Interview with Willa Bouier  
Conducted by John Hallen (sp?) and Monique Claiborne  
For  
The Chene Street History Project  
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JH: John Hallen and Monique Claiborne and we’re here today to interview Ms. Bouier and today is May 8, 2003.

WB: Everybody always pronounces my name incorrectly. It’s not a v it’s a u, Bouier. Like when you go to a football game and someone make a dumb play and you say “boo” and someone make a good play “yay,” that’s how you pronounce my name.

JH: Okay. Well let’s start off by--

MC: I’ve been pronouncing it wrong all day.

WB: It’s okay everybody does. I have all certificates and all of them got a v instead of a u. I have to be ca3erful with any documents I have they put a v instead of an e.

JH: Let’s start off as far back as you can remember. Grandparents, what were their names? And if you can remember, where were they from and when were they born?

WB: we were born in Alabama. As far back as I can remember, I lived in Ensley, Alabama. It was a city environment. My father I remember them coming from Dayton, Alabama, which is a rural area. I only went there in the summer time. So this is how my association with country life was, but I lived in the city. My father’s mother was named Alice. And my grandfather was, you know, I’m not really sure. I forgot grandpa’s name. But I can remember grandpa because I’m like, maybe like 4, 3 years old and my cousin, I showed her the pictures. Grandmother, they raised her. When I went there, Grandpa would sit in a chair, and I’m on one side and my other cousin on the other. And we’re combing his hair, he was Indian. And he would sit there just as patiently. You know at 3 years old we don’t know how to comb no hair. We must have been pulling on his hair, hurting him. But he never said a word, you know. And this is how I remember him, he died early. My grandmother was a stately woman. Grandmother must have about been 5’, I’ve got some pictures somewhere. She must have been 5’10 because I have a picture of her in a doorway and you know the average doorway is about, what like, 7 feet? And she’s almost, this is how I judge what her height was. When grandfather died she came to live with us. I was living in a little suburb they called Laurel Park. And I left there and came to Michigan. My father left in ’28. He came before we did, and then he sent for us. And I first lived on Monroe right off of Joseph Campau.

JH: What was your father’s name?
WB: William T. Scott

JH: And your mother’s name?

WB: My mother was Myrtle Scott.

MC: And your grandfather, that’s your father’s--?

WB: That was my father’s. My mother’s father died when I was very young. I vaguely remember him. So I came here when I was like 7 years old and grandfather was dead long time before then. Because I remember him living in Ensley on 23rd Street. When I came here I come from Laurel Park and we moved on Monroe. We lived on Monroe and I went to Duffield School that was on Macomb and Jos. Campau. I graduated from Duffield and went to Miller Intermediate School because it wasn’t a high school then. It didn’t become a high school till around ’33. Because I graduated from Miller Intermediate School and I went to Cass Tech and graduated from Cass Tech in 1936. Took nursing. Really didn’t want to be a nurse. But at that particular time they didn’t recommend that, we didn’t have offices. There were no office positions open at that particular time. My only regret is that I graduated too soon. I should have stayed back and gone to Commerce. But I didn’t do that. I left high school, I thought I wanted to be a beautician. So I took up beautician work. At that time you could work under a licensed beautician, and they could grandfather you in to get a license. I stayed there a couple years. I decided no, I didn’t want to do this. I learned how, and I still know how. I left there and I went to, I been to so many high schools that I don’t know if I can remember them all.

JH: Before we go on to all those high schools, let’s go back to when you, your father had sent for you, Your mother and yourself, to come to Detroit. Do you have brothers and sisters?

WB: No, I was an only child.

JH: do you remember how old you were? You said it was 1928.

WB: Right, I was born, 1918

JH: So you were about 10 years old?

MC: Where were you born?

WB: Ensley.

MC: So when, what day?

WB: December the 2, 1918.
MC: And how long was your father in Detroit before he sent you all?

WB: I guess daddy was here possibly about 6 months. He came here and he worked at the stove company that used to be there on Jefferson. You don’t know anything about that. The Detroit Stove Company. They used to have a great big picture of a stove right there and it stayed there for years. And he worked there until about ’36. They called him the Pastor at Church at Adele and St. Aubin.

MC: So your father was the pastor?

WB: Yes.

MC: Okay. Did he know anyone in Detroit before he came up here?

WB: Not really. He knew one person. And I’m trying to remember, his name was Trautman. And as near as I remember Mr. Trautman worked at the Police Department, in some kind of way.

MC: A Black guy?

WB: Yes. And I remember we had a policeman they used to call Ben Turpin. You heard of him?

JH: We’ve heard of Ben Turpin, yes.

WB: Yes. And I would see him, when we would all be congregating over there in the Italian hall that they had. He was always in the area.

JH: This was the hall on--

WB: Chene and Lafayette

JH: And Lafayette.

WB: Yeah.

MC: And he would cause trouble for you guys?

WB: No he would not. He was a pleasant person, but he was a firm person. And we gave him due respect. We had a theater there at Madison and Chene. And we called it the Catherine Theater I think it was called. I can remember going there.

MC: So your dad moved to Detroit for better opportunity?

WB: Yes.
MC: Do you remember the exact address of the street? You said you lived on Monroe

WB: I think it was 2940. I’m not quite sure what that address was again. It had to be that because when I lived on Fort Street it was in the 2600 block. It was 2940. Right off Jos. Campau and Monroe. And at that time the dinky we called it. The streetcar ran down Monroe street.

JH: Right.

WB: And you know, it had been misused. But dinky has a trolley, and of course if you pull the trolley down that’s where the power was. The trolley created the current that ran the trolley. So you know, we were going to pull the trolley and take off and the conductor would have to get out and reconnect the battery.

JH: so when you were first, you were 10 years old and you were enrolled in Duffield Elementary. What do you remember about the school?

WB: I was only there one semester. I was in 7th grade. They had always told me that they would put you back when you come from the South. But they didn’t put me back. And I only went there one semester, then I went to Miller.

JH: So did you get to know any kids there. Or it was the same kids that went to Duffield that you became friends with at Miller? Or?

WB: Yes there were a few at Duffield. I think that’s where I first met Ethel. Ethel lived down the street. She lived, when I was on Monroe. She lived east of me. And she ended up being the wife of James Bradley, who was a county clerk. We all lived in the project together.

MC: When you went to school, was your mom working?

WB: No

MC: She stayed at home.

WB: She stayed at home.

MC: And your father was still working at the stove company?

WB: Yes.

JH: Epson (?)
MC: Do you remember any of your teachers?

WB: Mrs. Bristol I think.

MC: She was black?

WB: Yes.

JH: This was at Duffield?

WB: Yes. Let’s see who I remember from Miller. I can see their faces and can’t put names to them. That’s terrible.

JH: So what was Miller mostly, what was the ratio of the kids, mostly, white black, pretty

WB: Mostly black.

JH: Predominately black? And some about Italian kids?

WB: Yes.

MC: And what about at Duffield?

WB: Duffield, it was mixed

MC: Teachers and everything?

WB: Right, right.

MC: Do you have any memories of any students, or incidences with students or teachers?

WB: You know, I didn’t have any problems at school. I guess it was from my upbringing or whatever. We did the little things that kids do, you know, after school there was always somebody going to start a fight and we would look on and all that kind of carrying on. I can remember that I always had a curfew that when the city lights come on, I must be home in the yard, not getting in the yard, but in the yard. So I really led a really sheltered life, you know. My activity was limited when I started going to high school. We used to go to what was Franklin Settlement; it was the old southern house. That used to be on Franklin street south of Jefferson Avenue right off of Dubois.

JH: Okay, okay.
WB: And that’s where we had quite a bit of activity, you know, learning how to dance and they had, we would have our little parties you know, Where they would have a band come in. That was the social life.

JH: This was when you were at Miller?

WB: Right, the last year of Miller and in high school.

JH: Do you remember the Franklin house at all? What it looked like, what was inside?

WB: Yes, it was just an ordinary building. Mrs. Bailey was my instructor and later on Mrs. Lodge, who was, she was the niece of John C. Lodge, she was one of my instructors. And Mrs., what was her name? Mrs. Szymanski. She was in charge of the settlement house.

JH: Oh okay.

MC: Was this all black dance parties, or?

WB: No. but we were mostly all black. We didn’t do a lot of mixing at that time. Whatever we did was mostly among each other. There wasn’t no mixing, a lot of mixing.

MC: So you didn’t have any Jewish or Polish friends at Duffield or Miller?

WB: Oh, I don’t even need that to go in history. No, let’s not go there. I have always had friends, uh, white friends in school. I can remember one girl, I’m trying to remember her name. But she was a character. One day she came to school with her hair dyed green. Now this is dyeing your hair in the ‘30s was not a very popular thing.

JH: Uh huh.

WB: She was a white girl, but she was a very congenial person and she had dyed her hair green. Can you imagine coming to school with green hair?

JH: Can you remember her name?

WB: I’m trying to remember her name because she was really a character.

MC: This was at Miller?

WB: Yes. Um, no no. this was at Cass. Yeah, because--

JH: When did you leave Miller and go to Cass? Do you remember?
WB: It had to be ’33. Because I graduated from Cass in ’36.

MC: So the majority of your friends were black. And when they came over--So you didn't have any Italian friends that would come over and you would go over to their house?

WB: When I lived on Monroe I lived upstairs over some Italian people.

MC: Okay.

WB: And um--

MC: Do you remember their names?

WB: You know, we only called them Ma and Pa. and I can remember them very well. She used to bake the best bread. And whenever she baked bread she’d always make little individual loaves. One for me. And she had 2 children, 2 grandkids. And they were very nice people. They didn’t speak very much English, I remember that. My Italian used to be fair, when you don’t use it you lose it, you know?

JH: Yeah.

WB: My teachers at school, I had good teachers. Mrs. Jameson (?). I think she was my favorite teacher.

JH: What did she teach?

WB: Biology. Mrs. Consadine, she was a very firm teacher. Mrs. Bailey.

MC: What school was this at?

WB: This is at Cass.

MC: Were there black teachers at Cass?

WB: At Cass I did not have any black teachers. I was there at the time that Mrs. Lindbergh was there.

JH: Okay.

MC: How did you get to school? Like did you walk to Duffield, Miller, and Cass?

WB: yes, walked to Duffield, walked to Miller. Went to Cass on the streetcar. The streetcar used to run on Jefferson so I walked from Fort street to Jefferson. The streetcar at 7 in the morning was at Jefferson and Chene and that streetcar would carry me all the way to Cass. But if I missed that streetcar then I
would have to transfer to Cass. So it was always been on time at 7:30 to take that streetcar all the way and not have to transfer. And I might add the transportation service was better than it is now.

JH: Yeah.

WB: When we had the street cars, because they were more or less on time.

JH: You said when you were at Miller you had a curfew that you had to be home inside the yard by the time the city lights were on.

WB: Oh yes.

JH: So that was...

WB: Even when I was at Duffield. That has always been a curfew. Get home when the streetlights come on.

JH: So that gave you a few hours after school came out.

WB: We were always on the playground playing ball. Some kind of game on the field, you know. And you’d get carried away sometimes and you’d be interested in the game and then you’d look up and see those lights, when the lights came on they’d flicker a bit. Boy, my father saw me running from Duffield alone trying to beat those streetlights.

JH: Were there any places where you and your friends would go to? Parks, playgrounds, shops, candy stores?

WB: Shops. Um--we used to go downtown. But this is much later. In the early years I don’t remember going downtown too much. When I do remember going downtown we’d go on the Monroe dinky, I called it. There used to be that, what’s that, Sam’s Cut-Rate, used to be right there at Monroe, right over there. Where the Second Baptist church, you know where the Second Baptist Church is located now.

JH: No.

WB: Well I have to get back and remember streets. But it was one block from where, now Gratiot came around Broadway, Randolph, Crowler Milner’s

JH: Riopelle?

WB: Hmm? No that’s not Riopelle there. Brush here. And Perry’s D used to be right down that corner. And Sam’s was in front of that. So that would’ve been.
JH: Do you have a map on you?

WB: Do I have a map? Oh. But I know, yeah where Gratiot comes down, Gratiot runs on a curve. You’ve got Broadway coming in there.

JH: This is downtown?

WB: this was right downtown.

JH: Beaubien?

WB: Beaubien, Randolph, Michigan Avenue. You know where the Water Board building is now, at Cadillac. Yeah that’s Cadillac. Those streets are all near the old city hall. You remember where the old city all was?

JH: Exactly.

WB: Okay. Coming back in that direction. We all need directions. I guess I always thought about... bound on the north by Canada. And then when they started directions, that’s south. But they always told me Detroit is bordered in the north by Canada. So that always confused me about directions. But the old city hall, up coming back toward Gratiot. There was a Sam’s Cut-Rate

JH: You said something about Max’s? Sam’s?

WB: Sam’s Cut-Rate. It was a melting pot up there. They carried some of everything. Second Baptist used to be a block from Sam’s. What used to be on that corner before it became our breaker lot? Hmm.

JH: So this is the area you and your friend would go to after school?

WB: yes, this is later on when we would to go downtown. After school

JH: But when you were younger at Miller, before you used to go downtown. Just in the neighborhood before you had to be home.

WB: our church was located there at Clinton and Jos. Campau Most of our activities were centered around church activities.

MC: What was the name of your church?

WB: Umm, give me a moment. Calvary Baptist Church. At that time Reverend Masters was the pastor. I had a lot of activities through the church. Mrs. Atillia Hodgkins (?) was one of our supervisors and she
used to be the center of the distribution of literature from the national Baptist convention and she lived at 2211 Antietem. Which is not far from Miller High School.

MC: Where was Calvary located?


MC: Do you remember the address?

WB: I never thought I would. It was across the street from Duffield. And of course Jos. Campau came to a, Macomb Street ran straight across and it was a park at Jos. Campau. So you came to Macomb street and you had to either go right or go left to get back to Jos. Campau which was a little far up there. A little island. Then you go either way to pick up Jos. Campau to continue to go north.

MC: When did you become a member of Messiah and left Calvary?

WB: In ’37 I think it was. As my father became a minister then.

MC: Was he a minister at Calvary?

WB: No, those years Calvary were those years when most of our entertainment was centered around the church. We had what you called a junior church. We had a choir made up of teenagers. And we would visit other churches and I can remember we would go to Pontiac a lot and our only means of transportation was an open truck. And you probably don’t remember the open truck had the side you could lift them out and you put them back in and it did not have a roof. So we got caught in the rain [laughs]. We had, we got wet or we had umbrellas or whatever. But it didn’t stop us, you know, being teenagers. At that time, that was the only transportation that we had. I first remember driving in 1934. I had never driven before. And we were at a convention out at River Rouge. A friend of mine had a brand new 1934 Ford. A 1934 Ford was a STOPPED WORKING AT CD 1, TRACK 4 MINUTE - 1:36.

JH: Okay we were talking about New Zion Baptist Church. Chene and Mack

WB: Yes. So we had services in the school building that they had. After we left we moved to Russell and Farnsworth. There used to be a hardware store in that building. And it had 3 apartments upstairs and the hardware store was on the first floor. They converted that whole first floor, that’s where we had our church.

MC: Was your father still the pastor?

WB: Uh uh.

MC: How long were you on the, at St. Aubin and ??
WB: There you go extending on me with dates and address.

JH: You said up until ‘43 when they burned it down.

WB: Well see, yes. I’m trying to remember when did we move on Russell Street. It must have been. I know I have those dates somewhere. I thought I found something about the dates there, I hate to misquote, you understand. Anyway, we stayed there awhile. And we moved over on Humboldt Poplar. ’36.

MC: August 21, 1936.

WB: Was that when we went on Humboldt? Or when we went to Russell Street?

MC: Wait, that’s when you were on St. Aubin and Hill.

WB: Right.

MC: Right. You went to Russell in ’56.

WB: That can’t be right. The riot was in, like, ’43.

JH: And then you moved to Chene and Mack.

WB: Chene and Mack.

MC: Wait, you were on Russell Street in June 1943.

WB: In ’43, okay. Send me the dates or something.

JH: So you said you were on Frederick and Russell.

WB: Farnsworth.

JH: Farnsworth.

WB: Right, across

JH: The hardware store.
WB: Yeah, it used to be an old hardware store there. I don’t remember the name but it was a hardware store, it had 3 apartments upstairs. From there, we stayed there awhile. Exactly, maybe that will tell you.

MC: Until 1970 when you moved on Seven Mile--

WB: We went to Humboldt Poplar from Russell Street. They don’t have that in there?

MC: No

WB: Because that was an important area in our timeline. We moved there and we had a church building. We had an annex, which was like a 2 story building. We called it the school building. And then we had an apartment building on the side of the church that housed 3 people.

JH: This is the one

WB: the one on Humboldt and Poplar. All that area was the site.

MC: Your father was a pastor then?

WB: Yes, he still was. My father died, he was still a pastor when he died.

MC: Okay and then that’s when Reverend Simmons came. Was he already a minister in the church?

WB: No.

JH: and what year did your father die? You’re not sure?

MC: ‘55

WB: was it ‘55? I don’t know what make me throw dates out of my mind. But it was the most shocking day of my life.

MC: Was it August 21st?

WB: Yes it was in August.


WB: We had gone to church. My father was not ill. He preached. And of course I was married at the time so when church was out I went with some friends; I don’t even remember where we were. But how I got the word somebody told me that, come home, your father’s sick. When I came home, well he was out of
it. So I got Doctor Thompson came over. And now I look back over it, you know, he must have had a heat stroke. I don’t know. But at that time we weren’t naming things as they are now. But he did not recuperate. He died that evening. So he preached that morning, he’s dead that evening. Most shocking day of my life.

JH: So let’s go back to the Farnsworth church. You guys were only there, for, until ’55, from about ‘43. What was that area like? What was it different at all?

WB: Farnsworth was a hard (?) life area. There were a mixture of stores and people.

JH: Any stores come to mind?

WB: Um, at that particular time. Um, and during that time, Caldwell’s had came out. That style of music. And that’s when the church really started to grow.

JH: In that period.

WB: Uh huh. And the congregation grew and we outgrewed that place.

JH: So you had about, how many?

WB: in numbers?

JH: Roughly

WB: I got documentation over there that tells you about--(?) But we had a very good membership. And when we moved to Humboldt and Poplar we had an old-fashioned organ at that church. You know, the old-fashioned pipe organ. And, but we finally got the new type organ. But at that time it was old-fashioned organ. And you had to be on time to church if you wanted to get up there. So our church grew, really grew.

MC: Did the church lose any members when it was burned on St. Aubin?

WB: There’s always a losing of some. But the majority, they were together.

MC: Do you remember anything else about the ’43 riots?

WB: Other than--at that particular time, I’m trying to remember. I get those two riots, you know we had two riots.

MC: ’67 and ’43.
WB: Right.

MC: Just tell us what you remember about both of them.

WB: I remember the riot. That’s when I had a grocery store. We had moved from St. Aubin, to, uh, Farnsworth. To Theodore and Beaubien.

JH: There’s a new Bouier. Where were you and your husband living?

WB: Where were we? I moved to Minnesota. Don’t ask me the address either. I can remember the house.

JH: You were on the west side.

WB: I was north east.

JH: Right

MC: Did you have any children?

WB: No. I lost my baby when I lived on St. Aubin.

MC: So, can you finish about the riot, I’m sorry.

WB: It’s okay. The riot, my father, they had moved to Cameron and west of the Boulevard. And of course at that particular time it was like a dividing line. Mostly black people were south of the boulevard. Very few were north of the boulevard, but there were some. So when we closed the store, instead of my going home, I went to my mother-in-law’s house which was over on Macomb and Jos. Campau. I can remember Mr. Gideon had a cleaning store right there at Jos. Campau and Madison. Used to be called Katherine Street but they changed it to Madison.

JH: Okay

WB: The three of us girls, I got pictures of us, we were standing there ‘cause one of the girls worked there. I’m at the grocery store so I’m over there not going to work that day. So we’re just standing there at about lunch time on the corner just talking to each other. Then comes this jeep with these soldiers and he jumped out with that helmet they wear and pointed that rifle at us and told us to move out.

JH: Of course you had not known anything big was going on.

WB: We weren’t doing anything because the riot wasn’t affecting that area where they were coming; it was mostly Blacks in that area. But there he was, I don’t know why he was feeling his cheerios I guess.
He was a pretty young guy. I went back to my mother-in-law’s, she went back to work. The store, we had to let so many people in because that area was devastated. In there in Warren, all the way to the Boulevard and Hastings

JH: You’re talking about your grocery store, you let people in.

WB: Right. From Hastings back to Woodward Avenue. And of course all of the stores were out of commission. Because most of the stores were white stores. There was another Black store. Mr. Gibbs, he had a store right around Kirby and Beaubien. But you let so many people in the store, wait on them, and then you let them out. Because all the other stores were closed and people needed food. Then the soldiers would come by and ask if we wanted to chase them away. They were orderly, they weren’t creating a disturbance.

JH: So was it mostly Black people waiting outside?

WB: Right, because that area then was mostly Black.

JH: During this time was your husband working at the store or in the service?

WB: He worked at the store. In fact, he worked at Ford’s at night.

JH: Do you remember what plant he worked at?

WB: The Wood’s Plant, I think it was. But it was a time, it was really a time. A horrible time.

MC: Do you have any memory of the Chene Ferry Market?

WB: Who?

MC: Chene Ferry Market

WB: The Ferry Market? Oh yes. Ferry Market, we would go there. The Eastern Market and the Ferry Market. The Eastern Market was the big market, especially in the summertime. In the wintertime, the produces houses were lining up along, that was Russell Street. The produce houses were those places where they ship in produce from everywhere. The grocery stores would go into the produces houses to get the produce for theirs stores. You know like the fruits and vegetables in the wintertime. In the summertime you had the farmer’s market at the Eastern Market. Which was under that shelter that they have. And then the farmers brought their products in from their farms around the state, would come in to the Eastern Market. And that was a place, that was a busy place. Especially in the summertime.

MC: How did you get to the Chene Ferry Market? Did you walk, drive?
WB: Oh at that time I had a car. We had cars at that particular. But there was a time that I didn’t have a car that I went to the market, east market, and we walked. I can remember we went in there and it was like, I remember we going down three embankments and crossing like a stream and coming up around there around Antietem and Gratiot. Somewhere in there. We used to come in there, there’s a church. There’s a White church that sat right there. I think it was St. John’s.

JH: On Antietem?

WB: it was in there.

JH: Are you talking about Chene Ferry?

WB: I’m talking about going to the Eastern Market. What we called a shortcut. We would go in that way rather than go all the way around.

JH: Was it a big church?

WB: Yes. I think it’s still there.

JH: Yes. It’ll come to me. I know what you’re talking about. It’s a German church I think it is?

WB: I don’t know whether it was German. All I know was i a catholic church I thought.

JH: Yeah, I think it was German Catholic.

MC: So you shopped mainly at Eastern Market and not Chene Ferry?

WB: I didn’t work there at Eastern Market because of the fact that, I don’t know why I went more to Eastern Market. Later years I can remember going to Ferry Market. But it was much later because after I had the store we were closer to the Eastern Market and so therefore those years that I was in the store business I got my food from the store and we got it all from the Eastern Market, not Ferry Market. And Ferry Market like up there in Hamtramck area.

MC: So you ran the store after graduating from Cass?

WB: Oh yes

MC: And how long?

WB: My husband worked, my husband worked for Kroger’s store.
JH: He worked for the company or the store?

WB: He was a clerk in the Kroger store.

JH: Which Kroger’s?

WB: Right, it used to be there on St. Aubin and Chestnut I think it was, yeah. Right across from where we had a store. And of course, it was always a man. At that time the clerks wore shirts and ties, you know, in the store. I remember going, back when they came out with this infra-ray meat, Kroger came out with infer-red meat. It was a meat that they took through some kind of violet ray that broke down the sinews in the meat and made it extra tender. Because you know like, we used to eat, we had to store. And you would take meat and put it in the refrigerator and let it age. And then you would bring it out, you would have to trim it off because all that outer area was not edible. You take a piece of meat this big and it will end up being this big. But Kroger came out with this infra-ray and they would run it through that violet ray some way and it would break down the sinews the meat.

JH: So you said your second Bouier’s grocery store that you guys had was on Kirby and ?

WB: No, it was on Theodore and Beaubien.

JH: Theodore.

WB: Mr. Turner Matchett had a restaurant in that same building. Kroger’s used to have that store where we ended up being there on Beaubien and Theodore and they had gone out of business.

JH: What was your store like if you walked in there?

WB: Okay, we entered from the Beaubien side. And we had our huge display window to the left. My husband growing up in the Kroger store he was an expert in putting in window and we always had a beautiful window display. The opposite of the window display to the back was the meat counter. The way the customer’s counter, as you entered, the counter was straight ahead. The window here and the counter here. We had a very good display of meat.

JH: So the meat was all the way in the back?

WB: Yes.

JH: And then the meat counter there.

WB: Right.

JH: Okay.
WB: And the refrigerator was behind the meat counter. And we did display of meat at that particular time. The meat was cut and displayed on a tray. You had to know how to lay them to make them look attractive. And we always kept a very good meat counter so it looks good when you came in. we separated it with this artificial green, oh it’s like foliage in between

JH: Looks like grass kind of

WB: Right. That’s how I learned to be a butcher.

JH: So who would come into your store? Mainly people from the church would come in?

WB: All the people in the area, in the area there. There was a White store across the street from me. Mr. Matchett had the Pelican Restaurant in the same building. There was a bar, they called it Sam’s? Next to the White grocery store. Then on the corner of Warren and Beaubien was an apartment building and it had a drug store in the basement. Across from it was another drug store, doctor’s office was upstairs. That’s on Warren Avenue. Down from the drug store was, there were houses that had been converted into business. We had a dentist there and then a moving company was there. Across the street was a music person, oh what was it called.

JH: Did you keep any certain special products or foods in your store that people would specifically come to your store to get?

WB: We used to make a pork sausage. And the day we were going to make sausage everybody knew it. We made a barrel of sausage and we would sell it all out in one day. It was a good sausage.

JH: Did you have a smoker?

WB: No, it wasn’t smoked. It was a fresh pork sausage. And like I said, I would open up the store and my husband would be at the market picking up the produce and I opened up the store. And I always had this man, and he would make it his business to come to the store early in the morning. And I told my ladies, I think he knew nobody was there but me because my husband was down at the market picking up produce and I’m opening up the store. They had already set up the meat counter with certain things. But he would want a T-bone steak. I think the just wanted me to cut that thing. And I said now look, I can cut the steak but I cannot lift the side out to put it on the counter. And he would go in there and put the side on the meat locker and I would cut him that steak. And he would do it often. I remember that we bought meat from Lowenstein brothers, which used to be right there at Vernor and Gratiot. And it was a huge place. And when you went in there to buy meat, they had it graded. They had Grade A, Double A, Grade B, Double B, Grade C. and it was really something to go in there and see all the meats this way. There was like half cows on display. And the livers were on display. And you go through and pick out the meats that you want. Very interesting. And I look now at the display of meats and whatever they want to charge you up different price they give it a different name. But the cow only has
certain portions of the body of the cow but they give it different things to get a different price. I went to the store the other day and they had something about Texas

JH: Texas Broil.

WB: Texas Barbeque. And it’s only the pork butt. That you get on the pork where the ham comes in, and at the end of the ham is the section they call the butt, and it becomes a piece of meat like this. And we used to get the pork steaks from that. Now I told her the only difference was, instead of slicing it they cut it in lengths about this wide a piece, a whole butt, and that’s what they call a Texas pork, a Texas barbeque. And I say boy, it’s something to learn about meat. And how you, at a butcher shop they tell you how you split a thigh, how you separate the leg from the other part. You have to cut it in a certain place. And when you know you cut it in the right place, when it separates there’s a little bone in there and it would be about the size of a quarter and it fall off. And you know you cut it in just the right place.

JH: So when you had the store on Theodore and Beaubien were there any sort of places that you and your husband would go out to, to have like a drink

WB: That’s where those pictures that I’ve got, when we went to the Three 6s, there were several places. I was not a frequenter, because I did not drink. They would always send me a big glass of whatever that was, lemonade or something. They like I’m drinking too. I never did drink. But there was a society of Black people that really were night club people. And what they called the Valley was where the Three 6s was. They had first class entertainment there. They had waiters. And everything was like on a first class basis or something. They had tablecloths and napkins and all the works.

JH: What kind of music did they have there?

WB: At that particular time, you know, we were doing jazz. We weren’t into pop stuff, beginning to get into the pop. But mostly we did jazz, blues, they did blues.

JH: Any other clubs you remember?

WB: There was another club--

MC: The Twelve Horsemen.

WB: The Twelve Horsemen was over there on Hancock. It was an old building but they had this nice club in there where they drank and whatever. And there was the Felts Lounge.

JH: Where was the Felts?
WB: It was over on, it’s still there. There was another place. Of course they started permitting Blacks to go to the Graystone Ballroom. They would have certain nights that they had them there. I never was into that scene so I don’t know too much about that. But they did have it.

MC: Do you remember some of the musicians that came?

WB: Do I remember?

MC: When did your husband die?

WB: My husband die? We were separated. We were married about, what, 17 years? He died in Tennessee I think it was. He moved to Tennessee. At that time I was working. I had started working for a moving company.

JH: What moving company?

WB: I worked for Russell’s Moving Company. And we were licensed. We had local and we had our intrastate license where we could go on someone else’s reciprocity and pick up in Michigan and load there, and unload, and pick up on somebody else’s reciprocity and bring it back to Michigan. We had an unloading license in Michigan. And we worked with the Ferguson’s Moving Company out of Cincinnati. They would use our license to unload in Michigan. And of course we could book jobs going all over the United States and travel under other company’s license. Our office was like a hub in the north for all the truck drives that would come in all over the city, all over the state. That’s how I learned quite a lot about what was going on here and there. Quite an experience. I can remember how we used to swing a piano. And funny thing, they used to call me and talk about the piano and I’m asking them where the piano and all that kind of stuff. The fellows taught me how to swing a piano. So I could talk that talk. I never swung a piano, but I could talk that talk. Whoever the customer would know I knew what I was talking bout. I believe that wherever you work you learn what’s going on, whether if you’re participating in it or not. Know the procedure. It helps you out in later years. I know that certain types of furniture you can’t take it in straight. I knew which end should go in first, around the curve you know. How to shift weights. All those things I learned about the moving business. There was no facet of the moving business you could talk to, about, that I didn’t know. I made it my business to know.

JH: So where did you go to the doctor and dentist and places like that? Even when you were a little kid, up until

WB: Um, right. Okay. There was a dentist that was second door from me when I was fourteen at Russell. There was the doctor’s office on the corner above the drug store.

JH: Do you remember their names?

WB: It’ll come back to me. The Doctor was Doctor Thompson, who lived--
JH: Was this the same doctor that came to your house when your father died?

WB: Yes, Doctor Thompson.

MC: And this was a Black doctor?

WB: Yes he was a Black doctor. They were all Black doctors. I was fortunate enough that I never had to go to the hospital or anything, you know in my younger years. But I had Black doctors, I can't remember their names. I see their faces good. I can remember the Mezeichs had a grocery store, drug store there, in the basement.

MC: Do you remember any on Chene Street? From living on Fort and Monroe?

WB: I don't ever remember going to the doctor.

MC: What about a dentist?

WB: Until I was about--

MC: Were there any funeral homes on Chene you can remember?

WB: The first funeral home, not on Chene. There was one on St. Aubin. There was one on Hancock and Beaubien. AG Wright Funeral Home.

JH: What about, you were talking about when I first came in, the Lory Brothers? Lafayette and Chene, what stuck so much in your head about Lory Brothers?

WB: It was a nice, neat store. Very neat. And It was the closest store to us. That's where we shopped.

JH: Oh when you were on Fort.

MC: Can you describe it?

WB: It was a brick building. It was large. There were rides and everything. Very neat. And they were very congenial people.

JH: What about your house on Fort? What did that look like?

WB: It was a two story house, frame. We did not have--it had, we had 2 bedrooms, living room, dining room, kitchen. We did not have a furnace, we had a heater. We had a gas stove, it was an old fashioned gas stove. It was when, the burners were on the side, the oven was on the other side. First we had a
refrigerator, not—an ice box, no an ice box not a refrigerator. It was like, an ice compartment, and then it had a side, and another ice compartment. The amazing thing about this was that food didn’t spoil like it does now.

MC: You remember the ice man?

WB: I don’t even remember him but I remember we had to get ice every day, I do remember that.

JH: And your house on Chestnut, do you remember that one?

WB: We didn’t live on Chestnut; it was just a grocery store. It was a large building on Chestnut and St. Aubin. That’s where we had the grocery store.

JH: I was talking about where you lived before you lived on Fort Street.

MC: Monroe.

JH: Monroe that’s right.

WB: It was two story building, it was a green building. We lived upstairs. And the Italian people lived downstairs.

JH: Do you remember their names at all?

WB: We called them Ma and Pa, that’s all we called them, you know?

MC: What about your neighbors at the other house?

WB: On Fort street?

MC: Yeah

WB: I had White neighbors who lived next door to me

MC: You guys got along?

WB: They were the landlords, we got along very well. Don’t ask me their names because I don’t remember. We got along very well. I had no problem with people, during my lifetime. Although I was aware that, where we were to go and where we were not to go. Sorry about that but there it was, just one of those things. So as we learned we’d do better, that was my thinking. And I can remember on Lafayette and Jos. Campau there was a rug company in there. And I can remember they had an oriental rug of a dragon. And I’m telling you, you go through that in the dark, when it’s dark, and the streetlights
aren’t on, it looked so real, like that dragon was going to jump right out at you. It was kind of scary when you young. And yet, coming from church, junior church, we would always take the long way home. Cause that’s our courting time. Holding hands and walk all the way around the cemetery there at Elmwood Cemetery. Now you know how far that is. Well, living on Fort but we did all that walking to take the long way home.

MC: So it was safe walking?

WB: Hum?

MC: You felt safe?

WB: Oh yeah, things were safe. Safety doors, we didn’t have all that. The nearest thing we had was a latch key, it was that, what do they call that key? It was a common key. I could lock just about any doors.

JH: do you remember any crime? Any gangs? Like groups of kids, get together?

WB: You know, we always had kid pranksters, but I didn’t know anything about serious stuff. They were just prankster stuff. Like Halloween we threw eggs, you know. That kind of a thing. Nothing like burning down people’s houses or all that carrying on. When I first moved here my porch was not screened in and I only had an ordinary screen door. And it just had a hook on. I didn’t worry about it, I put the hook on and leave the door open all night in the summer time. I didn’t bother about that at all. It’s just in the later years that we got introduced to crime and crime became what it is today. And there we are right now.

JH: When you were living on Fort Street, you didn’t tell me a whole lot about the stores that were in the neighborhood. Grocery stores and stuff, except for Lorry’s store and stuff.

WB: That was the big store in the market. The little store was the one next door to us.

JH: What was that called?

WB: it was just a grocery store and I don’t even remember the people’s name.

JH: And that was the one on Fort?

WB: On Fort and Chene.

JH: Where did your mom go?

WB: My mother was a home-body.
JH: Where did she go and get her food?

WB: We either went to Lorry Brothers or we went just for little things, the little store right downstairs. If we wanted me and things we went to Lorry Brothers.

MC: Who did your hair when you were younger? Did you get it done on Chene?

WB: I’m trying to remember that store, that beauty shop. I didn’t start going to the beauty shop, until, oh I start going in high school. Most of the time mom would wash my hair. At that time I had lots and lots of hair. And we just washed it, combed it, and I wore a braid on the top and two braids on the side. I didn’t start getting my hair done until I started going to high school. And I remember getting my first Marcel wave. A Marcel wave was done with an iron. I learned going to the beauty shop, when I started going to high school I started working the beauty shop. I learned how to do all that stuff. Curling iron. Then they graduated to another where the handle didn’t rotate. This way you had to turn the whole iron, but this way the hand rotated. The marcel iron, the marcel you did with the iron. Later on they did what you called the Pocono curl. The Pocono curl they curled the hair all over. Then you took the comb and combed it through to set it. And you set it with your hand in the comb. Like now when I do my hair now, I wash my hair, I use a warm comb. I don’t get a perm. I don’t get a perm, I had one in a lifetime. I don’t know if it was from the medication or from the perm, but it turned my hair yellow. And she had a hard time getting my hair back to the gray, so I didn’t get any more perms. I still don’t get a perm. I never wash it. And right now I can wash it, or warm comb it. And I can take my hair and push it, and a wave will set in it. I know how to reset that wave back in there. I very seldom curl it.

MC: Do you have any other memories of Chene Street?

WB: Chene Street, let’s see. What else, that’s where most of the. There was a drug store on Chene Street too.

JH: Do you remember where at or what it was called?

WB: No, that was Jos. Campau, I’m sorry. There was a drug store there but I was thinking of the one on Jos. Campau and Monroe. There was a drugstore there. I can remember the girl, you know, Michigan has always had bad weather you know. And one time we had winter, and when you have the fancy boots like we have now. We had old cumbersome boots. And we had to wear long underwear and you girls don’t know anything about that. And I can remember going around the corner to this drug store. It was a big archway and it had a little landing and I’d go in there and roll the underwear up and going to school and when I came home I’d roll the underwear down because I knew momma was gonna get me. But that was one of those times that--

JH: This was on Jos. Campau and Monroe?

WB: and Monroe.
MC: When did your mother pass?

WB: my mother passed in 1994. She lived to be 100 years old.

MC: ... (?)

WB: Yes. I kept her at home all that time. After my father died she came to live with me. As I said, very trying times, I was going through a divorce. When my father died, momma came to live with me. I worked overtime. I worked for a Black firm, it was called what—Mar-vel Unlimited. They were. [phone rings] A telemarketer. I don’t talk to them, I just listen and cut them off. Where were we?

JH: Talking about your mother moving in.

WB: Mother came and moved in with me.

JH: You were going through a divorce.

WB: Yes. I was working at Mar-vel Unlimited it. Which was. At that time this was the beginning of rehabbing buildings in the city of Detroit. I think we must have had 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, about 7 buildings. The government gave out a grant and these 7 buildings, and they give what they call a rehab. We had a building at Collingwood and Woodrow Wilson. That was rehabilitated from the apartment building that it was. They went and redone the apartments on the inside. We had 2 there. We had 1 on Pingree and 14th and one on Blaine. Two over here on the east side. Agnes and one on the Boulevard. I worked for them. And after I left there I, where did I go? I was thinking about not working anymore, I was getting old. But I did work somewhere else. I went to work for Detroit Area Agency on Aging. Where I worked with senior people. 55 and older. And under that program they were hiring seniors that were 55 and older. They worked like 4 hours a week at places like neighborhood City Hall. We also worked at some of the other senior buildings. And I worked there until momma start getting sick. And I tried to continue to work, but then it come to me that I’m paying more money out than I’m making, so I came home to take care of momma. I didn’t really want to retire then because my pension did not set in, but thank the Lord, He made the little bit become much. So I kept her until she died, in 1994.

JH: What happened to Bouier’s when you were divorcing your husband?

WB: That’s how things just went caput. The store closed and all that.

JH: Do you know what happened to the building there? Is it still there? Or you moved from Theodore and Beaubien?

WB: We moved from Theodore and Beaubien to Owen and Russell. And that’s, we closed there.
JH: Do you remember the last year that you were in business?

WB: Here we go with years again. I throw them out of my mind and that’s a bad thing. I can remember, I think there was an eye doctor in that burgundy building. And the building that we were in was a beauty shop. And the Mount Moriah Church was down the street. And there was a funeral home, it’s still there. They moved across the street now. It’s still there. And last I remember the grocery business.

JH: What about, we talked about the ’43 riots. Do you have any memories about the ’67 riots at all? Like personal memories? Do you remember seeing anything happening?

WB: Yes, I was working at the moving company then. And, oh, people were terrible. Doing crazy stuff, you know? They did a job on all the businesses that were on, Hastings was like a hub street for businesses. And oh, they destroyed everything.

MC: Like set fires, broke glass?

WB: Yeah. Oh, it was a terrible thing. Because, I was living here. And there was a, there used to be a fish market, and a grocery store, right here on Canfield. That, part of that building is still there. It’s a church now. I can remember that down Warren Avenue they broke in all those businesses, the drug stores and what have you. It was a mess. And I tried to shut it out my mind because it was a very unpleasant time. Because I can’t approve in my mind of what was really going on. I was always taught violence brings violence. You don’t solve anything, because if you’re violent, I get violent, and then we got a bad thing. Somebody has to hold their peace. But on the other side of the ledger, people think they have reached the saturation point, I’m tired of this and I don’t want it to happen to me anymore, so there’s a rebellion. Hopefully, we’re still rebelling. Like Bible times. There’s always rebellions and they haven’t stopped yet. But I keep praying that if man grow wiser, that they don’t grow foolisher.

JH: Do you have anything else you want to ask?

MC: No.

WB: Well I think I’m talked out.

MC: Well thank you.

JH: Thank you very much.

WB: Well I hope that we will learn more about history. Because history can make the future better. I think that when we hide something it’s like a river. They say a river goes so far that it cleans itself. Life is the same way. And so there has to come a time for cleaning. 3.4 STOPPED AT 0:25 SECONDS.
Interview with Willa Bouier  
Conducted by Marian Krzyzowski, Joe McKean (sp?) and Ashley Bell  
For  
The Chene Street History Project  
February 10, 2006  
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MK: This is a follow up to an interview we already did with Ms. Bouier a couple years ago. And I appreciate you being willing to sit down with us and give us your time. What I’d like to do is maybe begin by asking you where you lived. I know you told us, let me say what I remember. You lived on Monroe, then you lived on Fort. And then I don’t know where you lived from the interview. All I know is that you owned some stores. You owned a store on I think St. Aubin and Chestnut. And then you owned a store on Beaubien and Theodore. And then one on Owen and, what was the last one? Owen and something. Owen and Russell. But when you moved up here, you said your dad live don Monroe and that’s where you first lived. And then you moved to Fort Street from there, okay. That fort street house, can you describe it for me? Do you remember it? What it looked like?

WB: Yes, it was a two family. We didn’t have a full basement. We had a part basement. And we used a coal stove at that time. We didn’t have a refrigerator, we had a icebox. We had a gas stove. There were people downstairs and we lived upstairs. We had two bedrooms. A living room, a dining area, and a kitchen. We had a backyard. And I never saw such large, what do you call the word that you fish with? That I saw at that house. And when spring came you know, they would come out and they were big. What else did we have out there? We had a lot of asparagus out in the yard.

MK: Did you have a garden. Did your mom or dad have a garden in there?

WB: Yes, we would have somewhat of a garden.

MK: Was there a garage or barn out back?

WB: No.

MK: Was there an alley behind the place?

WB: There was an alley. I think I have a picture of that house.
MK: Okay great. That’d be great. And, how did you get upstairs? Was there an entrance from the front or from the back?

WB: From the front.

MK: IT was separate fro the downstairs? It was separate entrance?

WB: We had a common entrance. And there was a stair to the left and she went to the right.

MK: And when you got up to the top of the stairs, what room did you come into?

WB: We came in through the dining area.

MK: Okay, okay. And the bedrooms were to the back of the house?

WB: The bedrooms were to the side. Like if there’s a common area, like we call a dining area. The bedrooms are on the side. The kitchen was directly in back of the dining area. The living room was on the front side. There was like al hall when you came up the steps you could make like a right turn and go into the living room.

MK: The ice box is in the kitchen I assume.

WB: Oh yes.

MK: So how did the ice man, did he have to lug up the ice up the stairs in the front there?

WB: or we could get it yes.

MK: Did you have those little cards you put in the window for how many pounds of ice? Or how did he what to bring?

WB: We had set days, you know, for him to come by.

MK: Was he a black man or a white man, do you know?

WB: You know, I don’t even remember.

MK: so you lived there when you were going first to Duffield then Miller. Then Cass Tech. you know Ashley and I went to Cass Tech. I graduated in ’66. Ashley, when did you graduate?

AB: ... (?)
MK: So you got 3 Cass Tech grads here.

WB: I was there when Mrs. Lindbergh was there. You know. She wore a hat all the time and never took it off.

MK: This was at Cass?
WB: At Cass.

MK: She lived on the East side, or no?
WB: I don't know, no I don't know.

MK: So, excuse me. You lived on Fort Street when you went to Cass. How'd you get to Cass from home?

WB: I would get the Jefferson streetcar. And it came at 7:30 in the morning and it took you all the way to Cass. And I had one friend, now I’m trying to remember her name. That’s what I’m having a hard time with names. But she lived on Lafayette and Chene. And I had a little scarf that I put in the window if I was gone. If she saw that scarf she knew I was already on my way, you know. And we usually met up to get that street car every morning to go to Cass.

MK: So then after Cass you went to a beauty school I think you said? Or you went to some kind of apprenticeship right?

WB: I have to think. I did so many schools. I went to school every opportunity that I got that I didn’t have to pay an arm and a leg for. I worked under a beautician. At that time you really could get grandfathered in. But me, I have a tendency to want to know what I’m doing and why I’m doing it. And as much knowledge about what I’m doing as I can find out. I’m a curiosity person. I did go to a beauty school, but I didn’t complete the course. I decided I didn’t want to know it. But I wanted to know how. I still know how. I think after I left here, I did civil service, or nurses aid over at, and I passed. And I worked over at Herman Kiefer for a while. Now I didn’t think that was me either, so I got a job as, let me think, did I get married? I got married--

MK: Was this to Mr. Bouier? Benjamin Bouier?

WB: Yes, yes. And my husband was working for Kroger’s right there on St. Aubin. And after we got married, uh, what was that man’s name, I should never forget. He had a store right across from Kroger’s, and he had decided that he would no longer be able to work. And he more or less turned it over to my husband and we started the grocery store. Well it’s a new thing for me, I gotta get in there and learn something about that. Like I told you I’m curious. So I learned how to be a butcher. I could cut meat as well as the boys, you know. And we left there and moved to Theodore and Beaubien.
MK: when you had that store on Chestnut and St. Aubin right, where were you living?

WB: Let’s see now. First I lived, after I got married I moved to St. Aubin just across Gratiot, what was the name of that street? Adelaide? I think it was Adelaide. It was about the first street from Gratiot and St. Aubin.

MK: South of Gratiot or north of Gratiot.

WB: North. It was like a converted apartment where you had a bedroom and a small kitchen. And there was three people in that particular building.

MK: So you and your husband lived there.

WB: Right.

MK: Did you guys have a car then, or not?

WB: Let me see now. My father had a car. And he gave us his car. It was a ’36 Ford. Yeah. I think I got pictures of that car. And, but that didn’t happen until, because I left Adele and moved into the Brewster Projects and I didn’t stay there very long. I lived on Benton Street in the Brewster Projects.

MK: Were you still married then with Mr. Bouier.

WB: Yes.

MK: So you lived in Brewster after that, after living up on. Oh you had, also, could you have moved from, let’s see. You moved from Fort over to Atley, right.

WB: Adele

MK: Adele. Then you moved to Benton at Brewster.

WB: Well it looks like to me I stayed a couple of weeks with my cousins. My husband’s cousins. Because we had put in an application in to move into Brewster. And then I moved to Brewster. I didn’t, how long did we stay there? Someone broke into the house. And where did I go after I left the Brewster Projects?

MK: So all this was before the war?

WB: Yes.

MK: Before the war.
WB: See during the war we had moved the store over to--

MK: Theodore and Beaubien?

WB: Theodore and Beaubien.

MK: Why did you move over from St. Aubin to the Theodore and Beaubien store?

WB: Well, it was a better building, and a large facility. And, oh, and more in the hub part of things that were going on, you know.

MK: What was that neighborhood like, the Theodore and Beaubien, what was that?

WB: It was like, well, let's see. Mr. Matchett had the Pelican Restaurant there. It was his building that we moved into.

MK: What was his last name?

WB: Matchett. M-A-T-T-E-T-T something. He owned the Pelican Restaurant. Across the street there was a White grocery store. And there was a, I'm trying to remember those corners. There was a drug store on the corner of Warren and Beaubien. Mr. Russell had Russell's Moving and Storage on Warren, just east of the pharmacy. And, there was a music person. Moved there. Mr. uh, he was a, Perkins. He was an attorney. He lived next door to the moving company.

MK: A Black man?

WB: Yes. I'm trying to remember the name of the music person.

MK: What was it, it was like instruments and sheet music, or what?

WB: Yeah he taught music.

MK: Oh he taught music.

WB: Yeah. And also there was a dentist, that had offices over the place where Lawyer Perkins stayed.

MK: Were there any clubs in that section right there?

WB: Clubs? I'm not much into clubs. But there was a, the guys, the barber shop next door to the grocery store on the opposite side.

MK: The white-owned store.
WB: Yeah. And, uh, the guys used to come over there. Like people gather at barber shops. That’s as much as I knew. I wasn’t much into the, that part of the scene. But there was another lawyer that had an office, on Theodore side. What was his name? Can’t remember.

MK: So how long were you on Theodore and Beaubien? Were you there through the whole war years? Or were you still there after the war?

WB: We stayed there till after the war. And we left there, went to Owen and--

MK: And Russell. Why did you leave the Theodore/Beaubien location?

WB: Now that’s difficult. It was my husband’s idea. And things were, like, changing. That neighborhood was almost destroyed after the war you know.

MK: So the Owen and Russell business, was it on Owen or on Russell?

WB: It was on Owen.

MK: And, but it was on the corner of Russell, or?

WB: No it wasn’t the corner. Not it looked like to me an eye doctor, before you got to our place. And there was the beauty shop next door to our place. And, I’m trying to remember.

MK: Was this east of Russell or west of Russell? Closer to Downtown? I mean, which side of Russell was it on?

WB: We were on the southwest. See Russell’s like this, Owen’s like this. Okay. We were on, that would be the west side. And the south corner.

MK: Okay. Did it have a name? Or.

WB: Bouier Brothers.

MK: Bouier Brothers okay. And how long were you at the Owen and Russell location?

WB: We were there not awful long time. Because that’s when I, we start having troubles. I moved out on Nevada and Gallagher.

MK: When you separated you moved out then?

WB: No we were together when we moved out.
MK: Oh you moved on Nevada and Gallagher?

WB: We had a changing of minds. I started working for Russell Moving and Storage.

MK: The one on Warren?

WB: the one on Warren yes.

MK: What did you do there?

WB: I was chief cook and bottle washer. I was the telephone person that talked to people about moving. Convincing them that we were the ones to take the job. Mr. Russell, oh, I think it was 9 states. Including the State of Michigan. Loading and unloading.

MK: Was he a White man or a Black man?

WB: No, he was a Black man. And we aligned with Ferguson’s Moving out of Cincinnati. Because Cincinnati didn’t have loading and unloading license in Michigan. So he needed reciprocity to use our license, and we could use his license for those other 7 states that he had. So that gave us a broader scope.

MK: So where were you living then when you separated and worked at the Russell? Where were you living?

WB: I moved to my father’s house.

MK: And where was he living then.

WB: 7577 Cameron.

MK: So when did he move from Fort Street. Do you know? Was that at?

WB: My father moved, bought the house on Cameron. Do you remember when the veterans came through, you know, they gave the pensions? He used that money to buy the house on Cameron.

MK: Okay so after the war.

WB: Yes.

MK: Okay. But up till then he lived on Fort Street.
WB: He lived on Fort Street.

MK: So Cameron is where exactly?

WB: Cameron is north of East Grand Boulevard, about 2 blocks, it runs into the Boulevard. And we lived about, at the 3rd block. We were between Custer and Clay.

MK: So Cameron runs north-south.

WB: That's right.

MK: How far east of, let's say, St. Aubin. Where is it in that--

WB: In that vicinity? You know where Russell Street is? Where the old, what’s the name of that company? Was it Murray Body?


WB: It was on Russell. Cameron, it was.

MK: Was it east of Murray Body?

WB: It was west of Murray Body?

MK: Okay we can find that. And, so what was that house like?

WB: It was a two family flat.

MK: And he bought it out right?

WB: No, no. You made a down payment and we had a land contract.

MK: That house on Fort, did he own that one?

WB: No, no, no

MK: No he didn’t, he rented. Okay so this was the first house he owned.

WB: At the time my father worked at the stove company there on--

MK: Right on Jefferson,
WB: By Belle Isle there.

MK: So okay, so you then moved back in with him, on Cameron.

WB: Right. After I left my husband. And I started working for Russell. And in the meantime, a real estate company moved into the building. So I became chief cook and bottle washer for the two of them.

MK: Do you remember the name of the company at all?

WB: His name was Jones, Mr. Jones. And so, I worked the telephone for the two of them. And curiosity as I am I learned real estate till I got a real estate license. And while I working for there, the evenings I sold a couple houses and bought this house.

MK: Do you remember roughly what year you bought this house? Was it the ‘50s?

WB: Yep. It was before they built the Joy School over there. I was here when they built Joy School there.

MK: So you’ve lived here a long time.

WB: Oh long, too long, really.

MK: Half a century.

WB: Really. Shoulda moved long time ago. But I’m, you know, a single person now. On my own. And I’m working at the real estate company and moving company. And then Mr. Jones, I don’t know if he committed suicide or if somebody killed him I don’t know. So I cut the real estate out. So then one of the young men that worked for Russell had the opportunity to work for Northern Van Lines. And Mr. Cooper owned Northern Van Lines. And Mr. Cooper was getting elderly so he turned Northern Van Lines over to Claude Edmonson. So he needed someone who had the experience of talking and be able to convince whoever called to that we were the people they be choice of to move. So I learned moving business. How to swing a piano over the telephone. It was the guys that were swinging it. Because like I said, I learned whoever I worked for. I learned what they were about.

MK: Where were they at?

WB: It was on Joy Road. What was the name of that street now?

MK: It’s on the west side.

WB: Yes. You know Claremount turns. I’m getting confused. Claremount goes and it turns onto, what is that street? And the Coopers were on Gerard Road right in there.
MK: You used to drive all the way across town there?

WB: Yeah.

MK: You had your own car?

WB: Yeah.

MK: What kind of car did you have back then?

WB: Oh Lord. First I had, back when my husband and I was together, my father gave us a ‘32 Ford. Then we bought a Buick. I didn’t like it, it was something wrong with it. That’s when the Buick had a duel carburetor or something. And it wasn’t working good. So after I left my husband I gave that up. I ended up buying myself a car. It was a Ford. It was one of those Fords. I bought some Ford before I left Mr. Russell. Before I left Russell to go on. I had a Ford, somebody stole it. Broke my heart. Then I worked I worked and got me another one. And I think I got that, that car that I liked so much, that Ford Victoria. I liked that car. Well, I kept that for a while. And somebody hit me right in the middle. That guy, I’m going across the street and he just came on through and hit me. And after that I didn’t like that car anymore. I got another Ford. Oh I end up getting a Mustang, yeah [laughs]. I was Mustang Sally [laughs]. Yeah. And I kept that Mustang for a good while. Who did I work after I left Northern? Oh, when I was working for Northern, a Mr. Reed came by the office one day and he said to me, “Ms. Bouier, I want you to go and help my wife.” I said, “Your wife? Do what?” He said, “Well she keeps books for several business in the city and she need help.” I said, “I’ll think about it.” So I start working afternoons. Over there. I had had experience with some book keeping, but not on a schooling. Like I learned what you know. So I decided so I gotta do better than this. So I went to night school.

MK: Where at?

WB: I went to. There’s a school right over there on the expressway. It’s still there. What’s the name of that school? I went there for a while. Then I transferred to Lewis Business School. And while I’m doing all of this, Mr. Reid came back to me and said, “Ms. Bouier I have some people that the government has given a grant.” This time they were refurbishing apartment buildings. Rehabbing they call it. And they had given these young men a million dollars. And I think we had 9 apartment buildings. And I went there to work. And of course like I had some experience with, like I said I’d gone to school to learn the language. See you know the only thing separating professions is the language. If you can learn the language you can learn the profession. So I went there, and when I looked at the books, the girl was keeping the books in red. Well you know, red in book keeping is a bad thing, that means you’re in bad shape. And I couldn’t understand that. So I had to go back and bring those check books up to date. And I must have did about 3 years maybe going back to the start to get the checkbooks balanced. And I finally got ‘em balanced. And I stayed there. I had quite a bit of experience there. I learned a lot of stuff. I learned about, and I told my boss, I kept the books. I collected the money. I wrote the checks. I said to him one day, I said, “This is bad business.” He said, “What do you mean Ms. Bouier?” I said,
“Nobody should have that much authority. You really need to get some help. You need somebody to take some of these positions. Because it’s not good business for me to do all that. I got all of your money. Do what I want to do with it if I wanted to do with it.” And you understand what I’m saying. But that was never my thought because it was always of my opinion that if I make you grow, I in turn will grow. So we finally called in a couple people to help with the bookkeeping. But I was like the overseer. They were inexperienced, more inexperienced than I was. And I didn’t have any knowledge of apartment buildings. But like I say whatever I do I kind of learn something about it. But they, I guess they hired me. They would always do something stupid and I had to find a way to keep the books so they would always think they got no money in the bank. Because every time they thought they had some money in the bank they go out and do something stupid. And I know Uncle Sam will close you up if you do not pay that employment tax and keep that up to date. So that’s what I used to do. They finally lost the business. But they were good people at heart. But like I said, they were inexperienced. And didn’t have a lot of wisdom. I guess God gave me wisdom about some things. Otherwise I wouldn’t be able to live today because the time I was working, I wasn’t making any money if you know what I mean. But when I would go to the bank to bag their money, I never went to the teller. I always went in the office. And I got a chance to talk to the other people in the office. And I begin to learn things. When you begin to ask questions about things, people pay attention and they will start telling you different things. And I ran into a man, I don’t remember his name. But he sit down one day and talk to me about CDs, at that time, there were investments in the bank that paid an interest rate that was unheard of in the ordinary thing, you know. I heard about that. And I sacrificed. I should have signed this many for later. I don’t care what I have to do, no expense. And then I saved some of the money. And he helped me to get into a CD. And my money stayed there. And it rolled over, and it rolled over. And then I had a friend, a lady friend, we were at church together. She had lost her husband and she had really never worked. But she got a job because she had kids. And so we kept talking and I kept telling her about the government said that you could take up to a certain amount of your earnings and put it into an IRA and take it off your income tax, at the time, income tax time. So I start sacrificing so that I could do that to put this money in so that I could open up an IRA. Okay. Then when she started to work she started doing, we talked together, we were close. We start getting a Key Bill. I didn’t have enough to buy one, she didn’t have enough to buy one. But we trusted each other enough so we bought one together. It stayed there until she got enough to buy one on her own, and I got enough to buy one on my own. And that’s how I’m living today. Otherwise I couldn’t live. You know, because I wasn’t earning a lot of money, at all. Now I have enough money not to be able to get into health, but not enough to live and live fabulously on if you know what I’m saying. But I have an independent, you understand what I mean. Because I did not have family. My mother and my father were my only family. And I did not have any kids. And I lost it. And then my father died suddenly. And then I had mother. She was still up and around. My mother had never worked. Momma never worked. And now I got momma. Because at church, they weren’t paying no money at church at that particular time. I wasn’t earning any money and you wasn’t either. But then I brought momma here. And after I left the building that was my first time ever doing unemployment compensation. Okay, so that ain’t gonna work either. But I did, I started. I had momma. I had the house. And the son across the street at that particular time, they had a lot of activity over there. So I would go over there and I wanted to learn how to crochet. I learned how to embroider and that kind of stuff. So while I was over there one day a lady came there from Detroit Area Agency on Aging and she was talking...
and talking so after the meeting she had said if I can help anybody, I’m here. I’ll be here after the meeting. So I went up there and said to her, I said, I need a job, so if you got a job available you can help me that way. She said, you really want to work? I said yeah. So she took my number. And went back to the office the next day. I got a call to come in for an interview. And at that time Detroit Area Agency was serving seniors. They call a Title V Program. And they hired seniors 55 and older. And they work like 4 hours a day, 5 days a week. At different places like neighborhoods, City Hall, some of the apartment buildings. And that kind of things. So I went in there and I was working with them under. And while I’m working for him, I’m learning what’s going on. I learn everything that he sure knows. I did the filing, you know. I learned how to do the quarter statement. Because you had to make a statement to Lansing in, of the activity of the Title V program. I learned how to do that. In fact, I did the statement but he got the credit. But that’s all right with me because I have a job, you know what I’m saying. I believe, wherever you are you do your best. Somebody else will see you. Somebody did see me. And came to him and asked him would he share his position with me. He didn’t want to do that. Well okay, making ends meet. But now I would never upstage him because he didn’t know nothing about files. If the supervisor of the whole operation would come and ask him for something, he wouldn’t know where to find it. I would pick my time and go find it and when she turned her back I would put it on his desk. I would never upstage him to let them know that I was the one doing it. That wasn’t the thing to do. But he was a mean mess. You know, he would do some stupid things. I would say, you shouldn’t do that. It’s like rubbing the supervisor’s, you don’t want to do that. But finally they fired him and gave me the position. As coordinator for the Title V program. And it was a good program. It helped a lot of people that wanted to be helped. It gave people 55 and older and opportunity to do work other than menial labor. So I stayed there until I got mother. Then I’m working, mother got sick. I got to hire somebody to be here with momma. And I add up the cost and everything, I’m paying out just about as much as I’m making. So I may as well quit the job and come home and stay with momma. So that’s what I did. I wanted to stay there about 3 years more, and I could’ve had a pension if you know what I mean, and benefits. But momma was more important. I came home. And here we are. We battle this together. I was able to get some help for momma because momma’s income wasn’t very much. Although my daddy was a veteran, she got whatever the veterans were paying. But it wasn’t very much. And I kept my mother, she lived to be 100 years old. And she died over here at the Comerica Hospital. We were both in the hospital at the same time. You know, god is a good guy. He, I did not have any family. I’m all momma’s got. I got sick, I had to go to an emergency and they were going to keep me. But the lady that I had would come in and let me have a few hours to go to the store or whatever. And I talked to her and I talked to the doctor and I told them that momma was coughing and she might be coming down with something, you know. And then when I had to go to the hospital myself, the doctor made arrangements to get momma in the hospital. So we were in the same room in the hospital. So when she died I was in the same room with her. So what I’m saying is, they worked it out so that I wouldn’t be disturbed my momma being here. And I don’t know if everyone is doing what they should do or whatever. Because my mother had been to the hospital before and they put her on a feeding tube. But my mother was eating before she went to the hospital. I’m working, so I paid a lady to go at noon, to see her at noon cause I’m going to be there in the evening. But they put her on the feeding tube anyway. So when they do some stuff in the hospital, and I told the doctor, look, my mother was eating when she went to the hospital. And I believe she will eat again. And he said, you think you can get enough food for her? I said, I’ll tell you what, you let me
get in touch with the nutrition, let the nutrition tell me what she need to have and I’ll see that she get it. So that’s how I got off the feeding tube. I would cook. I had a little blender that I could blend the food because she had dentures and so it had to be blended so that she could eat it. I cooked everything that anybody cooks. I put it in little carts. I labeled it, dated it, and put it in the refrigerator. I made a menu for the lady that would come in here. This is what momma should have every day. I had a menu for the whole week. All the food was in the freezer. All she had to do was take it out and warm it. Momma got off the feeding tube and never got back on. I look at things that are happening right now. We have nursing homes. People’s attitudes have changing. People no longer really have compassion for whatever they are doing. They seem to be money oriented always. I do 9-5, do as much as I can while I’m 9-5. People deal with people, you have to have compassion and you have to be able to anticipate needs of a person. Sometimes it’s just a good word goes a lot. Go by and smile at them, say oh, how you doing today? You looking good today. Just a kind word. I had a friend that died not too long ago. She went to surgery to get a hip replacement. Hip replacement went fine, but they put her in a nursing home. She contracted some kind of communicable disease, they call it MRSA I think. That took the toll on her more than the hip replacement. Hip replacement never had no problem. She died of complications due to that. I’m bringing that in, I want somebody will keep in on people who are working, and giving services, would look past their job and look to the needs of the person they’re serving to. So I have a friend of mine that does it and I told her I said, she told me one of her patients is very depressed you know. And I say one day you talk to her and ask her if you can bring a friend along. And I say, I might be able to encourage her to know, hey, you’re still alive, you’re mobile, and learn how to do something. And encourage her so that she won’t be depressed. Because it seems as though her family isn’t looking after her. So she says she will. So I’m going over there one day. Try to encourage her. I don’t have family. I live here by myself. But I’m trying to do something. I need a new computer. I got one, but it’s an old, old one. Thinking I could buy a new one, but she could not take this old one. So I got a pot started. You may think it’s stupid or silly, but I know what my limitations are. So when I decide I want to do something out of the norm, I sacrifice something somewhere and start up so that I can buy this other thing that I think I need. They think I need a new TV. They said I’m gonna have to have an adaptor or something for the old TV. I looked at the prices of these TVs, oh Lord. So I say to young people this, as you work, I don’t care what you do, you put aside something that you will not touch for anything for your later years. It will aid you to go to school. Even though you get a grant, you need money to go to school. It doesn’t break everything. But we have a tendency to do what we want and beg for what we need. But I never was that, I never begged. I used to know kids who would get bags from Goodwill and all that stuff. Never got nothing. My father was too independent. I got my doll or whatever I got, and I was happy with it. You know what I’m saying. So it’s good to learn to be independent. Not arrogant. But learn to want to provide as much as you can for yourself, without having to ask. Now I’ve got a problem now.

MK: Now let me ask you though, I want to change gears a little bit.

WB: Okay. 4.8 STOPPED AT 6:33

WB: They had a mark, they all had a little grey patch. We were little kids. I never had a problem with people.
MK: When John and Monique were here, you said, when asked about Polish and Jewish you said, I don’t wanna go there. So what was that about?

WB: I didn’t know Polish people very well. I didn’t have any direct dealing with Polish people. Jewish people? I got along very well. In Northern Van Lines, he was a Jewish person. Got along very well. Because when I went out to work, he was still there. And he used to tell me all the time, “Mrs. Bouier, whatever you do, make sure that the files are up to date. So when the federal people come in, all you got to do is open the drawer and they have everything laid out for them. They find everything. They ain’t looking no further.” And that’s what I did. Because at that time you had to keep logs. Every driver had a log. This log had to be kept up to date. You had a mileage page. You had like, state roads, you had county roads, you had federal roads. Those books had to be up to date at all times. And that’s what I did. When the federal person came out there, all I had to do was open the drawer and go do my other work. And he’d go through that and never had any problems.

MK: In general, what, did you feel any kind of tension, animosity between the White, Black, and any of those? Either when you were back, living on Fort Street or later on when you were attending churches on Adele or Russell?

WB: No! Our landlord lived next door. And they were nice people you know. Got along very well. We never had any problems.

MK: You also mentioned Ben Turpin in your interview. Because Ben Turpin, people have different opinions about Ben Turpin. We’ll talk to people who think he was a pretty mean guy, arrogant and so on. Other people thought he kept order and you know, that he did the right thing.

WB: You know, my contact was that, he was a man that respected order. And I can remember that we didn’t have a theater. You know like I said, theaters were segregated. But we finally got a theater there on Catherine and Chene. At that time, they changed it to Madison now. But it was on Catherine and Chene. And while I was working for the moving company there was a man that we called Joe Brown. And Joe Brown used to get drunk. Ben Turpin would find him on the street drunk and put him in the back of the car and rode him around until he got sober. And took him home. He never would arrest him, because he wasn’t a rowdy person you know? And Joe used to tell me about this, how Ben Turpin used to pick him up. I’ve seen him go by guys on the corner shooting dice, you know. And he would yell out the window, “Boys, I want that corner when I come back!” What he means, don’t be here when I come back. And he’d go around and come back. And if they were gone, that was the end of that. So I think he was a compassionate person.

MK: Was he a big guy?

WB: He was a heavy set fellow. There was an Italian hall right there on Chene and--
MK: Fort?

WB: Fort Street. It was an Italian hall, oh it had beautiful weddings. I used to go over there and look in. We couldn’t go in, but we could see all the beautiful dancing you know, and listen to the music and all that. And he would be up there and he would let us stand outside and look, you know. And that kind of a thing.

MK: Did he have guns? Could you see his gun?

WB: Well yes. And he used that ride his car and we called it Big Four, you know. That kind of a thing. But I think he might have instilled in people that he was a mean people. But I don’t really think he was mean. But to be an officer, to be any supervisor or officer, or in any position you have to establish yourself as meaning what you say and saying what you mean.

MK: Another person that I’ve heard about and read about is Dr. Ossian Sweet. Did you ever come across Dr. Sweet?

WB: Yes, I used to go to Dr. Sweet.

MK: You did? Tell me about it.

WB: When he was right there on Warren Avenue upstairs over the drug store there on Warren. ‘Cause I used to have a problem with tonsillitis I think it was. I had to swab myself with some ugly looking stuff. All I remember is that I got well.

MK: How old were you then? So you were in your twenties? Or?

WB: Yeah, I had to be. I graduated from Cass, I graduated from Cass when I was 15 or 16.

MK: So you were young.

WB: I was young, yeah. I was young and didn’t have no direction. I think about it now because I wasn’t 16. I could’ve changed my curriculum, went to Commerce, and regarded who I wanted to graduate from. But not having, really, direction, I didn’t went on and graduate.

MK: So Dr. Sweet, what was he like? What did you look like? Do you remember him? Was he a dark skinned guy? Light skinned?

WB: HE wasn’t light. He wasn’t real, real dark. But you would know he was African American by looking at a glance.

MK: He had a brother too, a dentist. Did you ever meet him? No?
WB: The dentist that I did meet had an office there in the building that Perkins was in. He was, I should never forget him.

MK: Why is that?

WB: He was such a gentle dentist. I have, I should've looked it up. I was always a note keeper about something. I'm finding now I'm not remembering names like I used to, you know.

MK: That's okay. Do you have any questions? Okay. What I'd like to do now. Thank you. [BREAK IN RECORDING] So this is your husband right? This is Mr. Bouier at Brewster.

WB: Yeah that's my husband.

MK: Now this picture looks like it's at Messiah.

WB: No, no, no. This is on Adele.

MK: This is Adele? Okay, do you know anybody in this picture? Can you recognize them?

WB: I looked the other day I said Lord, I got these pictures and I don't write no names down. I don't remember any of these people. Let me get my glasses.

MK: No? Okay. ...[?] was a missionary?

WB: Yeah she worked on the missions. And she got killed. We had a storm here one year and she took shelter in a building and the building collapsed on her.

MK: Oh my. Okay. This is a picture of you. Is that by the church too?

WB: That's by, yep. That's part of Adele.

MK: Okay good. How old do you think you are in that picture?

WB: Oh lord, I was in my prime [laughs]. I had to be 25 up there. Because, like I told you, I got married early and I was in love at that time.

MK: So yeah, if you were 25, it would have been like, '42. So this is before '43, so like early '40s. Early '40s. And '43, after the fire bombing. I saw that in the history of the church that you have. Okay. This is a picture of you at Brewster. I think this is you, right?

WB: Yep, yep. This is where I lived. On
MK: Benton.

WB: On Benton.

MK: So that’s Benton. Okay. This one I know, your husband and you at Club 666.

WB: Yeah.

MK: This is one from the Club Congo. That’s your husband and you, but do you know who these people are?

WB: This is Mr. and Mrs. Um, oh Lord. They had, Gibbs. Gibbs. Yeah. They had a grocery store on Beaubien right up there, at that Great Lakes Building. At Kirby there.

MK: Okay. Now, this is the Burkes, now I assume, this is Carl and this is Robert. Or is this Robert and this is Carl? Do you have an idea?

WB: Yeah, this is Carl. And this is Robert.

MK: Okay so I got it wrong.

WB: And that’s the father right in the middle. And Carl ended up being, ended up being an engineer. Robert ended up, he’s a doctor.

MK: He’s still living?

WB: Yeah.

MK: And where, in Detroit?

WB: Yeah.

MK: And what’s the relation to you? What’s the connection?

WB: His mother, was my father’s, brother’s, daughter. My grandmother raised him.

MK: So his mother, was your father’s, what now?

WB: Brother’s, daughter.
MK: Brother’s, daughter. Okay. Related to your dad’s side of the family. Okay. Now this is a picture of your dad and mom, right?

WB: That’s right.

MK: And who’s this cousin Tom?

WB: Tom was the son of my mother’s sister. But he lived with my grandmother for his early years. And grandmother had died, so daddy went south and we were bringing him back to go live with his mother.

MK: Okay, so mother’s sister. What was you’re her maiden name, your mother’s maiden name.

WB: My, Auntie Ida was Harris.

MK: Harris okay. Ida Harris, was that her name?

WB: Yeah, that was my grandmother, my mother’s mother was a Harris.

MK: Okay, so. But your mother’s sister’s name was what?

WB: Ida.

MK: Ida, okay. And this is where? This is on Fort Street?

WB: That’s on Fort Street.

MK: Okay.

WB: This was like a schoolyard. And this is a playground in here. And I lived on the opposite side of that.

MK: Okay, so this is on Fort. Great. Okay. Now this is husband’s mother and father, right?

WB: Yeah.

MK: What were their names? Do you remember their names? And this is you by the way, right?

WB: That’s me. Oh Lord. Names, they go in time.

MK: He’s a good looking man.

WB: He was.
MK: He looks like Joe Louis, almost a little bit?

WB: Yeah kinda sorta when you look at it. Momma, give me time to remember.

MK: Okay. This is Fort Street, too, right?

WB: I don’t think so.

MK: No?

WB: Where were we when we took this? This is not Fort Street.

MK: Okay, let me cross this off then cause I have Fort Street on this. We don’t know what street this is. This is a picture of your dad and his mother, right?

WB: Yes.

MK: And who’s this?

WB: That’s my husband.

MK: This is your husband? No kidding

WB: Yeah!

MK: Where was this? Where was this picture taken?

WB: This was taken. Where was this? This is uh

MK: Is this Fort street or not?

WB: No that was not Fort Street

MK: Is that the same one as this then?

WB :This was taken out around 6 mile I think. I’m sorry. I don’t really remember where this picture was taken. But it was not Fort Street.

MK: Okay. And this is not Fort Street either?

WB: No. This is out on, past 6 mile. What’s the name of that street? Because his aunt lived out there.
MK: This is a nice picture of you and your husband. Do you know where this is at?

WB: This is taken at my house on Gallagher. And this is that Mrs. Russell. Do you remember I told you I worked for Ms. Russell?

MK: Right.

WB: This is Mrs. Russell.

MK: Do you remember the address at Gallagher?

WB: I probably got some cards down there in that barrel.

MK: And Gallagher, and what you say, Gallagher and what was

WB: It was, I lived between Minnesota and Nevada.

MK: Nevada, right. Nevada, between Nevada and Minnesota. Okay good. This is the neighbor boy you said lived on the first floor of Fort Street, is that right?

WB: Yeah. And I been trying, that’s what I told you. I got all these pictures of him. And of the people who lived downstairs under me.

MK: But you don’t remember his name?

WB: I can’t recall his name to save my life. And that’s him too. They moved down here on Tennessee.

MK: This is a picture of your dad and--

WB: No, no no.

MK: That?

WB: That’s a picture of one of the young ministers at our church. He became a minster under my father. What was his name? I don’t remember.