

TMP-019

Interviewees: Leola Hogge and Carlton Hogge

Interviewer: Jessica Taylor

Date: July 15, 2013

T: This is Jessica Taylor interviewing Leola Hogge and Carlton Hogge on July 15, 2013 at 10:15 a.m. Mrs. Hogge, can you please state your full name?

LH: Leola Brown Hogge.

T: Okay. What is your date of birth, if you don't mind me asking?

LH: October 21, 1914.

T: Okay. Where were you born?

LH: Right here in Gloucester, at home.

T: Okay. What were your parents' names and occupations?

LH: My father was a carpenter, my mother just a homemaker here in Gloucester.

T: Okay. What were their names, if you don't mind me asking?

LH: Andrew. My mother's name was Sarah.

T: Okay. Did you have any siblings?

LH: Oh, yeah.

T: How many?

LH: There was eleven of us altogether. [Laughter] I'm the second one, number two.

T: Number two. Did that place you in a place of responsibility for the other nine?  
Yeah? Okay.

CH: Yes.

T: [Laughter] Yes, okay. As for you, what was your occupation?

LH: Of my father?

T: Of you.

LH: Oh, me. Just a homemaker.

T: Okay. And I know we're sitting there right now, but where do you live in Gloucester County?

LH: Now?

T: How would you describe it?

LH: Lewis Avenue.

T: Okay. What is your earliest memory of Main Street?

LH: Gosh, Corky was two years old when we moved here.

CH: But you used to walk Main Street and ride because you went to Botetourt School.

T: Mm-hm. So tell me about Botetourt School.

LH: Like what? [Laughter]

T: What were your classmates like? What were the classes like?

LH: Just normal, everyday things.

T: Okay.

LH: We had two classes in one room, and just one little-story building. Just torn down recently.

T: When you walked up and down Main Street, where did you go as a child?

LH: I didn't, because I wasn't here.

CH: She lived down on Route 14.

T: Oh, okay.

CH: So she walked back and forth to school or from time to time they would come into the Courthouse.

T: Okay. So what kind of business would bring you into the Courthouse, your family?

LH: Grocery shopping, churches. We were one of the first that had a car. [Laughter]

T: What kind of car did you have?

LH: An old Model-T Ford.

T: Where did you get it?

LH: Well, then, gee, I was a young kid. I don't know where he got it, but he got it right here in Gloucester.

T: How about that.

CH: From the local Ford dealer at that time.

LH: I don't know who it was, either.

CH: I don't remember who was there at that time.

T: About what time was that?

LH: Gosh, I was about eight years old, because he put me in the car to hold **the spot thing** while he cranked it. You know, you crank it with...when it started, of course, then I pulled that down and keep it going. [Laughter] I remember from like yesterday.

CH: That was about 1922 then.

T: Wow. Tell about where you and your husband met.

LH: I was walking home from school. School was up here a little bit further, and the bus wouldn't take anybody past the Cow Creek Millpond, which I don't know whether you know where that is or not. Anyway, we walked to school and playing on the basketball team, we practiced in the afternoons because you didn't have ones to do it at night and do that. We were walking home, my cousin was walking with me, and they were working on the station. So I noticed this fella on the outside. They were running wires and things; I didn't even know what they were. Of course, it turned out to be lights. He looked up at us and he said, would you girls like to have a ride? And my cousin said, no, we'll walk. I thought to myself, tired as I am practicing basketball, I'd like to have a ride home. [Laughter] But I didn't say that anyway. We walked on, of course, and the next day he was there still working at that same area. He asked us again, so I answered him that time, and I said yes, we certainly would. So, he quit work and took us home, which wasn't very far. How far was it, you think, Carl?

CH: Probably about a mile at the most.

LH: [Laughter] So, from there he kept coming around, you know. [Laughter]

CH: You said at that time he was staying with your grandmother while he was working on the station. Is that right?

LH: I don't know that he was. I don't remember that.

T: Where was he from?

LH: He was from down Gloucester Point a way. Wicomico, they called it.

T: How long did he work on the station for?

LH: He worked on it till he finished it, the electrical part.

T: What else do you remember about when the station was built?

LH: It was my last year of school. That was what?

CH: Your junior year of school? If you were seventeen, it would have been about 1931, somewhere in that general time.

LH: Because I was eighteen when we got married. I had to finish that school year.  
[Laughter]

T: Where did you get married?

LH: At our minister's home. We didn't have a big wedding like they have now.  
[Laughter]

T: I think that's great.

CH: Yeah.

T: Did you ever stop by the station after it was built?

LH: Oh, yeah. Mm-hm.

T: What do you remember about that?

LH: Nothing particular. It was certainly new to us, anyway.

T: What was it like seeing all this new stuff at the station with the wires and the lights and all that?

LH: Very exciting.

T: Did people come to just look at it?

LH: Mm-hm.

T: [Laughter] What were people saying about it at the time?

LH: I guess we were just lucky to have it.

T: Lucky to have it?

LH: Mm-hm.

T: Can I ask-

LH: It was one of the first ones around this area, wasn't it?

T: Interesting. Do you remember Howard Brown or Captain Jack Brown?

LH: Where they were from?

T: Oh, just interacting with them.

LH: They were from Ware Neck. I know the first two boys that worked there, one of them was **Edmund Norfolk**. For the life of me I can't remember the second one, what his name was.

T: What were they like?

LH: Very accommodating, very nice.

T: Good. Do you remember the one-armed man?

LH: The one-armed man?

T: Yeah, Howard Brown?

CH: Howard.

LH: Howard? Oh, yeah. I remember him very well because I turned my stove on one day. [Laughter] We were living down not very far from here, and I turned that thing on for the gas to come in or the oil or whatever it was that you burnt in your stove. And I forgot it, and I went doing something else. When I threw my match in to light it, the whole thing caught on fire inside the stove. Well, I called Texaco station and Howard was on. He said, I'll be right there. Evidently, there was someone else at the station, too. He came down, and he stayed with me until all of it burnt out. Scared me half to death.

T: Wow. Oh my gosh. Do you remember the ladies' lounge or any people kind of hanging out at the gas station and socializing?

LH: No, I don't.

T: Okay. Did you ever socialize on court day?

LH: No.

T: No. Just because you lived too far away, or...

LH: Just wasn't interested in it. [Laughter]

CH: Too many children at home to take care of. [Laughter]

T: Fair enough. Well, tell me stories about being at home. What was Gloucester like during World War II?

LH: Well, everybody was excited, I'll tell you about it. Very much so...I wish I could tell you some more, but I don't remember. [Laughter]

T: That's okay. That's okay. Did your husband continue to work on the electric part--did he continue to do that in the county?

LH: Not as a job. He turned out to be a salesman for York Wholesale.

T: Okay. That's wonderful.

LH: He used to take--they'd always meet down at the station every morning to take his orders, and he'd take them the day before. When the man that met him there left and went on to West Point where the main office was, he did not have the orders and the money and everything that the customers had paid him. We never knew, from that day to this one, what happened to them. They think they laid them on top of the car, and somebody evidently picked them up and we never heard from them. So we had to go back and redo the whole route, and somebody else take his route.

T: Wow.

LH: That's a funny thing. Well, whoever found them didn't turn them in, anyway.

T: [Laughter] Can you tell me once you got a car with your family, where did your family go in it?

LH: Church was the main place we went.

T: You couldn't walk to church.

LH: Oh, no. It was too far.

T: It was too far, okay.

LH: But after we were married, we went to the church up here in Gloucester Courthouse.

T: Did your husband have a car? He did? What was his car?

LH: [Laughter] The first one was just a little one-seat thing.

T: What did he get after that?

LH: After that, he got a bigger car. I don't know what it was. Corky, do you?

CH: I don't remember till about 1951. After that, I can tell you about that. [Laughter] I was old enough then to know what the car was, but...

T: Yeah.

LH: I don't know what it was. Anyway, it was a bigger car.

T: Yeah. Did you-

LH: I imagine it was a Ford, I would think it was.

T: Did you ever go anywhere in the bigger car for fun?

LH: Oh, yeah. [Laughter]

T: Where did you go?

LH: Up in the mountains, down on the river shore.

T: When you went to those places, was it you that decided to go or was it your husband?

LH: Both of us.

T: How would you, for example, know to go to the mountains at a certain time?

LH: Well, we knew when the leaves and things turned and would be pretty, so we'd try to go up in the fall.

T: Did you ever go to the movies or to the skating rink?

LH: Mm-hm. He worked there for a long time.

T: You worked there?

LH: He did.

T: He did.

CH: We all did. My father ran the skating rink.

T: Oh, okay. Wow. So tell me a little bit about that.

LH: Corky can tell you about that. [Laughter]

T: All right, Corky. You're on.

CH: Okay. My father ran the skating rink, took it over from another gentleman who had been running it and had been steadily going downhill. My dad took it over, and decided he wanted to make it a family place to go, because people who were coming were kind of rowdy and families had stopped coming to the skating rink. So, I remember him having the sheriff have someone there from time to time because at that time, folks would come in and they'd bring a bottle of whiskey with them and hide it and go into the bathroom or out on the porch and drink it. Next thing you know, they weren't fun to be around anymore. So, my dad had the sheriff's deputy come in, and he would stay for a while. He had several people arrested and taken from there. They soon learned that it was going to be a place for families and people were not going to be allowed to be rowdy. I worked there as a child out on the floor as someone who would blow the whistle when kids were out there skating and endangering other folks on the floor and that type of thing. But Mom and I were the ones who would go down and clean between the nights that it was open. From time to time, it would be open on a night that it was not normally open for people to come in for hayrides, especially for church groups and youth groups and that type of thing. But, Dad ran it until, I guess, the late [19]60s, early [19]70s from like the mid-[19]50s.

T: Wow. How did the youth crowd- oh, I'm sorry. Go ahead.

LH: I'm saying we had a rule that you after you came in, you weren't allowed to go out. If you did, you didn't come back.

T: That makes sense. How did the youth crowd change over time?

LH: What do you think?

CH: Well, from time to time, as I remember, kids used to come in a big truck or a trailer being pulled by a truck, as a hayride to come to the skating rink. As time progressed and kids began to get cars of their own, instead of coming as a whole group in one vehicle, they would come in separate vehicles. It changed in that way but still accommodated a lot of church groups. A lot of birthday parties, that type of thing.

T: That's nice. I can see that. Before the skating rink, where did you go on dates when you were in high school?

LH: We went to the movies most of the time. We had a movie theater right down there on the corner, not far from where-

CH: There's still Edge Hill Theater that is now where the bowling alley sits, so there was a movie theater there. They tore it down and the Colonial Store built, which is now part of the central section of the bowling alley, is what used to be the old original Colonial Store once it was built. The Colonial Store moved out; it was taken over once the bowling alley that was underneath the skating rink- there was a bowling alley there. I used to be a pinsetter for the bowling alley.

[Laughter] But when that closed up, they opened the one up where there used to be the Colonial Store. Then, it expanded and then they built a movie theater and then the bowling alley expanded again. So, the bowling alley's been expanded three times from the original Colonial Store building, been expanded twice.

T: Who knew Gloucester needed bowling so bad?

CH: A lot of people came. As a matter of fact, there were so many people coming from the Northern Neck that not too long ago a bowling alley was built in the Northern Neck to accommodate the number of people coming from the Northern Neck over to Gloucester. Because they had the league nights and every league night was full.

T: Wow. So what was that crowd like?

CH: I mean, that was a good crowd of people who enjoyed having fun without getting out of line. [Laughter]

T: Corky's keeping them in line.

CH: That's right. I like people to do what they're supposed to do.

T: I'm really interested in how--it's hard for people of, I guess we call them the millennial generation, to understand how you meet your future husbands or future best friends. So, where do you meet men or how do you meet people you consider worthy of dating in the 1920s and [19]30s?

LH: I met most of mine in school. I'll tell you one thing that happened at the skating rink one night. [Laughter] Wasn't but one car there besides ours.

CH: I remember this well.

LH: There was a hayride and that car. I don't know what I came home for, but I came home to get something. I backed out from the rink, and backed right smack right into that truck. One car in the whole yard, and he was right behind me. [Laughter]

I didn't hurt anything, but anyhow, scared me half to death. But he blamed himself. He said because his sticker was out of date-

CH: His inspection sticker had run out.

LH: Yeah. And he parked it the way he did so that I wouldn't see it, catch it. And I caught it. [Laughter] He apologized for that, but scared me half to death. Didn't hurt anything. [Laughter]

T: That's amazing. And what about your generation? How do you meet-?

CH: Me?

T: Yeah.

CH: Where I met most of the kids was during school or at church. We had a large youth group at church; it was about thirty-some kids. We went to a local Baptist church here in the Courthouse, Newington, and there was a youth group there. My father was music director of the youth group, and took us from church to church in different counties, especially people where--he was a wholesale grocery salesman, and my mother talked about York Wholesale. They worked out of West Point, but they were a wholesale distributor for groceries. At that time there were lots of little local community stores where people got together such as they did at the Texaco station. So, Dad had a lot of contact with all of those folks, and a lot of them went to different churches in different counties, and he would invite our youth group to come and sing. So, I met a lot of my best friends at church or at school.

T: Okay. If you don't mind me asking, where did you meet your wife?

CH: The first time I ever met her, her father was working for my sister's father-in-law, who ran the Tri-County Furniture Store, which is still in business. She took me to a company party that they had at a cabin on the North River that Mr. Booker owned. That was the first time I met her; she was in the fourth grade, I was in the seventh. I fell in love with her and I married her some seven, eight years later and we've been married ever since.

T: That's wonderful. Can you talk a little bit about, now that you have grandchildren and great-grandchildren or just grandchildren--they'll never experience Gloucester the way that you did.

LH: No.

T: So what do you want them to know about Gloucester as it existed during your time? This is for both of you.

CH: Gloucester was a great place to grow up. I grew up on Lewis Avenue. As Mom said, we moved here when I was two, so that would have been in 1948. We moved here and there were fifteen kids or so on Lewis Avenue at that time. Mom and Dad's house was one of the first to be built at this end of the street. We lived with my aunt and uncle across the street while this house was being built for just a short period of time, and then we moved in here. I walked to Botetourt; there was no school bus picking up kids in the Courthouse area at that time. But it was a great neighborhood to grow up in and a lot of the kids--we played together all the time. We were in school together. A lot of us went to the same church or

churches here in town. That's kind of what I want kids to remember, that Gloucester's still a great place to grow up in, probably just not as close-knit as it used to be. I knew everybody on the street. I remember we didn't have a TV here until I was about eight years old. Mr. Broaddus, who lives about four houses up on the right had a TV. He owned with Mr. Hall the local Broaddus and Hall which is now Roberts Furniture. I remember Mr. Broaddus and Mrs. Broaddus would let the kids- on Saturday morning every kid in the neighborhood would go to the Broaddus's and we would watch TV in the morning for about an hour and a half to two hours. Then we would all disperse and go home or go out and play in the neighborhood. It was a great place to grow up in.

LH: You were two when we moved in here.

CH: Right, two when we moved here. That's right.

LH: [Inaudible 26:30] You see what's behind us now, don't you? Right on through to the main highway.

CH: There's a housing development right behind us now. That was a daffodil field when I was a kid growing up. We used to sleigh ride in the winter from the top of that hill down or out here in the street down. There was so few cars up and down the street that you were actually able to sleigh ride in the street when the street was frozen over. [Laughter]

T: What about you, ma'am? What would you like your great-grandchildren to know about Gloucester as you grew up?

LH: As far as I'm concerned, it's a very, very nice place to live.

T: Okay. What is your first memory of the gas station, if you don't mind me asking?

CH: My first memories of the gas station, I guess, was probably when I was about nine or ten. We would walk Gloucester Courthouse at that time, and the Texaco station was at the end. I had an uncle who ran another station close to that: Mr. Watson Brown, Mother's brother, ran the Amoco station right next door. Where the cleaner's is now- the grey building next to the Texaco station, was a cleaner's that Mom's sister and her husband ran. The Gloucester Cleaners, or Bill Rowe's Cleaners. But I remember going to the Texaco station and just kind of hanging around with the other kids. I remember Howard very well. I remember Howard would come out and fill your car with gas. There was no getting out and pumping it yourself. Howard was at the back of the car before you could ever get the car in park or pull the parking brake. [Laughter] But Howard would be out there and he would not only fill your car, he would wash your windshield. I could see him tucking that bottle after he squirted it up underneath that arm and then polishing your windshield and cleaning the bugs off of it and getting the hood up and checking your oil for you and making sure your water was okay in the radiator and those types of things.

T: Who did you hang out with at the station and when did you hang out with them?

CH: Probably most of the time that we hung out there was in the summer. We'd play on the street here for a while and then we'd go up to the Courthouse and we would kind of go to different places, and the Texaco station was one of the places that we would go because you could buy a candy bar there or a drink. But most of the people that I hung out with there were people who either lived on the

street or people who lived in the Courthouse area, other kids of my age that lived in the Courthouse area. The Bookers, for instance, the Johnstons lived next door to them, next to Tri-County. A lot of those kids we hung out with, and that's where we would meet, was one station or the other.

T: It was friendly competition, I'm guessing, between the Amoco and the Texaco?

CH: Oh, absolutely. They would help each other all the time. If somebody needed something and didn't have it, the other one would loan it to him. That was no problem.

T: What kind of stuff did they sell on the inside?

CH: I remember them selling oil and different things that you would use in your automobile, and drinks and candy bars and those types of things.

T: Okay.

CH: I don't remember a lot of groceries there, but knowing most stations you probably could buy a little something—**can of Coke**—that type of thing.

T: Do you remember tobacco products at all?

CH: Yes. I think every station had cigarettes and chewing tobacco that you could get.

T: Are you not a fan of chewing tobacco?

CH: She's not a fan of chewing tobacco, but my dad was a smoker. My dad smoked.

LH: He smoked, but he never chewed tobacco that I know of.

T: That's a good thing. Do you all having anything you want to add?

CH: If you've never been to Gloucester, come.

LH: Yep.

CH: From Gloucester you can be in any one of seven rivers in ten minutes' time. Florida's very much the same way, you know. But you can also be in the mountains in three hours.

LH: The beach the same way.

T: Okay. Thank you so much.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

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