

Bill Conyngham's remarks re Guthrie
7-93

Guthrie School named for Bill's grand-
father, George W. Guthrie who was
Chairman of the W-B School Board
President until his death in 1915 when his friend
Jim Coughlin took over as President.

This is the same Guthrie who came here
from Chester Co. (to Miners Mills to teach
school) as a young man - "farm boy"
and then changed paths to "read"
medicine with Dr. Mayer (Maier) who
lived on site of S. River St. Conyngham
House.

Also - Eleanor Mayer? - Peter? - wife of
Dr. Mayer - relative of Mrs. Conyngham's -
Charles Parish lived next door or Mary
Conyngham did or? + ? best friend of
Eleanor. - ? had 1 daughter, named her
Eleanor etc. -

Univers: 17 - 7-16-93

The Annette Evans Faculty and Alumni House,
Wilkes College, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania. View
looking toward the Susquehanna River Common.

Hi Marilyn - Duthie School was
named for (Bill, Guth, Jack) the Conyn-
gham's grand father, George W. ... who
was head of the W-B School Board
'til death in 1915 (when his pal
Jim Conyngham - Marilyn Rudolph's
relative) took over. This is same
Duthie who came from Chester Co.
to teach school (in Plains) & later
to read "medicine" with Dr. Mayer
who lived on site of our (Wilkes')
Conyngham Center. ... left to "by
that Dr. Duthie's daughter Jesse
(Bill's mom) - Small world. maybe we
can meet in Aug. to garner more
info. Happy Summer - Betsy C.

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HERE

POST CARD

ADDRESS

Mrs. Richard Maslow
R.D. # 4
Dallas, PA 18612

Bill Conyngham's comments re our Conyngham Hall #1.

• Gene Farley was smart! He never indicated which bldg...
Chase or Conyngham #1 was the first bldg. given to
Wilkes (B&JC) — so they both were first!

• Conyngham = 120 S. River St.

— Richard Robinson was Mrs. Conyngham's ^{by a sister? —} nephew, but
practically her son. His parents had died. Conyngham
took him in at age 6, but never formally adopted
him.

— Jack Markle (Hayleton) married another of her sisters

— In 1906 ---?

— Richard offered Hayfield to Dr. Farley for B&JC, ^{Wilkes}
but he declined unless endowment
came along w. gift !!! So — it went to Penn
State.

— Mrs. Robinson not happy in W.B. — None of family
left — Bill says.

INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM L. CONYNGHAM

July 19, 1991
Weckesser Hall

CNB: Today is July 19, 1991, and I am sitting in the Conference Room of Weckesser Hall on the Wilkes University campus with two friends, William Conyngham and Betsy Bell Condron, and we're going to do a session on our neighborhood, the neighborhood in which the University finds itself, *I want to* and particularly ~~to~~ tap Bill Conyngham's memories of his own family and of other key families in the neighborhood. My name is Christopher Breiseth, and at this point in history I am the President of Wilkes. We don't know what will happen tomorrow, but today that's what I am. Bill, I think it would be interesting to get us started by talking a little bit about how the Conynghams ~~came~~ *here* and what some of the general family history is because one of the assumptions I make at the very beginning is that *the* Conyngham family, unlike almost any other colonial family, has stayed here and been part of every major era in the history of Wyoming Valley. And certainly from the Wilkes point of view it is one of the most critical families in getting us started and keeping us sustained as an institution, so why don't you start with Zebulon and tell us how it all got here. Or go back beyond that.

WLC: Zebulon Butler, who was my *triple* great grandfather, was born and raised in Connecticut and came here as part of the Susquehanna Company in 1769 to help lay out the Wyoming Valley. He chose as the site of his own residence the corner of South River Street and Northampton, and Evans Hall of the University is located upon that site. He owned a good deal of the land all the way down, and several of his descendants later erected ~~homes~~ *down* along that land going south on South River Street. He was a mature man when he came to Wilkes-Barre. They lived up by the General Hospital on a little creek up there called Mill Creek. *His wife + son* They got pneumonia that winter, or flu or whatever they called it in those days, and he lost his wife and the one son. His other son, Lord, and the daughter lived and grew up. Zebulon later married two more times and had children by both his wives, which resulted in a great many offspring, many of whom we've lost track of by now. His son, Lord Butler, was also a very prominent member of Wyoming Valley. He was the first postmaster and, I think, county treasurer; he had a lot of political jobs. He lived on the same site where his father had erected the first home. Several homes in quick succession were erected there. One of them has been moved down further on South River Street and still exists.

CNB: What building is that?

BBC: It's three or four down from the corner of Ross. As you're going south it's on the west side. A little white . . .

WLC: I've forgotten who owned it.

CNB: Also, the cemetery was established in that same era? Across the street, around Mill Creek?

WLC: No. The original cemetery for the city of Wilkes-Barre was at the site of the present City Hall. When the Hollenback family, who were also very early settlers in Wyoming Valley, Mathias Hollenback—his son, George, owned a lot of land and he donated the land where the Hollenback Cemetery is. He also donated the land where the Wilkes-Barre General Hospital is. I presume he sold the other half of that cemetery to the city to form the present city cemetery. But I do know there were a lot of stories about them moving the graveyard when they went to build the present City Hall, and every so often, even in recent years, when they're excavating to put in pipelines or some other thing, they still run into an odd grave or a human relic in that area where the City Hall is today.

CNB: Put the Conynghams in this in those early days.

WLC: Lord Butler had a young daughter whose name was Ruthann, amongst other children, and Ruthann went to finishing school in Philadelphia. As I understand it, she was coming home, whether it was for a summer vacation or whether she had graduated I don't remember, but there was a young Philadelphia lawyer whose name was John Nesbitt Conyngham and he was being sent up here to investigate a bank failure. The bank in Philadelphia had a branch, the descendant of which is today Merchants Bank, which at one time was the Wyoming National Bank. That original bank which had been founded by the Philadelphia bank as a branch apparently had failed, so the Philadelphia folks, who had invested a financial interest in it sent this young lawyer up to investigate and see what could be salvaged. He met this young student on the stagecoach, which was a two-day trip from Philadelphia to Wilkes-Barre—spending the night in Easton. By the time they got to Wilkes-Barre they were both so hopelessly in love they got married, and he eventually moved here after he wound up his affairs with the Philadelphia bank and spent the rest of his life in Wyoming Valley. So that's how the Conynghams came to Wilkes-Barre. It wasn't because he planned to come; it was because he met a young lady and that brought ~~he~~ him here and he liked the area, apparently, when he got here. His older brother had lived here for some time because his father had been in the shipping business. In the panic following the War of 1812 there were a lot of unpaid bills and people had been speculating in land titles in this part of Pennsylvania. The Pennamites in Philadelphia were trying to counteract the influence of Connecticut Yankees coming into Westmoreland County. So the Pennamites were issuing land titles out of Philadelphia that took the same land that the Westmoreland people were issuing out of Hartford. There had been a lot of land speculation. There was no insurance in those days. The John Nesbitt, for whom this young lawyer had been named, had been a partner in his father's shipping business in Philadelphia. He later went on, after the War of 1812, to establish the Insurance Company of North America because he recognized there was a need for insurance to protect merchant shippers who would buy the raw materials and bring them back here and then expect to be paid and if the merchants didn't pay for them, they were frequently stuck for them; so this is why they needed the insurance companies.

*the Wyoming Valley
as Abram Nesbitt?*

CNB: Is this Nesbitt family the same Nesbitt family?

Bill? →
Raddin? →
Bill? →
WLC: Apparently not. It's never been established that they were. I can't say no absolutely. They had sometimes taken security they had land titles, so when the panic took place in 1812, John's father, he was very proud to say later in life, that he paid 100 cents on every dollar of the bills he owed. He had nothing left except a lot of land titles up in northeastern Pennsylvania that didn't amount to much. A guy who did a lot a research, Dr. George , who at one time was on the faculty here—he was a man who was very controversial, but he was a good student who knew how to research things, he told me that the Conynghams could have got on their property from down in Conyngham Valley lower Luzerne County up to Clifford which is above Scranton and up through Bear Creek and never left their property because that was all in this land title. They didn't buy the land; they didn't want to have the land; it was simply the security that they had and when they had to foreclose that was all they had left. The older brother lived in Wilkes-Barre at one time, went down to Conyngham Valley near Hazleton and liquidated what he could of the real estate which stayed there for 100 years because ~~he~~ *he* went to Lancaster and settled there. Conyngham Valley was not named for him or for any other member of our immediate family, but for John's first cousin whose name was Mustadus Conyngham (who had been a sea captain under John Paul Jones in the Revolutionary Navy, captured by the British three times and escaped each time).

CNB: Did he actually live in that Valley, is that why it's named or were they honoring the hero?

WLC: They were honoring the hero. When they were getting ready to name that little village down there, the elders went to Redmond Conyngham—that was John's older brother—and said we want to name it for you. He said no that's not making any sense at all, ~~and there is a man~~ *there is a man* if you want to name it Conyngham, ~~and~~ *who* it should be named for and that's our cousin.

CNB: Now let's get back to your Conyngham married *Ruth Ann* a Butler.

WLC: That was John.

CNB: And they take up residence in this area.

WLC: Their home was on South River Street at the exact place where the Jewish Community Center is built today. That was Judge Conyngham's home. I was telling Betsy that my dad used to talk about him. He said his grandfather had a little two-wheeler cart and a single horse and he would strap his law books onto the back of that cart so they wouldn't blow off or get knocked off over the ruts, etc. and he would set forth, perhaps on a Monday morning, periodically to go up to Wyoming County to Tunkhannock to hold court, ~~and they~~ *they* have a bust of him up there in the Courthouse.

BBC: Could you clarify again the relationship of John Nesbitt Conyngham and Judge Conyngham.

WLC: John Nesbitt Conyngham and Judge Conyngham are one and the same person.

BBC: OK. Thank you.

WLC: It was their father who was a first cousin of Mustadus. I don't know clearly.

CNB: And when was the immigrant generation from Ireland?

WLC: The immigrant generation came from County Donegal in Ireland. I can't specifically tell you the time, it was in the early 1700s because they were in the shipping business out of Londonderry which they always called "Derry." No good Irishman would call it Londonderry, they always called it Derry and Philadelphia was the branch office. The father always stayed at home in Londonderry. The son would be sent out to manage the branch office, and that was how John's father, who was David Hayfield Conyngham, found himself living in Philadelphia. He had been born in Philadelphia, but he was sent home to be educated; went back to Ireland. They didn't think any education in the colonies was fit. Had to go back to Ireland to be educated.

CNB: And David's son is John Nesbitt.

WLC: That's correct. It was . . .

CNB: And Lord Butler's daughter (Ruthann) married John Nesbitt Conyngham. Now they are how many generations back?

WLC: My great grandparents. They had several children, but their son, William Lord Conyngham, stayed here in the Valley. There was another son named Charles Miner Conyngham, named for his dear friend and not because we were any relation to the Miners. There's a letter which appears in Johnson's Historical Record, because somebody took it to Mr. Johnson who wrote this historical record of the Valley after he retired as editor and publisher of the paper, and he included that in one of his books—a copy of the letter written by Judge Conyngham saying that his wife that morning had delivered a healthy baby boy and out of his great respect and affection for Mr. Charles Miner could he have permission to name the baby in his honor. It was a very formal letter. The response is not there, but . . .

CNB: Well the response is there in terms of the action.

WLC: That's right. The Charles Conynghams' home was on the same end of South Street on the South River Street corner of South and South River. Will Conyngham's home was on the corner of West River and South Streets. The two brothers were side by side.

CNB: So the mansion that will be built there and then is torn down in 1919-1920 came after those two separate houses.

Right? John's house? Next door? Westmoreland Club? 2-6-78

WLC: I kind of got away from not following the houses correctly. John and Ruth had their home where the Jewish Community Center is. The first son to marry, my grandfather William Lord, married Olivia Hillard. They lived next door. That house is still standing and it's in the rear of the First Baptist Church. That's the house my dad was born in. If you're in the parking lot of the Westmoreland Club and look up it sits back there against that brick wall.

Branch

BBC: That's where Lydia went to nursery school.

WLC: Then the W. L. Conynghams, when they became more prosperous, they went down and bought the property at the corner of West River and South and built the house that looked up the river. But right along side of them came the brother Charles and his wife and lived there. Uncle Charlie had been shot in the knee; I think it was at Antietam. I used to think it was at Gettysburg, but I later found out I was wrong about that. He was shot in the knee and that was in the 1860s. In the 1890s he developed a malignant growth where the bullet had gone in and eventually died in his 50s. So that branch of the family moved out of town, but many of them had lived here for a time. In fact, their son

CNB: He had children?

WLC: He had children.

CNB: And what family did he marry?

WLC: He went to Trinity in Hartford. He met a girl in Hartford when she was about 17 or 18 and he was a college student, and he married her. It must have been a great shock to the rest of the family. That wasn't the way to do it.

CNB: Those things keep happening.

WLC: And that lady was the founder of the Wilkes-Barre General Hospital Women's Auxilliary. *My mother and Corky were both so very active in.* But the original president was Mrs. Charles M. Conyngham.

CNB: And her maiden name was what?

WLC: Helen Turner, but she was no relation to these Turners here. She was from Hartford.

CNB: Alright. William Lord Conyngham was your grandfather.

WLC: Yes.

CNB: And he was the son of Ruth and John.

WLC: Right. And he was very successful as a coal merchant. He did not own

WLC: Right. And he was very successful as a coal merchant. He did not own mines. He did not do any mining per se. He entered into partnership agreements with a series of persons up and down the coast, men whom he called his partners. He would go around and he would say to the different coal operators, "How many tons of coal are you going to have this winter?" "I will have 200,000 tons." "Alright, I'll take care of that." And then he would get the next one and the next one and then he would contact his different partners in Boston or Providence or Baltimore or Harrisburg or wherever and he would deal out the coal with them. There's a lot of old checkbooks out at the barn at the farm. I don't know what we're going to do with them. But they're just check stubs which say to so and so \$50-75-100,000 to buy coal then the different merchants up and down the line would pay these partners . . .

CNB: Don't destroy them. Work with the Historical and Geological Society. That's invaluable material for the economic history of the Valley. Particularly showing the connections with the major cities and the companies and people involved.

WLC: I always had a notion, but I never pursued it, that perhaps the Spragues who were in the same kind of business in Boston were dealing here for anthracite coal because that's what they were started in. They later went into oil and gas and other forms of heat, but coal was their original thing so I'm sure they must have had a connection.

CNB: Just stopping on the economic question for a minute. If you just take your lineal descendant or people you're descended from you start with John Nesbitt—he's a lawyer. His son William then becomes a merchant. And your father comes into the picture. Why don't you plug him in now.

WLC: William and Olivia had two sons—John, the oldest one, who's named for his grandfather and my dad who was named William Hillard Conyngham as opposed to William Lord Conyngham. My name is William Lord. Zebulon's wife who died up on Mill Creek that first winter was Ann Lord.

CNB: Is her grave identifiable here, by the way?

WLC: Yes, but I think they were all buried at City Hall and later hauled up It was a great big tomb about the size of this thing and they . . . sort of a mess. Dad graduated from Yale, Sheffield Scientific School, in 1889. That was a three-year course in those days.

CNB: He was born in 1868.

WLC: Yes. He came back here and really wasn't sure what he wanted to do. His father had a friend named Woodward Levenworth. He was taking orders from the different coal companies for supplies. He would go around and say, "I'm going to contact a maker of coal picks" (or shovels or blasting powder or what have you). "I want to get a carload in. How many will you take?" So he would assemble enough to buy in volume and then he

My son's
name is
William Hillard

Bill → ?

would eventually find a place to store some of the stuff and sell to coal operators what they would need. And that's how we got into the supply company business. Dad came back that summer and his father said, "My old friend Woodward Levenworth is looking for a young man to help him expand his business. He's getting along in years and is anxious to have somebody study with him and help take on some of the chores. He's tired of getting on the horse-drawn streetcar to ride from one mine to another to get these orders. So Dad went to work for him and eventually ended up owning the company. Levenworth, Dad told me, used to buy a box of cigars every morning on his way to work. He would walk to work and would stop at the tobacconist and buy ^{a box} of cigars, rip the back off and throw it away, pull the drawer of his desk open and set the cigars in his desk and he would have a cigar in his mouth all day long. And of course he died of tongue cancer—lips and mouth, etc. and not terribly old. And that's how Dad came to buy them all out, and that was the formation of the Eastern Pennsylvania Supply Company.

CNB: Which would be what year?

WLC: Dad graduated in '89. I always said that that really was the year that they founded the company. Up to that time it had pretty much been the case of just writing it down on the back of

CNB: So you just celebrated the centennial?

WLC: Yes. When we had the 75th, for some reason or another we sort of thought it was 1890 that they founded the company, but we later found a letter that Dad had written in 1939 in which he referred to that as 50 years.

CNB: By the way, a kind of diversion here. How many of the family papers have you kept, both personal correspondence as well as the business correspondence through this whole string of generations?

WLC: Not an awful lot of them ~~that~~ ^{that} have been kept. We're about to move our office. We're going to have an awful lot of things

CNB: You're going to find things you didn't know you had.

WLC: Yes. One story that Dad told me was that when his mother died in 1918, and that again the blight on this house, that next winter—she died the day after the Armistice was signed, November 12—

CNB: She had the flu?

WLC: No. She had a heart condition for a long time. She lived for five or six years under the care of my mother's brother and father when they had said she probably had not more than six months to live and they kept her going for five or six years, but eventually her heart gave way. I suppose today they could give her a pacemaker or something else and get the whole thing going again. After that, the house was empty and was never lived in by a Conyngham again. However, there was that winter, or during the next year, a convent fire at St. Mary's and the whole convent burned and a couple of the nuns were killed in the fire. So my dad and my uncle went over and invited the sisters to occupy that house.

BBC: In the house down here on the corner?

CNB: Where the Dorothy Dickson Darte Center is right now?

WLC: Yes. And they lived there for a year or two.

CNB: I would just say parenthetically that a wonderful picture of this house is in the film "The Lady in Grey" which is in the Osterhout Library. Its a series of short films like the "Perils of Pauline" and it takes place in the Conyngham mansion and what we call Chase Hall, but going past Kirby Hall. So it is a remarkable thing on film to capture the entire neighborhood, including the River Commons, and its access to the river.

BBC: It must have been Choppy Howe who did it. I can't think who else would have had that

CNB: I want to tie a couple things down here. Your father is William Hillard and that's his mother's maiden name. Do you want to say anything about the Hillards?

WLC: Let's finish up the Conynghams first.

Bill #2 wife
CNB: OK. So they then had your father and your father then marries a Guthrie. Is that correct? Where does that marriage come in and let's put that

WLC: That's correct. The first son that Olivia had was John. He married a girl from New York City. Her name was Bertha Robinson, and her mother had married a man who was an original partner of Anthony Drexel of the famous banking house in Philadelphia. Mrs. Drexel was a great granddaughter of Mathias Hollenback amongst other things, so there were a few tie ins there, too. Mr. Robinson had died early, leaving her with four or five children and she subsequently married a man named J. Hood Wright, who was no relation to the Wrights up here. He was an original partner of J. P. Morgan. So Mrs. Robinson, financially, was always rather well provided for. And Aunt Bertha had a great deal of money, a good deal more money than her husband. The Judge had a daughter named Mary Conyngham who married Charles Parrish, a very prominent coal operator here—most successful, probably one of the wealthiest if not the wealthiest man in town, but eventually made some poor business decisions and ended up in bankruptcy. They were the ones who built the house that subsequently burned. It was known as Conyngham Hall in the University's history.

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CNB: Betsy, you clear on all that?

BBC: Yes.

WLC: The John Conynghams had no children; the Parrishes did have children, but the Parrish home was being sold by the sheriff for the collection of debts, and my grandfather, wishing to spare his sister as much agony in all this, because in those days it was disgraceful to go bankrupt. It doesn't seem to be today. Grandfather bought that house. It wasn't until I walked into this room that I realized that he kept title to it in his own name, and it was his widow, Olivia, who gave it to John. But I know that he gave it to John and Bertha; they lived there from the time of their marriage.

CNB: Now, that's our Conyngham Student Center.

WLC: No. It's the one that burned down. Aunt Bertha did not appreciate the gift very much because she wanted to . . . she was not interested in moving to Wilkes-Barre. She was very much in love with her husband, but she didn't want to come here to live. She considered it backward and quaint. Her summer home was out in the country above Manhattan, and she herself told me that it was about where the George Washington Bridge comes into New York City, but that was considered out in the country that was not in the city at all.

CNB: Nice view.

WLC: Right. So that's how that house passed from the Parrishes into the John Conynghams and it stayed there until he died. In the meantime he had built his home at Hayfield Farm in Lehman Township in the beginning of 1933. They moved into it in '34. I know it took them a year to build the house, and all the stones in the house came off the farm. They moved into it early in '34 and they lived in it slightly more than 12 months when he had fatal heart attack and died and she stayed in it for the rest of her life—another 29 years and died at the age of 99 and 1/2. In the meantime, she did give the college that building. Gene Farley always played games as to which one came first—Chase Hall or Conyngham Hall. I see your book says it was the second one, which I always thought it was.

CNB: I've heard the story about your father's brother, his death and the picture that you've got with the black armband on. Would you tell that story.

WLC: My dad had had a very serious accident coming home from a dinner party one night to our home in Hillside. During my grandmother's long period of illness with her bad heart in order to enable her to get out to the farm, they had installed an elevator. They evidently did not have what dad thought they did which was a trick door that the elevator couldn't be moved unless the outside door was closed. One night they came home from a dinner party the outside door was open. He, suspecting burglars in the house, went roaring in to what he thought was the elevator cage and it wasn't there and he fell into the basement and very nearly killed himself. That was the summer of '35. My uncle came every day to see my mother, but he wouldn't go in to see my dad. He said he just couldn't bear to see him laid out that way and looking so badly, etc. He always had a great fear of seeing somebody ill. So he went home. They were having house guests over the 4th of July and the house guests had arrived. They were having a big dinner party that night and he had a fatal heart attack as they were on their way to the dining room. He lived for about ten days afterward, but my dad was so ill my mother couldn't even tell him that Uncle Jack had a heart attack let alone tell him that he died ten days later. But dad was so upset, and in the old fashioned way—that was a sign of mourning. I even wore it—the black armband.

BBC: Back to the original Conynghams in Ireland and the religious affiliations of that branch of Conynghams. When the branch of the Conyngham family that stayed in Philadelphia, later some of them coming up here to northeastern Pennsylvania, you all are Episcopalians. Was it Church of England in Ireland?

WLC: Yes. They were actually . . . we can trace ourselves back to the Bishop of Argyle in Scotland who was an Anglican bishop. They went over—suppose it might have been about the time of Queen Elizabeth, I'm not quite sure—to Ireland. County Donegal, which I was into ^{40 years} ago with Monica Reynolds, to try to find some vestige of Conyngham. We were descended from another prominent churchman who, in Ireland . . . I went to the cathedral in which he flourished and I could find absolutely nothing about him and I went all over the graveyard, looked everywhere. I found a Conyngham Road in Dublin but that wasn't where it was supposed to be. It was supposed to be in northern Ireland. Conyngham—our way of spelling it is the Irish way of spelling it, the Gaelic way of spelling it. There's a history of Mary, Queen of Scots written by Lady Antonia Fraser and she has a letter in the back and the English translation of the letter Queen Mary said, "I will send my servant Cunningham to . . ." In the original Scots, ~~which you can't read if you take the time to read it, it was "I will send my servant Conyngham."~~

CNB: Let me bring you back. We've got the Eastern Pennsylvania Supply Company. Where does the dairy come in?

WLC: David Hayfield Conyngham was left here in this country by the Revolution and thereby emigrated, because they had not intended to emigrate at all. One of the things he felt worst about was losing the family estates in Ireland. I don't think he ever actually owned a farm, at least if he did there's no record of it. I never read about it. It wasn't important in his life. He was in the shipping business, but his son John, who came up here, eventually developed a farm on the upper part of Wilkes-Barre right where Conyngham Avenue is, that's why it's called Conyngham Avenue. A few years ago the railroad declared that they were abandoning the line that ran across Conyngham Avenue and went down into the city near where the Lehigh Valley station was and anybody that had any territorial claims should make them immediately. It never dawned on me to think about it, but Jake Elliott, who was a cousin of my mother and was related to the Beaumont family, another old, old fine family, said, "I have discovered that we have some Beaumont land under that railroad and it had a reversionary right. I think there's some Conyngham land there, too." We went and dug out the records and sure enough great grandfather John had given land for use as a railroad in 1868 or 9 to such and such a railroad, ~~which of course, the name of the railroad didn't mean anything because the name of the railroad had changed several times since, but it did include that if it ever ceases to be a railroad it reverted to John and Ruth. To make a long story short, I had \$16,000 eventually to distribute to all my cousins, most of whom nearly dropped their teeth when they got a check in the mail. That was part of the old farm. My grandfather Conyngham bought Hillside in the fall of 1881. They had earlier been looking for a~~

place to have a summer home. My mother would kill me if she knew I told you this, but one of the places they went, they were charter members of the Bear Lake Association and they gave up their membership because they didn't like Bear Lake. They went to Harvey's Lake and took up a piece of property there and the kids got typhoid, diphteria, one of those children's diseases which they attributed to their time ^{spent} at the lake, so Harvey's Lake was out. Aunt Mary, his sister, and Charles Parrish, her husband, had a big estate at Laurel Run at the top of Giant's Despair and there was always great rivalry between the Parrishes and the Conynghams over which one had the nicer place and they'd always invite one another with letters saying "Why don't you come and spend the weekend where you can breathe and see the beautys of the Valley, etc." There was always great kidding back and forth about that. They bought Hillside, the first land, from a family named Harter who's still in existence there, too. Mr. Harter said to my grandfather, "I hear you're looking for a summer home. I have a farm for sale not far from the city." Grandfather said, "We've abandoned the idea of buying property. We are going to travel." Harter said, "I would be grateful if you and Mrs. Conyngham would just come out and take a look." Since he'd known Mr. Harter for a long time, he did go out and take a look. In the deed, a copy of which we have hanging at the dairy store, Mrs. Harter could not sign her name and signed the deed with an "X". You know Jane Harter who teaches up at the Day School (married Tucker Graham), she's part of that family. It's her great-great grandfather.

CNB: So they came to look at it and they fell in love with it?

WLC: Yes. They bought 140 acres. Eventually it was over 500 acres. I think that owning that property perhaps had as much to do with holding different members, at least in our generation. I thought for a time about staying in the Navy. I loved the Navy, I kind of thought I might do that. But I thought no, with all that land back there, the cows and everything.

CNB: So they bought a working farm? And hired some folks to work it?

WLC: Yes. Hired folks to work it. They never farmed it personally. Always had somebody else to work it.

CNB: Did they have a dairy business with it at the time so they got into the milk business?

WLC: They got into milking business—when they started delivering milk I don't know—but when I was a kid everybody in Corky's family and everybody else in town grew up on Conyngham's Grade A raw milk. It was either that or Goodleigh Farms Golden Guernsey milk. In 1928 one of our delivery wagons and horse were killed by a streetcar and a man very badly injured. After that they sold out to Woodlawn. The days of the horse drawn milk delivery business from that far out, was really passe.

Bill
Note re dairy-cows etc. those were!

CNB: We've got this down almost to your generation. There are two families, essentially the Hillards and the Guthries; put those two families in some perspective.

WLC: Alright. Oliver Burr Hillard was born in New York City, but moved to Charleston, South Carolina, and married a Charlestonian girl and had seven children in Charleston and was in the merchant shipping business. He had a fleet of ships. I think perhaps he was also in the fishing business, but I'm not sure about that. His wife died in the early 1840s; some say in childbirth, but I've never found a record of that. My grandmother, Olivia, his youngest child, was born in 1842. In 1845 they all moved to Wilkes-Barre, and the reason they moved was there was a man with the Army engineers whose name was Bowman, I think he was a major in the regular Army engineers, and he came from Wilkes-Barre. He grew up on Bowman's Hill which is North Main Street in Wilkes-Barre. He was building a thing called Fort Sumter in the 1840s and he had gotten to know Oliver Burr Hillard by his residence in Charleston. A year ago I took a ride out to Fort Sumter and walked around the place. At any rate, when Hillard had lost his wife and he was depressed, and the shipping business was turning sour and he had had this vast army of little kids with just a poor relative of his wife's to take care of them, his friend Bowman said, "Why don't you go up to the Wyoming Valley in Pennsylvania. They're just beginning to develop a thing called anthracite coal." So that's what brought him here. His granddaughters have told me that they always were told that he was the sixth wealthiest man in America when he came here. Who made up the other five or made that determination I don't know. Aunt Jo? who lived in the house George Waldner just sold and my cousin Daisy who was Bonnie's? grandmother always maintained that he was the sixth wealthiest man in America.

CNB: Did he build that house?

WLC: He built a house up on Hillard Road which is up where St. Ann's Academy was, now there's a nursing home there. That's where he lived. There's a Hillard Street up there. He settled up there and he went to church. He was an Episcopalian, of course, from Charlestown, South Carolina. He went to church and there was a young lady there in church, she took one look at him and said to her mother and her sisters, "There's the man I'm going to marry." So she eventually did, and with great, intense hatred on the part of all the stepchildren for their stepmother. She gave him three more children. Her maiden name was Dennis, but she was a granddaughter of Judge Jesse Fell who had burned the first coal in an open grate in Wyoming Valley and established the use of anthracite coal, and that, I think, it was in 1808, so this wasn't terribly later. They lived up there until Oliver Burr Hillard was killed by a runaway lokie. He had invested in the mines, of course, at the suggestion of Bowman and they said in the early days when he first built his house that he could look out the upper windows and look over on Bowman's Hill and see his friend's house and vice versa. He was showing New York City investors through his mine, and I have a notion that mine was up around Coal

Street—somewhere in that area between there and the Wyoming Valley Mall—up in the East End section of the Valley and not terribly far from where he lived. I can't prove that, that's just my thinking. There ~~were~~ was a runaway locomotive hauling coal and they couldn't stop it and here were these very portly men. They were all rather wide of girth and were walking down this narrow tunnel when this locomotive broke away. They had little bitty locomotives which carried coal cars that were probably not much bigger than this table. But there were a lot of them. So these men leaned up against the walls of the tunnel, but they were too fat and they were all ripped open and a couple of them were killed and he lived for six or eight weeks after that in the greatest agony. He had two sons who, in addition to Mrs. Conygham and he had a daughter, Mrs. Lynch, who with her husband built the home that your mother (BBC) lived in. Sam Lynch was a cashier at the Wyoming National Bank.

*Bill
clay 4/4*

→ 243 S. Franklin

CNB: And the other son was who?

WLC: There was Will Hillard that had built the Waldner house, and he died quite early. He married a great granddaughter of Zebulon Butler, too, so his kids were doubly related to my dad. The other ~~other~~ son, Thaddeus Hillard, had founded Miner-Hillard Milling Company, which was a very prominent milling company and for a good many years was in business with Charlie's grandfather, I suppose.

Miner's

CNB: Linked to present Pennsylvania Millers?

WLC: Yes. That all tied in together. Uncle Thad had a daughter who was married to Judge Woodward and owned the house where the Evans ultimately was built.

Hell

CNB: Which was Wilkes's Butler Hall.

WLC: It was really a Woodward house. The Woodward that built the present house there married the daughter of John Lord Butler. There had been three generations of Butler men and then a Butler girl married a Woodward, and after that it was a Woodward. Marian Woodward married Bruce Payne.

BBC: Quite a few Wilkes graduates in that bunch, too.

CNB: So we've got a little bit on the Hillards. Are any of them with the Hillard name still in this area?

WLC: No, there are none with the Hillard name. Will Hillard's only son, whose name was Lord Butler Hillard, had no children, and Thaddeus Hillard had three sons, and one of those sons has a daughter living, and that's all. The daughter married the Woodward and, of course, that's no longer Hillard either. But there are descendants of his. Another sister, Mary Hillard, married a fellow named Rufus Bell. Their house was subsequently named by the college students, Haina Hall. Did you ever hear of Haina Hall?

nick

CNB: No, I never did.

WLC: You know where the Bedford house is? Right in back of the Bedford house was the Bell-Huntington house. Aunt Mary Bell had two daughters. One married a Huntington and was early widowed and she lived there with her maiden sister. They lived there for up to nine years. They died in the late '30s and the house stood vacant for a long time and then it was leased. Her only son was Dillard Huntington who has a home up at Bear Lake and comes up here every summer. Somehow or other it came into the possession of the college, but it was never named because it was to be torn down; it was such an old, little bitty frame house. But they never quite got around to tearing it down because they always needed it. They could put a half dozen boys in the different rooms, and since it was never named, the kids called it from something they remembered the most and they called it Haina Hall.

CNB: This never got put up on the wall? Did it have a formal name besides that?

WLC: It never got put up on the wall. I don't think it had a formal name.

CNB: One of our former trustees, Eloise Warrinder Ehret, had a house right in that same area. On South Street. Because you're describing... this is behind Bedford on South Street.

WLC: I'm talking about South River Street. This would be right across from the Temple.

CNB: I see. Going south on South River?

WLC: Yes. Before that school, or whatever it is that sits there.

CNB: Her house went the other direction.

WLC: Yes. That was the Farnam house. Her mother was a Farnam. John Farnam married Charley Waller's sister, who was Jean Waller, and he was my dad's college roommate when he went to Yale. So I always went to that house. I had to stop and think which was the Farnam house. That was right on the corner of the alley. That was called Wright's Alley and their house ran along the alley.

CNB: Which, as I understand it as they used the term in those days, was a colored community. Down Wright Street.

WLC: They weren't all black down there. There were a lot of whites. They were servants; they were in walking distance. Mrs. Duell, who worked for my mother, was an Englishwoman, had been trained by the Duchess of Bedford herself as to how to be a proper upstairs maid. She and her husband thought they made the most mark in this country when they were able to buy their own house on Wright's Alley.

CNB: So Wright's Alley was really for the servants of the houses on South River Street.

WLC: It really and truly was.

BBC: Are you going to move on to the Guthries because I want him to tell about the farm boy?

CNB: Yes. I think we're doing fairly well. There's 60 minutes on a side to this tape, so we probably are getting close to the end of the first side. Now let's put your mother's family into this—the Guthries.

response? he
WLC: Grandfather Guthrie had very little history in Wyoming Valley. He was born on a farm in Chester County about 30 miles west of Philadelphia in a little village called Guthrieville. His father, George Guthrie, was a blacksmith and owned a farm in that little village and apparently endorsed a nephew's note and lost the farm. So in his late 60s he had to resume blacksmithing, which was a very arduous job. He died shoeing a horse; he had a stroke. His son, George, was the oldest of his seven children. *after* He had a long period of convalescence, had a bad leg injury, and he was in bed for a very long time during which time his mother taught him to knit and crochet to pass the time. She had graduated from Millersville Normal School. I suppose now it's a university. Anyway, it was on the Susquehanna above Harrisburg. She had done some school teaching and she got her son interested in that and spent a good deal of that year that he was in bed working with him trying to keep his morale up, etc. When he recovered from that he went to Millersville and when he got his certificate, or whatever they did, he found a job in Miners Mills above Wilkes-Barre and came here to teach school. But he was always interested in medicine apparently, had studied a good deal of it during his convalescence and had become pretty nimble with his fingers because of the sewing, so he began to read medicine with a Dr. Meyer, whose mother-in-law had been a Conyngham, too, a sister of the original John Nesbitt. He had married a girl named Peters, a large Peters family had come here as a result of their uncle's connection, etc. That house was were the present Conyngham Hall is. That house was built out on the sidewalk. The only picture I ever saw of it was just a great wall of the house right along the sidewalk.

BBC: It's in St. Stephen's. In the back room. That little picture.

Bill?
WLC: That's right. In one of _____ collection. Dr. Meyer had no children, but he got to know my grandfather who went there to "read" medicine. When he got to a certain point, he retired from teaching school in Miners Mills and went off to the Philadelphia Chirurgical School or some such name (Medico-Chirurgical College). It later merged with the University so my grandfather now qualifies as an alumnus of the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, but it wasn't that when he graduated. When he got his M.D. he came back here and hung up his own shingle and started to practice. He met my grandmother somewhere along the line. She lived on South Franklin Street, next to the YMCA. She was the daughter of Harrison Wright. The Wrights were a very old-time family.

CNB: Is this the house that John Moses's law firm is in?

WLC: I think that's it. I never was quite sure if it's the second or the third house down and I have to go and look at it to be sure and I don't think I could be absolutely positive.

CNB: This is your grandmother Guthrie you're talking about who marries this doctor who was weak as a young man, reads the medicine

WLC: Yes. He had an accident and been in bed

CNB: Does he recover his health as an adult physician?

WLC: Yes. He lived to be 70 years old and he became a very prominent doctor. He was very interested in the school board. He was president of the school board for years. Dick Maslow's office is in the George W. Guthrie School, which he completely did over, and that was named for him because in those days it was customary. The fellow that followed him as president of the school board was James M. Coughlin.

CNB: And I suppose with Dr. Kistler this tradition is being continued.

BBC: That's Marilyn Rudolph's ^{family} name, too, Coughlin.

CNB: I thought that what we call the Roccograndi building across from the "Y" was also a Guthrie home.

WLC: That was built by Isaac Osterhout who, when he died, left the rest of his money to the library. The library couldn't use the house, so they put the house on the market. My grandfather, at that point, (end of side 1 of tape).

His home and office were right across the street from St. Nicholas Church and my mother used to tell stories about how when she was a little girl, ~~and~~ she would run around the corner to where the firehouse was and watch the horses go out with the fire equipment, which was just on Ross Street.

CNB: The same place where the fire department is today.

WLC: Where it is today. It's still there. I have ^Nletter that he wrote to his father, the blacksmith down in Guthrieville, on the occasion of his 75th birthday and it tells him all about life here in the Valley. Then he goes on to say, "Father, you will be interested to know that I actually earned \$5,000 last year as a doctor in this Valley. Can you believe that such a thing could be possible for a boy who started out in the Guthrieville store at \$3.00 a month."

BBC: You have a real sense of history, your family. What about the Guthrie Clinic?

WLC: My mother's brother, in 1910 He had graduated from Yale in 1901, Sheffield Scientific School, and then he went to the University of Pennsylvania.

CNB: That's the same one your father was at?

WLC: Yes. Both of my mother's brothers did that, they both went to Shef. Then they studied medicine. They took their first work at the University of Pennsylvania. My Uncle Donald then went out to do his internship with a couple of brothers who were getting to be rather well known by the name of Mayo out in Rochester, Minnesota. Subsequently, when my uncle had established himself up in Sayre, Dr. Charley Mayo sent his son, Charles Jr., and ultimately his grandson, both to Sayre to do their training under my uncle.

CNB: They were connected with my uncle out in Minnesota, just to close the loop.

WLC: My uncle came back here at the behest of his father, who was beginning to feel ancient about that time and he urged him to come back to Wyoming Valley and go into business with him. I shouldn't say business—go into the office with him. So it was Guthrie and Guthrie, a pair of doctors together. Then a Mrs. Packer died and left all of her estate to found a hospital, which was already in existence, but it had one doctor and about four nurses on it. She left all of her money, and they were in the Lehigh Valley Railroad so there was a great deal of money, to this hospital. So they had the money to hire somebody to come up, so they hired my uncle in 1910 as chief surgeon and he spent the rest of his life there. He died in 1958. He had established a clinic in connection with the Robert Packer Hospital, Robert having been the man she wanted memorialized. The clinic is now known as the Guthrie Clinic and is quite well known.

CNB: And we, of course, are delighted that we now have a formal connection with the Guthrie Clinic with our new combined Wilkes/Hahenmann Medical School/Guthrie Clinic arrangement.

BBC: So it was your uncle.

WLC: Yes, it was mother's older brother.

CNB: I just want to tie one thing down. We started talking about the house that you said Osterhout built, left it to the library, it was put on the market. Your family didn't buy that house.

WLC: Yes, we did. Grandpa Guthrie bought it—I got off on the subject of the letter to his father on his father's 75th and it must have been about that same time. My mother was born on South Washington Street and I think my aunt was born here. I'd have to look and see when Mr. Osterhout died. Mother was born 1886 on South Washington Street and I think my aunt was born on South Franklin Street. Both of my dad's wives—my dad had been married before, I didn't mention that. He had married May Turner first. The Turners were also in coal, I think. That was the house they tore down across the street.

CNB: That was the McNellis House.

WLC: That was the Turner home. Both of my dad's wives had families that originated in Plymouth—the Turners and the Wrights came from Plymouth. Both of the girls were born and started growing up on South Washington Street. Both of them moved as their families prospered to South Franklin Street, and both of them moved to South River Street when they married my dad.

CNB: Did he have any children by Ms. Turner?

WLC: They died in infancy. My brother was born in 1897, would have been 94 years old this fall. And there was a little girl. The interesting thing was that the family doctor was Dr. George Guthrie. Mrs. Conyngham, May Turner Conyngham, had no problems whatever during the first seven months of her pregnancy. She suddenly got violently ill and lost the baby and very nearly died herself because her kidneys backed up on her. Dr. Guthrie said, "Mrs. Conyngham, we have saved your life and there's no reason why you can't expect to live a normal, healthy life, but I feel I must tell you you must not ever have a child because of your bad kidneys." So they went four or five years without any children, but her friends saying, "Why don't you go see a specialist. Go down to New York or Philadelphia and see somebody who knows what they're talking about instead of this old country bumpkin up here that you're dealing with. He doesn't have much experience in that sort of thing." So she did, and the doctor down there said, "Go ahead and have your family. There's nothing wrong with your kidneys at all." She became pregnant the second time, and everything did exactly what it did the first time. She got to seven months, the kidneys malfunctioned and she died as well as the baby.

BBC: That first little one died as a little child?

WLC: In infancy—at birth. They were both seven-month babies and in those days you couldn't do much. They might have lived a few hours.

CNB: So then your father, a widower . . .

WLC: For sixteen years. Then he married my mother, the doctor's daughter. He got to be very fond of the doctor, who also took care of his mother. Later when the doctor began to get poorly himself. He had something wrong with his lungs—they kept having to pump out his lungs. I suppose antibiotics would have straightened him out, but not in those days. He came to calling on my grandfather because he was very fond of him. The young lady who opened the door and met him, he began to pay attention to, and that's how we arrived. Then she had a miscarriage at the end of their first year of marriage. That was the fourth time he was expecting a baby, so I think by the time she got pregnant with me he didn't really think I'd ever arrive.

CNB: So he's 52 years old when you're born, and how old when the next two arrive?

WLC: Fifty-five when Guthrie and 57 when Jack came.

CNB: Then he lives until?

WLC: He died in 1943 when I had just gotten to Pearl Harbor on my way out to war and he died. I was 22, Guthrie was 19, and Jack was 17.

CNB: Any more on the Guthries or I'm willing to switch to

WLC: The only thing I'd like to say about my Grandmother Guthrie was that on her father's side, the Wright side, she was descended from a very early family in this country who had come over with William Penn because he was a first cousin of William Penn and they were Quakers. Her grandfather had settled in Shickshinny, Pennsylvania, as a Quaker. He had married a girl named Ellen Hendrick who had also come out here from Connecticut, from the Hartford area. She went to her parents and said, "There's a train going out in a couple of weeks to Westmoreland County and I want to go out because you remember my friend (so and so) went out and are living there now and I have a chance to go out." And her parents said, "Well, we don't really like it very much, but if you want to go you have to make two promises. One is that you won't stay; that you will come back to Connecticut. And secondly, if you don't keep that promise, the other is even more important—you must not marry a Quaker." She rode horseback, came out through the wilderness, arrived in Wyoming Valley. She never went back to Connecticut and she married not one, but two Quakers.

CNB: So much for family advice.

WLC: And she lived to be 96 years old. She lived up here in the house where her granddaughter lived, just below the YMCA in her final years.

CNB: That is a beautiful building. Just was over to see Mr. Moses a few weeks ago and it's awesome.

WLC: Her oldest granddaughter by the second marriage. She had had an earlier daughter, by her marriage to a man named Wadhams, again Plymouth. A daughter of that family had married a man named French. I can't quite remember exactly what happened. At any rate, this woman had been born a French—I guess her daughter had married a French and then her daughter married a Wadhams and came back in the Wadhams family again. One day the old lady in her high '90s sitting up here across from the Osterhout house ~~house~~ looked out the window and she called ^{to} her granddaughter she was living with. "Josephine, come here a minute. Who is that woman walking up there with her husband and all those children? She's a handsome looking woman; she carries herself well." Aunt Jo said, "Why that is your granddaughter Esther Wadhams." "Oh," she said, "I'm proud that she's my granddaughter. She is a good-looking woman and I'm very proud to see her." The following Sunday the situation being the same she calls Josephine and says, "Who is this woman walking up the street with her husband and all those children?" Aunt Jo said, "I told you last week, Granny, that is your granddaughter Esther Wadhams." "Don't you lie to me, Josephine. That woman last week had on a green dress and this woman has on a brown dress and no woman could afford two good Sunday dresses." That was the late 1800s in Wyoming Valley for a 96-year-old woman.

CNB: Do you know what was on the block where the YMCA is before it was built?

WLC: That was the Bennet home.

CNB: Is this the Bennet now of Charles Meyers's descent?

WLC: Yes, it would have been. I don't think there's ^{any} Bennets left around for me to point out who they are, but they were a very old Connecticut Yankee family.

CNB: Well, that's Charlie's family.

Charley Miner spells it Charley^{EY}

WLC: They were Bennetts.

CNB: And that house was torn down to build the "Y"? There must have been several houses torn down to build that, or was it all one

WLC: I think so.

CNB: Although it's not a deep lot.

WLC: No, but I do remember my mother talking about her grandmother's potato patch out in the back. In other words, those were deep lots, but they probably took something off even if they were deep lots.

CNB: Let's come down this street. You've got the Bennet house. Then there's the house the Guthries were in—the Wright House.

WLC: And then, when I was young, there was Mrs. Burnside's house. Frank and Bob Burnside, their mother—I forget what her original name was—married Boyle first. She had those two men as her sons, they were already Frank Boyle and Bob Boyle and they both use Boyle as their middle name. They were divorced at the time when people still whispered about the fact that Mrs. Boyle was divorced. Then she married Malcolm Burnside who had been employed by Fowler, Dick and Walker the partners who owned the Boston Store. He was a Scotsman, and very, very Scots. Apparently a good merchandiser and a very shrewd and sharp businessman who ~~know~~ ^{knew} how to save a penny in the true Scots tradition. He married Mrs. Boyle and had one more child, a daughter—Mary. Their home was along there somewhere.

BBC: That's the next one—three.

WLC: Somewhere else there was the George Stegmaier, which I think is where the Red Cross is.

CNB: What about the house that Paul Kanjorski owns, which is a pillared mansion?

BBC: That's ~~the~~ Mrs. Burnside's house and then there's one next to it that has the Medical Society behind it, and that's the one I ~~love~~ ^{love}... *wonderful architecture!*

WLC: Somewhere along in there was the Theodore Barber home, too. No, not Theodore Barber, his sister, Mary, married George McClain. Where would Molly's grandparents . . .

McClain

BBC: Who was Judge McClain? *can*

Bill?
WLC: That was Will McClain. *can* He married a Ricketts and his home, where I ever knew *can* McClain to live in my youth, was the building that's now Rifkin Hall. That was Judge William McClain. *can*

BBC: The Gutman house was also the old McClain. *can's* Now this was across the street from the Burnside house. Isn't that Mrs. Harding's house?

WLC: Yes. That's a very, very ancient home. In fact, Wilkes was probably lucky to have it torn down or you'd not be allowed to tear it down today. That was Mrs. Harding's when I was a kid, but I don't know much of the background.

CNB: So this is where we have a parking lot now?

BBC: Yes. *I think it's...*

CNB: Is this the old Osterhout house right next to it?

WLC: No. It's not that far up. Wouldn't this be Sturdevant right here?

CNB: Which is the Kocyan house?

I remember
BBC: The Kocyan house *ad* was red brick.

CNB: The Kocyan house has been taken down. We've got several houses in terms of the vacant lot here between Capin Hall and Sturdevant. The Kocyan were in one of them. This is one of them.

BBC: I have a letter from Kitty DeWeese and she has it all written out. The brewery people lived there—the Weavers, and then the Hillman . . .

WLC: Two Hillmans—the George Hillmans and the Fred Hillmans. Kitty's mother was the George Hillmans. I don't know whether she was on this side or that side, but it was a double block, two brothers together.

BBC: Then the Tigers?

WLC: No, the Slatterys. The Tigers was the last one down. The double block was right here and then the Slatterys. There was a thing in the back, it's still there the last time I walked through there, where the Slattery kids had

BBC: Like a summer house. We took that down a year ago. It's so sad.

WLC: That's where the Slattery children, there were 11 of them, had all ~~there~~ *their* sliding boards and swings, and all that sort of thing under cover.

This should probably be edited for clarity

CNB: Does this include the mayor who just died?

WLC: Yes.

BBC: His brother, ^{DWARD} ~~who~~ could give us some help, ^{he} ~~maybe~~, is here now.

WLC: Of the eleven children there are only two left. One is a nun in New York City and the other is Duard who's begining to get a little bit flaky, too. The nun isn't flaky, she's as smart as can be. But she doesn't come up here by herself very often. One of the Hillmans married a Parrish. In the bunch that Joanie Blackman Harvey Miner and Ruth Blackman Schooley are related to. That was the Fred Hillmans and they had two children, Doris who is still living, and Fran who married Fernbach and then Bertels in the most horrific husband and wife switch. Caused great to-do here in this Valley. Forty or forty-five years ago. Especially when the rector of St. Stephen's would not marry the wrong couple who began the trouble. That was the Hillman girl and they were the ones who had the money, so all the Hillmans marched out of St. Stephen's and gave no more money to the church.

Fernbach

CNB: Which church did they go to?

WLC: I don't know where they went after that, but they didn't give any more money to St. Stephen's. Maybe they didn't give ~~any~~ more money to the church. I really don't know. ^{any}

CNB: One thing to put down for the future would be the whole story of St. Stephen's as Bill knows it because that's so much the center of so many of these families. I want to stay

WLC: Have you seen George Raddin's "History of St. Stephen's?" It's very well done except there's no index. We ran out of money and had to eliminate the index.

BBC: Who has it, Bill? In the Historical Society as well as in your church offices?

CNB: Is this the one that so many copies of it were destroyed by the flood?

WLC: Right. That's exactly it.

CNB: I thought I heard a rather ungenerous comment attributed to you about how much that loss represented. Maybe it was someone else. That that was not a great loss to lose all those copies.

WLC: That may be confused with the new prayer book. The Episcopal Church came out with a new prayer book in 1968 or '69, the first one in 40 years, and it incorporated a lot of more contemporary language than the beautiful . We'd been using the King James version. Although our Bishop who was then living said when they came out with that prayer book in 1928 people were leaving the church by droves because they were so offended by this modernistic language they put in the 1928 prayer book.

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They did the same thing in '68. We had it on a temporary use in a paperback for two or three years, and they had just arrived at the time of the flood so most of them were dumped and there was a great rejoicing on the part of good old-fashioned people over that. I don't think many people really felt that way over George Raddin's book because it was very well done; overly researched perhaps, too much fine detail. But he did research one interesting thing that I found was the fact that the Episcopal Church, the *Anglican* priests in England, always had to take an oath to the king, so when the Revolution took place it was very difficult for them having sworn allegiance to the king to go against him. And Wright(?) was the only prominent Episcopal priest that did that, and he had not been made a bishop, he had to go back to England right after the Revolution and find a bishop who would ordain him as bishop. Then he was able to come back here and start ordaining other bishops to keep the Episcopal traditional of laying on of hands that began with Christ which is so important to both the Englishman and the Catholic.

CNB: At some point I do want to come back to St. Stephen's, but I do want to pursue these houses for a minute. Staying on the side of the block with the Osterhout Guthrie house.

WLC: Coming down was a house that I think was built by Charlie Miner's parents, or at least lived in by them, and later by a family named Howard, the daughter of whom, my contemporary—Alice, married Jule Ayers. That was right next to the Guthries. I know that the Charlie Miners, during the lifetime of Charlie's grandparents . . .

CNB: So he married pretty close to his job—Jule, on his second marriage.

Bill?
WLC: He sure did. Next but one. Charlie's grandparents lived down here in the old house which, of course, is where the Marts Center is. While they were living there, his parents—Dr. Miner was a contemporary of my dad's. He was just within a month of my dad and very, very close friends always. Eloise's uncle, John Farnum(?), . . . Charlie Miner went to Princeton and dad and John Farnum went to Yale, but they were all very, very close friends—lifelong. They were always "Uncle" . . .

Hitchhike
CNB: Hodgkiss came into your generation or was it . . . ?

Hitchhike
WLC: I was the first at Hodgkiss. Ned Darling went to Hodgkiss. His father's home on South River Street was about where the Annette Evans Alumni House is. On that land is where the Darling house was. *Hitchhike*

CNB: So that house is a contemporary.

WLC: That house was built in my lifetime.

BBC: Our Annette Evans House where Dr. Farley lived was where the Darling house was?

WLC: Yes.

CNB: Yes. I remember Ned telling me that.

BBC: I remember that, too, but I always thought it was next door.

I think it was the next south (check) Boston

CNB: Yes. I remember Ned telling me that.

BBC: I remember that, too, but I always thought it was next door.

CNB: And that house was built in the '30s?

WLC: There were two Darling houses. Tom Darling lived in the old Darling house there. Maybe it was the side yard that his sister—we always called her Auntie Bill, that was because she was Emily and there were so many Emilys in the family somebody called her Bill and it stuck. She had married Arthur Hillman and had Natalie.

CNB: So we're coming down this street. There's the grey stucco building which I would guess was built in the 1920s—there's been a dentist's office—that would be right next to what you say was Alice . . .

WLC: ^{ey}Charlie Miner should be able to answer that because he grew up next door to it. I don't know whose house that was.

CNB: So ^{ey}Charlie Miner grew up across from what we now call Miner Hall. He's not happy with that naming, by the way.

~~BBC: Which side of the street are we on? I thought we were on this side.~~

WLC: Starting with the Osterhout house which later was my grandfather's, the next house coming down was at one time the Charles Miner home and then becomes the Dr. John Howarth.

CNB: She's Alice Howarth Ayers. And then comes the grey stucco house which has got to be 1920s, no earlier, and we don't know whose that is, and then we come to—a vacant lot or Sturdevant?

WLC: I think that's a combination of Sturdevant and Ahlborn.

CNB: Is Sturdevant Hall named for a Sturdevant family?

WLC: Yes.

CNB: Did they give us that house?

WLC: No, I'm sure they didn't.

BBC: No, I have data on that. Ed Poggi's father designed that, or grandfather. He was an architect. He was involved with it, but the house is extremely old.

WLC: The double block that belonged to the Sturdevant family—now let me think if I can resurrect that one. There was a connection between the Sturdevants and the Thomases. I think maybe Mrs. Sturdevant was a Thomas. That double block went down to two old maids who were first cousins, one of whom was a sister of Jesse Thomas Bennet and Eleanor

Thomas Ahlborn. When I was a kid I was afraid to death of my cousin Natalie Ahlborn because she would ride her bicycle—she was two or three years old ^{er} than me and she was a tomboy—and when Tom S _____ and I would see her coming on her bicycle we would make tracks to get in the back yard and get hid. She's been long dead. She subsequently married a man you've heard of—Ed Gurney who was the U.S. Senator from Florida and served on the Nixon investigation. She died about that time, not long after that, of what they used to call in those days "premature senility" which now, of course, is Alzheimer's. That was that double block there.

Bill
S. Franklin St. map,
BBC: Here's Kitty DeWeese's ^{the way she has done what she remembered.} But this is going backwards, and I'm not sure it is right. She has Hilda's.

WLC: This is the Weavers?

CNB: The red brick is the Weavers.

CNB: So here . . . ?

WLC: John Turner. That was my dad's brother-in-law. That was McNellis, then Hilda's.

CNB: Then Hilda's, then Weavers which is our Capin Hall.

Bill?
WLC: Then Hillmans. That was a double block. 159 was a double block. Oh, Rymans and then Slattery. I didn't know the Rymans lived there. My grandmother at one time almost married Penn Ryman for which we've always been grateful she didn't or I wouldn't be sitting here. *Ben?*

BBC: What about Ann Pell ^{P5} Tigers? *Tiger's?*

WLC: That's the Posts.

CNB: That was right next to Sturdevant. That was torn down the week I got here (July 1984).

WLC: Remember, ^{Pell's} Annabelle's mother and her sister, my mother's contemporary, called them the Post Toastie sisters and they were first cousins of Emily who wrote the book on etiquette.

BBC: Emily Post was the daughter of ^{architect} Bruce Price who married a Bennet, who married a Lee—Priscilla Lee. He came up from Baltimore and married a Lee. That was Bruce Price and their daughter was Emily Post, ^{who designed} *the Bedford house.*

CNB: Did Emily Post actually live here?

BBC: No, I don't think so.

WLC: These Posts are related to Emily, my mother always said. There was Anna Post and Anyway, she went away and the word came back that she had met a man and married him. None of them could believe it because she was a Plain Jane kind of person and not very impressive. When she got off the train her friends were there to meet her and meet this dashing Army officer, I think he was, in his uniform and my mother said it was absolutely unbelievable that she could have gotten such a good-looking, handsome, attractive man. He kept going off and coming back, and Anna Pell and Johnny arrived as a result of these visitations, and then he disappeared and never reappeared again. Johnny found him just about a year or two ago out in California. At the age of 99 or 100 his father showed up and John corresponded with him. John's wife said, "You've got to go out and see your father. This is ridiculous. You'll regret it the rest of your life." He finally got around to going out to see his father, and I think along the way or something he got word his father had died, so they never spoke.

BBC: That house that I think of as Dr. Mengel.

CNB: Is that where the Farley Library is?

WLC: Right next to it.

BBC: Yes. Then there was one on the corner, right?

WLC: Down on the corner was the First Baptist Church.

CNB: Was this the McNellis house?

WLC: No, that was next door. That's your parking lot in there, next to the library.

CNB: But I thought we got that parking lot out of the McNellis property.

BBC: Of course, McNellis might have bought it from Dr. Mengel.

CNB: No, it's not the McNellis house.

WLC: Right on this side was the _____.

CNB: This is the McNellis house right here. I guess I forget that we had a parking lot there before we took down the McNellis

BBC: Dr. who? Billy's ^{Gritman's} grandfather.

WLC: Mengel.

BBC: Faith Mengel Davis and all that mess.

WLC: Faith Mengel Davis and Jessie Mengel Whitman and Mrs. Weaver.

CNB: What are the houses that were where the Farley Library is?

WLC: On the corner was the First Baptist Church. When I was about six or eight years old I remember looking out the corner room of our upstairs at

Bell?
sp.
McNellis

WLC: On the corner was the First Baptist Church. When I was about six or eight years old I remember looking out the corner room of our upstairs at 130 South River Street and seeing the fire of that church. It was unbelievable how it lit up the sky that night and it was so enormous. Betsy would be too young; it probably burned before she was born. Mid to late '20s—'27, '28, somewhere along in there.

CNB: And that then gives rise to the one that was built, so it's that new?

WLC: Yes.

BBC: But there was also a Baptist Church here on Ross Street according to something I have. I mean South.

WLC: Yes, that's the one I'm talking about.

CNB: That's the corner of South and South Franklin.

BBC: Maybe it's Northampton.

WLC: There wasn't any Baptist Church on Northampton Street.

BBC: I'll have to look again because in one of my architecture books I got very confused about it. Where Chesapeake and Delaware are. I'm going way back to the layout of the Durkee plots. I'll check that out.

CNB: On the corner here of South and South Franklin on the west side was a Baptist Church. This is where the present Farley Library is. Then there must have been a house next door.

WLC: Yes, there was a Stoddard house there. Ask your mother if they weren't the Stoddards.

BBC: Then must have come Dr. Mengel's.

WLC: I guess that's right. Then there was the entryway into the Christian Science Church, and that was a lot by itself. That was a big lot.

CNB: I just assumed there was a way to get back to that church.

WLC: They had a sidewalk that went all the way back in. I don't know that I actually formed the thought or asked anybody, but why did they have it back so far? I think that was probably a 1920s building.

CNB: I bet it was older than that. We're doing extensive work on that building. We're adding extra space inside the big church area for the bookstore. We're adding a second floor loft as well as putting in a ramp for the handicapped.

WLC: I have no way of tying it up to anything, but I do remember there was a lot of talk about Christian Scientists and why are they here. Maybe it was something they were doing.

CNB: That's it, isn't it?

BBC: Could we go back up? McNellis then, then Hilda's, then the Weavers, then the double block Hillmans, and then the Rymans that was the Slatterys, then the Posts that was the Tigers. What I want to know is where were the Kocyans. The big red brick Kocyan house and where was Mrs. Harding's.

WLC: Mrs. Harding was right next to the Post-Tigers.

BBC: Then we have Sturdevant and Kocyan and then the dentist's office.

WLC: How long did the Kocyans live there? You had cousin Louise Thomas, but she might have sold that to the Kocyans. The Kocyans weren't there when I was a kid.

BBC: That's where I went to birthday parties at that house with Jean, but that was later. We were in our teens.

WLC: The Ahlborns were there—Maurice Ahlborn.

BBC: Was it red brick?

WLC: Well, it was that double block. I thought it was white brick, but maybe painted brick.

BBC: Could you identify for me what you and Chris were talking about—the house that the dentist is in now, the stucco.

WLC: I don't know who was in that.

BBC: Then there's a parking lot. Was that were Alice Howardth house was?

WLC: Yes.

BBC: And then the one Chris calls the Roccograndi building.

WLC: That's ex-Guthrie, ex-Osterhout. I don't know whose that dentist's house is.

BBC: Coming up the street from the Kerrs, would you know any of those?

WLC: I know my cousin Ann Hollenback here.

BBC: Hollenback is still Hollenback—our Hollenback Hall.

WLC: That was cousin John Wells Hollenback. On the other side of the street, well, catercorner from that block entirely there's the Presbyterian Church and above that was the home of George Matson Hollenback. He was an extremely wealthy man and he gave that land to the Church to build the First Presbyterian on in 1887 they having formerly been built up where the library is. Eventually John Wells Hollenback moved up there. He had three wives and children by each of his wives. The oldest daughter of his first wife was cousin Emily and she married Dr. Lewis Taylor. He was an uncle of the Buckmans. They had a daughter, Anna Taylor, and that's where they lived and that became the Presbyterian manse after Anna Taylor's death.

BBC: Was it always a one-person house?

WLC: I think so. They just weren't very good about reproducing the next generation. Cousin John Wells Hollenback was born a Wells up in Wyalusing where all the Wellses came from. He was the fourth or fifth of the sons of George's sister Ellen Hollenback who married a Wells. George Hollenback had two wives and never had any children by either one, so presumably it must have been his fault. He decided to adopt a son. He looked at a number of them and considered them for adoption and he picked one that had a wife and two sons and a daughter and he adopted them. Almost immediately illness set into the family and before it was through both the boys and the wife had died and he was left with an only daughter. He subsequently married again and had three more daughters. He subsequently married a younger sister of his first wife and had three more daughters, but there never was another boy, so the Hollenback name died out. Anna Hollenback was from the second wife and whether she bought this house or whether she inherited it or the sister ^{did} I don't know. She had a sister Amelia who lived in the southwest and worked with the Indians and had a summer home up in Glen Summit.

BBC: That's what I think of, the one on the ^{left} corner ^{of the road up to Kirby's.}

WLC: Yes, that was cousin Amelia Hollenback. Cousin Anna was here. They were half-sisters. Then there were some Gibsons from one of the other sisters, but none of them lived here anymore.

BBC: And then the Weckessers and then But this was 1914 so we're talking much later.

WLC: Yes. I don't know who's between Bob Kerr and

BBC: There are several houses in there.

WLC: Above here was the George Stegmaier house, but I'm ^{unsure} sure about the order.

BBC: Stegmaier's right next door.

WLC: Then there was the George McClains. ^{Clain sp.}

BBC: That's the house my family owned for quite a while. That's been made into apartments now.

WLC: You remember Bob McClain, ^{sp. can} and Bill who lived over on Ford Avenue, and then there was Sandy who went up to Portland and married Martha Evans. Mrs. McClain ^{sp. can} was a sister of Theodore Barber who lived here in Hilda's house. Theodore Barber was in the coal business.

BBC: Between the McClains ^{sp. can} and the Burnsides there are at least three houses. You really have to stand in front of them and look at them to try to put it back together.

CNB: Bill, to finish off this first tape I wonder if you could tell us about the culture of this neighborhood as you knew it as a child and as you knew the older generation. I think we mentioned this earlier, but because your father was 52 when you were born by knowing him you really have a reach that goes back to the 1860s and '70s. Say something about the culture of this neighborhood and how these families dealt with each other, how the older people dealt with the younger people, what happened on marriages and people getting to meet each other, and dances. Just say a little about that.

Bill →
WLC: Of course divorce was hardly ever mentioned in those days. Most of these people had been married for a good many years and when a couple of them started trading around with their mates it led to considerable upset and distress. I started to say that my dad never joined the church, which always meant that when it came time for communion, which we only had on the first Sunday of every month—now we are becoming far more Catholic and we have it every Sunday. So when communion service started that was the signal for my dad to get up to leave and leave my mother there because she would receive, and when we were young we were allowed to accompany dad. After we joined the church we had to stay and take communion too. When you went to do that then you went down to speak to Carlyle and his old friends. Dr. Walter Stuart lived on the corner where the No. 9 shop is now and he could sit and see South Franklin Street and Northampton Street and watch who was doing what. He was a very old single man who lived with his maiden sister. He had been a practicing physician here in the Valley for umpty-nine years. I think he came from out in Center County. He knew everybody and being single he had time to watch everybody, so it was contant go call on Dr. Stuart every Sunday. I don't know if he and my father had a nip, but it would not have surprised me if they did. Then we would come on down here and call on my dad's brother-in-law, John Turner, who is also my godfather, and who had, amongst other things, contracted some horrible brain illness that caused him to go to sleep for six or seven years, a form of sleeping sickness. He had nurses around the clock because he couldn't do a thing for himself, and then after a good many years he suddenly woke up. Some new medication they tried on him brought him back and it was really a miniature case of Rip Van Winkle. He got well enough so he could go down to New York with a nurse and stay at the Waldorf-Astoria, which was his idea of going to heaven. Oscar at the Waldorf had a special feast for him and they had great times and then he came home and had a heart attack and died, which was a wonderful way to end up his life. But we always had to call on Uncle John even though he never knew that we came to see him, except when we were very young he still used to be around a lot. There were certain people you went to call on every Sunday. There was a lot more time. You didn't have to hurry home to see the ball game kickoff or watch your favorite program on television or anything of that sort. The greatest thing you talked about was who was getting married and who was dying, but there weren't too many divorces. They just had a very quiet, enjoyable time. Do you remember traffic was going both ways on Franklin Street and there were still a few people around with horses. The police rode about on horseback. Charlie Bart was a childhood memory on his horse. All the kids loved him and everybody else did except, I guess, the teenagers were a little leery of him.

CNB: Where did men like your father congregate socially with other men?

WLC: At the Westmoreland Club for lunch. That tradition still goes on. It was a very popular spot. I don't ever remember him going there in the evening with the other men unless it was a special occasion.

CNB: How about the women? Where did they get together?

WLC: Well, as I remember it, they would have their meetings at the Club, too—upstairs. They were more circumspect about it than they have been recently. They never went in the front door, always went in the side door and never stayed on the first floor until the stroke of six. To have a 5:30 cocktail party was just not done, to the best of my memory.

CNB: Did it make much difference socially which church you went to among these folks?

WLC: I always felt there was an iron curtain, or at least a curtain, between the Catholics and the Protestants. If they were Protestant, and in the Episcopal Church we emphasized the Protestant Episcopal a good deal more than we do today. I think there was definitely a feeling that the Catholics weren't quite up to the top rung.

CNB: How about among the Protestants? Whether you were a Methodist or a Presbyterian or an Episcopalian, did that make much difference in who you associated with socially?

WLC: I don't think there was a great deal of looking down at that as long as you belonged. I can remember going to church at St. Stephen's on Easter Sunday and their having to put up pop-up chairs to sit in the aisles. That would be absolutely unheard of. I can remember getting up at 6 o'clock to go to sunrise service at St. Stephen's and the place would be jam-packed. Nothing like that today. St. Stephen's was the first church to have joint services and I went somewhere, I can't recall where and I can't remember the man's name, and heard a famous, old Methodist preacher of the old days who said, "The first time I heard of ecumenism or ever thought of it was when I was asked to go to Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, as a visiting preacher and you had people from all the different denominations come to St. Stephen's. I'd never heard of such a thing before." So that was done here in this church, and they did in those days bring people in from all over. That was Harry Emerson Fostick or someone of that ilk. It wasn't Norman Vincent Peale—he was still alive, but he was too young and this guy went way, way back.

BBC: What about the education of most of the boys and girls.

WLC: Of course, I grew up in the Depression and the kids I started out with at the Wilkes-Barre Academy, a private school, many of them ended up going to public school because of the Depression, and that was true of the Institute. When I was very young, the old Institute was up here in the next block where that big parking lot is now that comes right out on Franklin Street. That was the old Wilkes-Barre—when my mother had gone to school it was called the "Fem Sem," the female Seminary. They

*Bill
Hillman
Academy* →

(Harry Hillman Academy)

barely

had embarked in the 1920s on a program to build a new school in Wyoming on Wyoming Avenue which Miss Alcott, the headmistress, thought was getting out in the country with lots of fresh air for the girls and away from the busy-ness of downtown Wilkes-Barre. That part was a good idea, but the timing terrible because they ~~really~~ got the students in the building before the stock market crashed and it was disastrous for them from that time on. I know my dad paid for several of my mother's relatives to go to the Academy just so there would be an Academy for us to go to. That was his rationale. Of course, tuition was \$300 or \$400 a year. In clearing out some of the bills, I found a bill to my father for sending me to Yale for one semester—\$750. When I think of what it's costing my grandchildren.

BBC: What about colleges? Here again, there was no college here.

WLC: There was no college here except, my recollection—I remember when it opened, was Misericordia. I don't know ^{when} what you Misericordia opened.

CNB: 1925, '23, something like that.

WLC: I remember the family looking upon it as a modern, new thing, and really, what in the name of time can you expect.

CNB: You started the Hotchkiss tradition.

WLC: I was the first to go to Hotchkiss.

CNB: In your ^{family} family or of all the kids in the neighborhood?

WLC: Both.

BBC: But they went away to school?

WLC: Others went away to school; others had always gone away to school. The reason my dad sent me to Hotchkiss was he really had always thought I should go to Taft because Horace Taft had been a half-brother of the President and gone to Yale with several of my dad's cousins at about the same time my dad did. So dad knew him and his brother knew him quite well. And they'd had President Taft here to visit on a couple of occasions, and he knew all of them. What they used to call the "Buts and the Tuts," which were the Hillards and the Woodwards and so forth. He knew all those people and the Taft family was very familiar, but dad found that maybe Horace Taft had stayed on a little too long and what would happen to the school if he died right when I was a student there. I don't know who told him to take a look at Hotchkiss but he did, and so I went there.

Bill

Wells Belin

Behlin(?)

had gone to Hotchkiss, but that would not have affected my family at all. There were other Hotchkiss people here in the Valley before.

CNB: Was it a ^{foregone} foregone conclusion you were going to Yale?

WLC: Yes. I wanted to go to Cornell; I wanted to go to agricultural school. That was my idea of what I wanted to do. Dad said, "You get your diploma from Yale and then I'll send you to Cornell." So when I got back from the Navy my mother said, "Dad promised you you could go to Cornell."

WLC: Yes. I wanted to go to Cornell; I wanted to go to agricultural school. That was my idea of what I wanted to do. Dad said, "You get your diploma from Yale and then I'll send you to Cornell." So when I got back from the Navy my mother said, "Dad promised you you could go to Cornell." But at that point they were only interested in New York state kids, and I had never heard much about Penn State. They didn't have the public relations department it's got today. By the way, I met the new president at Penn State the other day. I went to a picnic out at Holstein Cattle Breeders, just west of Penn State, and he was there.

CNB: Southern charm.

WLC: Very attractive.

BBC: And you played on the River Common, you could see the river flowing by.

WLC: Yes. I used to ride from South River Street on my bicycle to the Wilkes-Barre Academy on Terrace Street to go to school. Come home for lunch and then back again. One time I fell asleep while riding the bicycle and I ran into a tree and I remember the handlebars struck me in the tummy or something. Then a day or so later I was in the Wilkes-Barre General Hospital having my appendix out.

CNB: Where did the girls go to school and college?

WLC: Instead of going here because they left here about 19

Hillman
or?

INTERVIEW WITH WILLIAM L. CONYNGHAM

July 19, 1991
Weckesser Hall

CNB: Today is July 19, 1991, and I am sitting in the Conference Room of Weckesser Hall on the Wilkes University campus with two friends, William Conyngham and Betsy Bell Condron and we're going to do a session on our neighborhood, the neighborhood in which the University finds itself, and particularly to tap Bill Conyngham's memories of his own family and of other key families in the neighborhood. My name is Christopher Breiseth, and at this point in history I am the President of Wilkes. We don't know what will happen tomorrow, but today that's what I am. Bill, I think it would be interesting to get us started by talking a little bit about how the Conynghams came here and what some of the general family history is because one of the assumptions I make at the very beginning is that Conyngham family, unlike almost any other colonial family, has stayed here and been part of every major era in the history of Wyoming Valley. And certainly from the Wilkes point of view it is one of the most critical families in getting us started and keeping us sustained as an institution, so why don't you start with Zebulon and tell us how it all got here. Or go back beyond that.

WLC: Zebulon Butler, who was my _____ great grandfather, was born and raised in Connecticut and came here as part of the Susquehanna Company in 1769 to help lay out the Wyoming Valley. He chose as the site of his own residence the corner of South River Street and Northampton and Evans Hall of the University is located upon that site. He owned a good deal of the land all the way down, and several of his descendants later erected homes along that land going south on South River Street. He was a mature man when he came to Wilkes-Barre. They lived up by the General Hospital on a little creek up there called Mill Creek. They got pneumonia that winter, or flu or whatever they called it in those days, and he lost his wife and the one son. His other son, Lord, and the daughter lived and grew up. Zebulon later married two more times and had children by both his wives, which resulted in a great many offspring many of whom we've lost track of by now. His son, Lord Butler, was also a very prominent member of Wyoming Valley. He was the first postmaster and, I think, county treasurer; he had a lot of political jobs. He lived on the same site where his father had erected the first home. Several homes in quick succession were erected there. One of them has been moved down further on South River Street and still exists.

CNB: What building is that?

BBC: It's three or four down from the corner of Ross. As you're going south it's on the west side. A little white . . .

WLC: I've forgotten who owned it.

CNB: Also, the cemetery was established in that same era? Across the street, around Mill Creek?

WLC: No. The original cemetery for the city of Wilkes-Barre was at the site of the present City Hall. When the Hollenback family, who were also very early settlers in Wyoming Valley, Mathias Hollenback--his son, George, owned a lot of land and he donated the land where the Hollenback Cemetery is. He also donated the land where the Wilkes-Barre General Hospital is. I presume he sold the other half of that cemetery to the city to form the present city cemetery. But I do know there were a lot of stories about them moving the graveyard when they went to build the present City Hall, and every so often, even in recent years, when they're excavating to put in pipelines or some other thing, they still run into an odd grave or a human relic in that area where the City Hall is today.

CNB: Put the Conynghams in this in those early days.

WLC: Lord Butler had a young daughter whose name was Ruthann, amongst other children, and Ruthann went to finishing school in Philadelphia. As I understand it, she was coming home, whether it was for summer vacation or whether she had graduated I don't remember, but there was a young Philadelphia lawyer whose name was John Nesbitt Conyngham and he was being sent up here to investigate a bank failure. The bank in Philadelphia had a branch, the descendant of which is today Merchants Bank, which at one time was the Wyoming National Bank. That original bank which had been founded by the Philadelphia bank as a branch apparently had failed, so the Philadelphia folks who had invested a financial interest in it sent this young lawyer up to investigate and see what could be salvaged. He met this young student on the stagecoach, which was a two day trip from Philadelphia to Wilkes-Barre--spending the night in Easton. By the time they got to Wilkes-Barre they were both so hopelessly in love they got married and he eventually moved here after he wound up his affairs with the Philadelphia bank and spent the rest of his life in Wyoming Valley. So that's how the Conynghams came to Wilkes-Barre. It wasn't because he planned to come, it was because he met a young lady and that brought he him here and he liked the area apparently when he got here. His older brother had lived here for some time because his father had been in the shipping business. In the panic following the War of 1812 there were a lot of unpaid bills and people had been speculating in land titles in this part of Pennsylvania. The Pennamites in Philadelphia were trying to counteract the influence of Connecticut Yankees coming into Westmoreland County. So the Pennamites were issuing land titles out of Philadelphia that took the same land that the Westmoreland people were issuing out of Hartford. There had been a lot of land speculation. There was no insurance in those days. The John Nesbitt, for whom his young lawyer had been named, had been a partner in his father's shipping business in Philadelphia. He later went on, after the War of 1812, to establish the Insurance Company of North America because he recognized there was a need for insurance to protect merchant shippers who would buy the raw materials and bring them back here and then expect to be paid and if the merchants didn't pay for them, they were frequently stuck for them, so this is why they needed the insurance companies.

CNB: Is this Nesbitt family the same Nesbitt family?

WLC: Apparently not. It's never been established that they were. I can't say no absolutely. They had sometimes taken security they had land titles, so when the panic took place in 1812, John's father, he was very proud to say later in life, that he paid 100 cents on every dollar of the bills he owed. He had nothing left except a lot of land titles up in northeastern Pennsylvania that didn't amount to much. A guy who did a lot a research, Dr. George , who at one time was on the faculty here--he was a man who was very controversial, but he was a good student who knew how to research things, he told me that the Conynghams could have got on their property from down in Conyngham Valley lower Luzerne County up to Clifford which is above Scranton and up through Bear Creek and never left their property because that was all in this land title. They didn't buy the land; they didn't want to have the land; it was simply the security that they had and when they had to foreclose that was all they had left. The older brother lived in Wilkes-Barre at one time, went down to Conyngham Valley near Hazleton and liquidated what he could of the real estate which stayed there for 100 years because he went to Lancaster and settled there. Conyngham Valley was not named for him or for any other member of our immediate family but for John's first cousin whose name was Mustadus Conyngham who had been a sea captain under John Paul Jones in the Revolutionary Navy captured by the British three times and escaped each time.

CNB: Did he actually live in that Valley, is that why it's named or were they honoring the hero?

WLC: They were honoring the hero. When they were getting ready to name that little village down there, the elders went to Redmond Conyngham--that was John's older brother--and said we want to name it for you. He said no that's not making any sense at all, and there is a man if you want to name it Conyngham and it should be named for and that's our cousin.

CNB: Now let's get back to your Conyngham marries a Butler.

WLC: That was John.

CNB: And they take up residence in this area.

WLC: Their home was on South River Street at the exact place where the Jewish Community Center is built today. That was Judge Conyngham's home. I was telling Betsy that my dad used to talk about him. He said his grandfather had a little two-wheeler cart and a single horse and he would strap his law books onto the back of that cart so they wouldn't blow off or get knocked off over the ruts, etc. and he would set forth, perhaps on a Monday morning, periodically to go up to Wyoming County to Tunkhannock to hold court and they have a bust of him up there in the Courthouse.

BBC: Could you clarify again the relationship of John Nesbitt Conyngham and Judge Conyngham.

WLC: John Nesbitt Conyngham and Judge Conyngham are one and the same person.

BBC: OK. Thank you.

WLC: It was their father who was a first cousin of _____. I don't know clearly.

CNB: And when was the immigrant generation from Ireland?

WLC: The immigrant generation came from County Donegal in Ireland. I can't specifically tell you the time, it was in the early 1700s because they were in the shipping business out of Londonderry which they always called "Derry." No good Irishman would call it Londonderry, they always called it Derry and Philadelphia was the branch office. The father always stayed at home in Londonderry. The son would be sent out to manage the branch office, and that was how John's father, who was David Hayfield Conyngham, found himself living in Philadelphia. He had been born in Philadelphia, but he was sent home to be educated; went back to Ireland. They didn't think any education in the colonies was fit. Had to go back to Ireland to be educated.

CNB: And David's son is John Nesbitt.

WLC: That's correct. It was . . .

CNB: And Lord Butler's daughter (Ruthann) married John Nesbitt Conyngham. Now they are how many generations back?

WLC: My great grandparents. They had several children, but their son, William Lord Conyngham, stayed here in the Valley. There was another son named Charles Miner Conyngham, named for his dear friend and not because we were any relation to the Miners. There's a letter which appears in Johnson's Historical Record, because somebody took it to Mr. Johnson who wrote this historical record of the Valley after he retired as editor and publisher of the paper, and he included that in one of his books--a copy of the letter written by Judge Conyngham saying that his wife that morning had delivered a healthy baby boy and out of his great respect and affection for Mr. Charles Miner could he have permission to name the baby in his honor. It was a very formal letter. The response is not there, but . . .

CNB: Well the response is there in terms of the action.

WLC: That's right. The Charles Conynghams' home was on the same end of South Street on the South River Street corner of South and South River. Will Conyngham's home was on the corner of West River and South Streets. The two brothers were side by side.

CNB: So the mansion that will be built there and then is torn down in 1919-1920 came after those two separate houses.

WLC: I kind of got away from not following the houses correctly. John and Ruth had their home where the Jewish Community Center is. The first son to marry, my grandfather William Lord, married Olivia Hillard. They lived next door. That house is still standing and it's in the rear of the First Baptist Church. That's the house my dad was born in. If you're in the parking lot of the Westmoreland Club and look up it sits back there against that brick wall.

BBC: That's where Lydia went to nursery school.

WLC: Then the W. L. Conynghams, when they became more prosperous, they went down and bought the property at the corner of West River and South and built the house that looked up the river. But right along side of them came the brother Charles and his wife and lived there. Uncle Charlie had been shot in the knee I think it was at Antietam. I used to think it was at Gettysburg, but I later found out I was wrong about that. He was shot in the knee and that was in the 1860s. In the 1890s he developed a malignant growth where the bullet had gone in and eventually died in his 50s. So that branch of the family moved out of town, but many of them had lived here for a time. In fact, their son

CNB: He had children?

WLC: He had children.

CNB: And what family did he marry?

WLC: He went to Trinity in Hartford. He met a girl in Hartford when she was about 17 or 18 and he was a college student, and he married her. It must have been a great shock to the rest of the family. That wasn't the way to do it.

CNB: Those things keep happening.

WLC: And that lady was the founder of the Wilkes-Barre General Hospital Women's Auxiliary. My mother and Corky were both so very active in. But the original president was Mrs. Charles M. Conyngham.

CNB: And her maiden name was what?

WLC: Helen Turner, but she was no relation to these Turners here. She was from Hartford.

CNB: Alright. William Lord Conyngham was your grandfather.

WLC: Yes.

CNB: And he was the son of Ruth and John.

WLC: Right. And he was very successful as a coal merchant. He did not own mines. He did not do any mining per se. He entered into partnership agreements with a series of persons up and down the coast, men whom he called his partners. He would go around and he would say to the different coal operators, "How many tons of coal are you going to have this winter?" "I will have 200,000 tons." "Alright, I'll take care of that." And then he would get the next one and the next one and then he would contact his different partners in Boston or Providence or Baltimore or Harrisburg or wherever and he would deal out the coal with them. There's a lot of old checkbooks out at the barn at the farm. I don't know what we're going to do with them. But they're just check stubs which say to so and so \$50-75-100,000 to buy coal then the different merchants up and down the line would pay these partners . . .

CNB: Don't destroy them. Work with the Historical and Geological Society. That's invaluable material for the economic history of the Valley. Particularly showing the connections with the major cities and the companies and people involved.

WLC: I always had a notion, but I never pursued it that perhaps the Spragues who were in the same kind of business in Boston were dealing here for anthracite coal because that's what they were started in. They later went into oil and gas and other forms of heat, but coal was their original thing so I'm sure they must have had a connection.

CNB: Just stopping on the economic question for a minute. If you just take your lineal descendant or people you're descended from you start with John Nesbitt--he's a lawyer. His son William then becomes a merchant. And your father comes into the picture. Why don't you plug him in now.

WLC: William and Olivia had two sons--John, the oldest one, who's named for his grandfather and my dad who was named William Hillard Conyngham as opposed to William Lord Conyngham. My name is William Lord. Zebulon's wife who died up on Mill Creek that first winter was Ann Lord.

CNB: Is her grave identifiable here, by the way?

WLC: Yes, but I think they were all buried at City Hall and later hauled up It was a great big tomb about the size of this thing and they . . . sort of a mess. Dad graduated from Yale, Sheffield Scientific School, in 1889. That was a three-year course in those days.

CNB: He was born in 1868.

WLC: Yes. He came back here and really wasn't sure what he wanted to do. His father had a friend named Woodward Levenworth. He was taking orders from the different coal companies for supplies. He would go around and say, "I'm going to contact a maker of coal picks" (or shovels or blasting powder or what have you). "I want to get a carload in. How many will you take?" So he would assemble enough to buy in volume and then he

would eventually find a place to store some of the stuff and sell to coal operators what they would need. And that's how we got into the supply company business. Dad came back that summer and his father said, "My old friend Woodward Levenworth is looking for a young man to help him expand his business. He's getting along in years and is anxious to have somebody study with him and help take on some of the chores. He's tired of getting on the horse-drawn streetcar to ride from one mine to another to get these orders. So Dad went to work for him and eventually ended up owning the company. Levenworth, Dad told me, used to buy a box of cigars every morning on his way to work. He would walk to work and would stop at the tobacconist and buy of cigars, rip the back off and throw it away, pull the drawer of his desk open and set the cigars in his desk and he would have a cigar in his mouth all day long. And of course he died of tongue cancer--lips and mouth, etc. and not terribly old. And that's how Dad came to buy them all out, and that was the formation of the Eastern Pennsylvania Supply Company.

CNB: Which would be what year?

WLC: Dad graduated in '89. I always said that that really was the year that they founded the company. Up to that time it had pretty much been the case of just writing it down on the back of

CNB: So you just celebrated the centennial?

WLC: Yes. When we had the 75th, for some reason or another we sort of thought it was 1890 that they founded the company, but we later found a letter that Dad had written in 1939 in which he referred to that as 50 years.

CNB: By the way, a kind of diversion here. How many of the family papers have you kept, both personal correspondence as well as the business correspondence through this whole string of generations?

WLC: Not an awful lot of them that have been kept. We're about to move our office. We're going to have an awful lot of things

CNB: You're going to find things you didn't know you had.

WLC: Yes. One story that Dad told me was that when his mother died in 1918, and that again the blight on this house, that next winter--she died the day after the Armistice was signed, November 12--

CNB: She had the flu?

WLC: No. She had a heart condition for a long time. She lived for five or six years under the care of my mother's brother and father when they had said she probably had not more than six months to live and they kept her going for five or six years, but eventually her heart gave way. I suppose today they could give her a pacemaker or something else and get the whole thing going again. After that, the house was empty and was never lived in by a Conyngham again. However, there was that winter, or during the next year, a convent fire at St. Mary's and the whole convent burned and a couple of the nuns were killed in the fire. So my dad and my uncle went over and invited the sisters to occupy that house.

BBC: In the house down here on the corner?

CNB: Where the Dorothy Dickson Dart Center is right now?

WLC: Yes. And they lived there for a year or two.

CNB: I would just say parenthetically that a wonderful picture of this house is in the film "The Lady in Grey" which is in the Osterhout Library. It's a series of short films like the "Perils of Pauline" and it takes place in the Conyngham mansion and what we call Chase Hall, but going past Kirby Hall. So it is a remarkable thing on film to capture the entire neighborhood, including the River Commons, and its access to the river.

BBC: It must have been Choppy Howe who did it. I can't think who else would have had that

CNB: I want to tie a couple things down here. Your father is William Hillard and that's his mother's maiden name. Do you want to say anything about the Hillard's?

WLC: Let's finish up the Conynghams first.

CNB: OK. So they then had your father and your father then marries a Guthrie. Is that correct? Where does that marriage come in and let's put that

WLC: That's correct. The first son that Olivia had was John. He married a girl from New York City. Her name was Bertha Robinson, and her mother had married a man who was an original partner of Anthony Drexel of the famous banking house in Philadelphia. Mrs. Drexel was a great granddaughter of Mathias Hollenback amongst other things, so there were a few tie ins there, too. Mr. Robinson had died early, leaving her with four or five children and she subsequently married a man named J. Hood Wright, who was no relation to the Wrights up here. He was an original partner of J. P. Morgan. So Mrs. Robinson, financially, was always rather well provided for. And Aunt Bertha had a great deal of money, a good deal more money than her husband. The Judge had a daughter named Mary Conyngham who married Charles Parrish, a very prominent coal operator here--most successful, probably one of the wealthiest if not the wealthiest man in town, but eventually made some poor business decisions and ended up in bankruptcy. They were the ones who built the house that subsequently burned. It was known as Conyngham Hall in the University's history.

CNB: Betsy, you clear on all that?

BBC: Yes.

WLC: The John Conynghams had no children; the Parrishes did have children, but the Parrish home was being sold by the sheriff for the collection of debts, and my grandfather, wishing to spare his sister as much agony in all this, because in those days it was disgraceful to go bankrupt. It doesn't seem to be today. Grandfather bought that house. It wasn't until I walked into this room that I realized that he kept title to it in his own name, and it was his widow, Olivia, who gave it to John. But I know that he gave it to John and Bertha; they lived there from the time of their marriage.

CNB: Now, that's our Conyngham Student Center.

WLC: No. It's the one that burned down. Aunt Bertha did not appreciate the gift very much because she wanted to . . . she was not interested in moving to Wilkes-Barre. She was very much in love with her husband, but she didn't want to come here to live. She considered it backward and quaint. Her summer home was out in the country above Manhattan, and she herself told me that it was about where the George Washington Bridge comes into New York City, but that was considered out in the country that was not in the city at all.

CNB: Nice view.

WLC: Right. So that's how that house passed from the Parrishes into the John Conynghams and it stayed there until he died. In the meantime he had built his home at Hayfield Farm in Lehman Township in the beginning of 1933. They moved into it in '34. I know it took them a year to build the house, and all the stones in the house came off the farm. They moved into it early in '34 and they lived in it slightly more than 12 months when he had fatal heart attack and died and she stayed in it for the rest of her life--another 29 years and died at the age of 99 and 1/2. In the meantime, she did give the college that building. Gene Farley always played games as to which one came first--Chase Hall or Conyngham Hall. I see your book says it was the second one, which I always thought it was.

CNB: I've heard the story about your father's brother, his death and the picture that you've got with the black armband on. Would you tell that story.

WLC: My dad had had a very serious accident coming home from a dinner party one night to our home in Hillside. During my grandmother's long period of illness with her bad heart in order to enable her to get out to the farm, they had installed an elevator. They evidently did not have what dad thought they did which was a trick door that the elevator couldn't be moved unless the outside door was closed. One night they came home from a dinner party the outside door was open. He, suspecting burglars in the house, went roaring in to what he thought was the elevator cage and it wasn't there and he fell into the basement and very nearly killed himself. That was the summer of '35. My uncle came every day to see my mother, but he wouldn't go in to see my dad. He said he just couldn't bear to see him laid out that way and looking so badly, etc. He always had a great fear of seeing somebody ill. So he went home. They were having house guests over the 4th of July and the house guests had arrived. They were having a big dinner party that night and he had a fatal heart attack as they were on their way to the dining room. He lived for about ten days afterward, but my dad was so ill my mother couldn't even tell him that Uncle Jack had a heart attack let alone tell him that he died ten days later. But dad was so upset, and in the old fashioned way--that was a

sign of mourning. I even wore it--the black armband.

BBC: Back to the original Conynghams in Ireland and the religious affiliations of that branch of Conynghams. When the branch of the Conyngham family that stayed in Philadelphia, later some of them coming up here to northeastern Pennsylvania, you all are Episcopalians. Was it Church of England in Ireland?

WLC: Yes. They were actually . . . we can trace ourselves back to the Bishop of Argyle in Scotland who was an Anglican bishop. They went over-- suppose it might have been about the time of Queen Elizabeth, I'm not quite sure--to Ireland. County Donegal, which I was into years ago with Monica _____ to try to find some vestige of Conyngham. We were descended from another prominent churchman who, in Ireland . . . I went to the cathedral in which he flourished and I could find absolutely nothing about him and I went all over the graveyard, looked everywhere. I found a Conyngham Road in Dublin but that wasn't where it was supposed to be. It was supposed to be in northern Ireland. Conyngham--our way of spelling it is the Irish way of spelling it, the Gaelic way of spelling it. There a history of Mary, Queen of Scots written by Lady Antonia Frasier and she has letter in the back and the English translation of the letter Queen Mary said, "I will send my servant Cunningham to . . ." In the original Scots, which you can't read if you take the time to read it, it was "I will send my servant Conyngham."

CNB: Let me bring you back. We've got the Eastern Pennsylvania Supply Company. Where does the dairy come in?

WLC: David Hayfield Conyngham was left here in this country by the Revolution and thereby emigrated, because they had not intended to emigrate at all. One of the things he felt worst about was losing the family estates in Ireland. I don't think he ever actually owned a farm, at least if he did there's no record of it. I never read about it. It wasn't important in his life. He was in the shipping business, but his son John, who came up here, eventually developed a farm on the upper part of Wilkes-Barre right where Conyngham Avenue is, that's why is called Conyngham Avenue. A few years ago the railroad declared that they were abandoning the line that ran across Conyngham Avenue and went down into the city near where the Lehigh Valley station were and anybody that had any territorial claims should make them immediately. It never dawned on me to think about it, but Jake Elliott, who was a cousin of my mother and was related to the Beaumont family, another old, old fine family, said, "I have discovered that we have some Beaumont land under that railroad and it had a reversionary right. I think there's some Conyngham land there, too." We went and dug out the records and sure enough great grandfather John had given land for use as a railroad in 1868 or 9 to such and such a railroad, which of course, the name of the railroad didn't mean anything because the name of the railroad had changed several times since, but it did include that if it ever ceases to be a railroad it reverted to John and Ruth. To make a long story short, I had \$16,000 eventually to distribute to all my cousins, most of whom nearly dropped their teeth when they got a check in the mail. That was part of the old farm. My grandfather Conyngham bought Hillside in the fall of 1881. They had earlier been looking for a

place to have a summer home. My mother would kill me if she knew I told you this, but one of the places they went, they were charter members of the Bear Lake Association and they gave up their membership because they didn't like Bear Lake. They went to Harvey's Lake and took up a piece of property there and the kids got typhoid, diphtheria, one of those children's diseases which they attributed to their time sent at the lake so Harvey's Lake was out. Aunt Mary, his sister, and Charles Parrish, her husband, had a big estate at Laurel Run at the top of Giant's Despair and there was always great rivalry between the Parrishes and the Conynghams over which one had the nicer place and they'd always invite one another with letters saying "Why don't you come and spend the weekend where you can breathe and see the beautys of the Valley, etc." There was always great kidding back and forth about that. They bought Hillside, the first land, from a family named Harter who's still in existence there, too. Mr. Harter said to my grandfather, "I hear you're looking for a summer home. I have a farm for sale not far from the city." Grandfather said, "We've abandoned the idea of buying property. We are going to travel." Harter said, "I would be grateful if you and Mrs. Conyngham would just come out and take a look." Since he'd known Mr. Harter for a long time, he did go out and take a look. In the deed, a copy of which we have hanging at the dairy store, Mrs. Harter could not sign her name and signed the deed with a "X". You know Jane Harter who teaches up at the Day School (married Tucker Graham), she's part of that family. It's her great-great grandfather.

CNB: So they came to look at it and they fell in love with it?

WLC: Yes. They bought 140 acres. Eventually it was over 500 acres. I think that owning that property perhaps had as much to do with holding different members, at least in our generation. I thought for a time about staying in the Navy. I loved the Navy, I kind of thought I might do that. But I thought no, with all that land back there, the cows and everything.

CNB: So they bought a working farm? And hired some folks to work it?

WLC: Yes. Hired folks to work it. They never farmed it personally. Always had somebody else to work it.

CNB: Did they have a dairy business with it at the time so they got into the milk business?

WLC: They got into milking business--when they started delivering milk I don't know--but when I was a kid everybody in Corky's family and everybody else in town grew up on Conyngham's Grade A raw milk. It was either that or Goodleigh Farms Golden Guernsey milk. In 1928 one of our delivery wagons and horse were killed by a streetcar and a man very badly injured. After that they sold out to Woodlawn. The days of the horse drawn milk delivery business from that far out was really passe.

CNB: We've got this down almost to your generation. There are two families, essentially the Hillards and the Guthries; put those two families in some perspective.

WLC: Alright. Oliver Burr Hillard was born in New York City, but moved to Charleston, South Carolina, and married a Charlestonian girl and had seven children in Charleston and was in the merchant shipping business. He had a fleet of ships. I think perhaps he was also in the fishing business, but I'm not sure about that. His wife died in the early 1840s; some say in childbirth, but I've never found a record of that. My grandmother, Olivia, his youngest child, was born in 1842. In 1845 they all moved to Wilkes-Barre, and the reason they moved was there was a man with the Army engineers whose name was Bowman, I think he was a major in the regular Army engineers, and he came from Wilkes-Barre. He grew up on Bowman's Hill which is North Main Street in Wilkes-Barre. He was building a thing called Fort Sumter in the 1840s and he had gotten to know Oliver Burr Hillard by his residence in Charleston. A year ago I took a ride out to Fort Sumter and walked around the place. At any rate, when Hillard had lost his wife and he was depressed, and the shipping business was turning sour and he had had this vast army of little kids with just a poor relative of his wife's to take care of them, his friend Bowman said, "Why don't you go up to the Wyoming Valley in Pennsylvania. They're just beginning to develop a thing called anthracite coal." So that's what brought him here. His granddaughters have told me that they always were told that he was the sixth wealthiest man in America when he came here. Who made up the other five or made that determination I don't know. Aunt _____ who lived in the house George Waldner just sold and my cousin Daisy who was _____ grandmother always maintained that he was the sixth wealthiest man in America.

CNB: Did he build that house?

WLC: He built a house up on Hillard Road which is up where St. Ann's Academy was, now there's a nursing home there. That's where he lived. There's a Hillard Street up there. He settled up there and he went to church. He was an Episcopalian, of course, from Charlestown, South Carolina. He went to church and there was a young lady there in church, she took one look at him and said to her mother and her sisters, "There's the man I'm going to marry." So she eventually did, and with great, intense hatred on the part of all the stepchildren for their stepmother. She gave him three more children. Her maiden name was Dennis, but she was a granddaughter of Judge Jesse Fell who had burned the first coal in an open grate in Wyoming Valley and established the use of anthracite coal, and that, I think, it was in 1808, so this wasn't terribly later. They lived up there until Oliver Burr Hillard was killed by a runaway lokie. He had invested in the mines, of course, at the suggestion of Bowman and they said in the early days when he first built his house that he could look out the upper windows and look over on Bowman's Hill and see his friend's house and vice versa. He was showing New York City investors through his mine, and I have a notion that mine was up around Coal

Street--somewhere in that area between there and the Wyoming Valley Mall--up in the East End section of the Valley and not terribly far from where he lived. I can't prove that, that's just my thinking. There were was a runaway locomotive hauling coal and they couldn't stop it and here were these very portly men. They were all rather wide of girth and were walking down this narrow tunnel when this locomotive broke away. They had little bitty locomotives which carried coal cars that were probably not much bigger than this table. But there were a lot of them. So these men leaned up against the walls of the tunnel, but they were too fat and they were all ripped open and a couple of them were killed and he lived for six or eight weeks after that in the greatest agony. He had two sons who, in addition to Mrs. Conygham and he had a daughter, Mrs. Lynch, who with her husband built the home that your mother (BBC) lived in. Sam Lynch was a cashier at the Wyoming National Bank.

CNB: And the other son was who?

WLC: There was Will Hillard that had built the Waldner house, and he died quite early. He married a great granddaughter of Zebulon Butler, too, so his kids were doubly related to my dad. The other other son, Thaddeus Hillard, had founded Miner-Hillard Milling Company, which was a very prominent milling company and for a good many years was in business with Charlie's grandfather, I suppose.

CNB: Linked to present Pennsylvania Millers?

WLC: Yes. That all tied in together. Uncle Thad had a daughter who was married to Judge Woodward and owned the house where the Evans ultimately was built.

CNB: Which was Wilkes's Butler Hall.

WLC: It was really a Woodward house. The Woodward that built the present house there married the daughter of John Lord Butler. There had been three generations of Butler men and then a Butler girl married a Woodward, and after that it was a Woodward. Marian Woodward married Bruce Payne.

BBC: Quite a few Wilkes graduates in that bunch, too.

CNB: So we've got a little bit on the Hillards. Are any of them with the Hillard name still in this area?

WLC: No, there are none with the Hillard name. Will Hillard's only son, whose name was Lord Butler Hillard, had no children, and Thaddeus Hillard had three sons, and one of those sons has a daughter living, and that's all. The daughter married the Woodward and, of course, that's no longer Hillard either. But there are descendants of his. Another sister, Mary Hillard, married a fellow named Rufus Bell. Their house was subsequently named by the college students Haina Hall. Did you ever hear of Haina Hall?

CNB: No, I never did.

WLC: You know where the Bedford house is? Right in back of the Bedford house was the Bell-Huntington house. Aunt Mary Bell had two daughters. One married a Huntington and was early widowed and she lived there with her maiden sister. They lived there for up to nine years. They died in the late '30s and the house stood vacant for a long time and then it was leased. Her only son was Dillard Huntington who has a home up at Bear Lake and comes up here every summer. Somehow or other it came into the possession of the college, but it was never named because it was to be torn down it was such an old, little bitty frame house. But they never quite got around to tearing it down because they always needed it. They could put a half dozen boys in the different rooms, and since it was never named, the kids called it from something they remembered the most and they called it Haina Hall.

CNB: This never got put up on the wall? Did it have a formal name besides that?

WLC: It never got put up on the wall. I don't think it had a formal name.

CNB: One of our former trustees, Eloise Warrinder Ehret, had a house right in that same area. On South Street. Because you're describing . . . this is behind Bedford on South Street.

WLC: I'm talking about South River Street. This would be right across from the Temple.

CNB: I see. Going south on South River?

WLC: Yes. Before that school, or whatever it is that sits there.

CNB: Her house went the other direction.

WLC: Yes. That was the Farnam house. Her mother was a Farnam. John Farnam married Charley Waller's sister, who was Jean Waller, and he was my dad's college roommate when he went to Yale. So I always went to that house. I had to stop and think which was the Farnam house. That was right on the corner of the alley. That was called Wright's Alley and their house ran along the alley.

CNB: Which, as I understand it as they used the term in those days, was a colored community. Down Wright Street.

WLC: They weren't all black down there. There were a lot of whites. They were servants; they were in walking distance. Mrs. Duell, who worked for my mother, was an Englishwoman, had been trained by the Duchess of Bedford herself as to how to be a proper upstairs maid. She and her husband thought they made the most mark in this country when they were able to buy their own house on Wright's Alley.

CNB: So Wright's Alley was really for the servants of the houses on South River Street.

WLC: It really and truly was.

BBC: Are you going to move on to the Guthries because I want him to tell about the farm boy?

CNB: Yes. I think we're doing fairly well. There's 60 minutes on a side to this tape, so we probably are getting close to the end of the first side. Now let's put your mother's family into this--the Guthries.

WLC: Grandfather Guthrie had very little history in Wyoming Valley. He was born on a farm in Chester County about 30 miles west of Philadelphia in a little village called Guthrieville. His father, George Guthrie, was a blacksmith and owned a farm in that little village and apparently endorsed a nephew's note and lost the farm. So in his late 60s he had to resume blacksmithing, which was a very arduous job. He died shoeing a horse; he had a stroke. His son, George, was the oldest of his seven children. Had a long period of convalescence, had a bad leg injury and he was in bed for a very long time during which time his mother taught him to knit and crochet to pass the time. She had graduated from Millersville Normal School. I suppose now it's a university. Anyway, it was on the Susquehanna above Harrisburg. She had done some school teaching and she got her son interested in that and spent a good deal of that year that he was in bed working with him trying to keep his morale up, etc. When he recovered from that he went to Millersville and when he got his certificate, or whatever they did, he found a job in Miners Mills above Wilkes-Barre and came here to teach school. But he was always interested in medicine apparently, had studied a good deal of it during his convalescence and had become pretty nimble with his fingers because of the sewing, so he began to read medicine with a Dr. Meyer, whose mother-in-law had been a Conyngham, too, a sister of the original John Nesbitt. He had married a girl named Peters, a large Peters family had come here as a result of their uncle's connection, etc. That house was where the present Conyngham Hall is. That house was built out on the sidewalk. The only picture I ever saw of it was just a great wall of the house right along the sidewalk.

BBC: It's in St. Stephen's. In the back room. That little picture.

WLC: That's right. In one of _____ collection. Dr. Meyer had no children, but he got to know my grandfather who went there to "read" medicine. When he got to a certain point, he retired from teaching school in Miners Mills and went off to the Philadelphia Chirurgical School or some such name (Medico-Chirurgical College). It later merged with the University so my grandfather now qualifies as an alumnus of the University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine, but it wasn't that when he graduated. When he got his M.D. he came back here and hung up his own shingle and started to practice. He met my grandmother somewhere along the line. She lived on South Franklin Street, next to the YMCA. She was the daughter of Harrison Wright. The Wrights were a very old-time family.

CNB: Is this the house that John Moses's law firm is in?

WLC: I think that's it. I never was quite sure if it's the second or the third house down and I have to go and look at it to be sure and I don't think I could be absolutely positive.

CNB: This is your grandmother Guthrie you're talking about who marries this doctor who was weak as a young man, reads the medicine

WLC: Yes. He had an accident and been in bed

CNB: Does he recover his health as an adult physician?

WLC: Yes. He lived to be 70 years old and he became a very prominent doctor. He was very interested in the school board. He was president of the school board for years. Dick Maslow's office is in the George W. Guthrie School, which he completely did over, and that was named for him because in those days it was customary. The fellow that followed him as president of the school board was James M. Coughlin.

CNB: And I suppose with Dr. Kistler this tradition is being continued.

BBC: That's Marilyn Rudolph's name, too, Coughlin.

CNB: I thought that what we call the Roccograndi building across from the "Y" was also a Guthrie home.

WLC: That was built by Isaac Osterhout who, when he died, left the rest of his money to the library. The library couldn't use the house, so they put the house on the market. My grandfather, at that point, (end of side 1 of tape).

His home and office were right across the street from St. Nicholas Church and my mother used to tell stories about how when she was a little girl and she would run around the corner to where the firehouse was and watch the horses go out with the fire equipment, which was just on Ross Street.

CNB: The same place where the fire department is today.

WLC: Where it is today. It's still there. I have letter that he wrote to his father, the blacksmith down in Guthrieville, on the occasion of his 75th birthday and it tells him all about life here in the Valley. Then he goes on to say, "Father, you will be interested to know that I actually earned \$5,000 last year as a doctor in this Valley. Can you believe that such a thing could be possible for a boy who started out in the Guthrieville store at \$3.00 a month."

BBC: You have a real sense of history, your family. What about the Guthrie Clinic?

WLC: My mother's brother, in 1910 He had graduated from Yale in 1901, Sheffield Scientific School, and then he went to the University of Pennsylvania.

CNB: That's the same one your father was at?

WLC: Yes. Both of my mother's brothers did that, they both went to Shef. Then they studied medicine. They took their first work at the University of Pennsylvania. My Uncle Donald then went out to do his internship with a couple of brothers who were getting to be rather well known by the name of Mayo out in Rochester, Minnesota. Subsequently, when my uncle had established himself up in Sayre, Dr. Charley Mayo sent his son, Charles Jr., and ultimately his grandson, both to Sayre to do their training under my uncle.

CNB: They were connected with my uncle out in Minnesota, just to close the loop.

WLC: My uncle came back here at the behest of his father, who was beginning to feel ancient about that time and he urged him to come back to Wyoming Valley and go into business with him. I shouldn't say business--go into the office with him. So it was Guthrie and Guthrie, a pair of doctors together. Then a Mrs. Packer died and left all of her estate to found a hospital, which was already in existence, but it had one doctor and about four nurses on it. She left all of her money, and they were in the Lehigh Valley Railroad so there was a great deal of money, to this hospital. So they had the money to hire somebody to come up, so they hired my uncle in 1910 as chief surgeon and he spent the rest of his life there. He died in 1958. He had established a clinic in connection with the Robert Packer Hospital, Robert having been the man she wanted memorialized. The clinic is now known as the Guthrie Clinic and is quite well known.

CNB: And we, of course, are delighted that we now have a formal connection with the Guthrie Clinic with our new combined Wilkes/Hahenmann Medical School/Guthrie Clinic arrangement.

BBC: So it was your uncle.

WLC: Yes, it was mother's older brother.

CNB: I just want to tie one thing down. We started talking about the house that you said Osterhout built, left it to the library, it was put on the market. Your family didn't buy that house.

WLC: Yes, we did. Grandpa Guthrie bought it--I got off on the subject of the letter to his father on his father's 75th and it must have been about that same time. My mother was born on South Washington Street and I think my aunt was born here. I'd have to look and see when Mr. Osterhout died. Mother was born 1886 on South Washington Street and I think my aunt was born on South Franklin Street. Both of my dad's wives--my dad had been married before, I didn't mention that. He had married May Turner first. The Turners were also in coal, I think. That was the house they tore down across the street.

CNB: That was the McNellis House.

WLC: That was the Turner home. Both of my dad's wives had families that originated in Plymouth--the Turners and the Wrights came from Plymouth. Both of the girls were born and started growing up on South Washington Street. Both of them moved as their families prospered to South Franklin Street, and both of them moved to South River Street when they married my dad.

CNB: Did he have any children by Ms. Turner?

WLC: They died in infancy. My brother was born in 1897, would have been 94 years old this fall. And there was a little girl. The interesting thing was that the family doctor was Dr. George Guthrie. Mrs. Conyngham, May Turner Conyngham, had no problems whatever during the first seven months of her pregnancy. She suddenly got violently ill and lost the baby and very nearly died herself because her kidneys backed up on her. Dr. Guthrie said, "Mrs. Conyngham, we have saved your life and there's no reason why you can't expect to live a normal, healthy life, but I feel I must tell you you must not ever have a child because of your bad kidneys." So they went four or five years without any children, but her friends saying, "Why don't you go see a specialist. Go down to New York or Philadelphia and see somebody who knows what they're talking about instead of this old country bumpkin up here that you're dealing with. He doesn't have much experience in that sort of thing." So she did, and the doctor down there said, "Go ahead and have your family. There's nothing wrong with your kidneys at all." She became pregnant the second time, and everything did exactly what it did the first time. She got to seven months, the kidneys malfunctioned and she died as well as the baby.

BBC: That first little one died as a little child?

WLC: In infancy--at birth. They were both seven-month babies and in those days you couldn't do much. They might have lived a few hours.

CNB: So then your father, a widower . . .

WLC: For sixteen years. Then he married my mother, the doctor's daughter. He got to be very fond of the doctor, who also took care of his mother. Later when the doctor began to get poorly himself. He had something wrong with his lungs--they kept having to pump out his lungs. I suppose antibiotics would have straightened him out, but not in those days. He came to calling on my grandfather because he was very fond of him. The young lady who opened the door and met him, he began to pay attention to, and that's how we arrived. Then she had a miscarriage at the end of their first year of marriage. That was the fourth time he was expecting a baby, so I think by the time she got pregnant with me he didn't really think I'd ever arrive.

CNB: So he's 52 years old when you're born, and how old when the next two arrive?

WLC:

Fifty-five when Guthrie and 57 when Jack came.

CNB: *Then he lives until?*

WLC: *He died in 1943 when I had just gotten to Pearl Harbor on my way out to war and he died. I was 22, Guthrie was 19, and Jack was 17.*

CNB: *Any more on the Guthries or I'm willing to switch to*

WLC: *The only thing I'd like to say about my Grandmother Guthrie was that on her father's side, the Wright side, she was descended from a very early family in this country who had come over with William Penn because he was a first cousin of William Penn and they were Quakers. Her grandfather had settled in Shickshinny, Pennsylvania, as a Quaker. He had married a girl named Ellen Hendrick who had also come out here from Connecticut, from the Hartford area. She went to her parents and said, "There's a train going out in a couple of weeks to Westmoreland County and I want to go out because you remember my friend (so and so) went out and are living there now and I have a chance to go out." And her parents said, "Well, we don't really like it very much, but if you want to go you have to make two promises. One is that you won't stay; that you will come back to Connecticut. And secondly, if you don't keep that promise, the other is even more important--you must not marry a Quaker." She rode horseback, came out through the wilderness, arrived in Wyoming Valley. She never went back to Connecticut and she married not one, but two Quakers.*

CNB: *So much for family advice.*

WLC: *And she lived to be 96 years old. She lived up here in the house where her granddaughter lived, just below the YMCA in her final years.*

CNB: *That is a beautiful building. Just was over to see Mr. Moses a few weeks ago and it's awesome.*

WLC: *Her oldest granddaughter by the second marriage. She had had an earlier daughter, by her marriage to a man named Wadhams, again Plymouth. A daughter of that family had married a man named French. I can't quite remember exactly what happened. At any rate, this woman had been born a French--I guess her daughter had married a French and then her daughter married a Wadhams and came back in the Wadhams family again. One day the old lady in her high '90s sitting up here across from the Osterhout house looked out the window and she called her granddaughter she was living with. "Josephine, come here a minute. Who is that woman walking up there with her husband and all those children? She's a handsome looking woman; she carries herself well." Aunt Jo said, "Why that is your granddaughter Esther Wadhams." "Oh," she said, "I'm proud that she's my granddaughter. She is a good-looking woman and I'm very proud to see her." The following Sunday the situation being the same she calls Josephine and says, "Who is this woman walking up the street with her husband and all those children?" Aunt Jo said, "I told you last week, Granny, that is your granddaughter Esther Wadhams." "Don't you lie to me, Josephine. That woman last week had on a green dress and this woman has on a brown dress and no woman could afford two good Sunday dresses." That was the late 1800s in Wyoming Valley for a 96-year-old woman.*

CNB: Do you know what was on the block where the YMCA is before it was built?

WLC: That was the Bennet home.

CNB: Is this the Bennet now of Charles Meyers's descent?

WLC: Yes, it would have been. I don't think there's any Bennets left around for me to point out who they are, but they were a very old Connecticut Yankee family.

CNB: Well, that's Charlie's family.

WLC: They were Bennetts.

CNB: And that house was torn down to build the "Y"? There must have been several houses torn down to build that, or was it all one

WLC: I think so.

CNB: Although it's not a deep lot.

WLC: No, but I do remember my mother talking about her grandmother's potato patch out in the back. In other words, those were deep lots, but they probably took something off even if they were deep lots.

CNB: Let's come down this street. You've got the Bennet house. Then there's the house the Guthries were in--the Wright House.

WLC: And then, when I was young, there was Mrs. Burnside's house. Frank and Bob Burnside, their mother--I forget what her original name was--married Boyle first. She had those two men as her sons, they were already Frank Boyle and Bob Boyle and they both use Boyle as their middle name. They were divorced at the time when people still whispered about the fact that Mrs. Boyle was divorced. Then she married Malcolm Burnside who had been employed by Fowler, Dick and Walker the partners who owned the Boston Store. He was a Scotsman, and very, very Scots. Apparently a good merchandiser and a very shrewd and sharp businessman who know how to save a penny in the true Scots tradition. He married Mrs. Boyle and had one more child, a daughter--Mary. Their home was along there somewhere.

BBC: That's the next one--three.

WLC: Somewhere else there was the George Stegmaier, which I think is where the Red Cross is.

CNB: What about the house that Paul Kanjorski owns, which is a pillared mansion?

BBC: That's the Mrs. Burnside's house and then there's one next to it that has the Medical Society behind it, and that's the one I lose.

WLC: Somewhere along in there was the Theodore Barber home, too. No, not Theodore Barber, his sister, Mary, married George McClain. Where would Molly's grandparents . . .

BBC: Who was Judge McClain?

WLC: That was Will McClain. He married a Ricketts and his home, where I ever knew _____ McClain to live in my youth, was the building that's now Rifkin Hall. That was Judge William McClain.

BBC: The Gutman house was also the old McClain. Now this was across the street from the Burnside house. Isn't that Mrs. Harding's house?

WLC: Yes. That's a very, very ancient home. In fact, Wilkes was probably lucky to have it torn down or you'd not be allowed to tear it down today. That was Mrs. Harding's when I was a kid, but I don't know much of the background.

CNB: So this is where we have a parking lot now?

BBC: Yes. I think it's . . .

CNB: Is this the old Osterhout house right next to it?

WLC: No. It's not that far up. Wouldn't this be Sturdevant right here?

CNB: Which is the Kocyan house?

BBC: The Kocyan house was red brick.

CNB: The Kocyan house has been taken down. We've got several houses in terms of the vacant lot here between Capin Hall and Sturdevant. The Kocyans were in one of them. This is one of them.

BBC: I have a letter from Kitty DeWeese and she has it all written out. The brewery people lived there--the Weavers, and then the Hillman . . .

WLC: Two Hillmans--the George Hillmans and the Fred Hillmans. Kitty's mother was the George Hillmans. I don't know whether she was on this side or that side, but it was a double block, two brothers together.

BBC: Then the Tigers.

WLC: No, the Slatterys. The Tigers was the last one down. The double block was right here and then the Slatterys. There was a thing in the back, it's still there the last time I walked through there, where the Slattery kids had

BBC: Like a summer house. We took that down a year ago. It's so sad.

WLC: That's where the Slattery children, there were 11 of them, had all there sliding boards and swings, and all that sort of thing under cover.

CNB: Does this include the mayor who just died?

WLC: Yes.

BBC: His brother, who could give us some help maybe, is here now.

WLC: Of the eleven children there are only two left. One is a nun in New York City and the other is Duard who's beginning to get a little bit flaky, too. The nun isn't flaky, she's as smart as can be. But she doesn't come up here by herself very often. One of the Hillmans married a Parrish. In the bunch that Joanie Blackman Harvey Miner and Ruth Blackman Schooley are related to. That was the Fred Hillmans and they had two children, Doris who is still living, and Fran who married Fernbach and then Bertels in the most horrific husband and wife switch. Caused great to-do here in this Valley. Forty or forty-five years ago. Especially when the rector of St. Stephen's would not marry the wrong couple who began the trouble. That was the Hillman girl and they were the ones who had the money, so all the Hillmans marched out of St. Stephen's and gave no more money to the church.

CNB: Which church did they go to?

WLC: I don't know where they went after that, but they didn't give any more money to St. Stephen's. Maybe they didn't give any more money to the church. I really don't know.

CNB: One thing to put down for the future would be the whole story of St. Stephen's as Bill knows it because that's so much the center of so many of these families. I want to stay

WLC: Have you seen George Raddin's "History of St. Stephen's?" It's very well done except there's no index. We ran out of money and had to eliminate the index.

BBC: Who has it, Bill? In the Historical Society as well as in your church offices?

CNB: Is this the one that so many copies of it were destroyed by the flood?

WLC: Right. That's exactly it.

CNB: I thought I heard a rather ungenerous comment attributed to you about how much that loss represented. Maybe it was someone else. That that was not a great loss to lose all those copies.

WLC: That may be confused with the new prayer book. The Episcopal Church came out with a new prayer book in 1968 or '69, the first one in 40 years, and it incorporated a lot of more contemporary language than the beautiful . We'd been using the King James version. Although our Bishop who was then living said when they came out with that prayer book in 1928 people were leaving the church by droves because they were so offended by this modernistic language they put in the 1928 prayer book.

They did the same thing in '68. We had it on a temporary use in a paperback for two or three years, and they had just arrived at the time of the flood so most of them were dumped and there was a great rejoicing on the part of good old-fashioned people over that. I don't think many people really felt that way over George Raddin's book because it was very well done; overly researched perhaps, too much fine detail. But he did research one interesting thing that I found was the fact that the Episcopal Church, the Anglican priests in England, always had to take an oath to the king, so when the Revolution took place it was very difficult for them having sworn allegiance to the king to go against him. And Wright(?) was the only prominent Episcopal priest that did that, and he had not been made a bishop, he had to go back to England right after the Revolution and find a bishop who would ordain him as bishop. Then he was able to come back here and start ordaining other bishops to keep the Episcopal traditional of laying on of hands that began with Christ which is so important to both the Englishman and the Catholic.

CNB: At some point I do want to come back to St. Stephen's, but I do want to pursue these houses for a minute. Staying on the side of the block with the OsterhoutGuthrie house.

WLC: Coming down was a house that I think was built by Charlie Miner's parents, or at least lived in by them, and later by a family named Howard, the daughter of whom, my contemporary--Alice, married Jule Ayers. That was right next to the Guthries. I know that the Charlie Miners, during the lifetime of Charlie's grandparents . . .

CNB: So he married pretty close to his job--Jule, on his second marriage.

WLC: He sure did. Next but one. Charlie's grandparents lived down here in the old house which, of course, is where the Marts Center is. While they were living there, his parents--Dr. Miner was a contemporary of my dad's. He was just within a month of my dad and very, very close friends always. Eloise's uncle, John Farnum(?), . . . Charlie Miner went to Princeton and dad and John Farnum went to Yale, but they were all very, very close friends--lifelong. They were always "Uncle"

CNB: Hodgkiss came into your generation or was it . . . ?

WLC: I was the first at Hodgkiss. Ned Darling went to Hodgkiss. His father's home on South River Street was about where the Annette Evans Alumni House is. On that land is where the Darling house was.

CNB: So that house is a contemporary.

WLC: That house was built in my lifetime.

BBC: Our Annette Evans House where Dr. Farley lived was where the Darling house was?

WLC: Yes.

CNB: Yes. I remember Ned telling me that.

BBC: I remember that, too, but I always thought it was next door.

CNB: And that house was built in the '30s?

WLC: There were two Darling houses. Tom Darling lived in the old Darling house there. Maybe it was the side yard that his sister--we always called her Auntie Bill, that was because she was Emily and there were so many Emilys in the family somebody called her Bill and it stuck. She had married Arthur Hillman and had Natalie.

CNB: So we're coming down this street. There's the grey stucco building which I would guess was built in the 1920s--there's been a dentist's office--that would be right next to what you say was Alice . . .

WLC: Charlie Miner should be able to answer that because he grew up next door to it. I don't know whose house that was.

CNB: So Charlie Miner grew up across from what we now call Miner Hall. He's not happy with that naming, by the way.

BBC: Which side of the street are we on? I thought we were on this side.

WLC: Starting with the Osterhout house which later was my grandfather's, the next house coming down was at one time the Charles Miner home and then becomes the Dr. John Howarth.

CNB: She's Alice Howarth Ayers. And then comes the grey stucco house which has got to be 1920s, no earlier, and we don't know whose that is, and then we come to--a vacant lot or Sturdevant?

WLC: I think that's a combination of Sturdevant and Ahlborn.

CNB: Is Sturdevant Hall named for a Sturdevant family?

WLC: Yes.

CNB: Did they give us that house?

WLC: No, I'm sure they didn't.

BBC: No, I have data on that. Ed Poggi's father designed that, or grandfather. He was an architect. He was involved with it, but the house is extremely old.

WLC: The double block that belonged to the Sturdevant family--now let me think if I can resurrect that one. There was a connection between the Sturdevants and the Thomases. I think maybe Mrs. Sturdevant was a Thomas. That double block went down to two old maids who were first cousins, one of whom was a sister of Jesse Thomas Bennet and Eleanor

Thomas Ahlborn. When I was a kid I was afraid to death of my cousin Natalie Ahlborn because she would ride her bicycle--she was two or three years old than me and she was a tomboy--and when Tom S_____ and I would see her coming on her bicycle we would make tracks to get in the back yard and get hid. She's been long dead. She subsequently married a man you've heard of--Ed Gurney who was the U.S. Senator from Florida and served on the Nixon investigation. She died about that time, not long after that, of what they used to call in those days "premature senility" which now, of course, is Alzheimer's. That was that double block there.

BBC: Here's Kitty DeWeese's, the way she has done what she remembered. But this is going backwards, and I'm not sure it is right. She has Hilda's.

WLC: This is the Weavers?

CNB: The red brick is the Weavers.

CNB: So here . . . ?

WLC: John Turner. That was my dad's brother-in-law. That was McNellis, then Hilda's.

CNB: Then Hilda's, then Weavers which is our Capin Hall.

WLC: Then Hillmans. That was a double block. 159 was a double block. Oh, Rymans and then Slattery. I didn't know the Rymans lived there. My grandmother at one time almost married Penn Ryman for which we've always been grateful she didn't or I wouldn't be sitting here.

BBC: What about Ann Pell Tigers?

WLC: That's the Posts.

CNB: That was right next to Sturdevant. That was torn down the week I got here (July 1984).

WLC: Remember, Annabelle's mother and her sister, my mother's contemporary, called them the Post Toastie sisters and they were first cousins of Emily who wrote the book on etiquette.

BBC: Emily Post was the daughter of Bruce Price who married a Bennet, who married a Lee--Priscilla Lee. He came up from Baltimore and married a Lee. That was Bruce Price and their daughter was Emily Post.

CNB: Did Emily Post actually live here?

BBC: No, I don't think so.

Project: "To Populate the Neighborhood"

Oral History - Meeting w. Bill Conyngham. July 19, 1991

- Introduction: Chris Brewster & ↑ and date
- Bill: Tell about self and a bit of Conyngham family
- To-day's subject = 3 Conyngham Houses on ⁽²⁾ S. River and ⁽¹⁾ corner of S. + W. River Streets

- C. Miner

- * Bob Kerr

- Alice Ayers

- Fred Laycock

- Harry Schaley

→ born June 1868

- Father age 52 when Bill born. Died when Bill age 22
- one of few persons w. background of having lived in this neighborhood from childhood w. *
- Church a.m.

Start w. Family ... Autobiog. first

Then family -

Then on to neighborhood: characteristics shops
family inter relations

Zebulon = 3 grt's of Bill -

Schaley -
River Community -

John Turner

→ Partner in Phila. Bank - Family'd been shipbuilders
John Nesbitt Conyngham m. Ruth Butler = Bill's great grandparents.

Matt. was ^{here} partner of John Jacob Astor → Conynghams : Butlers
Astor liked Canada +
wanted to go north
- Hollenbacks
- Jacob Astor son-in-law
of Matt. Hollenback -

Tape -

- How Conynghams came here -
- Conyngham family'd gotten lots of NE Pa. land titles from foreclosures (Pennamite)
- Judge Conyngham (up to Tunkhannock) was John Nesbitt Conyngham
- Immigrant generation fr. Ireland early 1700's (hard) "Derry"
Phila. = branch office of shipbuilders
- David Hayfield Conyngham was father of John Nesbitt -
- one of
- Sons of John N.C. + Ruth Butler = Charles Miner Conyngham
named after friend Charles Miner.
- Charles Conyngham's home
- W. River + South St.
- John + Ruth's home = ICC
- Wm. Hard = (Bill's grandpa) - m. Olivia Hillard. + lived next
- later W. River + South. house (1st house still there behind Baptist Church)
- Next door was Charles' house
- Mrs. Charles Conyngham from Hartford (Helen Turner)
- unhard son of John N.C. + Ruth Butler
was a coal merchant up + down areas - had partners all over N.E. of USA
- John N.C. = Lawyer
- Wm. = son + a Merchant
- Wm. Hillard Conyngham = Bill's dad - (Born 1868 - Yale '89 - Sheffield Scientific School)
- Bill = Wm. Hard Conyngham -

Bill's father joined his father's pal Wm. Leavenworth - his

friend who sold mine supplies to coal mines - Boit & Stated
'em - Beginning of Supply Co. So, worked for
him + ended up owning the company. Eastern Pa.
Supply Co. (after Wm. Leavenworth died) → Probably 1889
the co. actually started.

- Bill's grandma died → 1918 Nov. 12 -

- House on corner was grandparents -

Levia's 1st son - John who m. Bertha Robinson whose
? was a Drexel.

Wm. Robinson died early. She remarried a Wright - an
orig partner of J.P. Morgan

She was Bill's Aunt Bertha.

John C's = no kids (Cha

Parrish's = no kids + their home had debt. so Bill's

group bo't that house to keep fr. bankruptcy. -

Aunt Bertha didn't like to live in W-B. Unhappy
w. the gift. Liked her summer home in country

Hayfield home b't. 1933. as summer house - store fr.
Corygh. farm. lived 1 yr. + then he died heart attack.
Age 99 she died. -

- Bill's dad had accident via elevator at Hillside 1935

- Uncle ^{Leek} had heart attack + died 10 days later. Arrived for
year. - 11

- Church of England Corygham's - Descendant of prominent
Churchman
Delaware

- David Hay. C. - stayed here, but wanted a
- son + John had farm on W-B's Conryham Ave.
- RR right of way in W-B still inc - Conryham land. from old farm.
- 1881 - Grandpa C. bo't Hillside. Felt H's lake not good, (Harder land)
- Sister Mary + Charles Parish had Laurel ^{Run} Home.
- Over 500 acres eventually -
- Bill loved Navy life but farm bro't him back here.
- Milk from Hillside Farm event. sold to Woodlawn. -

Oliver Berr Hillard: NYC then Charleston SC - 7 kids + merchant fleet. His youngest kid - Olivia (Bell's graning) born 1842 - Came to W-B - when wife'd died, - Had loads of kids + friends ^{major Col.} Bourman (who'd b't Fr. Sumter) urged him to come to W-B -

• B't. house on hill (St. Ann's).

• He m. ^a Dennis (a judge) stepchildren didn't like her, Oliver killed when showing NYC investors in ^{his} mine (East End section) by a runaway ^{coal} locomotive in a narrow tunnel. -

He had 2 sons + Mrs. Conryham + Mrs. Lynch (somewas a ^{captain} in

• Son with Hillard b't. Wolfe-Waldner House...

• Theobald " Jdd. Miner - Hillard - Milling Co. - - -

- Hillard name is lost. - (Hillard - Huntington still comes to ^{Bear} lake)

Geo. Guthrie's dad = blacksmith + farm in little town of ^{Spetherville} ^{1 yr. in bed} oldest of 7 children - leg injury - learned to knit/crochet. [✓] ^{Checker Co.} his man grad. Millersville Normal School. Got son int. in teaching. Came to Miner Mills to teach. Also liked ^{read with} medicine - Dr. Meyer in house on St. Center. Dr. Meyer had no kids. -

(Ended up being Bell's Grandmat

← Moses' law Farm now prob. was grandma Guthrie's house ^{a Wright - family of Wm. Penn + Oraker. Came to Shick-shing.}

Jesse 1886 born (S. Wash. or S. Franklin)

Prominent Dr. Guthrie. - Geo. W. Guthrie School named for him. -
(Jesse Osterhant bet. Rocco Brandi bldg. opp. YMCA - also left to
Osterhant). Bill's family bet

Bill's mom's brothers went to "Sheff" at Yale. & studied
medicine. Donald Guthrie did internship w. Mayos + Mayos
sent their children later to study w. Dr. D. Guthrie. -

Mrs. Peckard (Lehigh U. RR) left \$ to do a hosp. -
1910 - Guthrie Clinic ... Bill's uncle.

- Conyngham died very young.
- Mae Turner was dad's 1st wife. 7 mo. of pregnancy she
became ill (kidneys). Got pregnant again (tho Dr. Guthrie'd
told her not to). -
 - Second wife was Jesse + Dr. Guthrie's daughter. She had a miscarriage
then the 3 sons. Bill's dad died in 1943.

S. Franklin St.

Dr. Chas Miner closest
pal of Bill's dad

- ① Bennett home was YMCA lot. Z. Matt Bennett
- ② Wright house (Bill's family)
- ③ Mrs. Burnside - sons Frank + Bob - by Mr. Bayle Frederick Dickelher
then divorced + m. Fr Burnside - Mary...
- ④ Alice Howard Ayers. -

Story of St. Stephens - Geo. Rodden's. -

opp

~~② Alice Howard House~~
~~③~~

(Tape Recorder)
Oral History

media!
cassettes

• Tell Al-Essie
• Need good tape recorder
• "The Lady In Grey"

Max Rosen + story re Dan Flood + flood

Need Dena?

C. Miner: Original Board -

(822-7188)

→ 823-1181 (206)

Bill Conyngham ①: History of Neighborhood + Families -
+ anecdotes + Bldgs. - "Populate Neighborhood"

- Town blocks of S. River, W. River, Franklin St next
- ②. Conyngham family
- ③. Original Board
- ④. List of signif. past donors
- ⑤. What done by Essie et al: Clifts, Conynghams, Carpenters
all asked me re relatives of Clift, James Harris, Sam Davenport (a son),
see Hall gift & Hellenpark. + BISC Trustees Parkhursts. -

- ① — opp. Y M C A
- ②
- ③
- ④
- ⑤

Natalie
1 Ahlborn (cousin of Bill's) Ed Gurney
Sector

W side corner of South + S. Franklin going north.

1st Baptist church '27 - '28 burned... west corner
Dr. Mangel
McNelis → Let back into Christian Sc. Church. → Stoddard?

Held's was Barbers —

Weyers

159 Hellman (double block)

Rymans then Sletkys

lost then Tigers — (Emily)

Harding. —

Studenant

Kocys - Ahlborn

Steenro ~~to~~ (Dentist)

Alice Hawth

Ex Guthrie - Ex Oakeshat Bldg. = Rocco Crudi

- Kers

-

Hollenback - John Welles (cousin of Bill's) Welles' from Agassiz -
George Hollenback had 2 wives + no kids. - m. on + no sons
[some daughters]

- Week.

- Stef.

- Geo. McLean (Bill + Sandy +)

Charley Miner - 11-25-91 - Oral History

- Introduction: CNB and date
- Charley - Tell a bit about self
- To-day's subject =

→ 1790 came here -
Miner Family: Charles + Asher (bro's) here fr. Ct. ... to Plains 1st. C.M.
desc. fr. Asher. → Founded 1st school in area. Then Asher to run a
newspaper in Daylestown.

Charles to Westchester + ran a newspaper + Essays "Poor Robert. Grind"
→ "Person w axe to Grind" → in Bartlett's Quotes. was in Congress -
Knew J. Quincy Adams Asher. wrote early hist. of Uyo Valley + died
here. His descendants not here.

Asher here - ^{CM's} Grandpa was Charles Miner -
Miner-Hillard Brown Mill (Miner Mills) - 1790 flour. -

→ WWI - Asher lost leg. - Brig. Gen'l Nat. Guard.

CM's dad a phys. 1 of 3 sons. - ' Sec. of Health under Gov Pinchot
(CM knew him).

~~Former~~

Grace Shoemaker → (Dutch name) Here before Massacre

James N. Lea. one of

Lea Miner Coala - Bob Miner son of Asher + CM's cousin.
Asher 8 yr. older than CM's dad.

Miner House. CM lived in a house 'til 1924 on S. Franklin across YMCA
then into house grandparents bldg... the mansion - gave big house to
Dr. Miner → big TB specialist (miners here) - Co. med. Director - flee
epidemic 1918. Sec. of Health - Cardiologist (1st one here) -
Took his card. machine fr. house to house.
His office on st. of mansion. —

Dr. Howard's house was Miner's house. -

Sholomcha Hane was Ricketts later opp WSSS

- C.M.'s playmates → Ricketts'
- Reynolds house → Corrine was a friend -
- Henry Long (son of M/M Cos. Long) was a pal
- Darling house next (on Tom Darling's sons Ned + ?)
- Butler Beaumont (Union + Franklin)
- Nelson Jones (son of Lawrence Jones)

Flu Epidemic ... school out a lot... he had fun. -

man working w. Red Cross + dad being so ↑ ...

- Doctors in area 'any of Trolley Cars to square -
- Father was in. for F.M. Kirby - Pushed Health Center here. "some-thing that'll last 1000 years".
- Memories of F.M. Kirby -
- a Kirby house next to our Sullivan Hall on S. River St. —

Bixby House

House bet by Asher Miner. After his death Braxleys moved in Dr. Bixby
Dr. B. was a Welles family member - His dad a businessman. Dr. B.
was Princeton ^(4 kids) Trains all thru house at Xmas. Dr. Ned's ^{Dr} fire —

St. Stephens ... early 1800's ...

CM → WB academy - Hillman ac. - Uyo Sem. - The Hill where parents &
SM → WB Inst. } Princeton - History major
 } Harvard Law School

- BGA -

Dr. Mina + Charles ^{Ward} Howland stayed there - not Sam.
Ned Dava, Butts Beaumont,

Christmas & Bixley's on Ross St. Their Christmas m. @ her's 2nd daughter.

Next house up = Wm. S. McLean (lawyer) Rachel's
Dad was a Judge McLean.

Miner's Social life ... Family dinner at "264" - very close family & many reunions. CM's grandma 'til age 94 - Sun afternoon 4:00 gathering every Sun.

Bet. a trench in grandma's backyard.

Uncle & 3 cousins in 10th grades

CM in US Naval Reserve in WWII - Naval Intelligence → NE PA office -

↓ member of Concordia Singing Society → German related so carefully scrutinized

~~Miner's~~ Loomis House between Miner + McLean.

Bill Everett - Glen Alden Coal Co. ~~head~~ - very active in ^{community}

Mary Koons' was Fred Parrish's
Ahlboms house (allied)

Dr. Harold Harris →

Ed Ryan (Med)

Mother house?
Frederick house?

Walter's dad a grocer maybe?

- Morgan or Ross + S. Franklin →
- Then another house?
- Miner - Howells house → Bob Princeton WWI Pres Miner Willard
→ Miner owned that house -
- Howells rented
- a long → probably (Bernard?) house just before plg. lot coming north
- Minors' apt. →
- Weddells house - Victorian - Dr. Washburn → Gore Hall
daughter - Dorothy

Harvey have - big blue - Bob's family?

Dr. Alex Smith^{'s}

Perkins

2 2

Lynch family (bells)

Hillard Huntziger (Bear Lake)

Ben Dilley's Bar - cat
Elk - Ben's ashes.

Triple Black Frame

Long house - Dana - Whaley

Z. Platt Bennett - 3 houses (Fortwich)

→ - Wellenheraus

Dr. Yuz. Kay Rofan (Uhl) - Pen Tlaaro

Across South

Dr. Kerr

another few

Hollenback - Mr. & daughter Anna lived there - maybe given to

Stalls (next to Weckesser) Arthur Stall - Tim Mack

Weckessers
for kids!

Ch's Court at Glen Summit bet by Weckesser's

Stegmaier's -

Geo. McKean's lived in $\frac{1}{2}$ Howell + Joes house - Double ^{Ned} Haupts?

Louise Thomas' house - Dad was Isaac Thomas - Pelly Wilego's grandpa or great grandpa.
ask Pelly

Another house -

" house - med. Soc. behind

Burnside's - maybe Lagarus' bet. it -
needed stronger supports

? John Ross' house (apts) - Lagarus'

YMCA was George S. Bennett's - house set back

- Guthrie
- Minas - Hawth
- Stuart House Dentist
- Stuberant → Mr. Stend - arch. maiden sister (Ethel)
- Kogari's
- Mrs. John Harding (Smith College)
- Tiger - John Ann Bell
- Hellmans (Fred + George) Harry Hillman Academy
↓ Frances
Doris → Katherine + Wade
- Weavers
- Barbars (Hilda's) → Ted, Sister - Mrs. George McKean
Molly Barber → Stein Doctor
was Davidow's house -
- Dr. Mangel - Dr. McVetters?
- Church (Ch. Sauer) Faith Mangel Doris
- Baptist Church

BUSC

- Coming into Neighborhood →
- onto Board in 1938 (Charley)
- Gilbert's leadership - push - work to get this BUSC going... due to Gilbert & Mrs. Darte's financial support, Arnette's push. —

Hillard family - Henry Doran - old settlers
Hillard milling CO. - merged —

miners to Glen Summit - RR Service -

BUSC women Mrs Charles Clift → 3 kids -
Mr. Clift (w. Kirby family)

Kirby District office here

Sarah Kent - They moved here - He w an investment firm
Neil → (Smith grad.)

Miss Anna Taylor - Dr. Taylor headed - Lived in S. Franklin in row
Pres. Church House —

- James Harris Treas. - Dad was prob. Pres. of Beechell.
→ close pal Gilbert McClutch —

- CM started w Neil Christman in law offices (Coal Exchange Bldg)
Bill McLean, Edair Sherty. -
Mrs Art S. For. named, Ch Lennon, Ben Jones, Steve Killian -
10 yrs - 1st Eastern Bank (was 1st Nat'l).

Mike Bergman: March 3, 1992

000 Lead was Canyon house - Found in 1920's and then to be an art center - haunted in Mike's memory

- Dedication of Riley Park -

- Julian Kay Stew + Harry Stew (Mr. Stew - creepy)
bet. walls - 7 elevator (father + son)

- Jim Stew's kids Harry + Claire + also m. Dr. Sam. Goodman
to m. Ellen Koster

- #65,000 to remodel Berg. house after flood. make left
basement -

- Basement: flood '36 - Mike stayed drinking water stayed in!
wine cellar - could goods

- Sharpe House (Rene Hall) - Mrs. Bowman's father
Sharpe's Field -

Mike's dad

born 1880 in Conway to USA 1892 - Chicago to 1902 in Dept store -
then to Johnston - met m. Nathan + Nathan's twin

their children - 1916 started Bergman's store

on 5 main st -

1959 - made to Abrams - 45,000 sq. ft. 120 people
1972 flood - 5 million volume. Pinned Aug. 1991 had

to give up store.

Dad to 5th grade in school

Mum's family from Ireland (her grandfather) she has Brooklyn
roommate = Alice Brady actor. * moved in Canada.

vacation in Seven Lake - she sang - geyser voice.

Admiral

Mike born 1919 - 1925-26: Anna / Kay got home.

went to readers: Jessie G. O'Connell

Mr. Bittencourt, Mrs. Boddy -

Bergman - #2

Mike's dad → must go into business (not be a Doctor) - Any
(Oss) — went into business in '46. She died in '47. —
→ stayed in USA (made him sad) —

5¢ + 10¢ stores (Neuberg - Kirby - Kress - Woolworth
+ quality Dept Stores i.e. Berg's... Isaac Lang's... Boston Store
- Berg's = medium to higher price F.O. + W.
- Hal, Hollywood, Isaac Lang's, —
- Jordan's + Rosenthal's - Lang's (Bros.)
→ Simon Lang's —

Minim Lang → Freeman... Dr. Julian was a cousin. —

W. River Street

Julius Long Stern

- Waller Hall... bldg. before Bergman's
- Jim Stern + Madeline in north side... Harry in so. side + wife, ^{crippled}
✓ parents of Jim Stern
- after Harry + wife died house sold to Allen Kirby about 1939... They
sold it to Waller.
- Jim + Madeline divorced. — Claire Cantman lived there a while
- Jim + Ellen Stern: John + Joan Koster —
- McLaughlin's lived there. —

Kirby family —

Fred + Mike same class at academy... Fred's bedroom + Mike's had a
message line + Irene Jessie (i.e. lovely, beautiful gal + good times)
Stern/strict man = Mr. A. Kirby —

Rothkeller was beautiful! —

Louis Wolfe - card cars (Chrysler)

- our art studio probably an aesthetic home —
- S. River St = Jay Karpofsky's house —

#3 - Bergman

- Lord Butler Hillard } Mike's memories -
- Mrs Hillard + sis-in-law Josephine → lived a long time -
- lovely lady + died late 1800's -
- Buckmans owned double block
- (Paul) Heath's + Fearan Bells -
- Paul Sterling "Orlie" -
- Charles + Mrs Morgan - "Red Morgan" -
- Bayard Hand's house -
- Sharpe's field - "Bene Hall" - (Lydia Berman's parents)
- Selshy's house was a carriage house. -
- Nicholson House (Samuel)
- old Dr. Kravetski (alive) → epul

Warner (?) House - Daniel Roberts Warner (?)

- maybe assoc. w. Woolworth's -
- Denny Warner's mom was a Roberts
- Dr. Warnerth - Denny to Academy w. Mike -
- mom died early + Dr. Warner (dentist) - sold to Marmelstein -

Mike's class,
Jewish Community

- Beyond Hands: Dick, Carter, Barclay -

7 Chinese

Charles Margat → Red Morgan

Levy's Shapiro's, Smith's, Haddocks, (Smith's) Trathaway? → Kirkbulla
Shapiro's, Ernst (Gey) (Smith's) brick house (brick house)

Wetly Korn, sheet, Lynne
Have
"Cherry",

48 Rinde or
Pfiffling

Academy 1
(son of store)

Fred, Charles Epstein, Joseph ~~Coors~~ ^{Coors}, Bill Shoemaker, Bill McLean,
Russ Greaney — W. Hy Smith, Slettery, Bill Coughlan, Harry S.
Bob Goldsmith — Dubois —

Woz. Sem > Infl.

House → Inves + Levy + Hildebrand Carboactor.
Peggy

House → Parents entertained in house -
Chasley Waller: a gd. friend of Bergman's. - Peggy Wallace
Bedford Waller - Harling

#4 Bergman

Bedford -

Waller -

Darling -

Peter McCormick -

Seward Smith -

Eitley started out next to "Idi" on S. River. - David Eitley -

- Jacquia house was orig. Fred + Jessie Kirby house
next to Sullivan Hall -

- Mrs. Cleft -> (Spohrer) -

- Dr. Schappert -> Eye Ear Nose Throat ...

60,000 -> people working in mines in the 30's -