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TAPE1, SIDE1

KEVIN EANS: This is Dora Landrum and we are going to start with a question about the Stock Market Crash of 1929. Uh, what do you remember about that? What we spoke a little bit about in the beginning.

DORA LANDRUM: Yes.

KE: Before.

DL: Well, I remember that I was at college then. I belonged to uh, a debating team and much of our debates were about politics, and uh, I remember the impact of um, the banks closing.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: For reorganization and how um, that the people were uh, excited about it, and some demanding their money, and uh, well, I, I really don't think in a small that, that people lost their money.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: But it was reorganized and then the uh, the FDIC, the federal insurance

KD: Mm hm.

DL: came in.

KE: Do you know of anyone who lost a lot of money during the Crash?

DL: No, I don't. You see, I was in a rural area. I just remembered um, the excitement of people who did have a lot of money, telling that they jump out windows. My husband that I was dating him at the time

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And uh, he uh, pretty much kept up with all that.

KE: Hm. Did uh, did you or anyone you knew expect the Depression or foresee any kind of trouble with the economy?

DL: Well

KE: Before this happened.

DL: Um, actually I was in a rural area. We weren't depressed. We always had hard times, you know.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And if the tobacco crops would fail, you know, then it would be a depression, where we were. And the, the Great Depression um, in my judgment, and working in it, um, was greater in the city.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: You know, where, where people didn't have jobs. But people in the rural areas could still eat and they had their homes and a lot of the sharecroppers then picked on the farms, and uh, and they were always um, in hard times. But then uh, but that's the area I worked in.

KE: Okay. Uh, what do you remember about uh, Franklin Roosevelt and the New Deal social programs that he introduced?

DL: Well, it was all, it was all new. Uh, the country was uh, depressed. Uh, people um, they owed a little money or a lot of money. They just couldn't pay it back, and people didn't have a lot of stuff, where as a young college student, I, I would notice that, you know. They would owe something and there was no chance of paying it and then their creditors would be after them, and uh, I, I don't know that, that the New Deal and all of the programs that came in with all that uh, were, helpful or gave people that much more money, but it seems that it uh, made people have more self worth and they, they felt better about themselves. {Coughs} They felt like something was being done for them, you know, and the opportunity.

KE: Hm.

DL: I just, I felt kind of like they ought to earn their income, and, and of course the program started, it was an emergency relief and it never was set up for a permanent program, but it was turned into that, and expanded, because it was Kentucky Emergency Relief.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: That's what it was.

KE: Were you involved in some of the programs?

DL: I was Home Visitor. I was certified and whether they could get this um, relief or not.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And they um, they didn't get much money, you know. A little money went into these homes, um, but they um, they did start giving out commodities, and, and I still think that that's not a bad idea because most of that they gave out then, they are giving out now, uh, it's the surplus from the farmers, and it will either be uh, decay or get too old or just, you know, and, and

so I, I was pretty much for the commodities and the other programs. I think that uh, the working group of people helped, you know, to have someone go in. I just graduated from Campbellsville College, and uh, I had been teaching in the rural school and I had a school for the next year, but they uh, the people in charge of it called me in and asked if I would be a um, a Home Visitor.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And uh, of course I, I stood a chance to make as much out of my mileage as I made teaching school.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: I hated to give up school teaching. I loved it. But uh, I owed money for my college education and I had to have my money and I enjoyed this too. I enjoyed visiting; it was all in a rural area. On bad roads. I've ridden mules and horses and everything to get to their homes.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And uh, I, I would write family histories and much of those histories, I presume that we all wrote about families were, were catalogued and kept somewhere, you know. You'd have to run down everybody in the family, and whether or not they were able to help, you know, and tell the condition of the house and the families, and

KE: This was a social program?

DL: It was a social program.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: With the Home, I was a Home Visitor.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And uh, I got caught up in, in the program, very much, you know.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And a lot of things that, that we did, we, we had um, we introduced uh, water bath, a hot water, hot water steam canning.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: In the canners. Now I never canned in my life. I was uh, the youngest of five girls and all I did was wash the fruit jars, and uh,

KE: Mm.

DL: But they all laughed at me teaching me how to can, but of course I could read {Chuckles}and, and I did that and uh, and the people learned how to put up their food there, you know,

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And uh, and it was just a great program, I thought. And then I had a sewing project, in, in an abandoned school that several women worked for salary in it. And they made things like diapers for babies, and babies clothes and then we could use that when the babies were born, in the . . . So it, it wasn't all just hand, handout, you know.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: Um, it, it turned out to be a pretty good program.

KE: What about the uh, the WPA and the CCC? How did they affect uh?

DL: Well, I, I, I, uh, go ahead. Excuse me.

KE: Hartford and the surrounding area?

DL: Uh, well, uh, at the time that it started, you certified people for it. I was in Taylor County.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: But uh, um, and I think that I told you before uh, in the interview that uh, I would find healthy young um, men in the family, but um, that I would um, do most anything to get him in the CC, because there were families that just perpetuated uh, early marriages and settling in the community and hard times.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And there, there was no limit to the education to get them in this program, and so I would beg the parents and talk to the child and try to inspire him and get him uh, uh, willing to leave the nest, you know.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And so that it is the way the CC, a lot of 'em you had to do, but some of them were eager and willing to go. And then later after I, I moved to Harford here, um there was a large CCC camp right here, right over on the next street.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: Uh, just right here in my neighborhood, then, and um, but we had uh, high ranking uh, Generals and officers from the Army here training these people. And with the camps they were uh, they had uh, temporary shelter in uh, tents

KE: Mm hm.

DL: In the light, and it, it was a great uh, boost to the economy here in Harford to have it.

KE: What sort of projects did they work on?

DL: The CC camp now we are talking about.

KE: Mm.

DL: Well, they, they used them extensively in uh, conservation. The bottom lands down North Creek here that flood the uh, the countryside, you know, the land next to, to the river, and they just went out and uh, dug ditches, you know. Just manually, a lot of 'em, and, and, and then they planted a lot of trees.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: Pine and different kinds of trees, and that was one project but I am sure there are many others. Worked on county roads, but that was mainly WPA that did that. Works Progress Administration.

KE: Did the WPA improve a lot of roads in the Hartford area?

DL: Well, I'm sure that, that they did uh, uh, work, work on them, but mainly in the county that I, I came from, because I was trying to get my, get my car over the country roads, and, and I would uh, tell the men that they would get more money if they would take their teams and the wagons and go down to the creek and get the old creek gravel and fix these roads 'til you could get over them, and they could, too, you know. 'Course I was a little bit selfish in that, but, but uh, I, I set up projects like that. I could do that myself.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And uh, but here in Hartford, the monument to them was uh, I don't know how they ever did it, but they built this courthouse down here on the square. That was all built with WPA labor.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: I know our, our newspaper office was next door to the clinic. A young doctor sat out in the yard every day waiting to get a patient with a broken back or something. Those men

rolling the wheelbarrows up the ramp, you know, to do all that work. But he, he, he, they never had any serious injuries, and uh, and that was built, and then the streets, the concrete streets all over town. The City Hall here, the old City Hall? That was built with WPA.

KE: Mm.

DL: And, and about that time, I don't think this was WPA, but the schools uh, were uh, uh, consolidated and the little schools were built all around, but I, I'm not sure that that was connected with WPA.

KE: What do you recall about business conditions during the Depression?

DL: Well, of course, uh, uh, there wasn't much money, and uh, I suppose that uh, it was pretty hard times. I, I didn't have a lot to do, do with that. Later I worked in some of the businesses downtown, but this, I kept books for a large uh, hardware and machinery, sold machinery and hardware. They even, even sold thrashing machines. You never saw one, I guess.

KE: No.

DL: Well, it's where they go around a steam engine and, and you know, took the uh, thrashing machine and thrash the wheat crop, and uh, they even sold that, but they, they didn't know anything of the Depression, this place, because it was too big. And uh, I'm sure that they uh, that some of them that went broke, you know, but evidently they, they survived, most of them in little town where I was.

KE: Mm hm. What about the farm economy? How did it compare with today's farm economy?

DL: Oh the uh, the government programs uh, uh, have certainly done a lot for the farm economy and uh back then it was uh, more or less uh, you, you ever read any of Janice Holt Giles's books?

KE: No.

DL: She wrote on the rural life in Kentucky.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: She lived over in Casey County or Adair County, Kentucky, and she wrote this book on "Forty Acres and a Mule," and that's the way most farms were. They were little farms, and maybe you had a mule or two mules, and you just uh, you just raised what your family would consume mainly.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And I guess a little tobacco crop.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: Some cash crop, about the only cash crop at the time.

KE: Mm.

DL: But uh, 'course farms got larger and uh, the government subsidies and farming is all together different than it was then. It was hard time sure enough, these farmers would really think something if they were back then.

KE: Mm hm. What do you remember about uh, the establishment of TVA and rural electrification? How did it affect you and your family?

DL: Well, I guess that's one of the uh, uh, great things that, that, that hit the farms was the um, electricity.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: Um, it just, just changed uh, everything. Everybody had a street light on a pole, and the whole countryside was, was lighted, you know. Uh, it was one of the big things, rural electrification. And something that maybe isn't uh, uh, so much in government, well, I guess that this is in one of Roosevelt's programs is uh, homemakers. I, I've noticed that in, in the rural areas, that they used to, you could tell a rural woman and a city woman, but you cain't do it any more, you know. As soon, as soon as the homemakers and we have these home agents that people work with them. The could um, make their clothes and out-dress the women in town, and they had the uh, all of the appliances in their homes, and it was just a big change. Just from uh coal oil lamps and uh, the old icebox or no ice at all.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: I can remember now that we got ice once a week, out in rural areas.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And you just had the cold well water and if you, and your milk, you'd just put it down on ropes in a cold well somewhere. We had two or three wells on the farms. And so

KE: So life changed

DL: Changed drastically. Very drastically.

KE: After rural electrification. What were some of the other things uh, that uh, before electricity came about, was life like without it?

DL: Well, always it was the darkness. You know, you could walk in pitch dark around the houses, and uh, and coal lamps were used and uh, I hardly know how to answer that. It, it was just from darkness to light. You know?

KE: That much has changed.

DL: That much has changed. Mm hm. Yeah. But we had, we had great times. I, I don't regret uh, any of the, the now we would call hardships uh, because in, in the winter, my, mother would always knit wool socks and things for us, and we went out and tracked rabbits and run over hills, and uh, just have great times, and sleigh ride, off dangerous hills and everything, so it was great fun, but still life was very different.

KE: Mm. Yeah. What uh, what do you remember about labor conditions? The creation of the CIO then, the forty hour work week, minimum wage and things like this?

DL: Well, my father started out in West Virginia as a, a, he never did work in the coal mines but he worked in the timber that shored up the mines. And, but any time there was any strike, it would uh, it would affect that too, because the unions were just coming in. It was very rough, and uh, uh, families would really suffer. They, they couldn't uh, they couldn't get food, you know, but we had a large family. We had seven children and my father and mother and we lived in a company house, you know, I as a small child. Now I wasn't over five, four or five, but I remember um, that they would come at night and roll in uh, barrels, and in that barrel would be commodities. There would be a barrel of flour to make the bread and, and things. People just, and I, I can, I can remember all of that and know that is was serious times, but people worked long hours, and they, they, in terrible conditions, and uh, so uh, it was the revolution all right, all the way through, and I, I just don't know how, how to answer you.

KE: Hm. Do you remember anything about the uh, the last public hanging in Owensboro, the hanging of uh, in 1936 Rainey Bethea

DL: Well, I remember this much. Um, I married in 1935 and moved here and my husband was with the newspaper. At the time we didn't own it.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And I remember he got up at four o'clock in the morning to go with others over to see that. And he saw it. He witnessed it.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: Yeah. And that was uh, pretty rough seeing. I know it made a lasting impression and uh, he thought that was uh, uh, a bad way to do it.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: Yeah. He never was for it, hardly uh, capital punishment but certainly the hanging without. But he said that there were crowds and drinking and carousing and everything there, and the poor man going to be strung up by the neck, you know. He was, he was right there.

KE: Do you remember anything else he may have said about it?

DL: No, I can't. I guess that I could go back to the newspapers, could have and run it down. You know, down in the library, they, they've got one of these uh, well, I don't know what it is. Machines that all of our papers are on film.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And you can, and you can run it backwards and forwards. You know, you can put those films in.

KE: Like microfilms?

DL: Microfilms. That's it And it was given to the library in honor of my husband, because he served, after he retired, he served about uh, seven or eight years on the board, chairman of the board at the library here and did, did much fighting for it to finance it and keep it and everything. And so when this came in, they dedicated a plaque to it down there after he died all of us came in, and I, and I have a picture of me made for the paper in front of the machine.

KE: Uh, your husband uh, didn't make a very big impression on him, the uh, or not it was more of a negative impression?

DL: Oh, yes. Yes, he, he thought it uh

KE: Was more of a carnival-type atmosphere?

DL: Yes. Yes, it was. It was just, like the way he described it, it was that, but uh, and I don't think that you could have ever gotten him to go to another one.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: You know. You know, he would go to almost anything but he, he wasn't hankering to go to a hanging.

KE: What do you remember about the flood of 1937? How did it affect you? The surrounding community?

DL: Oh, I know, I think that we uh, we were, got out a two-page paper that week because there's just no power, and I think we, we got that paper published in a flyer, a sheet, and called it a paper because we had never missed an issue while we were there thirty-two years. Um, we had a large um, a real old printing press. We had a printing office, too. Printed it. And

um, and I think by hand that the boys just turned that out, and got out a paper and described the flood. That's all that was in there.

KE: But they printed it by hand, this one issue?

DL: This one issue, because there was no power.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And uh, it was kind of a scary times, and uh, swell water everywhere.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: Not adequate to drink, you know, but uh, as I, if I can remember, there were no casualties, but uh, homes were flooded and places around town where there are high water marks, you know. Um, our, our, we, the town went really short of bread especially and some other staples, and uh, some men ran a boat from here out to the little, the first little hill as you go out of town, you know, where you turn on Livermore Road. They would go out there and uh, but the bread truck could get there, and they would bring bread in by boat. And uh, people were very concerned, I mean the whole town was, was uh, excited because they had so many people in Louisville, elderly people and all, you know, in the flood. In fact, we had an aunt there and that we just didn't know whether she could make it or not 'cause she was on her own and very old. And we, then after the flood, we moved her here.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: But uh, I, I don't know what else to tell you.

KE: Mm. So how long did the high waters last? To Hartford was totally cut off?

DL: Well, I think it rained a week, and then it was some time before the waters went down, you know. It just poured. The rain. And uh, maybe a couple weeks.

KE: Did people get around on a boat pretty much?

DL: Yeah, I

KE: Were the streets all flooded?

DL: Well,

KE: What was uh, or just Hartford, considered an island?

DL: It really was. Yes. We were cut off from Dundee. Do you know where Dundee is, going up that way?

KE: Mm hm.

DL: Going up that way. But we were cut off there. We were cut off from Beaver Dam, and I'm not sure, maybe Centertown. Maybe they were cut off. I'm pretty sure the iron bridge just out of town, so we were pretty much on an island here. And uh, the houses, next to the river down there, uh, were just about covered. All, you know.

KE: Mm hm. {Pause} What do you remember about the first, uh, or do you remember the first radio broadcast uh, from the station in Owensboro, WOMI? When it first started broadcasting.

DL: No, I can't say that I do. I, I wasn't here. You know, when it did. I'll tell you what I do remember, and I was very thrilled about this, and I was recall When our first little station here went on the air, from Hartford, Kentucky,

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And, and, so it must have been a big thrill when Owensboro did it.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: You know, but I don't remember.

KE: When did the Hartford station start broadcasting?

DL: Now, I can't give you a date on that now. I'm not like my husband. He always had an association and uh, he, so he could just accurately within a month or few weeks give you most any date you ever wanted, but I, I can't do that. I don't know, but it's been several years though.

KE: Uh, the 1930's were a good time for literature and culture with several classics coming out like *The Good Earth* and *Of Mice and Men*, and all written during, you know, the '30s. Do you remember anything about uh, the books or movies, music, anything of the time?

DL: Well um, uh, I remember what an impression *Of Mice and Men* and *The Grapes of Wrath*, those books made a very bad, naughty books, {Slaps something} you know, at the time. Which now, they aren't, they're very mild, you know, and uh, Faulkner's writings, you know, uh, people were excited about his writing. In fact, I have a lot of his books, and uh, uh, I don't know what to tell you. Now what was the question? The last part of it? Let's go back.

KE: Well, just what do you remember about books and music and movies of the '30s.

DL: Yeah. Oh yes. The movies, of course, I started to the movies, and the silent movies, and uh, uh, everything was uh, you had to read it, you know, underneath the picture. And we had a piano player that uh, she played by ear. Could play anything, and she played real jivy music and we had this uh, drummer could play me asleep, and we, we often saw him asleep still

playing and uh, so it was real exciting to go to the movies, and one of the first movies I ever saw was uh, no I can't recall it right now, but anyway, I lived in the country a lot and until I went into town to go to high school. I was uh, probably in my teens before I knew much about movies.

KE: Did uh, did any of the movies that came out in the '30s make and impression on you? Do you remember any specific one?

DL: Oh yes, yes. I remember I cried and cried. *Jane Eyre*, you know.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And uh, I was staying with a family and going to high school when the man took his wife and myself to the movie, and he had aimed to take us out to dinner when the movie was over. He looked at our faces and he said "I don't need to take you anywhere." {Chuckles} We cried and our faces were fallen and it was so sad. And I remember that made a big impression on me. And uh, and the love story. I was about that age.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And Charlie Chaplin. I was very much in love with uh, his antics,

KE: Mm hm.

DL: You know.

KE: What about the music of the '30s? There a particular artist that you recall then?

DL: Well, I guess you'd say that uh, I loved all the old band,

KE: Mm hm.

DL: Band, the uh, the Glenn Miller type, Guy Lombardo and all those, still, still love them. And uh, but we had some

END TAPE1, SIDE1

TAPE1, SIDE2

DL: We were on a line here, with a trucker and then people called him to uh, come and haul for them, you know,

KE: Mm hm.

DL: So that was pretty,

KE: Did uh, your phone ring when uh, his would ring too, also?

DL: Yeah.

KE: Bell was on the exchange?

DL: Yes, maybe. You went by shorts and longs. Say we have a short, a long and two shorts and they would have a short and a long, something like that, and then you know

KE: Mm hm.

DL: You could tell the number, by the way that it would ring, you would know that it was your number.

KE: Uh, any other changes in uh, technology that, that you can recall come about in the '30s?

DL: Hm. {Pause} I'm not sure

KE: The radio. The radio was pretty much in use by quite a few people ??

DL: Oh, yes, yes, but uh, I can remember when we uh, had our first radio and uh, my brother was a student uh, a correspondence course down here and he made one and we could all take turns listening before we got one.

KE: About how old were you then?

DL: Oh, maybe I was eight or ten.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: Something like that. I can remember. But you could get the sound and all on, on, on the way he wired up and brought the radio in. I, I'm just surprised at how he did it, you know.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: Because all of his, he was doing this out of a school out of Chicago. The uh, correspondence. And of course, then we went from the old phonograph to the um, radio and then I remember radio to the television.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: 'Course we still have radio, but uh, and I use it about as much as I do television, to tell the truth.

KE: About when did the uh, Victrola change over to the, the kind of phonograph we have today?

DL: Well, I think it just all with the coming of electricity, you know, and uh, in the, in the farm areas and places where out so far because they didn't , we couldn't run record players like we have now

KE: Mm hm.

DL: Things that we have now. And radios were run by battery all together, you know.

KE: Were they very large batteries or?

DL: Oh

KE: I remember someone at the meeting saying that they could remember having to take the batteries to town to be charged up.

DL: They were uh, they were uh, larger than flashlight batteries, you know.

KE: Mm hm. What do you remember about uh, the rise of uh, Hitler and Nazi Germany and the start of World War II in Europe? Were local people worried that the United States would eventually end up in the war?

DL: I, I really don't think that they were that much concerned. My husband and a few people who were uh, knowledgeable about things that were going on, but uh, Pearl Harbor just floored everyone, you know.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: That was uh, the Japanese were here and they were talking peace and wham, they just knocked us out. In Hawaii, you know?

KE: Mm hm. What were you uh, do you remember where you were and what you were doing when you heard the news that Pearl Harbor had been attacked?

DL: Yes, um, it was on a Sunday and uh, heard it come over the radio. I, I don't, I'm not much on doing work on Sunday, but I would always um, do needlework if I wanted to.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: I was just uh, listening to uh, the radio, and my husband was reading the daily, the Sunday paper and that just came on. Just boom, there it was, you know, but uh, we had been

attacked, and 'course we just followed it day and night after, after that, and uh, uh, oh, the people uh, were just really shocked that we got into it, to tell you the truth.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: You know. And uh, would have liked to have blamed Roosevelt, all, you know, for it, for it, but he was meeting with the Japanese trying to bring about settlement when all this happened.

KE: Yeah.

DL: He was just as surprised as we were, I think.

KE: How did World War II affect you and your family?

DL: Well, I didn't uh, I, I didn't have anyone from my immediate family uh, engaged in war, you know, just really. I had friends and maybe uh, cousins and uh, uh, some relatives that were friends, but my husband uh, was of the age and had the war continued, he might eventually have to go, but due to the fact that he was publishing the newspaper and he was on the Draft Board and many things he was deferred. And so, but um, we followed it closely and I remember the girl that was working for us, her husband was uh, participated in D-Day and shortly after he hit the beaches, he was captured, and I remember when she got the uh, the notice that uh, he was missing in action, and how sad it all was, and uh, others did that too. And then we, we got some uh, real secret information that my husband kept in the safe. I didn't even know that we had it. It was on the atomic bomb.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: What not to if it was ever released, and so when, when uh, they dropped the bomb, that uh, ended the Japanese part of the war,

KE: Mm hm.

DL: He got that out and showed it to us, and uh, that he could keep a secret.

KE: So uh, the government sent uh, sent the information to him at the newspaper?

DL: Yeah, Mm hm. But we were not supposed to publish anything about anything nuclear, any of that,

KE: Mm hm.

DL: But uh, it was uh, I don't know if it was a directive or a threat, something from the government though, that we were not to publish.

KE: Oh, did

DL: But that was it, you know, something was uh, going to break and

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And um

KE: To hold off.

DL: To hold off and

KE: So did, did anyone know about uh, the atomic bomb or know anything about it until it was dropped? Or the Manhattan Project was developing?

DL: As far as I know, the general public didn't know anything to, to that extent. I, I believe that it was generally believed that um, they were working on some more war bombs or something that would uh, help, but uh, I, I don't think that it was just generally believed there's anything like what happened, you know.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: Nuclear bomb.

KE: What uh, what was the generally reaction uh, to the news that the first atomic bomb was exploded?

DL: Well, I don't, we were so, we were so mad at the Japanese for doing all of this to us and all. We didn't have all, I don't think that there was all that sympathy for those poor people who were, were just, you know, what happened to all of those.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: Cremated or just, and, and without uh, much warning or anything. No one could have ever warned them how awful it would have been, you know.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: Uh, but uh, a lot of people were frightened about it right after it happened, you know. Or it could happen to us. Didn't know who had it and everything.

KE: Mm hm. Uh, do you think now looking back that we should have dropped the atomic bomb?

DL: Well, I, I, I personally, I never thought that we should, but uh, you know, there are those that argue that it did end the war by a lot sooner and saved a lot of lives and we had already lost so many, but uh, I was never very much in sympathy having dropped that bomb.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: No.

KE: What about rationing during World War II? What items were rationed?

DL: Oh, just a little bit of everything. Tires and food and clothes. Have you ever seen a rationing book?

KE: Mm hm.

DL: Well, I've still got some of 'em around. You had to have uh, uh, just, just everything. Uh, the little neighborhood store here and both of his sons, the man was elderly, he was growing old, and his sons were overseas. They were in the, they had a real good store going up here.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And I remember what a struggle it was for him to uh, keep that store and keep it going, and uh, he had no one. He lived, this elderly man lived alone, and, and I, I do remember that a lot of times I would go in and there would be a half pound bacon in my sack, you know, because I would, I would cook like, he liked cornbread and cabbage and different things, and take him a hot meal up there. So, uh, not that he gave it to me, but, but uh, I was, I, I didn't suffer as much as some did because these items that would come in, if I weren't there to, there to grab it, well, it would be in a sack for me.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: Pineapples, you know. You couldn't get pineapples, some of those things, just think about all that stuff that you couldn't get.

KE: What was it like to go through the, the rationing? Did everybody have a little less?

DL: Yeah, but I, I really don't uh, uh, think that anybody suffered greatly. We, you know, right now, you, you could be cut off on clothes for twenty years, most people, and they'd still be wearing clothes that they have.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: It, it wasn't uh, I guess the gas rationing and tires. They would wear out, you know, and things that they were, just people, you had some hardships.

KE: Mm hm. Did people resent having to uh?

DL: No, no, not necessarily, I don't believe. They, they would uh, always want the men on, you know, the Rationing Board to um, save for them, you know, and, and they would accuse

them of not being fair and everything, because they had to sometimes decide who would get the tires, for the cars. They always had to be the doctor or someone that uh, was making his living driving to a war plant or something like that, so

KE: Did uh, some people cheat on these rations?

DL: Well, I'm, I'm sure that they did.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: I'm sure they did. Uh, {Pause} they would uh, well, just now for instance uh, I knew this, this woman who, coffee uh, it was an item, you know, and uh, and no, as soon as the war was over, she wanted to sell me five or six pounds of coffee. She had a cabinet in her house just stacked with coffee that was getting stale, and course I wouldn't buy any from her, because she'd bought it up in hoarded it. Stuff like that would go on.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: They wouldn't just get their part that was due them, part to the number in the family or something, but they would go from place to place, and buy the stuff and hoard it. That was the worst thing, and that made shortages, for people doing that, you know.

KE: Mm hm. How did you react when the war ended in 1945? Did the end of the war affect you?

DL: Uh, uh, very much. We lost some of our boys at the print shop, and it uh, and young men around town. Had a number of casualties with uh, friends and uh, and we knew that the war was uh, was winding down, you know, after the march through Germany and, and all of that, but uh, I think the, the most uh, thrilling thing that, that we had uh, at the end of the war was we had a young Methodist preacher here and he rigged up a loud speaker up in the uh, spiral of the cupola of the church

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And he, he read and kept up with things, and we knew that something big was about to break when the Allies, D-Day, when they all got together, and that came as a surprise to everyone, but he said that he was going to, to um, ring the bells of the church when this happened. It was about two o'clock in the morning, and my husband came in to, the refrigerator that was sitting right here, and got a drink of water and came back into the bedroom and he said, "It's happened. Whatever it is big has happened." But we uh, uh, turned on the radio and uh, and kept up with it, stayed up all night, and uh, and we, and that was uh, very exciting.

KE: How did you feel about Russia? Russia and the Communist after the war?

DL: Well, I thought that they were our friends, you know. Everyone uh, uh, did, but uh, near the end of, of the campaign it was uh, shown that uh, that they uh, were mainly just for themselves, you know. Uh, I was fortunate enough after the war to go to Vienna, Austria

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And one of the last places they marched into was there, and the, the Americans were marching from one direction, and the uh, and the Russians from another and they were so brutal and so vile that they would tell us there that the Russians were, that uh, they were just praying the Americans would get there first so that they could surrender to them.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And uh, they did. And uh, then they told us how when the Russians had part of the city, and they would be in the American's part, when they all got out how they danced in the street all night, you know, when we were all gone. I, I don't know uh, I felt sorry for the Russians and uh, uh, fighting in the cold and how they were attacked, and uh, and the hardships that they had to go through with, but I don't know how we got in to all of this being such enemies.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: It just happened and, and they uh, I guess it divided Germany. See we uh, uh, we went in West Germany uh, uh, no, my daughter and I, we wanted to go into West Germany and, and they were build, the summer we were there they were building the wall between East and West Germany.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And uh, they had to airlift supplies into West Germany, and uh, so the authorities in uh, Frankfurt wouldn't let us go. Wouldn't let us get on, just the army planes going in. My daughter was mad, she's a newspaper person. She wanted to go in there whether or not, you know, but I was glad. I just, I didn't want to go into it.

KE: Tell me about your political activities uh, in your uh

DL: Well, I 'm

KE: Campaign for State Senator.

DL: Yes. I uh, like politics, and that's a, it's, on the debate team in college I told you that we debated and a lot of it was about politics. And uh, and I, I just carried through. My, my father was a staunch Democrat, and uh, he was for uh, the party, you know.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: He was for Al Smith, and one of my early remembrances was a poster something like this, like I'm showing you myself,

KE: Mm hm.

DL: On the wall, of Al Smith, and of course my father was never for Prohibition. He did become a, a preacher, but, but he thought that Prohibition kept uh, uh, the people, the stills going on next to his country churches and kept people drunk out there, and disturb part of the worship and he, he, he just thought it all ought to be in the city where the people could not come out there and get it, you know.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And uh, so I don't know. I'm just very political minded, and, and the reason that I got into this race, I didn't give it any thought, but we, we went to this uh, meeting at uh, the old high school building here. Democratic Meeting, and uh, uh, we didn't have a candidate to run against the Republican, and the Republican nominee was uh, uh, in the same church, same town with me, and so uh, none of the men would run, none of the young lawyers or anyone because they knew they couldn't win, so they just mainly for fun and a dare, put my name in and they started handing me change that night, and I couldn't talk them out of it, and so my husband and another Democratic leader said well just, they just pushed me into the race, you see, and my, my husband said that we have the print shop and all of the literature that you'll need, will be furnished her, and we won't have that expensive. And so, they just, the men in the party, I think just for fun, put me out there,

KE: Mm hm.

DL: Really and truly. And then I started campaigning, and uh, going door-to-door in the cities and around and I got uh, like the Rotary Club and the different clubs in the town got behind me over in Breckinridge County

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And pretty much up in Grayson County, and uh, so I'm, just went through it all until, 'til election time, and uh, course I was defeated by the, oh about 1,300 votes. Well, my consolation that night, my campaign manager and my husband said that you came out better than Roosevelt ever did, in these four counties, and I, and that was a little comfort to someone who had lost a race, you know.

KE: Mm. Um, how did people react to a woman running for this position?

DL: Well, I would have done much better, but, uh, uh, it was, well a, a lot of them thought that it was very unlady-like and uh, that it was a man's, men's, man's job.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And uh, and there was uh, there were women who would say that I ought to be home with my children, and not out there making political race and uh, uh, women weren't liberated in those, in those days, 1949. Hadn't heard of that. I was pretty liberated woman because I'd worked out all my life since college, and uh, I felt like I was just about as capable as uh, the men I came up against.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: I could do anything at the newspaper that my husband could. Not as well because he's a trained newspaper man, but uh, uh, I found a lot of prejudice against a, a woman running, and uh, my opponent uh, had had a real campaign in his own party to get the nomination. In fact, he shouldn't have had it really because there was a gentleman agreement in the Republican Party that uh, that they would pass it around. That one time Breckinridge County would have it and then Grayson County and all, and uh, a young lawyer here decided that he was just going to keep having it, and so that, that was really one of the reasons that I won as well as I did in Breckinridge County. They were so totally against him.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: Because of that, and uh, but I, I thoroughly enjoyed it. I went from a size 14 to about a 10, and uh, walked a lot, and uh, went into homes and was given a lot of nice gifts, jams and jellies and um, cushions, and just everything that they had, you know. Just lovely to me. A lot of places, and uh, I learned a lot. And uh

KE: What are some of the other political activities you've been involved with?

DL: Well, I, they used to have a Chairwoman, Democratic Chairwoman and Republican Chairwoman in the county. I don't think that they have it as such now, so that they don't, organize like they did back then. I, I served that as uh, many times and I served as Campaign Chairman for Roosevelt. In about every election, I was either uh, uh, Campaign Chairman in the county or um, a Co-Chairman with someone, say from a larger town, Beaver Dam, a larger, a town outside, and I was Campaign Chairman for Alben Barkley, and I guess of all the people, I've ever uh, met, that he made the greatest impression upon me. And uh, uh, he was a great orator, and uh, and uh, I generally [Coughs} liked him, and uh, and I, I met his second wife, Mrs. Hadley, who was quite a socialite in Washington, and married him after his wife died, you know, and she was with him when he died. You know he died making a speech. Alben Barkley. And I um, had privilege to ride in parades in the car with her. Have her in my home, and uh, just freshen up before we went out, and I don't know, it was just like an exciting things happened, and uh, I will have been uh, a campaign manager for Wilson Wyatt, Henry Ward, and Henry Waterfield, and uh, Clemmons. You just name it. I've worked, and but, but though the thing I served on in the state for Bert Combs, I was on his State Central Committee. Uh, I campaigned

for him here and uh, so I think that Wendell Ford in Owensboro, helped get me on that committee. Now I never did get to do very much, because I found out that the Central, the State Central Committee is run by a few, you know.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And, but Mr. Wilson Wyatt sat down by me once and he says, "Now, you don't get to talk very much, and I want you to make this motion," so he told me what to say. And so I talked a little, but uh, I just think I warmed a seat mainly.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: But I was on it.

KE: Did uh, did more people vote?

DL: Oh, yes.

KE: Than they do now? Than in the '40s?

DL: Oh, oh, I think so. People [Clears throat] took their politics a lot, uh, more seriously. It was divided along the party lines. That's the reason that uh, that a Democrat can never uh, win in this county. Because the old timers wouldn't cross over. That was one thing. If you were a Democrat, that was the way you voted. Down the line. But now, you know, I [Clears throat] Excuse me. I still serve as uh, well I do serve as uh, Election Officer in East Hartford and have been there for about 16 or 18 years. I've been serving there, and I've seen it change very much, coming into the voting machine and everything. And uh, and people uh, they'll cross party lines. And uh, they don't go in there and just pull that lever under the Rooster or the Cabin. They change up, more.

KE: Did uh, did they have voting machines in the '30s and '40s?

DL: Oh, no, we voted secret ballot. Just on a piece of paper and dropped it in a box, and I've known 'em to be three or four days and nights counting votes here.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: Yes, I've helped 'em counting votes at night, and uh, and they, parties were uh, just, ganged around, you know, Afraid that someone was going to cheat the other one, and it was very exciting. I think that politics was much more exciting then than it is now. People take it for granted, and uh, I see people that don't come to vote and while I'm at the, the, Election Officer, I check down through there, and I say "Why don't they vote?" You know.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: I think it's ten percent this last election of the people. We have close to a thousand people in East Hartford, and just no one voted.

KE: Mm.

DL: It's, it's just really sad. Sometimes you can get a little more than fifty percent, but that's all.

KE: Mm. What do you think causes this apathy?

DL: Well, people have learned more about politics, and uh, they read of um, politicians who are, get in trouble or they are not honest and uh, they, they think that they haven't made good on their promises, and just, just get disillusioned with politics. But you can still get it out. If you have a strong candidate, you go out and vote for him. You go haul them. I've gone with, with friends into homes and keep a bunch of children while the other friend took the mother to vote.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: You know. We just aimed to get the vote out then, but we don't things like that anymore. They haul very few in.

KE: Well, going back into another area. What do you remember about television? In the '40s?

DL: Well, at first you couldn't see it. It was all snow, uh, but uh, uh, we were the second in the town here. I don't know about the county. In Hartford, to have one.

KE: Mm hm.

DL: And uh, and the aerials soon improved and the snow cleared up, you know. But, and, and the sets improved. Uh, it was uh, very, very exciting and, and the stores, when they would get one, they could always have a crowd in watching it, you know, and for those who sold televisions, uh, it was good for them. And then I, I can remember walking down the street and someone would have one um, up close to the window, so everybody could see it. And uh, we had a lot of visitors when we first got ours, and especially, I think that we, we had a party when Eisenhower was uh, inaugurated and they came here. Lots, lot of our friends didn't have one then and they came here.

END TAPE1, SIDE2