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TAPE1, SIDE1

KEITH SMITH: It's Monday, July 28, 1986. This is an oral interview with Carrye Abell. A-B-E-L-L. C-A-R-R-Y-E A-B-E-L-L. {Phone rings and tape cuts out.} I'm Keith Smith on the *Messenger Inquirer* tape recorder. {Tape cuts out.} I understand that you were born not too far away, uh.

CARRYE ABELL: About two miles up the road.

KS: On the same road, 3405.

CA: Well, back, off the road, sort of. Back.

KS: Well, is it still there?

CA: Not there any more.

KS: It's gone?

CA: Moved and, seem I've lived in this house about sixty-seven and a half years.

KS: Mm hm. How old is this house?

CA: I was a young lady, a bride, and a widow, all without moving.

KS: Wow.

CA: {Chuckles} By the time I was married, my parents were disabled and I had to stay on and take care of them, so

KS: This is their house.

CA: And I fell heir after the home place, so I, here is where I spent the most of my life. In this house.

KS: That's interesting.

CA: My father and brother built this house, and I refinished all the woodwork in it, when I was just a kid, and uh, we moved, and

KS: Got lots of memories.

CA: And I had, oh, hobbies, refinishing pictures, and the young lady that did one of the Christmas stories, I told her I'd take her on a tour. I didn't know what she wanted to know, and we went through the house and she was amazed at the different things that I had done. None of

'em so very well, maybe, not, I mean, you know, just, off hand, but I refinished picture frames for one hobby, you see, I have a lot of pictures. I was asked once if it was very good taste to have so many pictures. I said, "I don't know, but it's my living room." So. {Chuckles}

KS: True. You can have whatever you want.

CA: It pays to ask, so if you tell me what you want to know, maybe I can tell you.

KS: O.K., I've got a list of some questions here. I don't know whether we will get through all these, but uh, can you, do you remember much about your, your childhood?

CA: What? I don't hear too well.

KS: Do you remember much about your childhood?

CA: Oh yes.

KS: Do you remember

CA: Uh.

KS: Growing up?

CA: We lived on a farm, and nobody had anything other than what you raised on a farm. We ate what we raised, and, all that. Everybody knew that life. You know, what makes you unhappy with things is when somebody across the road has something you don't have, so, I mean, we all, I guess you'd say, were poor. My father and mother owned their home. Uh, and a lot of people didn't.

KS: How many children were there? Was a family a large family or a small family or? What, what size family did you come from?

CA: Uh, three children. A brother. A sister. My sister lives in the, red stone house right down the road here.

KS: Mm hm.

CA: And my brother died. You know. In 1947. He was fatally injured in an accident where he worked.

KS: Mm hm. Well, uh, do you remember what types, what you used to do for fun when you were a kid?

CA: Huh? You're going to have to talk a little bit loud for me.

KS: Do you remember what you used to do for fun when you were a kid?

CA: Oh, yes.

KS: What you did, for fun? What kinds of games you all

CA: Oh, we played games, and uh, I had a dollhouse, had a playhouse. It was a, oh I think that it had been a smokehouse of some kind or something, and my daddy moved it, in the yard and, I would say that I was the only girl in the country that had a playhouse, and we all, played dolls and everything in that playhouse, and we played ball and we played croquet and games that all, you know, and, and read. Well, I was an avid reader. Borrowed everything I could find to read.

KS: How, how did you get books out in the country here?

CA: From each other.

KS: Just passed 'em around?

CA: Mm hm. More or less borrowed from each other, and from the church library. Any where you could find something to read.

KS: From which church would that have been?

CA: Yellow Creek Baptist. I've been a member there, for, come November, it'll be seventy-five years. I am not the oldest member of the church, but I have been a member of Yellow Creek Church longer than anyone that's there, now, there are other people, that are a few people there that are older than I am, but they've not always belonged to Yellow Creek. I never belonged to any other church. I belonged there since I was between ten and eleven years old.

KS: It's a long time. Uh, what do you remember about uh, going to school?

CA: Well, I went to uh, Wright's School. It was just a little, back here, oh, toward the river, uh

KS: That's spelled like Wright's Landing Road up here, with a W.

CA: Uh huh. Uh huh. Wright's Landing Road was named, was a man that he lived over on the river. Name was Silas Wright, a prominent farmer, and I think he must have given ground for the school, anyway, it was named Wright's School, and it was about a mile and a half from our house, and we walked, mile and a half there and mile and a half back every day, and uh, 'course one teacher taught all eight classes, and it was a little one-room and about once a year we'd have a clean-up. We'd clean it all up, and fix it up and we had desks and different from the

chair type they have now with a top on 'em and then underneath that, you'd put your books, underneath in that, and we sat two to the desk and uh, 'course the bigger children sat at the back, and the small ones in the front, and then we had the bench, the recitation bench, where the classes all came to recite in their time, and uh, well, if it was a real good, cold winter, well, 'course all we had was potbelly stove in the center of the room, why, the teacher would let us pull our benches and things up around, closer to the stove, in kind of a circle, and we had a bench at the back of the room that you, with hooks underneath to hang your coats, and set your shoes, your overshoes and things back there, and then you set your lunch on top. We carried our lunches from home. We had no hot lunches or anything then or even heard of, and uh, sometimes when it was real, real cold weather, when you'd go to eat your lunch, it would be frozen, sitting back there at the back of the

KS: How, how, how did your teacher got around to all the different eight, eight grades?

CA: What?

KS: How, how did the teacher get through all the different eight grades?

CA: Well, everybody had a time to recite their lessons. You were assigned a certain uh, a number of chapters or whatever for that day and then she was constantly hearing a lesson, uh, you know, in front, one was reciting in the back and then another class recite.

KS: You, you'd just have to stand up and, and memorize something and then

CA: Sit on the recitation bench, and then when you answered questions, you generally raised your hand if you knew a question. We learned our ABCs and to count to a hundred, and a lot of those things before we ever went to school. Our parents taught us at home, and then at school we learned the multiplication table from when we were twelve, and a lot of things they don't do now in school. I don't know much about the new math or things that they do, but we worked interest about hundred percent math the old, old-fashioned ways, I guess, but we did learn.

KS: About how old were you back then when you were, when you were in grade school?

CA: When I first went to school? I think I was seven when I started. Most of the, you had to be six.

KS: Uh, what about uh, how were, how were, was people's health in those days? Do you remember any big uh, epidemics or, anything like that, or were people basically healthy or?

CA: Well, it seemed to me that our family was, but people didn't live to the age they do now. I've walked uh, St. Lawrence's Cemetery, and walked around up there and sometimes you

don't find not very many people lived past forty years old, up there. But uh, my grandmother, both of 'em lived to be ninety-six, and my grandmother Gatewood, eighty-seven, so our family was healthy. I didn't know much about, we had measles and, and uh, all children diseases like that, but uh, I don't remember us ever, you, know, being sick too much.

KS: What did people do for a doctor if they needed one?

CA: Well, we had a doctor, right here in Thurston and then they had one at Knottsville. Country doctor. Drove the buggy. Horse and buggy, and came to see at home more than you went to the office.

KS: I guess in, in those days, a 405would have been a dirt road?

CA: Oh, yes. Yes.

KS: And what was transportation like back then? What, how did people get around?

CA: There was a stagecoach from uh, Knottsville that went back and forth. They, here, they'd bring things for people, and uh, over at the Baptist Church, there used to be a pump, down in a, where there's a lot, and the stagecoach stopped there and feed his horses and watered 'em, and, and other people did, too. That's what it was there for, for the public.

KS: Did you have to Thruston to meet the stagecoach?

CA: Well, it went that way. It went to Elvington. If I went to Knottsville, yes.

KS: So you had to, get, get over here to

CA: To get to Owensboro, and they got things for the store and delivered things that, you know, from one general store at Knottsville. Well, there was a store at Thruston too, but that's where you used to get things delivered, the stagecoach.

KS: I understand. I hadn't thought about a stagecoach

CA: Uh, that's a picture of the Yellow Creek Church when, the way it was when it was first built. The first pastor.

KS: Was it, is it, the new one in the same place?

CA: Hm?

KS: Is the new church in the same place?

CA: Mm hm. Mm hm. You know, have you seen the new church now? We just build a new church, you know, last

KS: An addition.

CA: Added some more to it. It's grown from, that's the way it was when it was first built.

KS: Okay uh, when you think back to your childhood days, is there any particular story that kind of sticks in your mind about, about when you were a child? Does, does anything?

CA: Uh?

KS: Are you reminded of anything?

CA: Anything?

KS: I know that's going back pretty far, but uh

CA: Not much except that uh, all I ever had to play with was boys. I had uh, my brother was older than me, and the family that lived closest to us had all boys, and I didn't know what a girl looked like until I was ten years old, and then somebody moved in close to us that had a little girl, and we were inseparable for the next ten years after that.

KS: Well great. She became your buddy then, right?

CA: We played dolls, and we learned to sew and we learned a lot of things together.

KS: Now how old were you when you saw first car, or, or your first tractor?

CA: I don't really remember the first car that I remember riding in. Probably the first one I saw belonged to a man at Maceo. His name was Robinson, and he used to pick us up along the road and let us ride, when he'd be going into to Owensboro. And pick up the school kids and let us ride, and we thought that was the greatest thing in the world. We loved him dearly, 'cause he took the time to pick us up and let us ride, you know, how kids, so, have heroes, and he was one of ours.

KS: Uh, do, do you remember the neighborhood it changing much when cars started coming around, did, did that change much around here, or did you really, was it more gradual?

CA: Well, uh, we moved, I moved here when I was seventeen years old. 'Course I was through with school, and other than that and everything, it didn't very many people have cars, for a long time. We didn't have ours, 'course, 'till after we had moved here. I was eighteen years old when we got our first car. I learned to drive then and I been drivin' ever since.

KS: Oh yeah. How'd you get around? How'd you get around before the cars came around?

CA: Walked, or drive a horse and buggy, ride horseback, or any way to get there.

KS: Just any way?

CA: We walked a lot of times from home to the church when we'd, be something special, we'd, kids want to go to, and maybe our parents weren't goin', and take a bunch of get together and walk.

KS: Do you remember the flood of 1913?

CA: Remember what?

KS: The flood of 1913.

CA: Yes.

KS: Did that affect many people around here?

CA: We were not, we were not crowded out by the flood. We, I never lived where we had to move from the flood, but many people did.

KS: What did hear about the one in '37? What uh, we learned about this, actually we got ready for doing these interviews. Someone mentioned 1913.

CA: Uh, it, the '37 flood was over the bridge here at Yellow Creek and you, we had an awful hard time getting around, and I was workin' the '37 flood, and we had to go clear around by Durmont and come in a back road around here to get home. We couldn't get home, out 60, for the flood.

KS: Well that is a roundabout way to go through Durmont.

CA: What?

KS: Said that is a roundabout to get here, to go through Durmont.

CA: A long ways to get.

KS: Okay, we were talking about uh, the health awhile ago. Do you remember much about the flu epidemic? Back in 1918.

CA: Yes, I had the flu. And it just, I remember there was an old lady that lived down here I visited a lot, and I went to visit her that afternoon, and feelin' real good, and by the time I

got home, well, well, I was so weak, I just barely got home. It just hit you like that, right now, and it just took all the strength you had.

KS: Do you remember what people did, did for it?

CA: So many people, you know, died. Just hit 'em like that, and they were just gone in a little bit. It was very severe.

KS: Do you?

CA: I was the only one in the family that had it.

KS: Yeah, what did people do for it? Was there anything you could do?

CA: Well, uh, uh, quinine and castro oil, I think was the only remedies you had. {Chuckles} I don't know what the doctor gave you other than that.

KS: Oh. Let's see, back when you were uh, what, what, what were some of the, back in the teens, I guess, when you were, do, do you remember what year it was that you moved in here? When you moved here.

CA: 1918.

KS: 1918? So when you were about a teenager,

CA: I was seventeen.

KS: You were in your teens then.

CA: I was seventeen.

KS: Okay. Uh, what were some of the songs that were around those, in those days? Did you all have much access to music, or?

CA: Oh, I remember "When he wore a tulip and wore a big red rose," and uh, oh, I guess it wasn't too long before we were waltzing. I don't really remember too much about

KS: How, how did people get to hear music back in those days? That's before radio and all that.

CA: Well, uh, before radio you had, the first musical instrument we had was a phonograph with a big morning glory horn and a round disk, and uh, then we had an old organ, which I learned to play, that you pumped with your feet. We had one of those at church and I started playin' at church when I was twelve years old. Played for about the next fifty years.

KS: Kinda lost your piano.

CA: {Chuckles}

KS: What, what was it like uh, you said about that time, you know, you would have gotten married, uh, what was it like for courtship back in those days? Uh, uh

CA: What?

KS: Your, your husband to come, come callin' on you?

CA: Well, I married the boy next door. He wasn't too far away, and he used to walk. Sometimes, he used, and um, he had a horse. Most young men then had a horse, and buggy.

KS: Yeah, but I mean, what was the style then? What were, what were the customs that people, courtship customs that are, things are so different today?

CA: Well, we had parties and, and uh, well, our house was a meeting place, really, and get, couples would get together, play games. We had a "penny box" that stayed here and everybody put their pennies in and when we got, we used to buy uh, a first edition book, and that'd be seventy-five cents, and when we got seventy-five cents, we bought a book, and everybody read it. And uh, I remember the boys used to bring sheet music for the girlfriends to play and everything, and we had, 'course we had a piano, and I played, and we played and sang and, we played Rook and, Parcheesi, and, Flinch and all kinds of games, and

KS: Flinch? Now, now what was, what's Flinch?

CA: We sat and talked, and, we went to the movies a lot.

KS: Was there a movie house around here somewhere?

CA: No. No, we had to go to Owensboro to a movie.

KS: How, how did you get to Owensboro then?

CA: We went by horse and buggy.

KS: Horse and buggy? Was it, was it a long trip? Did that take a while?

CA: Well, it seemed like, it wouldn't seem so long then, 'cause, I mean, uh, we were used to it, and you had to in time, you know, make sure you got there in time.

KS: Well, let's see, here back in the, we've gotten into a little more now into the uh, the 1920s and, the 1920s was when the Klu Klux Klan kinda showed up in some parts of the country, uh, were, were they around in this part of the area or?

CA: Yes, they were. They burned a cross, on the hill, right, cross here from the house.

KS: Really?

CA: Mm hm.

KS: Do you, do you know any of the circumstances about it? Can you tell me about that?

CA: Well, uh, yes and no. I mean, you didn't know much about it, you know. They were very secretive, and they, you'd wake up some morning and find Klu Klux Klan literature on your doorstep.

KS: How, how

CA: It was kind of eerie.

KS: Was this after you married? Or before you?

CA: Before.

KS: Before you were married?

CA: Mm hm.

KS: What did you, do you know about how old you were when, when you first noticed these people? Uh, these kinds of stuff going on?

CA: Well, no, maybe twenty. Something like that. Not long after we moved here.

KS: Uh huh. Did uh, people, how did, how did people react to that? Your neighbors and your friends.

CA: Well, they were scared. People, to have somebody, you don't know who or what was goin' on. You know the Klu Klux Klan were against the Catholic people then, and well, we didn't have any colored people in the neighborhood, that, they were against the colored people, too. We didn't have any in the neighborhood here, but uh, it didn't make you feel very good when something like that's goin' on, around, you don't know, it's kinda eerie.

KS: Did you, did you ever hear of a group that used to do that, they were, what they called themselves, uh, the Possum Hunters?

CA: The what?

KS: Did you ever hear of a group called the Possum Hunters? They did that over tobacco, I think, back in the, back in the same time.

CA: Night Riders.

KS: Night Riders.

CA: Uh, I remember, uh, yes, I heard of them, and know that they existed, but uh, we never had any problems with them. Used to scrape people's plant beds like this, and think that was done at night, too, you know.

KS: We've heard some stories about them from uh, some of the other counties we've been in, where they, they've been pretty active and they call, call themselves the Possum Hunters for some reason here. Uh, the 1920s, uh, it's been, you know, it's been called "The Roaring Twenties" on the national scene there. What was it, what was it like uh, around here? Was it that much of a "Roaring Twenties" or?

CA: No, I don't remember anything unusual or, don't know why they called it the "Roaring Twenties."

KS: Well, I guess in the big cities it might have been uh,

CA: I guess

KS: A lot goin' on, with uh, uh, did you, do you remember much about Prohibition?

CA: Well, uh, I know everybody that wanted liquor, got it. And uh, 'course moonshine, oh, a lot of people made moonshine. Knottsville was one of the moonshine capitals of the country then, and um, I've seen them. They had a hiding place up the road here. One person would uh, bring a jug of moonshine and set it out and after a while somebody else would come along and pick it up. And you went to a party then, there's always somebody that had a coat with big pockets and everything, I mean, Prohibition was sort of a failure as far as, I mean, you know, gettin', well, people that couldn't buy liquor couldn't go far away, they couldn't go to a bar and buy liquor, well, there was always somebody around the party that had it, you could get it.

KS: What were, what were parties like in these days?

CA: Well, we played games, much like the square dances are now, games like choose your partner, play uh, squares mostly, "Skip to my Lou" and all the games like that, very active.

KS: Did uh, did uh, Thruston have any bars or anything like that, that had to close?

CA: No, no. No, we never had any, a bar in Thruston.

KS: Okay, so it didn't affect uh, Thruston that much?

CA: Yes, Thruston was a, a fine community. Everybody most owned their homes, and there weren't any real rich people. There weren't any thieves and robbers. Everybody was about at the same limit. Everybody went to church. One church or the other. Most, we didn't have a Catholic church, until St. Pius came up this way. They were all, they all had to go to Owensboro, but the Methodist Church here and the Baptist Church, most people belonged to one or the other.

KS: Did they get along with each other pretty well?

CA: Yes. We had a very good relationship between the churches. Why, we had a revival, they'd dismiss their service and came to our church and we did when they, and we still have uh, Thanksgiving uh, Service together. The two churches here. Uh the, one year we come to the Methodist Church and uh, when we come, our preacher and our choir, and they have the program, and the next year they come to our church and they have the program, and we still do that. We've always had a good relationship between the churches.

KS: Well, do you, do you remember the dam being built on the Ohio River back in the '20s?

CA: Huh?

KS: The uh, dam being built on the Ohio River, that's uh, supposed to have been a big deal back in the day there?

CA: Yes, uh, my husband worked on the dam.

KS: Did he?

CA: And uh, that was a big thing then when the dam was built.

KS: Can you tell me a little bit about it? What, what, what did your husband uh, what did he think about that, uh?

CA: Well, that, that was before we were married, but he, I don't know, uh, 'course it was all built with brick and mortar an', all, I don't know how to tell you much about the building of it, but I remember the

KS: I mean, how, how, how did he, how did he run into a job like that?

CA: Well, it wasn't hard to get a job in those days. I don't know now 'cause he was a farmer, 'n I don't know how he ran into the job. I don't know. He worked over there

KS: How long did he work there?

CA: Oh, probably through the winter season. One year, maybe, 'n then back to the farm.

KS: I imagine it's cold work on the river in the winter.

CA: Yes.

KS: Well, but, let's see, now, I believe you, you told uh, you mentioned you worked at KenRad, in the other interview, that came in the '20s. Can you tell me a little bit about that?

CA: Well, uh, it used to be, you know, girls didn't work away from home. And that was about the first thing that come to Owensboro that hired girls. And I started workin' there in 1927. There were fewer than a hundred girls working there then.

KS: And how old were you then?

CA: Oh, in '27, I was twenty-six. And uh, uh, they made radio tubes, and 'course that was work that girls could do. It was tedious and little parts and everything you worked with. And I drove to work, and home everyday. Had four girls that rode with me that probably paid for the gasoline, and, but they only got fifteen cents an hour for starting, then, but it wudn't very long 'til they got, 'til you got on piece work and did a little better than that. But I worked there fifteen years and my uh, time rate was only sixty cents when I quit. And I was doin' special, work for, engineers and things then.

KS: That would have been about in the '40s, I guess, then?

CA: '42. When I quit.

KS: That's a long time.

CA: And there were more than six thousand working there then, by that time. And then 'course, you know, we lost the radio tubes business and things, things changed when television and everything.

KS: What about the uh, in the '40s? Now uh, it would have been all geared up for the war, I guess.

CA: We worked ten hours a day, sixty hours a week and drew nine dollars. {Chuckles}

KS: This was during war time, World War II?

CA: And uh, we used to uh, get really excited. Our boss used to tell us somedays, when we making tubes, that they were goin' to, where they were goin' today, and everything. 'Course we were doin' our part for, for the, I guess at that time it was, I think they actually, they may have come that, they worked so many women, I guess, that the men were, the boys were all, in the army, and anyway this was work the girls could do. But uh, we thought it

END TAPE1, SIDE1

TAPE1, SIDE2

CA: …there was a lot of people that didn't think very much of it. They thought they ought to stay home. Mind their own business. They're like now, you know, they don't, women marry easier now, but they still think some things are not women's work, but a lot of people didn't think too highly of women voting.

KS: Was that a big deal around here?

CA: Was what?

KS: Was that a big deal around here, that

CA: Well, yeah.

KS: Women, talk about

CA: Yes, a pretty big deal. Some women didn't care whether they voted or not. Didn't, you know, weren't very civic minded, but I was. I voted. Voted every election year. I haven't missed one since, you had to twenty-one then to vote.

KS: I see. Do you remember seein' a, seein' an airplane the first time? Did you ever, do you remember much about then?

CA: I think the first airplane I ever saw was at the fair. We, like that was where you first saw them mostly was at the fair. Daviess County Fair, and uh, that was a great thrill to go 'n touch an airplane, 'n see it, 'n hear it explained 'n everything 'n, and then uh, oh it wudn't too long, I guess, before somebody come through with a little plane takin' people up, and I went up in one when, when they were quite new.

KS: About how old were you when you did this?

CA: Oh, I really don't know. In the '20s, I guess, early '30s, maybe.

KS: Wow, was that just a biplane, a, a two-seater?

CA: Yes, a little tiny, things and, I'd be scared to death to go up in one now.

KS: Where, where did you get in it?

CA: Hm?

KS: Where did you get in it? Where'd you do this?

CA: Well, like you do in a car.

KS: No, I mean, I mean like did you, was this, was this at fairgrounds, too, or?

CA: No, it was um, let me see, what was that that, I guess, when we went up, I guess they had a, an airport, by that time. I guess it was at the airport, that we

KS: Over on the east side of town?

CA: Mm hm. Before, had the plane, came and picked us up. I don't remember them takin' you up from the fairgrounds. That was more just to show.

KS: Do you remember that airplane factory the man had for awhile here? Did you ever hear about that?

CA: Mm, I don't know anything about it. I don't know, you know, know.

KS: There was a man that had a factory in the, in the '20s, the mid-'20s, that ended up crashing on Frederica Street there uh, into his plant.

CA: I remember when the plane fell here, "n

KS: That's the one I'm talkin' about.

CA: But uh

KS: That the one I'm thinking about.

CA: That, of course, was all in the newspapers and all, all the talk and everything for a long time, about that.

KS: That was, what, 1930 or something like that?

CA: Mm hm. Downtown.

KS: Did, did you ever hear anything about that robbery, bank robbery out at West Louisville? Back in the 1930s.

CA: Yeah, my father was on the jury when

KS: That's right. I saw that in the article. Tell me about that

CA: Down there

KS: the ??

CA: That was uh, very exciting, too, and at that time to have a woman connected with a robber was really, I mean, you know, 'n she must've been very beautiful. She was small, and I remember them sayin' that they called her "Ninety Pounds of Dynamite." I think she held a gun while the robbery was goin' on, but anyway, she, she, she must've been something else for a woman at that time.

KS: It's was a, it was a big deal in those days.

CA: Yes, yes.

KS: Okay. Did you all have any crime like that ever around here, uh?

CA: Uh.

KS: Or any kind of?

CA: No, I don't remember us ever havin' any, real crime of any kind around.

KS: Okay, now, after you married, you know, what, what was home life like for, for a young couple setting up their uh, setting up their home?

CA: Oh we didn't get to go to housekeepin'. We had to, I had to stay to take care of my father and mother. 'Course he had to take care of his father. People then took care of their own. There weren't any homes or any places to stay. You took care of your own. Well, we were, when we ready to get married, well, he uh, Dick said and everything, that his father was

paralyzed, and he had to stay home to take care of him. Well, we thought that wouldn't last very long. We'd just wait, and of course I was workin', and I didn't want, he couldn't leave home, so we just waited to get married, but that lasted seven years.

KS: Oh.

CA: And he had, and then by that time, my father was disabled, and I couldn't leave home, so then, after his father died, you know, well, he moved over here then 'n, and we didn't go to housekeepin'. I still use some things that were my mother's and father's, but it was awfully hard to get started. You had to, dig, 'n make things, 'n uh, do orange crates with the bricks 'n anyway you could to get by, but uh, they did and were happy anyway.

KS: Did you all have any children?

CA: What?

KS: Did you have any children?

CA: No, we didn't have any children.

KS: So uh, what, what, what did uh, young couples around here do for uh, for entertainment, uh, uh, did you have other young couples you hung out with or?

CA: Well, everybody went to church, and they went to the fairs and things that were at the church, and, and still had parties 'n things like that and then uh, the people down next door to us, we used to play Rook with at night, 'n sometimes we wouldn't get a game finished and we'd have to quit at ten o'clock, 'cause some had to go to school, and some had to go to work, and uh, leave the table 'n everything 'n come back the next night 'n finish 'n, then when you worked, the way we worked 'n everything, you were ready to go to sleep at night. You didn't have to have very much entertainment.

KS: I know how that is. I guess, that you were working at KenRad now?

CA: I worked three years after I married, and then uh, quit, stayed farmed the rest of the time.

KS: What, what year did you all get married?

CA: What?

KS: What year was it when you all got uh?

CA: '39.

KS: Well, let's see here, here do you hear much about uh, the '30s, the Depression and all that?

CA: Well, it, it, the Depression was pretty rough. It, I was workin' during the Depression and um, we went to six hours a day, in order to give more people work, and uh, there were many families where there was only that one girl working. What she'd bring in was all they had. 'Course I was on the farm and we uh, lived off what we made, off the farm, 'n it wasn't as hard on us as it was on some of the people that lived in town. Well that one girl was, that was all the income that they had for a long time, and we worked, I went to work at six o'clock and worked 'til twelve, and then another crew came on at twelve and worked 'til six in order to give, see, we had before that one, we'd been working ten hours a day. Well, that, we worked then went to six hours a day in order to give more people work.

KS: Do you remember the Works Progress Administration being around here?

CA: The what?

KS: Do you remember the WPA being around here much?

CA: Well, they were, down, uh, they worked on the roads, like cuttin' weeds 'n things like along, 'long the roads.

KS: Okay. What was, what was it like on the farm then? So it wasn't as bad as it was in town?

CA: Well, uh, farmers always raised what they ate, and everything, and you always lived well. You didn't have any money, or, things, very much, but then you knew you was goin' have something to eat.

KS: Wasn't as hard then.

CA: Yeah, you weren't goin' be hungry.

KS: Alright, how would it, how would it compare to today, farming in those days?

CA: Well, everything was done then with horses 'n, or small tractors 'n, my father never owned a tractor. My husband did, 'course had machinery 'n everything on down, but way back in farming days it was all done, I remember plantin' corn in this field right here by the side, must have took my daddy, and me and two mules to plant one row of corn. He laid it off 'n I planted with a little ol' one horse planter along with a mule, and I sat here and watched those boys plant corn last year sixteen rows at a time, cross there, the same field.

KS: Yeah, it's, it's changed a little bit. A lot of things have happened

CA: Changed quite a bit.

KS: What do you remember about the coming of electricity? Do you remember getting electricity?

CA: That was the greatest thing that ever happened.

KS: What about that?

CA: It was 1937 when electricity came, 'n my husband was instrumental in the, securing electricity, I mean, he was uh, oh how you describe him, but I mean, interested in things. He belonged to Farm Bureau and he was Vice President of the Farm Bureau when he died, and he worked at things, at community projects, and things, and he worked at helping to get electricity, 'n that made all the difference in the world. My sister-in-law lived in the city, lived in Detroit when she came back home, she said she felt that was the greatest thing that she, when she saw lights twinklin' over the country, she thought that was the greatest change that happened, since she left the country, but that brought so many things that we hadn't had before, made it possible to have, that we hadn't had before. More things than lights, 'course it brought good light.

KS: What was…

CA: And

KS: What was your husband's name?

CA: What?

KS: What was your husband's name?

CA: William T. Abell, that uh

KS: Okay.

CA: Bill, Bill.

KS: That's a, that's a beautiful old photograph.

CA: What?

KS: Said that's a beautiful old photograph. That's a

CA: I love it. He had that made for me one Christmas. I believe I's about thirty years old when that. He was very progressive.

KS: Is that right. So did you, so did you get it in '37 then? Did you all get electricity then?

CA: What?

KS: In '37, did you get electricity that year also?

CA: Um

KS: Or did it take a while to get around?

CA: No, it, that was when it first came. No, we didn't get it until, well, I guess in the '40s sometime, before, it was after I was married before we got electricity. You had to have the houses wired, you know 'n, that is of course when this house was built, it wudn't, you didn't, know anything about, electricity, and everybody had to have their houses wired 'n, it was quite, a hassle to get electricity, to get on the lines, and everything. Took a while before everybody got it. At first it was just a dear thing, like businesses and things like that that got it.

KS: Do you remember getting your first telephone?

CA: Well, we had had a telephone a long time ago, but uh, uh, that was uh, I don't know, you used to have a, exchange and you called through the exchange, 'n all that, you know, but then we hadn't had one for a long time until, after electricity 'n everything, and then we got a phone put in.

KS: The exchange. I, I heard one person describe it as sort of like uh, your, your local news station.

CA: {Chuckles}

KS: You call up there to see what was happening.

CA: Yes. {Chuckles} Well, of course uh, they had uh, uh, a girl, usually, as operator, you know, at the station, and 'course she knew everything that was goin' on. She listened in on all the, and they had a party line, well, everybody on the party line listened in to know what was goin' on, or

KS: Heard a few secrets on that telephone. Well, what, what, what was it like around here during the war, during World War II? Uh, was it uh, did you have rationing, that type of thing?

CA: Have what?

KS: Rationing, uh, during World War II. What was life like around here while all that was goin' on or did you even notice it?

CA: Well, um, it wasn't, I guess, maybe terribly noticeable, but then, of course the draft. Everybody had to register for the draft, you know, and uh, my husband didn't pass, for the draft. He had uh, arthritis 'n, had a stiff leg 'n, you know, it almost broke his heart because he didn't pass.

KS: Mm hm.

CA: 'Course then they, every, everybody wanted to be physically fit, I mean, you know, even if they had to go, 'course we carried signs on our cars that said uh, "If you don't like America, boats leave every so often, for, Russia 'n, " Everybody was real.

KS: Mm.

CA: Well that, and we were makin' radio tubes then, for our men that were, you know, believin' that we're workin' then. Everybody had a soldier. All, all the girls had a soldier boyfriend.

KS: Did you hear of the soldiers coming in from Camp Breckinridge much?

CA: Did what?

KS: Did you hear of the ones coming in from Camp Breckinridge much? Did they come to town or?

CA: Um, I remember them being there. I didn't have any contact, with them. Now my sister-in-law and on the farm, they had, they used to bring the prisoners out to do farm work. They had some of 'em worked on the farm. And uh, they were, you know, quite nice.

KS: Was that around here?

CA: They, were well behaved 'n, the ones they had, 'course were glad to get out of the camp to work on the farm. I remember my sister-in-law said they asked her, for uh, for a paper bag, that they had a little dog that they came to want to take the bones back to 'n, you know, they were, well, they were just like our, my, our nephew that spent eight months in a, prison camp overseas. He was shot down in a plane. They were well treated 'n, and uh, here uh, he had some pretty horrible stories to tell about the camps, but here, the ones that were here, well, they were just bein' kept, out of the fighting lines, that was all, I mean, they was

KS: These were German soldiers or?

CA: Germans, mm hm.

KS: Where, where did they, your sister-in-law, said they worked for, for

CA: They lived at Stanley.

KS: Mm hm.

CA: I remember that they used some of it.

KS: Mm. The '30s was uh, supposed to have been a really big time for, for literature; you said you're an avid reader.

CA: For what?

KS: For literature. There were a lot of new books that came out in the '30s, uh, uh, *The Good Earth*, *Brave New World*, some of those, uh, do you remember much about that? Uh, was there, you said that you were a big reader.

CA: Yes, yes, I remember reading *The Good Earth* 'n

KS: Was that kind of an exciting time for, for uh, for people that read, uh?

CA: Yes, yes. We read uh, Zane Gray's books, Westerns, all, those were, we had all those when they were new. Wait for another one to come out. Zane, Zane Gray, we read so much, 'n George Bar McCrutchin.

KS: And you all would uh

CA: And they were all, good, clean, stories. Nowadays you, you don't, so much is trash 'n then, it wasn't like that, when we were young.

KS: Well, is there uh, is there anything that I haven't asked you about that you'd, you'd like to talk about, that you particularly think might be important, that I haven't asked you?

CA: I don't, no, I can't think of anything.

KS: Oh, I was goin' to ask about the first television set.

CA: About what?

KS: The first television. You've uh, you worked at GE, so you might have been making some tubes for TVs.

CA: Yes, I guess we might have made some

KS: Did, did you remember…

CA: "Course our first television was little black and white. Radio, I think, was really more exciting than television by the time, um, I remember, there was a family lived up the road here that had uh, a first radio set that I ever saw, and it had earphones, and we used to walk up there and go up there at night 'n try to, everybody try to see how far away they could get a station 'n, 'n that was very exciting. By the time television came, we had gotten over the shock of thinkin' it couldn't happen, it seemed like, and accepted that more without as much excitement as the radio caused.

KS: About how old were you when this radio first came around? Do you remember?

CA: Oh, I guess, probably in the teens.

KS: How, how, how did, how did you work it, how did, how did it operate?

CA: Had uh, it had to have a battery 'n, 'n uh, earphones, 'n very, well as I remember, very crude kind of things, the first ones, were, and then of course they got 'em in cabinets 'n, everything later on, and then that, but, but before people had electricity, when they had, when everything had to be, battery operated, but they had, they had, and uh, then after we got electricity, well uh, radio, and television 'n everything got electric.

KS: Do you remember some of the early radio shows that you used to listen to back then?

CA: What?

KS: Did, could you, could you tell me about some of the early radio shows that you listen to?

CA: Well, we used to get uh, "Amos and Andy" 'n uh, lot of different programs like that that they we listened to every day like uh, uh, we looked forward to, 'n religious programs 'n things like that that we hadn't had a chance to hear before.

KS: How many people would be gathered around here to listen to it?

CA: Oh, sometimes a whole bunch of people, at first there weren't very many 'n 'course everybody went to listen to 'em, you know, then, and then people begun to get 'em on their own 'n everything, well, they were, got more, remember we got my father his own little radio. He used to sit and listen to, when he was housebound for a long and he looked forward to his little programs, his little radio, was the thing, which he hadn't had anything to do before that, really.

KS: Do you remember when WOMI started broadcasting?

CA: Yeah.

KS: I think it was the first station.

CA: Mm hm.

KS: What, what did people think about that?

CA: Well, that was very exciting for us to have a radio station, you know, that close to home 'n everything, home news. Very proud of that.

KS: Home news. What type of things did they play on the air, uh, was it music all the time or what?

CA: Uh, well, yes, 'n talkin' 'n adverstising and things about like they do now.

KS: Mm hm. Well, that would be a dumb question, I guess. Well, this is, I guess that this just about take care of me. Uh, I hope I've covered everything like, I'm goin' through as much as I can thing of here. Well, how far, how, how often did you go back and forth to town, when you were, when you were a little kid, now, and, and you had to go?

CA: Not very often.

KS: Mm hm. You all had the stagecoach out here. You could

CA: We had uh, a store here at Thruston. A general store, and um, that's where we got our sugar and things that we didn't grow on the farm, and they had piece goods. I remember one year I had four new dresses and all of 'em were red because that was what they had at the store. And my mother used to uh, sell butter, and she'd bring it to the store, at Thruston, and uh, then she'd take up her money in trade. She'd buy her things that we had, and so we didn't go into Owensboro very often.

KS: What once or twice a year, something like that?

CA: Well, yes, maybe. A little more often than that probably, but not really go every week, not my any means.

KS: The uh, store would, would, would barter then? They'd trade with ya?

CA: Oh, yes.

KS: Trade.

CA: Yes, yes. They'd look at what you had to sell 'em, and uh, and you'd take it up in trade. We used to, well, we 'd get a barrel of flour, for winter, you know, when you were gettin' ready for winter, you didn't in town or go out anywhere in winter, and uh, they'd take, you could take your grain to the mill and trade it for flour, and then uh, we could uh, we had a mill here at Thruston, too, and you could uh, bring, I can remember ridin' horseback to the, mill with a sack of corn, and then you could uh, either, if, if you had money you could pay for your grindin' and get all of your meal, or you could, they call it a "toll", and they could take so much of your, percentage of your corn for the grinding and you got the rest in meal. And then we'd buy sugar by the hundred pounds 'n, and uh, get ready to hole up like a possum in the winter.

KS: Was that pretty much what people did do?

CA: Uh huh, and uh, uh, somebody in the neighborhood usually raised uh, cane 'n uh, made molasses 'n we'd buy molasses.

KS: Did you hafta, did you still walk to school, uh, when it was wintertime?

CA: Yes, I walked to school all, my school days.

KS: All the time.

CA: Mm hm. Oh, sometimes when it was real rainy 'n real bad, my daddy'd hitch up the horses so he could take us, not very often, we, we pretty tough little kids, we walked, we'd meet uh, past two houses, the, on the way in, all kids get together 'n play along the road 'n have fun 'n, if somebody had a turnip patch, why we always had turnips 'n, then there was one place that had a orchard, and uh, uh, we'd get apples off the ground 'n, always we went through the orchard 'n they didn't care. 'Course I guess they couldn't do anything with them any more than what they wanted themselves 'n they didn't care how many we had, so, we always had plenty to eat.

KS: Sounds like fun, now.

CA: {Chuckles} We'd take a turnip and somebody usually had a pocketknife 'n hold it by the top 'n then peel back the, peel the turnip back 'n then eat that, as you went along home. 'Course you'd start home from school you was always starved.

KS: Turnips. Raw turnips. I don't know about you Carrye.

CA: First thing we hollered when we got home from school was "Momma", then Momma was always there, and had something to eat. Now kids go home and nobody home 'n, and uh

KS: My momma always was.

CA: It's a big difference, I guess, now, from what not having had kids, I don't know much about the schools now, but

KS: What, what did momma give you when you came home?

CA: Oh, she'd have cookies and whatever, bread 'n butter, and used to have uh, clabbered milk. We…

KS: Now what was that?

CA: We, well… It was good, and with brown sugar, sprinkled that with brown sugar.

KS: Clabbered milk?

CA: Mm hm. Clabbered milk. She'd take the cream off of it. Strained it in, to crocks, we had milk crocks then, and then she'd save uh, crock of milk, you know, to clabber, so she'd have that for us, and then we sprinkle that with brown sugar, dive in, that was really, that was fun.

KS: Sounds rich.

CA: And then fruit, if we had apples 'n, whatever, guess, well, when we'd have 'em when got home, but she'd always had uh, you know, you didn't have too big a lunch 'n time you'd walked to school 'n walked home, and then you had nothing to eat but that little lunch you had, you'd starve, when you got home.

KS: Yeah, I can imagine.

CA: I worked in a lunchroom, one, when they first had the lunchroom at school over here, I worked as the helper in the lunchroom over there. That was our first hot lunches that we knew anything about.

KS: What, what time was this now? What year do you think you this might have been.

CA: Oh

KS: Just, just guessing.

CA: I don't remember what year the school was built. I remember my daddy hauled the first load of bricks for the, consolidated school over here, and then I worked about the first year that the school was built in the lunchroom, the helper. I don't remember what year.

KS: Do you know how old you were about then?

CA: No, not very old. I guess a teenager, in that. I got to scrub the oven 'n do the, dirty work. I didn't do any cookin'. I was just the helper. Worked for fifty cents a day, at, but I could walk over to the school 'n at the end of the week, I had two dollars and a half, so that was pretty good for a kid in those days.

KS: Yeah, that probably was a pretty good wage, wasn't it?

CA: Now, they won't mow your yard for

KS: {Chuckles}

CA: They want five dollars an hour now to do anything.

KS: Movies these days cost five dollars. It's expensive being a kid.

CA: Yeah, I guess it is. But, I mean, we didn't have, a lot of things the kids have nowadays. I don't understand now that kids don't think that they can do anything, but they're not innovative. They don't, we'd make things to do for ourselves 'n, uh, entertained ourselves 'n, uh, we were happy. I think we're happier than kids are now. All they know is they want to drive 'n want to run through the shoppin' centers 'n everything. Well, 'course we couldn't do all that.

END TAPE1, SIDE2