



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



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Interviewer: *Patricia Knock*

Transcribers: *Eleanor White and Valerie Davison*

Abstract: Dorothy Hall Smith and Barbara Ashby Gordon grew up in Alexandria. Mrs. Gordon grew up in the vicinity of what is now the Fort Ward Museum and Historic Site, which they called "the Fort." Mrs. Smith, her cousin, visited there in summer. The women describe the homes and families "up Fort," and they talk about growing up at a time when Braddock Road required new tar be put down each year; when Barbara walked to her aunt's house to get milk from the cow; and when no one felt it necessary to keep their doors locked. They also describe in detail the house belonging to the Jacksons at the Fort. During Reconstruction, the Fort Ward area was a neighborhood of African Americans. The women talk about the importance of remembering the neighborhood as it was before it became a Park.

Table of Contents/Index**Tape:** *Tape 1***Side:** *Side 1*

Minute	Counter	Page	Topic
<i>Not indicated</i>	<i>Not indicated</i>	3	Introductions
		4	The Fort and Other Neighborhoods
		5	Growing and Storing Food at the Fort
		9	Buying Food from the Store
		9	Walking to Georgetown
		10	School in Alexandria, Manassas, and Washington, D.C.
		11	Helping Hands: The Ashbys and Others
		12	Childhood Games and Adventures
		13	The Bells at Oakland Baptist Church
		14	Houses and Neighbors at the Fort
		16	The Jackson House
		21	Advice for Future Generations
		21	Families at the Fort
		22	Graves on Howard Street
		24	Looking at Pictures

Tape: *Tape 1***Side:** *Side 2*

Minute	Counter	Page	Topic
<i>Not indicated</i>	<i>Not indicated</i>	24	Looking at Pictures, cont.
		25	More on Families, Neighbors, and Church
		29	End of Interview

Introductions	
Patricia Knock	I'm Patricia Knock and I am interviewing today?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Barbara Ashby Gordon.
P.K.:	And you were born?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Nineteen thirty-five.
P.K.:	And the date?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	September 14, 1935.
P.K.:	And you are?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Dorothy Hall Smith.
P.K.:	Okay, and your birth date is?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	September 20, 1932.
P.K.:	I'm just going to ask each of you your names when you talk. Say your names [inaudible] different. Dorothy, what was the time period that you spent at Fort Ward?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	I stayed there in the summer with Barbara, from, I'd say, 1941, two or three summers.
P.K.:	And where was your—
Dorothy Hall Smith:	I lived down in the Alexandria area we called Hybla Valley.
P.K.:	And so in the summers you guys would get together and play and go—
Dorothy Hall Smith:	As little girls.
P.K.:	What ages were you?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	I was probably about eight, about eight years old.
P.K.:	You were telling me that your families were part of the Jacksons, married into the Jacksons.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes, my mother married Robert Jackson in 1909. I have some proof for you. And he lived between eight and nine years, and when he passed, she married my father David Hall. In the meantime she stayed at the Fort until I was say, 19, 20, 22, or 23.
P.K.:	Did she live in the Jackson home?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Definitely so, with four boys.
P.K.:	And what were the boys' names?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	The boys were named James, Horace, Johnny, and Joe. She had two children to expire, the baby boy and the oldest girl was named Maria. She expired. Those two. So she had four boys left. Of course, at that time, they had to go down to Mudtown, as we call Seminary today, to school. The Episcopal school over in the field had closed down.
P.K.:	That was an Episcopal school?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes, over in the field near the cemetery. I think the cemetery was behind it. Yes, that's where my mother went to school.
P.K.:	And your mother was?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Mary Magdalene Wanzer. And there was no school downtown in

	Mudtown. As far as we know they went up in the Fort to school, to the Episcopal school. And some of the Ashbys, of course, helped her in school.
P.K.:	Do you remember the names of the teachers that worked there?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	I'll have to check that.
P.K.:	Does Bernie Terrell sound like a name you've heard before? Bernie Terrell?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes. I've heard them mention...but she did tell us that Mrs. Virginia Ashby helped her quite often with her studies. She was very slow. She said she kept her mind on work to be done at home, and I think there was an Ashby teacher.
P.K.:	Do you remember the name of that Ashby teacher?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	No, maybe Barbara would know.
P.K.:	Barbara, you said yes, you remember the name of an Ashby teacher?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes, the Ashby that was a teacher, I can't remember her name [inaudible]. I have it written down but I can't remember her name. She was called "Sis." And I can remember my grandmother telling me that she taught the children, and my grandfather. They all went to the same school.
P.K.:	On the Fort.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Up Fort, yes.
The Fort and Other Neighborhoods	
P.K.:	When you were there, you called it "the Fort." Did you call it also "Fort Ward?" What names did you call it? Dorothy, what name did you call it?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	I always said "Up to the Fort," because I think it was my mother...my mother was born down in Mudtown, and when she married the Jackson, she moved up, they called up on the hill. That's why they called it "up Fort." Braddock Road, up the hill. It's a very high hill. It was higher then than it is now. It's been scaled down quite a bit.
P.K.:	When you were young, do you remember the [inaudible], the mansion that...beside that property?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	On what side?
P.K.:	On the right-hand side, on the east side of the Fort property. If you went back up in there was an old place that used to be—
Dorothy Hall Smith:	I'm wondering if it's the Brookings' mansion.
P.K.:	I was asking you about the Brookings mansion because that was previously where Cassius F. Lee lived, and he was helpful in the community after the Civil War.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Never heard of him.
P.K.:	Never heard of him? Okay, that's okay. Are you familiar with any of these names of neighborhoods—Summerville? No. Green Heights? Yes. Where was Green Heights?

Dorothy Hall Smith:	That was down in the lower valley. I think one of the children of my brother Matthew were down in that area.
P.K.:	In the lower valley.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	It was over...of course, I think it eventually became Green Valley, I think.
P.K.:	Okay, like back Glebe road?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	It was across, of course, for Fairlington. You used to be able to travel right through Fairlington, right on down, across the highway—there was no highway—to Green Valley. They used horse and wagon, because I think the dogs were tied to the back, some of the older brothers tell me, and they stayed over there probably a couple of...one winter. And then they came back with the dog and the cow all tied to the wagon, back up in the Fort.
P.K.:	So Green Valley was the place that they took for pasture?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	No, people lived over there.
P.K.:	Oh, people also lived there.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	To be closer to work and places. They found better work. It was near to where the, where the Pentagon, but it wasn't quite over to the Pentagon. There was a large trash dump there, and the airport, and see they lived close to those things, because people could work doing jobs around those areas.
P.K.:	Did either of you hear of West End? What does West End mean to you?...nothing?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Well, I think they referred to Wasp area. All that like, they were given different names, all kind of working together. Did you remember, Barbara, at all?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	I know it now.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes, Barbara's been in all those areas. What do you call that Green—
P.K.:	West End.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	And what was the name before that?
P.K.:	I don't have that. How about Macedonia? No?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	They referred to...? These are all place names. They refer to Georgetown...yeah. Excuse me. Everything was in walking distance. People walked everywhere. My older brothers said they used a wagon.
Growing and Storing Food at the Fort	
P.K.:	When you stayed up on the Fort, the families that lived there, were any of them farmers?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	[inaudible] had a farm. As far as big farming, no. They all had their little gardens, but not farming, as such.
P.K.:	Do you remember any of them talking about the Depression? You all would have been just tiny babies then, but do you remember any of them talking about that?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Dorothy speaking, somewhat older than Barbara. I heard my mother,

	Mary Jackson, speak of the hard times that they had. Said normally when they were given different things, like potatoes and things like that, they put it in the kill in the ground, and milk was given to them by different people, pails of milk, and corn that was left in the fields, they shared that with the slaves and things like that.
P.K.:	When you said they put it in the ground, what did you call that?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	They called it a kill. K-I-L-L. The kill was built under the gate where there was [inaudible]
P.K.:	And what kind of a place was that?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Well, it's a real deep hole that goes down so far in the ground. Then it has a level, like a shelf, and they put the breakable things up on the shelf. The potatoes and other things go down in [inaudible] store.
P.K.:	But it's dug into the ground. And how do you...is there wood on the top of it?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	No, I'm told that, as I say, when they dug in the ground, the men dug a shelf, they dug like a hole back in the ground, then they went down and had the potatoes, apples, and—
P.K.:	So did they dig it into the side of a hill, is that what you're telling me?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes, definitely.
P.K.:	So it was like the side of the hill and then they would dig back in there. How far back in would it go?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Oh, I cannot tell you exactly. So far. It would be probably about three or four feet back. Not too far back, but—
P.K.:	Did everybody have one of those?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	[inaudible] if they had anything to put in it, and then again, they used the well for things that were needed right away. Like in the well they would let the food down so far in the well, like if the food was cooked on Saturday evening for Sunday, they lowered it in the well so far down near the water where it would be real cool. Things like maybe corn puddings or very seldom potato salad, anything baked. They would lower it down and then whatever they needed, they could, you know, raise it back up. Definitely the well was used for things that was needed the next day, the well. They lowered it so far down.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Now, my grandfather, on his property...built—John Ashby, yes—a storage place similar to that that Dorothy is speaking of, just back of the garden area, and it was built into a hill and it was built deep into the hill and had shelves and that's where they would put vegetables that my grandmother canned in the winter, and that's where we stored potatoes and other vegetables, root vegetables. And then—
P.K.:	Did they ever call it a root cellar?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	No.
P.K.:	That was never a name. Bomb shelter here.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Then [inaudible] World War II, when we had the black curtains and

	the light air raids, then my grandfather turned it into a bomb shelter, and it had wooden doors that came...you opened them and went in and you closed them. I have looked and looked and looked and I can't find it.
P.K.:	Do you know about where it is? Do you know where it might be?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	I can't recognize where the house was anymore.
P.K.:	Okay. Yeah, it's hard when the buildings are down and new buildings are up, it's hard to tell the different...you were telling me that they liked canned things. What things did they can?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	String beans, corn, tomatoes, anything they grew.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Squash.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Anything they grew. Sweet potatoes.
P.K.:	Did they grow these all in their garden or did some of them they bought?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes.
P.K.:	What were you saying, Dorothy?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Nuts and things was already in there. Christmastime things.
P.K.:	Were there fruit trees on the Fort then?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yeah.
P.K.:	What all fruit trees were there?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	We had apples, peaches, pickle pears, we had—
P.K.:	What'd you have, Dorothy?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	See said...apples, pickle pears, that reminds me. I went up there to stay with her for the summer for those pickle pears. And grapes! Oh, my goodness, grapes arbor.
P.K.:	Strawberries?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	No. Plenty blackberries. Plenty blackberries. And what was the other tree? I heard my mother speak about the trees up there. And whatever grew in the garden was canned. Preserved, I guess they called it, preserved and put up.
P.K.:	You used to help?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes, boiling the bottles and—
P.K.:	Did the people—most of the people had privies, right? Didn't have indoor plumbing.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Outhouses.
P.K.:	When you were a child, you called them outhouses...were the people mostly the owners of the houses, or were there some people that rented from other people?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	I understood that a lot of people came into the neighborhood, and of course they were friendly-like people, and they stayed in old shacks, the old houses that was there, and of course they did a lot of walking. Sometimes they came in the neighborhood and did jobs for people, the kids maybe, helped with the gardening and did things like that.

P.K.:	So there were nice houses like your grandfather's and there were also small—
Dorothy Hall Smith:	No. There were shacks, then there were fine houses, and then there were shacks, then there were middle-of-the-road houses, and there was a mixture. Mostly the people that I remember were homeowners.
P.K.:	Were homeowners?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yeah. Families, generations of homeowners.
P.K.:	Okay, so at the time that the homeowners were there, how many extra, like, farm helpers or part-time working people with families were there? If you can kind of think in your head how many families were up there?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	I'm told that the squatters lived in Jackson.
P.K.:	We were just talking about the permanent residences and then like the workers that maybe came in.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	My grandfather. My grandfather raised hogs and every year he would have a hog kill—
P.K.:	How many hogs did he have?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Oh, 10, 20, 30. And all the friends, most of the people lived in the Seminary, Mudtown, would come up and bring their hogs and [inaudible] and we would have a big old time slaughtering hogs. That was every winter.
P.K.:	So your grandfather was also like a butcher?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	No, everybody knew how to do it, but everybody did their own, but just did it because we had a big garage and they tied the hogs up in the garage and slaughtered.
P.K.:	Then they would take them back and salt the meat, or how would they keep the meat?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	It was like a two- or three-day affair. They would do it all day.
P.K.:	So how many people would come?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Sometimes as many as 10 or 12 people.
P.K.:	And they would all bring a hog with them that they had, like, raised in their backyard or whatever from scraps, or...I'm just guessing.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes.
P.K.:	Because my husband's family did that, too.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	But it was a gathering place, and there was...everybody had a good time then. They played checkers and, you know, drank a little homemade brew or whatever, but it was a big event.
P.K.:	Uh-huh, and then they would take the meat back home with them and then cure it or how would they keep the meat? Dorothy, what were you saying?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	I'd like to, I think this was done just before Thanksgiving or after Thanksgiving holidays. Sometime around there was cool weather.
P.K.:	Cool weather. Okay, I was thinking summer.

Barbara Ashby Gordon:	No, no, no.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Dorothy speaking again. Ladies helped with the washing and they shared the food with the neighbors.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Some of the neighbors.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes, some of the neighbors, they shared this.
P.K.:	Uh, huh, so the people had meat. So, did you eat chicken, too? Mostly pork? Everybody had chickens?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Not everybody. Most people...we had a chicken coop. Most people had chickens running around loose. We had them in a chicken coop.
P.K.:	But it was okay to have the chickens running in the neighborhood, that was all right?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes. Well, they didn't go out of the yards. [inaudible] chickens fed there, and...chickens—
P.K.:	They used to peck my ankles—
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Because the roads were dirt roads and when it rained, they became mud roads, and the chickens just never went beyond their yards.
Buying Food from the Store	
P.K.:	So we had a lot of food that comes from the home, the meat and the vegetables and canned things. So if you needed sugar probably, and flour, where would you buy that?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Then you go to the store.
P.K.:	What store would that be?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	When I was a child, we went down Braddock Road, across Quaker Lane—
P.K.:	Okay, we're going east on Braddock Road...go ahead.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	'Cross Quaker Lane, and right in front of Oakland Baptist Church, which is there now, there was a little country store.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	It's tore down.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Is it still there? Donaldson's store. A little country store. And that's where you went to buy meat, whatever you couldn't make.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Dorothy speaking. And before that, what Barbara's telling you, they went to the mill.
P.K.:	They went to the mill?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	To the mill to get their flour and things like that.
P.K.:	Where was the mill?
Walking to Georgetown	
Dorothy Hall Smith:	I can't tell you exactly. These places that you have named where they could walk across the field over to Green Valley (we used to call it Green Valley), then over to Macedonia, over in Georgetown. All that was done along the river. You'd be surprised. If I just had a picture to show you how Georgetown looked back there then, yeah, and the other area you talked about—
P.K.:	West End.

Dorothy Hall Smith:	West End, yes. That was over in Rosslyn. I'm sure it was Rosslyn.
P.K.:	So you have the feeling that Georgetown was a little town then?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Oh, definitely, it was.
P.K.:	And did you separate that from Washington?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes, it was separated from Washington then.
P.K.:	But when you thought of it as two different places.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	It was separated, it was part of Maryland. And the only reason they stayed within...well, they stayed within the Washington area too long, and they found out that the residents of Washington could not vote. Some of them, Alexandria and Arlington, pulled out, and got out in time. Georgetown got stuck. She was too late. Something to this effect. It's in my book now that tells us why Georgetown was still with us, but she was definitely part of Maryland, because Washington went all the way to Alexandria, Alexandria and Arlington.
P.K.:	Your family members are buried...where are they buried? Dorothy?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Up in the Fort.
P.K.:	Up in the Fort.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes. Most of the Jacksons are buried up there.
P.K.:	And, Barbara, do you know where your family was buried, or the Ashbys are buried?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Well, the Ashbys are buried in Arlington, and the other part of the Ashbys are buried at Fort Lincoln in Washington. But my grandparents' forebears are buried up Fort.
School in Alexandria, Manassas, and Washington, D.C.	
P.K.:	Dorothy, can you tell me how you got to school and what school you went to when you were a child?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Well, I went to school in Alexandria in my elementary years, and then after that—
P.K.:	Down in Gum Springs area?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes. And then, of course, I went a year or so to Manassas Regional High School, but it was too harsh, 35 miles and so far to go.
P.K.:	And you were at Gum Springs and they picked you up first and then came up to Alexandria and made the loop around to Manassas?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes.
P.K.:	So you had—how long was your ride?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	We left home at 7:00, so I guess we got there about 20 of 9 (8:40). Of course—
P.K.:	That's one-way?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes. We left Gum Springs and went to Spring Bank, then Lincolnia, then Franconia, then Annandale, then on Route 50 to Centreville, and did I say Mount Pleasant? And then we went on into Manassas.
P.K.:	About an hour and 45 minutes one-way?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes. It was too much, and it was terribly cold. Sometimes—

P.K.:	The bus was not heated?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	No. Things were made as hard as possible for you. It was a challenge to see if you would continue the challenge. Even for the bus driver, a challenge.
P.K.:	But then you changed from that and where did you go?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	To school in Washington.
P.K.:	And how did you manage that?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Well, I was able to live with someone and come home on weekends. First I started coming home every night, and of course I would go to Barbara's house any time I was short of anything to get what I needed, a snack or dinner or whatever was necessary. And sometimes different brothers that was living in Washington would bring me home, some evenings.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Let me answer that. My grandmother and grandfather established a house in Washington and up Fort Ward, which was his family home. Now, he worked in Washington. In fact, he used to be one of the elevator operators under the—at the Monument, the Washington Monument, as was it Park Services. He used to be an elevator operator there. And he would work in Washington and then he would go home on weekends and take care or make sure...because he had sisters and brothers living still in the Hunt Valley home. Take care of them. Then he would come back, or we would go back. That's the way it was, two establishments.
P.K.:	Would he have a car to go where he—
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes, automobile.
P.K.:	What did he have?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	He had a Model T Ford, and it had a running board and a rumble seat...rumble seat—
Helping Hands: The Ashbys and Others	
Dorothy Hall Smith:	I would like to say something, too. Now, Barbara's grandfather kept a place open in Washington where the strays could always eat. All strays that came from the country could—stray cousins—could always eat. There was always something there, plenty of vegetables, whatever was necessary. You got plenty to eat.
P.K.:	So you were a stray cousin that got food when you were going to—
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes, stray cousins and nephews. It was constantly done. Anybody over in Washington, maybe working, building buildings like some of my brothers, they could always go by there. If they were short of money for lunch, and dinner, she made sure, Barbara's people, that someone had something to eat all the time. And would let you sleep there.
P.K.:	It sounds like a wonderful family.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	I'd like to interject this, too. The Ashbys had somewhat more than the

	average family. I cannot say if they were given something or they worked harder, I cannot say. They were able to accumulate more and they did help others in the area. Like I say that because quite a few blacks at that time did that. They did that to each other. People that had more helped others. Clothes, as I say, food, and sometimes other things. Use of equipment, the [inaudible] for the ground, shovels. We had to share things. They shared things.
Childhood Games and Adventures	
P.K.:	I'd like to ask you now if you can remember when you were little girls what kind of games you played. Do you remember what your favorite games were?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	My favorite was cutting paper dolls, cutting models out of the Montgomery Ward catalogue and pasting them on cardboard and pasting furniture on cardboard to make dollhouses.
P.K.:	Oh, that sounds like fun. So you liked to do that handwork, work with your hands. Did you play outside games? Running games or baseball and—
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Had bicycles. I was friendly with one of Jessie Randall's daughter's. She had nine brothers and one girl, and I was friendly with the daughter, and we each had bicycles and we would ride the bikes. Got many a skinned knee from those—
P.K.:	Did you ride the bikes over—did you go to Seminary to ride the bikes? Did you ride on the Seminary grounds?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Now, what are you calling Seminary?
P.K.:	Where the church is and all the buildings, all the big buildings are, the theological seminary?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	No, you weren't allowed there. They had a brick wall to keep you out.
P.K.:	Dorothy?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	We used to play along, walk along the wall, that's all. Had fun doing that, because we were young and small, and walk on this wall.
P.K.:	Around the theological seminary.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes. The wall is not there now.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	It's not like it was.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	No, it was wide enough to walk on. Plus, we played hide and seek. And then we liked to check old places that was left vacant, especially old—don't ask me why—big holes in the ground, just checking, and running after bees and butterflies. Now this is Dorothy that did this. Barbara was somewhat afraid.
P.K.:	Barbara's cutting out the Montgomery catalogue dolls.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes, she lived in the city more so than we did. We were very inquisitive, just check any big hole. We were told if we fell in it, we could forget about it, they would definitely bury us in the ash bank, because money was short. You see Barbara's family was small. Most

	of the people Barbara played with was from large families, extremely large, and we did some daring things, because—
P.K.:	Did you go up to the gravel pit up by Chinquapin?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	The older brothers did all this. They did that.
P.K.:	They went up Chinquapin?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes. They did that. And the girls when they came along, the boys would take the little girls. Girls then wore one suit of clothes. Everything was made into one, and the boys would grab them, and of course you were very poor. The girls had pencils tied around their necks. That's the first thing—don't ask me why—the boys would take those off the girls' necks. Then the fathers would hide going up the Fort road in the bushes, and catch the boys, and then sometimes—we don't know where this came from—it was a stick of dynamite they found different ammunition things behind. The boys would get that and light it. One boy came home and Mary's—this was Mary Jackson, her son he was extremely dark—when he ran home one day, she found nothing on him but red flesh. He lit whatever he found. He thought it was no good. He lit it. He found it in just a large, what's-it, sort of like a water tube, sort of like a tube, a water pipe that goes to the sewer, a sewer pipe. He found this and he lit it, and he thought it had gone out, and he went back to see if it had gone out, and as soon as he got back, somehow the air from him caused it to explode, and of course when he got home, there was nothing. All the top skin which had caught first was a second-degree burn. She said it was just red as fire.
P.K.:	You were daring. The children in the country were more daring.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes, these things, they were much older than I was, but I'm telling you what they told me, and I know it's true, and then they would have apple fights. There was plenty apples. It was nothing to see apples just everywhere. They did not fight with, no, not rocks or bricks, they loved to fight with apples. And an apple can hit you pretty hard.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yeah, apples would be hard.
P.K.:	Did anybody play games where you had, like, a Mason jar and you would put grass in it and make a doll? Have you ever heard that?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	No.
P.K.:	I think it's a generation—
Dorothy Hall Smith:	I think they caught a lot of bees, too. I don't know if that was—
P.K.:	You were telling me about in the month of August sometimes the children had to stay in?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes, the dogs. Sometimes a dog would go mad. We don't know what caused that then.
P.K.:	And how would you find out that you were supposed to stay in?
The Bells at Oakland Baptist Church	
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Well, usually they would notify each other, and of course in that day,

	most vacations were done, not from the dog incidents, by the bells of the church.
P.K.:	Oakland Baptist?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes. One bell—Anita tells us this—one bell, I think it was fire, and then two bells was death, or either two for fire, maybe it is vice versa. One was for death and one was for fire. You would know when somebody's home was on fire. Everybody ran with buckets to help. This was before both of our times, Barbara or my time.
P.K.:	Did the Jackson home burn one time?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes, it certainly did.
P.K.:	And there would be built, a part of it rebuilt?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes. My two brothers was playing upstairs with matches, the twins, Elisha and Elijah, and Matthew. And accidentally the home burned. But it was restored again. But when we left, when Mary Jackson and my father, David Hall, when they left Seminary in 1930 and moved to Gum Springs, a Jackson still remained in the house, James Jackson. So Jacksons remained in the house, I guess until...I can't say what year. But Jacksons were still left when they moved, Mary Jackson with her new husband left.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	I was a little more civilized than Dorothy, or citified, I should say. But my greatest thrill was in the summer when they tarred the road. Braddock Road was tarred. When they tarred the road, the sun would make it so hot that you could, when you walked you'd leave your shoeprint in the road. Well, in evenings when the moon came out, we'd go to the road and dig down deep, deep, deep, full of fresh tar, and we would put that in our mouths and chew it. It was something to do. It probably did—
Houses and Neighbors at the Fort	
P.K.:	I'm going to show you a house with a lot of sort of additions to it and see if either of you recognize it, whose house that was. I know it's hard because it's from overhead. Whose house was way back?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	The Randalls'.
P.K.:	The Randalls' house was way back? We were talking about this earlier, Barbara, about a house that had been built on to a lot of times, and we thought that that might be the Randall house that had a lot of things built on to it.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes, this was an airplane view of it, right?
P.K.:	According to your map, yes, that's an airplane view. According to your map it would be back here, right? Is that it?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes. It was the last house before the road that goes beyond the Peters' house. And that's another thing. My Aunt Ella married John Peters and they had apple orchards and cherry orchards and raised cattle and they raised hogs, and that was a lot of fun. Every morning I would have to go down the road to Aunt Ella's to get fresh milk from the cow

	and bring it back.
P.K.:	When you were there, the time period that you were there, how did the whites and the blacks get along?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Oh, there were, across the road my grandfather's house, there was a white family and down the road there was another white family. We all played. They were as poor as we were. They had no more than we had. Had less than we had, but they came from humble beginnings and—
P.K.:	And you got along?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	We got along fine.
P.K.:	I've been told that people left their doors open, didn't lock their doors. So you would agree with that? there was a Randall family in one of the censuses. A Gordon family in one of the censuses is listed as white. Do you know that family?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	No.
P.K.:	So that was before your time.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	I think it was the ninth. The latest census before that was in 1910.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Barbara speaking. You should show a family called the Embrys.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	That's Cotton's family.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes...all right. The little boy we called "Cotton." A white family.
P.K.:	Were there other children, too?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	I think he had older brothers and sisters, but he was more our age.
P.K.:	Was he blond-haired then?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Not blond but white-blond, real white-blond, yeah. That's why we called him Cotton. That was the Embrys.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Dorothy speaking. I'm wondering, this house looks so familiar coming up the road. This is he coming up the road, the Cravens or the somebody had a...is he coming up Braddock Road? That house there, it was red brick. Here it is in relation to the Fort. Yes. Uh-huh. That building there. Oh, yeah, I know what you're talking about.
P.K.:	I'm not sure if we covered any or all of this. I know we covered a lot of this, but yes. Her house is near Clara Adams?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yeah. [inaudible] depression type. We...and Virginia Hoggan has a son named James Hoggan. I don't know where. Oh, you've got that, okay.
P.K.:	I think I have enough tape here.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	And in the old Jackson home was the Squabbers. Squabber, Mr. and Mrs. Squabber.
P.K.:	Squabber?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	S-Q-U-A-B-B-E-R, I don't know if that will show up. I think these were people that—
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Is that your copy or my copy?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	These are people that...excuse me, these are people that lived in, that

	would come, and they weren't homeowners, they...the Squabbers, who else, the Thompsons and somebody...no, no, don't put that down. Just Squabbers and who else? And the Freemans...these were people that moved into the area up there but they didn't, they were just, you know, like some people just—
The Jackson House	
P.K.:	Do you remember the Jackson house well enough for me to take you in the front door and tell me where the rooms are? Dorothy?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	I could call you and tell you.
P.K.:	You could call me and tell me?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes, because my oldest brother, Oscar, lived there.
P.K.:	Okay, that would be good. Maybe—
Dorothy Hall Smith:	I could call you and tell you how to go right through, how the windows...I know it was a cellar where they, you know. I told you about the kill outside, but there was also a cellar near the house.
P.K.:	Was there a cemetery on the Jackson property?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	I'll find out for you.
P.K.:	That would be great.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	We know about the cemetery over near the school. We know about that.
P.K.:	Right. But you didn't see any other tombstones on the Fort other than up by where this cemetery is at school?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	No, I did not.
P.K.:	You don't remember seeing—
Dorothy Hall Smith:	My brother would know. He lives up there.
P.K.:	That'll be good. Can we walk in the front door of your grandfather's house and take a look at it? We're going to open up the front door, go up on the front porch.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Oh, okay.
P.K.:	Did it have a front porch?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes.
P.K.:	How many steps were up to that front porch?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Oh, six. No more than eight.
P.K.:	And did it—was the front porch across the whole front of the house?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes.
P.K.:	Uh-huh, and what was on the front porch? Was it like another room or was it just a porch?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	No, it was one of those metal swings—
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	When I was growing up it was one of those metal swings—
P.K.:	A glider?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yeah, and sometimes there was a chair sitting in the corner, a metal chair—
P.K.:	Uh-huh.

Barbara Ashby Gordon:	And that's all. Sometimes flowers.
P.K.:	Then you open up the front door and you go in and where are you?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	We're standing in the hall.
P.K.:	Is the hall separate from the rest of the rooms?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	The hall goes straight back to the kitchen.
P.K.:	If you go all the way down to the end of the hall, you come to the back door?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	You come to the back door at the kitchen and then the back porch and then the back door.
P.K.:	We're opening up the front door, and we're in the hall. If we turn to the right, what is it?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	To the right are steps going upstairs.
P.K.:	Is that—where is the door? Is it in the middle of the front of the house?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	No, the door is to the right of the houses.
P.K.:	So it's to the east?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yeah.
P.K.:	And so you go in and you could take the steps upstairs if you wanted to?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes.
P.K.:	Okay, where else? Tell me where you're going downstairs.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	We go in a little three or four steps to your left, a huge sitting room.
P.K.:	Is that open to the hall?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes. It's open to the hall...where the children were not allowed, in this sitting room.
P.K.:	What was in there?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	A sofa, old furniture, I think like an old phonograph. Old pieces.
P.K.:	A wind-up phonograph?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes.
P.K.:	Pictures on the walls?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes. Yes.
P.K.:	Photographs?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes.
P.K.:	Paintings?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	No.
P.K.:	You couldn't touch any of that.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	You couldn't even walk in it. And...you walk into, there was an opening from the dining room—
P.K.:	How did I get in the dining room?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	I mean from the sitting room, to the dining room.
P.K.:	So you could go into the sitting room and behind the sitting room was the dining room.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Right. Or you could walk through to the kitchen and go in the dining

	room.
P.K.:	And the kitchen was on the east side of the house?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yeah, the kitchen was right in the middle of the house.
P.K.:	And what was to the right side?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Nothing. That would be the wall. And then the dining room you could go through the kitchen to the dining room, and that's a huge room, and that had a big ornate furniture in it, china closet, chandelier, and everything, but you were allowed in there.
P.K.:	And you were, it was very...the kitchen had a kitchen table?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	No, just the dining room table. The kitchen was just for cooking.
P.K.:	And you took your meals in the dining room. You ate your meals in the dining room?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yeah.
P.K.:	So that's all of the rooms downstairs, then. The parlor, the dining room, and the kitchen, and then the back porch.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Huge back porch the length of the house. The width of the house.
P.K.:	Closed in like a room.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	No. Open. Screened.
P.K.:	Screened. Furniture?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	I can't remember what furniture was on the back porch. I know there was a big huge tub where you took your baths on Saturday night in a tin tub on the back porch.
P.K.:	Heat the water in the kitchen and—
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes. And in the dining room there was a pot-bellied stove.
P.K.:	So that was how the house kept warm? Through the stove?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes, and we also had a pot-bellied stove upstairs.
P.K.:	Okay, take me upstairs.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Okay, you went up the steps.
P.K.:	Were they real steep?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	No, but they were narrow.
P.K.:	Did you have a wooden—
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes, banisters, yes.
P.K.:	Was the thing at the bottom of it fancy or straight or how was it?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	It was curved, kind of curved. And at the top—
P.K.:	Steep narrow steps to the upstairs—
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Like in Mount Vernon, those kind of...narrow steps.
P.K.:	Small risers, right.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	And at the top was a landing, at the top of the steps. A bedroom to the right.
P.K.:	Okay, we're going up to the top of the steps. The steps are like on the east wall of the house, right?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Right.
P.K.:	And we get up the top of the steps and there's a landing, and then I'm

	standing in the landing and I'm sort of looking. Is there a room right in front of me, a bedroom? How many bedrooms are up there?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Three.
P.K.:	Three? And so I—the landing is open to the hall that's upstairs?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes.
P.K.:	And the bedrooms come off of that? Facing the very front of the house is there a long bedroom that goes all the way across the front of the house?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	No.
P.K.:	How is that divided, then?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	It was—there was two bedrooms and then they took part of the largest one when we got indoor plumbing and made a bathroom out of it.
P.K.:	Uh-huh, and then they changed the window.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes.
P.K.:	They made two windows up there. The bathroom did not have a window.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	No.
P.K.:	Then the back of the house had a bedroom also? Is that where your grandma and grandpa sleep?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	In the bedroom on the left, on the left.
P.K.:	So I'm going up the steps and it's the bedroom to the left?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes.
P.K.:	Did they all have doors, all doors and a hall up there. How many side windows were there on the west side of the house? The bedrooms all had a side window?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	The half bedrooms had front windows, and the side bedrooms had five windows.
P.K.:	And the back bedroom?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yeah, it had little window.
P.K.:	A little side window and a back window.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes. Then you could go up in the attic.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Excuse me. Would you say there were two windows for each bedroom?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes. Two windows for each bedroom.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Excuse me, Barbara.
P.K.:	Then you could go up in the attic. Is that that little place we see up there, in that renovation? That little...[interruption] up in the attic?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Just a big, empty room.
P.K.:	Filled with stuff to play with?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	No. I don't remember anything being up there. Just a big, empty room.
P.K.:	That sounds like fun.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	We could go up there and play.
P.K.:	You could cut up those paper dolls. [Laughter]

Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes, out of a catalogue. Yes. Just a big, empty room, the full area of the house, the whole house.
P.K.:	Did your grandma keep her old dresses? Did you play dress-up-clothes? No? You don't remember that?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Then you would come out of the house, around to the side—
P.K.:	Out the back door.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes. Or the front door. And Daddy had a cellar. [Unclear]
P.K.:	Is that on the east side of the house or the west side of the house?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	East side. You could not go to the cellar from inside the house. You had to go out, and go in the cellar. That was the area where he stored all of his tools—the lawn mower and whatever—
P.K.:	Was that under the ground, then? You say a cellar—
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes. Yes, in the ground.
P.K.:	Did it have a floor at ground-level, also, or was it mostly underground storage?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	You went down steps. You went down steps to get to it.
P.K.:	Yes, Dorothy?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	I'd like to say—this house was built very modern, compared to the other homes there. Yes. So it had the latest. When you spoke of steps and everything. It was a very nice home.
P.K.:	So deciding how she would go down, underneath the house—it was like going in a side door.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes. And it was always cool down there. It was always cool down there.
P.K.:	So you did store things downstairs, too, food things? Or that would also be out in the—
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Well, it depended. It just depended.
P.K.:	Yes, Dorothy?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Being a particular housekeeper at my age now, the house was well-kept—floors, carpets, and everything.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Oh, the floors was slick as glass.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	The house was well taken care of, and it was really looked at as something special in the neighborhood. It stood out is what I'm trying to say. The house stood out. It was really, I would say, an upper-class home for blacks, at that time. Because I still remember it, at my age now. But what stood out so, the way the—Barbara refers to it as the parlor—the way those rooms stood out, the furniture, and the way it was furnished—
P.K.:	Very elegant furnishings.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Very much so. Yes, and you went straight through to the back and it was cool and airy, and you asked her about something, something you asked her about the playroom upstairs. It wasn't necessary, it was so lovely downstairs and outside, you weren't interested in going

	upstairs. Very lovely home. That expressed everything about, but it was very lovely. I can see why they were somewhat slow about relinquishing the rights to take it. Very lovely home.
P.K.:	I haven't gone into all of the history of when it was turned into the Fort or made a part so I've mostly dealt with the early, early history of that. But the people that I've interviewed have talked about what a wonderful neighborhood it was. And I'm sure it was a great hardship on your people to lose their neighborhood, so I'm hoping that this will be—that the neighborhood will be able to live a little bit through this project. And I'm hoping that Fort Ward will also have a copy of this so they can know Fort Ward as it was a fort and also as it became a neighborhood in Reconstruction period.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Everyone I talked to that have gone before me say that the Ashby home stood out in the neighborhood.
Advice for Future Generations	
P.K.:	Well, I want to thank both of you. Is there any last message you'd like to leave for future generations? This is kind of your moment in history. Do you have any advice for the future generations?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	My advice is, Don't forget where you came from. Alexandria should have preserved some of that area as a salute, if nothing else, to the former slaves who once lived there, and we all came from slavery.
P.K.:	Dorothy, do you want to say?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes, I would like to say if you can remember anything at all about the past, try and tell someone. We understand that a lot of people are very quiet about talking about it. A lot of us know about things but we hate to tell it. Some of us are ashamed, as Barbara just stated. Please let someone know. We've done the best we could. We've left some things out, of course, but someone will be able to fill this in.
Families at the Fort	
P.K.:	Oh, yes. That's the way oral history works. I didn't ask you about slave families. If you knew anything about your family—if they were residents of Alexandria in slave times.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Well, you have some pictures in there. They are shown with their shovels and things and their work clothes. Very seldom they changed clothes. Only on Sundays. They were prepared to work 24 hours a day.
P.K.:	Are these Jacksons?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes, these are Jacksons.
P.K.:	Slave Jacksons?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes, oh, yes.
P.K.:	Do you know what family they were part of?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Well, that's Robert Jackson's people on back. I heard it referred to—my mother married Jackson—referred to him as “Grandpa Jackson”

	and...the name is leaving me right now.
P.K.:	But you didn't hear about the name of the people that they—
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Owned them? No. I'll have to find out. Maybe I can tell you.
P.K.:	That would be interesting for me, because the Seminary didn't know that two of the priests were slave-owners, and when I—
Dorothy Hall Smith:	At the Seminary.
P.K.:	When I did the research, two of the Seminary priests were slave-owners, so they're real interested in knowing that for their history, too.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Can I ask you a question?
P.K.:	Sure.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Does the Seminary have any pictures of the homes up there? They don't have nothing over there?
P.K.:	No.
Dorothy Hall Smith:	That is strange.
P.K.:	They might come up with it later on, though, because they have a new archivist...
P.K.:	Will you introduce yourselves? [It is possible that the following part of the interview was conducted at a later date—October 24, 1994. The tape mentions that date but does not state that this is a later interview.]
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes, Dorothy.
P.K.:	Dorothy Hall Smith?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes, right.
Graves on Howard Street	
P.K.:	And I have in my hands a map drawn that depicts the three graves that are on Howard Street. Whose property was this originally?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	It was Luther Hall's property. They called him Ruther. Instead of Luther, they called him Ruther. So we understand...I told you it was three people buried there, but his daughter says he also buried his sister Louise there.
P.K.:	Okay, so we have one additional—
Dorothy Hall Smith:	So therefore it's Margaret (they called her Maggie) and Vincent, her husband, Louise, another child, and Elijah—
P.K.:	A child of Luther?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes, a child of Luther.
P.K.:	And Elijah was the child of—
Dorothy Hall Smith:	A grandson.
P.K.:	A grandson of—
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Of Luther.
P.K.:	Of Luther. Okay, who was—
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Wait a minute. A grandson...wait a minute, let me figure that out. Yes, grandson, that's right. Elijah was a grandson of Luther. I wanted to figure that out.
P.K.:	Okay, and there are four graves and they are all in the same location?

Dorothy Hall Smith:	Same location. He thinks the fourth grave may not be seen too well, since it was a baby's grave. Elijah was a baby. He was a twin to Elisha. Elisha still lives but Elijah passed at I would say about six months.
P.K.:	Okay, and you were telling me that your—was it your cousin that had gone to visit? What were the names of the two people that went to visit these graves?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Grandchildren. The twin to Elijah, Elisha, and another brother, Matthew. They went there and two to three years ago.
P.K.:	So that would have been, in what year would that have been?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Let's see, so [19]94, probably I'd better say two years ago, 1991.
P.K.:	What was that occasion that they were...?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	We were having family reunion in Fort Ward Park. They went across the road, went across the highway to Howard Road.
P.K.:	Uh-huh, well that seems clear to me, and I have this map here that shows the well and it shows the house and it shows the graves that approached the house and look at the front of the house, the graves appear to be on the right hand side of the house. Is that right?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	True.
P.K.:	And did you draw this map?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Well, the information was given to me and I drew the map for my brother.
P.K.:	And your brother's name is?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	The twin, Elisha. Elisha George Hall. We called him Elisha G., but it's Elisha George Hall. He's still living in Charlottesville, Virginia.
P.K.:	And you were telling me that he is the president of—
Dorothy Hall Smith:	The Virginia Seminary and College on the Hill. That is in Lynchburg, Virginia.
P.K.:	That prepares Baptist ministers?
Dorothy Hall Smith:	Yes, for the ministry.
P.K.:	Okay, thank you.
P.K.:	Could you give me your name, please?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	My name is Barbara Ashby Gordon.
P.K.:	And you're—you were a resident of Fort Ward during what time period?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	I was not a resident. My grandfather lived there. And I would visit in the summer when school was out. From about 1942 to when they sold the house—
P.K.:	Your grandfather was your Mom's dad or your Dad's?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	My Mom's dad, yeah.
P.K.:	Well, you made a very beautiful map for me here. Today we're just going to do your photograph, which you have a picture of your grandfather, who was John Ashby?

Barbara Ashby Gordon:	John L. Ashby.
P.K.:	John L. What was the L. for?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Linton. L-I-N-T-O-N.
Looking at Pictures	
P.K.:	Do you want to sit down? No? So the thing that I'm interested in here is this house picture, because I have two pictures of the house. One is a sepia tone and it looks like an older photograph, and you tell me that this is the original house and then it was remodeled?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes, when it was put in electricity and running water and a kitchen and put a bathroom upstairs; extensive remodeling was done to the house.
P.K.:	Was the kitchen an add-on or was it an integral part of the house?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	It was a part of the back porch and they used a kitchen.
P.K.:	In all of these photos of the house we're looking at the front of it, is that right?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes.
P.K.:	And there's one with two little boys out front and there's one with a lady with a flowered skirt and that's your grandmother.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	My grandmother.
P.K.:	What's her name?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Jennie Wanzer Ashby.
P.K.:	Jennie Wanzer.
P.K.:	Okay, now your daughter and I, Stephanie Gordon, talked about this Jennie Wanzer that was a midwife. Did you know about that? [Several oral histories might also refer to this midwife: Mary Crozet Wood Johnson mentions a midwife named "Jenny Wanderzer"; Julia Bradby mentions "the Wanders" as a family in the Fort Hunt area; Elizabeth Douglas talks about "the Wanzers" and "Aunt Jenny Wanzer"; and Edmonia Smith McKnight talks about "Jenny Wanzer."]
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	No, It was Jennie Roy Wanzer—
P.K.:	And is this lady a different Wanzer, then?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes.
P.K.:	Okay, it's an earlier—
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	It's a different part of the family, yes.
P.K.:	This in this blue jeans, that's you in the background?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes. Virginia Roy Wanzer was the mother of Joseph Wanzer.
P.K.:	Okay, so it would have been Jenny Wanzer married John Linton Ashby, so Jenny Roy Wanzer was Jenny Wanzer's great-grandmother, her grandmother. She was a midwife. Okay. Well, we were talking before about the history, about how if you say that when you've got it there it gets lost, especially at Fort Ward when the houses went down and that was the end of it, but actually I had heard from some people that wanted a midwife and that memorial that they are going to have of

	African Americans that's one of the names that I gave to—
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	That's not my grandmother, she was too young. It was her grandmother. Evidently during that time period they had the habit of lending their children off to their brothers or sisters, and everybody had the same name so it's been very difficult for us to sort out which one we're talking about.
P.K.:	Yeah, I know. I was telling Stephanie, there are so many Samuels that it makes you crazy trying to figure out which Samuel they were talking about.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes, which generation they belonged to. They drew me a picture also of the grave.
More on Families, Neighbors, and Church	
P.K.:	That's great. We can talk about it. What else do we need to talk about? Oh, yeah. You were telling me a Jackson connection, how your family was related to the Jacksons.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes. My grandmother, Jenny Ashby's sister, Mary Magdalene Wanzer, married Robert Jackson, who lived up Fort Ward.
P.K.:	And was Robert's father's name James, do you know?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Well, since one of the children was named James, he probably was. I have no idea, but I have cousins who would know that.
P.K.:	Do you remember any early history of the Oakland Baptist Church? Did you go to the Oakland Baptist Church?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	No, when I was a little girl, I went with Barbara Randall who lived down the road from my grandfather, took me to the Episcopal Church in Alexandria, right there on King Street.
P.K.:	So you were Episcopalian?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	I wasn't anything, I just went to Sunday School and church.
P.K.:	There's Mr. [unclear]...that still works at the seminary. Did you know that?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	No, what's his name?
P.K.:	...Probably it's the same family, because his father lived at Fort Ward.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Okay. Well, I know the name, William, Anthony—now, Clayton is out of town.
P.K.:	I'm not sure if I'd recognize the name.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	They had nine boys and one girl.
P.K.:	Right now I don't have the first names for that.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	George, was it George?
P.K.:	I'm not going to be able to tell you.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Okay. But Oakland Baptist has been there as long as I've known, and we found something. I was talking to a Terrell boy, and he gave me a part of their research, a part of the Peters family established in 1863 or 18—something like that.
P.K.:	The Oakland Baptist Church?

Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yeah.
P.K.:	They have some of their records missing because there was a fire, so you know it's been hard for them to reconstruct some of that old first history. There was a chapel on the Seminary; also, in earlier times—in 1880 or 1883—they had an Episcopal chapel on the Seminary for the—they called it “colored” of the neighborhood. So, I'm not sure. The reason I was asking about the Jacksons earlier is because one of the first ministers at Oakland Baptist Church was a Jackson, and I'm wondering if maybe the Fort Ward Jackson was a preacher at Oakland Baptist.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Robert Jackson was not a minister. Now, his father or somebody, I don't know.
P.K.:	You never heard them talking about a minister?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	No, because this is my grandmother's sister's family.
P.K.:	Yeah, you're not old enough to know. Because you'd be 100 years old—
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Probably. But another interesting point, you see this? Everybody has told me there was a Garnet Ashby.
P.K.:	There was a Garnet Ashby, yes.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	And I've never heard the relationship between him and my Ashbys, so I don't know.
P.K.:	We'll have to look on the census report, because I've got this on my tape here, I can remember to do it. Yeah, there was Garnet Ashby. At one time I had an Ashby and it was listed an Ashby living with Clara, or not Clara, her mother, Harriet, and noted him as being a grandson. The McKnights, that were the very first owners at Fort Ward, so that might be, you know, through that connection.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	We have the McKnights, Clara Adams was related to Ashby...then the McKnight family moved in there.
P.K.:	Do you remember a house that was particularly older looking that was up on the Fort that maybe had a fireplace, an outside fireplace, and you could see the chimney coming up on the house? I have some other photographs that I can show you.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Now, this is the house across the road. This is the road where the hedges are, and this is that house here.
P.K.:	Okay, you have that Amanda Clark's house. Which is it? That was east of your house?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Right.
P.K.:	And it was approximately the same distance from the road, is that right?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Right.
P.K.:	Okay. And then there was another road, the road that went back to the cemetery and school between Amanda Clark's house and Clara

	Adams' house.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Right.
P.K.:	This is wonderful. I haven't had anybody do this for me. This is—
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Okay, now that—
P.K.:	We have the Jackson family up here too, so—
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	But our Jackson family—
P.K.:	Which Jackson is this one?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	I don't know. All I know is Robert Jackson's house was here.
P.K.:	Robert Jackson's was west of your house.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Right. And there was another Jackson that—
P.K.:	That was down from the school, like south of the schoolhouse?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes. Now there was right here Embrys was a white family.
P.K.:	Okay, you're pointing to north of where Amanda Clark lived, in that little square between the two roads with Embrys.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Right, and this was the Randall family.
P.K.:	The Randalls. What did the Randall family's house look like? Did it look like it had a lot of additions to it, like it had been added on to a lot? Maybe it started a smaller house...and then got bigger and bigger?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Because they had nine children...yes, really.
P.K.:	That might be the house that is the old one. I'll have to show you a picture next time I see it, because I have...Seminary in 1883, that was about 1883, Angus Crockett was his name. He wrote a biography in 1892. He gave a small house to be moved up on the Fort for somebody that worked for him that was very good employee of his. And I've been trying to figure out which of the houses on the Fort might have been that house, because that would have been an old house.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	It was way down...in the middle of a curve like this. The road was go around the house. It just kind of grew and grew, it wasn't in very good shape.
P.K.:	Right. I think I have an overhead that will...she can blow up so the overhead—that aerial shot that they had taken before they renovated the Fort, before they turned that into the park.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Now this was a white family.
P.K.:	The Randalls were white?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Uh-huh, and we used to play with the little boy, Cotton we called him. And here this house, Amanda Clark's house, then after they moved out a white family moved in, and then I can't read this upside down...and after they left, the Betheas—a family, B-E-T-H-E-A—moved in.
P.K.:	Tell me about that flower pot that's out in front of there, because I'm afraid we'll forget to mention it next time.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	My grandfather used to go down in the back of his house in the red mud and...dig up artifacts.
P.K.:	An archaeologist.

Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes. And once he found a helmet that had been used, he said, in the war.
P.K.:	I'm sure he's right.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	And he brought the helmet home, cleaned it up, turned it upside down, and made a flower pot out of it. And put it up on a tripod and that's part of the decorations for the front yard.
P.K.:	See, I thought it was a black kettle...tea kettles out
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Real good, it's—
P.K.:	Oh, yeah, you can. That's neat. Do you know, I wonder who did the work on the house when they had it renovated? No?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	You want to cut that out?
P.K.:	Yeah. Go ahead. You are going to bring your sister Dorothy, who is—
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	No, my cousin Dorothy. By my grandmother's sister who married Robert Jackson, up Fort. After he died, she married David Hall, who also lived up Fort, had a farm, and they in turn moved to Gum Springs. Okay, that cousin is very knowledgeable about who and where in the cemetery up Fort.
P.K.:	Yeah, because what happened is a colored student that is serving in the cemetery found, we know that people are buried, they don't have stones. Like Julia Bradby...don't have stones. And some of them just have initials and with the church records getting burned and lost, then you know, as I said, I'd like to finish that cemetery study so that will be complete.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	My great-grandmother and father are buried up there, but I have no idea where, but I think she has a general idea of where they were.
P.K.:	That'd be great. That's one thing I wanted to do...too. My mother...[inaudible].
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	...living in the Seminary but we all went to school together, so therefore there's two families became one, so to speak, so in the summers I spent up Fort and visited in Seminary, like I could see both sides of it.
P.K.:	Yeah, they make a distinction between those neighborhoods.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yes, they do.
P.K.:	They still do.
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	It was like the difference between well, I don't know, the haves and the have-nots, so to speak.
P.K.:	So the Episcopalians were up Seminary, right, Episcopalian people lived up the Seminary more?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	No.
P.K.:	The houses were on the Fort?
Barbara Ashby Gordon:	Yeah, up Fort. They were mostly educated people, and they all went to school, though most of them went to school together in the little one-room schoolhouse, but after that, they went to school or became—

	worked in the government in Washington, because my grandfather's sister worked at the Printing Office. And her friends were all schoolteachers. It was that kind of group, you know. And they didn't mix too much with the ones in Seminary.
P.K.:	Totally abstracted and— [End]