

INDIANA UNIVERSITY  
ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER

IRENE HICKMAN

Interviewed by Catherine Jones  
10 June 1988  
OHRC accession #88-73-1,2

## INTRODUCTION

This interview was conducted by Catherine Jones for the Oral History Research Center as part of "The History of Paoli, Indiana." The transcript has been edited by the Oral History Research Center's staff, and by the interviewee. The original tape and final transcript are kept on file in the Lilly Library. Copies of some interviews are kept at the Paoli Public Library and the Orange County Historical Society library. Duplicates of the tape and transcript may be consulted at the Oral History Research Center.

The reader should bear in mind the fact that this material is a verbatim transcription of an interview, not a written document. Very few persons speak with the precision with which they write. We have done our best to make the transcript easily readable, while remaining faithful to the tape recording.

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INDIANA UNIVERSITY ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER

DEED OF GIFT AGREEMENT

I, Irene Hickman, hereby give  
Interviewee (please PRINT)  
my oral history interview with Catherine Jones,  
Interviewer (please PRINT)

which was conducted on 6/10/88, to Indiana University.  
Date .

It is hereby agreed between myself and the Indiana University Oral History Research Center that all rights, title, and interest in the transcript (verbatim and edited) and/or tape recording belong to Indiana University.

These rights, title, and interest include all presentations and publications which may result from the reading of, or use of excerpts or full transcript selections from this interview. If necessary, indicate below any provisions or restrictions on the use of this interview.

In addition, indicate below whether or not a copy of the edited transcript (that is, with all restrictions edited out) may be deposited at the Paoli Public Library, where it will be available to the general public. In addition, a copy may be left at the Orange County Historical Society library which is in the Museum of Local History.

Delete starting with J: Yes, yes., p. 53 untill the end of tape 2, side 1  
on p.56 and restrict the interview.

Yes, a copy of the edited transcript may be left with the Library and the Historical Society,

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

Irene Hickman 6/15/89  
Donor Date

Catherine A. Jones 5/11/89  
Interviewer Date

PAOLI PROJECT  
ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER

Biographical Data Sheet

I. INTERVIEWEE/NARRATOR DATA

Full Name: Irene Hickman  
(First) (Middle) (Last)

Address: 307 Railroad Ave., Paoli IN 47454

Phone: 723-2564

Date of Birth: 1924 Place of Birth: Crawford County, Mifflin

Sex: F Ethnic Origin:

Education: Paoli High School, diploma

Occupational History: seamstress at the Chair Factory ; taught  
upholstery sewing at Southwest Vocational Center; now designing patterns at  
Hillcrest.

Special interests, hobbies, etc.: listening to music, gardening, traveling

Father's Name and occupation: Platt, farmer, made railroad ties, Civilian Conserva-  
tion Corps

Mother's Name and occupation: Flossie Hammons

II. INTERVIEWER DATA

Full Name: Catherine Jones  
(First) (Middle) (Last)

Local address: 211 S. Grant 1-0158  
and phone

Permanent Address: 11705 Eden Glenn Drive , Carmel, IN 46032  
and phone

Date of Birth: 8/59 Place of Birth: NY

Association with the Paoli Project: graduate assistant

Subject of interview: early years farming and family life; town/country  
differences; women's role; Paoli Chair Factory; widowhood

Number of Tapes: 2

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Bloomington, Indiana 47405

INFORMED CONSENT

I, IRENE HICKMAN, agree to  
Interviewee (please PRINT)

participate in an oral history project with the Indiana

University Oral History Center under the below terms.

1). My participation in an approximately two-hour interview is voluntary. If I agree to any future interviews on this same project, this signed form will apply.

2). I am free to withdraw from the project at any time. If I do so before I have signed the Deed of Gift agreement, I may keep the tape and transcript and no part of the interview will be used in any way. (The Deed of Gift agreement acknowledges that I have made a gift of the tapes to Indiana University.)

3). I understand that the purpose of this interview and the larger oral history project is to better understand local social change.

4). As stated in the Deed of Gift agreement, the information shared in the interview may be used by researchers in presentations and publications, e.g., scholarly journals. Transcript excerpts or full selections may be utilized.

5). My interview will be audio-taped and in it I will be identified by name. I will be so identified in the transcripts (both verbatim and edited) of the taped interview.

6). I understand that I may restrict the use of certain portions of my tape and transcript if I so desire. I will enter all restrictions on my Deed of Gift agreement when I sign it.

7). These restrictions will be edited out of the final copy of the transcript. If any portion of a tape is restricted then the entire tape is restricted to researchers.

8). At some point after the interview, the OHRC will send me a copy of the transcript to me to check for misspellings, blanks

which need filling in, and dates. I understand that I may sign the Deed of Gift agreement either the day the interview is conducted (usually immediately following the interview) or at the time I receive the above mentioned transcript (to check for misspellings, etc).

9). I understand that at the conclusion of this particular study, the tape and one copy of the transcript will be kept in the Oral History Research Center and at the Lilly Library for academic use.

10). Further, I understand that I will indicate on my Deed of Gift agreement whether or not I grant permission for a copy of my edited transcript to be placed in the Paoli Public Library, for general public use.

Irene Hickman 6/10/88  
Interviewee Date

Catherine Jones 6/10/88  
Interviewer Date

INDIANA UNIVERSITY  
ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER

INTERVIEWEE: Irene Hickman

INTERVIEWER: Cathy Jones

DATE: June 10, 1988

SUBJECT: History of Paoli

TRANSCRIBER: Cathy Jones

Jones: (inaudible conversation.) Exactly. Ok. So, I'm Cathy Jones, and I'm here with Irene Hickman on her out-front porch at her home in Paoli on a beautiful day on June the ninth?

Hickman: That's right.

J: Ok. June ninth. And we're just talking about Paoli. When did your family come into the area?

H: I came to Paoli when I was--before--when I first started high school. I was raised in English in Crawford County.

J: How long had your family been down in that country?

H: That's where my mother's folks came from. In fact, a little place called Mifflin. You may have never heard of it.

J: No, not yet.

H: That's where she was born and raised. And my father came from Portsmouth, Ohio. And he came to Indiana to work and saw this little dark-headed blue-eyed girl and married her.

[both laugh] And we lived in Crawford county up until I was 11.

And then we moved just across the line into Orange county in a place called Bacon. At that time--no, you've probably never heard of it.

J: I haven't.

H: [laughs] There was an article in a paper one time which said "This is Bacon, but where are the Eggs?" [both laugh] There was a school, through the eighth grade...a church, and a store. And the only thing that is there now is the church.

J: The church.

H: Yes, the church.

J: How big, how big a town was Bacon?

H: Oh, it wasn't a town, it was just those three, with the people who lived around there. Not even a wide place in the road. Just the church and the school and the store.

J: Well like, how many families lived there?

H: Ohhh, we had, through the eighth grade, so you know there was a lot of children in the surrounding area there. I think there was about six in my grade, I came there when I was in seventh grade.

J: Oh, so the school must have been, what, about 20 students or...?

H: About that, yes.

J: What, what...ok, first of all, do you have any idea why your dad left Ohio to come down here?

H: No, just looking for work, I guess.

J: I know why he stayed, I just wondered why he came. [both laugh]

H: I know why he stayed exactly. [still laughing]

J: And had your mom's folks been in Crawford county for a long time?

H: They, as far as I know, they had lived in, around the area of Mifflin.

J: Do you know anything about where they lived or came from before this? Anything like family history, or stories or...?

H: No. I have never gone into anything dealing with it. But

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they were, well my mother and her brothers and sisters were all from around English.

J: What's your mom's maiden name?

H: Hammons, H-A-M-M-O-N-S. You don't see that many --it usually has a H-A-M-M-O-N-D.

J: Right.

H: But this does not have a D, I have a first cousin who lives just north of town.

J: And her first name was...

H: Flossie. In fact, I only have two aunts left, in my family, either side.

J: How big a family was your mothers?

H: Let's see, my mother is the oldest, Ivy ? and Ertie, Kanna, and Charles, Verlin, and Vera.

J: Was Mifflin a small community?

H: You know, I haven't been back there for years.

J: Oh yes?--ok.

H: Yes, like Bacon, it had the church, and the store, and the school. Not much bigger than that, probably.

J: But nothing like Paoli?

H: Oh, no. [chuckles]

J: Now, do you know what he, what your grandfather did?

H: My grandfather was a farmer and a part-time preacher.

J: Ohh, what \_\_\_\_\_.

H: He was a Pilgrim's Holiness.

J: A Pilgrim's Holiness?

H: That was the name of the church, Pilgrim's Holiness.

J: Pilgrim's Holiness, ok. I don't think I've ever heard of it.

H: Well, they are the denomination that believes in...[sound of microphone being moved]...acting out their joy, you might say.

J: Is that like talking in tongues and stuff?

H: No, no. They believe in being happy or fighting (?) or singing and walking up and down the aisles and things like that. Entirely different from Quakers, [laughing] I mean just exact opposite. But that was the how my mother was raised.

J: Ohh...did she continue on with that?

H: No. She did not.

J: About when she married, she ...?

H: I really don't know when she left that. Before she died she had joined the Jehovah's Witness, you know. One of my sisters is Jehovah's Witness also.

J: But, I was just wondering if you had ever heard of, where there very many people down there who belonged to it, or was it just because \_\_\_\_\_?

H: There was, there--I don't know if it is still in town or not, or if it incorporated with another group, but there was a Pilgrim's Holiness church on North Gospel Street. And before that church was built, they meet upstairs on the square, in what used to be the A & P store, it is now the, has been made into a discount furniture store.

J: I'll be darned.

H: On the south side of the square. But, my grandfather...

J: Your mom's dad?

H: Yes.

J: And, do you know anything about your dad's family, what kind of ...?

H: Very little. I asked him if I had met any of his family, he of course, said yes. Now, if I had met any of the rest of them, it was when I was very young, because they lived in Ohio. Now, he has one nephew that I visited in Texas.

J: Oh, when you went on your...

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H: [simultaneously] Starting February, I spent a week with he and his wife and their name is Piatt. Well, they told me it is French, but we always pronounced it PI ET, P-I-L-\_\_\_\_\_. But, I understand it is supposed to be PE OTT.

J: Like Edith--no, that's Piaf!

H: [laughs]

H: There isn't very many of them around, I have only known of one that even used to come around town, and he was a leather goods salesman. I have a brother who lives nearby and there was a boy came here several years ago and married a local girl and his name was the same as my brother's. Now where he came from, I have no idea.

J: Wait...your maiden is ...

H: Piatt. So this fellow just disappeared, I don't know--he might even have been a distant relative. But, he came, married a girl, and then had a child or two and was gone, and I don't know if he might have been a relative or not.

J: Well, yes and then...

H: Yes, it is.

J: Because he was bound to be something, right.

H: Yes, he was [laughs].

J: [pause]...Do you know how old your mom was when she, your father got married?

H: Fourteen.

J: Fourteen? How old was your father?

H: He was ten years older, I suppose.

J: Do you think that was particularly young for that time, I mean for a girl of fourteen to marry?

H: Probably not, for the simple reason that when they went through the eighth grade, they couldn't go ahead to high school. If they weren't married, or preparing to get married, they were considered old maids. So I imagine that that's--the only thing left to them was to marry.

J: Wow...I guess your \_\_\_\_\_. Did she go all the way through...

H: She went through the eighth grade. But my father didn't. In fact, he couldn't read or write when they were married. And mother taught him to read and write. And he loved to watch television, he read, he could read anything he wished in years to come.

J: I wonder, did he have a learning problem?

H: No. He just hadn't had the opportunity to go to school. He was born in 1896. So he would have been 92.

J: \_\_\_\_\_

H: He died before mother did, about five years, and she died in 1984, in May. I lost my mother, husband, and my oldest sister in nine months. In fact, had just a nephew...[inaudible conversation follows]

J: Ok. So there your mom and dad were living in Michlin?

H: Mifflin.

J: Do you know what kind of work he did?

H: My father, he farmed. I remember, when I was young, he used to farm, because I remember we would walk to the field of an evening and he would let us ride home on the back of the horse. And, I remember he raised pigs, to slaughter and mother made us home-made sausage that tasted so good.... But as far as money goes, we didn't have any cash. We lived on a farm and had our own cows and chickens....I guess, certainly not like nowadays, if people are out of work now they're in dire straits, very quickly.

J: Well, I was about to say what you were saying about not having cash, you know...was that, I mean, was that unusual? Or was that like the rest of your neighbors?

H: Yes. It was, yes.

J: And what year were you born in?

H: I was born in 1924.

J: Nineteen twenty-four. How many brothers and sisters?

H: There were 7 girls and 2 boys.

J: Wow.

H: I was the second oldest.

J: Wow! Did your brothers and sisters stay here, in the area, or did they leave or...?

H: My oldest sister stayed here; she married a boy who lived down at Valeen. And, she lived all her life right there. Just a hop, skip and a jump. My mother and dad moved to Jackson county, and my younger brother and sisters were raised there. So most of them stayed in that area, but my youngest brother came back here. You asked what my farther did...he farmed, but he also, when he was younger, made railroad ties. He was a really small man, but I guess he could really hew railroad ties.

J: Was there a company...?

H: I don't know. I never heard him say what it was for a company or not. [inadible conversation]

J: So, do you remember him doing that?

H: No, that was before I was born.

J: Before you were born, ok. As far as you can remember, he farmed. I know you left here around eighth grade, but do you have the farm?

H: No, he didn't even own it, he rented it.

J: He rented it, ok. Like, can you guess at the acreage? Was that like 100 acres?

H: Oh no, not with a one-horse plow, you don't plow 100 acres [chuckles].

J: You know--I'm sorry, someone, maybe it was around here, I \_\_\_\_\_.

H: There are farms around here that are 100 acres yes, but that was before the tractor -- well, there are bigger farms coming up now... you couldn't turn the plow over the horse...

J: Do you remember that well?

H: I remember my father riding on the harrow, and he was so small, he was a very small man, that he would have to put a big rock on the harrow to hold it in the ground! [laughs]

J: [laughing] Oh no, really?!

H: He was only about five feet, four. And Irish, red hair and freckles... Never had a sick day in his life. Always active and working.

J: Did you ever have, well of course you were born in \_\_\_\_\_, \_did you ever have the feeling that your parents really had to struggle to make ends meet? Did you seem any different than anyone else?

H: We felt different at that time, and I was telling someone just the other day that it seemed so unusual because my father was working for another landowner for fifty cents a day. And...

J: Depression time, you said.

H: Right. And we got clothes from Red Cross, we got colored stocking, which I remember the most. Well, we felt like that was a stigma, to have to wear colored stocking.

J: What did others wear?

H: White.

J: Just white? Ok.

H; Now, everybody wears colored stocking...

J: Right, and only nerds or something like that.

H: Right. [both laugh] So we, yes, we felt like it was a stigma at that time.

J: That's because you were getting clothes from...

H: Yes, from Red Cross. Mother said that one of the teachers told her one time, "Well, the Piatt children didn't have a lot, but they always came to school clean."

J: What was it like--you were the second oldest--did you have a lot of responsibilities helping your mom out or...?

H: Not with the children--I was the one who got the outdoor jobs. I milked the cows, and I worked in the garden, and my older sister was the one who took care of the youngest.

J: Let me ask you this--how many girls and how many boys?

H: Seven girls.

J: Seven girls.

H: But you see, the youngest ones grew up after I left home. And the two youngest daughters are now dead, my two youngest sisters \_\_\_\_\_. I felt like I didn't even know them. Because they, they were just babies when I left home. And I wasn't around. I still remember looking at my younger sister's casket, they always said that--she and I looked so much alike--and I looked at her and I thought, we don't look anything alike at all, except for our color. We both have red hair and freckles and we're small.

J: How, how much difference was there between you all?

H: Well, there was just about two years difference between each one of us.

J: Natural spacing.

H: Right. My oldest sister was just two years older than I and I didn't remember it at the time, but I don't remember the incident but I got a whipping my first day of school. See, my older sister had gone to school the year before, and was ready for second grade. Well, they had lived that winter with my father's brother in Illinois. They came back to Indiana and her first grade work was not recognized, so she had to take first grade over again. Well, she knew everything [about first grade] of course, so she would come home and teach me...when I started school, I already knew everything because she had taught me, and I went to school and it was just boring me because I knew everything that she, the teacher, was trying to teach me...[J laughs] so I started drawing pictures on the wall, while she was doing class. [both laugh] That's when they changed my name.

J: Why?

H: Well, my name was Iowa Irene. And this teacher could not pronounce Iowa. She called me Looie. And of course, my older sister was in the same room. Well, my sister got kind of peeved and she said "Well, if you can't pronounce it right, just call her Irene." So, I've been known as Irene ever since. Very few people know that my Christian name is Iowa.

J: I don't think I've heard that name before.

H: It came from Ohio. My father said that he named me after the prettiest girl in Ohio.

J: So, one of his girlfriends named Iowa?

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H: One of his girlfriends named Iowa, right. ...But no, I don't think it amounted to much. It's a family tradition and they tell it all the time.

J: [pause] You mentioned that you ended up doing most of the outdoor work?

H: I was the outdoor worker.

J: If there had been boys and girls in the family, would the boys have done that? Was it just because you were older or...?

H: I had a brother, next to me, but he worked for other people. For whatever work they needed him for cash. And I was too young to get a job for cash, so he wasn't around home to work.

J: Was that because he was a boy, he could go out and get hired?

H: Yes.

J: And a girl couldn't.

H: Yes, noone would hire a girl.

J: Ok. Was it because physically they couldn't do the work or...

H: Oh no! I was a steady worker, but ... [inaudible conversation]

J: Hiring a girl...now you did what kind of work now?

H: Well, outside of the work at home, I picked strawberries and bought my first bought coat...

J: What color was it?

H: I don't remember, but I just remember that I bought that first coat...and the work at home that I did?...I did all the washing. We had a spring and we would go from our house over the hill to the spring, during the summer time, and we couldn't carry that much water to the house, so we'd take our clothes and wash them on the washing board, by the spring. And we would boil everything.

J: You boiled?

H: Oh yes.

J: Everything?

H: All the white things were boiled. Daddy's overalls were boiled too, to make sure they were clean. And then, we carried them, the wet clothes, to the house. And I asked mother one time, during the last few years, I said, "Mother, why in the world didn't we put up a clothes line down there by the spring and dry our clothes down there?"

She says, "Well we did!"

I said, "We sure didn't when it would have helped me!" [laughs] But, the younger ones said they did when they were doing the washing.

J: I was thinking, how far was it to the spring?

H: It was not that far, but it was a steep hill.

J: Who would you--you said we, would you do all this by yourself, or did you have help...?

H: What help the younger kids could do.... My mother was not well, she had had too many children too quickly, so we did most of it.

J: Would you make a fire down by the springs?

H: Oh yes.

J: Wow. Well, would you put soap in it? In the water as it boiled or...?

H: We used Fels Naptha.

J: You used?

H: Fels Naptha, a soap, other than the soap that mother made, she made lye soap, and we would heat the water, pour it in our tubs, and we would let the clothes soak and rub the clothes over the washing board --you see those now in antique shops...

J: Exactly right. [both laugh]

H: And then we would drag them to the house, and hang them on the clothesline, but...I got to do the cow milking, and that suited me because I loved warm milk, I'm the only person in the world I think that loves warm milk. And I'd always get my share of the warm milk.

J: How many cows did you have?

H: One.

J: Ok, so this is just milk for the family then. Did you all have, when you went into town, would you went into town, would you get stuff that you couldn't raise on the farm?

H: When we were small, I remember walking to town and we carried our groceries home, we lived close to what is called Little Brown's town [Crawford Co.] now, I think it has been taken over by Patoka Lake, that area. And we would walk to town and carry our groceries home.

J: How far away was that?

H: About three or four miles. And you could buy then all that we could carry home for two dollars. Of course my father worked for fifty cents a day. Everything was cheap.

J: Was that, excuse me, was that just during the depression time that you're talking about?

H: That's when I was little, about the time that I started school [about 1930].

J: Did he keep working for fifty cents a day?

H: Oh, not very long. He went into the three C's, I suppose you've heard of the three C's: Civilian Conservation Corps. And my father, when I was young, went into the Civilian Conservation Corps. And he was in that for several years, and then he was hired as caretaker, at the one in Brown's town [Jackson Co.], when it closed.

J: Brown's town then was kind of a town close to...?

H: No, the Brown's town that I'm talking about is the one up in Jackson County where they moved. This was called Little Brown's town, it was just a stop in the road.

J: Ok, but I might be getting confused. You stayed, you yourself were in Mifflin with your family until you moved to Bacon, which was about when you were in about seventh grade.

HICKMAN

H: I was in the seventh grade and I was eleven years old.

J: Ok, in seventh grade and eleven years old. Then, did you also move with your parents to Jackson county?

H: No.

J: Ok, that's what I thought.

H: I had left home and was working here in town when they moved.

J: Ok.--You mentioned strawberry picking and it seems to me that other people have mentioned strawberry picking and was that a real big thing or is it still or...?

H: A lot of local people raise strawberries for the...well, they would ship them to Louisville and that's a funny thing because we would pick strawberries and I remember, we had one real good day, I picked 17 gallons.

J: Oh gosh.

H: And it wasn't that big a deal. But they would always sort them, they would take out the ones that had blemishes or wasn't quite ripe enough or overripe and they would let us take them home. And I said that's funny, because I don't ever remember eating strawberries at home, but if I ever started eating them when I was in the field I couldn't leave them alone, from then on I ate [J laughs]. But I don't remember eating those that I brought home. Sometimes there would be a gallon or two or more, or the culls they called them...

J: Maybe they just went so fast that you never got around to making jam or anything.

H: [laughs] I guess.

J: So, were there companies? You mentioned that some people would do it as a small money-making...

H: Oh yes, it was a money-making project.

J: Is it something that people had--I guess what I'm wondering is, did people do it more because it was the depression and they were looking for ways to get money or was this something that had always been done? Do you know what I mean?

H: I think there has always been a lot of strawberry raising in Indiana. As a matter of fact, there's a little strawberry patch right here in town.

HICKMAN

J: What--do you know what it's called?

H: No. But, I remember the house that was on the place when they tore the house down and put a strawberry patch.

J: Ok. So, it wasn't like there was any one major company that people...

H: No.

J: ...would go and work for, it was more like a family would hire you ...

H: Yes.

J: Was this something that you did every summer time?

H: Yes. From the time I was--from the time we moved to Bacon when I was eleven until I left home at sixteen.

J: Was it very lucrative?

H: Well...I wouldn't say that, but it was about the only way a girl had of making any money.

[END OF TAPE 1, SIDE 1]

HICKMAN

J: ...boys could do it or, you know, only girls?

H: I don't remember my brothers picking strawberries. I remember my older sister would.

J: Ok. Well that's interesting because the people that have mentioned have been women, so it may have been that they were doing it, because, you know, they were girls and they couldn't do something else. Well then, you mentioned that your brother, he'd been hired as a farmer--by a farmer, I mean. So they could go ahead and do regular, more heavy work \_\_\_\_\_.

H: Yes.

J: Did you--you were born in '24, and you left home...

H: When I was 16.

J: About 1940 then...did your dad...[pause]...did he stay with the horse the entire time or did he ever change over?

H: To the tractor?

J: Yes.

H: No. No.

J: Were people getting tractors, I guess that was still pretty early to be getting tractors or was it?

H: I imagine that it was very early, for a tractor. But when I was still very young, my father went into the Civilian Conservation Corps and he was never home. Oh, just maybe once a month after that.

J: Ohhh.

H: During the time I was living at home. So it was--Mother was the head of the family.

J: Oh really? Now, was this when you were in Mifflin or Bacon?

H: No, this was when we lived at Bacon.

J: At Bacon. Actually, I don't know very much about this Civilian Conservation Corps.

H: Well, it was kind of like a WPA, you've heard of it. It was work for--they did setting out trees, clearing, building dams, things like that. Actually, it was government paid work for the

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people who did not have work.

J: Ok. So, it would be work that would take him away from home, yes.

H: Oh yes. And untill the three C plant closed, and my father was hired a caretaker, my family lived, my father and mother lived apart, when he was just home when he had the opportunity. Then they all went to live...they lived at the camp barracks.

J: Caretaker was in Jackson county. Is that were they moved?

H: Yes, it was in Jackson county [both laugh]...

J: I'm pointing that way, it's that way!

H: Northeast of here.

J: Northeast of here. \_\_\_\_\_,  
for some reason. Ok, so they moved, oh so is that why they moved to Jackson county, because of the--ok. And caretaker was...

H: Well, it must have paid a lot better than what he made just as a member of the Civilian Conservation Corps.

J: Was it a company, factory, or...?

H: No, he was...

J: (simultaneously) A caretaker of that. Ok.

H: Yes, they stopped the three C's but they didn't abandon the building just to deteriorate, they kept them up for several years.

J: Ok.

H: And he was hired to care for them. He could do anything, with the tools. He could almost make his own tools. He was very versatile. But he just wasn't home when I was growing up.

J: Was that hard on your mom or...?

H: It's bound to have been.

J: But you didn't think of it or didn't realize it at the time or?

H: Well, we didn't realize how hard it was on her. Because all

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of us that was old enough, helped in whatever way we could. And we didn't realize it was...but I can imagine now what a job single-mothers have and she was a single-mother, although married. Because she lived alone.

J: Was she a strong woman, I mean...

H: Up until the last...baby or two, yes, she had been strong. But, she was never very strong after that.

J: You know, I'm just wondering something, and, and, about birth control?

H: I don't think they even knew what birth control was back then.

J: Did she...I mean, when you were young and you were about to get married, did...you know, what kind of idea did you have about what being a mother or what married life was like. I mean, I'm wondering if, you know, having seen your mother...

H: I certainly did not want to live like my mother had had to live.

J: Did they have so many kids, I mean I know there wasn't birth control at the time, but you know, people also mention that farming families would sometimes have large families because you know, the kids would be...insurance, and you needed kids to work the land. Was it because of that or was it...?

H: No, I think it was just that they never even thought of practicing birth control. Mother was...very close-mouthed. She did not teach us anything about our sexuality or anything like that. And we, I think we suffered from it. I think people should have been more open because we didn't know what to expect. We didn't know how to protect ourselves.

J: Yes. I mean, I could imagine being frightened by my wedding night, not knowing, you know...

H: We didn't know how to protect ourselves because...I don't know why she didn't tell us. Certainly with seven girls she should've realized what we were getting into, but she didn't tell us.

J: Do you think, do you think, though, that she was any different from other women in her position I mean?

H: Probably. I mean \_\_\_\_\_

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J: 'Cause I'm just wondering, I mean for that time, how open two people were at all when they got talking about birth control and...

H: I'm sure they just didn;t.

J: They didn't, yes, yes. It was just one of the things that you...

H: Right.

J: ...didn't talk about.

H: We think it's terrible that...I mean some people do, that birth control has to be taught in schools, but that's the only place a lot of children ever get any information. Simply because like my mother they don't tell anything.

J: How did...how did you find out things?

H: When I got married. [laughs]

J: [laughing] You got a crash course.

H: Right. [laughing]

J: Alright, ok. Well that must have been kind of frightening, not knowing what you were getting into...

H: But we, I can't say that we a hard life. We had enough to eat, maybe it wasn't what a lot of people had, but hard work did not hurt us.

J: When you look back, how do...how do you...when you think back to your childhood, how does it seem to you? I mean, was it a hard childhood or just we worked hard but we were fine...

H: I would say we were happy. When it came Christmas time, we got an orange in a bag and a little bit of candy, with our name on each bag, we knew what was ours. As far as toys, we didn't know what a toy was except what Mother made. [Jones clears throat] I would not have wanted my children to grow up like I did, deprived of so many things that...well, a lot of people didn't have, but I wanted them to have better. Just as they want their children to have it better.

J: Well, you mentioned about the stockings. Did that, were you ever aware of that as a kid? That..?

H: I thought about it, I'm sure, yes. Because I hated to wear

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them. But, it didn't hurt us. It just hurt our pride.

J: Well--

H: (simultaneously) That didn't hurt it.

J: Well, did kids tease you or was it just kind of the adults were more aware of those kinds of things...?

H: I don't remember that.

J: (simultaneously) Do you know what I mean?

H: I don't remember that we were teased because of it, but I know that we felt bad about having to wear black...

J: Ok.

H: ...colored stockings.

J: But, but again, I think you said that was more just during the hard depression.

H: Oh, yes, yes.

J: Ok.

H: If I was to remember one incident, Mother always made all of our clothes, we didn't, never had bought clothes. When I was in the 6th grade, that was the year before we moved to Bacon. [clears throat] And they had picture taking at school. And Mother had made me a new dress. And when the pictures came out, the dress was low-necked, had a ruffle around it like that and my long underwear showed.

J: Oh!

H: And I hadn't been aware of that.

J: Ohhh..[moans]

H: Well, I looked at that, and I says, "Well, I'll never wear them again," and I took them off, dead of winter and I never put them on again.

J: Really? [laughs]

H: [joins in laughter] But children do have pride!

J: Oh, sure, sure, sure.

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H: And I wasn't aware of myself until I saw myself in the picture.

J: Yes, yes, yes. Right, and then... [Hickman chuckles] Stubborn pride too that you didn't put them on even in winter time.

H: [laughs] I said I would never wear them again. And I didn't.

J: Well...how...you mentioned not having toys, except for the ones that your mom made. What as a kid, you know what of things would you do for...

H: We played Arthurs.

J: You played...Arthurs?

H: It's a game that we made out of little pieces of cardboard about an inch square and we wrote numbers and letters on them. And we would draw so many and then, it would go around just like a card game and we would ask "Well, do you have any A's?" Or whatever. And if anybody had them, they had to give them to us. And then we got all of them, four, then nobody could get them from us, see, because that's all there was. And the one that wound up with the most number of books won -- but we made our own toys.

J: We--is this your brother and sisters...?

H: Yes.

J: ...Or your neighborhood--were there any neighbors close by, how did that work out?

H: Ahhhh, yes, there were neighbors close by. In fact, there's some people living here in town that lived close to me when I was at that age.

J: I guess I meant--in Bacon now, are we talking about?

H: Yes.

J: Alright, ok.

H: And later we got hold of cards and we learned to play rummy and things like that. But when we were, before we got hold of the cards, we made our own toys.

J: Ok.

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H: But we liked to climb trees when we were kids. Now this is when I was 11 or 12, we had a huge oak tree, and I understand now that it's this big [demonstrates with arms], that its still standing. But we would climb up the limb and get up to the tree trunk and then we would climb back out and fall down to the bottom of the limb and then work ourselves down to the end of it. And we had a ball. [Jones chuckles] I would be appalled if my children did that. But that was our recreation, climbing the tree.

J: I'm laughing because I did a lot of tree climbing in my youth too. Yes, it's great.

H: I was at a sale the other day and they had a cross-cut saw. And I said, "Do you sell very many cross-cut saws?"

And this fellow says, "Well, no." Said people buy them to paint on. \_\_\_\_\_.

And I said, "Well, that wasn't what they were used for when I was young." My sister and I cut our wood. With a cross-cut saw. So I know what the use of it was!

J: Wow...

H: But is was, it was hard work, but it didn't kill us.

J: Yes, yes.

H: Made us sturdier, I guess.

J: Yes. Bacon, so you were there for 7th and 8th grade. And then...

H: I went to high school.

J: In Paoli. And I imagine at that time that they still had those tests? You know, that kids, kids who'd gone to country schools had to take the test before they went into...

H: Yes, we had to take the test to get into high school.

J: Did you have any idea--I mean why, why go on? Your mom had just gotten married right after 8th grade. Why were you going to do something different and go on to high school? Did very many girls your age go on to high school at that time?

H: Oh, most of them did.

J: Most of them did, ok.

H: I always wanted to go to school. I loved school. And I did get through three years of high school, but at that time, by that time, there was no money at home, and too many children and I did not have the money to continue. They didn't have grants like they do now. Or, financial aid for students like they do now. So I not only did not have the money to buy books or lunches, I didn't have the clothes to wear, so I quit school and got a job.

And in 1974, when my children were all grown, they started adult education classes here in town, and I went back and got my high school diploma.

J: Congratulations.

H: So I wanted to go to school.

J: And you finally did what you wanted.

H: Now, I have had no desire to go get college credit. That just doesn't interest me at all.

J: But, you definitely wanted to get the high school.

H: I definitely wanted--in fact, did I tell you about this dream I had for years?

J: I remember you --yes, yes.

H: Well, I would go to the school building, and everything was in utter chaos. I couldn't find my locker, I would lose my schedule, I couldn't find my books, I would be without clothes, or no shoes or something.

J: Oh no! [chuckles]

H: Something was wrong.

J: Something just horrible.

H: And I never did get to my classroom. So finally after I took, I mean I had that dream for years, that was just a regular...

J: That must have been so frightening.

H: After I went back to school and got my high school diploma, I have never had it since.

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J: Wow.

H: Now I know that could've been for no reason other than I still had the desire to go back to school.

J: Yes. And it sounds like too, it was something that you felt was important that maybe--I mean, it sounds like you felt that you weren't right or something like that for not having it.

H: When my children were little, I could've come to school up here and had my test graded at I.U. And got my credit. But my husband didn't want me to. He said "Oh, you'll never need it." Well, I didn't feel like it was a question of needing it, I wanted it. And then, when they started the adult education courses, I took them of the night, and worked up here [the Chair factory] in they day time.

J: That's great. Congratulations.

H: And I would be working on accounting at two o'clock in the morning [Jones laughs] and get up at 5:30 and...

J: Alegebra! [both laugh]

H: And I loved it.

J: Do many of your women friends, have they gotten their, their high school diplomas?

H: Most of them \_\_\_\_\_ Some of them are college graduates...most of my friends are people that I meet after Freddy and I were married. He is another one of those frustrated college students, he never did get to go to college. But at the time he graduated, it was right in the middle of the Depression and you couldn't -- so his grandfather--he became a baker.

J: Oh, that's right, that's right.

H: Then his grandfather taught him to paint and hang paper. And after we were married, they closed the bakery shop and he came home one night and he said "Well, I'm out of a job. Lloyd closed the bakery shop."

J: Just like that?

H: And I said, "What in the world are you going to do?"

And he says, "Well, I'm going to paint."

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And I said, "Well do you know how to paint?" See how little I knew about him at the time we were married.

And he says "My grandfather taught me how to paint."

J: I'll be darned.

H: So he painted and hung paper, inside and out. And he was the best there was in this area.

J: Ohh.

H: Up until the last ten years of his life, and then he had a fall. And he was never able to climb after that.

J: So he was pretty forced into retirement?

H: Well no, he took a job as...

J: County clerk or something like that.

H: County...[pause]...what was that?

J: I remember you telling me. It was something in the county.

H: Yes, he was...bailaff.

J: Bailaff, that's right, that's right.

H: And he worked there almost ten years, just lacked a few months being ten years, when he was forced to leave because of health reasons.

J: And I remember you telling me that he didn't take very kindly to retirement, I mean he really just had to just get up and work. He couldn't just...

H: I think that if my husband had been forced into retirement until, up till the point that he couldn't go any more, he would've been, it would kill him.

J: Yes. It's not like someone like yourself who, you know, is having a great time [laughing]...

H: I am sure enjoying my time [laughs] and he just, I don't think he could've done it. He had no interest, other than his job.

J: Do you think, I remember last time, your saying something about how it seems that more men are that way...

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H: A lot of them I think.

J: Do you think? It wasn't just, you know, him and his particular character, do you think its...?

H: I think a lot of men are, well I read in the papers, where a woman says "My husband is underfoot all the time, he doesn't know what to do with himself. I'm killing myself trying to keep him occupied in his retirement." Men do not plan for retirement like women do.

J: With your friends, has this been--I mean, has this just been something that you've read about in Dear Abby, or have your friends, you know, had the same problem? Women that you know.

H: I think my friends have had the same problem. [laughs]

J: Yes, ok...it's a shame.

H: Yes it is. But, I don't think a woman ever retires, like, the women always have to keep house...

J: That's true.

H: And, I have always taken care of my own yard, and that, there's just always things that a woman can do. When a man is out of a job, he thinks that is life is over. He'll just sit down and die. And women aren't like that.

J: Right, right. Yes, I hadn't thought about it in terms of women are always, there's always stuff to be done...

H: Always.

J: ...And women are always doing it. Yes, you're right though. Excuse me for a 'sec...where...ok, wait. Before we get on to your husband, can I backtrack for a second and talk about, what was it like then leaving Bacon, you were...how old are you when you start high school?

H: Fourteen.

J: You were 14, ok. You batched? You got a room in town or...?

H: No, as a matter of fact, I lived with a family here in town, and went to school.

J: Were you doing any kind of work for...

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H: Oh yes. They helped me with clothes and I remember one year at Christmas time, of course I didn't have any money, they didn't pay anything, it was just...

J: Room and board.

H: Room and board. And, one year at Christmas time, there small son was getting a lot of new toys and they gave me all of his old toys to take home to my brothers and sisters.

J: Ohhhh. That must have been fun.

H: And I wrapped all of them...

J: That must have been great.

H: And my younger sisters, they, they never had such a ball in their lives as when I brought that big box of toys. And they remember it.

J: Yes, oh that's neat.

H: I don't even remember what the toys were, but they can tell you just exactly what they were. [laughs]

J: Oh, that's a neat story.... Well, how did it feel, I mean what, how did Paoli high school seem to you, and Paoli I mean. You'd come from this small town of Bacon and now you were rooming and boarding in Paoli. Do you remember what your impressions were at the time?

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H: Yes, I felt like that the country people were discriminated against. We were, well...for instance...they had initiations back then. And when we were freshmen, 'cause they had the initiation then, the country kids were not allowed to take any part in the initiation. I wasn't even called to do anything, and yet, the cit--the town kids got to drink the Pluto water and all that sort of stuff, which was part of the initiation ritual. But they didn't call on the country people.

J: Wow.

H: So we felt like yes, the country people were discriminated against.

J: Oh God, that must have really...

H: When it came to our clubs in school, like the math clubs and things, country people were never elected to them.

J: Did that hurt your feelings a lot, as a kid, or a first or anything?

H: Not really, for the simple reason that I had to ride a school bus, I had no way of getting back to town for extra-curricular activities, like other people did.

J: Right.

H: So no, it didn't hurt my feelings because I knew I couldn't participate anyway.

J: Wait a second, I'm confused--the people that you lived with were in town you said? And you rode the school bus, because wasn't the high school, it was at Hillcrest.

H: I went the first two years of high school I lived with my parents...

J: Ohh...

H: But the third year I came to Paoli and lived with the family.

J: Ok, Ok.

H: And I worked in the school cafeteria, and jello, that's where I was introduced to jello [Jones laughs]. We never had anything like that at home. Just thinking about that food in the cafeteria, I can still feel it and taste it,

J: Really? Was it good?

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H: Oh yes. I thought maybe the kids would turn their nose up at the soup, but to me it was delicious. It was different from anything we had at home.

J: Oh, ok, so for you, the jello and, ok, ok. Were most of your friends then, after you'd been at school for a while and you know kind of gotten more accoustomed to it, did you...?

H: I had one special girl friend. I never even looked side-ways at the boys.

J: Were you shy or...?

H: I was extremely shy. And I just had this one girlfriend. Now some of the girls in our class were girls that I had gone to school with at English, back when I went there for six years, \_\_\_\_\_ for six years, through the 6th grade. But, they were not friends, they weren't someone you could just walk up to and say hi.

J: Right, right.

H: But this was a country girl and she was my best friend all through the three years I got to go to high school.

J: I guess this is probably a hard thing to say, I wondering if you were shy because, I mean if being a country girl had anything to do with your being shy?

H: I don't know, but my husband told me, when, the first time he took me church after we were married, that I hid behind him.

J: Ohhh.

H: Now I would then, we were married in December, and I was 20 in September, so I was already 20 years old, and he said I was so shy, I hid. When he took me. I told someone the other day, I said, you won't believe that would you?

J: [laughs] No, no. And you're so friendly.

H: (simultaneously) \_\_\_\_\_ so friendly.

J: Not in a million years, not in a million years.

H: \_\_\_\_\_, in ten years. But he forced me to take part in things.

J: Floyd now--was his family from here?

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H: Now who are you talking about?

J: Floyd--is your husband?

H: No, Fred.

J: Fred! I'm sorry.

H: Oh, yes. In fact, he was born right next door. And his grandparents lived here. And then when he was older, they [his parents] moved over into the Fairground Addition in town. But no, he was born here [on this street].

J: Ok, so that's where, so the grandparents lived here. And then...

H: His mother and father lived next door.

J: Was, were these the grandparents, what side of the family were they?

H: Mother.

J: They were the mother's grandparents, ok,

H: Mother's, his mother's mother and stepfather.

J: Were, had his family, had his ancestors been in Paoli for quite some time, do you \_\_\_\_\_?

H: As far as I know, all of his family always lived in town. His grandfather on his mother's side died when she was very young and his grandmother remarried and this man raised his mother and the other girls. There were five girls.

J: Ok, ok.

H: But as far as I know, all of his family had always lived here.

J: Do you know what kind of work...?

H: No, I don't.

J: And you meet him, you all married when you were...

H: I was 20 and he was 31.

J: Thirty-one, oh, he was quite a bit older than you.

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H: Eleven and a half years.

J: Was that unusual age difference or pretty much par for the course?

H: No...and it really didn't make any difference at the time.

J: Yes, yes. ...Was he baking when you all got married?

H: Yes, he was a baker.

J: Ok, and you meet here in town actually.

H: Yes, I was working in a resturant and he would bring rolls in all the time. [both laugh]

J: Oh--what, did he belong to a church, or did his family belong to a church?

H: Yes, he belonged to the Paoli friends.

J: The Quaker church.

H: And I didn't have any church affiliation. Anywhere we had lived I had gone to church, but I never had a church affiliation until we were married. Then, I became a member there. I am now clerk and Sunday School teacher.

J: Funny, just once I was at Mabel Miller's house and I was looking through the book there, from the church, and I saw your picture there. [Hickman laughs] And by the way, did your father belong to any church? I know your mom was the Pilgrim's Holiness.

H: As far as I knew, my father never attended church.

J: Ok, ok--one other question before I forget, about your mom and dad too--did they belong to any political party?

H: Different ones. One was a republican and one was a democrat and they always voted, always canceled out each other's vote.

J: (simultaneously) Oh, were they. Did your mom vote then?

H: Oh yes.

J: Really? Well now that's, I find that really interesting. I've heard that not a lot of women voted, or if they did, they tended to vote like their husbands did.

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H: No, they always voted the opposite.

J: Was that any kind of, did your dad respect that...

H: Yes.

J: ...Or would he ever try and change her mind?

H: Oh no, he didn't try and change her, they sure had they own opinions and they'd laugh about canceling each other out, but they always voted.

J: [chuckles] \_\_\_\_\_. Which one was, was your mom...?

H: My mom was a democrat and my dad was republican.

J: That's what I was going to guess for some reason. Do you know why she was a democrat?

H: No. Her parents were and I don't know \_\_\_\_\_.

J: Your just guessing on that one. Did your dad help out with any, like household stuff? How did that work, \_\_\_\_\_ couples, I mean I know your dad left at some point, but before then how did that work, you know, with things around the house? Some people--some men I've talked to who grew up in a farming family, you know, told me that they learned to cook around the house more--how did that work?

H: My father was a good cook. He made the best biscuits you ever tasted in your life and they were big, we called then turtles, they were delicious. I don't ever remember him cooking anything else, but he could bake the best biscuits. And when my mother was ill, of course, back then, you had a child, you stayed in bed for ten days, so he knew, he'd do the cooking at that time. But I don't remember anything except the biscuits.

J: Ok...sounds like he left a good memory there.

H: Your right. [both chuckle]

J: And then your husband belonged to the Quaker--if you, if your parents belong to different political parties, what did you end up with?

H: I ended up with my husband, he was republican.

[END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE TWO]

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J: Were you married at the Friends' church?

H: No, we had a Justice of the Peace marry us.

J: Oh! Boy...

H: His friends, good friends of his asked him that: "Why in the world didn't you take her to your church?" Well I didn't have any church affiliation and he did, but he didn't take me there, he took me to a Justice of the Peace in Jeffersonville, Indiana.

J: Was that the nearest Justice of the Peace?

H: I don't know.

J: Yes, I don't know those thing work out, ok. Ok, so you get married there and you come back here. ...Where did you all, did you all get a house \_\_\_\_\_ in there?

H: We had a house just out north of town that was furnished, complete. All you had to do was take in our groceries and our clothes. And we lived there for...quite some time, but we had moved into a small house out east of town, in a concrete, three-room concrete block house when our daughter was born. She was born there, and then, when she was a baby, we bought this in May [1946] and he dearly loved it.

J: And you mentioned before that, at some point when your husband was a kid his mother had been burned. And he had come and lived here with his grandparents and he really loved the house then.

H: Well, it was his homeplace, you see, where his folks were and then, when they died, the place was sold. And when the opportunity after we were married, when the opportunity came to buy it back we bought it.

J: He must have been really tinkled pink.

H: Well, he said "I'll never leave it again....Next time, I'll go out feet first." [Jones laughs] And he never wanted to.

J: Well--you know, that's funny because I remember last time I saw you we were talking about traveling and I know you've started to travel a lot since...you've retired and I, I remember you saying that he always wanted to spend the night in his bed. He'd go up to visit his brother near Monticello, but that was about it.

H: That was his cousin.

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J: Sorry, his cousin, his cousin.

H: And that's about the only place we went to. I mean to spend time over night. Because he wanted to be in his own bed at night.

J: Did you ever have any ideas about leaving Paoli or you know, kind of wanting to \_\_\_\_\_.

H: No, we never considered leaving Paoli. This is where his work was, and this was where our home was, we never considered living anywhere else.

J: Ok, ok. In your early years of marriage, did you work also? Did you work at that point or...?

H: I did not go to work yet...when we were first married, I was working at Charleston. And he said "You just stay home and raise the family or I'll stay home and raise the family." So I quit my job and I came home and I did not go back to work then until my youngest daughter was eight years old.

J: Ok. And how many kids did you have?

H: Three. Just three.

J: A girl...

H: Two girls and a boy. The middle one's the boy.

J: Ok, ok. And then you went back to work when she was eight years old. Was that strictly for economic reasons or did you yourself...?

H: It was strictly economics. Of course, at his job, he did not make a lot of money. We had, we were paying on this house, we wanted to re-model it. We had three children in school at one time, and really, we wouldn't have done it [and that's the truth (?)].

J: You started there at the [points to nearby Chair company] ..?

H: Right. Well, I worked a couple days a week at a decorating center here in town, but I worked there for about a year, you know, a couple days a week. But I found that it costs us more in taxes than what I earned when it came time for taxes.

J: Really? Isn't that pitiful the way the tax system..?

H: So, my neighbor, who lives in there [pointing to house] was a

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shipping clerk up here, and he asked me why I didn't apply for a job up there [the Chair company] and I said "Well, I never thought of it". And he urged me, course he knew I did sewing, you know, family sewing, and he urged me to apply for a job and I gave in and I said "Go on and bring me an application blank." He brought me an application blank, I filled it out, and turned it in, and they called me to work the next day. [laughs]

J: And that's the Paoli...

H: Paoli Incorporated, now...it was the Paoli Chair Company at that time.

J: When did it become...

H: When it was changed, about twelve years ago, they changed the name to Paoli Incorporated.

J: Are the owners people from Paoli or are they people from...

H: No. They are all from New Albany.

J: Ok. Before, it had been people from Paoli?

H: It was owned \_\_\_\_\_ by McCrackens.

J: Ok. Now sewing...you mentioned your mom sewed all your clothes...how did, did she teach you to sew...?

H: No, my mother did not teach me to sew because most of her sewing was done by hand. And then, my aunt, her younger sister, gave her an old sewing machine. And it was so hard to keep it adjusted, she wouldn't let us touch it. I took sewing when I was in high school, but that's the only sewing experience I had when I was married and I just more or less I guess, taught myself, because I made all my kids' clothes. Up until I started to work.

J: Did you like sewing a lot?

H: I loved it.

J: Because I knew you're doing quilting now? Or it's not quilting, it's...

H: It actually is quilt piecing.

J: I remember--was it quilting though, or was it crochet or something?

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H: No, I was making quilt tops, and then I had them quilted. I have one now that is at the quilters.

J: Ok, ok, alright. So tell me about what your work was like at Paoli Chair?

H: I went to work there at as a sewer.

J: Can you explain that a bit more for more?

H: Well, it was upholstery sewing. And I had never done anything like that. Of course I did sewing at home for my family but I'd never done any upholstery sewing. And the first six weeks for very traumatic. Because I wanted it to look just so and I didn't know how to go about getting it just so. But, I finally managed it, and one day it was real difficult for me and the next morning it was just like turning over a switch.

J: Right.

H: I had two hitches of being the sewer instructor. I worked at the sewing and then I also instructed the others -- when a new one came in, I taught them.

J: Ohh.

H: The last few years, I worked with the designer. He would design the chairs and I would help them to figure out how to make it to sew the chair for the least amount of work possible.

J: Like you talked about, right, right.

H: THat was one of the fellows that I worked with was one that I was working with today [at Hillcrest]. But I had that job when I retired. And I had that for several years.

J: And you worked there, not \_\_\_\_\_, but a total of 26 years?

H: Twenty-six years. And I never did work anywhere else except the sewing department.

J: What, what was it like, you know, going to work? Was it like a big room where all the sewers just worked?

H: Yes. At that time, it was one big room for both the sewing and the cutting. And later, they built another big room on for part of the sewers and also they moved the cutting out into another room. So it spread out considerably during the time I was there.

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J: How did you like work? I guess after 26 years, your feelings might have changed.

H: Nooo, I loved it.

J: You did.

H: I loved the work, right up to the day I left.

J: Really? Well, good for you.

H: But I have never regretted leaving.

J: Because...

H: There comes a time in your life when you've got to make a change. And I got to be 62, I was probably getting time I made a change, so I retired.

J: How old are you?

H: I am 63, I will be 64 in September.

J: So you kept on working after your husband's death.

H: Yes. I had to work until I was 62.

J: Ok, for retirement benefits...well I know that retirement has agreed with you fairly well. [Hickman laughs] Particularly since you won your boat!

H: Oh, that is wonderful but, well, it isn't something I would have purchased.

J: Oh sure.

H: But, we enjoy it. It is more or less a family thing. Of 'course \_\_\_\_\_, my son \_\_\_\_\_, he never has time. But my daughter, who lived at Huntingburg, she and her husband take it out. The only time I can get down there, and they'd like for me to go more often. But, it is a beautiful boat. And we are enjoying it.

J: (simultaneously) Enjoying it. Well, and then I know you've been doing more traveling.

H: I was gone all during the month of February down to Texas. I visited my husband's younger brother. He's also 60, at that time in very poor health--heart trouble. And then I also visited some

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friends of mine who I used to work with up at the factory and then retired and became winter Texans. They live in Texas in the winter and come back to Mitchell in the summer. So I go to visit them while they're in Texas.

J: Do many old, for some reason, I was trying to get a hold of some people or something like that and it turned out that, I got the impression that quite a few people were winter Florida people I guess.

H: A lot of people from here go to Florida in the winter and spring.

J: Just out of curiosity, do they go, I mean, do they stay like in the same community?

H: Yes.

J: They do? Ohh.

H: Some of them do, they double up. In a particular community, they go to it, and they stay until spring, come back here and go back in the winter.

J: So \_\_\_\_\_ in Florida. Well, ok. You loved your work. What was the...how can I say it...before you started, did you know many of the women--was it mainly women?

H: Women sewers, and I didn't know any of them at the time I began.

J: Did it take very long...?

H: ...No...

J: You know, did employees do stuff socially or...you know what I mean?

H: No, no. We didn't too much. I remember one time one of the girls had been off with a broken leg and we had a shower for her and we gave her a lot of little gifts -- just little things, you know, when she came back. But, socially, no, we didn't, we didn't \_\_\_\_\_. We lived most of us there in the country, so it wasn't something that you could get together after work.

J: So also it wasn't just the people from Paoli itself...

H: Oh, no. It was people from all over.

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J: All over the place. And what kind of a day was it? What time did you start and all that stuff?

H: Well, unless business was rushing , you generally start at seven in the morning and got off at four with an hour for lunch. But, I, at times when I worked there, we would start in a morning at six and go back after six of the night, for a couple, three hours. At times, when business was such that it demanded it. \_\_\_\_\_.

J: [simultaneously] \_\_\_\_\_.

H: After you have worked eight hours at the job that we had, you have given your best. You don't accomplish anything with longer hours.

J: And you said that didn't happen very often?

H: No, no.

J: Just out of curiosity, would it done, could a person have not gone back in? I mean, was it like you were doing a favor helping out or was it pretty much expected that it was just part of your job? To go back and work overtime? You know, at night \_\_\_\_\_.

H: It was expected of you. Unless you were physically unable. When business warranted it, it was expected of you.

J: Ok, ok. Oh dear. [sighs]...What, what...ok you got married in 1940. No, 1944.

H: Forty-four. December of '44.

J: Oh. What do you remember of World War I--and I guess World War II--and how...

H: My father was in World War I. Of course alot of the boys that were in my class in high school were in the service in World War II.

J: Yes...what was that like, I mean having young men that you knew gone?

H: Well, we wrote to them. And we were always got together when there was, they were home on furlough. But we worried about them, even at that age, we did worry. But you didn't think about, you know, what they...you just thought about the fact that they were gone. And not in the community. Like now, we see



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H: No, that's when I was first married.

J: When you were first married? Oh, so it [Saturday nights on the square] was still going on, that was 1944?

H: Oh!

J: Well, when did that, when that start dying down?

H: Just the last few years.

J: Just the last few years?

H: Oh.

J: Really? Well, I didn't know that. ...Like the last ten or something?

H: Last...15 years.

J: Fifteen....ohhh.

H: Things started going out from the square-, and I think I was bond to have experienced the things that--and...people just don't go to the square. In fact, when I go to town, I try to avoid the square.

J: Why?

H: Well, because of traffic. And there's nothing there.

J: But you go in for the first place. (?)

H: Yes. So I, I try to avoid it.

J: ...Do you miss, do you miss that there was, you know, kind of a place where people went and...like you said, the talking and whatnot.

H: Yes, yes, you do. People do not visit in their homes, like they did, back then. And now each home is, more or less, a closed community among themselves, and they just don't...get out in the yard and play croquet and things like we used to. And it gets different. It's...it's just like the town...became old and died.

It isn't active, it isn't--the town square. Now we have a court house that is famous.

J: Oh yes, yes.

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H: We have people coming all over the country to take pictures of that courthouse. But I'll--well, in fact I'll show you pictures if you want to...

J: (simultaneously) Yes. [tape recorder turned off, the back on]

about this. I don't remember how you put it, it was something about, you know, being, not a \_\_\_\_\_ with your kids, but that it's different, you know, that they're not growing up with the same values. [pause] Is that what you said?...

H: Our grandchildren do not have the same lifestyle that we had when we where growing up, thank God.

J: Thank God, ok.

H: There is a lot of things that they could, a lot of ways that they could benefit from knowing how we lived. In fact, if they knew how we lived I'm sure they would appreciate what they have more.

J: Now, when you say 'knowing how we lived', what...

H: Well, that things that they take granted, that we never even thought of. And we couldn't have avoided them if we had thought of them. Now, I have two granddaughters that are near the same size, and they fight when one of them picks up an article of clothing and wears it when it belongs to the other one. When my sister and I were going to school we had a double weardrobe, what little there was of it, because we shared: one day I would wear the, the sweater, and then maybe the next day she would wear the sweater. But they, they--well, in fact my daughter doesn't want they to share clothes. And I said "Well, why not? THeY don't even go to the same school? And they'd both have a double weardrobe if they shared their clothes." See, it's different.

J: Yes, but they each want it for themselves.

H: Right.

J: Yes. ...Would you have wanted, like before you mentioned, you know, with every house being self-contained, every house with an air conditioner and tv and, you know, people don't have to come, come outside--would you miss it enough that it would be better if people still did have the tv and the air conditioner and did socialize and talk more?

H: No. I think our children now are--children and grandchildren-- know so much more about the world than we did. Because we didn't have the opportunity to see what was going on

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or to hear what was going on. But, you know, in the outside world. We know what was going on in our community and that was it. News was just one thing that I like to watch. And

J: [simultaneously] Right, I remember.

H: But, my grandchildren do not look at the news. I don't know if that tv is doing them a lot of good.

J: Do you ever--I'm just curious--do you ever, you know, try and talk to them and you know, give them some of the lessons that you have learned to try and make them appreciate more what they do have, or is it that they're not going to listen to grandmother because of they're that age type thing?

H: They're in the age that grandmother...is an old fogey.

J: Yes, yes.

H: And they can't understand you enjoying...getting out and driving to their place and staying a couple hours or having lunch with their mother and taking off and coming home. Grandmothers just don't do that! You know, I'm supposed to be sitting in a rocking chair. [laughs]

J: Oh, I see--yes, right, right, and here you are, out on the boat and all this kind of stuff, right, right.

H: Children have a very different idea of what grandparents are supposed to be than what we actually are.

J: Yes, and I think, don't you think that part of that is just, I mean when I was a kid really anyone over 30 was...you know...

H: Oh yes, sure...sure. And they were! My grandmother died at 56. Which, she was an old woman. AND now, this sister-in-law that I take care --I don't take care of her, but I go over and see about her, everyday, or call her everyday--is 81. And except for not remembering things, she gets around the house, she takes her own bath, does her own laundry, she takes her own bath, does her own laundry. Well, at the time my grandmother died, that would have been the extremely old person.

J: Yes, yes. Are there any other changes that you see, you know, either in the town and people, \_\_\_\_\_, that has changed?

H: I have some ideas that...a lot of people would not care about, because I feel like that if a person is able-bodied, and can work and won't, they should not be supported, by the government.

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Which a lot of our local people are. And, I mean, they, they seem to be able to get by without working and I don't think--as hard as I've had to work, I've don't think other people should be able to live.

J: Do you mean welfare, welfare programs?

H: Yes, a lot of them I know around here are just using welfare that are perfectly capable of working. But they don't. ...Or, there are, there's corruption in a small town, I know there is \_\_\_\_\_. I mean things go on that shouldn't. We don't have too much, too much drug problem at the school, but we have too much, what little there is, there's too much.

J: Did you think about, you know how life, I mean, was it different being a woman that it was being a man, did it seem like opportunities were real, real different?

H: Yes, yes. There wasn't too many opportunities, at that time, there was no opportunities until \_\_\_\_\_.

J: Did very many woman work? Outside--I mean, women worked at home.

H: Restaurants were...just about all there was. During the season, they worked in the local canning factories. There was a basket factory here in town where they made bushel baskets, and some of the women worked there.

[END OF TAPE TWO, SIDE ONE]

J: ...last time I was here, you said something like at one point, you'd counted up and there were 18 widows?

H: Just in this area of town.

J: Really?

H: Yes.

J: I find that remarkable.

H: We are out there in and the men--that tea make you cold, did it? [both laugh]

J: I'm going back and forth.

H: Yes, nation-wide, there are 16 widows to every widower, for every single male.

J: Wow.

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H: And this town is heavily overloaded with \_\_\_\_\_ widows.

J: Are there many widowers?

H: No...Oh, I can think of four or five, but they're either someone you won't care to be seen with or they're too old, I mean, I haven't meet any of them that I would, in fact, I think I would have to get out of Paoli to find someone.

J: Wow.

H: But, I don't see anything wrong with just being a widow, except, as I said before, I can't conceive of living the rest of my life alone.

J: Right, right, with still 20 years, at least 20 years or so.

H: I hope! [laughs]

J: Yes, yes, I mean there's a good, a good...chunk of life left...

H: I'm healthy and if I could meet someone who could travel with me and managed to be compatable, why, I think it'd be wonderful.

J: Are, are--you know some of the trips, or at least one of those trips that you did was, I think it was AARP sponsored?

H: Yes. No, no--I haven't been to a A-A-R-P sponsored trips. They have some. I have been on trips sponsored by the Bedford Parks and Recreational Department for Senior Citizens.

J: That's what it was. Well, on something like that are there any other or very many widowers or is it mainly widows?

H: Widows. No widowers. [both laugh]

J: No widowers [laughing] I guess, I don't know, I mean, are there so many because one, women tend to live a little bit longer...

H: Women are living longer.

J: And then two I guess, women tended to have husbands that were a bit older. Do you think?

H: I think that's that biggest thing, because men, as a rule, do not marry women older than themselves. And according to

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statistics, a woman should be seven years older than her husband, you know, that you have this thing, life expectancy, and it just doesn't hapopen that way. Like my oldest daughter married a man 25 years older than she is.

J: Wow...

H: So she can, well, her first husband was a year older and he left her and she took up with this guy and he said, her first husband said "But Sally, you'll be a widow before you're 50!" And she said "Well, I'm a grass (?) widow now." So...but they seem to be happy together. But, he will leave her a widow probably before she's 50.

J: Are there any, like, local groups you know, or are things like that done more informally or...?

H: There is no organized group for singles. In this locale. Now there is Bedford. Where my daughter lives in Terre Haute, there is organized groups up there, for singles. Single parents, and she went to those, but, I know that there's no big--they say the best place to find a male companion or a prospective husband is in church. We have no widowers in our church. [laughing]

J: [laughing] And how many widows?

H: And a lot of widows. This class that Mabel was in, all widows, all widows.

J: Gosh. ...Well, I mean, I guess the good thing about that is that being a widow is not a big unusual thing

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H: No, it is very common.

J: So, socially, it's, is it awkward or anything like that?--do you know what I mean?

H: I have not found it so. I have heard people say that their friends dropped them when they became a widow. But most of the friends that we had, were people that were my husband's customers or friends he knew before we were married. And that has continued, just as always.

J: Ok.

H: But, I have been traveling with widows, there's three other ladies in my car (?) that go places together, like, they have plays in the Spring Mill Inn...we have gone on trips together--well, [chuckling] as my nephew said "Irene, if you want to find a

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husband, get away from the women." [both laugh]

J: Oh, dear. I wonder if there's any like dating services or something like that?

H: There's an advertisement in the local paper for a dating service!

J: Are there? Well, I mean, I can see it, just in terms of seeing it as a necessary thing just to find, you know, available men.

H: I find it very easy to make friends with males. I find it very difficult to be anything more than friends.

J: Which still might just mean that you haven't found the right one.

H: I just haven't found the right one. Now, I have a friend at Bedford, any time I am at Bedford and can, I stop and visit with him, he's had health problems this winter. But, we just talk up a storm and he is just tickled to death to see me any time I come, but we haven't dated.

J: Yes, if it's there, it's there, if it's not...

H: Well, we just have a good time together when I stop to see him and he talks to me about his health problems just as if I was his sister, so probably, that's far as I'll ever get, is his sister. But, he's a nice guy. He's someone that you find very easy to be friends with.

J: Yes, yes...well that's good.

H: And that's about the only person that I have met out of town. And I met him through my sister who passed away a year ago.

J: Well maybe this luau will...[both laugh]

H: I'm going to have to answer that phone!

J: You're going to have to let me know if anything happens there ok!? [both laugh] Oh, dear.

H: It'll be interesting. I visited my daughter in Huntingburg a while back and she took me around to her office, she works in the Farm Bureau Office, and she took me around. Her manager is a widower, and he just, he had a telephone call waiting, he just said hello, how are you, hello, happy to meet you, and I have a phone call and took off. And Joannie said later he said [stage whisper] "When's your mother coming back?" [both laugh]

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J: When are you going back? Well-where does your daughter live?

H: One lives at Huntingburg the youngest one, and the oldest one is in Terre Haute.

J: Did they marry, did they move when they got married or...?

STATE H: My oldest daughter is a school teacher and she and her husband came to Terre Haute where he was teaching in Indiana University. And they bought a house there and just stayed.

J: Ok. And then how about the one that lives at Huntingburg?

H: Huntingburg, she is my youngest, she has my oldest and youngest granddaughter, the oldest granddaughter is 19 and the youngest one is 10. And she has, she is very like me, in fact, she's red hair, blue eyes, freckles, and we've been, someone said you "Yuo two are as much alike as two peas in a pod." Of course, she looks not a day over 19. She is going to be...39, so, but they're nice, they're always glad to see me when I come to visit.

J: Do you get a chance to visit very often?

H: I make a chance. Being retired as its advantages in that you can make time to do the things you want to do, you're not obligated to do anything. And I've just about run the wheels off that little car. [both laugh]

J: Actually, its a pretty sporty little car you've got there.

H: THat was my husband's car and we had a Mercury when he died, and it was a big family car, I really didn't need a big family car so I kept this one and disposed of the other and I like it.

J: And then what about your boy?

H: Well, he is the manager of the Swifty station here in town...

J: Oh!, right, right here.

H: He's married, no children, and they have bought a place here in town. He's another example of a older man marrying a younger girl. He's quite a bit older than she is.

J: But, all your children essentially have settled down pretty close to home.

H: Oh, yes.

J: Yes.

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H: Sally's two hours away and Joannie is one hour away and John is five minutes away.

J: Would you have been real disappointed had they, for some reason you know, one of them moved...

H: No, Sally and her husband lived up in New York<sup>State</sup> for awhile. In fact, we didn't even see their first child until she was six weeks old because they were living in New York. But, they were real nice, they took us up there, for a present. Came down and got us and brought us home.

J: Oh, oh great!

H: And I have visited, took a bus trip and visited her former in-laws who live in Connecticut.

J: Well, that's, going to visit the former in-laws...

H: Visit the former in-laws and they are really nice.

J: That's great.

H: He calls once in awhile, and he and his wife are the nicest people.

J: Oh that's nice, that's an unusually close relationship.

H: For a former...

J: To keep up I mean, yes, well sometimes for present in-laws, but particularly for former in-laws...--One of the other things I wanted to ask you about is, you know you were saying when you were in school and it seemed like country kids were discriminated against. Was that something that, was that just in school or...were there other differences between people in the town and, just in terms of attitudes towards farmers and visa versa?

H: I think it was just the kids themselves, probably the older people didn't.

J: Didn't.

H: But the kids themselves were able to get together and do things after school that we country kids could not take part in. See, I couldn't even go to my junior/senior prom because I had no way to go. Back then, boys didn't have cars. They couldn't get out.

J: Right, right, ok. Today then, do you think there's any kind

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of town...

H: I doubt if there is much because now the country kids are, well, alot of them drive cars to school. So, their right out there, every ball game and everything just like the town kids are.

J: And then, in, in the adults, do you think there's any kind of differences or...?

H: No, I don't think so.

J: Ok, ok...And the other thing, and this might seem like a funny question, but when you were a kid, were there any, you know how sometimes parents will want their kid to be exceptionally polite or to be sure and be polite to this adult or something like that, were there any people that your parents tried to teach you, you know, were the respected people, or people you should be extra polite to or something like that.

H: No.

J: No, ok.

H: ...We, we were not instructed on being extra polite to anyone, we were expected to be polite to everybody. Now, the trouble that they are having now, with young people being picked up and things like that, you never heard of it, back then. It probably happened, but you just didn't hear about it.

J: Ok...What are some of the things you like about living in a town, a small town like Paoli? You know, just the idea of a small community. Are there somethings that you think that you like versus some that you don't like so much?

H: I like the trees, especially. You don't find a lot of trees in the city. I like the country atmosphere, but if I had my choice, I would live in the country. I was born and raised in the country, I like to work in the ground, and I, if I had my choice, I would live in the country. But this is where my husband wanted to live and this is where we lived.

J: Did, did you have the choice then or do you think this is only now that, you know what I mean? I mean not that--did you have that preference even then?

H: Oh yes, I've always liked the country.

J: Always, ok. Alright. Is it just the space, working in the ground...?

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H: Well, in the country you usually have an area that you know is going to raise anything you put in it. Here, you have to build every bit of the ground that you have to raise anything. Because, this is, this area is all limestone and the soil in it is less than a foot deep. Well, in dry weather like we're having right now, it dies. We tried our best to have a garden here and...

J: Things just couldn't get the water.

H: It just dies if it turns dry at all. You might as well just dig it up and leave it. Maple trees grow up in the garden area. [laughs]

J: Well, you like trees, so that's ok. I mean, I get the sense that you truly, truly enjoy working in the ground and having a garden.

H: I do. I was an outdoors person from the time I was real young, and I'd much rather work outside. In fact, I'm a very poor housekeeper, but I like to work with my hands, and I'm out in the yard every chance I get. If nothing else, just walking around looking.

J: Do you have any special feel for this house or...?

H: I've tried to convince myself that this is where I want to live for the rest of my life.

J: Right.

H: It isn't.

J: It's not?

H: No. This was my husband's home. It's the only place that we have ever owned, but it isn't a place that I would feel I would be devastated if I had to leave.

J: Have you ever thought about selling it and, I mean...and taking that money and buying something out in the country?

H: Yes I have. Very seriously. In fact, I have a house that I want, not picked out but is the design of a house that I want to build if I am ever able. And you'll think I'm crazy, but it is a square divided from corner to corner instead of in squares. And all of the outside walls are glass and it is beautiful. Redwood deck all around--now that's what I want to build if I am ever able to do so.

J: Sounds wonderful--would you stay?--where would you do it?

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H: I don't know, that depends. If I expect to find a husband, I'll have to leave. If I give up and decide I'll stay here, why I'll build it around here.

J: [simultaneously] Around here.

H: But I found that pattern years and years ago in a Women's Day or Family Circle magazine and it got away from me, but that was the prettiest little house you ever saw. [Jones chuckles] And I thought boy if I ever build a, have anything to do with building a house, that's going to be it.

J: So that then \_\_\_\_\_.

H: I imagine.

J: Yes, yes.

H: I like to raise roses, I'm not good at it.

J: Well, this one smells...pretty terrific.

H: Oh, they smell beautiful don't they. That one and this white one really have the aroma. But most of the cultivated roses, the hybrids, do not have an aroma. They're beautiful, but they don't have an aroma.

J: So they breed them more for the beauty than the smell which I've always thought was the most beautiful part of it.

H: Oh, yes, that's the most beautiful part of a rose. And you know, that's funny because my husband did not like roses.

J: How could he not like roses?

H: I don't know. He didn't like roses and I got some perfume one time, it was called Atter of Roses, and--

J: I wore that same thing I think!

H: And he won't let me wear it.

J: Really? Oh, he really didn't like them. I went through a stage, when I was pretty young, probably junior high or something like that, and I was just mad about this rose perfume I had and I wore it all the time, day and night, day and night. ...Well, is there any other last word about...

H: Well, I'm afraid you haven't found me very interesting...

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J: No! No, I've thoroughly enjoyed myself. [chuckling]

H: ...as far as information goes, because I was a homebody and then, when I went to work, I was working and a homebody and I don't get around very much. In fact, I've done more getting around since Freddy passed away than I did before.

J: Well you know that reminds me, I remember your saying that Freddy wasn't mad about social, didn't socialize very much...

H: He did not want to, very seldom would he ask anyone to come into the house. And we didn't go out. We went to church every week. And we visited his folks. But he didn't care to go out. He wasn't a recluse, he just didn't care about having people around him.

J:        W o u l d        y o u        h a v e        r a t h e r        h a d  
\_\_\_\_\_.

H: [simultaneoulsly] \_\_\_\_\_. I really don't know.

J: But you're doing it now.

H: Well, yes.

J: Some more, yes, yes. [sighs] Well, I thoroughly have enjoyed myself.

H: Well, I thank you and I'm glad you came.

J: Thank you very much. I'll go ahead and turn this thing off.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

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