

UNIFIED COMMITTEE FOR AFRO-AMERICAN CONTRIBUTIONS

Oral History Documentation Project
The St. Joseph Parish Housing Project

Agnes Genevieve Carter
with Shirley Carter (her daughter)

March 3, 2006 at 2:00 PM
Interviewed by Michael McCauley
at her home in Mechanicsville Maryland
Logged by Michael McCauley
A verbatim transcript is available
Original format is digital audio recorder
13 minutes, 38 seconds

Track 01

00:00 Mr. Carter farmed and they lived on Mills Point for 10 years; Johnny Guy's for one year, then to Lawrence Hayden's until '53. They got a loan through the bank for their own home. They had six children when they moved to their house. The youngest was three years old and the oldest was about 10 when they moved. Her husband gave up farming and worked at Indian Head for 10 years; then he worked at Maple Wood Apartments; and the day care center for 10 years.

Track 02

3:40 He still farmed a little bit but didn't have to share crop anymore. He cleared five acres of land behind his house for his own crops. They built their house within two years. Father Cavanaugh helped them get the loan. Scanlon Herbert and Alice Washington were in charge of collecting money to pay off their land loans. The land loans were paid separately from the house mortgage. The people who collected the money for the land were entrusted to make the loan payments because they could read and right and understand the loan documents.

6:40 They had to make a down payment of \$500. Mary Martha Carter was the first one to get a house in their area. Mary Martha Carter's husband's brother (Johnny) was the Sexton at the church. Therefore he was one of the first people that Father Cavanaugh informed about the project. Mary Carter informed Miss Agnes about the project.

Track 03

8:32 When they moved in they had electricity through a pull string. They had the house wired later. They didn't have running water in the house.

9:20 Father Cavanaugh liked poor people. He got houses for people to live in. People were upset when he was transferred to Indian. It was his thing to help poor people.

10:45 He may have been transferred because some people resented him helping poor black people. The five acres remain in the family for their children to build houses.

Track 04

12:17 When they share cropped, they had to give the tenant owner 1/3 of the corn, wheat and 1/2 of the tobacco. It was a hard life. They worked from sun up to sun down.