do you have any stories about him?
Margery Fawcett:	Well, he had stories but that's going into the New Hampshire historical society when I die.
K.C.:	All right, I'll let those...[pause]
Margery Fawcett:	The 38 boxes of letters and papers of that family up in New Hampshire in the Historical Society and they don't have a picture of him. He lost out because Daniel Webster had been running from

	<p>Massachusetts and he decided he'd change and run from New Hampshire and this man was Senator from New Hampshire and the other people, they were on the Committee for Naval Affairs—were all Southerners so naturally, he lost out to Daniel Webster...But then he became President of the New Hampshire Senate...And they don't have a picture of him. That is probably done by a pupil of S.F.D. Morse telegraph line who was a good painter but it's not signed and he was in Washington when Morse was up in New Hampshire in 1819...So he wouldn't have been there to paint him. But they think it's similar in style and so on. I had the Corcoran Gallery people study it one way or another.</p>
<p>K.C.:</p>	<p>How did your mother...</p>
<p>Margery Fawcett:</p>	<p>They were in shipping...in England and in South America—Antigua. We have a painting—this man's son was in the shipping business—and he had clipper ships that were built in New Bedford and one of them...when a ship was launched, they made a painting. The painting was this big. And, Mother got the painting in 1910 because this uncle—she was named for the uncle, Frederica, he was Frederick—so she got it and it was valued at \$15. Needed some repair; it was fly-specked and needed some fixin' up so we had a man come that knew what he was doin' and put it in order and I had it for years. Well, I had a brother named Frederick and Frederick had a son-in-law Frederick and a grandson Frederick so Mother said when she died, I should give the painting to them. Which I did. They wanted it and when I came out here, I turned the painting over to them. And it is valued now at \$100,000. A \$15 painting for \$100,000. [laughter from both] I lived with it most of my life from 1910 to 1978—68 years. I loved it. [laughter]</p>
<p>K.C.:</p>	<p>Wonderful. [End.] [An informal discussion continues to the end of the tape.]</p>