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Preface

This manuscript is the product of a tape-recorded interview conducted by Elizabeth Dixon for the Oral History office in October 1984. Julie Allen transcribed the tape and Linda Jett edited the transcript. Marie Burch reviewed the transcript.

Marie Burch was born in 1897 on a farm at the eastern edge of Divernon, Illinois. As a girl she was encouraged to pursue education and participated in all facets of farm life. While a student at the University of Illinois she met her future husband, Leo Burch. His untimely death in 1925 left her with a son to raise and the necessity to forge a living. This memoir recounts her life experiences in education and farming, through two world wars and the Great Depression. It touches on important events and institutions in central Illinois.

The interviewer, Elizabeth K. Dixon, was born and lives in Springfield, Illinois. She received her Bachelor of Arts Degree in History from Knox College, Galesburg, Illinois and her Master of Arts Degree in History from Sangamon State University, Springfield, Illinois.

Readers of this oral history memoir should bear in mind that it is a transcript of the spoken word, and the interviewer, narrator and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. Sangamon State University is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for views expressed therein; these are for the reader to judge.

Marie McMurray Burch, October 1984, Springfield, Illinois.

Elizabeth Dixon, Interviewer.

Q: What is your full name?

A: Fannie Marie McMurray Burch.

Q: When were you born?

A: January 15, 1897.

Q: Where were you born?

A: In my parents' home in the country about two and a half miles southeast of Divernon.

Q: What are your parents' names?

A: My father's name is Thomas B. McMurray and my mother's name is Fannie E. Haire McMurray.

Q: Did your parents have any brothers and sisters?

A: Yes, my father had a brother and sister and my mother had five sisters and two brothers.

Q: Do you have any brothers or sisters?

A: I have one brother and he's dead.

Q: What was his name?

A: Hayward T. McMurray.

Q: What was that first name?

A: Hayward, H-A-Y-W-A-R-D.

Q: What are your grandparents' names?

A: My father's parent's name was Nancy Parks McMurray and my grandfather was Joseph E. McMurray, Joseph Edward McMurray, and my mother's parent was Margaret Lindsey Haire and my grandfather was Johnson Haire.

Q: Describe what you know about your grandparents' lives on your father's side of the family.

A: I don't know too much about my grandfather. My grandfather was the ticket agent in Cerro Gordo and I guess he was on the Wabash Railroad. I really don't know. And I don't know anything about my grandmother except she belonged to the Park family in Auburn. They were both dead before I was born.

Q: You mentioned your grandfather, at one point in time, came from a family of . . .

A: He came from Sweetwater Valley, Tennessee, and his father was a slave owner and he didn't believe in slavery and he came north and worked his way through school.

Q: Do you remember any of the experiences he might have had?

A: Well, I have heard him tell about dogs running the slaves up trees.

Q: Describe what you know about your grandparents' lives on your mother's side of the family.

A: Well, they were from Scotch-Irish descent. The King of England, when he took over Ireland, moved them. They were good farmers in Scotland and he had them switched down to Ireland to do farming and I visited in

that grandmother's home in 1930. I didn't tell you that before. I hadn't thought of it. Slept in my grandmother's bed.

Q: What was her home like?

A: Well, it was a little thatched roof, a stone house. And, of course, it was cold and damp. When I was there, it was June. It had been raining. They put me to bed in the featherbed and I had what they called a hot pig. It was a stone-like affair. They had hot water in it and they put it to my feet to keep me warm and I caught cold, of course, over in that climate. And in the morning they brought me black currant jam tea to drink.

Q: Was it good?

A: Yes, it was good. That was what I got before I got out of bed.

Q: What part of Scotland was this in?

A: It was in Sleigo, Ireland.

Q: This is when they came down to Ireland.

A: When I visited in 1930 my grandparents were gone. But I went to the World Poultry Congress in England and after the Congress was over I went on a trip to the British Isles. And I finally landed at my grandmother's birthplace.

And the way I got there, I found a letter in my grandmother's Bible; in fact, I saw the letter the other day and when I got to London I wrote relatives of mine. I addressed the letter to the relatives of Anne Hubbard, that was my grandmother's sister that still lived in Sleigo. And I wrote this letter and in a week's time I got a letter back inviting me to visit them. I wrote to them when I would arrive at Sleigo.

And after the trip to the British Isles I left the folks and I went out on my own and I went across the Irish Sea. I was traveling alone. Women didn't travel alone then. I was very much of a curiosity. I was wearing a bright green coat with a cape and I had to sit on the deck and they all knew I was American. (laughs) I must have landed in Dublin. Anyway, I got on a train and had a five-hour train trip across Ireland to Sleigo and, again, I was quite a curiosity because I was traveling

alone, a woman traveling alone. And there was a lot of people been to the horse races and they were all talking about the horse races. I sat quietly but a lot of the men would come and visit with me. I had some interesting times, some of them telling about their forestry. Finally the ticket agent on the train came and wanted to know if they were bothering me. I said, "Oh, no, they weren't bothering me."

And I, to kill time, I went down and ate in the diner. Had a beautiful, a wonderful meal. Ate a big meal. Just killing time. To the ticket agent, I said, "Well, if my family aren't there to meet me, what'll I do?" He said, "There's a hotel right in the station," and he said, "I'll see that they take care of you." So when I got off the train he was right there. But my family were there. People I had never seen. My mother's cousin and their son.

Q: And this was when you crossed the Channel?

A: That's when I crossed the Irish Sea. And it was midnight. They spotted me. Of course, here I was an American again, with American clothes. And I went off with the driver, with this man and his son and the driver and what kind of car did they put me in, a Dodge. And it seemed like we drove forever but we only drove a mile and a quarter along the edge of the water and we went to their home. And the whole family was waiting up to meet me with a big dinner. I had to eat again.

Q: When your Grandmother Haire and Grandfather Haire came across to this country . . .

A: I missed that before.

Q: . . . how did they come?

A: On a sailboat. They were six weeks.

Q: Was it a big boat or a small boat?

A: I don't know.

Q: You don't know what the conditions were at all?

A: No. I know that Judge Conway up here, I think his grandparents were on the same boat.

Q: You mentioned before that your grandfather had come . . .

A: He came first, looked around in the country.

Q: How far did he go to look around? What drew him to central Illinois?

A: I don't know what drew him here. But this is where he landed. And a cousin came with him and he died while he was here. In fact, he's buried up in Springfield. I think he's buried in lots where the Federal Building is now, the Revenue Building.

Q: Right, that was the old Hutchinson Cemetery.

A: Then he went back and they got married and it shows in your obituary there when they were married and the next year they came to this country.

Q: And he died in 1869?

A: In 1854, wasn't it when they came?

Q: 1853.

A: Aunt Jane was born in 1854.

Q: You, also, said that he died when he was taking a child down to school?

A: He caught a bad cold and got pneumonia.

Q: And came home and died at that time and that left your grandmother with several children and one on the way.

A: Seven children and one unborn.

Q: How did she cope? How did she manage?

A: She must have worked pretty hard. She had to. The neighbors came and wanted her to give some of her children away. She said, "Never!" And Grandfather had made some investments. And she had an interest of a dollar a day, which was big money in those days, dollar a day interest. But they worked hard together and my Uncle David Haire, he was the first boy, he dropped out of school. He was in the fourth grade. And they just worked the farm. All worked together. Saved their pennies.

Q: And she had this dollar a day interest. How big a farm were they working?

A: I don't know how many acres he bought at that time. I think, possibly, three hundred and twenty.

Q: And she did that with just those small children and whatever neighbors . . .

A: And whatever neighbors could help. She must have been pretty highly respected. People came in and helped her. They did that a lot then.

Q: Amazing! Describe the home in which you spent your childhood. Tell me about all of the rooms in it.

A: Well, it had eight rooms, four upstairs and four down. Of course, no plumbing. No electricity, then. Nineteen twenty-six they put plumbing in. Bathroom upstairs, sink in the kitchen.

Q: What kind of stove did you have?

A: We had a hot air furnace in the basement and mother cooked on a range. A Quick Meal Range. Six holes on the top. A reservoir on the side where we could have hot water.

Q: Was that reservoir a container at the back that you filled with water and then the heat from the wood . . .

A: It had a certain piece of iron that went in the, I guess you would call it a little tunnel, and where the water went up close to the fire box you got heat from that fire when she built a fire in the range. It heated the water. We always had nice warm water.

Q: How did your mother bake in it?

A: Well, she could put her hand in it. She knew when it was warm—the right temperature.

Q: For cookies, for cakes, for bread. She knew exactly?

A: She just put her hand in. She knew what it was. If it was too hot, she'd have to let it cool down a little bit. When it wasn't warm enough she had to fire it up a little bit more.

Q: Just add more wood or corncobs or whatever?

A: Corncob or two would do a lot.

Q: Wood and corncobs were your main fuel?

A: Well, we had coal, lump coal.

Q: Where did you get the coal?

A: From the mine. See, we had a mine in Divernon at that time. You just take your team and wagon and go over and they had a chute where they'd run you in coal. Of course, it was weighed there over the scales. Probably paid a dollar a ton.

Q: You must have had a garden of some sort?

A: Oh, we had a nice garden. Raised our own potatoes. Mother was a good gardener.

Q: All sorts of other vegetables?

A: Everything. Onions, radishes, lettuce, green beans, lima beans. Used to be a lot of fun to get in between the teepees of the lima beans.

Q: Why? I don't understand.

A: Well, kids like to get in tents, don't they? Well, the beans would

grow up. Dad had gone to the timber and gotten her little trees, saplings, long slender ones. Put four down and tied them together and then the beans ran up the poles. You get inside underneath the beans. That was a lot of fun. (laughter)

Q: Wasn't it kind of buggie?

A: Oh, I didn't mind. (laughter)

Q: What did you do about food storage? You certainly didn't have any refrigeration.

A: No, we had no refrigeration. We had what she called a back cellar. It was a back cellar and you had your own steps that went down to it. It had a roof on it and it was covered with dirt. Throwing dirt over it. It's cool and nice down in there. Moist too. Didn't dry out like . . .

Q: You stored vegetables?

A: Stored vegetables, potatoes, apples, pumpkins, squashes, turnips.

Q: How did you store them?

A: Oh, you had big bins. Put them in bins, put them in boxes.

Q: Did you have to put newspapers between the things?

A: No, we didn't.

Q: Just set them one on the other?

A: You don't pile them too deep. You had shelves.

Q: How did you store meat?

A: Well, mother smoked the meat. We had our cured meat. Of course, they would frown on that today. That's all we had and it was a luxury if we had any beef. Finally the family would all get together and they

would butcher beef and each one would take a certain quarter. That's the way we would have beef. Didn't have any way to keep it. In fact they didn't know how to can meat like I learned when I started to can.

Q: Was the smokehouse brick?

A: Ours was a wooden one. But Mother was very careful. When she built her fire and she didn't get it too hot.

Q: You mentioned it was attached to the house.

A: Yes, it was attached to the house.

Q: Did you have an ice house?

A: No, we didn't. But some of them did. Of course, you had to go to the creek and cut your ice in the winter. In fact, I used to get up in that ice house and play in the wet sawdust. It was nice up in there.

Q: Would that ice last most of the summer?

A: Yes, it would last most of the summer. All packed in there and sawdust around. It had a good roof over it. Good building. Tight building.

Q: It must have been very thick walls?

A: Yes, it was pretty good.

Q: Brick?

A: No, it wasn't brick. It was wooden.

Q: Was this your parents' first home?

A: It was their first real home. It was some of Grandmother's land.

Q: How long did they live in their first home?

A: I don't know. I think about six or seven years.

Q: Do you ever remember your mother and father talking about their wedding?

A: I have some pictures. They were married on the front porch of Grandmother's home.

Q: Oh, they were? How nice?

A: Mother made her own dress.

Q: Did they have some sort of party?

A: Oh, afterwards, yes.

Q: Seems to me I have heard in growing up something called a shivaree. Did they have . . .

A: I don't know whether they had a shivaree but I remember when my Uncle Dave got married the second time. That was just before I started college. They had a shivaree there. All the people from Divernon. He lived in the big house on the other side of town and that's where I lived when I was in high school. They had a shivaree there. They even threw old chickens in the window. Had a lot of fun.

Q: Where did you buy your supplies?

A: We had a little grocery store here in town. Then there was a man by the name of Mr. Weber, who used to go through the country selling groceries and picking up butter and eggs.

Q: You mean fresh vegetables?

A: Well, no.

Q: What do you mean by groceries?

A: Well, flour, sugar, coffee. Things like that. Whatever you buy.

Q: He would go around to all of the farm houses?

A: About once a week he'd come on a certain day. If you had extra butter he'd buy the butter and he'd buy your eggs. In other words, you traded butter and eggs for groceries.

Q: Barter!

A: Yes!

Q: That's interesting. What were your parents like? Were they strong disciplinarians?

A: My father was strict, very strict, on table etiquette. Both of us were taught to say thank you and please. They said I always wanted to get it all in, so I said, "Thank you ma'am and yes sir, ma'am." I said them both. That's what they used to tell on me. I don't remember.

Q: Did you have friends come and visit you at your house?

A: Oh yes. Mother and I would get in the buggy and away my mother would go to visit her friends—go for dinner—and the women would visit and we kids would play.

Q: You didn't do much of this though in the wintertime?

A: Oh no. Just in the summertime. Wintertime we went to school.

Q: Sure, and then it would get dark too early to do anything else. At one point in time, you mentioned that your mother did not do much canning.

A: No. She canned tomatoes and peaches and made apple butter and grape butter and things like that.

Q: So basically, your food came from what was stored in your cellar and what you had in the smokehouse?

A: That's right.

Q: What did you do for things like cereal?

A: We had cracked corn. I got to be a big girl when Mother would let me take the horse and buggy. And I used to go to a place in Pawnee where a man had a mill. And I'd take a bushel of corn, and a bushel of wheat and he'd grind the wheat and he'd grind the corn and we cooked whole kernels. Mother cooked wheat and she'd cook corn. But we'd get cornmeal and she'd have whole wheat flour from what I would take to the miller and get it ground.

Q: It must have been awfully good?

A: It was. People don't know what they are missing if they don't eat whole kernel wheat. Mother, of course, would wash it, put it on the back of the stove in an old iron pot, let it cook real slow. Delicious. Cream and sugar.

Q: That's what would be like our oatmeal today?

A: Like your cracked wheat. Mother used to make lye hominy. That's a lot of work.

Q: How did she do that?

A: Well, we always liked to have white corn. And she soaked it in lye water until the skins would come off. Cook real slow.

Q: Each individual kernel?

A: That's good. The whole wheat was the best. I liked that. I like it yet. I like to go out when they are running the combines and stick my bucket under and get some wheat.

Q: Just get some wheat and then what do you do with it?

A: Well, wash it. Cook a little of it. Maybe a couple of cups at a time. It swells up quite a bit.

Q: You must have had cows for milk?

A: Oh yes, we always had a couple of cows. Mother made her own butter. Of course, we had chickens. That was my job to gather the eggs. Set the hens. We had our own turkeys.

Q: You told me at one point in time about the turkeys running away and told me about the gobbler and the hen.

A: I'd go after the turkeys on horseback with a buggy whip. I'd take my time. You go along easy so you drive them all home. If you go pushing them they'll fly, then you're in trouble.

Q: You mean they'll actually fly away?

A: They'll fly in all directions.

Q: What did you do with the buggy whip?

A: Well, jogged them along. Just take them easy. Have to be quiet. Just reach out and touch it with him and then they will move a little bit. Keep them going.

Q: How long does a turkey hen sit on her . . .

A: It takes four weeks for her eggs to hatch. They are pretty big eggs, larger than a hen egg and they're speckled.

Q: Are they smaller than a duck egg?

A: No, they are a little larger than a duck egg.

Q: Larger than a duck egg.

A: Smaller than a goose egg.

Q: Are they good eating?

A: Oh yes, you can eat them. They are a little stronger flavored than the regular chicken egg. People eat them.

Q: What are the gobblers like?

A: They are great big. Just like all males, a little bit on the cocky side. They're beautiful birds when they spread their wings and tail out and strut around. They're really pretty.

Q: They get mad?

A: They can get mad and they're pretty bossy. They just try and fly at you. Strike you with their wings and their spurs. They have awful spurs on their feet. They hurt.

Q: You just use the gobblers for breeding purposes?

A: Yes. They're good to eat. They are not as good as a hen but they're good eating. Good eating. They're big.

Q: Well, we mentioned the fact that most of your vegetables just came out of your root cellar. The cellar where you stored things. What were your mother's activities other than taking care of the home?

A: They both went to church. Mother belonged to the Missionary Society.

Q: What church was that?

A: Presbyterian. And taught a Sunday School class. She used to take charge of the kindergarten. She had a nice kindergarten. She was real good with children.

Q: Was this kindergarten with . . .

A: In the church. We'd call the primary.

Q: What you call the primary?

A: The same as kindergarten in school. She had a nice group. The way I

can remember, the foreigners, we used to call them. The people begin to come over here. Immigrate here to work in the mines and they had those children. Mother got along real well with them. A lot of people couldn't but she did.

Q: What were the nationalities working in the mines?

A: A lot of Hungarians, Austrians, Italians, Polish.

Q: That was around 1900?

A: 1910 to 1915 I graduated from high school and that was along with it. Along 1908-1910 she was doing most of her work. She did Ladies Aid. That was the women's organization they called the United Presbyterian Women today but it was Ladies Aid in the Missionary Society. She worked in both of them and worked at the church dinners.

Q: Was that in Divernon?

A: Yes.

Q: In her kindergarten, how many students did she have in her kindergarten?

A: She used to have fifteen, twenty, twenty-five.

Q: What did she do with them in class?

A: Well, of course, they had their little church service, they sang Christian hymns, and had their Sunday School class, and talked about different things in the Bible.

Q: And this was just on Sunday?

A: Yes. Whatever the church outline put out for them.

Q: Did your father do anything in community work?

A: He was an excellent teacher. He taught the men's class.

Q: In Bible school?

A: He was quite a student of the Bible. He was an elder in the church.

Q: Where did you go to school?

A: Well, the first grades I went to country school for the first six years. Actually, five years cause I doubled up. I did three years' work in two years.

Q: How many students were in your school generally?

A: Well, in the country school we only had eight or ten or twelve.

Q: It must have been difficult for the teachers to teach so many different grades at once.

A: I expect it was. She could only give us a few minutes to each class.

Q: What was your curricula?

A: Well, reading, writing, and arithmetic.

Q: Nothing else that you . . .

A: Well, we had history and geography. I had some little books. I can remember some of our history and geography.

Q: What was the school room like?

A: Just one room with a row of seats down each side and a stove in the center. That's the way we heated it with a Round Oak stove.

Q: What did you work on? Slates?

A: We had desks, chalk.

Q: But not any paper?

A: I don't remember. I must have had a tablet to learn to write on. But we did have slates.

Q: Do you remember any of your school books?

A: Oh yes, I can remember the little reader we had and the little "reader" books. We had all sorts of stories. Lot of those stories were historical stories we read. We were getting reading and history at the same time.

Q: You mentioned at one time your father was your teacher.

A: In my first year.

Q: Wasn't that kind of hard to have your daddy as your teacher?

A: I don't know. He made me behave. I wasn't any different than any of the rest of them.

Q: Was he tougher on you?

A: I think he was. He made me stand in the corner one day.

Q: What did you do?

A: Well, I stood in the corner!

Q: What caused it?

A: I don't remember what I did.

Q: That you don't want to remember?

A: I thought I'd get by with it but I didn't.

Q: Yes whatever it was.

A: I got the bell out here he used to ring.

Q: What time did you to go school and what time did you get out?

A: Well, we went to school at nine. We were there at nine and out at four. But when Dad was there we had to go early and build a fire. And the teacher had to go early and have it warmed up when the kids came.

Q: How did you get to school?

A: Well, we walked most of the time.

Q: Ever on horseback?

A: Yes, rode some on horseback but there wasn't anyplace to keep the horse out of the weather in the daytime.

Q: What did you do in the deep snow? You must have had a lot of snow?

A: Well, my dad walked and I walked in his footsteps.

Q: And your brother was right there, too?

A: Well, I was. No, brother wasn't ready for school yet.

Q: How much younger is he?

A: He's four years.

Q: Getting back to your home. Did you and your brother each have your own room?

A: Oh yes.

Q: And then you had an extra room. You said you had four bedrooms.

A: We usually had an aunt in the other one. My father's sister or some of my mother's sisters come to visit.

Q: So you had plenty of space. What did you do for play at school? You must have had some recess time?

A: We used to play Blind Man's Bluff and Fox and Geese, that was in the snow. We ran around. I've been trying to think of the other games. Where we ran around in a circle.

Q: I suppose you took your lunches to school?

A: Oh yes.

Q: How did you dress at that time? What were your clothes like?

A: Wool clothes. Always had to wear an old fascinator and these scarves and I hate them to this day.

Q: What did you call it? A fascinator? What is that?

A: Well, it's knit. Well, let's see. We had one. It was square. We tied it over our head and then we had the long one. It was knitted about so wide and knitted about so long and you wrapped it around your neck and over your head and around. Keep you warm.

Q: Well, like a muffler? Did you have to wear galoshes or boots? You must have had those sometime?

A: Oh, sure! Wore boots and galoshes. Waded through the snow and wore heavy stockings. Underwear clear down into your ankles, you know.

Q: Where did you buy most of your clothes?

A: Springfield.

Q: How often did you go into Springfield?

A: I don't know. My mother went shopping.

Q: She did it all without you?

A: They took me in at Christmastime. I went in to see the Christmas. They laugh and tell me about taking me to Springfield to see all of the Christmas and what did I see? A wagon load of corn going down the middle of the street. I wasn't looking at the windows at all.

Q: Why weren't you looking at the windows?

A: Well, a little country girl was looking at what she knew.

Q: What she knew. Right.

A: They used to kid me about that.

Q: Christmas, was it pretty exciting in your house?

A: Very exciting. We had a nice tree. Decorated it.

Q: How did you decorate it?

A: Well, we had a few candles which, of course, was pretty treacherous. But we had tinsel, popcorn, and cranberries. We thought it was pretty nice. We didn't have any of this icicle stuff or any of that. We had popcorn and cranberries and a little tinsel. Just one strand, you know. That was a lot. Didn't have the extremes that you have now. We couldn't afford it.

Q: Did they have ornaments for sale then that you could have?

A: Well, they had some. I can remember we had some ornaments. Always had an angel on the top of the tree.

Q: Did you hang up your stocking?

A: Oh, yes, always had something in it in the morning.

Q: Like what?

A: Well, various gifts. Always some clothing or something worthwhile. Maybe, some little toy. Oh, we got a little toy or two. Not like they do now.

Q: Did you have many toys when you were little?

A: Not very many. Enough. My brother and I had an iron train. We loved that train. We had marbles.

Q: That must have been a pretty special toy, that train?

A: That was a special toy. We could pull that around. That was great. My son's got one up in his kitchen. (laughter)

Q: Oh, he has?

A: I don't know where he found it.

Q: What other toys did you have?

A: Oh, we had a little automobile. Of course, one you could wind up and drive.

Q: Did you ever play with dolls?

A: Oh yes, I had one doll. I've still got it. About worn out.

Q: During the summer, your summer vacations from school . . .

A: Well, I went barefooted. Always put the feed in the boxes for the horses when they'd come in. Pump the water and the horses had fresh water in the tank. They could get a drink. That was always my job.

Q: What else did you do that were your chores?

A: Well, helped wash dishes. Do dishes. (laughter) I didn't like that. I hate dishes to this day. (laughter)

Q: Well, I do too.

A: Didn't have any dishwashers either.

Q: Did you help with the milking and the butter making?

A: Oh yes, a few times. I was milking one day and the old cow put her foot in the milk bucket so I never milked anymore. (laughter)

Q: Was that because your mother made that decision or because you refused to do it?

A: No. I had a whole bucket of milk. No, listen, I didn't refuse to do things!

Q: You did it.

A: I did it!

Q: You had no choice?

A: No, I did what I was told. If I didn't, it was too bad.

Q: Did you see your friends often in the summertime?

A: Not too much. My cousins and my own family would visit back and forth. Yes, my mother used to go. She'd hitch up her horse. I remember going up to Mrs. Richards. Elsie Jessup, our mothers were friends. We'd go and play together. When we were kids.

Q: Did you have any special celebrations, for instance, or picnics around the Fourth of July?

A: We always went to church picnics. Had a big church picnic. And we

used to have it up at Thomases Grove. It's all gone now. But have a big picnic. Then, of course, we used to go to the Labor Day picnic they had over at Chatham, I think. That was a pretty good distance away. Had to drive your old horse, you know. Go trotting down the road.

Q: How long did it take you to get over to Chatham?

A: It would take an hour or so.

Q: How long did it take you to get into Springfield that way?

A: Three, three and a half hours. Then they always took the horse to the livery stable and had it unhitched, let it rest, feed it. Let it rest while we went shopping. Just go to that about once or twice a year, into Springfield.

Q: What, the spring and the fall? You mentioned Christmastime.

A: Well, we went once at Christmastime. When I got in high school, we'd go up on Saturday morning. Illinois Central train. This is when I got in high school. Illinois Central train came in about nine or nine-thirty and we'd go into Springfield. That was great. Then we'd get to go for lunch. We'd go to Chatterton Theatre in the afternoon, to the matinee, and the train would come back. Get home about six o'clock. That was pretty nice then.

Q: Did you ever travel with your parents?

A: Not too much. When you get up on a farm, you can't leave it. Somebody had to stay home. But Dad used to go up to visit his people. And I used to go with him once in a while to visit his brother up in Pontiac. Then I'd go with Mother out to Aunt Margaret's in Keokuk, Iowa. We'd go on the Wabash train.

Q: Did she live on a farm?

A: No. Her husband was the principal of schools, the superintendent of schools.

Q: When you were a child what did you do about medical treatment?

A: We had our village doctor, Dr. Matthews here.

Q: But you couldn't get in to him all of the time. Your mother must have had some special treatments.

A: You just went if you were really sick. You'd go to see him. I never had too much trouble. I used to have a few colds. I had my tonsils taken out. I think I was in high school. That's when they began taking everyone's tonsils out.

Q: Your whole family remained pretty well?

A: Yes. My mother was exceptionally strong. I was pretty good. My brother had more sickness than I did. Oh, I had whooping cough real bad when I was in first grade in school. My mother put up with my dad and me and her mother, all had whooping cough at once.

Q: Her mother was living at your house?

A: Grandmother lived with us for a while.

Q: In her last years?

A: Well, when the youngest brother, this is kind of getting ahead of the game, but the youngest child, he decided he wanted to farm. The others were married and gone. So Grandmother gave up to him and let him take it. And Grandmother and Aunt Jane came down and lived with us. My dad was great to let Mother bring in all of her people and take care of them. We had a pretty happy family.

Q: That had to be done then.

A: Mother read her lots of stories. We'd sit around the table in the evening. Dining room and she'd read to us.

Q: What did she read to you?

A: What's the name of those stories? "Raggedy Dick." What's the name of that? What's the name of that author? We read all of those books. A lot of those were frowned on later. Said they were too idealistic. They were good stories. She had all sorts of stories. We used to have

the Youth's Companion. It was a nice magazine in those days. And we had a paper that came out once a week. State Journal we used to get once a week and then it finally got to coming twice a week. I don't remember when it started daily.

Q: Your dad never did teach again after . . .

A: No, after that one year. He just did that to accommodate the school district. Also he got a chance to start his own daughter in school.

Q: Was he ever active on the school board?

A: Yes, I think he was on the school board. Of course, my son was the one that was on the school board for years.

Q: Being that interested in education I thought possibly . . .

A: Well, yes, he was on the school board for a while. It was before my time.

Q: You don't know anything about it?

A: No.

Q: When did you graduate from grade school?

A: 1911.

Q: Well, I think we'll stop there for now, Marie.

End of Side One, Tape One

Q: At one point you mentioned that Great Grandfather Parks taught Lincoln. How did that come about?

A: Well, he was riding the circuit; when he was riding circuit around here. We all hear about Lincoln and riding the circuit. When he was on that circuit he'd stop over at—my grandfather lived over there and

Great Grandfather lived with him. And he'd stop and they sat at a little table and he taught him grammar, just plain grammar.

Q: Did this happen quite often?

A: I don't know how long it happened, but I always heard Dad tell about it. And in the obituary of Dad, it tells about he saw Lincoln. I think Dad was about four years old.

Q: You don't know anything more than that about it?

A: No.

Q: Grandmother Haire died when you were sixteen and all of her children were quite young. She also had help from her neighbors. Still she must have carried quite a load all the time to manage the farm, the small children. Do you remember anything more about . . .

A: Well, that's before my time. I don't remember anything . . .

Q: Well, I thought maybe since you knew her so well . . .

A: I know the part. When I had all my problems and I thought the world was all falling in on me I thought, "Well, you don't have anything compared to what your grandmother had." So I doubled up my fist and went on.

Q: But you don't remember any particular stories about walking behind a plow?

A: No, I don't know anything about that. I suppose she did.

Q: Give me the names of her children.

A: Well, the oldest of them was Jane, and the next one was Mary. And the next one was Elizabeth. And then there was David and then there was Margaret and Fannie and Kate and Dodd. Dodd was born after Grandfather was dead.

Q: He was the one she was carrying when he died.

A: Yes.

Q: We talked a little bit about your house that you grew up in. Could you describe the rooms other than the kitchen?

A: Well, it was a typical old house. It was built with two rooms one way and then an "L" out with two the other way. The kitchen was long and narrow. The dining room was a pretty nice room. It took a 12 x 18 rug. And it was our dining room. And across the front of the house was an open porch when I was a child with windows in the kitchen and the dining room. Then from the dining room on the west side, this part of the house was built in 1878. It's real old. But there was two rooms. And we called them in my day the library and at that time the front parlor. Then upstairs were two bedrooms over the part which was the kitchen and the dining room. Had two bedrooms over what was the parlor and the library. Then in 1926 when I came home, of course we had no electricity and we heated the stove. I guess they put the furnace in. We had a hot air furnace. But then when I came home they enclosed the front porch and put in electricity, Delco lights. That was what we had was batteries. That was a very great improvement when I brought a baby home with a kerosene lamp on the dining room table and little hands going around the edge of the table pulling at the tablecloth. And you know what could have happened. We were very careful. Then when I came home they put the lights in. And then we put in the plumbing.

Q: What did you call those lights?

A: Delco. D-E-L-C-O. Delco lights. That was quite the farm thing for farmers then.

Q: What kind of . . .

A: Well, they had a generator and they had batteries, big batteries. Sixteen batteries. And that carried the electricity. The house just had lights. And glad to have just one light in a room.

Q: Were they ceiling lights?

A: Yes, we had ceiling lights.

Q: And you used a regular light bulb?

A: Regular light bulb. Well, 32 volts. See, we use 110. But these were 32 volts.

Q: What room did you spend most of your time in?

A: Well, the dining room, we were right on our mother's feet, I guess. That's what most kids do.

Q: Was the front parlor, say, for company?

A: Always saved for company, yes. Had rolling doors in the dining room and that was always shut. Saved heat too. In those days we saved heat.

Q: What was your own room like?

A: It was upstairs and I had to go through one bedroom to get to mine. But it was a nice room and I had my own furniture and I could see out three ways from my windows. Real nice room. I liked it.

Q: You mentioned getting a hot air furnace. How was the house heated before the furnace?

A: With stoves. Not too much heat.

Q: What kind of fuel?

A: Coal. Or wood. Corncobs. Used a lot of corncobs especially the cookstove. Mother used to like corncobs. They make a quick, hot fire.

Q: How did they keep them dry? Where did they keep them?

A: You gather wood that are dried. Put them in burlap sacks. Put them someplace where they keep dry.

Q: On the porch.

A: On the porch.

Q: Did you have a summer kitchen on the house, what they call a summer kitchen?

A: We had it but Mother never used it.

Q: Why?

A: Well, we just cooked in the regular kitchen. It was good ventilation. Our kitchen was never hot. It was cross ventilation but always good. But that's where she washed. She had a little stove back there to heat the water to wash with.

Q: She washed by hand?

A: We had a washing machine. I never had to wash—I don't think she ever had to wash on a board. She might have a little at first. Well, when we children were small, she sent her washing out. The neighbor did it. I remember taking it when I got to be a little kid, in my wagon.

Q: Otherwise then, you did have a hand washing machine?

A: We had hand washers eventually.

Q: And on this farm, your father farmed 160 acres.

A: One hundred and sixty acres with four horses.

Q: With four horses. What was the machinery like in those early years?

A: When you look at the machinery now it's very primitive. I don't remember my father walking behind a walking plow except to plow the garden or a lot. They had what they called Sulky Plows.

Q: What are those?

A: Well, it's a plow that's on wheels. And you can ride it. Have a seat and you ride on it. First was the Sulky Plow with one plow and then they got the Gangplow. That was two plows.

Q: How are these powered?

A: Pulled with horses.

Q: Pulled with horses.

A: Oh, sure. That's all we had.

Q: I didn't know.

A: Well, they used two horses and a walking plow and they guided it by hand, with lines over their back and one line over this way. They had to guide them. They would take one hand and pull this rein and turn the horse that way or pull the rein and turn the horse that way. The horses soon learned. One of them has to walk in the dead farrow.

Q: Did you ever walk behind them?

A: No. I told you I tried to ruin a cultivator. I plowed out too much corn so my legs weren't long enough to guy those plows. (laughter) So I didn't get to do that very long.

Q: What kind of equipment did he use for each job? You mentioned one time a harrow.

A: That's what they smoothed the ground with. Yes.

Q: And that was pulled by horses. Everything was pulled by horses.

A: Only thing you either had horses or men. Well, we didn't have any oxen. We had horses.

Q: And you grew corn and wheat.

A: Yes. We had soybeans. Oh, we had oats. We always had a field of oats too. Finally oats got to be a crop that this weather has changed. Just as sure as oats would be heading in July we'd have those two hot weeks and it would just burn those oats, it never would fill out right, get what we call chaffing. The farmers have quit raising oats around here. They just don't do it anymore. If you want some good oats we

have it shipped in.

Q: Is that just because of the change of the weather?

A: The weather.

Q: The weather patterns?

A: Yes. If you can get it out early enough so that it heads before the hot weather it's fine. But normally it will be just in what they call the milk stage.

Q: What stage?

A: Milk. Full of milk. The seeds are full of milk before they get hard.

Q: M-I-L-K?

A: M-I-L-K. Yes. But then it will burn it and it won't fill out right.

Q: With this very primitive farm machinery it must have been very hard getting crops in the ground and getting them out of the ground.

A: Well, you just did thirty or forty or sixty acres. If you did eighty acres of crops you were doing a lot.

Q: And weather certainly interrupted you.

A: Yes. You had to work fast. Just like now. My tenant always gets his things in but he's out quick and early in the spring.

Q: But he's working with modern machinery.

A: Oh, yes. Twelve-row planters.

Q: But then it must have been very difficult.

A: Cherro Planter. Had a wire he put across the field, had a knot every so many inches and that made the planter trip.

Q: I don't understand.

A: Well, the planter had two boxes for seed on each side. And out here were the arms. On the end of the arm was kind of, I guess you call it a hoof. But anyway there was a wire put the length of the field and every so many inches there's a knot. And as the knot went through that machine it pulled it, tripped it and it slid off and went on to the next one and tripped it again. And that's the way they planted the corn.

Q: Oh, my heavens.

A: You had to get off at the end of the field, move that marker so many inches. Well, the machine would mark it. Then as you'd go back and the wire slide across, as the team went through, the wire would slide across and then the knot would go through that—I don't know what you called it. To make it trip and drop seeds.

Q: And this was the whole length of the field?

A: The whole field, he'd go back and forth. Now it's all set by machinery. You don't have wires. It's just set on the wheels so that I don't know exactly how they do it.

Q: You mentioned one time how you stacked the wheat to dry it.

A: Shocked the wheat. That was a lot of fun to get out and handle those bundles. You get pretty tired of that after a while. Stand them up like this.

Q: Like a teepee?

A: A teepee. Build them off the ground just like a teepee only keep building them around. Then they'd take a couple of shocks and bend them and spread them out and lay them on the top and that sheds the water. The water won't go down through them.

Q: How long would it take to dry it out?

A: Well, I think they usually let, it essentially has to go through a sweat. Two or three weeks.

Q: Given the proper weather.

A: Given the proper weather, yes.

Q: I noticed outside when you told me the other day that you were putting, storing your corn and drying it in your bins. And how did they dry the corn then?

A: Well, it was left on the cob. They just went into the bins, went into the grain bins, into the corncribs.

Q: Didn't get mildew?

A: No. Be enough air through it that it would dry.

Q: So it would dry. Those were the old wooden cribs.

A: Yes. With the slats through them.

Q: With the slats around them. A lot of work.

A: One of the last ones in the community, I think, was mine out here and it was so rotten he couldn't do anything with it but just struck a match to it and it took about three minutes, and it was gone.

Q: How did you dry the oats. Did you have any problem with that?

A: Well, no. The oats don't spoil so easily. When they were dry enough to come out of the straw easily then they were dry enough to put in the bin. But they did go through a sweat too. They would get real hot and then real damp and then it goes away.

Q: Sort of like we do. (laughter) When did you get your first power-driven tractor?

A: Well Mother and Dad had one of the first ones in the country.

Q: You mean in this area? Was it . . .

A: It must have been when I was in high school. It had to be I think. I suppose about 1916 or 1917, some time in there.

Q: Do you remember how expensive it was or . . .

A: No. It had iron wheels I know. It had big spikes in them.

Q: It must have been pretty hard to drive.

A: Well, it kept it from slipping as easy. Well, it would be pretty hard on these roads. It would just ruin these roads. I don't remember when we got the rubber tires, it was after I came back.

Q: You had cows and . . .

A: Yes. Cows and pigs.

Q: Chickens.

A: Chickens.

Q: But no sheep.

A: No. Dad said our ground was too damp, I think too wet, to have sheep. There's not many sheep raised in this country.

Q: Why does dampness . . .

A: Well the ground doesn't dry out enough and they get kind of a disease . . .

Q: I see.

A: . . . of their hooves.

Q: I see.

A: I don't know much about sheep.

Q: When did your day begin on the farm?

A: At day break, oh, about four o'clock most of the time. A lot of the farmers get up before that but I think we got up at about four o'clock. Dad did and he went out to the barn to do chores and get the horses in and feed them and milk the cows and Mother got breakfast and she got us kids up in time to eat.

Q: You didn't have any early morning chores?

A: Not that I remember. Except to help dry the dishes. I didn't like that either.

Q: No one likes that. (laughter) Did you have big meals when threshing time came and . . .

A: Oh yes. The neighbors would all come in and cook and it was a big time.

Q: Did people go from one farm to . . .

A: Usually, and then help one another.

Q: You had your big meal at noon.

A: Yes.

Q: That must have been quite an event.

A: It was.

Q: Your source of water.

A: We had good wells.

Q: You had good wells. You never had any trouble with them drying.

A: Well, once in a while we had trouble. I've seen the time when Dad had to sell cattle because they didn't have any water.

Q: That hurt.

A: Yes.

Q: Did you do your own butchering on the farm?

A: We butchered three or four hogs. We never butchered as much meat as a lot of people.

Q: Tell me about that.

A: Well, they used to like to get a hog about 250 pounds, I think, 200 to 250 pounds to butcher because after that they get kind of big and strong and younger hogs, it's more tender meat. Oh, we're doing it over. Excuse me. The farmers would all get together and wherever they were going, why, the man would get the fire built under the big kettle that they put the water in to heat the water and then they'd fix themselves a table to work on and sometimes turn the bed of a wagon upside down, a wooden bed of a wagon like we used to haul, turn that upside down. That would be the table and then they would anchor the barrel and put all the hot water in and then when they were all ready, why, either they'd usually shoot the hog and then stake it so it would bleed and then two men would grab . . .

Q: Stake it? What do you mean by stake it?

A: Stick it.

Q: Oh I see.

A: Stick it. They'd know where to hit the juggler vein. Then of course they had to get ahold of the sinew on the foot so they could put their hooks. They'd usually use baler hooks and they'd pull it up and down and souse it up and down in the water and scald it to get the hair off.

Just like a lot of other things, they knew just how hot—if they'd get that water too hot it would set the hair and then they were in trouble.

Q: Really?

A: Yes. But good butchers know just how hot to have the water and they'd scald it until it loosens and then they'd turn it around and put the other end in it. They couldn't get the whole hog in the barrel at one time so they'd do one-half and turn it around and do the other half. And then they'd all jump in on it and scrape it while it's hot.

Q: Just get right on top of the hog and scrape it.

A: Yes, about two on each side and away they'd start.

Q: What would they use to scrape it with?

A: Oh, they'd have rounded—they called them scrapers. It's a metal, about so big around with a handle in it. And they'd go after it and scrape it off.

Q: And then they would . . .

A: Then they'd hang them up and open them so they'd cool off better.

Q: How long did that take?

A: Oh, I don't know how long. Of course by time they'd get them all four butchered, then they'd have to stop and eat and rest awhile and then they'll start in cutting them up. But it's better to let the meat get pretty cool because it will stay smoother when it, as it cools it will cool even. And while they're cutting it, if it's too hot then part of the red meat will draw in more than the fat.

Q: Really?

A: And it doesn't cut up as pretty as if it was well cooled out first.

Q: The red meat separates from the . . .

A: Well it kind of shrinks more.

Q: I see.

A: Yes. Then they have to cut it up and then they trim it and the fat goes into the lard and then they clean up the old kettle and then put a little water in it first and then they put the lard in it and you have to stir it as it boils. Then when the cracklings get—the old boys know when it's cooked.

Q: In other words . . .

A: It takes quite a little while.

Q: . . . this is the fat coming off the skin.

A: Yes. Well now they skin them. They didn't then. That's the way they scraped them and then they cut them and they left the skin on I guess but all in the back and where they'd trim around the hands and the shoulders, then there's scraps of meat. And the fat is cut off and goes into the lard and the other meat and made into sausage.

Q: Then all this was cured for your eating throughout the winter.

A: Yes.

Q: Did you sell any of it?

A: No, we never did.

Q: How did you keep the sausage?

A: Well, mother seasoned it and it was always seasoned. And then we fried it down, patties and cooked them rather slow and put them into a big stone jar and then pour lard over them and that's the way they'd keep.

Q: And it didn't spoil.

A: No.

Q: One time you mentioned canning meats. Did you do this . . .

A: Well that I did after I came back home after I learned to can which was pretty good.

Q: Just in jars, like chickens and beef and whatever you wanted.

A: Yes. And you got away from all this curing. That was before you went to the butcher shop and bought it like you do now.

Q: It was probably better cured, don't you think?

A: Well, I don't know if maybe—I think people are better off eating more fresh meat than they are so much of the cured meat and nitrates and everything.

Q: Yes. There are so many drugs in them.

A: Yes. Well, you know, farm butchered pigs didn't have those drugs in them that commercial ones did.

Q: Yes.

A: That was when I hated to go to school, on butchering day.

Q: You had a lot of fun watching that?

A: I loved to stay home. Boy I hated to go.

Q: It lasted all day.

A: Yes, it would take about all day. Oh, it would be done before I got home at night. I missed it all.

Q: Why didn't they do it on Saturdays so you could see it?

A: Yes.

Q: You mentioned your mother belonged to a missionary society. What did they do?

A: Well, they studied the missions and then they made money and sent them to various missions. One of the ones I always—Mother had the one from Alaska, Nome, Alaska. I didn't quite make it up there when I went to Alaska, to Nome. But they studied that in their missionary society and then they raised money to send up there. And we used to have some very good programs on the colored people and Jerome Singleton who used to be a very noted singer in Springfield was black and he had a friend, Melvin Grey, who played the piano. And they came down and gave us a program once for one of our missionary societies. And when my father and mother had their fiftieth wedding anniversary they showed up and sat down at the piano and put on a program for us.

Q: At the house?

A: At the house.

Q: Oh how nice.

A: David says he works with one of Jerome's relatives over at Commonwealth.

Q: I think there are quite a few living in Springfield.

A: Yes.

Q: You mentioned one time that your mother got along with the immigrants that came to the . . .

A: Came to Sunday School, yes. So many of them are Presbyterians anyway in Hungary. But a lot of Hungarians came here.

Q: Did they in Sunday School help them learn English?

A: Yes. There was one little girl that was—she called her her angel. She was a few years older than the others and she could talk with them back and forth. She . . . skill . . . understood and just liked her.

Q: So many of the other townspeople didn't get along with them.

A: No.

Q: That's too bad.

A: Well, that's all different now. See, they all speak English. Of course I had two displaced couples after the Second World War.

Q: Who were they?

A: Well, one couple was . . . they had learned to speak English. I've forgotten, haven't thought about it for so long. They spoke—we had a dictionary, an English and German dictionary. That's the way we got . . .

Q: They were German?

A: Well, yes, Latvians. Estonians were the second ones. The fellow's name was Henry. What was his last name? It has slipped me for right now.

Q: What brought them to your house?

A: They were displaced people and people—well, Reverend Graebel was wanting us, as church people, to take displaced people out of the camps after the Second World War and the first one. Of course they weren't interested in me. They were just interested in getting to the United States. I had them a while but they didn't like it so I took them into Springfield where they wanted to go. I reported it to the FBI [Federal Bureau of Investigation] and that was the last I heard of them because I think the FBI picked them up. But the second ones were nice appearing Estonians.

Q: And did they stay here in . . .

A: They stayed a year with me and I still hear from them from Chicago.

Q: They're living in Chicago.

A: Yes. And they had a, the boy's—well, he was a baby from when the German soldiers had abused her. And the man that she had known before in Estonia, he married her and they came to this country. And they stayed with me a year and this little boy was about six years. Cute and a typical little blue-eyed, and looked a lot like his mother. He went to school here. And she was an ex-tailor, she was a good seamstress. So they went to Chicago and kept their word with me. They stayed a year. And they've been back a couple of times.

Q: They helped you in the house.

A: They helped me. He helped outdoors and she helped in the house. And one day since I've been here—they were with me when I was at the other place—since I've been here, one evening I was working over there and here came a car down the road, down the drive and I thought they were going to see the people at the next house but they stopped to see me.

Q: Yes.

A: And who was it but this couple. The man had died, but the mother, she had a baby after she had left me but the mother and the two sons stopped to see me. And I said, "Well, come on, I'll go home and change my dress and take you out to dinner." And they said, "Oh, no. We've got to get to Chicago by a certain time. We won't stop to eat." But as they got into their car, Helmet said, "This country has sure been good to us."

Q: Where were they in camps, Marie?

A: In some of the camps in Germany, displaced persons.

Q: In the concentration camps?

A: Yes. They were a nice couple. This boy grew up and I don't know where he went to school. He's now an attorney and he's served his share in the army, did his turn in the army. When I was on the Caribbean cruise and we docked in Los Angeles one day I tried to get ahold of him and I couldn't find him. But he got the word. After I was home I got a letter from him, the nicest letter from him. And he said he was in Washington at that time.

Q: That makes you feel good when you . . .

A: Yes. But the man who came, as he was getting back into the car, he said, "This country has sure been good to me."

Q: That's nice to hear. Getting back to your mother and the immigrants and the townspeople, you don't know why the townspeople didn't like . . .

A: Oh, they liked them all right. But they just didn't seem to understand them like Mother. Mother just was a motherly soul. Yes, they liked them. But they came to the Presbyterian. Of course a lot of them are Presbyterians naturally in Hungary. (tape stopped)

Q: In 1908 there was a race riot in Springfield. And do you have any memories of that?

A: Oh yes. It was a terrible sight, those houses all burned. That's all—of course we just were in the city and back and went on the train then, the Illinois Central backed in on a certain street and that was one of the streets in a part of the city that was destroyed by the burning of homes. We stayed away.

Q: Also many of the small towns in central Illinois put up "Not Welcome" signs for the blacks. Did Divernon have anything like that?

A: I don't know that they did. But I do know that they've always had a prejudice against black people. Why I don't know.

Q: You mentioned at one time that you had a black man that cut your grass.

A: Well, that's just this summer.

Q: Just this summer.

A: Yes, just June and July.

Q: And some question about, even now . . .

A: Well, my son came and said about my friends, I'd lose my friends.

And I said, "Well, then they're not my friends if they act like that." Besides, this is a different time. This is 1984. We have integration. We're all supposed to be together. Mary Alice Padavic came in and she said something, something had been said to her and she says, "You know what they'll tell you . . ."—I wouldn't dare put it on there. (tape stopped)

Q: Come on, tell me what you'd say.

A: I told them, "I didn't give a damn."

Q: That's the way you should say it. You have a lot of spunk, Marie. You stated at one time that you went to Springfield on a wagon trip at Christmastime. What were the roads like?

A: Really, I was too young to remember. But I think I know what they'd be like. They'd be pretty rough and rugged and ruts and you'd just jog along and if you got into too deep a rut, you'd stay on til you'd get out or you'd snap a wheel off the hub.

Q: And then you'd just have to wait until somebody came along to help.

A: You'd be in bad shape.

Q: When you went in to shop what did you purchase in Springfield?

A: Well, I suppose just the most important things. We didn't have any money to spend. Maybe I'd get a five-cent bag of candy and maybe some chewing gum.

Q: You mentioned at one time that your Grandmother Haire would go into town and buy shoes and she would stick her hand in the shoe and be able to . . .

A: See if that was the right size. She had so many that if she didn't get it for one she'd get it for another.

Q: Was your mother able to do the same thing?

A: I didn't have to do that. When I needed shoes, why, we were taken to Ettlebricks Shoe Store.

Q: I believe there was an Ettlebricks.

A: That was it. I don't remember too much about shoes. I guess I had a pretty black patent leather ones I showed to everybody.

Q: You mentioned having your tonsils out at one time.

A: Yes.

Q: Describe that experience.

A: Yes sir. Dad took me in and we went on the train then and took me into Hagler's, Dr. Hagler's, and just put local anesthetic on it and took it out. It hurt.

Q: Did Hayward have his done at the same time?

A: No. His was done later.

Q: I imagine that did hurt. Also you talked about your whole family having whooping cough at one time.

A: All but my mother.

Q: How did your mother manage with everybody?

A: She was a good tough person too.

Q: That was a pretty dangerous disease.

A: Yes it was.

Q: You don't have any idea of how she treated it or . . .

A: No. I think we just whooped it out. I don't remember that we had any medicine, or I suppose we had some cough medicine. I don't

remember. I was just a kid.

Q: She didn't steam you or anything like that?

A: No. I don't remember that she did. She might have.

Q: I have a picture of you standing with a horse.

A: Where did you get that?

Q: It was in your scrapbook.

A: Yes, that's Teddy.

Q: Teddy was the name of your horse?

A: Teddy was the name of the horse. She was a three-gaited horse. And that was—you didn't ask me about the clothes. That was a divided skirt.

Q: That's what intrigued me, is how you rode.

A: That's a divided skirt with a nice skirt on each side. That was before they had slacks or pants or anything for girls. But it's just as full like a skirt, only it's made for each leg and it fits over the horse and it looks real nice.

Q: It's real ladylike.

A: Real ladylike, yes.

Q: How old were you when this picture was taken?

A: It was in high school, sixteen. Teddy would kneel for me to get on and get off.

Q: Really?

A: Single foot—I used to ride downtown and reach down with my whip and tap her shin and down she'd go on her knees and I'd get off. That was something. Everybody would stand around and watch.

Q: Did you teach her to do that?

A: No. She was trained when I—Uncle Dave bought her for me.

Q: And this was when you were living with Uncle Dave.

A: Yes.

Q: And you lived with Uncle Dave all four years of high school, right?

A: Yes.

Q: And why did you live with Uncle Dave and not with your parents?

A: Well in those days Uncle Dave was a widower and his mother and sister lived with him after Aunt Lou died. And then they both died. They died right close together. So then this cousin from Peoria came down but a maiden lady and a widower would not live in this town, they'd be run off the map. So I was the chaperone. I was the third party. And he took pretty good care of me. He got me a horse and that's why you asked me about sports and things at school. I came home. I had things at home I enjoyed and my horse and my chickens and . . .

Q: The horse you just rode for pleasure. Did you ride it to school or were you able to ride it . . .

A: No. I didn't ride it to school. See, I only lived a block from school.

Q: Okay.

A: I had it to ride. I used to go out and help Uncle Dave drive cattle and she jumped hedges and we'd hunt or we'd pace a hedge and over she'd go.

Q: Did you dress like this at that time or do you remember?

A: Yes. Oh, I didn't wear any overalls or any kind of pants at that time. That was my riding outfit. Anna Crawford made it for me.

Q: And the horse knelt down to let you on.

A: Yes. She'd kneel down for me to get on and get off.

Q: When I've come into town I've noticed on the righthand side the McMurray Ball Park.

A: Yes.

Q: What . . .

A: My brother gave that to the town to have for the children to playball. He inherited that field from Uncle Dave.

Q: I see.

A: Uncle Dave gave me this 170 here and he gave my brother that 40 and he gave him a little bit more than me. So that's part—that was 140 that was Hayward's and . . . I think about ten acres he gave for that ballpark. The kids play out there.

Q: When did that happen? When was that?

A: Well, let's see, he's been dead about—well, he gave them that before he died. I think they've had that about ten years.

Q: And his house was the house that's at . . .

A: No. He lives way out in the country, my brother's house.

Q: Who are you talking about now?

A: My brother.

Q: Your brother.

A: Hayward.

Q: Hayward, yes.

A: He lived out in the country. But that house is where Uncle Dave lived, the big house on the other side of town.

Q: Okay. Also we talked about a shivaree earlier. And you mentioned throwing up dead chickens. And this was the second marriage . . .

A: There weren't dead chickens; they were alive.

Q: All right. Anyway, this was when Uncle David was married again, right?

A: His shivaree, when we came back from our month's trip to the West Coast. He was well-liked. Everybody liked him. And so they waited until he was in bed. And they knew which room he was in so they really gave him a good shivaree.

Q: What else did they do besides throw live chickens?

A: Well of course they got them out of bed and they sang and they just yelled and had a big noise. I don't know how long it lasted.

Q: Was everybody there?

A: In the family?

Q: Yes.

A: Oh, of course I was there and Anna Crawford was stll there.

Q: And a lot of the townspeople.

A: And a lot of the townspeople. That was in July, the last part of

July, I guess.

Q: Describe your high school for me.

A: I'll show you a picture of it.

Q: That's a nice old building. It's a nice big red brick building.

A: Yes.

Q: Did you go to school in this building all four years of high school?

A: Well the first year they were building that. So we went to school in the annex of the Presbyterian Church and then I started in the second year.

Q: They were building this the first year.

A: We were one of the first township high schools, see, when they started having township high schools, Divernon was one of the first ones. I won that for a doorprize at an alumni association meeting and a friend of mine painted that.

Q: It's a nice picture, Marie, nice to have.

A: I had it hanging there but then I got that picture and I've never found a place to hang it since then.

Q: And that's the picture of . . .

A: That's the picture of my farm, an aerial view of the farm.

Q: Well I think we will stop there Marie.

End of Side 1, Tape 2

Q: When you graduated from grade school what was your graduation like?

Did you have a party or . . .

A: We had a little old graduation for our own but we also went up to the county and the county superintendent had all of the students in the county and we went up and I don't know, we all went up to the theater and up on the stage and went to this graduation. But the one that meant the most to us was the one we had in our own school, in our own building.

Q: Did you have a program and get all dressed up and . . .

A: Yes. I had a graduation dress and I had a dress for class night. It seems to me that I had three.

Q: What was class night?

A: Well we put on a program and did the class history and the class prophecy. That was class night.

Q: I see.

A: Graduation night, of course we all sat on the stage, nine of us, two boys and nine girls and we had a speaker and got out diplomas. We didn't have any parties afterwards like they do now. This party that you saw was in my junior year.

Q: What was that party like?

A: That was a forty years history party. It was a lawn party. Everybody came dressed up in costumes the way they thought they'd look forty years from then.

Q: Did you get prizes and things like that for the best . . .

A: I don't remember whether we did or not but we had a lot of fun..

Q: Were there both boys and girls?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you dance or anything like that?

A: We played out in the yard. And I don't remember—we didn't dance. We were out in the yard. But we played games out in the yard. But what we played I don't remember.

Q: You don't remember. I have your invitation here that you sent out for that party. And it says, "Come dressed as you expect to look some forty years from now when women run the government, and men to them must bow." (chuckles) That seems like a pretty strong statement for that time.

A: Well yes it was. But you see how well it's worked out.

Q: Well yes it has.

A: The men's not bowing after forty years but they better watch out. (chuckles)

Q: At the forty years it wasn't quite . . .

A: No, it wasn't quite that far along.

Q: That would be 1953. But this was May 16, 1913. At this time were you dating?

A: No.

Q: But you had had some dates in high school?

A: Oh, I had occasional dates. Not too many though. I wasn't let go.

Q: And what activities were you involved in in high school?

A: Well, as I said, we had this glee club, this quartet that we sang in and I played basketball. I had my chickens and things at home. I didn't have . . .

Q: You mentioned a literary club. What did they do in the literary

club?

A: I don't remember. We read stories and reported on them and things like that.

Q: Did you get credit in school for this type of thing?

A: No.

Q: What was the curricula like in high school?

A: Well it was pretty much the same as now. We took four subjects each semester. At our little school we didn't have any chemistry. That made it pretty tough when I went to college and started in chemistry. But we did have a pretty good physics. And we had a little bit of home ec [home economics]. We had little hot plates that we did a little cooking on.

Q: You had all the math.

A: Yes, I took all the math.

Q: Algebra and . . .

A: Algebra and geometry, that's all we had then.

Q: You didn't have any going any further in math then. Did you have any languages?

A: Oh, yes. German in my junior year and senior year. And of course we had Latin in the first years.

Q: Yes.

A: We had a very simple school. I think we only had three or four teachers, principal and two or three teachers, is all I can remember.

Q: But they did prepare you for college . . .

A: Yes.

Q: . . . as best they could.

A: Yes, as best they could. It was enough that—I was allowed to go to college without taking any exams or anything.

Q: Did they have entrance exams then?

A: No they didn't. Well, I guess they did. I didn't have to take any.

Q: You didn't have to take any.

A: My dad saw to that.

Q: Did you have much homework when you were in high school?

A: Not too much. I stayed with my uncle and aunt. Oh, I helped. I did a little cooking and . . .

Q: No, I mean homework from school.

A: Oh yes, I took home homework. I studied on my geometry or German a good deal. That was a hard one. Also Uncle Dave was selling hay and grain to the mines to feed the horses. See, down in the mines they all used mules to pull coal. I don't know how many mules. But he sold them all the feed. And one of my jobs was to make out the bills and figure out how much hay he sold them and so much a ton and how much they owed him. That was one of my jobs to figure that out.

Q: That was a pretty big job for a young girl.

A: Well, that was part of it.

Q: Did he sell feed to a lot of mines around here?

A: No, just to the Divernon one.

Q: Is that what it was called, the Divernon Mine?

A: Yes. Madison Coal Corporation.

Q: What?

A: The Madison Coal Corporation.

Q: Madison Coal Corporation.

A: I think they had forty or fifty mules, you know, and that took quite a lot of feed, hay, a lot of hay.

Q: Is that . . .

A: See, if they'd go on strike they'd bring the mules all up and put them out in this pasture and they'd be so blinded with the light. They had quite a time.

Q: Did they ever get their sight back?

A: Oh yes they did eventually.

Q: Eventually.

A: About the time they got it back real good they'd get the mines running and the poor things would go back down again.

Q: Oh boy. Of course the humans had to go back down again too.

A: Yes.

Q: Were there any bad accidents at the mine?

A: Oh yes there were a lot of bad accidents. I know there's been a lot of fathers at one time and another killed. I went down in the mines twice. I took my wedding party down in the mine.

Q: You did? How did that come about?

A: Well, I just got permission. We took them down.

Q: Why?

A: Well that was something different to do.

Q: Something different to do. They were here visiting and so . . .

A: Well they were here for the wedding you know and the dinner the night before and after Henrietta gave—we had, you know, a rehearsal dinner and then afterwards we went down in the mine. Well, I had friends. We took them down.

Q: How deep was that mine?

A: Three hundred and sixty feet.

Q: Three hundred and sixty feet. In school did you have a library?

A: Oh yes, it was a small library.

Q: Any popular reading or all textbooks or . . .

A: Oh we used to read—who wrote David Copperfield?

Q: Dickens.

A: I read a lot of Dickens' works and different books like that.

Q: So they did have a pretty fair library.

A: Yes. I had books I had to report on.

Q: I see.

A: That's part of the literary work, English work.

Q: How much education did a high school teacher have to have at that time?

A: She was supposed to have had college training.

Q: Normal . . .

A: At Normal, yes.

Q: Yes. Were there any discipline problems in school?

A: Oh yes. They had a little boy that got into trouble once in a while but they didn't have any trouble with the girls, at least we didn't at that time. They didn't date enough, they didn't get into trouble. We didn't have any pregnant girls or anything like that. That was unheard of.

Q: They were, they had to live pretty close to home. When they did have the discipline problems, how were they handled?

A: The principal used to say—I used to go with him—after I came back I used to go with the principal. He was an excellent teacher. He said to me, "You know I had the best luck, just setting them in a chair on the side of me and ignoring them."

Q: Yes.

A: And as for other discipline problems, I don't know. I didn't get in on that.

Q: I thought maybe you'd remember some of the kids talking. What were the clothing styles like in high school? For boys and girls.

A: Well of course we didn't have such a thing as shorts or slacks or anything like that. We wore dresses. When we got older the girls began to want to wear long dresses you know.

Q: Wear what kind of dresses?

A: Long dresses, clear to the floor. My mother never would let me have them too long. She said I would have plenty of time to wear them later on. So mine went three or four inches from the floor and the girls used to make fun of me because mine were short. Of course I didn't mind it, I didn't care. That's the way my mother wanted it so . . .

Q: That's what you did. You didn't date in high school. You did play basketball and went to basketball games.

A: Oh I used to go to basketball games a lot with John Rettberg and Geraldine Larkins. They went together; they never did marry. But if John Rettberg went, why, Uncle David thought it was all right for me to go.

Q: Then you could see the boys in shorts. It was all right.

A: Yes. That's the way I got to go.

Q: Boy!

A: It didn't hurt me a bit.

Q: Oh, I don't think so either. You mentioned that when you were in high school you sometimes went to Springfield for lunch, and to the matinee at the Chatterton Opera House.

A: Yes.

Q: Can you give me a little description of this experience?

A: No I can't tell you. I don't remember. And we went to the matinee because we could go up on one train and eat at Connellys and . . .

Q: I was wondering where you ate.

A: And ate at Connellys, you know. Do you remember the Food Center?

Q: I remember the Food Center.

A: Well, Connellys was before the Food Center, was in the same building. And we ate up on the balcony, that's where we ate. And then we'd go to the Chatterton in the afternoon and we'd get out in time for our train. The train had to stop at Cotton Hill or Toronto and Glenarm and maybe Pawnee Junction and then Divernon.

Q: How long did it take you to go into town?

A: About forty minutes.

Q: About forty minutes. Did you do some shopping when you were in town?

A: Not necessarily.

Q: Not necessarily.

A: We didn't have much time—oh maybe. When we had that Kiwich Track Meets, athletics in the spring, and have track meets, why, he used to be one of the judges. And a lot of the times he'd take me. So one day he got me a new coat before we went. It was too long but then I wore it.

Q: You wore it anyway.

A: (laughter) It was a good one.

Q: When did you decide you wanted to go to college?

A: Oh I was raised with that idea of going on to school. That was . . .

Q: Was this true with David too, your brother?

A: Oh yes, sure.

Q: Where did he eventually go to school?

A: We both went to the University of Illinois.

Q: You both went to the University of Illinois.

Q: In this scrapbook . . .

A: You didn't find too much about me in that scrapbook.

Q: Well no, except this. You mentioned that this trip you took . . .

A: Oh yes. That's part of a . . .

Q: Graduation gift. And it was quite a trip at that time.

A: Yes ma'am. It was a month.

Q: So I'd like to hear all about that. You started from Divernon and . . .

A: We started from Springfield and we went down on the Illinois Central to St. Louis. And I don't know whether Uncle Dave—I don't think he had reservations—he might have had reservations, I don't know about that. But anyway we got on a pullman and of course that was my first time on a pullman. And we went to Denver and then we got off there and then we went to Colorado Springs. And how we got to Colorado Springs I don't remember. But I think on a train.

Q: Did you stay any time in Denver?

A: Not too long. We were down at Colorado Springs and we went up on Pikes Peak.

Q: What was that like?

A: Well that's quite a trip around that cogwheel clear up to the top. A lot of them—people would get sleepy, you know, going up that high altitude. It didn't bother me.

Q: Yes.

A: We went to the top and then came back and went back into Denver and

then went on the . . . anyway we went around through the Royal Gorge and rode on an open car, sat up on the top in an open car, and right around through the gorge and finally landed in Salt Lake City. And we visited Salt Lake City and went out to the lake and paddled in the water.

Q: Did you just paddle? You didn't swim in it?

A: No, you don't sink in that. That was something, the rains they had out there last spring.

Q: It flooded.

A: It flooded it.

Q: Terrible.

A: We were in the tabernacle. There wasn't any music there then. One of the things that I noticed so much was that water was running down the sides of the streets from the mountains.

Q: This was from the floods.

A: Well, no, it was just . . .

Q: When you were there on this trip you're talking about?

A: Yes.

Q: Right.

A: That was the way it was draining down from the mountains going down those, in the gutters.

Q: Right. You left in June.

A: Yes.

Q: And then you came back the first part of July.

A: We spent the Fourth of July in Yellowstone Park. And washed our faces in ice water.

Q: Oh my.

A: See we slept in cabins and they came in and built a little fire for us in the morning.

Q: Yes.

A: But the water in the washbasin had ice on it.

Q: Where else did you go?

A: Well we went to Yellowstone. Let's see, we went clear up to—I think we went to Seattle. And then we came on the Northern Pacific. We came into Yellowstone Park and we spent a week in Yellow Stone Park.

Q: How long did you spend in Seattle?

A: We went to Portland to see the roses in Portland. Weren't in Seattle, it was Portland, Oregon.

Q: I see.

A: Of course that trip was a whole week going through Yellowstone Park. We took a big trip and we brought home some pictures.

Q: Why did it take you a whole week to go through Yellowstone?

A: Well we drove. We had six horses hitched to our carriage.

Q: I see.

A: And we took the . . .

Q: Where did you rent the carriage?

A: Well that was the only way you went in those days was horses and a carriage.

Q: Well you went out on the train.

A: Yes. But I mean through the park.

Q: Through the park.

A: I got to sit up—I'd slip up by the driver and drive the six horses.

Q: Oh you would?

A: Yes, he let me.

Q: Was it just your party in the carriage?

A: Yes. There were six of us. You see we had our own carriage. We had a lot of extra courtesies since there were six of us.

Q: We were in the park. We stayed in all the different hotels. We were at Old Faithful one day and at Geyser Basin and Yellowstone Lake to fish. And finally we went back out the Gardner Gate and then we went on Northern Pacific clear into—we just went through St. Paul and then we went down to Chicago and visited the Board of Trade.

Q: You went from Yellowstone to . . .

A: We came on back—I think we stopped over in St. Paul-Minneapolis or just changed trains there.

Q: I see.

A: Then we came on into Chicago and then we spent one day at the Board of Trade seeing them buy and sell grain because he was interested in that. And it was interesting to me.

Q: Where did you stay in Chicago?

A: I don't remember.

Q: You don't remember that. That must have been an exciting trip. Who all went on that trip with you? You said there were five others.

A: There were six of us. There was Uncle Dave and his bride. And his bride had a boy the same age as me and he graduated from high school the same night I did. And a cousin of mine Harold Brown, he was a companion to Pud. And for me this housekeeper, Anna Crawford was my companion. There were three couples of us. And we kids used to ditch them in San Francisco at the fair and go off on our own. We'd let the old ones go by themselves.

Q: Oh you went to San Francisco's Fair?

A: Oh we went to San Francisco and we went to San Diego there and we went to Catalina Island and we went out on the glassbottomed boat.

Q: To Catalina?

A: To Catalina.

Q: Those cities at that point in time were not as crowded as they are now.

A: No. San Diego and San Francisco were fighting over who should have this World's Fair. So they just each one of them had a World's Fair.

Q: I see.

A: And it was at San Francisco in one of the buildings where I saw a model of the University of Illinois. You know how they fix models?

Q: Yes.

A: And the University of Millikin. Now my father wanted me to go to Millikin. Of course that's a good Presbyterian school. And closer. But I saw the models of the two schools so I decided I'd go to the

University of Illinois. So when we got home on July fifth or sixth or something, in a few days—Mother was with me, and we went on the interurban. Had to go back to Springfield. You know what the interurban is?

Q: Yes.

A: It was a trolley, an electric trolley. It went across to Urbana-Champaign. And we went over there and we went to see the Dean of Women and visited around and we decided, found a place for me to stay. I've forgotten—we must have been there two days. We came back on the interurban. So then when it came time to go to school, why, we packed my trunk and we shipped it on ahead to this spot on Green Street. She had six or eight students. So when it came time to go to school I went . . .

Q: What was her name?

A: What was her name? Her name was Strong I think. She lived on West Green Street about two blocks from the campus. When it came time to go they put me on the interurban in Springfield. And I went, just a little country girl, I went all by myself to Champaign and Urbana. And I got off at a certain street in Urbana and I didn't know which direction was which. But I think I said to the conductor when I got off, "Is this a certain way?" And he said yes. So I could remember then. I walked up the street and got to Green Street and then I walked that way so far and I found the house. That was a little country girl. So then I registered the next day and got started. I had quite a little time of that grammar but I went to this professor. He helped me.

Q: That's interesting that your . . .

A: I had excellent cooperation with all of my college professors but one English professor. And he just thought I was too hopeless to work with.

Q: He didn't know. That's interesting that your parents—sheltered as you were in high school that they would just let you go by yourself up on the interurban and just enter school by yourself.

A: Well she had been up with me . . .

Q: Yes.

A: . . . and found a place to live. I was eighteen years old. It was about time I was starting out.

Q: Well I would think so, yes.

A: Of course I had had a lot of advantages that lots of the other kids didn't have like going to the theaters and good books and good books at home and good music and of course I started in and I joined the—was it literary club? I forget what they called it now. Well anyway I went to the good concerts. I had never heard a symphony orchestra before. And I didn't like the first one. But I learned to like symphony. And I had never seen a girl dance ballet dances. And there was one of the girls that was in our class that had a harp. She was from Monticello and her father would come in and move her harp for her. But she would play and give concerts. I went to all those good things.

One of the things—I had my own money. My aunt Jane had given Hayward and I 160 acres of land. She gave it to us because Mother had done so much for her, Mother and Dad for her. So instead of giving it to them she gave it to us. So we had our own income and our own money. And Uncle David used to be so proud because we could handle our money and we always had plenty. And some other kids going from here, their folks were always having to send them more money. And he used to be so proud when he'd hear them talking about how much it was costing them, how they were having to send them. They didn't have to do that to us, we had our own money, our own checking account. We knew how to handle it, we had been taught.

Q: You took your board and room at this house?

A: Yes. The first semester began and there were city girls and I was the country girl. And also my roommate turned out—she must have been a dope fiend or a drug fiend as we call them now. I think it was only aspirin. But she used to have her drawer just full of little boxes. And I was just a little country girl. I didn't know anything about it. But I went down to the YW [Young Women's Christian Association] the next semester. I only stayed there one semester. I went down to the YW and I had a private room and that was a mistake.

Q: Why was it a mistake?

A: Well, I'd have done better associating with people.

Q: Yes.

A: And I only had it the one. I went back the next year and had a roommate.

Q: At the YWCA?

A: At the YWCA. We ate there too. You see, that was a nice place to stay. It was right on the campus. I stayed there. Then I got acquainted with some girls down at Presbyterian Hall, Osborne Hall. That was a nice place too. So I went there the next year.

Q: Did you have a roommate then?

A: Yes, a roommate that turned out to be my maid of honor when I was married. And I went there one year. And then they took the school, the army, took it over so we had to move. So I went across the campus and I was able to get in the Congregational House. And I still had my same roommate. We were still together. And it's still a nice group of girls. My mother never wanted me to join a sorority. I never cared about a sorority at school but after I got out and went over to Ohio to live, the connection with a sorority would have been nice and would have given me contacts with the same people that I'd be interested in. Again I had to start in and make my friends all over.

Q: Yes. That's interesting. What course of study did you follow over at the U of I?

A: I started out to take music and home ec. But they kicked me out of music in a hurry because I cannot read music.

Q: Yes.

A: I couldn't read music.

Q: Yes.

A: I started in home ec. And I had been used to cooking at home and I was used to cooking meals. And they started me cooking a little pattie of meat and a little tiny this and that. And I couldn't take it. Heavens, I knew more than that. I couldn't be bothered. Oh, and my first class was to cut up a chicken.

Q: Oh! (laughter)

A: And I sat in the front row. This teacher started in on that chicken and she was just sawing in the middle of the bone. And I sat and watched her for a while and I got up and I said, "May I help you?" And I took the chicken and cut it up. I didn't think too much about it. I did it. But there was another girl in that class, Gladys Bates who lived over east of Taylorville, a farm girl. And she laughed about that. She told me about it. I never thought too much about it. But that's a fact.

Q: Isn't that something?

A: Standing up there, a college teacher showing us how to cut up a chicken and she wasn't any more hitting the joint than the man in the moon. And I just politely stood up and I said, "May I help you?" Gladys got a bigger bang out of that than I did. But you see, I dropped both music and home ec.

Q: And so then where did you go?

A: Mathematics and chemistry.

Q: Mathematics and chemistry. Without any chemistry background from high school.

A: I had to work like hell.

Q: That must have been a . . .

A: Oh, first year I worked hard at it. I come home and I said, "I'm not going to take any more of that stuff."

Q: This was in the spring.

A: Yes, of the first year. I went back in the fall and took another course, took it again.

Q: Took it again.

A: It was a good course.

Q: So you ended up with both a math and a chemistry major?

A: Yes. No, a major in math and a minor in chemistry.

Q: Minor in chemistry.

A: Yes. And just lacked one point of making the honor roll.

Q: Oh Marie, that's a shame.

A: I didn't know it until I went to graduate.

Q: Yes. How big was the University of Illinois then?

A: Five thousand. A big school.

Q: A big school but still small enough for you to find friends. And the campus . . .

A: Oh, I made good friends.

Q: Yes. Everything's so spread out over there now.

A: Now look at here. Here comes the girl that lived upstairs for six or seven years. I've had a little [car]—I've had trouble with it. It stood for a year. You know what happens to cars that stand around for a year. The power steering went out. I had a little trouble with the starter because it's a heavy motor for the starter to start. But never let me down. I drove it to South Dakota to see my grandson. David and Shirley didn't want me to go. People thought I was crazy. Cadillac and I are going to South Dakota. So we went to South Dakota. And I drove 185 miles the first day and I had a friend, a college friend who lived in New London, Iowa, and I stayed with her and visited.

Q: How old were you then?

A: Eighty-four.

Q: Yes.

A: And visited with her. And the next day I started out and got down on I-80 and on I-80 they'd run over you if you didn't go seventy-five or eighty. So the Cadillac and I still—it was enjoying the trip as much as I was, a beautiful day. And it came onto evening and I got to Council Bluffs and it's 150 miles to Vermillion and that's getting pretty late and I was getting tired. Got off the big highway and found ourselves a nice little motel and stayed all night and then the next morning we got up and we rolled into Vermillion about eleven o'clock in the morning. Had a nice trip, stayed a week, started home and got into the worst blizzard you ever saw.

Q: How did you get through the blizzard?

A: Well the Cadillac and I just kept purring right along about thirty-eight miles an hour and the big semis would come around and souse us and they'd go around us and we just kept right on going. I started out and when I got to Council Bluffs I was 125 miles from Vermillion then and all I could see on the sign was the E-S and I thought, that's got to be Des Moines. So I went on that road and I thought well you'd better get off of here. So I found a place to get off. So I got off and I went into this little restaurant. There was a motel there and I was going to eat. And it was about two o'clock. And I thought, "Well I'll just stay here." And somebody came in coming from the east, from Des Moines and they said, "Well, no, it's clear out east." "Okay, well then I'll go on." The storm went right along with me. But we just kept purring right along. Of course she's heavy and it just would go through those deep ruts and the slush of the snow and it got about four o'clock and then there was a place to go off. And I landed at the Ramada Inn where the Pope had stayed the week before.

Q: Oh dear.

A: And I had forgotten about being a senior citizen you know and having a discount. So when I got into—it was just at the edge of the storm. The storm was kind of letting up and it was getting cold and the wind was beginning to blow and it was beginning to freeze. And I went in and the girl asked me if I had a reservation. No. She said yes she had a place. She asked if I'd like to be on the first floor. And I said I'd rather. So they put me around the side and I drove it up there and I thought—Steven had given me some flowers to take home and I thought, "Well, I'd better get those. It might freeze." So I went out and got them and just as I was going out there was a fellow coming in. And he had just parked his car and his clothes were over his back. And I said, "What's it doing out there?" And he said, "Just blowing like hell." So I moved my car so I could see it out of my window. And stayed there all night and came on the rest of the way. Then I got east of Des Moines

and I stopped at a rest place and walked around a little bit. There was another car parked along the side of mine. It was a couple in an Oldsmobile. And the lady said, "Are you driving alone?" And I said yes. "Oh," she said, "I'd be so afraid." "Well," I said, "if you're left a widow young, you know, you learn to take care of yourself. But," I said, "I call my son up every night and tell him where his wandering mother is." And I came on home.

Q: Well, when we were talking earlier you told me that the University of Illinois was 5,000 students.

A: Yes.

Q: Were there many other women attending?

A: No. There were four men to every woman at least.

Q: Since you were taking so many math classes and physics classes, were there any women in your classes?

A: I had one class where I was the only woman.

Q: Yes.

A: I had trouble with one English class. That was the one I had an average of about ninety in, I flunked English. I got a sixty-five. Through the summer I wrote back to the dean in the liberal arts and science school and asked permission to transfer to another class and repeat my course. And he wrote back and said I never should have been allowed in that class in the first place. So I took it. English was not my good subject.

Q: Who counseled you over there, if you got into a class you shouldn't have been in?

A: Counsel? We didn't have any counselors. A junior girl was supposed to be my advisor but she was over in the Presbyterian home and I lived over east. They didn't have counselors like they do now.

Q: So how did you decide what to take then? You just went over and registered?

A: I just decided that myself.

Q: You just went over and registered and that's the way you decided.

A: Yes.

Q: You gave me a picture which I have here.

A: I've got some pictures. I was going to give you one if you want to show people who you're working with you might have one.

Q: Well . . .

A: Just snaps.

Q: You gave me a picture of this, of yourself in this formal. It looks like a formal.

A: It was a formal.

Q: And I believe you said that was your first formal.

A: That was my first formal.

Q: That's an awfully pretty dress.

A: Light green. And it had embroidered roses on it made out of silver thread. And it had a paper rose, carnation on the waist.

Q: Did you make the dress?

A: Oh no. No, it came from Peoria.

Q: Before you went to school did you go shopping for some clothes up at Peoria?

A: I made most of my own clothes.

Q: But not this one.

A: No, not that one. No. I had been invited to a dance. When I went to school I didn't know anything about dancing so I went to a dancing school.

Q: Up at Champaign?

A: Yes. I learned how to dance.

Q: Was it connected with the school?

A: No. Private.

Q: Private.

A: Yes.

Q: And when you got to school that was all right with your mother and father to do that.

A: They accepted it. It never was any trouble or anything like that. But as a high school student I didn't dance. My father was a strict Presbyterian. My mother was raised in Paul's Episcopal, St. Paul's.

Q: Is this picture . . .

A: That's a high school picture.

Q: That's a high school picture. That's another pretty dress. Did you make that dress?

A: The same cousin that lived with Uncle Dave and me made that.

Q: Lovely dress. Well that formal, that was your first formal then.

A: That was my first formal.

Q: What was that dance like?

A: Well Allen Britton took me to . . .

Q: Who did?

A: It was Allen Britton, a boy from Virden. Aunt Henrietta and his mother were good friends. I went to his fraternity dances but this was—it wasn't the sophomore cotillion—it was one of those school dances. Oh I got to be a good dancer. I used to wear the boys out.

Q: Oh dear. (laughter)

A: I had three boyfriends in college.

Q: Including Leo?

A: Yes, including Leo. I got acquainted in my junior year when he was in ground school in aviation. And the girls—different groups, you know, entertained the boys on Friday night or Saturday night for, just in for the dance and to have a party.

Q: That would have been in 1918 or 1917.

A: In 1917. I graduated in the spring of 1917 I think.

Q: He was just in the air corps training school.

A: He left Columbia. He had started at Columbia.

Q: In New York.

A: In New York and he left it and came home and joined the service and never did go back.

Q: How far did he go in . . .

A: He only got the one year and then he went in the service. And of course he was there in this ground school. And then he went down to Kelly Field in Texas and he was just ready to go overseas when the war was over. So he came home and, oh, we were engaged since the end of my senior year. But Mother wanted me to stay home a year. So I stayed home. And he went back to Ohio and he had money saved and he saved money when he was in the service. So he bought a house. He never had to pay any rent. And we . . .

Q: How did he save this money? From the service or . . .

A: Well when he was—his mother and his folks were thrifty. Yes, he saved some from the service he sent home. And then he had been saving his pennies. He had a lot that he had bought up at Perrysburg, Ohio. It was a place that was on the south edge of Toledo. And he added to it. I don't remember how much he had paid down, probably $2,500 because the house only cost $7,500. And I think he borrowed the money. He got himself a job as soon as he came home and he borrowed the money from one of the banks, Diamond Savings Bank I think was the name of it. And I think he only had to pay 3 percent mortgage. It was very reasonable.

Q: Did you see him any of that year that you were home before you were married?

A: Oh sure. I went over in the winter. He came to see me once and I went over to see him and that's when we selected the house and we selected the furniture and then I wanted a nice church wedding. So I had it.

Q: Well I think we'll get into your wedding the next time I come. During your days at the University of Illinois how much awareness was there about the coming war?

A: The boys were going into the service all of the time.

Q: Starting what? In about—see, we didn't enter the war until 1917.

A: That's about when it was.

Q: So you started in 1915. And was there concern then among the students?

A: Oh yes. I remember the night of the Armistice. Of course that's when it was over.

Q: That's when it was over but prior to that.

A: Oh a lot of the boys, you see, dropped out and went to the service.

Q: Went on to the service before the war was even declared.

A: Yes. Our class dropped way down in the number that graduated because so many of the boys had gone to service.

Q: How many were in your graduating class?

A: I don't think there was but nine hundred and something. It was down.

Q: I know what I wanted to ask you about school. Do you remember what your tuition costs were or your board and room costs?

A: I can't tell you now. I don't know.

Q: How big was the campus at that time?

A: Nothing like it is now I can tell you. Let's see, Matthew North and South and Green Street East and West and of course the YM and the YW were across Matthew and Osborne Hall was on the west side. There were a few fraternity houses out in Champaign. It was nothing like it is now though.

Q: But at the time you went there it was a pretty compact campus.

A: Well it was a big campus for then.

Q: For then, yes, but I mean it was . . .

A: Yes. It was compact. It was next to Lincoln Hall and the auditorium, and the Commerce Building, liberal arts and science, engineering, chemistry and architecture.

Q: Well I think we'll stop there for today, Marie.

End of Side 2, Tape Two

Q: Marie, I think today we'll pick up on some things we missed the last time and if you'll bear with me I'll ask you those questions now. We talked about the University of Illinois campus life. What was your day-to-day campus life like on the University of Illinois? For instance, what were the rules at the YWCA? When did you have to be in?

A: We had to be in at ten o'clock. And no dates through the week, just on weekends.

Q: What time did you have to be in on weekends?

A: Oh I think on Saturday night if we went to a dance we could stay out till twelve o'clock. I just don't remember. They weren't too strict but they kept all the girls in line.

Q: Did they have a chaperone in the YWCA?

A: Oh yes.

Q: Yes. Someone who managed and looked after the girls?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you have a place to go on campus where you'd go and get snacks and things like that like they do now?

A: Well we had to go off the campus to the—I don't remember the name of the building. It was on the Illini Union. Where Matthew Street and Green Street crossed there was a place we used to go and buy snacks and down that street.

Q: Did you attend any ball games, football games or basketball games?

A: Oh yes I went to basketball games and I went to football games but I liked the basketball better. I always would go to the games.

Q: Did they have homecoming celebrations sometimes?

A: Oh yes. That was quite something for me.

Q: What did they do at that . . .

A: Well a lot of the houses built or fixed up signs and pictures out in the yard. And we all went around to see them. My mother came to visit me at homecoming and we went around to see things. It was quite a celebration for me at first because I'd never seen anything like that.

Q: They hadn't had it at high school yet?

A: Oh no. We had nothing like that in high school.

Q: You also showed me a picture of your first formal dress.

A: Yes.

Q: The one that I thought was so pretty. And you purchased it in Peoria.

A: Peoria.

Q: That's surprising at that time to go clear to Peoria.

A: Well I had this cousin that had kept house for my uncle and me and had gone back to live with her sister in Peoria. So I went up and she went with me shopping. And Peoria was closer than Springfield. And she went with me. And that was what we selected.

Q: You went by train at that time.

A: Yes.

Q: Did you take any agricultural courses up at the university?

A: I started in home ec. But no agricultural courses. But just the home ec. That's in the Department of Agriculture.

Q: I noticed that you have an aeronautical school dance program.

A: That was after I met Mr. Burch. And then we went to dances.

Q: Did they have them on a regular basis?

A: No, I don't think so. No, I don't remember that we did.

Q: You just went occasionally.

A: Yes. See, they were in these different—they were only there two or three months and then they were all transferred and went on to another school.

Q: Well you came—then when he arrived there he was only there two or three months?

A: Possibly six months. As I remember it was along in the winter when we had our first dance. And he was there for a while and then we went for walks on Sunday afternoons and on some of our first dates I took him to the University of Illinois to hear J. Lawrence Erb play the organ on Sunday afternoons. They had very lovely organ concerts every Sunday afternoon. He liked music, I liked music.

Q: Was that a visiting organist or one that . . .

A: No, he was the head of the department of music at the university. He also directed our women's choral society and I sang in that.

Q: Oh you did? Well, that was a pretty fast courtship on the part of Mr. Leo Burch.

A: Well we did quite a little through correspondence after that. He went on down to Texas and we corresponded. And then the next summer I went down there.

Q: Oh you went to Texas?

A: Yes, I went to see him in Texas, in Houston.

Q: You took the train?

A: Sure. That was before the day of cars. Oh I had my car at school my last year. But, no, I went down on the train.

Q: What did you do in Houston?

A: Well we went down to the gulf, down to Galviston, went swimming. I was only there one weekend. The only time he had off was on weekends. I just went down for a weekend.

Q: Without a chaperone?

A: Yes. I was my own chaperone.

Q: That was still . . .

A: That was still quite unusual.

Q: Quite unusual for that time I would say.

A: But my family trusted me.

Q: That's good. What were the final examinations like at school?

A: Some of them were pretty tough. Oh, I don't remember.

Q: Did they give you tests and reports to do throughout the semester as you were going to school?

A: Oh yes, especially in English they did a lot of that. In chemistry we did all sorts of lab work and all sorts of reports.

Q: When did you learn to drive? You mentioned that you . . .

A: When I was fourteen. When my Uncle Dave first got a car I could drive it before he could.

Q: It wasn't legal to drive at fourteen was it?

A: There wasn't any legal—we didn't have any legal things then.

Q: You didn't have any . . .

A: I got up to sixteen before they put that in. There were no legal things.

Q: You said you had a car your last year of college. That was pretty unusual too.

A: Yes. My brother and I were both in college and the folks couldn't drive it so we had it. They'd let you have it then.

Q: What kind?

A: Chandler. But they stopped it after a while, the next year or two. They wouldn't let students have a car.

Q: Were there many students up there that had cars?

A: No. I used to take the kids—at exams one year we had studied so hard and the girls were all in their nightgowns and I took them all out for a drive. We went down to Sevoy and back. I was the only one dressed.

Q: The rest of them were in their nightgowns.

A: In their nightgowns. Oh we girls had a good time.

Q: What are some of the other things you did, that you girls did together?

A: You know, when you study for three or four courses you don't have too much time. We used to sing and get around the piano and sing and then we'd dance on weekends. We had a lot of fun in our own place.

Q: Yes.

A: I didn't have too many dates. After I was engaged I wasn't even interested.

Q: You weren't interested. Why did they stop the students from having cars up there? Do you remember that?

A: Well people just didn't do it then. There wasn't many kids who could drive and their parents couldn't. Hayward and I both could drive and our parents couldn't. And they just let us have the car.

Q: Why didn't your parents learn to drive the car?

A: In those days it was different than it is now. Didn't you ever hear me tell about my father when we were trying to teach him to drive? And we drove in the drive one day and he was going to hit a post and he screamed, "Get that post out of the way." (laughter) They could stop a team of horses when they were driving, but to stop a car—it was different, they simply wanted to move the post.

Q: Your mother felt the same way.

A: Mother wouldn't do it, wouldn't touch it.

Q: Wouldn't touch it at all? Oh dear.

A: Life was so different than it is now you just wouldn't believe it. We didn't need all the things to entertain us. My father always told us, "Learn to entertain yourself." And I can do it and people don't understand how I've been so comfortable out here by myself. I normally don't have two dogs. I normally have one. But they're a lot of company. And I have books. I sew, I read. I did sew. I'm going to go back to it. I need glasses. And I don't get lonesome. I've got a telephone.

Q: How was Divernon affected by the war, World War I? Were there many young men . . .

A: Yes, a lot of the boys went to service. The first year of World War I, I was in college.

Q: But there were a number of boys from here who . . .

A: Oh yes, a number of the boys.

Q: Did they, most of them, enlist? Or were they . . .

A: Oh I don't remember. I imagine that a lot of them were drafted though.

Q: Do you have any memories of the influenza epidemic of 1918 and 1919?

A: Yes ma'am. My whole family was sick but me. I don't know how I escaped. Father and Mother were both in bed and my brother was in school in bed. When he was able to come home he came home and I was the only one that was left. I was up, I took care of all of them and I never got it.

Q: I've heard stories that it was so bad they had to have funerals at night.

A: Well I didn't run into any of that. In our family—we lived out at the east place and as soon as Hayward was able to, they let him come home. He was in the hospital at the university and as soon as he was able to come home he came home, of course on the train, on that interurban. That's what we had. But I don't remember any of that. I expect in places that was true but here in the country we didn't have that.

Q: You didn't have that problem?

A: No, not that much.

Q: I have a postcard that I found in your album from St. Louis.

A: Yes.

Q: And it's written to Leo. And I was just wondering if you were down there for any particular reason. It was written in 1918 in St. Louis. Do you remember that?

A: That's when I was coming home from Houston.

Q: Did you stay overnight in St. Louis?

A: No. No, I don't think so. No, just between trains.

Q: I thought there might have been something special you had gone there . . .

A: No, not at that age I didn't.

Q: Describe your wedding for me.

A: Well, it was a pretty nice wedding for Divernon. I had four bridesmaids and my maid of honor, all college friends. It was here in the Presbyterian Church. And at eight o'clock on a Saturday night. They were having an evangelistic service in the park. But that night they didn't have very many at the evangelistic service. They all came to the wedding.

Q: It must have been a pretty large wedding then.

A: It was. It was a church wedding. As we started down the aisle—my father and me stepped in the door to start down the aisle the lights went out.

Q: Did you have a storm?

A: No. But I said to my father—there was a switch behind the door. And I said to my father, "Look behind that door," and he turned around and there was a fellow back there. Somebody flipped the switches, did something, they blew a fuse.

Q: Yes.

A: That's what happened. The bridesmaids were all down and the

groomsmen were all in place. Leo was there. But the bride and her father were in the door at the back. And Dad turned and this man stepped out and he said, "I didn't do it." Well then they sent for the electrician, Wayne Sullivan, and about the time they found him, why, somebody put a penny behind this fuse so the wedding went on. But when the lights came on all the groomsmen were over talking to the bridesmaids. (laughter) And my aunt's always said, "You know, that was just the best thing that happened because I'd have been crying if it hadn't." But the wedding went off very nicely after that.

Q: What was your dress like?

A: It was a white satin and it was draped on the side. And I had a nice veil with artificial orange blossoms on the train and the veil went down to the train. It was a very nice gown. It was made by the Sturm sisters in Springfield. I don't know if there are any of them alive any more or not.

Q: How were the best man and the groom and how were they all dressed?

A: Just in straight business suits. I wanted Leo to wear a regular formal suit but he didn't want to. So the girls had the fancy dresses but the boys didn't.

Q: What were the girls' dresses like?

A: I don't remember. They were nice dresses and I think they had hats to match. And they were different pastel colors.

Q: Was it pretty hot that day?

A: Sure. June twenty-third. (chuckle) The night before I took the wedding party down in the mine. We had a practice dinner and then after the dinner was over we had to do something. It was my mother's idea but they all liked it. So we went to the mine and they took us down in the mine and showed us around and even took us on a ride on their electric mules, they called them, that they hauled coal in with. We had quite a time. That was an unusual . . .

Q: Were they electric cars at that time?

A: Sure.

Q: Pulled by mules?

A: No, they were electric then. And the mules had been all—they had taken them all out.

Q: None of them had ever been in the mine before?

A: No. I'll bet there's not many wedding parties where you go down in the mine.

Q: What was your reception like?

A: We had it out home. Mother and Dad had a tent set up out in the yard. And we had caterers and they served us. Real nice.

Q: It must have been a late supper?

A: A late supper.

Q: Where did the caterers come from? Springfield?

A: From Springfield. I don't remember their names.

Q: I noticed you had several cards in this book. And they all have poems on them and it looks like, "When cooking and you burn your pans, scrape with this mitt and save your hands." I assume you had a shower.

A: They had a shower for me at the university at the home, the Congregational house. They had a shower for me about the time I graduated. See, I graduated in June, the twenty-third, 1919. And I was married June twenty-third, 1920. It just so happened the same day. But the girls had a shower for me and those are the cards that were on some of the shower gifts.

Q: Yes, the poems are all very nice on them.

A: Yes. That was a surprise.

Q: This was another card that was in that scrapbook which I think is

very sweet, "In Leo Burch's airplane sly cupid rode and loosed a dart. The arrow flew correct and true and pierced Marie McMurray's heart."

A: Who signed it?

Q: No signature on it. It must have been something that went with a wedding present. Do you remember?

A: I don't remember. See, I saved a lot of those.

Q: Did you go anyplace on a honeymoon?

A: Oh yes. We went up to the Sault Ste. [St. Marie] in Canada.

Q: Oh you did?

A: Yes. We got on the midnight train in Springfield and went to Chicago where we spent a day in Chicago at the Palmer House. And then the next day we got on a boat and went up to the Sault on Lake Michigan.

Q: How long were you on the boat?

A: We were about a week on the trip, I don't remember.

Q: The trip was mostly on the boat then?

A: Yes. Then we got up to the Sault Ste. and I think we were over in Grand Island for a day or two. Then we took the boat back on Lake Erie to Toledo and we went to Perrysburg.

Q: Perrysburg? And that's where you . . .

A: That's where we lived.

Q: That's where you lived. Did your mother and father-in-law live there?

A: Yes. They were very nice to me. Always were.

Q: What was the town of Perrysburg like?

A: It was a small. It was a village about like Divernon. It was mostly people who worked in Toledo and went back and forth, mostly on the trolley then. Of course they have buses now. But most of them drive now. But they went on the trolley.

Q: What was Leo's business?

A: He was an auditor with Ernst and Ernst. When he first got out of the service he just took a bookkeeping job with Negels. But then he got a chance to get in with Ernst and Ernst, the auditing firm. You hear of those a lot today.

Q: Where did he get his training? He was only at Columbia for a year.

A: He went through the business course. When he left high school he took a business course like our Brown's Business course in Springfield. He took that and then started out to work. And then he decided he'd like to go to school. So he really picked a big one. I guess he was doing all right except that—well I found out later that when he decided he wanted to come to Illinois to study, I went back to help him get his grades and part of the grades had been destroyed by a fire. But the principal said, "I found enough of his grades that I'm sure his others were good." So they fixed him up with a set so he could enter the University of Illinois. How he entered the University at Columbia I don't know. But he went there for a few months.

Q: When did he go to the University of Illinois?

A: Well that's where he was when he was killed.

Q: And he was going to school then?

A: He was going to school. We were married five years. I graduated from the University of Illinois. And he came out of the service and got a job at Nagels Electric as a bookkeeper. And then he got into Ernst and Ernst and was working with Ernst and Ernst when the baby was born. And when the baby was about fifteen months old he came home one day and he said, "Well if I could afford it, I'd stop and go to school." And I thought, "Well it's this baby and I that's keeping him back." So I wrote that to my family and they immediately wrote back and said, "If he

wants to go to school, we'll help you." Well of course I wanted to go to my own school. So we decided then that he'd come back to the University of Illinois. And I wanted to rent rooms or do something to help pay the expenses. And my family said, "No, you're going to take care of that baby." So they met us there and they found me a lovely little apartment and so Leo went to the university offices and they said, "With your experience we'll get you jobs, different auditing jobs around in Urbana and Champaign and we'll put you on the military staff." Because he had his military work. And so it looked like we were going to be able to pay all of our own expenses. "But," they said, "we'd like to have you go back and do reserve officers training." Well he was a second lieutenant. He came out of the army as a second lieutenant. And so they said, "You go back and go and take training," he was going to have reserve officers training. "You go back and take your two weeks of training. Then you come back and we'll put you on the staff." So we went home. He went to the training and he was killed at the training.

Q: Just up flying.

A: Just up flying. The plane just stopped in the beautiful afternoon. He was a navigator but the other fellow was a pilot and they said had he handled that plane a little different he wouldn't have fallen but they say he pancaked, he flattened it out too flat. And it went down.

Q: So he had just started school when that happened.

A: Yes.

Q: A real tragedy. When he was killed and you . . .

A: Well our home was sold. We had sold it knowing that we were going to move. So it was sold. And I had to move. Grandmother Burch wanted me to move with her and I would have gotten along beautifully. We would have gotten along beautifully together but my family had means and they wanted me to come home. And I made a mistake. I'd have been better if I would have stayed with Grandmother Burch. Personally I think I would have gone on. Before Leo was buried I was offered three different jobs in Toledo by companies that knew him.

Q: What kind of jobs?

A: They just said, "If you want work, come down and we'll give you a job." I don't remember.

Q: You don't have any idea.

A: But I was so upset—my mother stayed with me. And then I came home but then the next year when I began to think, "I've got to go to work to support this baby and make my own living why, they didn't want to take care of the baby while I went to work. So that's when I decided I'd raise chickens. I didn't do too badly.

Q: When you started raising chickens . . .

A: Well first I hatched some myself and then about this same time one of my college friends started a hatchery in Danville. I guess some of the first baby chicks that were shipped on the Wabash Railroad came to Springfield and I got them.

Q: Yes.

A: And, oh, of course I worked hard at it. But I was raising my own baby. And when I used to deliver the eggs and see things in the alleys in Springfield—I'd see boys, one day I saw some boys throwing hatchets at a telegraph pole down the alley and I thought, "I'm glad my baby's not doing something like that." And that's where I started and . . . he's a good boy.

Q: When you raised chickens . . .

A: It was eggs I was producing.

Q: . . . the eggs were what you were interested in then.

A: Yes.

Q: Was it any different than when you did it as a child?

A: Oh yes.

Q: How was it different?

A: Well of course the babies aren't too much different at first. But I never had to set hens and watch the setting hens to see them, watch them

for three weeks and maybe have them break eggs in the nests. And you'd have to clean them up. But I just bought the baby chicks. And then Bruce brooded them from that.

Q: I see.

A: But when you brood them in cold weather it's not an easy task.

Q: How did you keep them warm?

A: I had little hard coal stoves. Then finally we got electricity—then electricity came in when the REA [Rural Electrification Association] came through.

Q: That wasn't until the 1930's though.

A: In 1936 was when we got that. That was quite a relief.

Q: How many dozen eggs did you have to sell to make . . .

A: Oh don't ask me!

Q: . . . so much money? I mean what kind of money were you making off the eggs?

A: Well, I don't have any idea.

Q: Was it difficult raising David with your parents?

A: No. They helped me a lot.

Q: No discipline problems, no problem that way?

A: The only thing was that Mother—sometimes he'd do things and he'd say to Grandmother, "Don't tell Mother." And Mother would tell me, and I said, "Now, listen, Mother, that's not very nice to do that." I said, "If you don't approve of it, then you know I don't approve of it, why, you stand by me. Don't shield him from me." That was the only—I didn't have too much of that. No, they helped me a lot. I could go to

women's clubs' meetings or Eastern Star and Mother was always home when he came home from school. Someone was there when he came home and a lot of children, you know, come home and don't have anyone. But there was always someone.

Q: The 1920's have always been described as the roaring twenties. Did Divernon have any of the roaring twenties there?

A: I'm sure I don't know. I didn't come home until 1925.

Q: Yes, but I thought you might have heard from your parents or . . .

A: Oh I was living with them.

Q: . . . or some such thing. And also there was a very bad farm depression during the 1920's too.

A: From 1928 to 1930, that's when the worst of the depression.

Q: Yes, but it started and moved its way through the 1920's.

A: I had the chickens and eggs business in the place that—had I had to have sold the corn off of my sixty acres of land that I had, it would have taken the whole corn crop to pay the taxes. As it was I only needed a little corner of the corn to feed my hens. And those eggs paid the taxes.

Q: And this was on your mother and father's farm.

A: Yes. That's where I lived.

Q: That's where you lived. But your father was growing crops at that time.

A: No. He was retired.

Q: He was retired then.

A: Yes. My brother ran the farm then.

Q: Hayward ran the farm. So you were all living there at that time.

A: Yes.

Q: Was Hayward married at that time?

A: No. He didn't get married until 1932. He got married in the bottom of the depression. See, I went to Europe in 1930 for the World's Poultry Congress. Dr. Card from the University of Illinois was one of the United States delegates and I went in his party.

Q: How did you come about that?

A: I don't know how I heard about it. I had been keeping in touch with Dr. Card and was learning and picking up things from poultry, learning about the new things in poultry. And I heard about it and, well, the folks wanted to see me get away. The ticket then didn't cost what it does now.

Q: Do you remember what it cost?

A: Eight hundred and some dollars for the British Isles. And I had to borrow some money, I had to borrow a little money so there would be some left in the bank for my brother to buy feed for the chickens if he needed or if I needed some more money. So I was just home two weeks when the banks closed. And I didn't lose a penny because my note covered my deposit.

Q: Oh.

A: But I was really uneasy until that check came in for that, because I knew the bank was in pretty bad shape.

Q: The check for what?

A: For the ticket.

Q: Right.

A: Eight hundred and thirty–some dollars.

Q: In other words, you had already paid for the ticket and had your spending money and all of that.

A: Yes. I didn't spend too much. I watched pretty carefully what I spent.

Q: From what port did you sail?

A: Montreal.

Q: You went by train.

A: I went by train.

Q: What was the ship like?

A: Well, the Duchess of York. The Duchess of York had either Princess Elizabeth or Margaret, she had while we were on the water. We had a lot of fun about that. That was the name of the boat, Duchess of York.

Q: What was the boat like?

A: Well just like all ocean liners. Only in this party there were so many people going to this World's Poultry Congress in London, there was no class. It was the same from the top to the bottom, it was all one class. But I had return passage back on the Duchess of York and I went to see where my cabin would be coming back and it was way down in the hole. So I had enough money that I changed my reservation to first class.

Q: First class. Was it normally a three–class boat or . . .

A: Two class.

Q: A two–class boat.

A: Yes.

Q: How big a ship? How many passengers do you remember that?

A: I don't remember.

Q: A pretty good number.

A: It was a good medium ship.

Q: Was the food good on it?

A: Yes, they were good. Of course we had powdered milk for a lot of things. I had never had anything with powdered milk in it before. And I had never eaten anything where you would put the sides up on the table to keep the dishes from falling off either.

Q: Was it a pretty rough crossing? What time of year was it?

A: July. No, it wasn't bad. Of course one fellow said, "Well, if you hadn't made me play cards I'd have gotten seasick." I said, "Well all you needed was to keep your mind off it and do something else."

Q: Did they have dancing and things like that on shipboard?

A: Oh yes. We had dancing and playing cards and . . .

Q: You were alone. Did you meet some people that you . . .

A: Oh sure. Dr. Card's wife was very glad to have a pal. And she turned out to be my cabin mate. We were together all the time.

Q: Where did you land?

A: Liverpool.

Q: And then what was the program from there on?

A: Well we went from Liverpool to London. And of course in London we were at this poultry conference. It was a big convention. It was all different nationalities and in this big crystal palace where we had it there were signs all upstairs, everything was done in five languages.

Q: Oh.

A: German—it was after the war. The German people stayed away from us. They thought we were mad at them and we tried so hard to make them feel that we weren't mad at them. They finally limbered up a little before we left. We were there ten days.

Q: What were the five languages, do you remember?

A: I've forgotten. If I could find my scrapbook or my pictures upstairs—I took a picture of some of those signs. I don't remember now. Of course there was a Spanish and there was a German and there was French. I wouldn't be surprised if there wasn't Japanese.

Q: Were these meetings that you attended at the poultry congress?

A: I didn't attend too many of the meetings. I traveled around. Oh I went to a lot of them.

Q: You said you traveled around. Where did you go?

A: I took trips around through England. Of course they took us on lots of trips too. They took us out to teas and they did a lot of entertaining for us.

Q: Any particular places that stand out in your mind?

A: Not any more. I heard "The Messiah." It's a big orchestra in London that plays "The Messiah," that sings "The Messiah". We went to that. It will come to me, the name, you know—Thomas Beacham.

Q: Oh?

A: We heard that in all its glory. We went to one home where they had tea and played music. There was all different kinds of entertainment. The English people turned out. Then we went out in the country

someplace and had a wonderful picnic.

Q: Did you go to the theater at all while you were there?

A: I don't remember. I went to the theater on another trip when I went back on the farmer-to-farmer tour. I went to a theater.

Q: How long were you on this trip all total?

A: Well I think it was about three weeks, about a week going over and about ten days there and about a week coming back. Then I stopped in Toledo to see Grandmother Burch, stopped overnight and then came on back to get David in school. He was starting school, it was his first year.

Q: Well, how long were you in Ireland?

A: That's where I left the party. Oh, just two days. And I came back to Liverpool or Dublin. That's where I left them, in Liverpool and then I took the train across the Sleigo there.

Q: You told me that you'd gone to Sleigo but you really didn't tell me what you did there.

A: I just told you about our first day. Well after we got to Sleigo the next morning I got up after my black currant jam tea and had a nice breakfast. I really don't remember what I had. And then this man and son came in with a big bucket of potatoes, oh nice big potatoes and they took a lot of those potatoes, they boiled them in their jackets and we had them for lunch. And the rest they took out and fed to the cattle. They had beautiful black angus, eight or nine head. And they had a few very lovely sheep. Now I don't remember the breed of sheep, very pretty white ones. And then that afternoon they took me for a ride and we went in one of these little carts that you open the door and you get in and two sit in front and two in back and one horse. We went patty-patty-pat down the road with the stone fences on either side. And we went to visit some distant cousins. And there we looked across the valley and they said over in that church they had the records of when our family moved from Scotland and when the King of England moved some of the good farmers from Scotland into Ireland. Well I didn't get over there to see it.

Q: That's too bad.

A: I would have liked to have gone over and see if I'd have found some of my relatives' history. Then of course one of the things that amazed me was their peat piles that they had cut in sort of logs of wood. And that was what they burned. And this home, in that same day . . .

Q: Ground up peat?

A: No, it's in blocks. It grows in the ground. It's a kind of a sponge, you know, how it grows. It looks like a tile spade and they just cut it down and they cut it in squares. It's blocks just like we use wood in the fireplace only they cooked with it.

Q: Oh really?

A: It stays on and dries. It has to dry a long time. I don't know how many months it dries. And they pile them all up on edge like this. They have it real big, deep.

Q: And this is the way they cooked and they heated their houses.

A: Yes.

Q: Did they cook on the fireplace?

A: This family cooked on a stove. It was like what my mother used to call a washing stove, a little iron stove with little legs on it and four burners on it and that was setting in where the fireplace was supposed to be, the big open place for the fireplace. But this stove was in there and of course the smoke went up the chimney. And that was what they cooked on. They were a little more progressive than a lot of them. They cooked on a stove. The roof was a thatched roof. They had to be careful.

Q: Why sure. Had you known that these other distant cousins were there when you got there?

A: No. They were a distant cousin. There was two families, my grandfather's Haire had a cousin, Johnson's, both Johnson's but they were cousins. And where we went to visit was cousins of the cousins. And then we also went shopping in this department store and I bought the linens that I brought home, the tablecloth.

Q: Now where was this?

A: This was in Sleigo.

Q: This was in Sleigo. Sleigo must have been a pretty fair sized city.

A: It was a pretty good city for this part of Ireland. See, that's in the part of the Irish free state. But they were Episcopalians. But they crossed the Irish—they crossed the line and went shopping and they never bothered them. They knew they were good people, they didn't bother them.

Q: What kind of linens did you bring home? That must have been exciting to see such lovely things.

A: Maybe I can find you the tablecloth in here and show it to you, the design in it. There's an Irish queen in the center of it playing her harp.

Q: Oh really?

A: And of course there's shamrocks embroidered in it and then there's a little castle picture on each corner. It's all worked in the fabric of the linen. Then I brought home some little guest towels, embroidered. And when they put me on the train and I had to go to meet the Duchess of York in Belfast where we went they—what would be our revenue, I don't know what they call it over there. He wanted to see this linen. I guess he was going to charge me something and make me pay for taking it out of the . . .

Q: Customs official.

A: Yes, that's what he was, a customs official. And he told me to untie it. And I tried and I said, "Well I can't untie it. I guess you have to do it." He said, "Is that permanent embroidery?" I said, "As far as I'm concerned it's permanent." And he let me go.

Q: So you went to Belfast to catch the Duchess of York and head back to the United States.

A: There were eight or ten of us on the Duchess of York coming back, I've forgotton.

Q: And that's when you changed your class.

A: Yes, I came back first class.

Q: When you came back to Springfield and Divernon the country was certainly in the throes of the depression. Did the depression present any particular problems for your family?

A: No it didn't. We weren't in debt any. And we'd always lived very carefully. And of course we were pretty good at saving everything. You can see that around here. And we didn't have the problems that a lot of people did. Because we were not in debt for anything.

Q: So you were living on the money you received for the eggs.

A: Well I lived on it and used it to start my chickens, used part of it for that.

Q: Where did your mother's and father's income . . .

A: Oh it was from the farm.

Q: From the farm itself, the hundred and . . .

A: The 120 acres, 160 acres.

Q: And they grew corn.

A: Yes. Corn and wheat. See we didn't start soybeans until a little bit later. I don't know when we got our first soybeans, along 1935 I guess.

Q: Were many people in Divernon that were destitute?

A: Oh, there were some people I guess.

Q: Did the community have any projects for helping people, do you

remember?

A: Oh yes, the women's club used to feed the children in the lower grades. Well Aunt Henrietta used to—the women's club did it, the same group of women. And I had a big pressure cooker and I'd bring that and took that over to my aunt's and she'd cook in it every morning, a whole pot of rolled oats. And different women then went and served it to the children in the lower grades at recess. And for a lot of them, it was the only meal they got. I'd forgotten—I think they weighed the children before they started and see how much they'd gain. Anyway they didn't lose a lot. I think they gained. We did that for weeks in the winter. That was one of our projects.

Q: Did you have many people come to your door asking for . . .

End of Side One, Tape Three

Q: Marie, I want to pick up again on some points from our last taping. We were talking about the Depression and its effect on the community. Did you ever have anybody come to your door begging just to work for meals?

A: Yes. I can't say too much but we always gave them something to eat. I remember once a couple of men at the door and Mother had them do something. But we just gave them something to eat and helped them and didn't ask for any work.

Q: You occasionally speak about Henrietta. Who was she?

A: She was my Uncle Dave's second wife.

Q: In one discussion you mentioned that your father, Thomas McMurray worked his way through school. What jobs did he manage to get and how did he do this?

A: I think he taught school partly. I really don't know but I know he told us how he worked one year and went to school one year. But I think he taught school mostly.

Q: How long was his college education?

A: I don't know. I don't remember but he got a degree and the copy of the article that he gave for his graduation is in a frame up in the Archives Building at Normal now, Illinois State. My grandson got that up there.

Q: Now I'll ask you a couple of questions about farming that we missed. Explain the threshing process in the early years, and can you compare it then and now?

A: Yes, it was really quite an ordeal in those days. First the crop had to be—we used the corn binders, the binders . . .

Q: What are the binders?

A: Well that's the machine that cuts the hay or cuts the oats or the wheat, whichever it was and threw it onto a belt that carried it up and the machine bundled it and tied it with binder twine, tied it in bundles and then threw it out on a carrier. And then after we'd get three or four bundles, why, the driver of the combine would trip that carrier to drop those and we learned as we drove to drop them in groups. Then the men would come along and shock them, that is when they'd stand the sheaves up on end like I described the other day.

Q: Yes.

A: Then they'd have to let those cure and dry out, usually two or three weeks I think before they'd start. Then they'd start to either thresh it or stack it in stacks. They used to stack it in stacks and then drive the pullway threshing machine up in between the stacks and throw it down on the belt so that the thresher—but then they got so they just hauled it from the shocks in with wagons, one driver with two horses and one man on the ground to throw it up. And they built it up on the loads and then drive it up to the thresher and then throw it on to the threshing machine. And of course the grain came out one place and the straw went out another. Then at that time we used to always—it all went into the bins. Of course now it goes into the elevators. But we didn't take it to the elevator right away. We'd put it in bins for a while.

Q: I imagine you pick it up differently now too.

A: Well we do now. We have the combine and just drive it through and it's cut and threshed and it all goes into the elevator.

Q: All in one operation.

A: In one operation.

Q: You also mentioned driving a darrick horse.

A: When they put hay in the barn of course we had horses and used a lot of timothy hay or timothy and clover were mixed. Again the hay is put in shocks until it cures and then they put it on the wagons and they haul it in and haul it up to the barn and then the barn had a track in the top of it and it was threaded with an inch manilla rope. And on one end of that rope—it would be about one hundred feet depending on how big your barn was, it might be more. One end of the rope was roped over those pulleys that went onto this track but it would go down and it took a strong man and he'd push that fork down into the hay and pull what we'd call the trigger ropes up and catch ahold of the hay. And on the other end of the rope a horse was hitched to it with a singletree. They'd put harness on her and then they either rode—I used to ride but then also I used to lead it. That was a lot of fun. Of course that's mostly boy's work but then I was four years older than my brother and I was a boy anyway. So I was the one that went out and would lead the horse to pull the hay up. Then when it hits the track and it would go so far they'd yell, "Whoa!" and then you'd stop the horse and then you've got to back her back and take the singletree back with you. Sometimes the rope would get kinked and knots in it and then you were in trouble. So the only thing they could do was take it out of the barn, hitch it behind the horse and take it down the road in the dust and they'd drag it about a quarter or a half a mile in the deep dust like we used to have on the roads. And that would work all of the kinks out of it.

Q: Oh it would?

A: Then you'd put it back in and thread it all over again. That was a lot of fun to drag it down the road.

Q: I would think so.

A: Dust two or three inches thick, deep you know. You never saw dust like that.

Q: No, I vaguely remember the dirt roads.

A: Yes.

Q: But that surprises me that the dust would take . . .

A: Well it was something about the dust and it would just work its way out—the kinks would all work out of it.

Q: We also talked a little bit more about the immigrants the last time. And something that I have not asked you before, these immigrants that came to work in the mines had to live someplace. But I'm sure they couldn't afford to buy homes. Where did they live?

A: Well they lived here in little houses. And of course their houses were pretty crude. But then the mine here built over one hundred houses for them to live in.

Q: Oh they did?

A: Yes. Little four-room houses. They weren't too bad.

Q: Did that take care of most of the miners? I mean . . .

A: Well a lot of them had money. And they'd build themselves a little—they were thrifty and resourceful. And they just built little houses, two or three rooms.

Q: Also during the 1930's there were a great many mine wars. Did that present the Divernon community with any problems?

A: No. We had a little problem with the strikes but not like they do now. But yes we had strikes, but not bad.

Q: When we were talking about the University of Illinois you mentioned your automobile, the Chandler.

A: Yes.

Q: What was it like?

A: It was just a touring car.

Q: Four door?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you have any idea what it cost?

A: I think around fourteen or fifteen hundred dollars at that time.

Q: That was expensive.

A: It was a good car.

Q: It surprises me that your parents . . .

A: Let me have it. (chuckles)

Q: Well I'm surprised that they really bought it given their thriftiness since they didn't really want to drive it.

A: Well everybody needed some kind of a car. And we kids could drive it so we were the drivers. I was the driver for a long time.

Q: So it was really sort of a treat for you children?

A: Oh sure. Sure. We never gave our family any problems and they rewarded us.

Q: When Leo was in flight training did he ever talk about his flight training? Aviation was so new then I would think it would be very exciting.

A: Sure. Right.

Q: Do you remember any . . .

A: No, I don't remember. I know he had to study hard and it was pretty

hard work and while he was at the university he flunked one week's work and he had to do it over. And he felt pretty badly about that but it did him a lot of good. One week wasn't much. Oh yes, he used to talk about the planes. Of course then they were open ones you know. And he didn't think they were safe for me to ride in. (chuckles)

Q: When you graduated from college what kind of a graduation ceremony did you have? Did you have a celebration over at school or . . .

A: No. We just all got our caps and gowns and marched down through the center of the campus and finally landed at the auditorium. That's where we had commencement.

Q: Very similar to the graduation ceremony today.

A: Yes. Very similar. We walked across the stage and got our diploma and changed our tassle from one side of our hat to the other. That's about all.

Q: When Leo came back to school what course of study did he want to follow?

A: He was following accounting.

Q: He was going into accounting again, what he had worked at.

A: Yes. That's what he . . .

Q: What were the requirements to be a CPA [Certified Public Accountant] at that time?

A: I don't know.

Q: You don't remember.

A: It was pretty stiff. He hadn't tried to write the CPA exam. A lot of people don't make it the first time. But he hadn't gotten that far.

Q: After World War II you mentioned housing two different couples, refugees from German concentration camps. And the first couple roused

your suspicions for some reason. Why was that?

A: Well, they just figured they were a little too good to work and help me clean and do things like that. That's what they were supposed to do. And they pulled every shade down every night, every shade. And it was way back from the road, there was no need for that. But down they came. And then they liked to get to town, Springfield. They didn't want to stay with me so I took them back in. Dr. Graebel had gotten them through the First Presbyterian Church for me. But there was something about them I just didn't quite trust. So I took them into Springfield. They went to Concordia Seminary. They got some contact through that. And I just had a feeling, and I went up and reported it to the FBI and I never heard anything more from them. But the next couple I got, they were good people. They stayed with me a year.

Q: Did the second couple ever talk about the concentration camps they were in?

A: Yes, they told something about it. The girl told me about it. Well she had been abused and the baby was some German soldier's baby that she had. She told about how good they were to her when she went into labor and I think a big battle was going on but they had her in someplace that was underground and protected. And they said they were very good to her.

Q: Well that's a surprise because all we hear is the bad things.

A: No. Some of the German people were pretty good to them. A lot of those German people didn't approve of all that.

Q: Well I was thinking in terms of the camps themselves.

A: Oh? No, she spoke very highly of them.

Q: Of the people, but not necessarily the camps she was in.

A: No. He was a cook. He cooked and he learned quite a bit, he knew quite a little English. His father was a schoolteacher back in Estonia. I haven't heard from them lately. I'd like to hear from them. I guess I could go up to the Savady's here in town and find out about them.

Q: Marie, we've skirted around the subject of your brother, Hayward. Would you describe the pattern of his life, his interests, his college

work, his family?

A: Well, he was a very good student. He was a better student than I was. He was a musician. He had a wonderful sense of music and voice and he could learn and recite poems and he was good. I was real proud of him. He married a friend of mine. Well one of the first years after I was home my folks tried to get me to get out and do things. And I went with the secretary of the First Presbyterian Church, Louise Jacobs. We went up to a Camp at Lake Geneva, Wisconsin. She went to a conference and I went along. And I enjoyed it. And there we had a roommate, Isabelle Hayer, H-A-Y-E-R.

Q: Any relation?

A: No. She later was married to my brother. And she was a very nice person. Very, very religious and a wonderful church worker and I think evidently she was a very good secretary. And we kept in touch with her. And then I went to Europe in 1930 and after I got home, why, I invited her down. And she came down for the weekend and met my brother and afterwards, after a couple of years they got married. And she lived here ever since. We were Presbyterians. She was a Methodist and she coaxed him—he went to the Methodist church with her and they belonged to the Methodist Church in Springfield. She never did feel at home down here. She was a city girl, a wonderful housekeeper and a good cook. They had three children and I lost a picture of those twins—that's their children.

Q: There's an article in one of these clippings about the Hayward McMurray's having twins.

A: That's it, there's a picture of them someplace in one. The girl, she's married and lives at Santa Rosa,California. After they finished high school, these twins, they went down to Southern Methodist. They were good Methodists. And they saw Southern Methodist advertised and their folks didn't like for them to go down there but that's where they wanted to go. So they went down there. And Margaret at the end of the four years won a scholarship to Columbia University and she went to Columbia. Well then Hayward gave her a trip one summer. She went to Hawaii. And on her way home she was able to converse with some of those—some people—I guess it was some of the Hawaiians but anyway she went to New York and studied to teach the deaf to talk. And she was very successful. And when she finished at Columbia then she went and got a job in Seattle, Washington. And she taught there at the University of Washington for a while. But she said there wasn't any—well I guess she wasn't getting as much of a salary as she'd like. And she got a chance to go to teach in the government schools in Germany. And there she met her husband. And he was teaching in those schools and he first had taught in Japan and was over there. And they

met and then they came home and they got married.

Q: What were they teaching?

A: He was teaching the grade school. He still teaches in the grade school in Santa Rosa. So they were married and he said he wanted Margaret to have the experience of being in Japan and teaching in Japan. So they went back.

Q: What did she teach in Germany and Japan?

A: She was still teaching speech therapy. And then they were up north and when I went on my oriental trip I wrote to her and told her I would be in Tokyo at a certain hotel on a certain day and when I landed in Tokyo there was a letter telling me they'd be there to meet me. And they came to meet me and they were going to take me out to dinner. Well, it was kind of late and that's when I took them upstairs to the top floor and we had Kansas City steaks.

Q: What about the younger child?

A: The other one was the older one. Well she lives in Indiana and she travels all over the United States for the Methodist Church. She got an honorary degree from De Paul the other day.

Q: Oh she did? For what reason?

A: I don't know. I never did find out. I forgot to ask.

Q: What kind of work did Hayward do?

A: He was a farmer. He had a farm right south of the other place.

Q: Does his wife still live there?

A: She lives there.

Q: How many acres did he farm?

A: He farmed about 600 or 560 I think it was.

Q: It was a big farm then. I noticed a clipping here about Hayward and he was giving a reading I believe called, "Citizen Soldiery." And then in here, this one, they talk about his singing.

A: He sang beautifully. He'd memorize. He was a musician. He could read music. I couldn't. You know, you can learn to see a note and sound it. I never could do that but he could. He got all of Dad's talents, I didn't get any.

Q: When did you become interested in 4-H?

A: When David was ten years old and then one of my neighbors over here was interested in getting young folks into it. When he was ten years old he started and got a calf and fed it and took it to the fair. Of course it wasn't very good and we didn't know too much. But he had a good time. He learned a lot.

Q: And I suppose you learned right along with him.

A: I learned right along with him. In fact I learned a little ahead of him and I was able to lead him. That's why we were able to—he did the work but there was a mature mind and—I don't know, I made friends easily and the judges would help me, give me ideas. Like I used to visit with Bill Rinaker, the big judge from—he was head buyer at Swift's. I'd sit with him and we'd go to hog shows. He used to judge the finals. They'd send another judge in to judge the classes and then when they'd get the champions in three classes, then he'd go in and pick out the big champion. And I sat up at the fair once with him and he pointed out certain points. He taught me a lot.

Q: This was in . . .

A: The State Fair.

Q: With calves you're talking about?

A: This was with hogs. I never did do as much with calves. Calves were too much money. We didn't go to far with calves. It was too big an investment.

Q: Dave would just raise the one calf?

A: No. We had several. But to buy the calf and to feed him and take care of him and groom him, there was too much money involved. We just couldn't do it.

Q: Yes.

A: But we could do it—there was a quick turnover with hogs, much quicker than cattle. But we probably just did a little bit better with hogs too. We just weren't able to go out and buy these top calves. And then they don't always turn out. But you can always get your money out of a hog if you take care of him and don't lose him.

Q: What were your other activities in 4-H?

A: Well see mine was just with the boy's. And his was just with hogs and cow. He kept his records. He did a good job with his records.

Q: How did they start with 4-H at that time?

A: Oh we bought a steer. They usually had two. No, I don't think I had two. I think it was just one. We had two hogs. We'd buy a calf in the fall and start to feed it and care for it and show it next summer in the fairs. It's, you know, in August, September.

Q: And you did the same things with the hogs?

A: Yes. But the hogs you'd do a little different because you'd buy a gilt, that's a young sow. And you'd breed her and you'd usually buy her bred to start with. And I got him two so they'd be company for one another. They suggested that. And you'd just take the old sow who would have her pigs in the spring and you'd keep your records of your feed and your costs. And then you'd show the pigs in the fall and whoever can show the best looking barrow or gilt—it's quite a game.

Q: You must have to get some information on grooming and . . .

A: Oh I studied a lot and . . .

Q: Where did you get your information?

A: Oh, I'd pick up books and pamphlets and I picked up the Prairie Farmer and various things and then visit with people. And I was out to learn. And after sales I'd get judges to show me the good points and the poor points and I don't know where I picked it all up.

Q: It's a matter of trial and error.

A: Yes. There's a lot of it.

Q: Did David raise anything else in 4-H, other than the hogs and calf?

A: No. He was in school. Well we had a Belgian mare for a while but that was a money losing proposition. But he wanted the horse and I got it and I had a cousin who never had any children but was interested in people and I said, "I suppose it was a poor investment." And he said, "No it wasn't. He wanted it." And he got it and he took care of it and Sunday afternoons when the kids would be running around he'd go out with that horse and he'd play with it and he'd run it and jump on its back and slide down its tail and that horse would play with him until he got tired and then he'd just kick up his hind end and say, "That's enough now." Sunday afternoons when other kids were tearing around, why, there he was there.

Q: He was there. What did that horse cost?

A: Three hundred and fifty dollars at that time I think. That was a lot of money.

Q: That was a lot of money, a lot of money.

A: Yes.

Q: I have a picture of you here slopping the hogs I guess.

A: Yes ma'am.

Q: And my heavens, you had a lot of them.

A: Yes.

Q: This must have been when you were raising them for income.

A: Yes.

Q: It says, "When David won both the state and national 4-H Club award.

A: Yes.

Q: He must have been pretty proud of himself.

A: Well I was.

Q: And you were too. What kind of a hog was it?

A: It was just a regular Berkshire.

Q: Berkshire.

A: Yes. They said, "Mrs. Burch, what's your secret?" "Heredity and environment. Buy heredity and furnish the environment." That means good beds, good feed, good care.

Q: Yes.

A: I never allowed anybody to ever abuse a hog or kick a sow or anything. Nothing like that. I made friends with them. I used to feed an old boar through the fence off my hand.

Q: You did?

A: He'd suck the feed off my hand.

Q: I've always heard they were so mean.

A: Some of them are. Some of them are mean because they're made to be mean too.

Q: I see. Over the years how do you feel all of this helped David, the 4-H experience?

A: He learned to win and he learned to lose. And he'd win a lot at the fairs. Most kids would be wearing their ribbons all hanging out but he'd put his in his pockets and let the threads on the ends hang out. He didn't make a big show out of it. Still he let the judge know he had some good . . .

Q: Good animals?

A: Yes.

Q: As far as David's school experiences and home experiences how were they different from yours do you feel? Or can you reflect on that at all?

A: Well it was very different from—I'd go with him to ball games and everything. But the other boys had their fathers and he didn't. I did the best I could. I saw that he went and when it got to be time for him to go out on his own I used to tell him—now I let him drive—finally I let him drive to school but I told the principal, I said, "I want you to watch him to see that he doesn't get out and drive around at noon and do things he shouldn't do. So if he did, why, Mr. Stutzman told me. And he'd get after him too.

Q: Your father must have been a big help.

A: My father was. When the baby was small he'd take him and sit down and sing to him and put him on his knee and ride him like a father would—excuse me, sing to him and tell stories. Of course he was very strict with table manners. We had to handle our knife and fork just right. Every once in a while he comes up with something about grandmother or his grandfather. He called him Pop. But they were good friends. That helped him. That helped me a lot too.

Q: You've always been, from all of these clippings, very active in the women's club.

A: Yes.

Q: When did this interest begin and why?

A: I was kind of raised with it. Well first I had no interest in it. When I was in high school or college and then I had my five years while I was married. And I did belong to a literary club over there. Then I came back and, well, when you've had the experience and the privileges that I've had you kind of feel that you need to pitch in and help. So I did do a lot of work. I've taken up and gone in and volunteered when they couldn't get anyone else to do things. I pulled the women's club out from going through twice.

Q: What do you mean, from going through twice?

A: Well everybody had lost interest and nobody would do this and nobody would be president. And I'd go ahead and start. And I'd say, "Well, come on now, girls, if you want to do it, I'll work with you." So we'd get it going again. But the older ones are nearly all dead. There's none of us left. So this past year they dropped it. Of course the Lions Club would come into Divernon and do a lot of charity work. And they're doing the work that the Woman's Club used to do. The Woman's Club is an old organization. It was organized here in Divernon, I think, about 1809.

Q: That's a long time.

A: These women here were the organizers of it.

Q: In 1890 you mean.

A: No, 1909.

Q: 1909.

A: What's the date of that? That was fifty years.

Q: This just says October third.

A: I cut the dates off of some of those, didn't I?

Q: Right.

A: Yes, I made a mistake.

Q: From the clippings you were certainly involved in a variety of activities.

A: Yes.

Q: One of the articles talks about going to Bressmers and learning about home decorating which probably was interesting but this was in the Depression. And I would think not many people would be able to afford . . .

A: We learned how to do things without spending any money. I still like to do that, pick up old things and make something out of them.

Q: You went there and got your ideas and . . .

A: I used to be able to get things. Well, I bought all my goods from Bressmers when I graduated from the eighth grade and my clothes were made by this Miss Crawford. Then I went to high school and I graduated from high school. And my clothes, most of them were bought from Bressmers and even when I got married some of my clothes were bought from Bressmers. And when I came back I had this one clerk who had waited on me all these years. He was up in the ready-to-wear department and when it was the Depression and people didn't have clothes I'd go to him and I'd say, "Have you got anything left that's shopworn that you're going to have to throw out?" And he'd give me things or sell me things, very reasonably. And that's where I did some things.

Q: And what would you do with those things?

A: Oh, I'd take them along and give them to people that needed them. I passed everything I didn't need around. I need to do that now but nobody wants them.

Q: Another article about the Woman's Club describes tacking comforters and hemming dish towels for flood victims.

A: Yes. In fact, there are two articles about the flood victims. We had them around home and we hunted up old feed sacks, a lot of feed sacks and old clothes and we made crazy quilts out of them. And the women came out and tacked them and we sent them down—it was flooded out down in Harrisburg and around there where the Illinois River used to go

over its banks. We did a lot of that. We sent a lot of things.

Q: Was this one particularly bad flood that year, 1938 or 1936, or something like that?

A: Yes. I think sometime in there.

Q: What's a crazy quilt?

A: I wish I could find you a piece that I've got. Well we'd use feed sacks again, cotton feed sacks and you laid pieces of material of different kinds on it. Wait till next time and I'll tell you, I'll show you.

Q: Go ahead and describe it, you'll do fine.

A: Well it's just odd-shaped pieces of material and you'd start with a piece of square muslin and you'd lay down a piece and then you'd just take scraps and pieces and sew them along and tip them over and keep all the muslin covered up and then you'd embroider over it.

Q: Then you'd hand stitch those odd shaped pieces of the material directly on the muslin.

A: You'd take the first piece that's face up and you'd take the other one that's face down and you'd sew it here and then you'd turn it over and then you'd just keep doing that.

Q: Keep doing that all over the whole thing. And then you'd fill it and then you'd put a backing on it.

A: Yes. Put the inner padding in it and then put the lining on.

Q: Yes. Another project you had in the Woman's Club was assisting high school girls with social graces.

A: Yes.

Q: What social graces did you . . .

A: What do you suppose? Teach them manners and play cards and how to eat at a card table and things that every girl should know but in these little towns and miners, why, they don't know anything about social graces or how to behave. And we tried to teach them.

Q: What did you do? Have classes?

A: Well we had classes. No, we had a party and showed them how to use their silver and their glasses and served them nice little refreshments. They went to a party.

Q: That's nice.

A: How we got the idea, we invited the youngsters over from the high school to put on a program for us. And then we wanted to serve refreshments. Why, they didn't know anything about how to be served or how to handle their silver. So we decided we'd give them some parties. They had a good time. That was something, they got away from home and did something different.

Q: Did you do this one whole year or . . .

A: We had several parties. I don't remember. We did it one year.

Q: What did you do for woman's club? Each year pick a different project?

A: Yes.

Q: Like the flood, that was an emergency.

A: That was an emergency.

Q: So you just . . .

A: We pitched in. They were asking people for help so everybody worked.

Q: Did women's clubs all over the state help with this Harrisburg flood or . . .

A: I don't know. Just Divernon. Oh, I'm sure it was done a lot every place.

Q: Another article about the woman's club when you were president talks—which was a long article—talks about the Halloween parade and "Have a safe and sane Halloween." So you must have had some sort of problems maybe with Halloween.

A: Well that's what your problem is right now with your son, that's a Halloween trick.

Q: What kind of . . .

A: Well, they'd come around in the country, you know, they'd mark your houses and soaped up the windows and marked your cars or steal gates or put things on tops of houses, everything. They don't do that anymore. But if the kids would promise that they wouldn't do that, we'd give them a party. So we'd give them a nice party. We'd get them all to dress up and we'd have a whole parade downtown and start out in the evening and we'd give prizes. You'd be surprised at some of the outfits they'd fix.

Q: From the description it sounds, it sounded very exciting, it really did. And they talked about, "Mrs. Burch awarded the prizes wearing an old-fashioned costume consisting of a skirt of printed Irish linen and short black silk coat." Now where did the old fashioned costume come from?

A: Well, they came from Ireland. They belonged to an aunt of mine. Well when my grandmother was left a widow, there was a niece of hers came over from Ireland to help her. And these were some of her clothes, was this jacket and this white linen skirt with a black figure in it. Maybe if I get that—somebody got up in that attic and they made a wreck out of it. David and Shirley, if I can corner them long enough to get up there and they'd go through it, maybe we'll find that. It's up there unless somebody stole it. I don't think they did.

Q: Another project you had—apparently you were working with juvenile delinquency because you had Harlington Wood speak at a meeting on juvenile delinquency.

A: Luncheon. It was always nice, you know, to get some nice person to come and speak at a luncheon. And Harlington Wood came. He was a judge himself.

Q: That also must have been a problem at that time.

A: It was. Juvenile delinquency. We were trying to keep the kids—that was before the days of drugs though. We never worked with any of that. We just didn't want kids to get into stealing and things like that.

Q: And then there is another clipping that shows all of these young people making birdhouses.

A: Birdhouses, yes.

Q: That must have been quite a project.

A: That was. We had the whole Presbyterian annex full of kids and their houses. You'd be surprised. I delivered the chickens and eggs to the Food Center and Mr. Grady, the colored man who was back there he'd save me cheese boxes and orange crates at that time, all kinds of boxes. We'd just fill my old car full.

Q: Anything that you might be able to use for your eggs. You also mentioned Mr. Grady the other day and mentioned Jerome Singleton.

A: Yes. Both black.

Q: Both black and you, in that same conversation, talked about a party or mentioned a party you and Hayward gave for the black people.

A: We went up to the church. They asked to . . .

Q: What church was this now?

A: Oh, some little black church on the east side of town.

Q: Springfield?

A: Yes. And Hayward recited from Henry Van Dyke's "Mansion." You know, that book?

Q: No.

A: I can't tell you much about that. I've forgotten. I'll tell you this stuff I haven't remembered in over fifty years.

Q: What kind of a party?

A: They had a nice Christmas party and they had made a lot of dresses, the black people, for their own missionary work. Well I don't know how it ever came that Mr. Grady had heard that Hayward recited. So Hayward and I went up and they treated us just like royalty. And Hayward recited Henry Van Dyke's "Mansion."

Q: Yes.

A: And it's a good story.

Q: Yes.

A: And they were very grateful for that.

Q: That's good.

A: We came home feeling real good, I'll tell you. Then when my father had his—I gave him a big birthday for his eighty-fifth birthday, or eighty-third, and it was written up in the papers. And that's the day that Jerome Singleton and Melvin Grey came down and they came down and sat down at the piano and Melvin played and Mr. Singleton sang. Jerome Singleton was educated by the man who owned the Camera Shop.

Q: Really?

A: Yes.

Q: How did that come about? Do you have any idea?

A: Well he worked with him. He worked at the Camera Shop and I don't know how much education, but he educated him.

Q: But you don't know how far he went?

A: I don't know how far he went, mostly music, I think, singing. He sang.

Q: The other clipping I have here on the woman's club is the fiftieth anniversary with your picture in the mirror.

A: That was a tea. (laughs) That was a surprise.

Q: And you had kind of a strange cake.

A: Yes. You couldn't eat it.

Q: How did that come about?

A: Well, we wanted to put the candles on something and so Mrs. Johnson said she'd like to have something that would hold fifty candles so I asked my brother—no, David did that. And David said, "I'll bore the holes if you'll mark it." So he got this board and he marked it and he fixed the board and I marked it for him. He bored holes to put the candles, fifty holes. Then he put lighter fluid on each candle so they lit real easy. And we had the whole thing lit.

Q: That must have been an exciting party.

A: It was different.

Q: After doing so much work in it over the years, in the organization, you also said you were involved with Eastern Star. Now what . . .

A: I'm a past matron of Eastern Star. I went through all the chairs and I've been past matron. Well of course they gave me an honorary party when I was fifty years old in the Eastern Star. I had to move from Divernon to Auburn. The Divernon chapter finally, so many people moved away that they had to drop it. It didn't have enough to get, for all the officers.

Q: I see. At another time you mentioned having luncheons in your home to raise money.

A: I did that for myself. I had no experience. That was after I had to give up the farm, when I didn't work on it anymore. And I had no experience and nobody would give me a job. I applied up at Sears and Roebuck for a job and I had boughten a lot of things there and I went up and applied for a job. And they asked me if I could run a cash register. And I said, "No, I didn't. But I could learn." But they turned me down. So I went to see the credit manager. I had quite a bill. I was getting it paid off.

Q: Credit manager at Sears?

A: At Sears. And I said, "You know, I like you people, but you wouldn't give me a job." He said, "Do you know why?" And I said, "Well, I'd sure like to know." He said, "Because you're over forty years old and our insurance is too high." They just can't hire people that old. So I had to hunt up a job for myself, make my own work.

Q: This is when you started . . .

A: And this is where I started.

Q: . . . a catering service.

A: Yes.

Q: How did you advertise it or start it?

A: I had friends. And then I had some cards fixed and I sent them out. The Council of Churches from Springfield used to come down and have their Christmas party with me.

Q: And they'd come right here and you'd fix it.

A: I'd cook a turkey and fix whatever—we'd fix the dining room. I had two rooms I could fix to dine in. I've had as high as thirty-four at one time. I'd always have somebody to help me. I wasn't a fast enough worker to do it by myself. But I did like to give parties and I enjoyed every party I gave.

Q: What kind of charges did you charge for . . .

A: I charged people but I didn't charge too much. I didn't charge too much. I made some money but . . .

Q: Well you should.

A: I didn't charge any big prices. I've forgotten what I used to charge. I think about two or two and a half for bridge when we'd have bridge. I don't know what I charged.

End of Side Two, Tape Three

Q: Marie, this is election year. And I'm hoping maybe you might have some memories of 1920 when the women got the vote. Do you have any feelings about that? Do you have any memories?

A: Yes. That was the year I was married. And I went to Ohio. And there a woman on the Election Committee that knew I hadn't been in Ohio very long and I hadn't registered. So I didn't get to vote.

Q: Were you sad or glad or . . .

A: Kind of provoked.

Q: You were glad to see the vote come to women I'm sure.

A: Oh yes.

Q: What changes in mail delivery have happened over the years in this rural area?

A: Not too much. Since I was a small child we started the mail carrier. Of course where I live now I'm the first one on the route so I get my mail early in the morning. But when I lived over at the east place I didn't get it until afternoon. But those mailmen went through mud, snow and would get stuck. And would go when we had—we didn't have the roads we have now. They really went through a lot of hard weather to get us our mail. It's a wonderful thing, though, to get mail. Before that the family rode horseback to Pawnee to get their mail.

Q: That's when you were a child?

A: No. I heard Mother tell about it.

Q: But otherwise then you've always had it . . .

A: We've always had a mail route.

Q: . . . once a day?

A: Once a day.

Q: How important was Rural Electrification to you and your family?

A: Oh, of great importance. We had a Delco light and the thing just wore out when REA came along. And the first thing I had was my electric chicken brooder. And the first time that they had trouble, well the men worked with the hot wires because they knew I had baby chicks brooding. And I said, "Don't do that again. They'll stay warm for a few hours without any"—exposing themselves to work against—well something went wrong in one of the transformers down at the corner. But they knew I had a baby chick brooder and had baby chicks. But it didn't hurt them. So they . . .

Q: It was very important to your livelihood.

A: Yes, it was. It was much easier than firing the old hard coal stoves that just wouldn't burn when the weather wasn't right.

Q: Yes.

A: It was a great help.

Q: I have an article here written by your brother, Hayward T. McMurray, about "When Fences were Emerald Green," and I assume these are the Osage Orange Fences. Can you tell me a little bit about them?

A: Well, Hayward's got it written pretty well there but they did take up a lot of space. They took about a half an acre on each side. They sapped the soil so that the corn or any crops wouldn't grow. But they were great to raise livestock along, especially hogs. And they'd get

down in underneath there in the weeds that grew up. And it was a nice cool place for them. When it would be hot days they'd be comfortable down under there. They had to watch the apples in the fall so that the cattle didn't try to chew them. If they did, they'd choke on them.

Q: Would both hogs and cows . . .

A: It didn't bother the hogs, just the cattle.

Q: I wonder why. The hogs didn't bother with them or what?

A: Yes, hogs couldn't swallow them. They just didn't like them.

Q: It was pretty tough, keeping them cut back in the summertime.

A: Very hard work. In the wintertime was when they laid the fences. They'd go along and Hayward describes in that article they'd lay them over. They were good fences. The hogs didn't bother them. They'd get all those sprouts that would come up through there. Then when they got up and got a good fence then they started trimming them so they didn't get so big. But that was hard work. Because it always had to be in the hottest of weather.

Q: At that time was everything fenced with hedge rows?

A: Most everything.

Q: What else did they use for fencing besides . . .

A: Well, I don't remember. The folks always had some wire fences. Now when they first started, I don't know. I can remember a few rail fences. They were out back of the barn. That was the last rail fence I remember. But they began to have wire fences. Of course they weren't of as good wire as they have now.

Q: Yes.

A: Real light wire.

Q: Your dad retired in the late 1920's. What did he do with his daily

life after being so happy on the farm?

A: Oh, he used to help me with the chickens. And he helped with the hogs and he always milked his cow twice a day. And he always went down and got the mail when it came. And he'd say to Mother, "Now you pick up the dishes. You pick up the food, I'll do the dishes." And he was busy. And he liked to read too. And he had his Victrola and his favorite records.

Q: Was that a wind-up Victrola that you had?

A: Yes.

Q: What kind of records did you have?

A: Oh he always played Handel's "Messiah." And a lot of the good old hymns. He had a lot of what we called Gold Seal records, the good ones. Classically, oh, he loved the music. He knew music too.

Q: That's interesting.

A: We were raised in a cultural environment. We didn't know anything else. Both sides of the family.

Q: Yes. Here in your collection of what we call collateral materials I have found several pictures of you taking care of eggs and chickens and with a, looks like a very nice lady.

A: She was a very nice lady.

Q: I'm going to show you these pictures and I'd like to have you describe what is happening in each one.

A: In this I'm gathering eggs. I'm gathering them out of trapnests where the old hens go in and then the trap goes down and then she lays her eggs and then you have to go along and take the egg out and mark which hen. The hens have bands on their legs and you mark on that egg which band it is. And they do that to this day in pedigree, in registered chickens.

Q: Oh they do?

A: That was just at the beginning of it and I was hunting for some good hens to produce eggs.

Q: Well how do you get them into the trapnest?

A: Well, they just crawl in. They're open and they go in and when they go in, they bump it. When they get in it goes down and shuts them in.

Q: I see.

A: And then you have to go . . .

Q: What draws them in though? Do they have . . .

A: Oh, they go to lay.

Q: I see. They know . . .

A: They have their nests, that's where they go to lay.

Q: They just do that instinctively.

A: Yes.

Q: This is one where you—it looks like you're sorting the eggs.

A: Yes, I'm candling eggs there.

Q: You're what?

A: I'm sorting and candling them. Candling them—every egg has to be . . .

Q: What do you mean, candling?

A: Well you hold them against the light to see if there's cracks in the shell or if they're a good egg or once in a while they have one of those blood spots. It doesn't hurt the egg, except people don't like it.

Q: I see.

A: It's partially good for food, but that was part of the work to see that none of those eggs went into the cartons. Then you have the other one with the cartons.

Q: I still—I get in the grocery store occasionally with a blood spot in it.

A: Occasionally, yes. But it doesn't hurt them any.

Q: I know it doesn't.

A: It's just an eruption in the egg canal of a chicken.

Q: I see. Now this one, I don't know what . . .

A: There I'm candling. You see, there's a light inside of that and there's two holes and you stick the egg up to that. Now there's a shade over it so the light doesn't hit you from the candler. But you can see the egg.

Q: In that picture it looks like a little lantern.

A: Well, you could call it that. It's a metal box and there's a hole in the top and there's a light underneath that, an electric light and there's two holes. And you do two eggs at a time.

Q: I see.

A: People that work with it good can handle two or three eggs in each hand. I never could. I'd drop them sure.

Q: Now here you are, it looks like, breaking all of your eggs.

A: Yes. That was where I broke them and took them to one of the bakeries in town. And they used the eggs to make donuts in their baking. That was through the war when labor was at such a premium. And they said they couldn't get them. And they said they didn't know what they would've done if it hadn't been for me. I broke them and put them into a cream can and as soon as the last one was broken, with the five gallons, away to town I went because I had no refrigeration on the way in. But it was just a matter of fifteen or twenty minutes. The basement was cool. And I had a nice clean place and every one was broken into a saucer to be sure I didn't get any bad ones or any shells.

Q: When you broke them like that, how did they price them?

A: They paid them by the pound.

Q: Paid by the pound?

A: Yes.

Q: What other stores did you sell to in town?

A: Well, H. U. Plain, I sold him eggs for years to him.

Q: Yes.

A: He was my good standby.

Q: You mentioned also one time selling to Walgreens.

A: Yes, I took quite a few to Walgreens. See, they used to, the one on Fifth and Monroe, that's the one I took them to.

Q: Who's the lady helping you?

A: That's Mrs. Goddard, Mrs. Lois Goddard. She's dead now. But she was a good friend and she stood by me. She'd had a paralytic stroke when she was young. But she was able to overcome it. She never could get rid of the fat or the heavy weight. And she tried so hard and she was such a good woman.

Q: Yes.

A: She stood by me, see, when I took care of my parents. She would work right along with me. She wasn't afraid to get dirty. She'd tackle anything. She was my buddy.

Q: Here's . . .

A: Here we're packing them in the egg cartons. Mr. Reeder, Norman Reeder, who used to be with Berkshire News designed my cartons for me. I put that away. I found one of my letterheads this morning. He drew, he designed that, and it was very pretty.

Q: I didn't realize.

A: Picture of . . .

Q: Where did you get your cartons?

A: I had them printed.

Q: In Springfield?

A: Yes, in Springfield.

Q: Didn't you have a problem during the war getting them?

A: No.

Q: No problem.

A: No.

Q: Here's another one of you going to town all dressed up taking them in.

A: Yes. That's about the time that the policeman stopped me.

Q: Why did he stop you?

A: Well he saw me delivering eggs, delivering something in lard cans to Walgreens. And I came in the alley on Fifth Street between Monroe and Capital, in there and walked into Walgreens and so he came. One day I was delivering dressed chickens that day and he came up to me and he said, "I've been watching you for about a month." He said, "Are you collecting arms, are you collecting stamps for that lard?" I said, "I don't have lard in those cans." "What have you got in there?" I said, "Chickens." He said, "What do you get for them?" I said, "Ceiling price." He never followed me anymore.

Q: What was the ceiling price at that time?

A: I don't know.

Q: You don't remember.

A: Just as much as I could get, I can tell you that.

Q: This is a strange contraption, the chicken heads coming out of the funnels.

A: Oh, that's where I'm dressing them.

Q: Why the funnels?

A: Well, they can't flop.

Q: Oh I see.

A: If you ever went out and tried to kill a chicken like a lot of people do, wring its head, why, you know it will flop and fly around. But this way they couldn't flop. And I could cut their throats there.

Q: I see.

A: I got pretty good at that.

Q: Oh dear. And here you are . . .

A: Where did you get all these pictures?

Q: You gave them to me.

A: I didn't know it.

Q: These are . . .

A: I was scalding there.

Q: You're scalding and then . . .

A: I still have that boiler down the basement and it's a copper boiler and I guess it's pretty valuable now and I said to my son the other day, "I'm going to get that boiler up and clean it up." It could tell a lot of stories.

Q: Well then you were obviously selling chickens too. You sold dressed chickens.

A: I sold dressed chickens.

Q: Now where did you sell the dressed chickens?

A: They went to Walgreens and the Food Center and Pete Plain used to use them. Then I sold a lot to Tom Thumb Market. I used to sell them a lot too. Do you remember the Tom Thumb Market?

Q: Oh sure.

A: I still hear from those people. They're up in Kalamazoo with a daughter.

Q: Where was the Tom? I've forgotten where it was.

A: Oh it was where MacArthur and South Grand . . .

Q: Oh where the little triangle was.

A: Yes.

Q: The barbershop was there.

A: When they built that new street in there, then they tore all that out.

Q: Yes.

A: Well that was all done before all the state, these rules of sanitation and that—while everything was done clean because I like things clean too—I couldn't do it now, but I was able to make a good premium and a good living, better than I could have if I'd have turned somebody over to raise my baby and if I'd have had to buy fancy clothes to go out and teach. I didn't have any of those expenses and I got a very good premium for all of this because it was a good product. That was before the days of all these laws now. I couldn't do it. They wouldn't let you do it now.

Q: In other words, no one could raise their own hens and chickens now and eggs and sell them independently.

A: No, no, not for the prices.

Q: They'd have to charge too much.

A: Yes. You couldn't compete with all of this big machinery and . . .

Q: There is a lot of handwork in what you did in these pictures.

A: Yes. You don't do that that way now though. I had a picker later on that had rubber fingers on it and you'd pull a chicken over that and it would strip them. It didn't tear them. If you'd scald them too much, if you've got your water too hot, then you're in trouble.

Q: You tore your skin.

A: Yes.

Q: Yes.

A: You had to watch out for that. Norma Reeder took all those pictures.

Q: At the end of the 1930's when you were very much involved in the Woman's Club and were raising chickens and doing all of these things, World War II was on the horizon. Was there any awareness in the Divernon community about the war or did they have any feelings about it coming? Do you have any memories of that?

A: Oh a lot of the boys went to the service.

Q: I mean before Pearl Harbor?

A: Not that I know of?

Q: You don't have that memory?

A: Of course I . . .

Q: People were not conscious of . . .

A: No.

Q: . . . a coming war?

A: No.

Q: Where were you when Pearl Harbor happened? And how did the community react?

A: Well of course I was in the country and I did my own things and my mother was in the hospital with a broken neck. She had fallen down the stairs and when it happened the first thing is I went to see her that day and I told her about it. That was my first—I don't remember whether—it was after Pearl Harbor, I guess, when David was drafted. And we started our farm work and I wanted him to do his part but at the

same time we were just beginning the farm work so I went and asked, "Could he be deferred until after the crops could get in?" And the Farm Bureau and the board that looked after that gave him a very high recommendation and they never did. I said, "I'm never going to say another word. He can go just as well as the other boys." But they never did call him. And he stayed right on the job. He worked hard. He came in town and took his truck. He helped with paper drives and did lots of community work and had he been asked again, we would never have said a word. But I used to feel—now maybe the boys will resent it when they come home. And several of the boys said, "No, he did more good right here on the farm than he ever would have did sitting around in the camps." So that made us feel pretty good. But of course he didn't get a lot of the advantages that the boys who went to service, like a bonus and things. He never got any of those things. We never asked. We just wanted to do our part. Of course I felt I gave my husband for the service so I wasn't too keen to give my son too. But I never asked. We never asked. We never said a word.

Q: Well they were needed on the farms.

A: And he did a good job. He didn't run around. He was always home and they never bothered him. I always felt pretty good when some of the boys came home and I said something to them one day about it and they said, "No, he did more good here than he ever would have in the camps."

Q: You were still selling eggs at this time. Were you also raising hogs?

A: I didn't start the hogs until after David was out of 4-H Club. He did so well with his hogs in 4-H that when he came out of it I liked it and I understood and I knew hogs and so I stayed with it. I raised chickens till the early 1960's. And then they got to be where the labor got to be too much for me. David got discouraged after the drought of 1954 and left me and I had to hire too much labor. So I gave up on the chickens.

Q: I was really thinking in terms of raising and selling hogs during the war.

A: We didn't do too much . . .

Q: You didn't do too much then?

A: The big hog project came in the 1960's, in the late 1960's and the early 1970's.

Q: What problems during the war did you have with transportation and rationing?

A: Oh we didn't have much because farmers were given . . .

Q: All the gas you could use.

A: Yes.

Q: What did you do with your meats and fats and oils and things like that? Did you have to have ration stamps for those?

A: Not for our own, we never did have. I don't think so. I don't remember.

Q: You didn't have to account for any of the . . .

A: No, we just produced our own.

Q: You just produced your own and . . .

A: And tended to our own business. I think if we'd have sold them we'd have had to collect the stamps. We didn't sell them. We just produced our own and that was it.

Q: Do you remember any of the community efforts toward the war in Divernon, what people did?

A: Oh yes. We went around and had our paper drives. And selected paper and . . .

Q: Did the Woman's Club . . .

A: Yes, we worked at it. We did . . .

Q: What?

A: I just can't remember now.

Q: Since people have their gas rationed during the war, I'm sure a lot of them in the Divernon community, were there any special ways of entertaining one another? Or did you . . .

A: Oh we played bridge and we had different things at school and in the Woman's Club. But we farmers were always pretty busy. Oh, I used to give parties. I belonged to two bridge clubs, one the younger ones and one the older ones.

Q: Did any of the women from Divernon go in to work in the factories in Springfield?

A: Oh yes. A lot of them did.

Q: They must have had to form car pools.

A: Yes they did. They formed car pools, most of them. And I don't know too much about them. I was too busy working with my chickens and eggs and taking care of my parents and raising my baby.

Q: Right. Do you remember where you were or anything about how you felt when they dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki?

A: I saw those. No, but I was glad it was over there instead of here.

Q: Yes. I think that's the way most people felt.

A: I think it was the thing to do. I don't care. They can criticize Truman or whatever they want to for that but it just kept them from coming and doing any more like they did Pearl Harbor.

Q: Yes. I think that is a pretty general feeling. Do you remember where you were on V-E day and V-J day in the wars, both of those times when the war ended, when the war ended in Europe and the war ended in Japan?

A: Oh I was on the farm and first listened to all of it on the radio. We didn't have television then.

Q: You don't have any other memory of it other than that?

A: No.

Q: After the war what was your situation on the farm? I assume David was here helping you?

A: Oh yes. He worked with my brother and he worked on his own. He had what we called a hired man that lived over in the tenant house and he helped us.

Q: That was on the east . . .

A: Yes. We had a nice man that was real good with—he helped me a lot with David.

Q: Well you were still living at the east house.

A: Oh yes.

Q: So where was the tenant house then?

A: Well it was a little house built on the farm.

Q: And then it was shortly after that that both your parents died.

A: Well in 1948 they both died. They died within ten weeks of each other.

Q: And that left you really alone. What was your situation after that?

A: Well I was too busy. Of course it didn't bother me—oh yes it did some at first. But I just made the best of it and went on.

Q: Right. And David was here to help you and . . .

A: Well he was married then. He was married before my parents died. Sure we worked back and forth. He was in every day. My age is telling

on me today. But if I'd go to town to deliver chickens and eggs he'd always go in and turn the light on so I didn't have to come home to an empty house that was dark. I appreciated that.

Q: Well David was still helping you on the farm but . . .

A: Oh yes.

Q: What was he doing in . . .

A: Well he and his wife lived over here.

Q: Over here in this house.

A: Yes. Yes, but one of them always saw that I didn't come home to a dark house.

Q: Well if he was living over here, then Uncle David was not living at that time?

A: No. Uncle Dave died in 1940.

Q: In 1940, I see. And this house was left to you at that time in Uncle David's will?

A: Yes. We had tenants in it for a while. Then for a little while it was vacant which wasn't very good for it.

Q: In the 1950's you had a series of tragedies.

A: Yes, one right after another.

Q: And the first one that I've known about is the chickens burning up in 1954 during the drought. How did that begin and when and can you describe that?

A: In 1954 the chickens all died of the heat. They just died by the hundreds. I had them in the loft in the barn and in the two-story henhouse. And even with ventilation and fans they couldn't take that

113 degrees. And that of course threw them all out—those were laying hens—and it threw them all out of production. David couldn't take it, see, the stench.

Q: Yes.

A: And I said, "Well, you back the truck up and give me a pitchfork." So I'd go in for a little while and then I'd come out for air. We finally clear them out but it was a terrific loss.

Q: How many days did this . . .

A: Oh, just one day. It just took one afternoon at 113 degrees. David was baling hay and each load of hay that went into the—we were taking them to Springfield to Weidlockers. And each load of hay that went in was two hundred pounds lighter. It was drying that fast, that hard. The same number bales but each load was about two hundred pounds lighter.

Q: Was that over—each day . . .

A: No. Each load.

Q: Each load during the day.

A: Yes. About every two hours.

Q: My heavens.

A: Yes. In 112 degree heat. You ought to face it.

Q: But nothing had bothered the chickens up until that day that the heat reach 112?

A: Well not so much. It didn't kill. That day killed them. We were able to save the hogs. They came through it. We had good enough places—the big hogs were over here in this big barn and David had it soaked down so they had a good cool place. But we couldn't do anything for the chickens.

Q: How did he soak it down?

A: Well, just watered, wet the ground.

Q: With a hose?

A: Well, a hose, yes.

Q: How many chickens did you lose?

A: I have no idea. Several hundred.

Q: After you lost these what did it do to you? You couldn't afford to buy any more chickens.

A: Well you just had to do without it, do the best you can and double up your fists and don't let it lick you.

Q: When did you get some more chickens then?

A: Well when you'd brood another group. See, it takes about five months for baby chicks, from the time baby chicks hatch till it's ready to lay, see.

Q: Yes. And you'd brood another group. You got the eggs and . . .

A: Yes. Well we started them again in January so they'll begin to lay in the early spring. That's when the eggs are a pretty good price.

Q: Yes. But all the chickens burned up in that.

A: Not all of them. No, they didn't burn up. They died with the heat. I don't remember . . .

Q: What did it do to the equipment in the barn and the barn itself?

A: Oh it didn't hurt the equipment any. Then the fire that I had that burned everything was after that.

Q: Okay. When was that?

A: Well, probably a couple of years later.

Q: And that was in the chicken barn too?

A: No, that was over at this—this, where they all died, was in the second story of a big barn. And this was over in the chicken house where the fire burned and burned everything.

Q: How did the fire start?

A: Probably from a short in the electric wires.

Q: That's too bad. At this point in time then David decided to give up farming.

A: He gave up farming after the drought. That year, see, we didn't raise a thing except one row of corn that was down in the dear furrow. And the heat burned the tassles of the corn and it was windy and it was dry. And it just burned the tassles of the corn and it all turned white and of course ruined all of it. But this one row was down in a dead furrow and it had corn in it. It didn't get burned.

Q: Didn't this happen to a lot of farmers around here?

A: Oh, yes.

Q: Did any of them come up with any decent crops?

A: Very little. It just depended. Ours just happened to be in tassle.

Q: Yes.

A: Just at that stage of pollination. If people had earlier corn or later corn, late corn that didn't tassle till after this hot spell, they had corn. But ours just happened to be tassling at that time.

Q: Yes. What about the soybeans?

A: It didn't hurt the soybeans.

Q: Not at all?

A: No.

Q: Did you have much of a yield out of the soybeans with all that drought?

A: I don't remember. It was fair enough. Of course . . .

Q: Talking about crops we haven't mentioned erosion. When you were growing up what did you do in the fields? What did your father do in the fields for erosion, to prevent erosion?

A: Well, we didn't have to worry about erosion too much because our place is pretty level. This place we have to watch.

Q: Yes.

A: But of course at that time, which I think is still the best, you plant two years of corn, one year of soybeans and then wheat and then clover. And then that clover, you let it grow and you're supposed to plow it under and that puts a lot of humis into the soil. But on that farm we didn't have to worry with erosion. But we do have to watch it here. But we have grass waterways and try to keep it so that it doesn't wash it. Once in a while the wind gets back at it and once in a while some of these flash floods will do some damage too.

Q: You said, "That's the best way." How does that differ from what they . . .

A: Now they just have all cash crops, corn and soybeans, corn and soybeans. And it makes the ground so loose that when the wind gets ahold of it, it really blows. That's why I always—dust storms . . .

Q: Dust storms that we have now?

A: Yes.

Q: In the middle of the 1950's you left the family home and moved to a trailer.

A: Yes. After David left me then I had to have some tenants to take care of things. The buildings were over there for chickens and hogs. So I moved into a trailer and I had a tenant here. The tenant over there had a farmhand here. Then the farmhand left and I think I changed tenants over there. So I came out here. I was living in a trailer then on a corner of the farm and I came out here and the sun was shining across these rooms and it was so beautiful and I thought, "You're just a fool if you don't come out and enjoy this yourself." And while it was terribly run down and terribly neglected I moved out on the first of July and I've enjoyed every bit of it since, working a little bit at a time fixing it up until I have it very comfortable.

Q: And this is the house that Uncle David left to you.

A: Yes.

Q: And also he lived in at one time.

A: No, he never lived in this house.

Q: He never lived here?

A: No. He bought this from the Presbyterian Church. The Presbyterian Board of Foreign Missions that Mr. Brown, who owned this place, deeded it to the Foreign Missions.

Q: But what did the Foreign Missions do?

A:Well they don't know anything about their tenants out here and they said they weren't making any money on it. So they came out and sold it. And it was in the Depression and Uncle Dave was the only who could raise the money. And so he bought it at sixty dollars an acre.

Q: David lived in it and tenants lived in it.

A: Yes. But it was hard to heat. There was no heating in it except for

the fireplaces. And they had an oil stove but it was so cold and it was one of those very cold winters and it was just pretty near too much for him.

Q: When did you turn it into apartments?

A: Oh after I was out here two or three years. There was no use in having that whole upstairs and not using it. So I found it a very nice investment.

Q: And you have, what, three apartments here?

A: I have one upstairs and one over in the brick section. That was just used for—Mrs. Brown used it for a summer kitchen. But everybody since then has used it just for a storehouse and just a place to dump everything. So now it's a very comfortable apartment over there and a nice young couple in it.

Q: We sort of skirted around Uncle David's life like we did around Hayward's life. And I'm going to ask you the same thing about Uncle David. He was very close to you and did a lot for you. Give me a sketch of his life.

A: Well he was grandmother's fourth child and the first son. And when grandfather died in 1869 he was in the fourth grade in school. And he dropped out of school to help grandmother. That's all the school he had. But he worked right along with her and he was a good businessman. He was honest and everybody liked him. And I, of course, don't know anything about their early life, but I know he helped build all those fences, those hedge fences and he worked right with grandmother. And when I first began to remember him I was about five years old. He lived and his wife lived in a house across from where we lived. I just remember that when he moved from there he moved over to the place on the east side of town where he lived the rest of his life. He liked children but he was very unfortunate that the first child he had, when she was about eighteen months old she got spinal meningitis. And at that time they knew nothing for it and, oh, he took her all over the United States trying to find something for her. But he never could get anything done. And she grew physically but she didn't develop mentally. And when she was about thirteen, she died. Well then when she was about four or five years old they had another one but again they never went to doctors and Aunt Lou developed diabetis. And when the baby was born she and the baby both died. Then he was left. And his mother and sister then came to live with him, his mother and oldest sister came and lived with him. They lived with us for a while and then they came over and lived with him. And they stayed with him until Nelly died and Jane died and grandmother died. They all died within three years of one another.

And again he was left. So this cousin, Anna Crawford, came down from Peoria to live with him. But at that time a widower and an old maid just couldn't live by themselves. So I was the third party. And I was in high school then. Hayward would walk back and forth to school but I stayed in town and went to school. And they became very fond of both of us. He lost his children and his love had to go someplace. And my mother was very generous to let us come and be with him as much as we did because she just practically gave me up. But it was nice for me to be close to school. And he was just as careful. He wouldn't let anybody scold me but it was all right if he corrected me, but nobody else dares say a word.

Q: (laughter) Oh dear.

A: But that's when we used to go to Springfield. We'd go up on a train on Saturdays and have dinner at Quannley's and then go to Chatterton to whatever show was on in the matinee and come back on the evening train. And then if we didn't go up, he'd go up. And then sometimes he'd come down and bring us a bouquet of flowers. Ann and I were spoiled.

Q: Yes. And then after that where did his life take him?

A: Well, then when I graduated from high school—of course I must go to college. So Anna couldn't stay with him if they didn't have anybody with them. Well, he went back to one of his former girlfriends and he married her. And then he took us all on his wedding trip. That was an interesting thing. We went up on the train in the morning and went to this Central Baptist preacher's home and he married Uncle Dave and Henrietta Jones. And we got on a big fast train and came back through Divernon.

Q: Yes.

A: After we were gone and Uncle Dave and Auntie and him were married, then my dad told it around town. And they all came down to see the train go through. It was just a country custom. And that was my first trip on a pullman. We went to St. Louis and switched trains.

Q: What happened to him then? Did he go on? He came back here and farmed?

A: Oh yes. He had his farm and then I went on to college and of course Aunt Henrietta had a son the same age. But he went to college too. He went on up to Ann Arbor. I went over to Illinois.

Q: Oh he did?

A: Yes. He had a bad wreck and got discouraged and dropped out. He never graduated.

Q: And Uncle David farmed the rest of his life.

A: Yes. He helped a lot of people. He did a lot for a lot of people. Probably we don't know various things. I know one fellow he offered to help him start up in farming. And he said, no he was going to do it on his own. And he did. But Uncle Dave liked to help people. He gave me an automobile for a wedding gift.

Q: That was a pretty nice wedding gift. And giving you this house.

A: Yes.

Q: That was certainly . . .

A: Well he gave my brother more land than he gave me but . . .

Q: Oh, both of you.

A: Yes. Hayward did a lot for him.

Q: I know this house has meant a lot to you.

A: Yes, I'm pretty proud of it. Wait till I get it painted in the spring. It's been painted once but paint doesn't stay.

Q: Well this was in 1960 I believe you moved into this farmhouse. And you were taking on a new farm and really handling two farms at that time, weren't you?

A: Yes.

Q: And was it at this time that you decided to . . .

A: Well with all of these losses and the pigs all died.

Q: Well how did the pigs die?

A: Well, cholera. I've been trying to figure the date but I haven't been able to figure it out. One morning we had—it was in the fall—we had beautiful pigs. I had six sows at one time in a clover field, part of them under a big hedge that had twelve pigs apiece. We had 225 pigs in the group. I don't remember how many sows. And one day the man came in and he said, "Marie, there's something wrong with those pigs. They're sick." Six or seven weeks old. And I said, "Well, we'll call the veterinarian. And," I said, "bring them all in." So he brought them all in and we called the veterinarian and while we were waiting for the veterinarian I walked that field. And out in the field I found the carcass of about a 150-pound pig. Now how that carcass got there I don't know, whether it was carried by birds or whether it was carried by humans.

Q: It wasn't your hog.

A: It wasn't ours. But it carried cholera to the little pigs and every one of them died. Well, I came pretty near to losing all my faith in farming but I doubled up my fists and I said, "You don't dare give up." So I stayed with it.

Q: Yes. What kind of a loss was that in dollars, Marie?

A: I don't know any more.

Q: You can't give a ballpark figure?

A: No.

Q: It must have been tremendous.

A: It was. After that then two years later the veterinarian used bad serum.

Q: Oh my.

A: And I lost some of them and stunted the growth of a lot of them.

Q: What was the serum for?

A: Cholera.

Q: And that was a preventative.

A: That was what they'd died of, was cholera. At that time they vaccinated them when they were about six weeks old. But they were just ready to be vaccinated when this happened. David and I had been wetting it. We'd shown hogs at the fat stock show. And we won. And I never knew whether it was done on purpose or whether it was done accidentally. But when I went back to the fats stock show at Christmastime the men said, "Oh, you should have called in the state." Well I never thought about that.

End of Side One, Tape Four

Q: We were talking about finding the pig in the field that carried the cholera to your pigs. And you said that you found out that the state could have done something to help you. What would that have been?

A: Well they'd have done something to help me find the cause of it.

Q: I see.

A: I don't think they would have done anything to help me with the expense of it but the loss of . . .

Q: But to find the person who did this to you.

A: Yes find the person. I don't think there would be any—oh, maybe there would be.

Q: Wasn't this the time that you turned the farm over to the . . .

A: Well I had so many losses and I was so deeply in debt that I had to do something. And I was turned down by a couple of companies. But Mr. Burdett Manning in Springfield suggested Connecticut General and made

out an application for me. And Connecticut General accepted me.

Q: For a loan your talking about.

A: For a loan. And they were noted for, to go out and help people. When you were problems with others, they'd take chances when others didn't. And it worked out very nicely for me. He suggested that I get a farm manager which I did. And I got Mr. George Engels from the First National Bank. He was finishing 4-H Club at the same time that David started in 4-H Club. So he was a very great help. And everything seemed to turn around. Whether George did it or what, I don't know, but it was a very great help. And after we got started then I had all of the buildings and the lots from two farms growing up in weeds and I had the knowledge of hogs so I said to him, "I want to start raising some pigs."

Q: You didn't have anybody working the farm then at this time?

A: Oh I had a tenant.

Q: Yes. Well, you said everything was growing up in weeds.

A: Well the lots. They didn't have anything in the lots you see. But since then we've torn out a lot of things. But anyway he kind of discouraged me but then he gave in and he helped me and I got a bred sow and some baby pigs and then I had a few gilds and then he hunted me up a boar and started me and then I got to doing real well and I got this elderly, this retired farmer that was living here in town that had worked for my brother and I knew him. He was the husband of this same woman that had helped me with the eggs. So he helped me with the pigs and on my first big trip Bob took over and that was the only year that I went in the red.

Q: Bob?

A: Bob was the hired man, Bob Goddard was his name. And that year feed was high and hogs were cheap and I had the labor bill. So I went in a little red that year. But the next year then and then two years later when the tables turned and the feed was cheap and the hogs were high and George kept the books and bought the feed and paid the labor and I made over a seven thousand dollar profit.

Q: And this was about what year?

A: In 1970.

Q: In 1970.

A: In 1972 was that year. And in 1970 was the year I went to the Orient and I was gone four weeks. That was a big trip. In 1972 I went to the South Pacific in the spring and I went to Floriade—I went with the AARP to Europe in the fall and we went to the Floriade. That's a big flower show in Amsterdam. Then I went in 1975, I went on the Caribbean cruise in the spring with the AARP. And that summer I went to Alaska. And then I didn't go on any more trips until I went to the fall festival. I went with the Farm Bureau that year. We went clear up to Nova Scotia and back. But I traveled on my hog money. My hog money paid my bills.

Q: That was the seven thousand dollars.

A: Yes. Well I made money ever year. And of course George was managing the farm and he had the money already for the payments and interest to go to Connecticut General. And George was with me until he got sick and had to leave the bank. And then I had Tom Dozier for several years. And then they kept changing them around so I did it on my own. And when those twenty years were up I kept all my payments and my interest up at Connecticut General and with the help of the State Bank of Auburn we paid off Connecticut General and did it with hogs. After Mr. Goddard got so that he couldn't help me, why then I took two high school boys, two because kids that age like company. And also they had to lift 100-pound sacks and that was too heavy for them. And so Mr. Engels complimented me once on how much good I was doing the boys. But I took the two boys and we bred pigs and we delivered little pigs and we worked with it just as—and George said I was doing a lot of good for the boys. And I think I did. I had some very nice boys.

Q: And just you and these boys . . .

A: Yes.

Q: And you had a tenant working your crops. And at this point in time you were in your seventies.

A: Yes.

Q: That's amazing. Are you still raising hogs?

A: No.

Q: When did you give them up?

A: Oh, three or four years ago it got to the place where I had to hire too much help. It got so it wasn't safe for a woman my age to go in with those big animals. But I made pets out of all of them. I never had any problem. I only had one mean sow. And I just watched for that gal with my little club. When she made a stab at me I hit her right on the end of the nose. That finished that. I never had any problems. They got to be real pets.

Q: And you've always been able to maintain tenants in your apartment.

A: Most of the time.

Q: Most of the time. When you went to the Orient was this an agricultural trip of some sort?

A: Yes. It was Farmer-to-Farmers. And in each country we visited the agricultural stations and a lot of them were financed by American money. I liked those trips because it was the farmer's viewpoint. You went with the AARP. It was more teachers.

Q: Yes.

A: And theirs was libraries and palaces and castles. But the agricultural—we looked at the farms and the crops.

Q: What were the farms like in Japan?

A: Well, they're small. They're little, little places. You know, a lot of it's—they're raising the rice and things under water. We were there in the spring, still snow and ice up in the Nypon. I was there to see some of the cherry blossoms. I saw a little corn in Thailand.

Q: You did?

A: Two fields of corn.

Q: Was it anything, raised anything like yours? Or didn't . . .

A: It didn't look like our corn but it was corn.

Q: Short and small ears?

A: Yes. Well it wasn't up to ear stage yet.

Q: Was it eating corn or feed corn?

A: It was feed corn. I saw strawberries. See, they grow some strawberries with seeds. And also they're raising edible soybeans there.

Q: Really?

A: Yes. We went in the greenhouses and we saw the strawberries raised on the sides of the mountains. But they were in greenhouses and strawberries were coming out of the rocks. Someplace I've got pictures. They were the most beautiful, delicious, great big strawberries. So for breakfast as long as we could get them we had strawberries for breakfast. You know, about six or seven berries in a dish.

Q: Yes, I saw the picture of you bending over the strawberries.

A: Picking strawberries.

Q: Yes. You said edible soybeans. What's the difference?

A: Well, they're a little different.

Q: How are they different?

A: Well they've just got, more like our green beans. But their soybeans, they have beautiful blossoms, orchid-colored blossoms. They don't grow as tall as our beans. They're a little bit larger. But you can eat these soybeans if you cook them.

Q: Are they harvested in the same way? Or is it . . .

A: Oh they're harvested by hand over there. They don't have these big machines.

Q: I see.

A: We did see a few bulldozers, Caterpillar bulldozers, working on the mountains in Taiwan where you saw that picture.

Q: I noticed in your pictures of Australia that you went to some various livestock farms.

A: They're big farms.

Q: They raise sheep and cattle. Did they raise cattle the way you did?

A: Well they use mostly grass. The problem they have to watch out for is water.

Q: Yes.

A: In parts of Australia we were in they had a great—if they could just get water they were all right.

Q: You went on the Jolly Swagman Tour and you went to the Out Back and you went to an area that they had turned into a green area . . .

A: Yes.

Q: . . . that had been a desert.

A: Yes, but they did that with irrigation.

Q: Irrigation. Were there any other agricultural experiences in Austrailia that you . . .

A: Well we visited this one farm. He had a big metal building like this one out here, only bigger. And inside of that then he had grain bins.

He had wheat. And International had an assembly plant over there and Ford had an assembly plant over there. And we saw it in Australia. These were big ranches, big farms. They had some of those same modern machinery that we did. But there again it's rain and water. If they can just find a place to have water, why then they're fine. I didn't get as far Out Back as a lot of people did. They have a trip now where they go clear back.

Q: Is that right?

A: Yes.

Q: Also when you were in Tokyo, or in Hiroshima I should say, you visited the war memorials.

A: Yes.

Q: Did you have any feelings looking back on that day?

A: Well, I'm glad I wasn't in it.

Q: Sure.

A: You see this one structure that's left that's right exactly underneath the bomb. And it went all over it. Of course it blew all of the windows out of it. It's still standing. That's of course left there as a memorial. It must have been something.

Q: There was also a picture of you dressed in a kimono.

A: (laughs)

Q: And some of the other people were all dressed up in kimonos. What was that all about?

A: Well there was one place we stayed and if we'd get dressed up in a kimono they'd take our picture.

Q: That was just a picture taking . . .

A: Well in Tokyo they have, they had lots of stores and things underground.

Q: Underground?

A: Underground. And someone said this place was sixty acres underground. So you could get lost down there just little booths. Well, a booth probably the size of this room, like little stores. And this great big place where you had to remember so you'd get back. You couldn't talk, you couldn't speak. I found some Japanese that could speak, but I went on my own this time. I got on this elevator and our hotel went down to the ground, just one story I think. And I started walking through there and I thought, well you'd better remember where you're going or you'll never get back. So I went, I walked this show, this different exhibits and went down the aisles and watched carefully so I'd get back. But there was this stream running down through, water running through there, very pretty. And everybody was throwing pennies or dimes or something to see if they'd get good luck.

Q: On all of these trips you took you must have had some reaction to the people you saw. You grew up in a very narrow area and had not traveled much throughout your life. And these trips were certainly something new for you after your 1930 trip to the British Isles. What did these travels mean to you?

A: Well, when I see articles in the paper now I read about different places in the world I can place and remember seeing and visiting various countries.

Q: Did it help you understand people more, do you think, than you had in the past maybe?

A: Well I had a more higher regard for the Japanese than I did before I went. And I enjoyed the Chinese. I wouldn't have been kind of slighting Taiwan and the government here, I felt kind of bad about it at first. Of course I was in Taiwan and they told all their side of the story and I wasn't over on the Republic of China. I only looked over the barbed wire fence from Tokyo. But I hated to see them slighting Taiwan the way they did. But I think they're working it out.

Q: I think they are too.

A: These clothes I got in here from Lane Bryant, they're all from Taiwan.

Q: Yes.

A: I had really an appreciation—one of the funny things when we got to Japan. They said, "Now be sure and take a match pack with you so that if you get lost and you can't talk Japanese and the Japanese can't talk English you show them those matchbooks and they'll tell you how to get back to your hotel.

Q: Oh, I see.

A: That's what we . . .

Q: In other words they'd point it out.

A: Well it had the address on these matchbooks and a policeman or somebody would take you back or tell you how to get back. I got lost once. We went to the fair in Kyoto and the crowd was so great. We went through the gates. We were going through several gates. And I missed the crowd and I realized I was lost so I stayed right put where I was. And she came back and she complimented me. She said that was the thing to do. My tour guide came back and got me.

Q: Yes.

A: It didn't frighten me because I just stayed put and she came back for me.

Q: What was the fair like?

A: Oh it was just like any big World's Fair.

Q: Yes.

A: I was so tired by the time I got there.

Q: I noticed the architecture in some of your postcards was very exotic.

A: Yes. All of them are like that.

Q: Yes, just magnificent architecture.

A: Beautiful.

Q: At one point in time you visited your grandson in service, Steven in service.

A: Yes. That was in San Diego.

Q: Why was the . . .

A: He dropped out of—he was going to Illinois State. And he got discouraged and so four of the Divernon boys enlisted in the marines together. And they went out to San Diego and at the end of the bootcamp, why—I don't know what was said. Of course he wasn't allowed to write too much. You weren't allowed to write only so . . .

Q: Was this during the Viet Nam War?

A: Yes. And I thought, "Well, he's worked hard. And that graduation is going to mean a lot to him." And of course my grandson had been murdered that time—my other grandson had been murdered at Christmas time. So I just decided I'd go out to see him graduate. I wasn't allowed to—he wasn't allowed to see me. I wasn't allowed to see him. And I went to the theater where they were going to have the exercise and I went early and I met another woman whose son was graduating. And when they marched in I thought I could pick him out—I <u>couldn't</u> pick him out. And my heart went down in my socks.

Q: Oh dear!

A: And I said to this woman next to me, "I can't see Steven." And about that time an officer came down the aisle. And this woman reached over, leaned over to him and she said, "This grandmother can't find her grandson." And he said, "What's his name?" And I told him and he says, "Steven Burch, stand up." And poor Steven Burch came up out of the crowd. And his grandmother, the tears ran down her cheeks the rest of the show. And Steven said, "I didn't know what in the world I had done."

Q: Yes. He had no idea you were out there?

A: He knew I was coming but he didn't know where I was. That was quite an emotional experience.

Q: Oh I'm sure. Did he go overseas, Marie?

A: No. He didn't have to go overseas.

Q: Good.

A: One of the boys did and got a Purple Heart. But Steven got switched from one place to another. They begged him to stay in and offered him a nice chunk of money if he'd stay. But he said that three years was all he wanted.

Q: Looking back on it what's your reaction to the . . .

A: It made a man out of him.

Q: But also to the Viet Nam War itself?

A: Well it's kind of a waste.

Q: I suppose like all wars.

A: Yes.

Q: How did the Divernon community feel about it?

A: Well, I don't know. I've never heard anybody say much.

Q: Say much about it one way or the other?

A: No.

Q: You mentioned your other grandson being murdered.

A: He had enlisted and was assigned to go in March. He dropped out of

school. He started to Rolla to study engineering and computers. But it was his first time away from home. And Steven was going into the service and Steven was home telling about his experiences and so David just could not be left behind. So he decided he'd enlist. So he enlisted. And because their ranks were all filled he had to wait about two months. So he came home and went to work at a gas station down here and he was working at night. He was only eighteen and he was handling lots of money. And he had had several contacts to peddle drugs. But he turned them down. And one of the boys being discharged from Viet Nam had bought himself a car on the West Coast and was driving home to Detroit. And he stopped at this gas station at about two in the morning to get gasoline. The lights were all lit. And when he went across the alarm and no one came out to get him, why, he went in and found my grandson dead on the floor. He'd been shot. Money around every place.

Q: They didn't take the money? Was it a they or was it one person?

A: The following summer they finally caught them. They worked awfully hard at it but they finally found them.

Q: You mentioned every once in a while to me that you have to go back to the parole board.

A: Yes, every so often they come, this fellow comes up for parole. And David and all of us and our attorney and goes back and ask for him to be left in. The father had been in an insane asylum or over in Jacksonville or someplace for an insane asylum. And he was out and the son—this boy's a veteran from the Viet Nam War. But they were just hunting for money to buy dope.

Q: Yes.

A: They're still in the pen. But every so often they come up, about once a year.

Q: And you feel that they would be released if you didn't make your move to keep them . . .

A: Well, we're certainly not going to let them out if we can help it.

Q: Right. What was their sentence?

A: Life.

Q: That was a very great tragedy in your family.

A: Yes it was. He was a good clean boy and smart.

Q: I'm going to ask you some general questions now about changes that have come about over the years. In agriculture: the government subsidizes agriculture, and makes rules for agriculture. How do you feel about government involvement in agriculture?

A: Well I don't know. I have tried to go along with it. But I look back, and we got along pretty good all by ourselves. But supply and demand is different than it used to be.

Q: How do you mean?

A: Well we produce so much more than we use in this country. And we do have to do something with it. And there's plenty of places in this world where they're still starving.

Q: Yes.

A: I really don't know. I'm not smart enough to say whether it's the thing to do or not. I try to go along with it and cooperate with it.

Q: Well it seems to bring markets.

A: We've got to get more markets. We need more markets now.

Q: Yes. How do you view the changes in your own community that have come over the years—in children's education and the freedom of children?

A: Well I think they could be more disciplined, all these chidren running around wild and—I don't have, personally I don't have much trouble with them. But I'm nice to them and I've worked with boys and I've only had one that's not gone on to do something worthwhile. And that boy finally got mixed up with drugs.

Q: Do you feel like the local schools have consistently improved?

A: I think our schools are pretty good. We have pretty good schools. Of course parents, when they're both working, it's a different story now than what it used to be. The mother used to be home. When I used to do all of these community things my mother was home when my son came home from school. And my parents helped me a lot. I could get out and do things, do community work, womens club work, Eastern Star, go to various things. But when David came home from school Mother was always here.

Q: That was my next question, women's role away from home, how you felt about that?

A: Well it's like my grandson right now, it just takes the two of them.

Q: Yes.

A: Of course they're buying their home and they're paying on it every month. But all this better living is so much higher than it used to be and it costs more to do it.

Q: Yes. You've always been very religious, very much involved in religion.

A: Sometimes I wonder.

Q: Yes, I think everybody does. How do you feel about religion in people's lives at this point, from looking back on your early life and thinking about religion in people's lives today?

A: We used to always have prayers every morning and Dad always had prayers at meals. We have prayer at Senior Citizens every day. But they don't have it like they used to. Well I just have one religion: Do unto others as you'd like to be done by. And I try to do it. Be good to people and now that I'm older and I find lots of them are trying to do real nice things for me. One of the younger women at Senior Citizens always sees that my tray's picked up. And today they gave us some surplus food. She was right there to carry it to my car for me.

Q: Yes.

A: And some of my deeds are coming home.

Q: That's nice. That makes you feel good, doesn't it?

A: Yes.

Q: Tell me about the Senior Citizen Center here. Is it pretty active?

A: We have a real nice group. Of course we had more today because they were giving us some cheese and butter.

Q: How many people usually go over there?

A: Oh about twenty-five. There's several that ought to be there that think it's charity. But it isn't charity. You all pay.

Q: You pay, and it's a way to get together, to socialize.

A: Oh yes. Lots of times before I had someone with me I'd think, oh I don't want to go. But I'd go and I'd always come home feeling better. You'd visit with your friends and eat together and, "Hello. How are you doing? And where do you go?" And it's real nice.

Q: Who runs it, Marie?

A: Mrs. Barbara Herlan, a woman here in town. She's eighty-four. She's the wanderer of the whole group. You'd never know she's eighty-four.

Q: Is she hired by . . .

A: She's not paid anything. It's volunteer work.

Q: Volunteer work.

A: The only one that's paid is the cook. The rest is all volunteer.

Q: Where is it located?

A: It's in the village here. It's in a building right on the northeast corner of the square. It's the front part of the township building.

It's real nice.

Q: Is it open seven days a week or just . . .

A: Five days a week.

Q: Five days a week. Getting back to some of the things that have come about since you were born, and probably one of the most influential has been television. And certainly you probably didn't dream of it as a young girl.

A: No.

Q: How do you feel about the influence of television?

A: Well I think cars have been the biggest influence, the automobile.

Q: Go ahead.

A: Of course we had the horse and buggy when I was a kid. But the automobile to me is it.

Q: Making our society more mobile.

A: Oh television's nice. Of course a lot of people like the shows and things. But I don't care as much for it as a lot of people do. I don't sit in front of it.

Q: Well, that's what I wondered, if . . .

A: It's probably all right for people who can't get out and can't do things. But to me the biggest change of all has been the automobile and then electricity. These are all sides of electricity, all of these, the radio. My, we thought it was something when we got a radio, that was something.

Q: You don't feel that the television has been harmful for the children for instance?

A: Well, yes, I suppose it has. But they're doing better on their pictures, shows. There are lots of shows for young people and there are some pretty good, some pretty nice ones in there, "Silver Spoons." Well, another one--what is it? "Family Ties," the young fellow on there? I'm enjoying, getting a big bang out of them bringing in a lot more youngsters on shows. But they can still keep a lot of it, some more of these bedroom stories off. But I think they're doing better.

Q: I'm going to ask you one more question and this is, of course, ending on sort of a sad note. But it's a very important note and I think you probably have thought about it. You have moved away in your lifetime from a very safe world to our nuclear world. How do you feel about its effect upon the society? Or do you have any thoughts about it?

A: I don't have any thoughts about it. I just take the world as it comes.

Q: In other words, the fact that we are in this nuclear situation . . .

A: Oh, I think it's beyond a little individual like me to control. I just accept it and go on.

Q: Accept it and go on.

A: There's no use trying to fret about things you can't do anything about. What could I do? I couldn't do anything.

Q: I think this is the way an awful lot of people feel.

A: Maybe that's not the right way, I don't know.

Q: No, it's a helpless feeling, just a helpless feeling.

A: Well, I guess that would be a good description of it, a helpless feeling.

Q: There are many days I feel like that.

A: With all my problems I just try to accept them and go on.

End of Side Two, Tape Four

Q: This is an addenda to Marie Burch's narration.

A: David was very active in the 4-H Club. We had our two steers. They were pretty expensive. We couldn't afford too much of that. But we had this one steer that we fed and that he fed and took care of and he sent him up to the international 4-H Club group and before I left Springfield I delivered chickens and eggs to the Leland and I said to the chef there, "If you'll buy my son's steer off of the Fat Stock Show I'll have a dinner party.

So he sent the bid in to the Fat Stock Show. And the Leland Hotel bought the Burch steer. So I made arrangements. And we had about twenty, a lot of the 4-H people from Divernon and my parents and some of my friends. And we had a lovely dinner party. And the chef said, "Now, if this dinner's not good it's going to be the meat's fault." I said, "It's not going to be the meat's fault. It's going to be the cook." But we had a lovely party. And they had a big picture of the steer on the bulletin board and told everybody how we were there. And we had a nice dinner in one of the private rooms, about twenty of us.

Q: To get into this stock show was the membership limited?

A: You had to have a membership in the 4-H Club.

Q: And that's all? As long as you raised the steer?

A: As long as you raised and fed the steer you could go to the Fat Stock Show. The 4-H Club part. We also used to send our barrows to the 4-H Club. But they wouldn't let kids show in the big show. So I sent it in in my name. But we could win just the same.

Q: Oh.

A: They wouldn't let the kids do it, but they'd let me do it. So I sent it in in my name and he showed it.

Q: Were there a lot of participants.

A: Yes, there were a lot of participants. We won one year in the

Berkshire class. We didn't win the grand champion. We won the champion of the Berkshire. We just did miss the grand champion.

Q: Was this the only steer that David raised?

A: That was the only one he ever took to Chicago. We had some others. But buying a young steer and feeding it for a year was just more than we could swing financially. So we didn't do too much in the steers but we did do a lot in the hogs.

Q: You mentioned that you were a member of the Association of University Women. Do you want to tell me about that membership?

A: Well I was a graduate of the University of Illinois. And everybody, anyone who was a college graduate was eligible to belong to that organization. And we had meetings once a month. They were always very interesting and instructive meetings. I met a lot of the best educated people in town.

Q: You mentioned also that you went to one meeting and took some eggs.

A: (chuckles) No, I took the eggs and delivered them at the kitchen door of the Leland Hotel and then go around to the front door and go into the American Association of University Women monthly meeting.

Q: Did the Leland Hotel buy eggs from you on a regular basis?

A: Oh yes.

Q: You don't remember what they paid for them, do you?

A: No, just whatever the market was. I got, usually, seven to ten cents premium over the regular market because they were strictly fresh eggs all guaranteed and delivered twice a week. They were strictly fresh. And I got a nice premium.

Q: How long a period of time did you sell eggs to the Leland Hotel?

A: I don't remember how many years. It was a nice account and they were very nice to me. And I always got my money.

Q: In 1955 you left home . . .

A: That's when David had gotten discouraged and he left me and I had to get a tenant. And I found a tenant and he wanted to raise chickens and hogs. And that place had the best equipment. So I had to move and let him move in. So I moved and went to Springfield first. But when spring came I couldn't take it. I wanted to get back to the farm. So I was able to pick up a trailer that a young couple were going to lose and I picked up, gave them an equity in it and picked up the payments and went on with it. And I parked it down here on the corner of my own lot. And I lived there for four years.

Q: On this lot or on the east farm?

A: No on this lot, right over on that street over there. And then that time I did church work at the First Presbyterian in Springfield. Then I moved to Divernon and I did Grey Lady work. I did Red Cross work at Memorial Hospital and I enjoyed that work. I worked under Marie Dirksen. And one of my first jobs was to deliver linens to the various rooms for the maids to make up the beds. And then any new babies going home, I got to dress the new babies to go home.

Q: Did you work anyplace else in the hospital, Marie?

A: No, that was the only place I worked.

Q: How long were you in Grey Lady work?

A: Well I worked about a year. See, it was all volunteer work. You didn't get any pay for it. I just wanted something to do worthwhile.

Q: Yes.

A: Then I was asked to join, to belong or join a conference where they talked about things for helping older people. That was before I went out to the Presbyterian Home. One summer I went out and took the place of the matron who went on a trip. And I enjoyed that work very much, working with . . .

Q: Was that the Conference on Aging?

A: Well I went after the Conference on Aging, went out there.

Q: What did you do?

A: Well I planned meals and I did a lot of the shopping. And I delivered the mail and then I'd do various things for the older folks.

Q: Where was this located?

A: The Presbyterian Home.

Q: The Presbyterian Home. (pause) In 1978 you mentioned breaking your heel.

A: I was working in the First National Bank with the man who was managing my farm. And I usually parked in the lot and would go up the back elevators. But this time I was getting ready to go on a trip. And I had my car parked out from town and I came in on the front and I took my income tax paper up to Mr. Dozier. And I went up by the center elevator in the front. And one elevator has a landing that's two steps below the others. I went up on the middle elevator and turned to my right and I didn't know there was two steps and I missed the two steps and walked right out—and I realized before I lit that I was gone. And I went on this heel, fell over but I didn't break my hip. But someone in the office—I thought maybe I could get up before anybody would see me. But some of the girls in the office came running to me. And they got me up but I couldn't put any weight on the left foot.

Q: What trip were you taking at that time?

A: Well, Mrs. Cody and I were going to go down to Natchez, Mississippi, and then come back up to the Grand Old Opry. And I couldn't go.

Q: Did you ever get to go?

A: No. They sent me back my money. I was all ready to go on Monday and this was on Friday.

Q: That's a shame.

End of Side One, Tape Five