

*Telling Their Story Is All I Can Do*

**ANN COTTRELL FREE**



**Animal Advocates  
Oral History Project**

Oral History Interview  
with  
**ANN COTTRELL FREE**

This edited transcript is the product of tape-recorded interviews with Ann Cottrell Free in Bethesda, Maryland, conducted by David Cantor on September 21, September 30, and October 1, 1999 and by Kenneth Shapiro on July 25, 2000 for *Recording Animal Advocacy*.

## **RESTRICTIONS ON THIS INTERVIEW**

The tapes and transcript of the interview are made available only with the written permission of Ann Cottrell Free (the interviewee) or subsequent copyright holders listed in the Agreement after Free's death.

## **QUOTATION**

No part of the transcript may be quoted for publication without the written permission of Columbia University's Oral History Research Office. The request should include identification of the user and the specific passages.

Requests for permission to quote for publication should be addressed to:

Oral History Research Office  
Columbia University  
801 Butler Library  
535 West 114<sup>th</sup> Street  
New York  
New York 10027

## **TAPES AND INTERVIEW RECORDS**

The original tape recordings of the interview, edited transcript, and records pertaining to the interview are deposited permanently at Columbia University's Oral History Research Office.

This interview is printed on acid-free paper.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Interview history</i> . . . . .	i
<i>Biographical sketch</i> . . . . .	ii
<i>Session 1 - September 21, 1999</i>	
[Tape 1, Side A] . . . . .	1
Parents and grandparents from Virginia – Sad memories of a cat (disappeared) and two chickens (killed for food) around age four [1920] – People’s inconsistent attitudes towards animals (including ACF’s parents and grandparents) – Killing and raising chickens – Traumatized by witnessing the slaughter of pigs eaten during holidays – Granddaughter a vegetarian – The need to fortify children’s sympathy toward animals – Father’s coal business which used mules for coal delivery – Stockyard fire around age six which killed hundreds of horses – Parents’ and ACF’s own love of horses; sad ending to mother’s mare “Windmill” – Poems written and books read while a teenager – Sending letter to Master of Fox Hounds requesting better living quarters for captive foxes used in drag hunts.	
[Tape 1, Side B] . . . . .	13
More on letter to Master of Fox Hounds; taking part in fox hunting and finding it to be horrible – Cat poisoned; deep love for pony “Nancy” and other horses – High school years; attending College of William and Mary, then Barnard College – Cruel methods of euthanizing animals; visiting animal shelters with mother who was working for Richmond SPCA – Neither ACF nor her mother could see inconsistency in wearing fur coats – Writing short story about roadside zoo – Editing <i>Richmond Times-Dispatch</i> Children’s Club section where children sent in stories about animals – Participating in demonstrations and writing about current affairs while at college – African-American mammy; inconsistent attitudes of white people towards minorities similar to inconsistent treatment given to animals.	
[Tape 2, Side A] . . . . .	27
More on mammy: her death; her good influence on ACF – Starting journalism career – Covering Eleanor Roosevelt and World War II – Working in China for United Nations Relief – Travels and experiences in Manchuria, Thailand, India, Vietnam, Palestine and other countries in 1947–49.	

*Session 2 – September 30, 1999*

[Tape 3, Side A] . . . . . 36

Working with the Marshall Plan in Europe – Marrying James Free in 1950 and setting up home in upper Georgetown – Board members of Washington Animal Rescue League all from top social strata – Good work of animal rescuer Virginia Sargent – Being given award by Washington Animal Rescue League twice, but not getting along with them; urging them to improve their shelter – Washington Humane Society has long history – Christine Stevens’ background; American Humane Association (AHA) and the formation of The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) – History of and involvement with the Humane Slaughter Act (1958)

[Tape 3, Side B] . . . . . 48

More on the Humane Slaughter Act; talking to children at 4-H fairs; ways of slaughtering animals – Writing articles on wild horses in the west to help Velma Johnson’s campaign – Horrified by appalling conditions of dogs kept by the Federal Department of Agriculture (FDA) for laboratory testing; efforts undertaken and success in securing a better facility for them – Meeting Rachel Carson in 1959 and helping each other with animal and environmental protection work.

[Tape 4, Side A] . . . . . 58

“Coon on the log” practice in Alabama; contacting Baptist preacher – Dog pound, humane societies and rabies in Alabama – Attempts by different persons to push legislative bills to help laboratory animals in the early 1960s – Civil rights in the South – Fay Brisk’s important role in helping dogs from puppy mills and exposing dealers who sold dogs to laboratories – Trying to get Senator Lister Hill to help with legislative efforts; pros and cons of involving the National Institute of Health (NIH).

*Session 3 – October 1, 1999*

[Tape 5, Side A] . . . . . 68

Animal groups unsuccessful with different bills to protect laboratory animals; hard feelings between groups – Events leading to the Laboratory Animal Welfare Act (1966): Fay Brisk’s role; dog dealers; disappearance of the dog “Pepper”; Senator Joseph Yale Resnick’s sponsorship of the bill – Hearing on the bill; concerns about the bill among animal advocates – National Zoo: stopping the practice of feeding live mice to snakes in the 1950s; rare Mongolian wild horse in the zoo inspired *Forever the Wild Mare* (1963); successful effort to halt deer hunt in zoo’s animal refuge in the 1980s – Organizing petition to stop road building in Glover Archbold Park.

[Tape 5, Side B] . . . . .

79

Hazell Harris forming Defenders of Wildlife; campaigns against poisoning wildlife and steel leg-hold traps in the 1950s and '60s – Writing op-ed pieces for *Washington Post*; the media nowadays – Harry Lillie's work in campaigning and publicizing the hunting of harp seals and whales; his friends Alice Morgan Wright and Edith Goode who did much to help whales and HSUS financially – Pearl Twyne's efforts to help horses; great admiration for her – Did not know Cleveland Amory well – Cruelty involved with euthanizing animals in decompression chambers; efforts to stop the practice at the Washington dog pound – Becoming a board member at Montgomery County Humane Society in early 1970s and meeting Ingrid Newkirk who worked at the kennel and drew attention to the huge mess with euthanizing animals there – Views on People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PeTA) – Silver Spring monkeys case (1981) and PeTA; getting Roger Galvin to act as defense attorney for the case.

[Tape 6, Side A] . . . . .

90

Lineage of Ruth Harrison's animal-related ethics; how Peter Singer came to write *Animal Liberation* – Attending 1977 conference in Cambridge, England – Meeting of philosophers in Blacksburg, Virginia – Albert Schweitzer's influence; writing *Animals, Nature and Albert Schweitzer* (1982) – Compiling *No Room, Save in the Heart* (1987) – Writing article that led to naming a Maine wildlife refuge after Rachel Carson – Thoughts on finding allies, infighting among animal advocates in recent years a tragedy, reaching out to the public, and many kind friends passing away.

*Session 4 – July 25, 2000*

[Tape 7, Side A] . . . . .

101

Reflection on “spreading too thin” – Difficulty in changing man-centered point of view because of “redneck” mentality and economic factors – Concerns about being ridiculed and regarded as a crank, especially as a journalist; rejection of book manuscript in early 1960s; Humane Slaughter Act passed without much ridicule – Anti-vivisection: Major Hume's fear of cranks and influence on Christine Stevens; ACF's successful series of articles on laboratory animals; National Society for Medical Research; Stevens not an abolitionist; ACF not completely an anti-vivisectionist; elements coming together to get Animal Welfare Act passed – Stray dogs in Vieques, Puerto Rico: helping to raise funds and set up a shelter there – The importance of and reasons for doing something about the injustice to animals and to humans.

[Tape 7, Side B] . . . . .

115

The book on Schweitzer has done some good; Schweitzer's questioning the paradox of “life divided against itself” – Relationship with Ingrid Newkirk and mixed feelings about her tactics – Concerned that the animal rights movement is viewed as a cult with no credibility; Ruth Harrison's influences – No-kill shelters can be prisons; long-time

involvement with euthanasia – Captive endangered horses in National Zoo inspiring the novel on wild mare which has the theme of learning to live with nature – Poems about Rachel Carson, Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt’s silver fox furs, and rabbits – 4-H shows: troubled that children are hardened by raising animals for slaughter; the role played by customs and economics – Do not like cults and being in groups; love being a mother – Ways of reaching out: testifying in congressional committees, writing and speaking about Rachel Carson, filling orders for book on Schweitzer – The importance of using the proper language when referring to meat-eating.

*Index . . . . .* 131

*Attachments . . . . .* in separate box

## INTERVIEW HISTORY

### Interview Time and Place:

September 21, 1999; September 30, 1999; October 1, 1999  
Bethesda, Maryland – home of Ann Cottrell Free  
2-hour session each day [total of 6 hours]

July 25, 2000  
Bethesda, Maryland – home of Ann Cottrell Free  
Session of 1-1/2 hour

### Interviewers:

David Cantor (writer, editor) – 1999 interviews  
Kenneth Shapiro (Vice President, *Recording Animal Advocacy*; co-founder & executive director, *Psychologists for the Ethical Treatment of Animals*) – 2000 interview

### Transcriber:

Douglas J. Wilson (professional transcriber)

### Project Manager and Editor :

Carmen Lee (President, *Recording Animal Advocacy*)

### Editing:

The draft transcript was **substantially revised** by Ann Cottrell Free. Lee prepared the introductory material and index, except for the biographical sketch which was written by Free.

---



## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Ann Cottrell Free (born 1916, Richmond, Virginia) is a journalist, author and poet who has used her abilities since childhood to protect animals. As a Washington and foreign correspondent she initiated and hastened the passage of many animal protective laws. Also, she has been active in civil and women's rights, having chaired Eleanor Roosevelt's Press Conference Association.

In China she blew the whistle on the Chinese government's diversion of relief supplies. She can be credited with the first Congressional action to help laboratory animals, having blown the whistle on the Food and Drug Administration's cruel incarceration of laboratory dogs. Her testimony before a Congressional committee brought an end to the National Zoo's deer hunts at its endangered species preserve in Virginia.

Her three books, *Forever the Wild Mare* (1963); *Animals, Nature and Albert Schweitzer* (1982), and *No Room, Save in the Heart* (1987) have dealt with animals. She was awarded the Rachel Carson Legacy Award by the Rachel Carson Council for her role in establishing a national wildlife refuge in Carson's name. The Animal Welfare Institute gave her its Albert Schweitzer medal for her work in improving conditions for laboratory animals. She was inducted into the Virginia Communications Hall of Fame, and appears in *Who's Who in America*.

---

**Ann Cottrell Free  
Session #1  
September 21, 1999  
Bethesda, Maryland**

**David Cantor, Interviewer**

*[Begin Tape 1, Side A]*

**Cantor:** Ann Cottrell Free, tell me about the early part of your life. You were born in Richmond.

**Free:** I was born in Richmond, Virginia, the capital of the misguided Confederacy, on June the 4<sup>th</sup>, 1916. My grandparents and great-grandparents on both sides were all Virginians, except one batch came down from Baltimore. They were well-to-do, but they were not the super, super FFVs (First Families of Virginia). Virginia is made up of old, old, old families with lots of money. Of course, it has many strata. I was lucky in being a part of several of the strata at once, which has been sort of the story of my life — being able to be comfortable in any group of people of different social levels.

My father [Emmett Drewry Cottrell] was in business with his father [Samuel Henry Cottrell]. Coal and wood was the main energy source then. They didn't sell oil. My maternal grandfather was the most colorful member of the family. His name was George McDuffy Blake. He was an editor-publisher and a writer and a politician and loved people and animals. He lived in the country and became the mayor of a small Virginia town. He had a tremendous influence on me because he was into everything. My grandmother [Emma Walters Blake] was a sweet and loving person. Of course, my mother was a tremendous influence on me. She was an animal person. And my father — he liked animals, but he was more like the general public. We had animals, mainly horses, which doesn't mean we were very rich, but it was easier in those days. We lived in 2008 Park Avenue for my first five years.

But to get on with the story, my first recollections — we're going to talk about animals — was beginning of one of the themes that has followed me all of my life. Betrayal. My mother loved animals. She was so kind and good. But we had a cat there, and I loved it. It had some kittens. The next thing I knew she had disappeared. I think my mother had sent her away. That was before they spayed females. That was slightly puzzling, but I think I was only about four years old.

**Cantor:** This was a family pet, the cat?

**Free:** That's the first animal that I really remember. This nice gray cat disappeared and that made me very sad.

Then the next animal for which I had any kind of a connection with, relationship, was when I'd go up to the country where my grandparents had moved, Louisa County, Virginia, which is about fifty miles west of Richmond right in the Blue Ridge foothills near Charlottesville. Patrick Henry came from there. It's a very nice county but not too well-known. But it was there that my grandparents had this marvelous little white frame house and had chickens. As a little child I remember feeding the chickens from the dining room table. They would sit outside on the window sill. One was named Charlie; the other was Nancy. I would feed them bread crumbs or whatever through the window. [Tape interruption].

I could hardly wait to get back the next summer, because I spent mainly the summers there, not much time in the winter. I came back looking forward to seeing Charlie and Nancy. Of course, they were no more. [Tape interruption].

**Cantor:** What had happened?

**Free:** Well, they grew up and were killed and eaten. I don't remember who told me, but that's just the way it was. I was very sad. That's why I brought up those two stories — my first experience with that little gray female cat and Nancy and Charlie. They were both "owned" by people who were very kind to animals, but that kindness only goes to a certain stage. And then they take the utilitarian point of view. And they didn't think, like I did, that the chickens were friends. They were their granddaughter's pets, but they grew up into real chickens, I guess. Pets no longer. That was the end of them.

But what I'm getting at with that story is that it stayed with me all these years. I'm eighty-three years old now, and I remember those two experiences as having an unsettling effect on me when I was four and five years old.

**Cantor:** The chicken episode took place when you were five then?

**Free:** Around about then. I don't remember the exact age. But I couldn't understand that. But this sort of set a theme that has gone with me throughout my life, that the inconsistency of adults — they love to have pets, but when the pet is no longer being a pet, you could turn it — a chicken, a duck — into something to eat, or if it becomes a problem, they get rid of it. In other words, I learned two things — in retrospect, I might say; I didn't articulate it then. But that showed — that was betrayal, and almost all animals are betrayed. Think of pet cats and dogs turned in by their owners into animal shelters. Inconsistency, which is, of course, the big theme throughout our lives — the ambivalence, the love/hate, inability to figure out where we stand vis-à-vis animals. So that thought has always been with me, and those particular experiences have stayed with me all my life.

**Cantor:** Were there particular people that you felt were to blame in the loss of the cat or the chickens?

**Free:** No, no. I didn't know what to think about the loss of the cat at that time. She had kittens — they all disappeared. But the chickens, no. I don't remember what I said. I was very sad. I just accepted it. You accept things like that, so end of story. There's nothing more except that.

---

But my grandfather, after all, he, like most kind-hearted people, was a typical person, human being in regard to animals. Animals are there to use and eat — not abuse. Those people in my background — they did not abuse. But they did use, naturally. That was just *de rigueur*. That's the way it was. I didn't like it, but I accepted it, I guess, and just stored my sorrow away in the back of my mind. But that might be one of the motivating things that's always been with me. It marked my subconscious very early on.

Then also the fact that the people you love the most — your parents, and my marvelous grandparents — that they will do these things. I used to see my grandfather go out there and chop the chicken's head off. They had a chopping block. Everybody did in those days who had chickens. There were several ways. I became kind of a connoisseur of how people kill chickens — put the head down on the chopping block like Mary Queen of Scots and Marie Antoinette, too, I guess. But the other way in the fine art of killing a chicken is to wring the necks. Then another way is the kosher way — but you didn't see much of that in Richmond — hung upside-down and slitting the throat. Those are the main ways. Take your pick.

But my grandmother wouldn't kill a chicken, but he did. My mother wouldn't. I don't think my father would either. Anyway, in other words, as a child you grow up with that as part of life. Violent death. Execution.<sup>1</sup> That part of life is something kids don't see, except those who really live in the country. The average child today sees the meat wrapped up in plastic. But when I was little in Richmond they had what they called a 6<sup>th</sup> Street Market — very interesting, like a souk, a Middle Eastern market. You see it in other countries — the dead animals hung up, you know, half or a quarter of a cow, a pig, you know, slit down the middle and all that. You just saw them, with their glassy eyes.

You got used to glassy eyes also on fur neck pieces in those days. My mother wore one. Eleanor Roosevelt kept on wearing silver foxes later on. I'm jumping way far ahead. But these neck pieces that people wore in those days — they all had glass eyes. I used to think about it: "What can I see in those glass eyes? What do they see?" Anyway, I often thought, looking at those dead animals at the market and the glass eyes on heads of dead animals, usually red or silver foxes or martens, around my mother's shoulders. So these are the things that influence a child. They're all very subliminal.

**Cantor:** Let me ask you, when you were saying about your father and grandfather would kill chickens but not your mother or your grandmother, did you see it as man's versus woman's work?

**Free:** I don't think so. I think it was just squeamishness, tenderness. I don't think we can see sexism in that angle.

**Cantor:** And did the people who would kill the chickens — like your grandfather — did they otherwise tend to display kindness towards living beings, towards you, towards other people?

---

<sup>1</sup> After having its head chopped off, the body would truly "run around with its head chopped off," an old saying about frantic people.

---

**Free:** Oh, yes, yes, yes. That's what I was trying to say. He was, I said, this good inconsistent man. My father, by the way, he didn't — I don't remember him ever killing a chicken, but he hunted birds. But, no, they were kind people. They were good to other animals, but animals were often a means to an end. They're no more guilty than anybody who eats meat today. I can see no difference. So I don't fault them for that — just a lack of sensitivity. But not many people would have given up killing a chicken if they had to eat.

**Cantor:** Apart from killing the chickens, did they treat the chickens well when they were alive?

**Free:** Oh, yes.

**Cantor:** How did they live?

**Free:** Oh, they lived very well, the chickens. They were Rhode Island Reds. It wasn't like the terrible factory farms of today. I do remember so well the tenderness that my grandmother displayed toward the chickens in the chicken house. Chicken houses in those days, and I guess on small farms today, had little built-in nests where hens lay their eggs and roosts and so on. You know, chicken houses were architecturally quite interesting. My grandmother would go out every morning, maybe twice a day, and collect the eggs. Another thing as a child that interested me — she would put a shiny china egg in a nest because that would be a stimulant to make a chicken lay. [Laughter]. They also had plenty of room outside for scratching around, catching insects.

Anyhow, I remember so well that she would take these chickens in her arms — one at a time, of course — and grease them with something to get rid of lice. She did that for — all this concern is all man-centered. You don't want a lousy chicken that would probably lose weight or something like that. But she was very tender and sweet about it all. I remember the greasing of the chickens quite well.

**Cantor:** How long would a chicken live in that location?

**Free:** Well, I don't know how long. I couldn't tell you right off the top of my head right now. Well, let me see. A hen will go on for well over a year or so to when they stop laying. The world of chickens is something that's very interesting. They love to scratch in the earth, pick up gravel that goes into their craw and grinds up their food. They molt and they don't lay for certain periods of time and all that. They go on for maybe two or three years. It depends on the chicken. We became very friendly with all those hens. When they stopped laying, my grandfather would go out and kill an old hen. He even probably knew her by name. That's the way it was. But that's a form of trauma for a child. Old hens were the bases of chicken soup and stews. They were often simply called "stewing hens." Sometimes we would find the un-hatched egg inside them.

While we're still on traumas of a sensitive — I guess you'd call me sensitive; I certainly was not insensitive — young girl, again about five or six. We used to go down to the country down near the Chesapeake Bay in Tidewater Virginia where my great-uncle, Dr. John Blake,

---

had, you might say, a small estate in Middlesex County on the Piankatank River.<sup>2</sup> His farm raised pigs. I'll never, never, never forget one October day — hog-killing time, always in October, on the farm, everywhere. They hang them up, get them by their legs and hang them up, big heavy pigs, hogs, and slit their throats. I saw that and the screaming before they could no longer scream. That was another trauma.

**Cantor:** And you were six?

**Free:** Or maybe younger, maybe younger. I know it was way back there — four or five, somewhere in there.

**Cantor:** How many of them would be killed at one time?

**Free:** Four or five, I guess. They're killed primarily for their hams, but people eat almost every bit of the body — sausage, chitlins, teet, and shoulders.<sup>3</sup> Particularly in Virginia, smoked ham was the big thing. So I grew up knowing all about Smithfield ham. I even — when I was a married woman having a family and all that before I really thought it through, I used to always say, "Well, we've got to have a Smithfield ham for Christmas," or Thanksgiving or several times a year. I grew up with Smithfield ham in my cultural, my culinary background.

Also, they had hunt breakfasts. I'll jump ahead, move away from the hog killing. Later on — I was still a very young girl — the Deep Run Hunt Club, which I'll tell you about later, would have a hunt breakfast every year on New Year's morning — actually lunch after the fox hunt. Part of the rich menu that included oyster stew, biscuits — of course, they'd have the egg nog and mixed drinks and so on, although there was still Prohibition at that time. But always in the middle of the table — very elegant, silver spoons and linen napkins, everything wonderful — there'd always be a shoat. That's a young pig. They always put a red apple in its mouth. I remember that so well — so barbaric, dressing up a corpse. But nobody thought of it that way.

**Cantor:** At those other meals at — the Christmas holiday meal you mentioned when they would serve a Smithfield ham —

**Free:** Yes, of course. And turkey.

**Cantor:** When that would happen, would you remember the scenes of the pigs being killed?

**Free:** I probably didn't want to make the connection. Or if I did make the connection, a Smithfield ham tasted too good. That's why people — taste and self-gratification sweeps away everything. There's nobody to fortify your dubious feelings when you're a child and have these feelings. There's no ally, so you just go along and enjoy. The people you love the most are the ones who are perpetrating the crime.

---

<sup>2</sup> His other home was in Baltimore. He would come down on steamboat on the Chesapeake Bay to the Piankatank. He had his own steamboat landing.

<sup>3</sup> Chitlins are intestines, cooked to a crisp, made into "crackling bread."

---

Now, my granddaughter [Amanda Blake Nooter] — this is the most interesting thing for me now — is now seven years old. She has grown up a vegetarian, and my daughter [Elissa Blake Free] did not grow up a vegetarian because I was eating meat when she was born. She changed before I did. She saw the body of a naked dead turkey in the kitchen and refused to eat it after cooking. But Amanda now — she's tolerant of other people. Thank God she doesn't make herself into some kind of fanatic, because that would be self-defeating, as you know. But anything about killing — she makes the connection of the animal and the food that's being served. That's good, because she's fortified — fortified by her vegetarian parents and her grandmother, therefore her own cultural background. Well, her friends all — we took a little girl out to lunch the other day and we all got vegetables or sandwiches. But the other child got a hot dog, but nobody said anything. That's not the time to do it.

**Cantor:** I wanted to ask again another thing about the pigs. When they were being killed out at that farm, who actually did the killing? Was it one person? Was it several?

**Free:** Oh, I don't remember enough. But down there they had a lot of farmhands. One of them would slit the hogs' throats. Then after they bleed them out, then they'd take them, just like they do in the slaughterhouses today, put them in hot water and get the bristles off of them and all that stuff.

**Cantor:** Did you see that being done?

**Free:** Yes.

**Cantor:** Before the pigs were killed, would you have had any experiences of the actual same pigs as individuals? Would you have named them or anything?

**Free:** Not down there, but I knew some up the country in Louisa. I had one experience with a pig living near my grandparents, but it was not their pig. I'm very vague about this. All I remember as a child, an old corn cob — pigs love for you to scratch their backs with corn cobs, and I remember that.

So all I'm getting at — because otherwise we're using up too much time — is that a child can have these feelings of sorrow — not all do — but these are also feelings of betrayal, cruelty, and inconsistency. But then they go on, go back and eat the victim that they wept over internally because they've never been supported. Their opinions have never been fortified. If we fortify these latent opinions or thoughts or sentiments, then we've got it made.

**Cantor:** Apart from the people who killed the pigs and your discovery of their inconsistency — because they were kind people who also were capable of killing pigs and chickens — did you feel that you should have been able to save the chickens or the pigs or that you were complicit in betrayal?

**Free:** No. I was too young to think about that. I didn't feel — but now I would, I guess, if I could. But you know, if you go to a slaughterhouse — as I have — right now, if you can get in,

---

you feel like you want to go up and save them all, but you can't. They'll throw you right out. What good does it do?

**Cantor:** And you mentioned another idea that one doesn't want to be a fanatic. You mentioned in regard to your granddaughter that she's not a fanatic regarding her vegetarianism. When you were young was it extremely important to be like the other people in your surroundings and to be reasonable and to do everything with a purpose and not be a fanatic?

**Free:** Oh, I don't even know whether I knew about the word "fanatic" then, because I didn't know any fanatics. But you open up the question that I've been making. The point I want to make is however, whether you're young or whether you're old, if you come on too strong you upset everything, because people are already opposed to you, to your philosophy. It only fortifies them if you make a spectacle. They say, "Oh, of course, they're crazy, these people. Of course they are vegetarian nuts." But if you — like I say, I think it's better for my grandchild to let the other child eat her hamburger or hot dog, because that is not the time to try to change people. This way she's already changed several kids with, you might say, the soft sell, explaining how the animal can feel and doesn't want to be killed.

**Cantor:** Back in this time that we're talking about — you're four, five, six, seven years old — was there a very strong training that you were being given in manners, in being polite, in being tolerant of other people? What kinds of things were you learning about life?

**Free:** Don't forget I was brought up in old Virginia where everybody has good manners. [Laughter]. I was always kind of a maverick, a naughty, bad child. I mean, I wasn't one of those sweet prissy little girls. I was kind of a tomboy. I knew about good table manners and stuff like that, but I never was much of a conformist. I could have been a lot better, because I think the main thing about manners is really about consideration of others. I feel today that I'm — I feel guilty that I don't always write notes when people are sick and so on. Some people remember every birthday, all that. I think that kind of manners is a small way of showing love and consideration. I think I haven't done enough of that.

**Cantor:** What about things you might have been learning in school? Did you go to church as a child?

**Free:** I went to Sunday school in a desultory way and to public school. Then I went to a private school after that. We were Episcopalians who rarely display emotion. [Tape interruption].

I keep on trying to make the point that I realize it now much later that I was, you might say, bugged by the inconsistencies, by the ambivalence and lack of guidelines, and no one to whom I could turn very early on. So therefore you just conform rather than not conform, because your desire to eat the ham or the steak would overcome your sympathy. But if somebody had fortified it, as my grandchild has been — I keep using as a point — has been fortified on that. It makes it much easier if other people believe the same way.

**Cantor:** So you had strong feelings about the animals —

---



**Free:** I had strong feelings.

**Cantor:** — and no one else was sharing those feelings.

**Free:** Oh, heavens no.

**Cantor:** Or telling you that your feelings were correct.

**Free:** No. But nobody criticized me on it. I don't think I said anything much. But however, on the other hand, my mother was very kind-hearted, always picking up lost dogs. I told you my grandmother was good to those chickens, and my grandfather was always bringing home dogs, particularly when they lived on another farm. They were always good and kind to animals, and that is the main thing. They were inconsistent because they were caught in their man-centered culture. I think I must have taken their kindness to dogs and cats, then applied it to pigs, cattle, lambs, but didn't act on my thoughts — not brave enough.

To go on to another molding influence — horses in my early days. I guess the first connection I had with any horses is very subliminal, but I bring it up now because this was maybe — the food that went in my mouth came from Daddy selling that coal. And how did the coal get to the customer? It was drawn by mules — carts and wagons. They didn't have trucks then. I should give more of the context. Don't forget this was 1916, '17, '18, 1920s. You didn't have many trucks for a lot of delivery and things like that. My father had the coal and wood business. The coal would come from West Virginia to a railroad siding and dumped right at his coal yard. I remember seeing that coal. I know a lot about coal — bituminous coal and anthracite. Anthracite is from Pennsylvania mainly. That being dumped off by the siding. Then they had these huge piles of coal. But he had mules who lived — he kept them — I'm sure they got enough to eat — but in an underground place, and underground stable — tied up in their stalls — and dark.

**Cantor:** Was this in Richmond?

**Free:** Yes. Dark. I didn't like that either.

**Cantor:** The horses and mules being kept in the dark?

**Free:** Well, it was darkish, yes. It was underground, no daylight. I don't know if we had electricity then in the stable. But it was interesting visiting the coal yard. I knew the — in those days the African-American workers, who were called colored folks, colored men. I knew the men real well. I remember George and one named C&O — it was a nickname for the name of the rail line, Chesapeake and Ohio — and Dan and all of them. They used to come up to our house and help with yard work and things like that. They called us, in the southern fashion, by our first name with a “Miss” or “Mister” before it. I was “Miss Ann,” “Mr. Emmett” or “Miss Emily” for parents.

So that was an experience that not many children have, being around those mules. I didn't know any of them personally though, because they were working all the time. They

---

probably never got to eat grass. I guess when they got lame, that was the end of that. They went to the stockyards or bone yards to be killed.

So let me take a little — while mentioning stockyards. I was just saying that that was the era when almost everything [was] horse-drawn — freight, milk, ice, and everything you can think of except personal transportation. We had Ford cars later, Studebakers and Packards. I learned to drive on a Model A, and before that we had a Model T, which didn't even have any real gears. I remember those.

Anyhow, horses and mules were sold from a stockyard which was also near the railroad and, in a way, wasn't too far from where we lived. I didn't witness the event at the moment, but my mother told me about it the next morning. She said that the stockyards caught on fire, and she was awakened with the skies ablaze. She could hear the screaming of the horses and mules. We went — and my father took me — over there the next morning. And there were all these smoldering bodies. They were victims; they were slaves. I'll never forget that.

**Cantor:** Were any still alive after that night?

**Free:** No. Recently I got the Richmond newspaper to send me a Xerox microfilm copy of a story on the fire, April 21, 1924. This is interesting — the banner front page headline read: “One dead in \$300,000 stock yards fire here.” The subhead: “White man is trapped in bedroom by flames.” Another subhead said fire: “also cremated about 100 mules and horses.” No top billing for those poor creatures. I don't remember the details. It seemed like hundreds — but only 100. I remember their bodies lying there. They had been trapped in stalls. It looked like their legs were all kind of burned off, just hunks still smoldering.

Anyway, they were — it's like these pigs. Here we are in 1999 and just had a terrible hurricane, Hurricane Floyd, which had a backup into middle of North Carolina where hundreds and hundreds of thousands of captive factory farm pigs and over a million chickens were caught in the flood and drowned. So animals that are incarcerated and then with a catastrophe — they get it both ways.

**Cantor:** How old were you when the horse fire took place?

**Free:** I was about seven, nearly eight.

**Cantor:** And that took place in Richmond.

**Free:** That was Richmond. Then the other thing — we had a horse. My father and mother were crazy about horses. In fact, they had met on horseback up in Louisa County I just mentioned to you near Albermarle. Their courtship was based on horseback. He was living on a neighboring farm, “Corduroy,” and she was living at “The Elma,” her family's home. Their courtship was based on horses. It should have stayed that way because they divorced later on. That was the one thing they really had in common.

---

So we had several horses in the early days. The first one I remember was Miss Pitta-Pat. She was a five-gaited small horse. Five-gaited means she had five gaits — pacing and single foot. I can't remember all of them. Anyhow, then after that we had a horse named Buddy. And then the big, big event — also molding of my life and my mother's — was when they went to Washington in 1925 or '6.

**Cantor:** That's your parents who went to Washington?

**Free:** My parents, Washington, DC. We had in — Washington, DC was a big horse town, many shows. Over there where Watergate is today was what they called the Riding and Hunt Club. It had an indoor ring and all that — you know, big stuff. As a matter of fact, the horse that they bought, they also brought home with them the cup she had just won called the Eugene Meyer Cup. Eugene Meyer had just bought the Washington Post. So that takes you back a while. Windmill was a magnificent mare. Sire was a thoroughbred "Dutch Prefix," and Dam, an Irish mare. My mother rode, and my mother was a fantastic rider, a better rider than my father, I think.

**Cantor:** Which horse?

**Free:** My mother was a marvelous rider.

**Cantor:** And who was the horse?

**Free:** Windmill was her name. You'll see in my poetry book that when Windmill — I wrote a poem about that because my mother's life was tied up with Windmill. The Depression came and she went lame. My father didn't want to spend the money to keep her up in the country, so he had her shot. I wrote a poem about it in my book. Should I read it out loud?

**Cantor:** Sure.

**Free:** Windmill (My Mother's Mare)

Chestnut,  
Like my Mother's hair when she was young.  
Your head held high,  
Like hers  
Through all those bad times —  
And glorious times,  
When over all those jumps  
You took her to her only glory,  
And yours, too, I believe.  
(Those silver cups I keep shining,  
Though the engraving has grown quite dim.)

You went lame  
And all of us went broke,  
1929 — Depression days. . . .

---

They sent you to a farm to live,  
And the price of grain for winter  
Went up,  
So they put a bullet through your brain.

Mother never shed a tear;  
But her chestnut hair  
Went white.

**Cantor:** It's a lovely poem. How old were you when you wrote that?

**Free:** Let's see, I said 1929. I was thirteen in 1929. I don't know when I wrote it, but much later.

**Cantor:** Did other events regarding animals that we've already talked about also inspire poems or other writings?

**Free:** Oh, yes. I haven't gotten to the foxes yet. A lot of foxes — I was always moved to writing poems about foxes. I wrote one about a dead dog, about showing the cycle of life. Shall I read that? [Tape interruption].

**Cantor:** So then did any — I was asking whether any of the animal episodes you had discussed inspired any other poems in your book.<sup>4</sup>

**Free:** Yes, a number. I did a poem on Mrs. Roosevelt in her silver fox furs. That's "Kind Hearts and Blind Spots," page thirty-five. Then the Windmill one was page forty-two. I'll come in a few minutes to — I have "Ladies in Fur Coats" on [page] thirty-three. It's all through there. Then I wrote a poem about lost dogs which is on page fifty-three. All kinds of experiences in my youth turned me not to drink, but to poetry!

**Cantor:** Well, when you wrote the poem you read in our discussion, you were just thirteen, and that seems like a precocious poem.

**Free:** You mean which one? On Mother?

**Cantor:** Yes.

**Free:** I was older than that.

**Cantor:** Oh, you were older than that then?

**Free:** Yes. I don't know what age but older.

**Cantor:** Okay. In your teens?

---

<sup>4</sup> Ann Cottrell Free, No Room, Save in the Heart (Flying Fox Press, 1987), p. 42.

---

**Free:** Probably.

**Cantor:** Were there things that you were reading that had to do with topics that became very important to you?

**Free:** Well, I was very much influenced by Black Beauty early on. Then there's a book that had sort of a revival, a book about dogs called — all English, of course — called Beautiful Joe. Then there was Grayfriar's Bobby. Anything about — any animal stories I loved. I just saw that movie, "The Dog of Flanders," the other day. It didn't have much about the dog, but it was a pretty good movie. I would say those two books in my early youth had tremendous effect on me.

**Cantor:** Black Beauty and Beautiful Joe?

**Free:** Yes.

**Cantor:** When you read them, were you moved by them and also did they open your eyes to any ideas of injustice, or were you just moved by them?

**Free:** Oh, injustice. That's what the whole thing is all about. That woman Anna Sewell — she wrote Black Beauty — she became the greatest single humane influence here and in Britain for many, many years. I don't know too much about the Beautiful Joe author, also a woman, but the book was reprinted here a few years ago.<sup>5</sup>

But don't forget — I want to make the point right now — that, from the standpoint of reading and a certain philosophy — a few people were still part of the Victorian Era. It was still influencing my family. My mother loved all that. She introduced me to Beautiful Joe, for example. But the Victorian Era, with all of its faults, had a tremendous influence on the animal ethic in this country. Of course, it was 1866 when Henry Bergh founded the ASPCA [American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals] and the law passed.<sup>6</sup>

And that's what started — in Richmond, Virginia, there was a woman named Ellen [Anderson Gholson] Glasgow.<sup>7</sup> If you're a scholar you would know about her, but most people don't know about her. She was a novelist, very, very famous, as much as — who's a big novelist now? The only ones I can think of are big ones — Norman Mailer and people like that. She won a Pulitzer prize. She was a big supporter of the SPCA in Richmond where my mother went to work later on. That had an influence on me. She left her large estate to this SPCA.

Then later on, when we had that horse in Richmond, Windmill, we got involved with the Deep Run Hunt Club, which was a fox hunting club, which was not too far from us. We lived out in the western part of the city which is now all grown up — you know, shopping centers and

---

<sup>5</sup> The author of Beautiful Joe is Marshall Saunders (1861-1947).

<sup>6</sup> In 1866, Henry Bergh, the son of a wealthy New York shipbuilder, founded the ASPCA. Modeled after Britain's Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, it was the first animal protection organization in America. The ASPCA's charter allows the organization to arrest and prosecute violators of the 1829 New York State statute which made cruelty to animals a misdemeanor.

<sup>7</sup> Ellen Anderson Gholson Glasgow (1874-1945), Virginia-born novelist and author of The Descendant (1897), Virginia (1913) and In This Our Life (1941), for which she won a Pulitzer prize.

---

McDonald's and all the rest. Then we could — only a few miles from the hunt club, and we could go on fox hunts — the country was right close by.

But then, that's what upset me about the Deep Run Hunt Club, was the foxes. They had drag hunts mainly, which meant they would capture a fox and put him in an enclosure, and it would sleep on these bags and give you the scent. Then they take these bags and roll them up together. Then a drag man would go out on Saturdays and lay the scent by dragging the bundle, and the hounds would follow soon thereafter. It's much more humane than tearing a fox apart. The sad part about that was they had these foxes there as captives. Just all they were doing was sleeping on the bags and pacing up and down in their enclosures, looking out at freedom, like a bad zoo.

I wrote a letter to [Edmund Preston] the president of the club, who was also MFH, Master of Fox Hounds, and complained about that — I have my letter here.

**Cantor:** Would that then be your first action on behalf of animals to improve their well-being?

**Free:** Yes, one of my first ones, yes, going to the establishment. I went right to the establishment on that. He was a senior partner of Richmond's most important law firm, called today Hunton and Williams. Supreme Court Justice Lewis F. Powell, Jr. was a partner.

**Cantor:** Do you know your age at that time?

**Free:** In my late teens.

**Cantor:** And this Master of Fox Hounds —

**Free:** Edmund Preston.

**Cantor:** Edmund Preston — he was an attorney?

**Free:** Yes.

**Cantor:** And did you know him apart from his being Master of the Fox Hounds?

**Free:** Yes. Not too well. He was an older man — at least forty — you know what I mean. I had considered him — wrongly — that he was one of the big original establishment snobs. I learned much later that he became known for helping defenseless persons, taking many *pro bono* cases. He wrote a nice letter at the time.

*[End Tape 1, Side A; Begin Tape 1, Side B]*

**Cantor:** We were talking about the letter that you wrote to the Master of Fox Hounds.

**Free:** I did. And I said to him that the club should be as interested in keeping the foxes humanely as they did the dogs and the horses. I said that everything within humane power is

---

done for them, but would it not be possible to build a larger runway for the foxes, which were kept in a narrow, confined space? I wrote about two little foxes that had been brought in and put in a cage forever, in a two-by-four space, down in the woods. I said also, I could write on at great length of my feelings on the subject, but I think if you will consider the condition of the foxes you will have similar sympathies. Then he wrote back the following: “I think your letter is an excellent one,” he said, “and I feel very badly about my failure to give this matter my attention. I am referring your letter to the current MFH” — he just changed — “to give this matter serious attention.” This is one of the first times when I first spoke up within the establishment framework, and it worked.

Although he was a senior partner for the biggest law firm in town, he knew me. I was kind of well-known in a way because it turns out, in all due modesty, I was a pretty good rider and I showed in all the horse and pony shows and won a lot of ribbons and cups, so they always knew an enterprising young junior rider, you see. And my father was a member of the club and my mother and all of that. Preston, socially and economically, was a notch above my parents. This is my first time for speaking up to change things.

Life has a way of casting its shadows ahead of it, because years later I became involved in — which we’ll come to later on in this interview, the oral history — getting better quarters for the Food and Drug Administration dogs. Then later on in 1963 I wrote a book, Forever the Wild Mare, which was to get those horrible conditions in zoos changed, particularly the wild mare was a case in point. She should have been forever the wild mare, galloping over the fields, and she had a rather small place. So finally, as the story unwinds, she got released and all that. So it all goes back, that I can’t bear to see any animal caged up.

**Cantor:** How did you feel when you got that reply? Can you recall?

**Free:** No. I just thought, “Well, I hope he’s really going to do something about it.”

**Cantor:** Did you hold his feet to the fire?

**Free:** No, no more. We never mentioned it again.

**Cantor:** Do you know whether he did take action?

**Free:** Oh, yes, it got better. I don’t think much better. After all, if they’re captive, they’re captive. But I wrote — see, I wrote about — my first published article was in the National Humane Review<sup>8</sup> on captive foxes that are captive and kept for a long time and then they take them and let them loose to be chased. You know the old verse “Catch a fox and put him in a box and then we’ll let him go”? Well, that happens, and they chase him to his death. [Tape interruption].

I took part in several fox hunts but never again after being at the kill for a couple of them — the awful screams. And the hounds would chase them down until they were — sometimes they’d get up a tree. Then they’d get them down. It was just absolutely awful — tear them to

---

<sup>8</sup> December 1935.

pieces. Once or twice they gave me the brush; that's the tail. The first person to the kill gets the brush.

But anyhow, later on, I found this book by Jack Sands. Let me read from this book, a handsome coffee table book on the Deep Run Hunt Club.<sup>9</sup> It shows this whole thing of double standards and wrong thinking and ignorance and blind spots, inconsistency. I cannot muster up enough adjectives, enough pejorative words, but to read you this one thing. This is dedication of the book on the Deep Run Hunt Club. Dedication page has a line drawing of a fox's head. "Dedication: Because without him there would be no fox hunting, because he understands every phase of the sport and always leads the field, and especially because a tribute is due his genius, skill, intelligence, and sympathy, this book is dedicated with respect and admiration to that gallant red ranger, the fox."

**Cantor:** That's the dedication of the book on the Deep Run Hunt Club.

**Free:** Yes. [Tape interruption].

**Cantor:** Well, then you actually — you yourself actually took part in some fox hunts.

**Free:** As I said, oh, I did, indeed. The drag hunts I really enjoyed because no animal got hurt. The bags they had dragged had a very pungent scent. If you ever smell a fox, it's horrific. It stimulates the hounds. I liked the drag hunts because you'd go over the jumps and it was fast-paced fun. It was all kind of a set scenario — you knew where you were going to go, what time we are going to get back. But a fox hunt, all except the killing — which is the final main part — was exhilarating. There's something about a chase that's always exhilarating, especially when you're young. But when you realize when you get to the kill — oh, my God. Just think. I mentioned that before, is that the hounds would bring them down in different ways, and there'd be so much excitement.

Then the huntsman — the MFH, who was mostly in charge of the people, though called Master of Fox Hounds, who was mainly in charge of the fox hound — he would have to call them off the foxes. He had a horn, you know, the big horn of a cow or bull. I had one and I could blow it. I'm a bugler, too. I love horns, and blowing my own horn right now. [Laughter]. Anyway, after that last kill, never again — never, never, never again.

**Cantor:** So there was a particular moment when you realized you wouldn't do it again.

**Free:** Yes, that very last hunt, because I saw the animal being torn apart. And the huntsman — that's why I was bringing in the huntsman — would try to get the — I don't know if he really tried — to get the hounds from tearing the fox apart so badly. It didn't make much difference because it was soon dead. But it was a horrible thing — chasing them down. They can no longer breathe almost. I cannot understand. Then what's going on in Britain right now. They are trying to stop it. The House of Lords is holding up the measure and will continue to do so. But it's awful, just like — well, all of these things get onto — any of these "sports," any sport that ends up abusing animals is reprehensible.

---

<sup>9</sup> Oliver Jackson Sands, Jr., [The Story of the Deep Run Hunt Club](#) (self-published, 1975).



**Cantor:** When you had that experience and you decided you wouldn't take part in fox hunts anymore, did you say anything to anyone about it?

**Free:** My mother mainly.

**Cantor:** Did she agree or did she pooh-pooh what you felt about it?

**Free:** She would say we are helping farmers, because foxes killed their chickens.

**Cantor:** Your mother took part in the fox hunts at that time?

**Free:** Yes, the whole family, ha, ha. Good wholesome family life. But look at the National Rifle Association getting all the families out there shooting birds and deer and bear and anything else — same old thing only that's a little bit more average American. The fox hunting is a little bit more chi-chi, a little bit more stylish, more upper class British.

**Cantor:** When you stopped taking part in the fox hunts, were you the only one in the family who stopped?

**Free:** I don't remember. I don't remember. I guess so. I guess so.

**Cantor:** They didn't ridicule you though.

**Free:** No. Anyway, so we kept Windmill at home. When we lived in Richmond we had a good substantial house. My father had an architect who designed it. It was a good strong house. I wish I had it now. It had a garage in the back. And that's when they took one side — it was a two-car garage — took one side and changed it into a stall for Windmill. The cat used to sleep out there with her. Windmill was a wonderful horse. I would bring her out in the yard and I'd play the Victrola. We called them Victrolas then.

**Cantor:** Record players.

**Free:** Record players. She loved the "Anvil Chorus" from "Il Trovatore." Who wrote that? [Giuseppe] Verdi? No. Who wrote it? Don't show me up that way. Also, there was a kind of a jazz-type song then called "Horses, Horses, Crazy About Horses," and she loved that too. The poor cat, Duff, who slept in her stall, got poisoned. I don't know who did that, but people put down rat poison a lot so he probably got some rat poison. I don't know what. Then we had a fox terrier, Billy, a very nice dog except he — something like a Jack Russell — would run out and bite people. My father said, "I don't want to keep him closed up in the backyard," like people do nowadays. Dogs used to roam anywhere in those days. So guess what he did? He had him put to sleep. I don't think much of that.

**Cantor:** How did you feel when that happened?

---

**Free:** It was awful. I was away when it happened, actually. I must have been ten years old. I was at Girl Scout camp. I was age ten.

**Cantor:** How did you find out?

**Free:** They told me.

**Cantor:** When you were away or when you came home?

**Free:** When I came home.

**Cantor:** How were the horses treated? Pretty well?

**Free:** Oh, very well, very well.

**Cantor:** Did you see horses as being intelligent animals? Did you experience them as being in a relationship with you?

**Free:** Oh, yes. I mean, right now — I mean, I long for horses in my subconscious. When I get around horses and suddenly the way a horse smells — it just sweeps over me. It's like a part of my life — horses.

**Cantor:** Do you still think about Windmill, this particular horse?

**Free:** Yes, I do. The particular equine that I think about most, is Nancy, my Welsh pony. I won so many cups on her. She was wonderful, wonderful. She was almost fourteen hands, a good-sized pony, a Welsh pony. She didn't belong to me, but I rode her all the time and won a lot of cups with her. One of the pictures I can show you here was age ten.<sup>10</sup> I was written up, a big feature story with pictures and all that. I was only ten years old and I had been winning cups for several years, and they wrote me up. [Laughter].

**Cantor:** In the Richmond newspaper?

**Free:** Yes. The Richmond News Leader. I remember that. I've got all that stuff here now. Nancy — I have this picture of me with the cup in my hand and Nancy's head resting on my shoulder. She was a chestnut sorrel pony, more like a small horse. We were affectionate with each other. She put her head on my shoulder and I had to kind of pose for the photographer. It took longer in those days. I'd say, "Nancy, get your head off my shoulder." I'll never forget that. But I said, "All for the newspaper picture," and I have the picture now. You would never know the pony was putting all that weight on me. She loved me. It was her way of showing her affection. So I loved her. God knows whatever happened to her.

They didn't have a pony for me. I rode everybody else's because people wanted me to ride because I always won cups. But then you'd have to give the owner the cup.

---

<sup>10</sup> Copy of picture attached.

---

**Cantor:** Then in winning these cups in riding, was that something of an introduction to being a prominent person for you?

**Free:** I think being with all those horses and riding in the shows and so on, I learned to appear before people. I won all kinds of cups and had a lot of falls. It was a very heady atmosphere. I liked it. My mother won cups. My father won cups. We had a good time.

**Cantor:** It was exciting, but you didn't see it in that broader way?

**Free:** No, I don't think so. No, it never occurred to me. No, it didn't. I always liked to — when I went to school I got elected — voted for the all-city hockey team. You know, I mean, I did things that put me out in front of people.

**Cantor:** So you were not a terribly shy youngster.

**Free:** Yes and no. It depends. If you feel something enough, you do it, like speaking up for animals.

Anyway, and then on to finishing up the interview about my life in Virginia, I went off to college. Before I went off to Barnard College in New York I went two years to the local branch of the College of William and Mary. That was interesting for me because I was doing a lot of riding then too. That was 1935. I finished in 1934 at Collegiate School, which is a very good school.<sup>11</sup> I learned a lot there. My mother took me out of public high school because I flunked every single course in my freshman year of high school — every single course but English. My mother was desperate. She said, "You're going to have to go to high school until you're twenty-five." Then my aunt came along and said, "Why don't you send her to private school?" They didn't have any money. They never had any money. My mother borrowed the money, so I went to this private school and did real well.

**Cantor:** What do you attribute all that flunking to? You're obviously an intelligent person.

**Free:** They were big classes, huge classes, forty or fifty to a class, and two shifts, morning and afternoon. I didn't find it interesting. [Laughter]. I know in trigonometry, I remember so well sitting in the back of the class reading a book that was a very salacious novel at that time called Bad Girl by Vina Delmar about a girl who slept around, I guess. But I sat in the back of the class and put the book Bad Girl inside the trigonometry book. And the teacher came back and he saw it. And he pulled it out and held it up before the class. [Laughter].

**Cantor:** Did he try to embarrass you?

**Free:** Well, he flunked me. I got F on every subject except English.

**Cantor:** So English was something you wouldn't let go even when you weren't interested in other things.

---

<sup>11</sup> In 1992 the Collegiate School gave Ann Cottrell Free its second "Distinguished Alumni Award." It noted her animal protection work along with her journalism career.

---

**Free:** English you have good things to read, you know. No, I couldn't do anything with the others.

**Cantor:** Were you doing some writing at that time as well as reading?

**Free:** Oh, yes, writing like a maniac — poetry and all that, all kinds of things. I've got bunches of stories right now that I wrote in those days — short stories, poems, plays, everything. So then I went off to college to Barnard College — that was kind of interesting in a way — which is part of Columbia University, as you know.

**Cantor:** Yes. What first struck you at Barnard? It must have been a very new experience.

**Free:** It was. And the reason I went was because at College of William and Mary, that Richmond division, I found that everybody needs a mentor, particularly, I think, kids that are kind of halfway floundering. I was a flounderer — I mean, about “what am I going to do?” I was high strung and all that. This teacher, a young woman — she was getting her Ph.D. in French from Columbia University, Margaret Leah Johnson. She was a Barnard graduate, and she was teaching at the William and Mary Richmond division. She was a very good influence on me. She wasn't too much older than I. She was just about — oh, I was about eighteen. She was only about seven or eight years [older] — a very smart woman but kind of withdrawn. She had kind of a sad life. Anyway, she inspired me to go to Barnard; she had gone there.

I don't think I was too crazy about it because it was not what I thought it was going to be — Broadway theater and all that glamorous stuff. Well, forget it. I was stuck up there in Morningside Heights. You know where Columbia University [is]. So that wasn't as thrilling as I expected it to be, although I made some good friends and learned a little bit.

My mother came up then and visited. We visited all the animal rescue places in the metropolitan area because by then she had become assistant executive director of the SPCA. She was absolutely astounded by the cruelty of Richmond's method of euthanasia which was a practice of putting animals in a closed box and then bringing the truck — you know, they used the ambulance-dog catcher truck — up to it with the exhaust pipe, the hot exhaust hose going in and searing the lungs and snuffing out the life of those animals. She couldn't stand it. They'd even put the live ones in on top of the dead ones.

She went there to work mainly because my father — he just — the whirl of gambling, alcohol, and women kind of did him in. So she needed the money; she went to work. She had to look after her mother. Her father had died in 1943. She had a hard life, and I can never pay her enough tribute for her strength of character. And even all these bad things that were happening to her, she would go out on the SPCA rescues. The men who worked there were no good. She would crawl under houses and pull out abandoned animals and all that sort of thing. Fearless. She was an absolutely wonderful person on animals.

---

So when I was at college, she said, “I’m going to go and visit the ASPCA up there and the Ellen Prince Speyer Home,” which is now called something else. She went to about three or four to see what they were using. They were using mainly Phenobarbital injections.

Jump ahead, fast forward on your tape. Years later I changed all the euthanasia in the city of Washington and Montgomery County, Maryland and Shenandoah County, Virginia, because I’ve been absolutely obsessed by the euthanasia cruelty in animal shelters, going on to this day. All over this country you’ve got these God-awful dog pounds, two-bit shelters where they’re still doing the carbon monoxide. Sometimes they’re shooting them. They’re doing dreadful things. And do you think these big rich societies are spending much time trying to change that? Financial help? Not enough. I changed recently the bad carbon monoxide chamber in Shenandoah County to injection by trained technicians and vets. This is 1998, ‘99. But then this was being done in 1936 in Richmond.

**Cantor:** Now, she was then running the Richmond SPCA when you were in your teens before you went to Barnard?

**Free:** I think before I went and while I was there.

**Cantor:** And then when she came up to visit you at Barnard, you and she together went to the ASPCA?

**Free:** Yes. We visited several.

**Cantor:** And what was that like?

**Free:** I don’t remember much about the visits there, but I found out they were doing a better job than in Richmond. At least she stopped that awful hot exhaust method. But even today, 1999, often euthanasia is a mess, because a lot of places don’t know how to do the injections. They have fairly untrained people. We’ll never, never know the suffering that goes on in animal shelters because there’s not enough oversight. They have boards of directors that don’t care. It’s quite unique if you have some people that care. And another thing, I can’t even go near a shelter now because I get such flashbacks of trauma and I’m a coward on that. Right now I’ve been trying to figure out how to make improvement more permanent. I have been putting out fires all my life — euthanasia, the fox hunting, all these thousands of things I’ve been involved in — Band-Aids, putting out fire. How do you ever pull it all together into anything permanent?

**Cantor:** Well, when your mother was doing that work, was she talking much about it and was she talking about it or saying anything to you about it as a larger issue than strictly the animals she was rescuing day-to-day?

**Free:** I don’t think so, no. She thought the situation was bad everywhere, but I don’t think she did conceptual thinking.

**Cantor:** So she cared about animals enough to go out and do that work though.

---

**Free:** Oh, yes. Oh, yes. And as I said before, she would — however, back to inconsistency and all that. When I was going to college — this is important to bring out — I was having a running battle all the time with my mother about what kind of fur coat I wanted. She didn't want me to get a leopard coat. See, that's my inconsistency. I wanted a leopard coat. "Ann, you can't have a leopard coat. They don't wear well. Get a muskrat." She had a muskrat, didn't have enough money for mink and all those expensive furs. However, there was a big store in New York at that time called Arnold Constable, you know, like one of the competitors of Saks and so on. I found this leopard coat and bought it, \$169. I hate to tell you this: I have it still in a trunk. She said it wouldn't wear, but I never wore it much after I realized what it meant. It's the long-haired kind, not the Somalia leopard. I hate to think of it. So I was just as inconsistent as anybody else. And my mother and I — there we are worrying about how to kill the dogs and cats, and yet we were shopping around for fur coats from trapped animals. So why are we the way we are?

**Cantor:** Do you think that your mother's inconsistency in that way back then might have had to do with not seeing the animals used for fur but you would see —

**Free:** No, and neither did I.

**Cantor:** But she would see the dogs and the cats.

**Free:** Neither did I. Neither did I. And same would be for you if you were living then, because you have — this all brings you — these experiences all bring you to what makes you, what wakes you up. Steel trap agony that has been publicized. Is it Bob Barker? Parades in the street? What is it? I think it's drawing attention. Like they stopped years ago by agitation having those birds of paradise, egrets, or whatever you call them on the women's hats. Protesters made such a to-do about that, and that stopped it. I think that's one of the things that's a little side issue that I'm bringing in now, but my field has been communications and writing. I think maybe I persuaded a few people. But the main thing is you've got to present it in such a way that people can see those horrors. I wrote a lot about trapping later on. We have to dramatize, make it visual.

**Cantor:** Now, when you went to Barnard, and that's where your mother visited you and you went to the shelters and everything, in your studies what was interesting then? What was engaging you?

**Free:** French poetry. [Laughter]. I don't know why I got off on all these crazy things.

**Cantor:** French?

**Free:** French poetry. I think it was the influence of that teacher, a French scholar, Margaret Johnson. I wrote one of my term papers on [Paul] Verlaine and [Arthur] Rimbaud<sup>12</sup>. I didn't know diddley-squat about what I was writing about. The symbolism age. I was — I mean, I loved everything — novels and history. I was a voracious reader. I was into everything. There wasn't anything I didn't find interesting, except I didn't know a darn thing about science.

---

<sup>12</sup> Paul Verlaine (1844-1896); J. N. Arthur Rimbaud (1854-1891), French poets.

**Cantor:** Did you study that at Barnard?

**Free:** Yes, I was in geology. I skipped classes all the time. Nothing awakened me to the fact that science is really searching for truth, and you can find your origins of why we are the way we are, but I never got it presented to me that way.

**Cantor:** So it didn't really engage you, science at Barnard?

**Free:** No, not at all.

**Cantor:** English?

**Free:** English, yes. That's about all.

**Cantor:** Were there any particular books you remember really opening your eyes when you were at Barnard?

**Free:** No. I think the English poets had a big influence on me. And you know that a lot of the English poets — even with Alexander Pope, and particularly when you got into the Romantic poets, like [Percy] Shelley — they were terrific on animals, absolutely terrific. Then, of course, Thomas Hardy was great on animals.<sup>13</sup> I never had it brought to my attention. I just sort of learned about it.

**Cantor:** So that aspect of the literature wasn't talked about in class.

**Free:** No. I didn't actually realize much of this until later.

**Cantor:** And the professors didn't bring it up.

**Free:** Never.

**Cantor:** Was there anything going on early in your years at Barnard in your studies that moved you in the direction of the work you then did, that you did later?

**Free:** On animals you mean?

**Cantor:** Or journalism.

**Free:** Oh, journalism, yes. I had worked before I went to Barnard. Let's see. I went there and then I worked for the Richmond Times-Dispatch between my junior and senior years, and then I was off to the races. I haven't given up journalism since. [Tape interruption].

---

<sup>13</sup> Alexander Pope (1688-1744), English poet; Percy Shelley (1792-1822), English poet; Thomas Hardy (1840-1928), English novelist, poet, and dramatist.

---

When I was at Barnard I wrote a short story called “Gentle Rain.” “The quality of mercy is not strained, it follows a gentle rain from heaven.” It comes from Shakespeare’s the “Merchant of Venice,” Portia’s speech.<sup>14</sup> This is a story of a young man who must have been a little bit psychologically disturbed, depressed anyway. He’s getting ready to kill himself because he was lonely and so on and so forth. His girl had jilted him. He said if he thought if he could — the way he could redeem himself in the eyes of his former sweetheart and in his own mind right now was not necessarily to kill himself but to do something worthwhile — which was to release animals from a roadside zoo. And he did that, and he got them released. He undid all the locks and so on. That liberated him as well. But his original desire for his death wish then took the form of a caretaker coming up and shooting him.

**Cantor:** So you wrote that in the mid-30s.

**Free:** Yes.

**Cantor:** Where had you learned about roadside zoos?

**Free:** I don’t know.

**Cantor:** Just by seeing them?

**Free:** Yes. I said in the story, which is fiction: “Casey’s Zoological Gardens and Tourist Camp.” They called them tourist camps. Yes, you see some of those around even now. Anyhow, that was written in 1936, I think. So this is all about how he released the animals, and that released him from his depression. But unfortunate, then he got his wish of suicide by somebody coming up and killing him.

**Cantor:** At that point, you saw — it sounds like you saw helping animals as something important one might do for oneself possibly.

**Free:** I don’t know. Just releasing — don’t forget in those days I was thinking about the foxes in Richmond. I can’t read it aloud. It takes too long. But here, “The bear had to be protected. To think that my dying gesture should change everything.” I’d have to read the whole thing now. “I shall live now and I shall do my sneaking around at night freeing caged animals from cheap tourist camps in a bigger way. I’ll focus public attention on conditions of this kind by writing strong propaganda that will even stir the souls of the vivisectionists themselves.” Is that shades of today’s —

**Cantor:** And that’s from the short story “Gentle Rain” that you wrote in college.

**Free:** Yes. It was just like — and then years later I became involved in kind of bringing Ingrid Newkirk into animal work in a big way. So she went ahead with all of her buddies and freeing animals and so on. I feared backlash if I did it. But here I was in 1936 having somebody who was going to free caged animals from cheap tourist camps. Public attention on conditions of this kind by writing strong propaganda. Same thing that’s happening today, right? Isn’t that

---

<sup>14</sup> Story attached.



amazing? I hadn't looked at this story for a long time. I don't like "propaganda" because it can mean half-truths.

**Cantor:** Were there other experiences in college that got you involved in writing about animals then or issues?

**Free:** I don't know. I'd have to read this again sometime. See, the animal thing — as I become older, I realize what a strong propelling thing it's been all the way through. I went back to Richmond after graduation and I became — got on the paper again, the newspaper, the Richmond Times-Dispatch. One of the thousands jobs I had — I was a woman's club editor, I wrote all kinds of stories.

But they dumped into my lap the Times-Dispatch Children's Club. And this is where I think I might have done some good. It used to break my heart. These kids — a lot of them were rural — who would write letters, write stories about animals. You can see that the kids wrote them themselves. Here's one: "In Memory of Little Bill, My Chicken," a true tragic story written by a little girl named Amethyst Adams, age fourteen. She wrote, "How can I work when my soul is dead within me?" Her chicken had died. There's so much love out there, and I don't believe that children are being awakened to it today. And here's — and then I gave — I printed one called "Roaming Birds" by a little child age twelve. "Pretty little blue bird, where is your home?" This is one, "Poor Robin." You can see I really got these kids going on animals.

Then I wrote a club page editorial. I'll read it. "Riding down the road I thought there were two large police dogs, but I realized it was a police dog and a pony, both very bewildered. The dog was pushing her weight up against a little brown, clear-eyed pony, trying to push him off the road and get him out of the dangerous place. So then I got out and led the pony up the hill. Nobody was home, but I found an empty stall and put the pony inside. The police dog was filled with gratitude and tried so hard to thank me by licking my arms and jumping on me. I called the neighbors and they came over. I'll never forget that dog who showed so much kindness." So nearly everything in that section was about animals.

**Cantor:** Then you were editing this section of the paper.

**Free:** Yes, just once a week. Then I did a lot of other things, too, boring stuff, like club women's meetings.

**Cantor:** This was after college?

**Free:** Yes, 1939. Then years — a couple or some years later, after I left, they stopped that Children's Club. That was too bad. See, kids are so receptive. If anybody is listening to this any day in the future, it's terrible the way we trample on the feelings of sensitive children. I think sometimes these awful things that are happening in the country today is because kids have no one to reinforce their empathetic feelings, their thinking, no outlets. We're all born sensitive and have feeling, but you have to have reinforcement. There's so little or any reinforcement today, especially on unpopular subjects.

---

**Cantor:** When you were getting these kids going at that time in 1939, did you know the kids before they wrote?

**Free:** Oh, no. I've never seen them.

**Cantor:** How did you communicate with them then?

**Free:** Oh, I didn't communicate with them. Their stuff came in the mail and I opened it, and I'd give priority to the animal stories. I would mention them in my editorials and award prizes to the best drawing, poems, and stories. I sent them books as awards.

**Cantor:** But they happened to write a lot about animals.

**Free:** Yes, they did. Maybe it was because I was the editor. Maybe they saw they had an editor who liked to write about animals. But I certainly — it almost was an animal page. But they were interested in other things, too. I was the new person on the newspaper. This was something nobody else wanted, editor of the children's page. I was only about twenty-one or - two myself. [Tape interruption].

**Cantor:** Then when you were at Barnard you were working on the college paper?

**Free:** Yes. The Barnard Bulletin. I wrote feature stories. Feature stories I love doing, like the poem. This is — the Depression was over, but there were still a lot of poor people — about the man who sold apples out front. Then I got very hepped up with the "War Clouds" about Japan. I've got pictures. I think I did write something about this. We were against Japanese — against wearing silk stockings because the Japanese produced silk. So we all wore cotton stockings. We demonstrated down on Broadway — I'll never forget that — against the Japanese. It was several years before Pearl Harbor,<sup>15</sup> but I guess those Barnard girls are always ahead. I was all involved with the good side in the Spanish Civil War, because that was raging then. I wrote poems about that. Anything that came along, I always wrote about it. I didn't know a thing about the Spanish Civil War, but I wrote about it anyhow.

**Cantor:** In the Barnard paper?

**Free:** Yes. And some of my poems were published in the Columbia anthology of poetry.

Then at that time it was the beginning of the battle lines between the far left wing and the far right. The smart — a lot of smart, very progressive people were very left wing, very pro-Russian, because a lot of idealists were, as you know or as you've read, felt that Russia was — that Communism — was the answer. And you know what happened to a lot of them. They were let down. The great dream blew up in their faces. But some of that was going on at Barnard, too. But I didn't know much about what that was all about. But I was on the board, although only my name was on the masthead, of Columbia Students Against War or something. I've got the little magazine now.

---

<sup>15</sup> December 7, 1941.

---

**Cantor:** When you were writing for the Barnard Bulletin, what were some of the main topics you wrote about?

**Free:** All things around campus and stuff like that.

**Cantor:** Anything that really grabbed your interest?

**Free:** Not much.

**Cantor:** Was it more or less practice journalism?

**Free:** I can't remember anything significant I wrote. [Laughter].

**Cantor:** We could talk about later.

**Free:** Then later — then I went back to Richmond to work. I had worked on a regular newspaper, you see.

Now we can get to a problem that always has bothered me. If you're a reporter, you're supposed to report. You have to be smart enough to know what's going on and also cold enough, like a doctor or something, that you don't take any sides. Objectivity is very difficult. It hit me worse about animals and civil rights.

We haven't talked about the black/white issue. Having been brought up in Richmond, I knew a good bit about it. And back to — you talk about the ambivalence and inconsistency about animals, I think the inconsistency of white people in Richmond, Virginia and everywhere else was appalling. I ought to bring this up now because I think it's all of a piece — animals and minorities, anyone who is pushed around by a higher group. It's got to be avenged, redressed, et cetera.

So that's why I felt it was awful that — I had an African-American mammy, [Adeline Walker]. Nowadays they call them nannies in the British style. But I had a mammy in the old-timey southern style, considered too "racist" today. She lived with us. She had a little room downtown, but she lived with us all during the week. And just think, my mammy could bring me as a little girl in the front door, but if she was by herself she couldn't come in the front door. She could prepare our food and serve us, but she couldn't sit at the table with us. And all those things. That, and the funny behavior we had about animals, and the behavior about mammy and all the "colored folks, colored people," it was so puzzling, having separate entrances, having to ride in the back of the bus or trolley. I don't think — thank God — the young people today have those terrible conflicts anymore, but probably about animals.

**Cantor:** Was there a parallel between the treatment of your mammy and the treatment of animals, in that people could treat black people respectfully but still make distinctions?

**Free:** Yes. I don't think I articulated it to myself. Obviously, I don't think that I was that perspicacious. Is that the word I want? The main thing is this. But it was true, and all I'm doing

---

is reporting the facts. The influences — you're puzzled about as a child, the ambivalence and inconsistency about the pet animal and then the animal that's eaten and all that, and also about the mammy who sleeps in the bed with you — she did that when I was sick sometimes — and the fact she couldn't eat with us. It got so ingrained with the colored people, and the white people as well, that when my mother came here to Washington before she died — are you turning that off? She sat at my dining room table with a black person for the first time.

*[End Tape 1, Side B; Begin Tape 2, Side A]*

**Cantor:** Well, what was the mammy's name?

**Free:** Adeline Walker. I have a photograph of her. She must have been in her — anybody past fifty was a hundred to me at that time. I guess she lived into her sixties. But she was my mammy from age three weeks to just about ten years until she died. But she did everything for us. She cooked and cleaned and did everything. That's the way it was. And my mother was riding horseback a lot. She took care of me from infancy on up to her death.

She was the first person that I ever — the first dead person I'd ever seen. Very sick, she went up to New York because she had an adopted daughter in Brooklyn, and then they brought her back to Richmond for the funeral after she died. She must have had cancer. And I looked at her in her coffin. My greatest recollections — she had lost so much weight. You're too young to remember the Indian head penny with the aquiline nose. So I'm at her coffin. She looked like the Indian head on the Indian penny, she had changed so. I was devastated. She was a great influence on me, and she was good to animals and to everything living. People like that are never appreciated enough. I think that she — I had wonderful influences: my grandmother and my mother and my mammy. They raised me.

**Cantor:** The kind of things your mammy taught you — were they consistent with what your mother and your grandmother taught, or were they —

**Free:** Oh, yes. They all had good affects in general. Of course, when it comes to the field that we're talking about — meat and all that — they just went along with the flow. That's the way it was. And that's why our generation is — and I'm novel for my generation in that way. When you see that broad mass of people out there making McDonald's and Burger King, all of them, rich. It's disgusting. [Laughter].

**Cantor:** So the beginning of your journalism career, you edited the children's section of the Richmond Times-Dispatch.

**Free:** And also all the women's clubs. That was interesting because I used to go to hear — they had good speakers that come to the women's clubs. They had a lot of money in Richmond, so they — the richest club, The Women's Club — could bring in these really fantastic literary and political speakers. So that was opening a door for me.

**Cantor:** You did articles on the presentations?

---

**Free:** Yes.

**Cantor:** Was that for the Richmond Times-Dispatch?

**Free:** Richmond Times-Dispatch, a very good paper.

**Cantor:** And how long did you work for them? [Tape interruption].

**Free:** I went — after I finished Barnard, I went back to the Richmond Times-Dispatch for a couple of years and worked doing some of the same things I had done before. But in 1939 I went up to Washington, DC to hear Marion Anderson, the great Negro contralto, sing at the Lincoln Memorial. (She had been denied use of the Daughters of the American Revolution's Constitution Hall.) I went with a friend of mine I had known at Barnard named Lois Sachs. She was quite — we were just soul mates. She was very liberal. She was only one of a few people I could talk to about my liberal tendencies, such as concern about segregation. We met here in Washington. She came down from New York and I up from Richmond, and we went to the Lincoln Memorial together.

Then later, a few weeks later — it wasn't very long after that — Mrs. Roosevelt came down to Richmond and gave Miss Anderson a medal.<sup>16</sup> And I covered that and interviewed Marion Anderson, which was one of my big thrills. I asked her how she felt about the Lincoln Memorial and all that. She said that she — words were not enough to express her feelings. She said, "My heart is so filled." Mrs. Roosevelt had resigned from DAR because of its denial of use of their hall because of her race.

Then a few years later — that was 1939. Within a year's time, I found myself working in Washington and covering Mrs. Roosevelt. In between I left the Richmond Times-Dispatch for some Hollywood-based work and went to work for Newsweek in New York. And then I got sent down to Washington. This was in late 1940. I was assigned to Eleanor Roosevelt right away.

Then I covered — and the war clouds were really gathering, to coin a cliché. So therefore I was assigned to cover almost everything under the sun. Then I went over to work for the — then within the year I went to work for the Chicago Sun, which was the brand new newspaper started by Marshall Field to fight the reactionary Chicago Tribune. It had a huge Washington bureau, and I was the only woman on it. I was the only woman on the Newsweek bureau as well. Then I stayed on with the Chicago Sun for quite a while, covering Mrs. Roosevelt and a lot of other things connected with the beginning of the military buildup and women going into the armed services, the WACs and the WAVES, Congress and the wartime agencies, and all that. I kept really busy, really busy. And fortunately I had seemed to have had good health.

There wasn't very much I could do about animals at that time, although I did cover the War Dog Program. I feel sorry for those war dogs people donated, because they were used for all kind of tracking. I have a horrible feeling they sent them into places with explosives, although I don't know. But anyway, there wasn't anything I didn't do during those war years.

---

<sup>16</sup> The Spingarn Medal.

---

**Cantor:** When you were covering Eleanor Roosevelt, that was for Newsweek?

**Free:** Newsweek, the Chicago Sun, and the New York Herald Tribune.

**Cantor:** Were they simultaneously?

**Free:** No, one after the other.

**Cantor:** One after the other. Was there a particular impression Eleanor Roosevelt made on you?

**Free:** Yes. Mrs. Roosevelt made a terrific impression on me, mainly because she had such a bountiful energy. And also, she was so involved in so many good things, things I had never even heard about. I learned a lot from Mrs. Roosevelt because she really cared about all the old people. When I first came here, one of the first articles I wrote based on the press conferences, she had gone over to where the old folks — the old folks' home and indigent — lived. And the conditions were so bad that she wrote about it a lot and testified before Congress.

So Mrs. Roosevelt — she used everything at her command — her column, her press conferences, her speeches, and her contacts — in trying to make it a better world. There's no doubt about it, she was one of the finest human beings that ever walked this earth, and I'm privileged to have been involved with her. I covered her constantly. I didn't know her very well like some of the older press women did. I was very young, about twenty-four, when I started with her.

I moved ahead awfully fast. I don't know whether it was — I don't know. I just got a lucky streak, because there weren't too many women. Women were beginning to come into big time journalism. Now they're all over the place, thank goodness. So after Mrs. Roosevelt, I found that I wanted to leave. When he [Franklin D. Roosevelt] died, the light went out for me.<sup>17</sup>

**Cantor:** FDR?

**Free:** After FDR died, I said the light went out for me in Washington. I never could accept Harry Truman even being president. I was that partisan. Anyway, I had been covering — I never could get across as a war correspondent, but I did get sent with the United Nations Relief to China.<sup>18</sup> Of course, that was a very, very traumatic time for me and doesn't do much about animals in that period because you didn't see any. [Laughter].

**Cantor:** But in this period, if you were covering Eleanor Roosevelt, China, various important situations, weren't you developing your skills as a journalist and your idea of what kind of work you wanted to do?

**Free:** I was already doing it.

---

<sup>17</sup> April 12, 1945.

<sup>18</sup> December 1945.

---

**Cantor:** Right. But in terms of — you mentioned that Eleanor Roosevelt dedicated herself to causes.

**Free:** Yes. Don't forget this brings up that Mrs. Roosevelt did it. And she could write and crusade in her columns. But being just a regular reporter, it's not easy because you have to be more objective. But later one when I got into the animal field, I found that very difficult. I'll come to that in a minute. But being a straight reporter — now, my husband [James Stillman Free] was mostly just a straight reporter, and he never let his emotions take over much in stories unless it was an editorial column. I think you outgrow being a breaking news reporter, and he never quite outgrew it. But I did. But I didn't have anyplace much to go except I got so involved, as we'll come in the next segment, all these 50,000 projects I got into, these crusades. And by that time, I was able to — had gotten some outlets where I didn't have to write straight news.<sup>19</sup> I had columns and special articles and syndicated pieces where I could crusade — if not to my heart's content, well, almost.

**Cantor:** When was that?

**Free:** That was from the 1950s on.

**Cantor:** I see. So you had been a reporter a long time before you were doing that.

**Free:** Oh, yes. Ten years. See, I went to China and then I went — but all the things I did were all, I hope, to make it a better world. I went to the United Nations for — oh, my God, China was a — that makes you — that changes the men from the boys, the women from the girls, because I had never seen just lots and lots of dying, starving people.

**Cantor:** You saw that in China.

**Free:** I certainly did.

**Cantor:** And reported on it?

**Free:** Yes. I wrote — I have a whole drawer-ful here of my files on that. See, the job I had worked out for myself was to work for the United Nations Relief, writing stories that were distributed all over the world — USA, England, Australia, Canada, particularly English-speaking world — about where the — how the needs for the Chinese were being met by the contributions from the United Nations. That took me into refugee camps, of course. It took me into famine areas. It took me into flood areas. It took me to — also, I said refugees. There were millions of Chinese refugees returning home from “free” China where they had fled during the Sino-Japanese War.

But then the eye-opener to me was that there were many — there were thousands of German and Austrian Jewish refugees who had made it to Shanghai. Oddly enough, the

---

<sup>19</sup> Editorial articles for the [Washington Star](#), [Washington Post](#), North American Newspaper Alliance, Women's News Service, McClure syndicate.

---

Japanese, who were in charge of Shanghai then, treated them fairly well. It was amazing. It's amazing. You would think that the Japanese, who had been hand-in-glove with the Germans, would have exterminated these people. But the Jewish refugees had their own little "city" inside Shanghai, called Hongkew, and ran their own thing. I'm sure some bad things happened, but it was surprisingly upbeat from the standpoint of what it could have been, because they fled to Shanghai as an international city, although it wasn't an international city after the Japanese took over. Everybody else — the British and Europeans went to camps, you know. But then White Russians remained — no homes to go back to. That was a fascinating time.

As for the world of animals over there in China — I used to see all these dead pigs. Chinese love pork, you know. They'd take the bodies of the pigs through the city. I don't know where the slaughterhouse was. I'd see them everyday. Then you never saw many dogs or cats. I guess they were eaten. And then the animal that I liked the most — I wrote a poem about one, the water buffalo.<sup>20</sup> I want to be reincarnated into a water buffalo, because they have a real good life. [Laughter].

**Cantor:** Where did you see that animal?

**Free:** I traveled all over China — all over in the countryside. Everywhere you have a rice paddy, you have a water buffalo.

**Cantor:** I see. Did they make it into your articles about the thievery that you covered of supplies, I think it was?

**Free:** Yes. I wrote about how they would — Chinese government. But I had to write that for an English-language magazine, China Weekly Review. Disgusting that relief goods were not getting through, but getting diverted. And that was pretty much deliberate, because the Chinese were pathological — Kuomintang, Chiang Kai-Shek government — they were pathological about anything falling into the hands of the communists, you see. They'd had this long struggle all those years. And the Chinese government wanted to keep all the supplies for their people. And the communists got hardly anything. It's very complex, the whole thing geographically and all that, because the Chinese communists were out in western China, which had not been messed up by the war or occupied by the Japanese. So I did go out there to Yellow River in Honan Province, which had been flooded. I saw some horrible things — people stranded, living on top of dikes.

The most interesting thing to me was going up into Manchuria. I used to say that's what it was like being in Russia. You see, a lot of White Russians were there who had left, you know, at the time of the Russian Revolution. They had their onion-bulbed churches, horse-drawn droshkys, you know, with the men with their fur hats and their beards. You could pass for one. [Laughter]. It was just filled with White Russians. But the authorities got me out of there because of the collapse of the conversations led by General [George C.] Marshall, who was trying to be an arbiter between the Chinese communists and the Chinese government. They fell apart finally, and I was stuck up there in Manchuria. They flew in a plane to get a few of us out.

---

<sup>20</sup> "Water Buffalo—Kwantugn Province, China," in Ann Cottrell Free, No Room, Save in the Heart (Flying Fox Press, 1987), p. 52.

---



That was uneventful. But another time, on a relief flight, we were forced down — something wrong with the airplane — in a place that was surrounded by communists, but nobody seemed to bother. We were stranded with the plane stuck in the mud. It took a seeming battalion of soldiers to lift us out the next day. The only thing I got out of it was bedbugs, sleeping in a native inn, where no white-skinned people had ever been seen. [Laughter].

**Cantor:** Did you ever feel your life was threatened over there?

**Free:** Sometimes. I think up in Manchuria one time when the sentries stopped us at night. You could hear the “click, click” of their — when they’re cocking their rifle. Like, “Who’s there!?” (in Chinese). I said, “Me.” A Chinese friend interpreted.

**Cantor:** Oh, when the sentries stopped you.

**Free:** This was up in Manchuria. It was a kind of martial law thing. But life was endangered many times, I guess. Look, traveling back in the boondocks of China, sometimes going over these bridges on primitive trains. The supports were made of bamboo. Yes, I was scared, but I don’t think about it now. You know, you only have one life to lose. [Laughter].

**Cantor:** It interested me — and I know we’ll get into this in a later session possibly some more — but in a lot of your reporting one of the issues seems to have been injustices against human beings by human beings.

**Free:** It had to be because I didn’t see the other — animals.

**Cantor:** And I was interested to know a little bit about how the animal issues got to be the area that you focused on after having focused so much on human issues.

**Free:** You mean when I came back? Oh, yes. When I came back I went first with the Marshall Plan. It was the human beings that were more visible at that time. But coming back from China, I took a trip around the world, writing some articles. I was most touched by the plight of animals in the strongly Buddhist country of Thailand. They won’t kill them because they’re Buddhists, but they don’t feed them either. So they have all these pariah dogs with the mange has already taken their hair off of them. They’re just down to tight skin over their bones. They seemed so frightened. I tried so hard one day getting food to feed a pariah, one of those dogs, and you couldn’t get anywhere near any of them. But I hope they came back and got it. But Thailand was the worst. See, of all that Far Eastern stuff, I never saw any dogs that I could rescue in China, because, as I said, they must have been eaten.

Except these rich people I had met<sup>21</sup> — I was lucky, in a way — find well-to-do people and getting to meet some of the ruling class of the British in old Shanghai who had come back. The Keswicks had some dogs of their own. I think they were kind of mongrels, but they were well taken care of. I don’t know what ever became of them. But I never saw any animals much. You know, if there’s going to be an animal, I’m going to see it. But all those peasants that were

---

<sup>21</sup> Lady Clare and Sir John Keswick. He headed the great firm of Jardine Matheson.

---

— what do you want to call them? — in the refugee camps and living on the boats, sampans, and so on, there were no animals.

**Cantor:** So in a way you were writing about humans by default.

**Free:** Not exactly. But anyway, I saw the worst things in Thailand. And even in India you saw a lot of pariah dogs and those poor white sacred cows — skin and bones — but they seemed to get along. They don't kill them, they don't eat them, they just let them wander around.

**Cantor:** Did you spend much time in India?

**Free:** Yes. Fantastic several months. I was there for the time with [Jawaharlal] Nehru and the transfer of power. I saw [Mahatma] Gandhi.<sup>22</sup> By the way, he didn't look very old, but he leaned on the shoulders of two young women. I was there when the riots were beginning between the new country of Pakistan and India. I had terrific narrow escapes then because those people had gone mad. They had a bloody civil war. I was lucky, and I always seemed to escape by the skin of my teeth, like bombs in the railroad carriages, that kind of thing. Sometimes I was just too dumb to know what was going on. [Laughter]. You know, dumb Americans. Two girls, two girls, just wandering around doing all that stuff. We went up into Kashmir. I had contact with animals up there. Rode a small horse<sup>23</sup> — reminded me of Nancy — up into the Himalayan Mountains. If you kept going you might come out at Tibet. Anyway, that was a world-shaking time for me. My emotions were torn to pieces by the tragic suffering in most countries — horrible, horrible. So then I went to the Marshall Plan to try to help that suffering in Europe.

**Cantor:** Excuse me. You were saying two girls running around when you were talking about India. Who was your companion?

**Free:** A young woman named Verna Feuerhelm. She was from Haywood, California. She had worked in China for UNRRA [United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration] and she was an economist. She had worked previously for the Bureau of Labor Statistics in Washington, part of the Labor Department. She was very smart. I wanted to come back around the world, and I wanted to go from Shanghai on the Trans-Siberian Railroad. But the Russians then — they didn't care too much for the Americans. They wouldn't give me a visa, and I'm glad they didn't. They took my five or ten bucks fee but never gave it back. Then I ran into her. I had met her once before at another part of China. I told her what I was planning — that I couldn't go back the Russian way — but I surely would like to go back around the world. So I said, "How about it?" She said, "Okay."

So we went back. We were ten months or more on the road, you might say. First, I went to Hong Kong. I went to French Indochina (Vietnam) when the unrest was getting bad. I could go on forever about that. But see, there are no animals in any of this. I felt horrible about that Vietnamese thing. I felt that we must never, never, never get into it. The French Foreign Legion was there. I met lots of the young soldiers in Saigon brought in to hold down the "natives."

---

<sup>22</sup> Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964), Indian statesman; Mohandas Karamchand (Mahatma) Gandhi (1869-1948), Indian leader.

<sup>23</sup> The pony's name was Bulbul, Persian for "nightingale."

---

Then in 1954 there was the siege of Dien Bein Phu when the Vietnamese got the French out, you know. When I came back to this country, people wanted me to make talks — you know, women's clubs and all that — about what I had done in China. I said, "Well, I'm going to tell you about something else. There's this war that's starting up out there in French Indochina, a combination of several countries — you know, Vietnam, Cochin China, Cambodia, Laos, and so on." No one knew where I was. I said, "The French can't last forever. Just say a prayer, hope to God we'll never get mixed up out there in Vietnam."

**Cantor:** Prescient.

**Free:** I should have been talking to the wind. But then — I don't know. I think it was big business who — I blame Joe Kennedy, Kennedy's father, a lot for that because he's the one who influenced his son to send those first military people in. The Catholic Church was all mixed up with — a certain bunch of Catholics who were running things out there. They had all these different cults plus the Catholics. It was a mess. But we should have stayed out! The French should have given up without bloodshed, as did the British in India. Big business — especially rubber interests — had a stake in Vietnam.

**Cantor:** Well, your companion Verna —

**Free:** She was just as smart as she could be.

**Cantor:** Was she doing work like you were doing?

**Free:** Well, we weren't doing much work at all really, but we interviewed a lot of people, high and low, and took a lot of pictures. She was a great one with the men. Wherever we went, they loved her. [Laughter]. But we always — see, we had all these contacts, particularly through me because I had newspaper, of course, men foreign correspondent friends. There's a picture of us right on the wall — well, you'll see it. I'll show you in a minute. All those contacts. And when you're overseas like that, one American passes you on — you know, it's an entrée. So I always would hook up with the correspondents in those particular countries, and one thing would lead to another, you see.

So I got to know the rather elite in India and the elite in a lot of places like that through the newspaper contact. I wrote stories from Bangkok. I wrote stories from Vietnam. I wrote stories from India. I wrote stories from — where else?

Then we went to — then I went to Palestine before it was called Israel. And I had a little background in that because I had covered, in Washington for the New York Herald Tribune, the struggle between the Zionists and the Irgun Zvai Leumi, which was a radical wing of the Israeli people. One of its top people later became the premier for a while, Menachem Begin. Then his wife died and he resigned. But anyway, I saw nothing but trouble ahead on that one either, because I went with a British correspondent to the tent camps for displaced Palestinians. I went all around everywhere, into the collectives and so on. But I figured that — I worried a lot about pushing those Arab Palestinians, who were living a fairly peaceful life, into camps. I didn't think much of that. The Arabs had not caused the Holocaust. But, I mean, I didn't have a whole

---

lot of background, but I knew a lot of pro-Israel people from this country. I ran into them over there. But that was a horrible mess.

Then I went on to Europe, Greece and Italy and, God knows, a lot of different places. So I felt that — that's when I decided that I'd go back with the Marshall Plan. Is that up to 1948? Is that enough for right now?

**Cantor:** Sure.

*[End of Session].*

---

**Ann Cottrell Free  
Session #2  
September 30, 1999  
Bethesda, Maryland**

**David Cantor, Interviewer**

*[Begin Tape 3, Side A]*

**Cantor:** Ms. Free, we spoke last time — in the recordings last time we got up to beyond World War II and just began to touch on the Marshall Plan on which you did some reporting. Do you want to say some more about that?

**Free:** Yes. I'll tell you how I happened to go with the Marshall Plan.<sup>24</sup> Instead of going back to the New York Herald Tribune, as I was supposed to do — I had had that long leave of absence for China, which was supposed to be a year but had run two years — [Tape interruption.]

But I didn't really want to go back to the daily grind, you might say. I had been such a roving spirit for two years and had seen so many things and had been my own boss. Frankly, I had not been on very good terms with my Herald Tribune bureau chief, Bert Andrews, and was not keen on working for him again. I wanted to go back overseas.

Those months abroad — particularly when I got into Europe and I saw the devastation there, I changed from my Washington days. I was a different person. Of course, the worst devastation was in Italy, London, and in Germany. The French were not too badly off because — of course, because Paris had been an open city. But the British were still kind of beaten up — all that bombing of London and Coventry was awful. I knew that the Marshall Plan was coming on line — was already on. And I thought, "Well, maybe some of my experience and abilities and et cetera, whatever I might have — I might be able to fit in there." I really wanted to be useful, to help. And I let that be known to someone at the Marshall Plan. The real name was the Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA).

It wasn't very long before I got a job with the Marshall Plan. I worked a little while in the Washington office headquarters. It was headed by a wonderful man named Paul Hoffman. It had some very good people, and we had bureaus — offices — all over Europe. The whole idea was to get goods, materials, and personnel to those countries that had been so beaten up. We were trying to build back Europe so it would — not only stand on its own feet but become a viable trading partner. Of course, some of my left-wing friends were very opposed to it because it was inimical to, I guess, the Russian interests.

But I went on and went first to ECA Paris headquarters where — as I say, Paris had not been messed up at all by the war. So I lived in rather elegant surroundings and ate very good

---

<sup>24</sup> Official name: Economic Cooperation Administration (ECA).

food. In Paris, you'd hardly know a war had been on. But I went out all over the country. I had a driver and interpreter-assistant. My luxury example was saving France's wine industry, and sampling much of it. I was thinking of this when Jim, my husband-to-be, told me later how he played tennis during part of the war when stationed at Trinidad with Naval Intelligence. He interviewed captured German submariners. Later he risked his life in the Pacific, so it evened up.

The French depended, not only for their gustatory delight but also for their pocketbooks, on the sale of wine, good wine. A certain kind of copper sulfate — I'm not sure of its name, but something you put on the grape vines — the French didn't have any left. But the Marshall Plan, by sending copper sulfate, was going to save the grape crops, the vineyards.

I was going to write all about it, so of course I had to go down to Burgundy. I go into a wine store today and look at the labels and see these places where I was after the war — Nuits-Saint-Georges and Beaune. It brings it all back. Beaune is the big Burgundy capital. They have an auction every year, a wine sale. It's held to support a wonderful 15<sup>th</sup> century hospital and convent, and those nuns are still making money off the wine. But that's a side issue. I did go down there and saw those places I just mentioned and went into the caves where the old wine was kept. So that was a nice little departure from the grim side.

Then I went to Italy, which had been badly damaged in places — beaten up — like Monte Cassino. Horrible. We helped with rebuilding many villages. I enjoyed that because the Marshall Plan was bringing in electricity, really helping to replace infrastructure. These people were pretty bad off, particularly up in the beautiful hill towns.

But then I went — the most grueling, searing view was what we had done, and the British had done, to Germany. I had never seen such ruins from bombing in my life, but I didn't have much sympathy. I would see the German people going to the post exchange type of places where they'd bring in their treasures to barter for coffee, for example. You know, my friend Verna was with me. She bought some lovely things on a barter exchange at this — I call it a PX — beautiful antiques and jewelry and so on for food. I saw that. The Germans seemed pretty well-dressed. I didn't weep a lot for them. I did not go to the death camps because the Marshall Plan was not concerned with rebuilding them! We were supposed to put places and the economy back on their feet. I was only going where the economic base had been blasted and was to be repaired. I should have gone anyway.

I wrote articles for Marshall Plan distribution but especially for the op-ed of the New York Herald Tribune, interviewed a lot of Germans. But what got me down about the Germans is that they were always thinking about themselves, complaining about shortages. They didn't seem to have any recognition of what they had done, bringing ruin on themselves and, of course, the Jews. I met with some young students at the University of Heidelberg. I found a very progressive group of young people who realized their guilt. I kept up with them for a while. So that was the only time that I saw any contrition.

I met over there — this is kind of personal. But when I was in China — in Manchuria, in fact, I was assigned to what you might call a guest house in Changchun, the capital. It had been

---

owned by the Japanese, who had been in Manchuria for a good while. Now it was a guest house where the UNRRA [United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration] people were putting up personnel. And this marvelous-looking woman came in [Thea Weckerle]. She was blonde, looked like a Valkyrie, you know, flaxen hair pulled back. She spoke perfect English. She had been in Australia all during the war and had said she was not a Nazi. She said she was planning to travel back on the Trans-Siberian Railway, but the alliance between Germany and Russia collapsed and she was stranded in Manchuria, governed by the Japanese. I don't know to this day. I rather liked her. We talked a lot. She was repatriated by UNRRA to Germany. Somehow I found this out and saw her in Stuttgart. She was in need of food. I took her to the U.S. Army PX with food and gave it to her. What the Germans needed so much is something we don't care too much about right now — they especially needed fats for cooking.

I don't think she was a Nazi. She was in Australia the whole time. Later, she wrote from Germany, "I hate these Germans. I hate these people. They never take the blame for anything?" And I believed her. I don't know why. I only saw her twice, in Manchuria and Stuttgart. But we corresponded for, oh, thirty years, I guess. I reached her by phone in a hospital in Stuttgart not long before she died. She wept.

**Cantor:** And what was her name?

**Free:** Fraulein Thea Weckerle. When I first met her up in Manchuria, I said, "How can you" — I said, "I don't think I can even talk to you, because look — do you know what you all did to the Jews?" She said, "Well, I wasn't there." They're always never there. But it's true; she wasn't. No, she was scared out of her wits the whole time in Manchuria because she was more afraid of the Russians than anyone. The Russians came into Manchuria after Japan fell. They took her German friend, who was also migrating back to Germany, and put her in a Siberian prison camp. She finally got out. But anyway, that's an absolute side light to what we're talking about and has nothing to do with my animal world.

So then after the Manchurian experience, I wrote some stories for the Paris Herald-Tribune while I was there — several, because that was my old paper, you see. And the Paris Herald, as everyone called it, still comes out now — owned, I think, by the New York Times, as you know. I also wrote stories about what was going on in the Ruhr part of Germany, which had been part of the industrial base. I went to the Krupp mansion.<sup>25</sup> I went all over the place — even to Berlin and stood on Hitler's bunker — pretty much in ruins, before it was covered up.

When I got back to this country, I thought, "Oh, gee, what am I going to do now?" I didn't know whether I wanted to go back to the Herald Tribune or not. I should have gone ahead with a book. I wrote a lot for the Washington papers here. After the breakup of a misguided affair, I married my old beau, James Free, James Stillman Free, who had been my colleague in newspaper work since even before I finished college. We worked for the Richmond Times-Dispatch. He had gone to Washington ahead of me. He got a job on the Washington Star, and then I came on up to Washington, beginning with Newsweek. And he then went — he was in the war, as I mentioned earlier. He worked for the Chicago Sun. In fact, after I was offered a job on the Chicago Sun by Rex Smith, my Newsweek editor who had become editor of the

---

<sup>25</sup> Krupp was Germany's greatest industrialist during both world wars.

Chicago Sun, and I put in some good words for Jim, so he ended up on the Chicago Sun as well. We were colleagues and we had a lot in common. He didn't have the Chinese experience. He didn't have the animal experience. But we had a lot of other interests in common. I was thirty-four years old; he was forty or forty-one. He was seven years older. Much to my surprise, I married him. I've never been sorry. We had a wonderful daughter, Elissa Blake Free.

I was exposed to a lot of different hard-edged experiences and conflicts. Due to Jim being from Alabama and me being a liberal — and he was, too — we ran headlong into the whole civil rights thing, which would be a tape in itself. He became a friend of U.S. Attorney General Bobby Kennedy's, right at the height of the goings-on, you might say, when they were burning the buses on the road to Anniston, Alabama. Everything was closed down at one crisis point. Jim became the pipeline, you might say, from the Alabama authorities to the Justice Department. Neither had wanted to speak to the other. Usually you don't do that when you're a newspaper person, but he did. A lot was at stake.

So he came out pretty well in the civil rights thing, I'd say, because the only thing you could do — the only solution — you couldn't be polarized with the rednecks forever, nor could you get the radical African-Americans in the saddle. Another civil war. There had to be a solution down the middle — cooperation between the races. And they ended up with that in the long run. There were many unsung brave white people, as well as black, in Alabama. That's what Jim was trying to do — make a place for moderation. It's just like with the animal situation. Maybe I shouldn't make these comparisons, but why not?. You get radicals on one side and you get the super-conservatives on the other, and you've got to come down the middle somehow or another. Nobody's really pleased, but in the long run it's the best thing.

So we married,<sup>26</sup> and I got my first dog of my own. I didn't have my baby until about five years later. My dog was named Chips. He was a Cairn terrier. My mother had had Cairn terriers, lots of them over the years. And they're the most wonderful little dogs ever. But that was, thank God, before the days of all those pet shops and puppy mills where you could pick them up very easily. But I met some people in the British Embassy who had Cairns. In other words, it was very difficult to find a Cairn terrier in 1950. And he was a wonderful little dog, very intelligent. I just loved him.

**Cantor:** What was his name?

**Free:** Chips.

**Cantor:** Oh, you said that. As in Mr. Chips?

**Free:** Yes. So he was a wheaten-colored blond — you know, biscuit color. In my family, we have had about five of them, and they're wonderful dogs. Toto in "The Wizard of Oz" was a black Cairn terrier. As you know, I have all these little dogs now.<sup>27</sup> I've always been crazy about little dogs, but I love the big ones, too.

---

<sup>26</sup> February 24, 1950, at St. John's Episcopal Church, Lafayette Square, Washington, DC.

<sup>27</sup> Two small terrier types, Shih-Tzu and poodle mix, Sweetheart and Tillie. Sweetheart was the name of King Lear's dog.

---



Anyway, so then those early years of the 1950s seemed rather bland. People are doing these retrospectives now about the 50s, with all those radio and TV ads and jingles about laundry soap — “Ring around the collar.” That’s when Ronald Reagan, I think, was getting on TV talking about — he was working for General Electric then, and he made commercials. I said, “Oh, my God, what a horrible, insincere man.” Now, I think he believed what he was talking about, that is, the script he was reading. He was doing a little politicizing, talking about conservative values, at the same time. So the 50s seemed rather bland. We even had a Rambler house. Everybody had a one-story Rambler in those years. Our first house was a precious little thing in upper Georgetown, right near Georgetown Hospital. But it was too small. We were next to a big wooded area called Archbold Glover Park, and I liked that a lot.

But I wasn’t doing a lot about animals at that time, although I had tried to get involved with the — I may have told you this before — with the Washington Animal Rescue League, which was the only one with a shelter. But that was a snob outfit. I went to the annual meeting about 1940, and they were very pleasant, but they never invited me back or asked me to be a volunteer. They did nothing because I was not a part of the inner snob circle. They never put anybody like me on their board, and they didn’t want any outspoken members.

**Cantor:** What sort of group was this?

**Free:** Oh, it’s a very elegant social, top-of-the-line social. That’s the only kind of people they wanted on their board — rich social people, and they left the running of the establishment to paid people who didn’t know much.

**Cantor:** Did they have a particular activity?

**Free:** They had a shelter and did rescues. I think on the rescue part, they were pretty good. I called the Rescue League several times to come and get lost dogs. I don’t think now they did very good euthanasia then. After my Richmond experience, I shouldn’t have been too trusting. Most people think if you send a dog or cat to the animal shelter wherever you lived, that was going to be off to the Elysian fields of heaven. What a damnable lie that often is. As I’ve said before, I think shelters, particularly in the past, were just hellholes. They put these dogs in cages at night. They had play yards in the daytime. I think they did the best they could. The few volunteers that had any kindness about them helped.

There was a woman here in Washington named Virginia Sargent who was an anti-vivisectionist and a vegetarian and animal rescuer, the kind that today looks a little ridiculous because she was always reciting sad little poems and quoting the scriptures — nothing but emotion, big emotion, which turns a lot of people off. Whereas the more sensible attitude — less emoting — makes a greater effect on the people who are not turned on to the subject. Miss Sargent had inherited money, and she spent all of it on animals, went through a fortune. I don’t know how big, but she once had a small shelter and she rescued more than she could handle. She was a saint in heaven and one of the people that we all should think of with a halo over her head in heaven but forgotten, absolutely forgotten.

---

**Cantor:** Virginia Sargent. And did she — at that time was she —

**Free:** She had her own little thing called the Animal Protective Association.

**Cantor:** So she wasn't running the Washington Animal Rescue League?

**Free:** No. She had nothing to do with that, but she came in there a lot and brought rescued animals in.

**Cantor:** And that was called the Animal Protective Association.

**Free:** Yes, something like that. In other words, [she] had her own little group and did a lot of their own rescues. She had a lot of ladies just like her. You know, that's the way people looked at humane societies often in early days, although there were some men with them. But most of them in this country, and in England too, were dominated with quote-unquote — they used to call them “little old ladies in tennis shoes.”

**Cantor:** I was going to ask if they actually all wore tennis shoes.

**Free:** I think that's just a canard. I never knew any who wore tennis shoes, but I've used the phrase myself. In other words, over-emotional little ladies that were poking their noses into things. But God bless them, every one of them, because they saved a lot of animals from atrocious suffering.

**Cantor:** Excuse me, what was the problem with the euthanasia? You mentioned they didn't do —

**Free:** I think they had been using carbon monoxide.

**Cantor:** From a vehicle?

**Free:** No, from a cylinder-tank. But they changed to the Euthanair, a decompression chamber. The Euthanair was recommended by the American Humane Association. The animals within the chamber were taken into a simulated high altitude and were supposed to drift off to sleep. Not so. Often the ear drums were ruptured and bleed.

**Cantor:** Does the Animal Rescue League still operate or exist?

**Free:** Yes. It's rich, rich, rich, and it gave me a big award about a couple of years ago, which is another story. Shall I go forward on it quickly? That was in 1997, about fifty-seven years after I attended that 1940-ish annual meeting I just described. Can you believe that?

**Cantor:** Sure.

**Free:** They didn't know me, except for one board member, Virginia Warren, who had heard about my animal work. But she hadn't known me in the 1940s! She had done some typing for

---

me. She called me on the phone and said, “We want to give you our Top Dog Humanitarian Award.” They had already given me one about twenty-five years before. I told her, but nobody remembered it — all new people. The former president has Alzheimer’s.<sup>28</sup> She gave me my first award. Of course, she didn’t remember. Unbelievable that I was still here. [Laughter].

When I made my acceptance speech for my award, I told about the bad things I had tried to stop in Washington and on the national level by blowing the whistle. Now, listen to this. I blew the whistle on them. I asked them to give more space and socialization to their penned-up dogs. Totally imprisoned.

It had become a no-kill shelter. Too many animals — I’d rather see the animals put to sleep painlessly than to be kept incarcerated in cells for weeks and months. And that’s exactly what they were doing. They had no play pens or yards like they had in the olden days in the other shelter. So I, right at that reception with, you might say, award in hand — I went up to board members and to the architect there. I said, “You have a nice shelter here, but you have no place for the dogs to run or play. And I see back there cards on the cages showing that some of them have been here nine or ten months and never gotten out.” So then I kept up my drumbeat for a long time, wrote to every member of the board, although I had told them in person. Then they all knew that I would blow the whistle in a big way, because that’s what I talked about in my acceptance speech, how I had gotten all of these things accomplished — or they thought I had — was by blowing the whistle. Now they were my targets.

So it took them a couple of years, and now they’ve got a couple of hundred thousand dollar landscaped yard and a fountain. They employ people to fraternize with the animals. It’s much, much — it’s a thousand percent better. But it still has its deficiencies, because don’t forget the dogs are still locked up in the pens a fair amount of the time. But I’ve told people to go down there to adopt. They have very good, healthy, well-immunized animals. When I went down recently for the grand opening of the recreation area —they invited me to that, of course. That’s when my son-in-law saw a little black and white kitten, among many, and adopted him and named him Mozart. Any animal you get from that place is going to have all the shots, in perfect condition. The other kitten we rescued from a trash dumpster and named him Vivaldi.<sup>29</sup> He has red-orange hair like real Vivaldi — some contrast in their origins.

Be that as it may, let’s get back to the olden days. This is much too discursive. We won’t get to anything substantive.

**Cantor:** One little thing on that: Did they acknowledge that their building had anything to do with your pushing them to build such a thing?

**Free:** In the ceremony? No. No. They really basically hated me. I came in there and told them what to do. And they couldn’t stand that — all ladies and gentlemen, with little knowledge of animals’ social needs. One thing, I told you they were snobs and all that, you know, very polite. And I could be very polite, too. No harsh words, lovely telephone conversations, lovely letters

---

<sup>28</sup> Betsy Kiernan gave me Humanitarian of the Year Award in 1970.

<sup>29</sup> The dumpster on Wolf Gap Road, Shenandoah County, Virginia, is a favorite drop-off for kittens. The county animal shelter will not take in cats and there are no private shelters.

---

back and forth, and everything on a very polite plane. But, then that day, several people came up and said, “You did this. You did this,” but they didn’t want to acknowledge it formally because I scared them into it. But they waited for some rich woman’s will to be probated and they took her money and built this place — spent too much, about \$200,000. It’s pretty nice, but I don’t think it’s commodious enough. I don’t think the animals stay out long enough. They put in a lot of expensive planting, then they say, “Oh, but animals keep scratching up the bushes.” What do they expect? But it’s an imperfect world. Progress was made.

But I’m getting too far away from those early days in Washington. The Washington Humane Society was established in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in 1870. It was long before this Washington Animal Rescue League, and it was a power in Washington in the olden days because Congress gave it a charter — the first and only Congressionally chartered animal society in the whole country. A member could, on seeing a cruelty, go get a police officer, and without swearing out a warrant or anything, the officer could arrest on the say-so of the member. So therefore, as years went past, they didn’t want many members. I guess they thought they’d be too slaphappy on getting people arrested, so they discouraged membership. I suppose the board feared suits for false arrests. You had to be proposed for membership with two seconders. Don’t talk to me about these people. Later on, I managed to change all that by engineering a coup d’état at an annual meeting. Another story.

Back to me and Washington. So therefore, while I was just sort of getting started out being married and I had my dog, we took some trips down to Alabama and up to Canada. I was not so young but youngish, married, doing all the things one does and had a cute house near Georgetown. It was kind of change after being in China and all that, all that hard newspaper work. It was kind of a change — and social, seeing people and doing things. But it really wasn’t what I wanted to be doing. I didn’t realize fully then that terrible animal experiments were being done close by at the Georgetown University Hospital. Dogs would escape. I found one and got a home for it.

Unbeknownst to me in 1951, a woman who’s about my age, Christine Stevens,<sup>30</sup> and her father, Dr. Robert Gesell — he and she established the tax-free Animal Welfare Institute because of his fury at the way the medical establishment had treated animals. They paid no attention to his attempts to reform lab animal treatment. He was a professor and chairman of the Department of Physiology at the University of Michigan Medical School in Ann Arbor. She never got over the fact of his rebuff and his dedication. She was one of those women who was really influenced by her father. So the Animal Welfare Institute is always out front. I feel that Dr. Gesell — I never saw him — was right there the whole time through his daughter. He died in the early 50s. She was in her early thirties. Therefore, she had a pitched battle against both the anti-vivisectionists and the scientific community, because she was going to continue her father’s work. A true moderate. And she did. Christine Stevens also established the Society for Animal Protective Legislation as a lobbying group. It is not tax-free. I’m getting too far ahead of myself.

The AWI became the second national group. The American Humane Association, which was really the only national humane group in the country — it was based in Denver. I think it

---

<sup>30</sup> Born 1917 in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Transcript of an interview with Stevens by Ann Cottrell Free attached.

had been in New York in the beginning. They had a lot of affiliates all over the United States, the local SPCAs [Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals]. The ASPCA [American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals] in New York was not generally considered a national group.

AHA's board was getting pretty stodgy and didn't want to do a thing to upset the apple cart when it came to laboratory animals. Its president, Robert Sellers, was not like that, but he died. So a dissident group made up of some actual anti-vivisectionists — a man named Oliver Evans, also Grace Conahan, Dr. Myra Babcock, Robert Chenowith — had a knock-down, drag-out fight against the old guard in 1954 at their annual meeting in Atlanta, Georgia. They broke away and established what they called the National Humane Society, which later they had to change to the Humane Society of the United States [HSUS] because the AHA threatened to sue them for using the term National Humane, because they had a magazine called National Humane Review. I never thought that Humane Society of the United States was a very good name because it's not catchy enough. People think it is part of the U.S. government.

Several other staff members resigned, too — Helen Jones, Larry Andrews. The editor of the National Review, among them, was a very brilliant man and ended up as the paid director. His heart was really in it. He had been a newspaper man and during the war had worked for Russian War Relief. In other words, he was a real liberal and a seeker of justice. It extended to animals. His name was Fred Myers. Fred was a real good writer, a smart, educated man. So he headed it up. And then I got to know him when they first established their small office here on 15<sup>th</sup> Street.

The first time I ever heard of HSUS — or National Humane Society — was after I became involved with the Humane Slaughter Bill. I had read a little squib in the newspaper, something about a humane slaughter bill in Congress.<sup>31</sup> I couldn't believe that because I had covered Capitol Hill, everything under the sun, as I've told you, for the WACs, the WAVES, the wartime restrictions, everything, and never been any animal thing to speak of. So I found out right away what it was. The first bill was put in by Hubert Humphrey; he was from Minnesota.<sup>32</sup> And a man named Mr. Norgood — Christian, I think — who worked for the AHA asked him to do so.<sup>33</sup> But he had also worked for a farm organization out in Wisconsin or Minnesota. He hated the way animals were treated in slaughterhouses and handled all the way through. So he was the moving spirit in getting Hubert Humphrey to enter into Congress the Humane Slaughter Bill, which probably was entered in about 1955, because the hearings were in '56 and bitterly fought, of course, by the meat packers who wore their own hats, like Swift and Company. Many have disappeared now — Morell, Swift and Company, Kingan — I knew them all — but under the big umbrella of the American Meat Institute.

---

<sup>31</sup> Pub. L. 85-765, U.S. Code Title 7 - Agriculture, Chapter 48 - Humane Methods of Livestock Slaughter, Aug. 27, 1958, amended 1978.

<sup>32</sup> Hubert H. Humphrey (1911-78), U.S. senator (D-Minn.), U.S. vice-president, and unsuccessful presidential candidate (1968).

<sup>33</sup> Christian Norgood, former secretary of agriculture for New York State and former commissioner of agriculture for Wisconsin; former professor of agriculture at the University of Wisconsin.

---

A man named Arthur Redmond from Seattle also helped to bring AHA into the battle. He had a film made of the slaughter of hogs with sound effects of screaming hogs. He showed it at AHA's 1954 annual meeting and to a congressional committee in 1956. I saw it. Horrible. Some people had to leave the room.

A man named Arthur Broadwin of the American Meat Institute floated a story, which got into the New York Times on March 16, 1956, implying that Fred Myers, having worked for Russian War Relief, was a member of the Communist Party. In other words, it was a scare tactic, especially for business-people — scared to death about everything. When you say “communism,” you had won the ball game. But Fred — it didn't stick. Fred had worked for Russian War Relief and was a member of the liberal American Newspaper Guild. I don't think he had ever belonged to any of those communist cells.

So that was a bitterly fought legislative battle which got me into the middle of it by writing tons of articles. By that time, I was writing for the Washington Star and also I got into the syndicate world, which was — we didn't have any TV then, so the best outlet would be to get syndicated columns. The North American Newspaper Alliance was a great refuge or outlet for writers like me and a lot of others just like me who didn't have a home-based paper. But you could sell it special articles. But you'd get to be a regular. It was almost the same as being on the Star, except for benefits. They didn't pay much either. Anyhow, it gave you an entrée anywhere, and for me it was wonderful. Most of the people who wrote for NANA — Mrs. [Eleanor] Roosevelt even did it — big circulation by syndicate member papers. It gave you a terrific entrée and it was a well-regarded syndicate.

I wrote a lot of humane slaughter articles, and I tilted in favor of the animals. I wrote one about women headlined “Heart Versus the Purse,” or something like that.<sup>34</sup> I interviewed a lot of women on how they felt about buying meat that had been killed in agony and all that.

So then I was involved with a friend of mine who helped to get some of the churches to come in behind it. The Methodists were very good. Methodists have always been good. [John] Wesley, who established the Methodist [Church] — he was a vegetarian. They've always been very liberal, the Methodists.

But the big stumbling block was the very, very right-wing conservative kosher. They fought the bill. But finally it was resolved that — and they probably were right, because I've seen kosher slaughter — that if done properly, the animal at the moment of death is a hundred percent better off — if you can say a hundred percent. It's better than being hit in the head until knocked unconscious. Slow death and messy. I made myself see kosher slaughter. I went over to a place at Linden, New Jersey, the killing ground for Manhattan, New Jersey slaughterhouses. Kosher beef is only the forequarter, I believe. The veins are pulled out. One part of the animal is kosher and the other isn't, and the non-kosher part would go to the gentile restaurants. [Laughter]. Anyhow, what happens — I'll describe kosher slaughter, because I wonder how many people have seen it. Shall I do it?

**Cantor:** Sure.

---

<sup>34</sup> Washington Sunday Star, August 3, 1958.

**Free:** The cattle file in along a chute like a hallway, one behind the other. I didn't see any panic or fright because they've been unloaded outside. How long they had been there sometimes would vary. One would follow the other. Then when they would get up to the actual place, the shochet is waiting, the rabbi who does the killing. He is obligated by his faith, and he takes it very seriously. He gets sort of — he got sworn in. He's a religious man. His knives have to be super sharp, and he says a little prayer, and he washes off the knife. Two buckets are waiting — one bucket for blood they want to keep, and the other bucket of blood is sold later for fertilizer. A lot of fertilizer, you know, has blood in it. Then the animals — I remember them. I stood right there, right there. I didn't see a great deal of fear, not as much as I did in a regular slaughterhouse.

This is something that is interesting, and it's certainly a part of history — use of a yoke. This was a new method of getting the animal's neck extended so the shochet can cut the throat more easily. The ASPCA put money into developing. This yoke would come down like two arms over the head and neck. And it extends the neck back so the rabbi can take his sharp knife and cut the throat from ear to ear. The whole idea is to cut the carotid artery. Once you cut that carotid artery, the animal is unconscious. When they are shackled and hoisted, there is much struggling, bellowing, and often hips and legs are broken before the rabbi cuts the throat.

I watched this so closely; I stood right there. The animal — his eyes would go back in his head right away at that moment of death. That, to me, must have been the moment of death when the eyes would go back.

**Cantor:** Why did the kosher slaughter people oppose the Humane Slaughter Law? Would it have changed their practices?

**Free:** They thought the old method of shackling and hoisting was faster. They would make less money by using the slower ASPCA yokes. They also hated a humane slaughter law, fearing outlawing of kosher slaughter and beginning of anti-Semitism. Sometimes the leg would be broken or disjointed. Terrible. The rabbi would go down the line, cutting the throats of those conscious animals. Governor, then Senator, [Herbert] Lehman and Dick Neuberger, a good friend of mine, were Jewish. They worked on getting a compromise on this thing. I probably don't have every detail right up front now, but the whole idea was that kosher slaughter could go ahead if done properly. I don't know how many use the ASPCA yoke. Most shackle and hoist. Guess where most of the kosher slaughterhouses are today. Out in the far west like Colorado and Idaho. A lot of those rabbis had gone out there. I don't think they've been very happy out in the middle west. It's certainly not like New York. [Laughter].

**Cantor:** A question. Right before you explained the kosher slaughter, you mentioned that you wrote a lot of articles about slaughter. Did they get a lot of letters to the editor?

**Free:** Yes. I got some. When I would write them — I'll append to this some of the articles.

**Cantor:** Was there a sense that the public —

---

**Free:** The public — they got pretty much interested in it.

**Cantor:** Did they?

**Free:** Yes. And a lot of people did say they wished they could have labeled meat, “humanely-slaughtered meat.” Then one woman came and testified before Congress that she couldn’t bear to tell her children how meat was killed, animals were killed. She said, “We’ve got to have humane slaughter.”

But the delaying proposition there was the meat packers wanted to have — it’s an old trick to delay things — to have a study bill. It finally squeezed through with very few votes and went on to the White House eventually — I mean, not eventually but pretty soon. It went through both houses and was sent to the White House.

But the best contribution I could make was to see that the bill was enacted into law, which meant one thing — President [Dwight D.] Eisenhower’s signature. He delayed and he delayed. This was the end of the session of Congress in 1958, I guess, that session. The strategy there would have been — from the opponents of it — to let it die. If it dies without the signature at the end of the session of Congress, that is called a pocket veto. Not many people are aware of that. You just let it die. You don’t veto it. You just do nothing, which means you’ve got to start all over again next session. That would give opponents a chance to mobilize their forces against it again for another Congress. You’ve got to wait and go through the whole darn thing again. You probably have to have hearings again. They’d find a way to stop it.

So there it all was in Ike’s lap. I guess letters were going to him and everything on both sides. The pressure must have been pretty intense on Eisenhower. But I had a notion: How can we smoke him out in a public way? You don’t want to come out and say, “I’m against it.” He had to either let it be a pocket veto or be for it. So I didn’t go — I was not a regular at the press conferences at the White House. If I had been there, he wouldn’t have called on me; Eisenhower didn’t know me. The main thing was to get a — as most people who look at TV now know — you have those regulars. The wire services are always called on and two or three veterans. So I got a hold of the head of the United Press whose wife was a friend, and she was a newspaper person too and very sympathetic to this, and explained to them everything that was going on, what I’ve just told you. His name was Julius Frandsen. He was head of the UP, United Press, bureau here. He got his United Press man to ask the question.

I got the transcript from the Dwight Eisenhower Library a few years ago, and I thought I’d write all this up in a book.<sup>35</sup> “Mr. President, you only have a few more hours.” It was that evening. The pocket veto would have been at midnight, and this press conference was that afternoon — only a few hours, you see. So Eisenhower said, “Oh, is this the day?” In other words, he had been briefed. I’ve got the whole text. Then he didn’t say yes, he didn’t say no, only, “Oh, is this the day? I have to look into that. I’ll have to look into that.” So the press conference was over.

---

<sup>35</sup> Transcript of press conference is dated August 20, 1958.



To set the scene a little bit more, I was a very good friend of a woman named Anne Wheaton, who was the press spokesman at the White House.

*[End Tape 3, Side A; Begin Tape 3, Side B]*

**Free:** This friend, Anne Wheaton, had been a newspaper woman and was a member of the Women's National Press Club, as was I. Anne had a very important job. She was the first woman press secretary, that is, assistant press secretary, to Eisenhower. I told Anne all about this. Of course, she couldn't be partisan. She had no influence on her boss. But I kept calling her every hour almost, "Has he signed it? What's going on? Anne, has he signed it?" I was probably the only one in the humane field who had such an entrée to the White House.

See, this is the thing: both the problem and the benefit. I was always wearing two hats. I was the journalist writing stories all about it. You're not supposed to be partisan, but I was, and had that entrée right into the president's office and the idea of having that question asked at the press conference to remind him in public. He would not have signed it. It would have just died. And no reporters would have paid any attention to it because they weren't very high on the subject, except like this UP man I had primed to do it. I asked one or two other people; they turned me down. Fortunately, I had the brainstorm to get this wire service bureau chief to assign his man. The bureau chief was Julius Frandsen; the reporter was Dayton Moore.

So I invited Helen Jones out to my house to have dinner with me that night, because she had been really terrific in getting this bill through Congress. She had been to a lot of slaughterhouses and all that. She, at that time — she had been with AHA in the beginning. She was one of the people that left with Fred Myers, and she was still with HSUS. Later she went over and established her own group, the National Catholic Society for Animal Welfare. She was a beautiful woman, very frail and gentle and nice. I liked her. She changed a good bit as time went on. A lot of people do as life buffets them around. Later she became an alcoholic and died of a fire in her house in 1998. Very sad.

We sat there and just sort of waited for the phone to ring. Finally, Anne Wheaton telephoned me. She said, "Ann, this is Anne. He signed it at 6:20." I grabbed Helen Jones and hugged her and she hugged me. Then we all got on the phone and called Christine and Fred Myers, everybody, because we had it right from the horse's mouth. So that was that. But I think that getting that question asked probably smoked him out. Later I had a very nice note from Christine, thanking me for putting Eisenhower on the spot.<sup>36</sup> She was generous in her remarks, that the "host of good things" I did for the bill was "the reason the bill passed."

**Cantor:** That must have been a really exciting victory. That affects a lot of animals.

**Free:** Well, it gave the animals a better death, not a better life especially, but that's the whole thing. Now, I should give a little parentheses side bar right now. Years later, up here in Washington at one of these wonderful rallies that the animal rights people had in the 1980s —

---

<sup>36</sup> Note from Christine Stevens attached. Ann Cottrell Free's article on Stevens and the humane slaughter bill in the 1956 Congressional Record also attached.

they were very good; I wish they still had them. I'll go into that later when I get into the next segment. They're very useful.

Helen Jones was one of the speakers. She was up on the platform. I hadn't seen anything of her for years, really, because she had moved to Pennsylvania — Clarks Summit, Pennsylvania — and renamed her Catholic organization to International Society for Animal Rights. I'll flashback a little bit. It was through her that I went over to Cambridge University to that wonderful animal rights conference in the 1970s, I guess it was. Everybody was there. That was a definitive conference — Peter Singer and all these British animal people that I had never heard of but had been taking a leading role.

Then years later at this conference here in Washington, she was at the microphone. I can't give you the sequence of what she was saying, but she said that she was sorry that she had ever been in favor of the Humane Slaughter Act. I was shocked. Then I got up on my feet, not accepting her new rationale: that it's better to have complete abolition — that's in vivisection and slaughter and all that — better to have complete victory. But I believed that in the meantime, thousands and millions of animals are killed. You wait forever while hell freezes over. I said in front of everybody, "Oh, Helen, you worked so hard for that bill. I remember the night it was signed." That was that.

But I could see she stayed a rabid — I hate to use that term — unflinching abolitionist on that kind of thing. We never would have gotten the Humane Slaughter Law. It may not be the best in the world, God knows, because it's not policed properly. But it's not the slaughter in olden days. I don't know how long it would have gone on — this sledgehammer knocking the beef cattle off their feet. Then they might — I think they probably eventually would have gone on to the captive-bolt pistol without any help from the legislative, because that works. Now they have a pneumatic pistol. You put it right up against the animal's head and wham — down immediate, absolutely immediate. It's a miracle. Well, not a miracle, miracle of death. But they're not dead. They're knocked out so bad that they fall over. They're already shackled. Then they pull them up, and then they take move down this little trolley pulley. That's when they cut the throats and they bleed them out. I mean, that's today's way. I have seen it. It works.

I've never been happy — can't be happy on that subject at all — of the way they kill pigs. We thought — Christine thought, and so did a lot of others like Mr. Norgood and some establishment animal people, that the big solution was going to be the carbon dioxide tunnel where the pigs would come in on a conveyor. Then carbon dioxide would knock them out and they'd just ride along flat on the conveyor. As they went past the executioner, their throats would be cut but they would be unconscious. Apparently, it didn't work out because I think it was too expensive. Hormel put it in first, the same Hormel who's now the Luxembourg ambassador. I don't know whether he had anything to do with kind killing of his pigs on which he built his fortune. [Laughter]. Hormel — that's where he got his money, off of dead pigs especially.

Anyway, I've never been happy about that, because today they use, under Humane Slaughter, two tongs, you might say, cathodes — I don't know what the word would be —

---

placed on each side of the head. It's an electric shock. I've seen that, but I'm not up-to-date on it. But it's a horrible thing. They come up this chute going up an incline, and the man's standing there. He has these tongs, places them on both sides of the head to knock them out. The electroshock treatment — I'll bet you've read about that — will knock you out. But in this case, it doesn't always do that because the man can miss. I saw when I observed, the wetness of the eye making a spark. In other words, I don't think it's always done properly. I don't know. But if they got up and ran away, they wouldn't be able to cut their throats. You've got to knock them out to cut their throats.

Here I was, a child, in my other interview with you, seeing them being hung up with their throats cut, as they're doing it still today out in the country, I guess — the screaming. The screaming amongst pigs in the slaughterhouse is so awful. I cry, as you can see, when I think about it, because a lot of them come from the same family, the same barns, and they group together when they're unloaded. They find each other and they group together. And they're crying out to each other, just like us, no difference. A pig — the way they shriek is just so awful. I could never eat any pork for \$1 million ever again, whereas I've always said I thought that the beef cattle had an easier death than the pigs. And the poor little lambs and sheep — oh, Jesus. A lot of decapitation on that.

**Cantor:** Well, back around the time when the Humane Slaughter Bill was being debated, was it considered important to be vegetarian?

**Free:** No. No, nobody talked about that. It never came up.

**Cantor:** It was a matter of making —

**Free:** I don't think the vegetarians — see, they didn't testify because they weren't going to eat meat anyhow, and indirectly, they could find themselves condoning slaughter. It's the same way as Helen Jones. Later she didn't want humane slaughter because we shouldn't eat meat anyway. You know, abolition all the way across the board, let everybody be a vegetarian.

Anyway, I feel so awful for the pigs — of course, the pigs — the lamb, the sheep. And the most tragic thing that I've seen in many a year — and you can see it anytime you want to at the end of a state or county fair when the lambs and sheep have won their blue ribbons and so on. Then it's Saturday night when everything is closing down. Waiting outside there, outside the ring where they give them their blue ribbons, the slaughterhouse trucks wait. I watched that and took pictures up in Shenandoah County in September 1989 at the county fair, and it was raining. The ladder — whatever you want to call it — that goes up, they had to climb up, and it was slippery. They'd push them up there and they're still some of them — their still beautiful white wool was getting dirty from the mud. The kids had taken the prize ribbons home. The poor lambs — but, oh, they had never been treated like that. They had come right from the loving arms of their children, and they're pushed up this ramp by men in the rain into the truck. And one ramp had a hole in it. Thank God none of them got their legs broken.

But that was, to me — that is, to me, the most criminal hypocrisy in the animal world. It is on the level of some of the worst atrocities we've ever had in the animal-man relationship,

---

especially involving children, because it's a — what would you call it? It's a blasphemy against the human feelings and the human heart, and it's all for one thing — money. And then the next week or so their pictures appear in the county newspapers. I've got one page upstairs right now, because this is that time of the year — pictures of the kids with their blue ribbon lambs and captions telling how they were sold to such-and-such a restaurant for so much a pound, and the child just standing there beaming.

**Cantor:** Did the children see the animals being loaded onto the trucks?

**Free:** No, they had gone. No. Would this be a good time to bring in my altercation, or my appearance with the 4-H children at a county fair?

**Cantor:** Of course, yes.

**Free:** Well, it happened — tying it together not chronologically but subject-wise. This is jumping ahead to 1972 or '73. I went to the county fair, Montgomery County. I went there twice. [Tape interruption.]

I talked to children there about their animals in the 4-H barn. I said to them — they had names for the animals and little poems about them. They gave them their own last names and “I live at such-and-such a farm,” all that, and had little stories about them. These were mainly calves, I think, big calves. So I said to the children, “Don't you feel badly about them going off, being sold, and do you know what they're going to do to them?” It's interesting. They had a kind of a block about death. I said, “Do you know how they're going to die?” And I told them. It hadn't been so long since the Humane Slaughter Bill had been passed, so I was quite familiar with everything about slaughter.

I felt strongly about the subject because I had also been to — one time when they were giving awards I saw a child weeping as he walked around the ring with his prize-winning steer that he had raised. He knew he would be dead soon. So, to me, this is the most psychologically damaging thing any parent adult can do to any young person, is to take a — it's like throwing black ink on a white soul, a white sheep.

So I talked to these children. I don't remember exactly what I said. But later, the head of the fair wrote a letter to the head of the Montgomery County Humane Society. I was a board member. This is quite interesting. I was a board member. And he wrote to the executive director. I'll tell you about her later. We ended up kind of getting her off the board. This is when everything was supposedly pretty good at the humane society in Montgomery County, which is one of the largest, richest counties in the United States almost. He wrote to her and said that Mrs. Free had been out there. I think he said that I was saying that I was with the Montgomery County Humane Society.

But here he says, and I read: “We have received complaints from several angry parents about Mrs. Free's tirades in the barn that left the children in tears. We have supporting statements from three youngsters, reporting that Mrs. Free graphically but inaccurately portrayed how their animal entries would be brutally slaughtered after our annual 4-H Beef and Sheep Sale.

---

These young people are farm-bred. They know where meat comes from. They know it even as their entries are sold at auction. But they do not have to be told that their steers will be hoisted by one leg, bled, and skinned in the brutally, highly imaginative fashion described by Mrs. Free. We trust that no further action” — this is to the head of the humane society, mind you — “we trust there will be no further action on the part of the Montgomery Fair Board” and blah, blah, blah.

Then while I was there at the fair — and the midway, as he makes reference to it then, I saw a huge — like an oversized, huge, huge checkerboard where people could — for chances — throw coins on a number. You might win the puppy that was lying out on this huge board, a little poodle puppy, dead sleep — sick, I guess. If you hit the right number, you got a puppy. It was very hot and the poodle puppy was comatose. No shade. So I thought that the carnival — that these animals should fall under the exhibit section of the Animal Welfare Act — carnivals, games of chance with animals used in them. On the phone I argued with the Department of Agriculture over this. I guess I went in there to talk to the people at the fair and all that. They didn’t want to let me use their phone. He makes some mention of that, too. So therefore, I’ll go onto something else.

Let me tell you about this woman I like a lot — she’s autistic. You know what that is. Her name is Temple Grandin.<sup>37</sup> Temple is a very smart person. She got her Ph.D. not long ago, but she only knows one subject — animal handling. She designs the proper kind of stalls and slaughter chutes and aids for slaughterhouses and so on. And Temple has always been doing that. She wrote an article that she had designed a way that the animals who go to slaughter wouldn’t be so frightened.<sup>38</sup> She called it “Stairway to Heaven.” Baloney. You know what I think of that. But I got to know Temple pretty well. She is so strange and has empathy of an unusual kind.

But if you’ve ever known any autistic people, you can never get them to change the subject. They can’t. That’s the nature of their condition. And I’ve known several. They can’t easily switch gears over to something else, can’t relate to other things. So she’s made quite a name for herself. She’s done a good job so far as it goes. But she and I took a trip around the middle west, and I took her to a place where they designed equipment for slaughterhouses. She worked with them, and she finally developed something that’s better for the sheep. So, you can see, I’ve had my finger in a few pies.

**Cantor:** When did you first know Temple Grandin?

**Free:** She called me up, I think, because I was writing about this stuff. I was working on a book about animals raised for meat. You’ve heard of Temple?

**Cantor:** Yes.

**Free:** Well, she’s only on one subject. She’s very nice. That’s all I can say. And a man who’s out there at the — oh dear, I can’t remember the college. Oh, yes, his name is Stanley Curtis at

---

<sup>37</sup> She is featured in Oliver Sacks, *An Anthropologist on Mars: Seven Paradoxical Tales* (New York, Knopf, 1995).

<sup>38</sup> *National Humane Review* (January 1976), pp. 6-9.

---

the University of Illinois — that's the place — in the livestock department, animal science section. He's the one who helped her get her Ph.D.

**Cantor:** So the Humane Slaughter Act passed, barely missed a pocket veto. Did it cause any kind of coming together of animal protection people?

**Free:** They all took an interest in the plight of wild horses. Wedged in between the laboratory animals and the slaughter was another issue I wrote about and had taken a part in, which persists to this day in various forms. I mean, I can't even keep up with it now — the wild horses of the west which were rounded up by airplanes and trucks. They would put — they would lasso them and then drag them in with heavy automobile tires behind them until they tired out. Then they'd take them to slaughter, not to be — like to do today, sold by the Bureau of Land Management, tamed and ridden and all that — but for dog food. I remember when I was feeding Mr. Chips, the food that you could get in the supermarket frozen compartment then that you don't see today. I used to feed him horse meat. That's my blind spot, wasn't it, just like once wearing the furs — the blind spot. I fed my dog horse meat. You feed the dog canned dog food now, it's beef, lamb, chicken, and I don't eat beef or lamb or any animal. So everything is relative.

So Velma Johnson was their savior. She was from the west, Utah. And I had heard about her in advance, and I wrote a real big article in the Washington Star with a five-column streamer on it.<sup>39</sup> I said that a wild horse drama, horse dramas, the curtain is going up — I used a lot of western terms. We became good friends. I kept writing about her and went to the hearings. I couldn't testify because I didn't know anything firsthand about the subject. [Laughter]. But my articles were all put in the Congressional Record in the hearings. So Velma got her congressman to go for that bill. Then they stopped that.

And it might be of interest to anybody who's listening twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, a hundred years from now — there was a movie made with Clark Gable and Marilyn Monroe called "The Misfits." It's about a man who hunted wild horses out there in the west from a plane. I'd like to see that again because I don't remember the details. But that was the inspiration — "Misfits." Two stars — two movie stars, not two stars in rating excellence. [Laughter].

By that time, the next thing on the program — and let's take a break. [Tape interruption.]

**Cantor:** Now at the end of the 1950s, I think — if I'm not mistaken it was '59 — you came upon some beagles in an FDA basement.

**Free:** Yes. I didn't just come upon them. I was at a scientific conference of some sort to do with veterinarians. A woman came up to me. She didn't know who I was; she thought I was somebody else. She may have thought I was with an organization called WARDS [Working for Animals used in Research, Drugs, and Surgery]. But anyhow, she said, "In the basement of the south building of the Agriculture Department," which is on Independence Avenue, just a stone's throw from the White House and the Washington Monument. She said, "In the basement" — it's actually a sub-basement — "the Food and Drug Administration, which is using those quarters,

---

<sup>39</sup> "Congress Eyes Wild Horses' Last Stand," Washington (Sunday) Star (July 12, 1959), attached.

has got hundreds and hundreds of dogs in cages and they're using them for test animals." She said, "It's horrible." I said, "How do you know?" She said, "I'm a scientist and I've worked there a lot. I have complained. No one cares. Is there anything that anybody can do?"

I said to her right off, "I have to see them before I can do anything." I think I knew who to call. And I said — she gave me her name, and I said, "You can talk all you want to me. I'll never reveal your name." I didn't want to get her in trouble. I don't remember it to this day. I didn't want to know in case I was quizzed at any point. Then you can't commit perjury, like if it went to a Congressional hearing or something. I said, "I'm going to conveniently forget your name. I'm just going to go see them." So I called the Food and Drug Administration because, after all, I was a member of the press. That's why being a journalist and having credentials and being listed in the Congressional Directory, representing a couple of newspapers — nobody can top that for giving you the entrée and the credentials, which I had.

So I said to the FDA official in charge, Dr. Curtis, "I hear you have a lot of test animals in the sub-basement of the Agriculture building. I'd like very much to see them." He hemmed and hawed. Then he said, "Okay." So I went to the building and he took me down there into the sub-basement. It's a beautiful building, with paneled elevators. We went down into the depths of this place. There in the hallways and big rooms of the large hall were rooms filled with cages, two-tiered deep, sometimes three, filled with dogs — beagles. And the cacophony of their barking and screaming just took my breath away. They were so glad to see somebody. You know, they're so affectionate — beagle dogs are anyway. They were shrieking.

The bizarre thing was they were different colors, like red and orange and so on, because they were testing dyes, stuff put in their food, colors that are used on things such as lipstick and jellybeans, to see how toxic they would be. I went over to them, of course, and put my hands up to the grill. It just broke my heart. They licked my fingers, barked, screamed, yelped in joy. Then one or two kept their heads down, drooping, like they had given up hope. Then on the grid of some of the cages, which were steel and don't usually show wear and tear, you could see their lonely horrible worn-down circular path in the cage. Stir crazy. They had been there for so long, some for seven years. Put in as puppies, three months old. They never got any exercise. They were imprisoned in small cages not much bigger than thirty-six by forty [inches]. They were probably taken out once in a while to be weighed, but there was no place to take them for walks right in the heart of the city in a sub-basement — complete dungeon of medieval type. They couldn't let them run in halls because they might urinate and defecate where people work.

I said, "This is horrible." Then Dr. Curtis, who was in charge, said, "We're getting a new building." "That's wonderful," I said, "You can build nice big quarters for the dogs." He said, "We hadn't planned to. We're going to move them, cages and all."

So then later I did two things. I got on the phone and called Helen Jones, Christine Stevens, and Fred Myers. Helen Jones had left HSUS and established the National Catholic Society for Animal Welfare. They were the only ones to call. That was the humane movement at that time. I didn't call AHA. They were not worth ten cents on lab animals at that time. They're better now. So they trooped over there (to the Agriculture Department) individually. They saw the same thing I saw — horrifying.

---

Then later one early morning I went to the building unescorted and took the elevator down and went down the hall to a small room. And then I saw in a cage a dead beagle, thin as could be, rigid, quite dead, and a sign on the cage, "Do Not Feed." That dog was a victim of LD50.<sup>40</sup> They had just been giving it so much of the colors until he died. An unspeakable death, I am sure. Then they were going to examine him, I guess, to see what the colors did, what he died from except starvation. Had one of the dyes caused his death? Morons.

When I came home — my mother was visiting then — I sat down at the kitchen table and wept. I said, "Mom, I've got to do something. I've got to get these animals out." That strengthened my resolve, and she was very sympathetic, too.

So then another fast forward. Another step was, how was I going to get them out? I don't know whether I wrote letters right then or not. The sequence I can't quite recall. But then I realized that since they were going to have this new building, that the only recourse I had was to stress better quarters in a new place. Letters did go to the top people in the FDA and they stuck to their guns about the new building. So we had something to fasten onto. "You can't cage the dogs in the new building," was our battle cry.

That's when I went to Senator Lister Hill of Alabama, who was the chairman of the key committees dealing with the Food and Drug Administration. It was part of the Department of Health and Education and Welfare, called HEW.<sup>41</sup> In other words, he was the man, you might say, who held the key to the cages of animals — nearly all of the laboratory animals in the whole country, that is, labs getting funding from the U.S. government. That was nearly all. So the reason Lister Hill received me so cordially — this is where you have to do things like this. I was not supposed to lobby, but I guess going to see a congressman, although I wasn't paid, to ask him to do something, might be called lobbying, although news correspondents, members of congressional galleries, were not supposed to do this sort of thing. But I was a citizen first.

So I told him the whole story. He said, "Well, the best thing to do is to get all your people to write letters to everybody — congressmen, newspaper editors." He said, "I can't take the lead on this on my own. I've got to look like I'm a victim of pressure from outside." He laughed and said, "You know anybody in Alabama?" I said, "I'll get everybody in Alabama who's humane to write letters." So they wrote letters to him. [Laughter]. But then he could say, "Look at all my constituents." He was very involved with the scientific community and was mainly responsible for the establishment and growth of the National Institutes of Health. Constituent pressure could get him off the hook with scientific lobbyists, whom he liked. He was their darling.

I got involved in some horrible things in Alabama. When we went down to visit my husband's mother, I was always putting my nose into everything. So I got the Alabama Federation of Humane Societies and the Birmingham and the Montgomery societies and then all the national societies, you know, we had just mentioned. There weren't very many. Then I had

---

<sup>40</sup> LD50 means that fifty percent of the animals fed a substance must die to show the substance is toxic; LD stands for lethal dose.

<sup>41</sup> Today much of HEW is part of the Department of Health and Human Services, HHS.

---



a friend of mine [who] wrote a letter to the editor of the New York Times. She was the head of Defenders of Wildlife. Anyway, [she] wrote a letter to the New York Times and talked about the beagles. That stimulated letters from people in New York and Connecticut.

So letters were coming in every which way and were building up a head of steam so that Lister Hill could say, “Look what all these people are doing to me! I’ve got to have a hearing.” He said, “Food and Drug Administration is not going to ask me for the money. I’m going to handle it in a roundabout way. There’s a lot of pressure on me and so on about this animal situation. Are you going to have a proper facility for them?” That’s the way it worked out at the hearing. It was a charade, but it worked. Finally, FDA requested the funding for a new facility.

We found a place — I say “we,” because then the FDA people conferred with me all the time — but finding a place that would be good was not all that easy. They checked everything with me all the time. Someone said, “What about out at Beltsville?” I said, “I think that would be ideal.” So they built this enormous place and had laboratories for the humans, too. Then I went through all this to-do with these planners about the kind of indoor-outdoor runs and the exact sizes. Then they said, “We cannot have the animals touching each other, fraternizing, because there might be cross-germination of any disease or so on.” I said, “You’re only testing minor things.” So I did all I could and we got really good quarters for them.<sup>42</sup>

Finally they built their building at Beltsville. I went with the FDA kennel men in trucks to take the dogs out there. I wrote a NANA article.<sup>43</sup> Right now let me read you the first lines of it. This dog, the first one I watched, was taken from his cage. He trembled. He had never been on a flat surface like a floor before. At first, he wouldn’t move. And I paraphrased Peter Pan — Peter Pan, “I can fly, I can fly, I can fly.” This beagle put his feet down on the floor — “I can walk, I can walk, I can walk. Hey, I can run.” That’s the way I began it.

**Cantor:** Great. Were other articles written about this by other people?

**Free:** Yes. They were written — oh, lots. All the humane organizations had articles. I’ve compressed a couple of years into a minute.

**Cantor:** Yes. How long did this go on for?

**Free:** Two or three years, it seemed to me, because by the time we mounted the fight, got the money, got the place built — all that took a while.

**Cantor:** Then did other people cover what you did? Did the New York Times or Time magazine or anyone write about what was going on?

**Free:** I didn’t want to publicize it much, because when the word gets out that they’re spending all that money for dogs, that doesn’t go over. Taxpayer money for a bunch of hounds? No way. One of the worst was by today’s best-selling novelist, Tom Wolfe. He was working as a young

---

<sup>42</sup> The USDA maintained the Agricultural Experimental Station, a huge agricultural facility a few miles outside of Washington. It contained buildings for all kinds of livestock that they were studying.

<sup>43</sup> Baltimore Evening Sun (February 21, 1964), syndicated by NANA, attached.

---

reporter on the Washington Post then, and I admired his work — a very wide-ranging and clever fellow. But he wrote a nasty one along that line about high-living for dogs. You know, sort of the grand hotel, Waldorf-Astoria, for dogs, the proposed facility.

No, I did not want too much publicity because I knew it could be a boomerang — “dogs living it up.” And I might say here parenthetically that often it was not a good idea to publicize plights of animals in dog pounds because then that only strengthened the hand of the animal users, the medical community. “Oh, all those dogs in the dog pound, don’t put them to sleep. We want them.” Pound seizure was raging, you know, in many states. So it often was better to have a very low profile because you couldn’t accomplish anything if the sword was turned against you. If you tried to help caged lab dogs, people would think they were pampered.

**Cantor:** Who helped with this? Did the people you said you called?

**Free:** Yes, all those humane people.

**Cantor:** They all helped.

**Free:** Yes. They all — they publicized it in their publications and got people to write letters. I was calling the signals because Hill — see, it was the scenario. He said, “I can’t do it unless I get a lot of pressure.” I said, “No problem.” [Laughter]. I mobilized the humane societies to alert their members to write Senator Hill and FDA. They did so — hundreds, many hundreds.

I might say here that I talked to everybody about it. This woman called me up one day in 1959 — I think that was the date. She said, “I’m Rachel Carson.”<sup>44</sup> I was thrilled. I was dumbfounded, because I had admired her Sea Around Us so much. She said, “I’m writing a book on pesticides and herbicides and poisons like that, and I hear that you — from a friend — that you knew about a woman who had fallen in some herbicides and she became very ill.” I had told a friend — that’s true — of Rachel’s about such an incident. I didn’t know the woman, but I had heard about it. So I said, “Well, I’ll try to find out about her.” Then that was the beginning of setting up a friendship.

In the course of that conversation or subsequent ones, she told me not only about what she was doing — see, I had never heard — I mean, I know about DDT — but chlordane, malathion, all of them. She told me all about the organic phosphates, the chlorinated hydrocarbons. Of course, she knew all about it. I didn’t know anything. I resolved right then I would help her all I could, and I did help her. I’ll tell you about that in a minute.

But I thought maybe she can help me. [Laughter]. *Quid pro quo*. Because I had a feeling she cared a lot about animals, and she did. She was just crazy about animals, cats especially. She was an admirer of Albert Schweitzer,<sup>45</sup> as was I, and we both got the Albert

---

<sup>44</sup> Rachel Carson (1907-64), author of The Sea Around Us: Drawings by Katherine L. Howe (London: Oxford University Press, 1951).

<sup>45</sup> Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965), Alsace-born theologian, musician, philosopher, and medical missionary, developer of the ethical principle “reverence for life.” He won the Nobel prize for peace in 1952.

---

Schweitzer medal, Carson in 1962 and I in 1963.<sup>46</sup> He was our mentor. So I said to her what I just told you a moment ago about these dogs in the basement of the Food and Drug Administration. Well, she was kind of involved with, you know, FDA and pesticides and all that stuff. She said, “I will write to George Larrick, the FDA administrator, immediately.” She did, and he knew her. She was famous, you see, and that didn’t hurt one bit. So she was another recruit on my side. We’ll talk further about Rachel Carson later, but that was the beginning.

That’s when — once again, although I had to swallow my ideas a lot, anything about Alabama at that time, I learned a lot about their misuse of pesticides down there. I gave Rachel a great deal of material about the use of dieldrin on White Fringe Beetles and so on and put her in touch with people involved in that field, plus the use of heptaclor against fire ants. That wasn’t wasted time. She and I became pretty good friends.

**Cantor:** So she wrote to the FDA?

**Free:** Yes, complaining about the beagles.

**Cantor:** Because of her book on the ocean, the sea, was she pretty well-known to that person at the FDA?

**Free:** She was well-known even then — The Sea Around Us. Obviously, she had contacts at FDA.

**Cantor:** Did the other animal people know her, know about her book?

**Free:** Oh, yes. That’s when Christine got to know her indirectly through me, you see, and she wrote an introduction to one of Christine’s books on children and laboratory animals and use of animals in science. I don’t think the other humane people knew her, because I wasn’t on real close terms that way with Fred Myers. See, it was just a handful of us, only a few. The wonderful thing then was that most everybody worked for free from conviction, although Fred Myers was paid and I guess Helen, too. But they were all in this, not for money or career or prestige, but because they couldn’t help it. They were convinced. It was from their heart and soul, no doubt about it.

*[End Tape 3, Side B; Begin Tape 4, Side A]*

**Cantor:** Now, you were also involved in some animal-related activities in Alabama.

**Free:** Yes. I seem to have gotten into several situations, entanglements, down there. One that really troubled me a lot was the brutal and medieval — really medieval — practice of something called coon on the log, which seemed to prevail in many southern states. A raccoon would be put on the log, chained on, and then would have to roll it with its feet to keep from falling in the water. Then the hounds were let loose to pull him/her off, so that was a big struggle for them. They would drown or get torn to pieces. Then you’d have “coon in a hole.” Then you’d have “coon up a tree” — all kinds of contests of man and his hounds against these poor raccoons.

---

<sup>46</sup> Copies of materials related to Free’s receiving the medal attached.

---

They had regular, like field days, little festivals — I guess people served fried chicken or something — where they'd have one performance after the other of these different types of ways to torment coons.

So I got onto that. How can I stop it, was my question? I got an inspiration. I went to the Reverend Joseph Boone, who was a Baptist preacher, head of the Tuscaloosa, Alabama Ministerial Association, and told him how troubled I was about this tormenting. It was un-Christian behavior toward these coons, the way I've just described it. I gave him a copy of a book by a man that I'll speak about later named Major Charles W. Hume, who was the head of the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare in London, England. Major Hume, whom I got to know quite well — and I'll mention him more about laboratory animals — he was, to me, the most outstanding Brit in the whole field of animal protection for many years because he took a very sensible view and he had a lot of know-how.

But he had written a book called Animals in the Christian Religion.<sup>47</sup> It's often hard to make a case for Christianity's regard for animals, but his book did it very well. I gave a copy of it to the Reverend Mr. Boone to make him realize that he would not be alone in protecting animals, because there's a good bit in the scriptures about kindness to animals and not overworking them and all that. The Old Testament has a lot on this, the New Testament much less. This fortified him to go to the Tuscaloosa Ministerial Association, and it passed a resolution which they sent to the governor and to their congregations and everything — I have a copy of it elsewhere — where they did not condone this type of brutality.<sup>48</sup> Here were these Baptist preachers going up against their own congregations. Many of them were rednecks, you see. That's the big religion down in Alabama — Baptists, Southern Baptist — a large number of them. Of course, this is just a small segment but a rather key section of the state, in Tuscaloosa.

It all went up to Governor Albert Brewer — all these complaints about coon on the log. It's kind of an annual thing. It's been going on for years, and I guess it still goes on. It's not supposed to. It went to Governor Brewer. I had a lot of correspondence about that. He said, "They're not supposed to do it. We can't police these things." In other words, they were sweeping it under the rug. His game commissioner man wrote letters and I wrote letters. And there was a woman down in Texas named Ann Gough Hunter, who — her grand passion was to stop coon on the log. She even got out a newsletter. She and I became pals. So I was working on Alabama and she was working on Texas and all around. They at least publicized it a lot.

Don't ask me whether we accomplished anything or not. We certainly opened some eyes, and there were some cases where they stopped it. But I wrote a letter<sup>49</sup> to the liberal editor of the Atlanta Constitution, Ralph McGill, who was very progressive on civil rights and all those things, and complemented him for his paper carrying an article on coon on the log in Georgia, which is a bad state, too. He said that I'm sure we can do something to stop it. In other words, I was getting up a head of steam with top people. He was very anti-Governor [George C.] Wallace, as most of us were.

---

<sup>47</sup> Charles W. Hume, The Status of Animals in the Christian Religion (London: Universities Federation for Animal Welfare, 1957).

<sup>48</sup> Attached.

<sup>49</sup> Attached.

---

At least the more educated people didn't condone it, but I don't think those rednecks even read the paper — not that educated. I doubt very much if many of the preachers would get up in the pulpit. But you never know when you start something. You can get a response, get it to snowball into something good. You often do not hear of good results. You're the last to hear good news and the first to hear bad mostly. That was quite an experience. It went on for some time, corresponding back and forth and working with one or two other humane-minded people down there.

Then the other thing that really blew my mind was Alabama's animal control — if you want to call it that — and animal shelters. Speaking of medieval — absolute pits. When I went down there one time, I visited the humane society, but most particularly a smaller Birmingham suburb called Bessemer, a steel town. Birmingham and Bessemer were built on steel, you know, not cotton but steel. The famed Bessemer furnace was developed there. That's where a lot of the blue collar workers live — lower income, blue collar, not terribly well-educated. Racially intolerant. That was Bessemer where they had a most dreadful situation for animals.

Like in Richmond in 1930, it was an awful dog pound but much worse. The dog pound truck would expel hot gas into a concrete bunker filled with dogs to kill them. But before then, they would hold the dogs in a series of tiny, tiny airless cells if they suspected rabies. The south had suffered a lot from rabies — mad dog running around — so they were very allergic to the idea of any sick animal. So any dog brought into that antiquated dog pound they would stick in a cell with hardly any air.<sup>50</sup>

But Birmingham, Alabama — Birmingham, which is about twenty miles away from Bessemer, the humane society had a lot of money at one time, but they didn't seem to know what in the heck they were doing. I opened one of my articles, describing how they brought in this dog from the truck. He had his tail chopped off and the blood was still pouring out of it. He was shoved into a cage — “the caged screaming dog chased his tail. It was merely a bloody stump, and he bit the air in agony.” His tail had been chopped off by a hatchet.

Let me speak a moment about mad dogs down south. From the 1930s through the 50s there were many rabid dogs; 455 in 1946. You remember the book To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee?<sup>51</sup> Harper came from Alabama primarily, and Monroeville, Alabama. I got to know Harper later on. I mentioned in my article that no one could ever forget the rabid dog and the weeping, staggering dog in Harper Lee's To Kill a Mockingbird. “Her father came out of the house and shot him. A yelp and an agonized leap in the air, and it was over.” In other words, rabid dogs in the small towns in Alabama was not terribly unusual. And rightfully, they had a fear. But what they did — they only punished the animal by incarcerating. I don't know why they didn't shoot them right away, because nobody was going to claim them. They were killed later and their brains examined for rabies.

So I raised hell about the entire mess in Birmingham and Bessemer in about six articles. I got a lot of mail, and the mayor got into the act, and they improved the pound and humane

---

<sup>50</sup> Birmingham News six-part series, “Animals in Trouble,” January 13-18, 1974.

<sup>51</sup> Harper Lee, To Kill a Mockingbird (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1960).

---

society there considerably. Now Birmingham is one of the better ones. I'm glad I could do that because I got so much mail on it, which meant that people had become aware. I was grateful to the Birmingham News editor, John Bloomer, for running such revealing articles. Jim and I knew him rather well.

So therefore my Alabama experiences were very unpleasant. I was not keen on Alabama anyway because I felt that it was in a horrible, intractable situation vis-à-vis the civil rights. It all came to a head right there in Birmingham with that redneck Bull Connor and the police dogs. Too bad they had to use police dogs. I like police dogs. [Laughter]. However, we rode out that storm and some good things finally came of it. Alabama is fairly colorblind now. And on the animal things, I hear some good reports of Alabama, but they're spotty like in anyplace. So that took up a great deal of my time, emotion, and energy. I was not paid for the articles.

I interested a young member of Congress, Representative Kenneth A. Roberts from Anniston, Alabama. He became subcommittee chairman of the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee, which had under its jurisdiction any animal laboratory bills. And that led me again into using my Alabama connection to help animals by persuading Kenneth Roberts to hold the very first set of full-dress hearings ever held on the Animal Welfare Act or any laboratory animals.

But as I said earlier, we set the stage by getting people — not only humane people, humane societies, but average kind of people — got them aware that certainly all was not well in the laboratories. So, of course, the anti-vivisection people had been putting out this stuff for years, but people no longer listened because they had overdone it by too much emotion and by the fact that the medical people were very smart in smearing them and made them ridiculous. And nothing kills anything more than ridicule. Sometimes they courted ridicule. That's something we've always had to watch. Once you're made ridiculous, you lost your credibility and it's very hard to reclaim it.

But back in Washington — I ought to bring it up right now — Dr. Jacob Gallinger had tried in 1899 to get an anti-vivisection bill through Congress.<sup>52</sup> It was modeled on the British animal protection law of 1876. But it was defeated. Later, the head of the big medical establishment was a Dr. Walter Cannon.<sup>53</sup> He used ridicule, so I'm back to my concern about that. If you make people look ridiculous, you don't get to first base. And that's what the enemy, the medical establishment, did.

**Cantor:** One question I have about Alabama: The south was notorious for not taking kindly to being told what to do in the civil rights movement by outsiders. Were there any threats against you when you tried to help animals down there?

---

<sup>52</sup> Jacob H. Gallinger, MD (1837-1918), Republican senator from New Hampshire (1891-1918). The bill was Senate Bill 34: For the Further Prevention of Cruelty to Animals in the District of Columbia. In 1896 Gallinger presided at the public hearings on the cruelty to animals bill introduced by Senator James MacMillan of Michigan which set limitations on animal experimentation. Voting on the bill was postponed because of the Spanish-American War.

<sup>53</sup> Walter B. Cannon (1871-1945), George Higginson Professor of Physiology at Harvard Medical School (1906-42); head of Council for the Defense of Medical Research of the American Medical Association (1908-26).

---

**Free:** This effort cannot be equated with civil rights. Feelings ran so high on that. Nobody cared if you criticized the way they treated animals. But to appear too kindly toward civil rights, to advocate the end of segregation, that would be poison at the polls.

There was a Southern Manifesto once that upheld customary segregation practices. I'm backtracking a lot. And Frank Graham, a senator from North Carolina, wouldn't sign it because if he did, he couldn't live with himself after that. So he was defeated. Probably he could have done some good things by signing and staying in the Senate — a terrible toss-up.

But if Lister Hill had not gone along with some of these things, he would have been defeated, and you have to put your bird in the hand against two in the bush. We all have it everyday — if I do this, what will happen to that? And we all have that. I mean, I have it all the time, because sometimes you do things on principle and you don't win anything. So it's hard to say, isn't it, because I've gotten in several, several big squabbles that way, standing on principle. And you stand alone and forgotten and the other side prevails in the long run. I don't know what the answers are. I come down on the side of principle myself and sometimes have lost in the long run.

But Senator Hill signed the Southern Manifesto back in 1950s, I guess, or 60s, somewhere early. But his rationale was that he was going to do everything in his power to help suffering humankind, black and white. His father had been a doctor, and he was named after Lord [Joseph] Lister.<sup>54</sup> Remember Listerine? Lord Lister — he's the one who really discovered antiseptics and sepsis and all that. He was a famous British doctor/scientist. My senator's father, Dr. Joseph Hill, I think, had named his son after Lord Lister in England.

So Lister Hill — he was a well-educated, courtly man and very smart. He knew his dilemma. I guess that's what he did. He was never — I never heard anything he did against black people. I don't think he was a racist. He got a bill through Congress to build rural hospitals called — I can't remember the name — yes, the Hill-Burton Act. Senator Hill and Senator Burton of Ohio worked out funding to put hospitals in rural areas, which would certainly cover the black citizens because that's almost all you had in the southern rural areas. Some counties are almost solid. Rural hospitals could bring in medical care, attention, and health education to all citizens. He said, "I want to help all," and that's the way I think he rationalized signing the Southern Manifesto, which now I can't remember what it said.

But therefore, he's gone down in history as the man who really put NIH [National Institutes of Health] on the map. Hill chaired the appropriations subcommittee funding NIH. He almost force-fed it with funding. I've tried — I'll tell you about that later on, about how he would have gone along with me on a very good animal welfare bill.

**Cantor:** That's fine.

**Free:** Senator Hill told me — he said, "All these bills before Congress" — which we'll get to in a few minutes — "about the laboratory animals" — Christine's one, which is modeled on the

---

<sup>54</sup> Lord Joseph Lister (1827-1912), English surgeon who introduced the antiseptic system for surgery in 1867.

British, and the HSUS one, which was much more radical, more AV [anti-vivisection] kind of but not really. But Christine hated them with all her being.

**Cantor:** Hated?

**Free:** The HSUS bills. I thought the compromise would be a bill that I drew up, which was to have the leadership of the direction of animal protection in the laboratories in the hands of an independent agency modeled on SEC's, the Securities and Exchange Commission, Federal Communications Commission, those independent commissions which had thrived and gone along for years and years. They have separate funding and they should be not beholden to anyone. I'm sure the lobbyists try to twist them around their fingers, but at least they're on their own.

So I thought, why not have something modeled on the several independent agencies that have been thriving for a good while? We even have now the EPA [Environmental Protection Agency] that is independent. Then it would have taken a certain amount of policing. I have it all written out. I took it to the HSUS, and Oliver Evans, who was then the head of HSUS, Fred Myers' successor — he signed on.

Back up a minute. Senator Hill says, "If you could get these humane groups with their various bills to come together, I'll sponsor any bill that you want to pull together if you can get them to agree to it." So I wrote this bill because I had gotten so familiar with all this stuff.<sup>55</sup> I've got a copy of it here. Then it would have representatives on it from all the animal-using agencies — NIH, Army, Navy — all through the government. You have to have the head appointed by the president. Of course, you're going to get politics in anything and get the wrong guys in, but that's going to be true on anything. The strength of a government agency depends on how much it can ward off the lobbyists. The lobbyists can then try to put them on starvation rations, too, as has happened with the Animal Welfare Act under the Department of Agriculture. There are all kinds of ways. That's what Washington is all about — pressure.

But I felt — but Senator Hill would have done it, and all the others signed on — AHA, HSUS. But Christine didn't want to touch it, because she wanted to stick with a bill like the British one which required licensed researchers and a good pain rule. The British law dated back to 1876; it needed some modernizing. Hill was disgusted because I could not get everyone on my bill, so later he went ahead and put in a bill giving power to NIH for policing labs. I was disgusted as well and went on with my vacation plans in England. I had tried, God knows. A separate agency might have worked better than one under the Agriculture Department.

But Christine didn't get what she wanted. What happened was the animal dealers threw a monkey wrench into everything by stealing animals and changed our focus. So the dog-stealing situation for the laboratories got completely out of hand. So this woman who was my — I was her sponsor in bringing her into the Washington animal scene. We were the same age, Fay Brisk from Pennsylvania. She and I had worked together during my brief interval I had with the Marshall Plan. She was a former news woman, and we saw eye-to-eye. She was a good writer.

---

<sup>55</sup> Bill attached.



We'd read each other our things on the telephone. And she was a wonderful editor — right on the telephone.

So I brought her onto the board of the Washington Humane Society when I was there. She was already on the board of a humane society up in Berks County, Pennsylvania.

However, she then got on — two things that Fay did that were perfectly marvelous, and one led to this legislation. One, she established the animal port out here at National Airport. These little puppies from the puppy mills needed help. Nearly every plane came in with little puppies, some of them dead and dying or coughing, bad shape. A lot of them were in what they call orange crates, and monkeys, everything under the sun. So Fay started on her own with volunteers. She didn't even drive a car. She had to get a ride to one of those horrible hangars out there. She would feed them, board them, and get better cages for them, before they would be sent on their way. Then she finally got the airport and the FAA, the Federal Aviation [Administration], to set up some standards to cut down on this abuse of the transporting of these poor little creatures.

She was a great gal.<sup>56</sup> Too bad she died so young. I think her final illness — I guess it was cancer. We'd been just so close, and suddenly she — this happens when people get ill. Cancer, I think, affected her psychologically. She wasn't friendly anymore. She changed. We had been so close.

Fay became obsessed by certain subjects. She'd get to talking about [how] she hated the Humane Society of the United States because she had put the animal airport under the aegis of the Washington Humane Society, you see. And people got it mixed up and would send checks in to the Humane Society of the United States, and she said they were her checks. Whether that was true or not — but then she got obsessed. I said, "I don't think that would have happened. I don't think they would have been that unscrupulous." She said, "You can be on their side if you want to." She got irate on that subject and thought I was taking up for HSUS. This is the kind of crazy goings-on that people get. So I think that Fay — maybe I ought to have to seal this part. Fay became very irrational about that subject, whether HSUS took some of their checks or not. They could very easily have been sent in to Humane Society of Washington, DC, because they had publicity all over the country. But I doubt if any great sums were involved, and it could have gone — and maybe when HSUS got them they didn't know whether — I don't know. Frankly, I don't know. I cannot answer. But I tried to say, "Don't get yourself so worked up." But she wouldn't buy that.

And when she got sick and died, we were no longer close, and we had been so close. Oh, my God, we had been on the telephone every day. I couldn't get out there to the airport at night because I had a small child and no one to leave her with. That's when they tended to the poor little dogs at the airport, gave them food and water and would get vet care, I had no way to help. I couldn't leave Elissa and go out there and work on these puppies. This would have been a classic case of "the shoemaker's children having no shoes." I couldn't do that, because Jim worked late, you see, being a newspaperman, nine or ten o'clock.

---

<sup>56</sup> Article on Fay Brisk, Washington Star (September 4, 1966), attached.

---

So the other thing about Fay that was so wonderful and so marvelous was that she comes from Pennsylvania and used her connections. It was a hotbed of those stinking animal dealers. So many of them — Dierhoff Farms. I've got a file that thick on the animal dealers who have come up, all through the south in particular, to buy or steal animals. Some of them even got keys from the damn rural dog wardens so they can go in and help themselves. Then they'd slip them some money, you see. It was so corrupt. And the darn hospitals and institutions turned their heads. How much they knew? They didn't want to know.

That's how, back there, Fay and I really learned about this dog dealing and stealing racket. We drove out to a place in Prince William County, Virginia, which is now kind of a bedroom to Washington, DC, but it was then quite rural. When I go that way I always look for the huge barn up on the side there. It's gone now. It wasn't very far from the main road in Prince William County where these dealers would bring in these stolen dogs. And some doctors and scientists were making money out of it. And they called themselves Zoologicals Worldwide. They were shipping animals to many institutions. The big ones, [Johns] Hopkins and NIH, were involved. They would put out a call for certain types of dogs. I went to a meeting once of the Animal Care Panel which had to do with talks about procurement. The hospitals would put out a call for — “we want X number of long-haired dogs or X number of short-haired ones, X number of pointers,” all of that.

We found about it through another friend, Pearl “Billie” Twyne, who worked for the Arlington Humane Society. A suspicious truck was going down the road, and they followed it and found this place. Then some others went in. I went there about the second or third day — the second day, I guess — after it was discovered. The dogs — they had shot them. They were all laying in these pools of water. Ditches? Graves? It had rained, I guess, overnight. Talk about gruesome. There was one live dog left, a coonhound. There was a young man there. I've got his picture. I went out, and I drove. I think Christine went, Fay, a woman named Ruth Frandsen.

So there was this one coonhound, and Ruth said, “I want that coonhound.” And the boy said — the young man we found there who had been involved with the group, like a caretaker or whatever — “fifty dollars.” That looked like big bucks for us. I gave five and we called friends. We raised the money in a hurry and got the dog, and she kept that dog, Becky, and then Becky's child, for years and years. So that was a happy ending to one dog. But there were so many dead cats and rabbits. I can show you photographs — incredible.

Something had to be done, but who was going to do it? What bill was going to pass? While the humane people were fighting with each other, animals were dying everywhere and nobody wanted to blow the whistle on anybody much. Right over here in Arlington, Virginia at Rosslyn there is a place where several veterinarians were in business. I went over there, and I took Cleveland Amory with me when I found out about it, where these poor animals — I guess they were stolen — were held in like a small warehouse. Oh! Unbelievable what was going on right around us, right here.

So I think we amateurs broke the back of that whole thing by exposure, but it was not the organized humane societies that did it. Fay was a freelance person like me. Cleveland was more

---

or less on laboratory problems in the beginning, but he didn't do much on that one. But he was horrified. He did a lot of good things. So we would just blow the whistle all the time and get publicity. That was the main thing. I did that series, and I wrote a lot about all of this later on, went all around the country.

The thing is you have to awaken people, and most avenues of awakening were closed then. No TV on the Zoologicals Worldwide story. Mainly the Washington Star. To the general media we were still a bunch of nuts and this is not a subject that we want to fool with. Because, after all, the vested interests all are going to hang together. They didn't know why they were opposed, but the why of that is because this has been a vested interest industry — everything about animals. Finally, a lot of these young people coming along in journalism have been infected by their older peers that we were all crazy. There's still a little bit of that going on now. But I think that we've broken down some of those barriers.

**Cantor:** When Fay was working with you on the phone about the bill, on the bill, and you were writing one that you thought everyone could possibly accept, I think you said Christine Stevens would not —

**Free:** She's the only one who would not go on.

**Cantor:** Were the others prepared to go with that bill?

**Free:** Oh, yes. So Senator Hill — I went to him. I said, "Mrs. Stevens, I can't seem to get her to come with it." Because I thought — and I imagine what she thought — that if she endorsed something that Hill got that it would end up with NIH.

But she didn't know some of the inner Alabama politics that I knew. He was not in hock to NIH because NIH held a lot of power over him. However, he was greatly influenced by Mary Lasker, whose husband invented the name Listerine, by the way. [Laughter]. The mouthwash and Lister Hill were both named for Lord Lister. He was a big advertising man. That's how Mary Lasker got her money. I don't think Mrs. Lasker's influence, however, would take priority over his Alabama ones. And through the Birmingham News, Jim and I offered Lister Hill a continuing platform with Alabama constituents. In short, I don't think he would have crossed us for her.

But later on in 1966, just before the Animal Welfare Act was passed, and I felt it was hopeless — I couldn't get anywhere with mine — Mr. Hill then — see, I had softened him up. I hate to use that term — to help. He was an honest man. He would never have lied to me. He couldn't even dare lie to me with Jim the top correspondent for the Birmingham News and he running for re-election every six years and his buddies running for re-election. I couldn't take advantage of his offer to introduce a Humane Society bill because I couldn't get full cooperation. And I've told this story before.

But I think that Hill wouldn't dare have turned it over to NIH if I — and with enough people, his constituents, behind me — said, "Don't do that. Please, sir, go with it the way it is, because NIH could be part of the trouble." NIH did have some good points on animals at that

---

time. They had a pretty good facility and all that, but God knows what else. The problem lay with NIH grantees — many were horrible. So I went by the board on that.

We ended up with the Department of Agriculture with a bunch of — I won't use the word — but people who didn't — they were livestock people.

*[End of Session].*

---

**Ann Cottrell Free  
Session #3  
October 1, 1999  
Bethesda, Maryland**

**David Cantor, Interviewer**

*[Begin Tape 5, Side A]*

**Cantor:** Ann, in our last session we touched a little bit on the Animal Welfare Act, and we touched a lot on some events that preceded that and involved various bills. How did we get from all that haggling over different bills, different versions of the bill to protect laboratory animals, to finally getting an Animal Welfare Act?<sup>57</sup>

**Free:** There was a big unexpected breakthrough on that. The humane societies had been going after each other tooth and nail, because HSUS [Humane Society of the United States] had gotten several bills sponsored that were more strict — not anti-vivisectionist, because they'd never get away with that, but wanted to help the animals much more — pain rule and so on and so forth. And Christine Stevens was trying to model a bill after the British act, which would have inspection done by some appointed inspectors. I won't go into the details.

But they went head-to-head on that, and nothing was happening because of very, very much hard feeling between groups. I mean, I saw tempers flare. One time after a hearing on the bills a group came up to my house — Cleveland Amory, Christine [Stevens], Oliver Evans, a whole bunch of them. They had a knock-down, drag-out fight in my living room. Passions were high because nothing was happening on the various bills. Of course, the little bill I was trying to push never went anywhere.

So there was, you might say, an unfortunate happening, which was a lucky break in breaking the stalemate, which is a story that's pretty well-known now. The dog dealers were stealing so many animals — dog dealers for the laboratories. I think we covered that some. The main dealers were up in Pennsylvania. Fortuitously, Fay Brisk, whom I mentioned in glowing terms right along — was from Pennsylvania and a board member — although she lived here — of the Berks County SPCA [Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals] or Humane Society. Anyhow, Fay had a very winning way about her. She got friendly with some of the dealers (a method in her madness), because one time she went into one of their establishments.

---

<sup>57</sup> The AWA (P.L. 89-544, August 24, 1966) requires that minimum standards of care and treatment be provided for most warm-blooded animals bred for commercial sale, used in research, transported commercially, or exhibited to the public. The AWA also prohibits staged dogfights, bear and raccoon baiting, and similar animal fighting ventures. The law was first passed in 1966 (then named Laboratory Animal Welfare Act) and amended in 1970 (renamed Animal Welfare Act), 1976, 1985, and 1990. Rats and mice account for approximately 95 percent of all animals in laboratories, as of 1999, but have been excluded from protection by the Animal Welfare Act.

This is what galvanized her into action. It was so awful — I quoted it in one of my articles.<sup>58</sup> She went in and she was stifled by the smell of dead and sick animals and feces and no water. It was just so awful. She said she had to go outside to get air, and then she felt that she was going to throw up. So she was determined from there on that she was going to stop this trade in dog dealing, and she figured, as we all did, that we had to get the proof that they were being stolen.

The Humane Society of the United States employed an undercover man to go out and pretend he was a dealer. I wrote articles on that.<sup>59</sup> His name was Dec[lan] Hogan. He testified before Congress afterwards about how dreadful it all was and how they went about stealing them. Then there were several other undercover efforts made. I think Christine had somebody. Oh, yes, she did. There was this marvelous woman named Dorothy Dyce. She was from Michigan. Dorothy went into some of these dreadful, dreadful places. I've covered all of that in a lot of articles, of course. I wrote a tremendous amount of stuff about that.

But then, as I say, fortuitously, since those bills were not going anywhere — although the bills in the hearings had discussed the stealing, it still was not making a dent. And we knew about Zoologicals Worldwide. Most of those dogs were stolen. But much later Fay got a tip that a dog had been stolen and taken to — a Dalmatian named Pepper. This was the breakthrough and end of stalemate. Word went out to try to find Pepper. She called one of these darn dealers that she had gotten chummy with. I don't know how she worked this. She didn't do it by going to bed with anybody. I don't think that was her come-on. I don't know how Fay got so friendly with these dealers. But she called one of them and she described this dog. The dealer's truck had broken down. A picture of the dog was in the newspaper, and the family recognized their dog. Word reached Fay. She traced it to the dealer. So he said it had gone to another dealer. But in fact — then she found out it had gone to Montefiore Hospital in New York. So she called up there and they checked it out, and the dog had been taken there but had just been killed that day or the day before.

But anyway, she — in her search in trying to save Pepper — she called Senator Clark's<sup>60</sup> legislative aide, Sarah Ehrmann. Sarah called Congressman [Joseph Yale] Resnick, who was a freshman congressman from New York State. And this guy who, named Nersesian — it's an Armenian name — he was in Resnick's district. That's how Resnick came into the thing — New York State. So when he realized that this Nersesian was mixed up in this — I don't have all the chapter and verses, a lot of detail. So they found out the dog was dead.

Guess what Resnick did. He was a freshman congressman, but he was on the Agriculture Committee, and you'd never expect a freshman from New York State to be on that committee. He said, "I am going to put in a bill to put this dog stealing trade under the Agriculture Department and have them stop it." The Agriculture Department had a whole cadre of veterinarians because they're all tied in with the land-grant agricultural colleges where most of the vet schools are located. The veterinarians are going around all the time, you know, checking

---

<sup>58</sup> North American Newspaper Alliance series, "Don't We Owe Them More?" (July 22-26, 1963), copy and rebuttals attached.

<sup>59</sup> In "Don't We Owe Them More?" series.

<sup>60</sup> Senator Clark (D-PA) was a sponsor of a regulatory bill.

---

cows for TB [tuberculosis] and all the other ailments that farm animals have. As a matter of fact, earlier my friend [Kenneth] Roberts had suggested that it go to the Agriculture Department, but we all hooted at that. I thought the veterinarians would be too tied in with the livestock industry, which turns out they are. But that was the way the bill got introduced.

Then we had the hearings. The hearings [were] very successful. Let me see. Can you stop for a minute? I want to get this. [Tape interruption.]

**Cantor:** So then what happened?

**Free:** I think what was happening — I want to backtrack a little bit — that there was a certain amount of legislative exhaustion by that time because the other bills were going nowhere. Eventually there were several sets of hearings, and the first and most valuable set was back in 1962, which was held, thanks to yours truly — me — held in September 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of 1962 by Congressman Kenneth A. Roberts of Alabama, who was chairman of the subcommittee of the Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee of the House of Representatives. I persuaded Kenneth, whom I knew pretty well, to hold these hearings. I introduced him to Christine and different people. He held those two days of hearings which were the most exhaustive hearings ever held on laboratory animal welfare.

The highlight of that appearance was Major [Charles] Hume coming over from England, who was secretary-general of the Universities Federation of Animal Welfare. Everybody referred to it as UFAW. He was a great proponent of the British bill. Christine had been enthralled with that, and she wouldn't give up, as we know.

But Major Hume had come a few years before in 1959. I had met him then when he made a talk to what they call the Animal Care Panel, which was kind of a quasi-scientific group, in which he talked about how we had to have a middle ground. Now, in England they had the anti-vivisectionists [AVs] and the hard-core AVs and the hard-core scientists. How his organization worked very tactfully to bring the two sides together, and his organization — this is quite significant — sponsored a book in 1959 that was written by Dr. W. M. S. Russell and Dr. R. L. Burch. They wrote this book which has had a far, far-reaching effect, particularly right now. It was called The Principles of Humane Experimental Technique.<sup>61</sup> Major Hume said — I'm reading a little bit — “This deserves to be on the classic for all time. We have great hopes that we will inaugurate a whole field of systematic study.” Indeed, it has. This was the field for reducing the numbers of animals by refinement and substitution primarily, which is still going on. That book has become the Bible to this day. And an award is given in their name every year at the Johns Hopkins Center, and it's called the Three Rs. — Replacement, Reduction, and Refinement.

I think that for posterity's sake that everyone should be well aware of the Three Rs and the role of Major Charles Hume in getting the book produced. He was a wonderful man. I went to England and met him for the third time. We went around to laboratories and so on. But of course, that 1876 bill which was still prevailing — still is — worked pretty well, but it was a much smaller set-up in England than it was here where we had this grandiose amount of money

---

<sup>61</sup> W. M. S. Russell and R. L. Burch, The Principles of Humane Experimental Technique (London: Methuen, 1959).

coming into NIH [National Institutes of Health] all the time, just thousands and thousands of animals being used or abused without proper supervision.

As a little sidebar, Major Hume kept saying we all think so much about the poor dogs and cats, but nobody is thinking about the rodents, which is true, because they're just used by the trillion. So he was always putting in a plug for the rats and the mice, as I have, because they're the most expendable right now everywhere. God knows what they suffer.

So he testified at that 1962 hearing. This most interesting thing with all these top people on all sides, members of Congress, and doctors, and humanitarians — they were wonderful hearings. But what do you think happened? Absolutely nothing, but they were printed. They are necessary historical reading for anyone interested. They were never resumed, because the medical establishment had put the pressure on the chairman of the full committee, Oren Harris, a Democrat from Arkansas. He had absolutely said he would never have hearings. But Kenneth, bless his heart — he went against his boss. The chairman is the boss, and he was just a subcommittee chair. And he did it. I think it's because Christine and I talked to him so much and showed him all these pictures and told him all these things, and I got to know him socially. Also he needed Jim [James Stillman Free] and me for Alabama press coverage. He was a man with a good heart. He had a bad time later on, which I won't go into.<sup>62</sup> He's dead now. But I thank Kenneth Roberts forever for having that hearing, because it wrote a book. The hearings were 400 pages — no, 370 pages long, 375 pages long. That gave us a document to go by.

So that hearing and some others that were held were good platforms for launching the unexpected bill by Resnick, which did not have anything to do with all the provisions that HSUS and Christine wanted in their bills. It was a much truncated bill, primarily on the stealing and the handling of the animals but did not go into the laboratory at all. It stopped at the laboratory door. But that was the only way to go — hardly a foot in the door. So that's how the first version of the Animal Welfare Act was passed.

**Cantor:** And it was originally called the Laboratory Animal Welfare Act?

**Free:** Yes. It wasn't called Animal Welfare Act. What Christine and all of us thought that the only thing to do was to go with this, because they did have unanimity. And the reason why — Resnick was smart; the others had not been so smart — they didn't realize that the average person was not going to relate to their bills very much. But they related when it came to their own pets. This was a pet-stealing bill. Then we decided, well, we'll just have to go ahead and year after year, whenever we can, amend it and strengthen it, amend it and strengthen it. It's still going on, you might say. But the big drawback was getting proper funding. It never has to this day.

**Cantor:** Question. Today when we have something coming up for animals in Congress, state legislatures, wherever, we'll tend to be notifying all kinds of people who care about animals and tell them to write a letter. Was much of that going on back then? Were letters coming in to congressmen to support this act?

---

<sup>62</sup> He lost his seat in Congress due to congressional reshuffling. He practiced law later. His personal life was sad.

---



**Free:** Yes. Christine put out mailings to her constituency constantly, and HSUS was pretty good about that, too. There wasn't anybody else, as I've been saying over and over again. There were no other big groups, because the American Humane Association, which, to its credit, with its Mr. Christian Norgood, was behind the slaughter act but didn't want to touch the laboratory thing because there was a lot of kind of "hanky-panky" going on there with the medical establishment. Somebody — I think it might have been Christine's husband — offered a lot of money to AHA to make a study of the laboratory animals and their problems.<sup>63</sup> But they didn't want to touch it. They had too many people in there with vested interests.

So therefore, if you looked at the people who testified in favor of the Animal Welfare Bill, they were mostly individuals and a few members of Congress that had become involved. Senator Joseph Clark, for example, was good. On the Roberts hearing, Rachel Carson sent a statement. It was a small group of us. It's absolutely amazing.

**Cantor:** Were you friends with Rachel Carson yet when she sent a statement on that?

**Free:** Yes. I knew her then. It was a short statement, but it was pretty powerful. That hearing went nowhere, and nothing was going anywhere. There were all these bills because they were blocked off. Every turn they were blocked off. So this was a lucky break that Resnick decided to go ahead and put it in the Department of Agriculture, bypassing the other recommended enforcers.

There's something called Action 81 because the big interstate highway goes from down south all the way up through the valley of Virginia on up through Pennsylvania and even to New York State. That's where these dealers would get these animals. They'd either go down and get them from thieves, called "bunchers," or they'd get them directly from dog wardens. They could get them all kinds of ways. Some had keys to the county dog pounds. And they traveled on Interstate 81, so I think Fay's idea was to help this woman who lived near there, who was an animal person, named Mary Warner — help her to establish this Action 81.<sup>64</sup> It is mainly public relations and a kind of a telephone network. If you heard something, phone into her headquarters and they'd get after them through the state police. Another source of supply was special nighttime sales, especially in Pennsylvania. They were called, I think, "Green Hornet" sales. Fay Brisk and HSUS's Frank MacMahon went to some of these sales.

So the dealer network probably still continues today, although the animals that go to the laboratories are supposed to be pretty well-documented as to where they came from. But don't kid yourself. There's nobody watching this stuff enough, like even now with humane slaughter. You got a law passed, but I guess if you want, you can neglect it. It's just like with all the narcotics and dope not being well policed. Only a fraction of that law is ever carried out because there are not enough people who have the will to do it. Therefore, that's how the laboratory — in a short version — how the Animal Welfare Act got launched through Fay Brisk, Sarah Ehrmann, the dog Pepper, and Mr. Resnick.

---

<sup>63</sup> \$10,000 was offered by Roger L. Stevens, realtor, theatrical producer, and former Democratic fund-raiser.

<sup>64</sup> Poem "Interstate 81" attached.

---

**Cantor:** Were there concerns among animal welfare advocates about having the United States Department of Agriculture be the enforcing agency, inasmuch as they were traditionally helping —

**Free:** Yes. Many. They couldn't do anything about it. I don't think they — I don't remember who testified against it. But I think they'd all come to the end of their rope. They knew they weren't going to get any bill, any of their numerous bills over several years. And nothing was happening. It was complete stalemate. So that was that about the Animal Welfare Act. Of course, it's been refined and refined.

**Cantor:** I was going to ask you, during this period from the very end of the 50s up through the time of the Animal Welfare Act, there were some other things going on. For example, I believe you visited the National Zoo and were inspired to write a book.

**Free:** Yes. I'll get to these in sequence. Those late 50s and early 60s were really crowded for me. I don't see how I did it, but I was a lot younger. Don't forget my child [Elissa] was born in 1955. She turned out pretty well. I think I could have spent more time on reading to her, but I told her many stories I made up. But that's all in retrospect now. She's a journalist and she does pretty well. She still can't spell worth a damn. My fault, no doubt. But she cares deeply about animals. She, her husband [William Van Nooter], and her daughter are vegetarians.

Anyway, I had so many encounters with the National Zoo, and they started back in the 1950s. I never went to zoos. I hated them; they were nothing but prisons. But I discovered that — I must be the last person in the world who was unaware of the fact that snakes were fed live mice. Most people know that. Children know it. But I didn't know it because I had blocked out anything about zoos. There was no zoo in Richmond. So when I found out about that, I said, "We've got to stop this at the National Zoo."

So I got as much information as I could. Once again, I depended on Christine. She said, "Talk to the people in the London Zoo." She said, "I think they kill the rats and mice first." So I got a lot of information from the London Zoo. They kill them, knock them in the head, and then they freeze them. Then they thaw them. I didn't know that. Nobody seemed to know it. But I went to the head of the National Zoo, Theodore Reid, and told him about that.

Then Dr. Kellog, second in command of the Smithsonian [Institution], entered the picture. The zoo was part of the Smithsonian. And he said so far as possible they should be fed dead food. But I did a lot of work behind the scenes on that, really behind the scenes. [I] went back at feeding time, oh Jesus. But what I thought we might do was make the dead mice quiver and move so that the snakes would think they were alive. So I gathered up several electric razors — my husband's cast-out electric razors — that had motors and we attached them to the dead mice to make them jiggle. It worked to a degree.

**Cantor:** It worked?

**Free:** Yes. But I never did get those razors back. [Laughter]. So you can see, I was everywhere all at once. And we stopped the live feeding because we got the dictum from the

---

boss, Dr. Kellogg from the Smithsonian. I must say that Dr. Theodore Reid, who was the head of the zoo, fell in line.

Reid, in a sense, was a great improvement over his predecessor, who was a big showboat, Dr. William Mann. For years he was there. From the 1920s, I guess, Dr. Mann would go over to Africa and God knows where and bring in all these poor captive animals. I got to know Lucy, his wife, through the Society of Woman Geographers, and I never could look her really straight in the face. I mean, I knew her socially — his widow, I must say. But Dr. Mann — oh, he was a big showboat, always in the newspapers with all these little animals, these little bear cubs, these little rhinos, little whatever, little elephants, little whatever. He was a publicity hound. But I heard later from the assistant director, Ernest Walker,<sup>65</sup> that Dr. Mann used to have people come in and watch him feed the snakes with live mice and rats.

Then at the National Zoo they had something else which Dr. Mann was behind, along with Gordon Leach, who ran the restaurant, called Anteaters Club, which was supposed to be funny, but it wasn't really. Not for me. The menu — they'd get wild game when they could. This was all in the 1950s, you see. Membership was by invitation. Many prominent citizens were invited. I have a menu. The menu said "boiled rhinoceros tongue, porcupine quills for hors d'oeuvres," all kinds of things like that. Of course, it was tongue in cheek, but they did serve wild game whenever they could get hold of it, you know, caribou and deer and they'd probably once in a while get some bear meat. Any wild animal that was edible, if they would get hold of a piece of it. This was the elite of Washington. You had to get an invitation to come to the Anteater luncheons. That was the frame of mind and intellectual atmosphere in the 1950s everywhere.

Then my next run-in with the zoo, experience with the zoo, was when I was there one day in the late 1950s with some friends. I was just beginning to go to the zoo, and I saw this horse. It was called a Mongolian wild horse, the *Equus Prjewalski*.<sup>66</sup> I'll have to spell that for you later, because "equus," as you know, means "horse." Prjewalski was a Polish explorer who came upon — he discovered the bones and hide of the horse. It's like a living fossil, a relic. He just had the skeleton, but they were still living in Outer Mongolia. But this was the last — might have been — of the cave painting horses in France, especially Lascaux and Chauvet. He sent the skeleton and the hide and whatever to St. Petersburg [Russia] Zoo. This was long before communism. They figured this was the original wild horse, different in some respects from today's horse.

So my imagination was captured, having been in China, inner Mongolia and Manchuria. Also I had a passion for everything Mongolian and central Asian, as I do today. The original horse was called *Eohippus* and developed in America. But then it crossed the land bridge of the Bering Straits and developed into a horse that then later came on through to Europe through the central Asian Dzungarian gateway. Maybe that's how the cave painters, the caveman, — the Paleolithic man — found them. They killed these horses, but they loved them, too. That's the beginning of ambivalence, you see. They would drive them over the cliffs often to kill them, we think. And they painted their pictures inside their caves. The most well-known, of course, is Lascaux, which I'm very fortunate to have seen.

---

<sup>65</sup> Ernest P. Walker et al., Mammals of the World (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1964), 3 vols.

<sup>66</sup> Alternate spelling: *Przewalski*.

---

Therefore, I couldn't believe — I was so bewitched by this wild horse that I decided right off I'm going to write a children's book — I had never written one before — about the wild horse. So I named her Isabella, which translates into something about her dun color. I won't go into that. [Tape interruption.]

I labored several years on a book about that horse. I got in touch with scholars. I wrote letters to the Soviet Union to scientists asking if the horses were still alive out in Mongolia. I had replies that some of them were, but the only other ones were in zoos. They had all been captured by a man named Hagenbeck years ago who had zoos, traveling menageries, very famous.

My whole idea — my thesis was that this boy, the young hero, had this passion to ride the horse. He did so, but he had admonitions from a Buddhist lama that he ran into at the zoo as well as a Scottish explorer — in kilts, of course — who was at the zoo. They all told him not to try to do that. My thesis was: You cannot break nature to your will. I had been inspired by Rachel Carson and Albert Schweitzer that we must respect life and not try to make everything to conform to what we thought was right. That was the thesis of the book. The boy did finally get on the horse, but the horse really bucked him off and then turned on him and was going to trample him to death until he was saved by the Scottish explorer and his bagpipes. Quite a story.

Anyhow, I named it Forever the Wild Mare.<sup>67</sup> I won a whole bunch of prizes on that from the Boy Scouts of America and Boys Clubs. It was also cited in the Schweitzer Medal Award. It was condensed and printed in Boy's Life. At that time, Boy's Life and Boys Clubs were big stuff. It was very well-received. It was published by Dodd-Mead. Unfortunately, Dodd-Mead and Company, which was an excellent publisher, was one of the first of the old publishing houses to go under. You know, almost all of them are under now. I'd like to have that book out again, but I just haven't had the energy to work on it. I don't know whether it would sell. It's dated and all that, except for its message. The whole thesis was: Respect wild things, respect nature. And I think I made a big point in that.

So that was the zoo. A press club had a big launching party on the book and I invited the head of the zoo. Why not? I disliked zoos. I did two major things to help the National Zoo. One was this book to try to improve conditions of animals in captivity. And the other was I became a founder of the Friends of the National Zoo (FONZ). At that time the zoo was poorly funded and animals were tightly confined. But over the years through FONZ, the zoo had funds through public support to improve conditions.

Then my next encounter with the National Zoo was many years later. By that time — in the 1980s. By that time, I had written a lot about endangered species, which had really come into the fore. Of course, the wild mare was on the endangered species list way at the top. Some of the zoo's wild ones have been repatriated, you might say, taken them back to central Asia — Mongolia and Kazakhstan. They will make the grade because they're very hearty. What had knocked them out earlier was some terrible epizootic.

---

<sup>67</sup> Ann Cottrell Free, Forever the Wild Mare (New York: Dodd-Mead, 1963). Review by Justice William O. Douglas, book cover, and newspaper clippings attached.

---

Anyway, I went out there in the 1980s, I guess, to see — I went out there. I didn't say where "there" was. The National Zoo has a huge farm which used to belong to the U.S. Government's Remount Station, which bred U.S. cavalry horses, out near Front Royal, Virginia, where they now keep endangered species. It covers about seven hundred acres. They couldn't keep them all downtown in Washington. These were out there for breeding and for safety. But they had some of the *Equus Prjewalski* horses out there. They had all kinds of rare deer. These were mainly hoofed animals, of course.

The man from the zoo made a chance remark about a zoo hunt that was coming up. "A what?" I asked incredulously. Traditionally up there in the mountains when it was not the zoo place, the local people would go in there and shoot deer. It was a tradition. And the National Zoo condoned it still. What has triggered it off — I saw a white-tailed deer leapt before us. And that's when he said, "I wonder if that one will be killed." What about the rare animals?

So I raised hell about that. I went to the zoo director first and said, "Do something about this. You cannot be having a hunt in a rare animal refuge," whatever you want to call it, compound. Of course, I was also thinking about the poor Virginia native deer, too, but making a big to-do about killing local deer might not cut any ice. The main thing was to put the emphasis on the danger to the variety of endangered hoofed stock you had there. Quite true. So stupid of the zoo. So I got the humane societies behind stopping the hunt. Then some congressmen came in the picture and wanted to help. Oh, we got a lot of publicity.

The next thing we knew, we were having a hearing<sup>68</sup> before the head of the House Appropriations Subcommittee — Representative Sidney Yates, a Democrat from Illinois — which did the zoo appropriations and oversight for the Smithsonian. The zoo was on the Smithsonian payroll, you might say, part of that complex. His committee held the purse strings for the zoo. We had a standing-room only hearing on that. I had done a tremendous amount of research. You see, the zoo had said something about a meningeal worm which can kill hoofed animals. I don't know. Some of the White House Christmas reindeer were quartered there and some died, and the zoo veterinarian and director wondered why. I told them why — the meningeal worm.

I testified before a standing-room only crowd. Former Democratic Senator [Rupert Vance] Hartke of Indiana was a big witness, too. He had visited the Front Royal grounds with me. He was very much interested in that subject. It was a banner hearing. Nothing like that had ever been held before. The next thing we knew, Ted Reid had stepped down. Congressman Yates and also the undersecretary in the Smithsonian, Philip Hughes, told me that Dr. Reid had to go. You know, it was a face-saving thing that he resigned, because the head of a zoo shouldn't get into things like that — permitting hunting in a zoo. It was absolutely reprehensible. That was good news.

**Cantor:** Then the hunt did not take place?

---

<sup>68</sup> Hearing on November 4, 1982 before the Interior Subcommittee of the House Appropriates Committee.

---

**Free:** The hunt was canceled. There have never been any more hunts. I kept maintaining — because I had done a lot of research about migratory deer patterns — that the deer were held in by fences. The big thick hearing book we have on all the testimony from scientists on both sides makes interesting reading. We made the point that the deer can just — if they got into the huge enclave farm, they can go out again the same way they came in and go — lucky them — live right next door into the Shenandoah National Park, which is under the National Park Service, where there's no hunting.

Before testifying, I remember I dragged my poor husband out there into the woods to go around and look at the boundaries to see how they could take the zoo fences down so the deer would follow this route. I came back and testified that I thought it was feasible. Then a hunter testified, too. Charles Yates (no relation to the committee chairman) testified that, "It's like shooting fish in a barrel." Earlier they had a mass meeting up there in the Front Royal fire department, the fire house, in Front Royal, which is a medium-sized town. They parked the fire engines outside. Many people spoke. Hunters, of course. I wanted to speak, but the chairman didn't want me to get up before the people because I think he feared for me. I wanted to get up and say something.

**Cantor:** And here you are, a Virginian.

**Free:** That's true, but the main thing is this: I wanted to get up and talk about it. But these rednecks, hunters — they were so irate, and they knew this bitch of a woman had started it. [Laughter]. I wanted to get up and say something. Somebody might have done something to me. I don't know. [Laughter]. But that was the end of that.

So my life with the National Zoo has not been very pleasant. His successor, Michael Robinson, who's an Englishman — I don't think he cares the least bit about mammals. He's an invertebrate specialist. He likes little crab things. [Laughter]. Nothing wrong with that.

But anyway, I tried to get the zoo then to carry my book on the wild mare in the zoo book shop, their very good book shop there. This was years later. I was kind of reviving it, you see. Ted Reid was gone. The head of the book shop wanted to sell it, but she said the head of the zoo, Dr. Robinson, had to read it first. So he read it and wrote me a letter, which I have here yet. He felt, "Oh, we can't have anything like that that preaches Buddhism." I had this Buddhist lama in it, and he talked to this boy, who was the little hero, about what the five principles of Buddhism and all that, whatever they are. The boy never became a Buddhist. He just listened and, I guess, in the end he respected animals a lot more. So Michael Robinson, the director of the National Zoological Park of the United States, said, "We can't have any book that" — he says — "preaches Buddhism." So that's a pretty shocking intellectual commentary, isn't it?

**Cantor:** Yes.

**Free:** Back to other things we might have left out along the way.

**Cantor:** I know that in addition to the wildlife involved in your zoo encounters — the Mongolian horse and the deer — you've done some other work involving wildlife and nature.

---

**Free:** Yes. Where I lived in Washington was not very far from Georgetown and next to a park called Glover Archbold Park, a lovely stream valley park, which was also a route of migratory birds, especially warblers. In fact, it was a breeding area. Bird-watchers would come out and do a lot of their counting there every year because everything seemed to come through there. If you followed it straight towards the south you would come to the Potomac River. Then if you kept going west — northwest — no, north — you would keep going, you would get out of the District.

This was a sacrosanct park donated to the District by some very rich people. Ann Archbold, whose money came from — her father was partner with John D. Rockefeller, and she had a lot of money. And Charles Glover was a head banker here who had a lot of money — headed the Riggs Bank, the whole nine yards. Mrs. Archbold and Mr. Glover dedicated this land, this marvelous, marvelous stream valley, they said, to the children and the citizens of Washington.

What the Highway Department wanted to do was to put a freeway from the Potomac River right straight through the park then hooking up with the beltway north — a shortcut through Washington. This would have been absolutely disastrous. I discovered — I fought it a lot. We had some mass meetings, neighborhood meetings, and Audubon [Society] and all that. The Archbold family tried to fight it through their lawyers, to no avail.

But somebody tipped me off to a letter from the head of the National Park Service to the highway people, saying in general, “Well, we don’t want a speedway” — you know, a big highway — “but we’ll go along with a road.” I had the goods on him. You know, what they call a park road — a foot in the door. But then it would then [be] expanded, no doubt about it. So we didn’t want any road going through there, any vehicles. It’s a very narrow place. So I got the goods there. I guess you’re going to think my specialty is blackmail. But anyhow, if you get a hold of a letter, you’re going to use it. I told Audubon and other opponents about it.

But I did something else. We started a petition through the Audubon and the neighborhood families with thousands of signatures against the road. [We] made an appointment with Secretary [Stewart] Udall on January 25, 1962.<sup>69</sup> We didn’t mention the letter in the petition, but Udall knew that his subordinate, the head of the Park Service, Conrad Wirth, had written this letter permitting a road. So we got — I have pictures right here and articles in the paper when we presented the petition. Then Udall made a statement that no road would ever go through that park. So hooray, hooray for that one.

**Cantor:** And that park is there now?

**Free:** Oh, yes.

**Cantor:** What’s it known as now?

**Free:** The same thing — Glover Archbold.

---

<sup>69</sup> Stewart L. Udall (b. 1920), former U.S. Secretary of the Interior.

**Cantor:** Did the people who worked on that in any way work together on other things, or was that a one-project thing?

**Free:** This is a one-shot deal, I think, because the local Audubon people — they were bird people. And bird people are not animal people in our sense of the word. I think there was just a sense of justice amongst people that you couldn't destroy anything so beautiful, so wonderful. They had piliated woodpeckers breeding down there, which is most unusual, and all kinds of exotic warblers and things came through. So we came down heavy on it being a sacrosanct area, because Washington is noted for its nice open spaces.

*[End Tape 5, Side A; Begin Tape 5, Side B]*

**Free:** Concurrent, you might say, with what I was discussing before — the zoo and all that — I got to know a woman named Mary Hazell Harris, who was a librarian for the government's Superintendent of Documents department. She was a red-haired maiden lady who was absolutely obsessed with wildlife, wolves in particular. So she had found her *métier* in life through getting involved with an organization called Defenders of Wildlife. Before that it was called the Defenders of Fur Bearers and the Anti-Steel Trap League or something like that. It had been started by a naval officer years ago. Then a woman named Katherine Bryan ran it for a while. I remember in the 1950s Miss Bryan called me up and thanked me for writing an article in one of my many newspaper outlets criticizing Mrs. [Mamie] Eisenhower — getting quotes from other people — Mrs. Eisenhower for wearing furs from trapped beavers. It went in all papers everywhere.<sup>70</sup> Of course, the Defenders of Wildlife was tickled pink about that. I don't know whether it did any good or not. [Laughter]. That was the first of the early public criticism of furs, long before these demonstrations much later on.

But Hazell Harris was a secretary then. She did all of her work at home. But then when Miss Bryan retired or left, Hazell took over because she had left job and had her pension and all that. So she ran it. Amazing woman. She worked very hard to get — with people out in the western part of the United States, whose names would be familiar to all — she worked against Compound 1080. I wrote a lot about 1080 for the North American Newspaper Alliance, too, and all the things we were trying — the cyanide guns that would go off in the mouth of — was it wolves? — you know, killing the sheep and so on.

**Cantor:** Excuse me. Compound 1080 was a poison, right?

**Free:** It was a long-range poison. If one animal got poisoned and another animal, a carrion, ate some of that, it would go through. It was a chain reaction poison. To his credit — and nobody gives [Richard M.] Nixon much credit on things about the environment and wildlife; he was a lot better than most of them — he wanted to get that ban, too. He's the one who started the Council of Environmental Quality. Nixon did some very good things on the environment. He certainly wasn't an outdoor man. There was no reason much for him to respond to that, but he behaved better than a lot of them.

---

<sup>70</sup> NANA, November 1, 1957; copy attached. Also version in Defenders of Furbearers News Bulletin, Spring 1958.



So I had met Rachel Carson in the meantime and introduced her to Hazell. They corresponded and so on. In other words, I got into this whole wildlife and poisoning thing — many letters and phone calls and meeting people and all of that. Also, we were crusading — as everybody is today — against the steel trap. Recently, through the House — I don't know whether it's gone through the full Congress — they're going to stop what should have been obvious years ago — stop using the traps in wildlife refuges and so on. But whether that's going to be enacted into law, I don't know. I think that's reprehensible. Of course, Christine Stevens has been a prime mover in that, because Major Hume, whom I mentioned earlier who was her mentor — Major Hume was the one who helped to get what they call the Gin trap in England outlawed. So she'll never rest easy, in her grave or elsewhere, until that's done. But Hazell did a fantastic job, too.

**Cantor:** I'm just wondering if you might have written a letter on that.

**Free:** No, I didn't. I didn't even know about it. See, I'm not doing any regular newspaper work. And a whole new generation of young animal protection public relations people have come up. But letters — I discovered some time ago that letters to the editor go only so far. You see, I got pretty — I wrote a lot to the Washington Post in op-ed pieces, you know, and, of course, earlier with the Washington Star. I was in there every week with fantastic things. All these subjects we've mentioned I've written about, but I didn't want to belabor the point — sometimes for the North American Newspaper Alliance, sometimes for the Women's [National] News Service, sometimes for the Washington Star, and then a lot for the Washington Post. And the Post really made fine displays of my articles — big spreads with pictures — the killing of snow geese, Rachel Carson, seal killing.

The Post treated me very, very well. But the editor of the editorial page left, Phil Geyelin. His successor was Meg Greenfield, who died recently. I continued to send things over, and they regularly came back. She did not want them. Like a lot of very cerebral people, intellectual people, she was only human-oriented. I don't think she ever took a walk in the woods. So very political-minded, very good, nice fine woman, but one of those people with an absolute blind spot on animals. There wasn't going to be anything I could do about it, period, paragraph. So I gave up on the Post, which was a tragedy because it was a marvelous place because I got so much feedback. I did big articles on Rachel Carson — all on the editorial page, mind you. They used to have their big op-ed that even carried pictures. I've got them all here. It's fantastic — the mail. And the good that I think I did through the Washington Post is immeasurable.

**Cantor:** When I asked that question you were starting to tell, though, about some work on the steel-jaw traps and 1080.

**Free:** Well, we worked on it. I can't keep up with 1080. It's been off, then it's back on, it's off, then it's back on. So, as you know, I have gone on to other things and cannot follow. There are too many things for somebody with my limited strength now to get into all of these things. I couldn't. I can't sit at the typewriter long enough to write stories.

---

Besides, the day of the printed word and the freelance writer is gone. It's all TV now. I always try to tell my daughter, who's with CNN — she's just the way I am. But she finds — you see, sometimes she says, “I don't want some of the TV people to get a hold of such-and-such a story because they're going to ridicule it.” The media has never learned at all. It's absolutely disgusting. They want to make fun of things. So I steer clear of the media. [Tape interruption.]

— on wildlife I wrote a lot about those poor little seals being knocked in the head, the harp seals. And how I got particularly onto that, and whales, was through a forgotten man — he wasn't too well-known when he was alive — Dr. Harry R. Lillie, a good Scottish name. He was a surgeon, a doctor, and he signed on at one point to a whaling ship. He wrote a book and crusaded about the horrible, horrible harpoon, explosive harpoon.<sup>71</sup> He gave lectures, he came here, and he worked with humane groups. At least he opened our eyes. He also had pictures and had gone up there years before anybody else even knew about those poor little harp seals being knocked in the head. So I knew a lot about that through Dr. Lillie in the 1950s or late 50s or early 60s.

I might say parenthetically that he was a great friend of these two women — whom I don't know whether I've mentioned or not — who really should have a star in their crowns, Alice Morgan Wright. And I think the Morgan had a connection with the Morgans, J. P. Morgan family. She was very rich. And her friend and colleague was Edith Goode. These two women were friends of Harry Lillie, of course. They tried very hard in the early days of UNESCO [United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization] and all of that to try to get — they worked on every level they could to do something about getting a better way of killing whales — a humane harpoon, even trying an electric harpoon.

Here were these two women who looked like they belonged in a nursing home, an old folks' home — Alice used a cane and Edith was very frail — but they were both intellectuals. Both had money, and they used it wisely. They'd go to all these animal meetings around the — over in England and so on. They did a lot of good. As a matter of fact, they gave a ton of money to the early, early Humane Society of the United States and, as a matter of fact, some kind of fund that was established, which you never hear by names at all. There wouldn't be any HSUS the way it is today if it hadn't been for those two women. You know, they were the little old ladies in tennis shoes, speaking in that fashion. So Harry Lillie would always stay with them out there in — they had a huge apartment at the Westchester.

Anyway, he had a big influence on me, because that's how I learned all the dreadful, dreadful things that were happening. He came here and testified for Congress on harpoons and seals.<sup>72</sup> He visited me. I just thought he was great, but nobody remembers him.

So we have to realize, as I mention these people, that we've all — any progress for animals has been on the shoulders of these people that have been forgotten, so to speak. I mean, I can rattle off their names. I don't think I've mentioned Billie Twyne sufficiently. She's the one who got the — she worked with Velma Johnson on the wild horses a great deal. Then she started the Horse Protection Association. But most importantly, Billie Twyne — her name was

---

<sup>71</sup> Harry Lillie, The Path Through Penguin City (London: Ernest Benn Limited, 1955).

<sup>72</sup> Dr. Lillie lectured March 9, 1961 at the Smithsonian Institution on “Man — The Menace to Our Planet.”

“Pearl.” She was half Irish and half Indian, American-Indian. She died several years ago. [Tape interruption.]

Pearl Twyne started the humane society in Arlington, Virginia. I have to bring myself back into the picture — what else is new? She came to see me to get my mother [Emily Dunlop Blake Cottrell] to help her start a humane society in Arlington, because my mother was a hell-raiser down in Richmond, Virginia, with the SPCA, which I mentioned earlier. Pearl then got a very good humane society started in Arlington. But her real love was horses.

I’ll fast-forward on this one. She went out, sent by Alice Morgan Wright and Edith Goode, to Kansas and those places to see how they killed the horses for slaughter with shooting and all that. She came back and wrote a memorandum about shooting them. She said the worst part, of course, as it is today, is the transportation, getting them there.

So she concentrated a great deal on the soring of walking horses, the Tennessee walking horse, which has a special kind of gait. When they get going the feet scarcely touch the ground. They extend their legs. Old-fashioned walking horse has sort of a rambling gait — rather nice but nothing spectacular. They made it very spectacular. People would whoop and holler as they go around the ring with their legs extended as if they were not touching the ground. No wonder they didn’t touch the ground. They couldn’t put their feet to the ground because they had been sored by their owners — there’s a lot of competition — with caustics, sometimes nails, sometimes chains like a shield over the top of the hooves, anything. When they get in the stall they’d lie down because they couldn’t stand. So Pearl — she helped to break up that. It probably still goes on. That’s the trouble — you don’t win forever. You have to keep after it. You get laws passed.

So she went to Senator Tydings — not Millard Tydings the father but his son, Joseph Tydings of Maryland, who was an animal person. You know, Maryland and all the Preakness and all the animal stuff up there. He put in a bill to outlaw it. But that’s, of course — you have to get animals taken across state lines for that to pertain. But she would go to some horse shows. It comes from down in Tennessee. She’d go down to Shelby [North Carolina]. I don’t know if it was Tennessee or North Carolina. Anyhow, they found out she was there and they almost mobbed her.

Billie Twyne — I think her wonderful efforts should be recognized in the future because she did it for no pay. She was working for the government in the daytime until later she retired. She did it all because she was so indignant. I knew her pretty well. We were on the phone a great deal and talking strategy and so on. She helped me on bills and a lot of different things. I won’t go into it. She even headed up Defenders of Wildlife for a while. So there were people like Billie that I am forever devoted to and admire so much.

So if anything that this tape recording does, or oral history, is to try to put in place the honor where it belongs to these women, like those two old ladies that I just mentioned and people like Twyne, of course. Velma Johnson, fortunately — she got some publicity — and Harry Lillie. I could go on and on. So I did a lot with wildlife, as you can see.

---

**Cantor:** What about whales?

**Free:** Oh, whales. With the whales it was mainly with Dr. Lillie. Then I wrote articles about the whaling, and interviews with people like Lillie. I remember one time I had a full-page article on whaling and that attempts were being made to stop the Japanese, because they did so much whaling. The Washington Star devoted a whole page to it. I've got it now. I ought to get it and frame it — you know, the big picture of the whale at the top. So I followed the whale story a lot.

I had several outlets. I had no problem with the Washington Star. I lost out with the Washington Post because of Meg Greenfield. But I still had North American Newspaper Alliance, Birmingham News also, and the Women's National News Service, then the Baltimore Sun — a whole slew of papers like that — because North American, the articles would come out anywhere from Minnesota, Florida. It had a huge clientele — subscribers, I should say. That was good stuff.

Then the other thing I got a little bit involved in — but there was not much I could do — on that horrible bunny bop, those bunnies that were rounded up cracked over the head.

**Cantor:** Who was doing that?

**Free:** In North Carolina they had so many bunnies, rabbits, that they rounded them up. They said, "Oh, it's strategy. It's been done time immemorial throughout the world." And Cleveland Amory, to his credit, hopped onto the bunny bop and publicized it a lot. I wrote some, but I didn't have the outreach that Cleveland had, of course.

You want me to go on back to anything? You finished up with the laboratories completely on that?

**Cantor:** For the moment. But what did you do regarding the bunny bop and how did you get involved?

**Free:** Oh, I knew about it and I wrote about it. I couldn't do a lot.

**Cantor:** Did you work with Cleveland Amory at all?

**Free:** Yes and no. He was in New York. He had been with HSUS earlier. I don't think Cleveland was anxious to work with any other writers. He was in New York. He was working for — he wrote wonderful articles for the Saturday Evening Post and the Saturday Review of Literature and all that. I really never knew Cleveland very well. I say, he didn't seem to be very friendly toward other writers. Not that I was any competition, but he might have thought so.

**Cantor:** And he started the Fund for Animals?

**Free:** Yes. Everything was based out of New York then. The Fund has always had some really good people working for it. Heidi Prescott is just first rate, a wonderful young woman. Of course, his old-time assistant, Marian Probst, is running it. But she's one of those unsung nice

---

people. She was devoted to him. I must not forget Virginia Handley in California. She is a marvel, especially on getting good legislation. [Tape interruption.]

Don't forget we want to talk about Vieques, too.

**Cantor:** Absolutely.

**Free:** And Rachel Carson Wildlife Refuge.

**Cantor:** At a certain point in the early 1970s, you became involved with the Montgomery County (Maryland) Humane Society.

**Free:** Yes, I did. The Montgomery County Humane Society was a medium-sized society. It didn't have much money and very poor facilities. The people who started it had their hearts in the right place. I have to stop a minute and get my thoughts. [Tape interruption.]

The Montgomery County Humane Society was, I thought, doing probably a very good job because some nice animal people were connected with it. When I moved to Montgomery County, much to my dismay, several of them said, "Oh, you have to come on the board. You have to come on our board." I said, "I don't like going on boards." But I said, "Since it's kind of a neighborhood thing and I've just moved into the county," so I did. As a newspaper writer, I should not do this kind of thing. It could hurt my credibility.

It was run by a woman named Polly Buel. The kennel manager was a man named Gene Hogan. He had worked at the [Washington] Animal Rescue League before with a woman — I can say I revere her memory — a woman named Phyllis Wright. Phyllis Wright was the major domo of animal welfare and rescue in Washington, DC in the 60s and the 70s. Later she became the vice-president of animal sheltering for the Humane Society of the United States, HSUS. She was a woman with a great personality, a lot of animal-care wisdom. She certainly tried to improve euthanasia, which I want to talk about. I haven't told you anything about the Washington Humane Society and Washington dog pound and the euthanasia.

**Cantor:** That would be fine.

**Free:** I've just come out of that. I have to backtrack on myself a little bit. I had come on the board at the Montgomery County Humane Society because I guess they knew that I had done a pretty good job in shaping up the dog pound in DC. I thought I told you something about that.

**Cantor:** A little bit, but tie it in.

**Free:** The euthanasia — well, euthanasia can be — the death link can hang it all together. But euthanasia for the Washington dog pound — I should say animal control — is managed today under contract to the Washington Humane Society. They had the Euthanair. That's a trade name, Euthanair, which is a big container barrel thing you put the animal in and it sucks out all the oxygen and they die. It's like going underwater without any — it's the pressure, and the ear drums burst. It was supposed to be — it was sold to all these humane societies through the

---

United States as being like going up into an airplane and getting such a high altitude that you get sleepy, that kind of loss of oxygen. But sometimes it was just the contrary. It was like the one going into a submarine where the pressure would break the ear drums. I watched dogs suffocating, biting the air. Simply horrible.

So a lot of humane societies in this country put it in. They were sold a bill of goods. And the American Humane Association seemed to be pushing it. That was the big conduit to the local shelters. At that time, most of the shelters were affiliated with AHA. And AHA carried big ads all the time in its magazine about the Euthanair. The end to all your problems about disposing of your animals — that was their message.

But we began to realize that this thing wasn't all it's cracked up to be. Phyllis Wright realized it pretty early on at the Washington Animal Rescue League. She had it taken out and it was down, but it was still down at the Washington dog pound. I found that out. That's when I wrote this article where I exposed how the animals were so badly — suffered so much in the Euthanair. Their ear drums would pop and they weren't always dead, and puppies would go through the thing and they'd still be alive. It was just so gruesome.

But how I got the Euthanair taken out of the pound was exposing it in a large article called "No Room Save in the Heart," which had a huge circulation in the Washingtonian magazine.<sup>73</sup> The editor told me they had more requests for reprints than any other magazine article they had ever run. They got a lot of members of Congress — everybody was on their high horse about this horrible, gruesome way of killing these animals.

Then they said that they would try to do something about it. They had a veterinarian there, Paul Romig, Chief of DC Animal Disease Control Division, who could have helped. He was a city veterinarian, and he said that he didn't want to kill animals with the needle. He was trained to save animals not to kill them. But he could easily put them in this chamber, but he wasn't going to put a needle in the animal. Probably he didn't have the skill. He agreed to sedating them first.

So I went down to the dog pound one day and they sedated these animals first and put them in there. That didn't work at all. So I have snapshots somewhere. I don't know where they are. I don't even want to see them. Dogs — they would pull them out [and] they were half alive, half dead. It was the most horrible, horrible thing — a wonderful dog licking your hand and jumping up to be petted and a few minutes later, if he wasn't dead he was half dead. It was inexpressible — the death chamber where they died or didn't die and blood coming out of their ears and so on. I had to stop it.

Then I went to the head of the city health department, Raymond L. Standard, and I had the help of a Dr. Charles Caleo. I see he's still active around. I haven't seen him in years. And he — always good to have an MD — he went with me to see Dr. Standard, who is the head of the health department. And he said, "This thing's got" — and they decided it had to be taken out. But then they had — but the personnel at the pound — awful. They didn't know anything about animals. Some of them stayed drunk a good bit of the time.

---

<sup>73</sup> April 1971, attached.

---

It was just hell all the time. Then finally — so bad that the Washington — let's jump ahead a few months or years. The Washington Humane Society — we put them out of business from the standpoint of being a city-run dog pound and got it fixed so that the pound could go up for contract, and the Washington Humane Society got the contract. This took action by the DC City Council. They have their personnel in charge now. I guess the euthanasia by injection of sodium pentobarbital is adequate.

But out here in Maryland where I found myself drafted to join the board of the Montgomery County Humane Society — I had gone through this successful venture in the District of Columbia. I was told that the Montgomery County euthanasia was good, and the great expert Phyllis Wright said it was good. I realize now you don't know who to believe.

One day — I had only gone to one or two board meetings — I had a letter. I won't go into all the details. One young woman there, backed up by three or four other women — Gayle Carey, Susan Gordon, and Ingrid Newkirk — wrote a letter to one of the council members that the euthanasia was bad, the treatment was bad, animals were disappearing, and something should be done. But Mrs. Buel and Mr. Hogan, whom I liked — they were my friends! I couldn't believe it. But I don't think that Polly knew what she was doing half the time. I think that she — I won't go into this. Her daughter is still alive. I won't say anything worse about her. Polly's husband was very smart. He'd do all her letter-writing for her. He was a former newsman. But they had just let that thing slide, and these girls were right in their accusations.

So I thought — so they sent their letter to all the board members, and everybody wanted to put it under the rug. I had met one of these girls. She was only about twenty-three — a blonde, British accent, named Ingrid Newkirk. It was Ingrid Newkirk and Susan Gordon who wrote the letter. Ingrid was a kennel girl, you know, cleaning up the dog "doo." She wasn't even a rescue type.

I was furious. I acquired the meeting room in the local public library and got all the board members to come to a special meeting. I also invited a woman member of the county council, a woman named Elizabeth Scull. We aired the whole thing. We had a commission [that] was appointed. I said, "Let's call it a commission not a committee." We're pretty self-important. Several of us were on that commission. One was Phyllis Wright, who must have known the thing was bad, and a woman named Edna Cooke, a woman named Mary Gardiner, and me. I wrote the report. We outlined how they had to shape up. We sent it to the county council and so on.

After that, a lot of publicity. David Scull said on television some things about some of them. There were several lawsuits. Somehow I got sued, but somehow or another I didn't get called. They were fighting — Phyllis and all of them were fighting back, and Gene Hogan. I don't know what got into them. I'll never know to this day how they let that thing become so lax, because on the euthanasia — I've got descriptions of that.

Then I saw it. They wouldn't do the euthanasia in the vein, the intravenous. They were injecting the heart and getting it into the lung cavity, and animals were screaming and not dying.

---

Then later we went there and looked up in the attic. It had a crawl space in this horrible little old shelter. A lot of animals — cats — had obviously gotten loose, probably during euthanasia, and they were all dead as doornails up there. It was horrible. And here were these seemingly humane well-to-do people allowing this, and I had leant my name to this organization. I was guilty for not questioning details about running the shelter.

So we ended up having a — we went to court. David Scull,<sup>74</sup> who later became a member of the state legislature and county council, and his mother was in the council — he should have known better. There was another big lawyer, too, on our board. They all seemed to get sued. I don't know what in the hell was going on. Hogan was voted out, kicked out. And Polly, somehow or another, sweet-talked the man from the AHA on the board into staying on, because her husband, a fine talker, sort of a promoter, got into the act. It was a tangled-up mess. I won't spend any more time on it.

All I know is that then we got the show back on the road. Now they have a first-class shelter. They have a lot of personnel. They have an animal ambulance. They have a spay/neuter clinic. All the good things you'd wish for. But I'm not on that board. They probably don't even know me now.

**Cantor:** Was the meeting that Ingrid Newkirk and Susan Gordon arranged the beginning of the change?

**Free:** They didn't arrange it.

**Cantor:** Did you arrange the meeting then?

**Free:** Oh, yes. I arranged it.

**Cantor:** You arranged the meeting with the board about the euthanasia.

**Free:** The board, about the letter that Gayle, Ingrid, and Susan had written about how everything was such a horrible mess. I said, "We've got to do something about this," and the board didn't want to do anything. So that's when we — reach up there and hand me that page. I think that's it. No, that's not it. It's a supervisory — [Tape interruption.]

We wrote this. The date on this is May 24<sup>th</sup>, 1972. We called ourselves the Supervisory Commission and talked about — the original charges were from a girl named Gayle Carey. She maintained the euthanasia was terrible. So what we ordered was more space, physical improvements of all sorts, and then to draw up a manual of operations. I will summarize. We expected them to get technicians and use the method of sodium pentobarbital that has the most immediate effect and less chance for error. No animal should be laid aside until it's dead. No dead animals were to be in the room when the others are euthanized. And no one under twenty-one can euthanize animals. As you see, that referred to kids seventeen and eighteen years old euthanizing — knew nothing. And they bring in the live animals where they were working with

---

<sup>74</sup> David Scull and his mother, Betty Scull, defended us.



dead ones right on the floor. I can't believe it, but it's true. You can see how people can get hardened. Think of the German death camps and how those guards got hardened.

So Ingrid and the others were vindicated. She became an outside humane agent, and then later she went down to the District of Columbia and became an outside cruelty officer for the dog pound.

**Cantor:** How does that work? How does one become an outside agent? In other words, she was working for Montgomery County Humane.

**Free:** She became an anti-cruelty officer for Montgomery County where she'd go out on places where reports would come in about starving animals or abandoned animals or beaten animals and all that. So that was what I call outside. She was not inside doing kennel work; she was outside doing anti-cruelty work. Then she became deputy sheriff — could carry a gun. Then she moved, I think, next down to DC and did somewhat the same thing.

Then the next time I knew about Ingrid was I went to a conference given by philosophers at Blacksburg, Virginia, under the auspices of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute [VPI]. A professor of philosophy up there knew all these animal people from all over the world. They had these terrific speakers. Peter Singer was there. Andrew Linzey was there. You name it — Bernard Rollins, all of them. They were all philosophers, you see, and were publishing a lot.

And who do you think turned up there? Ingrid Newkirk. I didn't know she knew what philosophy was because I knew her as a kennel girl who blew a whistle. I was put on the board of a Society of Animals and Ethics, a figurehead post. So I didn't want to continue on it. She called me up and said, "I want to vote for you." This conference in Blacksburg, I think, awakened Ingrid to the deepest meaning of animal welfare work and animal rights.

The next thing I knew — I kind of lost touch with her. Then the next thing I knew, she started up this People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals [PETA]. She had two or three people working as supporters, but she would go public on some of the wildest stories. She would make these calculated risks of alienating even supporters. It's a wonder she didn't get sued. Then she moved right along, and Alex Pacheco came in the picture. Then the next thing we knew, the next big thing, was the Silver Spring monkeys. Then I realized she was a grown-up girl who meant business.

**Cantor:** Did you know Ingrid at all — Ingrid Newkirk —

**Free:** Socially?

**Cantor:** — other than noticing her activities? Were you communicating with her through that time or observing what she did?

**Free:** Some of the young people would come over to my house. You know, she was twenty-three when I met her. I was in my fifties. They'd come over here and we'd have — several of them. And David Scull. I have pictures. We had parties. It always was some connection with

---

what we were doing. Sometimes she'd go — I told Ingrid, "You're moving too fast on such-and-such. It's going to come back and hit you in the face." And several times it did.

But she hooked up with Alex Pacheco, a nice young fellow. I think Dan Mathews, who was just a boy when I met him down here at AU [American University], was trying to do something about saving the pigeons from being poisoned. Dan — he hooked up with them and he's still with them. They've gone places with their outlandish publicity, which worked, which worked. I always wanted to — I did not want to court, as I've said over and over again, ridicule, because I had seen that happen with the early anti-vivisectionists and so on. I don't know how these kids pulled it off, except we had a younger crowd in the audience. They were able to do it because — how they could get away with taunting people wearing fur coats and so on is a marvel. I went on some of those fur coat demonstrations. [Tape interruption.]

**Cantor:** So PETA was founded what — 1980?

**Free:** I don't know.

**Cantor:** Somewhere around in there. Then did you follow the Silver Spring monkeys case?

**Free:** I did.

**Cantor:** Was that in the press a lot?

**Free:** I went to the trial. I might say here that when it went to court —

**Cantor:** What happened?

**Free:** Before it went to court —

**Cantor:** Yes. What happened there? What was it? What was the story?

**Free:** The county attorney had to appoint somebody to defend PETA.

**Cantor:** Who were the Silver Spring monkeys? How did that come about?

**Free:** Alex Pacheco got a job working in a laboratory headed by a man named Dr. Edward Taub. He had funding primarily from National Institutes of Health. He had some partners in it. They were not scientists but underwriting him. His big thing was deafferentation, to cut the nerves in the arms of monkeys and then try to teach them to use those hands to try to regenerate the nerves. So this would be the great white hope for people who had had all kinds of injuries where they couldn't use a limb. He just kept these monkeys in cages right in Silver Spring, Maryland, not very far from where the old animal shelter [was] where Ingrid had worked.

This boy, Alex Pacheco, went and got himself hired as a caretaker for these monkeys because he had been tipped off things were not good. He got pictures galore of the filth in the cages, the torn bandages, the feces, everything that was against the Animal Welfare Act and

---

against your sense of morality. He was very smart. He and Ingrid — after dark they brought in veterinarians and people like Michael Fox and people who could then testify to the condition of these animals. Then they got the police, the Montgomery County police, to go in and swear out a warrant to take these animals away from Taub on cruelty to animals. That's when I first heard about it.

There are so many ramifications to this thing. They were taken out — they were put into the custody, somehow or another, of PETA. I don't know why. They were taken to a place in the basement of a woman in Silver Spring. Anyway, how I got into it — I was out there and had all these confrontations with Taub about these animals. I've got pictures of him and I going head to head. The monkeys — their arm nerves were cut so they didn't have any feeling. They didn't suffer from that. But they suffered from neglect.

When it went to trial, I went everyday to the trial. But before that, how I played a major role, I should say — without being self-serving — in getting a good attorney, Roger Galvin, to prosecute the case. The top county attorney had assigned an inexperienced county attorney to take the case. But I saw that this guy was totally inept, that he would never be able to prosecute properly. He just didn't have a clue. He was just totally inefficient. Then what to do about that?

**Cantor:** Wasn't he supposed to be prosecuting the accused animal abusers as opposed to defending PETA?

**Free:** Yes, but he was defending PETA in a sense. But under Maryland's anti-cruelty law, it was the state against Dr. Taub.

**Cantor:** Okay. I thought the trial was the trial of the laboratory person.

**Free:** It was. Listen to this. This man was so inept that I got Christine Stevens and Fay Brisk to go with me to see the top county attorney, Andrew Sonner. I was important in this because I was the only Montgomery County resident. They were both District residents — Fay and Christine. The three of us went up to see Sonner, who was the head legal authority. We sat down with him and told him — I wish Fay was here; she had real good memory. And Christine has a memory like an elephant. We told him that the man who had been appointed to defend the state, to protect PETA, was really inept, he had no idea what he was doing, they would never be defended properly. And guess what? Sonner reached down into the pool of attorneys and came out guess who? Roger Galvin, who then didn't know diddley-squat about animals at all, but he boned up on it very well. He became in a sense their defense attorney in the county. But as a county attorney, he was working to prosecute Dr. Taub and the owners of the Silver Spring monkeys. Don't ask me the ramifications. I wrote about it; I should know. Then that case went on and on. Galvin later went into animal law.

*[End Tape 5, Side B; Begin Tape 6, Side A]*

**Free:** The Silver Spring monkey case became a cause célèbre. The verdict was overturned. I think they got Taub guilty on one count; that was enough. But later it was decided that the law didn't apply in his case, so it became kind of a moot thing.

---

But we had accomplished what — I say “we” because I certainly was right there everyday. My husband went, too. Everybody went like I guess people went out to the battles during the Civil War, especially Bull Run. They’d ride in their carriages and go out and watch them fighting. [Laughter]. It’s a good parallel — the good guys and the bad guys.

**Cantor:** It is a good parallel.

**Free:** You asked me about some other things that had some influence on all of us at that time. I want to go back to the time I went to England and met the new animal rights leaders. Until the 1970s, animal protection or rights was relatively quiescent.

But in 1964 a woman named Ruth Harrison wrote a book on animal machines, because in this post-war world, the animal husbandry thing had gone from bad to worse, not only in England but particularly in Holland and in Germany and, of course, in this country as well. Animals were placed in tiny little cages. The chickens couldn’t even turn around, and the pigs were in tiny little cages, and no freedom at all, no access to open air, walking around.

So this woman Ruth Harrison wrote a book called Animal Machines. It was serialized in the London Observer, a very good newspaper there. Friends of mine gave me a copy. I was bowled over. I then met Ruth in England in 1966. I was so impressed that she had been able to pull this off.

Then I found out where she got her ethic. She had worked as an assistant, like a secretary, for a while for George Bernard Shaw.<sup>75</sup> And Shaw had become very much influenced by Henry Salt. Henry Salt was the man who, you might say, “invented” animal rights, because the legacy goes back to people like [Michel] Montaigne and [Jeremy] Bentham<sup>76</sup> and all that. I have that book right here. His book is called Animal Rights,<sup>77</sup> and nobody in this country paid much attention. So he had influenced George Bernard Shaw.

Therefore, the way the torch came down was that Shaw met this girl, Ruth Harrison. I don’t know what her maiden name was. She absorbed that philosophy from Shaw. Then when she grew up and wrote that book on Animal Machines, that helped launch the animal rights movement in an indirect way, you might say. Some young people at Oxford [University], whose names are not familiar to the average person, published a book in 1971 called Animals, Men, and Morals.<sup>78</sup> It was published by Taplinger, who’s a foreign publisher, British publisher. The people who wrote for it were unknown to most of us — Maureen Duffy, Brigid Brophy, Richard

---

<sup>75</sup> George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950), Irish dramatist, novelist, critic, and vegetarian, winner of the 1925 Nobel prize for literature.

<sup>76</sup> Michel Montaigne (1533-92), French essayist and critic; Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), English philosopher and social reformer.

<sup>77</sup> Henry Salt, Animals’ Rights, Considered in Relation to Social Progress (London: Macmillan, 1892). Henry Stephens Salt (1851-1939), humanitarian reformer and campaigner for social justice causes; author of important works on the rights of animals and vegetarianism, including Animals’ Rights, which contains a number of issues and arguments raised by animal advocates in recent decades.

<sup>78</sup> Stanley Godlovitch, Roslind Godlovitch, and John Harris (eds.), Animals, Men and Morals: An Inquiry into the Maltreatment of Non-Humans (London: Gollancz, 1971; New York: Taplinger, 1972).

---

Ryder, Roslind Godlovitch. Then they wrote about all the things that we've discussed today — the factory farms, and hunting, and animal experimentation, the whole nine yards. The book didn't go anywhere much because nobody wanted to read that kind of thing — no big names.

But it was the seed of the success of a book called Animal Liberation by a young fellow from Oxford who was a little bit younger than some of these. His name is Peter Singer, an Australian. He reviewed this book that I just mentioned to you, Animals, Men, and Morals, for the New York Review of Books.<sup>79</sup> That led him to think more deeply about the subject matter. Then he made a complete turn and became a vegetarian himself and an anti-vivisectionist and went the whole way. He was just like being Salt himself. And his book, Animal Liberation, as I say, grew out of this book review.<sup>80</sup> Fortunately, I have one of the few copies probably in the United States of that book, Animals, Men, and Morals, called An Inquiry into the Maltreatment of Non-Humans. For the record I should give the editors' names, Stanley and Roslind Godlovitch and John Harris, people that are unknown to most of us. That got the whole — that book, with Animal Liberation, got the whole thing going.

I went to a conference in England, at Trinity College, Cambridge University, in August 1977, and some of those people spoke. It was an animal rights conference. And Richard Ryder at that time, who's a psychologist by profession — he was at that time the chair, like the president, of the RSPCA [Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals], which had always been a rather stodgy organization. He had inspired this conference. I went over. Helen Jones had told me about it. My daughter was studying in Oxford. That was a grand excuse for me to go over. We went to Cambridge and listened to all the sessions. Tom Regan came. Helen Jones had told Tom about it. He was just getting in, putting his foot in the water on this subject. Peter Singer, of course.

Then we signed an Animal Rights Manifesto.<sup>81</sup> It was sitting up on the table for anybody who wanted to sign it could, like a declaration of independence. It stressed that non-human animals are companions, should not be exploited, and so on. I should append that to this document. I said at the time, "This is like signing on to the Declaration of Independence," because [it was] the first document of that type that any groups had ever signed on to. It was not as radical as you would think. It was just against exploitation. That was one of my highlights in my life, being with these people that I had — I didn't know much of that stuff.

**Cantor:** Do you recall roughly how many people signed that or how many people were there?

**Free:** I had the list. I have the document right upstairs there. About 150 persons signed it. More could have, but they were probably afraid to.

**Cantor:** Was it publicized at all?

**Free:** Oh, in Britain, I guess. You've never heard of it?

---

<sup>79</sup> Peter Singer, "Animal Liberation," New York Review of Books (April 5, 1973), pp. 17-21.

<sup>80</sup> Peter Singer, Animal Liberation: A New Ethic for our Treatment of Animals (New York: Avon Books, 1977).

<sup>81</sup> Attached.

---

**Cantor:** Oh, yes.

**Free:** You've heard of it?

**Cantor:** There were just a few Americans there?

**Free:** Yes, just a few. Michael Fox was there. Helen Jones was there.

**Cantor:** You mentioned Tom Regan.

**Free:** And Tom. I'd have to look at the list. No, not many Americans. I would not have known about it but Helen Jones telling me. I thought, "Well, I'm going to go."

**Cantor:** Now, didn't some additional gatherings of animal advocates take place after the events you've just talked about and after Peter Singer published Animal Liberation? Some gatherings took place in the United States in the late 1970s, right? You mentioned Blacksburg earlier.

**Free:** That was an academic meeting of people like Andrew Linzey and a whole bunch of those people whose names are familiar to you.

**Cantor:** Weren't there some meetings of animal advocates — George Cave?

**Free:** There were some — there's a fellow — I wish I could think of his name right now.<sup>82</sup> But he got up on the floor at the Blacksburg meeting and said, "We've got to have a march on Washington." I thought, "My God, how self-defeating can you get? We are not ready for that." But a lot of people rallied to his cause, and they did have meetings and demonstrations. Do you remember his name? He was based in Ohio. But I thought it was self-defeating because we were not ready for just a general opposition to use of animals and so on. It would go nowhere. And I was right; it didn't go anywhere. I felt he was much — his indignation just overcame him. I'll give his name later, because I never got mixed up with him at all.

**Cantor:** But in that time some organizations were being formed, right?

**Free:** Yes.

**Cantor:** Trans-Species?

**Free:** Oh, yes, Trans-Species [Unlimited] guy.<sup>83</sup> He's the one who — Ingrid said that she didn't want — he and I would have been pitted against each other. He was one of the editors of that magazine, and I didn't want to get mixed up with him at all. So Ingrid said, "Oh, you've got to stay in there, Ann." I said, "No. Let that Trans-Species guy have it all if he wants it."

**Cantor:** Which magazine? Between the Species?

---

<sup>82</sup> His name is Charles Morgan.

<sup>83</sup> Trans-Species Unlimited; name changed later to Animal Rights Mobilization! (ARM!).

---

**Free:** No, that came later. I am on the editorial board of that one, which is mainly a journal of philosophy papers.

**Cantor:** Before this time, you've linked up with some other people with some related lines of thinking. There's Rachel Carson, and you worked to have a national wildlife refuge dedicated to her.

**Free:** Yes. I was very much — you see, as you can tell, I did not get in with the hard-core demonstrators. I thought from the very beginning — as I've said all through this — that overdoing it can only act as a boomerang because animal people don't have much credibility in the first place, so this only compounds it.

I think that the influence that Albert Schweitzer, which came to me in the 1960s, was terribly important. I felt at long last that the child in me, and now the adult, was being reinforced, that at long last I had found a grown-up who feels like I did. I guess that was in my mind. Because like every child in particular — I can only speak for my own case, and as I've said earlier — there was no one to reinforce my feelings. But then when I was a grown woman, reading him and saw that he, as a young lad, needed reinforcement, too. He didn't find it either. But he acted independently. He always acted independently. So I felt a great connection with Albert Schweitzer. Rachel Carson, I think, felt the same way. I have written many times about her devotion to Schweitzer and to animals.

**Cantor:** These feelings that he reinforced — I recall in our first session you talked about the feelings of being sensitive to animals that other people around you didn't share. Is that what you mean?

**Free:** That's what I meant. Here at long last was someone in authority — an authority figure, a role model. His name was made and all of that. In other words, it was not Virginia Sargent and some of those hand-wringing people. But here was a man of great reputation and so on and so forth, a doctor and a missionary and a philosopher — all the things he was. He had come out forthrightly. He had stature. He had credibility. He was a marvelous public relations person. Somehow or another he got a lot of press.

People would go to Lambaréné [Gabon] like a pilgrimage. Adlai Stevenson<sup>84</sup> and all the people of that day would talk about him like he was kind of a saint. You know, one of the apocryphal stories was, I think, that Stevenson was going to swat a fly or a mosquito, and Schweitzer restrained him. "That's my fly," he said. That got a little bit ridiculous that way.

Anyway, the word went forth that here was a man who really cared about animals. He's the one who coined, you might say, the term "reverence for life," which pulled it all together, you see. That motivated me. I say, it was in my book, Forever the Wild Mare, and I felt that way about Rachel Carson. She also felt that way about Schweitzer. I've written articles about

---

<sup>84</sup> Adlai E. Stevenson (1900-65), American politician and lawyer, governor of Illinois and unsuccessful presidential candidate in 1952 and 1956.

---

the influence of Schweitzer on Rachel.<sup>85</sup> She said that he was the greatest influence on her life, and I can say the same. She dedicated Silent Spring to his memory.

But I was trying to analyze it. I think it was mainly because we at long last found an authority figure, an adult, who shared our childhood emotions and feelings. We knew that — in other words, we had an ally in uppercase letters. I think that was a lot of his — a lot of the people followed him for that reason, although they didn't articulate it to themselves. Like [Ralph Waldo] Emerson once said, I paraphrase, "You find your own thoughts being expressed by someone else."

So that's when, in 1982, I took it in my head to write, that is, produce, Animals, Nature, and Albert Schweitzer.<sup>86</sup> I had been on the board of directors of — board of governors — of something called the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship, which was headquartered in New York and is now in Boston. But it was dominated by the medical and business community. They didn't want to have anything to do with any of Schweitzer's animal philosophy. They steered clear of that. At meetings all the time I'd try to bring up things about animals. They steered clear completely for the basic reason they were either from a medical background or from a business background. I think they followed a subconscious rationale, "We can't be favorable to animals because it's our economic base. Our survival in the long run depends on animals. Our economy is based on animals." That is the way most people think. That's why it's never gotten anywhere. That's why it's discouraged in the schools, because what would it do to the meat industry and the medical industry, pharmaceutical, and all the ancillary companies that live and feed off of animals? That's why people are so defensive, I think.

**Cantor:** What about your work to get the national wildlife refuge?

**Free:** Oh, yes. Let me tell you first about the book. I got off of that. So this Schweitzer group was doing nothing about animals. And every time I'd bring up anything I was sort of cut down. So one day I came up with a great idea. I said, "I'm going to bring out a book on Schweitzer and on the animal ethic." What I did — I went to four animal organizations. I said, "We'll publish it ourselves." The Fellowship was not giving the money for it. But I got the Humane Society of the United States, the Animal Welfare Institute, and later the ASPCA, to help. They got books in return. I then called it Animals, Nature, and Albert Schweitzer. Of course, it's the story of his life and how his ethic unfolds from his boyhood times. Fortunately, there was a lot of documentation. He had written a great deal about his early days. I took it on through to his philosophy. After nearly every paragraph by him or so, there would be a paragraph from me to keep the story going. Then it was illustrated with pictures of him and his animals that Erica Anderson had taken. They were given to me by her archive at the Albert Schweitzer Center.<sup>87</sup>

---

<sup>85</sup> Ann Cottrell Free, "Remembering Rachel Carson, A Friend of Animals," Animal Welfare Institute Quarterly v. 36, nos. 1 & 2 (Spring-Summer 1987); Ann Cottrell Free, "Since Silent Spring: Our Debt to Albert Schweitzer and Rachel Carson," address, 1992 (copy of address attached).

<sup>86</sup> Copy of book attached.

<sup>87</sup> Erica Anderson was an Austrian photographer who established the Albert Schweitzer Center and Archives at Great Barrington, Massachusetts.

---



So I pulled it together, and everybody liked it: Animals, Nature, and Albert Schweitzer. And Christine bought a certain number. In other words, she paid for her share. HSUS paid for its share. The Schweitzer Fellowship paid for its share. Later on, several editions — later I asked PETA if they wanted to come in. And the New York ASPCA — they could pay into it, too. They'd have a special edition, the ASPCA edition or the PETA edition. So we got several of those people to — organizations — to buy in quantity to give away or sell or do whatever they wanted to. They got the physical thing; I kept the copyright.

I think — I say I produced this book out of complete desperation that the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship was paying no attention to animals. Some of the board members liked the book. I mean, some of the more liberal people in there, particularly Albert Schweitzer's daughter and his son-in-law. They were really — ordered lots and lots of copies and wrote wonderful letters to me. There were certain members on the board that were very, very complimentary. Especially supportive was the Reverend George C. Marshall, author of a Schweitzer biography. Some of them were frozen-faced. But that was the biggest contribution I made in that Fellowship, because they spent most of their time talking about money, as most boards do. I didn't take any pay for it whatsoever. I did the whole thing. I had a man at HSUS who was very good in graphics and so on. He helped a lot with the layout. Most people agree it's a really good book. In Defense of Animals buys them by the carton even today. It's gotten — I think it's brought Schweitzer to countless people. I guess I had moved out about 30,000 copies at least. I'm proud of that because it brought Schweitzer to the millions that otherwise would not have known about him.<sup>88</sup>

**Cantor:** Yes. And you have a book of poems.

**Free:** Then a few years after that, I had established the Flying Fox Press. The flying fox is a southeast hemisphere bat that's supposed to have a kinship with primates — hence, the only flying primate. Anyway, trying to get that book of poetry and so on, mainly about animals, animals not being a popular subject, particularly the sadness of animals — it's not the sweetie-pie stuff but the real thing. I figured that animals were not very popular with the general public and general publishing houses. So that's why we established the Flying Fox Press. That way we could sell it ourselves. So we sold about 30,000 copies. [Tape interruption.]

**Cantor:** What about that? Why don't you go ahead and tell us a little about that [Rachel Carson Refuge]?

**Free:** Well, you haven't got much time. I think what we ought to do is — but first let me tell you about my book, No Room, Save in the Heart. It is a compilation of my animal poems, covering lyrical thoughts as well as real ones on the horrors of hunting, experimentation, and so on.<sup>89</sup>

**Cantor:** Give us the nutshell on that.

---

<sup>88</sup> The book was originally published by a consortium of the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship, the Albert Schweitzer Center, the Animal Welfare Institute, and the Humane Society of the United States. Then Free established the Flying Fox Press and has brought out at least 30,000 more copies.

<sup>89</sup> Copy of book attached.

---

**Free:** How many minutes do you have?

**Cantor:** We have a few minutes.

**Free:** How many? Five?

**Cantor:** Yes.

**Free:** All right, let's see. You want to talk about the future leaders.

**Cantor:** What about the wildlife refuge?

**Free:** Well, there's nothing much to it.

**Cantor:** Just the basic process. How did you do it? Because I know you got a letter thanking you from the Department of the Interior, didn't you?

**Free:** I got an award, yes.

**Cantor:** Tell us how you led up to establishing the refuge.

**Free:** We're not going to have space for those odds and ends I wanted to put in either.

**Cantor:** We'll do our best.

**Free:** All right. You asked me about the Rachel Carson Refuge. At the fifth anniversary of Rachel Carson's death, I thought I should write this article about what was happening all around me. It was more interesting — what we called ecology and conservation and all of that, and DDT, all those things. There was a lot going on because of the influence of Silent Spring, which was a beautifully-written book, well-documented, on the ravages, current and long-term effect, from these new postwar pesticides that were used helter-skelter over vast areas of the United States and all over the world. Reports were coming in on the bad health effects. She documented it very well.

Then, of course, all the time she was writing it she was suffering from cancer, which had started in the breast. She hadn't been treated properly on a previous operation. Anyway, she died, but her influence went on. I gave her material on pesticide poisonings while she was working on the book. We became friends.

So I wrote this article for what was the equivalent of Parade, a Sunday supplement called This Week magazine.<sup>90</sup> I interested the editor, which was not easy to do. But once again, anybody listening will think Ann doesn't have much selling power, but she used her contacts. I had an indirect contact with the editor of this magazine, and that's how I got him to carry this

---

<sup>90</sup> Ann Cottrell Free, "The Great Awakening," This Week (April 13, 1969).

---

article, which I called “The Great Awakening,” which related all the good things that had been happening in the environment since Rachel’s death caused by her book.

Then in the middle of the article I had what you call a box: “Why not a memorial? If you agree, write the Secretary of the Interior suggesting that he name a wildlife refuge as a commemorative gesture.” The letters just poured in. They had to hire extra help to handle them, and there were boxes and boxes of letters. I saw a great many of them, and they were written from the heart from people. They were asking the Secretary of the Interior to name this refuge. The people there at the Interior Department called me back, “What about this place? What about that place?” One day an official telephoned and said, “We have a new refuge stretching from New Hampshire more or less up to Portland. It’s mainly wetlands. It has no real name yet, only ‘Coastal Maine.’” I said, “Let’s name it the Rachel Carson Wildlife Refuge in Maine.” A done deal! Then they had a grand opening on June 28, 1970. The Secretary of the Interior came and all kinds of big wheels.

The refuge is still going on, and they get more and more money each year — they don’t think it’s enough — but to enlarge it. I’m very pleased because many, many animals and birds — it’s a migratory area — have been saved that way because it’s a breeding area and so on. I’m happy with that.

Certain organizations have even — you can ask me about what they did. Organizations have given me some very nice recognition for that.<sup>91</sup> I’m pleased because I wish I could give the recognition to all the people that have helped me. As you can see in this talk how much I’ve been inspired by all those old ladies in tennis shoes and so on down the line. For this I got the Albert Schweitzer — no, I got the Albert Schweitzer Medal earlier. Rachel Carson had gotten it, and Fay Brisk had gotten it later, too. It shows that Schweitzer’s influence has gone on.

Another thing that helped me — it wasn’t so much about animals. It was and it wasn’t — was that I went in 1975, I guess, to the World Vegetarian Conference in Orono, Maine, which opened my eyes to a lot of things that I didn’t know about vegetarianism, that you didn’t — different substitute foods. I met a lot of fascinating people. I wrote about it in a vegan book.<sup>92</sup>

At one point, I was going to write a book on livestock and factory farms, but I let that one go by the wayside. You have to be an expert in agriculture on some of those. I wasn’t really.

Then the other things I wanted to say before we end is that sometimes your allies — they’re on your side but for the wrong reasons, like Ducks Unlimited. I see wonderful people there in that — in Ducks Unlimited and the National Wildlife Federation. The World Wildlife Fund in the beginning was only in it to save the habitat to have the animals for them to shoot. I don’t think that prevails with their broader membership, however. But don’t forget, World Wildlife Fund was started by game managers. In other words, being for the right things for the

---

<sup>91</sup> Such as: The Rachel Carson Legacy Award from the Rachel Carson Council, 1987; Honorary Founding Member, Friends of Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge, 1988; Certificate of Appreciation, Department of Interior, 1995.

<sup>92</sup> An account of the conference can be found in: Joanne Stepaniak, The Vegan Sourcebook (Lowell House, 1998), pp. 13-15.

---

wrong reason. But if you keep persisting, the wrong reasons can then be pushed aside and the right things begin to be more important. [Laughter].

So I think that the point is that the — if we can get a way in some way — and I don't know how it can be done — get some better guidelines and get the protectors of animals to stop so much infighting. They all think that they have the answer. I think it's because their constituents, who are the animals, have no vote. Therefore, they all take it upon themselves to say that "I'm right." As a result, they end up killing each other off. That's why we've lost so many people along the way, because they're hard-headed and inflexible.

I think that's one of the tragedies of the whole animal movement. I've seen so many good people come and go. There are a few that continue on, but they change a lot. HSUS — I think they're doing some good stuff. I used to know everyone, but a lot of the people I know have gone. They had a very good magazine. Now they've hooked up with Time magazine, and they've got a very slick truncated magazine. If you read all that mail from HSUS — it's mainly money-raising letters — but through the average member of the public, they're hiding their light under a barrel because they're doing some good things but we don't know about them the way we did before where we all — back in those days, people from HSUS, and lots of fantastically good people — I mentioned Frank McMahon and Fred Myers and so on. We manned the barricades; we did indeed. It's all been built on that progress that we made early on. There has been no major legislation since the period that I was talking to you about.

But I think a lot of the improvement in the way we look at animals is coming through. I think there's much more education today in the schools of veterinary medicine, the philosophy courses and so on. Some of it is trickling down into the elementary grades. But I still think you have a — I guess those people will just have to die off — the redneck mentality, the shooter, the hunter, the deer hunters, the trappers. They're in the numerical minority. I don't think you can reach — I don't know how you reach those people because they don't read, and the churches that they go [to], they're not going to tell them. So I don't know. They may be a lost cause. But reaching our large middle class with its Hallmark card mentality is the real challenge. It must become aware of its inconsistent ethic.

But as I feel that — however, in all these years, going back to being a little girl — that I've been on the right track. I wish I had made more of a — could reach out to more people. But I do feel, in retrospect, that as these new people come along, if they just stop their darn infighting and their intolerance of each other, and be a little bit more kind to one another — there's not much kindness and love amongst many of the humane people. Now, as you can see, I grieve over the ones who have died. I loved Velma Johnson. Then there was a woman named Helena Huntington-Smith, who did a great job. She got the church people to come in behind the humane slaughter bill. I can just name them off, the ones who had their hearts into the effort.

But I don't have those kind, sweet friends anymore. I just wish that we could restore that to the animal field — much more love. I don't think there's much love, and I think that's terribly, terribly important. But I think that the torch is being passed. Thank God it's not being dropped. We have different ways of handling the torch, to use the simile again. Some people

---

run with it and catch people on fire and all that. But I think we're shedding some light, but certainly not enough.

**Cantor:** Thank you very much.

**Free:** Thank you.

*[End of Session].*

---

**Ann Cottrell Free  
Session #4  
July 25, 2000  
Bethesda, Maryland**

**Ken Shapiro, Interviewer**

*[Begin Tape 7, Side A]*

**Shapiro:** Our purpose today is to gather some loose threads together, try to look in an overview kind of way at the story, develop some themes that might need to be developed more, and take a look at some current issues and some prospect for the future. So, Ann, where would you like to begin?

**Free:** There's been a hiatus, a delay, in between this tape and the previous ones. It's given me time to take a little more perspective. I think that it might be well if I take a look at myself and why I haven't done more. It's sort of scattered, and scattering in itself can be a virtue or it could be a vice. Versatility can be also, if you spread yourself too thin. Speaking of that, Rachel Carson, who was a friend of mine — I used to try to get her into other things. She said, "I cannot spread myself too thin." How right she was.

**Shapiro:** You have some feeling that you spread yourself too thin.

**Free:** Yes, I do, because I have always responded to the immediate stimulus of something horrible — captivity, injustice — all this is unjust — unjust captivity of animals, hunting, when I've seen some atrocious things, zoos (which is captivity again), and numerous things like that. I'll tell you also about Vieques Island in Puerto Rico. I think it's either a fireman in me — I don't know of any fire department people in my background — but it's the journalist in me because I am a journalist!

**Shapiro:** So the cost of being immediately responsive sometimes is that you might lose focus or get scattered.

**Free:** But then you've got to go back later, which is how it comes, near the end of your life, I guess, to see if that spreading thin, lack of focus, in itself, was a kind of focus. That, too, showed that somebody was working on a number of things, because all the things are interrelated. That's where, if you could ever get a book written, to show these interrelationships, not only psychological within yourself but also the crimes and misdeeds that you've seen and their corrections. They all come together whatever it is, whether it's an animal being vivisected or whether it's an animal in the zoo or an animal in a steel trap — all crimes against the sanctity of life.

It's all a part of the same whole, but somehow or another man has got off on the wrong track back there some time ago, destroying that unity in behalf of man, himself. How we can

ever get over the man-centered philosophy we don't know, because it's being nurtured every minute of our lives by our environment and our culture. It's very difficult to try to change it. That's what we in the animal field from time immemorial have been trying to do, is to change that culture. Look at [Jeremy] Bentham, Plutarch, Pythagoras even. I don't think we've been terribly successful.

**Shapiro:** So a common theme is the injustice of suffering of animals, but one way to understand that is that it's maintained by a man-centered point of view.

**Free:** Oh, definitely.

**Shapiro:** In your years do you feel there's been some change or shift in that point of view?

**Free:** Some. It's been gradual, but some. You have to get your starting point. Look at how it was even thirty years ago. Look at what the laboratories were thirty and forty years ago, even in my lifetime. They're still terrible but I think there's been some improvement — not a lot, some. People are more conscious, I think. I hate this example, because it's an oxymoron: the humane slaughter law, which I worked on, made some improvements in the handling of quote-unquote — that's another oxymoron — of “livestock.” We turn them into “deadstock.” So therefore I think there's been some improvements. Otherwise our killing of animals and livestock would be as primitive as it is maybe in places like Pakistan where they knock them on their heads and slit their throats and all of that. But now I learn that the humane slaughter is being flaunted, animals killed and dismembered when conscious. There's been some improvement, but it's been very gradual. I think that people are, except rednecks, getting more turned off about hunting. That's one of the things I'd like to address — I don't know whether I can do it in this conversation or not — how to change the still prevailing redneck mentality. It doesn't mean that you have to be riding in a pickup truck necessarily with the gun across the back, but it's still — a lot of people have it.

**Shapiro:** Is redneck the same as man-centered, person-centered? Or is that something a little bit different?

**Free:** I didn't understand you.

**Shapiro:** You used the term man-centered and you used the term redneck. What's redneck?

**Free:** Well, the redneck is really an activist the wrong way — the hunter, the trapper, the man who salivates thinking about going out and killing a deer, et cetera, that mentality.

**Shapiro:** Okay. An enthusiastic exploiter.

**Free:** Yes, that's right, doesn't see a thing wrong. And the other is man-centered, which is the basis of all cruelty. It's based on greed and trying to better ourselves, more comfort and so on, and money and all of that. Institutional cruelty. There are not enough people who want to upset the apple cart on that. That's why vegetarianism has been so scoffed at, because that would upset the economic apple cart big time. I guess the part of that gross national product based on

---

livestock and animals is absolutely tremendous. So therefore those guys know that. This can be anything from Kraft cheese to leather shoes to, of course, laboratories. There is so much vested interest in the exploitation of animals that you have to be nibbling at it all the time.

**Shapiro:** In addition to attitude problems we have maintaining these exploitations [and] economic structures.

**Free:** It's an economic thing and the economic costs. They know it subliminally. They know it actively, but their knee-jerk reaction is that anybody who wants to change it is a nut. This brings me back to another thought, that my early days of writing about animals — I was very worried about being laughed off the stage, because if you lose your credibility and become ridiculed, you can't get your message across. That always bothered me. Because I think the anti-vivisection movement came along, after Henry Salt got things going and then Queen Victoria and [Benjamin] Disraeli and those people over in England. Sometimes they made themselves seem a little ridiculous, and the "enemy" seized on that and were always trying to make them, the anti-vivisectionists, look like fools.

I have had that problem while trying to help animals through a proposed book. I was ahead of my time. My grandfather was ahead of his time, God rest his soul, and I'm ahead of my time. I had a pretty good book manuscript going called The Cruel and the Kind. This is in the early 1960s, long before Peter Singer, Rachel Carson, any of those people. I had a good agent and it went to a number of publishers. I was a pretty good writer, I think a better writer than I am now. I had more energy. But I could show you the rejection slips on it. But one of them — and I had a good agent with International Creative Management, Roberta Pryor. She was an animal person. She spent a lot of time and money on me but couldn't get anywhere. A lot of them just said, "Oh, you've got to put in more about using animals. Mrs. Free is talking too much about saving them. Why not talk about how animals do things for us, how we use them?"

**Shapiro:** So you couldn't get a publisher because the publishers didn't find it credible.

**Free:** No, no, not just that. But fear their book would not sell, fear of ridicule. They were scared of it. I never will forget a P.S. on one of the publisher's letters to the agent, the literary agent. At the end was a little picture of a dog and it said, "Arf, arf." Once again, ridicule.

**Shapiro:** Scoffingly.

**Free:** Scoffing. I was always worried when I writing for newspapers, even in the 1950s and 1960s when we had something really big to write about, like the humane slaughter bills. I was very lucky in getting a pretty good reception on my articles there. But that's another story. I was always very careful not to — I was freelancing a lot then too. I had to — I was terrified that I would get laughed at and then I would have nothing.

**Shapiro:** This is 60s. Has that changed some in your view?

**Free:** 50s, 60s, and 70s.

---



**Shapiro:** Has the receptivity of —

**Free:** Well, I'm not freelancing like I was before. I think it's better, but I don't think it's a lot better. I fear for my journalistic colleagues. They're all a younger generation now. My daughter [Elissa] is in television actually. She's a journalist, Cable News Network. She's always terrified of ridicule on animal stories because once the material leaves her, there are a lot of different steps in producing. When an animal story would come up, she said, "Oh, my God." She used to do a lot with Alex Pacheco and Ingrid [Newkirk]. She was always afraid that somebody along the line at CNN production was going to twist it and make it laughable. Sometimes she'd stay off of stories because she felt they would be ridiculed. We journalists who care about animals deeply, sometimes you give up the story rather than have it boomerang on you. So I'll tell you that half of the work I did in journalism was looking over my shoulder to see that nobody was laughing at me. It was bad.

**Shapiro:** There's a chilling factor there, isn't there?

**Free:** It was. You didn't want to pull your punches. I don't think I did too much.

**Shapiro:** Yet you're always looking over your shoulder.

**Free:** In a way, yes, you have to. I'm jumping ahead a little bit but we're talking about — I think we might as well stay with ridicule for a while, because that was the heritage when I put an animal thing — the first thing that came along in the animal protection field in the United States on a national scale was actually the humane slaughter law. It started in the 1950s. That was quite remarkable to get that law through. Somehow or another we managed to do it without too much laughter. I don't know how we managed to do it.

My stories will all be in the archives here. You can't do it unless you have something to write about. Some women wanted to boycott. That's a story. The heart versus the purse. Housewives became interested. Then we had some good people behind it like Hubert Humphrey. He was a good man.

**Shapiro:** Are you saying that you need another hook besides the animal issue itself to make it newsworthy? Is that part of what you're saying?

**Free:** Pretty much, yes. We always have to have a hook in the story anyhow.

**Shapiro:** Yes. But it can't be the animal suffering in and of itself.

**Free:** Rarely, per se. The only people who could do that would be PETA [People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals] or an animal newsletter or something. You have to have a news peg — that's what we call it in journalism — something to hang your story on to. What I want to say further is that we came up with so many different spokes of this wheel. We're talking about the humane slaughter law, which I've discussed thoroughly in these earlier tapes. But that was a great triumph, I think, because we didn't have too much ridicule in that. I still don't know why.

---

**Shapiro:** Do you care to speculate why you were able to do that without the ridicule?

**Free:** I was speculating. We got some good sponsors. I think that Christine Stevens did a lot, and Fred Myers at the Humane Society of the United States [HSUS] did a lot. I think when people saw how dreadful it was that that did have a chilling effect.

**Shapiro:** But the exposé of the suffering had allowed room for the legislation.

**Free:** That was quite remarkable that that finally got through. It only squeaked through. The greatest enemies, in addition to the meat packers, were the — we had a lot of problem with Orthodox Jewish people on the kosher slaughter. They would have blocked the bill if anybody is going to keep them from doing kosher slaughter. They finally more or less won.

**Shapiro:** So that was exempted.

**Free:** More or less. But then they got a kosher — then they got a contraption that some rabbis accepted where you could tilt the animal so you wouldn't have to hang it up and slit the throat. I don't think it's used enough. Kosher slaughter where cattle are hung up by one leg is still a blot on our — but I've seen kosher slaughter. I'm getting back into the early part of my tape. I did go to a place — oh, it was like going into something out of Dante's "Inferno" — early in the morning over in Jersey City to a slaughterhouse, mainly kosher. Dawn was breaking and these animals had been unloaded and they were waiting their turn to go up this little chute. They didn't know what was going on. There was the rabbi. He did all the right things. He cleaned off the knife and the different kinds of receptacles and so on. He was doing his job. I must say, as they hung them — this is where they were using the thing that was like a yoke. The rabbi would almost sever the head from the body. It was quick. I saw the eyes; they went right back into the animal's head right away, meaning it was unconscious. So that was, I wouldn't say acceptable, but it could have been worse. Anyhow, they still didn't want the bill to pass.

**Shapiro:** I gather that you've talked some about the humane slaughter act, and you are picking up on the theme of ridicule.

**Free:** I was saying the humane slaughter act was a milestone.

**Shapiro:** To break through that issue of credibility.

**Free:** Yes. Well, we got through it, but we didn't turn anybody into vegetarians. I think it made people feel a little bit better that the animals — they got the idea that they were just humane. It lulled them into thinking it was okay to eat meat because the animals didn't object. No animal is truly humanely slaughtered because it has to travel to get to where it's going and all the inhumane handling stuff that's ancillary to that.

But then the big stumbling blocks, of course, were — the next thing that came along was the laboratory thing. I've covered this earlier in my tape. I got the first big thing going on making the public conscious of laboratory animals when I got the animals released from the Food and Drug Administration lifetime cages in the basement of a government office building.

---

You may have heard that story. Well, we got a whole bunch of congressmen into that one and we made the FDA build a new building. It didn't mean that they weren't going to have a LD50 and it didn't mean that the animals were going to have a wonderful life. But it was better than it was in cages in the basement — nine hundred dogs. It's hard to imagine. I wept when I saw them the first time. I came home and I told my mother, "I've got to get them out."

This is one thing I want to come back to as a recurring theme, that one person, if you have the know-how — that's important — and if you feel it, one person can do a lot. But you've got to have all these things. You've got to have the know-how. This I had the journalist know-how. I had some political clout too. Then I had all kinds of animal contacts — Christine Stevens, the Humane Society of the United States, and so on, and Helen Jones. Everybody rallied around. That's how we got that one through. But it took a lot of organizational ability on part, just like what would come later of this thing with this Caribbean island. It all takes organization and leadership and countless hours. We're getting off the track a little bit.

**Shapiro:** You're mentioning a bunch of ingredients that make for a successful campaign.

**Free:** Yes, but where we are now is what I meant. We want to go back to me being torn between being an activist and an observer. If I went into being an activist, I might be a nut, a "crank" as they say in Great Britain. I talked to Major [Charles] Hume — you've heard of him — in England about that. He was the greatest man in modern times for animal protection. He founded Universities Federation Animal Welfare. He was always terrified of the cranks. I think that had a terrific influence on Christine, because she learned more — that's why she learned the most from Major Hume.

**Shapiro:** Christine Stevens.

**Free:** Yes, and her father. But she was terrified of being considered a crank. I thought she would never touch animal rights with a ten-foot pole, and now lately she's turned around and is giving all of her archives and everything to the animal rights magazine.

**Shapiro:** To Animals' Agenda.

**Free:** Agenda. That's fine. That's her business. I just hope it won't burn up in that old building.

**Shapiro:** You're making a point that particular —

**Free:** The cranks. I was scared —

**Shapiro:** As a journalist you have to be very careful about the credibility —

**Free:** A journalist, yes, I had to be very careful.

**Shapiro:** — or being identified as an advocate and as an activist and as a crank.

---

**Free:** Then I can go ahead and develop my thesis a little bit better. I guess I realized kind of in retrospect what I told you earlier, that the main thing is to tell the story. I was telling the story through — which I can go down chapter and verse except it will take too long — journalistically. Heavy coverage on the laboratory. I'll come back to it and maybe you can tell me whether to do it now. My most effective laboratory animal contribution as a journalist was a whole series called "Don't We Owe Them More?"<sup>93</sup> which was distributed by North American Newspaper Alliance, which was the leading syndicate, one of the leading syndicates, at that time. See, they don't have that kind of thing much anymore. But I had a very good editor, Sidney Goldberg, and he pushed it with all these newspapers, the newspapers that subscribed to the service.

**Shapiro:** What they don't have anymore is what? The syndicate idea?

**Free:** That syndicate idea, yes. Now the television and all of that — newspaper freelance journalist for newspapers is a dead letter. It doesn't exist much anymore. NANA doesn't even exist as a news syndicate. They might buy up a book and serialize it, that kind of thing. The best series I ever did was that for the laboratory animal dilemma. It went for at least five or six huge articles. They were carried by papers all over the country.

**Shapiro:** When was this?

**Free:** 1964 or '65.

**Shapiro:** Have you discussed that in the earlier tapes?

**Free:** Not much.

**Shapiro:** Do you want to say a word about it?

**Free:** Then I got a — I had to put down this for a minute. The St. Paul Pioneer Press ran them as a series, but each one of the articles had a rebuttal from a different scientist — heads of hospitals, medical associations, and they even pressed the lovely man Charles Mayo into service.

**Shapiro:** Mayo Clinic?

**Free:** Yes. But come back to that in a minute. Well, later I wrote him a letter and said something like, "I was astonished, Dr. Mayo, that you lent your name to this series because if you read my articles carefully — we could talk — you would see that you and I have the same goals to seek truth." I said, "I hope you'll never do anything like this ever again."

**Shapiro:** What position did Mayo take?

**Free:** He was just kind of general.

**Shapiro:** He played the crank card.

---

<sup>93</sup> See footnote 58, p. 69.

---

**Free:** A little bit. But he didn't go after me, anything I said. He said it would be dangerous if we stopped animal research, something I never said. You see, the people who were behind this — it was the whole National Society for Medical Research, which was the predecessor organization of that Frankie —

**Shapiro:** Trull?

**Free:** Is that her name? Yes.

**Shapiro:** Frankie Trull.

**Free:** Yes, that one, Frankie. NSMR was the predecessor organization.<sup>94</sup> They hated me and Christine and Fred Myers and all of us. We were called neo-anti-vivisectionists. That was a big deal with us. I've got the articles here but I won't read them out loud. We were pretending to be a friend of animals but really we had a hidden agenda, NSMR claimed.

**Shapiro:** Which was anti-vivisection, abolition.

**Free:** Abolition. Actually, it was just the opposite, because Christine Stevens was never a — and she was one of the leaders in this. She was never an anti-vivisectionist — never.

**Shapiro:** She's a reformist.

**Free:** A reformer. So she was in there.

**Shapiro:** Is that your position also?

**Free:** It is pretty much now, because I do think we've made a lot of progress on alternatives. I never belonged to an anti-vivisection society because I was still prejudiced against this kind of residual thing of the crank, of the anti-vivisectionists who had made fools [of themselves]. They would make charges that had no reality to them whatsoever and make me furious to see them make such erroneous charges. They were shooting themselves in the foot and hurting the ones of us who were trying to make things better. But, yes, I'm pretty much an anti-vivisectionist now.

**Shapiro:** You're anti-vivisectionist?

**Free:** If push comes to shove, there's not one of us if our child, grandchild, that was the only way that child could be saved is something working on an animal, a pig valve heart or something, we would have a heck of a hard time making that decision. I don't think that I — I mean, I think I have a wonderful granddaughter who has a wonderful future ahead of her, and I have a marvelous daughter. If their lives with the potential to do good things could be saved by a pig's valve or a baboon's heart —

---

<sup>94</sup> National Society for Medical Research (NSMR) became National Association for Biomedical Research (NABR) in 1984. NABR's sister organization is Foundation for Biomedical Research (FBR). Frankie L. Trull is currently the president of FBR.

---

**Shapiro:** So it doesn't sound like you are an abolitionist or an anti-vivisectionist.

**Free:** Not completely. You've got to have common sense on the thing. What would the baboon say? [Laughter]. Would the baboon sacrifice me to save its children? I think so.

**Shapiro:** You're saying that rhetorically but I don't quite know what you mean.

**Free:** I don't know either. Anyway, I think when you make statement you've got to push it right straight through to the wall of what it would be. The perfect example is your child or your grandchild and if you felt that that procedure would do any good.

**Shapiro:** So you believe in the alternatives concept?

**Free:** Yes. I think it's just absolutely disgraceful we haven't done more. There's been progress mainly, as we know, in the testing but not enough in the actual research side. I'm not up to date on that like I should be, but God knows what's going on that I don't know about.

So we got off on that, because I can't take up this whole oral history interview with my huge campaign on helping lab animals. I guess it was a campaign. I think I did a lot of good with that series because it ran in a whole bunch of papers — the Miami Herald, St. Paul, California, all over. Not all of them had rebuttals, but there were editorials based on it. It was that time that Albert Schweitzer wrote that he was for some kind of legislation. So things really came to a head around about that time. I think that helped to create the atmosphere to get the bill passed.

As anybody knows whose kept up with all this, the humane people — at least Christine Stevens and Oliver Evans and all — they were at each other's throats about what kind of bill they were going to get to help laboratory animals. They finally came up with that thing that my friend Fay Brisk — about the stealing of the dogs. That's another story. That's another whole ball of wax. I think that getting the atmosphere created at that time with Schweitzer and my series and the editors — it all was atmosphere, atmosphere. I think that helped to put it over.

**Shapiro:** And that atmosphere was exposé?

**Free:** Exposé a lot of it. I mean, I think I've got it in the earlier part of the tape. We had all kinds of exposés of dealers. They stole these dogs and kept them in these horrible [unclear].

**Shapiro:** Class B dealers.

**Free:** Yes. They didn't even call them that then. It's a whole bunch of stuff on the early tape. And pictures which will be in my collection of animals that were held for Johns Hopkins [University], for NIH [National Institutes of Health]. Bad — I mean, it was just primitive.

**Shapiro:** So a series of articles like this is a way of dealing with the issue of credibility and the crank charge.

---

**Free:** Yes, because I had the pictures. I could prove it. We nailed them. I had reputable papers that ran them. There was no laughter in that, except those bunch of cranks in the NSMR. [Laughter]. Anyway, so I think that I — one of our campaigns — getting off to campaigns. This is not chronological now. I think we can jump ahead on the subject narrative.

**Shapiro:** On lab animals.

**Free:** On helping animals.

**Shapiro:** On lab animals still or —

**Free:** No, it's jumped from that. See, I did the FDA things and I did the thing which got the Animal Welfare Act going such as it is. Then this is jumping ahead to something entirely different, which goes back to my original thesis that, whereas I thought I spread myself too thin. Starting up a campaign by yourself where it looked hopeless, but going ahead and starting one and winning.

That was the one, Vieques. That island of Vieques about ten miles from the mainland of Puerto Rico has been in the news a great deal because the U.S. Navy decided right after World War II to use it as a proving ground for ammunition and to practice live-fire exercises and simulated landings. One whole end of the island is an ammunition dump and the other — and they close off everything and then they do the live firing. I used to go for vacations there and it didn't seem to bother me. [Laughter]. Vieques was so backward, poor transportation back and forth to the mainland of Puerto Rico, and no industries, no nothing. Many of the people — the Puerto Ricans who were there — were all on the dole and food stamps or worse. There were no hotels. There were a couple of small inns. My husband [James Stillman Free] and I went there several times. The navy keeps it as a colony.

**Shapiro:** What years are we talking about now?

**Free:** I went in the 60s, 70s, and 80s. The first time I went was way back in the 50s. A beautiful place, absolutely gorgeous. One of the last times I was there and I saw all these scraggly looking stray dogs, particularly at night. They had gathering places. But then we rented a place in 1986, and there was a mother dog there. She had puppies. There was nothing to do with the puppies. There was no veterinarian, no humane society, no dog pound, no nothing. So what to do? I guess they would have probably just wandered off and died or maybe some people would have taken them. I don't know. We took them over to the main island. My husband, naval reserve — in other words, he had navy credentials. I said, "Let's go over to Roosevelt Roads," which is on the tip end of Puerto Rico where they have a hospital and all that stuff. We went over on the mail boat, took the dog and her puppies. We borrowed a large dog-carrying cage.

**Shapiro:** A veterinary hospital or a naval hospital?

**Free:** A naval hospital. They had a vet there in place too. You know, the navy doesn't have any veterinarians. Their veterinarians are all army, oddly enough. Be that as it may, I got the

---

mother dog over there. It was so sad. I betrayed them — complete betrayal. We took them over and had them killed right in front of me. We got the vet there to put them all to sleep with a needle. It was seven puppies.

**Shapiro:** The betrayal is what?

**Free:** Betrayal of the mother dog.

**Shapiro:** By you.

**Free:** By me, by all of us.

**Shapiro:** In interest of being humane.

**Free:** Of saving them. Yes. Kill them to save them.

**Shapiro:** Because you didn't think they had a chance and you saw no other facility for them.

**Free:** Nothing. There was nothing. That's why the ones who have made the grade have either died or — I mean, you don't make the grade and die at the same time — but either died off or predators of some kind might have gotten them or maybe some of the natives might have pulled them in. But they had no future. That's why you saw a lot of stray, starving, feral dogs there. They had brought in some of these heat-resistant Brahmin cattle to help those people along, but then feral dogs were bringing them down, naturally, as they got bigger — dog packs. Then the cow owners would bait the dogs with meat with ground glass in the meat.

**Shapiro:** Bait them?

**Free:** Have baits with ground glass. I heard all about that. That's when I got these animals put down, euthanized. Then I had met two women there, Chris Mitchell and Penny Miller. There was a third woman, Kitty Kitterman, with a kind heart, smart, but an alcoholic and ineffective. Penny and Chris ran inns, small inns that take about eight or nine people, little dining rooms and so on. They both fortunately were animal people. So they carried the ball for me after I got things stirred up. I got them to start a humane society. Then what I did mainly — if I could put down this — I came home and wrote a flier and sent it out to every animal person in the world almost. Then I established [something] called the Vieques Animal Emergency Fund.

**Shapiro:** Do you want to spell Vieques for us?

**Free:** V-I-E-Q-U-E-S. This beautiful, beautiful Caribbean island that's hell in paradise, or something like that. I've got the flier right there. Can you turn it off and let me read you the first lines?

**Shapiro:** Why don't you just summarize it for us?

**Free:** I'd like to read you a few, because that really hit the spot, I think.

---



**Shapiro:** You've got the Vieques file over there, I believe.

**Free:** I don't see it. Anyhow, I sent that flier<sup>95</sup> out everywhere and to the animal — there was Animals Agenda, Animal Welfare Institute, HSUS, everybody I could think of — and asked for money. It poured in, so much so that I set up a separate bank account, because I didn't want it to get mingled with my funds. I was able to get Chris and Penny to bring over a veterinarian from the mainland to start spaying, neutering, feeding. Jump ahead a few light years —

**Shapiro:** You're offering this as an example of being scattered or an example of —

**Free:** It's both. I said that I was scattered, but you get off the track from being the journalist, being the author, whatever, and go off. I said, "Oh, my God, I saw these dogs. I've got so many other things I should be doing and all that, how can I take this on?" But I did. The money poured in. Then not long after that a terrible hurricane destroyed much of the island. By that time people here had learned about animals down there, and so then more money came in. I sent out an SOS to the press and people who had already helped.

To jump ahead a few years — that was 1986. That's a long time ago. They finally raised enough money and have a wonderful shelter. They have several people working there and have a rescue ambulance truck. They know what they're doing. They have a vet who comes over a lot, and then another retired vet has moved there. In other words, they're doing spay and neuter. They're doing fine. The other day, my last newsletter that came up — I rarely hear from them because there are new people there, but to my surprise they gave me full credit. The marvelous woman who really held it together — a German woman named Chris Mitchell — she died. And the other one, named Penny Miller, she's always been disorganized but quite wonderful. She's the one that at a drop of a hat would go out. She learned — found a vet to teach her — how to do euthanasia. She would go out and put animals — this is before we really got going — to put these animals to sleep once they were badly hurt. We have owned but stray horses there. The place was filled with them. People didn't stable their horses; they just let them run loose. They had a couple little highways there and they were getting struck all the time, broken legs. So she knew how to euthanize a horse even.

Anyway, that's getting off the track, but that took up a good bit of my time and energy. But I met with great success. I'm sure if you went down there you'd still see some bad things. Don't expect heaven.

**Shapiro:** This shelter — was that private or was that public?

**Free:** Money raised by us.

**Shapiro:** And it went to a private —

**Free:** Didn't get a damn dime from government, but we asked.

---

<sup>95</sup> Copy of flier dated June 1987 attached. Also copy of Summer 2000 Newsletter.

---

**Shapiro:** A non-profit or what?

**Free:** Non-profit, yes. I helped them get their 501-K and all that. I'm patting myself on the back. I rise to the stimulus and I tried to help those people. So that was a great success. Then there's nothing much to talk about on that except that some of the contributors were very rich and some of them continue to send in, write a check for \$10,000 a crack. That's another story. Anyhow, I'm glad that's behind us. I haven't been down there for a long time. The last time —

**Shapiro:** You take some gratification from that.

**Free:** Well, I don't sit around gratifying myself. The opposite thought would be if I hadn't done it I couldn't live with myself. That's what it's all about. I don't sit around and gloat over gratification, saying, "My God, isn't that wonderful?" I'm saying that to you because I'm giving you the facts. We got a shelter, we got a spay/neuter program, they have an educational program, they have little dog shows and educational stuff for the kids. That's not gratification. That's just the other side of the mirror of what it once was. I would die if I hadn't done anything to help. I think guilt can kill you.

**Shapiro:** Guilt is what comes to mind.

**Free:** It can kill you.

**Shapiro:** In your view your motivation is to prevent the feeling of guilt rather than to —

**Free:** You're a psychologist. You're going to say, "She's guilt-ridden."

**Shapiro:** Well, you said it, I didn't.

**Free:** I know, but I'm just saying.

**Shapiro:** It's not to feel good about yourself, it's to not feel bad about yourself.

**Free:** Precisely. And you can't live with yourself. Anything you leave undone, your life is not worth living.

**Shapiro:** And what's undone for you sometimes is injustice to animals.

**Free:** Oh, my God, yes. Also one of the things they say so much about animal people is they don't give a damn, don't care about people. I haven't been heavy into that, but I've always had tremendous sympathy for the abandoned old people. I've been involved in shaking up a few nursing homes. They've improved a great deal — substandard ones. Oh, my God. Here in Washington they have what they call personal care homes. They send these half-sick people out — people who didn't qualify — to give them some food and a clean place to live, but they treated them badly. I followed those people around.

---

**Shapiro:** So you've had other causes of injustice.

**Free:** I shook up a home for the blind, where residents were treated like inmates — quite miserable, lonely, forgotten.

**Shapiro:** Not just animal causes.

**Free:** Oh, yes. When I was in China I almost got myself thrown out because I was trying so hard to help those poor starving Chinese in Hunan province. The food stuffs were being diverted God knows where — to rich Chinese. No, I've always gone after the “underdog” whether they were Chinese or — I know when I was in Bangkok that broke my heart because, being a Buddhist nation, they didn't do a damn thing about helping animals because — they wouldn't kill them — because the Buddhist religion won't let you do it. Suffering — that's okay. I used to be always rushing around trying to help these poor pariah dogs who were just skin and bones. This is just my way. I think I mentioned all this earlier. My mother was kind. I got it from her. That's good, so I'm glad. My daughter feels that way and my granddaughter feels that way. My granddaughter — she'll be nine in October. She's a vegetarian.

**Shapiro:** I just wanted to say — so beneath this apparent scatter is a unifying theme which has to do with your sense that you must act to undo injustice and not feel guilty, and what were you saying about empathy?

**Free:** It's acting on your empathy, in a way.

**Shapiro:** Empathy is how you discover the injustice.

**Free:** Empathy is another word for anthropomorphism, I guess — feeling yourself in another entity's place.

**Shapiro:** Sounds like it's a way of getting out of anthropomorphism because you identify with another being.

**Free:** Anyway, put yourself in the place of anything that can feel. I did the same way — and jump ahead here. So the Vieques thing was a great success from the standpoint of physically. We got the money, we got the shelter, we got the spay/neuter, all that.

**Shapiro:** Was there any issue of credibility around that whole project?

**Free:** No. In general, I think I've got credibility. But now I'm getting older and I'm not doing much writing, so I don't get into these crusading fields as much as I used to. Anyway, to go on about the basic thesis of how you tell that story — activism for Vieques. The Food and Drug Administration. Those are physical ones, I guess you would say.

I've never been much of a one for rallies and parades and demonstrations. Maybe I'm too much of an individual person. I wanted to do it my way — not that I'm against it. They used to have those wonderful animal rallies here, but I didn't think they did a heck of a lot of good

---

except for people attended them. I guess that was the point — pep rallies. You got a sense of solidarity, fraternity.

**Shapiro:** The March for Animals.

**Free:** Those big rallies.

**Shapiro:** Marches for Animals in 1990.

**Free:** Yes, all through there. Peter Link. There was a marvelous young woman who ran them in the beginning. What was her name? I can't remember who ran those first ones. She was very good. Then I thought the Peter Link ones —

**Shapiro:** Peter Link — Peter Gerard.

**Free:** Peter Link. I didn't think that was so hot.

**Shapiro:** I think you're talking about —

**Free:** Syndee Brinkman.

**Shapiro:** Syndee Brinkman, the national Marches for Animals.

**Free:** She was good. She was —

**Shapiro:** She was the predecessor of Link.

**Free:** Yes. She was a great gal. I wish she hadn't given it up. Anyway, I didn't get involved much in those at all.

**Shapiro:** So you like to operate on your own more.

**Free:** I've got too much to do. I wasn't against it. I'd go to those things and all that and get very energized and thrilled to see people from all around because the thing was growing so. But I wasn't one of the big leaders.

Anyway, jump ahead from the campaigns. I'm probably going to forget one. Then the other way of reaching people besides journalism and the active campaigns would be other kinds of writing. I think that that little book on Animals, Nature, and Albert Schweitzer, which I mentioned on the earlier tape, has probably done a great — I hope, I hope — a great deal of good because it's been read by —

*[End Tape 7, Side A; Begin Tape 7, Side B]*

**Free:** The Schweitzer book, which opens with him as a boy. I think some of the things I said in the first part of the book may have influenced many readers, because most people probably

---

wonder about life divided against itself. I started the book that way: “Not unlike many children, the young Albert Schweitzer questioned in a child’s clear and innocent way the mysterious paradox of life divided against itself. He questioned why his own will to live and be free of pain should ever be in conflict with the same eager-will of a deer or cow or pig or horse or insect.” But then most people grow up and put all that stuff aside, but he didn’t. He always hung onto that question until his dying day.

**Shapiro:** Life divided against itself — what does that mean?

**Free:** It’s self-explanatory. Why his own will to live should be in conflict with another creature’s will to live. That’s what I said right in the first lines. I think that maybe has rung the bell subliminally with a lot of people. But what I said — this is why it was the message of my book, which of course is all about his definition of reverence for life and his own life. But his questioning the animals and his own will to live is why Albert Schweitzer as a child was different, and that is why also that one day the different may become the usual. That’s what one of my objectives is, I guess, again subliminally, unconsciously, I guess to educate and make more people become aware of life divided against itself and to ask questions “why” and then to try to change it. Who knows? You never know. I remember Holly Hazard.

**Shapiro:** Holly Hazard of Doris Day Animal League.

**Free:** Yes. One day she came up to me and said, “You know, Ann, I’ve met people. I met a woman in particular who said your book on Schweitzer had changed her life.” It was Schweitzer that had changed her life. It was the way I presented it, I hope. I hope that that — because every time I tried to bring into focus life divided against itself, how a child wonders about it. Then it went through the whole story in the book, which will be in the library at Columbia [University], of his life and how he questioned all these paradoxical things, and then how at the very end I said that — at the end of his life he could not solve the puzzle that had dominated his life since childhood, which is “I am the life which wills to live in the midst of life which wills to live.” I think that’s the dominant theme of all of our lives. I know it must be for you.

That’s why I said that all I could say is that he came — and then he came to terms. And then what I say at the end, which is a philosophy, my philosophy: “Make judgments with a prayerful and humble heart, realizing that love cannot be compartmentalized. It embraces all life.” In other words, make each judgment individually.

**Shapiro:** This is you speaking now.

**Free:** No, me and him. He couldn’t solve the dilemma. Of course, he was like a lot of people. For a while, he was a hypocrite. He ate meat early on, not at the end, like the Dalai Lama, eating meat because he is a symbol and shouldn’t do that.

**Shapiro:** Practically speaking, what’s your solution to the problem of life divided against itself? What does that mean in terms of your practices?

---

**Free:** It's to try not to exploit animals in any way, with food, and you shouldn't do the same thing with leather, but we do. What have I got on? These are canvas. How about you?

**Shapiro:** For sure.

**Free:** Same thing. To avoid using animals in all kinds of ways where possible, and then you get in the habit — a good habit. Then I think more people will feel the same way, and this way you get, I hope, a gradual and then a permanent change. I think, again, it's just like the laboratory animals — getting substitutes. My God, look at the automobile. We had a substitute for the horse and buggy. Fewer horses were driven to exhaustion.<sup>96</sup> It will happen. It has to happen. It's like something that's growing, like a shoot, a root, a plant. It's going to come up through rocky terrain eventually. It has to prevail.

**Shapiro:** I hear some hope there. You're hopeful?

**Free:** Yes. You have to be hopeful, because I think more children today, thanks to this surge forward in the 1980s — I think that Ingrid Newkirk has done a great deal in bringing this out, particularly with young people, with all of her dramatic ways. I talked about it earlier. I think she was my protégé in the beginning.

**Shapiro:** She was?

**Free:** She was a kennel girl and she blew the whistle on some bad things going on at the Montgomery County Humane Society. I had just joined that board — something I don't like to do, but I had just moved to this county. I said, "Let's listen to this gal." She was only twenty-three. And we did, and we thought her points were well-taken. So we overturned the whole organization, threw out the people — the prevailing leadership, you might say — I think maybe in on case a little bit unjustly because everybody got so worked up. But Ingrid is a dynamo, creative. I don't know how she — she'll be remembered. But I used to tell her that I thought she went too fast. I said, "You are courting a backlash," and has, I think, in a way. A lot of people don't like her.

**Shapiro:** Do you think there's been a backlash with respect to the movement generally?

**Free:** What is the movement? I don't think the movement amounts to much anymore.

**Shapiro:** How do you see it?

**Free:** I don't — number one, Ken, the term movement makes me think of cults.

**Shapiro:** Cults?

**Free:** Cults. I always shied away from being a part of a movement. I don't want the "movement" to get that interpretation of cult. You have to be careful about that. You read — and I think the magazines, Agenda and Animal People — they're pretty good but they're not as

---

<sup>96</sup> Poem in No Room, Save in the Heart, p. 60, attached.

cultish as they were. Scratch that, because that's a long subject to go into. But I think you have to be careful about being a part of a cult.

**Shapiro:** That's part of not being credible again?

**Free:** I wasn't thinking of it that way.

**Shapiro:** It's a kind of fanaticism.

**Free:** Yes. A cult. Dismiss us.

**Shapiro:** Which would then lead to dismiss us.

**Free:** Yes. But you see letters to the editor in the animal magazines about the movement. Some are serious; some are too emotional and self-destructive when filled with errors.

**Shapiro:** Okay. Do you think there's been a backlash with respect to some of these organizations? You were talking about Ingrid and some backlash.

**Free:** I always told her she was going too fast, but maybe not. I don't know. I'm of two minds about that. I think that — of course, Peter Singer's book got everybody started. One of the things I'm working on right now is an article for Christine Stevens, an obituary on a woman named Ruth Harrison who just died.<sup>97</sup> Ruth was —

**Shapiro:** Ruth wrote what?

**Free:** She wrote Animal Machines. One of the things I'm pointing out in that — I've already written a little draft of it. She came from a long line of idealists and people who moved things. She is in direct heritage from Henry Salt, because Henry Salt was a good friend of George Bernard Shaw. Her parents knew — her father wrote a book on Henry Salt. They all knew Bernard Shaw very well. She studied drama under him. In other words — then the mother knew Gandhi. Gandhi got influenced by Henry Salt. She as a young girl, with her parents and all that —

**Shapiro:** What was her father's name? What was Ruth Harrison's father's name?

**Free:** Stephen Winsten.

**Shapiro:** And the mother's name?

**Free:** I can't say right off. I don't remember her maiden name. When I write my final thing I'll put that all in.

Anyway, I was saying about Ruth Harrison — what was I saying about her?

---

<sup>97</sup> Ruth Harrison (1920-2000). Copy of obituary attached.

---

**Shapiro:** You were writing an article for Christine Stevens on —

**Free:** Yes, but how did I get off on that.

**Shapiro:** Ruth Harrison. She's recently died. I'm not sure what point you were going to make about that. [Tape interruption].

**Free:** I have a transition there. Anyway, she was — oh, I was talking about Peter Singer, I guess, and getting things started. Ruth Harrison — I'm going to point this out if ever get a — maybe I could write it for you, somebody. Maybe I'll do it in that article. Ruth Harrison got the Animal Machines written, and that inspired those people that wrote the book called Animals, Men, and Morals that Peter Singer —

**Shapiro:** [Stanley] Godlovitch and [Roslind] Godlovitch.

**Free:** Yes, them. But Ruth Harrison has the first article in the book. Ruth was not a pronounced animal rights person, but that kind of got everything started there. Then Peter wrote a review of that book for the New York Review of Books and that led to his book, Animal Liberation.

**Shapiro:** There in England.

**Free:** Yes. It all came on down that way. Ruth Harrison, Salt, Bernard Shaw, Godlovitch, Peter Singer.

**Shapiro:** That's the lineage right there.

**Free:** That's my version of the lineage, and I think it's true but not necessarily obviously so, not consciously so. Anyhow, Ruth Harrison — that's how we got off on Ruth Harrison. She had an influence on me and you can see I've been influenced —

**Shapiro:** You had said that Ingrid had an influence on you.

**Free:** No, I influenced her in the beginning, I hope. I always felt like she was a child, and I still talk to her that way because I think she gets off on the wrong track a good bit. [Laughter]. In other words, she was twenty-three. You know how old I am, don't you? I'm eighty-four. So she was a child. I think she's a little bit — anyway, be that as it may because that's off the track. I never see her anymore. I don't think that she — in recent years we've never been very friendly, oddly enough. I don't know why.

**Shapiro:** Something about the two of you, about her, about you?

**Free:** No, I think she's so busy. She knew I didn't approve of some of the crazy things they did in the beginning, because I'm afraid of boomerangs. But it hasn't worked — not too much but a little bit. I'm getting off the track. Let's get back to where we were.

---



**Shapiro:** That's important because your concern about Ingrid is related to your concern about the —

**Free:** The cult stuff.

**Shapiro:** The cult and the kookiness and the credibility and all those issues, that you're going too fast. Those are all related.

**Free:** Sometimes. However, I might be wrong. Don't forget my age, that I'm seeing things with different eyes. Like the cult, the "movement" back there prior to World War I, and then it all went down the tubes. I was afraid it would go down the tubes again, that it would be pushed right off the boards.

**Shapiro:** Like a second cycle.

**Free:** Yes.

**Shapiro:** What do you feel now?

**Free:** I don't know. I think it's settled down more. I think you're getting more of the universities involved, you're getting more respectable outfits in it — through you. In other words, you're getting more credible leaders. You're not having hysterical hand-wringers throwing people off the track. You've got more substance. You have scientific background. You have more people who know how to handle themselves. In other words, I think it's just fantastic what's going on. I think that the super hand-wringers who get often [unclear].

Another thing that's bothering me a little bit right now — this is a side issue, and I may be wrong. I think this wave of emotion leads us to the no-kill shelter movement. That is not always good because I think a lot of animals are being imprisoned, have no real lives. Just because they are not dead, the no-kill people think the dogs, especially the social animal, are happy.

**Shapiro:** Before you get to that I just want to comment. You've indicated that you feel that the organizations and the leaders have become more grounded in science and more credible and so forth. I just want to point out that that was always your concern and I wonder if you feel like you've contributed to that?

**Free:** I don't think so. I don't know.

**Shapiro:** You were always careful about that as a journalist.

**Free:** I was very careful about it. It was uppermost in my mind.

**Shapiro:** You were always presented that way.

---

**Free:** I don't know just what you mean. I was always very friendly with the more emotional people, of course, because we all came from the same broken hearts.

**Shapiro:** So you started to talk about the no-kill situation. What are your views on that?

**Free:** I just think now that that runs the danger of getting into the over-sentimentalism that you had earlier on in the animal movement. Some people think to save a life that's all you have to do. I think that these no-kill shelters can be horrible prisons for animals. Animals — dogs in particular — thrive off of human companionship. That's their nature. I think this is being denied them. I'd rather see them make every effort possible — all the efforts we make now, spay/neuter and so on, getting homes. But an animal shouldn't stay in a shelter month after month after month. That's another side.

However, you talk about what have I been doing in the recent years, like last year in 1999 and 2000. The Washington Animal Rescue League here is a venerable and well-to-do organization. They have a well-built shelter and all that, but not much there. They gave me an award. The current board didn't know much about me. Somebody said, "Oh, she's done all this blah, blah." So anyhow, Ken, you'll die. I bit the hand that fed me. The League gave me some kind of an award for being an outstanding humanitarian. I went and looked at that damn shelter and saw that they had turned — I didn't realize this — had turned overnight into no-kill. Written right on cards on the outside of the pens the dog had been there like a year or more. No run space, no yard outside, no volunteers to walk them, sterile, nothing to lie on, and all clean and sanitary. So I contacted individually every member of the board and expressed my opinion about this.

Fast forward. They dug up the parking lot, et cetera, and now have a little park and a little swimming pool and all that stuff and more volunteers and more attendants to walk them. They're still slow in moving out, but I've sent a lot of people there. So that was when I blew the whistle right then. They're giving me an award because somebody on the board knew that I had done a lot of things. So I turned right around and went after them. They didn't dare fight me. [Laughter].

**Shapiro:** You're making a philosophical point here, too, which is, I gather, that you put quality of life before life, that you would prefer an animal to be euthanized than to spend a year in a [shelter].

**Free:** Or two years or whatever.

**Shapiro:** Is that correct, that position?

**Free:** Pretty much.

**Shapiro:** Is that consistent with Schweitzer? Is that consistent with Singer? How do you see that philosophy?

**Free:** I don't know. I haven't run that past Schweitzer yet.

---

**Shapiro:** Your reading of Schweitzer.

**Free:** My reading wouldn't give me any clues on that because I didn't prevail at that time. But if I were — I have been walking hopefully in his shoes and all that. I don't think he'd like to see an animal that was deprived.

When I was at his house in Günsbach a few years ago in Alsace, I went with the woman who was the head of the place to a farmer's place nearby. He had a cow that was enclosed all the time. I said, "Oh, Ally." I wrote her a letter. I said, "Can't you speak to the farmer to let that animal go outside some and do different things?" She turned me down. I said, "Dr. Schweitzer would want you to do that." She said, "But we're on good terms with him." In other words, she was a great disciple of Schweitzer's, but she didn't dare rock the boat with this farmer close by.

I think Schweitzer — now I'm answering your question. I think if I had said to him, "Dr. Schweitzer, I'm really disturbed by that poor cow. Do you think you could do something?" he would have. He would have done something. I don't know just what — speak to the farmer in an indirect, subtle way. No, I don't think Schweitzer would want to see prolonged suffering. But how do we know the incarcerated cow was suffering?

Don't forget the other side of the coin: death versus long imprisonment. Euthanasia is another big chapter of my life. I have spent countless, countless hours, Ken, on the art of killing animals. I've been right up front on the whole thing. I got rid of that horrible — you've heard of it — the Euthanair, the high altitude chamber to virtually suffocate them. If the dials weren't adjusted right, the pressure was so great that the dogs' eardrums burst. I got that machine out of the Washington dog pound. But you have to see it. I have seen so much killing, especially by needle and sodium pentobarbital. You act like a doctor or a nurse. You have to kind of steel yourself a little bit so you don't break down, but you break down in your mind later. I can weep now thinking about some dogs that were in line one by one to be put down — and their eyes looking at me. Were they imploring me?

**Shapiro:** You could be thick-skinned at the moment.

**Free:** Numb is a better word. You have to be, like doctors and nurses, same thing. I've been all involved with euthanasia wherever I've gone, it seems to me. We have an old place in the country in Shenandoah County, Virginia. They have a stinking damn dog pound, but they're getting a new one now. They had a homemade gas chamber, and it leaked. The gasping and carrying on. Then I raised some money to pay a veterinarian to come in and euthanize by injection. It's a long story; I won't go into it. It got into all the newspapers. They don't want the money. "Let Mrs. Free take her money home. We don't want her interference." It's like white northerners going down south — outsiders.

**Shapiro:** Carpetbaggers.

**Free:** Yes. But I'm a Virginian, what the hell. But there are a bunch of Germans up there. [Laughter]. You know that valley is made up of people from Pennsylvania who came from

---

Germany and Alsace. They are insular and xenophobic. Anyway, be that as it may, I'm always getting into things. I haven't done anything like that lately. I think it's the arthritis that's held me back. Anyway, where are we?

What we want to talk about further would be this whole thing of — captive animals have always bugged me. That's why at the National Zoo here, way back, 1960s again, I saw the Prjewalski horse in the National Zoo. It is the original wild horse that later I found out was the horse of the cave paintings at Lascaux and all that. I even went to Lascaux a few years ago. Anyhow, I had lived in China and those Mongolian ponies look a lot like them, so I had an interest in them because they came from Mongolia. They're akin to them. But then they ended up in zoos. They are horses but not quite. Prjewalski was a Polish explorer-zoologist. Anyway, they were given his name.

**Shapiro:** These horses predate the modern horse?

**Free:** Yes, they're almost exactly alike.

**Shapiro:** And they're an endangered species?

**Free:** Oh, yes, quite.

**Shapiro:** Just in captivity?

**Free:** Yes, everywhere. They've resettled some of them out in — not Turkmenistan but the other one — Kazakhstan, I think. I got all involved with that for a while. That's another thing that's spreading yourself too damn thin, getting mixed up with that resettlement. I didn't. I stepped out of that one, interesting as it is. Many of them are truly free on the Asian steppes and grasslands where they belong.

**Shapiro:** You wrote a book about them.

**Free:** The book was about the wild horse, the wild mare.

**Shapiro:** The book is Forever the Wild Mare.

**Free:** Yes. But the whole purpose of the book was not to talk about endangered species. I didn't know it was an endangered species in the beginning, but I found out about it later. That was before endangered species law had even been passed.

Anyway, when I said my whole thesis was captivity. The horse — all the animals there pacing up and down, pacing up and down, pacing up and down. The horse had a bare, austere paddock when it should have been going across the steppes of Asia and all that. I wrote this story about this boy, a young chap, who wanted to make the wild horse free. So he ends up —

**Shapiro:** This is fiction then.

---

**Free:** Yes, fiction. He ends up getting the horse out and liberating her.

**Shapiro:** Where was the horse?

**Free:** It was in the National Zoo here. We are going to get this book reprinted. When I said in the end — there is an old Scottish explorer there, speaking: “You are trying to break nature to your will.” The horse turned on him and tried to trample him. She wanted her will to be stronger. So the whole thing is that this is a whole contest to see who is going to triumph. “You couldn’t do it, could you? There’s no reason to be ashamed of that. Even the biggest dam builders don’t succeed when nature [unclear]. You have learned a lesson. Mastering nature is not the important thing, but learning to live with it, understanding it, that is important.”

**Shapiro:** This is Ann reading from page 152 of the book. It reminds me of the quote you read from Albert Schweitzer before that a life divided against itself theme seems to be here.

**Free:** Maybe. “You and nature will both win that way. I think you’ve learned a good and valuable lesson.” He said all that. “The boy realized that you can’t bend things to the world of animals, the birds in the sky, even the worms in the ground. If you destroy them all, what kind of world would that be?” Then the boy said, “I guess this is like what Grandma said: Live and let live.” Anyhow, that’s why I wrote that book. The horse did get free in the end.

**Shapiro:** Here instead of activism you resorted to writing as a way of changing the zoo.

**Free:** That was my major thesis. Telling the story is all I can do. I’ve done it in the newspaper, I’ve done it in these campaigns, I did that book, which was to get the horse free and better conditions. I talked about other bad conditions in that zoo. Earlier I was a leader in organizing the Friends of the National Zoo and we made it a lot better. I ended up later on getting the head of the zoo fired. That’s when I stopped the zoo hunt I told you about earlier.

**Shapiro:** An earlier tape.

**Free:** Yes, earlier tapes. I’ve been a thorn in the zoo’s flesh. Now I’m very pleased to read — I’m a back number now — that they’ve got a woman veterinarian who’s been there on the staff who is going to be the new director of the zoo. I’m going to meet her and see if she passes my inspection! Also the head of the Friends of the National Zoo is African-American.

**Shapiro:** Do you know her name?

**Free:** I can’t think of it offhand.

**Shapiro:** Do you know who she’s replacing?

**Free:** Yes, Michael Robinson. Michael Robinson replaced the guy I had kicked out.

**Shapiro:** Do you have his name?

---

**Free:** Theodore Reid. Theodore Reid is a veterinarian. He didn't know a damn thing about exotic animals. Mike Robinson didn't know much either. He was an invertebrate man. This girl — young woman, you can't call people girl — I hope she's okay. They say she is. Anyway, so there I used a novel to reach children and so on with my thesis.

It was that time I was knowing Rachel too at that time. She was talking about man's will and nature. I think I imbued from my conversation with her some of her philosophy, and we both have been greatly influenced by Albert Schweitzer. He was her ideal and he was my ideal, too. So my poem came up around about that same time. Then the next way of expressing my —

**Shapiro:** What was the name of that poem? You said the Rachel Carson. What was that called?

**Free:** Which book? Which?

**Shapiro:** You just made a reference to — I thought you said poem.

**Free:** I misspoke.

**Shapiro:** What was the Rachel Carson piece called?

**Free:** You mean in here?

**Shapiro:** That you wrote.

**Free:** I wrote that one — I wrote one, "Our Debt to Albert Schweitzer and Rachel Carson." This is his half all about caged animals. It's the most wonderful picture I got from —

**Shapiro:** This is from No Room, Save in the Heart.

**Free:** This is page forty-six. I used a wonderful line drawing of a lion from a 17<sup>th</sup> century Indo-Portuguese embroidery, and had a quotation from William Blake<sup>98</sup>: "And then the lion's ruddy eyes shall flow with tears of gold." He's talking about captive lions called "Caged Lion in the Zoo." "Pacing, pacing, ever tracing misery on the savanna of your barren cage." I wish more people had it because it might help them some. I wrote about Mrs. [Eleanor] Roosevelt. She always wore silver fox furs.

**Shapiro:** She wore silver fox furs?

**Free:** Yes. I am reading: "Mrs. Roosevelt, I do wonder about that silver fox. You were so perfect, kind, and good, but somehow about wild creatures you never quite understood." It's a lot longer. In the book I wrote also about traps and fur coats. "Let the blood drip bright and red, and maybe royal blue, since they think theirs turns aristocratic when they are wearing you." I think you can do more with a few lines than with many. That's what I tried to do in this book. I have more stuff about the zoo in here. This book will be in that library for reference. I'd like to

---

<sup>98</sup> William Blake (1757-1827), English poet, painter, and engraver, author of Songs of Innocence.

---

get it reprinted but I find that the animal people — but the Schweitzer book has been a terrific, terrific seller. But the poetry just doesn't grab people like it should. Here's one. Remember we talked about life divided. An inconsistent ethic, that's another one of my big things.

**Shapiro:** Yes. You talked about that in the earlier tape.

**Free:** Here's bunnies. I wrote: "I saw a sign by the road, a sign I'll never forget: Good for food or an adorable pet." How are we going to stop this inconsistent ethic? This is what bothers me so much, but it turns up all the time.

People nowadays talk about, right now, about raising — I just read in a county paper about this woman who is raising rabbits and how the children, 4-H kids, love them to play with them but then they sell them for meat. How do you break through that? How do you break through the 4-H mentality. It's a farmer's mentality, which is rural, redneck, all that stuff. That's bad to have children raise these animals for eating. I think that is psychological trauma. I mentioned this to you one of the first times I ever met you. I said, "What can you psychologists do — or more to the point, what is it doing to kids who raise these animals to be slaughtered?"

I got myself in big trouble once going to a 4-H show and going up and down the barn asking the kids did they know what was going to happen. After I left they all started crying and carrying on. They told their parents and their parents went to the head of the county fair. Guess what? He wrote a letter to the head of the humane society that Mrs. Free from the humane society was disturbing everybody at the 4-H. [Laughter].

**Shapiro:** You were able to break through their denial.

**Free:** The kids. Yes. Because they had these darling little signs up: "I am Buttercup. I live at such-and-such a farm," and all that. I said, "Do you know what's going to happen? That calf or that lamb is going to go off, and where do you think it's going to go? What's going to happen tomorrow? How do you think it's going to die? They're going to — some of them they're going to cut their throats right away and some they knock them out." I told them. They knew it, but they denied it. Then they started crying.

**Shapiro:** They knew it in their heads but not in their hearts, and you pointed to their hearts.

**Free:** But I've never — I've done something that everybody should, and that means you too. Go to any county fair on the last night and when they're loading up the blue ribbon animals — calves, mainly sheep and pigs — and see them being loaded up. They've all been fixed up so nicely. Their wool is as white as snow, well-shampooed. I've seen that until the tears run down my face. Soon the fleece will be red. It's so awful. What is it doing to these kids? It only hardens them. They come back the next year and do it again and the next year. They're getting money for college so they can learn about philosophy, no doubt! They can read Dr. Schweitzer there hopefully. Some are so upset — very few — that they stop raising the animals — very, very few. I know of only one case actually.

**Shapiro:** How would you name this point of view, this inconsistency, this compartmentalizing?

---

**Free:** I ought to ask a psychologist that.

**Shapiro:** I'll ask him.

**Free:** People do it all the time.

**Shapiro:** How do you think about that inconsistency? How does that work? Do you have any idea?

**Free:** The inconsistent person? It's an iron curtain, that's all.

**Shapiro:** Iron curtain. Compartmentalizing, you say.

**Free:** Completely. Then they're going to be defensive and turn on you. They're going to turn on you who asked the question. I think.

**Shapiro:** Defensive.

**Free:** Defensive, yes. I think.

**Shapiro:** But you see it hardening them in the long run.

**Free:** Oh, yes, if they come back and keep doing it, of course it's hardening them.

**Shapiro:** A certain callousness that comes from that inconsistency. Denial doesn't work.

**Free:** Some of the parents give in when they cry and don't send them back next year and all that if a kid is too upset. But then they'll say, "You need that money for college."

**Shapiro:** It comes back to economics and greed.

**Free:** Once again, economics and greed and custom.

**Shapiro:** And custom and influence of the parents.

**Free:** Yes. Everybody at your church does it. It's custom. Like Albert Schweitzer said, "It's habit. It's custom." That is nothing in the world but following the leader. Why are we following the leader? It goes right back to Moses, I guess — good and bad leaders. [Adolf] Hitler capitalized on that the most, getting people to follow, even though in their hearts they knew it was wrong. People will follow because they don't want to be left out. People want to be — it's a part of the clan. You don't want to be ostracized. You want to be a part of the group.

**Shapiro:** It sounds to me like that's part of your suspicion of the cult of the group, of the movement, all that, that's it's following.

---



**Free:** I hadn't thought it through that much. You're probably putting words in my mouth on that. I think the one thing about the cult is that it hurts the image of the individual humanitarian. That's what I worry about on that, get smeared. Like the people at Waco and who joined Jim Jones — all those bad ones who really get destructive at the end. I hate that term "cult." After all, most churches are cults, but they wouldn't admit it. To be an independent thinker you have to think it all the way through and be perfectly willing, as I have been, to risk not being liked, all that stuff. That's true. A lot of people don't like me because I speak out about what I believe in.

**Shapiro:** It's given you some isolation or some —

**Free:** A certain amount. I never was much for groups or seeking popularity, but not antisocial either. My husband was more so. He was a stalwart of the Gridiron Club, the invitation-only club of outstanding Washington journalists.<sup>99</sup> I was thinking just the other day how all the people that I knew and had met — everybody is dying off like crazy. So many of those people — I don't pay any attention to them, they don't pay any attention to me. They have these dinners all the time, these parties and so. I didn't really like these dinners at the time — a complete waste of time. Anyway, I didn't like going to those press dinners, especially when they carried on about the menu — meat, wonderful paté de foie gras, and all that stuff. One thing is my husband enjoyed it. He was a nice man. He knew what he was getting with me. I almost didn't marry him but I thought — I won't get into that. [Laughter]. Anyway, I've got a wonderful daughter. You have children?

**Shapiro:** Yes, I do.

**Free:** How many?

**Shapiro:** I have a son who is thirteen.

**Free:** Really? How wonderful. Just getting to be out of that childhood age. Treasure every moment.

**Shapiro:** He's a nice kid.

**Free:** I loved being a mother. I never thought I would because I was such a hard-driving bitch. [Laughter]. I just loved it, and I love my granddaughter who is going to be exactly like me, a devil. [Laughter].

**Shapiro:** You have this combination of sensitivity and toughness really, driving and —

**Free:** Don't you think all people who blow the whistle to help animals do? I think they do. Albert Schweitzer certainly was sensitive, and he pushed his way through with his somewhat radical philosophy. I think you have to have both. You have to be able to not give in. You can't be weak-kneed until you collapse. You've got to be tough. That's why Ingrid is so good. Her heart breaks. [Tape interruption].

---

<sup>99</sup> James Stillman Free, "The First One Hundred Years: A Casual Chronicle of the Gridiron Club," 1985.

---

What was I going to say? Something —

**Shapiro:** You found telling the story in a legislative context.

**Free:** Testifying. That was one. I'll just summarize. Other ways of telling the story is getting up before Congress at congressional committees. When I was a newspaper reporter holding Congressional Press Gallery credentials, you're not supposed to lobby and all that stuff. What I would do — there's a way of getting around things — if I was an eyewitness on some terrible things, I would get the chairman to write me a letter asking me to testify. Then you're not lobbying. You're not getting paid. So I did that a fair amount.

Then another way of reaching out and telling the animal-nature story was writing so much about Rachel Carson. I think getting that wildlife refuge for her in Maine was a step forward, because the other day I was talking to the manager of the refuge. It's near Kennebunkport, you know. I had to call him to ask him what the acreage is now. It's 5,000 acres but they hope soon to have 21,000. You've probably been there. You go to Maine.

**Shapiro:** I lived in Maine for many years.

**Free:** I know you did. Anyhow, I said to him — I don't know how it came up but I took notes when we talked. He said, "We feel her presence here everyday." How do you think that made me feel? Because Rachel never even knew the place. I was the one who selected it, you know, wrote the article to get the thing. And then the Department of the Interior didn't know where to make a wildlife refuge. They had one on what they call coastal Maine. I think that's a lousy name. Why didn't they name it Rachel Carson, because she used to go to Maine, mainly up above at Booth Bay Harbor area. That's where her house was. I think she'd love that.

**Shapiro:** You told that story on earlier tapes? The Rachel thing?

**Free:** I think I did. I'm sure I did. Anyway, I make a lot of speeches on her. I wrote an article for Christine on Rachel Carson and her love of animals. She was highly-motivated about animals. As I said earlier in our discussion, that she didn't want to get — she was terrified of getting called a crank because she was trying to do something fairly revolutionary, stopping all this pesticide stuff. "I already have enough enemies," is what she said. She couldn't take on much. She would do it individually. She'd save animals and that sort of thing, but she didn't get out front. She helped me on the Food and Drug dogs, wrote letters to the Food and Drug [Administration], and all of that. She was smart. She kept her eye on the ball. I said I made lots and lots of talks about her until I'm almost talked out, because I didn't know her that well. But we were soul mates, you might say. Of course, I looked up to her because she was a brilliant woman. She was very receptive to material that I would give her about pesticides and stuff. I'd get a whole bunch of stuff through my newspaper work and the agriculture stuff and all that.

Then I think — those are the main ways of reaching [people], carrying on the torch on Rachel with the refuge and articles and on Schweitzer still. That little Schweitzer book of mine has done really well. I just got an order from Barnes and Noble today. They said, "How much is it?" It cost me about \$3.50. I said, "Eight dollars." I put it up. "How much postage?" "Two

---

dollars.” [Laughter]. I’ve got about only ten left. I did another printing the other day of the Animals, Nature, and Albert Schweitzer. It’s so much cheaper to do it in larger numbers. I ordered 1,500. I’m not pushing it, but it’s [got] consistent orders. I’ll tell you who buys them by the box or by the carton — Elliott Katz. I use his money exclusively to help animals in a variety of ways.

**Shapiro:** Elliott Katz of In Defense of Animals?

**Free:** Yes. He sends them out as a bonus if you join. That’s helpful, and I like to do that kind of thing. He gets a reduced rate, of course, from me. I like to do that. It’s reaching a lot of people.

Ken, in summary, I think that the main things that we have to worry about is how do we clean up our language from the standpoint of stop using words like “livestock” and stuff like that? Then I think on the language, let us be more frank and make people more aware of the fact that they’re eating dead bodies. That’s right. They’re eating dead bodies. You murder them and then you eat them. Terrible! Horrible! See, that’s custom. We all did it — take the gruesome, cruel, horrible, distasteful thing for granted and make them tasty — for example, tasty chopped liver, pickled pigs feet, barbecued pork.

Yes, I could go on forever with examples. I keep a list and would like to write a small book on the obscene contradictions that envelope our lives, our culture. One day, people, that is, in the so-called civilized world, will look back not only in anger, but sorrow and disbelief about our attitudes today. Of course, it is a class problem, too. Wealth often has nothing to do with it, but early conditioning, I suppose. We must shed our vested interest in prolonging fear and suffering for our own tastes. How right was Plutarch when he wrote about the suffering of meat animals, “All for a pound of meat.” One day we might go back a few centuries to [Michel] Montaigne, Plutarch, Bentham. Let us hope. And let us try, Ken.

*[End of Session].*

*[End of Interview].*

---

---

**INDEX**

- Action 81 72  
Adams, Amethyst 24  
African-Americans 8, 26–27, 28  
Alabama 39, 43, 55, 58–61, 66, 70, 71  
    Anniston 39, 61  
    Bessemer 60  
    Birmingham 55, 60, 61  
    Monroeville 60  
    Montgomery 55  
    Tuscaloosa 59  
Alabama Federation of Humane Societies 55  
Albert Schweitzer Center 95  
Albert Schweitzer Fellowship 95, 96  
Albert Schweitzer Medal 75, 98  
American Humane Association (AHA) 41, 43–45, 48, 54, 63, 72, 85, 87  
American Meat Institute 44, 45  
American Newspaper Guild 45  
American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) 12, 20, 44, 46, 95, 96  
American University 89  
Amory, Cleveland 65, 68, 83  
Anderson, Erica 95  
Anderson, Marion 28  
Andrews, Bert 36  
Andrews, Larry 44  
Animal Care Panel 65, 70  
animal dealers 63–66, 68–69  
animal experimentation and testing 53–57, 70–71, 89–91, 103, 107–10  
*Animal Liberation* 92, 93, 119  
*Animal Machines* 91, 118, 119  
*Animal People* [magazine] 117  
animal pounds 60–61, 84–88, 122  
Animal Protective Association 41  
Animal Rescue League (Washington) 121  
animal rescues 40–41  
Animal Rights Manifesto 92  
Animal Rights Mobilization! 93  
animal rights movement/animal protection community 43–44, 61–73, 82, 91–94, 98–100,  
    114–15, 117–21  
animal shelters 19–20, 40–41, 84–88, 111–13  
    no-kill shelters 41–42, 120–21  
Animal Welfare Act 52, 61, 63, 66, 68, 71–73, 89, 110  
Animal Welfare Institute 43, 95, 112
-

animals in entertainment 52, 58, 81–82  
*Animals in the Christian Religion* 59  
*Animals, Men, and Morals* 91, 92, 119  
*Animals, Nature, and Albert Schweitzer* 95, 96, 115, 130  
*Animals' Agenda* [magazine] 106, 112, 117  
*Animals' Rights, Considered in Relation to Social Progress* 91  
Anti-Steel Trap League *See* Defenders of Wildlife  
Archbold, Ann 78  
Arlington (Va.) Humane Society 65  
*Atlanta Constitution* 59  
Audubon Society 78, 79  
Australia 30, 38

Babcock, Myra 44  
*Bad Girl* [book] 18  
*Baltimore Sun* 83  
Barker, Bob 21  
*Barnard Bulletin* 25, 26  
Barnard College 18–23, 25, 28  
*Beautiful Joe* [book] 12  
Becky [dog] 65  
Begin, Menachem 34  
Bentham, Jeremy 91, 102, 130  
Bergh, Henry 12  
*Between the Species* [magazine] 93  
Billy [dog] 16  
birds 78–79  
Birmingham (Al.) Humane Society 60, 61  
*Birmingham News* 61, 66, 83  
*Black Beauty* 12  
Blake, Emma Walters [maternal grandmother] 1–4, 8, 19, 27  
Blake, George McDuffy [maternal grandfather] 1–4, 8, 19  
Blake, John [great-uncle] 4  
Blake, William 125  
Bloomer, John 61  
Boone, Joseph 59  
Boy Scouts of America 75  
Boy's Life 75  
Boys Clubs 75  
Brewer, Albert 59  
Brinkman, Syndee 115  
Brisk, Fay 63–66, 68, 69, 72, 90, 98, 109  
Broadwin, Arthur 45  
Brophy, Brigid 91  
Bryan, Katherine 79  
Buddy [horse] 10

---

- Buel, Polly 84, 86, 87  
Burch, R. L. 70
- Cable News Network (CNN) 81, 104  
Caleo, Charles 85  
California 84, 109  
    Haywood 33  
Cambodia 34  
Cambridge University 49, 92  
campaigning/lobbying 44–50, 55–57, 62–63, 69–70, 71–72, 105–6  
Canada 30, 43  
Cannon, Walter 61  
Carey, Gayle 86, 87  
Carson, Rachel 57, 58, 72, 75, 80, 94, 95, 97, 98, 101, 103, 125, 129  
cats 1, 16  
Cave, George 93  
Charlie [chicken] 2  
Chenowith, Robert 44  
Chiang Kai-Shek 31  
*Chicago Sun* 28, 29, 38  
*Chicago Tribune* 28  
chickens 2–4  
children and animals 3, 6, 24–25, 50–52, 126  
China 29–34, 36, 37, 43, 74, 114, 123  
    Changchun 37  
    Manchuria 31, 32, 37, 38  
    Shanghai 30–33  
*China Weekly Review* 31  
civil rights 28, 39, 61–62  
Civil War 91  
Clark, Joseph 69, 72  
College of William and Mary 18, 19  
Collegiate School 18  
Colorado 46  
    Denver 43  
Columbia University 19, 25, 116  
Compound 1080 79, 80  
Conahan, Grace 44  
*Congressional Record* 53  
Connecticut 56  
Connor, Bull 61  
Cooke, Edna 86  
Cottrell, Emily Dunlop Blake [mother] 1, 3, 8–10, 12, 14, 16, 18–21, 27, 39, 55, 82, 106, 114  
Cottrell, Emmett Drewry [father] 1, 3, 4, 8–10, 14, 16, 18, 19, 34  
Cottrell, Samuel Henry [paternal grandfather] 1  
Council of Environmental Quality 79
-

- cows 50–52  
*Cruel and the Kind, The* 103  
culture/tradition/customs 101–3, 127, 130  
Curtis, Stanley 52
- Dam [horse] 10  
Deep Run Hunt Club 5, 12, 13, 15  
deer 76–77  
Defenders of Fur Bearers *See* Defenders of Wildlife  
Defenders of Wildlife 56, 79, 82  
demonstrations and protests 21, 25, 79, 89, 93  
Dierhoff Farms 65  
Disraeli, Benjamin 103  
Dodd-Mead and Company 75  
*Dog of Flanders, The* [film] 12  
dogs 16, 28, 39, 52, 53–57, 60–61, 63–66, 68–69, 110–13, 120–21, 122  
Doris Day Animal League 116  
Ducks Unlimited 98  
Duff [cat] 16  
Duffy, Maureen 91  
Dyce, Dorothy 69
- economics 103, 127  
Ehrmann, Sarah 69, 72  
Eisenhower, Dwight D. 47, 48  
Eisenhower, Mamie 79  
Emerson, Ralph Waldo 95  
endangered species 75–76, 123–24  
England *See* Great Britain  
Environmental Protection Agency 63  
environmental issues/environmental movement 57–58, 97–98  
ethics and morality 2–3, 7, 94–95, 113–14, 115–17, 121–22, 126  
Euthanair 41, 84, 85, 122  
euthanasia 19–20, 41, 60–61, 84–88, 122  
Evans, Oliver 44, 63, 68, 109
- factory farms 91  
Federal Aviation Administration 64  
Federal Communications Commission 63  
Feuerhelm, Verna 33, 34, 37  
Field, Marshall 28  
Florida 83  
Flying Fox Press 96  
*Forever the Wild Mare* 14, 75, 77, 94, 123  
Foundation for Biomedical Research 108  
Fox, Michael 90, 93
-

- foxes 12–16
- France 37
- Beaune 37
  - Burgundy 37
  - Günsbach 122
  - Lascaux 74, 123
  - Nuits-Saint-Georges 37
  - Paris 36
- Frandsen, Julius 47, 48
- Frandsen, Ruth 65
- Free, Elissa Blake [daughter] 6, 39, 64, 73, 81, 92, 104, 108, 114, 128
- Free, James Stillman [husband] 30, 37–39, 55, 61, 64, 66, 71, 77, 91, 110, 128
- Friends of the National Zoo (FONZ) 75, 124
- Fund for Animals 83
- funding/finance 43, 81, 95–96, 111–13
- fur 3, 21, 125
- 
- Gable, Clark 53
- Gabon
- Lambaréné 94
- Gallinger, Jacob 61
- Galvin, Roger 90
- Gardiner, Mary 86
- General Electric Company 40
- Georgetown University Hospital 43
- Georgia 59
- Atlanta 44
- Germany 36–38, 91, 123
- Berlin 38
  - Heidelberg 37
  - Ruhr 38
  - Stuttgart 38
- Gesell, Robert 43
- Geyelin, Phil 80
- Girl Scouts 17
- Glasgow, Ellen Anderson Gholson 12
- Glover, Charles 78
- Godlovitch, Roslind 92, 119
- Godlovitch, Stanley 92, 119
- Goldberg, Sidney 107
- Goode, Edith 81, 82
- Gordon, Susan 86, 87
- Graham, Frank 62
- Grandin, Temple 52
- Grayfriar's Bobby* [book] 12
- Great Britain 12, 15, 30, 41, 62, 70, 80, 81, 91, 92, 103, 106, 119
-



- Coventry 36  
London 36, 59  
Great Depression 10, 25  
Greece 35  
Greenfield, Meg 80, 83  
Gridiron Club 128
- Hagenbeck, \_\_\_\_\_ 75  
Handley, Virginia 84  
Harris, John 92  
Harris, Mary Hazell 79, 80  
Harris, Oren 71  
Harrison, Ruth 91, 118, 119  
Hartke, Rupert Vance 76  
Hawaii  
    Pearl Harbor 25  
Hazard, Holly 116  
Henry, Patrick 2  
Hill, Joseph 62  
Hill, Lister 55, 56, 57, 62, 63, 66  
Hitler, Adolf 38, 127  
Hoffman, Paul 36  
Hogan, Declan 69  
Hogan, Gene 84, 86, 87  
Holland 91  
Hong Kong 33  
Hormel 49  
Horse Protection Association 81  
horses 8–11, 16–17, 81–82  
    wild horses 53, 74–75, 81, 123–24  
Hughes, Philip 76  
Humane Slaughter Act 44–51, 53, 72, 99, 102–105  
Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) 44, 48, 63, 64, 68, 69, 71, 72, 81, 83, 84, 95, 96,  
    99, 105, 106, 112  
Hume, Charles 59, 70, 71, 80, 106  
Humphrey, Hubert 44, 104  
Hunter, Ann Gough 59  
hunting 5, 12–16, 76–77, 81, 83  
Huntington-Smith, Helena 99  
Hunton and Williams 13  
Hurricane Floyd (1999) 9
- Idaho 46  
Illinois 76  
In Defense of Animals 96, 130  
India 33, 34
-

- 
- Indiana 76  
International Creative Management 103  
International Society for Animal Rights 49  
Irgun Zvai Leumi 34  
Israel 34  
Italy 35–37  
    Monte Cassino 37
- Japan 25, 38  
Johns Hopkins Center 70  
Johns Hopkins University 65, 109  
Johnson, Margaret Leah 19, 21  
Johnson, Velma 53, 81, 82, 99  
Jones, Helen 44, 48–50, 54, 58, 92, 93, 106  
Jones, Jim 128
- Kansas 82  
Katz, Elliott 130  
Kazakhstan 75, 123  
Kennedy, John F. 34  
Kennedy, Joseph 34  
Kennedy, Robert F. 39  
Keswick, Clare 32  
Keswick, John 32  
Kiernan, Betsy 42  
Kingan 44  
Kitterman, Kitty 111
- Laboratory Animal Welfare Act *See* Animal Welfare Act  
laboratory animals 53–57, 61–73, 89–91, 107–10  
Laos 34  
Larrick, George 58  
Lasker, Mary 66  
law and legislation 44–50, 61–73, 89–91, 104–5  
Leach, Gordon 74  
Lee, Harper 60  
Lehman, Herbert 46  
Lillie, Harry 81–83  
Link, Peter 115  
Linzey, Andrew 88, 93  
Lister, Lord Joseph 62  
literature 10–12, 23, 74–75, 96, 103, 123–24, 125–26  
*London Observer* 91  
London Zoo 73  
Luxembourg 49
-

---

MacMahon, Frank 72  
MacMillan, James 61  
Mailer, Norman 12  
Maine 129  
    Kennebunkport 129  
    Orono 98  
    Portland 98  
managing an organization 84–88  
Mann, Lucy 74  
Mann, William 74  
March for Animals 115  
Marshall Plan 36, 37, 63  
Marshall, George C. 31, 96  
Maryland 82, 86  
    Baltimore 1  
    Beltsville 56  
    Montgomery County 20, 51, 84, 90  
    Silver Spring 88–90  
Massachusetts  
    Boston 95  
Mathews, Dan 89  
Mayo, Charles 107  
McGill, Ralph 59  
McMahon, Frank 99  
media 47–48, 65–66, 80–81, 104, 106–7  
medicine/medical community 61–73, 107–10  
Meyer, Eugene 10  
*Miami Herald* 109  
Michigan 69  
    Ann Arbor 43  
Miller, Penny 111, 112  
Minnesota 44, 83  
    St. Paul 109  
*Misfits, The* [film] 53  
Miss Pitta-Pat [horse] 10  
Mitchell, Chris 111, 112  
Mongolia 74, 75, 123  
Monroe, Marilyn 53  
Montaigne, Michel 91, 130  
Montefiore Hospital 69  
Montgomery County (Md.) Humane Society 51, 84, 86, 88, 117  
Moore, Dayton 48  
Morell 44  
Morgan, Charles 93  
Morgan, J. P. 81  
Mozart [cat] 42

---

- Mr. Chips [dog] 39, 53  
Myers, Fred 44, 45, 48, 54, 58, 63, 99, 105, 108
- Nancy [chicken] 2  
Nancy [horse] 17, 33  
National Association for Biomedical Research (NABR) 108, 110  
National Catholic Society for Animal Welfare 48, 54  
*National Humane Review* 14, 44  
National Humane Society *See* Humane Society of the United States  
National Institutes of Health (NIH) 55, 62, 63, 65, 66, 71, 89, 109  
*National Review* 44  
National Rifle Association 16  
National Society for Medical Research *See* National Association for Biomedical Research  
National Wildlife Federation 98  
National Zoological Park (Washington, DC) 73–77, 123, 124  
    Anteaters Club 74  
Nersesian, \_\_\_\_\_ 69  
Neuberger, Dick 46  
New Hampshire 98  
New Jersey  
    Jersey City 105  
    Linden 45  
New York 56, 69, 72  
    New York City 18, 21, 27, 28, 44, 46, 69, 83, 95  
*New York Herald Tribune* 29, 34, 36–38  
*New York Review of Books* 92, 119  
*New York Times* 38, 45, 56  
Newkirk, Ingrid 23, 86–90, 93, 104, 117–120, 128  
*Newsweek* 28, 29, 38  
Nixon, Richard M. 79  
*No Room, Save in the Heart* 117, 125  
Nooter, Amanda Blake [granddaughter] 6, 7, 73, 108, 114, 128  
Nooter, William Van [son-in-law] 73  
Norgood, Christian 44, 49, 72  
North American Newspaper Alliance 45, 56, 79, 80, 83, 107  
North Carolina 9, 62, 82, 83  
    Shelby 82
- Ohio 93  
overpopulation of animals 110–13  
Oxford University 91, 92
- Pacheco, Alex 88, 89, 104  
Pakistan 33, 102  
*Parade* 97  
*Paris Herald-Tribune* 38
-

- 
- Pennsylvania 8, 63, 65, 68, 72, 122  
    Berks County 64, 68  
    Clarks Summit 49  
People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) 88–90, 96, 104  
Pepper [dog] 69, 72  
pigs 4–6, 31, 50  
Plutarch 102, 130  
poisoning animals 79–80  
politics 62–63, 66–67, 69–70, 71–72  
Pope, Alexander 22  
Powell, Lewis F., Jr. 13  
Prescott, Heidi 83  
Preston, Edmund 13, 14  
primates  
    monkeys 89–91  
*Principles of Humane Experimental Technique, The* 70  
Probst, Marian 83  
Pryor, Roberta 103  
psychological aspects 2–3, 5, 15, 17, 25–27, 50–51, 55, 101, 106, 113–114, 116, 126–27, 128  
public relations/outreach 56–57, 65–66, 71–72, 89, 129  
Puerto Rico 110  
    Vieques Island 101, 110–112, 114  
Pythagoras 102
- Queen Victoria 103
- rabbits 83, 126  
rabies 60–61  
raccoons 58  
Rachel Carson Wildlife Refuge 84, 96–98, 129  
Reagan, Ronald 40  
Redmond, Arthur 45  
Regan, Tom 92, 93  
Reid, Theodore 73, 74, 76, 77, 125  
religion 45  
    Buddhism 32  
    Christianity 58  
    Judaism 45–46, 105  
Resnick, Joseph Yale 69, 71, 72  
*Richmond News Leader* 17  
*Richmond Times-Dispatch* 22, 24, 27, 28, 38  
Riding and Hunt Club 10  
Roberts, Kenneth A. 61, 70, 71  
Robinson, Michael 77, 124  
Rockefeller, John D. 78  
rodents
-

- 
- mice 73–74
  - Rollins, Bernard 88
  - Romig, Paul 85
  - Roosevelt, Eleanor 3, 11, 28–30, 45, 125
  - Roosevelt, Franklin Delano 29
  - Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) 92
  - Russell, W. M. S. 70
  - Russia *See* USSR
  - Russian Revolution 31
  - Russian War Relief 44, 45
  - Ryder, Richard 92
  
  - Sachs, Lois 28
  - Salt, Henry 91, 92, 103, 118, 119
  - Sands, Oliver Jackson, Jr. 15
  - Sargent, Virginia 40, 41, 94
  - Saturday Evening Post* 83
  - Saturday Review of Literature* 83
  - Schweitzer, Albert 57, 75, 94–96, 98, 109, 115, 116, 121, 122, 124–129
  - science/scientific community 50–52, 126
  - Scull, David 86–88
  - Scull, Elizabeth 86
  - Sea Around Us, The* 57, 58
  - seals 81
  - Securities and Exchange Commission 63
  - Sellers, Robert 44
  - Sewell, Anna 12
  - Shaw, George Bernard 91, 118, 119
  - sheep 50–52
  - Shelley, Percy 22
  - Shenandoah National Park 77
  - Silent Spring* 95, 97
  - Singer, Peter 49, 88, 92, 93, 103, 118, 119, 121
  - Sino-Japanese War 30
  - Sire [horse] 10
  - slaughtering animals 44–50, 52–53, 81–82, 102, 104–5, 126
  - Smith, Rex 38
  - Smithsonian Institution 73, 74, 76
  - snakes 73–74
  - Society for Animal Protective Legislation 43
  - Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) [Richmond, Va.] 12, 19, 20
  - Society of Animals and Ethics 88
  - Society of Woman Geographers 74
  - Sonner, Andrew 90
  - Spanish Civil War 25
-

- 
- Spanish-American War 61  
Speyer, Ellen Prince 20  
St. Paul Pioneer Press 107  
St. Petersburg Zoo 74  
Standard, Raymond L. 85  
Stevens, Christine 43, 48, 49, 54, 58, 62, 63, 65, 66, 68–73, 80, 90, 96, 105, 106, 108, 109, 118, 119, 129  
Stevens, Roger L. 72  
Stevenson, Adlai 94  
Sweetheart [dog] 39  
Swift and Company 44
- Taub, Edward 89, 90  
Tennessee 82  
Texas 59  
Thailand 32, 33  
    Bangkok 34, 114  
This Week 97  
Tibet 33  
Tillie [dog] 39  
*Time* [magazine] 56, 99  
To Kill a Mockingbird 60  
Toto [dog] 39  
transporting animals 63–66, 81–82  
Trans-Species Unlimited *See* Animal Rights Mobilization!  
trapping 79–80  
Trull, Frankie 108  
Truman, Harry S. 29  
Turkmenistan 123  
Twyne, Pearl “Billie” 65, 81, 82  
Tydings, Joseph 82  
Tydings, Millard 82
- U.S. Bureau of Land Management 53  
U.S. Department of Agriculture 52–54, 63, 67, 69, 70, 72, 73  
U.S. Department of Health and Education and Welfare 55  
U.S. Department of Justice 39  
U.S. Department of Labor 33  
U.S. Department of the Interior 97, 98, 129  
U.S. Food and Drug Administration 14, 53–58, 105, 110, 114, 129  
U.S. National Park Service 77, 78  
U.S. Navy 110  
U.S. Remount Station 76  
Udall, Stewart L. 78  
United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) 81  
United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration 33, 38
-

- United Nations Relief to China 29, 30  
United Press 47  
Universities Federation for Animal Welfare 59, 70, 106  
University of Heidelberg 37  
University of Illinois 53  
University of Michigan 43  
USSR 25, 31, 38, 75  
    Siberia 38  
Utah 53
- vegetarianism 6, 45, 50, 98, 102, 130  
Verdi, Giuseppe 16  
Verlaine, Paul 21  
veterinary medicine 69  
Vieques Animal Emergency Fund 111  
Vietnam 33, 34  
    Saigon 33  
Virginia 1, 4, 7, 12, 18, 72  
    Albermarle 9  
    Arlington 65, 82  
    Blacksburg 88, 93  
    Charlottesville 2  
    Front Royal 76, 77  
    Louisa County 2, 9  
    Middlesex County 5  
    Prince William County 65  
    Richmond 1–3, 8, 9, 12, 13, 16, 17, 19, 20, 23, 24, 26–28, 40, 73, 82  
    Shenandoah County 20, 50, 122  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute 88  
Vivaldi [cat] 42
- Walker, Adeline [ACF's nanny] 26, 27  
Walker, Ernest 74  
Wallace, George C. 59  
War Dog Program 28  
Warner, Mary 72  
Warren, Virginia 41  
Washington  
    Seattle 45  
Washington Animal Rescue League 40–43, 84, 85  
Washington Humane Society 43, 64, 84, 86  
*Washington Post* 10, 57, 80, 83  
*Washington Star* 38, 45, 53, 80, 83  
Washington, DC 10, 20, 27–29, 33, 36, 38, 40, 42, 43, 48, 49, 61, 63, 65, 74, 76, 78, 79, 84, 88,  
    93, 113, 128  
    Archbold Glover Park 78
-



---

Washington, DC Animal Disease Control Division 85  
*Washingtonian* 85  
water buffaloes 31  
Weckerle, Thea 38  
Wesley, John 45  
West Virginia 8  
whales 81, 83  
Wheaton, Anne 48  
wildlife (in general) 79–80  
wildlife sanctuaries and refuges 97–98, 129  
Windmill [horse] 10–12, 16, 17  
Winsten, Stephen 118  
Wirth, Conrad 78  
Wisconsin 44  
Wolfe, Tom 56  
women and animals 40–41, 81, 82  
Women’s National News Service 80, 83  
Women’s National Press Club 48  
Working for Animals used in Research, Drugs, and Surgery (WARDS) 53  
World Vegetarian Conference 98  
World War I 120  
World War II 25, 28, 29, 31, 36–38, 44, 110  
World Wildlife Fund 98  
Wright, Alice Morgan 81, 82  
Wright, Phyllis 84–86

Yates, Charles 77  
Yates, Sidney Richard 76

Zoologicals Worldwide 65, 66, 69  
zoos 73–74, 75–77, 123–24, 125–26

---