

Schuylkill Township Historical Commission
Oral History Project

Anita Packard Montgomery
Parker Packard
Grandchildren of Mr. And Mrs. William J. Clothier



***Summary.** Anita Packard Montgomery and Park Packard are brother and sister, the grandchildren of Mr. and Mrs. William J. Clothier, who lived on Valley Hill Farm on Clothier Springs Road. They grew up at Meadow Crest, a house on the Clothier farm. This is a family history, with lots of interesting stories about the William J. Clothier family. Topics included in this interview include life on the farm, with its blacksmith shop, gardens, farm animals, the lodge, favorite pets and parties; activities at Valley Hill, including tennis, swimming, sledding, horses and riding; origins of the seeing eye dog program; riding in the Devon Horse Show and the Pickering Hunt; and Strawbridge and Clothier. The interviews end with a tribute to Marian Gillespie, housekeeper extraordinaire. Two interviews.*

1st Interview (final revision) - February 15, 2005

Anita Packard Montgomery
Interviewed by Nancy Loane
Transcribed by Nancy Loane

NL: Good morning, this is Nancy Loane. Today I will be interviewing Anita Packard Montgomery for the Oral History Project of the Schuylkill Township Historical Commission. Today is Tuesday, February the 15th, 2005....

AM: I talked with Helen McAleer the other day on the telephone.

NL: She is such a sweetie. I am so lucky to have her as a neighbor. I got to know her through one of the other neighbors. She is such a precious person.

AM: She is so upbeat. She is remarkable.

NL: She is.....So this morning we are going to be talking a little about you and your childhood. Where you lived and...

AM: It has been a great shock to go to the place where I did live. On the other hand, it is very satisfactory in one way because I think Mr. Gold who bought the property is going to keep it forever. (Anita Packard Montgomery is the granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs.

William J. Clothier, who owned Valley Hill Farm on Clothier Springs Road.) That is wonderful. That is a nice feeling. He disposed of the house where I grew up and built himself a great big house right there, and I think he is fixing up the pond and is doing all kinds of things. He is going to have a wonderful spot for himself.

NL: Where was the spot where you grew up?

AM: I grew up on Clothier Springs Road. “Meadow Crest” – where I actually grew up – was below the big house, which was started as a hunting lodge. My grandparents lived there, and we all lived at the bottom of the hill. The top of the hill, where my grandparents lived - “Valley Hill Farm” - was the center of the place. There was all sorts of room to run around and play in, and I consider myself very fortunate to be able to grow up that way. We had skating and sledding and all sorts of outside activity. Although people would not come up and see me – it was too far to drive at that point – there were enough kids around on the farm that we all had a ball, and got into a great deal of trouble on occasion.

NL: You mentioned lots of kids on the farm. Who were these kids on the farm?

AM: They were people who worked for my grandfather. They did all kinds of things. There was one corner of the estate that was for the pigs, so there was a large pig farm at one corner. And a lovely old stone house right there, where the people who took care of that farm lived.

Another piece of property had the kennels, where they kept the hounds with the kennel manager and his family living there in a wonderful stone house.

Then there was another section with the horses, training, overseen by a gentleman named Eddie Mooney who became the huntsman, who taught us all how to ride, and had to go off riding with us sometimes. And I had a brother who insisted on riding backwards - riding backwards facing the tail – that was the only way we could conserve. But if the huntsman stepped it up a step, and all of a sudden we were going faster, there was a great deal going on with the pony ahead of me, because George had to turn around.

It was wonderful – ponies and all the things that you would consider yourself fortunate to be caught up with. And huge vegetable gardens. There was a stable on top of the hill which also Mr. Gold had gotten rid of. And beyond that a blacksmith shop.

NL: A blacksmith shop!

AM: A blacksmith shop. And Helen McAleer reminded me about the time that my grandmother insisted that they start making signs in the blacksmith shop as well as shoeing horses and all of that. But signs and tables were done there. It made me put it on the list to make myself down to the basement and look elsewhere, too, for a glass top table that was square, with wonderful legs that bowed out, and a place to put a plant underneath. I think I have one. I hope I do.

NL: This was made in the blacksmith's shop?

AM: This was made in the blacksmith's shop. And signs were made there for people. It apparently was much more productive than I had thought. I used to spend a great deal of time there, just watching. I still remember the smell of the blacksmith's shop – it was delicious. And watching the fire being stoked and all of that. It was fun.

I'm trying to think if there was anything more. There were other places that people who worked on the barns – oh, there were cows in one corner and a dairy house where the farmer in charge lived.

And that corner was the corner where Ashenfelter and Clothier Springs Road converged. And in later years, when the place was being broken up, and people were not well, my grandfather gave that little piece of property to my mother, who lived there in the old stone house, where the cattle barn was. It was the cutest place you ever saw. It was just a dream spot.

I can remember going in to the cattle barn and trying to pat the cattle on the nose. I learned how to milk! One of the good – they were all good people, they were wonderful – one of them taught me how to squirt the milk into the cat's mouth. There was a cat that ran around there. I was never very good – I think the cat was covered with milk – but it was fun.

NL: You would need a pretty good aim to do that, I would think.

AM: Of course. And that is what I didn't have. You have to squeeze the cow, and of course they tense up, especially if they know some idiot is around. Things like that were just great fun.

There was a huge cherry tree outside, which lived until after I was married and had at least 3 children. It was still there and we still picked up the cherries, and we wound up with cherry pies.

NL: The farm almost sounds self-sustaining.

AM: It really was, almost. Vegetables and milk and butter and all of those things. Not to speak of the field crops- wheat and hay and all of that. It was fun.

NL: So your family – your immediate family – was ...

AM: ...here, until I was sixteen. And we lived in Meadow Crest. And then we moved down to Villanova. Grandmother and grandfather were still on top of the hill.

Some of the most wonderful time happened on the top of that hill, because there were tennis courts. There was a swimming pool, which was so cold that people would turn

blue when they jumped in. Obviously it was spring fed, dripping down from Diamond Rock, and it was absolutely clear and cold. Just freezing.

And in the winter - and I've got the most wonderful picture of this, which I didn't know I had - the three meadows - the one right in front of the lodge, and then you crossed a dirt road and go back to where some other people lived - i.e. people who were working there - and you went across the road and down through the second meadow, which had a pond on the left, so if you decided you wanted to skate, you could steer your sled over to the pond, and if you didn't you could sled down the beginning of the third meadow. This was quite an undertaking. Grandfather had it iced from the top of the hill. It was banked with a few bumps built in.

But the rule of the day was that you could ride down as many time as anybody would go with you - they were those huge Flexible Flyers, with three people at a time, and I have recollections of being squashed between 2 huge people, so they weren't going to let me bounce off - and that really was extraordinary. And people came from all over the place - by invitation - to do this coasting. The rule of the day was that you had to walk back up the hill once. Otherwise there was a team and wagon with hay and you would go up on the wagon. But they really made it a thing that you had to walk, which was good for us all.

NL: In my head as you are speaking I am visualizing this. It sounds wonderful.

AM: The main room in the lodge - which really wasn't a lodge by the time grandmother and grandfather were living there permanently. It started as sort of an escape - they lived in Wynnewood - the Clothiers - and then moved out on the weekends, and then eventually moved out all together. So the house was added to and changed around and it became a wonderful spot. You can imagine the view from the top of the hill, though a great big picture window. It had stairs that went up on each side, so you could go up and just sit on the window seat and just look.. It was wonderful. It sounds silly now, with no views anywhere. But I think we even appreciated it then.

And one recollection of that house sticks in my mind. That is the day Morris Frank, who was the man who started the seeing eye dog program, came. Somehow grandmother, who was caught up in everything and anything, and just full of energy, got him to come over. And I suppose they were trying to get people to help with this thing, because it was such a worthwhile cause. Well, Morris Frank was there, and he had a seeing eye dog, and he demonstrated what these dogs could do. I remember that day clearly - I was fascinated! . He took the dog up the stairs, all way around the top, took it outside, brought it back in, gave it commands - it was just wonderful. From that, which was just a small undertaking, grew that whole seeing eye dog training program which grew and grew.

And when we lived in New Jersey we would see the dogs being trained, in Morristown. And remember being warned that you never touch one.

NL: About when was this? When did this start?

AM: Let me think. If I was 10 – I couldn't have been any more than that – 1938 or so? It was just a very exciting thing. Things like that happened up there all the time.

NL: You mentioned tennis courts, too?

AM: There were tennis courts. My grandfather, William Clothier, was our national tennis champion at one point. Grandmother played tennis and rode, too. They both rode to hounds. I don't know when that started. I was too little.

But eventually I ended up cubbing, in the fall.

NL: I'm sorry, but I don't know the terminology.

AM: They call it "cubbing." They will run a fox, but it is a much more relaxed then during the actual hunting season. So that grew and grew. And out of it all came race horses.

Eddie Mooney, the huntsman, was very, very astute. He thought like a horse. There were a couple of hunters that came in and he said, "Mr. Clothier, I think we can do something with that one." And pretty much he was right. Eventually, before Grandmother died, she hunted this horse named Pine Pep.

Pep was a hunting horse, and a chestnut, and very sweet, but a big horse, and Grandmother was teeny. She would ride sidesaddle over the fences with this lovely horse who would jump and run like nothing I have ever seen. In fact he won the Maryland Hunt Cup and many other point-to-points and was sent to England to run in the Grand National. Something happened to the jockey over there, I can't remember what the story was, but it ended up that he didn't run and almost everybody was relieved. And Grandfather wrote a little book called *A Great Horse and A Foolish Undertaking*. So they came back and that was the end of that.

But also along the way came the race course, which now is where Mr. Gold has a track, which I know was put in by somebody else, but is still there now, just below the hill where the stables used to be. Every fall they had a race – many races – it was the Pickering Point-to-Point.

And I do remember also at the end, this is where we all loved it, because it was such fun to see friends – meaning the people who worked on the place and any other farmers around were urged to join. Some of them rode mules, and one of them had this old donkey, and the others had work horses – and they raced! It was wonderful! More people got excited about that than the horse races that were running for real. There were just things all the time.

NL: Wonderful things, too.

AM: They were.

NL: Going back to the lodge – what happened to the lodge?

AM: When I was a freshman in college, I got a frantic phone call saying that the lodge had burned. Everybody was okay. I am not sure that they figured out what had happened. They were not as good at that sort of thing back then as they are now. And the terrible part of it all was that – you can imagine that between the tennis and the racing and all of these things - grandfather had the most beautiful collection of trophies and memorabilia.. They were put where we could look at them if we chose. The only things that were saved from that fire, interestingly, were a couple of pictures and the Maryland Hunt Cup which Pine Pip had won 3 times, so they retired the cup. Actually I had them here until fairly recently, and now they are down with my son.

It really was a terrible time. They lost everything.

We all had had so much fun there. When I got married and we were school teaching, so to speak, all over the place, we would come back over the Fourth of July to see parents and grandparents, and we would have the most wonderful Fourth^h of July party with all ages. We played tennis and swam and played croquet. It was bursting with activity most of the time.

NL: Your grandparents were still living when the lodge burned?

AM: Yes. Grandmother died much too young – at 64. I don't know what they would call it now, but probably a type of dementia, I suppose. She just floated away and didn't really know that she was in bad shape, for quite awhile.

You know what the first indication was? It was kind of interesting. We were sitting on the porch at Mother's house. Grandmother came in and she had this funny little poodle, named Valley, of Valley Forge. Valley was beginning to think that children were not the greatest, and she nipped one of the kids. GaGa would have been frenetic if she had have been right. And she just said, "Oh, well." It was funny, because we all knew that that wasn't like her. Nobody said anything. Looking back, we all said that that was the first indication, because we all knew her so well, that things weren't quite right.

So she died, and another house was built on top of the hill, which was nothing like the first one. It was facing in the wrong direction as far as I was concerned, and a lot of other people felt the same way. But they both lived there. Then grandmother had to go someplace – actually they had her for a while in a little house in Phoenixville with people to take care of her. And she just slept away. Actually it was quite lovely. I was taken down to see her - she had bright blue eyes – and she was lying there looking just like she always did, and her eyes popped open and she said, "Hi Ducks!", which is what she always used to say, and then they closed. But for one minute you had her.

She was on the Valley Park Commission or agency or whatever you call it. I can remember going by - and all their cars were Chevies – and they were blue, navy blue, with a little yellow stripe, and WJC on them – and I can remember being driven by a chauffeur, who was a friend of the family, his name was Elmer, and he could wiggle his ears. I always wanted to sit in the back seat because if things got tense Elmer would wiggle his ears.

But we would fly through the park, and anybody that we saw would wave. I remember the park guards waving to her as we went by. Everybody knew that car.

She also was one of the people who began the Women's Coast Guard. She was decorated by then Governor Duff. She was extraordinary. Just extraordinary. Married to this great big athletic man. And she kept right up with him. She was remarkable – they both were.

NL: What was her background?

AM: She came – her maiden name was Porter. The family lived in Brooklyn. I really don't know – I'll have to find out before I next see you – how they met and how this started. Because the Clothiers were in Wynnewood. They were considered merchants. Strawbridge and Clothier? Therefore, they were not looked upon with great favor by a great many people.

I think mother felt this when she was growing up, although she had everything in the world that anyone could possibly want. But somehow there was – something – and I was too stupid to realize what it was until much later. But when she married my father, who was everybody, then she was able to do all sorts of things that she wanted. Junior League, and all that business, which grandmother and grandfather cared about not at all. Their lives were totally different.

NL: I didn't realize there would be that distinction.

AM: There was, in a funny way. Not everybody, but there definitely was some feeling about it in some circles.

NL: Is that Philadelphia?

AM: Philadelphia, and I imagine Baltimore and Boston. And New York is so huge that you simply go about your business. But it was interesting.

But it didn't keep everybody from coming out here and enjoying the fun.

NL: Was it was your grandfather who got started in retail?

AM: No, no, it was Uncle Ike. Grandfather never got involved in it. But my middle name was Clothier, so I had a wonderful time signing my slips at Strawbridge and Clothier. I

was, of course, not about to say that I wasn't the right one! So I claimed Uncle Ike regularly. Uncle Ike was the brother of my grandfather.

All of them had all kinds of kids. One of them, who unfortunately died at an early age, attended school with me at Agnes Irwin School in Wynnewood, which was the family homestead. She and I had the most wonderful time, because we got everybody sure that there was a ghost up in the tower. Why wouldn't we know? We did know! So we had all the younger kids walking with their backs to the wall.

NL: And you said that was the family home?

AM: It was, it was the Clothier family home. Then they moved here. This was where their hearts were. They just loved it. Grandfather always would appear with a rose in his lapel, which was picked in the garden, in the morning, by him. There's a wonderful picture over there – that's him and Uncle Ike – sitting together, discussing.

When the house burned and all of that happened, it was a nightmare, just a nightmare. People agonized, and not just family. Everyone had had such a wonderful time there.

So then something was built there, which was not so terrific, in fact it wasn't terrific at all - except that it had a sleeping porch. Which had always been in the lodge. A lot of people slept on the sleeping porch. Grandfather died at that house, I think he was 81.

At that point Bill, who had been in the FBI - he posed as a Minute Maid worker - he went all over the country and South America. He was fluent in Spanish, and unmarried - eventually he took the house. After Grandfather died, within six or eight months – and make of this what you will – Uncle Bill married the most lovely person, Irena. She had been married before. They had twins six months younger than my youngest. She was a potter, and made all sorts of lovely things. As a matter of fact, some of them she sold through the Devon Lamp Shop, which is now in Strafford. I go in there every once in awhile. .

Bill died last November and the place had to be sold. Bill had married again. She is a business woman who has her own office and apartment in town. It was clear that she was not going to remain in the country. Morris, the son, would have loved to have kept this place, and would have loved to have lived here, but his business was in New York, and his twin sister Stephanie lives in Colorado, so it would have been a hefty job to get this place back in working order. And I just think that he thought he couldn't do it. And he was right, You couldn't. It was a mammoth job.

So the place was sold. And now it isn't there anymore, just the land. Which makes me sad. But then I think, what's the difference? We had it all, and remember it all, and loved every minute of it, and it was there, and can't be whipped away.

I have two brothers who were as equally as naughty as I. We would do such things as ride in the donkey cart. We had donkeys – Whichit, Whatsit, Whysit, Wheresit, and

Whose it – if you can believe that- not all at the same time. But usually two at the same time.

Donkeys are, as you know, stubborn beyond words, and one time we were going down the lane and there was a small stone wall, which was supposed to keep you on the straight and narrow. Well, this donkey decided he was going to do something awful to us. We were in one of those basket carts. He backed up and so there we were suspended, one wheel over the stone. Fortunately we knew enough to lean to the front. It was quite alarming. There we were; we had to figure it out, which we did. I think we yelled so loud that the guy who lived down the road in the house came and rescued us from the donkey cart. It was ridiculous.

It was also a wonderful thing for all of us to watch the fields being planted and all the cultivating and things that went on. We really got a taste for it. I really think that you do. I think also when you have grown up as a child, as a small child, on vegetables, you like vegetables. They are quite tasty. When they appeared on the table we were all told that this came out of the garden this morning. They were so fresh.

NL: How many acres were there with the property?

AM: You know, at least 900, and I think more. But I can't say that with any certainty. The part was that I never knew even existed, this happened after I was gone, was I think part of a Pickering Tract. There was land someplace else where they also did hunting. Where that was I don't know. But my aunt mentioned this. "Where was it?" I asked. And she said that she couldn't tell me exactly. But there was more land, and my husband thinks there were around 1400 acres. It was very sizable. It had many things going. You never were bothered by anybody being close. But they were there. You always had privacy. It was very private and very wonderful.

Valley Forge Hospital kept prisoners at one time. During the time when my father was in the service, we acquired an English mastiff. His name was Turkey Trot. He was enormous. He was like the nanny in Peter Pan with the three of us. He was just with us all the time. He was a character. Unfortunately, when we moved down to Villanova, he took a dislike to the milkman, the postman. It killed us all. He was used to being by himself.

One morning Mother looked out the window – she thought that she heard a car come in – it was the tree man. There he was – or one of his helpers, I don't know – hanging on the tree limb with my little Scottie hanging on to his pant leg and Turk sitting there watching the whole thing. . Mother said if she just had had a movie camera!

One day my brothers and I decided that we wanted to cool Turk off. We could swim and he could not. So we took him into the stable – there was a watering trough that went all across the stable – and somehow the three of us , and my younger brother is 7 years younger than I am – got Turk into the watering trough. He just sat there grinning. And then we had to get him out of there.

NL: You talked a little bit about tennis ...

AM: There were ladies tennis days, there were all sorts of friends that came to play – they were always welcome – and there was a lot of tennis among the family at that point, too. We were all playing. It was nice – you really didn't have to go anywhere, just stride up the hill with your racquet. There was a lot going on at the tennis courts.

Entertaining was done for the Eastern States Tournament, I think it was called, which was held at the Merion Cricket Club. Grandmother and Grandfather would have a lot of young men and women out to Valley Hill during the tournament. I thought it was wonderful – and it was really interesting to me as I watched something happen.

Grandfather was in charge of the tournament at the Merion Cricket Club. And there he was in a white suit with a rose in his buttonhole, and a cane - he was a very impressive looking gentleman, and he ran that tournament. One of the really big names of the time – Bobby Riggs – acted badly on the tennis court. Bobby Riggs went into the locker room between sets – which would be frowned on today, unless you were sick - and somebody went to Grandfather and said, “Mr. Riggs is not going to come out again.” And Grandfather walked back, deliberately, right to the locker room, and told Mr. Riggs that he had exactly three minutes to get on the tennis court or he would be on his way someplace else. Guess what? He played.

The other thing is – the tennis whites? That was strictly adhered to on the court where we all played at the top of the hill. Nobody was out there without appropriate attire. I have this funny feeling that had grandfather stuck around a little more, there would not have been such a discrepancy in what people were wearing on the courts these days. It all started to happen after these big old boys all disappeared. It was interesting to me that they were able, in their own way, to have things just the way they wanted it at the Merion Cricket Club and such places. That was way it was and that's the way it was going to continue to be. I'm sure they are all rolling around with what goes on now.

The only sport that has kept all appearances is golf. The long pants, proper shirts, everything tucked in, belts – all of that. But you have to have someone who is willing to keep the standards or it doesn't work at all.

NL: You play tennis. Did you play complete tennis?

AM: Mercy, no. I played at it, and had a wonderful time. My husband played, so we both played. Actually, he had never held a tennis racquet until he got out with us. He is a natural athlete, and he picked up the game and really played extremely well. He had a wonderful time with it. He has stuck with it more than I have.

NL: Your grandmother was a player, too?

AM: Yes! All four feet eight inches of her!

NL: You said she was tiny!

AM: And fast.

NL: Were there famous players that came out?

AM: Yes, just let me dust myself off.... Straight Clark, Vic Seixas, Herbie Flam– the naughty boy from tennis back then – I don't remember who else. Players who came for that tournament and needed to be bedded down and all of that. They came out to Valley Hill – I'm having a blank right at the moment as to who they were.

NL: And they would be staying at the lodge?

AM: Staying there, and some would stay with people who were closer to the club. But my grandparents would always have a party, and everybody came for dinner and swimming and all of that, towards the finals, I guess. Naturally, we thought that this was pretty swell. We were getting to the age that we were rolling our eyes anyway. It was fun. I'll try to pick Tad's brain on this. See if he can remember.

NL: I know that your grandfather was also extremely involved in the hunt.

AM: He was. He was the Master of the Foxhounds.

NL: How did that all work? He didn't start that, did he?

AM: Yes. Yes. If you would like to turn that off for a minute and let me get you something.....

This prayer is a prayer of thanksgiving, and it was written by grandfather. This little thing says that he was founder of the Pickering Hunt. Every Thanksgiving the hounds meet at one of the Pikeland churches. They are down below – horses and hounds – and everybody is up on the hill watching all of this. It is just wonderful, especially on a crisp, Thanksgiving morning.

Actually, three years ago, we had a service to commemorate my mother who had died, I guess, the year before. And then Bill died the next year. So we had it in honor of them, which was wonderful. All the kids came. It was a lovely thing to do. You ought to go sometime.

But this was what was said back in the good old days, and it is still said every Thanksgiving.

We thank Thee, oh Lord, for the opportunity Thou has bestowed upon us for enjoying the good will and hospitality of our neighbors and land owners which makes possible for us the enjoyment of our hunting. We thank Thee for the privilege of this past time and we

pray that we may be able to make use of those opportunities for the benefit of our fellow men. We thank Thee for all Thy many blessing upon this day of great thanksgiving.. We ask Thy help for our efforts to carry out Thy will in our community and among our fellow beings everywhere.

And of course grandfather was a Quaker. The Clothiers were Quakers. I did go to Quaker meeting with them a few times, and it was just fascinating to me. But the Thee's and the Thou's were used most of the time by him. He really was very much a part of that circle,...

NL: And appreciated their values...

AM: Absolutely. He was extraordinary. Very much caught up in all the sports things that went on, whether he played or not. He did the hunting and the tennis for the most part. But was always interested in what the kids were doing in the world of sports.

NL: I don't know much about the hunt. Could you talk a little about that?

AM: Well, there are places that are designated meeting places, and a list goes out. And they will tell you that they are meeting at such and such a farm, on October whatever, and that's the way you know where you are going to go. Some people would van their horses and meet them there. Some people would ride, if it was close enough by. When everybody assembles together, the huntsman has the most wonderful horn, which you can hear across the countryside, when he is either gathering the hounds together, or letting people know that the fox is yonder. Everybody would meet, and then they would decide, or maybe had decided before, where it was most likely the animals would be. So they would ride for them. And on High Holy Feast Days, so to speak, they would wear what's known as a "pink coat," but it's red. It's not pink – it's red.

NL: Why is it called pink when it is red?

AM: I don't know. That's the way it always was. It was always engrained in my head that this is what you did. Grandmother rode side-saddle, my aunt rode side-saddle, my mother rode side-saddle, and I rode side-saddle when I was small. I always thought that I was probably going to be ricocheted off into the woods.

NL: What were you wearing when you were riding side-saddle?

AM: One wore jodhpurs, the ladies wore s skirt that went over the knees – I think there was an elastic that went underneath to keep it from bothering you, it attached to your foot – a jacket, and then, of course, the most important thing was the hard hat. That was a must. Absolutely. A small tie or stock – this was during the more formal hunts, not the cubbing, when you could go out in shirt sleeves. A jacket, tweed jacket, or the pink, and a long sleeved shirt, and the little tie. I recall I wore a tie and always had a problem getting it together.

When we showed – that was another thing – the Devon Horse Show loomed large. The Bryn Mawr Horse Show at that point loomed large. And the joke was that my grandfather and Uncle Ike Clothier would ride together in the pairs at Bryn Mawr, and invariably grandfather would go over the first jump and along came Uncle Ike and they did just fine until they got to the water jump. And every year Uncle Ike would foul the water jump. It was just absurd. But that was the story, and I can just hear grandfather laughing. He had a roaring big laugh.

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(Talking about the Devon Horse Show) And there was grandfather, grandmother, my father, my mother, Carolyn Clothier, (mother's sister), and me, and my brother George, who was riding front wards for the occasion – he was on a lead line – now many is that? There were about eight of us that one year. We were very upset because the Duponts beat us. There were four of them, but they had matched grays and they looked just wonderful.

NL: Oh, how fun!

AM: It was fun. Actually I didn't find it as much fun as the others did, for if the truth be known, I was timid. On the hunt I wasn't going to fling myself over some fence that I didn't know about. I had a couple of falls, but other people get up and go right on. I got up and went right on. But as soon as I could dump it I did., when I went off to boarding school. I was not sad, although I loved horses.

It's a very strange thing. I have the funny feeling that if I had had the right horse when I was young, and some attention, because we were all sent off to ride with several people, and they would do what they were told to do, which was to take us cross country. But we really didn't learn. We weren't taught – we just rode. For some that is fine. But for us it really wasn't. I've often puzzled that one out. If somebody had been in a ring with us, with happened subsequently when my children were little, they would come up here to ride in the summer, stay with mother, and they were instructed.

But the thing was that I loved the ambience of the hunt. Being out there in the wonderful countryside made me continue even though I thought – hummmm – I don't want to be bumped off again. The hunt is very exciting. When the hounds begin to bay – that means they have found something – and you see them all sniffing around – and all of a sudden one of them will let out that wonderful song that a hound will do, and the others get right up with him. Then they take off. And the whole group behind – all the hunting people – take off with them. They have something called whips. The whips were people who worked with the huntsmen – and when they say whip they don't whip anything. – but they whip their whips to keep the hounds together. So there is nothing unpleasant.

NL: How many people rode out together?

AM: Oh my goodness. Oh there were often 35 or 40. And grandfather had a lot of people who had no idea they would be asked to come. He would say, "Please." He was very wide-open to anybody who had a horse who wanted to ride along.

NL: Do you get permission from people to ride on their property?

AM: Well, a lot of them, of course, were part of the Pickering Hunt, for many people who were living out here then did some riding. I think there were only a couple of places – the worst thing you could do was to put up barbed wire - I can't even remember who did. But I remember there was one large piece of property nobody could go through, because they didn't want them.

I remember when I wasn't out there – I was in the house - and hearing that horn, and racing outside to see what was going on. And very often – here came the fox, three times as bright as the hounds.

There is a piece of the hunting thing that I remember well, and probably I shouldn't. In the kennels, where the hounds were, there was a section that was always kind of closed off. One day my brother and I decided to see what was there. So we did. And guess what it was? Foxes! Foxes! They were well-treated, well-fed, well-everything, but at a certain time they were let loose so they would go. I remember seeing all those little green eyes, looking. This would totally be illegal now.

And those little dogs that they have, the Norwich terriers. I never saw this happen here, but it happens in England all of the time. The dogs would ride in the saddle bag with the huntsmen or one of the whips, and when a fox went to earth, and they felt he was a healthy, strong fox, they would send the little dog down in to go get him. And the little dogs would go in, you would just see their tails sticking up, the fox would clutch the fur around their necks, and they would back out, shaking, and then let go. The fox would go on, the hounds would go on, and the little dog would go back in the saddle bag.

So there were all sorts of interesting things like that. And also when the hounds had puppies. We were very respectful of them, and never went in there without talking to George Lever, I think was his name, who was in charge of the hounds. We would go and see him, and he would tell us where we could go. Some of the bitches were just fine with people and their puppies and some of them were not.

Then the geese were an exciting thing! Have you ever been chased by a goose? I have many times. They could break your something or another with their wings, if they snake on after you. We had a pond below the house, and there were all kinds of things that would come there and just stay for awhile, then eventually leave. The geese would go. Now hundreds and hundreds are staying all winter. They are not my favorite. But it was fun to see those little goslings appear. It was! They were all on that pond and we could go down and watch and be very careful. This was spring when the mating thing was going on and the eggs were being laid. Papa would come right after you and chase you away from the nest.

NL: I'm going to go back to the hunts. How often did the – I don't even know the correct terminology here – did the hunts go out? That's the best that I can do.

AM: A couple of times a week.

NL: In certain seasons?

AM: In the fall, and I think sometimes the winter. It would be interesting now – and I don't get anything from the Pickering Hunt any more – I used to see it because of mother - it would be interested to look at their cards that go out and see how often they hunt. I suspect it is less now. I can't imagine these young people being able to take that much time off.

NL: Then it used to be a much larger thing than it is now?

AM: I'm not sure. I'm not caught up with it now. Of course there is less and less land for the purpose of the hunt. I have observed that the Pickering Hunt now is on route 113 next to a farm, and there are horses there. I imagine there is a lot less going on because of the terrain or lack of it with all the building.

Every Thanksgiving they still meet at the Pikeland Church. I suspect that way back when - and I never was out on a Thanksgiving - wherever they were, they gathered together and said this prayer and then went off. This has gotten to be a much bigger thing now. It's always for some charity, for some clinic in Phoenixville, or some such thing. It's a nice thing to have continue, especially for that emphasis.

(Mr. Montgomery comes in and shares some names of those who came for tennis.) Ron Laver. Ken Rosewall. Wasn't there a Herbie Flann? He was sufficiently obnoxious to cause a lot of concern. I will probably think of them later. I remember Vic Seixas. Bill Vogt was here a lot. The American who went on to make professional tennis a big deal, a national champion and won Wimbledon – I can't think of his name – he was here.

NL: Are there other times that people who hunt together socialize together? Was there a party?

AM: Teas. There used to be teas. Of course you could have your tea but you could also have a lot other things. The old Pickering Club House – do you know anything about that?

NL: No.

AM: It's on – right down here on Whitehorse Road, you cross the bridge, and you turn right – I don't remember the name of the road – anyway, it runs along the side of the Y field, and then comes out on route 29. In there, closer to this side, sits a wonderful

whitewashed old stone house. That was where the Pickering Hunt Club was. You could go there and have a meal – but I don't think you could go there all the time, they had times when you could and couldn't. Everybody would join there after hunting. Indeed there were dinners. I have wonderful pictures of dinners that were given for Gaga and Pa. I forgot what the occasions were – I'm not sure I ever knew. They are terrific pictures, the two of them. They had a steward, he and his wife lived there. There was always somebody there. They kept it as it should have been kept.

NL: You, in your lifetime, you continued tennis. You didn't continue hunting or showing.....

AM: No, when I got to be 15, I was out of that. It would have been hard to continue that anyway. I went to boarding school.

NL: Where did you go?

AM: I went to Westover School in Middlebury, Conn. I loved every minute of it. It was a good thing. But you are home seldom, and part of it was war time. You didn't really get home at all. You got home at Christmas. Thanksgiving was at school.

My brother – both of them eventually – went off to boarding school. So there was a lot that we missed in day to day life around here. I have great blanks in my memory about what was going on. That's why I wish Aunt Carolyn Clothier were here. She could fill in a lot of pieces that I can't. She is seven years older than I am. There would be things that she would remember.

NL: Did you mention Agnes Irwin for yourself? Did you go there?

AM: Through eighth grade. Then I went off in tenth grade to boarding school. I was there for ten, eleven, and twelve.

The thing that was difficult about school was that you went on the train. Dad would take us over to Paoli station, and he would go into town, or for the brief time that we was in the army, another one who could wiggle his ears would take us over to the station. We all had to be picked up at the same time, because of gas rationing. So we were dumped off in the morning, and that was great, because you got on the train and got to your station and went to school. On the way, home, however, when you were dismissed, and went to the train and went on out to Paoli, it could be earlier than Dad got there, so you had to sit, with the pot-bellied stove, in the little waiting room, and do your homework, and wave to the troop trains. That's how we passed the time – waving to the troop trains. It made for a long day. We often sit there for an hour or so. But we got smart and did do our homework. We all got to know the conductors and the conductors got to know us.

One day – oh, my goodness, how did this happen? – there was a really fat dog – sort of beagle-y looking dog. For whatever reason it was without a home. I couldn't have been more than fifth or sixth grade. The whole class was just desperate to find a place for the

dog. “Oh, Anita, you have a farm, why don’t you take the dog?” I had to take the dog on the train to Paoli. I had somebody’s belt, who could spare it. I did take the dog to Paoli. The conductors helped! They were wonderful!

So we arrive at Paoli, and we are picked up that day by Edson, who was a family treasure. He was just wonderful. He took one look at the dog, and he took one look at me, and I guess I looked small, fat, and forlorn – so did the dog - , and he drove us home. When we got there, mother was horrified. The little dog was properly taken care of and three days later had puppies. I never asked what happened. I just thought I was better off not knowing. But the little dog had Happy Bones and all of that for a certain amount of time. You couldn’t do that now. We were, obviously, little kids, trying to something good. It used to get mighty cold around that pop bellied stove. We just accepted it.

One morning at breakfast, sitting around at Meadow Crest, which was the name of our house, on a cold winter morning – all of sudden my mother walked in and said, “Children, your grandmother has just become Lt. Commander!” How many people have heard, “Your grandmother had just become Lt. Commander?”

NL: Your *Grandmother!*

AM: Of the Coast Guard, Ladies Coast Guard. As my father said, “I don’t think many people have heard *that* at the breakfast table!”

NL: What did she actually *do* with the Coast Guard?

AM: Well, I don’t know. She would appear in a little uniform and go into town and do whatever they did. At that age I didn’t really pay too much attention. I could read up on it now. It was not a big deal, because she was always doing something. She was a doer.

NL: The entire family sounds like a family of doers.

AM: Yes. That is the way we were brought up. That is what we lived by. No choice. It was assumed. You say that to a kid nowadays – you’ve got no choice – they fall apart, things don’t work well, you are an ogre, and all the rest of it. Not so in those days. You just did what you thought was the right thing. And many times did the wrong thing. But the values were there, and that is the most important thing.

NL: Your grandfather was a Quaker. Does that mean the entire family was Quaker?

AM: The Clothier family. When mother married dad, he was Episcopalian. I don’t think she ever paid much attention to the Quaker thing. It didn’t matter. It wasn’t a family issue. Dad did go to church, and we went, too. That was a long drive down to Rosemont. To that church that is in such trouble – the Church of the Good Shepherd. It’s broken off from the Episcopal faith and it’s now sideways. We went there for a number of years because my Packard grandparents went there, and then ended up at a large lunch at my grandparents house. Which was hectic! And then we came home.

Things like that were always going on here, too. And I remember – I do remember this because it was so absurd and it went on for years – Pa would say - to whomever was the newest member – “So and so, do you know the story about *Joe Stink*?” And whoever it was said, “No, sir, I don’t believe I know that story.” Pa would say, “Joe Stink decided he should change his name. So he went to court and went to the judge and did all the appropriate things, and the judge said, Well, I guess I can see why you would like to change your name. What would you like to change it to?”

And the reply came, “*John Stink*.”

This was incredible. We would all wait for this to happen. It always did. It was just crazy!

Every Christmas Eve there was a farm party. Everyone on the place came. We were all there. Wonderful goodies. It could be rather stiff. Everyone in their best bib and tucker. Everybody on their best behavior. No children except for us. Adults only. But grandmother had a way with her. She would get them all in the big room, and start a game. The game involved two people under a blanket. There was a crop. She would hand it to somebody and would say, “So and so has got to guess who tapped him with the crop.” Of course this would go along and people would go along with it and it began to be quite funny to everybody. But then they would get the patsy who didn’t know the game. He would be under the blanket with somebody else who had the crop and he would reach up and go “bomp.” It was so silly but it broke the ice. Everybody got much more relaxed. You could not be un-relaxed with grandmother near. Grandfather was another story. Grandfather was enough to frighten anybody.

NL: That was her genius.

AM: Absolutely. I can remember very well those parties.

NL; And adults only, and your family....

AM: It was a lot of fun – we used to look forward to it. Mostly that game! There was always some new young man there – the patsy.

NL: How many people did they have working there?

AM: There was a family at the kennels, and I can’t tell you how many kids, but there were kids. There was a family at the pig farm. There were three or four kids. Then there was the stable, up here – Eddie Mooney and his family. And Mrs. Mooney used to say to the youngest – actually she didn’t say this, she did it – she could smack him. And he would turn around and she said, “I know I won’t be able to catch you when the time comes, so I am just going to do it now.” There was a manager of the farm named Harry Taylor, and he lived there with all his family. And then there was – there were quite a number, there really were. I don’t remember the blacksmith’s name. He would come and go. I still talk to 2 sisters who were with us for years and years. They are buddies. I

really would have to sit down with a piece of paper and a pencil if I was to count all the people. Of course, the dairy. There had to be two or three people in charge of each place, just to keep things going. And chickens. I really couldn't come up with a number that would do a whole lot of good.

NL: There must have been people who were working in the house itself.

AM: Absolutely. Often husband and wife. He outside and she inside. There was one man who was just such a love, and he was related to the two ladies that I mentioned. His name was Charlie Althouse. He was just one of those wonderful people; my kids just loved him. He worked for mother after she moved into the little farm. I don't know how they found this out, but I had a great-grandmother who lived over where Fernleigh – no the other one – it's a whole lovely complex and I think Country Club Road is on one side of it. Great - grandmother lived there, and she had two nurses who were with her all the time. When great- grandmother got heavy, they somehow discovered that Charlie was the only person who could lift her and not have her cry out. I can remember this happening - He would come out of the fields or whatever he was doing, take a shower, get into a white shirt and trousers and go over there and help the two nurses put her into the bed, because he could do it. So he was a special treasure.

NL: That was your...

AM: Great-grandmother. Porter. Nannie Porter.

NL: I'm trying to get everything together here. Packard....where did they live?

AM: At this point, they were living in Villanova, where grandmother and grandfather Porter had the big house in the middle. Then there were four corners, and my father had three sisters. And he lived, but not at first, but the family bought the great-uncle's place, and so there were four corners. One child was in each corner.

NL: Is that estate still there?

AM: One house. I have an elderly cousin living in the house. That is the only one that is still there. The others have been sold or knocked down or whatever. That was very pleasant when we were there. We were very lucky.

Dad I think always wanted to move. Dad was not a great huntsman. He would go and he did what he should. But this was not his thing. I think it was probably better, much better for him that we moved. He loved this place – it was a love, hate thing. He really didn't want to do the riding. It was tough.

It certainly was tough when we moved down to Villanova. We went kicking and screaming. Absolutely. They had to bribe me with a lovely bedroom. New everything. I was not easy to bribe, either. But then I was off to school, so it swept itself away.

NL: Changing the subject - Where did you get married?

AM: Villanova. Never thought of it as home, really. Would much rather have been right here.

NL: I pictured you on the farm....

AM: The big house had burned down. By that time grandmother was not in the best of health.

The wedding was lovely, but somehow our spirits were still out here. All three of us.

I had one brother who really did ride to hounds. Parker, who now has MS. He lives in Ardmore. He was the only one left at home when George and I went off. He got himself into the right place and the right time and really did enjoy hunting and all of it. Which was fun for mother. Things have a way of working.

NL: I notice that the battery is starting to go down, and I don't want to miss anything you say. So let's stop for now. Thank you!

2nd interview – March 15, 2005

Anita Packard Montgomery

Parker Packard

Interviewed by Nancy Loane

Transcribed by Nancy Loane

NL: Today I am talking with Anita Montgomery and her brother, Parker Packard. Mr. Packard will start our conversation by talking about riding at the Clothier Farm.

PP: How does one begin all of this? Well, I guess one begins with how one learns to ride. We learned to ride at Meadowcrest, our little farm. My mother had a big red horse that I think she got from her parents, and she and Dad bought me Peter the Pony.

And when Peter the Pony came into our family he was already 24 years old, somewhat older than I was. He had a wealth of experience in fox hunting. He was round as a barrel and he had a hole in his cheek. Someone must have kicked him when he was little. Every morning I had to go down - or in the afternoon when I got home from school - water him down and then I would have to stick my finger in his cheek like that and empty the hole out. Oats and a lot of things like that came out.

Then we would get the harness on and the saddle on and he and I would take off with Harry and Turk on our little country outing every afternoon. Ride for about four miles and we would go – what was the name of that road where Ken Packard lived?...

AM: Oh, yes, I know exactly where you mean...

PP: We would go there, turn up the bridge that was up there, turn right, go up even farther, and really climb...by that time the dogs were really complaining, and it was wonderful for me because I didn't have to race with them any more. And Peter, too. And then we would come down the field above the kennels and we would come down, walk through the kennels, up the hill by the propane tank, and back into the stable. Of course the dogs collapsed by the kitchen door. But anyway, that was how I learned to ride.

NL: How old were you when you did this?

PP: Seven to ten, I would guess. And then, and then, there was another big step because right up the hill were my grandparents. Of course, Pine Pep was a new member of the family at that time, and hadn't won anything. Nobody knew who Pine Pep was, except for my grandmother, and she couldn't hold him. He was bought to be her fox hunting horse. She couldn't hold him and never could hunt him.

AM: She did. She did hunt him.

PP: She did for a couple of years, but that was it. Finally grandfather drew the line and said that would be all for him.

AM: Well Eddy Boyd came into the picture and said, "Mr. Clothier, I think you have something special here. I think we can do something with this horse."

PP: That sounds right. Gaga stopped riding him. Eddy started training him. I think he ran Radnor once very early on. Which I never saw. The only race I saw him run – I was going away to school – was Radnor. He lost. Came in second.

But then grandfather saw to it that there was a big horse, Peter. My goodness, can you imagine a pony, twenty-four, with a ten year old riding him? Taking him out to hounds, at that age? And hunting with those great big hunters? He jumped like a mad-man. He was absolutely wonderful. He was just as fast as though big horses but he just ran out of steam. So my grandfather get on one of these big fallows, get on him, and ride to hounds.

We would meet in the field between Valley Forge Farm, above us, and Meadowcrest Farm. There was a field in the middle. And the master would be the first one there. And the huntsman, Eddy Mooney, would come up from the stable with the hounds. And then the field would assemble. And off we go.

The farm itself was not that large – I don't think it was more than a thousand acres.

AM: 900. But Ka (Aunt Caroline) brought into the picture that there was more hunting territory, known as the Pickering Tract. I have no idea where that was.

PP: I think I have a feel for that. It was up toward Pickering Creek. And the whole area in there – we used to refer to “hunting up country” this week – and that was Eastwick. We weren’t restricted by 900 acres of Clothier Farm. We were riding almost free range.

AM: I told Nancy that the worst thing that could happen was that some neighbor got out of sorts and put up wire. And that was the real no-no in those days – you just did not do that. There were very few people who wanted their property restricted, but there were one or two. Do you have any remembrance?

PP: None. Except that there was something going on – remember that milk processing plant up there? That was put there because for some reason a wire came down somewhere. It was to get back. A commercial establishment in the middle of hunting country?

I got lost up there. If I had not a big horse with a lot of speed and a lot of power – Starlight - I wouldn’t have been able to stay with the field. I would have been lost. I don’t know how I would have gotten home.

Anyway, that went on for a couple of years, anyway. I think the most fun I had was cub hunting, which was in the early fall before the regular fox hunting season started. And the name is exactly what the name implies. You went out cubbing. Mama would have her cubs. The hounds, of course, were out of shape after lying around all summer. Mama would take off with a little trot. These hounds were just going like gangbusters. And, of course, mother just kept plodding along with the little ones behind her. And she get into her den. By that time the hounds were two miles back and slobbering all over the place, the dogs couldn’t keep up. You never killed the fox in cubbing. Never. It was not in the cards. And rarely during the regular season.

Grandfather was master of the hounds. I was never out when he wasn’t out. He and Eddy Mooney, the huntsman, were extraordinary that way. They were in there whipping off those hounds if they were getting close to a kill. They knew the value of one dead fox. It was interesting.

Finally I went away to school. I would come home for Christmas vacation or something and be able to ride once every two or three years. Finally it petered down to nothing. It was the greatest experience of my life as a kid, that’s for sure.

AM: What do you recollect about the number of times? Wasn’t it three times a week for hunting?

PP: Two or three.

AM: Two or three. Nancy asked me about now and I have no idea. We used to get those post cards...

PP: It’s not done here anymore. It’s all up country. They don’t even hunt here anymore.

AM: Pickering Hunt is down in route 113.

PP: That doesn't mean that's where they hunt.

AM: No, no it doesn't. But I am just wondering with the young coming along , if they have as much time to do three days a week.

PP: Good question. Good question. I don't remember going three days a week.

I'll tell you one thing I do remember. Do you remember the farmer's party at the Pickering Hunt Club?

AM:I remember the one at Christmas at Valley Hill Farm. With the blanket and the crop?

PP: I don't remember that.

AM: You were too little. This is really interesting to me because you forget the sequence of things.

PP: You don't remember the farmer's party with Boyd down at the Pickering Hunt?

AM: What happened there?

PP: Pass the handkerchief. Good Lord...of course Samuel....

NL: Tell us a little about that.

PP: Well, I don't remember how it went. One handkerchief went flying through the air...

AM: You had to tag somebody who had the handkerchief on them...one person was it....

PP: I don't know....I just kept saying get it out of here. I don't want it anywhere near me. Of course Samuel made a fool of himself most of the time and was so funny that everybody got hysterical. But all the farmers on the entire property were there with their wives, families. It was just wonderful. Grandfather paid for the farmer's dinner that night at the Pickering hunt.

NL: And Samuel...who is Samuel?

PP: Samuel was grandfather's butler. Samuel was Irish – don't you know, Gillespie. Remember the towel flicking?

My grandfather had a very old male secretary called Mr. Deemer. Mr. Deemer was kind of a legend Nobody really knew what he looked like, he was kind of a ghost who would walk around the house and we would say, "That's Mr. Deemer." I would go out and

have some fun somewhere. Mr. Deemer would go and sit at a little desk somewhere. I don't know what he did. Anyway, he was grandfather's secretary. And one night, Pa (Grandfather Clothier) announced to all present that Mr. Deemer, age 85, was getting married again.

AM: I had forgotten that.

PP: And Samuel looked at him in absolute horror – Samuel was this little tiny guy and he looked at this great big grandfather of mine, he was huge – he had a dish towel in his hand and he flicked it at Pa and said, "Get out of here!" Pa didn't blink. He did not blink.

Samuel I think realized what he had done after he had done it. Mrs. Gillespie, who was cooking, saw it. The whole thing was absolutely hilarious.

The other funny story on Samuel ...

AM: Samuel had a tiny penchant for...

PP: ...whiskey, don't you know...Not serious, but he had a drink now and then.

But the funny one on Samuel was with my father. Remember that one?

AM: Go ahead...

PP: I'm sure you will remember it. Anyway, my father decided that he had to ask permission for grandfather's daughter's hand in marriage. So driving up the hill, very nervously, parked the car in front, got out, knocked on the door, door opened, and Dad said, "Sir. I would like to ask for the hand of your daughter in marriage." Of course he is talking to Samuel, the butler. Samuel said, "I think the man you want to speak to is right over there, Sir."

That's the end of my Samuel stories. But honest to God, that house was wonderful. That big old lodge. It burned down in the winter of 1950-51, whatever it was. But that house ...

On one side of the second story you had the men's dormitory. Which was literally just that...It had ten or twelve bed and showers and the whole works. It was used for fox hunting. Grandfather got all his friends to come out fox hunt, then they'd get back up there, change into their city clothes, take the Pennsylvania-Reading Line back to Philadelphia, and go to work.

And on the other side, you walked around this huge living room. You had the stairs went up both sides. You went down the men's dorm in one direction. If you went down the hall that way you went past my mother's old bedroom, her brother's, her sister's, and at the far end were grandmother and grandfather. She had her little study there. And dressing room. And large bath. Their bedroom.

But the kicker for the kid my age was the sleeping porch. This porch was totally screened in. The doors were shut in the winter time. But come spring, those doors opened up, and there was this large sleeping porch with twelve beds in a row. Grandmother slept at the far end on that side of the entry-way. I was at the bed next to her. Grandfather, because of his snoring, was all the way down at the other end. Grandmother would say, “Bill, you have to face down the hill, when you fall asleep.” He’d do it. It was a real thrill to be my age to be able to be in the sleeping quarters with just your grandparents. It was great. And then you would wake up and smell bacon – the kitchen was right underneath.

NL: Where were you when the lodge burned down?

PP: I was – when was that, in the winter of ’51?

AM: Let’s see, I went off to college, and it was the middle of my freshman year.

PP: You went away in fall of 1950?

AM: Yes. So it was February of 1951.

PP: I was in the middle of my second form year at St. Paul’s School. My brother was in his last year at St. Paul’s School. We crossed for a couple of years up there. I can remember it.

It just happened to be announced that it was skating holiday. St. Paul’s was the place in the US for hockey – where it was founded. It came down from Canada, and we started to play at St. Paul’s prior to 1898 or something. And it was skating holiday. We were the only school of our kind that had skating holiday, but it was account of who we were and...we played college teams and beat them. Quite extraordinary. It was skating holiday.

And my brother came up and said I hate to tell you this but the lodge burned down. I said, “What lodge?” I just wasn’t thinking... He said, “Ga and Pa’s house.” It just hurt so badly.

And then when we moved in 1946 to Villanova, that hurt even more. The lodge was gone, Meadowcrest was gone...all those things we had grown up with that meant so much to us...

AM: It meant just as much to him, if not more, as it did to me...

NL: And there was the age difference.....

PP: That’s where history began, and it repeated itself in the Adirondacks. Same, exact thing.

NL: What do you mean by that?

PP: The Adirondack part of our lives came through my father. Our grandparents were really one of the first prime movers and shakers to find the place and begin a camp. And we have that going. To make a long story short – that really doesn't have anything to do with this. There were thirteen first cousins – four families – that were a part of it. We all lived there with great glee for a long time, until everybody had friends, or wanted to have friends, and that was part of the idea of the place.

So, my father and one sister moved to the other end of the lake – correct? – and it was lovely. It was the most extraordinary place – bought for \$6,000. Huge living room, tennis court, two fireplaces, boathouse, boat, the whole nine yards. A blacksmith shop, and a lighthouse. A winter house.

PP: 1200 acres in all. $\frac{3}{4}$ miles of waterfront – translated into 1970s dollars. Do you know what that was?

AM: He sold it for \$35,000. We had nothing to do with it. It was an unfortunate turn of events. As Parker says, we lost this, we lost that. As kids, it must have really taken its toll in many ways, that's where our hearts were. Right up here, and right in the Adirondacks.

PP: No question. No question.

AM: And, now we can't go back.

PP: I still feel sorry for Villanova, because that was a lovely place. A wonderful garden..

AM: I told Nancy it had everything, a tennis court, the whole nine yards, except it took bribery to get me there. The bribery you may recall was the bedroom with a fireplace and a dressing room and ...

PP: A bath, a modern bath...

AM: That really didn't impress me a bit....

PP: I'm glad you held out for something, because I didn't hold out for anything. I should have. I should have held out for my pony...I had the dogs, anyway. Did Turk go with us?...

AM. Yes he did, and he had to be put away.

PP: Why?

AM: Because he bit people.

PP: But he bit Mrs. Donahue in the ass at Meadowcrest and we didn't put him away.

AM: Censored! I don't know about that.

PP: I do. I was there.

AM: Did you see this happen?

PP: He didn't draw blood, but he sure took a bite.

AM: That's what you looked at. If you drew blood, you were gone. He was such a lovely fellow, but at the end he stepped out of line. But he had a good life.

PP: Sure did. I'll tell you one funny story about Turk, because Turk was a character, he was a great slobbery thing and if he nailed you, you were in trouble, serious trouble.

He was there for a purpose, and that was that they had German prisoners of war at the Valley Forge Hospital, and they would escape every once in awhile. And Dad said, okay. If Turk was out, and you were some German coming up the field, you had a real problem. He was bigger than any Great Dane that I ever saw. He was about 140 pounds.

I would ride around on his back and do all kinds of awful things. Pull his lips ..you used to pull his lips....

He knew...in those days you had a butcher truck...Turk knew exactly what days of the week he would come to our house. And sure enough, you could set your clock by it, because the butcher was always some time, same place, same everything. Turk knew it.

Five minutes before the butcher would arrive, way down by the end there, by the main drive, Turk would be sitting at the edge of our lawn – remember how it used to circle around down by the bottom, by the two roads – sure enough, there was the butcher. Up he would come, up the main road, the back way. Turk glumping along beside him, and you would see these pieces of meat flying out of the truck. It was hysterical.

And then we would have to give him his worm pills, which that didn't work too well. He would get the most beautiful dish of round steak that you ever saw in your life, and you would get these big horse pills, they would be about this big, and you had to mix them up with the ground round, so he wouldn't know they were they. Of course that thing would disappear in two seconds, and it was gone. You just sat there and watched, and watched. And Turk would in a circle like he was looking for a place to go to the bathroom. Well he wasn't, he was looking for a place to spit the pill out, because he had it hidden in his cheek. And he spit it out – spit it out. Every year this would happen. Because he knew that he would get more ground round.

NL: This is a very sharp Turk.

PP: Oh he was, he was. He was a very sharp character. The only person he was scared of was the one person I hated him to be afraid of. Elmer...

NL: Now who is Elmer?

AM: He is the one who wiggled his ears.

PP: And he is the one Aunt Caroline pushed him in the swimming pool and he couldn't swim.

AM: That's true. That was not funny.

PP: He was a terrible joker.

AM: He was.

PP: He deserved exactly what he got.

AM: He did. And Aunt Caroline decided now was the time, and she gave him a push and in he went.

PP: Funny times.

NL: Your sister talked about some of the winter sports....the sledding....

PP: Oh, my goodness...the sledding. Where he got them, I don't know, but he had them for years, those big old Flexible Flyers four bob sleds, with handle grips on the side. Pa would flop himself down, and then he would get two or three people on top beside him, not straight up and down.

AM: You were up straight enough so you could grab the next handle.

PP: That's a good way to put it. And then somebody would push you off. And the men on the farm couldn't wait for snow because they loved to watch – you wouldn't catch them going down that snow in a million years. But they would go out there and they would have a tractor with a wagon behind it, filled with buckets of water. I can't remember if they started at the bottom of the first field or the top of the first field, and they threw the water on the track. There were these two ditches or gullies so there was this track going down the middle so that you couldn't go over the side. They would take these buckets of water and slosh them down the hill late in the afternoon. After three or four days of freezing weather, that was an ice patch. And you could hear those sled rumbling for a mile away.

If you go down White Horse Road, cross the bridge (White Horse Road, south of Valley Park Road) today, look to your left to the top of the hill where the house was, you will

see those two ditches or mounds. I almost crossed White Horse Road once, that's how far you would come. About a mile and a half?

AM: When conditions were perfect...

PP: ...It was professional

AM. And when you think about it in this day and age it was extraordinary that nobody got hurt. Because it was dangerous. I have a cousin – did I tell you about this? – she was home from Middlebury College where she was a student, her freshman year – and she went coasting, and she and a boy were going down a little slope and they hit a little bump. She popped off and he popped off. And all of a sudden she said, "I can't move."

And she couldn't. She is paralyzed from here down. She is the most extraordinary girl you can possibly imagine. She is getting an advanced degree – a PhD, actually – at the University of Arizona, which is totally friendly to the disabled. It just is...atmosphere, everything...

NL: I didn't realize that your grandfather was sledding, too.

PP: Everything we all did, he did.

AM: That's why we did it.

PP: Sure. Why we all played tennis. He was the national champion. He was a fox hunter, a tennis player...he was a great, great sportsman. He was on the Harvard football team, the hockey team, he was an athlete. He was a true gentleman athlete.

AM: We have a picture somewhere of him playing for Harvard in the days before they had helmets. I wish I could find that. Playing football without a helmet.

PP: Big man. You are talking 6'3" maybe. 180 pounds. He's a big man.

NL: In going over the transcript, I am still a little confused about the Clothier family itself and the merchant....

AM: ...The merchant part I talked about, because that was important, I thought, in this whole picture. I had said that Uncle Ike...you know, it was Grandpa Clo, wasn't it, the first one?... that started Strawbridge and Clothier...

NL: That would be your great-grandfather....

AM: My grandfather's father...Then it went to Uncle Ike, who was Isaac, Jr.

PP:Then it went to Justice Strawbridge...

AM: Then you know more than I do...

PP: Only because Grandpa Clo retired before Justice Strawbridge...So that's where the Strawbridge connection is and the Clothier connection is....

And then Uncle Ike – there were nine Clothier children – our grandfather was the baby, he was number nine. Uncle Ike was number eight. They were very, very close. Pa wanted nothing to do, I guess, with Strawbridge and Clothier. And Uncle Ike loved it. After his father retired and Justice Strawbridge he ran the place... for however long it was.

He was absolutely wonderful. We used to go see them when we moved to Villanova. We used to go to Uncle Ike's swimming pool. And he was just a small version of Pa.

AM: He was, he was a short version. And you know, he had a wife, who was a large version of Gaga. And she was a screech!

One night, years later, she woke up and there was something called the "Cat Burglar," who scared everyone. Everybody had outdoor lights and I don't know what all – including my father. Then, apparently the Cat Burglar saw fit to burgle Aunt Liddy and Uncle Ike's house. So Aunt Liddy wakes up in the middle of the night and this gentleman is in her room, going through her bureau. She sat up, turned on the light, and said, "Sir. Would you please take what you want and go. Everything that is in this room is right where you are standing – my jewelry and all of that. Would you please take it and get out. Mr. Clothier has not been well and I do not want him disturbed."

And he left.

NL: That is wonderful, wonderful. Did he take some of the things in the room?

AM: I think so, but not a lot. She really was a grand dame...

NL: What a presence she must have had...

AM: You bet.

PP: Well, was it any greater than Gaga's? Gaga was such a little tornado! Whipping around with that silly little lab and that great big Dapne following her wherever she went. Remember Daphne?

AM: Yes, yes I do.

PP: Daphne was a standard French Poodle, and she was huge. She was a big dog. I should have brought a picture – you could appreciate it more if you see it. Pa was like that and Gaga was about here and Daphne was about Gaga's height. She was the white tornado.

AM: The dog was replaced by Valley of Valley Forge, who was a little tiny poodle.

PP: That's right. That's right.

NL: I know from our interview that Gaga was a tennis player also.

AM: She was. You bet she was. Those little feet moved like crazy.

PP: And not a hair out of place.

NL: And she was very influential with beginning the seeing eye dog program.

AM: That happened on her watch, so to speak. I don't think that ever would have happened if she hadn't gotten involved in some way. Of course at the time we accepted those things.

She was always doing something. She won the award for being the Gimbel "Woman of the Year" when that was all going on. I don't know if that is still going on or not.

PP: She was also – remember mother coming in at Sunday lunch one day...

AM: ...Sunday breakfast, I remember –

PP: ...breakfast? I thought it was lunch.

AM: Breakfast. I was on my way to school. It wasn't even Sunday...

PP: "Children! I want to announce that your mother has been promoted to the Lt. Commander in the Coast Guard!" Wasn't that it?

AM: Your grandmother. Yes.

PP: She was into everything.

AM: We went about chewing our oatmeal and went about our business.

NL: How did the two of them meet?

AM: That is what I don't know.

PP: I never knew myself.

NL: Was she from this area?

PP: She was a Porter. Judge Porter had all kinds of cronies in Harrisburg. He was political. I think Gaga grew up ...

AM: In Brooklyn.

PP: No. Well, maybe part of the time, but she also spent part of her childhood here.

AM: I'm not sure, I'm really not sure. It's one of those things....

PP: How about Aunt Caroline?

AM: She ought to know. I was going to talk to her and I haven't. But I will.

PP: I would love to...Brooklyn? My God!

AM: New Rochelle, or some such place.

PP: Oh, please. That's much better.

AM: Wherever it was, it is quite stylish now.

PP: Oh, isn't it fun?

AM: Actually I do think it was New Rochelle. But I will inquire about that. It will be fascinating to see if anybody knows.

NL: Hum...changing the subject...you mentioned that Meadowcrest, where you grew up...did something happen to that also?

PP: Yes. We moved out. A few years later the lodge burned down. My grandmother and grandfather moved Mrs. Porter, my grandmother's mother, who was living with them at the top of the hill at that point, down to Meadowcrest, which they owned. I believe it was a wedding present to my parents from Gaga and Grandfather Clothier. It was originally the Pickering Hunt meet house. So grandfather owned it because he was the master and owner of Pickering Hunt. So then grandfather decided when grandmother got sick that he was going to go back up to the top of the hill so he built a little house that was only recently torn down by the new owners. And he lived up there until he died. Grandmother passed away somewhere in 1955.

At that point Meadowcrest was empty. It was bought by a family called Rausch in Villanova. . They used it to walk through it on weekends. It was deserted for 15 years. Nobody lived in it. Nobody farmed it.

AM: Except for me in the summer, when Arch was a baby. We stayed down there, the Rausch's let us have it, so that we were close by. We stayed there for at least one summer, possibly two. Dad was getting his MA.

PP: I didn't know that.

But after that I couldn't stand to go back, because the place was falling down.

AM: Then they sold it to the guy who built that track up here. He had driving horses, as I recall.

PP: He had a lot more than that. He had some lady attendants down there taking care of tack and grooming and all that stuff. He decided he liked one of those trophies a little more than he liked his wife, so that was the beginning of the end of him, because he couldn't afford the place, after what his wife took him for. I can't remember his name...

AM: I can't remember his name, either....

PP: He used to drive a helicopter flying over...

AM: Was there a drug thing involved in that?

PP: He was purported to have been involved with drugs earlier on, but what really broke him up was what she did to him when he decided to play around on the farm.

AM: She got him.

PP: Dead right. There was no recourse. All those beautiful white fences started getting paint chips.

AM: At that point we really weren't here. This was all hearsay to us.

PP: Except we would be on top on the hill every so often with Uncle Bill.

AM: I told Nancy about the races, too. Remember them?

PP: Farmers? On the flagpole hill? God they loved that. They lived for that, didn't they?

AM: They certainly did. And we lived for their race, much more than fine horses that were whipping around...

PP: Or the Maryland Hunt Cup or anything else. God, those guys were awful to each other. They would whip each other, bump into each other...

AM: It was really very funny, in a nervous sort of a way.

PP: You stood back. You did stand back. You didn't want to get too close to that course. Because those horses were not in the first place trained to be race horses, they were everything you can imagine.

NL: Changing the subject...did you play tennis?

PP: Sure.

NL: Do you remember any of the people that came to the farm for tennis?

PP: I met Rod Laver and Gonzalez at the lodge. Laver was my favorite tennis player. My favorite question of my Uncle Bill Clothier before he died was if you had a match between John McEnroe and Rod Laver, who do you think would win? He was never quite sure, and neither was I. I loved McEnroe for the sheer beauty of watching him – not listening to him. And Laver, the same way. It was the thrill of my life to be able to shake hands with Laver. He was an extraordinary guy.

NL: And he was right here.

PP: Don Budge was here.

AM: Oh yes, we have pictures of him. They all came. It is really interesting how the young take all this for granted. It was exciting...but it was just sort of what happened.

There were all kinds.

PP: You had the hots for Sam Match at one time as I recall.

AM: Probably, because I had the hots for a lot of them. I was sixteen. Stray Clark...

PP: What was his buddy? The tall guy? Bill Boyton...Vic Seixas. Do you know it was his wife who taught me how to Twist at the charity ball? Dolly Ann...She wrapped herself around my hips, and boy, if you don't twist when Dolly Ann had you around the hips, you didn't twist ever.

NL: And whose wife was this?

PP: Vic Seixas.

AM: Now long, unfortunately, divorced.

PP: Oh long divorced. He is very tragic. He is. She is fine. She landed on her feet.

AM: I've seen her actually. But what happened to him?

PP: I think he came on very bad times, and there was this problem...well, he went through bad times.....

AM: I did remember after you left ...and you may remember some of this, too...it was Bobby Riggs who behaved so badly at the Merion Cricket Club.....

NL: Bobby Riggs!

AM: Yes. Bobby Riggs refused to come out on the court at the Club, and Pa was running Eastern States at the time...white suit...rose in the buttonhole...boy the thing went off like clockwork. And everybody behaved. But Bobby Riggs decided he was going to cause an uproar because he wasn't going to come out and play because of one thing or another. And Pa – and I could see this, but I didn't know what was happening – Pa walked, he stalked, across the lawn – went into the locker room – came back out again – strolled back to where the tennis was being played – and following him, at a cautious distance, was Bobby Riggs who did play, then. And nothing more was heard from him again. And Pa had told him that he, Pa, was going to leave the locker room, and it would take him about three minutes to walk back, and he expected Mr. Riggs to be on the court and ready to play. He was.

PP: Remember the other great story about the Easterns with Earl Cushall?

AM: There's a name. I don't know if it means anything to you...

PP: Earl Cushall was the bad boy of tennis at that point.

AM: Herbie Flann..

PP: Herbie was a good-natured one. Earl Cushall was a mean sucker with bright red hair, he was awful. Earl started putting on a show on the big show court, the number one court at that point. And yelling and screaming at the chair, and yelling and screaming at his opponent, and all that. All of a sudden, this guy stands up and walks toward the court.

“Earl, either shut up and play tennis or sit down!”

And Earl took one look and started playing tennis.

Know who it was?

AM: Do we know who it was?

PP: It was Dwight Davis of the Davis Cup team. And old friend of grandfather's. They played together. Dwight Davis...they didn't stand for any of that stuff at that time. They really didn't.

.....

NL: I talked with your sister about this, about going to school on the train.

PP: Oh yes. We always made Dad's winter for him, because we all had to pop into the car and go to the station – Paoli station – with him. In the winter time, getting up that Paoli hill. Well, sometimes Dad would make it and sometimes he wouldn't. When he wouldn't, there was silence in the back seat. When he did, there were cheers. But yes. He took the

8:14, which was an express to Philadelphia. We took something like the 8:21, which was the regular local.

You got off....no, you and I never crossed. George and I

AM: And George and I did...

PP: I got off at Haverford.

NL: Where were you going to school?

PP: Haverford. So I did that for six years. Couldn't wait to get out of that place.

AM: I told her also about the potbellied stove in the waiting room... because we had to wait. I guess you didn't, because you did it after the war. But we did. We had to wait for Dad or Ed or whoever was coming...

PP: I had to wait. I had to wait. Coming home?

AM: Yes.

PP: No. But I had to wait going down.

AM: On the way back. Our train came in, and we had to wait for another hour until Dad's train came in. Gas rationing.

PP: I don't remember that. Ed would be there. Ed would generally be there.

But don't forget – I was six, seven years old – '42, '43 – first grade – and we were a farm, don't forget! Tax dodge. We didn't have any problem getting gas or rations. Farms were exempt for those things.

AM: I guess. But I remember a discussion...

PP: Sure.

AM: Which is why I ended up sitting in that hot little waiting room. First it was cold and then it was hot. And waiting for the troop trains.

PP: Well, but don't you understand that those discussion were meant to be heard by us. How frugal we had to be. What a bunch of crap. You could get all the gas tickets – gas ration tickets – you wanted. Ed was always there. He didn't get on a tractor, either. He came in a car. Oh, boy.

NL: What were you happiest times there on the farm?

PP: I think being able to come home in the afternoon and being able to take my little ride on my little pony. Those were good times. I was very much on my own. Very solitary. Very nice.

When you went fox hunting with your grandfather as master you were under pressure. And you better not kid yourself that you were under pressure. You had better not ride up on the back of another horse. There were protocols that you had to follow. And you followed them. You tipped your cap to the huntsman and to the master, all of those things. You forget one of those things, and there was mother behind me yelling at me to “Shape up!”

Those times with the dogs and the pony were pleasant memories. Not that fox hunting wasn't. But there were pressures there. It took you a while to realize it, but there were pressures. And you do it right or you didn't do it at all. That's a lesson we were taught a lot of.

AM: That's right. But you know, you were very lucky because you got Peter. And when we were little like you we had Sunset. Sunset was the one that George rode backwards on. She knew more than any of us. Peter came along after Sunset was retired.

PP: That's right. I rode Sunset in the Devon Horse Show. I did. I have a picture of it. A yellow ribbon.

AM: After Sunset left and we were awarded other horses - I don't know if you remember any of this, but it scared me to death - I had a horse whose name I don't even remember and who put her foot into a couple of holes and she went down and I went down. Together. She was just not a good - she was dear, there was nothing *wrong* with her - she was just inexperienced. I took a couple of really nasty falls. And not only that, but that mare had a foal. Nobody knew she was in foal. And she had a foal with a cleft pallet. My little heart was broken, because I had the thought that maybe this baby I could do something with. But that was really....

PP: So you and George had your own ponies?

AM: We were sent cross country with Billy or Bud or whoever was in the stable. And they would be dispatched to take us. Nobody taught George or me how to ride. We just went cross country.

PP: I got some special attention on Sunset, not Peter.

AM: You did?

PP: When we would go to Devon, with Sunset, that is the only time anybody paid any attention to me riding. I don't think I was taught much of anything, either, except that someone had to pick me up to get me on the saddle.

AM: You had a natural seat, so that really did help you. You instinctively had it. Neither George or I did. But I open wondered, since I loved being out, I loved the horses, I often wondered if somebody had caught on, and I had got some instructing, or some direction.

PP: Me, too. About tennis. Especially about tennis.

Everybody thought all you had to do was to play Pa, and you knew how to play tennis. That was far from the truth. I used to play Pa, and I used to hate it.

AM: It was awful. He used to drop shot you to death.

PP: He never said “Keep you head up” or “Keep you racquet head up” or anything. Never did that.

AM: On the other hand, so the story went, Bill never paid any attention to Pa’s instruction.

PP: I don’t blame him. If you had been treated by Pa the way Bill was, you wouldn’t have listened to him, either.

AM: Exactly. But maybe that’s why he wasn’t after any of us.

It worked for Ca! She was just like him. She paid attention. She and her daughter were in the mother and daughter’s tournaments for years. Aunt Ca played a lot of competitive tennis. Never at the very top, but here she was a married lady with a lot of other things going on.

PP: The interesting thing about Uncle Bill was that, in his own peculiar way, Uncle Bill Clothier did more for United States Tennis than his father every thought of doing. Most amazing. He ran the junior program for years..

AM: The Arthur Ashe thing that is going on now, he was very much caught up with. The Davis Cup. Wimbledon. All the big ones. Uncle Bill was very much involved with it all the way along. And done some extraordinary things.

NL: What a wonderful legacy the family has left.

PP: Terrific. I wish I had come even close to what Uncle Bill Clothier did. He was an extraordinary person.

AM: He was.

NL: You mentioned the Devon Horse Show – you participated in that.

PP: Oh, sure. Grandmother has an award given in her name, even now. Best Junior Hunter, I think it is. Anita Porter Clothier Memorial Plate.

AM: That's right. There is also the Bryn Mawr Horse Show and Hound Show. And I told Nancy about Pa and Uncle Ike riding in the pairs. They did fine until they got to the water jump. Uncle Ike would go in every time. Pa would laugh.

PP: I don't remember that. But there is something very funny about Uncle Ike going in the water.

NL: Apparently at one point there was a little Valley Forge Horse Show, too. Mrs. McAleer talked to me about it. A little local show of some sort, near the fire station. She said that she would come over there and some of her friends.

AM: That I don't remember. But I'm sure mother went. I don't have any recollection of it.

NL: Do you have any recollections yourself about what you were doing at the Devon Horse Show?

PP: What I was told. Or whatever Sunset wanted me to do. I never got off the lead line in the family class. I think I came dancing along you and George. Pa, Gaga, dad, mother, Ca, you, George, me. Sunset was having a little bit of trouble, keeping her stubby legs going with all those big guys. I was too little. I was pretty little - two, three.

But I remember a lot of stuff from the pictures that we all have seen from over the years. I remember I was out with you big boys at least once.

AM: Oh, my. Such goings on.

PP: Sister, dear, I have to get going, I'm afraid.

.....

Memories of Marian Gillespie, housekeeper extraordinaire to the Clothier family

PP: You did not have your ankle wrapped around the chair leg, or you would feel a horrible pain in your ankle all of a sudden. These pointed shows would kick you. No rocking on the chairs, either.

AM: She was a real Mary Poppins.

PP: The best way to describe her – and this is the only thing that I have been able to come up with - she could have been, had she wanted to be, the head housekeeper at Buck House.

AM: Where?

PP: Buckingham Palace.

AM: She could have. There was nothing that she couldn't do, and was done to perfection.

NL: She was who, again?

PP: Samuel's daughter. Samuel was the butler. Her name was Marian Gillespie. She lived in Phoenixville. The parents bought the house years ago, and she lived there all her life.

AM: She worked for grandfather and grandmother. Then she worked for our mother and did, all the way through, until how many years ago?

PP: ;91 or '92.

AM: Then she obviously was not well. At this point Parker stepped in. Was mother out of it?

PP: No, she was just complaining because she was getting out of it.

AM: Parker stepped in and took over all of her things. Saw to it that - she had Alzheimer's - saw to it that her last years were spent in great comfort. He got in there and made a good deal for the house.

PP: . We owed her. Big time.

AM: And did we. I took care of mother, and he took care of Baro.

PP: I think the sad part of it is that our children - I hope to this day that they will appreciate her now as much as they did then. I have never been asked one question in the last ten or twelve years about her. What she did. Where she is.

She was extraordinary. She was a hard-headed thing. She took care of me when I got home from the hospital with my mother until I was four years old. And then mother had to fire her. Do you know why? Because my brother kept picking on me. He was four years older than I was. When I was four, he was eight. And when Baro wasn't looking he came over and took a swipe at me. And if she ever caught him, she got a broom and whacked him back.

And mother said I can take only so much of this. If I had been smarter, I would have said, "Hey listen. I can only take so much of this, too."

She had to go. But she came back.

AM: Yes indeed she did. Parker was maybe the cutest little boy that you ever saw. Blond curls all over his head. George, our brother, at that point, was not. He was a very cute little boy, but he did not have this business. Parker never stopped talking, and amused everyone. The big joke is that when Charlotte and Thayer got married, if you look closely, Parker is in all the wedding pictures – every one.

This was very hard to George to swallow, I think. It all righted itself.

NL: And what was her name, again?

PP: Marian Alexander Gillespie.

NL: What did you call her?

AM: B-a-r-o.

PP: I don't know where it came from.

AM: Somebody couldn't say something....

All of my children, she taught table manners. I can remember one of them sitting in front of a mirror. You chew with your mouth closed. Boy they all learned, didn't they?

PP: I guess they did.

She made them sit in front of the mirror?

AM: Oh, yes. At the table. My oldest is a boy – man – and when he and Phyllis got married, and Baro thought Phyllis was something special, which she is, and they had their first baby, Phyllis made an apron. And on the apron it said, "Great Grand Baro." And there is a picture of Baro, on the apron, holding Gregory. So she was very much part of the family.

PP: Absolutely. Absolutely. I can't imagine the family without her. I can't remember Pa surviving all those years without Gaga and Baro.

AM: Yes. Because she then went up and took care of him, and that was wonderful.

PP: It was interesting. I never forget being told this. She had another career. And when Pa died, she went to mother, mother didn't go to her. She said that she didn't want to go back to that accounting office anymore. She did her own taxes. She did other people's taxes.

AM: She was a sharp cookie.

PP: She was great. She said she didn't want to go back doing numbers. She said she liked folding sheets, and ironing clothes.

AM: Hanging things out on the clothes line.

PP: I don't like to cook, she said, but I would rather do that than numbers. And she said, "I would like to work for you." Mother said, "Wonderful!"

She wanted to be the world's best housekeeper, and she was.

AM: No question about that.

She rode in the car with my father and me when I got married. That shows how close she was. She did all sorts of things that the average person...

PP: She dressed my brother and I at his wedding to Minnie, which took place just down the road from the Villanova house, so she was running back and forth between the rooms getting our cutaways on. And she was also Chappaqua to get me buttoned up for my ...she was at all our weddings dressings us. She could do things with a wing collar or an ascot that you couldn't believe could be done. She was amazing.

I didn't know that she had driven in the car with you.

AM: Oh, yes.

PP: Dad needed some sort of protection?

AM: Dad and she got along like ham and eggs.

PP: Did they?

AM: Oh, absolutely.

One night mother and dad were out for dinner and I was at a party, a birthday party. For the first time in my life I won something. I won a pair of rabbits, little brown rabbits. And here they were. I had them in a little cage. What would you do with two rabbits in the middle of the night, so to speak, and your parents not there?

I put them in mother and dad's bathtub. I went and got carrots and lettuce and all of that.

PP: Was this in Villanova?

AM: Yes. Apparently dad came in first and went into the bathroom and suddenly saw these rabbits jumping around in the tub and called out to mother, "I think I am having a seizure." Here are these little guys jumping around. They were pretty clever, actually.

PP: I was at Valley Forge?

AM: Absolutely.

PP: That's funny.

AM: It is much funnier when I look back at it afterwards. I thought it was very clever at the time. Dad thought that he had had a little too much.

Well, do you need to move?

PP: Yes, I should. I really should.

NL: Thank you both so much for your time and for sharing your memories. This has been wonderful!