

INDIANA UNIVERSITY
ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER

CORA B. BROWN

Interviewed by Chrystyna Huk
25 May 1989
OHRC accession #88-96-1,2

INTRODUCTION

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DEED OF GIFT AGREEMENT

I, Cora Brown, hereby give
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my oral history interview with Chrystyna Huk,
Interviewer (please PRINT)
which was conducted on May 25, 1989, to Indiana University.
Date.

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I would like a copy of my transcript to
keep and share with my family.

OK to send to libraries — CJ 5/22/91

In full accord with the provisions of the Deed of Gift, I hereunto set my hand.

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|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <u>Cora B. Brown</u> Donor | <u>May 25, 1989</u> Date |
| <u>Chrystyna Huk</u> Interviewer | <u>May 25, 1989</u> Date |

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ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER

INTERVIEWEE: Cora B. Brown
INTERVIEWER: Chrystyna Huk
DATE: May 25, 1989
SUBJECT: Life History in Paoli, Indiana
TRANSCRIBER: Norma Olmer

Huk: Today is May 25, 1989. This is Chrystyna Huk. I'm interviewing Cora Brown in her home in Paoli, Indiana. We'll be talking about her life in Paoli for the Paoli Project.

H: Mrs. Brown, can you please tell me where you were born and what it was like growing up.

B: I was born in Hillsboro, Texas. That is about sixty-five miles below Dallas and I had nine sisters and brothers that I could play with. We played...we spent a lot of our time down on the creek, wading in the creek and swinging on grapevines. And ...rolling down haystacks. And then we did a lot of visiting with our friends and neighbors.

H: OK. When were you born?

B: 1913. April the 5th.

H: OK. And, in Hillsboro, were you...was this out in the country? Or was it in a small town?

B: It's a small town.

H: About the population of....

B: Oh, I have no idea. I would imagine 5,000.

H: And your family grew up right in town?

B: Yes. I lived in town until I was six-years old and then we moved out to west Texas on a farm.

H: So a lot of your growing up has been on a farm or in a small town?

B: Yes, just about all of it.

H: OK. Were there a lot...would most of the families have such large families?

B: Most of them did have....

H: Tell me a little bit more about what kinds...how you played.

B: Well, we played down on the creek an awful lot of the time and there was a bridge there that we played on. And I know, one time, one of my brothers would take his cap and put it on a long pole and stick it up over the bridge. And one day it...a car came by when he did this, someone grabbed his cap and he thought his cap was gone but they threw the cap back about a hundred yards down the road.

H: Did you play the same things that the boys did or did you have different games...

B: No, we played with the boys. It was Hide and Seek and we usually had a dog that would play with us. And mother was awful good about entertaining us and letting us have children in our home. Visiting children.

H: And what did your family do for a living then?

B: Well, they worked on the farm mostly--picked cotton and hoed cotton and gathered feed and those kind of things. After my own father died, well mother married this man that was more-or-less a farmer.

H: OK. Your own father owned a grocery store and a restaurant?

B: [And he furnished the money for Uncle John to start the new car dealership in a nice building right on the town square.]

H: Please tell me a little bit about that.

B: [Papa's] brother had the first car dealership in Hills County and, of course, he had a new car. And my father had the second new car that was owned in Hills County.

H: What an honor; and what year was that?

B: Well, that would have been somewhere...I don't know, it would have been about 1910. I do remember when the war ended--World War I--ended. And I know that people shouting all over town about when the war was ended. And my brother run

in the house--he must have been about fourteen at that time--he ran in to the house and he was hollering too. You know, "The war has ended. The war has ended." And one of my sisters said, "Well, Jim, go outside and holler with the rest of them." And he went out and gave one big hoot and came back in the house and sat down. (laughs)

H: No kidding. Did you have any hardships at all because there was a war? Was there any rationing that you remember.

B: Yes. There was quite a few things that was rationed. I don't remember... I think it was sugar for one thing. Well, I know it was because, yes, what little bit of sugar that we got, well, we had to be very saving and sparing with it.

H: Kind of hard for kids that liked baked goods.

B: Yes. We didn't get very many pies and cakes during that time, I'll tell you. But we used an awful lot of syrup. Now, we could get all the syrup that we wanted, you know, to sweeten things with.

H: What number child were you in the _____ of nine...

B: I would have been the sixth.

H: OK. And you...your father got a car after the end of the war, which makes...

B: No, no, that was before the war that my...

H: Before?

B: Yes. Mother was married to [her second husband] when I was only four-years-old.

H: Oh, OK. So your father had a car, then, about 19....

B: That would have been, let me see, somewhere about 1910.

H: He had a car and...

B: Yes.

H: Do you...have you seen pictures what that car looked like?

B: Yes. When Poppa died we moved out to Oklahoma and spent

several months.... And when my little sister was born, Mother found out that someone had driven our car and had left the water in the radiator and it had frozen and burst.

H: Oh!

B: ...And so Mother gave it to one of my cousins and he and his dad went back to Hillsboro [and got the car]. And this is amazing to me--the Red River that was between Oklahoma and Texas was frozen over to the extent that they pulled the car behind a wagon. They pulled that across the ice--on that river.

H: Is that a pretty deep river?

B: Part of it is and part of it isn't. It was wide but it wasn't very deep--where they went over.

H: Wow! So your natural father had a restaurant and a grocery store.

B: Yes, that's right.

H: OK. Can you tell me a little bit about what it was like growing up on a farm? Well, we had spoken before the tape recorder went on...you told me you had picked cotton. I might be interested in knowing more about that. So, you lived in Oklahoma and then you moved back to West....

B: Yes, we only stayed in Oklahoma about five months, I guess. [deletion] We went back to our home when my little sister was six-weeks old. When we got back, someone had gone into the house and had broken our organ and a big range stove and all those kind of things, and [deletion] had just destroyed almost everything.

H: OK. And so then you went back to the house you used to live in, or you moved to Western Texas.

B: [deletion] Well, mother married at Hillsboro, and they were married maybe a year or two before we moved out into the western part of Texas.

H: And that's where you farmed.

B: Yes.

H: Can you tell me a little bit about the kinds of chores you had to do?

B: Oh, well, we had to carry in wood and so, often, we would have to carry water from a well off somewhere. And that was about it.

H: OK. And what about the picking of the cotton.

B: Well, we had to get up at 4:30 every morning, eat our breakfast and be in the cotton fields by daylight.

H: Which was...about what time?

B: Oh, gee, I would say, I don't know, six o'clock--something like that.

H: And this was when you were how old?

B: Well, now, I didn't start picking cotton until I was eight-years old because I had to stay home...I would have been picking cotton before that. But I know the reason I didn't was because Mother had too much work to do and I stayed home and took care of my little sister.

H: OK. And then...you started picking cotton when you were about eight.

B: Yes, I was eight-years old.

H: OK. I've no idea, I mean, I'm a city girl. I have no...and I hear picking cotton is extremely hard work, could you try to describe it for me. I have no idea what that...I just know it's hard.

B: Well, it would be rather hard to describe, we had big white cotton sacks that...maybe the men's cotton sacks would be--oh, I would say--ten-feet long. It was just a big sack with a strap sewed on to it and the strap went across one shoulder. But now, of course, until I got up almost grown, well I didn't have such long sacks--that way.

H: And so you would just pick them off like....

B: Yes. You picked them out of the burr and sometimes our fingers would get so raw that we'd have to wear what they called finger stalls over our fingers.

H: Is it prickly. Is the....

B: Oh, yes, yes. The burrs are real prickly. And....

H: Do you have to do a lot of reaching... I mean, how tall are these plants?

B: Oh, usually about two-and-a-half feet high. And I have picked in cotton that would be shoulder-high to a man.

H: Yes. Well, there's a lot of reaching that you would have to do.

B: Oh, yes. When I started out picking, I would pick about thirty pounds in each bag before it was weighed, emptied up and then I'd start all over again.

H: And how long would it take you, when you're eight-years old, to pick thirty pounds?

B: Oh, land, I don't know, at that time, I'd pick maybe eighty pounds a day. And then when I got older...two-hundred pounds is the most I ever picked in one day's time.

H: When you were a teen-ager.

B: Yes. Now, some...a real good cotton-picker, a man, could have picked three-hundred pounds. I know, one time, dad told me that if I picked a hundred pounds, he'd give me sixty cents or a quarter or something like that. And each one of the children set what they thought they could pick. And my brother would have been twelve-years-old at that time, he picked three-hundred pounds--but that was the most he ever picked in his life. But it was very hard on him, he shouldn't have done it.

H: How hot is it when you're picking cotton?

B: How what?

H: How hot is it outside.

B: Oh, it's very, very hot, because usually we would start around September when the sun was really beaming down. But [soone the weather would get cold] right after cotton-picking time was over, farmers would be planting the cotton and then we would hoe cotton. And that is chopping the weeds out of the cotton. And that's when it really is hot, down in the Texas sun. It would really bear down on you.

H: And that's what month?

B: We would usually start around... it was one time we started the middle of August. Usually it was around the first of September.

H: You start picking the cotton...

B: Yes.

H: ...in September and you pick--for a few weeks?

B: Oh, we would pick for months. It was one time we finished picking cotton the thirteenth of April and then we started hoeing for another man the next day. That would have been the fourteenth of April that the cotton was big enough--in some patches--that [we could start hoeing cotton].

H: So, you don't have a winter there where anything freezes?

B: Oh, yes. Sometimes...I saw it get as much as nine degrees below zero there.

H: Doesn't that ruin the plants?

B: Oh no. No. Well, of course that is in the winter that it gets so cold there. Now, it don't hurt the cotton to be frozen.

H: I see. And when you were picking, when you were eight, when would you take a break?

B: Well, just at noon and at night.

H: And what time would you quit? At night?

B: Sundown.

H: Which was? Eight, nine o'clock?

B: Well, I would say seven-thirty.

H: So you would put in at least ten hours.

B: Yes. But we would usually take an hour off for lunch.

H: That must have been a very, very hard...I mean, we can't...I don't think my generation could possibly understand that...

B: They don't pick cotton down there any more now. They have

big machinery to pick it.

H: Yes. When did that machinery come in?

B: It was during the time after we had came out here because I didn't even know that they were picking it mechanically until we went down for a visit one time and I got to see a big bunch of cotton [and I saw cotton being picked with big machines].

H: I bet you could hardly believe it.

B: Oh, [I could] hardly believe it. The last place we lived was considered the paper-shell pecan capital of the world. And they would have to get big long-caned poles and stand up on [limbs of a tree] and beat the pecans off. And one time my brother made the remark to someone that he was going to get a pecan-picker so he wouldn't have to whip those pecans off of the trees. When we went back down there later on, they did have machinery that would shake the pecans off of the trees. So that ended all that. Of course, I guess they still had to pick them up by hand. I've picked up quite a lot of pecans off of the ground by hand.

H: You also had pecans on your farm?

B: Yes.

H: But that wasn't as hard work as cotton.

B: No.

H: Did you wear special clothing when you...did you wear special foot-covering at least or...?

B: No, no, we didn't do that...it was odd... The first I was thirteen-years old before we were even allowed to wear pants--long pants--in the cotton patch. And we just wore dresses and regular underwear and those kind of things. And that cold north wind could really get cold. But when I was thirteen-years old, Mother and Dad let us start wearing overalls to work in.

H: What footwear would you wear?

B: Just regular shoes.

H: Regular shoes. OK. How was your work in picking cotton different when you were a teen-ager than when you were eight? You were able to pick more.

B: Yes.

H: You were taller and stronger.

B: It was one time that we had three men picking cotton for us and they averaged three-hundred pounds a day each. So that was nine-hundred pounds that they would pick. And then with what we kids could pick, Dad would have to haul off cotton about every other day.

H: How many acres of cotton plants did he have?

B: Oh, we usually worked for the other fellow. Sometimes he would rent us a piece of ground and we would work that for ourselves. And we would get half that was made on this land.

H: So, a lot of it was...you werre picking for someone else.

B: Yes. Per pound.

H: Per pound?

B: Yes.

H: OK. Do you remember how much you got per pound?

B: Fifty-cents a pounds. (laughs)

H: When you were young?

B: Yes.

H: When you were eight?

B: Yes.

H: And how much was it when you were, maybe, thirteen?

B: Well, I would say, a dollar a [hundred] pounds. And that may not be correct, but it would be something like that.

H: I'm just trying to get a range and, you know.... What age did you leave home?

B: I was almost nineteen when I married.

H: And were you still picking cotton?

B: Yes. My husband and I farmed for the first several years. And then we quit farming and he started...for instance, later on, after we moved out here, he worked down at the...wait just a minute, I can't even think...Dupont. Dupont, down at Charlestown. And he worked there several years and they made him a foreman down there.

H: OK, can you tell me how much the cotton was per pound before you married.

B: Well (laughs)... It got down, one year, where it was only about five-cents a pound. So it wasn't long after that until my husband and I decided we'd better start working at something else.

H: OK. So the price varied an awful lot?

B: Oh, yes, yes.

H: So, the first couple of years of your marriage, did you live in the same area?

B: Yes.

H: And you also farmed?

B: Yes.

H: OK. Can you tell me when you moved to Southern Indiana?

B: It was in 1947.

H: OK. And what prompted your move here?

B: My husband's sister had worked for the Red Cross and she had met a man that was the more-or-less the boss of the offices where she worked. So when they got married, my husband, at that time, was studying refrigeration. And he came out here and stayed with them a few days and then he went on to Chicago and finished his school out there. And then came back by here and they had a lot of work for him to do and he built garages for them and those kind of things. And then...I...that was...he came out here at Christmas Eve, and the children and I didn't want to change their school, so we didn't come out until the 27th of May after their school was out.

H: In 1947?

B: Yes. So he came out here Chrstitmas Eve 1946. And the three children and I came out here the 27th of May of '47.

H: Can you tell me, what was Paoli like when you moved here?

B: Well, it was so much different then to what it is now, because we had theaters that we could go to. And we visited a lot more. We went to church and Sunday School, the children and I did. And my husband did refrigeration work for several years before he started working at Duponts.

H: How many children do you have?

B: Three.

H: Did you live in...? Two girls and a boy?

B: Yes.

H: And did you live in town or in the country when you first moved here?

B: We lived in the country, over here about a mile from where [I live now].

H: A lot closer to town?

B: Well, it's about a mile from here. That was about two-and-a-half miles out of town. And then we lived there, I guess, two or three years and then we moved into town and we lived there for eighteen years.

H: OK. And so, how big was Paoli when you came?

B: I think it was about 2900 population.

H: Oh, then, it wasn't much smaller than it is today.

B: No. No, not very.

H: OK. But the general activity level of the town was drastically different than it is today?

B: Oh, yes. Very much so.

H: OK. Give me an example of, like, what the town looked like or what your activities were. Like say, your going into

town...how often you go into town and for what and....

B: Well, of course, we would go in on Saturdays to do their trading and that... And we went to a little country church _____ until we moved into town, the children and I, and I was active in home-demonstration work.

H: OK. Tell me about...by trading, you mean, the grocery shopping...

B: Buying groceries, yes, grocery shopping.

H: OK. Tell me what that was like, you know....

B: Well, (coughs) excuse me. They had so many more grocery stores then. They had one right on the square and they had stores that I could buy clothing and material and all those kind of things--on the square. And now they don't have hardly anything like that. And they had a big cafe on the square.

H: They had a cafe?

B: Yes.

H: And where was that?

B: It was--you know where the theater was?

H: I forgot, can you refresh my mind.

B: It...you know where the bank is?

H: Yes.

B: OK. You go down to the corner there and the theater was right in the corner and this nice cafe was right next to the theater.

H: OK. And it was the kind of cafe for adults...

B: Yes.

H: ...or for everybody?

B: And they would make very delicious pies that we could buy and take home with us. So I didn't make as many pies then and I soon started working out in a factory and so I bought quite a few pies from this cafe already made.

H: You worked in a factory for awhile?

B: Yes.

H: OK.

B: Ten years.

H: OK. You didn't tell me that before the _____; I'm _____ I asked you. So, you...would you go early on Saturday mornings to the square?

B: No, we would usually go in the afternoon and probably, then, we would drive back into town in the evening. Get in the car and see people come by. Probably go to the picture show and just meet our friends there, and those kind of things.

H: OK. How active was the square? Was there a lot of people there?

B: Oh, yes. They had stores all around the square, good stores. Grocery stores, dry good stores, and bakeries and all those kind of things.

H: OK. And so you could go do your shopping and do your visiting at the same time almost.

B: Yes. Now, it was after we moved into town that we would usually go up there and set in the cars and see so many people and...

H: Because it was a little closer.

B: Yes.

H: OK. And how did the change--or how and when did all that change?

B: Well, I...there were so many children on our block when we lived in town and our doors was open to all of them. Usually, when these children were not in school, until bedtime, we'd have maybe eight or ten children in our home--just about every afternoon--or every night. And even now, I meet one and we talk about the good old times when they would come to our place and how their kids would gather in the yard and play, and those kind of things. And that's the way we raised our children. And my daughter in Kansas is raising her children the same way. Her

house is open to all her college-daughter's friends and the boy that's in high school, his friends are always welcome there at their home.

H: And how did the activity of the town-square change? You had mentioned that it was very active.

B: Well, so many of the stores went out of business. There's no grocery store on the square any more. No place that you can buy material, except one place has an extended amount of material. But it's nothing at all...you can't go into a store and get a Coke and ice cream and those things like we could at that time.

H: And you're talking about the '50s primarily.

B: Yes.

H: When did that change? Do you....

B: I would say around '60. The theater burned and that did an awful lot to the town because there was no place to congregate in and people just didn't go into town like they had been doing.

H: OK. And so slowly, when a business was burned or go out of business, it wouldn't be replaced.

B: That's right, yes.

H: When did these little shopping strips, north and south of town, start developing?

B: Oh, gee, that was way up in the...I would say in the '70s.

H: OK. Was this change a slow change or a quick change or...?

B: It was rather slow, the best that I can recall. They started building out on 37 South and it was a slow change.

H: OK. Can you tell me about the...you mentioned going to church on...with your children? Could you tell me a little bit about your church life and the social life that went along with church?

B: Well, of course, they had what they called the BYPU at that time, for the young folk. It was more or less like a Sunday School, I would say. And I was the leader of that, part of the time. And, I don't know, it seemed like we enjoyed the

fellowship so much in church then.

H: As adults?

B: Yes.

H: What about the children?

B: Well, they were very good to go to church with me. And my son is just like he was raised; his house is open to the children. And he teaches...he and his wife both teach school. They work with the church and he is...he's so busy all the time. Because he takes such an interest in people.

H: OK. Alright. What other kinds of fun things did you do as an adult in the '50s besides go to a movie,

B: When we still lived in Texas...there was about four families of us that would get together every Saturday night. And some of them were musicians and we did a lot of dancing. (laughs)

H: Did you do that when you came here?

B: No, it seemed like they just didn't do that here.

H: And what about, like...did they have, like, festivals or carnivals or....

B: Yes, they had a fair to come in every year. And we would go to the fair and enjoy that an awful lot.

H: When was the fair?

B: Sometimes about in August...

H: OK.

B: ...of each year.

H: It was, like, the end of harvest.

B: Well....

H: Sort of?

B: It was a fair that would always come in here. And then they would have a 4H fair too. And my children were all very active in 4H.

H: OK. Where did the fair occur? Where did it take place?

B: Well...the 4H kids would take cakes and all the produce in that they had grown and get prizes on that...

H: But where? Where would they do this?

B: In the fairgrounds here at Paoli.

H: Where are the fairgrounds?

B: Well, it's a few blocks out. I would say northwest of town.

H: OK. And what about the carnival?

B: That's where it would be stationed.

H: It didn't take place on the square in the '50s?

B: No. No.

H: OK.

B: It would be out at the fairgrounds.

H: It would be time for people to come and enjoy themselves and....

B: Yes.

H: OK. I believe that after World War I you were still living in Texas, but you had told me a story, before we started recording, about a soldier that your father had seen. Can you reflect that....

B: Yes, I will tell you how it happened. My dad and oldest brother went down on the creek one day and there was a young boy--looked like he was seventeen- or eighteen-years old--lying under a bridge. And they went down to see about him and he was crying because he had gone AWOL and he was afraid, naturally, that he would be caught. So he begged and pleaded and cried asking my dad and brother to not report him to the law because the penalty would have been very hard....

END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE ONE

H: Mrs. Brown, you were telling me how your father and your brother had found this soldier under the bridge and he was begging that they not do anything about it. And then you said that they pondered over it a little bit?

B: Yes. And they came home and stayed for several hours. They knew that they'd be breaking the law if they didn't report him. And they felt so sorry for him, they didn't know what to do about it. And they pondered over it for several hours and went back down to where the young man had been and he had gone. So they didn't know whether he had been picked up by the law or had just gone somewhere else [deletion].

H: And what year do you think that was about?

B: Well, that would have been about 1917, I would imagine thereabout.

H: And do you remember that? Or do you remember the story being talked about later?

B: Well, I knew when they came home and they were talking about it.

H: Really! You were only four-years old or five.

B: Yes.

H: Wow! And you heard that...that's kind of one of the favorite stories that they repeated.

B: No, I don't remember that they had ever talked about it since then. [deletion] But, I tell you, when I first started remembering things and the first thing that I could remember was when we were coming home from Oklahoma after my little sister'd been born; she was six-weeks old. And we were on the train and as we got close to our home-station, my brother Jim woke me up and told me that we were almost home. [I was 3 years and 4 or 5 weeks old.]

And I can remember that so plain and I can just remember a lot of things happening from then on.

H: Wow! That's kind of a turning-point in your mind.

B: Yes. Very much.

H: Tell me...you were weren't living already in Paoli at the

end of World War II, how did the town celebrate or remember World War II--or the kids in school or...

B: World War II?

H: It ended in '45 and you moved here in '47. So it would have been part of your kid's childhood...

B: Yes. [The people in our little town danced on the town square, but we didn't know it until the next day. I was very sorry that we had missed out on the celebration. It lasted about all night.]

H: ...to celebrate it. Did they do any celebrations in school or around the square or...?

B: Let me see. We came down here in '47 and it was over in '45. Well, we were still in Texas when it was over.

H: Right. But what kind of celebration did this town have...?

B: [deletion] [I really don't know.]

H: That was in Texas?

B: Yes.

H: OK. What happened in Paoli once you moved here? Were there any Veterans' celebrations or...?

B: Not to amount to anything. They had their own clubs and those kind of things--their lodges and things. _____ had a big building right out at the edge of Paoli [deletion].

H: You don't remember that the schools celebrated any kind of...

B: No, I don't. No.

H: OK. What church did you belong to when you moved here?

B: The First Baptist. Went there until we moved down to Jeffersonville and spent three or four years down there so we could be close to my husband's work. And when we moved back up here, then, I started going into Paoli--Baptist Church.

H: OK. Was that the church...were you raised as a Baptist or...?

B: No. No. My folks usually went to the Nazarene Church or something like that. But I have just always been a Baptist.

H: That's one that you found that you like?

B: Yes.

H: OK. And you had mentioned before to me that that was a real important part of fellowship for you...

B: Yes.

H: ...as an adult. And the children...and what did the children...was it instrumental in terms of bible classes...?

B: Oh, yes, they went to Bible School and the BYPU; that's for the young people. And I worked with them that way.

H: What's BYPU?

B: Well...

H: Bible...

B: Baptist Young People...

H: Club? No.

B: No.

H: Union?

B: Union, I guess.

H: OK. OK. Can you also tell me about...you mentioned something about home-demonstration clu... I didn't know what that was.

B: Well, that is our club for the ladies to teach you how to cook and wash and...just how to run your home. And for the Hundredth Centennial, now... I lived out here in the country at that time, but our club had a float in the parade in celebration of the hundredth year of Paoli.

H: And when was that?

B: That must have been somewhere about--I don't remember,

somewhere about 19...(large pause) Well, I don't remember. Somewhere about 1950--yes, somewhere about 1950.

H: OK. Is the home-demonstration club today called the Homemaker Club?

B: Something like that. They have changed the name.

H: OK. I wanted to trace...I got a little confused. You first moved here in 1947 and your husband was in refrigeration.

B: Yes.

H: And then when did you move to Jeffersonville?

B: In 1964. My youngest daughter got married December the 4th. And I had already gone down and had rented an apartment and we moved down the next day.

H: And what year was that?

B: That was 1964.

H: And how long did you stay there?

B: [Four and a half] years.

H: OK. I'm not real sure where Jeffersonville is from here.

B: Well, it is back...I would say, out of Louisville... it's about sixty miles from here and it is...I would say, ten miles out of Louisville. [deletion]

H: OK. So it's just a little north of Louisville.

B: Yes.

H: OK. And so you moved there because your husband changed jobs?

B: Yes.

H: From refrigeration to...?

B: From refrigeration into, well... of course they made bombs and all those kind of things that, at that time.... They made him a foreman over a gang of men. I found one of his honor... papers where they had honored him, right here recently and where

he...they had put him and several men in charge... they had put Raymond in charge of having power...oh, I don't know, it was some kind of big machinery. And they said that the quickest that that amount of men had ever done that before was in four days and my husband and his crew did it, I believe, in a day-and-a-half. So he seemed to be doing pretty good that way.

H: Did the refrigeration business not go well? Or was this a better opportunity?

B: He just simply didn't charge enough. (laughs)

H: I see.

B: (laughs) And he would feel so sorry for older people and people with small children or babies. He would go out and work on the refrigerator and charge them. And then he'd go back the next day to see if they were working right and he'd just didn't charge enough and he couldn't make a go of it.

H: OK. And just to review: so you first lived in the country...

B: Yes.

H: ...when you moved here. And then after a few years you moved to town.

B: Yes.

H: OK. And then you moved to Jeffersonville.

B: Yes, we just went down there and lived there during the time my husband was still working at that plant. When they retired him on medical discharge [deletion] we moved back up here.

H: And did you live in the country then?

B: We lived right here.

H: Oh! OK.

B: We brought our mobile home up here and then added on to it.

B: And what year was it that you moved here?

B: 1970.

H: So you lived here for nineteen years out of twenty.

B: Yes.

H: OK. So when the two of you moved here to this trailer, your husband didn't work any longer.

B: No.

H: Is that when you became more interested in sewing? Or has that always been a hobby...?

B: I didn't become interested in sewing until after I had spent thirty-eight days [in hospital] after surgery for cancer. And I made...I had just bought me three new bedspreads--and they were heavy. They were very nice bedspreads, but they were heavy. And I wanted something lighter and I got quilted materials and made bedspreads for my three beds, at that time. I gave a club meeting and all the club ladies liked my bedspreads so much. And I had made several and given them away and I just decided I would start selling bedspreads.

H: And how long ago was that?

B: That would have been... (figures aside) that would have been about 1978.

H: So, a little over ten years.

B: Yes.

H: OK. You had mentioned to me that in your lifetime you had helped with farming, you had worked in a school cafeteria, you had run a gift shop, you had sold clothes in a dress shop, and then also that you had worked in a factory.

B: Yes.

H: Can you tell me a little bit about which job you liked the best...?

B: Well, I liked running the gift shop up here at Cider Hill. And working in the ladies and children's ready-to-wear.

H: And why is that?

B: I just like to meet people. I just enjoy it. I always liked clothes and I always liked to sell clothes.

H: So it was kind of a natural thing for you.

B: Yes.

H: When did you work in the factory?

B: I started there, I believe, in 1951 and worked there until 1961.

H: And what did you do in the factory?

B: We made television cabinets.

H: OK.. So it was basically the same thing over and over and over and over again.

B: Yes.

H: Did you like that?

B: Pretty well. Pretty well, I guess. But I didn't like it as well as I did selling. I know when I was up here at the gift shop, one of the ladies that was helping me one day said, "Cora, you could sell anything."

She said, "You could sell the hind leg off of a hog and him running loose in the pen." (laughs) So, I just always liked to sell.

H: That's really...that's really a nice compliment. OK.

What I'd like to ask you, going back historically then... a lot of changes have occurred in your life. What... and that you probably _____ in your children's life. What can you remember from the era of the sixties?

B: Now, that would have been during the time that I had two teen-aged children and...

H: Wow!

B: ...and I can remember more about them and their friends. Us going to the shows together and going out and eating together and being in our home.

H: OK. What do you remember of what was happening nationally in terms of the hippy movement and the peace movement and the woman's movement and Vietnam? Did that have any effect on your day-to-day life?

B: Well, not so much, I guess, by living in a small town. Of course, we'd see it on television all the time because we had a television ever since we had moved into Paoli. And we'd see a lot of it on television and read about it in the papers, but it didn't affect Paoli as much as it did other places.

H: Because you were more isolated.

B: Yes.

H: What did you think of people dressing differently and long hair and experimenting with..?.

B: Well, of course, I wasn't used to it. And I didn't especially like it. But I just accepted it as it was.

H: Did it affect your children any?

B: No. No, I couldn't tell that it did.

H: OK. And what about the Vietnam War? Was that treated any differently?

B: Well, yes. I guess it would be because at that time, see, my daughter was in nursing school down at Louisville. And the nurses would give dances weekly for boys to come in to dance with them and those kind of things. That's where my daughter met her husband because he was stationed down at Fort Knox.

H: Yes. So, it affected her in terms of--she met her husband. Because of....

B: Yes, and they lived...after... she was working in General Hospital until she married him--no, now wait a minute. She was still going to school when she met him and then when they got married, and he went overseas, she worked in General Hospital because she could get so much better training there than she could anywhere else. They wanted to hire her as a nurse at Norton and she had put in part of her time training over at General Hospital. She said that they had to be really on their toes because they had everything to take care of at General Hospital whereas this hospital that wanted to hire her said that everything was scheduled, you know, and it was a upper-class of people and all like that. So, she finally had to tell them that she wouldn't...couldn't work for them there in Norton Hospital because she wanted to be where they had to be on their toes and to get good training. The superintendent of the nursing staff

told her that she made a wise decision because it was a very good education for her.

H: Where's Norton?

B: It is at Louisville. [deletion] They've done away with the old Norton Hospital and that's where they have the Wall Street Baptist Church--both the hospital building and made it into something else. I think home for elderly people, I'm not for sure about that. [deletion]

H: What do you remember, like, the community thing about Vietnam? Do you remember anything?

B: Well, I don't know as I do too much. No more than just the battles that they were having. Now my son-in-law, when he went over there, he got every kind of a medal, I guess, that anyone could get over there for heroism. And he came back and stayed a year and then volunteered and went back. And I know my daughter told him then that he had enough medals and for him to protect himself while he was over there. A tank caught on fire one time and a young man was on top of the tank. And Don, my son-in-law, was about a hundred yards from there, and he kept screaming and screaming for them to get that man off of the top of that tank that was on fire. He was running all the time trying to get down there, and he got up there and pulled him off but it was too late; the man died. So...

H: (Interrupts) Your son... Sorry.

B: Just things like that.

H: But your son-in-law felt it was his patriotic duty to go over there?

B: Yes.

H: But what about the people that didn't like the war? Did you know those kinds of people?

B: Oh, yes, there was some of them, all right. And they...what was it, objectors...

H: Conscientious ...

B: ...conscientious objectors, yes, that wouldn't go. But Don went over two different times. And then after that, he... couldn't have his wife over there--she'd had this baby in the

meantime--and he couldn't take them over there. But then he went to Germany for three years and he took his family with him.

H: I see. So Vietnam to you was much more (machine malfunctions) ...it was a more personal thing...

B: Yes.

H: ...from the people that you knew...?

B: That's right.

H: Did you think we ought to be there?

B: Well, I don't know. That would be a big...a big decision to make.

H: I guess. Can you tell me, how did you..._____ in the sixties that there was this drug movement and _____ movement and Vietnam, there was also some other things that affected, you know, the lives of Americans nationally as the peace movement, the civil-rights movement for equality of races, and the woman's movement. Do you remember watching on television...

B: Yes.

H: ...about the black rioting and.... How did you and your family and the community react to that?

B: [deletion]

H: But, did it affect your life in any way?

B: [deletion]

H: Were there any blacks in Paoli at that time?

B: There was one family. One family that was all that was allowed to be in Paoli at that time. And the reason they were allowed here was the President of the bank [deletion] had told people of Paoli that that was such a nice family, that he wanted them to always to be welcome in Paoli. And they were. She was a nurse aide and he had some kind of a good job and they are honored people.

H: OK. You had mentioned that there was only one family that was allowed. What would happen if other black families wanted to move in.

B: [deletion] I don't know. I'll tell you what happened one time; I'll go back quite a few years. We were living right...oh, it was a real nice house and it was about a block from _____ that stopped at our house of a morning and in the afternoon. And one day, along about sundown, we heard a terrible noise and it was a wagon-load of colored people--now that was down in Texas--it was a wagon-load of colored people and they jumped off of that wagon. They had pots and pans and all those kind of things, and they caught that train and left the country because they were warned that if they were there at midnight they'd all be killed. So that's the way the black people were being treated at that time.

H: OK. So your experience was a...in Texas, especially, was that they had been discriminated....

B: Oh, very much.

H: But in Paoli, there just weren't very many.

B: That's right.

H: But it was muy understanding that there were some black families living in French Lick.

B: Oh, I'm sure that there were because that big hotel down there, they needed servants and workers down there at that big hotel.

H: And how did you think all this rioting over civil rights affected those blacks? Was there any communication or any gossip in town or...?

B: Oh, sure. It was a lot of gossip about it but....

H: Do you remember what kind it was? What were they thinking might happen?

B: Well, they were just...well, for instance, my son-in-law, his family knew three young men that was working for that cause. And they were the ones that went down into Mississippi--I guess that's where they were having so much trouble. And, you know, they were building a big dam to a pond--a big lake down there--and these three white boys were killed and they were buried in that dam down there.

H: And these were friends of your sons?

B: They were friends that...from Kansas, I guess, from his ... his family knew these...they were very nice, quiet young men. And they went down to help work with these demonstrations and those kind of things. And the three of them were killed while they were down there and they were covered over with those bulldozers and those kind of things--buried in that dam.

H: So, basically, the civil-rights movement did not affect your life personally or the life of the community here? It was happening elsewhere.

B: Yes. Yes, that's right. No, there was no disturbance whatsoever around Paoli, that I knew anything at all about. Of course...

H: And black attitudes are probably still ____...

B: Well, some are all right. But this family were such a nice family that that kindly helped them realize that black people had feelings and souls as well as the white people.

H: But you think, today, there still might be a little bit left over of that because Paoli is still basically white?

B: Oh, sure. Yes. Sure, it would be a lot of it left over. Well, now, can I go back here and tell what happened when we were living in Hillsboro. I was about five-years old at that time. We lived out in a small town and there was a family by the name of Wells that lived down about two or three blocks from us. And this Mr. Wells, I don't know what kind of business he was in, but he had a black young man working for him. And Mr. Wells'd always go into Hillsboro, which was the county seat there, which was about twelve miles from the little town of Itaska that I lived in at that time. Well, one day, Mr. Wells fired this young black man and this black man knew that Mr. Wells would go into town every Friday to take care of business.

So this black man went to this Wells home and knocked on the door. And when Mrs. Wells went to the door, when she saw who it was and she wasn't afraid of him, well, he jerked the screen open and came on in. And he killed her and threw her on a bed and set it on fire. And she had a six-months-old baby and he put the baby on the bed with that. And the little boy that was about five-years old run out of the front door trying to get down to the school house where his sisters and brothers--and where my sisters and brothers--were going to school. This man run and caught him and drugged him back up there and killed him. Well, in the meantime, we had moved into Hillsboro, the county seat,

and that's where this black man was.

So my step-father and my oldest brother were down there several months after the man had been put in jail there. And the mob tore the jailhouse door down and dragged this young man out and tied him to a hitching post there on the square, right by the side of the sidewalk, out in the street more-or-less. And, so, then, they piled wood and stuff around him and set him on fire. Burned him to death.

Well, I'll never forget how Jim, my brother, acted when he came home. We children were out in the yard playing and he was just as white as he could be because he had seen all of that.

H: What year was that about?

B: That would have been about, now let me study just a minute--I was born in '13--that would have been somewhere about in 1918.

H: It's almost unbelievable for me to hear. I believe you, of course, ...

B: Yes. And they took this man--this is so gory that I almost even hate to even tell it--they took this young man...they burned him up just about half way. They burned his arms and legs off and put chains around him and drug him all over the back part of town. And then they took him back and put him back in that fire and finished burning him up. And my brother has told us that he could always remember hearing that black man scream when the fire...when the flames hit him.

H: When it came to Paoli again, and...how did you feel the black react...did you feel that people around here did not know black people basically.

B: Well, they didn't, I suppose. The only [black people that my children] really knew, I suppose, was the Norris family [and they were] highly respected. And so they accepted them; my children went to school with those children and they were just one of the bunch. And one of these boys--the youngest one, I guess.... Several years ago his picture came out in the paper and on television and all like that...and he was made Black Man of Indiana. He was honored; he was going to Indiana University or somewhere up there. And that was a very, very nice family.

H: But other black families that would have moved in, might have....

B: Oh, they probably would have felt the brunt of discrimination too, just like they did in other towns, I would

imagine. And therefore they just didn't come in.

H: It was just kind of understood. Can you tell me, what were the differences, you know,...a lot of differences occurred in the role of women. During World War II a lot of women went to the factories and worked. Do you remember that?

B: Yes, sure I do. And I don't know, it was more work at that time during the Vietnam War and so we just had to accept it, I guess.

H: Well, during the time of the Vietnam War, women's roles were changing and women were beginning to want to have a life of their own.

B: Yes.

H: How did Paoli, the community respond?

B: Well, I guess all right as far as I knew. I wasn't critized for working in the factory. And I was helping make a living for my family; and my husband is working down at Duponts at that time. And we kept our families going just pretty well. We put them through high school. One of them is a teacher and he's married to a teacher and they have two children that are graduating. One of them is married to a teacher and the girl is making a teacher. She's married to a real estate man and he's just new at it, but he's a very goodlooking man...he is doing very well in real estate. He's getting promotions all the time and he is almost head man. He sells more real estate than just about any of them as a whole.

And so, then, my other daughter is a nurse. She's married to this man that made Lieutenant Colonel when he was thirty-seven years old. Well, when he got out of the army, he worked with the ROTC for a good long while during that time. And now he is a policeman out in Manhattan, Kansas. They have one daughter in college and then, after one more year, they'll have a son in college. It seems to me like they're doing pretty well. (pause)

And my daughter that lives here by me has had telephone-operators schooling and those kind of things. And one of her daughters had gone to college and she's the boss over the Cablevision over at Salem now. And the other one is married; she has three children. She's very much a homebody and taking care of her family.

END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE TWO

H: So you think that your daughters have had more opportunities for education and jobs than, maybe, you did? Or you...

B: Oh, sure. Sure, all the kids did at that time now, they.... The biggest part of them that really wanted to go to college could do so. At least finish high school.

H: Your children.

B: Yes, my children. Now, my son joined the navy. He wanted to join the navy before he was even eighteen-years old and I kept begging him not to. I said, "You wait until your eighteenth birthday and then I'll sign the papers for you. Because I feel you'll be old enough that you'll know what you're doing."

And he had a very good record...he was in the navy for three years and he had a very good rating.... He had his own car and he'd taken it to Maryland --West... not West Point...

H: Annapolis?

B: At Annapolis, Maryland. Yes. And he had driven his car back home and left that and flew back down. And we then, when he did come home, we met him at Louisville and we had to rush him right up to Purdue for him to start into college.

H: What years were your children born, again please?

B: One was born in 1934, one 1936, and one 1944.

H: OK. So your daughters were in high school then in the '50s? Is that right?

B: Yes. One of them was.

H: OK.

B: Yes, one of them was.

H: And so, by the time they were in high school it was acceptable and encouraged for women to finish school?

B: Yes.

H: _____ specifically to say the '60s and '70s, when there was a lot of encouragement for women and for women's rights and for women to have their identity, how did

that affect Paoli? Do you remember? You know, there were some radical women and there were other women who said that women ought to be able to have education and women ought to be able to have a career if they want to, you know, do you remember that movement?

B: Well, not so much. I just know that so many of them had started working out in the factories and places like that, at that time, we were paying for our home. And we kept good cars for my husband to make his trip down [to his work], we would usually buy a new car each year for several years. And so that he would have a good way to get down to his work which was sixty miles from home. And so we could have a better life. I never left my children unattended or alone whatsoever until the last one was in school and then I had a neighbor-girl to come in and stay with her while I was working.

H: When did you go to work for the factory?

B: I started in 1951.

H: And you worked for ten years.

B: Yes. [In a factory, then managed a nice gift shop, then worked in a very nice ladies' and children's store.]

H: Mainly because there was...it was helping...the children were growing and....

B: Yes. Yes.

H: And where did your husband work sixty miles away?

B: Down at Duponts at Charlestown, Indiana. Where they made artillery, bombs and all those kind of things.

H: This was before you moved to Jeffersonville?

B: Yes. That's the reason we moved down there; he was getting in such bad health that it was too hard on him to make that 120-mile trip [each day].

H: OK.

B: [deletion]

H: I understand that. I didn't...

B: So we went down there and we lived there either four or five years and then when they retired him--medically--we moved on up here. But they kept him on the payroll for about six months so that they could retire him medically.

H: Mrs. Brown, you know, maybe a better way to look at the difference in female opportunity, is... like, let's look at the difference between, say, your mom and either your daughter or granddaughters, in terms of what they could expect in personally, you know, in family and children and jobwise. Is there...is that....

B: Well...

H: Is that different?

B: Yes, there is a very big difference. For instance, when my mother was young and had her family, it was almost unheard of for a woman to not stay at home and take care of her family. It was just expected of her.

H: Could she go to school? Could she finish high school?

B: No. Not very well.

H: It was just too hard.

B: Yes. Because our high schools were usually in town and the ones that lived in the country, they just didn't have very much of an opportunity to go into town and go to high school.

H: And by the time your daughters were being raised, how did they get to school?

B: Well, of course, we lived in town at that time. Or, either that...now, before we moved into town, they rode the buses.

H: They already had buses.

B: Oh, yes. They had buses.

H: OK. And could your daughters have...what could they expect, in terms of their personal family life and.... For instance, how many children did your mother have?

B: She had ten.

H: And that was normal...

B: That was normal. Some of them had a-way more than that.

H: She was pregnant quite often.

B: She sure was. And so, nothing could be expected of her except to stay home and keep house and raise her family.

H: And there was a lot of hard work?

B: That was a lot of hard work.

H: OK. And let's look at one of your daughters. You know, one of your daughters has a nursing degree.

B: Yes.

H: And that was an opportunity that your mom could have never had.

B: No. No. And even I couldn't have had it.

H: Because women weren't going into nursing that often.

B: That's right.

H: They weren't even economically or physically being able to...

B: That's correct.

H: ...finish high school.

B: That's right. Now, like it was, my daughter could go down to nursing school at Louisville and spend the week... I mean stay down there five days and then come home on Saturdays and we'd take her back on Sundays until she got her own car. She got her little red Fiat and she could do her own going and coming at that time.

H: How many children does she have?

B: She has two.

H: Which is kind of much closer to the average American norm now.

B: And she has two and my oldest daughter has two children and

my son has two children.

H: And that's much less than your mother had all together.

B: Yes. Now, I have six--let's see--I had three children, six grandchildren and I have four great-grandchildren.

H: So, your daughters, if they want to work, can work.

B: That's right.

H: Because...and their lives have been eased by a lot of conveniences and...

B: Yes.

H: ...their opportunities,-- what about if they stay in Paoli? What opportunities are there for women in this day and...

B: Not too much, because so many of the younger people leave Paoli when they get a high school education. Either go to college or go to other towns to get work.

H: What kind of work can you get if you stay here?

B: Not very much now, because the main factory that I worked in years ago has burned. And...Cornwell, that made television cabinets.... Now they have...oh, they have nursing homes and they have several smaller factories. There's just not very much opportunity for them to better themselves if they don't go to a bigger city.

H: So unless you wantd to work in the factory or in some kind of service, in like a grocery store...

B: Yes.

H: ...or as an aide or if you have a nursing degree or a teaching degree...

B: Yes.

H: ...you really don't have too much opportunity.

B: That's right. That's right.

H: What about for men? Do they have more opportunity or is it similar?

B: Well, it would be the same thing. These younger men usually go off to other places. Of course, quite a few of them work down in these factories that are around here, these small factories. But if they get anywhere, it looks like they almost have to go to a bigger city.

H: You know, one of the things I wanted to ask you is, how has the technology changed in your life? I mean, you've lived through a lot of new inventions. Do you remember when radio first came into your life? Or was it already part of your life when...

B: It was part of our life from the time my oldest girl was four-years old... was when we got our first radio.

H: And that was about when?

B: That would have been... she was born in '36-- that would have been about 1940. We got our first radio somewhere about 1938, I would imagine. And, of course, we had good radios until we went to television.

H: And so...you had mentioned that a long time ago there was a lot more visiting being done?

B: Oh, yes.

H: Radio changed that?

B: Yes. For instance, when we were in Texas--as I told you--there were so many fa.... Now, when I was a child, naturally, we didn't even have television...radios, or anything like that. But there were four families of us, I guess, that would be together for just about every Sunday. And we'd always have big dinners and we kids could play down on the creeks and on the canyons and those kind of things. We just had to make our own entertainment, naturally. But we did a pretty good job of it, I guess. We would always have that company to come in.

And then after I was married and my children...my two oldest children were small, we had about four different married couples that would visit in each others homes and have music and dancing and then a lot of times we would have Sunday dinners together.

H: How did you have your music?

B: Pardon?

H: How did you play music? Or listen to music?

B: In our group, there was a man that played the guitar and one [that played the violin or as we called it the fiddle].

H: Oh, it was live music!

B: Yes, live music.

H: OK. And...

B: [deletion] The second year that we were married we lived in a community where there would be thirty kids at our house, maybe, on Saturday night. And one of the boys played a guitar and one of them a violin and we would dance, sometimes, until daylight. But we'd always go to Sunday School the next morning. (laughs)

H: That was the rule.

B: Well, we just took it for granted that was what we wanted to do. (laughs) Naturally, some of the older people in the community didn't believe that we should have these dancing parties. But they were all good kids and they were welcome in our homes at all times.

H: And so, how did radio change your socializing?

B: Well, I don't know as it did very much.

H: That's how you got your news now, instead of reading it.

B: Yes. That's right.

H: By the _____.

B: Yes.

H: OK. And tell me, do you remember, when television first came in, when you first got a television, do you remember when you first got a television?

B: Oh, yes. We had moved into Paoli when we got our first television. It was a big...big screen...biggest at that time that was being made. And it was colored. And we...

H: Your first television was a colored one?

B: Yes, it sure was.

H: Boy, you work up the _____ fast.

B: Sure did.

H: And what year was that?

B: Somewhere about '52 or '3.

H: And how did that change your life?

B: Well, it changed a whole lot because at that time we had that television, and that was our entertainment. Of course, my kids had an awful lot of friends to come in and I know some of the boys from French Lick down here would come see my daughter and some more kids that she ran around with. And if the girls were off somewhere, well, the boys would just come in and lie on the floor and watch television with us. And so we enjoyed having them.

H: So social life was centered more on television.

B: Yes.

H: OK. Do you remember...did you have electricity always in your home?

B: Electricity. Electricity. Oh, not until we moved into Paoli. Now, we did in Texas for several years too. And yes... and then when we came out here, naturally we had electric lights and those kind of things, but we didn't have washing machines and electric stoves and things like they do now. When I lived over in this great-big nice two-story house over here, I still had a real nice wood range. But when I moved into town, we got our electric range.

H: And that was what year, again?

B: 1951.

H: Was that a big adjustment for you?

B: Yes.

H: It just immediately provided you with a lot more...

B: Well yes, and then I had automatic washers and dryers and

me, working like I did, I did an awful lot of...I made the girls' school dresses and those kind of things. And it gave me more opportunity to do those kind of things instead of having to wash like I used to have to.

H: On the board?

B: Yes, on the board. (laughs)

H: I've heard. (Both laugh)

B: Did you know, really, at that time--I wasn't working outside of the home-- and I didn't mind it so much. It would just kind of thrill me to do a big washing and hang them out on the line and see them whip in the wind and I kind of enjoyed it.

H: And how did you boil your water?

B: (laughing) In an old three-legged pot, out in the yard.

H: No kidding.

B: Now, when we lived over here, I heated my water on the stove--before moving into town.

H: _____ you had water on the stove?

B: Yes.

H: On what kind of stove?

B: It was a big wood range.

H: OK. Did you have...when did you put the indoor plumbing...?

B: Not until we moved into town.

H: You had an outhouse.

B: Yes.

H: In Texas and here?

B: Yes.

H: Wow! And how did you take a bath?

B: Well, we heated the water on the stove and poured water in

the bathtub and that was it. (laughs)

H: Oh gosh. That is a whole lot different.

B: (laughing) Yes, it was a whole lot different.

H: You were very fortunate to have one of the few families to have a first automobile.

B: Yes.

H: Can you tell me a little bit more about that?

B: Well, it wasn't that we wanted to be the upper class or anything like that. Of course, that made us feel good. We were proud of it; we were proud of our new cars. And we didn't do that until my husband was working sixty miles from home and the car that we did have, it wasn't very dependable. And we felt like...and I know, one time, it had a lot of work to be done on it. It was going to cost four- or five-hundred dollars to have that fixed up and I said, "Then we couldn't really depend on it."

And my husband almost had to have something that was very dependable. So we, then, started driving new cars. We did for several years and about four or five men would ride in the same car. They would take turnabout driving.

H: Yes. Was it...were you the envy of other people because your father had a car earlier than other people.

B: No. No, I wasn't really big enough at that time [to remember]. I suppose I wasn't big enough to really know but what everybody was living the same way.

H: OK. A little while back, when I told you, you know, about my drive to French Lick and Jasper, you had mentioned that at one time...I know they had a train going there. I learned that from someone else.

B: Yes. Well no, not right in Paoli.

H: They didn't have a train going...

B: No.

H: ...from Paoli to French Lick?

B: No. Yes, I believe though, by the time we got out here it was just a freight train, because when we came out here, we came

into Mitchell--on a train. And then we took a taxicab from Mitchell on here.

H: Where's Mitchell?

B: It's about fourteen miles back northeast of here.

H: Got it. OK. But about...especially with the bus that went up highway 150?

B: Oh yes.

H: Please tell me about that.

B: Well, it was just a bus that you could stop...you could stand by the side of the road and flag them down and they'd pick you up and take you into New Albany or into Louisville. And then there was one that would come back by that afternoon that I could ride in home on.

H: And how much did it cost?

B: I don't remember, but not very much.

H: And you would just flag the bus down...?

B: Yes, and then when coming back... and we were living, like I said, right off...out here.... And they had a bell...had a card that ran down each side of the bus and you could ring a bell that way and the driver would let you off wherever you wanted.

H: And do you know when that service was discontinued?

B: No, I don't. It seems to me like it must have been long about the time we moved back up here from Jeffersonville. But now I can't say for sure about that.

H: And how often did these buses run?

B: Well, it seemed to me like one of them would run down twice a day and back from Louisville twice a day. And they'd also come into Mitchell and they would go toward Indiana--two or three times a day.

H: Did a lot of people use those buses?

B: Yes, quite a few.

H: Well, what do...what do people do nowadays that can't use the bus? How do they get around and...? Where do people go shopping if they can't go shopping on _____ ?

B: Well, if you don't have a car of your own.... If you don't have friends to take you, I guess you walk. (laughs) Or you wouldn't have any way to get there.

H: Well, where do you go to shop, for instance.

B: I used to... I did a lot of shopping at Louisville and a little bit at New Albany, but not so much. And now we shop either here at one of the grocery stores or at Bedford [and sometimes at Louisville and New Albany].

H: OK. And other people do the same thing, you think?

B: Yes. Many of them do. And they have had a big store to go in down at West Baden. Some people go _____ down there. It's a big grocery store.

END OF TAPE TWO, SIDE ONE

H: You were telling me that people would come over to your home and play music and....

B: Yes, when we lived three years out here in the country. There were about four or five families of us that would get together and we would have, oh, parties. And play dominoes and those kind of things and have suppers. And then, a lot of times, we would even get together on Sundays. I know, it was one Sunday that we went down... there was a park right across the road and it's what they called Old Spring Mill place when we.... Sometimes we'd go there in this park, just privately, and have our own picnic grounds down there. Big stream of water there, flowing right by and it was... big trees and.... People who'd come from town out there, sometimes, would put on fish-fries and those kind of things.

H: So your best times were recreational-social times with your family...

B: Yes.

H: ...and friends. And you had mentioned, when the tape ran out, something about your children.

B: Oh, when they graduated and those kind of things?

H: Yes.

B: Well, all three of them...now the little girl.... Some of them, naturally, was in about the second and fourth grades when we came out here--and maybe a little farther along than that, but all three of our children graduated from Paoli High School.

H: And that was... their high school graduation to you meant....

B: Pardon?

H: Their high school graduation to you meant an awful lot.

B: Oh yes. It sure did because I had wanted an education so bad and never did get it. And I was very thrilled that my children all did get the high school graduation. And two of them had gone to colleges and then one of them had took telephone-operator's training.

H: You must have been very proud.

B: Very proud.

H: Can you tell me what was the worst memory for you?

B: Yes, well, I guess when I lost my husband the 13th of last December.

H: Oh, it's not very long.

B: No. Well, that's all right. I can talk about it now. But he had been sick...he didn't really... we knew now, after he got so bad, the doctor out here at Paoli told me that he knew that he had to had whatever it was that he died of for ten or twelve years. But he didn't complain much [deletion]. He didn't really get bedfast until last July when we went out to Kansas to visit folks out there and on the way home, that afternoon, the last day that we were on our trip coming home, he got on one of the beds in this nice camper that my son and daughter-in-law have, and he went to sleep. And when he got up I could tell that he was very sick. His fever was very high.

So the next morning we took him out here to the doctor and my husband told him that if they found out anything that was fiercely wrong with him, he wanted to go to the Jewish hospital

at Louisville. So the next morning, the doctor called me and said, "Come up and get him and get him to Louisville to the Jewish hospital just as quick as you can because there's something wrong with him and I don't know what it is."

We took him down there and he was in the hospital for twenty-four days and never did really find out his trouble. And about all that they were doctoring him for, I think, was his heart for which he did have a bad heart condition. And then he was home just a month or so and we had to take him out to the hospital. Here we took him in a month or so back to Louisville. And he stayed there for fourteen days and the doctor then told us that if he gets sick like that again, well, just take him out to your local hospital because it would be more convenient for the family. So I'm sure they knew there was something wrong with him that they couldn't control, so we brought him to the hospital out here and he was out here nine days and passed away.

H: That was really hard to....

B: That was the worst experience, naturally, that I have ever gone through.

H: And how long had you been married?

B: We lacked eleven days having been married fifty-seven years.

H: Fifty-seven year!

B: Yes. Fifty-seven years.

H: That's a long time. The other thing I wanted to ask you about, you had shared something with me before we began taping, about your uncle. Would you tell me about that now?

B: Yes. (machine goes off) [He lived] at Hillsboro, Texas. [deletion] He had a jewelery store. He had had a house built right out at the city limits. [deletion] A nice-looking young man had started coming to their home and he was more-or-less an orphan boy. And Uncle John and his family just kind of took him in. If he was there at meal time, he was welcomed to their table to eat with them. And so, he had known this young man for several months. And one Saturday night Uncle John with his family was sleeping in the upstairs where they lived over the jewelery store. And right at midnight.... (machine problem)

H: ...happened right at midnight?

B: Right at midnight there was a knock on the door and Uncle

John got up and went downstairs to see who it was. And it was this young man standing there. He had told Aunt Dora, his wife, to come on down with him and be with him. And when this young man came in and told Uncle John that they were having a dance out in the country and they needed guitar strings, Uncle John thought he knew the young man. And he opened the safe. And when he did, someone had turned the doorknob on the outside door and this Raymon Hamilton said, "Come on in, everything's all right."

When he did that, the door opened and Clyde Barrow run inside and they...I don't know whether Uncle John was reaching for his gun or what, but they shot him right through the heart--and he fell on the floor. And Aunt Dora, then, grabbed the gun, but of course, they overpowered her and made her stand still while they robbed the store. So they caught the bandits; it was Clyde Barrow that we heard so much about and Raymon Hamilton. They were all over the United States, running from the law. Finally Raymond Hamilton was caught and he was sent to the pen and I believe died after he had spent a few years in the pen. Well that's when Clyde Barrow took up with Bonnie Parker, the cigar-smoking gun moll is what they called her. She was a little tiny woman and she wore a double holster with a gun on each hip. And she and Clyde Barrow just went all over the United States, but they would still come back through Hillsboro. One of my cousins was sitting in the yard where Uncle John had got killed; he was sitting on the side of the fish pond right after daylight one Sunday morning and they came by and honked and waved at him and called out some smark-alecky remark.

So finally, when they did get Raymond Hamilton and Clyde Barrow --they had them in the jail there in Hillsboro-- and Aunt Dora and her son...two of her sons and the two daughters that were all teen-agers, were sitting in the car at the curb and they saw two men coming down the side of the jailhouse which was annexed to the courthouse. And these two men, when they hit the ground [they were running]...They had torn up their blankets and made ropes to slide down.

One of them run right up to the car that my Aunt and her children were in--[one of] the boys had gone into one of the stores. They jerked that door open and naturally Aunt Dora thought sure that they knew who they were in the car, and had come to kill her because when she identified them after they had killed Uncle John, they whispered to her then, "You'll be next."

So when they saw there were people in this car, they got the car next to them and they were trying to make their getaway. And Oscar then, her other son, run out...saw what was happening, and he jumped in the car and they went by the American Legion Hall. He ran in and got several guns and they took off after them again and he caught them twelve miles out in the country. And it was one police car that had beat him out there but he was the second

car to them. So they took them back to jail. [They escaped again] and they were just running around there for several years [killing people].

I think, maybe, [deletion] it was Raymond Hamilton's father that, since he had felt like Clyde Barrow had influenced his son into this crime spree, he found out that Clyde and Bonnie were going to go through Louisiana at a certain time right at sun-up on a Sunday morning. And he had alerted the police and the police had stationed themselves on two little hillsides. It was a lot of road work being done and this car that Bonnie and Clyde were in was going to go real slow to get around where they were working on the highway. And the police... the man was on the first hill, knew them and he made some kind of a sign to the police. And when the car got even with them, they opened fire on them and they killed them both. In fact, they shot Bonnie Parker's head completely off; they said that her body was hanging in the car but her head had rolled off onto the ground. And of course, they killed [Clyde Barrow] too at that time.

And that happened down in Louisiana and they brought the bodies back up to Dallas, where one of my brothers and sister were living at that time. So they wanted naturally to go down to see them but it was such a crowd that was going to that funeral home, they were just tearing up everything, tearing the screens off and beating the pretty shrubbery down and all like that. And they put it out on the radio that they wouldn't allow anyone else to come into the funeral home.

H: What year was this?

B: That must have been...I don't remember just what [year].... Uncle John got killed in 1931 and that was several years after that. I don't know just what year it was that they killed them. But they brought them back to Dallas, as I said, and my sister and brother then wanted to go down there, and my sister said, "Now Jim, I just now heard on the radio where they were not letting anyone in to that mortuary...into that funeral home because people are just tearing up everything."

Jim said, "Well, I think we can manage it."

And when they got there, they went around to the back door and, of course, there was a guard at the back door. And Jim went up and introduced himself and shook hands with the guard and told him, you know, that Uncle John was the first man that they had ever killed. And he said, "We would like to go in and see [Clyde Barrow] since he killed our Uncle." And they let them go in to see them.

And I know that Bonnie... Bonnie Parker was always writing poetry. And when they were killed, they found a poem that she had written, something like "From heartache some people have

suffered, from heartbreak some people have died. But all in all, their troubles...are small 'til they get like Bonnie and Clyde." And she said in this poem that she wanted them to be buried side by side, but her folk wouldn't let them be buried together. They were not buried side by side.

But years and years after that, I was working one day at the Cornwell [Company here in Paoli] and there was a detective magazine--someone had left lying there--and I grabbed just as another lady did, and I said, "On the front of it, it was something about the murder of John Bucher(?)."

And I said to this lady, "My friend," I said, "Do you care for me having it? ...because this is my Uncle that they killed. Then I'll let you have the magazine." So in that magazine it said that Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker had killed seventeen people each--when they were off on their escapades.

H: And this story that you had heard was from several sources? Compiled...?

B: Yes, it was just someone wrote up the story.

H: No, I mean the story that you just told me. You know, about your Uncle John and....

B: Yes, it was a different one. Naturally it was on the radios and it was in newspapers and all like that. And so we kept up with it pretty good.

H: Well, what happened to your family... you heard from your family. What happened to your Uncle's family?

B: Well, his wife never did remarry. She only lived two or three years. We were living about two-hundred miles from there and my two brothers had gone down to see a married sister that lived down in the eastern part of Texas at that time. And they had gone over to a little country store and some man came in and said, "Too bad about John Bucher(?) in Hillsboro." Well, of course, my brothers just perked up right quickly, said, "What happened?"

[The man] said, "Well, he got killed last night. And his jewelry store robbed." Well, my two brothers started to hitchhiking right then to go back to Hillsboro. And they stayed with Aunt Dora for several months and to help her in her business and those kind of things.

H: So you... this was related to you by your brothers.

B: Yes.

H: All these details.

B: Yes.

H: Wow, what a story.

B: [I don't know] whether this is true or not, but a man came here to hold a meeting at our church several years ago and he was raised on the King Ranch down in Texas. I don't know why he went down there but he was down in Louisiana on the police force when Bonnie and Clyde got killed. And he said that he was one of the first ones there. And when the ambulance picked them up, they took them back into a small town somewhere in Louisiana--I don't know what the name of the town was--but they put her on a show case. And this preacher that was here--now what the connection was I don't know--but he said that there was a preacher from Indianapolis holding a meeting about a hundred miles from there.

So he said, "I called him and told him to come to this place; that he would be interested in what was happening there." And said that this preacher got there just as quickly as he could and he even told what kind of shoes Bonnie Parker had on; they were some kind of a real good make of shoes--expensive shoes at that time. And he said that this preacher walked in and looked at Bonnie Parker and he asked this man in the hardware store if he had a box something the size of a shoe box. And this man found him one and said that he took Bonnie Parker's shoes off of her feet and put them in that box and brought them back to Indianapolis. And that was, I would say, eight or ten years ago. And he said that this preacher in Indianapolis still had her shoes. Now, as I said, (laughing) that was really stealing from the dead, wasn't it?

H: I think so. Well, getting back to Paoli...before we quit, is there something important that you could tell me about what makes Paoli special as a community--or something...anything that we've forgotten to talk about?

B: I don't know if it is. Of course it's close to West Baden Springs that has that building down there. Used to be a hotel and it was, at one time, the "seventh wonder of the world." A lot of people go from here down there and they finally made that place into a college. And right now, I don't know what they're doing with it. Some man out of Chicago has bought it. I don't know what they're going to do with it.

H: What was the "seventh wonder of the world?"

B: This...this big dome down at West Baden. It's one big dome and the rooms that was the hotel goes around this dome and it's several stories high and this dome is self-supporting that sets up on top of this _____.

H: It's really called the "seventh wonder of the world?"

B: Yes, it was for quite a long time.

H: And what was it used...wasn't it used for gambling?

B: Oh yes. And French Lick...now French Lick is about, I would say, a half a mile or a mile from there, and that's the one that was noted for gambling.

H: There's a dome there too?

B: No. It's just a huge hotel.

H: OK.

B: It's about a five- or six-hundred room hotel.

H: The resort hotel.

B: And Al Capone, so they said,... used to have special trains that would come in down there. [The hotel] was noted for gambling.

H: Is that because it was illegal to gamble in Chicago; that's why they came here?

B: I don't know.

H: They gambled in the res...what's the resort hotel... What was that big dome used for, that I saw today?

B: Well, it was a hotel.

H: It was a hotel. Did someone out of Chicago buy it _____?

B: Yes. In the last few years.

H: I couldn't very well see it; you could just see it from a distance.

B: Well, now, I have been in there. In fact, one time, we had a flea market under this big dome. And there's a huge fireplace in

there--I guess it's still there. Of course they've worked on it a lot since then. But it was known...now I don't know whether they gambled much there or not, but the French Lick hotel is the one where they...

H: That's still a resort area?

B: Yes.

H: OK. And at West Baden, the dome...it was free-standing, you think?

B: Yes.

H: Why are those two towns so close together?

B: Beats me; I don't know.

H: It's almost like it's the same town.

B: Yes.

H: OK. Is there anything else that's particular about Paoli that you want to finish...before we quit, you know. Something that is important for people to know about the community of Paoli; how it's special....

B: No, I can't think of anything, really.

H: So basically, the close tight-knitted...tight-knittedness of family and...

B: Yes.

H: ...small town as....

B: Yes.

H: ...that makes Paoli what it is.

B: Yes.

H: OK. Is there anything else that I've forgotten to ask that you want to tell me?

B: Not that I can remember of.

H: OK. Well, if I remember something, we can chat another time.

B: We can put in, if you want to, about that hitching rail [at Hillsboro, Texas].

H: Oh, I forgot. You wanted to tell me about your...we were talking about memories.

B: Yes.

H: You said one of your worst memories...actually not in...not of Paoli but it's of Texas. But why don't you tell me about that hitching post?

B: Well, it's still there; we have made several trips back to Texas since then and each time we would go through Hillsboro, I would especially notice that old hitching post that's still there. Where the black man had been chained to [and burned when we lived about three blocks away. Brother Jim and my dad saw it happen, and I remember how white Jim was when he came running home. The colored man had killed a white woman and a small boy that lived real near me].

H: What does that memory do for you? The hitching post?

B: Oh, I don't know. It's just connected with what happened when I was a kid; when we lived there. And when this black man was lynched there.

H: That must be hard. You know what I wanted to ask you, Mrs. Brown, before we quit? You were not born and raised in Paoli. You moved here as a woman in her thirties.

B: Yes, that's right.

H: Yes, OK. Were you treated as an outsider when you came here?

B: No, I don't think so because we lived in a place right out here and some of the neighbors immediately come in and met us and they invited us to come to 4H clubs and we'd always go to 4H clubs and we would have big suppers and our kids would sing and we just fit right in with the crowd, I guess.

H:: But you knew people here already. You had a contact.

B: Well, yes, because see, my husband's sister and her husband

lived here. And in the meantime, now, her mother and dad had come from Texas out here. And were living in the house with Raymond's sister.

H: How would you say Paoli's different than, say, the town that you lived in in Texas?

B: Well, when we first came here, I don't know if there was too much difference. The _____, towns were about the same size. I don't know if it was too much difference. We knew people down there that we would have in our homes more, but now, the kids just made themselves well-known right here and the kids was welcome in our house at all times. But of course, I was working at that time and my husband was working off so far that we just couldn't join in things like that--like we would have liked to have.

H: And what about now. I heard there were a lot of new people moving into town. Are they treated any differently?

B: I wouldn't think so. Well, I suppose maybe...I know one lady that I talked to not long ago said she used to live out in the community where my son...my daughter and her family lived. And they visited and they knew each other...they would telephone each other and she said, "Well, now since I've moved into town, I don't know very many people because most of the women are working." And she said that, "Really, I'm not as close to them now as I was to my neighbors when I lived out in the country."

H: No kidding.

B: Yes.

H: And so, if few people move into town, it's slowly absorbing.

B: Yes. But now, seems like it was in that way when we first moved up there. Of course, as I said, by both of us working like we did, we didn't have people in our homes all the time like we used to in Texas--except for the children. Now, they did. Our house and our yard was usually full of the neighbor's kids.

H: What do you see in the future for Paoli?

B: Well, that's anybody's guess. They're talking about bringing...now, this is just talk. They're talking about wanting a Walmart here and then another store that is a whole lot like K-Mart and things like that would kindly help a lot.

So there's quite a lot of stores going out of business, moving away and those kind of things and naturally it's hurting the town of Paoli.

H: And why do you think those stores are going out of business? People don't support them?

B: I suppose so. It must be.

H: So you think that the economy and the opportunities will only get worse unless something like Walmart comes...

B: [deletion]

H: ...into town?

B: Yes, I sure do. But that's the only thing that I can think about the reason; there's just no opportunity here for the kids.

H: _____ But once they go away and taste the rest of the world; _____ to come back.

B: That's right. Yes.

H: Well, I want to thank you for your time. And if I come across something else, we'll chat again later.

B: All right.

H: I really enjoyed my visit with you today.

B: Well, I have enjoyed you being here and I hope you're a success. (Laughs)

H: Thank you.

END OF TAPE TWO, SIDE TWO

END OF INTERVIEW

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