CARRIE ALICE MAURER MEMOIR

PREFACE

This manuscript is the product of a type-recorded interview conducted by Mary Ann Dillon for the Oral History Office in February 1974. Mary Ann Dillon transcribed the tape, Rosalyn Bone edited the transcript and Barbara Dewhurst prepared the final copy.

Carrie Alice Maurer was born in Cass County, Illinois, on September 28, 1891. She was raised in the country and continued living on a farm through most of her life. Her recollections of that life provide detail on farming tasks, home life and social activities. She also recounts experiences during the Great Depression and World War II.

Readers of this oral history memoir should bear in mind that it is a transcript of the spoken word, and that 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 the views expressed therein; these are for the reader to judge.

Carrie Maurer, February 28, 1974, Springfield, Illinois.
Mary Ann Dillon, Interviewer.

Q. Aunt Carrie, what's your date of birth?

A. September 28, 1891.

Q. Where were you born?

A. Well, I was born in Cass County, Illinois and about seven miles north of Ashland.

Q. Were you born on that farm?

A. Oh yes.

Q. Oh, were you. Now tell me, what's your full name?

A. Carrie Alice. Somebody in the office over at Dr. Cartmell, has been sending out notices that I should come in certain times--but somtimes I don't go to him for two or three years, depending on my feet--and she spells my name C-A-R-Y. Why that makes me so mad that anybody in an office would be so ignorant that she can't . . . My name is an old name.

Q. Yes, it is. Well, C-A-R-Y is a way of spelling a man's name, isn't it?

A. That's a surname, too. There used to be a hardware dealer down in Tallula. Their surname was spelled C-A-R-Y, but no female ever had a name spelled like that. That makes me so mad to think that anybody was that ignorant. (tape turned off and on again.)

Q. Now tell me about your family, your father; start with your father and your mother.

A. My father was Ernest Charles.

Q. And he was the one who came . . .

A. No, his father came from Germany.

Q. Do you know what year?

Q. I don't know what year they came from Germany, but I have the date of my father's birth.

Q. Oh, what is it?

A. Wait a minute until I refresh my memory. (Narrator leaves the room to get some records.)

Q. Do you know where your father was born?

A. Yes, he was born down in Cass County, closer to Virginia and Beardstown. I don't know exactly where, but it was in that area of Virginia and Beardstown. My brother Louie had this made off our family Bible; he wanted one of them. A Photostatic copy. I believe that's what it is, isn't it?

Q. Yes, it is. Ernest Maurer was born July 15, 1852. What was your mother's name?

A. Alice Becky, I believe. She was one of those children that had a whole lot of middle names. But I think Alice Becky; I don't think she ever used the middle name. It's on here, somewhere. Alice Davis is what it is here.

Q. Okay. Where was she born?

A. She was born down in that area, too.

Q. So it was your father's father that came from Germany?

A. Yes, and his father's name was John, John Mauer.

Q. And he was a bookbinder?

A. Yes.

Q. So, do you know what year your father bought the farm?

A. No I don't. They lived on a farm down bv Virginia seven years and they were married in, well let me see. . . . They were married in February, 1876, and they lived on that farm down there for seven years. That would have made it 1883, wouldn't it, about that time.

Q. You were the middle child?

A. Seven, I was number seven.

Q. Oh, you were number seven. How many were there?

A. Ten. Five boys and five girls, ten.

Q. What did your father raise? What kind of crops did your dad raise?

A. Corn, wheat and oats, and lots of hay; clover hay and timothy hay. One year, after Mildred's mother died, he hulled red clover that fall and he had a crop of twelve bushels to the acre, which was something very unreasonable, out of the ordinary, I'll put it that way, very out of the ordinary.

Q. How many acres did he have altogether?

A. On the farm? We had 140.

Q. Did he have livestock?

A. Oh yes, it was a stock farm. We had horses and cows, hogs and sheep.

Q. Did you use the wool from the sheep?

A. He sold it.

Q. You never made anything out of it?

A. No, we never carded or spun or wove any of it.

Q. Were the boys older than the girls? So, did they boys help him farm?

A. Yes, some.

Q. After they got older?

A. After they got older, they went out to work for themselves. (laughter) In those days, you know, a kid was, oh, about fourteen or sixteen or something like that, why, he went out and worked for somebody else. But the boys worked there.

Q. Did he rotate the crops, like, you know, where he planted corn?

A. Yes, yes he did, some. But of course, they didn't think so much about it back in those days as they do now, I don't think. He did rotate crops, yes.

Q. And he had to do everything with horses, right?

A. Oh yes.

Q. Did you have mules?

A. No, he raised a mule colt one time, but we had horses. We didn't have mules.

Q. How many horses did you have?

A. Oh, we had different, usually I think about six, maybe eight. I think usually about six; then of course, mares raised colts back in those days.

Q. What did you use for transportation? Did you have a buggy?

A. We had a buggy, we had a surrey, and originally they had a spring wagon.

Q. Oh, yes? You had a buggy and a surrey?

A. Yes.

Q. What's the difference?

A. A buggy is a one-seated affair and a surrey was a two-seated affair.

Q. Oh, I see. Well, how did you get all those kids in that?

A. (laughter) Well, my oldest brother was grown and married when my youngest brother was born, so you see, we were strung out over a period of years. (laughs)

Q. Yes, so they always had them coming and going.

A. Yes, coming and going and on the farm, you know, there was always chickens to be fed, cows to be milked and so on and so forth. So oftentimes we didn't all go at once.

Q. What kind of chores did the women do?

A. Oh, anything and everything.

Q. Did they take care of the gardening?

A. Oh yes.

Q. Did the women take care of the chickens?

A. Oh yes.

Q. Did the women milk cows?

A. Oh sure. On Grandpa Maurer's farm everybody milked cows. (laughter) And my youngest sister, she liked farm work and she did quite a lot of farming.

Q. You mean she drove the plow?

A. Oh sure! Sure. She plowed corn and she plowed everything. She helped my brother Frank; he was my third brother and there was Lily and me and Pearl in between Esther and Frank, and Frank always kind of catered to Esther. She would get up of a morning and go to the field without her breakfast for fear of somebody would want her to help wash dishes.

Q. She didn't like any of the housework then.

A. No. And one time we had walking cultivators--probably you never saw any of those--and there was two wheels and an arch and then the beams of the cultivators were fastened on there, and you'd walk behind it and hold the handles of the shovels. Frank told about one time he stopped to rest for something, I don't know what, and he left his cultivators and Esther was there, so she decided she would plow some corn. And of course, she had an accident and upset the cultivators. (laughter) And that was quite a chore, you know, for somebody to straighten them back up that didn't know about it. He laughed about coming back and finding her struggling to get those cultivators set back up so he wouldn't know she had upset all them. (laughter)

Q. How old was she when she did all that?

A. Oh. I guess a kid of twelve or thirteen, something like that. But she continued farm work as long as she was able to.

Q. Oh did she? Did you ever do any of it?

A. No, I didn't. The only thing I ever did, I drove a mower to mow hay and then I drove a rake to rake hay, and then we had a baler that was horse-powered and I drove the horse oftentimes to bale that hay and then to use a derrick--we had a horse dropper at the derrick--to stack hay. I did those things, but that's about the extent of my farm work.

Q. I didn't realize they had balers then. That made into blocks like they have now?

A. Oh sure, yes, yes. My father had a baler.

Q. Oh, I thought they just put them in big hay mounds.

A. Well, they did both.

Q. Oh, really?

A. Yes, yes, they did both. Yes, we had lots of stacked hay and we had a derrick to stack it and then my father also had a baler to bale hay.

Q. Did they pick corn or did they put it in those bundles?

A. Well, we had what they call shock corn. You cut it when it was kind of green, and then they shucked corn standing in the field, too. They did it both ways.

Q. They did it by hand?

A. Oh yes, sure. We didn't have any power outside of horses in those days. (laughter)

Q. What time did the men get up in the morning? Did they start really early?

A. I don't know, I suppose it depended on what they were doing. Sometimes maybe 4:30 a.m., sometimes maybe 5:30 a.m., depending on what they were doing.

Q. Did everybody get up then?

A. Well, no, they didn't. They strung out.

Q. Did your mother bake bread in the morning?

A. No, not in the morning.

Q. So what did you have for breakfast?

A. We had light bread.

Q. You mean white bread?

A. Yes, I guess that's what you would call it. We called it light bread. It raised, you know, with the yeast, like your sourdough bread.

Q. Did you have eggs and bacon and all that stuff every morning for breakfast?

A. I think sometimes they did, yes.

Q. Did they have what they call porridge?

A. Sometimes we had rolled oats.

Q. Tell me how the day went, you know, like after everybody got up.

A. Well, there was always something to do. There were cows to milk and milk to be separated and the separator to be washed. And then every so often there was cream to be churned or later on, we sold the cream. And of course there was the noon meal to get, interspersed with garden work.

Q. So did you make butter about once a week?

A. Oh no, we made it more often than that.

Q. Oh, you did?

A. Yes.

Q. What kind of a churn did you have?

A. Well, we had different kinds of churns. The first one I remember was sort of like a barrel, only instead of being shaped like a barrel it was more oval. It had a paddle in it and a crank on it and every time that paddle went around your hand had to go around. And then later on, we got what they called a bentwood churn. It was like this and was on legs, and it had cog wheels on it. So the paddle went around more often than your hand had to go around.

Q. So that would take quite a while, wouldn't it?

A. Well, sometimes it did, sometimes not. And we had a refrigerator that my father had built. It stood higher than your head and it had four doors on it and on this side, that's where the ice was. Over on this side was a place for milk and cream and so on and so forth. And down below there were shelves and we kept crocks of milk in that before we had a separator.

Q. Where did you get the ice?

A. We put it up. We put ice up in an ice house.

Q. Oh, in the ice house. But you could only have that in the wintertime, right?

A. No, they put it up in the wintertime to run us through the summer . . .

Q. Oh, it'd last all summer.

A. . . . put it up with sawdust. At first we had a frame ice house and put up ice. Then later on, my father dug an ice house in the ground and lined it with bricks, brick wall, and built a shed over it and that would keep the ice much longer than the old frame building would.

Q. Where did they get the ice from in the wintertime?

A. We didn't have a pond, but there were people around there who did have ponds and my father got the ice from them. At one time, he had a pond, but he built it too close to the road and the dirt from the road washed in and filled it up over a length of time, so he didn't bother to rebuild it, but we got the ice from neighbors who had ponds. And in this underground ice house, we had ice, oh, way on, I think sometimes as late as September, maybe later than that. It would last a long time.

Q. How did you keep milk before you had the ice house? Or do you not remember when you didn't have the refrigerator?

A. Oh yes, it was a while there we had what they called a milk trough.

Q. What's that?

A. That's a long trough and you put water in there and then you change that water every so often, you know. The milk was in there in crocks. And before that we had a spring house where they kept the milk.

Q. How did that work?

A. Well, it was a shed built over where the spring was--we had a spring down in the orchard--and it was a shed built over that and they'd put the milk in crocks, cover it up, and set it down in that stream of water that came from the spring. I was quite small when we had that, but I do remember it.

Q. Did you get your water from that spring?

A. Yes, my mother did, but I don't remember it because when I was big enough to remember we had a well at the house. They had one well there and it wasn't very good, and they had a man come out there to water witch for a well. Kinsey Barr was his name. It was a place out so far in the yard where they thought they wanted it, so they dug there and they didn't get water. And Kinsey Barr told them, he said, "I told you that wasn't water there. The water was here." They dug the well there where he said later on, dug it 47 feet deep, and seven feet down below the vein of water, and we never was without water. We used the chain and pulley and wooden buckets.

Q. How did he go about witching the well?

A. He had that forked stick that you have heard about.

Q. Did he use any kind of special wood?

A. No.

Q. My grandfather always told me that either peach or some kind of wood, either hickory or peach or something, that was supposed to better for it.

A. I don't remember that. I don't remember whether there was certain kinds or not. I don't remember. I just remember Kinsey Barr witching our well as we always had water. (laughter)

Q. How did they dig the well?

A. By hand with spades.

Q. Oh, by hand; 47 feet deep?

A. You seen these old windlasses, haven't you, in the well where they . . . I'm sure they have one out here at the Old Salem.

Q. No, what is it?

A. It's a small log put up on a trellis and it's got handles on it. You wind your rope around, fasten the rope to that, and then you turn the crank and wind that rope and that pulls up a bucket or whatever you have down there. I don't know, there's been a lot of them on the TV lately. Maybe you don't see TV, but I'm quite sure there's one out at the state park at New Salem.

Q. No, I've never seen that. Did you make cheese?

A. My mother made cottage cheese.

Q. Did she hang it in bags? Is that what they did?

A. Oh yes.

Q. I faintly remember seeing my grandmother do that.

A. Yes, my mother made it and in her later years, things didn't agree with her too well and she made a lot of it and ate it. (laughs) And one time she said that--I don't know what we were having for supper--and she said, "I was in a mind to tell you I'm going to eat my cottage cheese and I'm going to bed to sleep. But I didn't say anything and," said, "I'm glad I didn't because I didn't sleep too well afterward." (laughter)

Q. Did you all go to church?

A. Yes, we did.

Q. What church did you go to? What religion was it?

A. Baptist church. Oh, the name won't come to me. It was a Grove in Tallula, and that name won't come to me. They called it a Grove. Some Grove Baptist church in Tallula, Illinois and that's where we went to church.

Q. Did you go every Sunday?

A. Sometimes we did and sometimes we didn't, depending on circumstances and work and so on and so forth. What's the reason that name won't come to me? I've known it all these years.

Q. You'll think of it, you know, sometime later.

A. Oh yes, sure, I'm subject to that, sure. Try my best to think of something and then all at once here it comes.

Q. It sounds like all you did was work very hard.

A. Well, we worked. We worked. Didn't think anything about it. That's the way everybody else did. We did it.

Q. What did you do in the evenings?

A. Well, on the farm, you know, they usually worked until dark. By the time you got your supper over with it was time to go to bed. But, oh, there used to be times when, along in the wintertime, it was much different, right? The men didn't have as much to do in the wintertime, did they?

A. No. Well, our folks had the wood to get, you know, and cut timber for wood, and of course, there was always stock to [take] care of. There was always something to do, wood to split.

Q. What kind of heat did you have in the house? Did you have fireplaces?

A. Oh no, no, we didn't have fireplaces. We had stoves.

Q. In every room?

A. No, not in every room. We had stoves in three rooms downstairs, but the bedrooms were not heated.

Q. I'll bet that was cold getting up in the morning. Did you have feather beds?

A. Yes, we did, but later on, we had mattresses and we didn't have feather beds anymore. Yes, I've heard my oldest brother tell about sleeping upstairs when the upstairs wasn't finished and they'd use a feather bed for cover.

Q. Yes, I've got a friend of mine that slept like that all the time she grew up. Kathryn, who works in Howard's library, came from North Carolina

and we were talking about it the other night and she was saying that she grew up sleeping on a feather mattress with a feather bed over her, too.

A. Oh, I remember John saying that it was cold upstairs and they used a feather bed for cover, but not in my time.

Q. You had quilts and comforters and things like that?

A. Oh yes, and blankets?

A. Well, we had comforters more than quilts. Anything we had, we made it. We didn't make the blankets, we bought those, but then the comforts we made those and the quilts we made them.

Q. You didn't save feathers then from the chickens and stuff?

A. No, the feathers you get from the geese. Chicken feathers are kind of stiff, they have a rib in them. (laughs)

Q. Yes. Did you have geese?

A. Yes, we had geese.

Q. What do people raise geese for anyway? They don't use the eggs, do they?

A. Yes, you can scramble the eggs and eat them.

Q. Oh yes? Is that why people raise geese, for the eggs?

A. Well, they used to raise them for their feathers more than anything else. But geese eggs are good to scramble. They're a little too big to fry or boil, really, like that, but you can scramble them and they're very good.

Q. When they butchered, was there a certain month in the year that they butchered?

A. In the wintertime. We got so later on, we usually butchered along about New Year's and oftentimes in the fall of the year when it got cool, October or the first of November, something like that, somebody might butcher a hog to carry them through the corn shucking, you know. And then the general butchering was done along in January or something like that.

Q. I saw the picture with the seven hogs. Did you ever butcher any cattle?

A. Well, I can't remember my father killing a cow, but he used to butcher sheep.

Q. Do you go about that the same way as you do hogs?

A. No, that's different. He killed them in late summer and I believe he cut the head off, I believe he did and then split them open and then hung them up, took the entrails out. He'd like to broke his neck getting the water to wash the inside out before an odor or a bad taste set in. That

was one of the features of butchering sheep was to get the entrails out and get it rinsed out very quickly.

Q. Then how did you cure it or whatever? What did he do with it then?

A. Well, you didn't cure that. You just ate it as a fresh meat. My mother told about taking a hind leg of a lamb and roasting it. My brothers were up at my oldest brother's doing hay work and she'd take their lunch up there--they were baling hay, that's what they were doing--and she would fix the lunch of mashed potatoes and that roast leg of lamb and whatever else she had and go up, and my three older brothers, they stuffed themselves. That was about a three or four mile drive with a horse or horses to take the lunch to the boys.

Q. And she did that every day?

A. Well, she did that when they were in that work, doing that kind of work. Of course, that didn't last too long, you know.

Q. How long would it take to go three or four miles with a horse?

A. I don't know. (laughs) I have no idea.

Q. How long did it take to get to town?

A. I don't know that either. We just got ready and went to town and didn't time ourselves. (laughter)

Q. You weren't so aware of the time then, were you?

A. No, sunup and sundown more than anything else. And of course at noontime, you know, the sun was straight.

Q. Yes, and that's really all you had to pay attention to. So in your house, were some of the women assigned to do the sewing and all that kind of stuff or did everybody just do sewing? You had to make all your clothes, didn't you?

A. Oh sure, sure, we made our clothes and I remember when my mother made the cotton flannel mittens. They didn't have the mittens that they used to shuck corn with.

Q. Where did she get her material?

A. At the store in town. At a general store in town that we went to in Tallula. They had dry goods and they had groceries.

Q. How often did you have to go shopping?

A. Well, oftentimes we sold butter and, of course, that was taken in once a week.

Q. So that's when you did your shopping?

A. Yes.

Q. What kind of things did you have to buy?

A. We bought what groceries we needed and if we needed any yard goods or anything, why, we got it.

Q. But that's what you were telling me about that you just bought flour and . . .

A. We did that in the fall of the year, you know, for winter stock, you know.

Q. Oh, to last you all the winter.

A. Yes.

Q. Did you have a fruit cellar?

A. Oh yes, we had a cave. We called it a cave.

Q. What kind of stuff did you put down there?

A. Fruit, potatoes . . .

Q. Did you have jars to put fruit in?

A. Oh sure. I'll show you one of the jars. (Narrator goes to the kitchen and returns) I remember my mother canning tomatoes in these jars when John, my oldest brother, was getting married. She had a dozen of those and she canned tomatoes in them, and John took part of them and mother took the others.

Q. That's really big! That's more than a quart, isn't it?

A. Oh yes, that's a half-gallon. We didn't use quarts. (laughter)

Q. You didn't? Oh no; I guess you wouldn't.

A. Mildred has one of those. I had two of them left and she seems to be the only one interested in the old things we had, you know. Betty Blanch was raised there and Beulah was raised there, but it doesn't appeal to them like it does Mildred. I remember my mother canning tomatoes in those.

Q. I've never seen one that big. I didn't even know they used them that big.

A. Well, we didn't have quart jars when I was a kid.

Q. Well, a quart wouldn't do your family any good anyway.

A. Oh gracious, no! Gracious no! The only thing we would have put in quarts would have been jam. We had lots of red plums and my mother used to make preserves out of those red plums and Frank, especially, he was just

crazy over those red plum preserves. I guess Louie was too, but I particularly remember Frank.

Q. What other stuff besides tomatoes did you can and put up in the cave?

A. Oh, we had all kinds of fruit. We had cherries, we had peaches, and we had apples. And made [sauer] kraut first in a wooden keg and chopped it with a spade, (laughs) and then later on, we had a kraut cutter and we cut it with the kraut cutter and put it in the wooden keg. Then later on, we got to making it and putting it in stone jars to let it ferment, and then even later on, we made it and put it in glass jars like this and it fermented in those glass jars.

Q. How long did it take to ferment?

A. I don't remember, but I do remember John--oh, I don't know, he'd been married many years. I'm not right sure but his kids were grown--he wanted some kraut made in a wooden barrel and cut and chopped with a spade. He was going to have some of that old-fashioned kraut. (laughter)

Q. You mean they stored it in the wooden kegs?

A. Yes, it was a small keg like a small barrel, I guess you would call it. It wasn't as big as a big barrel, but it was wooden and they'd put the cabbage in there, take the core out, you know, and quarter it or something and put it in that barrel and take a spade and chop it and chop it. Then when they got it all chopped and done, why, they put some salt in there and weighted it down with boards and rocks, covered it over and let it ferment there.

Q. Just the cabbage and the salt?

A. Yes, just some salt. You wanted to be careful not to put in too much salt. If you got in too much salt, the cabbage would get soft and it wouldn't ferment right.

Q. Did you dry apples?

A. Oh yes.

Q. How did you go about that?

A. We had a apple peeler and peeled the apples and cored them, and put them on a sheet or something up on the roof of a house or someplace where they dried.

Q. How long does that take?

A. I have no idea.

Q. A couple days?

A. Oh yes, longer than that. And then you had to go up once in a while and turn them over, you know. And if it was going to rain . . . I think we usually brought them in at night because there would be dew at night, you know. Then you stirred them and turned them over so that they dried on all sides.

Q. Then did you put those in jars?

A. I think back in the early days we put them in a flour sack and hung them up in the pantry.

Q. So you had the orchard?

A. Oh yes, yes, we had an orchard and we also made cider. My father had a cider mill. It was a big thing; it was a log six or eight feet long on the ground and a platform built on one end of that log and then the posts went up from one end, on the other end with holes bored in them and they put pins through those holes. And this platform, you had a frame made and put that frame on there and put burlap in there for a strainer, I guess you'd call it, and put the ground apples in there. Then when it got built up about so high, he'd take the pins out from under the top log that he had. Then he'd take a pole and a chain and then bring that log down and use this pole to press it, you know, and squeeze the apples out of there.

Then we had a grinder which was, oh, a big barrel-like concern. Had horseshoe nails and screws and everything else in it to grind the apples. And then we had a horsepower that they could hitch eight horses onto that. They only used two to grind the apples. People would come in there with a tiptop sideboard wagon, a load of apples, maybe three barrels on the top of it, grind those apples. (laughs) And then we made lots of cider. Then my father . . .

Q. Have you got something cooking out there?

A. Maybe I have. Maybe I forgot. (Carrie leaves the room to investigate)

Q. I heard little pops.

A. You know, I didn't smell that at all. I intended to turn that off and I forgot it. (laughter) My father had a corn sheller, a small corn sheller, that he shelled corn and used this horsepower.

Q. A buzz saw?

A. Buzz saw. It was a circular saw about so big across and he had that on a frame and then he had a rack built that you could put the stick of wood up on there and push that in against the saw to saw it.

Q. Where does the horse come in?

A. The horse turned the power and he had the belt, a tumbling rod from

the power over to a, I guess you'd call it a jack, I'm not sure what they called it, and he'd have a pulley on it and there was a belt on that pulley that was fastened on to the pulley that was on the saw.

Q. Good grief! (laughter) That sounds pretty complicated.

A. Well, it would be when you didn't see it, but when you saw it. . . .

Q. It made sense.

A. Oh sure, sure! And we also had a cane mill.

Q. What's that?

A. To ground cane and make sorghum.

Q. Oh, did you raise sugar cane?

A. Oh yes. I had the picture the other day, but I guess you didn't notice it. (She gets the picture out.)

Q. I don't remember it. (pause) What did you use the sorghum for?

A. Ate it and sold it and anything you . . . Now there's some of that hay stacking that you spoke about. And there's the butchering. (Referring to pictures)

Q. Did other people bring their cane to you to be done?

A. Cane? Oh, once in a while somebody did, but not very often.

Q. Was it pretty common for most everybody to have one of those?

A. A man that lived across the road from us had one, and some people bought it from us. I guess I have the wrong picture book. (She goes to look for another picture book and returns.) Turn at the back here. There, isn't that a tree all broke down with ice? That was that sleet storm we had the last year Mildred was in high school and there's some more of it down there.

Q. My goodness! It looks like it broke everything.

A. The ice was an inch thick on the telephone wires.

Q. It was in 1924? Oh, it was the day before Christmas.

A. Yes, yes, it was in December.

Q. What were Christmases like? What did you do at Christmastime?

A. Just about the ordinary thing. We didn't . . .

Q. You didn't celebrate?

A. No.

Q. You didn't have a Christmas tree?

A. Oh no. There were no trees growing in our neighborhood, and they didn't commercialize trees then. Here's some of those haystacks. (referring to a picture)

Q. Oh yes. My grandfather's farm had those, too.

A. I was going to find you that cane mill.

Q. There's some kind of thing. What's that?

A. That's it, that's the evaporator there--this is a book that belonged to Pearl--and this one here I saw the other day that showed the cane mill.

Q. It's got some fantastic pictures. There's that good picture of your mother.

A. Oh, there's the cane mill right there.

Q. Who's that under it?

A. That's Esther, I think.

Q. And this is a wagonload of cane?

A. Yes, that's a wagonload of cane.

Q. So they squeezed that and got the syrup out of it, right?

A. Yes.

Q. Then did you have to boil it or anything?

A. Oh yes. It would boil then in that evaporator that you saw a while ago.

Q. Then you put it in jars?

A. Well, we usually put it in jugs. My father usually had these gallon jugs to put it in.

Q. Did you have a smokehouse?

A. Yes.

Q. We have a smokehouse on our farm and I never knew how it worked. But it still has the smell, you know, of smoke.

A. Oh yes, it'll keep that smell. In our smokehouse, it had a dirt floor and there was a little place excavated in the center, and you put your

hickory wood in there and let it burn, you know. And you had your meat hanging up above there, and it got smoked that way.

Q. How long does that take?

A. Oh, I don't know.

Q. A week?

A. Well, it depended on whether you had started your fire in there. (laughter)

Q. Is that to flavor the meat?

A. Yes.

Q. That doesn't in any way age it, or keep it from . . .

A. Well, when it flavors it, then after it's been salted and smoked, then your're not bothered with bugs getting in it. And it flavored it, too, yes. It was called cured is what it was called.

Q. But they salted it first?

A. Oh yes, yes.

Q. And then smoked it.

END OF SIDE ONE

Q. Oh, give it to the people out in Sangamon, this history professor, Cullom Davis, and he'll have a girl type it up. They're doing a whole collection of the history of Illinois on all different subjects like they're talking to coal miners and merchants here in town and the Italian-Americans and that community and the Germans and the Jews. So I picked farming.

A. Well, there was a man by the name of Powers out by Cantrall. He compiled a history of Sangamon County, you know, many years ago. I took care of this man's son. So that was quite a thing to talk about at that time. The father had been dead many years and the man was as old as I was, which was (laughs) the sixties or something. He was in World War I, I'll put it that way. So that is a book that is considered to be a treasure, and I imagine there's one out in the library. I have been in homes that were friends of theirs, you know, and they had a copy of it.

Q. Yes, it'd be interesting to read.

A. Oh yes. It's a book about that thick, if I remember right.

Q. When World War I came, you were like in your twenties then, weren't you?

A. Yes.

Q. What happened then? Did any of your brothers go?

A. My brother older than me was drafted and he was a married man with a four year old son.

Q. Oh yes, I saw the pictures of that. Did that affect your life on the farm at all?

A. Yes, it did because we had that so-called daylight-saving time. (laughter)

Q. Did you go by it?

A. Yes, we went by it and we also, at that time, was having one of these circuit chataquas in Tallula, and we always attended. It rushed us like everything to get our cows milked in the evening before the flies ate them up, so we could go to the evening program.

Q. What is that? What did they do?

A. Well, they had speakers and they had music, and it was a very interesting affair. They called it a circuit chataqua; they would go one place, you know, and hold this chataqua and then they'd go somewhere else, wherever a group engaged them to. And we had that at Tallula for several years. There was one they called . . . I believe our circuit, the one we usually had, was . . . I don't know whether there's a Lincoln Circuit or not, I have forgotten. But there was one they called the Red Pass Circuit and it spread out over more area, I think, than the one we had, see. Finally it broke up. Then we used to go to Petersburg to Old Salem Chataqua grounds, and they had chataqua there, too. I guess part of that auditorium is still standing there. I think it is. (laughs)

Q. Did you ever go to dances or anything like that?

A. Well, we had some neighborhood home dances, but my mother wouldn't permit us to go to dances.

Q. Oh that's right, she didn't believe in dances, did she?

A. Well, that wasn't it. When she was a young girl she went to dances, but they had them in their neighborhoods and some of her cousins were fiddlers, as they called them (laughs), and some of them were callers for square dances. But then after they joined this Clary's Grove Baptist Church . . .

Q. There you go.

A. Clary's Grove, and they joined the baptist church there in Tallula. At that time, you know, dances were out.

Q. Oh they were?

A. Oh yes.

Q. You mean because of the religion or what?

A. Yes. They considered them to be out. So we didn't go to dances. In fact, Mother commented later on about that she used to go to those dances and they would wear those long, full skirts, you know, at those square dances and somebody would swing them and maybe their skirt tail would wrap around them. You've seen them on TV, haven't you? Now most of them wear the short dresses, now. But I think once in a while there's somebody in a long dress and, of course, they wore long dresses in those days.

Q. Just the laundry, I think, would have been a terrible thing, the way you all had to wear those clothes. That would have taken all day. How did you do it?

A. Well, as you say, we took all day. We had a washing machine, hand-powered washing machine.

Q. Oh, you did? The kind where you have one tub over here and another tub over here and a wringer in the middle?

A. No, we didn't have that. At first, I remember, we had a machine and it had a tub like this and there was slats across the bottom and then there was a kind of a cradle like. It had slats on it and it had something to hold on to. You stood there and worked that back and forth and stirred the clothes in that water. That's the first one we had. And then later on, we had, I guess, we had the one with the round tub on the pedestal and it had a handle on the side of it and you turned it back and forth and washed. And then later on, we had one with a dolly in it and cog wheels on the top and a handle that we worked back and forth this way. That was a little faster than either one of the others we had.

Q. Did you use boiling water?

A. Oh yes.

Q. Did you heat it in a kettle outside?

A. Well, we had a copper boiler and we heated ours on the stove. People used to heat them in a kettle outside.

Q. Did you make your own soap?

A. Yes.

Q. Was it lye soap?

A. Yes, we made two kinds of soap. They used to make what they called a soft soap. They would take the trimmings and things from the meat as we used it, you know, and the grease of the meat and put it in a kettle and boil it to get the grease out of it. Then you'd put the lye in and what the lye didn't dissolve in the fragments of meat, why, they would take out and then they would put rainwater in there and cook it and they would make soap.

And we even made our own lye!

Q. How do you make lye?

A. You fix a sloping platform and you put wooden barrels on there and as you burned your wood and your ashes you put your ashes in those barrels, poured rainwater over it, and it drained down through those ashes and came out a lye. They had one over at the Old Salem State Park; I've seen that one over there.

Q. How often did you make lye?

A. Oh, about once a year.

Q. Then you made it in a big quantity?

A. Yes.

Q. Then how often did you have to make soap?

A. Well, we made soap once a year, and I remember we had a wooden barrel in the smokehouse that we put that soap in and you'd go out there with a bowl or something and dip some of it up into that bowl and take it into the house and use it for your washing.

Q. Oh, it was soft.

A. Yes, it was soft soap.

Q. And that's what you used for laundry?

A. Yes, and then later on, they made the hard soap and they used the lowest lye to make that.

Q. Hard soap was what you used to bathe with?

A. You could. But we usually had Ivory soap. I was raised on Ivory soap; we usually used Ivory soap.

Q. Oh, you bought that.

A. Yes, as a toilet soap and then in later years, my mother bought what they called a Lemox. It was an oval bar, yellow, and we used that for laundry soap, too, an awful lot.

Q. You didn't bleach your clothes or anything?

A. We boiled them, the white things, we boiled them. Wash them so long in the machine, then wring them out and put them in the boiler on the stove and boil them.

Q. My goodness, that seems like an awful lot of work!

A. Well, I told you, it was all the day's work. (laughter)

Q. Well, it seems like that would be so hard on material, too.

A. No, it didn't, no. It wasn't nearly as hard on the material as I think these bleaches are they use.

Q. That's probably true. So did you starch them?

A. Anything we wanted to starch, yes, we starched it.

Q. What did you use for starch?

A. Well, we had a bulk starch. It was in good chunks and then we had what we called an Argo starch later on that I remember. That came in a package. You would dissolve some of that in cold water and them pour a teakettle of boiled water in with it and then put it in a cook pot.

Q. Did you ever use bluing?

A. Oh yes, yes.

Q. You bought bluing.

A. Yes.

Q. Then you had to iron?

A. Oh, you bet your life! Nobody irons anymore. I called a lady the other day and she was ironing and I didn't say, "Well, I didn't know people ironed anymore." (laughter) You know, this is that permanent press, I guess you'd call it, and I don't like it because you notice where I sit back here, those things won't wash out.

Q. Oh, they don't?

A. No, they won't wash out. And if you took an iron and pressed them out--now that thread I think is dipped in rosin, that's what gives it that permanent press, you know, the stuff they use to weave the material, that is rosin-coated--and if you put an iron on that back here to press those out, you'd melt all that rosin. (laughter) And I think you would have a mess.

Q. Might be, although I iron some of Howard's permanent press shirts.

A. You don't use an iron hot enough like they used to iron. If you had one of those like they used to have to use to iron starched things, why, you'd melt that rosin all off and you'd have a mess everywhere, I suppose.

Q. You had to heat your irons on the stove?

A. Oh yes. Yes. I gave Mildred the irons we used to have. I had them here and I put oil on them and then when I was away from home so much of the time it got away from me and they kind of rusted. I had them down in

the basement, so I brought them up and tried to clear that rust off of them and put a coating on. I wasn't having much luck, so I said, "Mildred, you get out more than I do. I'll let you have those irons." I knew she would want them. Oh yes, because there was two . . . one was an eight pound iron and I don't know if the other one was a nine pound or not. And then we had two smaller ones that were six and seven pound irons. A neighbor gave those to my mother when she first went to housekeeping. Her daughters had had them; they had grown up, outgrown these irons, so she gave them to my mother because in those days, you didn't run to town to get things, you know. So my mother had had them all these years. I gave them to Mildred and she used them when she was a kid.

Q. Did she?

A. Oh yes. (laughs)

Q. Did all the washing and ironing get done in one day?

A. Oh no, no. We washed one day and usually ironed another.

Q. Did everybody do it?

A. No, not everybody. Pearl and I usually did the washing after I was any size. Of course, before that, I guess, my mother and Lucy did it.

Q. What about the men's overalls? Did you make their overalls, too?

A. Not since I can remember.

Q. They bought those.

A. Yes, I imagine my mother did in earlier years, but not to my knowledge.

Q. Did you make coats and things like that?

A. Not to my knowledge, no.

Q. And shoes and boots and all that stuff, you bought in town.

A. Oh yes, yes.

Q. Well, in the garden, did you raise any herbs?

A. No, I can't say that we did. Now it would depend on what you would . . .

Q. Well, like rosemary and margaram and thyme and basil.

A. No we didn't, no. But there was an old trapper and a bee man, German, that lived across the road from us and he had a ginseng bed. Now they had that on "To Tell the Truth" yesterday evening on Gary Moore's program, and the woman had made pillows. She had put herbs in them and they were talking about ginseng, but they didn't say ginseng. And somebody said, "Well, where did you get the ginseng?" She said, "Well, they grow it in this country." But what she used came from China, I believe she said.

And I thought, well, "I don't think you know as much about ginseng as the rest of us do," because this old German, he trapped, he had bees, and he went out in the timbers and dug up ginseng roots and he fixed a bed on his property and had trees, oh, briar vines, blackberries and things like that growing there. He raised ginseng and then there was sweet anise. He'd get sweet anise. I don't remember anything else, but I remember him growing ginseng and the sweet anise.

Q. What did they use ginseng for? I've never heard of it.

A. To tell you the truth, I don't know what they used it for.

Q. But that's what she put in her pillows?

A. Yes, she put it in pillows, she had ginseng in it and then she had some other things, some things I wasn't acquainted with, you know.

Q. That would be nice. It would make them smell good.

A. Yes, that was it and there was a panel of four and she had one for each one of them.

Q. That was nice. Did you make sachets or anything like that?

A. No, we didn't.

Q. Women didn't use any kind of cosmetics then, did they?

A. No.

Q. Did they wear perfume?

A. No, we used just soap and water. (laughter)

Q. They didn't wear powder or anything like that?

A. No, I believe I heard my mother say that she used some cornstarch powder the day that she was married, I believe that was it. But they didn't even use powder then.

Q. And they didn't curl their hair or anything?

A. Oh yes, they had curling irons, yes. But our family all had curls, but Virgil, the youngest one. And my father, see, around here, that was all the hair he had and that was curly as long as he lived. He was down in Beardstown one time--one of my brothers lived there--and his sister-in-law was working in a store and one of the girls in there said something to her about Mr. Maurer's hair. Well she said, "It's been that way as long as I've known him." And she was a girl that grew up right across the pasture from our family. She said, "He's been that way ever since I have known him." (laughter) But his hair curled all his life.

Q. Did you have very close friends in the neighborhood? I mean, did you go back and forth with other neighbors?

A. Well, some, not a whole lot. Everybody worked.

Q. Did the kids do that?

A. Oh yes, yes.

Q. They'd go around to the neighbors.

A. Yes, yes.

Q. Did they have any kind of thing where neighbors got together to do one particular kind of work or something? Like when they butchered?

A. Oh yes, yes. Back before my time they used to cut the grain with cradles, they call them, or scythes and they would help one another. But in my day, we had the McCormick binders.

Q. Out of the wheat, then, you didn't make flour?

A. No, we didn't.

Q. You bought flour?

A. Yes. My mother's father was a miller.

Q. What's a miller?

A. He's the one that grinds the grain up and makes the flour.

Q. I see. Did World War II change anything very much?

A. No, I was in Springfield when that came along.

Q. You weren't back on the farm then?

A. Yes, I was with the Taylors. They were originally from Virginia and I was with Henry Taylor that married Elizabeth Bunn, do you know?

Q. No, I've heard of them.

A. Well, Henry Taylor married Elizabeth Bunn and his father was a banker in Virginia. Henry's mother died when he was born and he had an older brother, Robert, and this Rebecca Eckron was living with Henry's grandfather. She was a Canadian and he was Scotts. And he had lost, I don't know, two or three girls and he had one girl left at home so he got this Rebecca to come down from Canada and live in his home to be company for Alice Taylor. And so then when Henry's mother died, why, Rebecca went in to keep house for Bert Taylor and raised these two children. So she spent the rest of her life there. And then I went and stayed with her. They were living in Virginia when I went there. I went there on Memorial Day and the boys were . . .

Q. What year was that?

A. That was about 1937 I imagine. Somewhere along there. And Henry had married Elizabeth Bunn and they lived here in town and Robert had been in Chicago working and then, as his aunt got older--she wasn't an aunt, she was a distant cousin but they called her aunt--so he came home then to stay with her and they had quite a lot of business and money and everything else. Well, they had acres and acres of land and came home to take care of that. And so then I answered an ad in the paper and when they came to see me, why, here it was these Taylor boys. I didn't know them but I knew the woman who had helped this aunt raise them. She was a friend of John, my oldest brother, and Lucy; she was a friend of theirs. So they came in. I said, "Oh, I know who you boys are." I said, "Mamie Newman stayed with you boys didn't she?" "Yes she did." I said, "Well, she was a friend of my oldest brother." So I went there then and it was on Memorial Day. Then in September they sold the place they had there--they had I think about five acres there in town--and moved up here on Laurel Avenue, 1604 Laurel, Robert did. He didn't want to be bothered with that house, you know.

So then they moved up here in September and Robert had been to Scotland--that's where their ancestry had came from--and he had such a pleasant visit. So he was always wanting to do things for Aunt Becky as they called her. So he said to me, "What do you think about taking Aunt Becky on a trip to Scotland?" I said, "Well, Robert, it's kind of late in the season"--that was October—I said,"It's kind of late in the season to take an elderly person on a trip like that." He said, "Well, I guess that's true." So we didn't go and then we went to Florida. And then, of course, we went down there in December and came back in April and then the next year we went to California and they got a house on the ocean. No, the house along the ocean was in Florida. I've got my dates mixed. We were right on the peninsula down on the Daytona Beach and we went down some steps and you were right on the Atlantic Ocean.

So then the next year we went to California. We went out there on Thanksgiving Day and that was the early Thanksgiving—that's when Roosevelt was having the early Thanksgiving. So Robert got a house in Beverly Hills and Henry and his wife usually came out after the first of the year after the holiday season was over. They did that in Florida and they did that out in California.

So one night they got up from the supper table, Robert walked into the living room, I guess knocked ashes off of his cigarette or whatever he had, I don't remember what, and as Aunt Becky got up to walk in there she fell and she broke a femur. So Robert and I got her up then and put her on the davenport and he called a doctor, I believe, and an ambulance. They came out then and took her to the hospital. So she spent a good part of the time in the hospital. That was before Henry and Elizabeth had come out. So they came out then and she was in the hospital, I don't know how many weeks now I've forgotten. But she was so sick and every so many different times thought we was going to have to bring her back as a corpse because she was so sick. So then they finally brought her home to the house and had two registered nurses, one in the daytime and one at night. So then when April came . . . No, she broke her bone in Florida. I'm getting my dates mixed because Henry and Elizabeth came back because Elizabeth was

pregnant and Robert stayed. So he got the undertakers to come out and take her to the train and they had one of these stretchers with poles like you see in the wild west. They didn't have the kind they have now. And they had an awful time getting it in there and Robert engaged a stateroom for her, you know, and they had to take her off of the stretcher to get her into the room.

And after we got started back to the train, you know, she perked up and Robert said, to me said, "Carrie, you know, I believe Becky was homesick." And you know, she improved from that time on. But every few days here she would go into kind of a faint spell, you know, and they'd think, "Well, she's going to . . . " So Robert says, "I believe she was homesick, afraid she'd die before she'd get back home." But the minute we got her on that train she perked up and they brought her home and had the help come in to help take care of her and got her up so that she could walk but that leg was shorter than the other one so they had a built up she for her. Oh, that . . . What was his name that made shoes? He was an old German. I believe it was Hembricker. He made her built up shoe and she got so that she could walk with a cane and her arm around my neck and I'd take her around the house. We took her to California that way. Had a wheelchair for her. Took her to California.

Q. Did you go to California on the train?

A. Yes. So she spent her winter in California and then we were ready to go to Florida the next winter when Pearl Harbor happened. Robert had gone down there and driven the car through and a fellow who went to school with them over at Knox College and lived up toward Chicago--and I can't think of his name right now but he was a poor boy and worked his way through college but he was a friend of Robert and Henry's. So Robert drove the car through down to Florida and took this fellow along with him just for the trip. He was a married man with a family and a good position. So Aunt Becky wouldn't let me have the radio on very long, very much at a time because that took electricity. So then Sunday morning I hadn't had the radio on and along in the afternoon Mrs. Lloyd Bunn, Sr. came over. I don't remember who was with her. Some woman was with her. She came in and she said something about the Pearl Harbor attack. That was the first I had known about it. So she didn't stay very long and when she left Aunt Becky was very anxious then to turn the radio on to hear about it because Robert had gone down to Florida. So I turned the radio on there and we got the news.

So then that evening Henry called me and he said, "Carrie, I guess you know what happened." I said, "I didn't until Mrs. Bunn came and told me." And I said, "We've had the radio on since then." And he said, "Well, Robert called me." Robert had called Henry and talked to him, you know. And Robert said, "Now, you folks decide whether you want to come down or not." So Henry--I don't know whether Robert called me or not I've forgotten--but Henry called me and I said, "Well, Henry, your Aunt Becky wouldn't be satisfied." Well, Robert had told me he had been in training and they let him out because he was 25 or something, I forget what was over age, anyway, they let him out. But he said to me, he said, "Now if things were in an unrest," now he said to me, "Carrie, if we ever go to

war," He said, "I'll be called back." But he said, "I'm not telling Aunt Becky." So she didn't know anything about it but I did. So then when they called me they said, "Now you folks get your heads together and see whether or not you want to come on down here or not." I had a trunk standing on end in Robert's bedroom ready to pack, you know. (laughs) And I said, "Well, Aunt Becky won't be satisfied down there if you boys are not there." Because that's what she lived for was those boys. So we didn't go. And Robert came back home then and later on he was called back. He was in service when she died. She had urinary poisoning. She died of that.

Q. You were on the farm in the Depression, weren't you?

A. Oh yes.

Q. How did that affect you?

A. We starved through it. What was it? Corn? Was corn . . . Something was a nickel, was it the hogs or the corn, I've forgotten. Nobody even wanted it, nobody wanted to buy it.

Q. That was part of your livelihood, you sold corn?

A. Well, not too much. Well, sometimes, we had a little extra corn, but most of our corn went into the stock. We had the stock. We had cattle, cows.

Q. You had plenty of food?

A. Oh yes, everything outside of the flour and sugar and coffee, you know.

Q. So really it didn't affect people on the farm as much as it did city people, do you think?

A. No. No, it didn't. We managed to get by all right.

Q. Did you have a car then?

A. Yes.

Q. Did you? So they had rationing. Well, they had sugar rationing, didn't they?

A. Yes.

Q. And gas rationing, didn't they?

A. You see I was in town . . .

Q. In the Depression?

A. Oh, no. I wasn't in town for World War II. I'm getting the two confused, yes.

Q. So did I. They didn't have rationing during the Depression, did they?

A. No, I think you starved through with what you had or could get. (laughter) I believe that's the way it happened. And of course, the only thing we had trouble about was our flour and sugar. I don't believe coffee was rationed, I'm not sure, but anyway, we stretched it and got by all right. Of course, we had corn and we could have some corn meal. We had a feed grinder that we ground feed for the chickens, but it took a bolter to prepare it for corn meal, and I don't know whether we ever had the right screens for the bolter or not, you know, to make corn meal. I remember hearing Dad speak about getting bolter, a certain mesh for corn meal, but I don't remember whether he ever got it or not.

Q. Your father died before your mother, didn't he?

A. Yes. He died in 1931, if I remember right, and my mother lived seven years afterwards.

Q. Did he have a heart attack?

A. He had enlargement of the heart. At one time, he was sick. He worked very hard. There wasn't anything he wouldn't do. And I said if he wanted to carry a brick and plow somewhere instead of hitching a horse onto it to drag it, he'd put it up on his shoulder and carry it. (laughter) Wasn't anything he wouldn't do. And he worked very hard and he got to having pains and had the doctor for him. The doctor said, "Well, his heart is three times its natural size." So we took him to the hospital.

Q. Where was the hospital?

A. Here, in Springfield. Springfield hospital. Brought him up here, X-rayed him, you know, and did different things. And I believe it was Virgil, I'm not sure, came up to see him and he wasn't in the hospital. He was out. (laughter)

Q. How did he get out?

A. Oh, he just got dressed and went out. You couldn't keep him down.

Q. Where did he go?

A. I think he went downtown or where he went, I don't know, but Virgil laughed about that. Here he went to see Dad and he wasn't in the hospital. (laughter) So he came back home after they got the tests made and the doctor gave him strict orders. "Now, don't you do any hard work." And so my brother Ed lived in Beardstown and my sister-in-law had gone to, I believe, Galesburg and had an appendectomy and had a doctor by the name of Barnes. And Ed thought there was nobody like Dr. Barnes. So he came up there and Dad was having to loaf, which he didn't want to do. Ed began talking about going over to Galesburg to see old Doc Barnes. He'd get him out of it. So Dad went and the doctor over there, I think, told him he could do light work. Dad didn't know what light work was. (laughter) He came back home then and just went to pitching in, you know, like he always had done.

We was all raising cane. The doctor had told him, "Now you loaf and take care of yourself because that heart's going to play out on you." And Dad thought that he strained his heart when he was a young fellow. I don't remember now what it was he was adoing, but he put some pressure on whatever it was and he thought he strained his heart then and it had bothered him ever since. But he lived a long time after that spell.

Betty Blanch was a little baby when he had that spell, and she was a good sized kid when he died. But he would have spells and that spring when he died, he lost his color. He was looking kind of ashy, you know. He had to haul manure on Friday and on Saturday it was raining, he couldn't get out. So he had to stay in the house and then on Sunday morning, he had got up and he was sitting in his old chair back of the stove where he always sat, and my mother was making pancakes. She usually made pancakes on Sunday morning. She made the pancakes and went in to call him for breakfast and he had passed away.

And Pearl was sitting in the room, Ed and Blanch's little kid, and she knew that there was something wrong with Grandpa, but I was out working with the chickens. But I can remember back that his color wasn't good and he didn't feel good. But if he could get out and do something he was out and he'd been hauling manure.

Q. Did you have a doctor in Tallula?

A. There was doctors in Ashland, and we had a country doctor in Newmansville, which, I think, was about four miles north of us, oh, little country village, you know. It used to be a postal station for the mail that was carried from Petersburg to Virginia. They would drop off mail there before we had rural delivery. And this doctor, his family owned farm land there and he grew up there and went on and studied medicine, and came back and married and raised his family and practiced medicine there. He was our country doctor.

Q. It was called Newmansville?

A. Yes.

Q. How did you get hold of a doctor? You didn't have a telephone?

A. No.

Q. How did you get a hold of him when you wanted him?

A. Somebody would get on a horse and go to him. (laughter)

Q. When your mother had babies, did the doctor come?

A. She didn't have doctors. She had ten children without the aid of a doctor.

Q. Well, who came to help her?

A. I guess a neighbor woman.

Q. So you probably didn't call the doctor that often, did you?

A. No, oh, no. We seldom ever had a doctor come to the house. But they might go to Newmansville to a doctor. Then my mother doctored with a Dr. Hall in Tallula. She would go there, but we never had over two or three doctor calls in our life. Frank, one of my older brothers, he was shucking corn up for John in the snow and he had lung fever. He was pretty sick, so my mother hitched up--I don't know whether she did or somebody did--hitched up the horse to the buggy. We had had a snowstorm and some of the roads were blocked with snowdrifts. She went to Newmansville to see Dr. Matthew about Frank, tell him about Frank. She got stuck in a snowdrift (laughter) out there, between our home and Newmansville, and she had to get out and I don't know what she did, but anyway she got out and led the horse through that snowdrift. So then she told him about Frank's condition and he came to see Frank.

And at that time, he had a new medicine and I think it was supposed to break the fever in three days time. Before that, I think it ran on for quite some time. Dr. Matthew came out and gave Frank that medicine, the first time he had ever used it, and he said, "I was leery about that." So the next time he came back, the fever had broken and Frank was so much better, he said, boy, that was a relief to him, knowing that that medicine had really worked because he said, "I had never used it."

Q. (laughter) He was a guinea pig.

A. Yes, Frank was the guinea pig. (laughter) Like my brother Louie when he died of leukemia out in Banning, California. He went to the soldiers' hospital there up near Los Angeles. He was there and they treated him and gave him shots in the bone, you know, in the marrow and Louie said, "I told him, 'I know you're using me for a guinea pig.'" And he was very sick and they got him up and on his feet and he came home and he was in a wheelchair, he was just that weak, you know, and he recovered from that enough that he was up around, doing little chores around the house, you know.

Q. Did your dad use a blacksmith or did he do it himself?

A. Well, he did shoe some, but then he didn't make a practice of it. Thought he wasn't very good at it. He didn't have the patience for one thing. (laughter)

Q. Did you have a bank?

A. Oh yes, we had a bank.

Q. In Tallula?

A. Yes, there was one time they had two banks in Tallula. Yes, there was a time I think when Dad shod the horses, but he wasn't very good at it because he didn't have much patience. (laughs) There was one time, he was trimming one of the horse's hooves and the horse wouldn't stand still.

I've forgotten now what the horse's name was, and he said, "Gol darn you, stand still!" (laughter) That was the length of his profanity. So then one time when he was soaking his feet and he had my mother atrimming his toenails--and he was very ticklish--he was jerking, and we laughed at him. We told him, "You told the horse to stand still." (laughter)

Q. Did you name all your animals, your horses and cows both?

A. Oh yes.

Q. You'd have the same cow for a long time, wouldn't you?

A. Oh yes, yes, we had one Holstein cow, we had her, I think, about fourteen years or something like that.

Q. Oh really? Did you have mostly Holstein cows?

A. No, no, we just had cows, shorthorn Holstein . . .

Q. What about school? What age did you start school?

A. Six.

Q. How far away was school?

A. On the corner of our farm.

END OF TAPE