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H.H. Douglas interviewing  
Mrs. Mary R. Finks, and  
Henry C. Jenkins, Buckland  
Farm employee and resident  
in a farm tenant house on  
Buckland Mill Road across  
from Mrs. Finks.

Mrs. Finks:

This room we are in was the original house built  
by the old preacher, John Trone.

As his family grew, he put on several additions.  
He had an office over the top of one of the ad-  
ditions where he used to marry people.

He was a lay preacher. He preached here, at  
Sully -- all around.

/Did he get around by walking?/

Yes, mostly. I don't know whether he even had  
a horse or not.

Jenkins:

He had both a blacksmith and a wheelwright  
shop here. One of them was on the other side of  
the old gravel, dirt road which has been changed  
and is now the highway. There was an old toll-  
gate between here and Haymarket. It cost you  
15¢ to get through. A man stayed there to pull  
the pole up, let you through, and put it back down.

The old road wasn't the present Route 15. Just  
across Broad Run there you turn left. That used  
to go to Haymarket.

Mrs. Finks:

/When did John Trone build the house?/

The Lord knows, I sure don't. But he was here during the Civil War. He had lived here for some time before that. One time a northern officer wanted him to shoe his horse.

"No, I won't do it," said John Trone.

"By God, you will."

"Maybe God will do it, but John Trone won't."

And he didn't shoe 'em.

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Mrs. Finks:

I was born in Warrenton. I've lived in Buckland about 35 years -- something like that. We left Warrenton when I was five years old. We lived down to Greenwich twelve years.

I spent the rest of my time in Washington until I married and come up here.

/How did you happen to come up here to live?/

The man I married owned this house. He had bought it from his stepdaddy. He was raised here from the time he was twelve.

John Trone had a lot of daughters around here. One of them lived right near here. The house burned down. One of the Trone daughters was a Fletcher.

/How much land do you have here?/

Two acres and a forth.

/35 years ago everything was very different here./

I know, and just remember I'll be 84 my birthday, July 4, 1890.

/What was it like around here when you first came?/

I liked it better than I do now because there lots of people here that was older than me and it was all different, but now there's mostly young people. All the old people are gone. Some moved away and lots of 'em died.

The highway took several houses. Dr. Brown and Dr. Kerfoot used to live in the first house across the highway on the route.

/Who lived in Buckland Tavern when you first came?/

Nobody. It was falling down. It was empty all during the 1930s and 1940s.

/One of \_\_\_\_\_ Payne's daughters, Minna, married George B. Stone. The house was in the Payne family for a long time. Did the Stones ever live there?/

Yes, they lived there, but I don't know when or for how long. 5

The Fishbacks lived there for a while and ran a store right by the house. It burned down. I was very young when it happened. I was living over here in Greenwich when it burnt down.

The post office was here in this house. When Mr. Trone got so he couldn't handle it, they put it in the store. Then when the store burned, they put it down there where Mrs. Leitch lives. After that it was moved to Gainesville. John Sweeney's father used to run it at Gainesville. Then he died and his son, John R. Sweeney, Jr., took it over. He has retired. He lives just up the road here (Buckland Mill Road). He retired a long time ago -- yes, much more than fourteen years ago.

Jenkins:

John Sweeney, Sr., was postmaster in Gainesville from the time it was moved from Buckland. When he died, John, Jr., took it over.

I remember when John's daddy used to drive two horses to a mail cart. Had the lines stickin' out through the window. Them old horses would pull up to your mail box, he'd put the mail in and go on down the road.

There was a square hole through the "windshield" for the lines. You run your lines through that hole, set back and those old horses would pull off at every mail box.

The "carts," "buggies," "wagons" were a regular post office model with shelves and pigeon holes inside to sort the mail.

/When did John Sweeney, Sr., die?/

Oh, Lord, I won't know.

/What was this road like 35 years ago?/

In 1927 we got the first hard top through here.

/That's when they were building Lee Highway  
clear across the country./

That's right. It was poured concrete. I  
was just a kid and worked on that bridge down  
there knocking nails out of the boards. In that  
lot right where I live was where they kept the  
mules /for the road work/.

The road then was all a bit south of the south  
lane of the new highway.

When they cut that hill down /in the direc-  
tion of Warrenton/ they gave those old people  
\$50.00 for what was most of the land they owned,  
clear up to the church property.

They're just as bad now. If you don't give it  
to 'em, they'll take it away from you.

Back then nearly everything was horses and  
buggies, with a few Model T Fords comin' up.  
When the depression hit, it was mostly Model Ts.  
The first car I ever drove was an old Model T  
Ford. One of the first cars was electric.

Mrs. Finks:

There was one coming through from Washington to  
Manassas and Warrenton. They let school out. Boy,

you oughta seen the kids settin' on the roadside.

It came by alright, a little old things about three feet wide just chuggin' along like crazy.

Mrs. Finks:

We later had an old Model T Ford -- had two of 'em.

Mr. Jenkins:

My father had a 1922 Model T.

/Did you have any stores here?/

Yes, Haymarket, New Baltimore, and here. We always went to New Baltimore for our shopping.

They had a mill and everything up there. And

they had a mill over across the road here.

Tote two bushels of corn on an old horse and bring it to the mill. The man would grind it and I'd put it back on the horse and I'd take it home. I was too little to get down and get it.

/What did they call the mill at New Baltimore?/

Just the New Baltimore mill. It wasn't a water mill, it was run by motore--gasoline motors. It never was a water mill.

This mill here did a good business. It was the Calvert Mill. I believe he built it. First it was a woolen mill, then they made it a grist mill.

Mrs. Calvert showed me the old foundations. A big flood about the time I came here washed it away. There used to be a big dam down there.

I used to love to lay in bed and hear that water running over that dam.

/What year was the flood you are talking about?/

That first flood? I don't know. Maybe it was in the 1930s.

/It probably was part of the terrible 1936 floods./

Yes, it could have been.

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/Where were you born, Mr. Jenkins?/

Bethel -- just over here on Route 17. I've lived around here all my life, -- in both Fauquier and Prince William.

/What was the first work you did as a youngster?/

The first work I did was on a farm. Been on a farm all my life except for two years I worked for the State Highway Department. I quit that and come here on the 6th of July -- on the 6th of July I've been here at Buckland Farm for 37 years.

/That would have been July 6, 1937, that you came./

I've lived in the little house across the road for 22 years. Its a Buckland Farm tenant house. There are two of 'em. The rest of the time I lived over just this side of Vint Hill Army Station. That used to be Mrs. Roberts' father's farm. I lived over there and walked over to Buckland Farm and worked for her.

Oh, yes, I knew Mrs. Roberts before she owned Buckland Farm. When I first worked here, it was

for her. She took over in 1940.

Before that I was working for Burt Creel, Dan Ritenour, and all them before that time -- on the Armstrong farm and Vint Hill. You see, Mr. Harrison owned them all.

Buckland	500 acres
Armstrong (Acorn)	350 acres
Vint Hill	1300 acres

The government took all of Vint Hill.

/When Mrs. Roberts came to Buckland Farm, did she make a lot of changes?/

Oh, yes. She had the house remodeled. When she took it over, the house was stuccoed on the outside. So we dug all that off and the contractor pointed the rocks up.

The interior was a mess, too. All down in the basement was nothing but a dirt floor, wasn't no rooms down there at all. They'd been keeping chickens, turkeys, and every durned thing there.

We cleaned it all out. Charlie Grant was the contractor that done the work on that house -- inside and outside. He's dead now.

Mrs. Roberts also did a lot of fencing around the farm and made quite a few changes. She cleaned it up a whole lot.

When she started, she brought 10 Angus heifers and a bull. When she sold out, we sold 185 cows and a bull. Not the same bull, no sir, no-o-o. No.



Jack Solomon of Gallagher's Steak House in N.Y. bought the farm.

He bought it from A. G. Post from the other side of Fairfax. Post had it two years.

Mrs. Roberts sold to Post, who sold to Solomon.

Solomon kept it about twelve years and sold it to Mr. and Mrs. Evans. Mr. Evans has had it eighteen years.

Solomon also raised Angus. He sold out the old Roberts herd and brought his herd in from up in N.J.

Mrs. Finks:

Did he drive em in. I remember one time somebody drove cows in here someplace -- loads of em. They were driving 'em on the road -- oh, that was John Sweeney. He had lived in Gainesville. When he retired, he built the stone house back here on Buckland Mill Road. When he moved, he drove about 100 head of cattle up the road, with horses, people walking, and they were all over the yards. He had Angus, too.

During World War II they drove a big herd of horses through here. They came through Warrenton-- stayed there all night.

They were driving them down somewhere (maybe Fort Myer) before shipping them across the water. It was beautiful to see all them horses going down the road -- men aridin' them -- a soldier on every horse.

/Yes, World War II was the last time the Army had cavalry. That was the end./

After that they got to carrying the soldiers by in trucks.

I don't know where they came from. The only re-mount station I knew of was at Front Royal.

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Mrs. Finks:

Nearly all the old people here have gone. All young-uns are coming in now. It gets right lonely.

No, I'm not the farm manager, Don Robertson is. He's been here nine years. Came from Kentucky. He's a professional horse man.

/How many horses?/

If you had 'em all together it'd be about 200. They are all around -- here and at the race tracks.

/Do you win many races?/

We made right smart this year.

/You win more than you lose?/

Well, 50-50, I guess.

We had one running today. I hope she wins. It's a \$100,000 race.

/Do you ever go with the horses?/

I just haul 'em back and forth in the truck. I don't stay there. I go to Florida, New York,

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Kentucky, and different places -- just unload and come back.

/What's the most famous horse you've had?/

The best one was Sea Saga. She's here at the farm now with a foal. She's won the most money for us. Mr. Evans paid \$225,000 for her mother. I raised Sea Saga myself. She raced up until last year. We bred her last year and she foaled this year. She won't race any more.

/How long has Mr. Finks been gone?/

He's been gone fourteen years. He was an automobile mechanic, most anything that came his way.

Jenkins:

He was one of the best there was. I used to get up and take him to the hospital any time of the night when he needed a doctor. He was a real honest-to-goodness gentleman.

Mrs. Finks:

He couldn't get his brother to take him no place. He died in Charlottesville of emphysema. He was there eleven days. He came to this house right here when he was twenty years old-- from Bealeton.

He lived here the rest of his life.

His stepfather was a lumberman--sawyer-- in this area. Once he almost got his leg sawed

off. ~~His~~ helper started the saw without looking.

It went to the bone but he jumped just in the nick of time.

/What kind of a bridge was the first one you remember over Broad Run here?/

Jenkins:

It was a little iron truss bridge. They replaced it in 1927. I never did see a date on it. I worked there as a kid pulling nails out of the form boards -- for \$1.50 a day.

When they poured the concrete for the bridge we always put a penny into the cement. There used to be a old fellow up here, he was kind of nutty anyway, Tom Delaplane -- we went down there with a chisel and got all the pennies. There was one in every post of both sides.

The road, as they built it in 1927, was poured concrete.

Mr. Jenkins departs.

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Mrs. Finks:

Mr. Jenkins has eighteen children -- no, more than that for five of 'em died. There are about seventeen living and all are married but one. He's got about fourteen grandchildren, I believe. The youngest daughter just got married. He had all those children in that small house, but now they've all got away but one. When he

first moved there there was only four rooms. He built one room on the back and two on the south end. He had a hard time raisin' them children and takin' care of 'em, but he took care of 'em.

/Were there any outstanding incidents that took place in and around Buckland./

We-ell, it was always a quiet place. It's still a quiet place.

We had some excitement when the store just across the highway, right next to the tavern, burned. Mr. Sanders and Mr. Fisher ran the store. The post office was in the store. When the store caught fire, they moved the post office down to where Mrs. Leitch lives now. I wasn't here then.

I used to go over and see Mrs. Bear. Whenever I cooked anything extra, I'd always carry her some. Later one she got sick and couldn't gwt nobody to do nothin' for her or help her out. One time she talked of having an elderly man live in the house and look after everything, but when she found that he drank and smoked, she would have none of it.

When she came here that house was nothing but a shell. She fixed it all up. The stone work on the other end was cracked open so bad the

kids could squeeze through, from the top all the way down. Mr. Thorp and another fixed it for Mrs. Bear. I was away for a while after she came, and when we got back the wall was all fixed.

Mrs. Bear had a nice great big pond on this side of the house before the highway was widened. There were frogs 'n fish and everything in it. The highway taking it had a sad effect on Mrs. Bear. The highway trucks came along with dirt and rocks and just dumped it all right into the pond on top of all the frogs and fish. Mrs. Bear really grieved over that. "The place is ruined" she said. It was really a big, pretty pond. The highway went right through it. She used to sit on her porch at night and listen to the frogs.

Buckland used to be a nice place to live one time. Now there's so many different people coming in -- young people and others who don't know or care about what the place once was.

My husband told Mrs. Bear she should make a will so everything would be definite. Otherwise the house could stand there for years and years -- could even fall to the ground, which it almost did before she bought it.

She wouldn't make a will -- she said she had one.

That lawyer doesn't do a thing -- doesn't even keep the place clean.

I've got my will fixed so that everything will be fixed, and nobody can come walkin' in and take whatever they want. My husband waited to the last minute to make a will. If he hadn't made one, his old stepbrother would have stepped in here and took about everything away from me. But he made a will and I got everything, and his stepbrother got mad with me.

Mother died at 69, Daddy died when he was 94. I'm still going.