

INTERVIEWING AN ELDERLY RELATIVE

WHO? - CHOOSE CAREFULLY

GET PERMISSION FROM THE SELECTED PERSON – AND SOME OF THEIR CHILDREN

WHAT TO ASK – MAKE A WRITTEN PLAN
TAKE IT WITH YOU TO GUIDE THE INTERVIEW

EXAMPLE:

MAIE PARK INTERVIEW PLAN

W. D. KIVETT

02/16/2000

RECOLLECTIONS:

1. What are some of your earliest memories as a child - what sticks in your memory?
2. What to do remember about your parents in the early years? - show photo.
3. What to do remember about your brothers and sisters in the early years?
 - Wesley - 22 years older - away from home? - anything about his death?
 - Daisy - 19 years older - married 1909 - lived as a child with Aunt Liz and Uncle Bill?
 - Pearl - 17 years older - was he away from home also?
 - Florence - 15 years older - childhood relationship ?
 - Fleet - 13 years older
 - Arthur - 11 years older
 - Clarence - 8 years older
 - Clark - 5 years older
 - Lexie - 3 years older - died at age 6 - cause of death? - you were about 3 years old.
 - Maie - b. May 7, 1908 - Mary Vestal was playmate?
 - George - 3 years younger - mother was 45 when he was born - father almost 52.
4. Tell me about life in a this big family spread over such a wide age range - family gatherings - how did they make ends meet? Relationship with Will & Rosetta's family - with Aunt Liz and Bill Staley? with other neighbors?
5. What do you remember about Will & Rosetta? - Rosetta 17 years younger than Will - show photo.
 - Everett - 7 years older
 - Pauline - 5 years older
 - Ada - 3 years older
 - Aleene - same age - died at age 3 - buried at Rehobeth beside grandmother Susy.
 - Mozelle -7 years younger
6. Any conversation back then about grandfather Leander or grandmother Susy? Did Dave know about or associate with his half brothers & sisters? How did Dave & Will come by the farm there? Was it Leander & Susy's place, or did they buy it? Where did Will & Dave grow up?

7. Playmates - Mary Vestal - others? School - where? How did you get back and forth? Teachers - who? How did they get to be teachers? What did you learn about? How many years did you go? Boyfriends - Alfred Brower ?
8. Later years - how did you get to Raleigh? - relationship with 15 year older sister Florence.
9. How did you meet Arthur Park? What attracted you to him? Talk about him & his family.
10. Early married life - jobs, locations.
11. Oxford and the children - just the good memories if you want.

GENERAL:

1. What else would you like to talk about?
2. What would you like others to know about that might otherwise be forgotten?
3. What person had the most influence on your life, and how?
4. Other than Arthur and Greer, what do you miss most from earlier times?
5. What changes for the better or conveniences of modern times do you like best?
6. How would you like to be remembered?

HOW TO DO THE ACTUAL INTERVIEW

CHOOSE A GOOD TIME FOR THE PERSON TO BE INTERVIEWED

**BRING A PORTABLE TAPE OR DIGITAL AUDIO RECORDER WITH
AT LEAST ONE HOUR RECORDING CAPABILITY**

TRY TO MAKE THEM FEEL COMFORTABLE

**IF POSSIBLE, START BY SHOWING AN OLD PHOTO OR ARTIFACT
THAT WILL BRING BACK A PLEASANT MEMORY**

LET IT FLOW, BUT POLITELY STEER THEM ALONG A TIME LINE

LET IT HAPPEN

SENSE WHEN TO STOP

EXPRESS YOUR HEARTFELT THANKS

**ASSURE THEM THAT THEIR WORDS WILL BE TRANSCRIBED EXACTLY
AND ONLY SHARED RESPONSIBLY**

TRANSCRIBE LATER FROM THE RECORDING – TIME CONSUMING, BUT WORTH IT

Lightly-edited Recorded Interview with Maie Kivett Park on 19 Feb 2000 at her Retirement Home in Columbia, SC

by Bill & Nell Kivett

[First page only]

[The interview begins about 11:00 AM with Maie sitting on her sofa in her apartment, with Bill in the chair to her left, and Nell in a chair across the room from them. Maie was recovering from an injury to her leg, and at the time was restricted to getting about with the assistance of a walker chair. As the tape begins, Bill was in the process of showing Maie a picture of her parents and her Uncle Will and Aunt Rosetta. Just before starting the tape Bill had shown Maie the picture of her father and mother, and as it begins Maie is describing the location of the photograph.]

Beginning of recording

Maie: “ --- And there’s a big tree – you know, the yard was– there’s no trees down there now”.

Bill: “Not much, is it, no they ain’t – No“.

Maie: “ What happened to those trees?”

Bill: “Was it out front – in front of the house – was the big tree there beside the house?”

Maie: “No.” [Pointing with her finger to an imagined map on the coffee table] “You know the house is here, and the tree down here, just as you started up to Uncle Will’s”.

Bill: “ OK – OK”

Maie: “ It was that big tree right there”

Bill: “All right – so that’s where it was. I was trying to think when that was – where it was made. And on the back I’ve got another one that you might recognize them, too.”

Maie: [Turning the page in the book to the picture on the next page] “Oh –Uncle Will and Aunt Rosetty – Yeah! Where was that made?”

Bill: “That was on the front step there at the house – at their house”.

Maie: “Oh”!

Bill: “I think”.

Maie: “Uncle Will was such a sweet person .”

Bill: “You know, I never – he died before I was born, and I know anything about him – we’ll talk a little more about that. What – when you was – going back as you were a child, now, you know – what was some of the first things you could as a youngster down there”? Do you remember – lets go way back”?

Maie: “Oh! – I remember playing – you know George - George was born in 19 – Let’s see, I was born in 1908 – George was born in 1910, I guess.”

Bill: “He was about 3 years younger – 2 or 3 years younger”.

Maie: “ And, we had the best time. Oh – I remember then - we had a little dog names BOZEY. [Laughing] And BOZEY got hit by the - it was a horse. And, so we were just distressed to death, you know, that BOZEY was injured. And he couldn’t walk. The horse – he was lying out there in the yard and the horses started to running and they hit him – kind of on the back. So we took BOZEY down on the branch and made him a bed [Laughing] And then we had a prayer over for BOZEY – you know, that he’d get well. And then we covered him with persimmon leaves [More laughter]”

Bill: “Just you and George”?