

## Selby Cemetery with Joe Saint

**Length: 31 minutes and 9 seconds**

*The interviewer and interviewee are not introduced but it can be assumed that Joe Saint is speaking to Miriam Swan. There is also an unnamed woman present.*

... Joe asks if she ever talked to Bill Culbert about it. Miriam says that she hasn't; she's only met him at parties. She did ask him about tombstones, but he didn't know. Joe asks if she's heard of the Selby Cemetery on the 10th Line in West Gwillimbury but she can't remember it. The cemetery is on Lot 12 or 13. Joe once drove Dick Noble home and he was going to see A.C.\* Stewart. Dick invited Joe into the barn but Joe said no and stayed outside. Dick came back outside and told Joe that he had been standing on top of a tombstone that was being used as a doorstep. A lot of graves didn't have tombstones because they couldn't afford them. Miriam notes that acid rain has been causing a lot of damage to the limestone tombstones and so they wanted to record what was written on them before it was too late. She heard that some tombstones were being stolen and turned into furniture. – Tape cuts out - In Coulson's Hill they ran out of plots so they turned walkways into plots. Joe asks about what happened to the church up here (*it is unclear what church they are referring to*). She says that there wasn't enough of a congregation to support the minister so they closed and the property went back to the head office in around 1900. When the people who owned that land sold it, the church was torn down by the new owners because there were no restrictions on it then. They built houses over the graveyard and never told anyone. If churches were closed and torn down it was common for the land to be built on over the graveyards because it was too expensive to move a graveyard. Miriam notes that there is a cemetery in the middle of Pearson Airport that they couldn't move so it remains there. – Tape cuts out -

... He lived on Lot 11, Concession 6 and Joe says he was a carpenter. Miriam was told that Baldwin was the carpenter. Joe says that Baldwin was the owner. Miriam says that Bill McArthur told her that Baldwin earned his living by finding an old house, buying it cheap, and fixing it up. They would fix up one corner for him and Agnes to live in while the house was renovated. He hired tradespeople like Wilson Stoddart, Dave Bateman, and Keith Kneeshaw. She was told that Baldwin himself was a carpenter and did the wood working on the house. Doug and Howard Thompson did the brick work and stuccoing on the house. Howard still does stone masonry. Howard's father, George Thompson, was a notable stone mason. – Tape cuts out –

...Miriam says Uncle Frank slipped and knocked himself unconscious when he was shaving and fell onto the bathtub where the hot water was running. He was there with scalding hot water pouring over his arm for about half an hour. They took him to the hospital and two weeks later they amputated his arm. – Tape cuts out -

... Miriam says there was a 15 foot deep field of Lilacs and her husband Chris discovered two little Elm trees growing among them. They cleaned out most of the Lilacs and made the garden nice. Joe says wherever the end of the old house was, is where the old cistern would have been. The old cisterns were probably made out of wood (but waterproof). The woman says that beside her bird feeder, they found a stone well. The walls of the well are three to five feet thick with no mortar. There's a pipe in it that slants up out of it toward the house. Up towards the newer barn there are the foundations from two older barns. Near these old foundations, there is a square hole about four or five feet deep. Joe says it is called a cistern. That is where they would have another supply of water. Miriam thought it might have been used to store grain or water. Joe says that the farmer (Jeffs) was smart and made it as a reserve well in case the others went dry. It also could have been used to have running water in the house (gravity fed). Joe says he (*Baldwin?*) spent two years just fixing this farm up. Joe thinks he was working on it as more of a hobby. – Tape cuts out -

... (*Miriam is speaking*) He wanted to get overseas and see some action (*it is unclear to whom they are referring*). When he got over there, he and his squadron got assigned to fly over the severely wounded officers from Italy. In the fuselage, they would bring fruit and other things from Italy that you couldn't get any more in England, and vice versa. As they flew they also dropped leaflets over Holland, warning the population to evacuate. He was glad he wasn't assigned to dropping bombs. She doesn't remember what squadron he was in. – Tape cuts out -

... (*Miriam is speaking*) His father had left Ireland as a young man of 20 and went to Trinidad. He was a sugar planter and moved up to be head of a sugar company that owned three estates and a small refinery. They lived in Venezuela (*speaking about her immediate family*) and her oldest kids spoke Dutch, Spanish, and English because Shell\* is half Dutch and there were many Dutch people living near them. Joe says after spending about seven months in Germany, when he came out he could speak the language fairly well. – Tape cuts out -

\* *Indicates that the word or name is written as it sounded, and therefore may be incorrect.*

... *Indicates that the speaker is inaudible.*