

EVA L. CLOUGH MEMOIR

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## PREFACE

This manuscript is the product of tape-recorded interviews conducted by Mary Ann Dillon for the Oral History Office in the fall of 1974. Mary Ann Dillon transcribed and edited the tapes. Eva L. Clough reviewed the transcript.

Eva L. Clough was born October 27, 1894. She has lived with her brother and sister on the family farm all of her life. They have no electricity, water, phone or transportation. Along with her sister she has kept their house, tended their garden, canned food, raised chickens, quilted every winter and thoroughly enjoyed their country surroundings in every way. She loves animals and birds. They sold their farm and moved into Donnellson this fall, 1974. After they had lived in town about five months I asked her how she liked it. She said, "Well, some things I do and some I don't. You know, every morning when I got up I used to look out my window to the North Star to see if it were going to be clear or cloudy. Here I can't even find it. And I used to enjoy the moon so much. And the shadows from the trees that it would make around the place. Here you don't even know if you got a moon with all these lights."

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Eva L. Clough, October 27, 1974, Donnellson, Illinois.  
Mary Ann Dillon, Interviewer.

Q. Okay, first of all tell me about, can you remember very much about when you were a child?

A. Well, I can remember a good deal, but then, just to think of it, you know, I couldn't do so good.

Q. Yes, okay. Tell me about the games and things that you played when you were a little kid?

A. Well, we used to play things that the children don't play now. Like Andy Over and Drop the Handkerchief and Black Man and Prisoners Base.

Q. Oh, I've heard that Black Man game. What is that?

A. Well, they have two bases, separated, and then somebody gets out there to start them on, to stand it, and then they try to run from one base to another. The ones that's a standing it, they have to try to catch them. And then if they catch you, why then, you have to help catch others until they get them so you can't get through, you know. There'd be so many of them that they'll catch you.

Q. Did you play mostly with just your brothers and sister or did you play with neighborhood kids or relatives?

A. Well, of course we just played at home, but at school is where they played the games, the most games.

Q. Oh, I see, where did you go to school?

A. Elm Point.

Q. Where's Ellen Point?

A. At Elm Point.

Q. How do you spell that?

A. Elm Point. It's two words. It's a mile and a half south of Donnellson. They's a dwelling, they made the schoolhouse into a dwelling. It's used by a man that lives there.

Q. How far to school did you go?

A. A mile and three-quarters.

Q. A mile and three-quarters. Did you walk?

A. Yes, most of the time. Well, when we's small our folks used to take us sometimes and then when it got real bad weather—we used to have lots of snow then—and if snow'd get so bad we couldn't get there a lot of times.

Q. What was the school like? Were there a lot of kids that went to school there?

A. Well, they was around thirty when we went to school but further back, we talked to a man that went to school there, he said there was sixty. I don't see how they got in that little house. It was a little brick house.

Q. What kind of heat did they have?

A. Just had a stove, coal.

Q. Coal stove. What kind of desks did you have?

A. Well, we had double desks. They's two set together and of course, you had a seat. Then it come up and you had a desk on the back of it for the ones back of them. They just went back and then they were large at the back for the bigger ones. And then they got smaller until they's pretty small for the small ones.

Q. Did you have a recitation bench?

A. Yes, and we'd, the teacher had a call bell, one of them kind you tap, you know, and she'd call them up to class that way.

Q. Oh I see.

A. When we'd go up to the recitation benches.

Q. What did you do when you went up to . . . Oh I see, when it was your class you went up.

A. Our class. Well you see they taught eight grades and that way, well it was hard on the teacher, and we'd have . . . well, we'd have at least two studies between each intermission. We have first recess and then last recess and then we took up school at 9:00 a.m. and dismissed at 4:00 p.m. And we had an hour noon.

Q. Did you go home for lunch?

A. No. We took it. That's another thing, talk about frozen sandwiches, why we had frozen sandwiches before they was ever any freezers.

Q. Oh you did?

A. We took our lunch in a little half a gallon bucket. They set them on the floor back at the back of the room, and it'd freeze up in there by noon in the severe cold weather, and then finally they made some shelves up by the flue and then it didn't freeze, but it froze.

Q. What kind of things did you take for lunch?

A. Oh, we took meat sandwiches and then we'd take a little jar of some kind of fruit or tomatoes or something and pie and cake and cookies if we had it. Course we didn't have them so much but Mom made lots of mince pies and of course they'd last for three days.

Q. Because she made a lot of them you mean?

A. Yes, she'd make . . . And our dad worked at Panama, Illinois. That's when Panama was building up and she had five lunches to fix, four for us children and one for him.

Q. What did he do at Panama?

A. Carpenter work.

Q. Oh, he was a carpenter, I didn't know that. Did he build very much furniture for you?

A. No.

Q. No. He just worked on houses and things?

A. Yes, he did a lot of work at home though. He did his blacksmith's work and he made knives out of saws and saw blades and little odd things like that, you know, that a lot of people didn't do and then he sharpened ploughs and he made a lot of his things; tools and things he used to work with.

Q. Was your mother a large woman or small woman?

A. Well, no, she's about what you'd call a medium woman.

Q. She had a lot of work to do didn't she?

A. Yes, and then our grandparents, our grandpa and grandma Clough, lived with us, and at one time she had eight to do for. But our grandfather died when I's six years old. And Arthur was three so we wasn't much help. And Grandma, Grandma's a little tiny woman, about like Lulu, and she was pretty poorly weak, and she didn't do very much housework. I remember she used to do the dishes. She'd wash them and then Lulu began to dry dishes, she's older than I was. So she began to dry dishes, before I did, and I just wanted to dry dishes so bad but they's afraid I'd break them. But after I got big enough to do it I wasn't so anxious.

Q. No, it's not so much fun after all, is it? What was your mother like?

A. Well, she was a, oh, I don't know what you'd say, she's lots a love for us. She was a good neighbor and she had friends and she did, oh, she was a great hand to work the garden and she raised chickens and of course, she done housework.

Q. Did she like to work outside more than inside?

A. Well, I think she did, but after she got older and got so she . . . She was a great hand to hoe, oh, she would get out and she would hoe, just all day, you know that way. After while why, she got so she stayed in the house. After she got so she wasn't able to work out and she did the cooking and we got out. I just love to run the garden plow and the lawn mower. I can't do any of that now but I like to do that.

Q. Your mother, so she was very affectionate with you children?

A. Yes.

Q. Was she a very strict disciplinarian?

A. Pretty much, our folks was. They never had trouble with us like a lot of people did. We lived away out there kind of isolated and we wasn't with the others very much, you know, and I think that saved us a lot. We wasn't, oh, exposed to the temptations, a lot of them you know. Oh, yes they were strict on us. We thought they was. But I'm glad they was, because that kept us out of a lot of temptations.

Q. Was your father very strict also?

A. Yes, but he didn't whip us. Mom, she'd take a switch and whip us sometimes but Dad didn't do that much; but I'll tell you when he said something it hurt! It hurt as bad as being hit, nearly.

Q. What about your grandparents, how were they with you children? Did they discipline you at all?

A. Yes, somewhat, of course our grandfather he was weakly. He had some kind of stomach trouble or something and he'd take care of us when we was little you know. Mom'd go to the blackberry patch to pick blackberries and he'd take care of the kids and then sometimes he'd have to go and get her. She picked lots of blackberries too and did lots of canning. And we was brought up to can.

Q. Did she do much sewing?

A. Well, she made all our clothes and she even, back when the boys was little, she made the boys' clothes and Dad's clothes. I mean the everyday clothes.

Q. Did she do quilts and embroidering and things like that?

A. Yes, especially when she got older.

Q. She probably didn't have time when you were small.

A. No, and she saved scraps for us. We each one had a roll of scraps of our clothes and then after we growed up, why, we made a quilt of them.

Q. Yes, that's nice that she did that. Okay, tell me about Christmases when you were little, what kinds of things did you do for Christmas?

A. Well, we didn't get very much toys but, oh, we'd get candy. We had more candy at Christmas than any other time.

Q. Did she make the candy?

A. No, they didn't anybody make candy hardly any then but they'd get candy. Now our relatives they'd give us candy, [too]. When Mom bought candy she'd put it up and we knowed to let it alone, then she'd just take it down and give us a piece once in a while.

Q. Did you have a Christmas tree?

A. Yes, some, but of course, Mom was so busy she didn't have time to fool with a Christmas tree so much but sometimes she'd have it and we'd hang up our stockings but we never was fooled about Santa Claus. They didn't believe in making the kids believe. Oh, we'd talk about Santa Claus, and all, but we knew they was the ones that got the presents. And we'd hang our first stockings but we didn't get much. Oh, we'd get candy but we didn't get toys to amount to anything.

Q. What kinds of things did you play with then?

A. Oh, just things that we'd contrive of our own. We had a little train and Lula and I had a little iron and . . .

Q. Did you have dolls?

A. Yes, we had dolls but they was just little dolls about this long. Only we had a big rag doll apiece.

Q. Did you go to town very often?

A. No not very often.

Q. About how often did you go?

A. Well, the folks, of course we had eggs to sell and they'd go once or twice a week but they didn't take us very much. Sometimes you know, maybe you don't know, but they used to give the children candy, the merchants did, sometimes give them a piece of candy. Well, they'd used to give us a lump of brown sugar sometimes and that's what we had a lot. Mom give us brown sugar. It'd get in a lump, you know, and of course that was candy to us. But we didn't go and help ourselves to the sugar even.

Q. Was it a big treat when you got to go to town?

A. Oh yes. They'd let us go occasionally.

Q. Did you come to Donnellson, is that where you would go?

A. Yes.

Q. Tell me about Easter, did you do anything special for Easter?

A. Well, Mom used to let us have the eggs sometimes that we got on Easter. We didn't just have what each one found but we'd watch the hen nests pretty close on Easter and then she'd take the eggs and sell them. Then we had that for Sunday school money.

Q. Oh I see. You went to church every Sunday?

A. Yes, unless the weather was bad.

Q. Did you walk?

A. Well, not when we was small. We went in the big wagon, you know, that was pretty cold.

Q. In the spring wagon?

A. No, in the big wagon, a big farm wagon. We'd have two seats down there and then Mom and Dad, they'd sit on the front seat and we'd sit on the back seat. Sometimes they'd start up right quick and the seat board would just fly up and we'd land back in the back.

Q. What kind of animals did you have then?

A. Why, we had hogs and horses and cows.

Q. Did you just have two horses?

A. No, we had more than two. Dad raised young horses.

Q. Did you have daily chores that the children had to do?

A. Yes. When we got home from school we had to peel potatoes. Lulu and I did. And the boys, they had to get in the wood and things like that that children could do. And then sometimes we had a little time to play.

Q. Did you go to bed early then?

A. Well, we generally went to sleep before we went to bed. And then we'd get up in the morning, we wanted to get up when the folks did and they weren't too hot about that, but they let us get up. We get up early.

Q. Did you do most of your living in the kitchen out at the farm or in your living room?

A. We did it in the living room, we had a warmer fire, and of course we kept out of the kitchen pretty much when the cooking was going on unless we had to get in there and get ready for the meals and all. Of course we's kind of in the way I guess.

Q. Tell me what your favorite food was that your mother used to cook?

A. Well, meat. We used to eat lots of meat. We ate meat more than we



did eggs and we ate lots of beans.

Q. What would you have for breakfast?

A. Well, we had bacon generally and then we always had gravy, we was great for gravy. Of course we had bread and milk if we wanted it. We always did eat a good breakfast, we do yet. Lot of people just eat a little bit. Why, we have a big breakfast!

Q. What do you have for breakfast now?

A. Well, we have—meats too high now—we have eggs and oats and I drink coffee and the others drink cocoa, in the winter, and then we drink water in the summertime.

Q. Did your mother do lots of baking? Did she bake lots of cakes and pies?

A. She didn't make very much, only when we went to school. She made some though—and cookies, she used to make a kind of cookies, they was eggless cookies and they was real hard but they was real sweet; they had lots of sugar in them.

Q. Then for supper, what kinds of things did you have for supper?

A. Well, we always had potatoes for dinner and supper. And then of course we had butter a good deal of the time.

Q. Did she make mashed potatoes and fried potatoes and hash browns and all those different kinds of potatoes?

A. Yes, and we liked fried potatoes awful well. And occasionally we had baked potatoes. We had two kinds of baked potatoes, one that just baked the potatoes with the peeling on and then another kind where you peel them and cut them in kind of thick slices and put grease in the pan and put salt and pepper on them and baked them. It's sort of on the fried potato order. Of course she had them for dinner generally because it took quite a little bit to cook them.

Q. What kind of meat would you have?

A. Well, we had pork only. One year we butchered a beef, otherwise we had pork. And of course we had chicken.

Q. Would she bake the chicken a lot or would she fry it or what?

A. Well, when it was young she'd fry it and then when it'd get good sized she'd bake it and they called it smothered chicken. That makes the best chicken gravy, I think there is. She'd roll the chicken in flour and put it in a pan and put some water on it and if she didn't think it had enough fat to make a rich enough gravy she'd put a chunk of butter in it.

Q. What about vegetables, did you have all kinds of vegetables?

A. Well, we had beans and potatoes a good deal but we didn't eat carrots and a lot of things like that like they do now. And in the spring we had greens, wild greens. We'd get out and get dandelion and dock. I always thought that greens wasn't good unless they had horseradish leaves in them—that give them a kind of spicy taste.

Q. Can you remember anything special about birthdays? Did you have birthday parties?

A. Well, we did a few times. But of course we didn't have any friends that lived real close. But we had a birthday party sometimes, Mom, she'd make a cake and she'd get some little candies and decorate and we'd call some of our friends in. Of course that was a great event then for us because it didn't happen very often.

Q. I wanted to talk to you about your relationship with your brothers and sister. I understand, from visiting you before, that you and Lulu have always been very close haven't you?

A. Yes, we were so near the same age and, of course, the way the boys are, our older brother and the younger one, they's about seven years difference in their ages and so our older brother he kind of got the start on the rest of us. Our younger brother, he was playing with us more than they did together, because they's too much difference in the boys' ages until they grew up pretty well. But we was so near the same age... of course, I thought I had to do whatever she [Lulu] did.

Q. Did she mind?

A. Yes.

Q. I mean did she mind that you wanted to do everything that she did?

A. Oh no, she didn't care about that. Oh no, she enjoyed it. We'd just play with our dolls and we'd make clothes for them and hats and trim them with chicken feathers.

Q. Did you play outside a lot?

A. Yes, we had playhouses outside. We didn't have dishes, like little child's dishes, you know, we'd take an old piece of broken plate and things like that for our dishes and we'd fix bricks for our stove and they let us have a fire in it and we had an old stove door that we put on there, and then we'd get out and get us some weeds and cook them for greens, of course we didn't eat them. And then we got English sparrow eggs and we cooked them, we didn't eat them either, but you know they was just little miniature eggs, they was just as nice as they could be for imitation. And then we made mud pies and mud cakes. And then we'd get ready for . . .

Our school, on the last day, would always have a dinner. All the parents would go and, oh, it was a grand day. And then of course, they had a program and we all had to be in the program. So my sister and I

would take a notion to have a imitation of that dinner and we'd just make a whole lot of those mud cakes and pies, you know, and we'd use sand for sugar and they was an old wild cherry log that rotted down and it made red, so we put that in for cocoa and chocolate. And we made icing out of white ashes.

Q. Wow, you really had good imaginations!

A. Yes, we had to go on imagination a lot, we didn't have the real things to play with and so we just imagined. Of course our mother told us lots of what she had done before, you know.

Q. Did your mother grow up in that same house?

A. No, she grew up over south or northeast of Sorento, but after she married she come over here.

Q. I see. How old was your mother when she got married?

A. I believe she's almost twenty-two. They's going to get married on her birthday but the minister that was going to marry them, he was going to leave so they had to set it up a week earlier. They was married down in that house where we lived. Our uncle and aunt was living there at that time. So the minister, he walked down through from up here across Branch Creek down there and he crossed that [creek] and he fell. He hurt his thumb and they had wrapped his thumb up in turpentine. Of course turpentine was the great medicine for bruises and things, and it kind of made the bride sick to smell it. (laughter)

Q. Did they celebrate their anniversaries?

A. No.

Q. Do you think that your parents had a good marriage?

A. Yes!

Q. They got along very well? Did they ever have arguments?

A. Oh not much. If they did we didn't know it.

Q. What happened when they argued? What did they do?

A. Oh, they didn't argue very much and they just quit before it got hot.

Q. Did your father pretty much decide how things were going to go or did they share the responsibility?

A. Well, they shared a good deal but I don't know it's always been, I guess you'd call it a tradition in our family, they always kind of thought the man was the leader. If we wanted to go somewhere to stay all night we had to get permission from both of them. And Dad never wanted us to be gone at night, but he let us sometimes. I don't know, he

always wanted us home at night.

Q. Well, it doesn't work that way anymore. I don't think Arthur's the leader around here, do you?

A. Well, he don't think so. (laughter) We just all boss around here. When our parents was alive we thought it was our duty to do what they said and if we got in any arguments we'd take it to them, to Mom especially, and then whatever Mom said, that was it!

Q. You all three get along pretty well though don't you?

A. Pretty good.

Q. Tell me about the gardening. Did you do much of the gardening?

Q. Well, the women did the gardening mostly. Of course, Dad, he had the field work to do and, oh, even back as children, they'd give us a bed and then we could plant whatever we wanted to in it. And that's the way we started to making garden. Then of course as we got bigger we just went into the big garden all of us.

Q. I saw your garden out there. It's very big and looks like you used to have a very nice one.

A. Yes, we used to have an awful big garden and, oh, we raised so much stuff. A lot more than we could use.

Q. When did you usually start planting your garden?

A. Well, way back we could commence in February sometimes.

Q. What did you plant in February?

A. Oh, sometimes we'd plant potatoes and cabbage seed and things like that.

Q. Did you plow the garden in the fall?

A. No, but you could get it plowed so much earlier than you can now. It stays wet so long now. And we'd just plant a lot of potatoes and we'd have to get out and hoe the potatoes and pick the bugs off them sometimes. They got so they sprayed for the bugs after while.

Q. What did they use to spray them?

A. They used Paris Green first and then they got to using arsenate of lead. But the potato bugs never bothered the last few years.

Q. Tell me, what else did you plant?

A. Well, we always planted a lot of beans. A lot of onion sets, we used to sell a lot of onions. Panama, they's lots of people over there use a lot of onions and we just raise them by the bushel and take them

over there and sell them.

Q. What kind of onions?

A. Well they had top sets, they's a winter onion that lives through the winter and then they grow up a seed stalk and then they have a bunch of sets up there. Well, we had the other kind of onions that did that and then we'd take them bunch of sets apart and put them out one in a place you know. We had great long rows of them onions. We didn't use much onions ourselves.

Q. Oh you didn't? You just raised those to sell?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you plant lettuce?

A. Yes, we always had lettuce and radishes and beets, turnips.

Q. Did you like turnips?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you have an orchard?

A. Yes, we had an orchard. And we used to have a lot of apples. And we made cider and vinegar.

Q. How do you make vinegar?

A. Well, take the cider and let it work and let it sour. And you'd have to wait a year or so before it turned to vinegar and it made good vinegar. We used the good apples. But the vinegar was kind of like the cider if you used poor apples, sour apples, why it didn't make very good vinegar. You take the good tasting apples makes a good cider.

Q. Did you have a hand crank cider mill?

A. They'd take them in the wagon and went to Reno, they had a cider mill down there.

Q. Did you kids drink cider in the wintertime?

A. I never liked cider when I was growing up but here lately I kind of got so I like it. And of course Mom used to can it, because we never used any hard cider. Dad never had a hard cider on the place until the boys got big enough [so] he could trust them. (laughter) She'd bring it just to a boil and then seal it in the fruit jars. Well it didn't taste just like the fresh cider but it was pretty good. And then they'd open that and drink it in the winter.

Q. Did they drink it hot?

A. No, I don't believe so.

Q. Tell me about your flowers? Did your mother have lots of flowers?

A. Yes, Mom was . . . our grandmother, she was a great hand for flowers and we had lots of annual flowers and lots of hardy ones that lived through.

Q. What kinds of annuals did you have?

A. Well we had zinnias, and marigolds, petunias and rose moss and things like that. And of course, I can't think of them all right now. In later years we had a lot of chrysanthemums. Grandma and Mother thought so much of them. Mom just reminded me of a butterfly, she'd just go out and look at one bunch and she'd go and look at another one, it just reminded me of a butterfly aflying from one flower to another.

Q. Did you have very many flowers in the house?

A. Well, Grandma always had a Christmas cactus and then she had an amaryllis and then after we got bigger, why we had . . . oh, we just had a whole lot of different things, begonias.

Q. And what was it you gave me? Gloxinia?

A. No, we didn't have them until a few years ago.

Q. Tell me about your house. How it was when you can first remember and then how it's changed.

A. Well, before I can remember, the main part, the part that is a story and a half high, it was built back in about 1878 or something like that. Well, the living room and the bedroom and then the two bedrooms upstairs.

Q. Just Lulu's bedroom?

A. Yes, and then they later, still before I was born, they built the kitchen on, I don't remember just what year that was and then the east part, we always called it the front room and the bedroom that was built in 1910.

Q. The front room, that's the room that you had everything stored in?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you use that as a front room or what did you use that for?

A. That's what most people would call a living room.

Q. What did you have in there? What kind of furniture?

A. Well, we had our organ and oh, there was a stand table and davenport and chairs.

Q. Did you use it very much?

A. Well, we didn't use it in the winter because we didn't have heat in there. But in the summer we used it.

Q. I see. Then the room that I was in was the dining room.

A. Yes, and that's where we lived mostly in later years. And then of course, that's where we had the fire, it was warm.

Q. Was there any handmade furniture in your house?

A. Oh yes. Oh yes, we had handmade chairs, some of them was and that bureau that's in there was handmade.

Q. Did your father make it?

A. No, our grandfather.

Q. Is that the one that lived with you?

A. Yes, no our great-grandfather made it. Our great-grandfather. Grandma's father.

Q. Did he live where you live?

A. No, he lived down here . . . well, they come from Kentucky to Wood River and then they moved down here to a place about a half a mile south of town. And then he had a kitchen table that we sold at the sale. And then that kitchen table in there, our great-grandfather made it.

Q. That really has beautiful legs.

A. That's what I think. Arthur don't like that table but I do, it's got a drop leaf. He had a turning lathe and he made lots of furniture. Did you see our spinning wheel? He made it. We give it to Winnie Edwards, she's a distant relative but we want to keep it in the connection.

Q. So you just had a stove in the kitchen and the dining room?

A. Yes, and then further back we had one upstairs to heat the upstairs but we hadn't for a long time.

Q. Did all of you kids sleep upstairs?

A. All of us slept upstairs at one time but Grandma, she slept downstairs. It was too hot up there in the summertime, so we'd move down in the summer.

Q. I'll bet it was cold in the wintertime.

A. Well, they's a flue that went up through it and then they had that stove up there at one time and then at one time the stovepipe from the stove went right up through the floor and we had a radiator up there but it'd fill up with soot and catch afire and so we discarded it. So

we made a place there for the heat to go up for a register and then the heat, of course, rises and it made it real warm up there.

Q. Did you have feather beds then?

A. Yes, have yet.

Q. Do you like feather beds?

A. I like them in the wintertime, I don't like them in the summer. They get too hot. Lot of people don't have a use for feather beds but we's raised on them.

Q. Did you make butter?

A. Oh yes, that's the thing we had to do. We had to churn. I used to get so discouraged churning, I'd keep alooking to see if the butter . . . We had these old dash churns, you know, we sold it at the sale. Then later we had them little glass churns. Then we had an old wooden churn, we kept it, but it never did have any dasher that I can remember.

Q. Did you ever make cheese?

A. We tried to. And we didn't have very good luck with it. But we made cottage cheese by the gallons.

Q. How did you make that?

A. Well, you let the milk clabber, sour, you know, you want to catch it right at the right place, you don't want to let it get too sour. And put it on the back of the stove and then it'd separate, the whey would get watery and then that thick part, that's what you made the cheese out of. And then you'd take that and drain it, we didn't make it like a lot of other people did, we put more stuff in it than some did, and everybody put salt in it, of course, and then butter, but we had lots of butter and we just put a lot of butter in and we put sugar in it and salt and sometimes pepper.

Q. It tastes a lot different than the kind you buy doesn't it?

A. Why, yes, this don't taste like anything. After we quit making it, why we just didn't like these boughten ones, but it's been so long now that I like the boughten ones. Of course you can add some things to that; like we always put some sugar in it and some butter. We made it and give it to the neighbors and they liked it too.

Q. You said that your mother made bread? How often did she make it?

A. Well, she made it at least once a week. And then she made biscuits. She made lots of biscuits.

Q. Do you make biscuits?

A. Not very often, we do sometimes.



Q. Can you tell me what your recipe is?

A. (laughter) No, I didn't have any recipe I just . . . just get some flour and put the stuff in it, you know.

Q. What all do you put in it?

A. In the biscuits you mean? Why we put salt, take the flour and the baking powder and shortening . . .

Q. Do you use lard?

A. Yes, but we used to use butter when we had lots of butter. But we use lard mostly now.

END OF SIDE ONE

Q. Do you have any idea about how much of everything you put in?

A. No, but I generally for a batch of biscuits like we made, it makes about ten or a dozen. I use about two cups of flour and about two heaping tablespoons of baking powder and then I just put in a lump of lard and I work that all up together and then, of course, we don't have sour milk anymore, I use water and dry milk.

Q. Do you use a lot of dry milk?

A. Well, considerable. I just take the dry milk and mix it in the flour and that saves you a messing up something to mix it up with water, that's just as good, the milk is in there, you know. Just make the dough until it gets kind of, well you just have to learn the right consistency, to work right, you know. If you get it too dry, why it makes the biscuits hard.

Q. Tell me about when you used to butcher.

A. Oh, that was a great day at our house. Our uncle would come over usually and help with the butchering and they'd butcher about two or three hogs.

Q. Where did your uncle live?

A. Well, he lived about three quarters of a mile south of us. He was Dad's brother and they'd go back and forth when they butchered.

Q. Did his whole family come when they butchered?

A. No they didn't, he just generally come when they butchered. Then Mom would cook the lard, they cooked it out back. We had big stove pots that we put on the stove, cast iron pots. Some people used the big butchering kettles but we made it in that. Dad and Mom would cut the

lard up, you know, the leaf lard, they call it, it's just solid lard.

Q. Where is that?

A. Well, it's around the kidney. And they'd take and cut that up in small pieces and then they'd put a little bit of water in the pot to keep it from sticking when it started. Then they'd put it in [the pot] and it just melts kind of. And then they'd watch the cracklings until they got the right stage of browning and you had to get it cooked enough or your lard wouldn't keep good. If you got it cooked too much it'd be scorched. And then the sausage grinding, when we was children, was a great thing for us to watch. We had a sausage grinder and it had knives in there and the folks, they made us stay out of the way when they ground the sausage, we liked to see them grind it. They had the meat cut up in chunks and they'd put it in there. And we'd get under the table to see the sausage come out when they's grinding it.

Q. What did they use to stuff the sausage in?

A. Well they didn't stuff it. They'd make it and put it in a big jar.

Q. What did they season it with?

A. Salt and pepper and sage. And then they'd fry a little cake of it to see if they had it right and if it needed anything else they'd put it in. They didn't leave it that way very long until they'd take it out and make it in cakes and then they'd put it in a jar.

Q. Do you mean one of those stone crocks?

A. Yes. And they would put the grease that had cooked out of it in there and they'd put it all over the top of it and then when they'd take it out they'd save that grease. Why that makes awful good gravy. Sausage gravy. They'd have a good deal of that. And we never canned it then, now they can it.

Q. How did you do it after your parents were gone?

A. Well we didn't butcher after they's gone.

Q. Did you ever make sausage?

A. No, but of course when you buy sausage you have to season it you know, it's just a ground meat. You can get it seasoned but most of it [is] just a ground meat. That's the way I do it, I put salt and pepper and sage and try a little piece and see if I've got it right.

Q. Oh, I see, I didn't do that. I always assumed it was already seasoned. Do you remember how they cured the hams and all of that?

A. Yes, they didn't do it like they do now. They bought barrel salt, and it was course salt and it was especially good for meat. They'd take a box and put some salt in there and they'd lay the hams and shoulders and sides, just put salt all between them. Then they leave them a certain

length of time, I don't know how long. And then it depended on the weather, if it was too cold, why it didn't take the salt so fast, and then they took them out and took the big old butchering kettle and filled it up with water and put a fire under it and they put them there hot red peppers in it and then they'd take them there pieces of meat and they'd just dip them in there, you know, to take the salt off. Then that pepper it was supposed to kind of keep them things that want to get on the meat off.

And then they'd fix a string in it and put it in a tall sack and they'd hang it up. Sometimes they'd put it in a sack. Well, I don't guess they'd put it in the sack until after it was smoked. They'd hang it up in the smokehouse and they had hickory wood to smoke it with. They just wanted it to smoke but they didn't want it to blaze, kind of hard to keep a fire just right. If it got to blazing too much they'd put a little ashes on it. Of course it made heat too but the meat was hanging way up high. And smoke would just get thick in the smokehouse. And then when it got smoked they'd put it in sacks and then they'd just hang it up and when they needed it they'd just go and get it.

Q. That ham sure is good isn't it?

A. Yes. That's what Arthur says. He says, "You can't hardly buy the cured meat. If you do it don't taste like it used to."

Q. Did she used to bake hams a lot?

A. Yes, and she used to boil them sometimes. She boiled it more. Of course she didn't boil a whole ham. The hogs we butchered, you couldn't of got it on the stove. She'd cut off a piece. And she'd boil it and then that made awful good broth and then she'd take some of that and she'd put a lot of biscuits in it. And we liked that.

Q. What else did she do with the broth from the ham?

A. She had too much and she'd set it back, the grease would come to the top when it got cold and she'd take that off and put it in the skillet and put it in the oven and heat it, then the water that was in it would fry out.

Q. I see. That makes good gravy doesn't it?

A. Oh yes. And Grandma used to call the broth meat liquor. It was just jelly you know. Oh, I just love to get that and eat it.

Q. Yes, that's really good. Let's see now, tell me about your quilting and sewing.

A. Well, Mom did our sewing until we got big enough to do our own.

Q. She taught you how?

A. Yes, she taught us how. Well, of course years went by, and you just take things up you know. We got so . . . I never bought no patterns.

I'd see a picture and I'd cut my own pattern. I can't do it now. We always did sewing and oh, I always did like to make quilts and I like it yet.

Q. What do you use on the inside of your quilts?  
(Interruption by someone leaving room)

Q. Did you make like one quilt every winter or what did you do?

A. Oh no, we's arunning two or three of them at the same time. Kind of sorted your scraps that way.

Q. Did you use a quilting frame?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you sell your quilting frame at your sale?

A. No, I guess it's around somewhere, if I can find it. Of course I don't guess we'll ever quilt anymore.

Q. Why not?

A. Well, we don't need the quilts for one thing and then for another thing we can't see.

Q. Yes, so it would be hard for you.

A. Yes, and our hands has got so . . . we've had arthritis. I'd just like to see if I could quilt sometime but I never will I guess.

Q. Well, you could probably do a little at a time because now your lights are better in here than they were out there [on the farm]. So you could probably quilt for a half an hour and then rest and then go back and do it again. You could quilt and sell them.

A. Yes, they sell a lot better if they are quilted, they're worth a lot more.

Q. Where did you learn all of your patterns?

A. Oh, we just made them up. Of course we used to make them just plain. They used to make just the slanting, that's the easiest way to quilt, the slanting line. And then we quilted them in checks and diamonds and spider webs and different things but of course it's more complicated to make them some ways than it is others.

Q. What do you put in the middle, in between?

A. Well, we put cotton, but they don't use cotton now. I don't know what they call it. They've got some special kind of stuff they use.

Q. I wondered because your quilts are very nice and light.

A. Yes. And then of course we used to make comforts and tack them.

Q. How many do you have left?

A. I don't know, I'd been worried about some of the quilts but then we found them. We've got four quilts we've never used. Then we got some real ancient ones, some real old ones, of course they wouldn't last no time. There's one that's our great-grandmother's. But it wouldn't last anytime, she used it.

Q. Did you ever do any tatting?

A. Yes. We used to tat and sell our tatting. We used to make handkerchiefs and sell them. We'd pull threads in them and color threads and make tatting and make a little design in the corner.

Q. I love tatting, I want to learn to tat. You don't do that anymore?

A. No, we haven't done that for a long time.

Q. Think you could teach me to do that?

A. I don't know whether I could or not.

Q. You use a shuttle don't you?

A. Yes. When we learned to tat we didn't know what was the matter with it, we'd make the ring and it'd come out all right and then we'd make the next one and it'd be away over about that far. Come to find out we's apulling the thread the wrong way. We couldn't figure out what was the matter and we showed somebody and they'd say, "Well it was all right," and then they finally saw how it was. But we used to make a lot of tatting and crochet.

Q. Does Lulu like to do that too?

A. Yes.

Q. But she's not doing any of that now?

A. No, not for a long time.

Q. Why did you quit?

A. Well, we just didn't have time. You see there was three women there and then Mom, she used to do a lot after she got older.

Q. Now I want to talk about your social life. What did you do in the way of socializing?

A. Not much of anything.

Q. You didn't. You went to church?

A. Yes, we went to church and Christian Endeavor and then we went . . .

Q. Wait, what is this Christian Endeavor?

A. Well, it kind of, sort of, took the place of Sunday school but it wasn't like that. They'd have a leader and they'd have a topic and different ones . . .

Q. Would that be after church?

A. That was before church Sunday night.

Q. Oh, I see. You went to church at night?

A. We'd go twice a day. Then. But, of course they got so they didn't have church at night. And then we got so we didn't go out at night too. Walking was too far.

Q. I'll bet that was nice though, especially in the summertime, to walk to church in the evening and then walk home at night.

A. Yes. We wouldn't eat supper until we got home Sunday night.

Q. I'll bet that was nice. That would be a nice walk, through the country at night.

A. Making the trip twice a day, about five miles round trip, twice. But we'd rest in the afternoon, Sunday afternoon.

Q. Did your mother go?

A. No.

Q. Did she go to church when you were little?

A. Yes. Of course little children don't know much about, only what they see, and we'd sit there and swing our feet and look at people, you know. I remember we had some hats, kind of wide hats, they called them leg-horn hats. They was kind of soft like straw and we wasn't big enough to see over the back of the seat and we'd have to sit over like this to keep from mashing our hats. (laughter)

Q. Did your grandparents go to church with you?

A. Well, yes. Further back. Of course they got so they wasn't able to go very much. But Grandma used to go a good deal but she got so she couldn't hear and couldn't see very good and it got so it wasn't very good for her to go.

Q. How old were you when your mother died?

A. Well, she died in 1949.

Q. What year were you born?

A. 1894. 1894.

Q. What was the matter with your mother?

A. Well she had heart trouble and neuritis.

Q. What year did your father die?

A. He died in 1940. He wasn't but 65 when he died.

Q. What was wrong with him?

A. Well he had hardening of the liver and then he got so he couldn't hardly breathe, he just finally . . . But he worked awful hard.

Q. Did he?

A. Yes, and he took a lot of exposure.

Q. Did you have the doctor out very much?

A. No. We was a pretty healthy family.

Q. So you doctored yourselves. What did you use for medicines then?

A. Well, for cough medicine we got wild cherry bark, made tea out of it and put sugar in it or horehound tea. And then we had petroleum jelly, a form of vaseline, and we'd swallow some of that for a sore throat.

Q. What did you use for a cold?

A. Well, that's what we used for colds. And then Mom would put turpentine and stuff on our chests and a flannel rag. That'd kill or cure you, one, I guess. Them fumes come up your nose, that turpentine. (laughter)

Q. Can you think of anything else that you used in the way of home remedies?

A. Well, sometimes when we got kind of a bad cut Mom'd put sugar on it to stop the blood. And we never did do it but they say hornets nest is good.

Q. What?

A. Hornets nest. It's made out of stuff. Did you ever see a hornet's nest?

Q. Yes.

A. Well, it's just kind of like paper you know. They scratch up that stuff off of lichen from posts and rails and things, then they make some kind of a glue, I guess, to make it stick together and they say that's good to put on it.

Q. Somebody once told me, grasshopper spit. (laughter) And then another one was tobacco juice and also a cobweb. Did you ever hear of that? Wrapping cobwebs around the wound. Somebody told me that once. So you just didn't get sick very much?

A. No. We was always kind of delicate but we just didn't get sick very much. Only when we had some kind of a disease like measles and whooping cough.

Q. How did your life change after your mother died?

A. Well, of course we took over quite a bit; she got so she wasn't able to do so much. We just kind of went ahead like we had been doing. We didn't change very much only we just had more to do.

Q. Did anybody, any one member of the family sort of take her place?

A. No. We just kind of filled in somehow, I don't know how.

Q. When there is a decision to be made how did you go about making it?

A. Well, we just went together to see what each one thought. We didn't always see things alike but we agreed on something, you know.

Q. Did you think that after your mother died you might move to town?

A. No not then. Of course we's able to work and all then. We's used to country life and we had the farm so that was just the thing to do, to go ahead.

Q. And you liked it out there?

A. Yes.

Q. When you were younger did you think about leaving home? Did you go through high school or when did you quit school?

A. We quit out of the eighth grade.

Q. Did you want to quit then?

A. Yes. Why my older brother went to high school and of course I saw his books and there wasn't nothing that interested me. (laughter) And then besides, I didn't like the teacher. And then I just wanted to just start living, you know.

Q. Did you ever think about leaving home, when you girls were younger?

A. We used to work some, around in people's homes. My sister did more than I did. I didn't very much. We always tried to one of us be at home with Momma all the time. So she wouldn't have the whole burden by herself. And we worked in the field. We just got out and pitched hay and we went to the timber and helped saw the trees down and we worked at the power saw, sawing up the wood with Arthur, after Dad died.



Q. You had a power saw?

A. We had a power saw, a cross cut, one of them big round ones, you know.

Q. Was it run with electricity?

A. No, we had a gasoline engine. Well, Arthur would what they call feeding the saw. And him and Lulu carried the wood and I did what they call the off bearing. I stood up there and when it was sawed off I'd throw it back, you know.

Q. How old was your older brother when he left home?

A. Well, I guess about nineteen or so. He got to working in garages and he was interested in machine work.

Q. And so he never came back home to live?

A. Well, he come back and boarded at home some. And then they had two garages up here in Donnellson, he'd work at one and then he'd work at the other, whichever one gave him the most money. And then after he was in the service he went out to Nebraska and worked out there for a threshing machine, where they sold threshing machines and then when he come back he started his own business. He first started in the garage and then he got a machine shop and then of course, he worked at the lathe and things like that, you know.

Q. Was that here in Donnellson?

A. Yes, that little shop down there by the town hall. Well, he had a bigger one there and it burnt. He lost everything he had and he had to start all over.

Q. Well did you and Lulu have boy friends?

A. No.

Q. You never did? Now how did you manage not to do that?

A. No, because we never seen nobody that ever tried to walk up to us. We either knew them or didn't know them, one. And we's going to be particular. We didn't want to start running with somebody that we'd be ashamed of. I wanted somebody I could look away up to. (laughter)

Q. And he never came along, huh?

A. No. (laughter)

Q. Well, I think it's really nice the kind of home that you have. And it's so nice the way all of you get along so nicely. You seem really happy.

A. Our older brother got married when he was 46.

Q. How did that work out?

A. Fine. He was seven years older than his wife and he lived seven years after she died.

Q. What about Arthur, did he ever have any girl friends?

A. No.

Q. Would your parents have minded if you had?

A. No, I don't think. Of course they always told us to be careful what we did. If it'd been satisfactory with us it would have been all right.

Q. I wanted to ask you also, did you have a Watkins man?

A. A Watkins man?

Q. Yes, that's a man that comes around and sells . . .

A. Yes.

Q. Did you buy things from him?

A. Some.

Q. Was there anything in particular that you liked that he sold?

A. Well, we got extracts mostly from him. I liked them.

Q. Any other kinds of salesmen that came around that you used to buy from?

A. Well, they was a McConnon and the Raleigh and Heberling.

Q. Did you buy from them too?

A. We never did buy much stuff from them, mostly extracts.

Q. When you came to town did you ride a horse to town or how did you get to town?

A. Well, we used to come with a wagon, and we had a surrey at one time.

Q. But, later, after your parents died how did you get to town?

A. We walked.

Q. How did you get your groceries home?

A. Carried them. Carried our eggs up here.

Q. Why didn't you come with horses?