

8-1-1986

Interview with Allyene Gregory Regarding Her Life (FA 154)

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Recommended Citation

Folklife Archives, Manuscripts &, "Interview with Allyene Gregory Regarding Her Life (FA 154)" (1986). *FA Oral Histories*. Paper 26. http://digitalcommons.wku.edu/dlsc_fa_oral_hist/26

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

Interview with Allyene Gregory (CT 1)

TAPE1, SIDE1

STEVE VIED: How do you pronounce your first name?

ALLYENE GREGORY: Allyene.

SV: Allyene Gregory. Okay this is August 1 [1986]. Can you remember Ms. Gregory one of the first memories of your childhood?

AG: Well I was born in the country and my father was a farmer and he had racehorses and we had a racetrack and my mother had seven sons, eight sons before I was born and so when the first girl came along they named me for one of the racehorses that's how I got my name.

SV: Were you born here?

AG: In Daviess County.

SV: In Sorgho?

AG: Near Sorgho on the Louisville Road. And uh, we uh, had lots of fun playing. My mother always had help to take care of the house and one of her son until the two daughters came along. We played a lot together and I had lots of fun with my brothers. My youngest brother was a big teaser. He ran us all over the place.

SV: Tell me about the race track. What was the name of the race track?

AG: Well, it was just a uh a track on our farm and that they trained the horses on. He had cart horses, cart racing over here.

SV: Harness racing?

AG: Uh huh, and we had lots of visitors. The Henson girls who lived in Lexington where our cousins and my brothers went up to University to school. And I was oh around eight or ten years old in the summer time and three or four of those girls would come down to visit. Course there

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were lots of boys and they had one brother and uh they would come down and visit so that they could go out and see the horses.

SV: What transportation did they use from there to get here?

AG: Well, they would come on the train. That was the only transportation from Lexington to Owensboro at that time.

SV: What kind of things did you do for fun? What kind of games did you play?

AG: We played hopscotch. I played marbles with my brothers, and we uh played hide-and-go-seek and uh all kinds of outdoor games, that were running games. I can't think of the names of all of them that we used to play at school and we played ball, and we would use what we called a slat for our bat and uh we would uh play that at school as well as at home. We had a croquet set we played in the yard.

SV: You played croquet before 1910?

AG: Ah well I am sure it was before 1910 because we had and then uh we played a lot of games indoors around the table, you know, card games that they had at that time. Rook. My mother and father would play Rook but they would never let us play the other cards but the boys did. They would go over to the cabin for the colored. We had a house where we were all born when my grandfather had owned the farm.

SV: What was your maiden name?

AG: Gregory. I'm still a Gregory.

SV: Oh you're still a Gregory.

AG: I was never married—out of the ten I was the only one that didn't marry.

SV: Oh I see. OK.

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AG: And uh the boys could take their cards and play over there and hide them in their shoes. My mother would probably . *{Laughs}* And uh the two younger brothers that uh mostly were the ones my sister and I played with. Course we played together a lot, but the youngest brother was the big tease. He'd catch snakes or anything and put them on a stick and chase us around.

SV: What did your dad do for a living?

AG: My dad farmed and then in the winter he graded tobacco here at the warehouses. And then of course he trained his horses for racing. He never said he did it for a living. He did it for fun.

SV: About how often did you come into town into Owensboro?

AG: Well, do you mean during my childhood days? Well, my mother would come I would say about once every maybe two weeks. She would go shopping.

SV: Would she bring you with her?

AG: She didn't always. She would bring us when she wanted to buy something for us.

SV: What would she buy? What stores were there?

AG: Anderson's and MacAfee's. She traded mostly at Anderson's because she was buying boys' clothes.

SV: And this would have been up into the teens in 1916-17?

AG: And she knew Mr. Arnold and uh well even before that I can remember when they had stepping stones across the street.

SV: So they were dirt, mud streets.

AG: Yes, dirt, and then we could step on them.

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SV: So what did you think of town when you were like eight years old? Can you remember?

AG: Well, I just, course I, it was something big for me to get to come to town 'cause we didn't come too often. My mother would come a lot.

SV: So it was a special occasion?

AG: Yeh, that's right. And uh my grandfather had built the house out on the Henderson Road and that was one thing that I always liked to go by there and course all of her people, my mother's people, were buried there. She used to tell us some things that happened when she was growing up. Her mother and father died before she was married.

SV: Can you tell me anything about medical practices and illnesses that you remember before 1910?

AG: Well, I tell ya that we were a very healthy family and uh the only the diseases that I ever had. They thought that I whopping cough but [it was] the measles. That was the only disease that I really remember ever having. My sister and brother had chicken pox, and I slept with my sister but I never did have it, not even while I was teaching.

SV: Where did you go to school?

AG: Where? We went all the way until I came to High School. What was called at that time Pleasant Grove. Do you know where the Pleasant Grove Church is down here on Henderson Road? They call it Sorgho School now, but all the years that all my family came there my brothers it was Pleasant Grove.

SV: What do you remember, Mrs. Gregory, about going to school as a first grader or second grader?

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AG: Well, I had a Mrs. Ore Pruden as my teacher up until eighth grade and we had double seats, we had double seats to sit in.

SV: How do you spell her name? Do you remember?

AG: Ore Pruden.

SV: She taught you for eight years?

AG: Uh huh. Then uh.

SV: Then how many rooms were in the school?

AG: Pardon?

SV: How many rooms were in the school?

AG: There was only one room in the original building, now it was through the eighth grade. I think that by the time I was in the eighth grade they had made an old church, they had built a new church in 1910, and uh our old church was made into a double school room and the eighth and ninth grades were in there.

SV: Was it hard learning with just one teacher all the way through?

AG: Well, I didn't know anything else. It didn't seem hard to me. I liked school. I was one of those people who loved to go to school.

SV: What subjects did they teach you?

AG: We had a lots of fun playing during the wintertime. We would get out and make snowballs and we had one big stove in the room, you know, and you'd get your snowball and I like salt on mine, I'd bring it in and cover it with salt. *{Laughs}* And uh we would play these all these running games, that I liked to do, still like to run. *{Laughs}* Run and hide, and I walk fast and they say I am running but

SV: What do you remember about the first car you ever saw?

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AG: Well, the first car I ever saw belonged to um my cousin who lived up here on Griffith Avenue. Green Crabtree. And uh Green Crabtree came down to our Church in his first car. And that was the first car that I did

SV: Do you remember what kind of car it was?

AG: I don't remember what kind it was.

SV: What did you think of it?

AG: Well, of course, it was something to think about.

SV: With people in it? I guess all the people in that...

AG: Then my father got an old Ford that we had before I came to high school. I never could drive it of course. The roads were sandy. You know, when my brother and I came from what was eight miles out, we came to high school here. My older brothers they would come

SV: To the Owensboro High School?

AG: A lot of people went to county high but my father had always gone to school here. His father, too. My mother had lived out there about three miles from Owensboro on the farm that Kathleen Bartlett[?] lives on now. She's a descendent. She's one generation. Her father was Green Crabtree. She lives on the farm that my mother was reared on. Where all my grandparents were buried.

SV: What do you think about your early childhood? Like from ages five or six on up through ten or eleven?? What do remember of those years? What sticks out in your memory?

AG: Well, the thing that I like the most was in the fall we would go on hickory nut hunts. We would go to the woods, pick up hickory nuts, and we had one tree in our field outside of our yard, and it was real tall and we would pick up nearly a barrel of nuts every time we would get home from school. That was our first job to do after we had started school. Course in the

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summer time my sister and I played dolls and we built a little house for our dolls out of one of the chicken houses. Papered the walls and played with that a lot in the summer time. My mother had geese and she had my brothers, and I think that I maybe helped one time, pick the geese to make the feather beds that we had on all our beds.

SV: Do you remember the first movie that came here?

AG: Owensboro? I didn't see many movies 'cause we were too far out and Cecil B. DeMille had some uh what is that big movie that was early. Can't remember the name of it, but I didn't see very many movies when I was growing up, course when my brother and I drove into school, we drove in a buggy and drove a horse and we had to go home and do chores. Mr. Bausch was the principal when I was in high school and he was later superintendent, and he was always kind to us because he never allowed us to have to stay after school. If you were late in the morning, you had to stay after school a period, but he always let us go home because he knew we had chores to do. He was a farm boy, too.

SV: Since you were a farmer, your dad was a farmer, when did he get his first tractor?

AG: My father never did have a tractor.

SV: Oh, he never did.

AG: He had a hay rakes and bailer, I think. One of my brothers had a hay bailer. I don't think he ever, my father, had wheat, you know. They had had to have someone come in to thresh it.

SV: So he had all horse-drawn equipment? Plows, things like that?

AG: Yes, the things were drawn. Course, they even had a plow that they pushed for the garden and things like that.

SV: Pushed the plow?

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AG: Just pushed the plow. Uh huh.

SV: How about an airplane? Do you remember anything about the first time you saw an airplane? When that would have been?

AG: Well.

SV: You were probably twelve, thirteen or fourteen

AG: I don't know the first time I, I don't remember the first time I ever saw one. The first time I ever rode one, I was teaching then, and I traveled from Charlotte, North Carolina to where my sister, flew back and forth on the plane.

SV: Do you remember anything about the flood of 1913?

AG: Oh, yes I remember that very well, that flood of 1913.

SV: How did it affect you and your family?

AG: Well, we didn't live in lowlands, but my uncle did and oh I thought that was terrible. I couldn't imagine why anybody would live over on the Fifth Street Road way down and it was in the lowlands and the water would be up around their house.

SV: Do you remember the water being up into people's houses?

AG: Yeah, and they had to leave their porch in a boat, and I just couldn't imagine 'cause I was afraid of water.

SV: Did it get into your house?

AG: No, we never did have any water. It would have been long

SV: Do you remember when it started raining and how it came about? Remember much about that?

AG: Well, I just remember that it rained a long time. I don't remember too much about that flood as much as I do about the '37 flood.

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SV: I'll ask you about that later for the '30s. What do you, how do you, what do you remember about World War I? Did that affect you in any way?

AG: Yeah, it affected me because uh my brothers, I had a brother Harmon had to go, some of my brothers were too young and some were already married, but two of my brothers went. One went with the Navy, Harmon, and Jessie went to the

SV: Harmon and Jessie? Did they both survive the war?

AG: One went to the Army. Harmon went, he was drafted and went to the Army, and Jess was in the Navy, {Car beeps} but he volunteered. He went into the Navy. But they never did have to go over.

SV: Did they just stay in this country?

AG: Yes, they stayed here. ??

SV: What about the news of World War I? I bet that you were seventeen or eighteen years old at that time.

AG: Yes.

SV: You were probably interested in what was going on. How did you get your news?

AG: Well, you see I was in high school when that war, and we used to, we had the daily paper, and we had a telephone, a wall telephone, and uh in high school in our Home Ec classes, I took Home Economics, we prepared meals for the trains that would come through here. We would prepare meals and the soldiers would come over or food would be carried over there at the station some times. We would go to see them as they would go through.

SV: Did you know people of your age who died in the war that went to fight?

AG: No. Not in World War I.

SV: You didn't have any personal friends or young men that you knew that went over?

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AG: Not that I knew personally in World War I but did in World War II.

SV: When you were at that age, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, your high school years, what did young ladies do for, for fun? What was the social life like for you at that time?

AG: My mother was very strict on us being at home because she had all these boys and a lot of people went back and forth and visited, you know, and spend the night. I used to spend the night at, I always spent at the neighbor there, Miss Ore Pruden was my teacher had a sister who was about my age and she had another sister that one of my brothers went with, but my mother would never let us go and spend the night anywhere.

SV: So what did you do to have a good time back when you were sixteen?

AG: Well, we would go out and watch them burn the planting beds you know, and take potatoes and corn and roast them in there. And our neighbors would come and we would visit during the day, of course

SV: So most of your social life

AG: Most of my social life that I had outside of my own house and farm, was at my aunt's who lived over on the Henderson Road on our way to the Pleasant Grove Church. We all belonged to Pleasant Grove Church and uh we would stop there and spend the day a lot of times with the mother was my father's sister and the father was my mother's first cousin so they were closely related and we had a lot of visiting.

SV: What did people your age at that time, what was some of the things that they did? Did you listen to music?

AG: Well, yes. My brother had a guitar and my father had a violin and my father blew a French Horn.

SV: Did you listen to phonograph records? Did anyone have a phonograph player?

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AG: We didn't have but some people did have and with those crazy big horns. I know that we visited places where they have them.

SV: How about the flu epidemic? In 1918?

AG: That was when I was in high school.

SV: Can you tell me how that affected you and your family?

AG: My brother and I, you see, were in high school and when we came we had to have shots. Everybody in the high school had to line up and we had to have a shot for that flu and then we had to stay after school a lot, too. {Car drives by} The schools were closed for awhile.

SV: Did anyone in your family get the flu?

AG: I don't recall anybody in my family.

SV: Can you remember anyone that you know that got it, that died of it or got real sick from it?

AG: Well, there were a lot of people that were here in town, but I don't, I don't recall any

SV: So it really didn't affect you?

AG: No. My whole family, we didn't have anybody.

SV: I guess that was pretty big news though

AG: Yeah

SV: Since it was nationwide.

AG: Of course you know everybody was scared to death to get out, and we just stayed home from school, from

SV: How long do you remember it lasting? The scary part of it?

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AG: I think that it uh we had high school, because I recall it was closed for five or six weeks as I recall.

SV: At the height of the epidemic?

AG: And uh so we were all out of the

SV: What was school, what was high school like for you?

AG: Oh I loved it. I loved high school and I liked all my teachers, and I liked uh athletics.

SV: Did you get to go to any games that they had?

AG: I, I belonged to the basketball team. My mother and my father didn't approve of me wearing that kind of clothes and getting out in public and playing but

SV: You did it anyway?

AG: I finally got one game out. I played at school all the time, but when I had to go to Henderson to play, the teacher, the director had to get permission. My mother and father let me play one time. {Laughs}

SV: You played in that game?

AG: That one time that let me go play and even after I told them, I played all through college. I played basketball through college.

SV: Where did you go to college?

AG: Georgetown. Georgetown College

SV: In Kentucky?

AG: Kentucky. And then uh I played there and I taught Phys Ed while I was there. I got a job teaching Phys Ed and working in the Chemistry lab. That paid my way through school.

SV: Was it fun growing up in the teens?

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AG: Oh yes, it was fun, and my mother had a colored girl and she had an older woman when we were all small but then she had this colored girl that was uh older than we were when my sister and I were little, and we couldn't wait for her to get her work done so she could take us out on the farm or out where there were trees we could sit down and make clover leaves and make leaf hats and all kinds of things. We would take a picnic lunch. That was

SV: You mentioned uh...

AG: One of the things we all did when we were growing up and as children in the summer time we would go pickin' blackberries. That was a big picnic for me. My sister-in-law was married to my oldest brother when I was ten and I made her wedding cake. She said I made her wedding cake at the age of ten. She would take us all the time. We had another farm over on Panther Creek and that was the one that was covered in blackberries and snakes. I was scared of snakes but I sure liked to pick blackberries. My sister liked to pick 'til she could get her mouth filled and then she wanted to go home. I was

SV: Speaking about having a colored woman, do you remember any racial problems

AG: Well,

SV: When you were growing up?

AG: That, I mean.

SV: Was there a lot of prejudice?

AG: No. We didn't have any thought of prejudice, except that we knew they were colored and we were white and we didn't associate with them other than of course we called the colored men who worked for my father Uncle Sam and we called the colored woman who worked for my mother, Aunt Jenny and she would wash and iron and even after the babies were big enough for her not to have to stay, she'd take the laundry out. That laundry was carried out

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in a big basket and brought back, and uh, of course, that help my mother out. After we got big enough to help more, then she had this young colored girl when I went to high school.

SV: There was some hard winters.

AG: We never had that feeling that you know, that you hated the blacks. We didn't hate them. When I first went to Girl Scout Camp, I went to uh {Car drives by} Cleveland, Ohio, and we had colored cooks up there, and they called them "Mrs." whatever they names were, and I said "Why do you call them?" I didn't want to call them. I had never called a colored person Mr. or Mrs.

SV: You called them by their name?

AG: Aunt Ginny, Uncle Sam and just by their names. And they said what do you call them? Well, I think that I would rather call them Mr. or Mrs. than claim kin with them. {Both laugh}

SV: Tell me about the winters here when you were a teenager.

AG: Oh

SV: Were they hard

AG: We did all kinds of sleigh riding and we had a big pond, and uh tobacco barn, and the boys could skate, and they would take chairs down. I didn't ever to learn to skate from my sister-in-law. I learned to skate later but not when we were little. They would take a chair down and skate us all over the pond, and we would play in the snow. We would play snowball with each other. That was a game where I always felt how deep the snow was, but I was so little that I guess it was up to my knees every time. Wasn't as deep as I thought it was.

SV: Do you remember the winters being hard on you or your family?

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AG: Well, not, not particularly. Now another sport we had was my brothers and my father were hunters and they always brought in quail in the fall, and uh, and we would all sit around the fireplace in the dining room and pick birds. They would pull out birds and we would skin them. Spend the evening picking birds, and then of course another thing we did for entertainment was pop corn. We would all sit around the fireplace and we would eat pop corn. That would be eventful, and uh one thing that I always enjoyed would be the minister always came. He was a good friend of my father's and he would always come when we had church then twice a month, and he would stay at our house.

SV: What church did you go to?

AG: Pleasant Grove Baptist Church out on the Henderson Road where we went to school. And then the building that they turned into a school building but it was torn down.

SV: The 1920s. What is most vivid for you from the 1920s? 1920-1929.

AG: Well, you see I graduated in '23 and then I went to Georgetown in 19 and 19, fall 1920, 1919-20, I graduated in 1923.

SV: Not many young ladies went to college back then?

AG: Oh, I didn't do

SV: Why did you like school that much?

AG: I liked it, and my father and mother believed in school. They were both pretty well educated people. My father's father came from Virginia here, and uh his mother was uh believer in education and I had, it appeared when they built the new library I went in when they opened it and had uh a this teacher that used to teach my father and uncles. They had the book opened where they had gone to school and had perfect attendance on that month but he had been sent to school. My father and mother both were pretty well educated. My mother taught a little bit.

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SV: When you were at Georgetown College, how many other girls were there? Was it mostly men or were there lots of women there too?

AG: Oh no, we had a great big dormitory and I couldn't tell you exactly how many but there'd be over a hundred girls in the dormitory I'm sure. Hooker[?] Hall. It was pretty well balanced with boys and girls at Georgetown. Most of them got married but I didn't. {Laughs}

SV: You came back here in 1923?

AG: I, I came back in 1923 I taught in at Pensacola High School. I taught science at Pensacola High School. In the summer of that year after I graduated, I went to Emory University and worked as an assistant dietician, and then I got the job at Pensacola, and I taught there during the winter and then the next summer I worked at Emory University again. And uh, before school started they opened this junior high school out here and Mr. Faust knew that I had applied for a job as a Home Ec teacher cause that is what I took as my major, that and science. I had two majors. So um, he called two weeks before I was supposed to go back to Pensacola, to see if I would take the Home Ec Department here. And I said well that I would have to get permission, you know, because I had already signed up to go there, and they let me off, so I came back to Owensboro.

SV: You taught in the Owensboro?

AG: So then I taught here 45 years. I never missed a day of teaching.

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SV: What about the Ku Klux Klan? That was a little bit active.

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AG: Well uh

SV: Can you tell me some memories of that?

AG: My father used to tell us these things, you know, that they'd do when we were children then, and I would be scared to death. They would go out and I was always afraid that the Ku Klux Klan would get them or something that like. He would tell us about them riding horseback, you know, and uh I was scared about that when I was a child. That was frightening back then.

SV: Was it frightening to you in the '20s when you were a teacher? Did you?

AG: Well, no.

SV: Did you hear much about it?

AG: No, I don't think that I remember much about it.

SV: Women were able to vote in the '20s. Got the right to vote. How did you feel about that issue?

AG: Well, I always voted though

SV: As an educated lady.

AG: Well I always, I always vote. I don't know sometimes who to vote for but I'll go and vote for the ones that I, you know, feel like I want to have in office.

SV: What other things about the '20s do you remember about this area? What stands out in your mind? About the time, the '20s?

AG: The '20s, yes. Well then everybody, then people were beginning to drive cars, and I, one big thing that happened while we, while I was teaching there at Junior High on Frederica, that a plane went down right in front of the library and high school and crashed.

SV: Did the plane crash in the street?

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AG: Right in front of us. Course everybody didn't...

SV: Were you an eye-witness? Did you get, did you run out and see what was going on?

AG: Well, we didn't, we didn't allow the children to run out of the building to do it.

Some, you know. If you were in the front of the building, you could look out, and course later we did. And, all.

SV: Was that in 1925? When he died there, was that Frank Stevens? Do you remember?

AG: Who?

SV: Frank Stevens. Was that the man that crashed the airplane?

AG: Doesn't seem like that was his name.

SV: It says here in my questions here that it was 1925.

AG: Oh.

SV: That he crashed here

AG: Oh, well if they gave that then I am sure that is. Well I remember that date would be about right.

SV: Were you teaching the school the day that he crashed?

AG: Yes, we went to school that day. And I knew his wife real well. She worked in the Girl Scouts with us.

SV: Tell me a little about the crash. Did you get to go out and see where the plane had gone down?

AG: Yes. It was right there in the corner of Ninth and Frederica. You know where the art center is now? Well, see that was the library then. That was our public library we had across the street, and uh.

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SV: There was a school there that you taught?

AG: And I taught in the building, that uh, let see, we've had had the groceries and all those things in there and they have turned into office buildings. That was the high school were I went to high school.

SV: The big building on Frederica?

AG: I went to high school there and then afterwards taught there until they built the new high schools.

SV: Do you remember that crash vividly?

AG: Yes. I remember it, course that was quite a time, when you knew somebody had crashed and got killed right out there in front of the building. Could have crashed on us. It was sad, course, he was so young.

SV: What kinds of things did people do for entertainment in the '20s? Were people going to the movies by then?

AG: Oh yeah, I think the people who lived in town, lots of them did, you know, but I never had uh, been a movie goer so I would occasionally when some real good movie was going to be on, but I really wasn't a movie...

SV: Can you remember any really good movie that you saw back then?

AG: I can't remember the names of them off hand. Nell, downstairs, that's why I said she has a better memory on things.

SV: Did you have any favorite movie stars back then?

AG: Well, uh, Clark Gable, and I loved that movie.

SV: Gone With the Wind?

AG: Uh huh.

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SV: That was ten years later.

AG: Nelson Eddy and uh, what was the girl that sang with her? I went to all those movies, because loved his voice.

SV: Do you remember the 1929 robbery of the bank? West Louisville?

AG: In west Louisville?

SV: Yeah.

AG: I, I remember that, that it happened but I didn't know much about it.

SV: What did you think about the Stock Market crash in 1929? You would have been 29 years old.

AG: Yeah, I knew that I had savings in the bank. We went down

SV: Did you, what bank did you have it in?

AG: Owensboro, Central Trust.

SV: Central Trust?

AG: Uh huh. And one friend of mine came down that day, see it was right after Christmas, and my sister and her husband had been home for Christmas, and it snowed and got icy that morning and they left, and I was so worried about them driving back. They were driving back and forth a long time then, and uh, this friend came out on a bicycle and she said that I've got some bad news for you. Well, of course, the first thing that I thought was that my sister has been in a wreck. And she said, uh, Central Trust closed its doors. Course I had all my savings that I had, not much, but as much as you have at that time, and uh I, I said, "Oh!" I wasn't worried at all. Only thing that I was worried was if she had said my sister had been, so it was an easy way to tell me. I figured that, well, you made the money once, you can make it again.

SV: Which kind of brings us to the '30s

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AG: Huh?

SV: That brings us into the '30s. How was the Depression for you? Do you remember much about life during the Depression?

AG: Well, I said that uh everybody was in the same boat, you know, and uh, I, I didn't think that it was any worse than other times.

SV: You had a job all the way through it?

AG: Yes.

SV: At the school?

AG: Our salaries were cut, but everything else was cut so we could balance it up. I always made it a point when I started teaching that I was going to save something out of every month's salary, and I did. And I put so much in the bank first, and then I lived on what I had left.

SV: Were you living at your home then?

AG: At that time, no, at that time my mother and father, they sold the farm while I was at Georgetown, and then when I came back here I rented an apartment over on Allen Street, and uh, where Mrs. Smith lived. Right off of 14th, and uh, it was about a five room apartment and I had my mother and father, and sometimes my brother. He worked for the highway department, but if he ever came, there was always room for him, too. And uh, that's where we were living, and I got an apartment for \$35.

SV: A month?

AG: Well, \$35 a month, could take that when you were making, when I started, I think I got about 150 or 180 but they cut us down.

SV: That's a month when you started teaching here?

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AG: Yeah.

SV: And they cut that back during the '30s?

AG: Uh huh, and I don't think I got, I'm not sure, but something around near 100 after they cut us back. Well, everything else was cut. I bought a steak, every time I bought a steak down there at Piggly Wiggly next to Anderson's. Seventeen cents a pound. Now buy a steak, and multiply that by how much more you make now, so you see things balanced up, and uh, everybody had to cut back and you didn't see everybody else doing all these things you would like to have done if you had more money.

SV: Did they have any kind of bread lines or soup lines downtown?

AG: I don't know, they might have had but not to my knowledge.

SV: You didn't see any evidence of it?

AG: Not to my knowledge. I don't know.

SV: What do you remember?

AG: I was so busy teaching and trying to keep up with my Girl Scout troop. I had a Girl Scout troop from '26 on through 'til I retired. And uh, of course, I had my family. I had a big family. I did travelling with my brother.

SV: Did you own a car?

AG: I bought an old car. They called it a Leaping Lena, and I would take my Girl Scouts, and go out into the woods and we would cook out and have all our picnics and things.

SV: So you got your first car in the late '20s?

AG: Uh huh. My brother taught me how to drive.

SV: And it was a Leaping Lena?

AG: Leaping Lena.

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SV: Leaping Lena.

AG: Uh huh. {Car goes by} Take off with a jump. We called it Leaping Lena. Some of the scouts, I think named it.

SV: Do you remember what model, what kind of car it actually was?

AG: It was, uh, I think it was an old Dodge. I'm not sure. I can't remember for sure. I had Chevrolets after I had it, and now I have a Dodge but I kind of think like that old one that I bought was, black. My father's first car had these button on curtains, windows, you know, that you would take off it off and put on according to the weather. Old Ford.

SV: How did farmers do around here during the '30s?

AG: Well, lot of them lost their farms. A lot of them lost their farms. That was one thing that bothered me more than almost anything. But for people to own things, and because they owed so much, they'd take the whole thing away from them. I couldn't understand that. I still don't. And they are going to be people doing that here if there is any more Depression. They claim that the people in the South haven't made a thing this year.

SV: What do you remember about the TVA coming and electricity getting out to the farmers?

AG: Well, my brother lived in the country and he thought that was the greatest thing that ever happened. Thought that Roosevelt was responsible for that, and he was really a believer in Roosevelt, course he said how much he did for the farmers. And he lived down near Stanford down on the river. City, really.

SV: What did you think of Roosevelt and all of his programs?

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AG: I liked Roosevelt myself. I think that if we had somebody to give all these people to do than to sit around and wait for you to give them money. Do nothing. I don't believe in that. I believe in working for what you get.

SV: Were you involved in any of his programs, the WPA or the CCC or any of those?

AG: No, I. The only thing that I was involved in during was Red Cross. I worked with the Red Cross you know, and did things like that. It was pretty good work, but I didn't want to work with the WPA or I seen what it was. Travel. I traveled down to my sister's by train most of the time.

SV: What did you remember about the, the hanging? That happened in '36?

AG: I, I didn't go to it. {Laughs}

SV: You didn't go to it?

AG: But I knew the boy. I went to school with the boy's mother. She was in high school.

SV: Bethea?

AG: What?

SV: Rainey Bethea's mother, the woman he killed.

AG: Uh huh. Bethea. Edwards. [Rainey Bethea was accused of raping and murdering Lischa Edwards and was hung in Owensboro]

SV: Uh huh.

AG: And Phillip.

SV: But you didn't know him?

AG: His name was Phillip Edwards and her name was Mrs. Edwards, and uh, I don't know what the colored fella's name was.

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SV: Bethea was his name.

AG: What?

SV: Rainey Bethea.

AG: I thought that was awful. To go watch. But I sat here last night and watched them shoot a boy on that television. He had done something, and they tied him up, arms and legs, and then took him out and they said that they were going to kill him. And I looked down and that guy was standing right in front of him and shot him.

SV: But you didn't go to the hanging?

AG: Oh, oh no. Lot of people did. I didn't want to. Would you? Not I.

SV: I guess it was big news, wasn't it?

AG: Oh sure, and I thought that he deserved it. I thought that he deserved it, but uh, I don't, I just, I don't know how, how they should be destroyed, but if they live, they keep on. We've got so many now that they don't do anything with them. Turn them loose and they go right out and do the same thing again. Goin' to have to do something.

SV: Is that, is that your, probably is that the thing you remember the most about the '30s, the hanging? Does that stand out in your mind more than anything else?

AG: Well, no.

SV: How about the flood the next year?

AG: That flood, now that stands out because my brother that ran the Transit Mix Concrete.

SV: What was his name?

AG: Carlin Gregory. He, uh, got the man he buys concrete from in Louisville to send his boat down, and he went out every day and we, his sons and his daughter, that I lived with. We'd

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fix his lunch and take it down to the boat, and uh, and he would go out and pick up all these people who stayed in their houses 'til the water was up and forced them out. And he would bring them in and we kept them down at our church, Third Baptist church. Uh, kept a lot of them and we fed them down there, and they just loved my things, like grapefruit and things, they didn't, people in the country had never tasted, and some of them would say "My kids won't eat that stuff." {Laughs}

SV: What kind of, what kind of literature or books did you enjoy during that time? I am sure that you read a lot since you were a college graduate.

AG: Well, I didn't have too much time to read a lot, except my own school planning. I didn't, see I was keeping house and teaching, too, and uh, then I had this other brother that my mother and father went and lived with him. His wife died and left him with five children, and uh, I helped him to sew, and uh, we'd go down and help my mother with those five. I didn't have as much reading time as most people did.

SV: When did you first remember hearing about Adolf Hitler?

AG: When I first remember

SV: I think that he came to power in about '34 or '35.

AG: Well, I had nephews, see, in that war. I had, uh, my oldest nephew was a Colonel in three wars. He, that was his first war, and uh, he was in India and uh he was all around. He went all over.

SV: What do you remember about World War II?

AG: And then, uh, he didn't lose his life, but he went through, and uh his brother lost his life. He was shot down over Formosa. His younger brother. There were three of them in that family that went, and uh, another brother went to the Naval Academy and he, he was in the uh on

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the ship and he was firer for the guns and he, the front end of each of his went down, one end of it was shot off and they had to bring it in and repair it and then went back to sea.

SV: What do you remember about Pearl Harbor?

AG: Oh, I remember that. I was sitting in the Third Baptist Church when they announced. That was the first night of the community sing.

SV: Community sing?

AG: Well, what they have at Christmas. That was the first one they had, and they were having it in our church, and uh, after it was over, they announced that uh that, about Pearl Harbor.

SV: What was the reaction of the people in the church?

AG: Oh I don't know, course everybody was upset over it, and we had uh one boy from here who was on one of those boats that was shot. I mean, you know, where the boat was destroyed. He went down. I'm trying to think of his name. He went to the Naval Academy at the time my nephew was there.

SV: How did World War II affect you, your family, people that you know?

AG: Well, I'd say of course that it was an awful thing for my brother to lose his son, see, I still think that caused an early death for my brother and his wife, both. They, it took them a long time

SV: What was your nephew's name?

AG: Uh, Had Lee, Harold Lee Gregory.

SV: Harold? Harold Lee Gregory?

AG: Uh huh. He's on that thing over here.

SV: Did he die in Formosa? Did you say Formosa?

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AG: He was shot down over Formosa. He went down in the sea, we think.

SV: His name is on the thing at the sports center?

AG: Uh huh. There was one boy that came back after the war was over that went on, and he said something, I think that he told the mother and father that {Car goes by} that somebody on the plane, his thing that you pull out with, when you push out of the plane.

SV: Parachute?

AG: Yeah. He gave his parachute to somebody else. He went down with the plane. And uh, but when he came back, he was over there and mistreated so badly and he got the diarrhea. Even after he came back he was in the hospital for a long time, and he said that the ones who went down with the plane were the fortunate ones because they weren't tortured.

SV: By the Japanese in Formosa.

AG: That's what he, the way he felt about it.

SV: World War II, when it was going on, was there something that everybody uh was worried about every day? Did you read about it every day?

AG: Well

SV: Look forward to the news?

AG: Well, uh just about every day.

SV: What did you do, read newspapers and listen to the radio for your news? {Pause}

Where did you get your main news about the war?

AG: I imagine that most of mine, I get from radio because see I was living over here and my brothers on Fifth Avenue, we had a radio over there. I, I was of course be in school all day, and uh then at night I listen to the radio.

SV: Did you listen to any particular announcer that told you more news?

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AG: I did, but I can't tell you his name now. He's gone. {Laughs} There were two of them that used to announce all the time. I can't think of it, that's why I said that she can think of names downstairs that I can't think of. That's my worst thing, trying to think of somebody's name.

SV: Edward R. Murrow. Was he one?

AG: Yes.

SV: What that the one?

AG: Yes, Edward R. Murrow and one more. He was a bigger man. He had been on a long time. And I used to keep up with one story, when I would wash dishes and try to clean up. I kept up with one war story of this woman who had people in and they were giving the story of her life and television, radio. I listened to it while I cleaned up the kitchen.

SV: Did you ever listen to Roosevelt on the radio with his chats?

AG: Oh yes. Yes. Every time he was on, I listened to him. And I remember the first television picture I ever saw. We went down to the hotel in Owensboro.

SV: The Hotel Owensboro?

AG: Had a radio, I mean television. I couldn't believe that they could bring a picture in there.

SV: You were ? [referring to her age], remember what year that was?

AG: From New York or anything and I thought how in the world can they picture. Well, when I heard the first radio, I couldn't believe that, during the war, when I said well, you know that they have a hole under the door or something, where they hearing all that music. I couldn't believe that it could be something there they you could hear.

SV: Do you remember what was the year you saw the TV?

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AG: Yeah. I don't remember what year it was but...

SV: Would it have been after World War II?

AG: I think so. I believe so. It was down at the Hotel Owensboro. You ought to be able to get the record of that, that was when they had...

SV: What was it like here in town during the war? Did they ration the food? And all the young men, a lot of the young men were gone?

AG: Yeah, the cars and trains were going through all the time here with soldiers. I made a trip to uh my sister's and I couldn't even get a seat on, I had to sit on a suitcase from here to Charlotte. Trains were loaded with the soldiers and uh

SV: In 1945 they dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. What was your reaction to that?

AG: Oh, I thought that was horrible. I hated to think that we were the first ones to do it, but I, but at the time I thought it should be done. They had dropped those things on us, and we had to do something to stop them. I still think that it was the only thing that would ever stop it that fast. Been thankful for years after that. We'd have been fighting them years after that.

SV: Where were you when you heard about it?

AG: I heard about it, oh I know where I was when I heard that about the President being shot. {Pause} I don't remember where

SV: How was it when the war ended here?

AG: Oh of course everyone was just shouting around. Everything was, being happy over then.

SV: What was it like with all the soldiers start coming back? Did they have any kind of ceremonies here for the returning boys?

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AG: Probably so. I just don't recall. See, I was gone so much in the summers that I wasn't here. And I was teaching all the time that I was here.

SV: What about President's Roosevelt's death in 1945? What do you remember about that? And the people and how they reacted to it?

AG: Course everybody reacts different. {Laughs}

SV: The social life here in the '40s. What did people do in the '40s, like on the weekends generally? When they wanted to have social activities, a good time, what did people do during that time around here?

AG: Well, I, I would still say they'd go to movies and they play golf and tennis. All those kinds of things during that time.

SV: A lot of the same things that they do now?

AG: Yeah.

SV: What are some of the, do you remember any of the popular songs that you liked during that time?

AG: No, I can't think of them. All those war songs I liked, and uh, "Johnny Get Your Gun." {Laughs} All those

SV: Did you teach Home Ec in the elementary schools or science?

AG: No, in Junior High. I taught them both. I taught Phys Ed down at old Southern, Main Central, and, and Home Ec, and I had Foods down there, and then uh, they had another teacher that taught science. And then when I went out at Southern I had to teach both because we just had the one teacher. Then later on we got another teacher, but we both taught both. One, we'd have a Home Ec class with Foods and then we'd have a class with

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SV: With the war went on in the '40s, uh, was the '40s a good decade? Was that an exciting time in the history in your life?

AG: I, I would, my life is just almost the same through. Course to me it was just what was happening and then in the summers I would camp away from here.

SV: Girl Scout camp?

AG: I went to Fredericksburg, I mean uh Gettysburg, near Gettysburg to Girl Scout camp. It was Harrisburg Girl Scout camp, for about ten or twelve years. I went to camp in Cleveland. That was in the '20s, '29 and '30. I was up there three years. I went to California one summer and then

SV: Being a teacher, what was uh, as far as what was your educational concerns of that?

AG: Oh the projects then. Everything had to be a project.

SV: In school for kids?

AG: We had to think up projects that you were going to have them do, and uh, and then gone round and round in so many cycles then. You know, think you get something new but were going backwards at the same time.

SV: Did you have good students in the '40s and '30s?

AG: I thought so. I thought

SV: What, what educational things

AG: I said that I had the advantage in the but it was the discipline that took a lot, but I taught out in here where most of the wealthy children lived, see, the Southern and Eastern and Faust and Nell said down there, she was with poor children She taught during...

SV: What did you stress, what did the teachers stress in the '30s and '40s? Was it just Arithmetic and English or was it?

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AG: It was uh, all the things, you had all the same things.

SV: What did you teach there ??

AG: You would have Phys Ed and Music and uh um, Home Ec and um, Physical Ed and Shop for the boys, Home Ec and Shop, and Music and Art were divided up. We would have six weeks of one and six weeks of another and six weeks of another. Of course they always had Math and English and Social Sciences. That's where they did projects and things. Tried all different things...

END TAPE1, SIDE 2