

Summary of the Personal Oral History of Ann Cottrell Free

(June 4, 1916 – October 30, 2004)

This oral history was recorded over a period of more than a year: April 17, 1997 – July 21, 1998. The interviews were primarily conducted by Ann's daughter Elissa Blake Free (EF) and her son-in-law, William Ward Nooter (BN). Ann's friend and helper, Joan Rooks asked the questions on the second part of tape 9 and all of tape 10, in Ann's home in Bethesda, Maryland (4700 Jamestown Road). Most of the oral history was conducted at Ann and Elissa's farmhouse in Lantz Mill (Shenandoah, County) Virginia. (56Bell's Lane, Edinburg, Va.) or in the car returning to Washington, D.C.

Tape 1

Pages 1-23

Recorded April 17 & 27, 1997

Lantz Mill, Virginia and in the car driving from Shenandoah County, Va to Washington, D.C.

Born Richmond, Virginia, 421 West Grace Street, delivered by Uncle William West, grandparents Emma "Pet" and George McDuffie Blake, Mammy (Adeline Walker), 2008 Park Avenue, "go-cart", run over by small truck, strips bark off tree with sickle, father takes her to "police station", pulls Alice Selzer down the steps, kittens disappeared, visits Gayton coal mines, sees French General Marshal Foch in parade, Cottrell grandparents "G-Muds and G-Dads", father attended Fork Union Military Academy, Ann's parents meet horseback riding near "The Elms" and "Corduroy", flu epidemic of 1918, 3105 West Grace Street, Robert E. Lee Grammar School, William Fox School, Normal School, "Buddy" in garage stall, "Duff", "Windmill", Deep Run Hunt Club, Louisa, Va., father's coal yard, fire at stockyards, Binford Junior High, John Marshall High School, Collegiate School for Girls, Camp Mont Shenandoah.

Tape 2

Pages 23 – 44

Recorded April 27 & May 10, 1997

Lantz Mill, Va.

Camp Mt. Shenandoah, Barnard College, Thomas Wolfe, *Richmond-Times Dispatch*, Jim Free proposes marriage, Hollywood, California, "Virginia" the movie, New York City, *Newsweek* magazine, 24 year old reporter for *Newsweek* in Washington on 12th floor of National Press Building, pre-war Washington, 1734 Q Street, Georgetown, D.C., Mrs. Roosevelt's press conferences, opening of National Gallery of Art .

Tape 3

Pages 44 – 64

Recorded May 10 & 11, 1997

Lantz Mill, Va.

Mrs. Roosevelt's press conferences with detailed description of the "girls", describes Marian Anderson at Lincoln Memorial, *Chicago-Sun* Washington bureau, *New York Herald-Tribune* Washington bureau, Pearl Harbor Day, Newsweek, war-time Washington, 12th floor of National Press Building, 1606 20th Street, Jewish Liberation Front, Winston Churchill, UNRRA

Tape 4

Pages 64 – 84

Recorded May 11 (Mother's Day) & July 20, 1997

Lantz Mill, Va.

United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), Empire Joy, Clare Keswick, Baron Eric MacKay, Shanghai, Cathay Mansions, Anna Chen Chennault, Jardine Matheson, dinner with General Marshall, Chou En-lai, famine in Hunan Province, Arthur Rothstein photos, Changsha, Henyang, House of Wu, sent telegrams to Shanghai, Manchuria, Jack Chen, Thea Weckerle,

Tape 5

Pages 84 – 102

Recorded July 20 & 27 and August 27 & 30, 1997

Lantz Mill, Va.

Harbin, Manchuria, Fontaine Maury Thraves, Peking, visits Great Wall with Seymour Topping, trip around the world with Verna Mae Feuerhelm, Hong Kong, Saigon, Indochina, French stowaway, Bangkok, India-Calcutta, Burma, Yemen, Suez Canal, Yugoslav refuge camp- El Shatt-in Sanai desert, Nina Solem, Maria Bancicevic, Cairo, George Polk, Greece

Tape 6

Pages 102- 122

Recorded August 30 & October 25, 1997

Lantz Mill, Va.

Greece, Italy, Palestine, Germany, Thea Weckerle, taking money out of Germany for Thea, France (Paris), Lucie Noel, Paul Leon and James Joyce, Dior fashion house, Dunkirk, London, England, Rebecca West, trip back to USA, Barbizon Hotel in NYC, Marshall Plan, France (Paris) Simone Bosc Heligon, Italy, Tennessee Williams, Trieste, Wien, Vienna - Rita Nagel, May Day 1949, Opera House

Tape 7

Pages 122 – 139

Recorded October 25 & November 16, 1997

Lantz Mill, Virginia and in the car driving from Shenandoah County, Va to Washington, D.C.

Washington, D.C., Marshall Plan, Manfred Baer, Alger Hiss, Whittaker Chambers, marriage to James Stillman Free 2/24/50, St. Johns Church, living at 3000 Conn. Ave. (Cathedral Mansions), McLean Gardens, North American Newspaper Alliance, Washington Star, Washington Post, Cambodia, 1963 39th Street, “Chips”, Burleith neighbors, 4500 Que Lane, Rudolph Lowenthal, Brownie troop leader, Nettie Mae Eddy, *Forever the Wild Mare*, dancing with Richard Nixon, Eisenhower Administration, Humane Slaughter act, Sen. Hubert Humphrey, laboratories, FDA beagles, Sen. Lister Hill, Rachel Carson, article on Rachel Carson memorial

Tape 8

Pages 139 –144

Recorded February 6, 1998

Lantz Mill, Va.

Mother’s illnesses, Thelma Allen, Mother’s death, Montgomery County Humane Society, Ingrid Newkirk, book – *Meat: The End of the Affair*, bleeding ulcer, column for *Enviro, South*, joined board of Albert Schweitzer Fellowship, book – *Animals, Nature and Albert Schweitzer*, poetry book – *No Room, Save in the Heart*, Elissa marries Bill, trips to Morocco, Spain, Portugal, Tunisia, Malta, Gibraltar, Brittany, birth of Amanda Blake Nooter, purchase of farmhouse in Lantz Mill, Va.,

Tape 9

Pages 144 – 152

July 21, 1998

Lantz Mill, Virginia and Bethesda, Maryland

(second half of interview conducted by Joan Rooks)

Life with animals – kittens disappeared from yard at 2008 Park Ave., Richmond, Nancy & Charlie (chickens in Louisa, Va.), Billy, Windmill, mules and workers in Daddy’s cold mines, Daddy bringing in dead birds to be cleaned, Deep Run Hunt Club, fox hunting, first printed article, “Hunting from the Fox’s Point of View”, After Dark (horse), Pittypat (pony), Venus (horse), stable hands – Luther & Page, horse shows, Mother taught riding at Brook Run stables, Windrock (horse), falling off of After Dark at Deep Run Hunt Club horse show, “blooded” on fox hunt, Mother worked for Ellen Glasgow at Richmond SPCA, visited New York area shelters with Mother to research humane euthanasia, Washington Animal Rescue League.

Tape 10

Pages 152 – 158

Taped July 21, 1998

Lantz Mill, Va.

Interviewed by Joan Rooks

Decompression chamber, captive bolt pistol in slaughter houses, euthanasia, talks about her early animal writing on humane slaughter, signing of the bill by LBJ, Helen Jones, “we don’t need meat in any way, in any shape or form.”