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Western Kentucky University, mssfa@wku.edu

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Folklife Archives Project 154 – A Generation Remembers, 1900-1949

Interview with Lattie Edds and Essie Thomasson (CT 59)

TAPE1, SIDE1

{Pause while tape is running.}

JUDI HETRICK: This is a test. This is Judi Hetrick and I'm at the Riverside Manor with Mrs. Essie Lee Thomasson, and Miss Lattie Edds, and we're gonna talk about, some of the things they remember, from when they were young women. Miss Thomasson, did you grow up here?

ESSIE THOMASSON: How's that?

JH: Did you grow up, here, in McLean County? {Leans in and speaks louder.} Did you grow up in McLean County?

ET: Yes, ma'am.

JH: Whereabouts?

ET: Do you know where Pleasant Hope Church is?

JH: Just vaguely.

ET: I was born right north of it. Grew up there.

JH: And when were you born?

ET: In 19-, 19-, 19-hundred and one.

JH: Oh, my heavens. When you, think back, to, being a little child, or just growin' up, can you remember, what one of your first memories might be, from, when you remember something outside of your family?

ET: I remember things outside of my family?

JH: Yeah.

ET: Well, yes, I guess I do, some things.

JH: What was one of the, the earliest memories that you have?

ET: Oh, I cain't hardly tell ya.

LATTIE EDDS: Let me tell it.

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ET: I expect she remember more about it.

LE: Wheat, wheat thrashings, and log rollings, and carpet tackings.

ET: Yes.

LE: And quilts.

ET: And weaving carpets. I have weaved carpets.

JH: Uh huh.

ET: Mm hm.

JH: But those, those would all have been, opportunities for community gatherings?

LE: Some, all day.

JH: Uh huh.

LE: Uh, when, they thrash wheat, the neighborhood would all thrash away and they had this pen and chickens, and we'd go out, and, watch 'em. Then they'd let us climb up, on a little, little platform, and blow the whistle. {Chuckles}

JH: Of, of the engine? The engine had a whistle, on it?

LE: 'Course they don't have engines like that now, but then they had the old-fashioned pull a little cord, and blow.

JH: And how old, were you, when you remember doing the, wheat thrashing?

LE: I'm, guess, in 1910.

JH: Uh huh.

LE: Some where.

JH: Yeah, yeah.

LE: And my father would go in the summer we'd move that, on the farm, and on these special days, my father would go in town, and bring some of our friends out. Then, we'd go out and watch 'em.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm. Do you, do you remember

ET: I weaved those carpets, I tacked carpet rags.

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JH: Yeah.

LE: Then we'd make it into

ET: And I'd make it into a ball.

LE: Balls.

JH: Mm hm. And that would be, the same kind of rugs, my, my family called 'em rag rugs? Is that the type that they made?

LE: It's a carpet, bind the yard. You, makes you strips and cut off the yardage and sew the strips together. A long time ago, they would put straw on the floor. They put this carpet down and packed it. In later years, they didn't use the straw, but they still used the rag carpets.

JH: Do you

LE: That was, go on.

JH: What was the straw, used for, what did it do?

LE: I don't know whether it to protect the carpet, I think.

JH: Uh huh.

LE: And walk on it, to layer it.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm.

ET: And, and weavin', then we had shuttles. Wrapped, put the rags on.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm.

ET: And went through the, loom.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm. Did that

LE: And you'd move

ET: And a pedal at the bottom, cross the, every time you went through, with one rag, you'd just raise that pedal.

JH: Catch it.

ET: Yeah.

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JH: So that, okay.

ET: It'd cross, it'd cross

JH: Yeah.

ET: That string.

JH: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Did that take, more than one person, to make those?

ET: No, no, huh unh. One sat on a bench.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm. Did everyone have a loom?

LE: No.

JH: That you could use?

LE: People would have to make it by the yard.

JH: Yeah.

LE: And they'd buy it.

JH: Oh, they'd buy it. Okay.

LE: Or sometimes they'd furnish the rags strips, and pay so much

JH: Mm hm.

LE: To

JH: Mm hm, mm hm. So that, there were one or two people then, in the community who were the rug makers?

LE: Yes.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm. But you got to help with that?

ET: Huh?

JH: You got to help, making the rugs?

ET: Yeah.

JH: Uh huh, uh huh. That's interesting. {Pause} When you were, a little girl, do you remember what types of chores, you had to do around the house?

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ET: Yes. Carryin' coal, carryin' stove wood. You know, stove wood was cut about that long.

JH: Uh huh.

ET: Carryin' arms load of it.

JH: Uh huh.

ET: And sweep, sweep with a broom.

JH: And how, how young were you when you started doing that type of work, to help your mother?

ET: Ohhh, about eight.

JH: About eight.

ET: Seven or eight.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: Oh, I s-, six when I carry in that wood

JH: Yeah.

ET: And coal.

JH: Uh huh.

ET: And uh, mother wouldn't let me sweepin'. Didn't think I'd get the floor clean enough with a broom until I got

LE: Really?

ET: Older.

JH: You got older, yeah. So, did you get to help, um, the, the jobs that maybe were your dad's jobs, did you get to help with those at all?

ET: I didn't chop the stove wood. My, father and my

JH: Your father.

ET: Older brothers.

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JH: Older brothers did that.

ET: Chopped the wood.

JH: Uh huh.

ET: And they'd pile it. We'd go to the stove wood pile, pick up arm loads of it, and carry in.

JH: Uh huh.

ET: We had a box in the kitchen, where we put it.

JH: Mm hm. Did you learn to cook on a woodstove?

ET: Huh?

JH: Did you learn to cook, on that kind of stove, when you learned to cook?

LE: I need.

ET: How's that?

JH: When you learned to cook?

ET: Oh.

JH: Was it on a fancy stove?

ET: Oh, I learned to cook. I's about ten, twelve.

JH: Mm hm. And that was on the wood stove?

ET: Yes.

JH: Uh huh. Was that hard, to learn?

ET: Mm nm.

JH: No?

ET: Mm nm.

JH: What did you have to do? How would you cook, a soup or somethin'?

ET: You mean what I cook?

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JH: You, well, how did you go about it, on that type of a stove, how did you do that type of work?

ET: On the top of the stove.

JH: On top of it. So did you have to feed the fire while you were cookin'?

ET: No, huh unh. I raised the cap, and put in so many sticks of wood with a, few lumps a coal on top of it.

JH: So you used both the coal

ET: Uh huh.

JH: And the wood.

ET: Both.

JH: Inside of it. Mm hm, mm hm. That's good.

ET: Yes, I used both. That coal, when it caught, it would hold fire longer than that wood would soon burn up.

JH: Uh huh, uh huh.

LE: The stove, the range, it had at that time it had a

ET: Warming closet.

LE: Warming closet, you could keep your food in.

ET: Uh huh, uh huh.

LE: Now at this time they had the reservoir, they called it, and you could keep that full of water

JH: Uh huh.

LE: And it would stay.

ET: And, and uh, uh, all of the stoves that we had at home, I remember, water tank on the side, a big tanks, water in it. It would heat by the heat of the stove.

JH: Uh huh. And what did you do with that water, what was it for?

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ET: Well, when you wanted hot water for anything, to wash your hands or take a bath, like, you could go to the hot water tank,

JH: Mm hm.

ET: And get it. Dip it out.

LE: Wash dishes. It would clean.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: Quite different now.

JH: Yes.

ET: Quite different.

JH: Yes, yes. How 'bout, sewing, and making your clothes and crocheting, how 'bout, did you learn that when you were little, also?

ET: How 'bout what?

JH: The sewing, and crocheting?

ET: Well, my mother learnt me to sew, and uh, I learnt to crochet, they uh, the hairpin braid on a hairpin. And that's where I learnt to crochet.

JH: Uh huh.

ET: And uh, sewin', I learnt on makin' me some aprons.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: I pieced a quilt, and I wudn't old enough to go to school, and I still have it.

JH: You pieced a quilt?

ET: Eh, I, I uh, my mother would cut pieces, and these is too small for her quilt. She'd throw 'em down on the floor, and I'd pick 'em up, and sew 'em together. It'd taken, it'd taken uh, sixteen to make a block about like that.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: And uh, I pieced 'em up together, and uh, I, my, Jay's half-sister in Tennessee has a quilt, I, put it together with a solid color, it then, it's put together with red. I got a red, line.

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JH: Uh huh.

ET: And I quilted it.

JH: Uh huh. That's amazing, and you must of been how old then?

ET: I wasn't old enough to go to school,

JH: About,

ET: When I pieced that.

JH: Four or five?

ET: When I pieced them pieces, I wasn't old enough to go to school.

JH: That's pretty amazing, that's pretty good.

ET: I loved it.

JH: What, what do you remember about going to school?

ET: What do I remember about what?

JH: Going to school, being in school.

ET: Well, I remember, {Chuckles} I remember several things. We walked across the fields to the old fashioned school house. You know what the old fashioned school house was?

JH: No.

ET: Well, it was just a big, buildin', taken so many, children. I think our school, Little Grove, at one time had about sixty enrolled, in there. And uh, well I, most I remember about, I wore long curly hair, and there was certain girl that, she'd pick at me about my curls. Gonna cut one of 'em off, gonna cut one of 'em off. Well, the teacher that I, my first school teacher, one day she kept pickin' at me about it, and got me to cryin', so this teacher, she picked up the shovel, you know the old fashioned shovel they shovel out coal, and put in the stove. She says, "The next time she goes to you, you hit her with this shovel." {Chuckles}

JH: Did you do it?

ET: I did. Yes, I did. {All chuckle} She didn't ever bother me no more about my curls. {All chuckle.}

JH: I bet she didn't. {Chuckles}

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ET: Miss Lattie that taught that, teach-, that, pupil some, Eva Ayer, Adam Ayer's wife, she was Eva Kirtley. She boarded at her mother's.

LE: She went to school to be a teacher.

JH: Where, which school was it that you taught at?

LE: I taught at Oak Grove my first ?? some of 'em would teach in the one room schools, and this one I do remember was a huge room, and you heard of the pot belly stove.

JH: Mm hm.

LE: Well, that's what we had in the center of the room, and the pipe went straight up, into the ceiling, and one rainy day, one of the children said: "Let's play blind fold. I said "O.K." And I put the blind fold on and we, {Some kind of machine running in background} and we were just runnin' around, and all at once this stove pipe fell and stuff fell every where. So I went to a nearby telephone and called a trustee, and he said, "Well, don't worry, just dismiss 'em and come on home." And I did, that's where I was boarding, and, they had a little trouble. It's three days before the we went back, {Chuckles} but he said, "You won't have to make any of it up, and I didn't." And we were where I board, and they were wonderful.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm. Did you, were you not able to live at home, is that why you were boarding?

?: I like that. {Someone in background.}

LE: When I taught, so far away I had to board.

JH: Mm hm. Was

LE: Was only one time...

JH: Mm hm.

LE: ...that I remember that I could stay at home, and that was one of the times I taught what was called "Little Grove School."

JH: Mm hm, mm hm.

LE: But all the other times I had to board.

JH: Uh huh. Was that unusual, for a young woman, to be boarding, with another family?

LE: Well, it was the way all the teachers had to do, I think.

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JH: Uh huh, uh huh, and did you have to,

ET: She's my school, old school teacher. I went to school to her, the first, first school that I went to school to her, was 1913, wasn't it?

LE: About the year that I, no, I taught in Rumsey that year.

ET: You taught Oak Grove in 1912, wasn't it?

LE: I

ET: And then you taught

LE: Think so.

ET: And then you taught Little Grove.

LE: ??

ET: The best I can remember, I's about thirteen when I went to school to ya, that first school.

LE: And...

ET: And then that other 'un, I was up, practically size grown, the other school.

LE: I think I taught five schools then I began to, teach in the four-room

JH: Mm hm, mm hm.

LE: Schools where they had it First, Second, Third, and Fourth

JH: Mm hm,

LE: Grades.

JH: Mm hm. How many years did you teach?

LE: I taught thirteen schools, but it, that was something I wanted to do.

JH: Yeah.

LE: I couldn't do that one year, and I decided I like to learn how to learn shorthand, and I went to the Business College in Owensboro.

JH: Oh, you did?

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LE: And, then the next year, I went back to teaching.

JH: Uh huh.

LE: And it was one year, my sister and her family were in Denver, and they wanted me to come out there, so I went out there, and, but they wanted me to stay, and I said, “I can’t sit down and hold my hands, {Chuckles} I’ll hunt a job.” So while she was shopping, I asked the floor manager, I said, “Could you use another sales lady during the holidays?” He said, “Yes. Come tomorrow.” So he called one of the girls over. She fixed me up with a little apron and little scissors, and a pencil on strings, cords. I, I was, thought I’d just work during the holidays, but I liked it so, that I just kept on for the year. And so at the time it, I said to my, my manager, “Well, I decided to teach school again this fall, so I’m going home.” He says, “Why, I thought you lived here.” And I said, “I, I, I live in Kentucky.” He said, “Where?” I said, “In McLean County,” and he smiled and says, “I’m from Louisville, Kentucky.” {Chuckles} And he says, “You know, I thought I detected that Southern drawl.” {Both chuckle.} So, I came back home.

JH: In what year was that, that you came back?

LE: Uh, just...

JH: Do you know about how old you were?

LE: Well, I, I was in my early twenties.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm. When did you retire, from teaching, how old were you then?

LE: {Pause} I just don’t remember.

JH: Mm hm. But you did not teach, on into your, later adult years?

LE: No.

JH: No.

LE: Mm nhm.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: I remember uh, my mother, had a side saddle, and she had a big ol’ horse she’d, ride every once in a while,

JH: Mm hm.

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ET: And take us children, with her, go visitin'. She'd take me in her lap, and my brother ride on behind her, and we'd go visitin'.

JH: How old were you, when you rode out with your mother?

ET: Huh?

JH: How old were you then?

ET: Oh, I couldn't 'a been more than three or four.

JH: Very little.

ET: And she'd take me in her lap.

JH: Oh.

ET: And my brother, there's three years between me and my brother, and he was that much older, and he'd sit behind her.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: On the horse.

JH: And you'd be on her lap?

ET: Mm hm.

LE: I've seen that many 'a times.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm.

ET: I remember well ridin' that ol' horse and sittin' in momma's lap.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm. How old were you when you started going to school?

ET: When what?

JH: When you started school?

ET: I started at six.

JH: Mm hm. Do you remember, the types of things, you studied when you were in school?

ET: It, it was a primer. I learnt my ABCs.

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JH: Mm hm.

ET: In that primer, that's the first I remember.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: Mm hm.

JH: Mm hm. Do you remember...

ET: They don't teach 'em ABCs

JH: Yeah.

ET: Anymore, do they? {Chuckles}

JH: That, that's what I was wonderin'.

LE: The cards, we called 'em flash cards.

JH: Uh huh.

LE: And

ET: Yes, and on the board.

LE: And I would teach the primary grade if I could get it. It's awfully hard, all they get is what you tell.

JH: Mm hm.

LE: And I had these flash cards then to "jump", and I would hold it up and call a certain name, and he'd get, he'd jump, and another one had "run" on it. I'd hold that up and call a name, and he'd run up to me. Different things like that.

JH: Uh huh. But you to, create those, yourself?

LE: They didn't have them. You had to make it yourself.

JH: Uh huh, uh huh. Did you go to school to learn how to do that, to become, a teacher, or did you, teach yourself?

LE: We'd take that examination and then get a certificate, then teach.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm. But there were no special, like going to college classes, anything to help you

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LE: No.

JH: Think that stuff up.

LE: Well in later years, I went to Bowling Green to college.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm. But you had already been teaching

LE: Yes.

JH: Before you did that?

LE: Mm hm.

JH: That's interesting. That's good. Did you ever work outside of your home, did you ever have a job like Miss Lattie,

ET: No.

JH: Teaching?

ET: There was nobody but me and my husband, and uh, we bought a home, and, I worked in the field all the time, just the same as he did.

JH: Uh huh. How old were you when you got married?

ET: I got married, nineteen.

JH: Nineteen.

ET: I was nineteen and he was twenty.

JH: Mm hm. And so he farmed. What types of crops did you grow?

ET: Corn and tobacco mostly.

JH: Mm hm. Was that a good living, for you then?

ET: Yes, that tobaccer was a good price then, it was a good, mm hm.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: 'Course we raised the corn to feed to our stock.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: And uh, 'course we had a garden, it, where we raised our garden stuff.

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JH: Mm hm, mm hm. Can you tell me, what it was like working, the farm back when you were just a young

ET: How's that?

JH: How, what was it like working, the farm, when you were just first married? What types of work did you do?

ET: Well, I have set tobacco, we set it the old fashioned way with a peg, and I have uh, cut it,

JH: Mm hm.

ET: I suckered it, I stripped it.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: I done pretty near everything on the farm,

JH: Yeah.

ET: Everything but I didn't break ground with the old fashioned breaking plow. But outside of that, I done a lot of the other.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: Drove a team, and disk, and air it.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: Things like that. I worked in ground, you know.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm.

ET: That's before the tractor, times.

JH: Yeah.

ET: While yet a lot of 'em got tractors, but we didn't.

JH: Yeah.

ET: Mm nhm.

JH: So what did, when you first saw, when you saw a tractor for the first time, do you remember that,

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ET: Huh unh.

JH: At all? Huh unh.

ET: Huh unh.

JH: Huh unh.

ET: We didn't never did get a tractor.

JH: Never did get one.

ET: Never did own a tractor.

JH: Huh.

ET: When uh, my husband's health went bad, he couldn't raise the, crop, we rented the ground out. The other folks, had the tractors, and done that, as long as he lived.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm.

ET: Mm hm. I think it's about thirty-five years that he wasn't able to, do a thing on the place.

JH: Huh. That's too bad. What

ET: He had a nervous breakdown.

JH: Huh.

ET: And that nervous breakdown was caused from putting out a tobacco crop that we shouldn't never have put out. He wasn't able to do it, and he thought we had to have it, but we didn't have to have it, and uh, after we uh, we managed to get it out, and were, and worked it, and put it in the house,

JH: Mm hm.

ET: And then he got to where he couldn't sleep. That's what hit him. He couldn't sleep day or night.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: He went to about five different doctors, and he finally, seen that he was gonna to have to quit.

JH: Mm hm.

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ET: And he did.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: But we stayed on the place. We lived in the house and just rented the ground out.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm. When he quit farmin', how old were you all, when he quit, then?

ET: How old uh?

JH: When you, when he quit farmin', how old were you then?

ET: Let's see, he went to drawin' Social Security at fifty-six.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: He was disabled.

JH: Yeah, so that would have been in the fifties.

ET: Yeah.

JH: Then.

ET: Yeah.

JH: So you farmed, without a tractor or anything all the way through the Depression,

ET: Yes, yes.

JH: And all the way through the,

ET: Our farmin' was without a tractor.

JH: The war.

ET: Yes.

JH: And uh.

ET: Mm hm. We didn't ever get one. We felt like it was a lot of, a tractor then really cost money, of course, they do yet.

JH: That's true.

ET: Mm hm.

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JH: That's true, that's true.

ET: But uh, he seen that it wasn't gonna be many years he wasn't gonna be able to raise a crop, and he didn't uh, he thought it useless to buy a tractor, put that much money in something he couldn't handle,

JH: Mm hm.

ET: And raise a crop.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: So he just decided he'd rent the ground out.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: Well, that tabaccer crop, the neighbors had to strip it, and delivered it for us.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm.

ET: He wasn't able to do anything.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: That uh, now that all happened in the year '49.

JH: MM hm.

ET: The '50 water had us penned in. We couldn't get out, to the highway.

JH: Oh.

ET: We could get up to the, highway,

JH: Mm hm.

ET: But what I mean, we couldn't come to Calhoun or Livermore.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: The water had us shut off.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: And there was a dirt road, a crossroad, that, we traveled, through.

JH: Mm hm.

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ET: Mm hm.

JH: Mm hm. Were there also problems in, with the other floods in '13 and '37? Did they flood?

ET: How's that?

JH: The other waters, in '13 and '37, did those cause problems for you?

ET: You mean our water system?

JH: No, no, no, the floods, well, back in 1913, and 1937, when there was a flood, was that a problem also?

ET: Oooo, we had to move out in '37.

JH: You did? Oh, what happened?

ET: Water got us.

JH: Yeah.

ET: Mm hm.

JH: Can you tell me about that?

ET: Mm hm. Yes, I remember all about it.

JH: Uh huh.

ET: Yes, uh, uh, the water was never known, 'course that '37, there's never been anything like it.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: And water never was known to, it'd get up on our place, but it didn't never get to anything like either of the buildings, but that time it just walked on in. And uh, it just barely covered our floor at our house,

JH: Mm hm.

ET: But we seen it was gonna get in, so we moved out. There was a house uh, an old bachelor lived in, uh, up above us on a little higher ground, and he told us, says, "Now, if you all need to move, why, I've got couple rooms up here empty." So we moved up there

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TAPE1, SIDE2

ET: And it was done in there, drive way out there, comin' in. Our farm, there was thirty-five acres, and it was just as level as this floor. And when it started to comin' in there, why, it come in.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: And uh, we went and moved out one mornin', and um, by night it was done up under the house. So, I wuddna stayed there. Some of us says, "Why you all, could have stayed, with that water that deep." No.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: You didn't know what time you might wake up and, step out in water.

JH: Yeah, yeah.

ET: Mm nmh. I wasn't stayin'. I was raised in the hills. I never had back water. {Chuckles} Didn't know nothing, about it. {Chuckles} The '13 water, got pretty high, and we lived in the hills. I wasn't married, nothin', but uh, us kids wanted to go see that water. We heard of it bein' certain places, you know, and we wanted to go see that water. Pappy hitched up to the surrey, and took us, and uh, went to see that water.

JH: What did you think about that, when you, you must have been what about twelve? What did you think about it?

ET: Oh, I think I didn't want to be in it. {Chuckles} I didn't want to be in it. The place that we owned, that '13 water got, up, to a big tree about middle ways of the farm, and everybody said, "Why, it'll never go past that tree. Huh unh." Why shoot, that tree wasn't, {Chuckles} wasn't in it at all. It just walked on up. You can, me and him stripped tobaccer one evenin', it, at our barn at the lower end of the place, and we could just see that water comin' up cross the fields.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm. Now, that was the flood, your family's house got surrounded, by that flood, right?

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LE: Nineteen and thirteen, I was teachin' school that last flood. It, I'm, there's one flood...

ET: It's the 1913, wasn't it, the water that uh,

LE: Got to the transom, and it stayed, for, do you remember how long, about three weeks, wasn't it? And when it went down, they cleaned the house really good; there was no damage.

ET: I say, I don't remember much about that, that '13.

LE: Mm nhm.

ET: See, we, I, I wasn't married,

LE: '13

ET: And there wasn't anything.

LE: The '37 was when it

ET: But I sure remember the '37. I never will forget it.

JH: Yeah, yeah.

ET: But, and, you know, a lot uh, folks, we heard prediction that there'd be another like that '37 in twenty-five years, and there ain't never been another one.

JH: Yeah, there hasn't been.

ET: And it's been more than any twenty-five years.

JH: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I wonder if it makes a difference 'cause they built all those dams, I wonder if that's a difference?

ET: Huh?

JH: Since they built all those dams, I wonder if that makes a difference about the floods.

LE: The plan it does.

JH: Yeah.

ET: Oh, there's a lot of difference.

JH: Yeah.

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ET: A lot of difference.

JH: Yeah, yeah. What do um, either one of you remember, about either one of the World Wars, either World War I or World War II? Do you have any, memories?

ET: World War I, I had a brother in it.

JH: Did you?

ET: Yes. He went in on the last day of April, and he didn't come back 'til the last of June. He was in the fighting, right on the battlefield.

JH: Uh huh.

ET: He was over here just one month, 'til he had, cross, and went in the fighting,

JH: Mm hm.

ET: And he helped to operate a machine gun, and uh, he said that uh, he'd never seen but one German killed, but says, "Over there, there was a lot of 'em told us that we was really doin' the job. We was just mowin' them Germans down with that machine gun." And, 'course uh, he was a pretty good hand with anything like that, and machinery, you know.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: And there was him and two others, was put to operate that machine gun.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: And uh,

JH: Mm hm.

ET: And then he went through that all over there, he was over there when armistice was signed, and got out, and uh, and there was a fella hired him to work for him, to shoe horses. He was a good hand to shoe horses. He was used to that at home.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: And uh, a horse throwed him, broke his leg, and he had to go to the hospital, and stay there,

JH: My heavens.

ET: a month, before he could get started home.

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JH: Well, did that war affect those of you who were here at home, very much?

ET: Well, what?

JH: Did, when, when the war was gonna on, did that influence the way you lived, here at home?

ET: I was at home.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: Yes, it worried us. We worried over that boy.

JH: Yeah.

ET: My mother just like lost her mind over that. {Teary}

JH: She's scared. Yeah.

ET: But he got home safe. And uh, was at home, right smart little while, and then he married and moved to Louisville.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm, mm hm.

ET: Yes, he was in the first World War I.

JH: Yeah. Do you have any memories about that war, Miss Lattie?

LE: That year was when we had the first, flu epidemic.

JH: Mm hm.

LE: My father and I had it,

JH: Mm hm.

LE: And we were the first ones in Calhoun to have it, and that doctor didn't know how to treat it, so he was afraid that he would do the wrong thing, and he give us no medicine forever, and my father died.

JH: Mm hm.

LE: And I remember how I suffered. It was terrible.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm. But the doctor, just didn't do anything?

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LE: Not anything. They were afraid they would do the wrong thing.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm, mm hm, mm hm. Did that, flu epidemic affect your family, at all?

ET: Well, we had the flu a time or two, 'course there was nobody but me and him, and we had the flu several different times,

JH: Mm hm, mm hm.

ET: But uh, we didn't have it that first year that it was so bad.

JH: Not then.

ET: I was at home then.

JH: Uh huh.

ET: And we didn't have it then, but we had it there at home the next year, and the, it was pretty bad.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm.

ET: And then of course, after I married, why, me and my husband had it a time or two,

JH: Mm hm.

ET: But it was very light, what we had.

JH: Yeah, compared. Did you, did you ever see doctors, then,

ET: Yes.

JH: When you were sick? What did they do, to try to help you?

ET: Uh, what did they do?

JH: Mm hm.

ET: I don't know. They gave us medicine.

JH: They did.

ET: {Chuckles}

JH: They gave you medicine.

ET: To help us come out of it.

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JH: Uh huh, uh huh, uh huh. That's good. When, when you were getting' courted, before you got married, how, what was that like? What'd your husband do?

ET: When I was uh, courtin' him, you ought to see my courtin' buggy, it's over there on the wall.

JH: Ah, did he come pick you up in that?

ET: Yes. {Snorts} Ain't a horse to it there, but that, that's the buggy.

JH: Yeah. And it had one horse?

ET: Huh?

JH: It had one horse, that pulled it?

ET: Mm hm. One horse.

JH: Uh huh. Where'd you go, in the buggy?

ET: Oh, we went to church,

LE: Church,

ET: We went to parties, we went every where we wanted to go. We drove to Calhoun to see the show, and uh, theater down here.

LE: And to Owensboro.

ET: Yes.

LE: Didn't it take about three hours to drive to Owensboro?

ET: That's right, that's right.

JH: Uh huh, uh huh.

ET: My mother and father, and then there was another couple, would go to Owensboro about twice, a year, and they'd go in the surrey. They'd go in the fall and then in the spring, and us children would stay at home. One time, when I was, uh, older, was, was married and gone, me and Augusta, and we went over to Mrs. Kirtley's and spent the day, with the neighbors, while they's gone to Owensboro.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm. So what was the big attraction, in Owensboro?

ET: What was the biggest the traction?

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JH: The attraction, in goin' to Owensboro, what could you do when you got there?

ET: Well,

LE: Shopping.

ET: We shopped.

JH: Uh huh.

ET: Our main shoppin' place was at Anderson's, just like it is today.

JH: Today.

ET: The old Anderson,

JH: Yeah.

ET: Up in Owensboro.

JH: Yeah.

ET: I still go there.

JH: Yeah, yeah.

ET: Mm hm. Uh, my mother, the man that uh, organized that, Anderson store, his name was Anderson.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: He come from Hartford, Ohio County. He owned a dry goods store at Hartford for years, when he, before he come to Owensboro. Well, he had told mother, if she ever come to Owensboro, "I'm gonna take you around over to my store."

JH: Mm hm.

ET: And uh, then I don't know whether it was it or not, then, he'd taken us up in the elevator, to the, top, the roof, and we walked there, up to, there was a platform built up there, it was for, sightseein', and you could see Ohio from one end to the other. I don't remember how old I was when uh, we made that trip, over there.

JH: Uh huh, uh huh.

ET: Some where around twelve.

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JH: Uh huh, uh huh. Mm, okay. Well, you talked, when I was here before, about havin' to take the boat, to get to the train, and then take the train back, and get back in the boat, to come back to Calhoun. How old were you when you took those trips that took so long?

LE: Well, I was in my early twenties,

JH: Mm hm, mm hm.

LE: Before that, we would rise, start real early, and get there and shop then ride back,

JH: Mm hm.

LE: For the whole day.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm, mm hm.

ET: That store in Owensboro was named after this man, Anderson.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm. The one from Hartford. Yeah, yeah, yeah. Did you go to the, movies,

ET: Huh?

JH: Did you go to the movies, too.

ET: No, huh unh.

JH: Huh unh.

ET: We didn't go to no movies then. Huh unh.

JH: Why not?

ET: {Chuckles} Well, my mother and father didn't much believe in it.

JH: Uh huh.

ET: {Laughs} No, we didn't go to no movies then. We shopped, in getting, what we needed, and then we made it back home.

JH: Uh huh.

LE: I remember when they first begin to have movies here in town. They'd come, I think, once a week, or maybe not so often, and I don't know where they came from, but they'd have certain rooms where they would meet. And of course, later, and another thing I remember in Calhoun there was a certain side, and that was from where, the courthouse square back to the

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river. We never thought of walking on that side of the street because they had saloons. And I remember seeing men standing out, leanin' against the posts so that they wouldn't fall, so drunk they couldn't walk.

ET: You know, it's, it's first name was Yellowbanks.

JH: Yes, I've heard that.

ET: Do you know that uh, street that's got that HIGH, all up and down here, well, that was the bank of the Ohio River at one time.

JH: Oh yeah, huh?

ET: They tell me that Owensboro is just built on a sandbar.

JH: Huh? So the, the river used to come all the way back, this far? Huh.

ET: No, I never cared much for movies, myself.

JH: Yeah.

ET: Now, when, my husband was goin' with me, when there wasn't a party for us to go to, do you know what a party was?

JH: Um, why don't you tell me about it?

ET: Huh?

JH: Why don't you tell me about it?

ET: Uh, oh, we had uh, play parties.

JH: Yeah.

ET: When there wasn't one of them for us to go to, we'd come to Calhoun to the show, because he liked shows.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: But uh, if there was a party anywhere, or church services anywhere, we went to that.

JH: Mm hm. Would you tell me what happened at a play party?

ET: Mm?

JH: What happened, at the play party?

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ET: Oh, we played games 'til we got tired, 'til around nine or ten o'clock, and then we went home.

LE: One game was "Snap". A boy and a girl would

ET: "Buffalo."

LE: Hold hands, and another girl would go out and snap a boy, and he'd come and catch on.

ET: That's called "Cross-eyed Snap".

LE: It was "Cross-eyed" and there were two at the same time, it's just one,

JH: Two people.

ET: "Cross-eyed Snap" 'n "Buffalo" 'n "Handkerchief." There's a lot of different games.

JH: What's, what's "Buffalo"?

ET: What's "Buffalo"? Well, you, you 'n your boyfriend, hold hands and ya, go around and around sayin', I, I did know that song, but I don't believe I could sing it now. And then, ch

LE: Chase the,

ET: Chase the buffalo, and then, we broke up and went swingin' the arms here and here. Go all the way around thata way.

JH: Uh huh. Sort of like a square dancin'?

LE: Mm hm.

ET: Mm hm. Yeah, it's a lot like it. Yes.

JH: Mm hm.

LE: Now another game was "Drop the Handkerchief."

ET: Yeah.

LE: We'd go around a big circle and try to drop it back of one that didn't see it. Then you'd try to get back 'n touch her.

ET: If you got back and

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LE: Then she (talking over each other).

ET: Picked up the handkerchief before they picked it up, why, you'd go again, and if you didn't, why that one had to, had to pick it up and go.

JH: Mm hm.

LE: Then if, then if you got there before she saw it, she had to stand in

ET: Yes, had to stand in, up in the middle.

LE: Mm hm. Yes, we had a lot of nice, clean fun.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: What do they do now, anything? Go to a show?

JH: They watch TV, probably.

ET: Uh huh. Well, there wasn't no TVs then.

JH: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

ET: I remember uh, mm, no, back about the first radio. Radio, wasn't such things as TV.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: I remember about the first radio.

JH: Yeah, what do you remember?

ET: Don't remember any certain thing. I know the, some neighbors got one, and he'd turn it so loud, you'd hear it plum to our house. {Laughs} Oh.

LE: I remember when they first got the televisions.

JH: Yeah.

LE: Why, the neighbors would come to our house and we all sit 'til ten or eleven o'clock and we'd have sometimes as many as ten, and look at the different

JH: Mm hm.

LE: Programs.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm.

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LE: Then after so long, different ones would get their own.

JH: Mm hm. But your family had one of the first ones?

LE: Mm hm.

JH: Mm hm. And do you remember when that was?

ET: I didn't ever care

LE: ??

ET: Much for, TV. I've got one over here now.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: I hardly ever turn it on.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: The weather and the news,

JH: Yeah.

ET: Is the main thing that I turn on.

LE: Or special

ET: Yes.

LE: Events.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: On Sundays, you get uh,

LE: Church.

ET: Services.

LE: I'll tell you why I quit lookin' at those stories. I reached the point I get so interested I wouldn't visit my neighbors. I wouldn't go to the Homemakers Club, so I just stopped, and I've never gone back to it now, not years and years ago. Just specials, sometimes.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm.

LE: As she said the weather, the news.

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JH: Yeah.

LE: “Good Morning America.”

JH: That’s my favorite. Yeah.

LE: It’s good.

JH: Yeah.

LE: Then another thing happens that after ten.

JH: Mm hm.

LE: It’s the Sally, the, I think she’s

JH: You’ve got me on that one. I don’t, I don’t watch that. So,

LE: Well, I think she’s the main one

JH: Mm hm.

LE: On this, but it isn’t just those love stories.

JH: Mm hm.

LE: {Chuckles} where I feel like I’m wastin’ good time.

ET: You know, we paid for home during the Depression.

JH: You did?

ET: Things just went to nothin’.

JH: Huh. Huh. Do you want, can you tell me a little bit, about what it was like during the Depression?

?: Excuse me. (someone else breaks in)

ET: Well, I, it was, it was pretty rough. You didn’t get, anything hardly for what you had.

JH: Mm hm.

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ET: Chickens got down to seven cents a pound. I didn't sell any at that price. I sold any that was done up before I sold any. And eggs, and they tell me now that you cain't hardly give eggs away. {Pause} The crops, went to nothin', tobaccer,

JH: Mm hm.

ET: Corn.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm.

ET: There's a lot of 'em thinks that they're practically havin' a depression now, with some of that stuff.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm. Well, so what did you, do differently to get by?

ET: Huh?

JH: What did you do differently back then to get by, if you couldn't get any money for your crops?

ET: You mean uh, what we, what we had to, get by on?

JH: Mm hm, mm hm, mm hm.

ET: Well, we had to get by on just what we had.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: If it was a little, why, a little's the way we done.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: And uh, and, {Pause} my husband worked here at the ASC office, here, ya, I, do you remember ASC?

JH: No, ma'am.

ET: You don't? Well, it's a farm program. That's what it is.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: And he worked at that, twenty-three years, and raised a crop, too, at home. I told him he wasn't gonna hold out at both of it.

JH: Yeah, yeah.

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ET: That's what helped to get him, 'cause his uh, nervous breakdown was doin' too much.

JH: Mm hm. {Pause}

ET: But sayin' that you either had to work at most anything you could get,

JH: Yeah.

ET: And makin' our land payments, he helped build this, road up here, here at Livermore. This highway.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: And he helped work on the, 431 from Olivia to Livermore.

JH: Mm hm.

ET: Any way you could work, to make the money, to meet your land payment, that's what we done.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm.

ET: We paid for it all right. {Chuckles}

JH: Yeah. It must have been hard though.

ET: {Chuckles} And lived several years after we had it paid for.

JH: Did, did the Depression hit your family hard?

LE: Not too hard.

JH: Mm hm.

LE: Some of our neighbors, they had to go on the dole and they extended off on them on the county, and the way we did, we just stand from nothing. We didn't have nothing. We made it fine.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm. You were very lucky.

LE: Yes.

JH: Very lucky.

LE: We thought we were, too,

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JH: Mm hm, mm hm.

LE: Because many of our neighbors were just, livin' like they always have,

JH: Uh huh.

LE: And that made 'em run out of money.

JH: Yeah, yeah.

ET: I used to go, when I was a kid, to the ice cream supper in Beulah. Do you know where Beulah is?

JH: No ma'am.

ET: Well, it's Old Beulah now. Ain't a thing there like it was,

JH: Yeah.

ET: At one time, not a thing. My father would give me a nickel, to get me an ice cream cone, and that's all I had to spend.

JH: But that, that must have been pretty nice, to get the ice cream though?

ET: Huh?

JH: I said, that must have been pretty nice, to get the ice cream. Yeah, mm hm, yeah. That's good.

ET: Get an ice cream cone for a nickel.

JH: A nickel.

ET: You can't, you don't need to walk out of your home, on a nickel now. {All chuckle}

JH: That's good. Well, I'm gonna get ready, to leave, pretty soon. You ladies have been so nice about spending this time with me. Is, is there any one, other thing that, that you think that I should know, maybe a story that you have that is particularly good, about the way times have changed, the, the things that you've seen different, since you were little?

ET: You mean, do we know of any where that you could talk to anyone that would?

JH: Well, I'm thinkin' more if there's something that I forgot to ask you that I need to know about from you. If there's something else that you could tell me?

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ET: Well, I don't know of anything. {Chuckles} I don't know of anything.

JH: Uh huh, uh huh.

LE: I remember they used to, when the men would cut trees,

JH: Mm hm.

LE: For new land, and they would have what they called "log rolls."

JH: Yeah.

LE: The neighbors would come in and they'd have, don't you remember?

ET: Yeah, hooksters, they'd call 'em?

LE: The log rolling,

ET: Oh yes,

LE: And they'd have those long hooks too,

ET: Yes, yes. Log rolling.

LE: Hooks to.

ET: We never did have any of it done.

LE: Well, we did

ET: But uh,

LE: Because we

ET: I remember when they, done it, I remember that.

LE: And then women,

ET: Yes,

LE: Would come and

ET: And they, and they helped with one or two log rollins up there, above us.

JH: Mm hm.

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LE: They'd have an oven, and the women would come in and help get the dinner, and then in the afternoon, they would, have hooks.

ET: Hooks.

LE: Old dresses, and things not worn out, but good, and they would tear 'em into strips, for carpet and they'd make balls. Then later, you would take these balls, and sew the strip together,

JH: Mm hm.

LE: Into then they weaved.

JH: That was for the weaving. Uh huh.

LE: Then that was to be used

JH: Uh huh.

LE: In weaving carpets.

JH: Uh huh, uh huh. So that would have been, there were still doing log rollings when you were how old?

LE: Oh, I don't think been more than ten or twelve.

JH: Mm hm, mm hm.

LE: Just then.

ET: I remember uh, I's just, oh, a kid I, yeah, at home, and uh, buying chickens, there would be, now at Utica, there's a fellow name O'Flynn. He called it a "hookster wagon." He'd uh, get in that, and start down the road to, and he had bell he'd ring. If you had any chickens you wanted to sell, take 'em out to him. I remember that. He passed the road by my home, where I was raised, a lot of times,

JH: Mm hm, mm hm.

ET: With his, "hookster wagon," he called it.

JH: Uh huh, uh huh.

LE: Now, I missed what, about livin' in town.

JH: That's good, that's good. Well, ladies

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END TAPE1, SIDE2