

This is Rose Hearn interviewing Mrs. Gladys Jewson in her home at 1918 Nigh Road, Ridgeway, Ontario, and the date is July 29, 1985.

R.H: Good morning Mrs. Jewson.

G.J: Good morning.

R.H: Could you please tell me when you were born?

G.J: Yes, 1900.

R.H: Do you remember what month?

G.J: June 14, 1900.

R.H: And could you tell me where you were born?

G.J: In Fort Erie. Well it's Fort Erie now but it was Bridgeburg then.

R.H: What was it like then? What was the neighbourhood like then, the streets?

G.J: I can't tell you about that, but it was it was different than now, as far as that goes.

R.H: Were the streets paved?

G.J: Oh no, they were dirt roads, and no sewers or anything.

R.H: What kind of stores were there?

G.J: Oh yes, there was stores, Hays, the Hays Store was there, the grocery store, and Mitchell's was the bakery. My mother used to send me down there for a loaf of bread and we got it for 5 cents. Five cents for a loaf of bread and it would be warm, fresh baked.

R.H: Was that Jarvis Street?

G.J: Yeah, that was Jarvis Street.

R.H: And as you say the roads were all dirt roads, but was there sidewalks?

G.J: Yes there was other kind, wood sidewalks. I don't know an awful lot about that.

R.H: What school did you go to?

G.J: Rose Seaton. I passed the entrance, then my father sold out and moved up here, around here.

R.H: Do you remember how old you were when you moved up to the farm?

G.J: Yes I was twelve years old. I passed the entrance that year, and I went to high school from then on.

R.H: Was Rose Seaton called Phipps Street School when you went there?

G.J: Yes.

R.H: Do you remember any of your teachers?

G.J: Well the Gerrards. One was called Jane Gerrard.

R.H: What was the other name?

G.J: Helen.

R.H: Do you remember what the school was like, was it a large or a small school?

G.J: We considered it then quite large, but of course they got larger after that.

R.H: Did you live far from the school, did you have to walk a long way?

G.J: No, my father bought the lot right straight across from the school, and we built a home there, we built us a new home. I just had to cross the road to go to school.

R.H: So you lived right on Phipps Street?

G.J: Right on Phipps Street all the time, and I was born on Phipps Street by the river and then we moved up, farther up north. Mr. Hansel was the principal of the school. It was a continuation school, no high school then at all, just in the one room, and when you passed the entrance why you went into this room that was...

R.H: Did you have uniforms when you went to school?

G.J: No, no, no.

R.H: So you moved to the farm when you were twelve?

G.J: Yes we moved here and right just across the road I still own 45 acres. Mr. Tribble bought it, and he was going to move from Buffalo over here you know...

R.H: Mr. Tribble?

G.J: The real estate man. He bought the farm and my parents moved back to Fort Erie. They lived on Lavinia Street then. We moved back there.

R.H: So there was no electricity in this farm when you came here, was there?

G.J: No, there was no electricity 'till it came, but oh dear I don't remember what year.

R.H: Was that in the twenties?

G.J: I imagine it would be. Beverly probably has it in there. (Mrs. Jewson is referring to her daughter-in-law's family history book).

R.H: Before you had electricity, did you have gas?

G.J: We had gas.

R.H: Gas lights?

G.J: Gas lights, yes.

R.H: Were they like filters or mantles, did you use filters?

G.J: Well, they had mantles.

R.H: And you had to light them with a match?

G.J: The gas lights, yes.

R.H: And then the electricity came in?

G.J: Yes we got the electricity through...Beverly may have it in there.
(Mrs. Jewson is again referring to the family history book) Just show me the book for a minute or two. Now that's Grandpa Jewson, he came out here as a young man in 1880, and his father followed him out here.

R.H: Where did they come from?

G.J: England.

R.H: They were English, were they?

G.J: English yes, and his father followed him out here, and this land was a Crown Grant to the town of Fort Erie at the time of the war between the States and...

R.H: The Civil War or was it the War of 1812?

G.J: 1812 yeah.

R.H: Did they tell you anything about the Fenian raids or anything?

G.J: No, I don't know.

R.H: So they got this land?

G.J: It was a Crown Grant to one of the captains that was in Fort Erie when the war was on, and he sold it to...Grandpa Jewson bought it. Grandpa Jewson came out and bought the farm here then.

R.H: And was this the farm that you came to live at then.

G.J: Yes, I came here in 1919 and I was married in 1919.

R.H: How old were you when you got married?

G.J: I was nineteen....my oldest son was born in 1919 and my other son was born in 1921.

R.H: Did you have a doctor then, and did you go to a doctor?

G.J: A Dr. Mencke.

R.H: Dr. Mencke? Oh yeah I've heard his name, was he your doctor?

G.J: He came out here from Fort Erie 'cause I had no...

R.H: So your child was born at home?

G.J: Oh all my children were born at home.

R.H: And they were all born in this house, and how many children did you have?

G.J: Four, three boys and a girl. The oldest boy was...he went to college that year my daughter was born so he was eighteen years old.

R.H: That was quite a difference in age, right?

G.J: She is the...

R.H: She is the youngest?

G.J: Yes. Ted is the youngest son, and Joanne is six years younger than Ted.

R.H: You went to square dances did you when you were...?

G.J: Yeah, we went to square dances.

R.H: Where did they hold them? Do you know the place where they held them?

G.J: We used to have them around the homes.

R.H: Did they have them in the house, in the homes, oh did they?

G.J: Yes we did.

R.H: Oh did they, in the living room?

G.J: If you had a big room.

R.H: Did you hire fiddlers?

G.J: Yes, there was always somebody to fiddle, and somebody to chord.

R.H: And somebody to do the calling?

G.J: Yes.

R.H: Were they every Saturday, every weekend, or almost...?

G.J: No, no, mostly in the winter 'round in the different homes, we'd just have it.

R.H: Do you remember any of the names of the fiddlers or the callers?

G.J: No I don't.

R.H: Do you remember any bad storms during the winter?

G.J: Yes we had snow, and we were snowed in for quite a long time during the winter.

R.H: Was that way back? Was that when you were younger the winters were bad? Did you find when you were younger that they were worse?

G.J: Well I don't know whether they were or not. Of course we didn't drive cars in the winter then.

R.H: You drove horse and buggy?

G.J: Yeah, horses. My husband had a young team, small team, small horses you know and he used to drive them...he was an insurance agent, he sold insurance on farms.

R.H: Was his office at home?

G.J: Yes, he just worked out of his home, and Ted is doing the same thing.

R.H: What is the name of his insurance...?

G.J: Fort Erie Insurance.

R.H: Is that in Fort Erie?

G.J: He does all kinds of insurance, he does fire, and he does all kinds of insurance, hospital, car...car insurance, Ted does all kinds, but his father didn't...his father just did fire insurance. Bertie and Willoughby it was called at that time.

R.H: This was called Bertie? And what was the main road then, do you remember what the main road was when you were young at that time? Was Nigh Road the main road?

G.J: Nigh Road and Garrison Road.

R.H: Was Garrison Road built up then?

G.J: Not like it is now.

R.H: Did you sell any of your farm produce?

G.J: Yeah the milk truck used to come, and we sold milk 'cause we had jersey cattle.

R.H: You had jersey cattle, did you?

G.J: We had jersey cattle and they liked the jersey milk, the customers did. The holstein milk wasn't so rich.

R.H: So the milk truck used to come here and pick up the milk?

G.J: We used to set the milk out on the stand out at the bottom of the road, and they'd come and pick it up every morning.

R.H: Do you remember the name of that dairy? Was that a dairy you sold it to?

G.J: Fort Erie Dairy, or it was the Ridge Dairy, I don't know what.

R.H: The Ridge Dairy?

G.J: That was Ridgeway, and this was Bridgeburg.

R.H: So that would be the Fort Erie Dairy?

G.J: Yeah.

R.H: Did you ever go on the ferry-boats?

G.J: Oh yes, I used to drive the car over there.

R.H: You had a car?

G.J: Oh yeah we had a Ford, a Model T, and I used to take the kids to Buffalo and I never thought anything of it, now I'd be surprised 'cause now I probably wouldn't touch it.

R.H: What did you pay to get on the ferry-boats, can you remember how much you paid to get on?

G.J: No, I don't remember that.

R.H: Do you remember the names of any of the ferry-boats?

G.J: The Toledo, I can remember that.

R.H: Did you go to Erie Beach?

G.J: Oh yeah, Erie Beach was the thing, they built that dancehall there. We'd go up to the swimming pool.

R.H: Did you go dancing there?

G.J: Oh yeah, we used to go dancing at Erie Beach.

R.H: What was it like? Tell me about it, can you tell me what it was like there?

G.J: What do you mean, at Erie Beach or...

R.H: No, the dancehall. What was it like? Or what it was like at the beach, whatever you want to do?

G.J: Oh I don't know, I didn't think much about it really.

G.J: Do you remember any of the bands, the names of the bands?

G.J: Crystal Beach used to get the big name bands, and they used to go to Crystal Beach.

R.H: Did you go on any of the trains, the little trains that ran...?

G.J: I went to high school by train you know, and the train that ran right along the lake front, it would drive to Ridgeway High School, and there was a little bus...a little station, and it stopped at all the crossroads like, and it went all the way up to school. That's how I went to high school.

R.H: Do you know how long it took you to get there?

G.J: Not very long. I just had to be out there at half past eight.

R.H: And the little train picked you up?

G.J: Yeah.

R.H: Do you remember what Ridgeway High School was like then?

G.J: Yes, it was just a continuation school 'cause it just started in...

R.H: Do you remember any of the teachers there?

G.J: No.

R.H: Or the principal, do you know who the principal was?

G.J: No I don't remember.

R.H: How about the Bertie Fair, do you remember the Bertie Fair?

G.J: Yes I do. We used to go to the Bertie Fair, and as a matter of fact we used to have a bed around the old Townhall.

R.H: Did you sell anything there at all, or what did they do there? What did they have there? Do you know what it was like there? Did they have contests?

G.J: At the Bertie Fair? No I don't remember much about that.

R.H: How did you get there, was it by car?

G.J: Oh yeah we got a car at that time. We had a Model T.

R.H: And you used to drive that to the Bertie Fair?

G.J: Yes.

R.H: Was it on for a week, do you remember how long it was on for?

G.J: Oh the Bertie Fair was only on for one day.

R.H: Oh! It was only one day? And was it in the Fall?

G.J: Yeah, school fairs, they used to have school fairs. The government supplied seeds for the kids to plant, and then they showed them at the school fairs.

R.H: And when you were living in the farmhouse, did you have a telephone?

G.J: Yes we had Bertie Telephone.

R.H: Did you have a telephone in the house?

G.J: Yes, but as I said if you wanted to phone out of town, a distance, you had to go to Sexsmith's. He had Bell. This was Welland County Telephone that we had.

R.H: Oh you had Welland County, I didn't know that, and was the phone just for local calls?

G.J: Yes, it was all party lines and it had rings. So many rings for each person.

R.H: And when you'd dial, did you have to get the operator?

G.J: No, they just rang you. You knew the rings for the neighbours you know, to call.

R.H: So if you wanted to make a long-distance call you had to go to Sexsmith's, and where did he live?

G.J: Yes. He lived south of the creek.

R.H: Was that far from where you lived?

G.J: No, no, just at six mile creek.

R.H: Could you tell me about some of the chores you did on the farm, like what did you make?

G.J: Oh I always smoked the meat, and you know we butchered our own

beef and pigs.

R.H: Did you have a smokehouse?

G.J: Yes, and we still got it I think. I don't know, I think it's still out the back, but I don't get out anymore.

R.H: You had an ice-house I believe?

G.J: Yeah it was part of the house, a room that became the wood-house after that.

R.H: Is that where you kept the milk and things like that?

G.J: The ice-house? No I had an ice-box, and the ice man came around and put ice under there.

R.H: Do you remember the name of the ice company that came and delivered the ice? Do you remember the name of the man who used to...?

G.J: Gorham used to bring the ice to us.

R.H: Do you remember when the Peace Bridge opened?

G.J: Yes I do.

R.H: So you remember the Peace Bridge, when that opened?

G.J: Yes that was quite a day when we got the Peace Bridge.

R.H: Can you tell me about that day, did you see the Prince of Wales?

G.J: Oh I imagine I did, but I can't remember anything about that.

R.H: Was it a big celebration? Was there a lot of people?

G.J: Oh yes, I would say there was a lot of people.

R.H: Did they have marching bands?

G.J: No, I don't know that.

R.H: How long have you lived here Mrs. Jewson?

G.J: Since 1919. I just came across the road. We lived on the farm across the road there, and then after I was married my father sold out to Mr. Tribble the real-estate man, and he subdivided that farm and that's Buffalo Heights now.

R.H: Did you have many neighbours around you?

G.J: Oh yes our neighbour who died last Sunday Lawrence Rohe, their farm ran the same as my husbands.

R.H: Who else was your neighbours, who did you go square dancing with?

G.J: Oh yeah there was family down the road, the McGaw's, they had quite a big family and we used to like to go to the McGaw's.

R.H: Was there anyone else you liked to visit?

G.J: Oh we went around the farms, and different places around.

R.H: And what about card parties, did you have card parties?

G.J: Oh yeah we used to go and play cards.

R.H: What kind of card games did you play?

G.J: Euchre. I wasn't much on bridge, I didn't care much for that.

R.H: So you went to a lot of card parties?

G.J: Oh yeah in the winter, the neighbours used to come in and they'd play cards.

R.H: You didn't have tractors then, did you?

G.J: Our first tractor had steel wheels, they didn't have rubber.

R.H: What did you use before that?

G.J: Horses.

R.H: What other chores did you do, tell me about the chores you did?
What you did?

G.J: Well I used to do lots of things around the farm.

R.H: Did you do a lot of canning too?

G.J: Yes I canned...

R.H: (Mrs. Jewson is looking at the family history book again). Is this the horses your husband had?

G.J: Yes this was our team, they were Sorrels with a light mane you know.

R.H: How long would a team of horses last?

G.J: Oh we had a team for a long time until we got tractors and then...

R.H: And did they cost a lot of money, the horses?

G.J: No they didn't.

R.H: They didn't cost too much?

G.J: Well not so much as they do nowadays.

R.H: No, but have you any idea?

G.J: I can't tell you.

R.H: Was it hundreds?

G.J: Oh yes I suppose it would be a hundred dollars.

R.H: One hundred dollars for a horse?

G.J: I imagine so...

R.H: When you moved in here, did two families live in here?

G.J: Yes we put a partition across our living room. They had the kitchen, and that's my bedroom now.

R.H: So you had two families here and was that your husband's parents?

G.J: My husbands parents, and then they moved to Ridgeway and we had the whole house, and our family was growing then you see.

R.H: Your parents still lived in Fort Erie?
G.J: Yes Fort Erie on Lavinia Street.
R.H: Did you go visit them a lot?
G.J: Well they visited us a lot.
R.H: Did you see the changes in the Northend?
G.J: Oh yes some. Once the Peace Bridge opened why Fort Erie changed. Bridgeburg changed.
R.H: Did you stop using the ferry-boats then, and start using the bridge then to go to Buffalo?
G.J: Yeah we used to use the bridge, but as long as the ferry-boats run we'd use that too.
R.H: What were the ferry-boats like, do you remember?
G.J: They were just ferry-boats that's all.
R.H: I've never seen one.
G.J: Well they would just load the cars in on them.
R.H: Where did you pick it up? Do you know the name of the dock where you picked it up, where you went to get the ferry-boat?
G.J: Yeah it was right at the end of the...oh I can't tell you now.
R.H: Was it Niagara Boulevard?
G.J: Yeah.
R.H: Do you remember what Niagara Boulevard was like, do you remember what it was like there? The streets?
G.J: No I don't. (Mrs. is looking at the family history book)
R.H: Your husband was in politics?
G.J: Yes he was...oh what do you call that...
R.H: Council, on the Council?
G.J: On the Council, yeah.
R.H: The Town Council?
G.J: Yeah.
R.H: For Bridgeburg?
G.J: No for Bertie.
R.H: Oh for Bertie Township?
G.J: He was a Councilman but never for Bridgeburg.
R.H: Who was the Mayor when he was the Councilman?
G.J: Hershey. The Hershey's lived out here on Rosehill Road.
R.H: Did you get involved with his politics?
G.J: No, not particularly...(Mrs. Jewson is looking at the book) She should

have some pictures of some snow...

R.H: What is that? (Pointing to photograph of an antique washer)

G.J: A wooden washer.

R.H: Is that what you used?

G.J: Yes that was mine. It was the one used in the home in 1919.

R.H: So you used a wooden washer?

G.J: It wasn't electric you see, I had to work it by hand. There's the cream separator. We used to put the milk through that every time and take the cream out. (Mrs. Jewson is looking at objects in book)

R.H: You took the cream out with that, you separated the cream from the milk, did you?

G.J: Yeah...and that old stove is still up the back stairs up in the storeroom.

R.H: Is that what you did your cooking on?

G.J: No, no, no, that was our heater...(Mrs. Jewson is looking at photographs of various objects in book) See there's a lot of gaslights, original gaslight fixtures. There's an electric meter on the outside pantry wall, yeah that's just a meter. (Still looking at book) That's the telephone. The attic stairs going up toward the hired hand's room.

R.H: You had a hired man working for you?

G.J: We always had a hired man.

R.H: So you had hired men to do the chores?

G.J: Yeah they helped with the chores, and they worked for a dollar a day then and with their meals.

R.H: And they lived right here?

G.J: Well some of them did. We paid twenty dollars a month for a hired man that lived in.

R.H: How many did you have at a time?

G.J: We just had one.

R.H: You just had one at a time, and were they local people, or did they come from out of town?

G.J: Usually they were local.

R.H: Did you have any girls working for you?

G.J: Yeah, I used to have some come in.

R.H: What did they do?

G.J: Whatever you asked them to do.

R.H: I mean, what kind of work did they do?

G.J: They did everything, they helped with the house...

R.H: (Looking at the book again) This is a Crown Grant?
G.J: Yes.
R.H: From King George 111, fascinating. What's the log house, (pointing to photograph in book) do you know anything about the log house?
G.J: Where do you see that? (Looking at book)
R.H: It says the site of the original log house. Was this a log house before...?
G.J: This is the site of original log house. Oh yeah that's the old cellar that was...where the garden is now down along the orchard.
R.H: There was a log house there, was there?
G.J: Yes that's all I ever saw of the log house, was the cellar that was there. The old cellar...
R.H: What did you keep in the ice-house? Where was the ice-house?
G.J: Out the back door there...
R.H: And that's where you kept...
G.J: They cut the ice out of the quarries or out of the lake in the winter and brought it in and packed it in sawdust, and then that's the way we used to get our ice then, until we had the ice man come out later.
R.H: Oh that was an improvement over the other. Who had to go to the lake and get the ice? Your husband, did he have to go and get it himself?
G.J: Yes, and the neighbours. Everybody helped. Each one had an ice-house so they would help. Each one helped the other.
R.H: They brought it back on the buggy, the horse and buggy?
G.J: Sleighs.
R.H: Sleighs! Oh you had sleighs for the wintertime, did you?
G.J: Oh, big sleighs we had.
R.H: Yes I guess you would have to, wouldn't you?
G.J: We sure did.
R.H: Yeah, and you went out on the sleighs to get what you needed?
G.J: Yes.
R.H: Did you use them also for fun times?
G.J: Yes.
R.H: Did you use them for going visiting too?
G.J: Oh yes sometimes...
R.H: Did you have an outhouse?
G.J: Oh yes.

R.H: Did you have indoor plumbing here when you moved in?

G.J: No, no, no, we had an outhouse out the back...

R.H: When did you get the plumbing in?

G.J: Oh dear I can't remember that.

R.H: Maybe in the 40's?

G.J: Probably, has she got it in there that it was in the 40's when we got the plumbing. (Mrs. Jewson is referring to the book again).

R.H: It says (in the book) 1945,1950, when the water came into the sink. You got the water into the sink in the kitchen in 1950, and before that you had no indoor plumbing. That must have been tough. How did you get your water, from a pump?

G.J: Right there, (Mrs. Jewson is pointing to an old water pump outside the house) and it still works.

R.H: Yeah, and that's where you got your water?

G.J: That's where we got the water, from a cistern. There's a cistern underneath the house.

R.H: And you'd have to heat it on the stove for...?

G.J: I'd heat it for washing, and bathing.

R.H: Did you have a big tub for the baths?

G.J: Yes...

R.H: Thank-you very much for the interview Mrs. Jewson.