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Iron Hill School Oral History Interview  
Interview with Noble W. Prettyman

Roberta: This is Roberta Perkins. Today's date is Wednesday, February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2007 and I am here at Mr. Noble Prettyman's home here in Milton, Delaware, to interview him as to his experience going to a 2 room schoolhouse that was built by P.S. duPont and while Mr. Prettyman did not attend Iron Hill we feel he will have valuable information to share with us, his experiences, and give us a view point of what it is like going to one of the duPont schools. Thank you Mr. Prettyman.

Mr. Prettyman: I am Noble Prettyman, I live at 323 Mulberry Street, Milton, Delaware. I am a native of Milton. I was born in a home on Mulberry Street on April 23, 1945 to James and Catherine A. Prettyman. I am the youngest son. I have 3 older brothers, James Anthony, William Joseph and John Bernard. We all grew up here in Milton and we all attended the 196C elementary school. My first grade teacher was Miss Ann White, she is a Henry now. I had her for the first 3 years and then for the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade I had Miss Viola Piper. Looking back over it, it amazes me to this very day how the teachers were able to teach 3 grades with no aides, no para-professionals and the classrooms were orderly. The kids were orderly and we learned unbelievable and everybody just was the same. There was nobody that as we see it today, you see this kid is better than this one or this one wore fancy clothes, we all kind of wore the same starched clothes and khaki pants and things to school. There was no really dress codes. The teachers were unbelievable at that time because I know Miss White when I was in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade math was a terrible thing, memorizing those time cards, flash cards that we had to do for math and subtraction cards and everything and Miss White, she would just send a note home if one of the students was going by my home and tells them to tell Miss Catherine that Noble is going to be staying after school. I am going to be helping him with his time tables and she stayed there with me.

At that time she didn't have a car so she walked home but she would walk me home and then she would walk home herself and she lived over on the other side of town and for several years she did that. Well for the first couple years I know she did it but that's the way they were. They told us all we could do anything that we wanted to. We had this self esteem that we could go anywhere and be anything even I remember I was telling Miss. Piper one time, and I loved her dearly, and I was being my goofy kid self. She said, "well what do you want to be Noble when you grow up?" I said, "well Miss. Piper I want to be a fool." She said, "okay well if you want to be a fool you are going to be able to read and write and do such and such but you will be the best fool." She didn't say I couldn't be a fool but she made sure that I was going to have everything I needed to be that fool and everything. Luckily I matured and grew up, I was in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade then and I matured and grew up then because by them allowing us to be creative, allowing us to think and not try to mold us into what they wanted. They allowed us to be just who we were. As we needed help to get over different hurdles and bridges they were there for us and they made sure that we understood and we got it. I mean they gave us you know just like if you couldn't sing and you knew you couldn't sing and you were out of tune they made it like – you can sing, you just go ahead and you know it's loud but go ahead. So you fit in, your mouth was moving but – that gave you more and more self esteem that you could do things and I guess Miss. Piper saw in me this debating person that likes to debate and everything, and everything that came up, especially in history, I wanted to debate it left and right and so she just took me underneath her arms and kind of started debating. She and I became the very best of friends. Even 5 years before she died, this is really weird, but 5 years before she died she had done her obituary and everything and she had put my name down to be a pallbearer and everything and the lady came up to me and she said Miss. Piper did this 5 years ago but she said Noble if you don't want to, I said no, if Miss. Piper put me down there I am going to be there and she knew I was going to be there so you know there you were you know but she still had control over my life after I left 196C and went to Jason so I would see her and I

would go visit her and everything and stop and let her know where my career was going and then when I went into the military I wrote her and sent her cards and everything because she was really an influence on my life. My family, my brothers and I we grew up different than most children in the area because my mother and father, they taught school up in Frederica there and that's how Bernard ended up being a Young. They taught school at Frederica. My father's mother was the first colored teacher of any knowledge here in Sussex County, here in Milton and so as I came back home and everything, after several years I got involved with our Historical Society and there was a lady, Mary Morgan, she used to introduce me to people in the different communities as being a part of the first family. I couldn't understand – what is she talking about? The first family? Then one day she said well your grandfather was the first colored businessman because he built his ice house on the mill pond in 1897. His wife was the first colored teacher here in the community so that makes you the first family of business and you are the first family, the first colored family. I said, "Miss Morgan I don't want all that on me because I am goofy." I said, "I am so glad that I moved away while I was real crazy and radical." She laughed but getting back with Miss. Piper, going to school, and you know one thing that I don't understand is that when I went to school here, the 2 room school in the September, October, early November our classrooms were crowded because at that time we had migrant children, families here working in the fields. Well they had to go to school. Well they came to school. I mean I can remember sitting on desks, sitting up here, the rooms were crowded but they were orderly. There was no disrespect. Nobody yelling and everything and although Miss. Piper, she could pick up a piece of chalk and hit you in the forehead and then make you pick it up and bring it back to her. Well I don't remember if I got hit, I'm not going to go there but I can remember that. We learned and the things that I had learned in the 2 room elementary school has carried me through. I graduated from Livingston College in Salisbury, North Carolina, with a BA in secondary education. I then went in the military, I was drafted and then I came out, I got a BA in Criminal Law and Justice from Glassboro State

College and then I furthered my education experience at Glassboro and got certified as a special ed teacher. Later down through the years as money became available I went to Rutgers University and I got my Masters Degree.

Roberta: Glassboro, in New Jersey?

Mr. Prettyman: Yes, it's Roland State College now but Glassboro, New Jersey. Then I went to Rutgers University to get my Masters in psychology. I became after doing all this I became Residential Director for a private school for retarded children for a little over 18 years. Then my mother got ill and I was running up and down the road so I gave up my career to come home and take care of her and to do something that I never dreamt I would ever do but I worked at Draper King Coal for \$5.50 an hour after living in a mansion where the institution bought my car for me every year. I had a cook, groundskeeper, a guy to take the car out, wash it and bring it back to you and then I gave it up to come home and take care of my mother because my mother was my best friend and my brothers don't deal well with sickness so I was the one and it worked out fine. We had a good time taking care of her. She was a great patient. Then after my mother passed away I found out Daddy didn't know anything. The man was 70 some years old and he would ask me, "Noble do you know what size underwear I wear?" Because my mother had done it all. He'd bring the money home and she stretched the money and made it go for the kids and everything. I got him straightened out and then I had an opportunity to work for the government as an inspector and I went out to Indiana and I worked out there for several years. I moved back here in the year 2000 and I applied for a position with the group homes as a supervisor overseeing the group homes here in Sussex County. I did it for about a year and then I got sick.

Roberta: What was the name of the group home again?

Mr. Prettyman: Fellowship. I did that and then I got sick about a year after that and I was at my doctor's office and he told me I would never be able to work again and so I went through my depression and all that crazy thing that we go through and then one day I just said to myself they said hey you can't do that, they say you can't do this – I'll show 'em. I ran for Town Council. I got onto the Town Council. I

ran for the Cape Henlopen School Board and I am on the Cape Henlopen School Board. I hold 2 electoral seats. I am secretary to the advocate for people with mental illness for the state of Delaware. I am the person I guess right now people in this area in Sussex County I mean I have a lady over on the western side of the county, I know nothing about her. I mean she called me, "Mr. Prettyman can you, I am going to be running for County Council, I mean City Council, can you give me some idea of it and everything?" So I coached her and told her what she had to do and prepare herself and getting her committees together and everything and then people will call me because they need money for electric or they need this so I am like an information center. If I don't know it I will tell them point blank I don't know but in 48 hours I will have an answer for you because I have enough contacts out there that I can find out where I need to be and everything so I guess being sick was the best thing for me or having this because I am now able to be an advocate for people and also to be able to help people. Just like when this prescription thing came up for everybody people didn't know how to go about doing it and everything but I had done it for myself with the new prescription plan and then I did it for another old lady, I shouldn't say an old lady I'm sorry, I did it for her and then she got on the phone and she said well you should call Noble, Noble came over here and sat down and he took information from me and I didn't have to say a word and he took care of it. He just sat there on the phone and waited for them and waited and everything and I just went on about my business. Then it came that everybody was calling me so but I got them, the medicines and stuff, and took all that stress off of them and everything. I am pretty lucky and I live in a community that for some reason they love me. I don't drive any more and people because of right now hopefully will get back to driving but the medicine makes me lightheaded and everything because I am waiting for a heart transplant. Last March I went into the hospital at Beebe with congestive heart failure and then they lost me on Good Friday, they had to get the crash cart out and then I ended up, I went in like the 12<sup>th</sup> of March and I didn't get back home until the 25<sup>th</sup> of April. I ended up going to Johns Hopkins. They had shipped me to John Hopkins to put a

defibrillator in and then I came home and then things got bad. After I got home I had blood clots on the lungs and I had to go back in and then when I thought everything was good and everything was great and everything – it never happens with Noble – I went to Johns Hopkins for a check up and the doctor I was seeing today he said when I walked in, “oh Mr. Prettyman you are staying.” I said, “why?” He said, “you either stay or you will be dead by the end of the week.” And I knew that the food I was eating didn’t taste right and my belly was really big and hard. I had, they took out of me, 35 pounds of fluid. It was going all over the place. My heart is enlarged and it is so weak it wouldn’t do and now we find out I can not drink water because my body likes water and it will just store it, it will not, even with Lasix it will not go through my system so I can not drink water. I have to drink organic juices and things. I didn’t find out until later back when I first got sick they gave me 6 to 8 months to live. That was in 2001 and I’m still here.

Roberta: You look great.

Mr. Prettyman: People tell me oh you should stay home, you should get out of this and everything and I tried to encourage it. That’s one thing that I am doing because I came from moderate family. We weren’t poor but we weren’t wealthy because I didn’t have any new clothes, ever, until I got out of high school. I think I got a suit when I graduated from high school because my brothers were bigger than I was. I was the runt so my mother, being a home ec teacher, she just cut all my brothers clothes down and re-made them for me so it looked like I had a lot of clothes but none of them were new Mom knew how to do that and everything see I think that’s one thing that was really neat back then because you know. Parents, even if its community Mom would know if you didn’t have food or your food was low or something or found out that you needed something she would just make a big pot of soup and she would take it and just sit it on your back stoop and everything and when you came in you picked it up and you took it and nobody said anything and when you would home the pot would be 2 or 3 days later, back at your home, and you know people then were more caring and everything even though I did have the opportunity to grow up here in the

community with the Ku Klux Klan. They burnt crosses in our yards. I guess I was 6 or 7 when I first realized who these people were out there burning crosses. My Mom just got us all into her bedroom and she said, "don't worry, they have to do this." Because they were doing it to other colored families so they had to do it to us even though my father was in business and they were coming to him to get their ice because they didn't have refrigerators, they had iceboxes. So they were no better, at least we had a refrigerator, the iceman had a refrigerator but they didn't. But they burnt crosses and they did that for oh several years but it didn't bother. Also growing up here there is a theater downtown, the Milton Theater, well our neighbor behind us, Bob, a white guy, he would walk us to the theater and he would go downstairs and sit downstairs at the movie and we would go upstairs in the balcony and sit because it was separation and to this day it seems to bother a lot of people that the segregation was here and the way we were treated and everything but we were Prettymans and we were treated a little different per se, because we were from that prestigious family of Handy Prettymans who built the icehouse. Handy Prettyman who bought up half of Chestnut Street during the Depression and let the white folks keep their homes and then sold it back to them at a profit and everything so they didn't lose it so we were like even though they had to burn the crosses in our you know. There was a sub shop, Norma's Sub Shop, at that time we didn't eat in sub shops anyhow that much because Mom cooked all the time but the migrants they would have to go in, order their food and pay for it and then go outside and wait for it and they would bring it out and give it to them. I did not realize how racist that place was until 1983. That was when I came home to take care of my mother. I knew everybody in there you know, the couple behind the counter lived next door to my Dad's icehouse and I was sitting on the stool talking to Betty, yadda, yadda, talking to Betty and Betty was talking to me and this black guy came up and tapped me on the shoulder and he said, "you can't sit down in here." I said "do what?" I said, "I don't know what you are talking about, this is Betty." And I just went on talking. I went home and said something to Mom about it and she said they are letting you in there and sitting down but they really

don't like it. I said, "it's 1983 Mom I said these people are its just as crazy as ever, they're just as crazy as if it was 1956." Others had the problems and the struggles of it and the worst part was and I was not a part of it, it was integration. Integration ruined, well the colored, they were still using colored then, this is something about history that really annoys me because like I tell you I rattle and you just have to deal with my rattling. I used to speak and do a speech for schools and things when we were "colored/negros." There are several teachers out here, young teachers, that have never heard the word Negro. It's African-American in their lives. I try to tell history and when people write history and when somebody wrote something about my grandmother and called her African-American. I said the woman was far more no African-American than ever because she was high yellow and she was mixed with the Carolina Indians and whatever so if you saw her walk down the street you would think she was a white woman. She would tell you "colored." My dad died at the age of 90 and you talked about "black" to him, he would turn around and say "colored." Because to call him "black" is to call him a "nigger." That's how he looked at it because that's how the white man – you blackie, you nigger, and that's how and Dad never let go of being colored. He would correct you in a heartbeat. Integration – it ruined our students because the teachers do not care about minority students at all. I sit on the school board and I just see all the dismal – I go into a school, there's a school across the street from me and I visit it because up until this year I am waiting for a heart transplant and they don't want me to get any colds or anything so the school is just noting but filled up with bacteria so I don't venture but the last couple of years I have been spending 3 days a week, 3 hours a day mentoring and I would be there and a little white kid would knock a book on the floor and it would make a loud noise and nothing was done. A little colored kid scraped his chair – you go to the office. I said excuse me did I see you out in the hallway so you can go to school here in the Cape May School District, there are African-American students there now and never see another teacher that looked like them and I asked about that at a Board Meeting and one of the superintendents, not the present one, Dr. Vandenberger

said there is nothing for African-Americans to do here that's why we can't get them. I said Dr. Vandenberg I said you must have so much red on the back of your neck that a chisel wouldn't get it off and the rest of the Board looked at me and I said I don't know what you are thinking. First of all we go to operas, we go to plays, theaters, we like to go to the casinos, we like fine restaurants. I said you are so stereotyping thinking that we are going in the back sheds and doing finger popping and popping and everything. I said here in Delaware they can go to Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, New York and come back on the same day and not have the expenses of a hotel. I said all that sells. I said I don't know where you all are coming from but just everything...so they all kind of put their heads down and everything but see I just said what I think, I say it and that's it. I don't carry luggage.

Roberta: Let me ask you this question, is it Cape?

Mr. Prettyman: Henlopen. H-e-n-l-o-p-e-n.

Roberta: That's the other thing that I enjoy about even going to different parts of Delaware. There are different pronunciations from what I've learned. I love it. Anyway, go ahead.

Mr. Prettyman: When I was in Johns Hopkins most of those doctors there thought I was from Bermuda. I said, southern Delaware, that's it. With the integration I heard some of the terrible things that happened to the kids here in Milton as far as going into the white school for the first time. Being told that they can not be teachers. Being told that they can not be doctors. Being told that they can not be when they were told all along, they can be anything. They were told and all of a sudden their world started to crush and then their self esteem started to come down. Teachers don't understand and that's one thing that I have done with the Vice Principal over here. I said you don't understand. I said some of these children when they come in here in the morning they have seen their mother or their sister with 2 or 3 men. They've seen them drugged up or beaten and they are the ones that get themselves up to school because they know they are going to get a warm meal and I said all you have to do is kind of pat them on the shoulder and say good morning – you look good or your hair looks nice. That's

all. That's going to take them all the way and its going to build them up and its going to be better. No you all just walk in and look like Gestapo's there, you can't smile and all this. I said you don't know. I said there was one kid that came to school here and he had, it was like he was out for 2 days and nobody really knew and I didn't know it at the time and then I went to school and I was talking to him and I said you missed school for a couple of days, what's going on? He said my mom's boyfriend killed her a couple of days ago. He watched that. He wasn't getting any counseling until I talked to him, you know. Here you are talking about an 8 year old.

Roberta: Now this is something that happened years ago?

Mr. Prettyman: Yes, you just go through it and how unattached our teachers are because they are hooked on the DST, the Delaware State Test. That's it. I've sat in classrooms where kids have their hands raised and the teacher has their back to them just talking and they never turn around to see because they have got one thing, the test, whether you get it or not, I'm teaching it. I grew up where the teacher made sure you got it. I mean from elementary school when I went to William C. Jason down in Georgetown which is now Del Tech when I went there in 1957. I started there in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade in '57 and graduated in 1963. Those teachers were strict. They were strict. First of all they would paddle you. I mean they've got these wooden paddles and boy if you did, and you didn't want that to get back home. You didn't want some kid to say oh you got a paddling, then when you got back home you got another paddling and another one because your mom and dad. Your mom would give you one, your grandparents would give you one so you know here it was like a whole family. Don't you tell so-and-so, don't you let my mom know I got it, don't you let you know, we didn't want it to be out and everything.

Roberta: It was a real fear wasn't it?

Mr. Prettyman: Fear, yes, because it was a different type of fear. It was a fear of respect and everything and they knew they did wrong where today children when they do wrong their parents come in and start yelling and cursing at the administration and that's one thing on my campaign when I ran for the Cape Henlopen School

Board, I ran on responsibility – the students are responsible – the parents are responsible – Grandmom’s responsible. You are responsible for your behavior and you know what is right and what is wrong and don’t say you don’t and everything. But it’s just one of those things that you know time has changed, are changing and children don’t respect parents. My brother and I, we laugh at Daddy all the time because my Mother had this theory. We had breakfast as a family and you have dinner as a family and at 5 o’clock dinner is on the table. Daddy would play that key till 4:59. We would say Mom, Dad’s not going to be home for dinner. She would say well James is going to be here. We’d say well he is not here and the next thing you know you would hear his truck come squeaking around the corner, he’s there for dinner. We all had dinner together. We talked about what went on in school, we talked this and that and then after dinner we had chores to do. One cleaned dishes, one took the trash out, swept up the kitchen you know, we had things to do and then you did your homework. Today’s children, parents don’t see them from one week to the next because the parents are working 2 jobs to give Johnny something and Johnny can’t even do simple math but he’s got a car, he’s got the fine clothes. We didn’t have all that. Even in high school we didn’t have the pressure of this dressing and wearing all this stuff. You know you were clean. I remember Mrs. Creighton, our school nurse, there was a couple of families because here in Sussex County we went to school at Jason from all over Sussex County all the way over from down to Gumboro, DelMar. There was a couple of families that didn’t have running water and in the morning when they got off the bus Mrs. Creighton would give them a brown paper bag. She had clean clothes in them and they would go down to the gym and take a quick shower and put their clothes on and she would take their clothes home and launder them so they would have them so that they wouldn’t feel you know. Everybody in the school knew what was going on but no one ever said anything about them. My mother did and I guess I did a great thing and I didn’t realize I was doing it. We had to write what we were getting for Christmas one year and I think I was in the 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> grade and there was this family I think there were like 14 or 15 children in the family. So Celestine got

up and said the older children weren't getting anything for Christmas because the younger ones, they were giving it up so the younger ones could get something for Christmas and boy oh boy that just hurt me so bad so I came home and I told Mom about it and the boys were a little larger than I was so Mom knew how to buy clothes and everything so Mom went out and got like a couple of flannel shirts for them and a sweater for each one of the boys and then she got blouses and things for the girls. She went to Roses, I can remember that. So she got it and everything and the last day of school before Christmas I took the 2 shopping bags in to school and I gave them to Celestine so she could take them home. I said Mom wants you all to have these for Christmas gifts. To this day that girl remembers the best Christmas of times. Today she is running the First Academy Beauty School there in Dover. She started out as a beautician and then she got a school and everything so when she sees me or one time when I went in she tells everybody that was the best Christmas and it was something that happened over 40 years ago and she still remembers it. I guess our family is kind of strange because we don't have a whole lot but we've always been able and wanting to help others and I come from that and I want to give back when I came back home I wanted to give back to my community because I was allowed to get out of it and get educated and to do things and then I had all this knowledge that I learned and I wanted to bring it back into the community and you know that's it. My brothers, my one brother John, he get on my nerves because he's so (gagging sound) and everything, he's Dean of a law school, his wife is an attorney and they live in a million or something dollar home and its like I told him one time, he got so mad at me, I was up there in Rhode Island, he was doing something around the house, he and Betty were, I liked Betty better I wish she were my sister and he was my brother-in-law but that's another chapter I said well John I don't know why you are getting all uppity I said you went to an outhouse for the first 14 or 15 years of your life and now you've got this great big house with 6 bathrooms and only 3 people. That doesn't make much sense to me. He got all mad and he said oh I wish you wouldn't bring those things up. I said well you took a bath in a tin tub. You know the tub out here on

the front porch of mine is what we took our bath in on Saturday nights. Yes indeedly. You see.

Roberta: Let me ask you something. This is wonderful. I am getting this picture.

Mr. Prettyman: Now let me go back. This is the first one-room elementary school that they built here in Milton and my grandmother didn't teach there. I don't know if she taught one year there but then she ended up leaving there and then she went to the 2 room school. This is the 2 room school with the dirt road and you can see there is our outhouse and the coal bin.

Roberta: If Laura doesn't have pictures of these can we somehow get permission from you to make copies?

Mr. Prettyman: Yes.

Roberta: Okay.

Mr. Prettyman: Here's Mom-Mom in the middle there, she I think she is "high yellow," from the Indian.

Roberta: And what was her name?

Mr. Prettyman: Effie. E-f-f-i-e Aiken Prettyman. Effie Prettyman. Those are some of the students that were there. The majority of them are gone I think 1 or 2 of them are still living around here.

Roberta: And this was the 2 room schoolhouse?

Mr. Prettyman: Two room school, yes, the 196C two room school. Now this is a power point that I did and I should have made copies because this here is just, it just shows you, you can look through this and maybe you want to turn your mike off while you look through that or if you want to look through it and ask questions as we go. The school was built in 1921 when Mom-Mom took over the school. I have done a lot of work because Brian Page was the Historical Preservation Planner, he and I had did a lot of work on getting information and I gave him information and he helped me on getting the documents and things that I needed for school. As you go through those. This is the school as it was when I went to school there.

- Roberta: I am going to keep it rolling even though people listening can't see what you are talking about you will probably say something that they can relate to and understand.
- Mr. Prettyman: I just showed the comparison, this is when it was the old school when it was first built and then later and then this is the old Milton colored school.
- Roberta: Where was it located?
- Mr. Prettyman: It was located on uhm, ok we call this the Academy. It's the white school. This was the first white school, now it's burnt down but that's what we called the Academy. I don't know why we called it the Academy. ?
- Roberta: The Academy had 2 stories?
- Mr. Prettyman: Yes but they were for whites. As you turn over...
- Roberta: Documents?
- Mr. Prettyman: Down here – this is the kids. Thank God that I was taking the pictures so I don't have to be in them. This here is just showing my family. This is John Peter Parker Prettyman and he was way high up in the Masons and this here is the Milton white school which is still an elementary school now up on Federal Street.
- Roberta: The school that is down the street here from you...
- Mr. Prettyman: Yes HOB that's an elementary school. Again this is the white school and again the students.
- Roberta: This was 1950, the one, the first one in front of the cafeteria, what year was that?
- Mr. Prettyman: They are all around the same time. They are all in the fifties. That's when I was there.
- Roberta: What was that like for you, you personally, now I know you were telling me generally but what was it like for you personally when schools integrated?
- Mr. Prettyman: Well see I wasn't a part of it. I missed all that. I went all through school in all black schools. All 4 years of college were black. Until I went to Glassboro State which is Roland State College now that's when I first sat in a classroom with white students.
- Roberta: So you finished the Milton School in 6<sup>th</sup> grade?

Mr. Prettyman: Yes.

Roberta: And then you went to the William...

Mr. Pretty: C. Jason School.

Roberta: Was it a high school then?

Mr. Prettyman: Yes. William C. Jason went from the 7<sup>th</sup> grade through 12<sup>th</sup> grade because see like here in Milton, Milton and Allendale, they went to 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Lewes, most of them went to 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Lewes and Rehoboth, they went to 7<sup>th</sup> grade and then they came to Jason in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. So depending on...

Roberta: Where you came from...

Mr. Prettyman: Where you came from.

Roberta: You talked about a Miss White and a Miss Piper. Who taught 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup>?

Mr. Prettyman: Miss White taught 1<sup>st</sup>.

Roberta: Okay.

Mr. Prettyman: She's a Henry now. Ann White Henry.

Roberta: And Miss Piper...

Mr. Prettyman: Miss Piper was 6, 7 and 8. No, 4, 5 and 6

Roberta: 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup>? Okay. I kind of thought from the way you were talking that was the case but I wanted to clear that up.

Mr. Prettyman: That's how it was and everything because I had, I was writing one day and I got stuck on something and then I asked Miss White to add up on something because she wrote down all the teachers and where they taught school because after a while what happened, after I moved away and the reason why they built this school here was the enrollment at the 2 room school got so large, it was outrageous. They were teaching over here in the basement of the church, they were teaching out at the American Legion and everything and the teachers, Miss Piper and the Board of Trustees wanted to build a new school for the colored students. Well the white man didn't want that to happen so they decided to do this thing called integration. We'll build a school and all of us will go to school together and that's it because and we all know, Miss Piper well she's deceased and Miss Ann is still alive and everything but we all know that when they went to integration there was such a change in our students because we all graduated

from Jason. Those of us who graduated from William C. Jason when we took our SAT's and we took our other tests and I don't know what they called them back then we scored higher than any other white schools. Here all of our teachers had their Masters Degrees or were working on their Masters Degree, at the white school if you were good in Home Ec you could go ahead and teach and go to school right after high school you could get a job teaching and go home and work the next 6 or 7 years or 8 years whatever it took you, 10 years, to get a degree. We were highly certified. To think of Sussex County and that is one thing that I tried to do when I was talking when we were colored/Negroes is that when we were separate and William C. Jason put out some of the finest students. We are doctors. Okay who would think that an iceman's son would be a business manager of Roger Williams Law School? That's my one brother. My other brother Jimmy, he just retired from Kodak Company and he was an executive at the Kodak Company.

Roberta: What business school again?

Mr. Prettyman: Roger Williams. Joe was the black sheep of the family, Lord knows where that child came from but Mom told him you've got to finish high school and he finished high school and he wanted to be a truck driver so my father put up money and got him a truck and he had a company for a while and everything and he did that. Myself? I was a creative, spoiled brat. I defeated everybody because everything they wanted me to do, felt they wanted me to do, I did the opposite. Mom sent me down to North Carolina to a religious school because she thought that I was going to be a minister. Yeah, right. Okay but that didn't happen. I asked her one time I said Mom you know I would get up there and say now Miss Sally you wore that hat 2 weeks in a row. I am tired of looking at it from this angle. I said Mom, no, no, so anyhow after I got out of the service I went to the New Jersey, Salem and I became a police officer. I was young and crazy and then I found out after 5 years of that oh this is not for me so I went back and got my certification in special ed and then I taught for a while and then I found ? training school and then I moved on up and got my Masters. Getting back to William C. Jason we had people that were contractors out in California,

we had people that have their Doctorate in Ministry, we have people that are developers, we have people that have just, people like Calestine, she owns her own business you know. We have people from that school that have achieved great things. You're not hearing Bernard D. children doing great things here in Sussex County in the Cape Henlopen School District. You may get 1 or 2.

Roberta: This ends side 1, tape 1.

Roberta: This begins side 2, tape 1. Would you continue Mr. Prettyman?

Mr. Prettyman: I was talking about the success of those of us who went to William C. Jason High School there in Georgetown, Delaware. We all achieved. We were all given the opportunity to be creative, to grow and the teachers there made sure we got what we needed to do what we needed to do. When we are graduating kids now in our schools who are graduating but they have nothing to do other than being entrepreneurs on the street selling drugs or working in a K-Mart or a Wawa and I don't have any problem with that but we graduated from William C, Jason back in the good days. The young girls, they were able to leave there and go into a doctor's office or lawyer's office because they could type and do shorthand. Guys that wanted mechanics, they were able to take those courses and go and work in a garage and be a mechanic or a barber. Everybody had something. Those of us that went to college that was it. One thing that they did there that we don't do anymore – when you come to Jason they put you in a class and you would be 7A (for Academic), 7B would be business, 7C commercial and the rest if they didn't fit in they may go to Special Ed but then they could be pulled up and if you were in 7B or 7C you could move up to 7A or 7A may move down if they find out I don't want to do this, I'm not going to go to college, I want business, I want something that I can get out and make money and so they gave us the opportunity for success but now we can't do that because...and so but then every child got what it needed. He learned how to read, to write, to balance checkbooks, they learned all that before they left. Before I left elementary school Miss Piper said nobody, there's not a child that Viola Piper taught that could leave Milton Elementary School not knowing the Negro National Anthem without reading it and seeing it, My Country 'Tis of

Thee and The Star Spangled Banner. She made sure we would know those and that when we hear it, we stand. And today its like I was at a program, a Martin Luther King program and they were singing the Negro National Anthem and the waitress started bringing out food and everything and not a soul stopped them. I went & I said no, no this is my national anthem. They just stopped and kind of looked at me and there were like over 300 some blacks and not a one of them were stopping them. They just don't respect themselves and that is what is happening to us. We have, well I won't say we, I still tell people I am colored and Negro because those African-Americans are crazy. They have forgotten where they came from. They have gotten so uppity because I got 20 pairs of shoes, he's got 13 suits and I got a fancy car and can't pay for none of it you know? But they think that they are all up there and everything instead of looking back and saying hey, I made it, let me pick up somebody and bring them along. That's what I have tried to do is to bring somebody because I'm not going to get any younger. I have knowledge up here and sometimes it's amazing to me what's in my head and I want to pass it on. I want to see that I can help some child or some young person to get into it so when somebody calls me and wants to get into political something and everything and how to do it I take the time and I go over it with them. I tell them I don't drive and if you can get someone to pick me up I'll come over or you can come over and I will sit down and I will map out things for you and how to do things. I think it is African-Americans are driving me nuts because they feel that somebody owes them something and they walk in with such evil looks on their faces that it just turns me – even if I wanted to like you I don't like you just because you are not pleasant when you walk in. See they feel like they, I don't know, I guess I should feel more like somebody owes something but we weren't taught that way, we were taught to work for what you get. My father and his crazy self when we were getting cars and everything he was saying well if you can't pay cash for it you don't need it so.

Roberta: Tell me a little bit about your Dad.

Mr. Prettyman: My Daddy is the, oh God, Daddy was one of the strangest persons in the world. The man could sit with the governor, it might be when he was on Governor Bob Moore's board for Kruse School for girls back in the fifties. But he could sit with the governors and talk with them and he could sit on the curb and talk with a wino and talk with them and give them the same kind of respect. Up on the hill where I grew up when we moved up there, there was a button factory across the street from us and in later years it was sold and it was turned into Plum Park. Those people would be out there cursing and a cussing and everything. Dad would walk out there in the yard and they'd say there is Mr. Prettyman, he don't want to hear all that. Respect. The man didn't ask for it but he was given respect. Daddy, after finding out the man didn't know what size underwear he wears because of my Mom, but he provided for his family. There were 4 boys and he provided for 4 of us and the Queen, Queen Catherine, because my Mother was totally the queen because anything she wanted – once we started driving and moving up she would pick up the phone and – I need to go here, I don't care what your schedule is but this is what I need and its like, okay Mom and you do it. Daddy, Daddy provides, he, I can't say that he wasn't a loving father but he wasn't a mushy father. He was there for us and he supported us by seeing that we had the things that we needed. He did attend our programs and everything, most of the time he had to leave early and we always knew that because of the ice business so he would have to leave to do something there if a machine broke or something. He gave us the same thing, if you saw my father other than when he wasn't embarrassing us kids all the time, he would walk around the town looking like the Pied Piper with the worst clothes on, the raggediest clothes that he possibly could find and you know Daddy here your kids are successful and we are buying you these – well I don't need all these clothes – so I would come home from Indiana and put new clothes up there and throw the old clothes out in the trash. I would come back and he would have the old clothes on. He went out and took them out of the trash. I then got smarter than he, because see I am the baby boy and Daddy he can't even chew gum and get across the street in the same day but I beat him. One time I took the clothes

and put all new clothes up and matched them up – pants and shirts - and put them in the closet so he didn't have to think about it and put everything in the trunk of my car and took them to Indiana and threw it away.

Roberta: How did your father get started in the ice business?

Mr. Prettyman: Okay, Daddy being an only child, Pop-pop was in the ice business, Daddy graduated from college, Delaware State College for Colored Students and because of being a loyal son he took over the father's business.

Roberta: So your grandfather started it.

Mr. Prettyman: Yes, see Pop-pop started it in 1897 taking the ice off the mill pond. He and his brothers took the ice off the mill pond, in fact there is a picture over here of it, he and his brother took the ice off the mill pond and they would wrap it in burlap and bury it down into the sand and in the spring time they would turn around and sell the ice to the town people and a lot of people don't understand that our winters were much earlier. Winter started right around September so we only had really 2 months of hot weather that's July and August and he sold a lot of his ice, well some was sold just to keep the milk and butter but a lot of ice was sold for the frozen pudding because people used to make frozen pudding during the summertime. You are looking at me like, what the devil is frozen pudding? Ice cream, but they called it frozen pudding. So they could do that because they made their frozen pudding in the summertime because they didn't make toppings for cakes so the frozen pudding would be their topping for their cakes and everything. The neat thing was the ice business, my parents would be living in boxes under the boardwalk in this day and time because the ice business was called Prettyman's Pure Artificial Ice. How can something be pure and artificial at the same time, you are saying to me. Well I asked my father that and he skipped over it, I asked him and he skipped over it and then one day my Mother because we are this family that you must have an answer to all questions and my Mother kind of explained it to me. I don't know if it is true or not but she said well the reason why it's pure artificial is because Pop-pop had the pure ice because he took it right out of the mill pond, Daddy makes ice and that's artificial. So Daddy respected Pop-pop so he called it pure artificial. Okay?

That doesn't make sense to you. So that's the reason why it was Prettyman's Pure Artificial Ice.

Roberta: What was your grandfather's name?

Mr. Prettyman: Handy, James Handy, J. Handy. Everybody called him Handy. H-a-n-d-y.

Roberta: Let me get back I want to get a picture from you – what was your school day like? Kind of like describe what went on in the school and lunches and...

Mr. Prettyman: Well the first 3 years of my thing I walked to school we lived down there and walked around the corner to school then when we got to school you hung your coats up in the, we had cloak rooms, we didn't have lockers and Mom had these strings around our necks for the gloves to hang out so they all stayed together. Okay after we did all that we went into the classroom, the cloak rooms were in the classrooms, then you took your seat. Miss Ann, or Miss White, she would start the first grade off probably printing words because you had these word papers and you had to make the letters just write so she would start us off on that and when she got us going on that then she would move to the second grade then she may do social studies or science with the second grade and the third grade she would do math and she would do that. Then we would have a recess and see that was me because the first and second graders would go out to recess at the same time because we are all about the same size so we would go out and play dodge ball. Some would play dodge ball and some would play softball and then you get the bell and ring the bell and if you were really good, I guess the today's kids think it's a punishment but if you are really good Miss White would let you stay in for a few minutes to erase the boards for her and to wash the boards down and everything and then you would go out and play but that was like a bonus to erase the board and get that powder all over your face so you could wipe people on their backs and everything. I know it sounds strange to you. So then we all took our lunches, we had our lunch pails and thermos bottles and we would take our lunches and then we would have lunch at our desks and then when we were finished with our lunch, well before lunch we would go to the bathroom and wash our hands and then have lunch and after you finished you put your lunch pail back in the cloak room and then we had some time after

lunch to go out and play and then we would come back in start the next part of the day. First graders we did some writing and she may do some spelling with us and then she went on with the other three. It was all orderly and very nice.

Roberta: How was the school heated?

Mr. Prettyman: With 2 great big, enormous and they may not be enormous but they had these great big round coal stoves. The older kids got to throw the coal in to keep the fire going and everything so that's how they were heated. Sometimes I can remember it got real toasty in there and then sometimes it was real cold in there. We all dressed for it and you know it was okay. We didn't think of it until I guess I was in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade they decided to start having hot lunches and that was because there were some ladies in the community knowing other children weren't getting anything to eat so they would make pots of soup and stuff and bring it over there and then they would start serving lunches there and everything. They were free lunches and everything for the kids that didn't have it, in fact I guess everybody ate it because I remember I've eaten the soup with my sandwich there. I had a Lone Ranger lunch pail because I like the Lone Ranger you know. I did have Howdy Doody when I was younger. Sometimes I think oh my God how goofy I was. What a dork I was. Then we all played and like I said at the end of the day, by 3:30, school was over with and you walked home with each other and as you get by you would say bye and everybody came on home and then we changed clothes because we changed clothes once we got in and put on our play clothes and then we would get ready and study and then somebody would set the table and somebody's mom would be cooking because my mother stopped teaching when I was born. She didn't go back to teach until I was in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and then she went back teaching again. She stayed home to make some money, to stretch money and everything she would do hair so women would come there to get their done and she would do their hair but she was there for her children.

Roberta: Do you remember whether your school had a library?

Mr. Prettyman: No it didn't. Well we had a section with encyclopedias.

Roberta: So you had extra books other than what you worked with at the desk?

Mr. Prettyman: Yes but see the thing about our books and things that is something that a lot of people think or doesn't understand too. Our books were missing several pages, torn pages, because we got the books from the white schools. When our teacher would order new books the new books would go to the white school and we would get their old books over here and everything so I guess Miss Piper was lucky enough to get a book card or Miss Ann to get enough books with full pages, with everything in them that they had so that they could teach us and everything but we didn't lose anything by it. It was funny because one of the kids that, a white kid that a grew up, he did not know that and he was asking me one day about it, he said oh that was wrong, I said it didn't bother us we were just so happy that we had and see we had to learn the duPont song. Do you know the duPont song?

Roberta: I've heard it but I could not say it.

Mr. Prettyman: I have the music somewheres of it. We had to learn that because in the Fall of the year the duPonts would come to the 2 room schools and they would come in with their cashmere coats on and their derby and they would stand at the back there and the door would open up and it would be just like somebody stuck a pin in Miss Piper, she would drop what she was doing and go to the piano and ... we would know to stand up and salute like little soldiers standing there saluting them singing the duPont song. It talks about how they gave us schools and like how the duPonts are like king and queen, they gave us schools, they gave us this, a road, and all of that so it was people here and when I read that song because I don't sing, when I read that song sometimes when I'm speaking people sit there and say oh how terrible, how could you do that? I said, see you are looking at the wrong thing. We were thankful for what the duPonts had done for us because if they did not open these schools we would not be where we are today. So we were taught to respect and be thankful and we would stand up there and sing that song to them and they would kind of nod their head and go out and everything. It was a thing that was done. It was respect.

Roberta: Do you know who composed that song?

- Mr. Prettyman: No I don't but I have it. I have the whole thing because it was funny I was looking for something and oh my God, here it is but it had Emma J. Woods name on it and she was like our Sunday School teacher in Milford, well that's another story. My family is so weird.
- Roberta: Hold that thought now for just a second. Now who was the duPont that came? Was it P. S. duPont who would come or was it...?
- Mr. Prettyman: All I know is that it was a duPont. We were kids we didn't know, all we knew was they were the duPonts so that would be in the fifties. All I know is that they were very stately and they had these long black coats on which I found out they were cashmere with the derby hats and everything.
- Roberta: And so you were getting ready to tell me a story.
- Mr. Prettyman: About my family, they are crazy because see we are the family that did not go to the church here in Milton because my mother, the queen and her mother – no – my mother the princess and her mother, the queen, when she was young, that's her up there. My mother is at the top and her mother is at the bottom. So Grandmom said her children and grandchildren will go to St. Paul's Methodist Church. That was the family church. Its funny because we as kids going in, Dad worked most Sundays because of the ice because you must realize that they were dressing chickens and the trucks were not refrigerated so when they did it they would come around to Dad's ice house from the various chicken plants and Dad would put these big cakes of ice in a grinder and the driver would blow the ice, I mean he put the ice in the thing and the ice would go down into the driver of the truck and everything and here's a picture of the whole – the driver would have to crawl up over the top of the cases of chickens and hold the hose and guide the hose as Daddy put so many cakes of ice in there to make sure that the chickens were going to be fresh when they got to the city. When we went in Mom would walk into church with the four of us, my oldest brother – one, two, three, four – right down the line, she would go in, stop at the pew because her mother and father were sitting there then we would go around her and we would go in and sit and then she sat with her mother. It was Granddaddy, Grandmom, Mom and her children all in the same pew and that is the way we did it up until

Granddaddy – Grandmom died, Granddaddy died, we – that was it we went...that was it, that was the church and you didn't do it. Bethenia wanted her children. Now behind you on the frame there, that's Pop-pop. That's Pop-pop at his ice house. He built his home on Chestnut Street and that's Pop-pop, Handy Prettyman. He is a funny man because the kids in the summertime used to run in and out of the ice house there because he would give them ice and everything and then he would say all right boys go on home and they would go home for 15 or 20 minutes and come back and start all over again. They would laugh and tell me all those crazy things Pop-pop did.

Roberta: How did the black and white children in the community get along? You went to separate schools but how did they get along?

Mr. Prettyman: That's a really neat thing. I am glad you brought that up because we got along great. We played together, we were in and out of each others house. Where I lived up on Mulberry Street, further up, the guy Bob who lived right behind us, his mother and father, his grandfather lived there, sometimes my Mom would be at a meeting because I was a baby, I was younger, not a baby, but younger than my brothers and she was afraid they would kill me while she was gone so I would go over there and stay with Bob and his mom and have dinner with them and then when my mom came home then should would come and get me. One evening Mom came in and there was Bob and I both up on the couch sleeping, arms in arms, sleeping together and everything. It was funny because one of the other neighbors said well we play together but why don't we go to school together? I am my mother's child because I had an answer. We don't go to church together do we? And that was the end of it. So everything made sense. We didn't go to church together, we don't go to school together but we can play together, we go into each others home and it was not because we all played out in the fields together you know we played softball or football together and everything but it wasn't that bitterness that there is today. It was a total different thing. Every once in awhile somebody would call you a nigger and you would say oh well you're a nigger too. There was no fighting and everything and hostile and everything. The one thing about growing up here in Milton with the

migrant camp because Pop-pop built his home on Chestnut Street, the man is still a strange man because he built this brick home during the Depression when nobody had money and he built a home and he was buying up property then after the Depression he put another layer of brick around the house. The house has like a 14” thick wall. That house shall not be moved.

Roberta: Was your grandfather able to buy those properties on Chestnut because of the ice business?

Mr. Prettyman: Yes because he was the one making money. Not only the ice business, Pop-pop, Uncle Billy Joe, Uncle Pretty and Aunt Sissy, they were entrepreneurs way, way ahead of time because in the Fall of the year while they are waiting for the ice to freeze they would go around to all the farm land and pick up the seeds from the can and beans and dry them and sell them back to the townspeople back in the Spring. They were a close knit family because Pop-pop lived on one side of the street, Uncle Pretty he lived on the other and Uncle Billy Joe lived with Pop-pop until I guess Mom-mom caused him to kill himself because Uncle Billy Joe decided to commit suicide. I can understand that because if I had to live in the house with Mom-mom I would kill myself too but that’s another chapter. The neat thing about the migrant workers – can I talk about the migrant workers?

Roberta: Yes, I was going to ask you.

Mr. Prettyman: Okay, the migrant workers.

Roberta: Where did they come from?

Mr. Prettyman: I think this is my show and I am talking oh, okay, the migrant workers. They came from the south. They came from the Carolinas, Florida and all down south and they migrated up here to work the fields. Where HOB Elementary School is there was a field with beans and they would pick beans and tomatoes and everything was picked by hand then and as they filled the baskets they would put little tickets on the baskets and each family had a different color. So you and your husband and your 8 or 12 children would be out there picking all day long from sunup to sundown and putting tickets on the baskets because that’s how you got paid, for how many baskets you did. They lived in the migrant camp and the migrant camp, I don’t know, I know I was young and that was the

first time I saw a naked person other than myself and I said oh Pop-pop and Pop-pop just said, boy just shutup because what happened was this man came out of this little coop and they didn't have showers in them so at this end I saw they had like a block, cinderblock wall with a shower head and he came out to take a shower and the men took showers on the one end and the women took showers on the other end and I guess Pop-pop was going by there putting ice out and I saw this naked and I just went oh and he told me to shutup and then when I got home I was telling Mom and she Pop-pop was right to tell you to shutup, just go ahead. They worked in these camps from sunup to sundown and every child in there worked. They lived in places no bigger than my bathroom. There were maybe 8-10 people in there. They worked shifts though, 4 would maybe go to work and then when they both worked in the field. They were interesting people, they were also creative because see as they were picking beans and things they were storing some in their aprons so they could go back and get a pot of water and they can boil, find a ham bone or something and make soup or something so that's what they were doing. They didn't have stoves in them, some of them had hot plates and that's what they would cook on but the thing was on Saturdays. Saturdays I loved to go over and sit in Mom-mom's and Pop-pop's yard and I was too stupid until many, many years I guess I was even out of high school to realize what was happening. On Chestnut Street, they were coming down Chestnut Street going to the Blue Goose. The Blue Goose was a joint for dancing and drinking and partying for them. Let me tell you, the white folks, I never understood at that time until I got older – they would have these big pots of hot water because they didn't want the blacks to walk on their sidewalk they would throw hot water out there like they were cleaning their sidewalks when they came down and they had to walk in the street. The thing is, I didn't understand that part until I got much older, but the thing that I loved about it was it was the fashion show of all time. They had their can-can skirts on, the guys had their processed hair wrapped up and all done, the women had the brightest colors and then you think they are coming out of the camp and they had the whitest whites. The guys wearing white suits. How can you keep a suit that

white you know in that dirty place there? Every Saturday they would come down to the Blue Goose and they would party and drink and then they would fight and the woman would make the guy mad because back then if you loved your woman and she made you jealous you gave her a passion mark. I mean you cut her with a razor. That means that I am yours. You love me. They would have their little fights and they would maybe get their passion marks and then they knew they were home free with that man because you know they got all that and everything and although he ran with everybody else but she's the one that got the passion mark. How they could get their hair and dress so fine, the can-can, going to it was just like a total fashion show coming down for maybe about an hour or an hour and a half because they would go maybe half an hour depending on the shift who got their bath and then you know they had to wait so you have a spring to go through and then the next thing you know there is another group coming through and it was just like a total fashion show there just seeing all these bright colors and everything that they were wearing going down to the Blue Goose. Then they would go down there and they would party then when the Blue Goose closed up they'd go up to Blueberry Hill, that's where they made the movie "Shawn" and they would do some more partying back in Blueberry Hill and everything.

Roberta: I wonder what's the origin of the passion mark?

Mr. Prettyman: I don't know, I don't know if it's a southern thing, I don't know because all I know is that because they were all from the south. They wanted that mark. I remember saying to my Mom, why would they want to be cut? Doesn't that hurt? She said well that's their custom I guess that's what they want.

Roberta: Did the community use the school itself or was the school just used for teaching?

Mr. Prettyman: Just for teaching. The neat thing about the 2 room school was when we had plays and things we could slide the doors open because they had folding doors and we used to open them up. We would have teas there where you would have everybody dressed up and you would cut the crusts off the bread and we kids would serve the older people and our parents the tea and everything while they

sat and listened to our recitations and things and we would sing songs and whatnot.

Roberta: This is a question that I wanted to ask you – did the school district, when you were going, have visiting doctors or dentists?

Mr. Prettyman: Oh yes.

Roberta: The health care of the students.

Mr. Prettyman: Yes we had a dentist to come in twice a year and he would set up, then we had a bathroom.

Roberta: Do you remember the dentist's name?

Mr. Prettyman: No. We would have a dentist come in. I think he came twice a year because I know he would come in somewhere in September and he would be there again in the Spring and he would set up into the bathroom because then we had a bathroom and he would check our teeth and if you had the plague or something he would do that and then he would tell us how to brush our teeth and give us new toothbrushes and everything and we had whatcha call it? I don't know if that was Dr. Toban it could have been because he would come in and check our ears and eyes because he was our town doctor. Yes we had that, they came in quite often, I mean not quite often, they came in a couple times a year to check that, your eyes and ears and then the dentist was there to check your teeth and gums and give you new toothbrushes. Something they did and it amazes me, I don't know how we did it, but we were able to take trips. Today, oh boy you've got to have, you gotta own, or you've got to rob a bank to take a trip and everybody went. I don't care whether you were good, bad or not because well first off if you were bad either Miss Piper or Miss Ann were going to kill you so you weren't going to do it anyhow and we went down to Fort Miles and we would go to a couple of things in the area that we would go to and sightsee and everything. It was just a neat time to grow up in the '50's here because everybody, first of all. This is how bad we are, we told on Miss Ann because Miss Ann was a young teacher and I came home and I went and called Miss Piper up to tell Miss Piper on Miss Ann. You know what Miss Ann did? Miss Ann had the nerve to wear a pair of slacks downtown and I called Miss Piper

and told her because I saw Miss Ann with a pair of slacks on. She had pants on Miss Piper! They were all the way down and she had a coat on but she had pants on because I saw them from down there and everything because we had never seen women wear pants because they always wore dresses and suits and the nylons with the seams up on them. It was on a weekend and oh, she had pants on! That was something. I know I was a monstrous child.

Roberta: Was she from this area?

Mr. Prettyman: Yes, she lived over on the other side of town, she and her family. She lives over in Georgetown now.

Roberta: It was scandalous wasn't it?

Mr. Prettyman: Oh yes, I mean, we had never seen it. Even my Mom even when she was going to go grocery shopping and before she started driving and we would take the Sharp Line Bus to Milford to do grocery shopping, she would put her little shopping hat on, her little shopping gloves and her heels and nylons and everything and we, 4 of us, would go shopping with her and when the bus driver would come back we would have to walk up to the corner going but when we came back he would come by the house and we would take the groceries off and set them on the front porch and he would help us and then he would go back on his route again but Mom, never. Seeing pants, oh that was like oh! Another thing, I got in big trouble, Miss Piper who I loved dearly as you already know that, one day Miss Warren who lived when I came out of our house we walked up to the park. Miss Warren had all these beautiful tulips around, Della Warren had all these beautiful tulips around her tree and they were so nice and I knew Miss Piper would love them so I went around and Momma had already taught me how to pick flowers so I went around and I picked one of each different color, wrapped them up in my notebook paper and I took them to Miss Piper. Oh Miss Piper was in her heaven all day! All the beautiful flowers and everything oh she just went on every time so after school I get home, change clothes and we are doing our dinner and she said well Noble what did you do today? I told her everything and she said what else? Nothing, that was it and she went to my other brother and she came back to me and she said what else,

did you remember anything else? No, Mom what else did I do? She said well I got a call this morning from Miss Della. I said, oh. I said well Mom I picked some flowers but I didn't step on any of them I said I went right around and picked them right from the bottom I didn't break them off in-between. She said yes, Miss Della watched you from the window while you were doing every one of them. She said now every Saturday for the rest of the, for the next month, you are going to have to go up and do yard work for Miss Della. You will pull weeds and do whatever she wants you to do. Well, okay. I didn't get a spanking but Miss Della I did pull weeds one time and then she let me come on in and the next week she said well come on in and have some cookies and she said now don't you tell Catherine that you were in here having cookies and milk with me now you go out there and put some dirt on your pants and get your hands dirty and everything so that was Miss Della's and ours secret until I was grown because I didn't tell Mom. If I told Mom she would have me doing something else. I did not tell her until I was grown that Miss Della and I got over on her.

Roberta: That's wonderful. That's neat. Who took care of the school? Do you remember you know just the general maintenance – cleaning inside?

Mr. Prettyman: Well Mrs. Piper's husband, Mr. Arthur, his brother Mr. Draper, the trustees took care of it.

Roberta: Okay.

Mr. Prettyman: Somewheres I have a letter because Miss Piper was cruel because she didn't like one of the teachers after I left and she wrote a letter and her husband is on the Board, they did not renew this teachers...Claudia Lockland she left and went up to Slaughter Neck to teach. I thought that was so funny. Here's Miss Piper's husband is on the whatcha call it, and she is up there writing this goofy letter. Her husband is a trustee and her cousin or uncle was a trustee and it was all a family thing so... (inaudible) so they maintained it and see I wish I had the register here and see the registers were pretty interesting because down in there they wrote things like we are planting flowers or rose bushes this year so that we could use the flowers for our spring something and everything that they did it

was kind of in there, the register, what they were doing and how they would be using it for programs or whatever. They really did a lot of creative things and that's one thing, I can't remember, oh God isn't that terrible I can't remember, I know that we learned Negro history and we did not learn just about football players and basketball players. We learned about Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth and all of those and we had for Negro history month Carter G. Woodson we learned all this and its not being taught anywheres in the schools, in fact here in the Cape Henlopen School District a couple of years ago I spoke at the Milton Mariners School... (inaudible) then I asked the Principal at another school and he said oh I don't think the kids would be interested.

Roberta: That's too bad.

Mr. Prettyman: He was right so I said okay I'm not going to mess with that, I know where you stand because I think all children – I mean talking to the ones that are here in the middle school they were really, in fact I went 3 days to do the same thing. Three days to get all the classes and everything... (inaudible) and I left the display up and everything and they said it would be safe in the room I left it in and everything so I did that so I wouldn't have to do it all again. So we have come a long way but we haven't. We have to take time and just like what you are doing now I am hoping they will keep it as colored and Negro and not be politically correct and say African-Americans because none of them knew what African-American was and if we are going to do history and that is what is wrong with history being done today when I read something and say Marion Anderson was the first African-American, wrong! Marion Anderson was the first colored.

Roberta: Clarify that for me when you said, "none of them knew what African-American was," who were you referring to?

Mr. Prettyman: I am talking about my grandparents. I am talking about the older generation. African-American? They have no clue to it. In our own race, in my own family they come as light as they can and as dark as they are. There is such a mix there. They do not, as I said, my Dad died at 90 a few years ago and you call him black he would tell you – colored. I use the word colored to myself or

myself Negro and people my age they are saying why are you doing that, what color are you and I say, any color you want me to be. I would say no, you get away from me then I tell them I said you all are so black that you all don't even know what you all are so keep changing it. At least I got stuck on Negro and colored and that's it because you all were Afro-Americans for a while and there is no such thing as an Afro-American and see I am still a Negro and colored.

Roberta: This ends side 2, tape 1.

Begin Tape 2, side 1.

Roberta: This is Roberta Perkins interviewing Mr. Noble Prettyman in his home in Milton, Delaware. This is tape 2, side 1. Before I forget Mr. Prettyman I wanted to ask you about the Superintendent of the school district. Did they ever visit during the school year?

Mr. Prettyman: I am so glad that you asked that question because right here in front of me I have from where they visited my grandmother at the 1924 to 1943 and this is very interesting because you have to kind of look at this, you look at it here and you can see Mom-mom got somebody upset because her first year in 1924 she got an A for her rating, then she never got another A. She went from A to B and see this is her and as you turn it over they tell you what they grade them for and how they evaluated them.

Roberta: Now she from an A to a B now this is in spite of her being responsible for increasing the school attendance?

Mr. Prettyman: Yes for teaching and yes see that, but see she just didn't, she just wasn't one that she had it her way and she was going to do it and you can say anything but she was going to do it and she knows what was best. She didn't bend to the system. She heard the beat of her drum and then she marched to it. As you can see through it but that's from 1924 to 1940 something.

Roberta: Wow, I am seeing here see she got some...

Mr. Prettyman: C's

Roberta: Some C's.

Mr. Prettyman: She aggravated somebody.

Roberta: 1932 to 1939 and then it went back up to a B. Do you think the Superintendent changed hands?

Mr. Prettyman: Either that or something, I don't know. It just was amazing and everything. They were out much more regular than they do in this day and time and everything and they really evaluate you. You get these little certificates. But I want go back and I want to show you pictures of what I have been talking about. This was the camp. When I came back to Delaware they were tearing it down but that's what they lived in. In one of those little chicken coops. A whole family lived in each one of those little doors. That's what they lived in.

Roberta: I've seen them when you are going up (Route) 13 sometimes and they are way back.

Mr. Prettyman: But they were tearing down the camp and I had just gotten back into Delaware and I didn't even unpack my car I ran over and I just drove in and started taking pictures because I said this is history going on and no one would ever believe it and everything so I got those pictures and everything.

Roberta: It's good you did. I'm trying to think if there is anything else that I wanted to ask you.

Mr. Prettyman: We all played, I mean it was a good time. It was a good time and it was a bad time and when I say it was a bad time it's like I say I guess I am the wrong person in a way. I am a person of knowledge but I didn't feel all the bitterness and the cut because I was a Prettyman and even though my Mother didn't think that we knew because when we would leave home she would push the screen doors open and she would say now remember you all are Prettymans. It didn't ring a bell to us as kids but that meant that the whole community watches us and everything, how we are and so when we would leave this side of town to go over on the other side to visit Mom-mom and Pop-pop, let me run through your yard and you would call me back – yes Miss Roberta – she would say where are you going – over to Mom-mom and Pop-pop's – then she would take my hand and spank me for running through her yard and then she got on the phone and called that 4 digit number because we only had 4 numbers then, and a party line at that

too, and she would tell Mom-mom and then the rest of the world would tell Mom because everybody listened on the party line to see what was going on and everything so when you got home you got another spanking and then when we went to church on Sunday after church, Grandmom and Granddaddy either one of them would give us another spanking so we learned pretty fast that people or somebody was looking at us all the time so we learned that by the time we were I guess 10, 12 years old we learned that when Mom says Prettymans that means everybody's watching us so we stayed on the sidewalk and we would say yes Miss Frazer, no Miss Frazer, I'm going over to see Mom-Mom its nice to see you and keep on going along because once we got to Mom-Mom's we had to call home and let them know we got there and everything.

Roberta: Once you realized what that meant when your mother would say, remember you are a Prettyman, did it create stress for you?

Mr. Prettyman: No, it didn't. The one thing that did more stress to me was Pop-pop's funeral because I realized what it was to be a Prettyman by then. But I didn't realize what it was to be a Prettyman and I know you don't understand that but what it meant is at Pop-Pop's funeral, I loved the goofy old man even though because on Sundays Pop-Pop would come over to our house Sunday morning for breakfast well Mom would have all the pancakes, sausages and everything on the table. Well we knew Saturday night Pop-Pop was coming so we had to read the Bible because we had to have a Bible verse and say it and we would kneel down beside the chairs and we all had to say a Bible verse and we could not say a Bible verse somebody said two thousand years ago because Pop-Pop would clear his throat so you always had to have a backup Bible verse so when we read the Bible we got two of them and memorized them because when Pop-Pop cleared his throat – he's heard it before – so you had to have another one. So finally by the time you got breakfast and he finished praying it was like lukewarm but we we all went to church and everything but when he died, that's when I found out what a Prettyman was. I was standing between my Mom and Dad and I don't know what happened, I started to cry and my father grabbed me by my elbow and squeezed it in there so tight, he said you show no emotions in

public, you take that home with you and that's when I knew what truly a Prettyman was. You are strong. You are strong. Twelve years old and I have never forgotten it. When my mother died as much love as I had for her and the 400 and some people that attended that funeral, I was tall and straight and a Prettyman. I know it sounds cruel but that's part of being a Prettyman. So its not an easy road to being a Prettyman but I'm glad I'm a nut.

Roberta: Did anybody ever explain to you why it was important for the family to present that face in public?

Mr. Prettyman: Because we were professionals. We were colored, we were considered like Mom said one time she wished she had a penny for every dollar that they thought we had because we were always clean, we were always neat and we were setting examples for the other minorities or the other coloreds that were in the community and that was it, you are a Prettyman. You are a trend, you are being watched. Through it all there are people that I didn't know, my mother had helped a couple of young girls through college, I don't know how she did it but she helped them through college and she would buy them clothes and different things from time to time and one of them told me a few years ago that oh Miss Catherine used to bring me these blouses and things and everything when I was at Del State and she would give me a little spending money and everything and I you know, we didn't know it, Mom didn't do things for show and to be I did this, she did it out of her heart and that is one thing that I have learned being her son is to do things from my heart. I care about people. I don't care if I get something its just like last year, the year before last, a girl called me up and she said oh Mr. Prettyman I am going to the nursing school and I got my grant and everything but I need one hundred dollars for books and she called me up and I said well okay give me a couple of days so I called her up and I made some contacts with some people I know, I got the hundred dollars and I called her up and told her I had the money and she could come by and pick it up. Well Roberta I wanted to smack myself up side the head, I wanted to pull the window up and smash it down on my head and everything. Here she can't afford a hundred dollars but she drives up in a SUV, the Cadillac SUV, and I gave it to

her. I didn't hear a word from her, not a, I mean she said okay, thank you, but she didn't write a thank you note. I have not heard anything at all from her and that kind of hurt a little bit but I said I am not doing it for the thank you, she said she needed it, I hope that she is a success and everything but – here I can't afford a hundred dollars but I can ride up in a, you know. At that time I had a beat up '95 Olds rusting and over a hundred and some thousand miles on it, my theory was it was paid for, it didn't cost me anything and my thing really like we have always said something to me like oh you should have a bigger car or you should have this or why don't you a Mercedes. I said I want a home more than a vehicle...(inaudible) I've got this and hopefully we'll get it paid for and that's it but at least I've got a home. I've done some other things for some young people and they are the things that you know I guess because of the way I was raised that you help people and I help people with their mortgage. There was a girl, she couldn't pay her mortgage for her trailer or something, she was like six months. I got it all paid up. Got her electric and everything taken care of. A year later she is calling me and asking me for help again and I told her I am not going to enable you. I said you get your hair fried, that fancy hair, you got all those gold earrings, you and your daughter walk around with cell phones and everything and I said you get yourself a box and live under the boardwalk. I said I'm not going to enable you, I helped you, people have helped you to get back on your feet and I said you didn't pay back anything once you got back on your feet. You went and got a fancy car and they get mad at me and oh you think you're and no, no I don't. I don't have anything. I live on disability and that's it and I try to keep my mortgage and my utilities paid and that's it. I love to eat because I have a lot of clothes but I had to have clothes because I lived in the professional world where you had to wear suits and things and I didn't grow. I wore a suit a few weeks ago to someplace and somebody said oh God that's a – that suit was over 20 years old but I take care of my clothes. We were taught to take care of them and everything. I guess being brought up with nothing, wearing everybody else's, when I got out there in the world I bought suits, I bought shirts, I bought ties. I can open up my own little men's store. Those are

the things that you look at and I am really, really grateful for Mom-mom and Pop-pop and Grandmom and Granddaddy, Mom, Dad because they provided for their 4 children and they gave us a self that we can do it. Like when we went to college, we didn't have to work. Dad said you make the grades, I'll see the moneys there but we all took little jobs so we would have spending money while we were in college. When I was in North Carolina I had the weirdest job I had crazy things going on for me because being a Prettyman you become an entrepreneur and I had a Funeral Club because I would go to funerals, you didn't have to know them because you were in college but because of a mix-up in my class if I didn't go to the funeral but I found out where the burial was and then I would follow them back to their homes for the repast. I was really good for the Jewish ones because I had my yammacas and I knew everything and I know the best white fish and I know to select lox and all their desserts are perfect because they just don't have nothing but perfect desserts being Jewish. So I would bring the food back and have a small smorgasbord. I would sell it to the kids. You bring a paper plate and you get blank, blank, blank it depends on what you get, you get either three or two dollars and if you get dessert it would be five dollars. Everybody wondered well how did you do – so then I organized them and we all were going to different funerals and you know I said you don't have to say anything, if you don't make the funeral find out it tells you here why they are going to bury them you go to that and follow them back because they think that that person just touched you as a college student and we are in a college community. There would be some weeks that I would make over a hundred dollars because I had been to funerals and brought the food back and you had to bring your own paperware and your own plasticware. All I would do is just set it up and charge. As you were going out I would look at it and charge you for what you had on the plate.

Roberta: It's creative.

Mr. Prettyman: Entrepreneur. I come from a family, Pop-pop and them picked up seeds...so I would go around - they were going to throw the food away. College kids eat and they were so glad to give it to you and box it up and then I had to train a

couple of them, now this is running into that so have them to put like a piece of cardboard down there okay so that won't run into that and then wrap it in foil and everything. I know I shouldn't have said that on tape. Oh my gosh they are going to think he is really bizarre. You talk about changes here what I don't like now it is not the buildings, I don't like it as much but they are not building communities, they are building sections. We have the elites over here, we have the wanna-be elites over there and everybody thinks they are better. It's just like a lady asked me not too long ago, she said, well Noble where did the elites live when you grew? I said oh my God we didn't even know that word. I said we didn't know that word. I said but now I am seeing a new form of the Klansmen and she said well what do you mean. I said they usually wear hoods and burn crosses in our yards I said but now they go by the name of elites and they throw their money around and they move in next door to me and then oh I don't like that house, I don't like this and I want you to tear that, tell them they have to do this and that. They were there before you got there I said so maybe you all are just a fancy-type Klansman throwing money around I said because that's the same thing, they didn't have the money to throw around, they just tried to run you out by burning crosses in your yard. You're moving in a minority area because see we say about this community is the minority lives near the waterfront see nobody wanted to live down there for years and now all of a sudden they want to live down there and look at the water, look at the water, get close to the water here in Milton and everything and the minority owns and now they are trying to move all of them off of their land.

Roberta: Are they able to maintain their property?

Mr. Prettyman: Oh yes.

Roberta: Because sometimes property is gotten by back taxes.

Mr. Prettyman: Oh no, no, they are up on it and everything and it's just like I have talked to this a few of them myself. I say if they want your land, if that developer wants your land you tell him to build you a house of your choice and you want at least an acre of land and then after they build you that house you move into that house and look around and make sure everything is working. They give you that

house because it is going to cost them and then you ask them for at least another couple hundred or whatever thousand dollars that you can invest because you are happy living in your littler pepper box and if you are going to move and if they give you five hundred thousand they are going to take taxes out of it, then you are going to have to pay three or four hundred thousand for the land and then to build a home. I said this way they already own the land so they are not losing, they can put that, what they do for you, they can put it on somebody else's bill and everything, make them pay higher to get their money back from you but when you do that get a house that you know you can afford to pay the taxes on. Don't get something great big and then you lose everything. Have them to build that house the way you, and you looked at it and make sure everything is right before you sign any papers. Have them to move you in or whatever you want to take from this house, have them to move you in at their cost, give you blank thousands of dollars to invest.

Roberta: Have they had any builders so when they give them those...

Mr. Prettyman: There's this one guy out here on Elenor Road, they have been to this guy a couple of times, a Robert Lincoln, and he and his wife told him if they wanted it and they said well you have...they said well I am just as happy to be here, you want to build on my land all those fancy homes are going to be right up close to me and I've been here. I know where everything is in this house. I can walk around here in the dark. So then he said well we are going to give you four hundred thousand, he said yeah but they are going to take taxes out on that because they had down too. I have been trying to educate the older blacks. I said Ed they may even come to you and talk to you about it. He said uh huh, uh huh and say I'll get back to you and then you call me and let me sit down and I will talk with you and everything because the corner that you came around coming down here, okay there is a little white house on the right side, he owns that, that corner, that lot there and his sister lives next door to him. They are sitting in like a three million dollar area there. They are old, Mr. Outten (spelling ?) God he's got to be close to 90, I guess he's 85 and his sister, Miss Pearl, she is in her late eighties. I talked to their children because one of the

children I went to school with... (inaudible) well both of those kids I went to school with and she lives over in Baltimore and I said don't let anybody do anything with that property without touching me and if they talked to them about it then talk to me because you don't want to do it. You all can have a summer home here in this area or whatever you want to because I said you are sitting on big money. They think just because you are old not even though just because you are black you don't know, oh I'll throw two hundred thousand at you and you'll say oh two hundred thousand and then you've got to go and buy something then you don't still have anything. No, let them. If they can build it cheaper. It's just like this house here. It set on the market because they stripped the house down to the frame and they rebuilt it. It sat on the market for 3 years not moving because they wanted too much money for it and then the owner they had it built, he got away from the realtor and he put a sign on it for rent so one day I was riding by and I said well let me go in there and look at it. I came in here and looked at this house and I fell in love with it so he said well twelve hundred a month. I said you are out of your mind, okay, bye. Three months later he calls me, no reference, no nothing. He says Mr. Prettyman what can I do to get you into that house? He said I had some people to come, they want to rent but I just don't like the way they look, what can I do to get you into this house? I said well I am not going to give you twelve hundred a month. He said well okay come over and talk to me so I came over and I sat down and we talked and I said okay I will rent to buy and he said can I do that and I said yes. Well let's see he wanted two hundred and twenty thousand for it. I said you are out of your mind. He said well aren't we going to negotiate? He said well what can you pay? I said I can pay one hundred and fifty dollars. He said well you know better than that. I said okay, lets see, I said well you've gotta come down from two twenty and he said well what about one ninety five or something? Mmm, I said oh what about one fifty? He said what about one sixty? I said okay. I mean one eighty six. I said okay you got me. Got it. See he was losing money because he had to pay taxes and everything on it and it was just sitting there and I knew that so I got it.

Roberta: Let me ask you, let me go back to your great- grandmother.

Mr. Prettyman: No, my grandmother.

Roberta: Your grandmother.

Mr. Prettyman: My grandmother and my Mom-mom.

Roberta: Okay. Do you remember being told what it was like for her starting to teach?  
She was the first black teacher.

Mr. Prettyman: Here in this area. She had taught over in Maryland before. The thing was it was, education was something not needed. No one then when she started it was not a thing that was needed because when she first started she had very small classes I mean she'd be lucky if she had 8 or 10 kids because they were all farming and after the farm season was over with they were doing canning and all that stuff and everything so they'd go to school here and there. Then she got to the parents somehow, I don't know how she got to the parents and she was telling them how important education was and how the kids can read and everything so she started, the enrollment started to grow because she, you get some many kids out of a family and back then families were big, you're talking about 10 or 12 kids in a family so they were big so you've got those kids, you would get the younger ones and you would maybe get 4 or 5 of the younger ones and you teach them and then they would go home and teach the older ones and then the older ones, later, came to school because they were able to read and then she took that extra time working with them and build that enrollment up to where they had to build a 2 room school. Before I think it was like maybe 35 or 40 kids and she built it up to where it was over 80 some kids and it just kept growing to where they had 2 teachers and everything.

Roberta: How did she come to Delaware?

Mr. Prettyman: She wanted to marry Pop-pop. She taught over in Maryland and Virginia then she came in and she ended up marrying Pop-pop and then that was it. She lived in Houston, Delaware, her family did for years. They all got educated at Delaware State, her brother was one of the first graduates of Delaware State College, Uncle Boykin.

Roberta: That name is familiar.

Mr. Prettyman: He was the first graduate up there. Uncle Boykin worked in a tire factory. Aunt Cora was the one and see where the Delaware State College Alumni House is where those apartments are is the Aikens farm land and when he died, Uncle Walter, his brother, because we are too dark for the Aikens so Uncle Walter gave that land to Delaware State College. Instead of saying I will give you that land by my, the offspring, because we are a small family and at that time Uncle Boykin died we were in college and he should have worked it out where we went to college free of charge but because we were the wrong color...(inaudible). It was like it didn't bother us at all because we knew they were crazy and everything but Mom-Mom lived in Townsend and then married Pop-pop and then started the school. She just got the enrollment up and kept it up and she is a big woman and when those boys came in there and act up she would grab them and put them on a chair and sit on them and they will tell you. Oh my God, that woman, she was big – she wasn't tall but she was a big-boned woman and her great thing that she used to tell us kids and to this day I can't understand why Mom-mom would tell us kids that when she was growing up working on the farm she could bale more hay than any man in town. Now I said that's something a woman would want to go out and tell everybody? Even if I was grown and she was grown and married with children we were grandkids she is still telling that story that she could bale more hay than any man in town. Okay! She was a character. Education – her wanting to do good for the community and everybody respected Mrs. Prettyman see because she was like a peacock around town because she wore those big hats with flowers and she wore those old folks shoes that laced up and tied and she would trip around town and when she would drive you knew where Mom-Mom was in town because when she parked her car she just drove it to a space and let the children out and just went on about her business. She didn't take no time to parallel park. Nobody said anything. Our family, because we got so much history from our family, Pop-pop always was talking about his family, Mom-mom talked about her family, Grandmom and Granddaddy their family and see the Nobles are crazy. I am a Noble my grandmother, anybody, thank God I was a boy because they

were going to name me after my grandmother, Bethenia. What child would want that? But then they named me Noble Winder. I asked Mom what was wrong with you when you named me Noble Winder? Granted Grandmom's maiden name was Noble and I took the family name but this Winder, you know? What were they doing, reading Edgar Allen Poe or something? That's a strange name like something you would hear in one of his stories – Noble Winder and then to have Noble Winder Prettyman – that's too much for a little kid. Then growing up see my name was so weird growing up because no one and you didn't have any Nobles. Nobody didn't know and everybody would call me Nolan, they would call me Noel, they would call me Norman. There is a woman that to this day that has known me ever since I was born and she calls me Noah and somebody would say his name is Noble. Okay, Noah, and I said leave her alone, she has been doing it all my life. I have let her get away with it and there is no sense in me changing her now. I did something the other day that has made me who I am with that crazy name Noble because as you grow up and everybody – oh you are such a noble little boy and it just gives you more “air” about yourself and everything and I think that's real good anyhow. I just have fun and that's one thing with me, I don't carry luggage around and I guess that's why I don't look all stressed out. People get mad at people and carry their luggage around and don't understand why. It's done, its over with, I'm moving on. If you can't deal with it, ok, but I've gone past that and that's what I do. I give that credit to, because I remember one day in elementary school I would hear somebody was talking about my Mom, calling her all kinds of names and this and that and I came home crying and Mommy said, Noble did they come here? Did they know me? I said no. She said well let them say anything they want to because they don't know me. You know better so just let them say it and don't say anything just keep on going and it took a while because you kids it took a while for that to go through but then as you grow up you know. A strong family is what I grew up in and I look at children today not liking their grandparents and not liking their parents. I don't know if we didn't like Pop-pop or it wasn't that we didn't like him we just didn't like reading that Bible

because we'd go to the movies Saturday night, Saturday afternoon we'd go to the movies and get home probably about 8:30 and then you would have to sit up there and say what Bible verse did you say last week – there were 4 of us there and we had to say you know, make sure that we weren't repeating each other and then we were taking Bible, reading the Bible getting a Bible verse memorized and everything. There was just so much history and that's why I am able now to talk about family because Sundays, we didn't read the newspaper on Sunday, you read the Sunday newspaper on Monday because Sunday was a family time. When we came home from church, we went to church in Milford and we would go by Grandmom and Granddaddy's house after church just to whatever, to annoy them and then we would come home and then Pop-Pop would come over for dinner. Pop-Pop and Mom-Mom would come over for dinner then the kids had to discuss what went on in the morning service. Well see St. Paul's Church for a church for educators. Instead of taking Bibles to church you would take a dictionary to church because the minister talked WAY up there. So we had to come home and talk about what went on in church and everything and Pop-Pop would explain to us what, he brought it down to what he was saying because we, some of the words we could pronounce but he knew close enough what we was talking about and so that's what we did. We talked about the Sunday service and then we talked about the good old times they had growing up and none of them were good because they were out in the snow or they were doing work, so it was like well what were the bad times like if these are the good times? We just grew up all in a family and you were all wrapped up in family and up until, I don't know, we were all grown, I mean instead of taking vacations like normal people take vacations well in the summer time I would stay with my grandmother up in Milford because Granddaddy would go up in New Hampshire and work up in the camp up there. We would go camping and Grandmom really ruined camping for me because when I was in college they would say oh let's go camping, you said you like to go camping. I love to go camping but I didn't know that they went camping, camping. They went out in the woods in shacks. My Grandmother, anytime she packed a suitcase if we

were going to stay in a hotel that was camping and see that's what I thought camping was. We would travel all down around,,,(inaudible) Salisbury, down there because her family was down there and we would visit families and everything and she would say now Cousin Pauline is not a good housekeeper so you don't eat anything at her house and we are only going to be there for a few minutes and everything and it may smell because she knows me I would talk about it, don't say anything, just shake Cousin Pauline's hand, don't go kissing her because she chews snuff and I didn't know what snuff was. Then we would go down to Cousin Mabel's because Cousin Mabel's house was cleaner and everything so we spent a night or two there with her then visit other relatives and then come on back home. My grandmother was a trip though. I once said we were playing up there at the house and Granddad had a 22 rifle that he would shoot at squirrels and we were playing with the gun. Grandmom came in there took the gun from us and said you boys are going to shoot yourself, you all are going to blow...the next thing we new Grandmom was shooting windows out of the house and Granddaddy came downstairs and he said Bethenia, Bethenia now the boys were fine with it now look what you've done. You shot the windows out of the house you shot the window out of my car. We all were just laughing, oh Grandmom's in trouble. She got me in trouble one time. See I didn't know my Grandmother was a diabetic and she had this tart cherry tree in the yard and in the summertime she would make cherry pies and so one day after she made this cherry pie and she let me go round to Mr. Jewels store to get a pint of vanilla ice cream so I went round and got it and came back and she opened it up and squeezed it over the top of the pie and she and I were sitting on the floor – this great big television with this little screen looking at Roy Rogers and the Cisco Kid, cowboys because we were into cowboys back then and Grandmom and I were sitting on the floor eating out of the pie dish and guess who came in? My Mother came in. Mommy came in. Mama what are you doing? You have no business eating this, she started yelling, I started crying because she was yelling at Grandma, Grandma grabbed me and hugged me and she told me don't pay Catherine any mind but I didn't know my Grandmother was a diabetic and

she was not supposed to be eating that stuff because we had done that many a time, blueberry pie, we'd just squeeze ice cream over it and we would eat it together.

Roberta: Now explain that, not to get off on, what is that squeezing the ice cream over?

Mr. Prettyman: Well it was hand dipped and it was soft and it was in a carton, paper carton and so you just squeezed it over the dish of pie.

Roberta: And you didn't dip it out?

Mr. Prettyman: And you just eat that pie out of it and everything. Pie and ice cream.

Grandmom was the grandmother. Now Mom-mom wanted me to be little Lord Fauntleroy. Grandma, she never grew up. She loved the floor, I don't know about an old lady lovin' the floor and we could walk on her, we could sit on her on the floor when we were little and everything, it was fine she was just a crazy lady. We had so much fun with her. There was times I stayed there at the house with her, oh there was this one night, I guess I was may 10 or 12 and Grandmom had to sleep downstairs so they took the sun parlor and made it into a bedroom and made a bathroom in there for her because she couldn't get up and down steps but she could do everything else. One night I couldn't sleep because I was scared, I heard this noise in the wall and she said oh its nothing but mice, they'll go away so I ended up getting in bed with Grandmom, she told Mom, she said that boy next time he sleeps in that bed I am going to tie him up because his arms just smacked me and kicked me. She was just fun. Some mornings she couldn't get up and fix breakfast or something and she wanted poached eggs. I ate so many poached eggs one day. This one was too hard, this one was too soft. I would take it back in the kitchen and eat it and do another one. Finally I got it right, poached in the toast and then she ate it and then she would take her insulin and everything. I said Mom why can't she just eat scrambled eggs? She said because Mama doesn't want scrambled eggs. I said well the next time she wants poached eggs I'll call you and you can come up and poach them because I ate too many eggs.

Roberta: Trying to get it right?

Mr. Prettyman: Yes, trying to get it right. She was a trip and then I thought my Grandmother couldn't read and I told Mom, I said Mom, Grandmom is a teacher and she can't read and she said oh Noble now what? I said Grandmom can't read, I said every time we go riding she makes me read all the signs. She said Mama is teaching you how to read. She can read. Why do I have to read all the signs? I had to read all the signs, so many miles or this and everything because she was teaching me as we traveled I was still being taught and that's kind of interesting. She was creative. The lady was something else.

Roberta: She used a lot of opportunities to teach. Neat. Mr. Prettyman this has been wonderful. That's about all the questions I have and I think you pretty much covered. I am going to make sure Laura gets a transcript of this and if she has any more specific things that she wants to learn from you and I will make sure also that I ask her about if she is interested in copying any of the photographs and we'll find out about that.

Mr. Prettyman: One other thing that I am going to find, I thought it was with this paper, I have a pretty good breakdown of the teachers and some of the things that happened at the school after I left because Miss Ann wrote it and I thought it was this paper but I don't have it. I don't know if you want this.

Roberta: This concludes my interview with Mr. Prettyman, end of tape 2, side 1.