Oral History of Illinois Agriculture

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Abstract: George Howe (1870-1953) was born in Logan County, Illinois. His father, Samuel, immigrated from Ireland in 1857. Samuel joined the Union Army and served in the Civil War for several years, and later became a tenant farmer before purchasing his own land in Piatt County in 1871. Samuel and his wife, Catherine, had 10 children, six boys and four girls. George, the third child, grew up on the family farm near Mansfield and helped raise wheat, oats, corn, and cattle in the 1880s. His first plowing experience was with a John T. Walton walking plow when "I was just about big enough to reach the handles." With the exception of a corn planter and a Buckeye harvester, which were equipped with seats for riding, all of their horse-drawn field implements were operated on foot. Oats were cut, bound, and shocked by hand, and then fed by hand into a horse-powered thresher to separate the grain from the straw. Prior to the advent of drainage tile, wet fields were drained by ditching implements pulled by teams of oxen. In the 1880s, 40 bushels/acre of corn and 35 bushels/acre of oats were considered good yields. Prices for improved land circa 1900 were about $90-100 per acre. George discusses harness-racing horses and several breeds of horses used on the farm, including Shire, Morgan, Clydesdale, and Norman. George served as President of Peoples State Bank in Mansfield for thirty-four years (1916-1950) and retired at the age of 80. George expresses concern about the stability of the dollar in 1952, but is pleased with the advancements that have been made in Piatt County and says "I've not got any hankering to go back to the good ole' days." He says he has enjoyed his life and thinks his community is very special.

Keywords: Howe family; 1880s, 1890s, 1900-1950; Logan County, Piatt County, Sangamon County, Blue Ridge Township, Mansfield, Farmer City, Salt Creek; family farm;

tenant farming; grain, oats, wheat, corn, timothy grass; beef cattle, oxen, harness-racing horses, Clydesdale horses, Morgan horses, Norman horses, Shire horses; John T. Walton walking plow, corn planter, Buckeye harvester, wire binder, separator, threshing machine; soil drainage, blind ditcher, slush ditcher, drainage tile; fences, plank fencing, hedge fencing; crop yields, land prices; Peoples State Bank, bank president; railroads; churches; value of dollar.

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Adams: How do you do, sir? You are Mr. George Howe, I believe?

Howe: Yes, sir.

Adams: Well, I'm Cal— C. W. Adams, from Monticello. I represent the Piatt County Historical Society and we understand that this is your 82nd birthday, January the 23rd, 1952, in Mansfield, Illinois.

Howe: That's right.

Adams: And we're trying to get a little information of the old timers throughout the county for our records, which will be filed away in the Allerton Library in Monticello and we've come up to interview you on your early days and your life, and we'd be glad for you to tell us anything you can think of or answer any questions. We just make this sort of a visit. Have you been in this county all your life?

Howe: I was born near east of Logan County and lived the first year of my life in Logan County, eighty-one years in Piatt.

Adams: Eighty-one years in Piatt County?

Howe: Yes, sir.

(unintelligible muttering)

Adams: Well, you are certainly in fine conditioned appearance for a man of that age, and by the way Mr. Judge [Elim Jacobs] Hawbaker here tells me he's known you about all his life.

Howe: Correct. And I knew his Father before him, and so he did mine—

Adams: —I'd be very glad to have him take up from this point and go on. No doubt you fellas can tell some pretty good yarns on each other.

Howe: Probably. Probably better— you better not tell too much, Judge. (laughter)

Hawbaker: Mr. Howe, I think that the Historical Society would be very much interested in your family and your father's family. As I remember there, it was a rather large family and very typical of our country. You might tell us, if you will, when your father came to this country and where from.

Howe: Well, my father came to this country from Ireland in 1857 and worked by the month for a few years and went in the Army and spent three years in the Army. Come back and went to farming in Logan County and farmed there. Was a tenant farmer for five years and then moved to Piatt [County] in 1871. I was one year old. As a consequent, I don't recollect anything about it. But I do recollect some things. I recollect that Salt Creek didn't have a bridge over Salt Creek till seventy-four [1874], so Mr. Bill Firke tells me. He helped to build the first bridge over Salt Creek on the east side. And as I recollect, Salt Creek had looked bigger to me then than the Illinois River does today (laughter), but I guess it is somewhere near the same size it is now. We used it, for the— goin' to Farmer City because we didn't trade much in Mansfield at that time. Incidentally, Mansfield was founded the year I was born, so it isn't hard for me to recollect the age of Mansfield. I recollect my own, and that gives me the age of Mansfield.

Hawbaker: Well that's very interesting. I remember when they didn't have very good bridges over [Salt Creek] because one of our neighbors went over there one time, in very high water, Mark Winegardner, to get the coal for the neighborhood, and he drove— water was in there at Farmers City and it washed him off the bridge and he got upset and he had to come back without the coal.

Howe: Yes. Yes, well I recollect—

Hawbaker: Now, let's go back to your family. How many brothers and sisters did you have?

Howe: Well I was a family of ten. There's six of us boys and four girls.

Hawbaker: And your father settled north of Mansfield, did he not?

Howe: Yes.

Hawbaker: When you first come here, what's called a home place, about two or three miles north of Mansfield?

Howe: Yes, that's correct.

Hawbaker: And I guess all the boys stayed with him and you all worked there, did you not? Then go on and tell us about who bought the first farms and so forth.

(pause in recording) 4:20

Howe: Well, Dad and Uncle Joe started farming together and they farmed together seven years, five in Logan County and two up here. So they bought a farm in 1870, contracted for settlement March 1st and came up here in '71, and didn't divide their land till two years later, and Uncle Joe then took eighty acres, my father took the other eighty. Uncle Joe improved the eighty he lived on and that's about the time they was herding cattle over Salt Creek. They bought cattle in Logan County and I think they, with the money that they got for the first cattle they ever owned, they bought this farm up in Piatt County.

So my Uncle Joe wasn't very strong, kinda stricken (??) with consumption, so he run the herd for a few years and they had a pond that they kept the cattle overnight on Glen Ross' farm, and with a lot of other fellas. Each fella had his own brand. Later they— well, later Judge, part of that farm was sold to Frank Seivers just two or three years ago, it belonged to Judge [David] Davis. This was along Salt Creek; because the land was swampy, it was hard to farm, and they had a water supply.

Hawbaker: Well, I don't like to interrupt you, but an interesting thing about the sale of that farm, because Judge Davis had such a large estate, that when they went to buy the farm—this may not be authority, but I heard it from pretty good authority—they offered him a certain amount for the farm and they said they wanted to sell it for less because it put him in a different estate bracket.

Howe: I've heard that story, Judge. I think that's authentic alright enough.

Hawbaker: Well, how many brothers did you have?

Howe: I had five.

Hawbaker: How many are living today?

Howe: Three of us. I've got two brothers living.

Hawbaker: You had three sisters, didn't you?

Howe: I had four sisters, Judge.

Hawbaker: Did you?

Howe: Um-hm.

Hawbaker: Who are they?

Howe: Well, three of those sisters are living. Pearl lives in California. Martha's living just the next house to the west of us, and Liz [Elizabeth]is living in the country, Lizzie Warren.

Hawbaker: That's right. And two of your brothers are dead?

Howe: Three.

Hawbaker: Three.

Howe: Joe, Sam, and I had a brother [William] die when he was fifteen years old. I guess you never knew him.

Hawbaker: No, I didn't know him. And your brother Bert [Albert] lives up on the farm?

Howe: Yes.

Hawbaker: And Robert lives on the same block with you here in town?

Howe: Correct.

Hawbaker: I believe all of you have farms, isn't that right?

Howe: Yes.

Hawbaker: And some of you have two or more farms?

Howe: Yes.

Hawbaker: When were you married, Mr.—?

Howe: 1894.

Hawbaker: Well, I was here then for your wedding anniversary a few years ago.

Howe: Fifty.

Hawbaker: And that was fifty years. How many children in your family?

Howe: We have four.

Hawbaker: And how many are living?

Howe: Three. Incidentally, the one who is dead was living on the farm that you was raised on.

Hawbaker: That's right. You folks bought that farm from my father in 1918.

Howe: Correct.

Hawbaker: Then that is Harold, wasn't it? That was Harold.

Howe: Yes, that was Harold.

Hawbaker: And then Clayton is here in the bank running the— he's President now of the bank, since you resigned.

Howe: Yes. He is.

Hawbaker: And Josephine is practicing law and living at home, with you.

Howe: Yes, that's correct.

Hawbaker: Roscoe is where? Down in Louisville?

Howe: Mayfield, He's in Mayfield, Kentucky.

Hawbaker: Mayfield. And he's in business down there?

Howe: Yes.

(pause in recording) 8:31

Hawbaker: Well, nearly all of your children have farmland, haven't they?

Howe: All have, yes sir.

Hawbaker: And that's true of your brothers' children?

Howe: That's true, too, I guess.

Hawbaker: And that farmland was earned by just farming the country here in the ordinary way, I guess. Same as anybody else farmed it.

Howe: Very much the same as all the neighbors did.

Hawbaker: You were particularly interested in livestock and grain farming?

Howe: Yes sir.

Hawbaker: You might tell us a little bit about your first experiences farming as what kind of tools you used, Mr. Howe.

Howe: Well, Judge, I can go back. The first plow that I ever followed was a John T. Walton walking plow, 14 inch. I was just about big enough to reach the handles. And the fact of the matter is, we walked behind all the implements except the corn planter and we had an old south (??) rake or a Buckeye [Buckeye Mower Company] harvester, either one of the two. They had both, but we walked with everything else. And really, farming was some work at that time.

Hawbaker: About how many hours a day did you put in, Mr. Howe?

Howe: (Laughter) Oh lord, I don't know, Judge. We didn't have watches at that time and we'd throw em' away if we had 'em. We looked at the sun.

Hawbaker: (Laughter) I suppose you were out there about sun up and stayed till about sun down after you were late in the season.

Howe: Yes, that's correct.

Hawbaker: And the corn were shucked by hand?

Howe: Well, the oats was cut and bound by hand, shocked by hand, handled by hand every other way until it got through the separator. And that separator was a very crude affair in my first recollection. It had the old horse power and the oats— the straw fell down the pile behind the separator and then the oats come out in another place, and it was handled by hand and then one fella pushes the straw back to the next fella, and he to the next fella, and he to the next fella, and they stacked it that way.

Hawbaker: I see. Well, he did get the wire binder, I suppose about 1880, wasn't it?

Howe: Yes, first binder I ever saw was the wire binder.

Hawbaker: And then he used the wire binder for a long time and when they cut it, how did they cute the wire, when they threshed?

Howe: I think they had a sort of a thing like a hatchet. They hit it right with a hatchet and cut the wire.

Hawbaker: And those were self-feeders, I presume, on the threshing machine?

Howe: Hand feeders. Yea, they was hand feeders.

Hawbaker: What crops did you raise principally at that time, in the eighties say, Mr. Howe?

Howe: A little wheat, oats, and corn.

Hawbaker: You had grasses and clovers though, I suppose, too.

Howe: Yes, not much clover. Mostly timothy [grass].

Hawbaker: That was for the horses, I guess.

Howe: And they fed timothy to everything; cattle, too.

Hawbaker: Some of the country was pretty wet, wasn't it— around there?

Howe: Oh, boy. It was plenty wet. I hope to tell you. I digress a little bit. They had a machine called a blind ditcher. Incidentally, I hadn't run across some of the blind ditchers at your place (??) and you didn't know what in the heck they were. And now what a blind ditcher was. They had a plow just like an ordinary breaking plow with a heavy beam. The beam about that long and at the bottom of the beam they had a round sort of a thing. I guess was adjustable. They dug a hole, dropped the plow in, and pulled that through the ground with oxen. And I guess when they had a rather tight subsoil that worked real well. Dad had some that didn't just work so good, it filled up too bad.

(pause in recording) 12:41

Then later they had this— what they called a slush ditcher, also pulled by oxen, which was a block about so square. Excuse me, Judge. (Chuckle) And they also planted that and it's pulled by six oxen. I can't just recollect how it's done, but they pulled up through the ground and had to do that in the wet time, and some of the early ditches was made with an ox ditcher, or a slush ditcher, they used to call it.

I recollect a fella stayed at our house a few days, when he was going through the place, and the driver got sick, and my Dad says, "I'll drive your cattle for you." And he just laughed at him. Didn't think the fellas out here know anything about driving oxen. He laughed, he didn't take Dad very serious, and he gave Dad the ox whip and he said, "Now let's see you bring the oxen around and get 'em yoked up." So Dad said he always did like to drive cattle and he wasn't gonna get the mule. The fella said, "I guess you'll do, I guess you've driven 'em before." So, Dad drove the oxen for a few days while the fellow was trying to recuperate a little bit.

Hawbaker: That's very interesting. I've heard of it. After the ditch was laid out, the water would naturally dig itself a little deeper and you would get the surface water off.

Howe: Um-hm. That helped wonderfully.

Hawbaker: Then, later you began the tiling that made this country so fertile and farm so well.

Howe: Yes.

Hawbaker: Well, what was the fences when you first remember, Mr. Howe. How did they, after they quit herding the cattle, how did they keep them in the enclosures?

Howe: Why, so far as Dad was concerned, he and Mr. Langely rented a quarter section of the Robinson land or almost a half, I don't know which, that lays a little south of Kumler [SE McLean County]. And they test (??) that land, and there was a well there, and they put up a windmill and they run that till their lease expired, and when their lease expired, times were plenty hard in the seventies [1870s], seventy-three and four. So, they refused to re-lease. But Dad pastured some cattle up northeast of Bellflower [SE McLean County] on the Summer McNally(??) land, at so much per head per month, and he did that till about 1880, and finally he worked in some more land and grass and finally just—

Hawbaker: —Did they have a wire fence up there at that time?

Howe: No, that was before the day of wire fences, Judge.

Hawbaker: Did they have to go to the woods and make rails to fence it, or how did they do it— do the fencing?

Howe: [unintelligible] pretty well. I think they had plank, Judge.

Hawbaker: Um-hm, plank fencing.

Howe: I don't think it was rail.

Hawbaker: Of course, they immediately started these hedge fences [Osage orange], about the time, and were sorry of it afterwards, I guess, when they got the wire fences because most of those have been pulled out since that date, I think.

Howe: They never did make a very good fence, Judge. And there's a lot of grief to get rid of them.

Hawbaker: Well, Mr. Howe. Tell us about some of the crops you raised long in the eighties— your corn and your oats and your wheat. How was it with reference to yield at present day?

Howe: Well, we thought that forty bushels of corn was a good yield. And thirty, thirty-five bushels of oats was a good yield. Fella said he got fifty bushels an acre we would accept that, but if he said he got sixty bushels an acre, we'd think he's a darn liar.

Hawbaker: (laughter) Well, of course it had all ranges of price, I suppose. You might tell us some of the years when you had low prices and some of the years when you thought you had pretty good prices.

Howe: Yes.

(pause in recording) 16:40

Howe: Prices in the early seventies [1870s] were pretty good, the war—there was sort of an after-effect of the war [Civil War]—but about seventy-four or five, farm prices (unintelligible) and stayed low till seventy-eight or nine. I've seen hogs sell as low as $2.25 a hundred and as high as $10 in, before, the war hit us. So, I sold some hogs here in town for $10 a hundred (unintelligible) Mr. Firke's in 1910.

Hawbaker: Would you now recall about when this land hit $100 an acre, Mr. Howe?

Howe: Yes, I—

Hawbaker: What year it was?

Howe: I know I gave $90 an acre in 1899, and that was about the outside price, 'course it was just a hundred acres that was pretty well improved. And just a few years after that the land hit a hundred, but it didn't go much higher for quite a little while.

Hawbaker: You own some of the VanMeter land. I think that there was eighty acres left on the Jacob VanMeter land and I don't recall the day that that sold, but that was about $100 acre land because it was considered pretty well improved.

Howe: Yes. We've got the 80 acres that Jake first built on. The house is now gone.

Hawbaker: You might tell us something about the VanMeter family, if you recall. How many acres they had and where the land generally laid.

Howe: Well, the land was located north, and it was both east and west of Mansfield. It's a couple of miles north, it started and they had three sections in a row, two miles deep. That made 3,840 acres of land, and they bought 160 acres that (unintelligible) Roth now owns. Which made, incidentally (unintelligible) owned too, where the Duncan cemetery is located.

Hawbaker: How many were there in that family? I believe it was Garret who originally entered most of the land, wasn't it?

Howe: I think he entered that 4,000 acres and then, David VanMeter, wasn't he a cousin?

Hawbaker: That's right.

Howe: He entered the Sexton land.

Hawbaker: And what did Garret do with his land? What children did he leave?

Howe: Oh, he left Solomon, Charles, Isaac, Will, Garret and then there was—

Hawbaker: —some girls, too.

Howe: Rebecca, who met Cruise, Tobiatha, and Sally, who met Mr. Cunningham.

Hawbaker: I believe he must have left the girls about a half section and the boys about a section of land a piece. Didn't he not?

Howe: Well, I think they had a half section apiece, and some more. I think Charles had more than a half, I think Charles had a full section. I don't mean Charles, I mean Jacob.

Hawbaker: That's right. And that's part of the land that you have today.

Howe: Yes sir.

Hawbaker: Well, who were some of the other original landowners in this vicinity at that time, in the seventies and eighties, that you recall.

Howe: When we came here, I recollect the McKees east of town. They were here, I don't think they'd been here long. The VanMeters, the Lindsays up on Blue Ridge, and a fella by the name of Alexander.

(pause in recording) 20:56

And there's quite a lot of Virginians here at that time. Fact of the matter was, there's two or three settlements made here that come in groups, families. Now the Sextons come from Southern Indiana, they settled northwest of here. That included the Coxes, the Blazels (??), (unintelligible), Crosbys, and they entered quite a bunch of land, I think they say that cost about fifty cents an acre. Then there's another group, (unintelligible) people come in a group and I think they come in fifty-four [1854]. And this land, I guess, was all prairie at the time. Fact of the matter is, when we came here Section 29 was all prairie then (unintelligible) bought in on.

Hawbaker: Well—

Howe: Then the VanMeters settled that corner, and they was some people from Kentucky. However, a lot of those fellows settled in Sangamon County, just below Blue Ridge. Which is next to Jacoby, isn't it?

Hawbaker: Henry Jacoby, in Sangamon Township, was quite a large estate, was it not?

Howe: Um-hm.

Hawbaker: Two or three sections in there.

Howe: Yes.

Hawbaker: Some of it went up into Blue Ridge Township.

Howe: Yes sir. They and the Bedfords intermarried somewhere and now they are related. They settled together and part of that was in Blue Ridge Township.

Hawbaker: Well, the Langleys and the Rosses were out there when you folks came, were they not— in that neighborhood?

Howe: Yes. The Langleys were here. He'd been here some little time. The Coxes. Mr. Ross— I just don't know where Mr. Ross was livin'. I believe he might have been livin' at Farmers City. That's Bert's, Duane's Granddad.

Hawbaker: They own land over there and that's still in the Ross name isn't it?

Howe: Yes.

Hawbaker: And their son is in the bank, is he not? With Clayton, your son?

Howe: Yes, that's where the cattle pound was, Judge, where they used to corral the cattle at night.

Hawbaker: Well, what about the settlement of Mansfield? That was settled by John L. Mansfield, I believe.

Howe: Yes. John, however, never lived in the town. He was just over the edge and could look in.

Hawbaker: He built a nice home out north of town—

Howe: —Yes.

Hawbaker: —stood for a good many years, did it not?

Howe: It did.

Hawbaker: And then he laid out the town here.

Howe: Yes sir.

Hawbaker: Well, did he have— he had some sons, did he not? That went in business here?

Howe: He had three sons: two of them was in business here. I believe that Fielding never lived in Mansfield. I think Fielding, when J.R. moved to Mansfield, Fielding had gone down to St. Louis.

Hawbaker: And what were the other son's names?

Howe: Oscar was at home, Charlie, then they had two sisters. Mrs. (unintelligible) and Mariah. They all lived at the Mansfield homestead.

Hawbaker: And Oscar was in business here for some time?

Howe: Yes. He was in the hardware business. When I first come to the country, Oscar had some good horses. Incidentally, some of those have carried on.

Hawbaker: And Charles was practicing law with the State's attorney?

Howe: Yes, later on, but Charles was only a kid when we come here. I think only ten, twelve years old.

Hawbaker: Well, now tell us about some of these horses, Mr. Howe. First, when you were farming in the seventies and eighties, what breed of horses did the farmers use?

Howe: Well, the— Oscar brought the first improved breed of draft horses into this country. He was supposed to be a full-blooded Shire; came from Canada.

Hawbaker: That's Oscar Mansfield?

Howe: Yes, Oscar. And he also owned two old stallions. Incidentally, they were well bred. Pilot Gold Dust and (unintelligible) he was from the Paxton family—

(pause in recording) 25:28

Howe: —which produced Dan Pack.

Hawbaker: Oh, that's interesting, sure.

Howe: And Pilot Gold Dust has— in the early eighties, Pilot Gold Dust's half brothers and sisters was Maude S and J.I.C., which was the two fastest harness horses in the world at the time.

Hawbaker: Well then, Mansfield was right in first class horses, weren't they?

Howe: Absolutely. And among other things, too, that was right interesting. Maude S trotted the mile in 2:10 and a quarter. And J.I.C., her half brother—their mothers were half sisters—took the quarter off. And Maude S went back and trotted the mile in 2:08 and three-fourths. Well, they'd converted J.I.C. to a pacer and he afterwards paced the mile in 2:06 and a fraction, so he was the fastest double-gated horse in the world.

Hawbaker: Well that's interesting, indeed. But, you had the Morgan horse too, didn't you? For a farm horse, till you got heavy implements to pull?

Howe: Lots of Morgan horses here, um-hm.

Hawbaker: Well, the Shire horse that Mr. Mansfield brought in here, did they raise a good many Shires?

Howe: Yes, they did. That horse is a grade (??) and he added fast to the horses they had here. Which they needed to pull the heavier implements.

Hawbaker: I guess he'da been going still if it hadn't been that he had so much hair on his legs that he got mud in it and he allowed the travel to keep him clean, wasn't it?

Howe: That's correct. Yes, indeed.

Hawbaker: Then what horse, was it the Norman [Spanish-Norman breed] that supplanted him because he was a cleaner footed horse?

Howe: That's correct. The Norman is cleaner footed and the Norman had a good disposition. Some of the Clydes [Clydesdale breed] come in about that time too, but they were kinda inclined to be nervous and flighty, but nevertheless the six-horse teams (unintelligible) for the last several years have been principally Clydes just the same.

Hawbaker: Well that's interesting, of course, we've all seen those. I suppose they got to pulling fully-headed plows when they got the gang plows and they needed heavier horses.

Howe: That's true.

Hawbaker: We might talk about the banks here. We once had three banks in this town. You remember them?

Howe: Yes.

Hawbaker: What were they?

Howe: Well, there's the Fairbanks' Bank, the Fairbanks had two banks. I just—don't want to be egotistical, Judge, and if I go to name that bank (unintelligible) it might reflect a little on some people who are now living here.

Hawbaker: Well, we'll not discuss 'em, but just name the three banks.

Howe: The State Bank of Mansfield, of which Mr. Firke was one of my large stockholders. Fairbanks have had two banks here, they had the National Bank and the State Bank, and I think Mr. Beady(??) had a private bank here, at one time, and Peoples State Bank, which is the bank we got now.

Hawbaker: When was this bank that you have here now organized? 1910?

Howe: May, 1910.

Hawbaker: And your father was President of that for five or six years, was he not?

Howe: Yes, six.

Hawbaker: Then when were you elected President?

Howe: 1916.

Hawbaker: And how long did you serve?

Howe: Well, I served thirty-four years, Judge. I served till I was eighty years old and told ‘em it was time to put in some younger blood.

Hawbaker: Well you’re still the Chairman of the Board of Executives.

Howe: Oh, that’s what they say, yes.

(pause in recording) 29:22

Howe: That’s the notion of Brad Moores and the board down here. I told them I didn’t care. I wouldn’t mind staying on the board of directors, but I didn’t want any responsibility.

Hawbaker: Well that’s fine. Tell us a little bit about this Mansfield. At one time, it was a little larger in buildings than it is at present, was it not?

Howe: Mansfield in 1900. According to the figures, had a population of 708, and I don’t think they’ve ever had counting (unintelligible) quite that big. I think at the present time it’s 697.

Hawbaker: It was a good trading center too and has been all along.

Howe: Yes, it has been. Hard roads and the automobiles has hurt it.

Hawbaker: Do you remember when the railroads came through?

Howe: No. See, the IB&W [Indiana, Bloomington & Western Railroad] went through the year that I was born. I’ve just got a hazy recollection of the Chicagoan and Paducah, now the Wabash.

Hawbaker: Mr. Howe, you might tell us in your own words. Compare the present times, prices, and things with prior times and give us your idea of, generally about business conditions, political affairs, and anything that interests you, in the few remaining minutes that we have on this tape. Two minutes.

Howe: Well, I think the financial structure was possibly a little sounder than it is now. I don’t know whether anybody knows what the dollar's worth or not, or what the dollar is. I don’t. But nevertheless, we have gone along and we’ve got a lot of things that we didn’t have years ago, and I’ve not got any hankering to go back to the good ole’ days. This present day suits me right good well. And I think we’ve made a lot of advancement, in spite of— it’s been a trial and error in a lot of ways.

Hawbaker: It's pretty hard work though, wasn't it?

Howe: Yes indeed, it was.

Hawbaker: But the people had a good spirit and you've always enjoyed yourself here in this town and in this vicinity, have you not?

Howe: I've always enjoyed life and enjoyed livin' here, and I think we got a fine community. Wonderful set of people.

Hawbaker: How many churches?

Howe: We've just got two churches in the town at the present time.

Adams: Well, Mr. Howe, we thank you for this little interview. It's a good start for the Society records and we hope to interest the young people in the history of the past. We will have this transferred onto paper and a story written from it, and I'll send it up to you.

(end of interview)