



City of Alexandria  
Office of Historic Alexandria  
*Alexandria Legacies*  
**Oral History Program**



**Project Name:** *Alexandria Legacies*

**Title:** *Interview with Harold Payne*

**Date of Interview:** *March 5, 1999*

**Location of Interview:** *Black History Museum, Alexandria, Virginia*

**Interviewer:** *Mitch Weinschenk*

**Transcriber:** *Jeanne Springmann*

**Abstract:** Harold Payne was born in Alexandria and lived here all his life. His family moved often to different neighborhoods so he has great stories about many different areas of the city. He was a member of the Lions Club for forty five years.

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<b>Family Background</b>	
Mitch Weinschenk:	Today [is March] 5, 1999, and this interview will be conducted with Harold Payne, and the interview will be conducted at the Black History Museum in Alexandria, Virginia. My name is Mitch Weinschenk and I'm [an] intern at the Lyceum. Would you please state for us your full name please?
Harold Payne:	Harold W. Payne.
M.W.:	And your age and birthday?
Harold Payne:	March the ninth, 1919. I'll be 80 next Tuesday.
M.W.:	Let me say Happy Birthday in advance to you anyway. My mother's birthday is today as a matter of fact, but she's not quite as old. She's 66 today. And can you give us the name of your parents and where they were born?
Harold Payne:	My father was named Grover C. Payne, born in Franklin County, Virginia. That's just outside of Roanoke. And he was born there in 1884.
M.W.:	And, when did they come to this area?
Harold Payne:	He came to this area about 1908. My mother's family's been here since the city started, I guess.
M.W.:	Okay, so you have a family name, to say the least, that goes back into history here?
Harold Payne:	Named Deeton, D-E-E-T-O-North It was my mother's maiden name. It goes way back. I had a great uncle that was first lighthouse keeper at Jones Point. That's in the 1800s. 1840 or something like that. So it goes back beyond that.
M.W.:	Did you have any brothers or sisters?
Harold Payne:	I have four brothers and one sister. Family of six children grew up together.
M.W.:	And their names are, or were?
Harold Payne:	They are. Ralph L. He's 83. And Francis W. died at age 76. And then, I'm Harold W. III. And Grover C., Jr., is the fourth boy. And Nancy Payne is born in 1921; 1922 she was born. She's the only girl. And then I have a younger brother born in 1926.
M.W.:	And you all were raised in this area?
Harold Payne:	All raised right here in Old Town.
M.W.:	Very good. As far as your wife, were you married?

Harold Payne:	Yes. She's also a native here, born in Braddock Heights, or Beverly Hills, up there on [inaudible] Lane. She was born in 1921. It was then Arlington County, but it's now Alexandria. Been Alexandria since about 1932. But she's a native here too. We were in school together and graduated together. Didn't graduate together; I was ahead of her. But anyhow, we were in school together.
M.W.:	School meaning which grade did you meet her?
Harold Payne:	When I was just coming in to be a senior in high school, she was coming in to being a junior, I guess.
M.W.:	So you were high school sweethearts?
Harold Payne:	Yes. And that was 62, 61 years ago.
M.W.:	Very good, very good. And what was her maiden name?
Harold Payne:	Sheppard- S-H-E-P-P-A-R-D, Morse. Her first name is Morse, M-O-R-S-E, a family handed-down name.
M.W.:	Morse? That's unusual. What is her family background?
Harold Payne:	She was born...her mother was born in Franklin County, Virginia, the same place where my father was born, except across on the western end of the county, near a place called Mart..., near Martinsville, Virginia. My father was born down at Boones Mill, near Roanoke, Virginia, but it's in Franklin County. And they were born the same year, one month apart, but they never knew each other.
M.W.:	Never knew each other.
Harold Payne:	Never met yet.
M.W.:	Is that right?
Harold Payne:	Never met.
M.W.:	My goodness! And did you have any children?
Harold Payne:	Who me? I have two children. I have a girl born in 1951 and a boy born in 1957.
M.W.:	And their names are?
Harold Payne:	Brenda Payne and Harold W. Jr.
M.W.:	Before we started taping I heard you talking about that you lived in many locations throughout the city. Is there any way that you could at least give us a few of the addresses?
Harold Payne:	Give you a whole lot of them.
M.W.:	Well, I mean if you can remember them all, that would be fine.
Harold Payne:	Are you going to record now?

M.W.:	Yes, we're on.
Harold Payne:	Okay. I was born at 603 North Columbus Street, right around the corner here. That building was later torn down, and I'm going to judge it was torn down in the late [19]20s, probably around 1930, [19]32. That building that I was born in was torn down.
M.W.:	Were you living in there at the time, or did they condemn [inaudible]?
Harold Payne:	Born in the building, in the liv...in the bedroom of the building. I was born there, and two other brothers were born there, in the same building, 603 North Columbus. And then we lived at 528 North Columbus. That building has been destroyed too. I lived at 600 North St. Asaph Street. That building has been destroyed. I lived at 329 North St. Asaph Street. That building is destroyed. I lived at 519 Queen Street. That building is still living. I lived 1106½ Prince Street. That building's still standing. I lived at 122 North Patrick Street. That building is destroyed. I lived at 507 North Fairfax Street. That building is still standing. I lived at 119, 219 North Royal Street. That building is still standing. How much more you want?
M.W.:	That's good! That's very good.
Harold Payne:	I can go on from there.
M.W.:	Let me ask you the obvious question to me, after you naming off all these addresses, is why did you move around so much?
Harold Payne:	Well, my father and mother didn't get along that well. He had his problems and she had to move the best way she could and handle six kids from 1932 on.
M.W.:	From 1932 on.
Harold Payne:	So we had to go where we could sleep.
M.W.:	Any of these houses that you lived in, were any of these relatives that you stayed with?
Harold Payne:	519 Queen was my grandparents' home on my mother's side.
M.W.:	And how long did you live there?
Harold Payne:	Off and on.
M.W.:	Off and on?
Harold Payne:	Yes, from, I guess from 1924, [19]23, something like that, until 1938. Off and on there, in and out of there, maybe, four or five times. But they always took us in.
M.W.:	All, what? Seven of you?
Harold Payne:	All of us, yes.

M.W.:	Six, seven. Yes, seven.
Harold Payne:	Sure, took seven of us.
<b>Early Memories</b>	
M.W.:	As far as those early days are concerned, your memories of Alexandria as a child, what did you do for entertainment?
Harold Payne:	Played in the playground where the library is now built, on Queen Street, was a playground. It was the first...it was a Quaker cemetery; had a brick wall around it. And the city acquired it because no more relatives claimed anything in it as far as Quakers or people buried in there were concerned. Tombstones were used as bases. Played ball in that yard. Had a shack there about the size of this...one of these buildings, not both of them; size of one of them. It was probably 20 by 30 feet that they kept the equipment in, like badminton nets and stuff like that, and horseshoes. Had swing sets up in the yard. We played ball in the yard. They had sandboxes back in there. They had a lot of things. A lot of kids went there.
M.W.:	And who was responsible for the upkeep of that? Was it the city ran it?
Harold Payne:	City ran it, yes, sure. Then we played in the street a lot. There wasn't many cars; there was more horses than cars in the 1920s. Just as many, anyway.
M.W.:	And they didn't move quite as fast a pace as you didn't have to get out of the way quite as fast?
Harold Payne:	We could play half an hour before a car might come by.
M.W.:	Is that right?
Harold Payne:	A lot of the streets were cobblestone and dirt. And the street from St. Asaph Street from Oronoco Street on out north was dirt.
M.W.:	Just dirt?
Harold Payne:	Just dirt, plain, old dirt. Mud hole.
M.W.:	So I imagine in the summertime that would throw up a lot of dust with these horse carts going.
Harold Payne:	Cars, horse carts, and the wind. Everything would blow up a lot of dirt, dust, sure. I lived on the corner of Pendleton and North St. Asaph Street and the street from Washington Street on down to the river was cobblestone. And the railroad train came right around from Powhatan Street and swung around St Asaph Street, and it butt-ended right in front of my house. It had great big iron butts that stopped the train from rolling out into the street. Sometimes it would push the butts over [in] the street anyway.

M.W.:	The trains would?
Harold Payne:	The car would.
M.W.:	The car?
Harold Payne:	Boxcar.
M.W.:	They would?
Harold Payne:	Sure. Had the tracks where you could see where they had run out there and put dents in the cobblestones. That's okay. They didn't hurt anything. See, the building that they are now remodeling there, across the street on St. Asaph where they are remodeling the old Arena Building, old Red Cross Building. Well that was, when I was a kid, it was occupied by the Navy as a warehouse. So the trains used to come up on the siding to that building too. And also Portner's Brewery was on that block. The train track was put in there probably from Powhatan Street. It came on down went around where Christo's Restaurant is around. It was only one building on the corner at that time. The train went around that building and it came in on to St. Asaph Street and ran down there and was some shacks and buildings, and few businesses along there that went on. The train went down there. And service...and the main reason to go down there was to service the Navy place there, warehouse. So a lot of stuff was shipped by train rather than truck.
M.W.:	Oh sure. You're talking about World War II, I mean World War I period of time?
Harold Payne:	Yes.
M.W.:	As far as the naval...
Harold Payne:	Yes, it was early [19]20s. They were there through the mid [19]20s, [19]26, [19]28, anyway. Because my brother was born down there in 1926. So they were there then, because we used to go over there. And there was a creamery open on the corner. On the northeast corner [of] Wythe and St. Asaph Street there's a building that they've remodeled seven times [inaudible] say it is quite different from what it was when it was a creamery. I told Mike Miller that they had it on the...they put it up there on the southwest corner, but it was never there; the brewery was there.
M.W.:	Is that right?
Harold Payne:	So I told him [inaudible] for this article it was over there. Because I've been there. And then the railroad came up from the river beside that building. Right up Wythe Street to that building. And they had a siding up to it. So, anyway, that's the way it goes.

<b>Education</b>	
M.W.:	And where did you go to school?
Harold Payne:	I went to school...I started in 1925. I started in the old Lee School on Prince Street. It is now an office building, 10 hundred block Prince Street. That was a school. It was built in 1914. I started in 1916 at first grade. I stayed there a year and a half or so, and then we moved, so they moved me down to the Washington Street School, which is now the Campagna Center. That was the elementary grade school. They also occupied the old Alexandria Academy building there. Are you familiar with that?
M.W.:	No, I'm not.
Harold Payne:	The oldest free school in Virginia is right there on Wolfe Street.
M.W.:	Oh, is that right?
Harold Payne:	George Washington paid the first money to get it going. Free school. So I went to school on the second floor in there for a year in that old, old building. They used all three floors for a public school. And then they...and my last year or two in those grades, they put me over in the other building, the big building, what's the Campagna Center now. Then I went from there to the old Jefferson School which is dead end at the end of Queen Street at West [Street], right up on that hill. (Used to be a hill there. They cut it down.) But anyhow, it was a school there called Jefferson Elementary School. And then there was a twin school [inaudible] facing Cameron Street off of Peyton [Street], and that was the Alexandria High School, on Cameron Street.
M.W.:	And that's where you went all four years?
Harold Payne:	No, I went there a year or two and then they built George Washington High School in 1935. That's an intermediate school now, but that was the high school in Alexandria. And I went there until I graduated in June of [19]39.
M.W.:	June of [19]39.
Harold Payne:	Anyway, you see Alexandria had annexed all that land out there in Del Ray and on the other side of the railroad tracks, and north of Braddock Road; all that was Arlington County. Alexandria annexed it about 1932. And when they did, George Mason Elementary School was the high school for southern Arlington County. George Mason Elementary School on Mount Vernon Avenue was the high school. The main building there, the main part of the building, the original part, is still standing. But it was the high school for that part of Arlington County. When Alexandria annexed it, the two schools remained open, until George Washington was built, for three years:

	[19]32, [19]33, [19]34. In [19]35 they all high school kids came to George Washington. One school.
M.W.:	So that must have been a big deal them, going to a brand new high school?
Harold Payne:	Going to a brand new...and of course, the high school wasn't that big. It's been added on several times. They built a gymnasium, a shops building, and everything else. The glass house that...the florist's glass house that's down on Prince and Dangerfield Road, one of those streets that cut through there at the end of Prince Street—Alexandria Floral Company—that glass house sitting in the back of the house was sitting on the corner [of] Braddock Road and Mount Vernon Avenue, right where they play ball now. On that field, right on that corner.
M.W.:	I guess that wouldn't be a good place for a, for a something like that,...
Harold Payne:	Not today.
M.W.:	...with baseballs and stuff flying around.
Harold Payne:	Well, they didn't play there in those days. The baseball field's right here where all these buildings are built down there, on West [Street], on the...it would be the southwest corner of Braddock Road and West Street, where all those high rises and all the townhouses built, that was a baseball field. Anyhow, that's the way it goes. What else you need?
<b>Jobs</b>	
M.W.:	When you left school, what was, or maybe even during school, what were some of the jobs that you had as far as part-time jobs?
Harold Payne:	I worked a lot of part-time. I worked from 1933, mostly in the grocery and meat business. And I worked in the city market down there. I worked in the old city market before it was closed. You know [the] first floor of the City Hall from the south end of the building on Royal Street, it came down to Cameron [Street] and turned and went that way, and went all the way down to Fairfax [Street], and it went back south again half a block to an alley. There was an alley that went behind it and ended. It was a horseshoe U building, came this way and this way. The center aisle in there, great big thing...it was stalls all built in there. A fish, chicken market was built in there. Permanent for them. The stalls were permanent. Had a shed over it, a roof over it. The farmers came into market there and brought their stuff from everywhere, as far away as Culpepper, Manassas, Leesburg. They brought it into Alex...Alexandria was the center in the 1920s and [19]30s. Even in the 1930s you could hardly walk down King Street on a Saturday night, it was so crowded.

M.W.:	Is that right?
Harold Payne:	Sure, it was real busy. Alexandria was a big...and the farmers would come down Friday night to set up shop for Saturday morning, and by one o'clock in the afternoon it was all over. But I worked for a man, Mr. Chauncey, there; I went to work for him in 1933 as a kid, part-time riding a bicycle, delivering groceries. And then I got to cutting meat with him and learning how to do that. And he was also an abattoir right there, where the water fountain is in front of City Hall, was a building that he had an abattoir there. We ran the animals up a ramp to the second floor, slaughtered them, calves, hogs and sheep. They didn't have any cows. Calves, hogs and sheep. We would slaughter them and blood was running down the drain and on down to the river.
M.W.:	To the river?
Harold Payne:	That's what they did in those days. He had that thing and kept it until after World War II, but they finally made him close it up.
M.W.:	Oh, is that right?
Harold Payne:	I didn't work there all that time. I left him about 1937 or something like that. When I finished school, I left that and went into the Safeway stores. I worked for them for a while. I worked for PEPCO [Potomac Electric Power Company] in Washington [D.C.] for a while. I was working for them when I was called into the service. And then I went back with them. And then I went into the insurance business for 30 years. But anyway, I served in both World War II and Korea.
M.W.:	Oh, you did? Okay, that was one of my questions. You just jumped ahead, but that's fine.
Harold Payne:	My mother was the only five-star mother in the City of Alexandria. She had five boys in the service at the same time during World War II.
M.W.:	Is that right? She was the only one?
Harold Payne:	And my brother was decorated by Eisenhower in England.
M.W.:	And what theater of operation were you in?
Harold Payne:	I was right here and Miami, flying the Caribbean in South Atlantic down to South America and all the islands in the Caribbean and the South Atlantic. And I went down to Natal and Belem in Brazil. I was in air transport service with the Navy during World War II. But my main job was running an electrical shop to keep things going. I learned how to overhaul and repair electrical things—generators, starters, motors, anything electrical. Wire engines for the airplanes, used to do all that.

M.W.:	Is that what gave you the experience to go into working for, would you say, PEPCO?
Harold Payne:	No, I did a different job with PEPCO. I worked for the railroad as an electrician for 3 years. I've done a lot of different jobs.
M.W.:	Lot of different experiences!
Harold Payne:	I like it all. I like to work with my hands. I never could sit still long enough to be really educated. I had many scholarships to play football but I never took any.
M.W.:	You never took any.
Harold Payne:	I didn't think I was smart enough to do it.
M.W.:	Well, they must have if they offered you the scholarship.
Harold Payne:	They didn't care about that as long as you could play football. I played four years and never missed a game in four years; never got hurt in four years. I weighed 185 pounds. 185, 90 pounds in those days, that was big.
M.W.:	That's pretty good, yes.
Harold Payne:	But now you've got to be 300 pounds to be considered, almost. But I enjoyed it.
<b>The 1920s and Prohibition</b>	
M.W.:	Going back to the 1920s, can you give us a feeling, or give me a feeling what prohibition was like in Alexandria?
Harold Payne:	There were a lot of bootleggers.
M.W.:	There was, or wasn't?
Harold Payne:	There was. There would have been two hundred barges from the north end of town all the way down and up Hunting Creek and down south of Hunting Creek. House barges. People lived in them and had bootleggers and everything else all up and down the river.
M.W.:	I mean, how obvious was this? How blatant?
Harold Payne:	Everybody knew it.
M.W.:	It was blatant?
Harold Payne:	Blatant.
M.W.:	I mean, the police knew about it?
Harold Payne:	I guess so. I knew some of the bootleggers but I'm not going to tell you who they are.
M.W.:	No, I'm not asking for names.
Harold Payne:	They were not friends of mine. I just knew of them.

M.W.:	So, I mean, you could get liquor anytime you wanted, to say the least?
Harold Payne:	Well, any of them. Yes, anytime.
M.W.:	I mean, with that many people selling it?
Harold Payne:	Sure. A lot of people made it in the bathtubs. Beer, mostly. In the bathtubs. Some people tried to make whiskey but I don't know how successful it was with a still and all. But, that went on in this town. I know a person right here on Henry Street used to have a grocery store. He had a side door went upstairs. That's where he sold his whiskey by the drink and half-pint. His wife did all that business for him. She put the money in her trunk. And when they sold the business and everything, they took the trunk and bought a great big farm in Fairfax County. Went out there; nobody ever bothered them. Nobody ever bothered [inaudible] as far as I know. But bootlegger...I know some people that police chased all around shooting at the cars, putting holes in the cars, bootlegging. Anyhow...
M.W.:	Getting back to that period of time, as far as Prohibition is concerned, with Portner's Brewery. What did they do in that period of time?
Harold Payne:	Well, they didn't do anything. After the...I think they were shut down probably in 1916, 19...
M.W.:	Oh, they were?
Harold Payne:	Yes, they were shut down by the state, or somebody, before Prohibition came.
M.W.:	My timeline is a little bit off here. I thought they went into maybe the [19]30s or [19]40s.
Harold Payne:	No, no.
M.W.:	They didn't survive that long?
Harold Payne:	Let's say that this is a city block. This is the house I lived in on the corner—600 North St. Asaph Street. It came up this way, Pendleton Street. There was...behind me was a little yard, so big, and it was about a barn or a gar...converted into a garage, that's what we used it for, that would hold five or six automobiles and had a loft and all in it. I think probably the brewery might have kept horses there at one time, but I don't know that. And that's what it appeared to be because a loft and all in it. And I used to hang ropes up over the beams like that and swing on them. Swing from this wall over to that one.
M.W.:	Did you ever find anything inside there that would indicate what it was used for?
Harold Payne:	Not that I would know. You see I was six or eight years old, nine

	years old. I was there for...
M.W.:	You were just there to have the fun. You didn't care about who had it before?
Harold Payne:	I was there from about 1925 to 1929 or [19]30—five or six years. That's when I knew the Navy was across the street, the creamery was on the...the brewery buildings was sitting there but they were empty; even the brewery office buildings across the street in the 600 block were empty. I ran through them, ransacked them. They had the papers and records...
M.W.:	Is that right?
Harold Payne:	Desks and furniture still in them. But bums and winos and everybody else could go in and out of them. And the factory buildings that brewed the beer and stored it in the drums were all down in the basement. Hundreds and hundreds of the barrels that they put the beer in but there wasn't anything in them; they were empty drums. That's where they stored them. And they had ramps built out with sheds on them that went out to the boxcars. The stuff came in the boxcars went out. And the boxcars came right up to the door on the St. Asaph Street side. Those two buildings and my building, and the little houses, four or five houses along this way, took up half of a city block, and the other half of the city block was the building that they were tearing down now, the old Woodward and Lothrop.
M.W.:	Oh yes. They just tore it down.
Harold Payne:	That building—that's a new building. That building wasn't old. It wasn't more than 30 years old, as far as I know. But it used to be a mansion there called Portner's mansion. And nobody's ever been able to find a picture of it, including me, and I've tried. It took in that whole city block on Washington Street.
M.W.:	Right there?
Harold Payne:	600 block North Washington Street on the east side. It had a driveway that went in and around to the front door like this and on out. It had outhouses out back. They had a couple ponies in that yard that was fenced up in there. That building went to disarray and during, before World War I, World War II, the city, or at least that lot, used it for a playground, because my brother was an instructor in the playground.
M.W.:	Right there?
Harold Payne:	Right there. But that building was later torn. I don't know when it was torn down. It was a beautiful, old building.
<b>Alexandria's Businesses and Industries</b>	
Harold Payne:	It's just like the building across from it, Belle Haven Apartments.

	They talk about the dummy sitting up in it. Do you remember that?
M.W.:	No.
Harold Payne:	They said the dummy sat up in the cupola. Well, all my life as a child, the dummy sat in the window three stories up. And everybody would watch it there. If it was ever up in the cupola up on top...is that what you call it? KAH-PU-LA?
M.W.:	Yes, K...
Harold Payne:	Anyway, it's a tower up on top. I don't think you could even see the dummy if you put it in there. From the windows, you could see it. That building wasn't anything but a hollow shell with belts all around running this machine. When I was a kid it was a spark plug factory; manufactured spark plugs. Because I used to go over and collect all the little rolls of metal that came off when they put it on the spindles, device, the...
M.W.:	Yes, lathe.
Harold Payne:	Lathe. I used to collect all that stuff and play with it—make roads and everything else [inaudible], when I was 6, 8 years, 9 years old. I remember that. I stepped in that building and looked, but they were very careful that you didn't come in, because those machines running and these big belts, and the wheels turning. It was very dangerous. They had walks all...catwalks all around where men walk. And the offices were on the second floor where they walked up these and right off of there were offices on the Washington Street side. And the dummy sat in the third floor in one of the windows. And people drove along Washington Street looking at the dummy, running into cars and have wrecks.
M.W.:	And that remained there for years?
Harold Payne:	Yes, that dummy remained there for years. I guess they remodeled that building into apartments. I'm going to guess right before or right after World War II. I don't know when. I was finished with that end of the town by the time I went in the service. But up until then. But I used to play ball. Just like I say, this was a whole vacant lot, that next block, next door, where that little white bungalow is. That was the only house on that whole lot. I remember...
M.W.:	From here down, in other words.
Harold Payne:	One whole city block square. All the houses...I remember when the houses on the corner were built, three brick ones up on Columbus Street, the whole row of them was built, up on the corner down there where the store...I remember when...of course that was when vacant lot. I used to play ball, and football, and everything else on that lot when I was a kid. A lady, Mrs. Smith, across the street in the early [19]20s, used to bring cows over and chain them. She had two cows.

	She lived at 605 or 607; she was our next door neighbor but it was a big yard between us that belonged to her. And she had a shed in the back where she kept these two cows. She'd take them out and stake them out every day. She staked them out on this property over here too.
M.W.:	Kept everything nice and trim?
Harold Payne:	Yes, cows came out and kept it fertilized too.
M.W.:	That's right. That's right.
Harold Payne:	She did keep cows. And then on the north end, you know...the north end of town, from St. Asaph Street on down, where you can go down Montgomery Street. Wasn't any Montgomery Street; it was a path across the city dump. Went all the way over to Fairfax Street. All the rest of that, to the south of that, and to the east of St. Asaph Street, was all a great big swamp. Must have been 30, 40 feet down into there was a huge swamp. They filled it in as the city dump; burned 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Stink. Smoke everywhere, everything. But they finally got rid of that. Got incinerators, I guess. They did that. I used to...you see this cut from here around there? There's a scar there.
M.W.:	Oh yes, I see that.
Harold Payne:	You see that? When I was a kid, that was a big scar. I was about 7 or 8 years old. I fell on that dump and cut it on a piece of glass. I used to go down there and get bottles, and metal, and things like that, and take them to the junk shop and get 2 or 3 cents for this, 5 cents for this, get 10 or 15 cents worth the whole day long, fooling around down on the dump. I used to climb through there...
M.W.:	Go out and buy some candy, or something?
Harold Payne:	Something like that. That's what you did. But I used to do that. They used to have glass factories over there on North Fairfax Street. But I don't remember them operating. They closed up before I could ever remember what happened. But they operated properly until about 1920 or something like that.
M.W.:	Glass, as far as, what do you mean?
Harold Payne:	Blown glass.
M.W.:	Dinnerware and stuff like that?
Harold Payne:	Bottles. Bottles and things like that, I think. Glasses, and stuff. I can't tell you what they made. But that's what they...there were two glass factories down there. They were pretty much in disarray when I saw them and they eventually tore them down. But there was a nice big house over there too. I guess that belonged to one of the people that owned the glass factory. That soon left too. But I don't remember

	much about that. But they—to the north of that, couple of black citizens had pig farms down there—just to the north, where these apartments are all built now.
M.W.:	I heard somebody mention something about that, that where the Giant Food is, there used to be pigpens there too.
Harold Payne:	Well, there may have been, but I don't think they were quite that close. I think they were a little further back.
M.W.:	You think so?
Harold Payne:	Couple blocks.
M.W.:	Well that was this gentleman's recollection.
Harold Payne:	He was right. They were there but they were a block or two further and little bit toward the river. I remember because I went down there and whipped them with a stick. Just what kids would do. Not to hurt the pigs, just to make them squeal. Didn't hurt them because their hide is so thick. I remember a vinegar factory used to be right here on Henry Street. We used to have a vinegar factory here. Had two great big frame buildings. I mean they looked about three, four stories high to me when they burned in 1927, I think. There was two vinegar factories. The train used to come this way with a side rail over to there. And the apples were in the cars and the men would shovel the apples out and put them on a conveyor belt to run them inside the buildings where they made the vinegars, and whatever else they made. But us poor people used to come up with our bags and buckets to pick up the apples that fell on the ground. And if enough of them didn't fall, the workers would throw a shovelful out and miss the conveyor belt, so we'd have apples to pick up. And we did the same thing with the trains that came through the town both on Henry, on Henry and Fayette Street, and also down on Union Street, down near the water. The train used to run through town. They would stoke them with coal. Well, we needed coal to keep warm, so we'd go down there with a bag or bucket and pick up the extra coal that was fallen from the train. And the fireman that fed them, he would be feeding them, he'd throw a shovelful here and shovel there, so you could have some come to take home. I'm sure the railroad knew those things happened but we didn't think there was anything wrong with it.
M.W.:	It's probably easy for them to just write it off, you know, on the paperwork, you know. That they used it, that's all.
Harold Payne:	That's all. [inaudible] And down on the south end, I remember, south of Columbus [Street] at Wilkes Street, there was a shirt factory. Made shirts. I remember when that was working. It would have been on the southeast corner, Wilkes and Fairfax [Streets], Wilkes and Columbus Streets.

	<p>And then where Demaine’s Funeral Home is now, was a shoe factory. That was operating when I was a kid. On Washington Street where Demaine’s Funeral—that building was built I think for a shoe factory. I don’t remember it, but the building on Prince and...the building on Prince and Fairfax Streets, which would be the southeast corner, was built for a furniture company named Brown’s. If you had a piece of his furniture now, it’d be very valuable. And I don’t know what it turned into. It turned into...it was a garage...it was a warehouse one time, I think, for somebody. And then it was a Dodge-Plymouth dealer at one time. And now it’s condominiums. That building had a lot of uses. But now it’s nice condominiums. So there’s a lot of those things that went on around town.</p>
<p><b>Alexandria’s Landmarks</b></p>	
<p>M.W.:</p>	<p>Here you are talking about a lot of these landmark locations, I have a few listed here that I just want to see if you remember, have any recollection of. You mentioned the Jones Point Lighthouse. Did you go there as a child yourself?</p>
<p>Harold Payne:</p>	<p>No, I never went there as a child myself. I’ve been there a number of times since it’s been remodeled and finished. I think the DAR [Daughters of the American Revolution] is the people that take care of it pretty much, along with the federal government. But there’s a, there’s a city marker down there that marks the boundary of Washington, D.C., when it was, this land was granted to D.C. for the capital; [inaudible] to the government for the capital. There’s also one out by Union Station on Russell Road. There’s one up on the big Baptist church lot on King Street, way up on the hill up there. There’s one up there. I know of those three. And there’s others, you know.</p>
<p>M.W.:</p>	<p>So those are the original markers there?</p>
<p>Harold Payne:</p>	<p>Yes, they’re still there. They’re in an iron cage to keep people from fooling with it.</p>
<p>M.W.:</p>	<p>Walking off with it? How about the first Alexandria Hospital, which was located on the corner of Fairfax and Duke Streets? Do you recall?</p>
<p>Harold Payne:</p>	<p>I don’t know that that was the first one at Fairfax and Duke. But I don’t know, I don’t recall that hospital at all. The Alexandria Hospital was where the Time-Life building was in the 700 block of Duke Street. And that’s the one I remember. But it was a small, old, big, pretty big hospital for the time. But, that building stayed there until they built the one up on Seminary Road. I guess they built that, about what, 1965, 1970, something like that? Yes, something like that. Let’s see. My boy broke his leg in 1968, 1968, and they were just opening that hospital. And that building was still going too. But,</p>

	I don't remember...I do remember...the only thing I remember about the hospital building is reading about it. And I remember the other one down there. There wasn't air conditioning; had no air conditioning in it. It was very cheap there. I mean, in those days hospitals didn't cost anything. Dollar, two dollars a day, or something like that. Now aspirin costs more than that.
M.W.:	In a hospital, yes. How about the City Jail at St. Asaph Street and the corner of Princess [Street]?
Harold Payne:	I know that well. I've had meals in there with the prisoners and things like that. See, I lived just across the corner from there. I lived...Princess Street is here, the jail is here, and I lived there. And I used to know the people there, the jailers; I used to talk to the prisoners back and forth through the bars. I used to watch them bring them in the gate off of Princess Street into the jail, and take them out, and take them to court and stuff like that. And then, I've toured through the jail, walked through there and seen the prisoners behind the bars and the locked gates, and stuff like that. The kitchen was on the north end of the building. I used to go in the kitchen and sit there and eat with the guard. You have a sandwich with them or something. When you were my age and hungry, you'd go anywhere to get a bite to eat. So, I've been in there, yes. I've never been incarcerated, but I've been there.
M.W.:	I would imagine a lot of those criminals that were there weren't there for what you would call heavy crimes, were they?
Harold Payne:	Well, not that I could recall.
M.W.:	Murder and stuff?
Harold Payne:	A lot of them came out and helped to clean the building, clean the sidewalks. They came out and helped in the kitchen. A lot of them did that. A lot of them were regular patrons there. It's just like the people in Washington. When the weather begins to get bad they do something so they put them in lock-up for the winter.
M.W.:	That's right. You're right. That's true.
Harold Payne:	I mean, I believe that happened. Not all of them, but I believe a number of them did that. And I don't blame them. You'd do anything to get a meal and keep warm. So they do a misdemeanor type of thing and if it was second, or third, or fourth, or fifth, that's how much time you get.
M.W.:	Right through the winter. Ninety days will be fine. Right?
Harold Payne:	But I remember...And then the police station, you know, everybody talks about the old police station on Pitt Street, which was in the, I think it was the 400 block, North Pitt Street was the old police station. It's now out on Mill Road, out that way, off of Eisenhower,

	<p>wherever. But anyhow, it used to be in the City Hall building. The police station was in the City Hall building. It was on the Fairfax Street side at the north end of the building, from about half of that wing (you know I told you it was a U) about half of that wing was the jail. And upstairs was where they kept the people overnight until they had their trial, went to the judge. And I used to talk to them from the market alley up to their windows. They'd throw you a dollar or a quarter to go get them a pack of cigarettes, or something like that. You'd do that for them. And that was the jail. That was not the jail, but it was the police station.</p>
M.W.:	Do you recall the St. Asaph Racetrack that was located on Route 1?
Harold Payne:	I only recall the shed that was there for a train stop, or a bus stop or something. But that was just off of, just off of the Monroe Street Bridge a little bit. I don't recall a racetrack. That wasn't running in my day.
M.W.:	Okay. I have a date here but it was before your time. I was wondering if it was still going in your time or not. I have a date of 1908 here, but I was thinking maybe that it was going, still running.
Harold Payne:	No, not by 1919 when I came around. See, I can tell you I can remember most things from 1925 when I started to school. I spread out from the house; I can remember more things. But I remember a lot of things my mother told me. You see, there was a railroad ticket office one time at Fayette [Street] and Cameron Street for one train, and on Henry Street at Cameron [Street] was a ticket office for another train. And then where Fannons—it's an antique shop in Duke [Street] and in Henry Street now—is a building built for a ticket office for, I think, Southern Railroad, or one of the railroads. Orange and Virginia, or whatever it was. And the building that Van Lanningham lives in was one of the ticket offices.
M.W.:	It was a ticket office?
Harold Payne:	Yes.
M.W.:	Is that right?
Harold Payne:	I remember the streetcars very well. I rode those. I remember all the routes that it took and everything. I know how they ran up and down and around.
M.W.:	Did those connect direct into D.C., or did you have to switch over?
Harold Payne:	Ran right into D.C. Let's start down at...it ran from Washington to Mount Vernon. And the circle at Mount Vernon is where they used to turn. But you didn't have to turn them because they could change handles from one end to the other. But that's where it went around and made a turn. But, anyhow, the boulevard south pretty much follows the route of the trolley car. Pretty much, not entirely. Pretty

	<p>much. Of course the right-of-way was already there for the tr...and the trolley car line during World War I was used for freight cars going into what they called Fort Humphries. That used to be, before Fort Belvoir, that used to be on this side of Hunting Creek, on this side of the creek, down there. Down...they used to run the freight cars down there, cut off of the streetcar line and go into the base to carry the supplies [inaudible]. But the freight cars used to go in on that.</p> <p>But the streetcar ran from Mount Vernon up. It came in across and on Royal Street, onto Royal Street. It came up Royal Street to King [Street]. It spun around the block. Cars that weren't going to Mount Vernon, or had to get out of the way, used to go around the block; from King, they would go down Royal and turn left and go down to Fairfax [Street] , turn left and go down to King, and turn left and go back up King. King Street only had a one-way track on it. The cars that were coming from Washington would come down King Street to Columbus [Street]. The cars going to Washington would be coming up King Street to Columbus. The ones that were going to Washington would turn off and go over to Cameron [Street], and then turn left and go that way. Then these cars could go there. And that's what they used that round trip thing down at the other end for. That round...Fairfax, Prince, Royal, and King. That was the turnaround spot so to get out of each other's way. That went on out, and it went out...you know where you go up King Street and you turn right on Commonwealth [Avenue]?</p>
M.W.:	I'm not familiar with that.
Harold Payne:	Well you turn right on Commonwealth [Avenue], you go under an underpass where the trains run over. The streetcars went under that underpass onto Commonwealth. And Commonwealth is a big wide street. Do you know that? With an island in the middle. Well, the streetcars ran down the island in the middle. It ran on out and went across the creek, Four Mile Run, and you know where the bus stop is at Route 1 and Four Mile Run where they park all the busses?
M.W.:	Yes.
Harold Payne:	That is not a bus thing. That was a streetcar barn.
Harold Payne:	So, anyhow, they went on out past Virginia Highlands, that's the Pentagon area, the Crystal City area, but they were still on the west side of Route 1. And they went on out there and across the old 14th Street Bridge and up Pennsylvania [Avenue] in that direction and they made a right turn and came down to 10th and D Street is where they stopped. They terminated in Washington and then they got back, loaded people on and off, and then they came back the same route.
M.W.:	But it was all in the same system?

Harold Payne:	All in the same system.
M.W.:	And I imagine it was pretty cheap to ride on?
Harold Payne:	Five cents for local rides; ten cents to Washington. I knew some of the people that were past conductors on them. But that didn't mean anything. I knew them later in life, you know.
M.W.:	How about the...I know I'm sure you're familiar with the Ramsay House. Some information that I came up with that I asked somebody else in another interview, and they couldn't give me an answer for this. Maybe you can. I'm just curious. I've seen actual photographs of the Ramsay House. It was a restaurant. It was called Hershey's Restaurant. Do you recall that?
Harold Payne:	I'm trying to place the Ramsay House.
M.W.:	Ramsay House is, let's see, on King and North Fairfax.
Harold Payne:	King and...
M.W.:	North Fairfax Street. It's the oldest house in Alexandria, supposedly. What I have, my information here. It was a cigar factory back in the 1880s and then...
Harold Payne:	King and North Fairfax. Oh, you're talking about the Alexandria Visitor Center building.
M.W.:	Okay. It's called Ramsay House.
Harold Payne:	It's a white frame building. That building was built in Occoquan, Virginia.
M.W.:	Oh, was it?
Harold Payne:	<p>And it was floated up here on a barge and set on a foundation that was built by Mr. Ramsay. Put on his lot. That house is older than the one that is sitting there. It's been remodeled a number of times. My great uncle Humphries, who was a friend of Theodore Roosevelt... they rode together with the Rough Riders in Texas and they became good friends long before Roosevelt ever thought he would be President, I guess. But when he became President they became good friends.</p> <p>Well, that Humphries ran a cigar shop in the first floor of that place. He ran a cigar shop there. He shut it up about 1908, [190]7 or [190]8 or [190]9, somewhere like that. And he went to Oklahoma and got into the oil business. And he died a multi, multi, multi, multi millionaire. And he died in 1914. And he only worked it six or eight years. He had enough money to do anything, and he...the worst of the story was that his lawyer back there sent a notice to the [Alexandria] Gazette which was in the Gazette that the relatives of George P. Humphries, or whatever his name was, I think, "Please</p>

	contact me at so and so.” Nobody contacted him. We were all of his relatives up here. I wasn’t born then. I wasn’t old enough. I wasn’t...I knew nothing about it. You see, my mother and her people and others were real close.
M.W.:	So you never knew what happened with the estate?
Harold Payne:	Yes, yes, it went to the federal government.
M.W.:	It did.
Harold Payne:	And the Gulf Oil Company bought the whole thing. It was huge; it was one fourth of Oklahoma. In those days, Oklahoma wasn’t anything but range in it, and oil fields. But he just had things right. That’s the way things go. Who cares? I don’t. I never did.
<b>Lions Club Activities</b>	
M.W.:	I’d be a little negligent if I didn’t ask you this question here because Kim Miller, who knows you from the Lions Club—
Harold Payne:	Yes, I know him real well.
M.W.:	He is the one that actually gave me your name and said that you would be a good interview. How do you know Mr. Miller and how long have you been associated with the Lions Club?
Harold Payne:	I’ve been in the Lions Club since January the 11th, 1954. That’s over 45 years. I haven’t missed a meeting yet. I’ve served in every capacity in the city with Lionism. I’ve helped over 3500 people on a one-on-one: indigent, poor [inaudible], glasses, hearing aids, hospital beds, wheelchairs, food, shelter, clothing, Christmas, you name it. I give the Lions ten to twenty hours a week for 45 years.
M.W.:	Currently? Still?
Harold Payne:	Still, but most of it is on the phone now. I had a call today from Stafford County because I’m in the Lions. There’s eighty clubs here. They’ve got four, five, six of them in Stafford County. They don’t know the answer so they call me. I’m glad I can answer them. A guy had some hospital equipment: a bed, pot, and a table, and some other things, sundry things to give me to help indigent people. I gave him the names of three clubs down there and the people to call. I said, “If they don’t give you any satisfaction, call me, I’ll get them.” I’ll call one of my members. They’ll go get them. I gave two hospital beds away two weeks ago to people. And a wheelchair, and a pot for the side of the bed. I didn’t give him the pot; I told him where to get it. I know where to get it in Maryland or wherever. I can tell you how to get it. Tell those people.
M.W.:	So that’s how you know Kim Miller then?
Harold Payne:	He came in the Lions Club seven or eight years ago—he and his

	wife. Sure.
M.W.:	I had to put that in there because he was the one that gave me your name.
Harold Payne:	<p>He's a good Lion. He caught on fast. Most people come just to bend the elbows and have a knife-and-fork dinner. But the workers are few and far between, and we need more workers. I was president of the club in 1967, [19]68. I used to go to all the international, state, and local conventions. It's the world's largest service organization. Just this week I'm in the process of sending a child, a blind boy in Tanzania, in Africa, money to go to school to learn more about how to teach. He has a blind school that he takes care of. I sent him five, six years ago, I sent him a Perkins Braille Writer, and a short-wave radio, and some material and stuff. I don't mail it. I give it to the nun here and she takes it over there on the plane with her. Because if you mail it, it won't get to him. So two years ago I sent him another Perkins Braille Writer and she took it with her. Now she's back two years later and I'm getting the money together to send him to school, to college to learn better about how to teach blind children. He needs some money—about \$225. So I got it, I got it committed to me already. I just haven't put it up and put it together and sent it to him. I had to find out how the money was. It's shillings over there. 700, 691 shillings is one American dollar. So they want 79,000 shillings. So I had to give him couple hundred dollars. So I got it and I sent it to him.</p> <p>I don't care where people are, where they're from, color. When I work for people, service people, I don't ask what their color or race or anything is. I do want to know, though, because the Lions don't want to get involved with people that are illegal. If they are illegal people, we will not help them. Lions is a one and half million person organization. And we're in 181 countries, geographic locations and we can't afford to have a legal hassle with people. So I feel sorry for the people; I'm willing to help them. But if they go back to their country, they'll find a Lions Club to help them, most likely.</p> <p>We were the first service clubs behind the iron curtain. When the iron curtain was lifted we were behind there before the wall, before the wall came down. We had Lions Clubs there. So, we're everywhere, all over the world, worldwide. We do a lot in Alexandria. I've helped 3500 people myself. And I've got the records. I'm not just shooting the bull. I've got the papers home. I've got everybody's name and phone number, who gave it to me, on my records. So, when somebody asks me about it, I say, "Come by my house. I'll show them to you. You can see them but you are not going to take them." But anyhow...</p>

<b>After World War II</b>	
M.W.:	When you were...after you were...getting back to...let's go back a few years, I mean, to after World War II, when you were discharged, when was that?
Harold Payne:	I was discharged...I was discharged...what time of year was it? I was discharged about November the 1st, 1945. I had, I was married and I had my points.
M.W.:	You had your points. Okay.
Harold Payne:	It's my points in service and everything else. I was the chief electrician in charge of electric shop. We had 42 airplanes and I had 63 electricians working for me. And I was the chief in charge. And I kept the planes flying. And then, when I went back, they recalled me July the fourth, they delivered me the notice to come back in the service July the fourth, 1951, to come back [inaudible].
M.W.:	We liked you so much the first time around, you got to come back again.
Harold Payne:	Well they needed a chief to run the shop. They needed one in San Diego, they needed one in Newport, in, not Newport...Quonset Point, Rhode Island. They needed one in Argentina. They needed three. So they kept me here. After they called me in, they kept me in Anacostia for three weeks to decide which airport had the most pull. So Admiral Kincaid at Quonset Point must have had the most pull, because that's where they sent me. The airplanes there were only 30% availability when I went there. 30%, that's all the availability they were. They had nobody to do the work. [inaudible] So when I went in there I got all of the papers together—the regulations of the squadron, the regulations of the base, and all this. They kept saying, "Chief, when you going to work? When you going...?" I said, "Soon as I finish reading all these papers." I read them all up. So I went over and told the maintenance officer, "Sir, I'm ready to go to work." I said, "These planes are 30% so I understand. I'll improve that." So within a year I had them up to 94% availability. Within a year. See I taught the kids to overhaul stuff, to clean stuff, how to do stuff, how to work stuff, how to, what belonged where and what didn't. I could teach them all that. So I taught them. We had 94%. I got written up in the Navy [inaudible], the magazine that goes all over the Navy world. That doesn't mean anything. I have a copy of it at home.
M.W.:	No, that's a good thing.
Harold Payne:	But, anyhow, I served total active and inactive service 11 years and 10 months. Of course, half of it didn't count because it was inactive; the other half was active. But I did what they told me to do.
M.W.:	And you did it well, it sounds like.

Harold Payne:	I got along all right.
M.W.:	As you're aware of, we have the 250th anniversary of Alexandria...
Harold Payne:	I know that well.
M.W.:	...is coming up, or it is here actually. My question to you is, Do you remember the bicentennial in 1949?
Harold Payne:	Sure.
M.W.:	...and what kind of activities did they have at that time?
Harold Payne:	Well, I couldn't tell you that. Of course, in 1949 I had just changed jobs. I was in Omaha for a while. I had just come back here and I went to work for the railroad in 1949. See they knew I...the man that ran it, Mr. [inaudible], he was a long time friend of mine even though he was older; he knew me from a kid up on Columbus Street. He lived on Princess Street, nice big house. But anyhow, he knew me from a kid. He knew I was an electrician. Knew I had worked on electric stuff in the Navy too. So anyway, he called me to come to work. He said, "Harold, we need somebody to change over from these steams to diesel. We don't have the people to do that." I said, "Okay." So I went down and talked to him. I decided I'd go ahead and do it. So I did. Worked there until they called me in the service. I told Buck I said I wouldn't come back. I said, "The diesels are running and everything is going. You've got enough people." I said, "I'm not that big a cog anymore." I was for a year or so. It was just a job. So, I didn't go back. Anyhow, I did work on transfer of...see we had five or six railroads coming into Potomac Yards. We had B&O [Baltimore and Ohio], C&O [Chesapeake and Ohio], Pennsylvania, RF&P [Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac]. And all of them had different engines and different...and the electric engines came in. I got to work on them some. GE GGs they were called. They ran from here Alexandria, to New Haven, Connecticut.
M.W.:	So, were you...you were more or less settled back down again in this area in the 1950s or later [inaudible]?
Harold Payne:	Well I stayed here all my life.
M.W.:	But I mean as far as traveling and being in the military? What is your feeling as far as Alexandria in that period of time compared to earlier days? Was there a drastic change from World War II? You weren't around here I understand in World War II, but did you see drastic change from before you left mili...before you went off to military service and then when you came back in the mid-[19]50s, did you see a drastic change in Alexandria?
Harold Payne:	Oh, sure. The change was the militarization of a lot of stuff. Like, the torpedo plant was here. And the people in Washington working at the

	<p>Navy Yard and other places. And even the military bases, and Cameron Station was put up, you know. They had to have housing for those people. So they built Cameron Valley, they built Chinquapin up there where T.C. Williams High School is. They built Henry G. Hurley homes over there. The Pentagon was built. They had to have homes for all these people. So they built Parkfairfax. They built Fairlington. All that during World War II to make homes for these people. There was one right here on the corner down here. I think it was called Hurley Homes, or something. I don't know what the name of it was. Right down at West and Braddock Road was a whole flock of homes where they built all those high-rise...those townhouses now and a few little shops there. I forgot what the name of that place was. They built one there, and then they built the Berg in the 1940s. They built the Berg. Do you know what the Berg is? That's the argument that they've got two whole city blocks down there where mostly black people live. They want to tear it down. It's awful valuable property. That wasn't anything but marshland in my day but it's valuable property today. But they don't want to tear it down. When the city tears it down, they provide them with nice homes. These homes back over here they provide with. Some of those homes they get for \$200, \$300 a month.</p>
M.W.:	These here?
Harold Payne:	Some of them.
M.W.:	Really?
Harold Payne:	Some of them are houses that are subsidized houses. I think they need them. I think they got to have them.
<b>Urban Renewal</b>	
M.W.:	That gets us into another question here as far as urban renewal. I mean, what do, what is your feelings on what they've done to this city here as far as...
Harold Payne:	Well, I think it's great. People don't remember, but, I heard talk and I never read it, that Rockefeller talked to the people in Alexandria years ago about redoing Alexandria before he did Williamsburg. Of course, Alexandria had a tremendous number of original buildings. Not just foundations, but buildings and all. And the city decided, it's what I hear, that they would rather do it with private money. So Rockefeller took his plan to Williamsburg.
M.W.:	What was their rationale behind that, do you know?
Harold Payne:	Well, they didn't want the government or any fund to control that part or the city, or whatever they were doing.
M.W.:	They wanted direct...still have hands on...direct...hands on...

Harold Payne:	And they've done a good job revitalizing it. Now some buildings they've torn down that I didn't agree with. See, I'm a Southerner by nature and by birth. But I'm not against or for any particular ethnic group or anything, not even my own group, if I think they're wrong. They should never have torn down the Marshall House where Colonel Ellsworth was shot. They tore that down and that shouldn't have been done. You know they didn't tear down the Stabler-Leadbeater drugstore, apothecary shop. They didn't tear that down. They're not going to tear down the old firehouse or Christ Church.
M.W.:	Or Gadsby's Tavern.
Harold Payne:	They're not going to tear that down. The Marshall House had a piece of heritage to it that other buildings didn't have. They won't tear down the slave pen down there on Duke Street. And I don't blame them. If I were black, I wouldn't want them to tear it down either because I'd want my kids to know what the hell the thing was.
M.W.:	What year...do you remember what year they tore that down, that house?
Harold Payne:	They tore it down about [19]64 when they built the Holiday Inn on King Street. That's what's built. About [19]64. Now, don't hold me to [19]64, but it was in the [19]60s. Because all this big stuff started in the [19]60s. All of it. You know, renovation of City Hall, the fountain in the square, and all that, and the Gadsby Square, Bankers Square, Courthouse Square, and the Holiday Inn. All that came in the [19]60s. About. Maybe some of it ran...maybe the Courthouse ran in the [19]70s. I don't know. I think it did run into the [19]70s. But I think it's good. I think it's great. When they remodel and move people and take their property out from under them, they got to furnish them something else. I believe that. They have to do that.
<b>Alexandria Today</b>	
Harold Payne:	So what else do you have down?
M.W.:	Oh, let's see, I just was wondering what your feelings are. Now we are moving ahead to the year 2000 and the new millennium here. What do you think, or what are your feelings about Alexandria and the direction that the city is going?
Harold Payne:	I think it is going fine. I think development of Potomac Yards and Cameron Station. I think something's wrong. There is just not enough connection between the planners, the contractors, and the Council, and all those involved in it. I don't understand why a builder just arbitrarily moved his building line 40 feet because he wanted to put up a certain kind of building different from the plan. Now somebody in the city, the inspector or somebody must have known that. Now they say they're going to make the condos next door,

	<p>whatever it is, pay for half of a buffer wall because it's only a 20-foot buffer strip. So the builder is willing to pay for half of the wall if the condo pays for the other. Well the agreement was that the building was supposed to be 60 foot over with a buffer. But they took 40 foot of it and left only 20. I'd make them tear the buildings down and put them where they belong.</p>
M.W.:	<p>Start over, yes.</p>
Harold Payne:	<p>That's what I'd do. I don't care how much it costs them. If he didn't like it, get a new builder. Too bad.</p>
M.W.:	<p>This is right here you are talking about?</p>
Harold Payne:	<p>No, this is Cameron Station. Out there. It's all in the paper and everything. The only thing I know is what I read in the paper. And that's what I read—that they moved it. Now the inspectors or somebody must have known. Somebody issued some license and permits and drawings and plans. The Council votes on what...you can't really blame Council all the time because if the right information doesn't come to them, they can't vote right.</p>
M.W.:	<p>That's true too, yes.</p>
Harold Payne:	<p>And they don't have time to go out and inspect all this. But they did go out and inspect that after so much cane was raised about it. And they decided that the man didn't have to move the building if something else was done. I wouldn't excuse them that easy. Just like these people out here at Potomac Yards. I understand they put buildings up and built them in places where they shouldn't be. Or the kind of building that shouldn't be. I wouldn't stand...if I were a Council person and sitting.</p>
M.W.:	<p>Well, is there not enough clout in the Council or is there not enough people in Council? There's a difference.</p>
Harold Payne:	<p>There's plenty of people in Council. All the clout you need in the world is on the City Council because they can deny or add anything they want. Even if the people have a contract, if they don't live up to the contract as it is stated, they have the legal sides on that side, not on the other side. If it's on my side, I'm going to use it. I think things like that and like this is against...it makes another builder feel, well, if this builder can do that and I come here and do something and then somebody else can come on and do the same thing to me. Maybe I don't want to do that. And I think some of the buildings they build, they let them get too close to the street lines too. I don't like that. That's up to them to figure out and I won't be here to worry about it. I think the city's better off than it was. Yes, much better off than it was in the [19]20s and [19]30s.</p>

<b>The Great Depression</b>	
Harold Payne:	During the Depression it was a terrible thing.
M.W.:	How was it impacted in the...I mean, I assume you were impacted because of your background. But, I mean, how was the city in general?
Harold Payne:	The city, in general, made out pretty well because of its proximity to Washington. I remember the bonus march over there and stuff like that. That was a horrible thing. And Eisenhower was the captain in the Army at that time that had to fight the bonus marchers off. But that was a terrible...it wasn't his fault; that was his job.
M.W.:	Now those were the soldiers from World War I protesting?
Harold Payne:	Yes, for their bonus that was promised them.
<b>Distribution of Wealth</b>	
Harold Payne:	They didn't promise us any bonus. And I don't think the government owes me anything for serving. They don't owe me one cent, one nickel. I was not hurt. I was not damaged. I had no family at the time except my wife. She was not affected. I was not affected, anything else. I don't think the military owes me anything at this point. If I got sick and got hurt or unable to do something or had no other means take care of it, I think they should look into it. But other than that, I don't think they owe me. As long as I can go, I don't want them to owe me. I mean, why should you work and pay for things that I might need, unless I really need...I think I earned them because I did everything they wanted me to do for 11 years.
M.W.:	Well, that's the only reason that you need them—for me to pay your medical bills. Hopefully, somebody will pay mine, down the road. That's the way it's supposed to work anyway.
Harold Payne:	So, that's the way it goes. It's just like I didn't think they owed me an education because I served in the service.
M.W.:	So you didn't use your GI Bill for anything?
Harold Payne:	No, I didn't use it to buy my house. I haven't used it for anything. I still have the certificate of eligibility.
M.W.:	Is that right?
Harold Payne:	Those things...but I haven't used it.
M.W.:	And you don't plan to, I assume, at this point?
Harold Payne:	I don't plan to. They couldn't stop me if I wanted to. If I ask them, they'd have to give it to me. But I'm not...unless I have to, I'm not going to ask them. But I don't think that a person is owed anything for serving his country.

M.W.:	Well, that's a good attitude to take.
Harold Payne:	And none of my brothers do. None of my brothers do. My brother at 77 died from Alzheimer's [disease]. He died three years ago. He is three years older than I am, so he died three years ago. And Alzheimer's. He didn't last but a year with it. He had serious kind. It just went like this and took him. But, anyhow—
M.W.:	I know they say Ronald Reagan is in pretty bad shape now too. You never see him anymore out in public. It's a sad thing.
Harold Payne:	<p>So is Billy Graham. Billy Graham has Parkinson's [disease]. Not Alzheimer's, but Parkinson's. But Reagan is in bad shape. But all these things add up and amount to things. And I don't feel that the city owes me anything. I could make some recommendations to them if I thought they would go anywhere. It's like Fairfax County. You see, my retirement funds, and most people my age, those funds were earned when retirement wasn't considered a very big thing. So my retirement is very small compared to somebody that's going to retire today. Of course they've had 15 years to build more than I could build, because it wasn't building...retirement didn't really come about as a good thing until the 1970s. I mean real good, where it increased fast. In fact, the city in the [19]70s or early [19]80s didn't give retirement to part-time workers. [inaudible] Their retirement was very small until those things.</p> <p>I was Registrar of Voters for five years, 1982 to [19]87. I went to work after, after I was 62, so I was ineligible for their retirement system. However, if I was still working on July 1, 1987, which was five years later, if I was still working at that time, I would have been grandfathered in the city and state retirement. I was voted out of office four months ahead of that. So I didn't get anything. But that's okay. I don't hold it against them. But you take taxes on my house. In Fairfax County, if your income is a certain amount, like my brother, he makes more than I do, retirement, because he worked longer. He's younger than I am. He worked longer. But his retirement is a little greater and his wife has a retirement. Between the two of them, Fairfax County still gives him a 50% reduction on his real estate tax. Here, I have to pay the full amount. They don't give me any consideration at all...if I didn't earn \$1000 a month retirement, they would still want that \$3000.</p>
M.W.:	How long have you lived in your current home?
Harold Payne:	33 years.
M.W.:	And how have you seen the tax increase?
Harold Payne:	[inaudible] from everything up.
M.W.:	Tremendous?

Harold Payne:	When I worked, when I bought my first house, the payment including taxes was \$115 a month. Now the taxes are more than that. Taxes are \$3000 a year, \$250 a month, on my house.
M.W.:	But then again, the house is worth more than you paid for it.
Harold Payne:	Oh, a hell of a lot more. Ten times what I paid for it. Sure. But what am I going to do with it? You know, I'm going to live in it. That's it. People always want to repair it. I say, "To hell with it. It will outlast me."
<b>Other Memories of Alexandria Locations and Events</b>	
Harold Payne:	<p>Well, anyway, that's a lot of things to talk about. I know a lot of other things but to think of them right off...I used to hop on a train and ride through the tunnel down in Tunneltown. Come out black as a [inaudible]. God I was...smoke everywhere. It was terrible. But we used to do all those things. I remember a blacksmith shop operated right on Wythe Street down here between St. Asaph and Washington [Streets]. That would be the 600 block of Wilkes Street on the north side, used to be a blacksmith there. I forgot his name but I always thought his name was Bowman, B-O-W-M-A-N. Because my mother, when we lived around the corner on St. Asaph Street, when a baby carriage wheel would break, or a scooter wheel or bicycle wheel, we'd go down to Mr. Bowman's blacksmith shop and he'd weld it and fix it for you. You know, he'd charge you a dime. And then there was a blacksmith shop I remember very well out on the southwest corner of Patrick and Franklin Street, right where...there's a school there now in that property. I used to know a lot of folks in there. But he had a blacksmith shop right on that corner. Mr. Smith was his name. Because in the 1930s, 1930, [19]31, I delivered newspapers to him. That's how I knew him.</p> <p>And I used to deliver newspapers all the way down to the keeper of the National Cemetery. All the way down at the end of Wilkes Street. Way down where that cemetery is. I used to deliver the <i>Gazette</i> down there.</p> <p>There was a hay, grain, and feed company. There was a vinegar factory I was telling you. Two buildings. They caught on fire and burned in 1927. I watched them burn. Firemen took great big furniture pads and blankets and put on the second, the first building, to the left on that side, west side of the street. So the building to the left was the one that was burning. But they were trying to keep the one to the north from burning so they put water hoses on. They couldn't stop fire in the other one, so they tried to keep that one from burning. But all the blankets and water they put on that wouldn't [inaudible]. Both of them burned down to the ground and never re-opened. Never re-opened. I watched that happen. About 1927 it was.</p>

	Tornado came right through here in 1927 too. That was right at West and Peyton [Streets].
M.W.:	Was there much advance warning in those days?
Harold Payne:	No, wasn't any at all. It just hit. I was in the school, Jefferson School there. And it didn't hurt the school. But it came right through and it bypassed the school, just a little bit. But it tore a building down where the old Coca-Cola plant was before it moved on Seminary Road. But it was at King and Peyton Street. On the southwest corner there's a brick building, has stores and all, rug shop and all that in it now. There was an old, frame, black hotel there. Blew it down. Tornado tore it down. And then it cut right through that block and garage roofs and house roofs came off on West Street. On Henry Street there was a Hogue, H-O-G-U-E or H-O-D-G-E, Hodge, or something like that, Feed and Grain Company with a brick building. It just took half of the wall right out of it. The tornado did.
M.W.:	Is that right?
Harold Payne:	Yes. I remember seeing it but I don't...there wasn't a whole lot more.
M.W.:	So, I guess that made all the newspapers? They were talking about that for years?
Harold Payne:	Sure, I guess people that know it still do. I don't know how old this lady was that was here. But I don't think she is as old as I am.
M.W.:	No, I don't think so.
Harold Payne:	But I remember when a lot of vacant land up this way. Parker-Gray High School was right across the street. Then they moved it down there where the Metro is at Braddock Road. Moved it down there. Built a beautiful building. That lasted eight or ten years, I guess. And then they integrated. They built that building about 1951, [19]52. And they integrated about 1960 or so, or whatever. So that ended that building. I don't think they used it anymore. I think the city claimed it back for a warehouse for a long time. It was practically a brand new building. GW [George Washington High School] was built in 1935. Now that's 64, [6]5 years ago. That building's in good shape.
M.W.:	Still going strong.
Harold Payne:	It was a strongly built building. Well done. So, that's it. I remember trains running up and down Henry Street. Not passenger trains, freight trains. Came through Henry Street. Henry Street was a two-lane Route 1 truck route, you know, for Route 1. Shirley Highway and all that wasn't over there. Henry Street was a two-way truck route, Route 1 and the scenic Route 1 was Washington Street. I remember, I was here when they dedicated the Masonic Temple, George Washington's birthday, 1932. I saw that. I was here when the George Washington's Day parade was. And on Princess and

	Washington Street on the west side facing the river, on the west side of Washington Street, was the grandstand where President Hoover sat. And I just lived one block down the street on St. Asaph. So I saw all of that and everything. I remember those things very well. Very well.
M.W.:	Did they arrive real early that day to get all the security set up for him and everything? Or, was the security not as big for the Presidents in those days?
Harold Payne:	I don't know. But I saw the Queen. When she visited Mount Vernon she rode through in her car. I saw that. Waving. I didn't touch her. And I saw President Roosevelt when he visited Christ Church. I was within a few feet of him. But I was just a little boy and I was just there, you know, when he came in. And I saw him. He had his cane and everything else. And then, that was about 1933 or [193]4, something like that. You know, after he became President. Then I saw Mr.—President—Eisenhower when he visited Christ Church. That's when they had the security all over the building, on top of the buildings and everywhere, all around. All kinds of police and plainclothes men.
M.W.:	Secret Service.
Harold Payne:	Secret Service up on the roofs, all around that whole church, on all sides. Washington Street, Columbus Street, all sides of it. They were there then. And then my daughter shook hands with President Truman, with, yes, President Truman. When the YMCA [Young Men's Christian Association], the first building out there on Monroe Avenue was dedicated, she shook hands with him. He was the principal speaker at the opening of that thing. And both of us had a chance to reach out for his hand, but I let her do it. That's exciting to a child. So I let her do it. She got that close. And due to Mr. Humphries, who I told you about, had the cigar shop and also the oil, he was a friend of Theodore Roosevelt. And he took my mother to the White House and she was introduced to President Roosevelt, Teddy Roosevelt. So she met Teddy Roosevelt.
M.W.:	Your mother did?
Harold Payne:	Yes, in those days. This uncle was quite fond of my mother. And when she was a young girl, twelve, fourteen, sixteen years old, he used to take her to various things like that. There were a lot of opera houses in Alexandria in those days they used to go to. A lot of them. They're torn down now. Not all of them. I hope I've helped you some, or whatever.
M.W.:	Yes, you have. I want to thank you on behalf of myself, and the Lyceum, and the city of Old Town, Alexandria.
Harold Payne:	There's a lot of other things, like the Elks Club. I know a lot about

	that. I managed that for ten years. I just had to quit because of my wife.
M.W.:	Yes, I understand. I'll turn this thing off. [End]