

Interview with Patricia Geuting by David Farber for Raskob Family Oral History, Hagley Museum and Library, September 10, 2005.

JAMES : It's September 10, 2005. We're at the Hagley Museum recording an interview with Sister Patricia Geuting and David Farber and Richard James.

FARBER: Thank you. Thank you, Sister Pat for being here. Well, let's start with some of the most basic information. Remind us where and when you were born and to whom.

GEUTING: I was born in Lansdowne, Pennsylvania in 1934, the eldest child of [unclear] Raskob, Helena Raskob—the oldest of the Raskob girls.

DF: Tell us too where you were educated from as far back as you can remember onward.

PG: I started school in public school in Lansdowne. I went to kindergarten. We moved to Boston during the war to Weston, Massachusetts where I continued in public school through third—through second grade. Actually, it wasn't during the war; it was before the war. We moved then to Long Island, to Manhasset, Long Island where my father worked in a glider factory during the war. And I continued in public school there for the end of second grade, third and fourth. Then we moved to Washington, DC where I started the Sacred Heart School in Washington and went on through high school at the Sacred Heart School in Washington, then went to Manhattanville College in Purchase, New York, then did graduate work at Fordham in psychology—really, psychometrics before I

entered the Order in March of 1959. And I'm a religious at the Sacred Heart.

DF: Thanks. So you were born in 1934. You were a little girl during the Great Depression and then not much more of a big girl when World War II began. Do you have—what are some of your first memories of being around your grandparents?

PG: My recollection—actually, I don't know Skipper as well as I know Granddad, because when I was old enough to really begin to have real memories Skipper was pretty much already in the West. And we sometimes visited her but I have lots of recollections of Granddad. I do remember Skipper some on the farm down on Pioneer Point. My recollections are largely of her—the asthma she had because she stayed in what was basically the only air conditioned area down there. We did—I did visit her in the West a number of times. But I remember Granddad a lot growing up. I think Mom was—well, she was the oldest girl—I think one of his favorite kids. She never—she never crossed him. She used to—he would—she said, you know, “Keep quiet and things are fine.” She wouldn't argue with him and I think that helped. [chuckles]

: [chuckles] Does that—having contrast with some of the other kids—

PG: I think it does.

: —[unclear]?

PG: I think it does. I mean, other people would take him on sometimes.

DF: Interesting. And your mom specifically told you that?

PG: Yes, she specifically told me that. She said [chuckles], you know, “If you don't—don't argue with him and things will go smoother.”

Granddad—I spent—I mean, I have recollections on the farm early on

before World War II. They're sort of not totally clear memories. But at that point there were horses still on the farm in the stable and I can remember riding down there. I can remember Jack Corcoron, who was—I mean, I think of him as kind of a lifeguard down there at that point. But I can remember with him—even, you know, when I was under nine, Pete, Tony and I swimming, learning lifesaving from him. Tony used to say the best part of the lifesaving was he used to get—put his hands on me. [laughter]

DF: That sounds like him.

PG: Yeah. [laughter] Doing skeet shooting as a child, a little child. And most of those things after the war—you know, they stopped during the war because they didn't have the personnel to keep them up. Skipper was no longer there really after the war. She occasionally came back to visit. But—so the stables never really opened up again. The skeet range didn't continue. So the summers that I spent down there as a child after the war from, like, 1946 or '47 was mostly swimming. And it was swimming and boating and biking, walking, but not some of the other things we had done before. I also spent a lot of time with Granddad in his apartment in New York.

DF: Just wait on that a little bit—

PG: Okay.

DF: —because I know we're going to do a lot on that.

PG: All right.

DF: Because you're our source for that. Let me stay with you a little bit during those early years—

PG: Okay.

DF: —and try to prod some more memories out of you.

PG: Okay.

DF: So it sounds—and you were a very small little girl then. You were anywhere from just a few years old to, at the most, 10 or so, 11, 12.

PG: Ten, probably nine.

DF: Yeah, and as you say, then things seemed to switch a little bit—

PG: Mm-hmm.

DF: —to World War II and it colored the experience there. Do you—it sounds like you had a great deal of autonomy there even as a fairly small kid. Was it sort of that the children would be off doing things in groups and the adults were doing something else?

PG: That certainly was true later. I'm not so—I don't know, to tell you the truth. I mean, I think we had some autonomy. We were pretty small.

DF: Yeah.

PG: So I don't think we totally were free but in my recollections of the farm were being able to pretty much—to run loose around the farm.

DF: Mm-hmm. Like with the skeet shooting, was there some man there who taught you how to use a gun—

PG: Oh, yes.

DF: —and instructed you?

PG: We weren't—we didn't just go skeet shooting. [chuckles]

DF: But it wasn't your parents or your granddad who was teaching you that, as you remember?

PG: I think it was Jack, not my parents. It may have been—Granddad certainly was involved with it.

DF: Was he sometimes with you as you were doing these activities—

PG: Yes, I think so. Yes.

DF: —as a little one?

PG: Mm-hmm.

DF: Did he ever shoot?

PG: I assume so but I wouldn't swear to it. I mean, the fact that the skeet range was even there says to me, yes—

DF: Yeah.

PG: —that he and Skipper probably both did at some point. I don't remember him riding.

DF: Yeah.

PG: I remember riding with my mother.

DF: Oh.

PG: But I don't remember Granddad ever on a horse, which is not to say he wasn't.

: He was a member of some of the equestrian clubs there in New York City but he didn't care to use them that much. I kind of personally—I sort of tend to ascribe a lot of the outdoor activities to Jack and Skipper.

PG: And Skipper. I'd be inclined to too.

: Right.

PG: I mean, the fact that they didn't even—they didn't start up again either once Skipper wasn't there says some of that to me.

DF: Do you remember—again, I'm trying to get you in these—

PG: Sure.

DF: —stay in focus a little bit here—

PG: Sure.

DF: —these early years. Do you remember weekends what it would be like there? Did people come down from the city—New York City or

from Wilmington, or were the children really kind of isolated from whatever the grownups were up to?

PG: See, when you try to focus me on the really early years, my recollections are very fuzzy. I can answer that question for after—

DF: And you will. [laughter]

PG: I don't really know.

DF: Okay.

PG: I really don't know. I know we sometimes—you know, I have recollections of getting down there, riding down on the train and driving down from the Wilmington station, either with Granddad or, you know, in one of his chauffeured cars or being met by one of those cars—

DF: Mm-hmm, at the train station.

PG: —at the train station and driving down. But—

DF: Now, how—

PG: And I think in those—in those early years too we probably—as a little girl, I think I probably stayed more in Hartfeld House than in Mostley Hall. But, you know, some of this is—

DF: Sure.

PG: —vague guessing. [chuckles]

: Do you remember how you would perhaps pass the time in the car on the way down if you were with your grandfather, playing games or, you know, what kind of—it's a long drive.

PG: Yeah, it was a like an hour-and-a-half drive, as I remember. You know, you're prodding me on a period that's pretty fuzzy.

DF: Don't worry about it.

PG: Yeah.

DF: But those are—those are memories we don't know much about.  
That's why—

PG: Right, I know.

DF: Just to see if there's any details that emerge. But I stress we don't know too much about the next period either.

PG: Right, I know more about the next period. [chuckles]

DF: Right. Well, sounds like we'll—maybe we'll circle back to that. Sometime when you start to remember things from your teenage years other memories pop up so—

PG: Well, the teenage goes back [unclear]. I was—I was nine, ten when the war was over.

: Yeah, that's right.

PG: And that sort of—the first summer after the war was over, like that must have been the summer of '40—

DF: Six?

PG: Forty-six, probably. I know my family went—because I started spending whole summers on the farm.

DF: Oh, I see.

PG: And we originally—the first summer we were back there Mostley Hall wasn't opened up yet. It's like the farm wasn't back in full swing and we stayed in what was the gardener's cottage for that summer. And then by the next summer—by the time I was 11 Mostley Hall was opened. And both my family and Nina—Nina Lyon—Nina Bennett's family really spent her whole summers on the farm up until the summer after Granddad died, through the summer after Granddad died.

DF: Let me just ask you a little bit as we're sort of in that transitional period. The war ends August, 1945. One of the things I don't have much sense for yet is how the war affected the Raskob family in general, or your grandfather in particular. He doesn't talk about it. It doesn't come up very much. Do you have any memories of World War II's impact on the family?

PG: I have recollections of its impact on—you know, like, Ben was in the Pacific. Nobody much talked about it but I'm sure there was concern. Bob was too, I think. I—Aunt Patsy, you know, was in love with Steve, who was involved in the war. And Boo was, you know, waiting for Bill to come back from the war. I remember the day the war ended. I was on the farm. I think—I think Mom that summer was in New York. She lost a—her index finger from a bad infection on her right hand. And she had been in the city. I was on the farm with Aunt Pat and Aunt Boo. And I can remember when the war was over, the two of them. We got wineglasses and it must have been champagne, I guess [chuckles], had a little drink, threw them into the fireplace in Hartfeld House, broke them. And I can remember throwing confetti all over that room and then trying to sweep it up off a straw rug. [laughter] But I remember the great—you know, great relief and great excitement of that.

DF: Was your grandfather there?

PG: He wasn't. He wasn't there at the moment, no. You know, again at the time he must have been coming down on weekends and I think—don't think it was a weekend.

DF: Right. You're just 10, 11 years old at this point.

PG: Yeah.



DF: So the war wasn't much discussed down at Pioneer Point.

PG: Not—no, certainly not in my—

DF: Maybe not in front of you—

PG: Not in my presence.

DF: —because it'd scare you or something. Okay.

PG: My recollections of the war are kind of, you know, “What's—why are they going to need newspapers when it's over, because there'll be nothing to put in them?” [laughter]

: Did you sort of collect cans or do any of that kind of conservation?

PG: Yes, and I was in public school. We had victory gardens and we collected stuff and I remember rationing. But I mean, I had—I'm not aware of—I can remember being in lines for gas but not—I really have no recollections of being much affected either by the Depression or by the war.

DF: And—

PG: And I guess part of it was because I was so young, whatever was was all I knew so it was normal.

: That's kind of what Betty says about being kind of in the very privileged kind of side of the—of the lifestyle that—

PG: Yes.

: You know, that's how it was. You know, there's nothing to compare it to when, you know, it seems—

PG: When that's what you've known.

: Right.

PG: Right.

DF: Do you remember at the farm, other than there being a lack of staff during World War II, were there any other changes that were notable?

Was there conservation on the farm? Was there victory gardens planted there?

PG: I don't think there were—no, I don't think there were victory gardens, for sure. I don't even think—I mean, the fact that we were in the gardener's cottage the year after says to me even the big garden that was there, which usually—which basically was used to feed people on the farm—I don't think it was really terribly much being used.

DF: But by '46 staff started to be rehired and—

PG: Well, staff—I think staff in the—staff at Hartfeld House itself—I mean, I don't know that it dropped that much. I think what they lost was, like, the stable staff.

DF: Right.

PG: Some of the larger farming—farming staff. I know they used to have turkeys of the farm when I was very small. And then later there were no more turkeys. They continued to have the chickens and the cows and the pigs, which they raised, but no more turkeys, which may have been a staffing issue.

DF: So when you were a little guy—again, we're talking from '46 back—

PG: Right.

DF: —did you have chores? Did you do anything at the farm, like, productive or—

PG: No. [laughs]

DF: It was straight out fun.

PG: It was straight out fun. [laughs]

DF: So all the kids got to just—

PG: Just be—

DF: —enjoy themselves.

PG: Yes.

DF: Okay.

PG: For sure. The other—and this too probably was—it was prior to—to the reopening of Mostley Hall and whatnot. I—I can remember—and I'm confused as to what summer it was. But I remember having to learn times tables—it may not have even been summer—and Granddad making me write them out, two times two equals four, and on these yellow legal pads. You know, two times three is six. And then he would drill me on them and I remember hating it. [laughs]

DF: Oh, that's a great story.

PG: But I do remember—

DF: So, yeah, you must have been in third, fourth grade. That's about when one learns those things.

PG: Yeah, those things. Right.

DF: And it was on the farm.

PG: It was on the farm.

DF: [unclear]. So he would take that kind of care with his grandchildren, or you, maybe, again.

PG: Yes.

DF: Because—

PG: He also—he had a—he had a table, a wood table, a little, small table that was inlaid with a map of the United States with different inlaid woods, probably woods common to each of the states. And I can remember being drilled on learning which state was which from that.

DF: With him.

PG: With him. Didn't say on them. All you had to go by was the shapes but learning—learning that kind of thing.

DF: I know—

PG: I traveled with him the summer I was eight—

DF: Oh, my goodness!

PG: —across country by train, just—you know, we went to see Skipper. I think Mom was pregnant with my sister. I—my pregnancy, I know, had been difficult. And I think they might have wanted to get me out of the way. [laughs] And so we traveled across country; I had a roomette to myself. I was eight. We went to—I think Skipper was in Santa Fe at that point, maybe. She loved to go to Santa Fe to the LaFonte Hotel. And I have—I have very vague recollections. I think we may have been there during one of their festivals because I have these vague recollections of, like, Spanish dances and things in Santa Fe.

DF: It was just you and your grandfather?

PG: Just my grandfather—

DF: Just the two of you.

PG: Just the two of us. And I remember—what I can remember before I went, sitting on my mother's bed—I had long braids—learning to braid my hair, because my granddaddy said if I couldn't do my own hair I couldn't come. [laughs] So learning to braid my hair, sitting on a bed in front of a mirror learning to braid my own hair. Then the first day on the train, of course, the train is going like this. [laughter] I'm trying to braid my hair and I remember Granddad saying, "Did you brush your hair this morning?" and being highly insulted. [laughter]

DF: That's really an interesting adventure. So he was obviously comfortable hanging out with an eight-year-old.

PG: Well, he seems to have been fine.

DF: I mean, that's some of the things I'm trying to get a sense for. I mean—

PG: Yeah.

DF: —in those days men in particular were more formal than they are today. But he seems to have been fairly casual and at his ease, or not?

PG: I mean, I don't remember him being stiff with me.

DF: Okay.

PG: He wasn't about to do my hair.

DF: Yeah, right.

PG: I mean, he—he played with me. He taught me games. I played Chinese checkers with him. He taught me how to play gin rummy; we played a lot of gin rummy.

DF: On this train trip?

PG: Not on the train trip but as—

DF: But in general.

PG: But as a kid I can remember doing that. On the train, in my recollections, more of—less of actually being with him than of sort of walking through the cars and—

DF: Mm-hmm, which means he sort of let you loose and said—

PG: Yeah.

DF: —“Go explore the train.”

PG: Right. [laughter]

DF: Probably give him some peace.

PG: Right. [laughter]

DF: Well, that's quite a good [unclear].

PG: But it was just the two of us.

DF: So you're eight years old and he's—at least, as a man in those days, he was willing to take responsibility for a young girl and—

PG: Responsibility for me, mm-hmm. Right.

DF: And then when you—

PG: [unclear] there.

DF: And then you went all the way to Santa Fe and then you spent a few days with both of them there.

PG: I assume, and we must have come back—we must have come back the same way. And whether we went from Santa Fe to Tucson, I don't know. I mean, I certainly visited Grandma and Skipper in Tucson with my family.

DF: [unclear] time though, right.

PG: But I'm not sure that time.

DF: Good story. All right, let's age you a little bit.

PG: [laughs]

DF: It's where you want to go, I can tell. So by the time the war ends and you're now getting to be a teenager, or a very young lady—

PG: I'm 10, 11.

DF: Right, very young. You know your grandfather really until his death in 1950. So during those later 1940s you said you spent a fair amount of time in New York City with him?

PG: Yes, and certainly we did too while we were on Long Island. So when I was eight, nine I also—some of that is in the apartment in New York.

DF: First, before we even talk about him, tell me what that apartment was like, what it looked like, what it was like to be inside it. Do you have memories of that?

PG: Oh, yeah. [chuckles] I could probably draw you a map of it.

DF: Well, I might ask you to do that. [laughter]

PG: It's 85<sup>th</sup> and East End so right—right on the corner overlooking the river. It—it was a penthouse apartment and it basically was the whole floor. And it'd be interesting to go back now and see how big the rooms really were, but, you know, they seemed huge to me at that point. Came up the elevator, went into a little lobby area and then into a big kind of hallway off of which there was a breakfast room, a big dining room, two kind of living rooms, big living rooms. And then there was—it was like a little library that connected through bathroom, dressing room to what was Granddad's bedroom. And then in addition to that I—I think there were six—maybe six other bedrooms in that house, not counting—which is the part I couldn't draw a map of—the servant's area. There was a servant's area and there were live-in help. So there were bedrooms back there and the kitchen was—you know, it was a pantry, big kitchen. And then there was a laundry—dry—it had drying racks back there. You know, things you put clothes in and blew hot air on them, I think. But I—you know, and I had a little—when I—I have recollections so I must have been pretty small [unclear] of a little—one of those little carts made with wheels.

DF: Oh.

PG: Like a little tiny tricycle—of riding that thing all over that apartment. [laughter] Around the halls and down the corridors and into the rooms.

DF: What—I don't know. How was it decorated? I mean, you were a kid; you probably didn't notice that much.

PG: No, it was—it's—I think of it as fairly formal. I wouldn't have called it homey. I mean, just maybe pictures of Archmere would have been or—

DF: Mm-hmm, okay. Was there an area of the apartment that your grandfather especially seemed to spend his time in? Did he have a den or—

PG: Well, there was this little library that was kind of a den that connected through to what was his—would have been his bedroom.

DF: So he had, like, a suite.

PG: Yeah, and I think he probably—if he wasn't entertaining, he probably spent more time there because it was small. It was cozier. I mean, it was more comfortable furniture, I think. But still—to me, it was still sort of formal.

DF: Were there pictures of the family throughout the apartment, in the den, anywhere?

PG: There probably were family—some family pictures in the den. It's not like on the farm where they had those portraits hung around. And I don't—I don't have much recollection of picture, portraits, what was on the walls in the apartment.

: You had mentioned if he wasn't entertaining then he would, you know, spend time in his den. Do you remember sort of visitors who would come, what kind of sort of social functions took place there, whether that was sort of very common or infrequent?

PG: I—I mean, I don't think there were a lot of, like, big parties. He would—he would have people over. I don't—I couldn't tell you who. Certainly, he would have friends—friends over. The dining room was big. I think probably the dining room table—that big dining room



table that was originally at Archmere was there. I mean, I have recollections of a big table there.

DF: Yeah.

PG: Had a meeting there and the chairs were—I mean, I had short dresses as a little kid and whatever the covering on those chairs was, it itched.  
[laughter]

DF: Horsehair, probably.

PG: I didn't like it. [laughs]

DF: Elegance in the '40s was horsehair.

: Were you sort of—

DF: So that's where you'd eat, in this formal dining room?

PG: Yes.

DF: Even if it was just three or four of you. You'd be there with your parents. Were you there by yourself, or both?

PG: I don't remember so much being there by myself.

DF: With your folks.

PG: With my folks or certainly with my mother.

DF: Yeah.

PG: I—I mean, I do remember eating some breakfast in the smaller—the smaller little dining room. But basically, we used the—we ate in the big dining room. And it was served by—by servants.

DF: Mm-hmm. So there was a cook.

PG: There was a cook, there was a butler. There was a valet. Granddad had a valet.

DF: And someone who served the meals who wasn't the cook?

PG: Yes, yeah.

DF: And probably some kind of housemaid type person also?

PG: I'm sure.

DF: So there were several people?

PG: Yeah, there were several people there. Yes

DF: A whole staff.

PG: It was a big—yeah, it was a whole staff. It was a big apartment to take care of. It was big, even if the rooms would look smaller to me now. [chuckles]

DF: Or at least—as you say, at least seven bedrooms in the main part of the apartment—

PG: Yeah.

DF: —and three or four probably in the back. Yeah, that's huge.

PG: Yeah, it was huge. It was a big—

: [unclear] now.

PG: It was big. It was big. And, you know, the bedrooms—some of the bedrooms were really small. There were a couple in the back that we used to call, like, the nursery. I mean, it was like two smaller bedrooms connected to a larger one.

DF: Yeah, maybe for small kids and their parents.

PG: Small, yeah.

DF: Yeah. Here's a funny question. Do you remember what you ate at any of those meals? Was it typical fare, eggs and toast in the morning or something?

PG: I do remember—I mean, there were a couple—Granddad insisted that you eat some of everything, like it or not, for which I'm very grateful, having grown up, that there's almost nothing I don't like. But there were a few things I didn't like [chuckles] that I had to eat, like chocolate rice pudding, fried tomatoes, which we—it seemed to be

part of big breakfasts, which I didn't like at all. But other than that, it was pretty typical American fare in those—and back then there wasn't so much influence from other countries in our food.

DF: True, yeah.

PG: So, you know, it'd be meat and potatoes and a vegetable and salad and—

DF: Your grandfather was in his 60s at that time. Did he still have a good appetite? Was he—

PG: I don't re—yeah, as far as I know, he certainly did. It's not the kind of thing I noticed.

DF: Do you remember if he had any favorite food?

PG: Yeah, I don't.

DF: What do you—

PG: I know he had a favorite restaurant in New York. He used to take—he used—he took me to a lot of musical comedies as a kid, even as a fairly small child, seven, eight, nine. We used to go to Broadway shows and he always went to a little place called the Swiss Pavilion, which was close to Broadway. It must have been just off Broadway, but we'd go to dinner there and then go to the shows. He was well known there. I mean, the waiters would know him and he got special attention. But it seemed to be the restaurant he went to in New York.

DF: What kind of restaurant was it?

PG: It was a relatively small little restaurant. I remember it had some booths.

: White tablecloths, fancy silverware or just—

PG: Not super fancy. I mean, it was a—I'd say it was a medium—probably a medium-price-range restaurant. Very nice but not the Ritz.  
[chuckles]

DF: Yeah, right. That's interesting. A place you eat—was comfortable and he went all the time. Let's see, before I get you out in the Broadway streets—we'll get—and we'll get to that in a second—I want to just stay on the house for a little bit longer.

PG: Okay.

DF: So I'm getting a sense for what it was like there. You mentioned just a few minutes ago that you took a little cart. Maybe it was the cart for food delivery or something?

PG: No, no. It was a little—it was like a—it wasn't really a tricycle. It was a little—a little thing that kids sit on and—

DF: Oh, it was for kid to play with.

PG: Yeah, right. You pushed with your feet—

DF: Oh, okay.

PG: —and made it go.

DF: So it was there purposely for children to play with.

PG: Yes, mm-hmm.

DF: And you could just run around the house in this thing.

PG: Yeah, I think now—I mean, the people underneath must have hated it.  
[laughter]

DF: [unclear]. And also, it wasn't such a fussy place that children had to kind of mind their p's and q's?

PG: No, hm-mm. No, I never felt that way with Granddad anywhere, really.

: You didn't have to stay out of the parlor or—

PG: No.

: —don't scratch the floors or—

PG: No. We pretty much had the run of the place.

DF: So he got a kick out of you just running around having fun?

PG: I guess he did, yeah. [laughs]

DF: It sounds like it. And would he interact with you there? You said you learned games and I assume some of this is happening—

PG: Right, he interacted.

DF: —in New York City.

PG: Right. Yeah, I can remember playing, especially gin rummy, with him in New York.

DF: Tell us about playing gin rummy. Now, we've got these stories of him being just a phenomenal card player. Did he teach you tricks or—

PG: I'm trying to think if he might ever have taught me some card tricks. I think he may have. But what I really remember is the gin rummy, playing gin rummy with him. And sometimes he'd let me win but I don't think he—I sometimes beat him and I think it was legit.  
[laughter]

DF: Was he a good loser.

PG: I—yeah, with me. I don't know what he was like with his peers.  
[laughs]

DF: Would have been different. Stakes might have been different.

PG: Right.

DF: Were you gambling? I mean, even just silly, make believe?

PG: No, we didn't. No, we never gambled.

DF: So it was just playing the game.

PG: Yeah.

DF: And that was his game with you.

PG: That was his game with me. And I—I mean, I think rummy may have been his game with—he was into games. I mean, I can tell you other games he—

DF: Yeah, tell us.

PG: Not—not there, particularly, but on the farm he played some silly games with people. Like, there was one. There was a counting game called fizzfuzz. Anybody ever told you about fizzfuzz?

DF: No, tell us about it.

PG: [laughs] You counted, one, two, three, four and any number that was divisible by three you said fizz. If it was divisible by five you said fuzz. If it was divisible by both you said fizzfuzz and if you missed you were out. And it was a question of seeing how—who could stay in the longest.

DF: And your granddad was—

PG: This was children.

DF: —playing this with the kids?

PG: With kids and adults both. We'd sit around the porch at Hartfeld House and go, "One, two, fizz, four, fuzz." [chuckles]

DF: I would assume he was rather good at this game.

PG: I think he was probably pretty good at this game. There was another one that was called scissors. And you had this pair of scissors; it was a trick thing. And you'd pass them from person to person and you'd say uncrossed, crossed or double-crossed. And you had to figure out what the trick was. And people would—you know, they'd open the

scissors and pass them and say they were crossed or—had to do with what you were doing with your arms and legs.

: Oh.

DF: You knew that; I played that one. [laughter]

PG: And again, he'd play that with adults and kids sitting around a porch to see how long it would take people to catch on. He sometimes got the kids—I don't remember ever doing this with adults but lie on our backs on the floor and he'd balance a quarter on our nose. If we could wiggle it off we could have it. He—the porch at Hartfeld House—his room—it was a two-story porch. His room was off the porch and there was a little balcony off his room that was over the porch. And Pete and Tony may have told—or Pete may have told you this too. He used to throw pennies off there and we could never catch them, like pennies from heaven. By the time we ran up there, I mean, he was nowhere to be found. But these pennies would come showering down.

DF: He thought that was pretty funny.

PG: I think he did.

DF: We did get that from Pete.

PG: So, you know, I think he enjoyed sort of playing that kind of game, teasing that way. He played the piano.

DF: Oh.

PG: He used to—I can remember him playing the piano, a lot of George M. Cohen songs. Not—I mean, he didn't play, like, classical piano.

: It's odd because I just, this very, sort of last few days was reading one of an earlier [unclear] a friend of his where this person recollects him

as—like, she calls him a jazz man. And I hadn't—I didn't know until that point that he played. He was musical; obviously Skipper—

PG: Yes.

: —was. But I never knew that he played piano and also way back in the sort of late 1890s and, you know, Lockport and those days.

DF: Did he sing when he played or did he just play?

PG: No, he'd sing and I don't think he had a great voice but he'd sing. I mean, we did "Eastside, Westside," "Daisy, Daisy," a lot of that—and George M. Cohen stuff are the kind of ones I remember. I can remember one time at Hartfeld House rolling back the rug in the living room and, like, learning the Mexican hat dance with him playing.

DF: That's great.

PG: He—I learned square dancing with him. And I don't know—I can remember a couple of square dance occasions in Mostley Hall. I have no idea who was doing the calling but he—

DF: But somebody was doing the official—

PG: And he was—I mean, he was dancing with us and I did learn to square dance down there.

DF: So there was lots of fun. I mean, sounds like—

PG: There was a lot of fun.

DF: —he was full of ideas and pulled all you into them.

PG: He did. But you didn't argue with his ideas [chuckles] as I'm sure you have heard.

DF: In different contexts.

PG: And you have talked about the walking.

DF: Well, tell us about that.



- PG: You know, he would walk—the gate was, like, two miles from the house and he used to walk to the gate almost every night and back. And you could go with him but he walked a good pace.
- DF: So the kids could go but they had to almost literally jog along with him. [chuckles]
- PG: And it—you know, it wasn't just kids. It was—he'd do this more with adult guests who were down there. If you were—happened to be there you could go too.
- DF: So he's doing this all the way through, right? Through the 1940s? I mean, his health always seemed good to you then during this time?
- PG: His health always seemed fine to me. I mean, I was never aware even that he had a heart condition so—and it may have been, you know, just a sudden heart attack. [unclear].
- DF: Yeah, I think it surprised everyone.
- PG: Yeah.
- DF: Oh, another thing I've heard is that he did magic tricks. Do you remember that?
- PG: Oh, you see, I don't remember him doing magic tricks but I—there was a stage at which I was into magic stuff as a kid. And I may have—it may have been him that got me into it.
- DF: But you can't quite remember.
- PG: I don't quite remember him—
- DF: You don't remember him doing coin tricks or anything like that?
- PG: No.
- DF: Might not have done it anymore at that point. Because when he was a teenager he learned some of those things. Okay. All right, let's get

you back in New York City and maybe outside. You went to many Broadway plays, you said.

PG: Yes, musicals. It was all—it was all musical theater.

DF: Where'd you sit? Do you remember? Was it always in the first few rows? Was it—

PG: It was always in the orchestra. I can remember once going with him and being in the very back of the orchestra and being able to—because I was short, couldn't see that well—turning the seat up and sitting on top of the seat. And nobody was behind me so I could do it. So it was always orchestra seats but it—I don't remember ever it being really, like, in the very first—first few rows.

DF: Did he laugh? Did he have fun at the theater?

PG: I'm sure he did. I don't—I mean, I don't think he would have kept going if he didn't.

DF: But you don't remember any particular—

PG: No.

DF: —experiences—

PG: No.

DF: —of him responding?

PG: Not to particular shows. And I don't know either—I mean, he was certainly taking me to musical comedy. Whether he went to other kinds of shows, I don't—I don't know. But he—I mean, he might not have taken me to serious stuff but I have a feeling that musical comedy was what he liked and that's what he went to.

DF: I think so. That's our sense, yeah. And he'd been doing it for years—

PG: Yeah.

DF: —from the 1920s forward. Did you ever go backstage? Did he ever introduce you to any of the actors or—

PG: No. I don't know if he actually, you know, was into theater from that side of it.

DF: He was earlier; we know that. In the '20s, in particular, he knew everybody. But I think he might not have—

PG: I think later he—

DF: —by the '40s.

PG: —drew back from some of that.

DF: He did draw back from it.

PG: I mean, I do remember meeting Al Smith, going to his apartment and meeting Al Smith.

DF: So he took you along.

PG: Yes.

DF: Obviously.

PG: Yeah. I can remember—this was the trip on the boat to Europe. But Grover Whalen, who was the official welcomer in New York at that point, was on the boat. His daughter is also a religious at the Sacred Heart, happened to be my teacher that year.

DF: Oh, my goodness!

PG: She was a nervous wreck that I was going to come back with all these stories about when she was little, [laughter] which I didn't. But I do remember him taking me—I mean, going to a reception on the boat on the SS America that Grover Whalen had on that trip.

DF: Smith wasn't on that trip.

PG: No. No, no.

DF: This is three, four years earlier when you met Smith.

PG: It was years early—

DF: At least that.

PG: Yeah.

DF: Because he died. Yeah. Do you have any recollection of their meeting when—so you go—you went there with your granddad to meet—to go to Al Smith's apartment. Do you have any memories of that? I'm trying to get a sense for their relationship.

PG: I know. And I mean, I think I was a little awed by meeting Al Smith and not too aware of what—

DF: Yeah, sure.

PG: I mean, I think it was probably a warm relationship. And I don't know why we—this was well after the campaign.

DF: Yeah.

PG: They'd stayed friends.

DF: Absolutely.

PG: So I think it probably was more [unclear].

DF: Oh, they're clearly friends. I'm just trying to get a sense of the quality of it.

PG: But I don't—Granddad wasn't—he was reserved in lots of ways. And I think it was the style. I mean, I don't remember him being outgoing, warm with me or anybody else. It wasn't touchy-feely hugs kind of thing.

: Can we stop for one second?

DF: Sure.

: And change tapes.

[end of side 1, tape 1]

- : New tape. We're continuing talking about John Raskob.
- DF: You just told us that in some ways your granddad was reserved, I think was the word you used, not touchy-feely. And I said that other people have called him shy. Do you think he was shy or—
- PG: Let's see. I—I suppose he could have been. I just—he was—he had very strong opinions. And I don't think of somebody who's—who has that strong opinions necessarily as being shy. I don't think I thought of him as shy but more sort of reserved, which was the way men were at that time.
- DF: Yeah, I think so too.
- PG: I don't know that I would have said shy but other people knew him differently too so—
- DF: Well, because people know him differently they sometimes don't know him well. So it's useful for me to hear different perspectives on that. Let's—let's get you back out into the city. You went to Broadway shows, the Swiss Pavilion Restaurant. Where else did you go with your granddad while you were in New York City?
- PG: I don't remember much going anywhere else with him—to the park, to the—you know, across the street. You—to mass. We went to—went to [unclear] Mass at St. Ignatius Church, the Jesuit church in New York on Sundays, sat in the front row. And I'm sure you have heard this story too from my cousins but he would, you know, hand me the money to put into the collection and it would be a \$50 bill or something like that.
- DF: [chuckles] Let's talk a little bit about church. So he only went to Sunday mass.

PG: [unclear].

DF: Or was it that you were only there on the weekends?

PG: No, I think he only went to Sunday mass. Same thing on the—in Pioneer Point. We went to mass. I mean, he helped build the church in Centerville. And again, you know, we'd go to mass on Sunday, sit in the front row. But he—you know, I think he was religious in a formal kind of way.

DF: How do you mean?

PG: I mean, I think—he had rosaries. He would say the rosary, go to mass, but I don't remember any kind of—I mean, there weren't, like, religious pictures around. I don't remember a lot of religious talk at all. He certainly—he was good friends with Cardinal Spellman. He certainly supported the church financially in lots of ways but, you know, I—I don't know. He didn't talk about his faith so I don't know what [unclear]—

DF: So he never talked to you about issues of faith.

PG: No. And, you know, if there was a priest on the farm, like Father Tucker was often there—there were other priest friends he had would come down. And we'd have mass in the chapel in Hartfeld House. But again, I think those masses were pretty much Sunday masses. I don't remember daily masses there. I remember he—I couldn't—in those days, girls couldn't serve so Tony did that. They got the collection, as I'm sure they've told you. [laughs] But I had to learn how to put the vestments out and set the—set the mass up and learn the responses so they could say them at mass.

DF: Who—who was teaching you these things? The priests when they came?

PG: The priests. Some of it I learned at school. It wasn't he who taught me; it was the priest. But it was Granddad who was saying, "Learn it."

DF: And you did.

PG: Yeah. [chuckles] And do it. You know, set up the—set up the altar; set up the vestments.

DF: Some of the sense I have gotten—and this includes my sense also of Al Smith and some of the other men your granddad was friends who were all Catholics—was that they did not wear their faith on their sleeves in the sense, as you say, they didn't talk about spiritual issues very much.

PG: Right.

DF: It wasn't something they probed, in a way. It was very much just who they were; it was a matter of course that they would go to Sunday mass.

PG: Mm-hmm, they would support their church.

DF: They would support their church.

PG: That's—that's sort of the sense I have. I mean, I didn't want to say it was pro forma but—

DF: Yeah, let's go at that a little bit. Yeah, I don't think it was pro forma. My sense is more that it was—

: Intrinsic?

DF: —in a good sense unquestioned in the sense that—

PG: That—

DF: —this is who they were.

PG: Yeah, I think that may be true.

: I would think the word intrinsic.

PG: Mm-hmm.

: I mean, there's no separation between. They're sort of interwoven.

DF: So it was a both—it was a cultural thing too.

PG: Mm-hmm. And yet, you know, Granddad had—it was also a period when, you know—I mean, this is a funny—funny story for me but Catholics and Protestants didn't much associate and—

DF: Right.

PG: —you know, heaven forbid that you'd go to a Protestant service unless maybe it was a wedding.

DF: And even—

PG: Even then it was a little—hmm. [chuckles] But Granddad had lots of non-Catholic friends who came to the farm. I mean, he had friends who were divorced, which was a real no-no. And so I didn't grow up with quite that sense of “watch out for those Protestants.” However, I did grow up with a sense that you didn't go to Protestant services and stuff. And when I went to Europe on—with Granddad that time it was a—it was a U.S. ship. And there was a priest on board so we did have mass. But they had Protestant services as well in the—sort of the general living area. And there was a balcony around that area. And I convinced myself that—I wanted to see what went on at one of these Protestant services. [chuckles] And I convinced myself that if I went and sat in the balcony and read a book [laughter] I really wouldn't be any—doing anything wrong, and I could sort of watch what was happening down there.

DF: And that's—so that would have been the first time you'd seen a Protestant service.

PG: I probably had been—



DF: You were—were you 15 or something?

PG: I was—yes, I was—I was 15.

: Were you surprised, appalled, disappointed?

PG: No, I think I felt guilty that I had done it. [laughs] I had brought with me books—books that we were supposed to be reading for school because I was missing several weeks of school to go on this trip. And I was sitting up there reading Dante. [laughs]

: Maybe if you'd taken the "City of God" or something like that you would have been [unclear]. [laughter]

DF: And this is something you just sort of picked in the air. No one told you, "Don't go to a Protestant church or"—

PG: Oh, I think—I think I probably was told that at school.

DF: At school.

PG: Not so much from—

DF: Your mother or—

PG: From my mother or—it was—it was the culture.

DF: Yeah. I think you raised a good point, which I have been very aware of, is that your father did tran—your grandfather did transcend some of the normal prejudices in both directions. He seemed to be able to get along well with Protestants. And he himself didn't seem to harbor any—

PG: No.

DF: —prejudices about them.

PG: No, I don't—

DF: How about Jews? Do you remember that? Were there any Jewish people around?

PG: Not that I'm aware of.

DF: This is—we're still talking the '30s and 1940s, I assume.

PG: Yeah.

DF: There were no people of color who were treated as peers. I mean, there might have been some servants.

PG: Servants, but not treated as peers. No.

DF: Yeah, a long time ago.

PG: But I also grew up—I mean, I—I didn't grow up with a sense of people of color being inferior. I mean, they were in a servant position. And it may have been sort of a paternalistic approach to them. But they were—I mean, I thought of them more as—as family.

DF: Mm-hmm. So again, there was no atmosphere of prejudice on the farm or in the city.

PG: No, not that—that I ever felt.

DF: Well, they would have taught you if they—

PG: Right, yeah.

DF: —wanted you to feel that way, probably.

PG: But I also grew up in the South in a culture where that was the norm.

DF: Right.

PG: I don't think I ever thought much about it.

DF: Yeah, [unclear].

PG: But I—I mean, I—you know, I grew up with a sense—and you were saying Betty was saying she was sort of upper class—but I grew up with a sense of the upper class, but I guess to say it was upper class but not jet set. You know, I think I grew up with ability to be comfortable with people at all different kinds of social levels. And I think some of that came from the way the servants were treated or—

Weir. You know, you've asked about Weir, who was—I mean, I thought of her almost as part of the family. So—

DF: So it was certainly not a family in which there was an emphasis on creating separation and barriers.

PG: No, there certainly wasn't.

DF: Mm-hmm, it was just a kind of ease and comfort. That's good. Let me take you back a little bit to the issues of church. I'm still trying to get as much as I can a sense of both of your grandparents' religiosity and how they practiced their faith. Do you have any sense of Skipper in these regards, or you just didn't see her enough to know?

PG: I didn't see her enough to know. My guess would be that Skipper, maybe just because she was a woman, it might have been a little more open or talked about or—but I don't have a lot of sense of Skipper.

DF: Yeah.

PG: I really don't.

DF: You just didn't see her that much.

PG: I didn't see her that much.

DF: Right, you never had these kind of special private times with her.

PG: No, the ones who knew her were Roz and Pete.

DF: Yeah, yeah. [unclear].

PG: Yeah, who don't know Granddad as well.

DF: We've learned that.

PG: Yeah. [laughs] Although, Roz had—probably had some sense of both.

DF: True. Did you meet Cardinal Spellman?

PG: I met Cardinal Spellman a number of times. In fact, the day I entered the convent we drove—we had been in New York the night before.

And he said mass for me in his private apartment the morning—that morning. So we went to mass and breakfast with him before we drove up to Albany, which is where [unclear] was.

DF: And that special relationship was, in part, because the family knew him?

PG: It's because of the family—knew him, yes. I mean, I don't—I don't think I ever thought of Cardinal Spellman as a particularly close friend or something. But I met him more than once and he—I think my mother knew him—my parents knew him better.

DF: As—

PG: And he was—

DF: Part of their—sometimes at social events and [unclear]?

PG: Probably, probably.

DF: Mm-hmm. Did you ever see your granddad with Cardinal Spellman?

PG: I'm sure I did but—

DF: But it didn't—doesn't stand out.

PG: It doesn't stand out, no.

DF: Nothing happened that was real interesting.

PG: No. [laughs]

DF: Okay. [chuckles] Did he have a special relationship with the priests that were visiting or were they just treated as guests and—

PG: They were treated—I mean, most of the priests who were down there, I think, go back to Lockport days. And, I mean, I think they're friends.

DF: Oh, that's interesting.

PG: I don't think they were treated—treated differently, particularly.

- DF: So they weren't there just in a role to serve—a priest who could serve mass on Sunday.
- PG: No. No, no. They were there as friends and guests and it was a very, kind of informal, comfortable relationship with them.
- :
- Did you—you know, I have seen some things in various matters about while he was, you know, particularly comfortable with sort of the unique kind of spiritual responsibilities of ministers, he was not particularly sort of praising of their business acumen, you know, and their organizational skills. Do you have any sort of feeling for that?
- PG: It wouldn't surprise me but I—[laughs] I think—you know, one thing that would even suggest that to me is the charter of the foundation. It doesn't allow clerics to be board members.
- DF: Yeah.
- PG: And that—even for me, that was a difficulty for me because technically—
- DF: Oh. Oh, I didn't think of that.
- PG: In canon law a religious is not a cleric.
- DF: Oh.
- PG: A religious woman is not a cleric.
- DF: Right.
- PG: But I think my mother's generation—and I—I was active in the foundation. I mean, I remember it very early on. And I entered and we were cloistered for awhile. So I came back to it in the early '70s—late '60s, early '70s. But for a long time I was simply a sustaining member because, I think my mother's generation—many of them didn't think I should be a member at all. It was my cousins who pulled me into it and, you know, finally, technically there's no reason

I can't be because I'm not a cleric. But it's sort of a in-between sort of state. And so it's only in very recent years that I have become an active member. I mean, I was very active but not technically an active member, which meant I had no vote.

DF: Oh, that's fascinating.

PG: But I participated and I used to go to meetings. I used to go to area meetings. I was very active but—

DF: And starting when you were young?

PG: When I was young. I mean, I can remember, probably '46, when the foundation was very new. I have recollections of a foundation meeting at Skipper's in Tucson—

DF: Oh, really?

PG: —with just she and some of her—my mother's generation around the table. And I have recollections of reading foundation applications very early on. I think it's how I got a lot of sense of how the other half lived—

DF: Oh, I didn't think of that.

PG: —was through that experience.

DF: Now, this was when you were a young woman. I mean, you're very young.

PG: I was in my teens.

DF: Yeah.

PG: Yeah, I was in my—I was, you know, 16.

DF: So at that point you were welcome to join in.

PG: Well—

DF: You didn't have a voting membership.

PG: No, and I think—

DF: But you were allowed to participate.

PG: Or I was allowed to sit there and listen; I don't know.

DF: Right.

PG: It was all sort of over my head.

DF: Well, this is just a factual thing I didn't realize. So Skipper was partially out some of the monies from her headquarters out west. And your sense is then Granddad was doing it out east and never the 'tween shall meet or [chuckles]—

PG: Granddad—well, he wasn't there so I'm [chuckles] not sure how that worked.

DF: He wasn't involved at that point, you think?

PG: Well, he had to have—I mean, when would this have been?

DF: This is the very early years.

PG: It—this was probably—I think the recollection I have of Skipper doing this would have been after Granddad had died.

DF: Oh, okay. So—so in—

PG: Yeah.

DF: —'51, '52, something like that.

PG: Yeah.

DF: Okay.

PG: Not—not really earlier than that.

DF: Yeah. Okay, that makes more sense because I don't have any sense for those very first years. I mean, the foundation exists. It has monies, though it has much less money at that point. I don't really know how it worked.

PG: Yeah, and I think it was only—I mean, the stuff I read is sort of different ones of my mother's generation took turns chairing meetings

and they could tell you better what really went on. But I think early on it was more—I don't know that they were really receiving applications so much as just making grants to where they thought it ought to go. But see, then I—I entered in 1959 and we were cloistered until the late '60s. So I really couldn't—couldn't participate. And then I started coming back when we first were not cloistered; maybe the first time I was back at a foundation meeting might have been '68 or thereabouts. There's a picture of me somewhere at an early foundation meeting here at Iris Brook, still in habit with a glass in my hand. My [unclear] used to say they could use it for blackmail. [laughter]

DF: That's great. Okay, let me take you back a little bit to that trip you took to Europe.

PG: Okay.

DF: Really, which is in your grandfather's last months of life.

PG: Right, yes.

DF: You told us a great story about the services. [chuckles] Try to narrate the tale, if you can. Tell us about that trip. How did it come about? How did you get involved? And then get us on the boat.

PG: I don't know how I got involved but anyway, it was Mom and I, Aunt Jo and Boo. And then Uncle Will and Aunt Nell joined us at some point in the course of it. I just know I got invited. It was in—I know that there's a book of Robinson recollections. It says this trip was in May. Not true; it was in late March and early April because we were in Rome for Holy Week.

DF: Great.



PG: So, you know, I had to—I was out of school. Part of it was spring break but I missed two, maybe three weeks of school to go on this trip. We sailed from New York on the SS America to [unclear], France. It's 1950. There were still the wrecks of ships from the war in the—in the harbor, which I remember seeing, took the train to Paris. And then we had a private car and drove down through the Chateau country. I can remember going to Carcassone. Impressed me, I think because it was a walled city that looked to me like a medieval city should look. [chuckles] Down to the French Riviera, along through Caan and Nice, along into the Italian Riviera through—through Italy and [unclear] Pisa, Venice, Siena. I can remember going up the Leaning Tower of Pisa. And I can remember the feeling of feeling like you're walking downstairs when you're really going up because of the way it leaned. We were in Rome for Holy Week. We were there Easter Sunday. I remember vividly the audience with Pius XII, that I showed you that picture. And one of the things that—I mean, I stuck out like a sore thumb because in those days, if you had an audience with the Pope, you know, you covered your head and you wore long sleeves. And because I was so young, I had to wear white and everybody else had to wear black. So, you know, I stand out like [chuckles]—like nobody's business. But—and I can remember having to buy the dress to wear at this before we even left this country, and carting it all around Europe with us. I remember being very nervous about this whole prospect. And what I really remember is how as soon as Pius XII walked into the room I was totally at ease. There was something about the man, his presence; I don't know what it was but—and it wasn't a long audience. I think we had the private

audience; it was just us. So it was really private because both Granddad and Uncle Will were Knights of Malta. But we were all just sort of lined up and he—Pius XII came down the line and just sort of greeted each person. I don't really even remember what he said to me. But, you know, he spoke briefly with each one and then he left. But it was the highlight of the trip for me. And then he said the mass on Easter Sunday and I remember we had seats somewhere up in St. Peter's, high up. So we had a really good view of what was going on.

DF: Was your—was your grandfather in his Knight of Malta regalia?

There's a regalia—

PG: There is a regalia. I think he probably was. We could probably tell by looking at the pictures.

DF: Oh, yes. Did you—I mean, you were probably almost tunnel vision at that point. [laughter] You can't—how did the rest of the family react? Or can you tell us what the conversation was like after the audience was—

PG: I think I was tunnel vision. I mean, I think other people were equally impressed but I don't remember a lot of talk about it afterwards.

DF: How about before? Was there—

PG: I don't remember that either.

DF: —anybody—your mother tell you, “Stand up straight.” Do or don't look the pope in the eye. I don't know what the proper [laughter]—

PG: I don't think so. You know, I'm sure I told her I was nervous but she probably said, “Don't worry,” but I don't remember.

DF: Had she been an audience before, a private audience?

PG: No, it was her first time to Europe, as well as mine.

DF: Oh, that's interesting.

PG: She hadn't—

DF: So she had not accompanied your grandfather.

PG: No.

DF: Some of the kids had.

PG: Some went on that trip around the world.

DF: Yes.

: Right.

PG: And that was the year I was born. Yeah, I think Granddad was in—maybe in India or someplace like that when I was born. So, no. Joe had been on that trip but I think Mom and Boo—Aunt Boo—it was their first—first trip to Europe too. I remember Versailles vividly. It was just sort of overpowering to a 15-year-old, the magnificence of it.

DF: You went to so many places.

PG: We went to Venice.

DF: You were there five weeks?

PG: Something like five weeks.

DF: Five or six weeks.

PG: It must be five weeks.

DF: Yeah.

PG: And then back up into Swiss—I remember going through the Bremer Pass—there was snow still—in the car, and then to Lucerne.

DF: One of the things I have noticed about your granddad's trips to Europe. Sometimes it seems almost like a forced march. You know, you went here and then the next day you went here. [chuckles]

PG: It was—yeah, it was. I mean, we kept moving. And he had—I assume it was he who gave it to me; I think it was. But I had a fairly thick, a fairly fancy book. It was like a really fancy guidebook. And

he would make me read from it. If we were going to go through some little town, to look it up and read—read about it out of this book.

: Were these places that were new to him or was he sort of showing you places that he knew and loved?

PG: I think some of them were new to him. Certainly, I don't think all of them were. I don't know how much experience of Europe he'd had before, to tell you the truth.

DF: He'd been there many times.

PG: Yeah.

: Many times.

PG: But I don't know that he'd been—because we drove, like in the Chateau country.

DF: Yeah, that could have been new to him.

PG: That—some of that could have been new to him.

DF: I mean, several of these places, I think, were new. I think he must have deliberately picked out a few new things to see.

PG: I think he probably did.

DF: How did—

PG: I—the other thing I remember is he was constantly getting me to convert kilometers into miles and vice versa. [laughter]

DF: You mean to get—as like an exercise? A test.

PG: Right, yeah. [chuckles] Like learning the times tables. [laughs]

DF: Oh, that's funny. So you obviously—there's a group of you.

PG: Right.

DF: But you—you had private time with him or were next to him?

PG: No, this was in the car.

DF: Well, that's what I mean. You're—but you're all chatting with each other and—

PG: Right. I remember—I was trying to figure out this morning driving up here what kind of car this was, because there were seven of us when Aunt Nell and Uncle Will were there. I remember sitting in a jump seat most of the time. But even with that—

DF: Yeah, boy, a big touring car.

PG: Well, with the jump seats and one person in the front it would have worked.

DF: Yeah, that must have been what it was.

PG: Yeah. But it wasn't always all—all of us.

DF: You had a driver?

PG: We had a driver.

DF: The same driver?

PG: We had the same driver the whole time.

DF: Was he from the United States or some European fellow?

PG: He was some European. I mean, it wasn't somebody—

DF: He'd been hired.

PG: He'd been hired, yeah.

DF: Where did you stay? Did you stay always in elegant hotels?

PG: We stayed in elegant hotels. Couldn't now tell you—I know the one in Paris was right on the Place de la Concorde. I don't remember which hotels now but they were—they were very nice hotels.

DF: And you told us a funny story that in New York City you were told eat each kind of food. In Europe were you also testing new foods?

PG: I was eating—I don't know how new they were. I certainly was eating whatever was put in front of me. [laughs] I don't have much of a real recollection of what we ate on that trip.

DF: Yeah. Oh, okay.

PG: But I know with Granddad you ate what was there and you ate some of everything.

DF: You mentioned that the ships—still seeing sunken ships in the harbor; 1950 Europe was still in recovery. Do you have any recollections of that? Were there other signs of that?

PG: I remember sort of trying to look for things like that, not seeing much. You would see bullet holes in walls sometimes. I do—although I don't remember if it was this trip or a later one, but seeing the ruins of Monte Cassino.

: And—

PG: But we weren't in Germany at all, which would have—where I think it would have been more [unclear].

DF: He chose not to go to Germany—or he chose not to go to Germany.

PG: Not to go to Germany. Right.

: Your trip did end up in London; that was sort of the departure point. Did you notice—

PG: I didn't notice war damage. What I really remember is the harbor in France where I think it was the most obvious.

: Yeah, it would be.

PG: I don't remember, like, destroyed parts of London.

DF: You were in many countries. Do—family members—did your granddad—did your aunts, uncles—your mom speak any of the languages?

PG: I don't think so.

DF: So you relied on translators?

PG: Translation or—you know, and we had a driver who spoke English perfectly and the languages. And we were staying in first-class hotels where people would have spoken English.

DF: Did you have guides? So if you were going through Venice did someone guide you, or was it just the family members going to the sites?

PG: I think it was pretty much the family members going to the sites. I mean, I remember going to Murano, which is the island where they make the glass. And I had never seen glass blown before so I was fascinated by that. And what I imagine is that the concierge in the hotel, you know, got a gondola for us and arranged it. But we didn't have a—I don't remember having a guide, per se, in these places at all, even in Rome, although I—I mean, I imagine we drove around Rome with this driver some.

DF: Your grandfather, though he didn't know it, only had a few months to live. What were his spirits like? Was he—was he having fun being out with the family?

PG: I think he was. I mean, I think occasionally life got a little tense if somebody tried to cross him. I mean, we were closed up in this car with him a lot. [laughs] It wasn't always peachy creamy.

DF: Tell me about that because you've mentioned that but you haven't shown us that yet.

PG: I mean, I can't give you specific examples. I can remember—remember times, and I don't want to name names or places, where

somebody would cross him and, you know, they wouldn't be on speaking terms for several days or—

DF: This was on the trip?

PG: Or other times.

DF: Other times.

PG: Yeah.

DF: And “crossing him” meant essentially he'd say something and you disagreed.

PG: You disagreed.

DF: It's that simple.

PG: It could be that simple. [chuckles] Or you'd argue. You know, you'd argue it with him. I mean, I think it'd be one thing to say, “I don't agree,” but something else to try to convince him to your side of the— your view.

DF: He wasn't open to that.

PG: He—

DF: Or rarely.

PG: Yeah. He had strong opinions and he held to them and best to let them be.

DF: That was certainly your mother's approach and created a very close relationship. [chuckles]

PG: It did. [laughs]

DF: Which a lot of the boys, I think, had difficulty with and probably didn't have such a close relationship.

PG: Right, yeah. And I think some of the girls did too.

DF: Yeah.

PG: So many of the girls.



DF: I heard that. I'm trying to get a sense for this—this trip because I think for my purposes in writing a biography this is in some ways the last wonderful—

PG: Kind of the last—

DF: —wonderful adventure—

PG: Right.

DF: —he has. Do you think he planned out this trip? Do you have a sense for that? I mean—

PG: I think he—

DF: My goodness, there's 20 stops, it looks like.

PG: I know. I think he did. I think he probably did it in conjunction with Cook or one of those big travel agencies. But I'm sure he had—he probably knew where he wanted to go and more or less what he wanted to do.

DF: And he knew Holy Week would be sort of maybe the—

PG: Right.

DF: —climactic experience of the trip.

PG: Experience of it, yeah. Or at least Easter in Rome. He—and he certainly—I mean, it certainly was an enjoyable trip, I think, for everybody. It certainly was for me and it was all so new to me—

DF: Yeah, that's—

PG: —that I think it was kind of overwhelming, the whole thing.

DF: Tell me more about being in Rome for Easter or being in St. Peter's. Can you recollect any of the details of it, what it felt like, what it looked like?

PG: There are pictures in one of those albums that are not ones I took but of that—that ceremony. I—what I—the first sense I had, really, of the

Universal church. I mean, there were millions of—not literally millions, but there—thousands and thousands of people there. St. Peter’s was jammed. After the liturgy we went up on the roof of St. Peter’s and you could see all down on the square the crowds there. And I—I—the Pope, I think, blessed the crowd there. So there were people both—I mean, recently, all those masses have been out in—out in St. Peter’s Square. This one was actually in St. Peter’s. So, I mean, it’s a—it’s a kind of overwhelming sense of what the church really is when you have those people from all over the world and that kind of crowd all in one place.

: Now, at that time, I guess the approach—did you approach [unclear] by foot? I mean, you can’t just drive up?

PG: No, you still can’t just drive up.

: Were there sort of beggars and, like, war sort of veterans and, you know—

PG: I don’t remember any of that.

: Because I remember being there 10 years ago and that whole sort of approach is lined with kind of souvenir stands.

PG: Right, yeah. I don’t remember what the approach was like. Probably was too focused on—

: [unclear]

PG: —St. Peter’s itself.

DF: But you were all walking up along—

PG: Well, I think—you know, I think you could drive up probably to where the—you know, the curved part of it starts.

DF: Okay, and then you got off and you probably walked those last 200 yards.

PG: I think, yeah. Across—

DF: That's how it works.

PG: Yeah. I'm not sure you can drive that far up now.

DF: For you, was this a powerful spiritual moment?

PG: Yes.

DF: Besides sort of the spectacle aspect of it?

PG: Oh, no. It was. It certainly was. I mean, I knew at that point that I wanted to be a religious.

DF: You already knew before—

PG: I—I was pretty sure before by that point that I did, hadn't said anything to anybody.

DF: Oh.

PG: Didn't for another couple—another couple of years. But it certainly was on my mind at that point and I think this kind of experience, you know, sort of deepened my faith and that—that sense.

DF: Just as a slight aside, your granddad obviously didn't know that you would choose that path.

PG: Right.

DF: And you didn't speak to him about it.

PG: No. No, no.

DF: I mean, this is speculation but do you think he would have liked that that was your destiny? Do you have any notion of that?

PG: I—he probably would have been fine with it. I don't know if he would have been thrilled. I know my Aunt Yvonne, who died when she was in college, had wanted to be a religious. Whether she ever could have been, even if she had lived, because her health was not that good—

DF: Right.

PG: —is an issue but—

DF: Do you know—did you do family lore? Do you know if your grandparents, both of them, thought that was okay or good or—

PG: I have no sense that they—that they didn't.

DF: Okay. So again, they were accepting but perhaps not celebrating or—

PG: Probably not—maybe not celebrating. It's always interested me that in a Catholic family the size of this I'm the only religious.

DF: Yes, I'm aware of that too and that's why, I guess, I pushed—

PG: Yeah.

DF: —at you a little bit to ask.

PG: But I also think—it surprises me less now with—as the generations are growing because, particularly for women, there's so many more opportunities in—not just in the church but in the world than there used to be.

DF: Mm-hmm, yeah, to do service.

PG: And I think that's a factor. Right.

DF: Yeah.

PG: But it is something that has always kind of surprised me a little bit.

DF: Me too. And Al Smith's family's different that way. Most of these big Irish Catholic families—

PG: Families, right.

DF: Often a son—if not a son, a daughter—

PG: Right.

DF: So it is—it is different; I agree. [sentence unclear]. Who knows?

PG: And Aunt—you know, Aunt Boo is a third-order Franciscan, I think.

DF: That's true too.

PG: Yeah.

DF: So—but, yes. I thought maybe there was some ambivalence among the—among your grandparents about that issue. They obviously didn't push. [chuckles]

PG: No, they didn't push. And, I mean, I never talked to Skipper about it. You know, I didn't talk to anybody. That—when Granddad died I was pretty sure that's what I wanted but I wasn't totally sure—

DF: Yeah, it was a while.

PG: Yeah, it's a long time ago.

DF: You weren't close enough to Skipper really then to talk to her about these things?

PG: No, hm-mm. I didn't even talk to my own parents until—

DF: Okay.

PG: —very close time to when I was actually about saying, "I want to do this."

DF: How did your parents respond?

PG: Actually, [unclear]. I told them when I was a senior in college, would have liked to have entered right after college. At request of my father, I stayed on and did graduate work before I entered. I think he probably hoped maybe I'd change my mind. Mom thought I'd never survive, that I couldn't live out a vow of obedience. [laughter] But they—and Dad ultimately was very proud of me. I think he just wanted to be sure that that's really what I wanted to—

DF: Yeah.

PG: —wanted to do.

DF: So he created a little buffer.

PG: I mean, so they weren't jumping up and down for joy but—

DF: Mm-hmm, they wanted what was best for you.

PG: Yeah, they were fine with it.

DF: Just typical parents in that sense.

PG: Right.

DF: Yeah.

PG: And I have never felt uneasy. I mean, I felt resistance, as I said, from my mother's generation in the foundation to ambivalence about my participation in the foundation, but no ill feeling over the fact that I'm a nun.

DF: Do you think that that concern, let's just call it, about your participation in the foundation was simply in some ways trying to honor the charter of the foundation? Or do you think there was a greater ambivalence than that about you participating?

PG: No, I suspect it was honoring the charter of the foundation.

DF: Okay. They were just trying to figure out where you fit in the rules.

PG: Right.

DF: Okay.

PG: And some of them thought I didn't.

DF: Yeah.

PG: Yeah.

DF: Well, that language is unclear. I mean, you actually explained it very well. But maybe they didn't know enough to understand that.

: Okay, let's change tape again.

DF: Okay. We'll just wrap up.

[end of side 2, tape 1]

: Tape number three.

DF: All right, as we're beginning to wrap up, you mentioned, Sister Pat, that there's some good stories and some descriptions you'd like to give us of life on the farm in the—in the '40s; is that what we're talking about?

PG: It's really '50s—late '40s.

DF: Into the '50s.

PG: Late '40s, actually.

DF: Okay.

PG: Those are the summers that I found [unclear] Lyon family spent the whole summer down there at Mostley Hall. We—the kids really had the run of the place. We used to bike all over the farm. I can remember riding the cows, [laughs] which probably we shouldn't have done. But at the end of those summers—those were summers when Granddad—he'd come down on weekends. Sometimes he'd stay for a whole week. And the adults would be basically up in Hartfeld House, the more formal house, and the kids down at Mostley Hall, which was dormitories and just big open space. When he—at the end of the summer the Maddens—I don't know if anybody's talked to you about the Maddens, George and Barbara Madden—good friends of Granddad's. I don't know where the connection comes. But George used to play for the silent movies, play the piano for the silent movies. And he and his wife, Barbara, and their daughter, Melissa, used to spend time on the farm in the summer. And late in the summer he—for three different summers, I think, they organized a kind of show with the kids to thank Granddad—

DF: Oh.

PG: —for, you know, letting us be there and everything that the farm meant to all of us. And it'd be like a minstrel show or—there were musical shows and George and Barbara would write this kind of script for it. And all the kids would—there'd be some kind of theme and every kid would have some song to sing, or some dance to do or—not just the—it'd be any kids who were there, kids of friends of Granddad who were there plus, you know, myself and my cousins. And they were—these were great productions and great fun. [chuckles]

DF: They were original productions.

PG: They were original pro—they were original, all right. [laughs] Some of them a little risqué.

DF: Tell.

PG: There was a—

DF: Do tell.

PG: [laughs] The first one we did and I don't—did Pete talk about this at all? It was a minstrel show, which would be a kind of no-no today but—and so there was this dialogue between—who—this was Pete and Tony doing this dialogue. But—some of which was a little off-color—a little off-color and totally over the heads of the kids but of course not the adults. [laughs] Somewhere I have a script for this. I might be able—

DF: Are you serious? Oh, I'd love to see that.

PG: Yeah, if I could find it I can send it to you. And in between we'd do these—these little songs. But there were things about pulling the covers up and down and [laughter]—

DF: And you had no clue what you were really talking about.



PG: No. [laughs] And Pete—I think Pete and Tony may have had some clue as to what they were talking about. I think most of this dialogue was theirs. But I mean, they were—they were fun shows to do.

DF: You'd practice for days?

PG: We'd practice for several days and pull this thing off and put it on one night for the—Granddad and whoever else might be there. And it was the Maddens who pretty much organized this and George would—would play.

DF: Where literally did the play take—

PG: In Mostley Hall, in the living room of Mostley Hall. We used to play a hide-and-seek game there where one person would hide and everybody would look. And when you found the person you'd hide with them—

DF: Oh, okay.

PG: —until suddenly, you know, there'd be one lone soul trying to find everybody. You'd hide in a closet or you could even hide in the fireplace. There was a huge fireplace with a screen in front. And, you know, unless you knew to look in there, when there was only a couple people they didn't show up very well. I remember—I had to have been very, very small. This was a long time back but my mother's generation talks about the house parties they used to have with college friends in Mostley Hall. It must have been, like, vacation times. They'd come down there and the house had these two dormitories, one for boys, one for girls, with these rooms in between that were for the adults—[chuckles] keep them apart. And Mom used to talk about these dorm raids where, you know, the girls would put on bathing suits, put cold cream all over them so the guys couldn't hold onto

them. And they go and try and raid the boys' dorm. What "raided" meant, I'm not sure. [laughs]

DF: Yeah.

PG: And, you know, Skipper would let this stuff go on. I remember—and this one I remember. In one of these raids one of the beds in one of the dormitories got broken—I mean, badly broken, like into smithereens. And whoever's bed it was, I think was somebody who hadn't—was new to the farm. And they had a funeral for this bed. And I remember the funeral. [chuckles]

DF: So this is in your time. [chuckles]

PG: But I was very small.

DF: Right.

PG: I mean, I had to have been probably—

DF: Late '30s or something.

PG: Yeah, late '30s maybe. They broke this bed up into little pieces of wood, put it in a great big kind of industrial laundry cart, which they had there, covered it over with a black [unclear] and a wreath and a sword. And my dad wrote this poem about "Poor Betty Wood, mourned by us all, scuttled by Jim when he had a great fall." And they staged this funeral for this bed and made the guy burn it in the fireplace. [laughs] And I can—I can still see this cart full of this bed covered up with this black thing. But it's the kind of crazy fun things that went on down there.

DF: I mean, that's—what it sounds like that it was just good times.

PG: We just—it was.

DF: And there was always scores of you? I mean, typically there'd be five to 20 kids there or something?

PG: I don't know there were ever as many 20—as 20 but there were certainly 10 to—10 or so, even just myself and my sister. My brother was—my brother was only one years old at—sort of at the end of the farm years. But—and with the Lyons—there were like seven or eight of us to start with and then—

DF: Yeah, right. Right, that's just the core group. Now, you said—you— basically, when school got out—

PG: We went down—

DF: —soon thereafter, you were there.

PG: Right, basically spent the summer down there. My dad commuted to Washington.

DF: Oh, okay. So he was there too.

PG: He'd come on weekends.

DF: But he would just come for the weekend.

PG: He'd come back on weekends. Yeah.

DF: Yeah.

: Now, he was in some sort of aeronautic, commerce group?

PG: Right, it was like a trade association for small plane manufacturers. Eventually, he was president of that association.

DF: That was his job?

PG: That was his job.

DF: Right.

PG: Yeah.

DF: So this is the '40s. Right? That's what you're saying? This is in the late '40s.

PG: This is late '40s, yeah. And '50, '51, probably was the last summer.

DF: Or even after—after J.J.R. died.

PG: I think the summer after—I think we were still down there because the farm hadn't been broken up yet. Then when the farm was sold to the Funkhausers eventually our family bought back a couple acres of it that—on which was the original house that had—had been there. Coate Cottage, it was called.

DF: Mm-hmm, so you kept going.

PG: And we kept going back down there for the summer—in the summer.

: Is that still in the family or—

PG: No, eventually my family gave it to the Jesuits at Georgetown.

: Oh, right.

PG: And they use it as a sort of get-away place—

: And they still—

PG: —for people. They still have it, yeah.

: That's nice.

PG: I think probably we kept it until maybe the early '60s, thereabouts. I think my—I mean, I have vivid recollections of the farm. My sister has very vague recollections of it. My brother doesn't remember, you know, Hartfeld and Mostley Hall at all. He remembers Coate Cottage but—

DF: Yeah.

PG: But my sister and brother's interests weren't—I liked to sail. In fact, my Granddad gave me a sailboat—

DF: Oh.

PG: —when I was maybe 13. My sister was into horses. [chuckles] And I don't know what my brother was into but—

DF: But then you said there's several years' difference.

PG: Yes.

- DF: So you had a sailboat. And who taught you to sail? Corcoran?
- PG: No. Because after—the years when we went back to the farm after the war he was west with Skipper.
- DF: So who taught you how to sail?
- PG: Aunt Pat—Uncle—actually, Aunt Pat, some. Bill Lyon taught me more.
- DF: Hmm, he could sail.
- PG: He taught me to race. And we used to—it was a Comet, which is a 16-foot sleuth.
- DF: Nice.
- PG: He actually gave one to Pete and Tony as well but they basically weren't—weren't there much in the summer. But through my teen years I used to race in the Regattas all over the Chesapeake Bay area.
- DF: So that's what you mainly did during those summers. You were on your—on the Comet.
- PG: I was on the Comet or swimming. At that point, the jack of the farm was a man named John Livingood who's—
- : Great name.
- PG: —now, my father's—my brother's dentist. [laughs]
- DF: Oh, so he was a young man yet—
- PG: He was a young man.
- DF: —to find his profession.
- PG: Right, yeah. And he basically took care of the wharf and lifeguarded for us. We swam everyday for an hour and a half in the morning, an hour and a half in the afternoon. And other than that, that was sort of—there were set times for that. Other than that, we—

DF: When you say swim, you're playing in the water or you mean you're—

PG: We're playing in the water.

DF: Oh.

PG: No, we played in the water.

DF: And he's watching.

PG: Yeah. I mean, down the slide, off the diving board.

DF: It's the late '40s. Did your grandfather ever come down to the water?

PG: Oh, yeah. And he would swim.

DF: He would swim?

PG: When he was there on the weekends, he'd come down with his friends. They'd swim.

DF: They—again, did he literally swim or were they just sort of padding about in the water?

PG: No, he literally would swim. I mean, because we weren't in shallow water. We were off the end of the pier so it was over our heads.

DF: Was he a good swimmer; do you remember?

PG: I don't think he was an outstanding swimmer. But he certainly—

DF: Breaststroke?

PG: He would get in and swim some. I mean, we—we went nonstop for an hour-and-a-half twice a day. [chuckles]

DF: You must have been very fit.

PG: Was at that point.

DF: I mean, my goodness! And then sail.

PG: Yeah, but, you know, we would canoe; we would swim. We did archery. There was an archery thing down there.

: It was a summer camp.

DF: Yeah.

PG: It was a summer camp.

DF: It sounds like so much fun. Wish I could go. [chuckles]

PG: Played croquet. Croquet is another game that Granddad loved.

DF: Oh, really?

PG: Croquet and horseshoes, we used to play with him down there.

DF: Was he competitive when he played? Did he want to win?

PG: Oh, yeah. I think he wanted to win. [laughter]

DF: When he hit the croquet ball—I mean, if he hit somebody else, was he knocking—

PG: He'd knock you. [laughter] And it was a game both adults and kids could play so—

DF: It's perfect. So a lot of times in the early evening you'd all be out there, kids and adults?

PG: Or some of the—some of the kids. Maybe not—you know, part of what happened down there, you know, the kids were in one house, the adults are in the other. I mean, sometimes some of the kids would—I think, would go up there, like, for breakfast on Sunday or something after mass. Some of us might go up there, not usually the whole crew.

DF: Mm-hmm. You weren't in that house very often, in other words.

PG: Not too much in the summers. If we were down there in the wintertime for a vaca—you know, off—not summer times, we'd—we stayed at Hartfeld House.

: It mostly would have been winter [unclear]—

PG: We'd kind of closed up.

: —closed down.

PG: Right, yeah.

DF: Were you ever there at Christmas time?

PG: I don't remember being there at Christmas. I know we were there some—probably some New Years. I mean, I remember New Years in the apartment in New York.

DF: Oh.

PG: Because I can remember listening—just, I don't remember doing anything special. I can remember hearing the whistles and the bells and stuff in the city. I—Christmas, pretty much, we always spent at home. You know, we may have gone sometime during the holidays.

DF: Did you spend any holidays with your grandparents, or just your grandfather? Like Thanksgiving or something like that?

PG: Not that I specifically remember. I wouldn't be surprised if we—Thanksgiving, we might have.

DF: But it doesn't stand out.

PG: It doesn't stand out. I think we tended to—I mean, Easters we tended to spend with the Geuting side of the family.

DF: I'm sure.

PG: We often went to my aunt's. Christmas we pretty much spent our Christmases at home.

DF: Did you get any presents from your grandfather that you remember, Christmas gifts?

PG: I got—yes, I got dolls ad infinitum. I don't think he knew what to give little girls. [laughs]

DF: So you did—maybe somebody went out and got a doll.

PG: I think so. [laughter] I got dolls and I wasn't into dolls particularly.

DF: So it was not really well matched.

PG: No.



DF: The Comet was well matched to you.

PG: Right, the Comet was well matched to me.

DF: The big gift.

PG: Yeah, that was—that was—that was fun.

: Did you remember the story, David, that Charley told us about being chased around the dormitory at Mostley Hall by—

PG: By my mother.

: Yeah. [chuckles]

PG: I mean, she and Aunt Nina sort of ruled the roost down there. And, I mean, Mom, I think—you know, Mom, to me was—she had the Raskob spirit of—I mean, she was very independent woman who, because of the health issues, I mean, I think was sort of like a bird with a clipped wing. And, you know, she—she would do some pretty nervy things or some sort of crazy things periodically. I can remember once—it was years later but up here, when Dana was—they lived in a converted barn at one point. When they were doing over that house there was this very narrow walkway that went out over this open space where they were doing some construction work. And Mom went tootling right out onto that thing. And we were all nervous wrecks because at that point she wasn't—she was getting a little unsteady.

DF: Oh, boy!

PG: [chuckles] But she didn't—I mean, if you argued with her she—it was like daring her to do more.

DF: Sounds like your grandfather.

PG: Yeah. She climbed up into the—like, the radio, television tower on top of the Empire State.

: Oh! [chuckles]

DF: Just for the thrill of it.

PG: Just for the thrill of it. [chuckles] But—

DF: That's great.

PG: And yet, you know, she had these spells, these petit mal spells, which I heard various stories as to what caused them, not dead sure. It was some sort of accident she had as a child. I've heard she fell off a horse. I've heard that --

PG: —that she fell down the stairs at Archmere. I don't know which is—

DF: But before that she did not have these.

PG: As far as I know, she didn't.

DF: But there was some injury that caused it.

PG: There was some injury. And because of that, you know, people worried about her all—all her life. And she was rarely able to be totally alone. They always wanted—

DF: Oh, really?

PG: —somebody—I mean, Roz told me this. I don't know if it's true or not but there was—there's always been a kind of tension between my mother and Betty, who's her next youngest sibling. And Roz says that her mother told her she sort of—that her mother kind of had to keep an eye on Mom when they were kids and that I think she resented that a little bit.

DF: Yeah, we did hear that.

PG: Yeah.

DF: Yeah.

: You don't have any sort of—you know, you don't have any sort of feeling about from your mother's side if that was the case, or it just wasn't something you ever talked about?

PG: We never much talked about it.

: Right.

PG: I mean, when we lived on Manhasset on Long Island Roz also was in Manhasset.

DF: That's right.

PG: And so they were fairly close together. I mean, Roz and I saw a fair amount of each other but I don't remember our families being together a whole lot.

DF: They're very far apart too, right?

PG: Well, no. I'm saying we both lived in Manhasset. We were—we were probably within walking distance. I mean, a slightly long walk but—

DF: I was just [unclear] that a little bit. Your mother was close to your grandfather.

PG: Yes.

DF: And how do you know that?

PG: Well, I know it partly because he did a lot of things—she's the one that got invited to [unclear]. We spent—we spent a lot of time in New York with him. Now, Roz also lived in New York for awhile when Granddad was there. Nina did too in the same apartment building—

DF: Right.

PG: —at one point. But, I mean, I'm the one that has stories of him taking us—you know, going to the theater with him and whatnot. I don't think Roz does.

DF: So that—

PG: And she's not that much younger than I am so it's—and, I mean, Mom talked—she talked about Granddad a lot. She didn't talk that much about Skipper.

DF: Yeah, interesting, huh?

PG: It was a different—I mean, it was a different kind of relationship and she—she's the one who would say, "You know, as long as you don't cross him, he's" [laughs]—

DF: Right, that's so great.

PG: — "he's fine." And I think it's just seeing them, seeing as much of him as I did and the amount of time that we spent together at the farm or in New York—

DF: Yeah.

PG: —says it to me, they were close.

DF: That's pretty good evidence.

PG: Yeah. But Mom's spells, they—I mean, I have different recollections of them at different times growing up. When I was very small my recollection is of her having these, what I used to call, sick headaches. I think she might have had migraines, like migraines now is what I think. But I think as medicine improved and they were better controlled—and she until very late in her life, if she was going to have one of these spells, she knew it was coming on. So, like, it never kept her from driving. She would—she would drive. She carpooled us when we were in school and, if she knew this was going to happen, she'd just pull over.

DF: And it wouldn't last very long.

PG: No, they only lasted, like, a minute.

DF: Was it scary for you as a kid?

PG: Not—it was scary for other people; I think it wasn't scary for me because I'd grown up with it. And—

DF: Yeah.

PG: Because she always carried smelling salts. And she would just say to me, "Get my smelling salts." And I learned, just as she started to get woozy you'd reach in her purse, get her smelling salts and she'd come right back.

DF: Yeah.

PG: Very late in her—in her life she—I mean, I never—I never saw this but the people who were taking care of her would say that she had got to a point where she didn't know they were coming on and she fell a couple times.

DF: Yeah.

PG: So something—you know, something changed but—

DF: Until the end she was able to basically control it in the sense that—

PG: Yes.

DF: —she knew what was happening; she knew what to do about it.

PG: Right, yeah.

DF: And so did you.

PG: And so did I. And it didn't last long but it did—it was scary for other people.

DF: Right.

PG: You know, other people would get—would be much more worried than I was when they would see it happen.

: It almost seems to me that, you know, the condition, whatever it was, was also involved in her sort of—she was more uninhibited sort of in that sort of family context.

PG: Yeah, I think so and she—I mean, she was very much a family person. Her life was really wrapped up in our family. And she's the one who kept—for years, kept the family records.

DF: Yeah, that's great.

PG: And she kept birth dates and she kept—people used to call her with the birth dates of their kids and the marriage dates.

DF: Oh, so she—

PG: She kept the records, which now the foundation is keeping.

DF: Yeah.

PG: For years, she did it.

DF: She was Lisa.

PG: She was Lisa, yeah. [laughter]

DF: A little more. That's great.

PG: But I know when—after Dad died when she first moved to Wilmington into this apartment, I think it may have been the first time in her life that she was able to sort of live totally independently.

DF: Wow! Amazing.

PG: And I also remember when she moved—I mean, she had tons of stuff and we were moving out of a big house into a—it was a fairly large apartment, but still. And she went out and bought some more china. And I remember the three of us kids were sort of mad at her for doing that. “Why are you doing this? You've got all this stuff?” And I think it was a way of her saying, “I want to do my own thing. I can finally—finally have a chance to do my own thing.” And for a long

time she—she was able to live by herself here in Wilmington. I mean, people kept an eye on her.

DF: That's marvelous.

PG: My father's sister-in-law—my father's brother and his wife lived in Wilmington and they were very good to her. But she—I mean, she had a car; she was driving for a number of years here. Eventually, you know, I think—maybe the spells got a little where she was getting older and people didn't want her to be alone. And so she eventually had people with her all the time but Dana Robinson and Kathy Smith were wonderful to her.

DF: They'd visit with her too.

PG: Yeah, I was in St. Louis.

DF: Oh, I see.

PG: Too far away and Tom would—Tom came up periodically to see her. My sister didn't do it that much.

DF: Good.

PG: But—

DF: Any other areas we should talk about? Any other memories?

PG: I don't know. One of you at some point was asking about Weir, what I knew about Weir.

: That was me, yeah, because—

DF: Yeah, tell us.

PG: I mean, I don't know a lot except she—at Archmere, I mean, they had these—they were sort of nanny nurses, I think. And Weir was really the one for the youngest kids. Patsy, Bill and Ben are the ones who are really, really close to Weir. But I knew her sort of as the family nurse, that if you needed something she's the one who would come.

And I know if Mom was—was sick or they were worried about her, sometimes Weir would come. I had an appendectomy in New York City in 1947 and Weir came and took care of me. You know, I remember her coming and—

: That was my curiosity, was that I knew her as a nanny, as a governess, I guess. But then, even as the children became adults and lived—

PG: Right.

: —independent lives, they're still—

PG: Still calling on Weir.

: She basically is actually sending in receipts for attendance on—

PG: Right.

: —[unclear] of the children.

PG: Right.

: And the grandchildren. So she just was—

PG: She was like on call, I think. [laughter]

DF: Yeah.

PG: You know, I remember her well; she was a great person.

: Oh, really?

PG: Yeah.

DF: Single woman?

PG: No, she was married. Her husband was a doctor.

DF: Oh, really?

PG: I think when—I don't know when they married. I mean, I think when she was being a nanny at Archmere maybe she wasn't married yet.

DF: She was probably very young, in her early 20s or something.

PG: Could be.

: She was white or African American?



PG: African American. And I think that then the one who was nanny when—in Mom’s time more was a woman named Carney, Helen Carney.

: Yes. She was—

DF: This is way back.

: —more specifically kind of—

PG: Who was white.

: —Yvonne’s—she was white. Right.

PG: Yeah.

: She was more sort of Yvonne’s nurse—

PG: Yeah.

: —for a long time. Yvonne’s sort of companion.

PG: And I remember her too when I first—when I was first starting graduate school at Fordham in New York and I didn’t have any place to stay yet. I lived with—I lived in her apartment for a little bit.

DF: Interesting. So she was still connected to the family.

PG: She was still connected to the family. “Skinny,” we called her. [chuckles] She was called Skinny. She was; she was tiny.

: Yeah, because she must have been—

PG: She was pretty old by then, I think, yeah.

: Right, but she was sort of Yvonne’s age or thereabouts.

PG: And Yvonne died about a month after I was born. So I think maybe after she was married, I don’t know whether Weir—she never had any children of her own, I don’t think. And her husband was a doctor. So I don’t know if she—because she seemed to be able to come if you needed her.

: Yeah.

PG: She must not have been working or at least not working fulltime.

DF: That's sounds like—

PG: Yeah.

: And she also went to sort of distant places. It wasn't—she didn't just—

DF: No.

PG: Right.

DF: She traveled wherever the need was.

: —[unclear] on call in the metropolitan area, right.

PG: Right, yeah.

: She went to far-away places.

DF: Isn't that interesting? She maintained this relationship.

PG: Right. Yeah, she was like part of the family.

: Yeah, that's what it sounds like.

PG: And I remember going to—I don't know, it might have been a 75<sup>th</sup> or an 80<sup>th</sup> birthday party that they organized. She lived in Camden at that point—that Patsy, Boo and Ben, I think, had organized.

DF: And actually, they stayed very close.

PG: They stayed very close to her, yeah.

DF: That's fascinating.

PG: And I can remember going to that birthday party, which was in the—I mean, we were—it was after—it was in the '70s.

DF: Yeah.

PG: Because I was out of the habit at that point.

: Is it Lil—give me her first name. Is it Lillian Weir or—

PG: I think it is. I think Lillian Jones. Jones is her name. I don't know where the Weir comes from.

DF: Oh. [chuckles]

: Oh.

PG: I mean, I don't know if it's a nickname.

DF: It might be her name before she got married?

PG: That's—yeah, that's possible.

DF: That's her last name, I thought.

: Yeah—

PG: That could be, yeah.

DF: Unless it's a nickname; we'll figure that out.

PG: No, it could be because her married name is Jones.

DF: I bet you that's it.

PG: Probably was. Yeah, but everybody called her Weir.

DF: Always?

PG: Yeah.

DF: Well, this is great. Anything else that we missed?

: I don't know if—I mean, of course, you may not know this because it's—you know, we're talking about the '40s and it's kind of the males' sphere. But do you know anything about your father and John Raskob's kind of business connection?

PG: I don't. You know, growing up, I had—I still don't have a whole lot of sense of Granddad's—sort of the business, public side of his life.

DF: Obviously, it never came up when you were around him.

PG: No. I mean, or if it did I didn't—I wasn't into it, you know. I was a kid and I knew him—I knew him totally differently.

DF: That's what we figured, yeah.

PG: I mean, I knew he was responsible for building the Empire State and—

DF: Did you visit the Empire State Building with him?

PG: Yes, yeah. I mean, I remember going to his offices in the Empire State.

DF: Oh, gosh. Do you remember what the office looked like?

PG: It was—you know, it was—they were formal offices with leather furniture. It was more than one room. It was a couple of rooms, fairly good size. I mean, the portrait of all the kids—I mean, that one portrait that they're all in was on the wall of one of the rooms so they weren't tiny rooms. It was, I think, the 80<sup>th</sup> floor on the Empire State.

DF: And did you go up to the club, The Empire State Club?

PG: I don't remember the club. I remember often going up to the—to the top and to the—into the—I guess it's the 85<sup>th</sup> floor that was the landing.

DF: Yeah.

PG: But, I mean, I don't—

DF: That's helped a little.

PG: There's a couple pictures in this book somewhere that are taken in that office.

DF: Why don't we—why don't we take a look—quick look at some of the pictures and see if it—anything we can talk about or need explaining.

: Okay.

DF: Is that okay?

: Yeah.

DF: Yeah, turn it off for a minute and we'll try that.

End of Interview