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TAPE1, SIDE1

KEITH SMITH: January 8th, H. L. Neblitt Center, Oral History Interview. {Tape shut off} Well, okay uh, now, you're Mr. C. E. Coy

CHARLIE EARL COY: Mm hm.

KS: Okay, now, Mr. Coy, when were you born?

CEC: Uh, 19n02. Seventh day of November.

KS: Seventh day of November.

CEC: You might put C. E. "Toad" Coy, I think.

KS: Toad?

CEC: Toad. T-O-A-D.

KS: Okay. That's your nickname?

CEC: Yeah.

KS: Okay.

??: Okay. {Chuckles}

CEC: Then, and then, the day I was born, when the ?? come and ask ??,

??: Uncle ??

CEC: ??

??: Says he looks just like a toad frog. {Chuckles}

KS: Great.

CEC: And when the people in this town ??, that uh, we moved down at Stanley ?? when I's, about six years old, when I ??, then went to Stanley, and in 1918, and then been there all the ?? the people runnin' that ?? C-H-A-R, Charlie, my name is Charlie Earl, but uh, you can call fer, Charlie or Charlie Earl, or either one.

KS: Okay.

CEC: {Chuckles} So, just uh, I ?? don't ever known me, ?? time, when we moved in, I'd get the, ??

KS: Yeah.

CEC: So I ?? I'd get ?? some information that you can use.

KS: Okay, great.

CEC: And uh,

KS: Oh, oh, okay, now let's, think for, for a minute here how to ??. What's the earliest thing that you can remember, like when you were a child?

CEC: I was uh, I remember, about four years old, which would be 19n-, uh, '16, yeah, born in uh, say, I was ?? in 1906. And uh, I think how I remember, no, wait a minute, {Chuckles} and your first car. My dad, he took me and my older brother up to the store, that uh, truck to get some groceries. And oh, we come out the door, and here comes an old car through there, one of these old four cylinders, and we were ?? {Chuckles} And then, he was achargin' and oh, makin' lots of racket, and ?? up, and then he went to ?? over there ?? that second house, 'cause I lived in the first house, and he lived in the second house. And Dad turned it off, and ?? "If you're goin' that away," he said, "Get in." Said uh, "I think that ?? on down, to ?? {Chuckles} My dad and my older brother, they started the car ?? I, picked me outta ?? and ?? And uh, it had ?? and I said, "If you let me alone, I'll beat 'em home." I wasn't gonna get in that thing. {Chuckles}

KS: Uh,

CEC: And then, then the next thing, that happened and almost that way, we moved, I guess the next year, down here at the ?? section, a little farm, uh, and we went over to, to the train, you know, and to ??. And uh, they'd ride the train. You'd flag 'em down and, they'd stop. And then it was about ten cents apiece, and uh, so then the, conductor got off and said, "All Aboard." And those moms that brought out all their kids ??, and uh, {Chuckles} they were waitin' for me, I went uh, said, "Well, ?? pulled the ?? down and started goin' the opposite?? direction. {Chuckles}

KS: Didn't want to get on that either, huh?

CEC: Yeah, they caught me and put me on that. So, from that day on I never was scared of anything else. I thought if I could ride anything, and not get hurt, I'd be all right.

??: {chuckles}

KS: What uh, the people livin' back in those days, now, see we're talkin' basically about uh, I guess the uh, World War back to about uh, about the first decade of the century, I guess, then 19-, you were born in 1902, you would have been a child then, I guess, around 1910, you know,

CEC: Yeah, mm hm.

KS: You were growing up then in the 1910s there, uh,

CEC: Well,

KS: Tell me, when you were, go ahead, I'm sorry, go ahead.

CEC: No, no, uh, I want you to tell me what you want me talk about.

KS: Well, that depends on you, too. Well, I just had a few things that ??

CEC: ?? I can tell, from there on out, I can tell uh, this ?? {Chuckles}

KS: What uh, one thing that I was wondering about is like the people that were livin' back in that day, what was, what were some of the things that were, really important to them? What, what was the chief concern or a chief worry for people in those days? What, what were your parents concerned about?

CEC: Well, I tell you the uh, the, the people didn't really worry, then do like they do now. And we never uh, never thought of such a thing as going hungry.

KS: Mm.

CEC: And then getting wages. There wudn't no work. You see, we raised our for, uh, uh, I was a farmer, tenant farmer's son, and uh, we had a cow, we had a chicken, we had a hog, we cured our own meat, and we had the chickens for eggs, and meat, too, and the cow for butter, and milk, and uh, uh, corn. We even had a little patch of corn to ?? feed our stock and things, and we'd take corn to the mill. And then trade it for meal, and get the sack of corn and get so much meal back. And then uh, flour, flour was about the only thing we bought, and ?? sugar, flour, sugar and salt, and coal. And that ?? we uh, we raised, we had uh, we raised our beans, we'd have our beans put up. And uh, ?? potatoes, and ??, you know, and year round, 'cause all through the winter, before the next crop come on.

KS: Did, did, did, did it seem, you know, your, your parents gettin' worried about, about anything or?

CEC: No. Everybody was happy. You'd meet a feller out, and you'd stand and talk and laugh, and, and go away with, feel like you were in heaven ??, besides where it is now. That's life, that's ?? If you don't have uh, uh, a lot of income, why, tell you, you're in bad shape. ?? My granddad used, he'd take uh, uh, uh, ??. We maybe get ?? by the head there. But I've been on a farm, my wife, and her two sisters, and they heir??, uh, uh, thirty acre farm, and I bought the other heir out, uh, sixteen acres, the house, barn and everything. 'Course it's, it's thirty acres, she had ??

KS: Uh huh.

CEC: And uh, I bought that for seven hundred dollar.

KS: What, what year was that?

CEC: Sir?

KS: What, what, how old were you then, I mean, what year was this?

CEC: Well, I was married. I was married and my first child. That was uh, that was in 1930, '31. And, beginnin' of the big Depression. And uh, I worked hard. I raised six ?? acres tobaccer, and it, I got it all, and it brought me eighty dollars, the whole six acres, and uh, that wudn't clear. I had to pay the ?? out of that. And that's, uh, less than uh, two cents a pound. And uh, the next year, ??. I told my wife, I said, "We worked ?? even on the interest. Same ?? six percent interest."

??: ??

CEC: And we couldn't pay on the interest. And uh, make it, and, and no payment. I said, "Let's, let's just tell 'em we'll divide that, and give him the house. Let 'em take it all if they want to." And I said, "We'll take this, fourteen acres sittin' here by itself, and let them have it. ?? came, and uh, house, barn and everything, and that's how we got out of it.

KS: That was back in the Depression?

CEC: Uh huh.

KS: Right.

CEC: Yeah. And uh, but now, we lived just as good tehn ?? but we couldn't pay nothin' off. We couldn't pay a thing. ??, and uh, I sold corn, and talkin' about tobacco, less than three cents a pound average. That's the total average. And uh, I sold corn for seventeen cents a bushel. ?? so, there, ?? the mill. And uh, he'd take a load of corn, and, right there at seventeen cents a bushel. See how much your, what kind of check you get.

KS: Yeah. What uh, from, from, from when, from your early days, I'm thinkin' more back like when you were, you know, a child or, or a teenager, maybe even,

CEC: Mm.

KS: What, what were the things that, that were, were ?? What were some of the big evils that people, you know, just didn't want anything to do with? Well, what was considered really bad in those days?

CEC: Now, let me see that again.

KS: Well, what, what ??, what were some of the biggest evils, back in those days, you know, if, did your parents say, you know, point to some things and say, you know, don't ever do that, or, what were some of the big things that were considered bad?

CEC: Uh, {Chuckles} this, now this is crazy but, but the first one that I, now we had uh, a bank robbery here, uh, that they robbed a bank in Owensboro and went across the ??, and uh, the two deputy sheriffs followed him, and he had ?? behind a tree, ?? here, ??, and killed 'em both, and they caught him, but that's the only kind, the only robbery that I ever remember back in the early days, and people didn't steal. We didn't lock, lock our doors. When we'd go away, and uh, at night or, uh, at night ?? go in the basement and just turn that, and just keep a dog ?? come in.

KS: Uh huh.

CEC: Give him food. And uh, ?? and {Chuckles} no. There wasn't much evil back there in the early day there.

KS: Huh.

CEC: There was quite a lot of drinkin' but everybody uh, uh, ?? drink. And uh, they didn't bother ya. And uh, you had neighbors. If you wanted anything done, and let, one of them know it, you'd, everyone would come in and help. Well, they still do that ?? anyway you can help, yeah. But there just wasn't uh, a whole lot of evils back when they ??. Now that's all changed, for

KS: I, I, I don't mean, by, I don't mean compared as it is today. I mean in, in, in those days, there might have been something else that, that, that uh, that people considered to be bad, you know, that we might,

CEC: Well,

KS: Might not think that was that big of a deal today.

CEC: Well, I, I, I don't know, I couldn't tell you exactly the first time that I ever heard of rape, but uh, I was uh, already married and 26 ?? way down in there. ?? back in them days. People uh, I mean, uh, ladies and they wore their dresses down ??, and a whole lot of ?? from that, they wore dresses to the ground then, and you didn't see their shoetops, and uh, so uh, they just wasn't uh, any, any more other like that. There wudn't.

KS: Okay.

CEC: Not that uh, I know of before the Depression, I never, heard of anything called a rape.

KS: What, what did uh, I, I'm runnin' around here,

CEC: Yeah.

KS: Around here a little bit.

CEC: I'm ?? run on and carry on and I may not be able to ??

KS: I don't mind. I want you to tell me too much of what I want to hear. I want you to tell me what was important for the people that were livin' back then, so

CEC: Yeah,

KS: You know,

CEC: Mm hm.

KS: If you think of some of my questions are dumb, you tell me so and I'll, you know, we'll change 'em. See, we're gonna be doing this a lot, so I'm,

CEC: Mm hm.

KS: Kind of explorin' here a little bit. Uh, what did, what did people do for fun back in those days?

CEC: For what?

KS: For fun?

CEC: Fun?

KS: Entertainment?

CEC: Fun?

KS: I mean, did you come to town to the nickelodeon, did you, or?\

CEC: Uh,

KS: You know, just?

CEC: We would uh, just go from house to house. {Chuckles}

KS: Oh, yeah?

CEC: Yeah. And uh, have big eats and uh, talk, and there were few, few musicians around here at the time. And if we had a lot of time, we would uh, get in a bunch of, fiddler player, and he'd come to the house and set out in the yard, and come in ?? late, and just, and then you'd be doin' the fiddlin'. You'd get cars from miles around. And people would ?? like that. And uh, I never went to uh, movin' picture show until I was, mm, I guess I was twenty-five, thirty years old. And they just wudn't any thing, when ??, the, uh, we ??, and uh, I can't think of that other, first started out there. And I also remember this, but I don't know whether it's ?? any good for me or not, uh, back uh, in about 19n16, I guess, I remember Gabe Fiorella, down at the courthouse square, pushin' a hamburger cart, out there, and sellin' hamburgers, and could buy a hamburger. Buy a hamburger for a dime and Co-Cola sold for a nickel, and you had a ?? runs it.

KS: Huh.

CEC: And uh, this uh, George ?? feller, uh, ??

KS: Uh huh.

CEC: He, right down from the courthouse on Main Street, he had a shootin' gallery. Now, there's some things that we uh, go, when everybody had guns, and you hunted and you go out and kill anything, game you want, birds, rabbits, squirrels, and ?? ducks. And uh, the uh, he had a shootin' gallery, and you'd go in there and on a big table, that'd be ??. He had guns and he cost ya. I think uh, two shots for a nickel, if he furnished the rifle himself, and uh, if you brought your gun and shells, you could get uh, through the whole ?? for ten or fifteen cents. And he uh, a roll of uh, birds, I guess it was, ducks, whatever, on the chain, and they would bob. And ?? through and when you'd shoot, they'd fall over. That's where you knew whether you hit 'em or not, and people would go in there and linin' up to, to take turns, by see who was the best shot, you know?

KS: Is this George ??, uh, Sr.?

CEC: That was uh, George uh, yeah, Sr.

KS: All right.

CEC: We called him Jimmy the Greek, at the time.

KS: Why'd you call him that?

CEC: Mm hm.

KS: Why, why'd you all call him that?

CEC: What time is it?

KS: Why'd you call him that, Jimmy the Greek, uh?

??: Where'd he get his nickname?

KS: Where, where did he get that nickname?

CEC: That, that's the only thing I ever heard about him until my, you know, when he uh, went into the uh, candy?? factory business. Mm hm.

KS: Okay.

CEC: Yeah.

KS: Uh,

CEC: Jimmy the Greek, and, and they'd say, "Let's go down to Jimmy the Greek's." ?? {Chuckles} There.

KS: Well, you've already talked about the first car you ever saw then, that's uh,

CEC: Mm hm.

KS: Do you remember the first time you saw an airplane?

CEC: Yes. {Chuckles} That was in 1918. And uh, I remember it, and ?? a girl Karen ??. We worked for the out there at Stanley, and he come out to the field. I was mowin' hay. That, that's ??, and uh, I uh, he wanted to talk to me. And I pulled up to stop, and I heard this thing *MMMMMMMMMM*, you know, drawin', {Chuckles} and I couldn't figure. I looked, and looked, and looked, and looked. ?? I could hear and ?? looked. I said, "Oh, Mr. Field?, I ??. An airplane!" which ??, didn't have the ?? with it. Just looked like a big bird, and uh, I said, "Don't you hear that motor?" {Chuckles} And he said, "That's a bird." I said, "Mr. Field?, that's a airplane." Said, "Don't tell me there's a man up in that thing." He said, "Get over right here, and get goin'. Cut this hay!" {Chuckles}

KS: He didn't believe ya, huh?

CEC: He didn't believe it. He didn't believe it. He let along for ??. He said, "Don't tell me there's a man up there. No Way." {Both chuckle}

KS: Wow, did, did it land or anything, or did it just keep, did it just fly by?

CEC: It just flown.

KS: Uh huh.

CEC: Mm hm. And uh, I remember, uh, this uh, plane that fell out here in town. At uh, of course, that was a little later than that.

KS: Yeah.

CEC: ??

KS: Uh, yeah, yeah.

CEC: He uh, fell there in front of the post office where, or not the, post office, the Library.

KS: Okay. Where the library is now?

CEC: Mm hm. No, no.

KS: Where it used to be,

CEC: Yeah, yeah.

KS: On ?? Street?

CEC: ?? and Ninth.

KS: Didn't he have, didn't he have uh, a business in, uh, airplane factory?

CEC: Yes. Yeah, and that was in there. He didn't uh, his wife, she uh, tried to make it go, and she couldn't. And uh, I come up here and I went to get help, and they sent me that day and hollered, hollered, and they couldn't hear what they said, but they know, the street was full of people walkin', you know, and tell the people, "Get out of the way. He's fallen." And he fell and didn't hurt nobody. Killed him, of course, ?? women, ?? him off.

KS: Hm.

CEC: Mm hm.

KS: And that was middle of the 1920s, or, the mid-1920s?

CEC: That was in 19n uh, I guess it's probably in about 1920, '20, '21. I guess I'd say '20.

KS: Okay.

CEC: Oh, heck, it would have been 19-, it was 1918 when I saw that first plane goin' over, and that ?? uh, ??, for his place up up there, and he was ?? it when it hit. And nobody, of course, will ever know what happened to him. Talk up there, go under??.

KS: What uh, there's, there's been all, just all sorts of changes that have happened in, in uh, in uh,

CEC: Huh?

KS: There's been all sorts of changes,

CEC: Oh, yeah.

KS: Come about in the first half of the century,

CEC: Yeah.

KS: What, what were some of the changes that had the biggest impact on you or your, or your family? Uh, when you think of the, you know, what,

CEC: Well, I think radio and television.

KS: Yeah?

CEC: And electricity, now, that, that's one of the biggest things, convenience, uh, uh, rural, uh, rural people. Electricity.

KS: Tell me about when you first got electricity.

CEC: Electricity, and the first time we got, I was over in ?? when we got that. It was 19??, and I got my, roof replaced and electricity. My daughter, ??, she uh, uh, she's about three years, and I had been puttin' me some bulbs, you know, that had burnt out. Here it was cloudy and rainy and I wudn't gonna ??. I told my wife, I said, "The sun ain't gonna never shine anymore." Then the little thing walked up just as earnest, you know, said, "Daddy," said, "Maybe the bulb's burnt out." {Both chuckle}. So, like that?

KS: Great.

CEC: Said maybe the bulb's burnt out. {Chuckles}

KS: Do, do you remember the first uh, radio show, you heard, uh?

CEC: The first radio, ?? in 19n uh, I believe ??, it was 19n20. It was when Al Smith run for President, and Bill ??, that's Stanley??, he bought, one, and he invited everybody, he bought just at that, to heart that, at that time, and he had a room as big as this here, in his house full of people. And this uh, they had to dial, three, dial to get the station. Now, in one certain place to next certain place and the next ?? and then put it on the right station, get it come in.

KS: Okay.

CEC: All that just to operate it. And we sat there and listened to that thing. We couldn't believe it. Most of us, uh, we just couldn't believe it was anything, and we called it, had telephone and everything, and calling in, you know, and,

KS: How, how old were you when you heard your?

CEC: I was about uh, nineteen at that time. Yeah, and of course, television, it come in, and I didn't uh, uh, own a television. I seen 'em but uh, television wudn't too far than havin' a radio.

KS: What about uh, changes that might have come about in the, in the farming community, the, the, the tractor, uh, you know, some of those things, were, were there any big changes, in like, did, that changed uh,

CEC: I ?? the first tractor at these uh, bought in the Stanley section. {Chuckles} I guess you think I'm, braggin' but I, I'm tellin' the facts. This son-in-law, uh, drove ?? Tractor, and he said, "I want you." Says, "You've the most ??." Six of us boys livin' on that farm, and workin', the biggest river bottom farm, and uh, ?? Stanley, on Ohio River. {Chuckles} He said, "All them could run that tractor. Will you do it?" I stared a long time and I said, "Yes." It means a sittin' down job. I won't have to get the horses out and, and, get the plow out here. ??" Well, they brought it down there, took it over to the river bottom. He come and got me, the boss man did. I thought he'd stay over there uh, maybe a half day to learn me, you know, and uh, the feller that brought it down, from Holder?? and ??, now, I don't know if it was Holder or ??, at that time, but that was 19- and uh, -20, and uh, he uh, {Chuckles} he took over, you know, the bottoms, he made one round, broke the land, turned and started to, told me how to, break the land and turn, you know, you have, to start off straight, he ?? around, he was showin' me how to, to change gear. You have to uh, uh, try in the gear, that you start off in. You cain't, do it like a car. You cain't start off in first to mow. You have to start off in second gear, and run in second and third, it's gonna run in third. But then the ?? the high and low, I mean uh, yeah, they did have a high, a high and a low, and reverse, and uh, he showed me all these gears, how, how to do it. Showed me how to raise the plow out of the ground. Showed me the plow, and the tank. He said, "Get on here." I got on and I looked at him, and I thought he was gonna try to ?? on it somewhere. I didn't know somewhere, that he could get. {Chuckles} He said, "Get agoin'." I said, "By myself?" Said, "Tsk, get on." I drove from there, and he ?? me and he pulled here and down, and away I went. I thought well, he'll stay around here for awhile, somethin' happen. I got down there where it cross the ?? River, back up there, and they'd done gone and them out of sight. And it scared me naturally, you know, around that, a mile from my home, anyhow, anybody around, from out there for a mile and, don't know a thing in the world about it, but you know I went on and drove that tractor and never did have uh, mishap or uh, make 'em uh, uh, move wrong, ?? everything that, just like he told me, and it, that's okay. {Chuckles} And I drove.

KS: That's great.

CEC: And the first combine, I drove it about uh, oh, about my first ??, and, that was uh, about 1922, I guess. It sure could have ?? Stanley??. ?? was on the farm down there and, he uh,

had some ??, too tall, about as high as a head, and this, this factory wanted to bring in a combine there to demonstrate it. But they shipped it in there on the train, and put it over in his barn, then they advertised, to, get a crowd in, to demonstrate. Well, we all went up there and he's ??, to look at, and it ?? people around there, and ?? there and the man run the ??, he hadn't showed up, and he was up and boiled along and needlin' and jumpin' up and down and, said, "I've got to get this thing out, and get it greased up." And he said, "These people here are waitin'," said, then, he was already well, about thirty minutes late. The man that lived there, said, "Here, here's a guy here, the best tractor driver in the world." I get over and he said, "One move," he said, "Now I've got to ??" and the barn was ??, but he didn't wait, if, if, he would have scraped it, and he ??, something wrong. And he said, "No. Well, this driver here, he's tryin' to do it." No, he come out of here screamin', he said, "We ain't never ??." Man, was he mad, ?? certain words, brought him to me. He said, "If this boy makes a mistake, I'll be responsible." Says, "I know him, and," said, "He's a the, he's the best. He not uh, just an ordinary," and uh, he takes the side of me. He said, "Boy, it's your move, ?? that combine up." Said, "I don't know what I'll do for you, but to direct, you want it out, I can pull it out, and I won't hurt it." He says, "See if you can go in there, " and he didn't think I could start a tractor. {Chuckles} I went in there and turned it on. He said, "Back it up then." I backed it up. Said, "Can you take it out easy, slow?" I said, "Man, I can, yeah, half a day if you actually want me to."

KS: {Chuckles}

CEC: And he said, "Get this slow movin' ??." So he ??. I can't say what it's involved. He had nothing to, he, that ?? around ??, and he said, "Man," said, "I'm so proud of, you got in to ?? and went to work." About that time, you heard the ??, here come the driver, that, they go on out there and they ??. And Charlie Drury down there knew me, boss at the time.

KS: Charlie who?

CEC: He was the ??

KS: What was that name again?

CEC: Charlie Drury.

KS: Yeah, you know, you know how you spell that, D-R-U-R-Y?

CEC: Uh huh. D-R-U-R-Y.

KS: And he had the first combine down there?

CEC: Huh?

KS: He had the first combine down there?

CEC: Down there in the ?? first in this part of the country. Yeah. I could drive ?? that, and I pulled it, out of the barn. {Chuckles}

KS: So you got to drive that first combine?

CEC: Yeah, yeah.

KS: Uh, well, you mentioned, you were talkin' about airplanes there and that's about 1918, do you remember uh, did you, did you think of Americans gettin' involved in World War I, was that, did that, that was about that time when that was startin' up?

CEC: Uh.

KS: What'd you think about that?

CEC: Uh, that was uh, uh, in fact, in 19n14 um, Wilson, he come out to run for the second term, of the Presidency, and he had women?? on the ticket. He has kicked the ??

END TAPE1, SIDE1

TAPE1, SIDE2

CEC: The only place for me to work, and uh, but uh, anyway, the uh, it was just about the ?? to take everybody, when this thing ended. My brother, he was just eighteen, and he was to be called up in about thirty days, and uh, we were shucking corn, and we got it in, me, my dad, and my brother, and we were all ?? in Owensboro ?? out of it and ??, and just, opened my ?? when he just paid?? me that. They wudn't open, and said, "Well, it's eleven o'clock." Said, "Let's uh, quit, ??. Let's go home, and call the Exchange." That's the only way we got to the news, in them days, was to call the Exchange.

KS: Call the Exchange, now you, what was the Exchange?

CEC: Stanley.

KS: Okay.

CEC: And uh, so he went to the house, that's the first telephone we owned, too, was in 19n18, and uh, he called out there, and they told him the war had ended. He hung that phone on up and is ascreamin' and ahollerin' and happy, and my brother, he cried like a baby. Said, "I wanted to go." {Chuckles} But I think that he didn't want to go that badly, so.

KS: Mm, and you were, you were just like, I guess, about twelve when it, the War started then. You were a little younger.

CEC: '18? I was sixteen.

KS: Sixteen when it was over, I guess?

CEC: Yeah. When the war ended, I was sixteen. See, I was born in 1902, and '18 is when it ended, and November of '18, and uh, November, it was on the eleventh, and my birthday was on the seventh.

KS: Okay.

CEC: So I was just exactly uh, uh, sixteen then.

KS: You know uh, did, did you come to Owensboro much, uh, when you were, when you were a child?

CEC: Uh,

KS: Did your parents bring you to Owensboro much, uh?

CEC: Uh, well, the only way we could come to Owensboro, maybe two, uh, two times a year. And we had to take a train, train in and train out. There wasn't any cars. Just uh, just see one once in a while. And the roads, weren't nothing but mud and, and couldn't, and, but uh, bunch of us get together and save up through uh, little allowance that they had to give us, and get enough to go up there and get us a hamburger, and we'd come back on the train. Ten cents out,

KS: Yeah.

CEC: And ten cents back. Ten cents for hamburger and nickel for the Co-Cola.

KS: How, how old were you when your parents let you do that?

CEC: Uh, eighteen. Eighteen. Mm hm.

KS: Okay. And you, you mentioned, earlier about uh, the people used to drink in those days. What was it like during the Prohibition, uh, did that have much of effect on people? Did that, did you notice that much?

CEC: Yeah. That uh, and that was the all time worst, they ever had. Now the people doing very well, for a while, but it wudn't, I don't guess it's, it's over six or eight months, took every woods?? down in there and every house at Stanley, every other one, was bootleggers. And children, if you had uh, uh, uh, let's see uh, I believe they started lots of time at dollar and a half, fifty cents for a half pint. And uh, if you had the money, if you can reach over these tables, you

got, you got your booze. Yep. Now I don't think uh, there wasn't anymore uh, when that, there just wasn't enough cars in them days to, for anybody to be caught drunken drivin'. Nothing like that ever happened, 'cause they didn't have the cars, you know?

KS: Uh huh.

CEC: And whenever they would uh, most of 'em, when they'd get drunk, they'd just go on uh, ??, back in the ??, and uh, lay there. {Chuckles} Sober up. We had three people, down at Owensboro ?? some of 'em live in there um uh, ??, that done it, that, that ??, but they'd come to this town, and the police, they wouldn't allow 'em to carry a gun. Only thing they had then was a bag of shot, about as big as that uh, they wore and it had a strap around it, to hook around their wrist like that and it was a bag of shot. Leather bag, filled full of shot, and that's the only thing they had to fight with, and these three people, they'd had, this room full of uh, helmets, coats, pads, and their uh, billets??, they called 'em, down there below the Union??. I never did go and see it. I wished I had now. But uh, everybody went there to, you missed your everything??. They'd come to town and uh, every time, they'd uh, three ??, you know, there and take the, take his, take the clothes off and take 'em home with 'em. {Chuckles} They wouldn't hurt him, just take his clothes.

KS: They would come to town and, and take his clothes off of the police officer?

CEC: Yeah, yeah.

KS: Sheriff?

CEC: Yeah, they got to the point, when the uh, went on the lower end, they had to come up the, old river road. 60 wudn't here then. The old ?? Road, and the river was here, and he'd uh, and when he'd ?? {Chuckles} come in ?? to town, he would get word to every police that uh, Beech??, and tell him, "These boys was in town, you know, and you can't find the police no where. " {Chuckles} Now that's how, uh law, uh, you uh, they just didn't want any law, they couldn't, they couldn't handle it. They didn't have enough uh, you know, they didn't have enough to equalize that.

KS: Uh huh. But what time ??

CEC: Made ?? of 'em.

KS: About how old were you when this was all going on, now, what time were you talking about here?

CEC: When about these uh, boys?

KS: Yeah, when was

CEC: Well, I'd ?? they got older, uh, I guess, uh, well, I knew all about it. They were doin' this all their life, and uh, I knew all about it when I was uh, sixteen, but then they done that until they died. {Chuckles} Three of 'em, and when they died, I can show you the farm, but I just never did go in there because, they, it was always the, and uh, I just didn't, I was scared to, I think that ?? go off. {Chuckles} But they uh, most everybody thought they was good people there and, you ?? good people, so ?? everything. It was good to get along with when they uh, wasn't drinkin', the best people in the world, but they got some uh, nephews, ?? nice family, and uh, one of 'em had a son that lives up there to ??, and if I'd called a name and you, {Chuckles} ?? it out, they'd be on me in a hurry.

KS: No, we don't want to do that. Uh, so you, so people didn't pay a whole lot attention to the Prohibition then, uh? It sounds like that everybody, everybody kinda got around it. Uh.

CEC: They didn't pay a bit more attention to Prohibition than uh, than you would goin' to the river and gettin' a drink of water. They uh, uh, we worked in the ??, when I married, first year I married in 19n26, just got the right again. And uh, he'd come to town there one day and my shirt ??. Told me, he said, "Come down here in the basement." That's the courthouse, basement, had uh, take the evidence, you know, when they catch these moonshiners, and they said they had a ?? all the way around, and I wasn't sure what the official, did with down there, when they find something good, they'd keep the special out, and they'd let all the others come down and drink all they want to.

KS: Oh, really?

CEC: Yeah, he said uh, everything that went to town, and this, deputy sheriff. I'll tell you who he was, ?? Chaten. He was a well-known and he had been dead too awful long, but uh, I know that to be fact, and uh,

KS: What, what was his last name?

CEC: Chaten, C-H-A-T-E-N. He's got people here, too.

KS: He, he had his own little speakeasy then, I guess, down there, didn't he?

CEC: Huh?

KS: He had his own little speakeasy then, I guess?

CEC: No.

KS: Is that what you mean?

CEC: No. He'd go out and raid.

KS: Okay.

CEC: He'd go out and raid and then uh, and bring the, stuff in, and they wouldn't uh, they supposed to, destroy it, you see? But he'd ?? these people, {Chuckles} and drink it theirselves, and then finally the people, started payin' attention, you know to, er uh, uh, catch you moonshinin', you went to a penitentiary for a year. Yeah. And uh,

KS: Did Stanley have any distilleries back then? Now they got one now, but uh,

CEC: No, they uh, they put 'em all out of business.

KS: Okay.

CEC: And uh, we lived by that one down on the, R-, uh, the ?? area at Stanley, the Ohio River, and uh, they uh, finished bottlin' up what they had, and uh, just closed the building, the store, but these other buildings, at Livermore and uh, Daviess County at that time, and uh, ??, why, they kept their business, they just closed it down. ?? uh, the government had to have alcohol, and some of 'em made alcohol, for the government, just pure alcohol.

KS: Mm hm.

CEC: And uh, then uh, back uh, I guess it was uh, in the, I can't remember just exactly the year but it was uh, around the middle '30s when the uh, took the Prohibition out, the ??.

KS: Uh huh.

CEC: Yeah.

KS: Now, you were talkin' earlier about the women, back in those days wore long dresses.

CEC: Mm hm.

KS: What, what was it, uh, do you remember the Women's Suffrage Movement where they got the right to vote, and they uh, they started asserting themselves more?

CEC: I remember it as well as anything, ?? about but I don't remember what year it was.

KS: Well, that's okay, I can, I just, just tell me what it was like when that was goin' on. I don't need the year. I can,

CEC: {Snorts}

KS: I can look that up.

CEC: Well, I can tell you exactly who were the, and it wudn't but a very, very few women that wanted votin', in the county, and they said that it's against grace??, to let the women

vote. Said that's a man's place, and a man's job, and ??, and said, a woman that's gonna vote, she ain't no better at all." I've heard that remark lots of times.

KS: Mm.

CEC: But, from the years, we've ?? it, everybody likes it, {Chuckles} and the women, enjoyed it. But they didn't ?? on for, uh, I'd say, at least two years, two elections, before they ever ?? on, and my, and my mother, never voted. My wife never voted. And uh, well, now my people uh, ain't uh, uh, many of 'em that uh, grandmother, their ??. No, you know.

KS: Do you remember big uh, big illnesses during that time? There was uh, I think, I big flu epidemic, uh,

CEC: That was uh, uh, that was in 19n17 it started. We had uh, snow, about uh, I think they said about eighteen inches at ??, and it turned cold, and uh, I remember ?? me, and they ?? it, uh, from Indiana over here across the Ohio. And I was, I was there at that ??. They uh, pulled up to the bank with a team on that side, of course, a team couldn't stand up on that ice, and back, they took a Ford, truck from ?? there, put chains on it, went over there, and pulled it out. Took it down to the uh, Owensboro ?? down, down and ??. And uh, then it uh, broke up, you were talkin' about the flu, I told that you I'd get to this. Me and my brother, we and went out in the snow, and it drifted higher than this team, and the ??, you know, we had a few there, and we couldn't work, and the schools were closed. You couldn't go to school. And uh, and after uh, ?? got in ??, diggin', mountains under there, tunnels, and when you went through that whole weather, never had a bad cold. Talkin' about ice, break up, and the snow in there, that was why it got so, ??, the whole country liked to die, ?? flu. And the break up, the, hard winter.

KS: Do you remember what, what, what doctors do to treat it then, uh?

CEC: Huh?

KS: Do you remember what doctors did to treat it then, uh?

CEC: Uh, I don't know what they created, but I know, I know how they treated it. ?? the uh, uh, Edward?? uh, where they have Stickley?? houses and store at a crossroads there, a country doctor. And uh, we had to go to doctor down at Stanley ??, Kinchlow??. And he'd come to our house, and everywhere there's a telephone, he would uh, tell his wife, when to call to uh, meet him, catch him at that time, and tell him the other calls. And this doctor, two weeks solid, the only time that he ever got any sleep, he'd come to our house, and he told Mom, he took his watch out, he said, "Let me sleep ten minutes." {Smacks his hand} And he said, "And make them ?? if you have to, wake me." And, and he had a watch, and he just dropped. And so, so there he'd sleep, and ten, ten minutes was up, he's just snorin' and everything, and Mom wakes him. He jumped, oh, gathered his watch, gone, to the next place, and for two solid weeks, that's the only way he got, ??, just uh, I had a little uh, horse and buggy, and, three solid weeks he

never went to bed, or he never went home. He had uh, he'd, he'd ask Mom, "Have you got a sandwich?" or uh, get a glass of milk and some cornbread. Now we eat a lot of that in ??, and if you had a glass of buttermilk, cornbread, and ?? eat, sleep ten minutes and gone, to the next place, and then they would call in up there and, if he'd got any more calls. He had a line. He couldn't, herd 'em ?? sheep, and time he ?? at my house.

KS: Mm. How did, how, how, how,

CEC: I'm tellin' the truth.

KS: How uh, uncommon was it to have a telephone out in that neighborhood? And do, do you remember when your parents got the first telephone or?

CEC: It was in the house when we moved in it.

KS: Uh huh.

CEC: But it wudn't no trouble, uh, trouble was uh, was havin' the money to spare. Now you call that a luxury.

KS: What, what'd you need the money for, I mean, what, did, did they charge to have that phone hooked up?

CEC: Yeah, they charge you uh, I think, I think seventy-five cents a month. {Chuckles} But you ?? seventy-five cents. I think it's seventy-five cents. And ring, had a crank there, and it'd ring them bells, just dingle-dingle-ding. Ring it up, "Operator". You tell 'em, give 'em the number, ?? two or three things and, ?? man say, "Hello." {Chuckles} But they had to, crank it, and uh, and something about the newspaper, we didn't get uh, get uh, ??ly. We didn't have no Sunday paper ever. Back in the day, and uh, you could get the *Messenger* or the *Inquirer*. They had two papers then. And you uh, they, {Chuckles} man would come around and uh, Les ??, he hadn't been dead too long. Oh, thirty years, and uh, he'd come down every year uh, he had to ?? fair. He'd, he had it all ??, because he knew it was such a nice fellar, and uh, he enjoyed talkin' to him, and he'd come around here and they'd give him uh, money, get to pay for another year. {Chuckles} I think that it was about a dollar seventy-five a year.

KS: Okay. But that's, uh, how you kinda how you kept up with things then?

CEC: Mm hm.

KS: Between the telephone call exchange and the newspaper then, huh?

CEC: You uh, uh, that's only way you had a uh, had uh, uh, know any uh, uh, ?? any way at all was to, you could use the paper.

KS: Did uh, did people keep up much with the national issues or was that important to 'em at the time?

CEC: Nah, nah. You didn't get much, you didn't get the, no, mm nhm. If anything locally happened, if a, something uh, and the bells, when we knew when the bells and whistle, started ringing that something, had happened, and you'd go to the telephone there and, and I remember the uh, the, the latest, the latest of the uh, they'd tell you quick, and uh, as quick as you could get it, and get to the house, ?? anyway.

KS: Well, what uh, can you give me an example of what would have been a big deal, uh, you know, what would have been, with, when something happened, what, give, what would have happened that would have, that they would have rang the bells about, you know, what kind of ?

CEC: Uh,

KS: Local issue?

CEC: Well, uh, they uh, the only thing I can really, r-, say much about is when the war ended.

KS: Uh huh.

CEC: And uh, and then there's another time uh, in this last war, uh, when uh, Ike was all over, and they ?? drop the, hydrogen bombs over there at Japan. Russia had uh, uh, declared war on Japan, and they rung 'em at that time.

KS: Mm hm.

CEC: There, was it, it was all over, when Russia had declared war, they knew it. {Chuckles}

KS: What uh, what made, what made news or what, what was the news to people, like out in the Stanley community, I mean, what was important, you know, that they, you'd hear people talkin' about back in those days? What kind of things, I mean local stuff, you know?

CEC: Um, they just wudn't a whole lot of gossip goin' around.

KS: Uh huh.

CEC: And, to tell you the truth, we didn't have time to sit around and gossip. It's a farming community, and uh, the farmers worked from sun up til sun down six days a week, and then he'd go to uh, church, whatever church he belonged to, and we belong to the Baptist Church. We'd go to Sunday School and Church. And, then you would get to home with someone, spend the day, or someone come to our house. Now, that's somethin', that uh, that has faded totally out. Back when uh, all those times we've been talkin' about, there was never a

Sunday what there wasn't someone at our house or we was somewhere, people's, ??. And uh, I guess uh, when they uh, are you talkin' about ??. My children, probably big enough to uh, to take to high school, about in 19n-uh, '40, I guess, when they started to high school, fer, and uh, they would, the whole country, at that age, they stopped, visiting.

KS: Mm.

CEC: Now nobody goes to visit anybody, to spend the day, ??. I've had an uncle who ??, and uh, we'd go up there, if ??. He'd always come on Mom, and call her Lou. Said, "Lou," said, "Get you some chickens out in the house and I'll be back next Sunday." Said, "I'm gonna get even with you on this meal." {Both chuckle} And ?? joking, you know, and uh, and here he'd come, and not, Grandpa and M?? and Dad would say, "Let's go see our father." And then ??, better let 'em know, or you wouldn't get nothing to eat. And uh, so but they quit that, and, I don't know of anybody that visits any more.

KS: Mm.

CEC: Not like when they did.

KS: Well, let's see here. What uh, you, you mentioned here music.

CEC: Huh?

KS: You mentioned here, you know, havin' fiddle players to entertain and some of the local musicians. What kind of music did people listen to those days?

CEC: String music.

KS: String music. When you were growin' up, I mean, if you were, if you could, what did you do if you went out on date with your, with your girl, your best girl or somethin' uh, did you go, did, did you have dances or anything like that or?

CEC: They did but I never danced.

KS: Yeah.

CEC: I never danced and I never dated until I was twenty-two years old. {Chuckles} I, I never was on a dance floor, but they'd have uh, platform dance at that Stanley. We went out uh, about every month, you know, but we had phonographs. Now, the old crank phonograph. I'll tel you that.

KS: The Victrolas, are you talkin' about?

CEC: Mm hm. And uh, the whole community had it, and uh, everybody had rooms full of records, and uh, this neighbor and that neighbor, our neighbor. Every weekend, I had to get

on my bicycle, go around three or four places and trade records. They'd call Mom and say, "We've got a new record." And they said, Mom said, "Well, we've got so many," and where to how many he has, he has five new records, you'd call five different people, and if they had a new record, you'd trade 'em for a week.

KS: Now, how old were you when you were doing this?

CEC: Huh?

KS: Do you remember how old you were when you were doing this, when you were trading records like this, for your Mom?

CEC: Yeah, that was 1918.

KS: Okay.

CEC: Yeah, 1917 and '18. Why, I didn't have no bicycle 'til '18. And we'd get, we'd get out our phonograph from about 19n-, late 1917, yeah, and uh, but uh, we'd keep them records a week, and then take 'em back, and they'd have some more, and they'd call us, and say, "We'll, uh, I got another 'un. You got another 'un." And we'd trade another, and I can?? think everybody had some new records every week, you see.

KS: What kind of records were, were big in those days?

CEC: Uh, they were uh, disk records, what we ??.

KS: I mean what kinds of bands were on records, ??

CEC: Oh, we had uh, army bands and uh, it was mostly all band music, yep, and there wasn't any uh, very few uh, local records whatever. And so ?? of any ??, and it was all band music. And uh, ?? a lot of time for records. Uncle Josh and uh, he had one there, it, he, he had a song about Uncle Josh. You see, you didn't, you wouldn't know what I'm talkin' about, I'm sure.

KS: No, I don't.

CEC: But he uh, well, just sorta like uh, Bob Hope and, and things like that, you know, and he put a record out, and this fella said in this song there, he said, "I always laughed at the wrong time." Said, "I laughed when my uncle took a tumble in the river, and I laughed at the wrong time." {Chuckles} Said, "My uncle could have died, he ?? run over a peach tree." Said, "Yeah, I laughed at the wrong time. He ??" {Both chuckle} Things like that.

KS: Uh huh.

CEC: And now hey, we had a ??. All about a ?? than there was music, yeah. And uh,

KS: Well, this oughta, give us a good um, good start here. Why, well, let me see that.

CEC: Yeah.

KS: ?? take that.

CEC: Titanic.

KS: Oh, okay.

CEC: That was the uh, and in my days, I guess that that was the worst tragedy that had ever been known, the people, and walked around for weeks, maybe months. You'd talk to somebody, and you'd holler at him. Just be walkin' around in uh, haze. He'd look up at ya, and come again goin' the other way. Sure ??. Peoples down there where we lived, they just almost lost their mind, but I think what caused it, see, that ship was made, undestructible. Most think, no way, can never be stopped, you know, solid field??, never sink. Well, they all got on there, and they're sailin', and you, you know it, and the Captain, made the remark, "Hell, Heaven or New York in three days." Now, I can't hardly talk about that, but I can tell you here ?? almost tears come to my eyes, but ?? uh, to stand up and make that kind of remark. Hell, Heaven and New York in three days.

KS: Mm.

CEC: And, what few people that got off, they took men, I mean, women and children, and then a few people dressed in their wives' clothes and went out, reckon they'd get out. I think one or two got away, got away, but most of 'em was caught, and uh, pulled off and put back on the ship. And uh, the last uh, boat that went from ?? each other, why, they uh, could see, as far as they could see, before it went under, but then, ??, the ?? got to be, and filled of water, and nothing was there. And downward, this ?? was downward, they played each other cards, until the water, ??, that, and the religious, what few religious ??, they prayed until the water, choked them out. And went under.

KS: What uh, now, what, made that so, why did people in the, in the Stanley area, uh, react that way to it? It seems pretty far removed from people in Stanley.

CEC: I'm, I am just uh, uh, believe now, we had more religion back in them days than we got now. Way, way ?? more, and uh, I just think that the remark that that Captain, "Hell, Heaven and New York in three days," he just knowed, he had the whole world in his hat, I'm gonna do it. He forget, that God, he takes care of everything. We do, what he wants us to do, and what he wills us to do. If, if, by today I couldn't be settin' here, if it wudn't his will for me to be atalkin'.

KS: Mm hm.

CEC: Now wait, I'd been available, tied up, and couldn't speak. So I think that's what uh, the impact was, and uh, that uh, but that's how I seen,

KS: Huh.

CEC: Now other, somebody else might have seen it differently.

KS: Well, sure.

CEC: But I've talked to boys my age, and they turn their heads, and go ??

END TAPE1, SIDE2