



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



**Project Name:** *Alexandria Legacies-The Company of Sisters, Inc. Oral History Project*

**Title:** *Interview with Mabel Porter Price*

**Date of Interview:** *April 21, 2002*

**Location of Interview:** *Shiloh Baptist Church, Alexandria, Virginia*

**Interviewer:** *Phylis J. Adams*

**Transcriber:** *Valerie Davison*

**Abstract:** *Mabel Porter Price was born at home on Jefferson Street in Old Town, Alexandria, in 1908. She talks about the neighborhood of Jefferson and South Alfred Streets and her neighbors there. She also talks about shopping on King Street on Saturdays and memories of attending Parker-Gray. Mrs. Price worked for the federal government; her husband worked for the telephone company. They raised two children, both of whom graduated from college. She describes her marriage of 77 years and reflects on what a good life she has had.*

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<b>Background</b>	
Interviewer:	Can you tell us the date of your birth?
Mabel Price:	December 11, 1908.
Interviewer:	And you were born—
Mabel Price:	I was born in Alexandria.
Interviewer:	What street were you born on?
Mabel Price:	On Jefferson Street, south side.
Interviewer:	Do you know who assisted your mother with your birth?
Mabel Price:	No, I don't.
Interviewer:	But it was probably a midwife?
Mabel Price:	A midwife I imagine. Yes.
<b>Life at Home on Jefferson Street</b>	
Interviewer:	Now when you grew up, who was living in your home? Who lived in your home with you?
Mabel Price:	My mother and stepfather.
Interviewer:	And your mother's name was...
Mabel Price:	Catherine Porter Price. No. Catherine Porter Young.
Interviewer:	And your father was...
Mabel Price:	James Young.
Interviewer:	Were there other children living in the house with you?
Mabel Price:	Nobody but me. I was an only child.
Interviewer:	You were an only child.
Mabel Price:	Yes.
Interviewer:	...describe your mother to me.
Mabel Price:	Well, she was a hard-working woman. She did housework and cooking in homes. She was church-going, at the [unclear] Baptist Church. She was a very nice person. As far as I know, she didn't have any bad habits. She liked to cook and all, and she was real nice on birthdays. She'd bake a cake and everything. I learned to make them from her.
Interviewer:	Would you describe your mother as a good cook?
Mabel Price:	Yes.
Interviewer:	What were some of the things that you prepared that you really

	enjoyed?
Mabel Price:	One of them was pineapple cake, [unclear] pineapple cake, three-layer cake, and then the regular foods you eat, you know...chicken. We most liked chicken, and meats and vegetables and things. Regular food.
Interviewer:	But she was a very good baker.
Mabel Price:	Yes. She baked things. She worked and cooked in people's families in Alexandria, where she worked there.
<b>Neighbors in Old Town</b>	
Interviewer:	So she worked for some of the people who lived in Alexandria?
Mabel Price:	<p>I know one of the Lawlers lived on South Washington Street, and she worked there up until her death. The older Lawlers had passed, but the daughter, Miss Margaret Lawler, she's still living. She looked to us like we were sister and brother to her, because, as a child, my mother would take me there, and I would play in the yard with Margaret.</p> <p>Then after my mother passed, my husband started cutting grass for the Lawlers. They eventually moved. She sold that big house there [unclear], Washington Street, just below the drugstore. There was a filling station on the corner, and she was right next to the...the big, red brick house was the Lawlers' house. The father passed first. Then her mother passed. Then she sold the big house and got a smaller house, up on Franklin Street.</p> <p>But we're still friends and all, and we talk on the telephone to each other. When my husband passed [unclear] November. I told her, and she had the girl who worked for her bring her to the church, to the shower, to the funeral. She did more crying than I would, because I was trying to hold myself up, you know, grieving [unclear]. And we're still friends.</p>
Interviewer:	And you said this was Mrs.—
Mabel Price:	Lawler. L-A-W-L-E-R.
<b>Values</b>	
Interviewer:	What did your mother stress? What did your mother and stepfather stress while you were growing up? What kind of values did they stress?
Mabel Price:	<p>Always, especially my mother, always tell me to treat everybody like I wanted them to treat me; never "run around the streets," and never sass and talk back to anybody. You know, the regular way. Go to school. We didn't have no school buses then. We had to take the books...[unclear] Columbus and Franklin Street, Jefferson Street as a kid. We had to walk all the way up there to the school, carrying our books, long before we had any school buses [unclear]. That was when I was [unclear] still carrying our books. I didn't go no further than the school right here.</p>

Interviewer:	But you said your mother emphasized Christian values.
Mabel Price:	Christian values. She was a church member at Shiloh [Baptist Church], and she would take me with her to Sunday school. I grew up in Shiloh, you know. [Unclear], like my son said, [unclear]. [Laughs] She would go to church...my mother would, like I said, bake cakes and she would sell them, to make money for the church...different prizes and things. So she was busy all the time doing good, and teaching me to do good. I guess that's why.
Interviewer:	So in a way she was kind of a businesswoman, if she was making cakes.
Mabel Price:	Cakes and things.
Interviewer:	And selling them.
Mabel Price:	At the church or whatever, selling them. They would have suppers, because the elders would have the suppers, you know, and she would help with all of that. She was busy at the church, raising money to help Shiloh.
Interviewer:	...You are being interviewed right in front of a beautiful organ, that I understand was given by Shiloh, is that correct?
Mabel Price:	[Unclear]
Interviewer:	A beautiful pipe organ.
Mabel Price:	[Unclear]
<b>Neighborhood</b>	
Interviewer:	Now tell me about the neighborhood where you grew up. What was it like?
Mabel Price:	Well, on Jefferson Street, it was good and bad when you were going through there. [Unclear] some of the people in the south end of town was worse than...they wasn't no worse, but they [unclear] uptown, downtown, across the [unclear] and all that, down in the [unclear] and different sections. They were given different names. I never had any trouble growing up, and neither did my son, because he would always be going in...he could take care of himself. [Laughs] But nobody ever bothered me.  Only one time, but they didn't catch me. I was coming...and they was...yes, that's a part of my life. Even when I went to school [unclear]. I used to work for a family named Diehl on Prince Street, between Columbus and Alfred, next to [unclear]. I used to go straight from school [unclear]. I'd go down to the post office. There was a post office on [unclear] and Prince. I would pick up their mail and come back, and then I would help them to prepare their dinner. Then after dinner was served, I had to wash dishes after. Then coming home one night, I

	<p>passed through a section down on South Alfred Street, between [unclear]. Anyway, I heard these steps, like somebody was trying to catch up. I looked back, and there was a man [unclear]. I started to run. I ran up to Franklin Street, and there was a soldier...because there was a camp [unclear]. I guess he was going to attack me. So I ran screaming and howling, and [unclear] right in the middle of Franklin Street [unclear], "Help, help, help! That man is after me." She opened the door, and she "blasted him out. He started going back, and I guess he would have attacked me.</p> <p>So that's the only time anybody ever bothered me. So I told the people I worked for what had happened, so my mother would come and meet me, coming home. Then I changed. Instead of coming down Alfred Street I would come to Franklin, and cross over to Columbus Street, because there was always some fellows or somebody standing on Columbus that I knew, and they would protect me.</p>
Interviewer:	They would protect you?
Mabel Price:	Yes. Because they knew us. They knew our faces. [Unclear] None of them, but this was a soldier.
Interviewer:	A what? A soldier?
Mabel Price:	A white soldier.
Interviewer:	A white soldier.
Mabel Price:	Anyway, I was lucky. I didn't have too far to run. He didn't catch me. Other than that...That's the only time, growing up [unclear].
Interviewer:	What neighbors do you remember?
Mabel Price:	<p>Neighbors? Oh, some of the neighbors still, what was in the 600 block or 700 block...the Norton family, and [unclear] go there to her service and she'd come to my service [unclear], when I was leaving. But Miss [Unclear] Miss Burke [unclear] 400 block [unclear] on Thursday, at 11:00, [unclear] 11:00-11:30 on Thursday. And we had [unclear]. Her and her husband lived on Alfred Street. He passed a few years ago. She always said, "Mabel, we're the oldest ones living here now." The family that lived on the 600 block, she said, "We were just like a family, living on that block." Whatever happened to one family...death or marriage or whatever...everybody always would be involved, helping one another as much as we could.</p> <p>So that was a nice neighborhood when I lived there. Of course, all around, on the other streets, we knew people and all. Nobody ever bothered us, and they was always nice to help one another. Whatever we could do...the children, or whatever. And my schoolteacher...of course, he's gone, Mr. [unclear]. He lived on that block. And [unclear]. She was my first-grade teacher. She lived on that 600 block. She moved up north</p>

	<p>of Alfred Street, before she passed.</p> <p>So we had good neighbors. The Burkes were another family. Then there was [Unclear], my school teacher. [Unclear]. She lived across the street, in that same block. So we had all good neighbors, who helped one another. [Unclear]</p>
<b>Businesses</b>	
Interviewer:	Now let's talk about some of the businesses that were in Alexandria, businesses that you knew about, or maybe even some that you did business with.
Mabel Price:	No. I was in some stores. We had a store right across the street on Franklin and Columbus Street. It was Harrison's [unclear], where we used to buy our groceries and everything [unclear]. They eventually had a [unclear]. So [unclear] merchants had a store [unclear] stores you could buy from.
Interviewer:	Where did you shop for clothes?
Mabel Price:	On King Street. [Unclear] different new stores, new people, and if you saw a coat you wanted, you'd go in that store. You don't see as many now as you did [unclear] or whatever. Saturday morning would be the main day for going up...leaving the house, taking [unclear], going to King Street [unclear] down King Street. [Unclear] But that was Saturday morning [unclear] the five-and-ten-cent store to shop and buy things in there. [Unclear] payments down on the car. Eventually, J.C. Penney's came, and we would do our shopping there. [Unclear] sometimes, but we did it mostly in Alexandria.
Interviewer:	Did you experience any difficulty when you wanted to buy things in Alexandria?
Mabel Price:	No, I didn't, because my husband always worked [unclear] but he worked at a power plant, at the electric company. So we were always able to have mail and able to pay our bills. We didn't have no problem, because he worked for the Virginia Bell Company. He retired in...what was it? In 1970, after forty-six years. I was going to make thirty years in the Marine Corps, but at that time I only had twenty-eight, and there was a new pay increase. The government was giving a 9% pay increase, but you had to be out by the 30 <sup>th</sup> of June, in 1970. So I called the Civil Service [unclear] civilian personnel. She suggested...she said, "Well, Mrs. Price, my best bet for you at the time is to make it..." Because, you see, we never had had a 9% pay increase, and I don't think [unclear], and I'd been watching it. [Unclear]. So that's why I had twenty-eight years in the government, and he had forty-six years with Virginia Bell.
Interviewer:	Your husband.

<p>Mabel Price:</p>	<p>My husband. Uh-huh. So working all through the years, we were able to take care of our bills. I bought the house where I'm at...I mean, where I was...up on 420 North Payne Street [unclear, sounded like Main Street], in 1949. That block was between Princess [unclear, sounded like Prince] and Oronoco [unclear], and it was practically all white on that block. But then they started selling their homes, because so many colored people were getting good jobs [unclear]. So they would sell us their homes. So [unclear] moving back, as fast as the house [unclear]. In a couple of years we had finished paying for the house, because we bought bonds. [Unclear] had bought bonds from [unclear], and I had bought bonds. So we decided to cash in, which we did, because [unclear] when the real estate man came and showed us through the house.</p> <p>So anyway, we went on and bought where we're at on South Jefferson Street. Miss Hill owned practically all of that 600 block. She was supposed to sell the house, so that meant that we had to...everybody had to move, when they'd got somewhere to go. So that's how come we moved up onto North Payne Street [unclear], because we found that house that we could buy. We looked at others, but we took that one. So we lived there from [19]49 up until now. Now [unclear] my son, and my granddaughter and her husband are going to live in the house that I had.</p>
<p>Interviewer:</p>	<p>Do you remember any black businesses here in Alexandria?</p>
<p>Mabel Price:</p>	<p>Black businesses? Other than barber shops and things like that, no.</p>
<p>Interviewer:</p>	<p>Do you remember a black hotel that was here?</p>
<p>Mabel Price:</p>	<p>Yes. On King Street, going toward the temple.</p>
<p>Interviewer:</p>	<p>Can you tell me about it?</p>
<p>Mabel Price:</p>	<p>I don't know much about it, other than that I think it was a Jackson...I think the man's name was Jackson that...I never knew him. I'd pass it, or something like that.</p>
<p><b>Transportation and Schools</b></p>	
<p>Interviewer:</p>	<p>Now what kind of transportation was available to African-Americans, when you were growing up here in Alexandria?</p>
<p>Mabel Price:</p>	<p>[Unclear] could catch a bus, to take you to [unclear] or something like that. But none of the taxicabs...there were no cabs. Other than that, you walked.</p>
<p>Interviewer:</p>	<p>Can you describe to me what going to school in Alexandria was like? Can you tell me about the schools?</p>
<p>Mabel Price:</p>	<p>Yes. Well, the schools was nice. It was up to you to do your work in school. My mother always saw that if you had work to study...overnight, so we would have it the next morning. I always did</p>



that. So I was on the honor roll in ninth grade. One of my teachers, Miss [Unclear]...that was the third-grade teacher, when I was [unclear]. I was on the honor roll, and she let us stand up and [unclear] spelling bees or whatever. Because by me being on the honor roll and high, and some of the other children would be at the top of the line. But this other girl [unclear], she was one of the slow students and didn't have no business at the top of the line [laughs]. So this one time, I did what I was supposed to [unclear], and I said, "You don't have to [unclear]." But Miss [Unclear] said, "You can't come back until your mother comes." And my mother was sick at that time. So my [unclear] came back to school with me.

But other than that, in school, I didn't have any trouble, because I always did my work, had good grades, and was on the honor roll. Mr. Lyle, one of my teachers. He didn't have no trouble with me, but the other children who didn't know the lessons, he'd smack them [unclear]. [Laughs] He wouldn't let them sit at the desks, because they didn't get the lessons, you know. But other than that...I always got my grades. I was fortunate enough about studying my lessons and learning my lessons and reading...I used to read a lot. That's what got me my government job, see. And I didn't go all...I just had started in high school, but [unclear] and when I took the exam to get the government job, I passed, and some of my friends I knew didn't pass. When I went to get my driver's license, I was lucky with the written test, and also with the driving around. So some of them asked me...one girl asked me, "How did you pass these things? You didn't even go to college?" I said, "I had to study and read, and that helped with that." [Laughs] That helped. [Unclear]

Anyway, I never had any trouble in school, as far as schoolwork and "what matters." I did my work overnight, and read, and then I'd go to school. [Unclear] so I didn't have any trouble. So I said we were able to do that. My husband, he didn't have any education hardly, just two grades. But we both worked. We bought our home, sent Charles to college. He finished college. He finished at Junior State, and he was a football coach. He coached football [unclear], and his children...he had a girl and a boy. Both of them [unclear]. Harold is a principal of a school, and Claudia, she's assistant principal. Both of them are married. Claudia don't have any children; Harold has two, a girl and a boy. They must be sixteen or fifteen. They're doing good in school. [Unclear] Harrison, I think, I think it's the Thomas Jefferson School there. He goes there, doing computer or whatever. I don't know what he's doing.

Anyway, all of them...so I said if I didn't get all the education myself, I instilled it in my children, and they're all doing well. My Charles, him and his wife...she's a schoolteacher. She taught school there, somewhere down Mount Vernon way, somewhere she taught school.

<b>Parker-Gray</b>	
Interviewer:	What do you remember most about going to Parker Gray? Is there any one thing you remember most about going to Parker Gray?
Mabel Price:	No. I remember the teachers was all right, like I said. One thing I knew...Mr. Wagner was the principal at that time. He would stand in the hallway, and when the late ones was coming in, he'd be standing there with a strap. [Laughs] He'd get 'em and whip 'em for being late. They were supposed to be in school then. I would always be on time. I didn't have any trouble with the teachers. Everybody was nice to me. I tried to be nice. I did my lessons, so they didn't have any reason to...of course, other children would get in trouble a lot, but I didn't have any trouble.
<b>Marriage</b>	
Interviewer:	Tell me a little bit about your husband, and about your marriage.
Mabel Price:	Uh-huh. Well, we married...I guess [unclear] I think I was only eighteen. We lived with my mother for a few months, until we got a little house on Jefferson Street. Then we went to housekeeping, and Charles was born and everything. Then we moved into the 700 block on [Unclear] Street for a little while, until we moved into the 600 block, and that's where we spent most of our time...on the 600 block of South [Unclear] Street, up until 1949. Charles, our son, would go from there to school, walking, carrying his books and everything.  My husband always worked, and I worked...before I worked for the government, I'd go into homes where I would get a job that wouldn't pay but twenty-five cents an hour, [unclear], and I remember one...[Interruption]...[Begin Side 2] Other than that, there wasn't no problem.
Interviewer:	Now we were talking about your husband. You moved to Jefferson Street—
Interviewer:	We moved to Jefferson Street, to the 700 block [unclear], and from the 700 block to the 600 block. That's where we stayed for a number of years, until the landlord was selling, because she had houses on both sides of the street [unclear]. She was selling her houses, and that meant everybody had to go and look for somewhere...another house. So I always said that I would buy instead of renting, if I could. So when we started searching for a place, I found this place [unclear] swing shifts and I worked at nights and sometimes in the day [unclear] had worked at night, and he was going, looking. So we found this house on Payne Street. [Unclear] lived next door [unclear]. Anyway, she went [unclear] since we was so in need of a place, and didn't want to rent anymore, [unclear] got it through the bank, on King Street. So when I got ready to pay her, finish paying for the house [unclear]. She had a new freezer in

	<p>the kitchen, when we went there to look at this place. When she moved, she took the freezer, and put this little old box...I think her husband had a hotdog stand, somewhere around Henry Street, [unclear] and that's what she had left in there. Of course, the real estate man said he was going to make her bring it back, but she never did bring it back. I had to buy a freezer. Then they cracked the window. Of course, that could have been accidental. But she had a clothes thing in the yard, a big swing thing to hang clothes on, to swing around [unclear] in the yard. So I had to get rid of all that.</p> <p>So anyway, I said, "Well, I'm going to fix her. She think I'm going to [unclear]." She had [unclear], something we had to pay. She would get something every month, [unclear] the bank. So when we got ready to pay her, we'd go to the bank and pay it all off, and we didn't tell her nothing. She had moved a couple blocks, streets, from where we lived. I said, "I'm going to the bank before I go to work. I'll catch a later bus and be late for work." So we went down first thing in the morning, to the bank down on King Street, and talked to the bank and told them what we wanted to do. So he "laid up" everything for us, and took the bonds... You know, the bonds, they have to pay everything off. And that's what we did. We got rid of her, and [unclear] two or three years, I guess, [unclear]. She was so disgusted. She told [unclear] gave money to pay off that much money...cash... "They must have hit the numbers." We don't even play. We never have played any numbers. But that's what she thought; that the only way you could get money like that. So we paid her off, and still had money in savings. So I haven't seen her since. She wasn't treating us right.</p> <p>But I said we've been lucky through the years.</p>
<p>Interviewer:</p>	<p>You told me you were married for seventy-seven years.</p>
<p>Mabel Price:</p>	<p>Seventy-seven years. We were married February 1924 [unclear]. This past February would have been seventy-eight. We had our seventy-fifth with Charles and the children, and we had it at the Ramada Inn over here. We had over 200 people. They were paying the whole thing, and didn't charge me for nothing. That was three years ago. That was our seventy-fifth anniversary, and it was beautiful, and all the people and all the [unclear].</p> <p>One lady from the church they had write up something in the paper about us. She said over in Washington somewhere, at a cheese factory somewhere in Washington, they were honoring everybody married fifty years or over, or something like that. And it said the oldest couple...she asked me would I mind her sending in our name, and I said no. So she did. So in February, something else they had going [unclear]...it was a week or two later. Anyway, the lady told me that they would send to pick us up, and Charles, my son, wanted to know if they could go down and pick us up. No, man [unclear] he didn't want me to go by myself.</p>

	<p>So from that cheese factory place, they sent this grand limousine, a grand limousine, and picked us up [unclear], Charles and [unclear], and [unclear] and myself, and the chauffeur. They carried us over [unclear] cheese factory place. So the lady was out there to meet us, and they took pictures and everything. Then they took us upstairs, in an elevator, where they served the food at. We didn't have to pay for nothing. They served, they took pictures of us, and [unclear] a basket with teddy bears, with them other things [unclear]. I was so proud of it. "Oh," she says, "somebody was going to take pictures, but the man didn't show up. So we'll take pictures anyway. I'll get somebody. Stay and wait here."</p> <p>So there was a fellow in there...I can't even think of his name...who played basketball over at Washington, and she went across the road and asked him would he stand between us, [unclear] so he did. So the three of us, with the [unclear] around us, and they took the picture and all. Then they had some balloons in the limousine, but I didn't take them into the hotel with me. The man said, "They'll be all right." But when they set to take us back home, there was another limousine...I didn't know I was going to get another limousine. It was some kid, anyway. It wasn't the same limousine that brought us all there, back home.</p> <p>Oh, that was good. I'd never experienced anything like that.</p>
<p>Interviewer:</p>	<p>Can you share the secret with the rest of Alexandria? How do you have a good seventy-seven-year marriage?</p>
<p>Mabel Price:</p>	<p>Well, the only thing I can say...[unclear] my husband worked, and I worked, and we saved, and didn't get on the telephone constantly. He didn't drink, I didn't drink, neither one of us smoked. We went to church and all. We were friendly with our neighbors. Everybody was a good neighbor at [unclear]. We didn't have any reason to accuse each other of running around or anything like that. Because if he did, I didn't know it. [Laughs] And I know he worked all the time. He worked night and day, at whatever shift they had him on. And I know I wasn't running around. So I guess...oh, what else? I guess we just loved each other so we stayed together. That's all. His parents had passed, and mine had passed, and most of my relatives are gone. Charles is [unclear]. So we're just close with each other. I didn't get on the telephone and do a lot of gossiping or nothing. I didn't have a whole lot of people running in and out of my house. Not that I had all that valuable things. What I had was new, was mine, was ours. I didn't have nobody "you said, I said, this, that." We didn't go through all of that. And then the church...working in the church, and working at Eastern Star, and working at the United States [unclear] Mason.</p> <p>So I went out there. Charles came out to the cemetery last week...week before last, down there on the highway. What is it? Number one?</p>
<p>Interviewer:</p>	<p>Number one highway?</p>

Mabel Price:	About where you turn off [unclear].
Interviewer:	I know where the cemetery is. I can't think of the name of it right now.
Mabel Price:	<p>[Unclear] Anyway. He's buried out there, because we had bought [unclear], when Charles and Marjorie [unclear]. That was all paid for. So they wanted to know what you wanted to put on the stone. [Unclear] agreed to put my name [unclear]. [Laughs] [Unclear] my granddaughter, said, "Grandma [unclear]." Anyway, Charles drove her there, [unclear] and I stood off just long enough to see Ike's name, and I couldn't think of my name being on it. So my sister-in-law, she's the only one with all them children. She said, "You got your name on it?" I said, "No. I don't guess they'll [unclear]." [Laughs]</p> <p>Anyway, I said, "We've been together all these years, so I guess..." It was terrible when he passed because he was...he got so his legs and knees bowed, and he'd fall. A couple times I had to call 911 to get him off the floor. This particular night, he scooted around the house on the floor. I tried to make him get up. At the foot of the bed, pull up. He did. So anyway, he did. I called Charles, and he said, "Did you call 911?" I said, "No." He said, "Well, I'll call." So anyway, they come and took him to the [unclear] Hospital, and he stayed there, I think, almost a month. Then they sent him to the nursing home on King Street...you know, the one there...and they gave him therapy or something. His legs were not good.</p> <p>He never did get [unclear] enough, so he stayed in the nursing home, and we would go by every day and night to see him. I would always sit beside the bed and hold his hand. This particular day, the orderly rode us down in the dining hall and we watched football...it was on a Saturday night...while he got rested. He wanted to go back to his room, so they took him back. In taking him back, they set him in the hall...because he was in a chair...and the next thing, they carried him in the room. He was still in somebody else's room. I don't know what [unclear].</p> <p>Anyway, I would always sit beside him and hold his hand. You know, hold his hand. So he says, "Mabel, my back's hurting me." I said, "You stop trying to get out of bed." [Laughs] Because he kept on saying he wanted to go home, and he would be shoving down on the bed, and I said, "Stop doing that." So he stopped, when he got [unclear]. [Laughs] Then after a while, he was laying on his back, and I'm still holding his hand, and he said, "Oh! Oh!" and I said, "Ike, don't you 'spit up' on that [unclear]. Let me get a napkin. Don't spit up on that bed, they just changed the bed." I didn't know that was...he was dying. I was still holding his hand. He give a [unclear], and after a while I tried to shake him, to wake him up, and I didn't get no sound. I called a nurse, and the nurse...they came, and they said, "Oh, we'd better send for 911." So</p>

	<p>they came, and this nurse and doctor is all in white. And she put that [unclear], what is it? And she said, "He's gone." I said, "Oh, my lord, no!" I was holding his hand, and he was gone.</p> <p>Oh, that was terrible. I didn't break down. I didn't holler. All I said was, "Oh, lord, no. No." So I started turning his hand looser, and she said, "No, keep on holding his hand, because you was holding his hand before he passed." She said, "You don't have to turn it loose now. So when Charles and Marjorie came...they had some business, something to do in town...They had left me there. It was in the evening. When they came back, to pick me up, Charles said, "Where's Dad? He wasn't in the room?" And the nurse said, "He's gone," and the nurse was crying. And he said, "Gone where? Dad can't even walk. So I know he ain't gone." Yes. Yes. And then [unclear] said, "He's passed."</p> <p>It was a shock to us, but we didn't break down. We held ourselves together...we left before they came to take the body away.</p>
Interviewer:	What's beautiful is that you were there with him.
Mabel Price:	<p>Yes. Holding his hand. Yes. So I was telling the doctor about it, and he said, "That's a beautiful way to go. That's the best way to go. That's the way he would have wanted it. He gave these two "ah, ah..." and I thought he was going to up-chuck, you know. That's why I said, "Let me get a napkin, to keep from messing up the bed." And he was gone.</p> <p>So we had a beautiful [unclear]. The place was crowded...white and black people, old friends, people who knew him. And Charles's people that he'd gone to the Capitol with [unclear] different people [unclear]. The Masons, they turned out and all [unclear]. It was beautiful.</p> <p>So I've been trying to hold myself...one time I broke down in church. People...they mean well, but hugged me and talked, and the next thing you know...tears. [Unclear] trying to hold myself up. My son and daughter-in-law is good as gold to me. [Unclear] [Laughs] Marjorie did all the cooking and the washing and everything...folding clothes. So I'm watching TV. [Laughs]</p>
<b>A Good Life</b>	
Interviewer:	Well, whatever you're doing, you certainly do look beautiful. How old are you?
Mabel Price:	Ninety-three. I was ninety-three, December 11 <sup>th</sup> passed.
Interviewer:	You look beautiful.
Mabel Price:	Ninety-three. Yes, sir. I just keep going.
Interviewer:	What is your secret...to look so good, and—
Mabel Price:	[Laughs] I don't know. I don't know what it is. I just worked during my early life and all. He worked, and we were able to save money and all,

	<p>to take care of everything. [Unclear] I didn't have to ask nobody for a penny, because the graves were paid for, and [unclear] I had paid for that. [Unclear] thinking I have any debts or anything on it, which I don't. My children are nice to me. They take me places. And, oh, yes...Friday night my daughter-in-law's Delta chapter...sorority...they had their dinner dance [unclear] at a hotel, and they carried me, too. It was 12:30 until we got home, because they didn't serve the food until around 11:00.</p> <p>But it was nice...dancing [unclear]. I would dance when I was younger... [laughs]...</p>
Interviewer:	Would you!?
Mabel Price:	But not now.
Interviewer:	Did you enjoy dancing?
Mabel Price:	<p>Yes. I enjoyed dancing. They had [unclear] and I used to [unclear]. I never learned to dance, but I would go with other girls to a couple, with them, and then would always get back home with them. But this particular night, they asked me...this was the night shift he was on. So when he got off work...he knew I was going, because I told him where I would be. And [unclear] standing by the door, peeping at me. [Laughs] "Why are you hugging me like that?" I said, "Well, that's the way the dance is." [Laughs] He thought he was hugging me too tight. [Unclear]</p> <p>We had a nice life. Because, whenever [unclear] wanted to go out with car...there was always somebody who wanted him to take them somewhere. I never kicked about it, because I had to be home with Charles. He was a little fellow then. So when he got back home...we didn't have no fussing or fighting or anything like that about it. And the places I had to go, to my meetings and what not. I'd do it. So I've had a wonderful life. I can say it...a wonderful life. No fussing, no fighting, no bills. I worked, he worked, and we saved.</p> <p>So that's the best I can tell you, how you get to have a long life, you know. With one another...we helped each other. You save and pay your bills. I never...I had one credit card.</p>
Interviewer:	You never had one credit card?
Mabel Price:	I only had one, and I give that up.
Interviewer:	Well, that's some good advice. We all need to take that.
Mabel Price:	<p>Yes. So I don't have a credit card. When Hayman's used to be on King Street, I had a credit card with them. Then I decided to let it be...go by...because I didn't really need it. I said, "I'm going to get rid of this card," I said to myself. "I don't need it. If I need to buy stuff, I'll just go in and pay cash." And that was long years ago, and I still don't have a credit card, because I refuse to have one. Now [unclear] house, clothes</p>

	<p>and different things, they charge them. I've got clothes, brand-new things that I've never worn. With the sales and all, I would just go buy. Some of them I didn't know I had...under the bed, boxes, and my husband's things and all. He had sweaters and shirts and ties and stuff. I guess we'd wear one thing, and we'd just wear it and wear it until it'd wear out.</p> <p>Now like this slip I've got on. I have a new slip. It was a new slip. I didn't realize I had it, a whole lot of new things. Charles said, "You know, there's clothes laying around here, [unclear]." [Laughs] Anyway. When he passed, we had most of his things...some to Goodwill, Salvation Army, or whatever. There were few things, hardly, that he could wear. And my grandson, my great-grandson...a raincoat, a black raincoat [unclear]. He just wear it, so I said it was nice somebody could wear some.</p>
Interviewer:	Mrs. Price, it has been wonderful interviewing you. Our time is almost up.
Mabel Price:	[Laughs] I guess I ran my mouth.
Interviewer:	That's the idea. We want you to talk. It's your interview. What I want to know is if you would allow us to talk to you again sometime.
Mabel Price:	Maybe so.
Interviewer:	Maybe so? And if you find any pictures, any old pictures of yourself, as a child, or any old newspaper articles, we'd like to see those also.
Mabel Price:	Okay.
Interviewer:	And thank you again.
Mabel Price:	Well, thank you for having me [laughs]. I ran my mouth.
Interviewer:	Well, we want you to run your mouth. [End]