



Interview: August 6, 1984  
Interviewing: Mr. Julius Dennis  
Columbia Beach Road  
Shady Side, Maryland

1984.007

Note: This version uses the old time Shady Side speech patterns, if in doubt of what is being said go to the DVD.

JL: Mr. Dennis ...

JD: Yes

JL: Could you please tell me what year you came to live in Shady Side or were you born in Shady Side?

JD: I born right here, right here in Shady Side, you know my place, my old home town right across, right across my place.

JL: Uh, what year were you born down here, Mr. Dennis?

JD: 1895.

JL: 1895?

JD: Yes, ma'am.

JL: Could you ... uh ... tell us exactly where in Shady Side you were born?

JD: Yes, right down here, right, right here on ... uh ... well, today they call it Bay Shore, I mean ... no ... yeah, they call it Bay Shore. See, thats my grandfather bought down there and there's ... uh ... Dennis property, my grandfather, Jake Dennis.

JL: Do you happen to know what year your grandfather bought this property?

JD: Nom, I don't, nom, nom, I didn't even know him.

JL: Uh, Mr. Dennis, do you have brothers and sisters?

JD: Oh yes, yes.

JL: Could you tell us who they are, please?

JD: Oh they. .uh. .well, they all gone except two of them.

JL: And what ...

JD: Uh. .John Dennis, John C. Dennis my oldest brother, he's gone, passed away, and Isaiah Dennis, and ... uh, uh, Ira Dennis, he's living, he's down here in Columbia Beach and he's passed 90, he's up there, he's passed 90, but I ain't even close to 90, he's 10 years older than I am, I'm 88 years old and he's 10 years older than I am and ... uh ... their all born right, right, right across from my home here now.

JL: How many children were in the family?

JD: In the family?

JL: How many children?

JD: Ten of us. Four girls and six boys.

JL: Uh, could you tell us a little bit about your home life when you were growing up?

JD: Oh, yes, my, you know ... uh ... I mean, I was born right there and my father started me in working, oh, I guess I say around nine years old, on the farm. I done work on the farm, we, worked, I know he raised tomatoes, and they only brought down eight and ten cents a basket, that was 5/8 basket, 5/8 (peck). And ... uh ... he raised tomatoes like that, it seemed, up until 19', I would say 1917, cause he passed away that year, 1917. And before that he raised, all he got was ten cents, eight and ten cents a basket, eight cents was all he got, contract. And we hauled 'matoes all two ox carts, two ox carts, running ... carried 40 carried 40 baskets ... a load. And he had a little wagon, spring wagon, 'at carried about 15, it could've carried more but to put the seat on, make him sit comfortable, it carried 15 baskets. And he just liked to drive down, see us unload tomatoes and he'd be there, all like that.

JL: Where did, where did he take the tomatoes?

JD: Down to Chalk Point, canning house, be down there, Mr. Hyde's place, that's where, that's where the canning house was down there and, oh ... uh ... well, when we hauled them down, when big enough in 19', let me see, 1917, he'd taken sick and we came to Johns Hopkins Hospital. Well he's too fur gone the doctor said, so we could got a hold a little sooner, about couple weeks ... uh ... more, why they could have patched him up and he would have lived a little, but he was too fur gone. Well then we brought him back home, my mother did, brought him back home and then he stayed around here and ... uh ... got sicker and sicker and then in 1917, which he, he passed away. And ... uh ... he had, let's see, I think it was five boys of us then, cause one, had lost one brother ... one brother got drowned, and four girls, that was nine head of em. Yeah, and then, then later when my sisters passed away, it was just off and on like that, and clean up here till last year, my sister next to me, she lived down Virginia. She moved down there, but we had to go down there and get 'em, brought her back, brought what ... she brought her boy up, but she was sick in the hospital, couldn't move up. And it wasn't long before she passed away, that was last year. So, so she's gone now only, only two of us now, Ira Dennis, Julius Dennis, there's the only two in the family now that's living.

JL: Uh, could you tell me some of the chores that you and the other children in your family had to do when you lived at home?

JD: What we had to do?

JL: Yes, some of your chores.

A: Well, all we, well we just worked, you know, like that and tried to, we tried to raise, we raised some

tomatoes and tomatoes jumped up that year. That year he passed away, tomatoes jumped up to 40 to a dollar a basket, dollar a basket. Captain Bert Hartge, Captain Mike Hartge, they was running them from, from down to Mrs. ... uh, uh ... Captain George Kirchner, Captain George Kirchner, down at Chalk Point to eastern shore and we got a dollar a basket. And we carried, we carried 40 basket, 45 basket, I guess down there, \$45.00, and ... uh ... we run maters like that then, oh I don't know, maters been up ever since, they can bring the price. And I, a lady come in here the other ... for, about a month ago, and brought up talking about Mr. Kirchner, Miss Myrtle Kirchner, it was Captain George Kirchner's wife, and ... uh ... she knows me so well, you know, and I'd go out here in the middle of the day and, well now see ... 19 ... , yeah 1917, Uncle Sam, he. .uh ... soon I had come 21 ... Uncle Sam, I got a letter, Uncle Sam, I had to go to be raised (registered), sign up. That's was up here ... um ... it would be next to the church, that big lumber yard out there. I had to go up there and sign up and I then I hung around and go back and forth to Annapolis to be examined. My mother, she went with me, tried to get me exempted ... from the Army, but nun huh (Negative connotation) I just come the age, 21 and I went in and ... uh ... that fall my father was passed away that in May, in my May. In November I had to go in the Army, they called me in, and I went in, but I didn't stay long ... in, they assigned me back home, I come back home and I been here ever since, doing farm work and oystering, all like that, that's my living I was doing, following the water.

JL: Could you tell us where you went to school in Shady Side?

JD: Oh, I just, just school, just school up the road here, I didn't go to school much, I didn't get much schooling.

JL: But do you remember.

JD: Ma'am?

JL: Do you remember who some of your class mates were in school?

JD: Oh, yes indeed, all gone.

JL: Could you tell us who they were?

JD: Yes, ma'am. Oh, it was, her name was Evaleen (actually Evelyn) Matthews, we used to call her Sis, but her name was Eveleen (Evelyn) Matthews, then cause she got, she grow up and got ... uh ... come to be Scott, Evaleen (Evelyn) Scott. She married a fellow lived down West Shady Side, here, not West Shady Side, ... uh ... a place down here called South Grove. And she married, and she, oh she raised, she had two daughters, she raised two daughters. They live in, one of them live in Washington, one of them live right up the road aways.

JL: Uh, do you remember ... uh ... any of your other class mates names?

JD: Oh my, yes, they all gone.

JL: We'd love to know who they were ...

JD: Well George Gross, one of them was George Gross, Grant Gross, ... oh, let me see what the other boy name now, Smith, Roy, no not Roy, uh, Walter Smith, uh Pike Smith, Dewey Smith ... uh ... Dewey Smith's living. All of them, I went to school with him, but they living, but most all other's is gone.

JL: Do you, would you happen to remember the name of some of your teachers?

JD: (Laughter) This here ... uh ... Miss Mamie Houston, she, after, she stopped teaching school she went over, she went over east shore, for ... uh ... eastern shore. The last time I know would know anything about that she was there and of course she's been gone. Then another teacher's name ... uh ... Miss ...

Mrs. Holmes, Mrs. Holmes, I think her name was and then uh, Mrs. Lou Garrett, she, she's gone, she was a teacher. And that's about all I, the teachers that I had during that time.

JD: Did you have, did you have a favorite subject in school? What did you like best?

JD: Well, most of it that time I wasn't no more than, I guess, I like to play and all like that, you see, but my father kept me home most, we helped him on his farm. He had, he had four boys on "the oyster rock", four of them, see, and he kept me home with him, on the farm to help out. And that's why I didn't get much schooling because we had all, we had six, seven head of horses and a bunch of cows and uh two yokes of oxen and all like that ... oh boy, I got a picture here now, (chuckle) this is my father.

JL: What year would you say this picture was taken?

JD: Oh my dear, I, I really couldn't tell you. I really couldn't tell you what year that picture was taken. I couldn't tell you, cause it's back, now, you take this here picture, this is him. This is my picture when I was hauling water for my mother. Had to go ...

JL: With a team of oxen?

JD: Yes ...

JL: That's beautiful ...

JD: I had them, she wanted some water to haul and we had ... um ... down here to Columbia Beach, down to Columbia Beach, was a fellow used to own, own that property, that place down there named Mr. Sam Parrot. My father used to haul boarders for him and ... uh ... well, he was gone, he passed away and my father knew him and he worked for him and we had to go down here and he had a nice well down there, we loved that water so down there, it was ..., it was a dug well, you had to draw water, and I used to drive, used to go down there and back the cart, the wheel, the cart up to the well and put something to stop the wheels on and draw water, and set the water in the cart and get up and pour it in the barrel.

JL: How old would you say you are in this picture?

JD: Well, I would guess about 12 years old, not older.

JL: Uh, is this, is this well still down here?

JD: No, that well, that, that they fill it up. After this place was sold, Columbia Beach people got, I mean people out of Washington, you know, bought it ...

JL: What area was it in down here in Columbia Beach, this well?

JD: Well, only thing I know it was called was um, well, all I would know is, you know, says Shady Side. Now this was Shady Side. This was Shady Side.

JL: It's still part of Shady Side.

JD: They, they, the gentlemen that what lives down there, Mr. Sam Parrot, he's the one what named it Shady Side. Down there in Shady Side, down there called Shady Side, that was Parrish Creek. And Mr. Sam Parrot, I mean he had it, he named it Shady Side because he had boarders. My father used to haul boarders for him. Well, after it was, well 40 years was gone, Mr. Bob Nowell down here, he had to go way up here to Sudley, that's where a person could go get mail and Mr. Bob Nowell he wants to get see could you get the mail down here and some way they got it down here. Then ...uh ... after they got it down in they all said, well, what is you gonna name it? And he said name it Shady Side. So that's why I call it Shady Side.

JL: That's wonderful, that's, I like that story, that's wonderful.

JD: Yes, and then you see that went like that and well then the places down see columbia, for Columbia Beach uh ... oh his name was Adman Garsch, Adman Garsch and he, he uh got this place down here then, he got it. Then a fellow named of, had a store down here where Mr., where Eddie's store down here now, his name was G. C. Hopkins. He come here and he got the store and he took over down here some how, some way or another he got into it and then Mr. ... uh ... what's his name, I called it just now ... Adman, I didn't know then they come together and they sold it, open up a beach and ... uh ... then the people come in here and just build up, build up, built and that's the name Columbia Beach.

JL: I see ...

JD: Ma'am?

JL: I see you have some other wonderful pictures there ...

JD: Oh yes, this is, this is ... uh ... this is another yoke of oxen my father had, see he had two yoke of oxen.

JL: And who is in the picture with this ...

JD: That's uh, my brother

JL: Which brother?

JD: One called Isaiah and Ben, they was hauling tomatoes down to Chalk Point.

JL: And what year do you think this picture was taken.

JD: No, my, no, I can't no more tell you nothing ... I couldn't tell you, it was way back, you know, after ... after I had this picture taken, after that picture was taken ... yes ma'am, that's ...

JL: What were, what were the names of these oxen?

JD: Uh ...

JL: They must have had ...

JD: This one, this one, this last one I show you, They's, Orson and Tager. My father bought this one from up, up on Highland from a fellow, the lawyer up there a fellow named Mr. Frank Donald and he, that's what he had, he had a big farm, so my father bought this oxen from him, one of them, because he wanted to match the other one, he hunted all around, so he went up there and he found this one and bought, bought him yonder, broke him ...

JL: Would you know what year that was your father bought these oxen?

JD: No, no ma'am, I couldn't no more tell you nothing, deed I couldn't.

JL: Well, this picture of you with the team of oxen, what are their names?

JD: Uh, Bird and Hunna, she had a ... this one got his long horns on, well both of them got horns on, but this one, he was red and we called him Bird ... and this one, his name was ... uh ... Hunna, that's the name we give him, cause they had to have names so you could talk to them, say come up Hunna ... right Bird, Bird, you know, come here Bird, you know, you have to have a name so you could talk to them and they'd know just what you mean, that's the way you bring them up, just like you're driving up, you're taking horses and you drive them, say get up, a mule, you break them you say gee, that's the way you break them, tell them get up, see, so oxen the same way. Then my father had, oh my lord, I had to milk and I had 15 cows, milk cows.

JL: You did?

JD: Yes, my father did, my father had, and when he had a weird place down here down below Columbia Beach called “down on nick”, he bought it from some old fellow or another lived down on there named Robert Foote. And ... uh ... he moved, you know to, he moved, getting old when he moved and my father and my uncle they bought it, 30 acres I believe it was, 50 ... uh, a hundred and ... a hundred and fifty dollars, seventy-five dollars apiece, my father and my uncle, bought it. Just to think of it, and, oh, it was a lot of land, now it’s done washed, it’s done washed, so bay on the eastern side, with the bay, Chesapeake Bay, and over on the other side is pond, called pond, and this land is right in the middle, that was pond. That was on the right hand side going down and on the left, I say, is the Chesapeake Bay and they go place down below going down, oh, going down, oh, next to Franklin Manor, down was Churchton called ... uh ... Franklin Manor, a fellow named Doc Franklin had it and he’s uh ... oh, he passed away and uh it’s still Franklin Manor, but it’s built up just like Columbia Beach, houses, houses, houses. And he used to raise all cattles and sheeps and horses all like that he had down there, now you go down there ain’t nothing but houses, houses, houses. We could, we could go down, we could go down Columbia Beach, down further jump over to a place down there called Deep Creek down there between em, between Mr. ... uh ... place my father bought, old man Robert Foote and down below Mr., Doc Franklin’s, that’s where he was on the other side Deep Creek, cause that’s where he is down there now, called Franklin Manor, and Deep Creek run right between it, coming in out the bay and go up in the creek all around back that place called Doc Dent right down there by go all up in there, the river, creek, crab and fish, all like that, great place. Yes ma’am, that a long ... well now Mr., let me see, Doc Dent, he passed away and gone, his family, I ... Miss Belle, Miss Dent, Miss Belle Dent we used to call her, Miss Dent, shes gone. I used to haul wood for her, in the woods, in the winter time, not with the oxen, with the horses, but them oxen have been in the woods now, my father, my father, my father and my brother have been in the woods hauling for Dr. Dent. Oh, he was a doctor, (laughter) he was a doctor, he was something, he was.

JL: Could you tell us a little bit about him, we haven’t heard, I haven’t heard too much about him.

JD: Who’s that ... uh.

JL: Dr. Dent.

JD: Doc. Dent, well all he was the doctor around here and he talked real dry, you know, and ... uh ... and him and my father was just like that.

JL: Uh, could you tell us where his office was down here?

JD: Office? You go right up the road here where there’s a store right there and you turn left and go back and the airport down there now, he ain’t no, his place ain’t gonna have too far, but his place gone down, cause he had, he had one, he had one son and a daughter. I don’t know, but I believe the daughter’s still living, but I know his son, him’s gone, the son’s been gone, he had one son and a daughter. His name, his name was George, we called him Georgie ...

JL: But you said Dr. Dent and your father were very good friends...

JD: Oh yes ma’am, they were very, they were very, (laughter), my father would go down here the store with, they’s a store at and the feller kept store down there named Will Owings and Doc Dent, Doc Dent he was, he was our family doctor, round here, he was the only doctor that was around here and so he, he’d go down the store and he’d see my father and mother down there, “good morning Jack, good morning Doc and ... uh ... Jack, I hauled my boat up this morning”, said did you Doc? “Yes.” “Who helped you Doc?” ”Me and Christ!” (laughter). That’s the kind of man he was, but he would talk like that, he and my father good friends and the next thing that he’d know, he’d tell my father, they’d say father would get together and they’d have a talk and both of them try to get away from one another can’t go ‘cause: “wait a minute doc, wait a minute, doc, I got something I got to ask you.” He’ll stop. Then my father he getting

ready to go “Jack ... I want to tell you something else.” And that’s the way they was. Yeah. (laughter). And I’m telling you the truth, we missed him, he gone I think a better place, I think about two years ago. I went down there, going down was the airport because, say come on, let’s take a drive and I said alright and I looked at Doc. Dent’s place and I said Oh, it don’t look like it when he was there, because it’s gone down and some growned up and big woods and my father used to take his boys down there and burn his marsh off for him in the spring the year. He had to have somebody to burn his marsh off and my father would carry, carry us down there three or four of us, help him burn his marsh off. That’s the way he kept his place, oh, his place was beautiful. Farm, he farmed, and it’s all gone down, all gone down. And he had, well he had a colored fellow there who come down Charles County somewhere down that way, he was a carpenter and he knows Doc Dent, you see, down that way and ... uh ... he got, oh he come up here and live with Doc Dent, done some carpenter work, done work around there fer him.

JL: Uh, what was this gentleman’s name, do you remember?

JD: Oh, no, my, I done forgot it, now it been so long, I forgot his name, but he was always working for him, I saw him, I have saw him plenty times down there. The doctor told my father come down this part of the country where he was at ain’t no way he could stay and he had youngsters coming up and then he ... uh ... he was a carpenter and then doctor got him and he come and lived with doctor at his place and he done some building right on the place for him And he done some building for someone else, if you know, you know him, you know the doctor, you know he messes with people \_\_\_\_\_, but you know how he could build. He couldn’t do much climbing, but he was a good carpenter, good carpenter. So when he ther’re all gone, they all passed away and I know them people, I know them, I know more of them people now gone than I know living, see. Now here’s, now there’s ... uh ... there’s uh there’s uh, two men, my father on there and my friend, my father’s friend.

JL: This is a tintype.

JD: Yes, ma’am.

JL: Who are they pictures of?

JD: My father and some of his, one of his friends.

JL: That’s a beautiful picture, that’s lovely.

JD: Now, now here’s now here’s can you picture ..., now there’s my father, and my father.

JL: In the back?

JD: Yes, that’s his friend. It was somebody, someone he knows. So you look on that picture and see that, you can tell my father. I showed it to a lady some time ago and she picked him out, she said down right there, that’s your father, she said I can tell by up here.

JL: Oh, that’s a great picture.

JD: Yes.

JL: That really is.

JD: Yes ma’am. But he, but I’m going to tell you he had a lot of friends, a lot of friends.

JL: Your father?

JD: Yes, ma’am. White and colored, they knowed him because he went everywhere, he went places, my father went to places I know I never go, I know, I never go. All over in Prince George’s County, he used

to go over there, and stay because he had horses, you know, he'd put on a row of stand of horses along stand and he'd go over there and stay for a week.

JL: What were the type of things he did when he went over in that area?

JD: Well, he just had the horses you know, breeding horses, things all like that.

JL: Oh, I see, I see.

JD: He was horse man, anything could be done to an animal he would know what to do. These old Hagerstown Almanac, that's what he used to go by, really. Tell you all about what to do with animals and he could do it. And everybody come all the, like I told you. all these people around here, now take Gus Crandell, and Mr. Proctor you telling me about ...

JL: Yes sir.

A: Well Mr. ... his father and my father was just like this. \_\_\_\_\_ that's the way they would just get together and sit and talk and don't go ... if my father would go to that house, to their house, they'd have them they were ready to eat, and he would sat out with them and eat, he would sat there with them too. "Come on Jack, come on" and he didn't, my father didn't smoke, he didn't drink, he didn't use no bacco, no kind of way. No kind of gambling, no nothing, he didn't want nothing to do with it. He said he wasn't able to buy, buy bacco and spit it on the ground and drink whiskey, say he wasn't able to do that. So that's the way he was. No kind of gambling, nothing like that, he didn't want nothing to do with it, and he didn't want us to do.

JL: I'm sure he taught his children not to do things like that.

JD: Oh, when I was a boy, we used to play with a bow and arrow, shooting bow and arrow and he used to tell us. Well, he said one morning, we was playing with the bow and arrow and he said "you know what you're getting ready to do? You're getting ready to put one another's eye out, better get rid of it, better throw it away." Lord, we didn't throw it away, but while he was gone we took the bow arrow and shooting bird, shooting bird, shooting bird, shot his hos..., shot one of his horses in the, up on top the of the shoulder up on the, on the rump part. Scared us so bad, my heart come right up here, scared to benz that he come back home, we studied everything what to do, couldn't get to the horse that we shot to get that bow and arrow out, get that arrow out. Finally we, we worked that horse around so he was late coming home, we got that horse in the stable and got that, then blood coming, oh, my lord, what we gonna do now? We taken, went out there in the road and grabbed a whole lot old mud and stuff and rubbed all over the horse back. And when he come in the horse comes ups to him and he said, I wonder what she's been out here rolling on. I don't know, he said something's a wrong. And when he said, he rolled on something, rolled on, he's said he rolled, and I come down, cause if he found out we had shot that horse with that, with that bow and arrow, mother couldn't stop him from killing one of us to save our life, he'd of killed us. He would dip em all around and high and spin round and round and then look up, you better be doing something, either getting away from or doing something, cause he's that kind of man.

JL: And I suppose he never found out you shot his horse.

JD: No ma'am. He's dead and gone and I never told him or no body, till after he was gone, cause you see, he didn't, he didn't believe in things like that, but you know what children do. We played caddy, caddy. We shot the morning in.

End of side 1

Continuing Conversation with Mr. Julius Nick ((sic) Dennis)



JL: You were telling me about some type of game that you played, could you tell us about it please?

JD: We used to play caddy, you know, take a piece of stick, put some long stocking on each end and lay it down and we'd take the other piece and sit on it and we'd draw a big circle, a big ring and if you knocked that caddy in there, ring, you'd win, all that, so we played this here, my father, you know what you're going to do? You're getting ready to put one of your eyes out. You better get rid of it. That went on till one day, he had to put one of it in his eye, in his face, and we got rid of that. Cause see, all what he told us, we didn't want to stop, but we, we kept on playing when, when that thing struck him in the face, you know, what your father told you. Well, come down one time I went in, one time I went in the Army, me and my father talk and he worried, be worried so much about money, money, money pay bills with and he said to my mother, says what you, what am I gonna do, my mother said don't do nothing, just don't do nothing. I spoke and I said I'll be glad when I get 21. He said what you gonna do then? I said I'm going to save my money. He said, listen, you save your money and I save mine and the other person saves his and the money might not be no good to us. Well, he was right with that. So that went on, he said I want to tell you something else, when you come to play with money you can't usually choose because, he said the Lord will take care of it. And when I went in the Army, laying in my bed one night, bunk, 350 head of soldiers and I dreamt, woke up, cause what did your father tell you ... that what he told me I dreamt, say now, you 21, get up now say you going home. Now, wait, now I wouldn't get nowhere before the guard say where you going? Stop! See, well all that what he told me, I dreamt it. I dreamt it and it's so clear that I told I believe the boy said that's wonderful, say see, you listen at your father didn't you now see what you done, you dreamt it and that's what he told me too. I laying in bed one night dreaming it and my mother was talking to me, she said son, let Jesus lead you, just like that. I woke up and I worked so hard out in the Chesapeake Bay and, uh, I was laying up in my bed asleep and my children, I couldn't sleep in bed with them and they all want to sleep in bed with their mother, I said well now look, I'm going in the other room, cause I said I'm working dead hard, I can't sleep out here.

JL: Excuse me just a minute, could you please tell me what year you and your wife were married?

JD: Yeah, we, well got married, let me see, we got married the next year after I come out of the Army, after I come out of the Army, that year about 1917 and the next following year I got married. Now let's see what would that be, what, well anyhow, that's the year I got married.

JL: Is your wife still living?

JD: No ma'am. She died, she died in 1936. She passed away in 1936.

JL: So how many years were you and your wife married before she passed away?

JD: Oh, I don't know must, let me see now, I think I was married around that time that ... I don't know, well, anyhow, uh, now 1937 she passed away.

JL: How many children did you have?

JD: Four, no, I had, six. She lost, let me see, she lost two, she lost two and I had four children when she passed away, I had four, two boys and two girls. Now, now, one, one, my daughter and I got two boys, one of my daughters passed away.

JL: And do you have grandchildren?

JD: Oh, yes ma'am.

JL: How many do you have?

JD: Let's see, I got one boy down here he got, he got two families, three families, my boy, my son. Uh, by his first wife, this girl, I talking about I telling you she uh, I telling you she, this girl, well she got three,

he got three by her, he got three by her. Let's see. .Ethel, and Bobby Ann and Sam, that was his first wife, my first three grandchildren, now he's got, he's got six, he's got five, he's got five down there and he got a boy but he's by, he lives in Annapolis, he's by another lady up in (An)Napolis and so he's got ... uh ... I got six, I mean three down here, one live in Washington, one live in Napolis, and one live down here, this one, she lives here with me. She got incarcerated because she's nasty. And then she's got five, she got five ... uh ... she's got five more down here, five, six, seven, eight, nine, he got nine little children, I got nine grandchildren.

JL: Do you have any great grandchildren?

JD: Yeah, yeah..

JL: How many?

A: I got two, got two. No, I got more than that two, I got about four or five, I think, I got four or five of them, cause one, one, one is in North, South Carolina, and then I got one, let's see, two here in Washington, yeah, two in Washington, great grandchildren, three or four in Napolis.

JL: I'm sorry I interrupted you before, uh, you were talking about what your mother had said to you.

JD: What did my mother ... oh, oh, oh, well, I was laying there one night and my mother said son, let Jesus lead you and ... uh ... it woke me right up. I got up and sat on the side of the bed just like this and I called my wife, I called her three times, her name was Lillian, Lill, you know I used to cut names off something, and I said Lill, Lill, she didn't, I call again, she said yeah, I said, we used to call my mother maw, you know, maw and paw and maw and dad, you know we never called our father daddy, we called him paw, cause how we took to call him paw, our mother used to tell us, you know say, go tell your paw come on get his breakfast, come on get his juice he going somewhere, time for him to go, said go tell your paw to come on and we just took to calling him paw. And this one yell and the other gonna go up and we all, he had 6, he had 10 head of children and all of em called him the same thing, paw and our maw, maw. At's up till Mary, calls her daddy. I got a brother, Ira, his children call him and his wife right out by name, Edith and Ira. I think why they call them I think that his wife go tell Ira to come on get his so and so, come on get his breakfast, come on get his, come on time to get him so and so, alright like that you know and they just carried it that away, and they just kept that up. That's what we were saying. Now, I said when maw, when my mother. she used to tell me, say let Jesus lead you, well I was having, that was a good dream, I tell some people that was a wonderful dream. And see, I'm going to tell you something, see you obey your father and your mother, see the Good Book says that, honor thy father and thy mother and your days will be long upon the land, says here that's what you did, and I say I never got, I, I say my grandson made me so mad with me one morning, I said I could have knocked the devil out of him. I said his mother called him, and went to my door, called him and get him, wanted him to go to the store. And he answer her, he told her no, I just thought it was terrible. What? I said, if one of us had did that, I said my father would I said he would have knocked our head off. So I said children get away now, children get away. One time my mother was telling me, said Julius put some wood up there, put some wood in the stove and I don't know what made me say that, the old devil, and she was in her room sewing and sitting there at the sewing machine, she said put some wood in the stove cause I know, I know it's I get up here and get some supper, see. And I went put wood in the stove, putting wood in the stove I had a piece too long in that old cook stove, there, you know they can't be much longer than that, bout 10 inches, 12 inches and I put it in the wood stove and couldn't get it all the way down in the stove and I had the other piece was hitting, hitting, hitting on it I said oh, this piece wood as long as judgement day. Now what made me say that, I don't know. She says what's a matter with the wood? So she ... she got up and come in there and I took the piece of wood up in my hand and she said well why you can't get piece in wood stove, I said don't you know that piece of wood, she pulled my ear, she grabbed me by the ear against the

house, beside the wall, she said as long as Judgment Day, don't let me hear you say that again and I said yeah, here I am now eighty some years old and ain't haven't forgot it. When she got through with my head without beat children and let the get away with it. But I said the things they did done beat me for, for, I said my father we could see him coming home, way up the road, we used to tell one another, paw coming, now you be cutting up, you been cutting up, when he come home go cut these switches and take about four or five had them in his arm like that, come in the house. Mother says, he says to my mother, he says if they hadn't been cutting up, I say know what mother would do, she'd just look around at, at the one that cutting up. And father would say, what you been doing? And she go on try to tell him, beat your butt, gonna beat your butt. And I say you got switches i.? I say he no more lay them switches down then he'd tell one of 'em go do something, get something. And we'd all move, he'd say, lies dropping off ya, dropping off you, you dead? That's right all that stuff for you, and I say if you don't go, buddy, I'd say your gonna get that switch. He say didn't I tell you I was going to beat you? Then I say know what I tell you? You'd be crying and carrying on so, that's what I said, you don't like it, I'm going to beat you again. And I say he would, he would, and I say tell you the truth, I say thunderstorm and he'd have us in a stall, we'd sit down be just as quiet as I say as a mouse. And I said one here, I killed him, one pig. And of course he said, "what's a matter?" He bit me, he bit me. I'm gonna beat you for it, I'm gonna beat you. When that storm over I said that all you gonna get, cause I said see, they learn you, you learn your name. You just look out the window and see some old person coming and we're old too, and he said who is it and I said I don't know, somebody coming, and he'd get a little closer and know say listen, when they come in that door I want you to go out in the kitchen, cause you know what that was for? What they're talking about, talk, you wouldn't know it. Cause the children was children and you sitting down talking and so and so walk in I said that child he gonna go to school say something, now they'd say, where did he get that from? You know when he hears his father, mother talking. See I said that's why you or some old person because they had to get up and come out here and you better act right, you better behave yourself, cause they you cutting up, oh boy - (Phone rang) excuse me!

JL: Mr. Dennis, will you tell us some more about Shady Side?

JD: Yes.

JL: What you remember as a young man?

JD: Yes. Well, when, uh, well coming up, growing up I ... don't know ... I done a lot of work around, father, feller live over here in brick house, named Mr. Trott, Mr. Dick Trott, you might of heard of him but I know you don't know him. Do you know a fellow live down here by the name, Pack Trott?

JL: Yeah, I've heard his name.

JD: Well, that's his son, but he's up, he's up in his eighty's too now. Captain Pack used to ... but any how, father told me, I mean father came home one day he says Julius, he said ... um ... Mr. Trott ain't got nobody to help him get his corn in. He said, you want to go over and help him to get his corn? I said yes. They was talking right there, always talking about Mr. Trott. Mr. Trott used to tell people they hired \_\_\_\_\_ your youngster come out. So I went over Mr. Trott and helped him get his corn. Mr. Trott met me coming over to his place and he said your father send you? Yes sir, so father said look, Mr. Trott ain't got nobody to help him get the corn in, you go help him, hear and don't you sass Mrs. Trott, you hear, No you do what Mr. Trott tell you, Yes, and I did so and Mr. Trott, some days you'd go over there and my father would come over, Mr. Trott, Mr. Trott say oh and yeah I'm afraid Josh come to get you boy. So well him and Mr. Trott sit there and they'd talk and they'd talk, about back when they was boys and Mr. Trott used to tell him Josh, I wouldn't take nothing for him, that was me, he say he know, he know what to do on the farm, he know what to do, cause my father said well, Mr. Trott, that's why I let him come over cause some things I see he had done around here and he can do it. He said to my self, come here, I want to take

you down, take you down here a little ways, he said look them rows where he runned off, my father said did he do that? Mr. Trott said yes sir he done it. He said now Josh, he said now that's just as good as me or you could do. Father says yes indeedy, I wouldn't take nothing for him he know what to do on a farm. So I say his wife was named Mrs. Mae, Mrs. Mae had two children when she married Mr. Trott because she had been married before because she come here from Baltimore. He had to come here, he told me that he advertised for her, Mr. Trott did. Well, I guess he's go over there in that big building, brick house on the farm. And the son there, you know how it is man thing, so his son left him that spring went down to the place called Jersey, dredging oysters, and he didn't have nobody to help him with the corn, so I went over there and help him and he was so nice. (Tape stopped)

Continuation of tape:

Yes, uh, I got this horse from him over here Mr. Trott and uh brought it home a little colt and raised him up, and when I got over here to it I tried to get the colt (giggle) right in the house. My father I called him three times, he didn't answer, you see, but my mother, she called him, Jack! He went huh? Julius wants you, and he got up and sat down on the side of me rubbed his eyes said what is it you got there? I said that's a colt, you used to tell me about if you have the money to buy him from? What's you got? You bought him, I said yeah I bought him, make you a fine horse. So then I says, I says Paw where can I put him at? He says put him down there with my horse, my colt. So I came down and turn him loose, and yet people come along, my father had, he had four horses down here all his horses was black, black horses, and my brother, he had a horse down here, he was a white horse and then make, this horse I got was bay and so people come along and say, oh horses, oh that's a pretty bouquet out here in that field, say three, four, black horses, and one white one and one bay one, red one, say that's a pretty bouquet all they have to do is make \_\_\_\_\_ and I broke the colt and started him working and I don't know, I raised, I raised two colts off him and just, just done farm work for. Until finally he commence getting old, I sold him. Then I took up oystering, went on the water then, oystering and, oh my, I stayed out there and worked and worked and worked.

JL: How many bushels of oysters could you get in a day?

JD: Well, some days I'd catch as high as five, six and then some days 10, 20, 40, 50 bushels. Depending on what kind of day it is, good mild day, no wind, you could get a little more wind than just now, but wind, why it make your boat work better, make your boat work better on the bottom of ... move about, make you find more oysters.

JL: How much did you get paid for the oysters?

JD: Forty and fifty cents, fifty-five cents, maybe, that's the highest.

JL: A bushel?

JD: A bushel, a bushel. Then you went up, oysters went up, a dollar a bushel, after that went oystering one day and me and my brothers one morning they down here now, living down on the beach, (chuckle) we didn't rush, we went out oystering. We were fooling around out there, just talking, talking, talking, working along. And went up to Mr. Woodfield over there where I sell them at, boy that was, and the fellows they said ... uh ... you caught 49 bushels, and how come he got those many bushels? I said why I didn't know I was that close, I would. Just as I said, we didn't work hard, just work along. Captain Herman says to me, he says, you had 49 bushel, 49 dollar. See, well, that, that made me work a little harder, then some days, I don't know, we'd go and catch some more some days, some days catch less, depending on what kind of day the weather was. Some days it was nice, it's up here nice over head, and people would say oystermen got a good day, but I can't go out there cause of the tide, the tide was

running, we'd work there days. You can't catch them when the tide, but I used to go there and catch them by myself, now I mean I had a boy that cull for me, he just stand up there, boy just pick out what you got. Well, you had to pick them up from the shells and anything else that had stick in it and throw the oysters in. So I used to catch as high as 40, 45 bushels by myself.

JL: Do you think the Bay is as good now as it was then?

JD: Uh, no, no, what you mean, with oysters in it? No, ma'am, no. The oysters are gone.

JL: Well, why do you think they're gone?

JD: Well, it's just a different, they're catching them now more different, they, they're back there around 1941 and 42, all like that, we would have, we used hand tongs, catch them this way. Had a long shaft and the, and the tongs kind of crossed like that and you worked them like a 5 tong, you had a, and you know that's how many sometime you'd bring up boat, I don't know about half a peck, sometimes we'd bring up a lick and we didn't have but two or three oysters of a shell and sometimes we'd go back down again and we'd catch all clear oysters, some days when you'd hit a spot out there ain't nobody, ain't nobody been on it and, and we'd happen to get oysters and we'd catch oysters. I also have, they'd have big ones then, you know for a friend of mine, and we'd fool and fool around out there trying to catch oysters and I'd say what's wrong, but it was one of them kind of days, the tide was bad. Had about, I don't know, about 2:00 o'clock or after and I said, I said look, I'm going home, I said cause I ain't doing nothing and he said I don't care. And we got ready and as we's coming, left the bar in the bay, went on up, was a bunch of ducks feeding there and I said, I told him, I said, look, I hear people say where you see a bunch of ducks at, they is oysters there cause them ducks is feeding off them, them oysters. I said let's stop and get and see what, he said I don't care, and I say I'll pull my, I'll stop there and I'll pull my tongs while you get by the anchor so you can drop the anchor on out there. And when I saw the boat lost headway, I told him, I said throw it out and I dropped my tongs down. I saw nothing but there a lot of good oysters, got plenty of oysters and we caught oysters that easy. Oh, I don't know I caught, I caught around 25 bushel oyster and went in to see Mr. Woodfield said where you, where you been out there? I said down the bay and he said, um, where, where you find them at anyhow? Said down the bay as we was coming between the bar, big, nice big oysters, almost as big as my hand and so he said, uh, you going back there again tomorrow? I said, oh, no, I don't think so, then a fellow was standing up there, I wouldn't tell him, cause I was afraid the fellow was going to tell some more, watch me go back on my spot. And the next morning come, they were laying for me to go, to watch where I went at and they followed, some of them followed me, I went way down further, went down further and he said this fellow I tell you go Captain Pack Trott. He was there and said Julius, why don't you go on in here, why don't you go on your patch? I said I'm already on it. But, I wasn't, I wasn't there because I run past it cause they kept looking out. We had got there some more, saw it there. Well, Good Lord, in a few minutes, a whole bunch of them be there and they done broke my place up. So that really worked pretty good that we find a place where sorta make a buoy, sort of buoy, buoy them off. So the next day went back there and wasn't nobody around and we go back and work satisfied as, work in peace, nobody to bother you none, just work, so that's the way we used to work out there, but the oysters went up there to a dollar a basket, um dollar a bushel and kept on, kept on going up so we just worked on like that and all, but now they got the, uh, patent tongs, you know, work by a motor, you start your motor up and you drop them things overboard and them things shut to and you check the leaver on the, on the, on the motor and they come right up out of the water and drop, right on board, then somebody have to pick them. And once when you had to go ahead and work like that all day long, but now they got \_\_\_\_\_ So there is a lot of them out there, and \_\_\_\_\_. You'll find some small ones out there, but you got, you got to be at least two inches and a half, that's the law, got to be two inches and a half and so a lot of folk go a head and just them in and just don't care what, sometime they get by with them, but they get arrested.

JL: Do you think there are as many fish in the Bay as there used to be?

JD: No, I don't think so, no, no. See, the law's too much different now you can go there once and catch fish with hook and line and chum, but now it's not, it's not a fish, it's not fish there, used to catch the fish they call hard head, trout, and all like that. Now, you don't get but so many, so many in the bay catching, see you got nets, so many nets, crab pots and they all them be catching big fishing now and that's why they broke fish up. One thing about it, you catch fish down the Bay before they get up here. Used to catch the alewives, Good Lord, to catch loads of alewives ... alewives, you wouldn't nobody hardly give two cents for him, now he bring, he bring a price on the market now, cause so much he won't \_\_\_\_\_ and me catching them alewives they making fertilizer and all like that for use on the land, but you can't do it now, you doing it now to, to use for bait, crab bait, all like that now, just put in that crab pots now and they put in so many that the fish in there that they done catch crabs, that's how they catch crabs and that's what's going on now, there's a lot of crab pots there now, a lot of them, I got, I got some down here that I used, I got over a hundred pots, crab pots.

JL: I think you've got to tell me what the name of your boat was.

JD: Oscar Day, you see my bo.... oh, well I have uh, I had two boats and I, when I, and I got rid of one, I sold one, then I had a new one built and her name was Loreene L. She, she, she had my wife name and my sister's name and my wife was named Lillian and my sister was named Loreene, so I named her Loreene L, you see, and the other boat, the other boat, the other one I had, the first one I had, she was named, uh, Lyna B, Lyna, Lyna B. I think the gentlemen's uh, what I got her from, his wife was named Lyna so I just let it name now cause the name was in the Customs House, so I didn't name her again. So now I, I, my boat, the other boat, she was a new boat just built and come right from the factory. So I don't know, I'd go, I kept on oystering and oystering, oystering, but then later on I cut out 19, well I say from 1937, 1937 I still was oystering and up to '47 I got married again and I could, I bet I could have gone.

JL: Oh, you were married again?

JD: I got married again, oh, I been married three times.

JL: Do you have any other, do you have other children by your other two wives?

JD: No ma'am, no ma'am. My second wife and my third wife I didn't have any children by, but my first wife I got, I got three uh, three so ... two sons and a daughter, though. And I got a bunch of grandchildren, I believe nine of them, more than that I guess, ten, grandchildren and great grandchildren, so I ... um ... just don't do anything now, this way.

JL: And enjoy life...

JD: Darling That's what I'm ....

JL: Now what kind of hobbies do you have now, or what are your interests now that you say you are retired?

JD: Oh, well, I, I, don't do nothing around, just sit around and don't do nothing. Just sit back, watch television, then get up go to the store sometimes, call up friend of mine and says look, you busy now, no, I said, come on, run me up to the store and he would do that, my granddaughter, she comes over sometimes and ... uh ... wash for me and she won't ... uh ... cook something on the wood stove, "grand daddy you want anything from the store?" I say yeah, well, she'll go to the store for me, wonder she hasn't call me, she hasn't called me yet today.

JL: Mr. Dennis, it has been a delight talking to you and it will make a wonderful addition to our library.  
JD: Yes, ma'am, yes, ma'am.

JL: Our talking library of the people who lived in Shady Side in the early days and we really do appreciate it.  
JD: Thank you.

JL: It's a pleasure talking to you, thank you again.  
JD: Oh, you're welcome, you're welcome.