

Memories of Ravensworth
An Interview With Mr. Douglas Dove

TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT YOURSELF, MR. DOVE, WHEN AND WHERE YOU WERE BORN AND SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR EARLY LIFE.

I'm Douglas Dove and I was born at a little place halfway between Annandale and Fairfax on Little River Turnpike, little place called Ilda -- I-L-D-A -- just a wide place in the road, about three miles east of Fairfax Court House. I was born in 1911. My mother died in 1913 and my grandparents, the Nelsons, took me to raise. They did a fine job. You can't beat grandmothers.

On my father's side, my grandfather's brothers, my great uncles, they served the Confederate cause in the Civil War. The Nelsons came over here after the war.

Gen. Robert E. Lee's two daughters [Mildred and Mary Custis? See note below] went over to Sweden and talked my grandfather, who was 12 years old at the time, and my uncle, who was older and married, into coming over here. The Lees lived in West Point, Va. then, they wasn't at Ravensworth. My grandfather worked for the Lees and his brother went up to Maine. I don't know what year that was, sometime after the Civil War. He homesteaded some land in Maine and became a successful farmer up there.

WHEN DID YOU START LIVING AT RAVENSWORTH?

My grandparents lived in the stable on Ravensworth, over the carriage house. They had a three-room apartment up there. It was a nice place. When you walked up the steps and made a left there was the kitchen, straight through was a bedroom and then we had the living room in the middle. It was an L-shaped set up. The horses never bothered us. They had three or four and my grandfather kept the stable real clean. We never had any flies. Underneath our apartment was the carriage house. They had the carriages underneath and the apartment over the top of them on one side and on the other were the horses and over them the hayloft. Finally they put a car in there. Later Dr. Lee [George Bolling] was partners with some lady up in New York and they was raisin' race horses. They had mares there and they done away with the carriage house and put box stalls in there, about five or six of them. And then they built a barn on the end, but that was after I left. They had about four more stalls out there. I don't think the breeding was very successful.

We heated the place with a wood stove and used kerosene lamps to light the place.

Just about the time I came there to live, Mrs. Lee, Dr. Lee's mother, was moving from the place. She moved over into the Stoney Courts [sp?] Apartments on Connecticut Avenue, in

Washington. That was about 1914. She had a real nice colored lady by the name of Carey Newman who was her cook; Sam Ayres, a white man, was a butler there. My grandfather used to take a team and go over there every so often, when Mrs. Lee would want something picked up or delivered. You know how women are, always rootin' around in junk. She wouldn't even invite us to have a cup of coffee or a sandwich when we'd go over. They said she was a spendthrift, I don't know, you know how gossip gets around. There was a man by the name of Charlie Bladen, a blacksmith out in Annandale, he got so he wouldn't shoe her horses because he had to wait too long for his money. But she was living off a trust fund and I think her budget was very tight.

Otherwise, she was a very generous person, always giving me things. She'd always give me an Easter basket every year. When she died they moved all her stuff back to Ravensworth. I don't remember her first name anymore [Mary Tabb Bolling]. I always called her "Mrs. Lee." She was a great big woman. She had a hearing problem and had to use a thing like a teapot she put up to her ear to listen. She used to come out and stay at Ravensworth, had a room up over the east wing. She used to call for me to come by when she was there and she'd throw Hershey bars to me out of the window. She was always giving me something.

She died in Richmond. I went to the funeral. My grandfather and Mr. Sigismund [sp?] and Glenn Newman, he was drivin' the car, and me all went down. There was a lot of people there. After the funeral they put her on the train to send her to Lexington, Va., where all the Lees are buried at.

Mr Bob [Robert E. Lee, Jr., son of Gen. W. H. F. Lee], Dr. Lee's older brother, was there too and he still lived there for a year or two after his mother moved away. I never did know his wife. He got married and moved away to Washington afterward and died in 1922. He used to go to that theater, the Knickerbocker, that fell in 1922 and killed some people, but he wasn't there that night, of course. He was a very big man physically, weighed over 300 pounds.

DID YOU CALL HIM "COLONEL BOB"?

We always used to call him "Mister Bob." He was a lawyer, well educated. But his brother said he was lazy, wouldn't work, that's what Dr. Lee said about him, said if he didn't quit eating so much and loafing around so much he was going to die young, and sure enough, Dr. Lee was right.

WHAT KIND OF A MAN WAS HE?

Oh, he was a nice guy. He taught Sunday school at Good

Sheppard Church on Braddock Road for years. That was where the shopping center is now, at the intersection of Braddock and Backlick roads. They relocated the church to Olley Lane when they built the shopping center. He had an old horse named Bob that he used to drive up there. I'll never forget the time he was up there teaching and he had old Bob with him and he was coming back. At Long Branch, on Braddock, just above Accotink Run, there was no bridge, you had to go through the water. The water was up that day and old Bob must have gotten scared by the rushing water and shied and Mr. Bob hit him with the whip, which he shouldn't have done. Bob made a good big lunge and jerked loose of the buggy and left him sitting there in the creek. Bob came on home and left him down there in the creek and my grandfather caught him and went back and he gave Mr. Bob the devil, said he never should have hit the horse, he would have brought him on out if he'd just let him alone.

Mr. Bob was a sociable kind of man, he was always carrying on with a lot of foolishness. He had this old dog, Kate, and she was everybody's pet, and she liked to suck eggs. I went into the hen house and got a dozen eggs and Sam Ayres caught me, with these eggs all laid out on the grass and the dog was eatin' 'em. He told Mr. Bob and he had a kangaroo court. My grandfather was there too. I don't know who he was makin' fun of, me or Sam, but he asked me what I'd done. I told him I knowed Kate liked eggs and I just wanted to help out. He said, "Sam, I don't believe we got no case here. We're liable to get sued ourselves. It was my dog and my eggs and Douglas thought the dog was hungry and he give her the eggs. That was a nice way for him to do. Case dismissed!" He was a lawyer by training but he never practiced law.

One night he was going to Ravensworth Station on the Carriage Road and it was dark and he couldn't half see, and he thought he saw a package in the road. When he picked it up he found it was a skunk and the damned skunk "perfumed" him real good. They had a summer house up in the garden on the estate and they hung his clothes up there to air out and they couldn't never get the smell out of them.

Another time he was walking back from the station and Accotink Creek was up and they had a tree throwed across as a footlog, you know. And he fell off it into the damn creek, old man Bob did. He made a joke of it. He said there was two frogs a hollerin'. One of 'em was hollerin' "You better go 'round!" and the other was hollerin' "Knee deep!" and he said he didn't pay no attention to him and that's why he fell in. You oughta heard him tell it. Make a pig laugh.

I remember Mr. Bob tellin' my grandfather and laughin' about

the time his mother had a whole lot of friends from Washington out there at Ravensworth for a big dinner. They served these little round balls of potato and they was hot. Mr. Bob was eatin' with 'em, see and he put this potato in his mouth and it was hot. He rolled it around a few times and then spit it out in his plate and embarrassed his mother. She gave him the devil. He said he wasn't bothered a damn bit about those guests, they made him sick anyway. These were all high-falutin' society people from Washington.

WHAT DID HE DO FOR A LIVING THEN?

Nothin'. He set on his butt and eat, that's what his brother said.

WHERE'D HIS INCOME COME FROM?

That's a big question. I wondered about that myself. His aunts, Gen. Robert E. Lee's two daughters,* Mary Lee and Nellie Custis I think their names were, I don't know where they got their money from either. Anyway, there was 10,000 acres to that place when the Lees inherited it. Braddock Road was the north border; Backlick Road was the east border; and Rolling Road was the west border, but I don't remember where the border was on the south. But I don't now where they got their money from.

Anyway, World War I broke out and there was a big demand for lumber, so they started selling some of their property to the pulpwood people.

Mr. Bob always gave me a pair of high-top shoes for Christmas and his mother was always giving me clothes of all kinds and everything. She was a nice lady.

CAN YOU TELL ME SOMETHING ABOUT DR. LEE?

Dr. Lee was a pretty nice guy, a big fat fella, overweight all the time and smoked cigarettes all the time, lit one from the butt of the other. And he was a damn doctor. He told me that Mr. Bob would die if he didn't stop eating so much. He liked to eat steamed rice and steak.

I got to know Dr. Lee pretty good. One time him and I went down to Widewaters, Va., and I like to froze to death. He had

*Gen. R. E. Lee's two sisters Anne (1800-1864) and Mildred (1811-1856) both died before the Lees inherited Ravensworth. This statement refers to Maj. Gen. William H. Fitzhugh ("Rooney") Lee's two sisters, Mary Custis (1835-1918) and Mildred (1846-1904).

some relatives down there. They had a bunch of ships out in the water, old World War I ships parked out there on the Potomac and he wanted me to go down there with him one day to go duck huntin'. They carried us out to an old blind and had a dog that would run out and get the damn ducks. I didn't have a gun. We'd have to pull this old dog up into the blind and he'd shake that water off on all of us. It was about zero weather, cold as hell and I'm tellin' you, it was terrible.

Once there was this damn circus come to Washington, the 101 Ranch, I never will forget that thing. This was way back in about '28. The boys I worked with wanted to go to this circus but none of 'em had any transportation, so I asked Dr. Lee if I could borrow the new Dodge touring car he had. "Go ahead and take it," he said. We parked about two or three blocks from the entrance to the circus. It was in a lumber yard. Everybody was going towards the circus when we went in and when we came out everybody was going in every direction and we forgot where we'd parked the damned car. Couldn't find it for about a hour. That's a bad feelin'. Back in them days in Washington, D.C., the policeman was walkin' the beat, you know. We met one and told him somebody stole the car. He helped us look and eventually we found it. Real nice guy. I told Dr. Lee about it afterward and he laughed like hell.

Dr. Lee had an office in the Plaza Hotel in New York City. He was a surgeon. He would visit Ravensworth once or twice a month. It was recreation for him. He wanted to get away from it all. All hours of the night they'd call him, they'd have emergency cases up in New York and he'd have to go back in a hurry. I'll never forget one night he called me, I guess about 2 a.m., and I drove him over to Union Station and he goes in to buy his ticket and the lady was tryin' to be nice to him but he was a little excitable. She was tellin' him about the different trains and it upset him and he said, "I don't give a damn what it costs, I want to catch the fastest thing out of here to New York!"

In 1919 or 1920 Dr. Lee bought a Model T station wagon, they called 'em Dayton's back in them days. This was before he ran the dairy on Ravensworth. He got a nutty idea he wanted to go to Warrenton and buy some cows, so him, my grandfather and I went to Leesburg, cut through to Middleburg and then on over to Warrenton. We never got there until midnight, the roads was real bad. We went over muddy roads and he choked the engine and it didn't have no starter on it, we had to get out and crank it. We put skid chains on in Middleburg and lost one of them. It rained the whole time. It was in September or October. We had a hell of a time gettin' there. That's the first time I ever stayed in a hotel in my life, was in the Warrenton Green Hotel. I believe he bought 35 head and had 'em shipped to Burke Station. We was

comin' in the back way from Burke and a lot of the cows got away over into the woods. We was about six months getting six of them back. They got wild.

CAN YOU DESCRIBE THE MANSION AND THE GROUNDS FOR ME?

Oh, the grounds were beautiful. The front lawn was 30 acres and my granddaddy used to run the mowin' machine over it and put the hay in the barn for the horses. That was a horse-drawn mowing machine.

Inside were all kinds of old things hanging up there, portraits of the Fitzhughs, I guess. I was all through it many times but I can't tell you too much of the details any more. They had a great big parlor with all these paintings hanging around over the walls. I seem to remember that the house had 32 rooms in it. The attic was just full of junk. This was before my time and is only hearsay, but I'm sure it's so that Gen. Robert E. Lee [Maj. Gen. William H. F. Lee, see previous note] had a couple of unmarried daughters and when they passed away they put all that junk in the attics. Mrs. Lee, Dr. Lee's mother, would come down there, get an itch to see something she knew was up there. She'd take my grandfather and Sam and hire a couple of other men and they'd go up there and search all day in this junk. Oh, my God, it was a terrible mess! There were rats and mice and squirrels in there. When she got through each one of those men would have a wagonload of things she'd given them, see. Oh, them attics in the main part of the house and in the wings was just full of stuff.

I guess that's how it caught on fire. You know, back in them days they had these matches that would strike anywhere. If you didn't keep them in a tin box, the mice would eat through and strike 'em. They accused Russell Wood of setting the fire that destroyed the mansion, but I don't know if he had anything to do with it or not. That was in 1926.

YOU THINK THE FIRE GOT STARTED BECAUSE OF NATURAL CAUSES?

I think so. I'm not sure. That's my personal opinion because I don't think anybody had a reason to set that place afire. Everybody around the country there respected the Lees.

DID THEY HAVE ELECTRICITY IN THAT HOUSE?

No. Every room had a fireplace in it. Sam Ayers and my grandfather would gather wood for the place. Mrs. Lee stayed in a big room in the house that was full of comforters and blankets and sheets and pillowcase and everything. It was really a shame the place had to catch afire. They only had \$35,000 insurance on

the place.

After Mr. Bob died his widow came in for her share. But the Lees did everything they could to keep her from gettin' it. They fought her in court and everything else to keep her from gettin' Mr. Bob's part. She was living in Washington. Mr. Bob died before his mother. I don't remember anything about Mr. Bob's wife, I think I met the lady but that was all. I tell you what I heard, this is hearsay, they had \$35,000 insurance on the old home place and they give her that for her part.

DO YOU REMEMBER THE FIRE?

Oh, yes, I was there that night, maybe half an hour, an hour after it started. We couldn't get nothin' out of the main part of the house. We just saved the stuff in the east wing. I don't recall what was saved, they had it all piled out there on the lawn. I helped carry that stuff out. There was a lot of people there helpin' out. Mr. Sigismund [?], he was a Swiss fella that lived in the neighborhood, he was there and he kinda took over and told people what to do and watched us. In a situation like that there was always somebody wanted to pick up somethin' and carry it home with 'em. That fire must have burned for a day or two. After the house fell in the ashes smoldered for a long time. We was livin' down near Accotink Run in a tenant house and my grandfather woke me up around 3 or 4 a.m., said he believed the old house was on fire.

After, Glenn Newman and Russell Wood and I went down to Lorton to get some bloodhounds, to see if we could pick up a trail, because they suspected arson. But when we got there the man who handled them was off and we couldn't get them.

Russell Wood was a little bit retarded. They thought he might have done it, see. They accused Russell Wood of doin' it but I don't think he did.

I THOUGHT YOU WERE LIVING IN THE CARRIAGE HOUSE APARTMENT THEN.

What happened, we was livin' in the stable, my grandfather and me and Mr. Downs come out to run the farm. He was a good farmer. He had a flock of sheep up there grazing on the lawns. He had an old ram. My grandmother couldn't hang the clothes on the line because this ram would see her and come up and butt her. I just took a stick and knocked the hell out of him but he bothered my grandmother. So we moved down on Braddock into our own house. My grandparents had a house of their own down there on five acres of land, right on Accotink Run.

THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN JUST WEST OF WHERE RAVENSWORTH SHOPPING CENTER IS NOW?

Yes. It was down on the right side of Braddock Road, going west. Dr. Lee got the a nutty idea, after his mother passed on, that he wanted my grandparents to live on the place, so he fixed this house up. It was a tenant house across the road where the Ravensworth Farm subdivision is now. He had a couple of guys come in, fix it up and paint it and we moved up there, which we shouldn't have done. He wanted my grandfather to work all day and live on the place and look out after things.

My grandmother died in 1926 and my grandfather and I was livin' there by ourselves, so we decided to move back into the stables. A Mr. Allen was running the farm then and I got a job working there on the farm.

WHAT KIND OF CROPS DID YOU GROW AT RAVENSWORTH?

They raised corn and wheat, sugar beets, and had a dairy farm. They had four 30-acre fields in crops there. They only had 440 acres by then. Mr. Allen and I worked that farm about a year and he left and a man by the name of Carnell [sp?] came in there to run the place. He had a bunch of sons and sonsinlaw, so I worked for him. We were milking 10 or 12 cows then, I guess. Dr. Lee bought ten heifers from up North somewhere. He paid \$500 apiece for 'em, Holsteins.

When Carnell came in I worked for him for about a month. That was the turning point in my life. That was in 1928. When Dr. Lee would come out I'd drive the car over to Union Station in Washington, pick him up there and then take him back. We had a 1927 Dodge touring car, a nice car; he bought it brand new. We had a 1922 model before that, which we turned in.

So they had a 30-acre garden there that had been neglected for 10 or 20 years, and Dr. Lee told me that he'd give me \$15 a month to stay there and help Andrew and Sam Ayers take care of it. Sam had worked there all his life and his father had been gardener there before him. I can just remember his father, a nice old man.

But Mrs. Lee sharecropped the place. You know sharecroppers, they take everything off and don't put a damned thing back, so the farm got in bad shape. They had a man named Judd there. He came from Culpeper but he didn't stay long before he went back. Then Dr. Lee took over, that's when he bought the cows. They had a man named Jordan Downs who came down from Vermont or somewhere and then he left. Then a fellow named Wood came out. He was a good dairyman and his son's the one they

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accused of burning the house down. Both he and Downs were good men. I never seen one man do so much work by himself as Mr. Woods did. I worked for Downs, who ran the farm: a dollar a day and my dinner is what I was paid. He was a real farmer. After a couple of years the old farm was back in good shape.

Anyway, when Dr. Lee offered me \$15 a month to work that garden, I told him I was going to try to find another job, so I went to Arlington County and got me a job, \$3.20 a day for eight hours of work a day. I thought I was flyin'. I worked for the county highway department. That was about 1929.

DO YOU REMEMBER IF THERE WERE EVER ANY PEACOCKS AT RAVENSWORTH?

No, I don't remember any. We had plenty of damned foxes and crows and hawks and owls. I never heard anything about peacocks. I used to hunt rabbits and squirrels all over the place. We didn't have deer. I'll tell you somethin', I was ridin' a horse there one time, I was just a kid, and I seen this animal, I didn't know what it was, and it was a deer and it was the first one I remember seeing. We had copperheads and moccasins through, and plenty of blacksnakes, 3-4 feet long.

COULD YOU DRAW ME A SKETCH MAP OF WHERE THE RUINS OF THE MANSION WERE AND WHERE THE GRAVEYARD WAS? DO YOU REMEMBER ANYTHING ABOUT THE GRAVEYARD?

Dr. Lee's father was buried at Ravensworth and a couple of their kids was buried there too, but they took them up and entombed them at Lexington, VA. I ain't much of a drawer [draws the attached sketch]. Here's the main entrance and here's the stable and right over here is the mansion. Right back here is the graveyard. That old mansion was built years ago and in between the plaster and weatherboard was brick and they got the brick out of the ruins and built the three rooms right here, where the servants' quarters was. That's the first thing they built. They built that while I was there. Later, they built another house on the old ruins. They used original materials from the old mansion to build the three rooms there, but the house was frame.

They was four big tombstones in the graveyard -- Fitzhughs. Dr. Lee's father and a couple of sisters and brothers who died at birth was buried there too. I don't recall exactly when they removed them to Lexington, must have been in the early '20s. There was a brick wall around the cemetery and a two-foot-high fence over the top of that and an iron gate. It was about 50' x 25'. I've been in there hundreds of times. We used to chase rabbits around there.

DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN THEY BUILT THE DAM ON ACCOTINK CREEK?

I visited down there one Sunday during World War I. They got the dam all built during WWI. That old Accotink Run used to get mean sometimes. They had a terrible rain and it started to run over the dam and it damaged the railroad bridge. About that time the war was over and they just let the place go. They had some shanties there and there were some people living in them, I don't know if they rented or what.

DID THEY BLOW THE DAM UP?

I think they did, to let the water run through. That was back in 1918, about the time the war ended. Anyway, everything stood still until World War II and the government came in there and reclaimed it and built another dam there, the one that's there now.

WHAT WAS THAT CREEK LIKE, BEFORE THE DAM WAS THERE?

It was just a moderate-sized creek, I'd say. It could get real mean though. We had a house on the creek, back about 200-300 yards from the creek and the water got up real bad and into our house and the barn. I don't know where all that water came from.

DO YOU REMEMBER WHERE RAVENSWORTH STATION WAS ON THE RAILWAY?

Oh, my God, man, I know it like the palm of my hand. There was just a little shed there, to get you in out of the rain and a post up there with a signal on it to stop the train. Listen, they had a road that went down through the back called the Carriage Road and Mrs. Lee would sometimes go over there and catch the train. They'd hang a lantern up to stop the train. My grandfather used to carry her over there to the station and sometimes he'd go meet her. The station was about a mile-and-a-quarter from the house. You had to go through the creek to get over there.

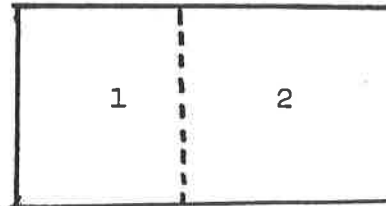
WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER OF SPRINGFIELD STATION?

That was the most dangerous damned place to get over in a car, but they've fixed it up good now. Old man Brookfield was the ticket man there and a mail carrier. His wife was sister to Howard Smith, a congressman. He sent a lot of bums to the government, where I worked. He was tryin' to help 'em out and they took advantage of the man. I think he meant well. You work for the government, you ought to know, they sure do have a bunch of freeloaders in there. It's a shame. Their supervisors were afraid to open their mouths because these guys had a letter from

RAVENSWORTH IN THE 1920s*



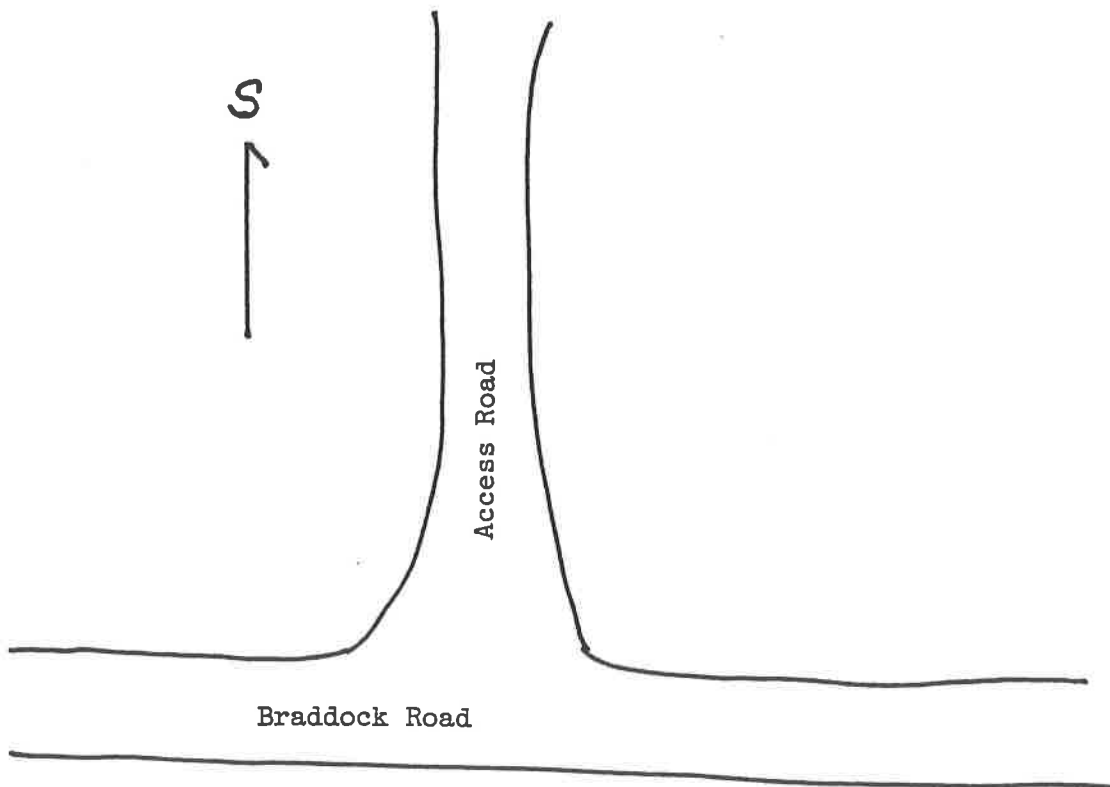
Carriage House



Site of original mansion

+++

Fitzhu,
family
burial
ground



1. Three rooms erected on the original site of the mansion from materials scavanged from the ruins.
2. A frame addition

*Redrawn from an original sketch prepared by Mr. Douglas Dove, who lived on Ravensworth until 1928 or 1929. His grandparents occupied a 3-room apartment just above the carriage house. Sketch drawn September 18, 1993.

some politician. The guys that ain't got a letter have got to earn their money. Every damned day I worked for the government I earned my money. I would rather work than loaf and try to fool a man. Listen. If you get tired of workin' you can sit down 15 minutes and enjoy yourself, but if you get tired of loafin', you can't enjoy yourself noway.

WHAT WAS BRADDOCK ROAD LIKE IN THE '20s?

On the left side as you went west there wasn't nothin' but Ravensworth and you couldn't see 'em from the road, but on the right side was some colored houses. There was Arthur Newman's house and when Mrs. Lee moved to Washington, Carry Newman lost her job as cook, they moved to Washington too. Arthur Newman's daddy, Custis Newman, had a house down there too. His daughter, Adkins, had a house down the road there too, and then our house, before you come to Accotink Run.

All those colored people worked for the Lees, way back, before Dr. Lee's father died. Their homes were just a little west of where Wakefield Park is today. In those days that place was just woods. But the property on that side of Braddock Road was owned by Senator Bristow* who also owned Ossian Hall.

WAS THERE EVER A SCHOOLHOUSE IN THERE ANYWHERE?

Yes. I never seen it, it was tore down before I was old enough to remember it. But my mother and my aunt went to that school. It was right across the road, on the left-hand side of Braddock Road, just before you get to the run. The school teacher boarded with my grandparents. The school teacher's name was Spinnel [sp?]. On the Carriage Road going to Ravensworth Station was another house, I remember seeing the ruins. It was another tenant house.

We used to have to go to Burke every Monday. There was a Mrs. Marshall over there and Mrs. Lee thought nobody could make butter like she did and we used to have to go over there and get the butter every Monday. And that Braddock Road was so damned bad you couldn't hardly ride a horse up there in the winter, it was so terrible.

The winter the Knickerbocker theater collapsed, 1922, we had

*Joseph Little, a Republican senator from Kansas who served during the Taft administration. He purchased Ossian Hall in 1918 and was its last occupant. Eventually he owned a total of 4,400 acres in the vicinity. He died at age 83, sometime during World War II.

a snow, about four foot, blocked all the roads. Mr. Downs was on the place farming then. Glenn Newman lived in the neighborhood, a black guy, a carpenter and a good one, and he made a snowplow. We opened the road with it. It took all day. The neighbors come, Glenn Newman and Harry Harmon and I don't know who all. Everybody was there. We had to go along first with four horses and an empty wagon. Ravensworth road was so bad the cuts was all filled up. You know, a horse will get into deep snow and get to lungin' and you can't do much with him. So three or four men would get on each side of the road and walk along and pat the snow down. Then we came back and hitched the four horses to that snowplow and went along over the road. That's how we got the road open. We opened it both ways, all the way out to Annandale and then we come back and went around to Wakefield Chapel Road.

DO YOU REMEMBER OSSIAN HALL?

I worked some over there. Senator Bristow was a tight man. It was a right big place. He come here from Kansas and bought up a lot of land. He was trying to farm but he knew nothing about farming. You can read all you want to out of books but it's that actual experience what counts. He had one son that was a bum and another that had a paper out in Kansas. The son that lived here was an artist but he didn't work at it.

WHAT WAS IT LIKE AT THE INTERSECTION OF BRADDOCK ROAD AND BACKLICK ROAD IN THE 1920S?

Onliest thing I remember was there was Hugh Burns had a farm in the northwest corner and the Deans were up the road. They was bricklayers.

THEIR LITTLE HOUSE IS STILL THERE AND I'VE STOPPED AND TALKED TO MRS. DEAN WHO'S STILL LIVING THERE.

I knowed her husband, a Kinslow. Her name's Ruth. I know her and Florence Dean, I knowed all the boys, Ben Dean, Harry Dean, Rob Dean. Old man Dean used to come up to Ravensworth and point the bricks in the old stable. Back years ago they didn't have concrete, they just had lime and the stuff would fall out after a while and he used to point 'em up. He was a nice old man

DO YOU RECALL ANY ILLEGAL STILLS ON THE RAVENSWORTH PROPERTY?

I don't think any were ever located on Ravensworth. But over the county they was makin' moonshine liquor. Some around the Burke area. I was never much of a sport when it come to drinkin'. People'd give me whiskey and I'd just give it away. I don't like the taste of it, I don't like the effects of it, I

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don't like the price of it.

MAYBE THAT'S ONE REASON YOU'VE LIVED SO LONG.

Is that it? Well, I lost my wife in '90 and I'm livin' here by myself. My son lives here part of the time. I was married to a real woman and we was married 58 years. Her death was a terrible letdown to me and I'll never get over it. They say that "Time heals all wounds." I don't believe that. It's like religion. I've lived a Christian life all my life but I couldn't say I'm a "religious" man. But I treat everybody like I'd like to be treated myself.

(Mr. Dove was interviewed in his home in Madison, VA, on September 18 and 25, 1993, by Dan Cragg, a resident of North Springfield.)