Interviewer's tape no.: 82.6 NAFOH Accession no.: 1687 1 1594004

Interviewer: Suzanne A. Winkelman Address: Box 829 Bucksport, Me.

Interviewee: Mrs. Ida Wood Address: Orland, Me.

Place of interview: Ida's living rm. Date: Oct. 22, 1982

Other people present:

Equipment used: UHER 4000 Report L (NA TR-14)

Tape: Brand: Scotch 3M Size reel: 5" xxxxxx/1.5 mil Speed: 1 7/8 ips.

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Brief description of contents:

Ida Wood's early life and work experiences growing up during the time of the Depression.

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	0011		(Opening announcement)
		0022	My name is Ida Wood and I was born in Old Town, Maine, 1907. I can remember back to when I was 7. We were very poor. I came from a family of 9 children and when I was 7 it was a glorious thing for me to go to school. I always wanted a good education. It was a convent school, grades 1-9, 2 or 3 classes in one room, just a little way from my house.
			I was fourth oldest in the family. My father was a carpenter and didn't take in too much work.
		0070	We all had to wait our turn to have a pair of shoes, wore them right down to nothing. Mother

Old

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			sewed for all of us.
			We had outdoor plumbing and no electricity.
			We didn't have indoor plumbing till I was 12. I lived in Old Town till I was 16. Didn't go to high school, had to go to work to help support the family.
			We moved to a farm in Brooks. My father bought
		0089	a farm in Brooks and the man who sold it to him gypped him because he was supposed to leave some cows and other animals but when we got there,
	0100		there was nothing left (animals) for us. We had no money and we almost starved to death. Didn't know anybody. This was about 1923.
			My father went out into the woods and sawed wood, sold it, and I went to work and once in a while I bought flour or lard to help out, to keep alive.
			My first job was working in a pants factory putting in back pockets. I knew very little sewing when I first worked there. Worked there about 3-4 years, 8-9 hours a day for about 25¢/hr.
		0122	Five days a week.
			Then when my father was getting along pretty well, I left and went to Bangor and worked at the Penobscot Hotel there. It's burned down now. Wages were about $8/week and had room and

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		0135	board right at the hotel. I was assistant pastry cook and breakfast cook for about 3 years. I also worked in the apple factory, the bean factory, corn factory, all in Brooks. None of these was interesting. All hard work, piece work. I didn't like the shoe factory very much. Didn't like the smell of it. That was in Bangor. Piece work again. I was a stitcher there. When I worked in Bangor I didn't visit home on weekends because I didn't have a car or any means of giong anywhere. Didn't see them for 2-3 years at a time. Wehn I got work I helped my folks as much as I could. Growing up we had a big neighborhood gang. There were 9 in our family and about 5 kids would come
	0200		to wait for each of us each morning. One morning my father wasn't feeling well and there must have been 20-25 kids in the kitchen waiting for us to go to school and my father said, "What
		0198	do you think this is, Grand Central Station?" and he didn't say it in a nice way. So they all went out and waited. I was always a ringleader, playing school, or nurse. Once when my cat died I had all the kids in the neighborhood in a parade carrying candles,

Bangor, Brooks

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			bouquets, 15-20 kids, and we buried him in the woods and put flowers on the grave and put his name up with a stick.
			We had fun even tho we were poor, jumped rope,
		0219	hopscotch, right on the sidewalk. We were too poor to hve toys. My father used to do some cabinet work in the house and we used to play with the shavings.
			When the Depression hit I was just beginning to save some money and I had about $150 in the bank and I lost all my money. My first savings. My folks were too poor to have saivngs but they held on to the farm. I didn't lose a job during that time becuase our jobs were essential. My brothers worked on construction and they lost their jobs. Growing up I remember a midwife coming in to help when my brothers and sisters were born. I didin't know what was happening.
		0258	Was very innocent. Didn't know till I was 14. Always thought someone brought it(baby) over to the house. In those days you had to learn by yourself. I was kind of late getting my period, about 13 or 14. I was quite excited about it and told my mother. [Describes what happened] and she said, "Oh that's alright"--

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			Never explained anything except that next month it would happen again. I took her word for it
		0279	and didn't ask any questions. I had an older sister but nobody talked about it. Guess they felt they didn't need to explain it. Was just t
			as ignorant as I could be.
	0300		Found out mostly in school. Not from the teachers but from the older girls. I told them they were lying. I didn't believe them. When our babies (my mother's) were born at home we weren't allowed in the room. We were sent upstairs. It was a curious time. Then my mother would call us in and show us the baby.
			During the Depression my father supported the family. He got a cow, planted a garden. My
		0323	mother canned all the garden things and the meat that my Dad butchered like hogs, cows. Once my mother fell down the stairs when we were all little and had to walk around with crutches and do all the work. She was supposed to have her cast on for quite a while but had my father take it off because she couldn't drag it around to do all the housework. So he took a jackknife and cut it off. Then it was a lot easier for her to walk on crutches. The doctor told her

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			she did the wrong thing because it wasn't healed yet.
			In those days a doctor would come to the house. My mother had some home remedies and brought us all up without a doctor. The most wonderful
		0347	remedy she ever had was baking soda. For colds, anything. In water. The old doctor that we had, said that if baking soda was a dollar a pound people would kill themselves buying it because it's the best remedy there is.
			For colds she used to boil molassas and sulpher and onions together like a syrup. Then camphor in a cheesecloth on our congested chest. For pain we'd get a little drink of whiskey in hot water and then we'd go to sleep. No aspirins or medicine and we all survived.
			I never knew my folks' relatives because they were all living in Canada, Petit Rushe? (Rocher?) my mother's side (Melanson). My maiden name was Arceneau ?. My Dad's folks were in St. John's N.B. I never met them.
		0383	We didn't have to stand in line to get things in the '30's but stores weren't so plentiful then as they are today.

Canada. St. John's, N.B.

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			While I was working as a young woman the only recreation I ever had was to go to the movies like cowboys, continued shows every Friday. Cost a nickel. They were silent movies. Bijou and Stranded (sic) in Bangor. There were news-
	0400		reels but all silent. They had a piano player and the same movie was continued every Friday.
		0409	We used to go to dances in Brooks in the Grange hall. My folks belonged to the Grange in Brooks. I worked in a gas mask factory during the war, making bags for gas masks. I got about $150 a week at that time . It increased during the war. Wages went down after the war. No insurance benefits.
			Wwhen I met Manley (my husband) I was living in Bangor. I was 32. (1939). Met him at my girl- friend's house at a party. Love at first sight. Knew him 3 years before we got married. He was living in Bucksport working at the mill at that time. We were married in '42 and were living 40
		0444	years in Bucksport.
			Manley was 39 when he was drafted but he didn't pass because of his bad ear from a football ac- cident when he was young. He's worked at St. Regis since it started. I worked there for about 3 years wrapping up school paper. I don't think the town (Bucksport) has grown at all. Little more people than there used to be but as far

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			as the town building up and growing, there's
		0459	not too much change.
			The mill employs more than it used to. I think
			the town looks just the same as it did when I
			first came there.
			Manyley's father was a big rugged man and he
			had about 500 men working for him in the northern
			woods. He never knew how to read or write but
			he was in charge of 500 men. Had a bookkeeper.
			He was a very smart man for not having an edu-
			cation. Manley had a store there (in the woods)
			sold clothing to the woodsmen.
			When Manley worked at the mill he was a boss
			at the warehouse for 38 years. When I worked
			at the cafeteria at St. Regis I baked donuts.
			When the men smelled the donuts frying they would
	0500		all leave their work and line up to get the
			donuts. They got in trouble because a they left
		0496	their work, hundreds of them. Used to make 6
			or 7 dozen every morning.
			Bucksports' Free Press must have been around
			for 25-30 years. They didn't have any before
			then.
			The big ships that come into Bucksport bring
			oil to the mill. When Manley was working there

Bucksport

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		0511	2 or 3 big ships used to comein. They would ship the paper by ship. Not any more. Shortages during the war were meat, butter, sugar, lard, (crisco). They gave us little tokens for so much sugar, so much lard. If we lost our tokens we couldn't get these things. [S. asks, "Did you know of ways to get these things if you ran out of ration stamps?"] If people didn't use too much gas they'd give the tokens to somebody else or sell the tokens. [S. asked, "Had you heard of the Black Market?"] Not in Bucksport. My husband and I are very much outdoor people. My husband is a fisherman and a hunter. Rather'd live outdoor anytime. I used to love to go with him but not since I"m older. Manley used to get a deer every year. We'd freeze it and have it all winter. You can make most anything
		0542	(With deer) that you can make with beef. I have a brother who was in World War II. Our family felt pretty bad but he came home all right. I remember Pearl Harbor day. I think I was in Brooks at the time. We were listening to the radio that night. I had some friends whose son was killed there (P.H.) It was a

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		00558	terrible shock. I remember President Roosevelt said, "We will strike and strike and strike again and again and again and again." And he did. I heard it on the radio. After that everybody was talking about it. Very sevious. When my brother was in we sent him packages of cookies at Christmas. No problem getting letters thru. There was a training base in Bnagor. A few soldiers used to come into Bucksport. The train used to bring passesgers into Bucksport from Bangor. The train station is a museum now.
		0583	During the war Manley was just getting about 35¢/hr but I was making more than he was. St. Regis (mill) made guns diring the war in the machine shop. Manley wasn't involved in that. Besides movies folks in Bucksport would play cards for recreation. We still do, gather from one house to another. I never belonged to the Bucksport Grange.
	0600	0598	(End of interview.0)
	0601		

Bangor N. [illegible]

Interviewer's tape no.: 82.7 NAFOH Accession no.: 1687 2 1594015

Interviewer: Suzanne A. Winkelman Address: Box 829 Bucksport, Me.

Interviewee: Mrs. Ida Wood Address: Orland, Me.

Place of interview: Ida's living rm. Date: Oct.26, 1982

Other people present:

Equipment used: UHER 4000 Report L (NA TR-14)

Tape: Brand: Scotch 3M Size reel: 5 " ~~1 mil~~/1.5 mil Speed: 1 7/8 ips.

Cassette: Brand: C-30/C-60/C-120

Amount of tape used: (Side 1): (Side 2): 1/3

Brief description of contents:

Continuation of Ida Wood's life and work experience in the Bucksport area in the 1930's and '40's.

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	0006	0018	(Opening announcement)
		0027	[Suzanne asks, "Could you tell me about any teacher in particular you remember from your school years?"] When I went to school we had all Sisters and we just called them Sister and I can't recall any names. THere was one who was quite elderly and very mean. I don't think she should have been a teacher. She was really too old. They used to spank you a lot with great big long rulers made out of hard wood and they used to spank your hands until they were all swollen. One day the teacher wanted to know whose father was a carpenter and I said my father was so they asked if he would make them a great big long ruler
		0057	about two feet long with a handle on it. So my

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			father worked awful hard and made her one, smoothed it all down, varnished it, and I was the first one to get a licken with it. I came home with my hands all swollen up and my father said, "Well, if you had behaved yourself, you
		0062	wouldn't have got it." I wasn't paying attention, wanted to get the other kids' attention, wanted to play more or less, than study. [S. asks,"What do you remember about Eleanor Roosevelt?"] I thought Eleanor was a great person, really did a lot for the President at that time. She took over after he got paralyzed. She really did all the work. Nobody knew anything about it. She did everything, went on tours trips, all for him.A lot of people didn't know anything about it. THey thought maybe the President was doing it all. I found out that she was doing all those things, read about it. I was quite young at the time but the older people
	0107		used to talk about it. I voted for him in '32.
		0112	[S. asks about unions where she worked.] They had one at St. Regis but I didn't belong to it. When I began to work at St. Regis there wasn't union for the kind of work I was in (cafeteria and sealing paper). I remember one strike there

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			but I don't remember when it was. Didn't last
		0137	long. They gave it (raise) to them right away.
			[S. asks about early awareness of birth control.]
			I never was aware of it, nobody talked about
			it, never had a clinic for that that I know of.
			I remember hearning about birth control pills
			about twenty years ago. My niece did it.
			[S. asks about her first home after they were
			married.] I lived right in Bucksport and been
			living there ever since until I moved here (Or-
			land) about 6 months ago. I was married in
			1942. We lived with Manley's folks in Bucksport.
			We lived at Toddy (East Orland) Pond in April and stayed till
			November. Lived there part of the year till winte
			Manley and I built the camp on Toddy Pond. We
			lived on the lake. It was wonderful, pretty with
			the foliage changing in the Fall. You could
			see the leaves come back in the summer. I really
			enjoyed it. It wasn't winterized so we couldn't
		0179	stay there for winter. It was right on the water
			so when Manley would come home from work we'd
			pack a lunch and away we'd go, fishing every day.
			Manley's folks built their house on Third Street
			and Manley and I added on to it.because we didn't

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			have enough room. After we sold the cottage (on Toddy Pond), we moved in full time with Manley's folks. I took care of Manley's Mom until she died. She was a very nice woman. It isn't every mother-in-law who would think that she
	0200		(daughter-in-law) could do a lot better than
		0204	she (mother-in-law) could. In lots of things I could do a lot better than she could. No friction with her. She was a beautiful woman. Delia Wood. SHe passed on first and Manley's father passed on about six years later. He lived there till he got trouble with his leg. He was a great big man, over 6 feet tall and I couldn't handle him so we put him in a nursing home and he lived one month. They had to take his leg off. Once I taught when H.O.M.E. Coop. first opened and I taught at the old seminary (Bucksport) where the Senior Citizens are now. I taught how
		0231	to make patch-work and I had 20 girls over there, two hours a week. THey sold their things thru H.O.M.E. Coop. I made a lot of craft for the Coop myself like pocketbooks, aprons, patch-work quilts, all designs, placemats, most anything they wanted, I'd sew for them. Hand work, machine work.

Toddy P. / Bucksport

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			[S. asks if Ida know of any families in Bucksport area who have been around a long time, or who could trace their family back a long time
		0249	in that area?] I kon't know unless my neighbor, Mrs. Gray, she's about 83. I really don't know. [S. askes about local legends or stories.] About Buck's tombstone was what I read in a book, don't know that I can remember it all. It was about that witch being burned at the stake. THey sanded that tombstone all down and in a few days later that leg appeared again on the tombstone. That's why people go over and see it. Outline af a leg, comes right out again. People say it's a curse. People all say it's a curse. Some believe it, some don't. THey say there'll be a curse on your grave all the time, that't what she wished
		0280	him (Jonathan Buck) when he died. [S. asks about where major shopping was done in the early days in Bucksport.] They'd go to Bangor or Ellsworth but years back they used to order it alot from Sears and Roebuck catalog. When I first came to Bucksport, forty years ago, my mother-in-law had me make out her orders for her
		0300	because she didn't know how to read and write. You'd send it through the mail and it'd come

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			through the mail. It just went as far as Boston so in a few days we had it back. We'd buy a big order, mostly clothes. [S. asks where you'd go 40 years ago to buy bigger items like radios,
		0315	refrigerators.] Forty years ago we didn't have refrigerators. We had an icebox. THere used to be an ice-man that used to come around in a great big truck, took some tongs and pick some (ice) up. He had a leather jacket on and he'd pick it on his back and carry it right in and put it in our refrigerator. We got it about once a week and it would last. He delivered once a week for about a quarter. Us kids used to follow the ice truck and ask for a little piece of ice, used to follow him in the summertime. The ice was cut on the lake in the winter. They had all the equipment , saws, and haul it up. In those times the lake used to freeze up to 20-25 inches deep and they cut it up and the truck would go right on the lake and haul it out, store it in this great big building with some sawdust
		335	and that would keep it all summer long. [S. asks about gas mask bag factory, how people felt making these things.] We knew what we were

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			doing but it didn't do a thing to us. We didn't imagine nothing, just working for a living. During the war there was volunteer work here. We made a lot of bandages in connection with the
		0350	Red Cross. We women all went out to the fire station to do this. All during the war. [S. asked about civil defense, airplane spotters, baackouts in Bucksport during the war.] I can't remember, maybe once or twice, like a practice. [S. asked about salvage drives, saving tin, fat.] I think they did. We saved everything we could. Somebody'd come along and collect it. Newspaper drives we always had. [S. asked how the end of WW II celebrated.] I was in Bangor at the time, over to my sister's, and the street was so full of people, packed,
		0383	just like sardines, couldn't walk. Whole town was hootin and hollerin and dancing and drinking. The bells were ringing, horn was blowing, all the church bells were ringing. V-J day. The soldiers started coming home right off. The celebrating lasted all night long and all the next day. Wrok stopped and everybody was kissing each other, strangers kissing strangers. My

Buckhorst

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			My brother came home before that because my father was sick, he had a leave of absence. I thing he was home at the time the was was over. THey thought my father was going to die so they let
		0398	him come home.
			[S. asks, "Is there anything in particular you
	0400		would like to do over if you had a chance?"]
			Yes. I wish I would have had the chance to finish school, maybe I could have if I worked it differently, after I went to work. I didn't think of it at that time, but now I do. I would have had a different job, wouldn't have had to work so hard, to slave so much at piece work. Factory
		0413	work was hard work.
	0414		(end of interview)