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to have got in the nxins. I could go in now, but I'm now on my own. I don't want to get tied down to anything else now. I'm free. (How long ago did you want to be a nun?) Ever since I can remember. (So you were never interested in marrying.) No, I was interested in religion. And regardless what's on TV yet--what religion is on TV--if it's talking about religion, I'm inter? ested in it and I watch it. (How did they celebrate your birthday on Long Island?) No, there's no such thing as a birthday, no such thing as a birthday. I didn't know when my birthday was till I was getting into the Senior Citizens. I looked for my birth certificate, then I found out my birthday, and I didn't know it till then. Then, I took some women in here out to a birthday party last year-- they said, "Now when your birthday comes, we'll take you out." I said, "I went 64 years without a birthday, and I'm not go? ing to start now." (And Christmas?) Oh yes, Christmas, we'd hang up our stockings. We wouldn't go to midnight mass or anything because we had no way of getting there. But we'd hang up our stockings and put decorations up, and put a little tree up, and the paper around cigarettes--well, we didn't have ciga? rettes, but the paper around tea, the alum? inum foil around the tea, roll it up in balls, put it here and there in the tree. Cut it in small, small strings and tie that to the tree so you'd have some tinsel on the tree. We used to have to go to bed early. And our uncle, he used to butcher a cow before Christmas, And he would go out and get the cow's foot. He'd stay in the path, and he'd put the cow's foot tracks here and there. Then he'd get the broom and make skips. So we'd think it was Santa Claus's reindeers that came down the skips, where the broom was, where the sleigh went, skipped through. And we had a brake in the flue, by the way Santa Claus was coming down, coming out through the brake. And we have our stockings hanging there. My un? cle 'd take the brake out of the flue in the nighttime, sprinkle some soot out a- round. We'd get up in the morning, "Oh, my God, look at the mess Santa made last night!" We'd leave a little lunch for him. They'd drink the glass of milk--they'd drink half the glass of milk, and they'd eat half a cookie, and, "Oh, my God, he was in a hurry last night--he only had half the cookie!" Oh, Christmas was real. Because, we had no TV--there was no such thing as two Santa Clauses. Only the ??ne Santa Claus. (I think of places like Long Island as be? ing so solitary, you know. And people of? ten tell me about experiences that they had, either religious, or seeing people who have died. At Long Island, was there ever...?) Connection with the dead. No, no. (Or spiritual feeling.) No, no. Not a thing. But we heard a lot of ghost stories, and things like that--an old man riding on a stove, coasting on a stove down to the shore. And the man that picked up the bracelet that the devil lost. And this old lady used to tell a story that there'd be a fire on top of the house, and a fire on top of the barn, and the two of them would come over and hit against one another a- bove the road. And they'd go in sparks up. And after awhile, they'd come back again on top of the bam, on top of the house, they'd come back, hit against, and go in sparks in the middle--halfways between the house and the barn. We heard those stories, but that's only stories, I told you there wasn't anything spooky a- bout it, but there was. There was a young



fellow over there--as a matter of fact, he's still living--but not on the island-- a  
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