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TAPE1, SIDE1

KEVIN EANS: My name is Kevin Eans and we are here with Miss Pearl Perguson, in uh, Mulberry Apartments or McCreary Court, whatever uh, {Chuckles}

PEARL PERGUSON: However you want to call it.

KE: However you want to call it. Okay. And uh, um, if you would, tell me uh, when you were born and what your first memory is?

PP: When and where I was born?

KE: When and where and,

PP: I, I was born in Ohio County, of course. And uh, October 30th, 1894. And uh, 'course I don't know about my first memory when I, {Chuckles}

KE: What's the, what's the first thing you can remember? In your life?

PP: Well, 'course when I was a little girl, I, my father died when I was four years old. I don't, I barely remember him.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And we lived on a farm, 'course, at that time, when I was a little girl, and uh, well, we lived just about like everybody else. We, weren't rich, and we were not poor either, we didn't call ourselves poor, but I'm sure we were at, by today's standards, I guess we were {Chuckles} considered poor, but we had everything we needed, so, I guess I didn't, we didn't think about such.

KE: Mm.

PP: People have so much today, of course.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Young people have no idea, of course, about how to have, really how to have a good time any more, like we did, when I was growing up, because we didn't have all the, video, the television, and all of that, you know. The children and the, the young people have today. So we just made our own pleasures, and we had a good time and were happy.

KE: Mm hm. Well the uh, I was thinking, if we just start asking you a few questions about the uh, the years from 1900 to 1909, uh, what uh, what was the chief concern for people living here? What, what did they think about most, what would, what was ?

PP: 1900 to 1909?

KE: Mm hm, that first, decade, yeah.

PP: Well, I guess uh, living, and being a new neighbor, being a good neighbor,

KE: Mm hm.

PP: As people did. I, uh, I don't think they thought much about politics,

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Except uh, once a year, or once every four years, whatever it would be.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And, 'course we had no, television or anything like that, no radio. Uh, I grew up with the *Courier-Journal*, so we always had that.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And, by that time, of course, at my age, at that time, I was just uh, like all other, girls that age, you know, goin' to school, and Sunday School and church, or course, and uh, playing with my, friends. We didn't, get away very much. If there was, something, special, happened in Owensboro, my, we always went to that. And of course, my mother was a great hand to take us to the circuses and the County Fair. I remember the first airplane we saw that, we had, we, had the *Courier-Journal*, and that, anyway, it, it, there was some way we got word, that there'd be an air- {Tape shut off.} Airplane so that.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: We uh, my mother took us to Owensboro, see the, we rode the train, 'cause we, I lived,

KE: Mm hm. {Noises - Problems with tape?}

PP: Lived in a little old railroad town, and, we rode the trains, We webt to see the airplane. I remember very distinctly, us going out to the, field, just a field, where the airplane was.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Modern day wonder, of course, to us.

KE: What was uh, what did you think about the airplane when you saw it?

PP: Oh, we, we had read about them, of course, and, but they were, we thought that was one of the, finest things ever was, it, didn't think it could ever anything, or ever be anything better than that. Look at us today.

KE: What, what kind of airplane was it?

PP: Oh, just, you know, just a little, two wing, I, I, I guess one engine, really.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: One motor, I imagine. I have no idea.

KE: What were some of the more uh, significant local events, for people, livin' in this time, what, what significant happened in?

PP: In this little town?

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Well, we, when I grew up, it was a very, very busy, little railroad town, and we had uh, three hotels, and uh, we had uh, uh, eight trains a day, heading out of Louisville, stop there, and then we had, six, from Owensboro, a day. And uh, we were busy, 'cause, change, people changin', and then we had uh, uh, bookstores and general merchandise, of course.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Thought they had everything. But one could have been born in Horse Branch and uh, lived their entire life and died and never been out of there, because we always had two doctors and two drug stores.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: We had a seamstress who knowed the, uh, style that needed to be made, and I used to help do that. And then we had uh, one of the merchants, kept caskets, and I helped to line those.

KE: Oo.

PP: So uh, and then of course, we just had a lot of fun.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: {Chuckles} We had uh, well, we had country dances, you know, every so often, we had a group of, Catholic families who lived there and they liked to dance.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And uh, they had uh, 'course they, once a month they had a dance. So we had, different things.

KE: Mm. What uh, you mentioned some, some of the things that people did for fun uh, what about uh, early movies, uh, maybe a nickelodeon or something, do you remember when you first saw?

PP: {Chuckles} Well uh, they were not near us.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: We had, we would come clear down to Beaver Dam or Hartford, movies, silent, you know.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: So. And then we went to Owensboro, when, oh, went to the movies, because, as we said, we could ride the train for a dollar.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And uh, we could go uh, at ten thirty in the morning and come back at, two thirty in the afternoon if we wanted to, or come back that night. So, we went to Owensboro.

KE: What do you remember about the, the movies that you saw?

PP: I don't remember particular ones.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: We just liked 'em.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Uh, and then once a year, and this is unusual, and I know it's just, uh, not very many years, two or three years ago, where there's one still going. Once, every summer, there was a little, show, came, and stayed a week, and everybody went, of course, and they had uh,

KE: Was it a play?

PP: Yes, and uh, oh, they had clowns.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Different things, you know. So, we enjoyed that.

KE: What uh,

PP: Now, now, they used, they used to travel around, and I know, as I said I noticed a few years, that there was one still going, and that was back in the New England states somewhere.

KE: Mm hm. Mm. What uh, what did people consider to be the biggest evils, of this time, uh, when you were growing up, like what?

PP: We didn't.

KE: What was the

PP: We didn't have any.

KE: Really? {Both chuckle}

PP: We didn't have any. {Both chuckle} In, uh, when the little town was uh, first, uh, uh, settled, I guess I'd say that,

KE: Mm hm.

PP: My husband's great, great grandfather, uh, built the first house, it was farm, and then he gave the land for uh, the railroad, to go through.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And uh, we had uh, so of course, they had different things, and they had a, few saloons, I think.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And uh, it was uh, uh, it was incorporated, and we had uh, uh, some good carpenter in town and he built the, uh, lock-up. Every Saturday, everybody had a big time, you know, and somebody'd get, picked up and put in the lock-up.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: So he built it, and when he got through, he said, "Now, there's one thing sure about that, won't anybody ever break out of there." They didn't. He was the first one that was in. {Both laugh} He had such a big time celebrating, that uh,

KE: He got in.

PP: That he was the first one had to be put in the lock-up. {Both chuckle} I, I, I don't know of any evil that we had in our town.

KE: Mm hm. What was family life like?

PP: Happy.

KE: Mm hm. How, how were children treated?

PP: Huh?

KE: How were children treated?

PP: Oh, course you couldn't say there were treated perfectly.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Went to school, Sunday School and church. We didn't, we didn't have any youth problmes .

KE: Mm hm. Were children uh, "seen and not heard," as they say, or were they?

PP: Yes, "seen and not heard," that was one of the important things when I was growing up. Children should be seen, and not heard, and that would be a wonderful thing today, to put into effect,

KE: Is that ??

PP: Seen and not heard. {Chuckles} Uh, I guess, for old people, uh, old people like to talk and, if there's a child around, you sure can't do it.

KE: Mm hm. Um, how did women fit into the society, in this first decade of the century?

PP: Well, they, of course, they did their work, and, had their quilting bees.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And then uh, in the winter months, that, we visited around, 'n popped corn, had the, get our song books and sing then there was always, of course, there was somebody that could fiddle, you know, so we had, {Chuckles} always had somebody in the little group that could, play the violin, and, or fiddle rather.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And guitar, and a banjo, and a mandolin, you know, things like that. We had a good time, we were happy.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Much more so, and now the youth today, are searching for something, they don't know what.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And because they, and we weren't lookin' for anything, we just had, plenty.

KE: What was uh, it, was the uh, black community available?

PP: Black?

KE: Mm hm.

PP: We didn't have any black people.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: I, our little town, had uh, a rule, that no black man was to spend the night, there, and of course, as I said it was a very busy railroad town, and they were, railroad company was always sending people, from, New Orleans and Chicago, for different workers. And uh, one time, they, they knew better than to send a black man, but one time they did, and, I, say this with much regret, he was not allowed to stay all night, but then the, a man built a hot-, built a hotel there who had a chain of hotels. He had one in Dawson Springs, one in Central City, and he had one at Horse Branch. And uh, he had uh, the manager of this hotel was uh, an old German lady from uh, New Albany, and she brought her, house boy, black man, and he was allowed to stay, but he was not allowed to go in anywhere but the depot and the stores, and things like that.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: But uh, we all thought a lot of him. He was just a wonderful old man. So he was allowed to stay.

KE: Mm. Well,

PP: We didn't have, ever have a nigger family live there.

KE: Mm hm. Did they live out of the?

PP: No. They didn't live any nearer than Beaver Dam. Out at, they have built, I think maybe, out some lived.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: They lived, and uh, we didn't go there.

KE: How long did this rule last, the uh, that, no black man could spend the night?

PP: {Chuckles} Well, it uh, might still be effect. {Chuckles} There isn't any town there any more. Uh, the little town's gone, and what there is, we do still have, there is still a post office there, but uh, the town's up on the highway now, of course.

KE: This is Horse Branch, right?

PP: Uh huh.

KE: Um, were there any national or uh, state events, that had a big impact on people, or were people pretty much, more concerned with what was going on here, and not?

PP: Oh, yes, more concerned with what was going on here.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Not they uh, not like it is today, of course.

KE: Mm hm. How did they uh, local public keep up with local government issues? Did uh?

PP: Well, we had county paper, of course, and we had, as I said, we always had the Owensboro paper, or the, *Courier-Journal*, I was raised on, with the *Courier-Journal*.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: We had that, and we had, two little, two other little papers that came down, two-thirty in the afternoon. Oh, we had, uh, plenty of, outside of the, as much as anybody did, contact with the outside world was through, we had, in the afternoon at two-thirty, a train, came from Louisville, and brought two, afternoon, papers, the *Time*, the uh, *Times*, and uh, then another paper, can't remember the name of it right now.

KE: Mm.

PP: Another paper, and then of course, we had the *Courier-Journal* in the morning, and then several people took the *Commercial Appeal*, published in Memphis.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: So we kept up with things. And they we had uh, course, with this, this uh, change of trains there, we had contact with the, people in between trains. They'd have to, stay there, and eat, or sometimes stay over night.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: We were not isolated by any means.

KE: Mm hm. What were some of those, significant government issues, at this time?

PP: Not right now.

KE: Okay. Uh, what were some of the things, they can be big thing or just, any things, small things, that stick in your mind, about this first decade, what do you remember most about it? Or what do you think of first when you think about, 1900 to 1909?

PP: I don't remember too good, didn't pay much attention to that. {Chuckles}

KE: Mm hm.

PP: As they do today, of course.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: I, we lived, young people left.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Right now, I can't think of anything.

KE: What uh, what do you remember about you saw, the first time you saw a car?

PP: Well, I, I don't, think it was anything very exciting. {Chuckles}

KE: Mm hm.

PP: But the first, of course, the first car that anybody had in our community, I think, I believe they got it from Sears Roebuck. {Chuckles}

KE: Really?

PP: And uh, it, course they, it wasn't mine, if they's wonderin'. 'Course we didn't have any road, in there, except the railroad. We depended upon the railroad. We didn't anythiung of that, roads, and uh, course, we always knew when came spring came, because the first automobile would come to town, 'cause we didn't have any road. {Chuckles} We didn't have any roads for them to come any other time.

KE: Mm.

PP: We didn't look for the first bluebird. We looked for the first automobile to come to town. {Chuckles} We knew it was spring then.

KE: Mm.

PP: But as I said, we, any time anything, unusual came up, we knew about it, and uh, 'course these trains comin' in from Owensboro, and my mother got us on the train and we went to Owensboro, if there's anything, exciting to come.

KE: Mm.

PP: See, we never missed a circus or a fair.

KE: Mm.

PP: All we really had was the circus, and then when my son came along, 'course I love the circus today. I just love to go to the circus. When my son came along, I thought, the first thing I must do when he got older was to take him to circus. He never cared for circuses. And I thought that was the oddest thing. {Both chuckle}

KE: Gonna, just to name a few things that happened in this first decade, and if, uh,

PP: I might remember it if you,

KE: Okay, uh, okay, well, Teddy Roosevelt was president.

PP: Yeah, oh yes, he, {Coughs} great uh, that was a great thing, Teddy Roosevelt. We were tickled, I thought the first thing I remember is that, big grin he had. And 'course everybody was for Teddy Roosevelt. He was a fine one. And then, then it was later of course, but, and uh, Woodrow Wilson, uh, dedicated uh, Lincoln Memorial at Hodgenville, I was there.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And they didn't have any road, we all, they just had to cut a little path up to that,

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And uh, 'course I remember that very well.

KE: About what year was that?

PP: Well, I've forgotten what year. Somebody told me the other day that they were amazed that I had been there, to see that. {Chuckles} But I was, that was before I was a teenager.

KE: Mm hm. Well, some of the other things uh, San Francisco had the big earthquake.

PP: Uh huh.

KE: And that was in 1909. Do you remember anything about that?

PP: The earthquake,

KE: Mm hm.

PP: In San Francisco,

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Yes, I, my, brother-in-law, I remember hearin' he was terribly disturbed about that, and I remember hearin' him to doin' a lot of talkin' about it, and uh, that was in, yeah, 1909, wasn't it?

KE: Mm hm.

PP: But, of course, we didn't think, so far away, that we didn't, get excited about it. He did, my brother-in-law did, but I can't remember if my family got very excited about that.

KE: Mm hm. We're gonna move into uh, to the next decade of 1910 to 1919. Okay, uh, what, do you, did the uh, flood of 1913 affect uh, you and your family, in any way?

PP: The flood? No, no, no it didn't, except that our, now my husband, wasn't, we were, course we were not married, but, my husband went to Indiana, group of 'em had to go Indiana for the flood, but we didn't uh, it didn't bother us. Other than, than, a group of workmen, of railroad men had to go to Indiana for that,

KE: Mm hm.

PP: It didn't bother us, we didn't have anything.

KE: Now was, was the flood of 1913 a very bad flood, do you remember?

PP: Yes, it was. Of course we sat in, we had a radio at that time, and we sat and listened to the, news, you know. Send the boat, send the boat.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: In Louisville. And of course, we had a lot of friends living in Louisville at the time, but other than that, it didn't,

KE: Hmm.

PP: Affect us.

KE: Did uh, let's see, what uh,

PP: Now that was the beginning, of course the, the 1913, and that was the beginning of World War I.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: You know, 1912.

KE: Did uh, you

PP: And uh, we were very concerned about that, of course, and uh. Because uh, we had never known anything about war except what we read in the history books. And for our, boys to be just taken out, knowin', goin' to war, we just, couldn't hardly, believe anything like that.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: So it was, just a very disturbing time, and I married during, in 1917 then.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: But I was teaching in 1915, and uh, then I taught, a couple years, then I went to ??

KE: Mm hm. Um, did you or any of your friends think that uh, the United States should get involved in World War I?

PP: No. No. We didn't uh, nobody thought we would get into it.

KE: Mm hm. Did uh, well, when uh, Archduke Ferdinand was assassinated, which a lot of people say kinda sparked, the beginning of the, World War, did uh?

PP: Yes, I'm sure it did.

KE: Did that scare a lot of people?

PP: Well, I, I doubt if it did too much, because, we were not so conscious of outside, affairs then, as people are today. Now, of course, I've been scared to death, last year we're gonna get in war. Everything looks like it.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: But, you know, uh, the reason it, that is, that I hear all this, read it in the paper, and we didn't do that in those days. It was just so far away. The world has grown so small, you know, since that,

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Period of time. World's a very small place now, to where it was then, and that was so far away, never occurred to us that, it could happen to us.

KE: Mm. Did uh, what year, you said you started teaching in 1915?

PP: Uh huh.

KE: Do you remember anything uh, about uh, when Germany sank the *Lusitania*, in 1915?

PP: I remember, yes, I remember reading that.

KE: Um, do you remember anything about that or what?

PP: That's when we began to feel that we might be involved.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: When that happened, of course.

KE: Do you remember, any, specific thing about it?

PP: No.

KE: Specific thing?

PP: No, there, of course we were get uneasy then, and, by 1914, of course, we knew that we were going to, that our men were going to have to, our boys were going to have to go. And, that they would be drafted. And they were of course.

KE: Did uh, did people take Prohibition very seriously, when it first started?

PP: Yes, very. {Chuckles}

KE: What do you remember about it?

PP: {Chuckles} Well, I , they took it very seriously because uh, we had, but before that, Ohio County had gone dry, and so we didn't have any, uh, we just had a saloon in Horse Branch a few years.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And uh, other than uh, people doin' a lot of talking about it, of course, the boys with the hip flask, you know, we read about that. {Both chuckle} Everybody wanted to show off. My, I, I've always wondered if that had, might not have prompted people to drink that wouldn't have. Old time people, you know, I think, drank, but uh, they didn't, drink to excess. {Chuckles}

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And uh, I think , maybe that, it looked, didn't get a fancy flask, hip flask, you know. {Chuckles} And of course, they had use it, so, that seems to be like, the biggest thing about Prohibition, in our, day.

KE: Did they, were there a lot stills, do you know, around here, or?

PP: I don't think so.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: No.

KE: How did uh, how women feel about the, Suffrage Movement, and uh, getting the right to vote?

PP: Oh, they were very excited. Uh, we just went right around everywhere and made speeches. I did, and everybody else did, you know,

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And we just voted.

KE: Where did you make speeches?

PP: We, we worked very hard at it.

KE: ??

PP: We were, we felt like we uh, should have the right to vote.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: So we really worked at it. We'd have a weekly meeting, you know.

KE: Around, Horse Branch?

PP: At the church.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And uh, we worked very hard at that. We were very, very, and, I don't know if I, I don't recall every woman who didn't believe in it.

KE: Mm hm. What were some of the thing you would do, like, you just mentioned you would give speeches, where would you go and speak?

PP: Well, here, there, all around the, oh, the country, you know.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: We didn't, we didn't go out of town.

KE: Mm hm. How did the men react to this?

PP: Men. Well, they were afraid to say anything, {Chuckles} about it. I don't think, I, I, don't recall any men objecting to it.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: I don't think they did.

KE: Were you or any family ill during the uh, flu epidemic, in 1918, 1919?

PP: Well, we had it. I was teaching, at the time, and of course, had to, go home, I had, for a week or two, but, we had quite a few deaths from it.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: But, my family didn't, suffer from it.

KE: Were any of uh, your students, uh, their families?

PP: Some of our families, 'course, one family, had, two, members at the same time, you know, dead, but uh, well, it's just, pretty rampant.

KE: Mm hm. What did people think about it, did they?

PP: They just didn't know. That was the first we'd ever heard of flu, of course.

KE: Mm.

PP: And uh, nobody knew what, it was and the doctor didn't either, didn't seem to.

KE: Mm hm. How did people, treat the flu, what did you take for it?

PP: Huh?

KE: What kind of medicine?

PP: Well, {Snorts} we had an old country doctor, up there, and uh, they gave mostly aspirin.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And they, of course they didn't know anything else to give, you know, and of course, uh, no one knew, no one knew which would follow it, the uh, doctor did the same what they would with pneumonia they would any other time, you know.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: So, they didn't uh,

KE: Mm. How did people here, around Horse Branch and, this area, respond when Woodrow Wilson, approved, America's entrance into World War I?

PP: I think shock. I, I guess I'd have to say shock other than anything else.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Because, uh, we used, the only thing we knew about war was what we read in, books, history books. And uh, I think it was more shock than anything else, because it was, seemed impossible, that we could get into a war.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Somewhere else besides in our own country, 'course we did have Civil War back then, veterans living at that time, but that was a different matter entirely, that was here. And uh, I think it was shock other than anything else, that, people just couldn't imagine. Well, as I said, the world was really small at that time.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Uh, our world was just small. The Atlantic Ocean was something that you just, didn't cross. Now of course, people just hop across there and, have breakfast, and back home for dinner.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: But they didn't do it in those days. I think there was more shock than anything else, and then of course, they may have begun to, come to conscript, and people signed, for a draft.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: That was another thing that just seemed impossible. And it almost seemed impossible that we would ever have to do that.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: So of course, it was a time of very deep sorrow, because, {Clears throat} we had to see our, uh, brothers and, my brothers were too old, for it, and uh, but we had to see our, and my husband, was. I was, was a bride in World War I, then, in 19n, we married in 1917 and he went in May, then, so we had uh, and we just, had to see, we really didn't know why they going, because, as I said, the world was so small, that we didn't realize, you know, that, did take longer to get across there than it does now, of course.

KE: Do you remember when uh, women first started wearing their hair short, bobbing your hair?

PP: {Chuckles} Yes, yes.

KE: What uh, what was the, the reaction uh, of some of the people when women started to?

PP: Well, some men didn't like it, but most women did, so.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: I think I was living in Greenville. I know it was when I had mine, hair cut, and uh,

KE: About, how old were you then?

PP: Oh I was, twenty-two, twenty-three. I was already married. But uh, women liked it, and they still like it. {Chuckles}

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Of course. But the reaction of course, there's some people was, and some people never did get used to it, and never, you know, still don't.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: We have some people living in the, some of these apartment s around here that still have their hair long, you know, and

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Don't want to do it.

KE: Mm. Did uh

PP: I don't remember really any man complain. Men like for their wives to look nice, and if they look better with short hair, that would suit them fine.

KE: Mm. But uh, what do you remember, about the sinking of the *Titanic*?

PP: Well, of course I remember it was a nine days run, there in this, the, our papers were full of it, you know, 'n, of course we couldn't imagine. That was another thing that wasn't our idea of anything, that a ship could be made that couldn't sunk and yet it did.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And now, of course, they're, goin' down there 'n, makin' some pictures again'n

END TAPE1, SIDE1

TAPE1, SIDE2

PP: I guess a quarter.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Something like that.

KE: Mm. Do you remember uh, when you were, were young couples ever left alone or were they chaperoned at all times?

PP: Well, you, yes, we were chaperoned, I was. {Both chuckle} I'm just speaking for myself, I was chaperoned..

KE: Mm hm. When you

PP: But there'd be couples, you know, and, I didn't mean my mother wasn't home, now, she was home.

KE: Mm hm, mm hm.

PP: And I remember, one time, my brother, uh, mother who was in, a play party, we called it, out in the country and I wanted to go, and, and uh, mother said, "Well, uh," my brother was visiting us. He's already married and gone. And she said, "Well, he can take you." Now, I said, "I'll just stay at home." {Laughs} So I did. I just stayed, I just stayed at home. I didn't feel like I was gonna do anything very bad, so I just didn't need to go, {Both chuckle} and so then I'd just stay at home.

KE: Um, about, what age did uh, girls first, first start uh, being courted by young men?

PP: I guess about like they do today.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Some do it. Girls didn't grow up as fast as, early as they do today, doesn't seem to me like, but anyway, I imagine, about the same time.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: I noticed these little girls around here, well, the boys, get, makin' eyes at each other, and I guess they'd be in the hallways. I imagine that's what happens.

KE: Mm.

PP: I imagine that was always the case.

KE: Huh. But, do you remember the, your first date?

PP: Well, no, we used ta, in school 'n at church and everything, we were always together, you know.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Of course we paired off this way and that way, and

KE: Mm hm.

PP: So, I, I don't know that I remember anything about any, that I recall a first date.

KE: Mm hm. Okay. Um, how did people, first adjust to Daylight Savings Time,

PP: Well,

KE: When they first started?

PP: They loved it,

KE: They did?

PP: They loved it, yes, they loved it and they still like it.

KE: What were some of the, things they liked about it?

PP: Well they liked the long hours, of course.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: For one thing, maybe they didn't like getting' up so early in the morning, but, 'course, where I lived, up, grew up, we had to get up early in the morning, because uh, you know, it was farmers and then in our community, and in fact when we were in the store we had to get up early, because uh, we had, the train, Owensboro train left at six-thirty and we had to, they would always want something before they, went out, and uh,

KE: Mm hm.

PP: We'd just always, so we liked Daylight, and still like it. I wish they'd put us on Eastern and keep us there.

KE: {Chuckles} Now, I'm gonna start with questions from the Twenties now. Movin' right along now. All around the country, the Ku Klux Klan was kind of active in the Twenties, um, what did they, did they ever do anything around in this area?

PP: They did. We had a, fellow who, {Clears throat} or a young man who, had gone to Texas, to work, he had brothers out there, and he was killed in, oil, explosion, I think it exploded. And uh, {Clears throat} they brought the bod-, the body back here it, and he was a member of the Ku Klux Klan. But we told, that it was not like, this one down south.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: That they didn't do the things that, but it, the thing of it, and intrigued us, of course, was that they had uh, uh, sent uh, emblem, Klu Klux Klan emblem.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: In this little country cemetery.

KE: Huh.

PP: Yeah, but uh, we were told, and I think that's right that, there was something different about in Texas to what it was down in, southern states.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: That they didn't believe, you know, that violence,

KE: Mm hm.

PP: So that was uh, that's, the only, thing that we ever, way we ever came in contact with 'em, you know.

KE: What about um, I heard something about in Ohio County, they had a group called the "Possum Hunters"?

PP: Oh, {Chuckles} yeah, they were somethin' else. Now, they took care of what was evil was goin' on in the county.

KE: Mm, what did they do?

PP: Well, they whipped the people that didn't do right. {Chuckles} If they didn't do that, uh, what they would do, they would fix, a bundle of switches, and leave it at the doors.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: If somebody wasn't, and when I was teaching, we had to come down here and stay a week, at the Institute, they called it, we teachers, before school started. And uh, of course, we had a quite a bit of time, and, we toured the, the vicinity around here, which sounds ridiculous now, when you can go all over the state in an hour's time. But anyway, they took us teachers around, and uh, of course, they took us through the jail, and they had uh, a group of those Possum Hunters in the jail.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: They had whipped somebody, and, out there, they got arrested.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: {Chuckles} And so, and that's, I, we didn't have any of 'em in our neighborhood, so all I heard was just what was around here. All I knew was what I heard around here.

KE: Well, what sort of things did they whip people for?

PP: I don't know.

KE: They were just a sort of a check on?

PP: Yes,

KE: To make sure they?

PP: Yes, yes.

KE: Behaved ??

PP: Well, living together and not being married, one thing, I know, I remember that when we, came to the jail out here, they had a couple, they had the couple in jail, and they were letting them visiting out, visiting out in the hall.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Visiting each other, and they'd lived together without being married.

KE: And they were put in jail.

PP: It would take a, awful lot of Possum Hunters now to take care of that. {Both chuckle}

KE: Do you remember anything about the uh, the Scopes Monkey Trial in Tennessee?

PP: Just what I read in the paper.

KE: Mm hm. Did uh, did that create any kind of, reaction around here or?

PP: No, no. I don't think there was very much reaction.

KE: Mm hm. Do you remember when uh, President Harding died? How did the people around the community react to that?

PP: Well, I don't think they paid very much attention to it. 'Course uh, people who were uh, his uh, political affiliation, maybe regretted it, but I, I don't think people paid much attention.

KE: Do you remember the first uh, movie you saw with sound, the first talkie?

PP: No, I really don't. Uh, as I said, we just have always gone to Owensboro, and I don't remember the first one. I remember the first radio.

KE: Mm hm. What do you remember?

PP: We were, we were living in Greenville, and uh, that was, sixty-four years ago. That was then. We were living in Greenville, and the, the judge, of the, Muhlenburg County, had gotten a radio. Had it up to the courthouse. And, everybody flocked to, hear that radio.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Well, I didn't because my baby was about a year old, and hardly that old, and my husband went to hear it, but I didn't go. And up home, up at Horse Branch at, at that time, we had, alot of Irish families there, at one time, and we, we had two old bachelors, and they knew about radio. They couldn't afford to buy one, of course.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: So they from, and I guess from Sears Roebuck, they ordered the parts and made the first radio that was in Horse Branch.

KE: Huh.

PP: So I came up, to Horse Branch to, see my family, and everybody, said, "Frank and Joe have a radio." And I said, "Well, let's go down and hear that radio," 'cause I hadn't heard the one in Greenville. So I went down, and uh, 'course they were just happy, to turn the radio on, for, you know, and they had to have, well, the first one we had, you had to plug in three things.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: To get anything. Well, I, 'course I listened to it, and uh, I am sure by the wildest stretch of imagination, I might of heard then a word or two. But uh, {Chuckles} but, anyway, I think I had to imagine most of it. {Both chuckle} That was the first radio. But those boys could do most anything, and they did. They did improve it, until, of course, it was, all right. It wasn't as good as the, ones you would buy, but, at least they weren't able to buy the ones, so they

KE: Mm. {Pause} What uh, do you remember anything about the, Stock Market Crash in 1929?

PP: No. Not much, except just what I read in the paper.

KE: Mm hm. Did it affect many people around here?

PP: No, it didn't affect anybody in town.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: In our community, I, I doubt if it affected anybody in Ohio County.

KE: Mm.

PP: Now, the bank failures did, of course, and they did, when the banks failed.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: That affected several people, very much so because, some people lost their entire savings, of course.

KE: Were there any banks in Ohio County that failed?

PP: I don't think of any in Ohio County, I remember one in Grayson County that did, and we had, a neighbor who had put their life savings in the bank, and of course, in fact, it caused their death, I'm sure of it, today. But I don't believe that any in Ohio County failed. I don't remember. I don't, I, I'm sure they didn't. 'Cause we had this big bank.

KE: Really?

PP: That was the first one.

KE: Uh, in uh, 1929, also uh, a man and his wife, Carl Browder, and his wife's name was Grace, they held up a bank, uh, I think it was the Farmers Bank , West Louisville, did, do you remember hearing anything about that? Did you think ?

PP: Oh, I guess I heard about it, but I didn't

KE: Mm hmm. Did things like that, happen very often?

PP: Not very often.

KE: Do you remember any big, like a big crime or something that really, stirred up a lot of commotion?

PP: No, people were pretty good in those days.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: No, didn't usually have those things.

KE: Huh. What do you remember about um, Bill Monroe and bluegrass music?

PP: Well, I guess just about what everybody else does. {Chuckles}

KE: Do you remember any?

PP: Of course, I've just always known my neighborhood, they were from Rosine, and,

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Horse Branch just three mile away.

KE: Mm.

PP: But, I never did hear anything about them until they got to be famous, of course,

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Because

KE: You never heard anything about 'em when, while they were, visiting Rosine?

PP: To us, they were just ordinary people, you know.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Bill wudn't , any more than we thought about our next door neighbors, you know, he wasn't very famous in my day.

KE: Huh. Well, what do you remember about uh, Franklin Roosevelt and some of the, the New Deal Programs he, he introduced?

PP: Well, I think it was wonderful, and I think today that people that draw Social Security, should always remember, Franklin D. Roosevelt. 'Course to us, he was one, of the finest presidents that we ever had. I, I think of him in that way, because he instituted so many good things.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And uh, just, every, he wasn't very popular, as you know, because he was, elected several times. {Chuckles}

KE: Mm.

PP: More than anybody else.

KE: You uh, you, you taught school in uh, a one-room school room, is that right?

PP: Well, I started teaching in a two-room school, Horse Branch had a two-room school.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And uh, I taught two years, and um, thirty dollars a month. I's so

KE: Really?

PP: And thought I was a millionaire.

KE: About what year was this?

PP: In 1915.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And then 1917, I, I thought I surely could make more money than that, so I left to go and took a business course. And uh, had a job, and came home and married, and then, my husband left too, he, then he had to go World War I. Of course he went to France, so, teachers were scarce, and I started teaching again, so,

KE: Mm hm.

PP: I taught uh, again it was still a two-room school. Then I taught at Narrows, and that, I, I taught there, and that was the first one-room school I taught, and that was the first year it had been a one-room school.

KE: Mm hm. What grades did you teach?

PP: All of 'em. {Chuckles} You had to teach all of 'em.

KE: Mm hm. What uh, what do you remember about?

PP: Eight, you had eight,

KE: Teaching?

PP: You taught eight, subjects.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And you started with the, primary, and went on up to the eighth grade. You had all of 'em, up to the eighth grade.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: It was very enjoyable. I, 'course, that's what everybody did, so I just enjoyed it very much.

KE: Mm hm. What were some of the things you remember about the students, of that time?

PP: Well, they were very crude, of course. We had uh, big pot belly stoves that had to be kept warm, and, teacher had to, do their own, janitor service or, we usually hired a boy, you know, to do the janitor service.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And we had a well, and went to the well and got the water, 'n, I, I think they used to do this, but not in my day now. We always had those little folding cups, individual to drink out of, but I think they used to use a gourd, and everybody used the same gourd. {Chuckles} That's what I was told. Now, I never did do that. We always had those little, individual,

KE: Mm hm.

PP: That was uh, one of the things that you had to carry around with you, in your pocket, was, a drinking cup.

KE: Mm. At the school

PP: But we were happy. Had a lot of fun.

KE: As a school teacher, I'm, I'm sure a lot of the people in the community uh, had certain expectations that, I guess you were to, I guess to live up to, what sort of things, do you think uh, the community thought of a school teacher?

PP: What, I thought that they, that the community think of a school teacher?

KE: Yeah.

PP: Yeah, well, we were held, in very great respect.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Uh, we had the children, of course, six hours a day, there's just six hours, six hours a day, and uh, yes, I was treated, royally when I taught. And I, substituted, uh, one time, and, out in, out in the country, and the people that I had to stay with, sent me a hot, lunch every day. Uh, so, we were treated well. We didn't make very much money, but we were treated well. Oh, yes, I, I wonder today if teachers were not, had, treated with more respect, than they are today.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And uh, to me, I felt like that, my mission in life as a teacher, was the next thing to a minister. 'Cause I had those children, as many hours of daylight, some of 'em, as their parents had.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Because uh, some 'em, got in, had to come early, and they got in late, and they went to bed early, and I felt like that sometimes I had those children more hours of the day than their parents, and I felt a very great responsibility. And I, so far I have, been able to say that I taught twenty years, but I have never had a pupil that, has gone bad. So, I'm real proud of that. Of course, now, {Chuckles} that's been a good many years ago, and they're not, today's youth, that, well, we never heard of drugs.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: I guess they'd get around behind the chimney corner and smoke a cigarette.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: But, that's about the, that's the extent of it, and they didn't do as much of that, of course, as they probably do today. So, it was nice. I enjoyed every minute of my teaching.

KE: What subjects did you have to teach?

PP: Well, we, we had, every subject, from the ABCs, where you taught the children, uh, we didn't have this modern method. I, I was teaching at the time this, modern word method was introduced, but I, used it, partly because I had to, but I didn't think children could ever learn spell if they didn't know their ABCs.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: So I did that. And then we had, arithmetic. We had grammar, we called it, which of course now, I don't what they have.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And uh, history and geography, and today children don't know a thing about geography. They don't know, and we had to learn the name of all the presidents, know the states and the capitals, 'n,

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And we had to learn a lot, and now, of course, these kids have computers, and they didn't have to use any brain at all. So I don't know what's gonna happen to them.

KE: You said you taught for twenty years?

PP: Uh huh.

KE: How did uh, how did uh, teaching change from, when you first started to twenty years later?

PP: Very drastically, 'course I taught in high school there, I taught.

KE: What were some of the changes that took place?

PP: Well, I don't know. We just went along with what we, everything changes, of course. By the time the twenty years was up, well, I, I quit teaching, and there was twenty-five years I didn't teach.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And the I, World War II came along, and of course, teachers were scarce, and I started again. That's when I, well, finished teaching. I had only taught four years before that, and 'cause we had a business, and I, was, had to work at home. And then when World War II came along, I started teaching then because, they just, didn't have teachers. Teachers could make, we still, teachers were still not making any, very much. And of course, they could get out at these war jobs, you know, and make, my goodness, so every teacher quit because they could, you know. And went to that, so I started teaching again, and I just kept on. And I enjoyed every minute of it. I, enjoyed my teaching the, high school students and, they were just lovely and they were not like children, boys and girls today. They were so different. 'Course that's been a good many years ago, you know. And uh, I enjoyed it. Every, every year the juniors and seniors then went on a trip.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Weekend trip. You may have done that. Well, I'm, for fifteen years, I sponsored the, one of those trips, and they were just as marvelous. I never had any trouble at all.

KE: What kind of places did they go?

PP: Well, went to Chattanooga, and the, Smoky Mountains,

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And um, one year we went to Smoky Mountains, next year we'd go to Chattanooga, you know. Juniors and seniors, and um, that's about, as far as we went.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Then the bus drivers, of course, they took the children to the zoo in Evansville, Beech Bend Park, and I nearly always went with them. I, I liked to go, and I liked, I, I liked for them to have a good time, but I taught them that there was a way to have a good time, and not do anything bad.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Not tear up everything on the place, {Chuckles} and they enjoyed that. So, I, liked that myself.

KE: In uh, 1936 in Owensboro, uh, the last public execution in, the United States was held. Do you remember anything about the hanging?

PP: {Chuckles} The only thing I remember about it is that uh, uh, we had uh, we had the store, of course, and we had a neighbor here next to us, and, he wanted to go, so uh,

KE: Mm hm.

PP: I, I don't know why. He didn't like things like that. I think it's ridiculous myself, {Chuckles} anyway, uh, my husband and uh, this next door neighbor of ours, decided they would go. So uh, by the time the word got around, why, two or three more people went, so some of them went over there.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: To see it. I thought it was terrible myself.

KE: What, did they say anything about it,

PP: No.

KE: When they came back?

PP: {Chuckles} No, and they didn't, they didn't talk when they came back. {Chuckles} I think that they almost wished they hadn't gone.

KE: Really? Mm. {Pause} What were uh, business conditions like during the Depression? Did you, did you have

PP: Well, I tell you ours,

KE: the store then?

PP: I'll, I'll have to say that, uh, we had a store, of course, general merchandise, everything, and uh, they were building 62 through our community.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: From Paducah to uh, from, down, well, anyway, a strip, between Central City and Caneyville.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And the, men that were doing that all stayed in Horse Branch, and, they were, and they were doing it through there, and uh, there was plenty of work for everybody, so, personally we didn't feel the Depression, 'cause, we were just, busy at the store.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And everybody had work, and they got paid, of course, we had uh, our neighbors now, but, but our neighbors, as I said, had work, 'cause they worked on that highway, was through there, you know, and uh, we didn't, we didn't feel the pinch very much. In fact, uh, we had never kept our store open on Sunday, like stores do now.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: But uh, we had to, keep our store open on Sunday afternoon after we'd get in from church.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And uh, our neighbors had work, most of 'em, for a good many, several years, and, it wasn't as bad as uh, now, the worst thing about it was, when they rationed, the food for everybody, you know, that was the worst thing about it.

KE: Was that, was that during World War II?

PP: Yeah, they'd have to have the stamps, you know, to get sugar, and

KE: Mm hm.

PP: Everything like that.

KE: Was it pretty hard to keep up with all that?

PP: Well,

KE: In the stores?

PP: It was very, very hard. Then we had to make uh, we had to, when they started now, when this rationing started, we had to, list every item that we had in our store.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And uh, that had to be submitted to a board, and, the price, they set the, the price was set, we didn't, we couldn't set the price.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And then uh, of course, we never varied from it because we didn't want to get into any trouble, but a lot of people, lot of people did.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: But, anyway uh, we got by, and was a lot of, an awful lot of work, and uh, really wasn't necessary, but uh, people, then uh, I had uh, but people could get more sugar to can with. They had to come and fill out another paper, so I, at, at the store, I had the charge in that, for them, our community. And uh, they'd have to tell me how many cans of fruit they were gonna cook. If they had always canned, and then they were allowed so much sugar than that.

KE: Mm.

PP: The neighbor man came one day, and uh, [Someone exits]

UNIDENTIFIED PERSON: I'll see you later.

PP: Okay, that's fine. The neighbor man came one day and, one morning and uh, he was, kept follerin' around after me, every time I'd wait on somebody, he was right at my heels. I wondered what in the world he was, finally the last one left, and just left him, and he hurried before somebody else could get in. He said, "Pearl, I, I need some sugar." And I said, "Well, do you have a stamp?" He said, "No. Don't have." And I said, "Well, I'm sorry. We have to have one, when we buy sugar, and I, I just can't let you have it." He said, "What, what do they, expect a man to do, to have fried pies, uh, fried apples when you don't have sugar." And I said, "Well, they don't let you have pies." {Both chuckle} But, uh, most people, of course, were very nice about it, but, it was a big problem. It was a headache.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: But you had to do it, and of course, you had to help your neighbors. Now, we had neighbors that, that lived away that, had an awful hard time. And one man, lost his job and came back, to the community, and he said, "Well, I know what I can do. I can always have a living with my family here." So he, found a little house way back out in the country, and he said, he went around to the farmers, and he said, "Now I don't want any money. I just want some food, that you've made, to keep my family, from starving until I get back, get a job back."

KE: Mm hm.

PP: So he did. Mm hm. And, and the farmers, gave him, they didn't give him any money. They didn't have much money, but they gave him flour, and meal, and things like that, because they grew that.

KE: Mm hm. What do remember about uh, uh, right before the United States got into World War II and Hitler, being, about the rise of Adolph Hitler and Nazi Germany? Were uh, people around here worried about that?

PP: Well, of course, we'd had World War I, you know, so they were worried. {Clears throat.} And they were worried, and that was a big worry in that, was a terrible thing, and, I don't want to live through another one.

KE: Mm. Do you remember what you were doing when you heard about Pearl Harbor?

PP: Yes. Late Sunday in the afternoon, I had just been out there and been to church and Sunday School that day, and, and been out to a neighbor's that, afternoon and, had come in, and one of, next door neighbor, had asked me if I'd go in the store and get something for him, and he had just heard it, and I hadn't, I had been at home, and I hadn't heard it, but he told me. So, of course, we were just very much disturbed, because we knew what that meant. And uh, we, did, next our, our place of business was next to the post office and, we had a wonderful post master, and we got mail, on every train. Not just once a day, we got it, every time the train came, and the post master was very, very nice. He would work the mail after every train, and people just met every train, so they could get a letter from, overseas.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And we almost wore it, I, I did almost an atlas out, trying to locate these little pinpoint islands in the Pacific Ocean, that we'd never of, didn't know existed. But uh, and then of course, they'd get, some would get good word and some would, get bad word, and then, one morning that, the lady who had worked for me for, twenty years, I, her son was killed overseas, and, 'course, they asked me if I would tell 'em. Which, you know how that is, so, very, very, very trying experience. But uh, 'course, we'd, then people'd meet the train to get a letter, and they wouldn't get a letter.

KE: Mm hm.

PP: And it was a terrible, terrible, experience. My son was wounded in Italy, ??. {Clears throat.} He was uh, student at Western and, he wouldn't have had to gone right then but anyway he said, "Well, everybody is." And he, he thought would look, look at him and say, "Well, why isn't he goin'?" So he just volunteered, and

KE: Mm hm.

PP: You know, he was really just ??, but uh, and I guess that, this letter I got was when he said he was in Italy in the hospital, so, why, then we didn't hear, we got that letter and he said he's in Italy in the hospital and I thought, well, if he's in, in the hospital, at least he's safe, now. And we didn't get uh, notice from the government for three weeks, that he had been wounded. And the agent

END TAPE1, SIDE2