

INDIANA UNIVERSITY
ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER

RICHARD F. OAKLEY

Interviewed by Chrystyna Huk
31 July 1989
OHRC accession #88-98-1,2,3

INTRODUCTION

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my oral history interview with Chrystyna Huk,
Interviewer (please PRINT)
which was conducted on July 31, 1989, to Indiana University.
Date.

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

Richard Oakley
Donor

July 31, 1989
Date

Chrystyna Huk
Interviewer

July 31, 1989
Date

PAOLI PROJECT
ORAL HISTORY RESEARCH CENTER

Biographical Data Sheet

I. INTERVIEWEE/NARRATOR DATA

Full Name: Richard F. Oakley
(First) (Middle) (Last)

Address: 321 College Hill
Paoli, IN 47454

Phone: (812) 723-2214

Date of Birth: January 3, 1929 Place of Birth: Paoli

Sex: Male Ethnic Origin: Scotts-Irish

Education: High School Diploma

Occupational History: Hauled milk; Factory-woodwork; Mail clerk-carrier;
Postmaster

Special interests, hobbies, etc.: Hunting, Fishing, Farming

Father's Name and occupation: William O. Oakley, Tool grinder

Mother's Name and occupation: Trophy True, Housewife

II. INTERVIEWER DATA

Full Name: Chrystyna O. Huk
(First) (Middle) (Last)

Local address: 510 E. Cottage Grove, #1-J, Bloomington, IN 47408; 333-0980
and phone

Permanent Address: 3619 Riverside Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44109
and phone

Date of Birth: 2-25-53 Place of Birth: Cleveland

Association with the Paoli Project: Graduate Assistant, 1988-89; Summer Intern, 1989

Subject of interview: Country/Depression era life in Paoli; Refugees from the 1937
Louisville flood; WWII & community support; Town attitude toward vets-WWII, Korea, Vietnam;
Post office career; Post Office employee and public attitude changes, 1950s to present

Number of Tapes: 3--2hrs 32mins

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OAKLEY

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INTERVIEWEE: Richard Oakley
INTERVIEWER: Chrystyna Huk
SUBJECT: History of Paoli, Indiana
DATE: July 31, 1989
TRANSCRIBER: Norma Olmer

Huk: Today is July 31st, 1989. This is Chrystyna Huk. I'm interviewing Richard Oakley, in his home, in Paoli, Indiana. We will be talking about his life in Paoli for the Paoli project.

Mr. Oakley, can you tell me, like, where you were born and where you grew up, and a little bit about your family?

Oakley: Well, I was born in Paoli. There was 9 of us in the family. I was the youngest of 6 boys and I had 3 sisters. One older and 2 younger. The first I remember is living out east of town in probably the early '30s. We moved from there in '34, started school in '34 in the first... I guess the first, I guess, the first part of about the fall of that year. We moved out west of town and I went to a country school then until the 4th grade, and we burned out and we moved back... we moved to town then.

So then, from 10 years old up till now I lived here in Paoli. With the exception of 2 years in the service, I've never been out of... I've never lived anywhere else other than Paoli.

H: What did your parents do for a living?

W: Well, my dad worked in the Paoli Chair Factory up here as a tool grinder. He first... he worked as what you call a "sticker." That is a machine that turns _____ wood and a sticker... when the blades flew out of it one time... broke, hit him in the arm there and cut all the muscles on the arm and he couldn't open his hand. He could grip anything after he got injured there, but he couldn't open his hand.

Well, then he went to work as a tool grinder. He was a, oh, jack-of-all-trades. He could do anything. He was part-time, around home, he worked on the clocks, watches, gunsmith. He could work in wood, he could... anything he put his mind to he could do it. And, well....

H: Was it his left hand that got injured?

O: Yes. His left hand.

H: He was left-handed or right-handed?

O: No, he was right-handed, but he could... like when he... he'd done a lot of hunting and he could hold... like I say, he could open his hand with his other hand, and he'd grip anything, but it just cut all the muscles on the back of his hand that opened his fingers up. And he could grip anything after he got it in there, but he couldn't open his fingers without taking his other hand and open it.

He was crippled. When he was about 7 years old he had some kind of a sickness; they never did know what it was, but his right leg from his knee to his hip got some kind of an infection and it didn't grow. And his right leg from his knee to his hip was 6 inches shorter than his left. And he built up a... he'd take his shoe and he put a wood piece in there, and had it sloped up this way. And he walked on his tiptoes on his right... he walked on his tiptoes on his right. And he could take and... if he sat there with his foot crossed like that, he could bend his ankle. And, of course, the tip of his shoe here would touch up there on his knee.

And he used to be a hunter a lot and he lived in Campbellburg. Him and another fellow was pretty much a joker, Charley Cooper(?). And some other fellow moved in there and wanted to go hunting with them one night, coon hunting. So they took off across the cornfield where the corn had been cut; course the stubble was about that tall. So they'd made up that... got across there, I think Charley bumped this other fellow and he bumped Dad. And Dad fell on the ground and turned that shoe up there. And there he was. And Charley said, "My God, you broke his leg." (laughs)

And at that time Dad was about my size, but he was heavier. He weighed about 180 pounds at that time. And they made that guy get Dad on his back and packed him about 3/4 of a mile back to Campbellburg (laughs) thinking that he had broke his leg.

But that was the kind of fellow he was; he would... he was serious about some things, but other things... he was a joker at times.

H: Well, he pretended....

O: Yes. He pretended... he had a lot to say. He walked on his tiptoes all the time. He'd say his shoe was out here... his foot would be down in here like that; he'd walk on his tiptoes. But when he turned his ankle up, why, that shoe would fill up the tip... would touch up here. It's supposed to be straight like that, yet this shoe, the way it was... it would be tipped up there, it looked like he broke his leg in /two.

H: How far did they have to drag him... or take him?

O: About 3/4 of a mile across that bloody cornfield back into Campbellburg.

H: Into where?

O: Campbellburg. A little town over here; that's where he lived at that time.

H: Yes. How old were you when your father injured his arm? Do you remember that pretty well?

O: Yes, that was in '32, I believe it was. And he was off work for... oh, I'd say probably a year.

H: That was a bad time to be out of work.

O: Yes. And he might have been off longer than that. I know that was, of course... Depression was still on and about the only.... All during the Depression, about the only meat we had was... I remember at two different times we raised a hog to kill, but about the only meat we had was what he brought in with a single-barrel shotgun.

Of course, we had a big garden. We raised what we'd eat out of it, but as far as meat was concerned, we'd only eat what he'd bring in from the wood with a shotgun.

H: So you made it through the Depression because he hunted a lot.

O: Yes.

H: And you grew your own food.

O: Yes. Had a big garden. We canned everything in half-gallon fruit jars. Blackberries that we... the clothes that we wore and shoes that we wore to school, we picked blackberries. We sold them... 10-cents a gallon, to make money to buy school clothes.

H: So you children earned your way.

O: Yes, pretty much. Yes.

H: Did blackberries grow plentiful around here?

O: Yes they were more so than they are now.

H: Did you have to go very far to pick the blackberries? Were

they in the neighborhood?

O: No, just out in the fields out around the house. We lived in the country at that time and... there were more blackberries at that time because now they... farmers have cleaned up with the brushhogs and sprays and so forth. Cleaned up the briers. And used to, they'd... along the fence though, they'd just grow up as briers. But they keep them cleaned up more now than they used to.

H: For whom did you pick the blackberries?

O: Oh well, for our own use and then we'd sell them here in town. Dad would take some up there to the chair factory; he'd be working there part-time. He'd... people up in there would tell him how many gallons they wanted, and he'd bring the orders home and we'd go out and pick them then. But at 10-cents a gallon... that's what we got for it.

The last berries I picked was... I got 50-cents a gallon for them and I thought that was a right smart of money. I'd been... I'd picked them with another friend... he was supposed to pick some for his neighbor. I went along with him and I picked a gallon too. I mean, go in the woods and found a 6 double-O terrapin(?). About big around as a silver dollar. And I was going to take him home to my two younger sisters. I just put him down in the bucket and went ahead and picked the blackberries and forgot about him. And was walking with him down the street before he was... to sell these berries. And a lady came out and wanted to know if I'd sell mine.

And I said, "Well..." And I asked her what she'd give; she said she'd give 50-cents.

And I said, "Yes."

And I just sold her bucket and all. And I never thought about that terrapin till later on, and I just wondered what that woman thought when she dumped them out (laughs) in the sink and there was that terrapin in there. (laughs hard)

H: When did you get 50-cents for them?

O: Oh, that was in the '40s, while the war was going on.

H: What was your first recollection of the house that... the very first house you told me about?... that you lived in? Do I have this straight? The first house east of town: you lived there. And so... early....

O: Well, the first thing that I can remember, it was... that anybody could recognize, historically, was John Dillinger. And I remember Dillinger. And I remember we had a little battery

radio, and that was on the news all the time. John Dillinger was in the newspaper, and I know I can remember John Dillinger; they were hunting him. That was one of the games the kids around the neighborhood... they'd all get together and one of them would be John Dillinger and the rest of them would be G-men. They would be trying to catch... we played that game a lot.

And I can remember when he was killed. I can remember seeing the Louisville paper... a picture of him. It was about a 3 by 5 picture of John Dillinger on the front page, where he'd been killed in Chicago. That's about the first thing that I can remember of anything historical that anyone would recognize.

H: Do you remember how old you were then?

O: No, but I must have been... I hadn't gone and started school yet. I started school when I was 6, so I must have been 5, or somewhere along in there.

H: So it was early in the '30s.

O: Yes.

H: And you told me that you were the youngest of 6 boys.

O: Yes.

H: That there were 9 children in the family.

O: Yes.

H: Did you have, like, a real big farmhouse, or... do you remember the first house?

O: Yes, it was... it had a living room, and there was --let me see-- there was 3 bedrooms upstairs and 2 down. A kitchen and a pantry. You know what a pantry is, I guess?

H: Yes, that much I know. (laughs)

O: That's where you keep your... oh, your kitchen groceries and so forth.

H: And how many bedrooms, again?

O: I believe there were 3 upstairs and... I'm not sure whether there was 1 or 2 downstairs.

H: So you shared a room with some of the boys?

O: Yes. Two... well three other brothers. We usually... my 2 older brothers had a room to themselves, and then the 4 younger ones had a room to themselves. Then the 3 girls slept together in another room downstairs, separate.

H: What was... and you lived in the _____ until what year? about?

O: Hmm. '34.

H: Well, you lived in another house when you went to school.

O: Yes.

H: What... do you remember, like, what you did in that house? Did you, like, you know, help... did you have chores when you were that young?

O: Yes, I carried water from the spring, was one thing. Carried the wood in. I was the youngest so I got to carry in the chips that kindled the fire with. And I can remember carrying water from the spring; I had a small aluminum kiddle(?) that I carried. The rest of them had water buckets but mine was the smallest. Just about yea-tall and so-big around, carried water in. And when we moved out west of town, we had a big spring down over the hill, but there was a hydraulic ram(?) there, that worked.... I don't know if you know what a hydraulic ram is, or not, but it's... well, it pumps water up a hill. It works on the spring... there's a bu____... the ram has to be set below the... and somehow the water pressure's coming down, forces it through a valve somehow or other. The pressure of this water coming down pumps it up and it... and I think for a gallon of water, I think they say a third of it was... 2-thirds of it was wasted. About a third of the gallon was pumped up and the other 2-thirds was run off. And it pumped the water up the hill to the house, and the loops in the pipes that come through the kitchen and out to the barn... out to the port(?) stalls. Cattle... stocks that _____ up there. And run all the time, when it would work. A lot of times it didn't work... or a lot of times it would just stop and you'd have to go down there. And there was a little valve on it, and you'd push that valve down and it would start pumping again.

Like I say, a lot of times it wouldn't work and you still had to... and on wash day, you had to pack water up that hill to heat and do the washing. You had to... the washing machine you had was one of those... was kind of a tub-like thing that you _____ there with a rocker on it, that you pushed back and forth. When times got better and Dad was at an auction somewhere, and he bought a washing machine that had an agitator

in it; a lot like these are today but it still didn't have any power. It had some gears under there and a handle... like a fork and handle come up there. And you stood up there and pushed that handle back and forth. And that's what agitated it.

H: And when did he get this second... the more sophisticated machine?

O: Well that was in... that was after we moved to West Town. That's in '30... oh, '37, I suspect, something like that. See, we burned out in January of '39. So it was '37, '38, somewhere along in there.

H: That house burned out, _____?

O: Yes.

H: So in your first 5 years, you remember helping the bigger boys with the big chores of carrying the wood in, of carrying the water in.

O: Yes.

H: You had a wood stove, I take it?

O: Yes. Had a wood heating-stove and a wood cook-stove.

H: Did you have a stove upstairs _____?

O:; No. No. In wintertime it was cold; you undressed and gathered around the stove. Undressed there and run upstairs and got in bed. And you got up the next morning and you grabbed up your overalls... you wore bid overalls mostly. You'd run back downstairs and jump into them right quick.

H: And you had to carry water in from the spring...

O: Yes.

H: ...for cooking and laundry and bathing?

O: Yes.

H: Will you tell me how you bathed?

O: In a washtub in the kitchen. You'd just heat water on the cook-stove and throw it in the washtub. And then you'd sit in the washtub and bathed there.

H: Was that like a Saturday night activity?

O: Yes, it was done weekly.

H: You mean all 11 people bathed on Saturday night.

O: Yes.

H: But you, maybe, _____ use the water or something, because that's a lot of water.

O: Yes. Yes, you'd... you didn't waste it.

H: Right. So, you were the youngest of the boys but you had younger sisters.

O: I had 2 younger sisters, yes.

H: OK. Your mom must have had a lot of work to do with that many children.

O: Well, yes, but then the kids all helped too. Everybody had their little chores that they took care of. And everybody... like on washday, everybody packed water, helped wring the washer... washing. And so forth. Everybody had to help.

H: Boys and girls alike?

O: Yes.

H: Was washday Saturday too, or...?

O: Hmm, I don't remember. I don't remember what day it was.

H: What did the girls do for chores?

O: Well, they helped pick the blackberries, and they helped in the garden. And they'd help Mom with the washing and the cooking. And sweeping. Everyday you had to go around over the house with a dust rag and a dust mop and clean... wipe the dust off the furniture. That was a daily deal.

And then in the summertime, when the flies were bad, why they'd... a certain time of... they got so bad in the house, maybe they'd... they'd prop the screen door open and everybody'd get on one side of the house with a dishtowel and they'd go _____ dishtowel. And they'd all congregate at the door and shoo the flies out. (laughs)

H: What did you do for fun as a _____?

O: Oh, we'd head up a game of baseball, of course... softball. Of course we didn't have a regular team or anything; they'd have.... I'm not sure how they... whether they'd throw a... to make an Out... you'd have one man on each base. You'd have a pitcher and a catcher, and then the batter. And when he hit the ball, when he'd run for the base, and he'd bag up that ball. If he'd throw that ball between you and the base, then you was Out. You were supposed to have a catch... you didn't have enough men to go all the way around the bases, so that was the way to put the fellow Out was to throw the ball between you and the base before he got to it.

H: Did the girls play too?

O: Yes. And then in the wintertime, we'd have what's called a game of Fox and Geese. I'm not sure... we'd tramp around in the snow making an oval in the snow, and then there'd be a cross somewhere. I forget now how that worked. But we played that, and one fellow'd be it. He'd be the Fox and the rest of us would be the Geese. And someday... I'm not sure how that worked; I forgot that.

And we'd play what's called Handy Over. That would be one or two on each... so divided up, on each side of the woodshed. And you'd throw the ball over. And you'd get ready to throw the ball, you'd say: Handy Over, and you'd throw the ball. And if somebody... and then when you'd throw the ball, and then you're supposed to run around the other side. And you got caught... caught the ball, throw it and hit you before you got around the other side, then you was Out. You'd swap sides the other _____.

And then we had a hoop off of a barrel nailed up on the side of the barn; had a basketball at one time. And we'd... what was called Shorts and Long, when you had a... be so far from the base... from the hoop, and you'd throw at that basket. And there was a hoop, and if you got through it, it was so-many points. And then you'd back up to, say, 5 or 6 feet farther and you'd shoot. And you'd get to shoot... I'm not sure how... what the rules were on that; I forgot about that. I know you'd stand at 2 different places. I think, maybe, you had 3 shots and then you'd move back. And each time you made a basket was so many points. And I'm not sure about... I forgot the rules on that.

H: What was Sunday for you like, as a small child?

O: Well, it was pretty much... we didn't go to any church regularly, but we'd just.... Well we slept late of a Sunday _____. And I know... you'd have breakfast and dinner. And then for supper, you'd... they never cooked a meal on Sunday. I don't know why, but they... we always had leftover from dinner. Sunday

was no cooking... supper wasn't cooked on Sunday for some reason. I don't know whether it was a custom in our family or... I don't know if it was just our family or whether... that's the way it was at home. We didn't.... And in later years, we'd have maybe cold stuff. But Sundays, we never... any supper cooked on Sundays.

H: Did you do any visiting on Sunday?

O: Yes. We'd drive to... oh, like say, they'd... the family lived at Campbellburg before I was born, and they had a lot of... my parents had a lot of friends and relatives up there. And we'd go up there on a Sunday afternoon; we'd all load in the car and take out for Campbellburg.

H: All 11 of you?

O: Yes, pretty well so. (laughs)

H: (laughing) What kind of car was this.

O: Well, usually it was a Model T Ford Roadster, a 2-seater. You'd sit on one another's lap. You'd all load into....

H: So you always had a car, as far as you can remember.

O: Yes. Yes.

H: Was it black?

O: Oh, most of them were, yes. Except Ford, at that time... Henry Ford built his Model T, said, "You could buy any color you wanted, just so long as it was black." That's how old Model T's came in: black.

H: Do you remember how fast those cars went? compared to what todays _____?

O: Oh, probably not over 25 miles an hour. I couldn't tell you; I really don't know. Of course, the roads wasn't as good in that _____. We always went through the country roads that were closer, back through the county roads. Gravel roads; chuckholes and everything. But I'd say 25 miles an hour was probably tops for them, if that much.

H: That was probably faster than a horse.

O: Yes.

H: When your father was still working for the chair factory, before his injury, you still had a vegetable garden and... did you have animals?

O: Other than a foxhound and a beaglehound; that's about all. We didn't have any livestock. Well, we did have an old red cow for milk when I was a kid. Old... called her Cherry; she was a red cow. And I remember... well, that cow had a calf, why, Dad knocked the calf on the head with an axe because... to save milk. He couldn't sell the calf. I mean, it was during Depression; you couldn't get nothing for it. And the milk was more to him for the kids than it was to feed the calf. We needed milk for the family and... I don't never remember raising the calf when I was a kid.

H: Do you remember milk costs during the Depression?

O: No, don't have any idea.

H: _____. So... did you grow any crops, though, besides the vegetable garden?

O: No, we didn't... all we'd rented was the house. The house and yard was what we'd rented.

H: You lived out in the country just because your folks were...

O: Yes.

H: ... country folk and that was....

O: Well, it was cheaper. It's cheaper to live in the country. The rent was cheaper, and then, well, the kids wasn't so much trouble in the country as in town. They'd run in the streets all the time. They'd either... I believe they were easier to control in that way.

H: Where did your parents come from, again?

O: Campbellsburg. Now, my dad, he was originated up in Putnam County, up around Greencastle, up in there. And he came down to Campbellsburg to... offer to manage a poultry house for Havens Brothers, I believe the name of the company was. They sent him down there to operate this poultry house. And he run a... bought chickens, cream; and they run a peddling wagon over the country over in there.

I can remember him telling about... he'd come down... oh, as far as Chambersburg, down to Potato Road. And he run from

Potato Road... I know one time he talked about coming through... coming into Chambersburg from the east, and there wasn't no bridge on the... where the highway is, on 56. There was no bridge there where _____ is. There'd been a thunder storm come up and he came through there with an old Model T Ford peddling wagon. And he got up there and the creek was up. And the store that he stopped at was just across there within hollering distance, and the guy that operated the store was sitting out on the porch.

Dad hollered and asked him... said: can he get through?

And the guy said "Yes." Said they'd been going through it all morning.

So Dad cranked up his Ford and drives off into it. (laughs) Had to put his feet on the windshield... on the dashboard to keep from getting wet. Of course the car drowned out. And he come to find out the guy had a team of horses hitched up behind the barn and he'd been pulling them through all the time... (laughs) all morning.

H: And he was making a b_____ off....

O: Yes.

O: And another time... he told about... out there on Potato Road... of course, there was a bank... and a house set up on a bank about, oh, 3 or 4 feet above the road. And he stopped there and traded for some eggs. And he was sitting down on the road, counting eggs... lifting the eggs out of the bucket, or whatever the woman had them in. And putting them in the case, and she was standing up on the bank. And in those days they wore big long dresses come clear down to the ground.

He said a puff of wind (laughs) come up and blew that... this dress up right down over his head, and there he sat there.... He said that woman liked to beat him to death. (laughs hard)

H: And where did your mom come from?

O: Campbellsburg.

H: That's where they met?

O: Yes. Yes, her dad was w_____. I guess he worked at that poultry house, or had run it before or something. I'm not sure what... he'd operated the poultry house here in Paoli at one time, my granddad had. But at that time he was in Campbellsburg. I don't know whether he'd run the poultry house farm or whether just worked for them.

H: Do you know where your... where both of your folks originally came from?

O: Well, Mom's people were True. They came from North Carolina.

H: Who did? your Moms?

O: The True. Yes, Mom was from the True family; they came from North Carolina. Was Scotch-Irish ancestry. And Dad's people... his came from down in Mississippi, where he was... I forget now what his name was, but he was run out of Mississippi during... just before the Civil War; he was an abolitionist.

H: Your dad's people?

O: Yes. And he... and before he left, down there, the white caps had come around (laughs), and he hid... had a dug well way out, and he hid down there. And he had a board across it, down in the well there. And he hid there, in this well, hiding from the white caps for a couple of days before he could get out of the country. And he left and he came up somewhere in Kentucky. I think that was his granddad. Then his dad moved on up to Indiana; and then his dad and my granddad and grandmother emigrated west and homesteaded in Kansas.

My uncle, older than Dad... my uncle was born in Kansas and _____. And drought or something... they starved out and they came back to Indiana again. They originally homesteaded in Kansas. My uncle was born out there, and then they starved out and had to come back to Indiana.

H: Why Indiana?

O: Why, that's... I guess they... at that time people just moved around to find a place and they settled there. And when they left here and went to Kansas, I guess they had... I don't know whether they still had property here, or whether they just liked it or what. But they came back; they were up around Putnam County.

H: Do you know when your mother's people came from North Carolina?

O: No I don't. I don't know when that was.

H: You don't know why either.

O: No. No, I don't. Were they just emigrating or looking for free land, I suppose. I really don't know.

H: Seems like a lot of people that _____ had some folks that came from North Carolina and....

O: Well, this area around here was mostly settled by North Carolinans. In fact they....

END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE ONE

H: We were talking: how this area is settled by a lot of people from North Carolina.

O: Well, during the... at the time of the Civil War, it was more-or-less a lot of southern sympathizers here because most of the people in southern Indiana came from the south, and had southern sympathies.

H: OK.

O: While I was in Germany in the army, I was on pass in Frankfurt and run onto a couple of tourists over there from the United States. I don't know whether they was from up in the east somewhere. And we were talking. So, I mean, he wanted to know what part of the south I was from.

And I said, "I'm not from the south. I'm from Indiana."

Well, he couldn't believe it because of the way I spoke. He said I had to come from the south. I don't know if I talk more like a southerner than I do a northeasterner, I guess.

H: And that's because, you think, that southern Indiana was populated by....

O: Yes, populated by southerners. Yes.

H: And still passed on that typical accent.

O: Yes.

H: OK. When... can you tell me, when you were little, how often you went to town? or how far it was to go to town? or...?

O: Well, we lived about 3 mile out, and about the only time we got... about the only time the kids got to town, was when the carnival was on. We'd go in for the carnival which was probably on a Saturday night. The other night we didn't get to town.

H: And how often was the carnival?

O: Oh, once a year. They'd have a carnival here around the public square up there.

H: Can you tell me a little more about it?

O: Well, it was sponsored by the American Legion. They'd had... I believe. the Rumble was the name of the outfit. And they'd have a Ferris Wheel and merry-go-round. And then they'd have the games of chances... different games of chance. They didn't cost much; I think it cost a nickel maybe to ride the Ferris Wheel or merry-go-round. About a nickel was all it cost. It was usually here a week, I think; it was set up on a... they'd move in on a Sunday, I guess, and set up, and then they'd be there all week.

H: When was that about?

O: Oh, that was back in the '30s. I don't know when... I don't remember when they quit using the square after the traffic... bigger trucks and everything. They had to quit using it around the square because there wasn't room enough for the traffic to go around. And then they moved first down to what's now the Jay C park. Up until then it was always grouped around the inside of the square, around the courthouse.

H: And what time of year was the carnival?

O: It was in the summer. Yes.

H: Well, did your family get to go... did your parents go to town to do some shopping?

O: Well, they'd do the trading. Usually Dad would... I think he brought the groceries in on a Friday. On payday... he'd bring the groceries home Friday night on payday, and maybe go in on Saturday. But most of the time we spent our time at home.

H: So your dad did the shopping by himself.

O: Yes. They made out a grocery list and he'd stop in and give the great list to the clerk. And they'd go around and gather it up and put it in a box or in sacks, and he'd bring it home.

H: Did your mother ever go with him?

O: Well occasionally, yes. Mostly he'd... by himself, I think.

H: Do you know why it was called trading?

O: I suppose it was a holdover from the days when they did trade. You'd trade eggs for... cream or butter for your groceries. I suppose that's what it came from.

H: But your folks paid with cash.

O: Yes.

H: OK. So, going to town was not part of your childhood...

O: No.

H: ... unless it was a special occasion. Your life centered around the home or school.

O: Yes.

H: Alright. Can you tell me when you first went to school, what that was like? And you mentioned that you went to a country school up until the... 4th grade, is that right?

O: Yes. Of course, a country school and a go-up-to-town school is altogether different. In a country school there's just one big room, and I think it was 8 grades. I believe it was from the 1st to the 8th. Usually the little kids in the first grade will set on the front row, and as they progressed more... the bigger kids set in the back.

They had a chalkboard and a teacher's desk. And a big woodstove, and a water bucket set in back for your drinking water. And you did your studying right there at your desk or bench while the other class was going on. 'Course you listened in on the... I think that was... I believe that was a help in the early grades because the first-graders get to listen in on what the other classes were talking about. And that helped them with... I think that helped them learn more as they went through the grades. And when you'd get to town, that was altogether different; you had one room in... well they made it 2 classes, but each room was all one grade.

And your teacher was... you'd have maybe 2 or 3 different teachers. Out in the country school, you just had the one teacher.

H: What was the name of your country school that you went to?

O: Willowcreek.

H: Willowcreek?

O: Yes. I don't know what the number... they go by numbers. I don't know what the number was; I just called it Willowcreek.

H: And how many kids went to that school? about?

O: Ooh... (pause) I really don't... I know my class was the biggest class there. And one year it was the biggest class there and there were 10 of us in it.

H: In your grade?

O: Yes.

H: At that country school?

O: Yes. But the higher grades wouldn't be that many 'cause as a person got to be 16-years old, he quit and went to work. Tried to find him a job somewhere. I think that in the 8th grade, I think, there may be 5 or 6 in class.

H: So yours would have maybe 30 or 40 in the whole school?

H: Yes, that would be a big school, I'd say.

H: And 9 of them were of your family?

O: (laughs) Well, at that time there'd been... let's see, there was 5 of us at one time. Our youngest sister, I think she started after we moved to town. I guess there was 4 boys and 1 girl went to school out there. The others went to town. After you get to the 8th grade, then you come to the town school -- if you're going to go ahead and go to school.

H: Did you know everybody in that school?

O: Yes.

H: Because they were, like, neighbors?

O: Yes.

H: How far did you have to walk to school?

O: Oh, about three-quarters of a mile. (Machine turned off)

H: Mr. Oakley, you just brought out the picture of your town... excuse me, country school. Can you tell me about this picture for the record?

O: Well, I think Mom took that picture. She....

H: Your mom did?

H: Yes. A couple or three times, she took pictures out there and then they'd sell them to the school... to the pupils that wanted them. And that's one that she had taken.

H: And this was about what year?

O: Ooh, it must have been... I was in first grade, so it must have been in '30... in the spring of '34, I guess. The year of '34 and '35. I started in '34 so it must have been in '35; in the spring of '35.

H: And you're the boy that... in the front here?

O: First row on the right. Yes.

H: OK. And we'll try to get a copy of this for the files so people can see.

O: OK.

H: Is that OK?

O Yes. And who's the teacher here?

O: Orville Clements.

H: I'm sorry?

O: Clements. Orville.

H: He still lives over here in... over here in town.

H: No kidding?

O: Yes.

H: And how old would he be about now?

O: Ooh... I don't know. He'd probably be in his 70s.

H: And he taught all the years that you went to this rural....

O: No, he taught... the first year I was there, he taught. And the next year it was a teacher by the name of Kenny Hall. And

the next year was... the 3rd grade, was Watson, James Watson. And in the 4th year, Orville was back again. Evidently they just... wherever they... they just signed a yearly contract. I don't know where he taught the other 3 years, but some place he was teaching. Maybe an in town school or some other country school.

H: So your first year and your fourth year he taught all the grades in the country school?

O: Yes.

H: And how many kids did we count up in here?

O: 34, wasn't it?

H: I think so. 34. _____ (long pause) Yes. And out of these 34.

O: No, it would be 33 because I was counting Orville.

H: Yes, you can't count Orville.

O: 33.

H: And out of these 33 kids, you have an older sister in this picture?

O: No. No, she'd... she was going to town school at that time.

H: Yes. So who are your siblings in this picture?

O: Well... let's see. There's my brother Phil next to me; there's me and there's Phil next to me. And there's Darell. And there's Dayton.

H: What's his name?

O: Dayton.

H: Dayton.

O: Yes.

H: So there are four Oakley boys....

O: Four there at that time. That's before Betty... before Betty and Pat started. Now Betty started school out there but it was a year or two later. So that there is from when I was in

the first grade so... she started two years later.

H: What grade is Dayton in? in this picture?

O: I believe he was in the... I don't know if he was in the 8th... probably in the 8th grade at that time.

H: And which one is Dayton again?

O: That there.

H: This one here.

O: Yes.

H: This is the top... almost like the second row from the top, the second boy from the right.

O: Yes.

H: OK. And which one is this boy again, here?

O: Darell.

H: This is Darell right here?

O: Yes.

H: And he's to the left of the girl in the white dress, right in the middle.

O: Yes.

H: Top left. And what... and he was in about the 5th grade there, would you say?

O: Let me see. That's... no, that wouldn't be right. See, if I was in the 1st, Phil was in the 2nd, I believe. So Darell would have been about the... probably the 4th.

H: He looked bigger. That's why I was guessing....

O: Yes, it would have been about the 4th or 5th grade. And Dayton would have been about, probably, the 6th.

H: Dayton would have been? He wouldn't have been in the 8th.

O: No, I don't believe so. No.

H: OK. And this one here is Phil?

O: Yes.

H: And he's like... 11 o'clock, 2 boys over from you.

O: Yes, in the second row.

H: In the second row, in the middle of the picture. And he was about a year older than you are?

O: Yes, 18 months.

H: You had mentioned --when we shut the tape recorder off-- that the boys were... a lot of times wore bib overalls...

O: Yes.

H: ...to school? And what did the girls wear?

O: Just dresses.

H: _____ dresses.

O: Yes.

H: Yes. Did your mother make some of the clothes? Or was the overalls made _____?

O: The overalls were bought but she made... I think she made the girls' dresses. But our overalls were bought.

H: Alright. So thanks for showing that to me; that was a real treat.

So, from this school on you went to town school because you moved to town.

O: Yes. Yes, but then they closed up school. Ooh, I don't know what year they did close all the county schools around. But it was probably about the 6th grade; I don't know what year that would have been that they closed the county schools.

H: So you all had to go to town.

O: Yes.

H: Were you already living in town then or not?

O: Yes, we were living in town at that time.

H: So you had basically lived in the country --in two different houses-- until you were about the 5th or 6th grade.

O: 4th.

H: 4th grade.

O: Yes. I was in the 4th when we moved to town... come back to town.

H: And was your father already doing his second profession... his second job?

O: Oh...

H: Was he _____ injury?

O: Yes, he was working... back working at the town when the house burned.

H: That was in '39.

O: Yes.

H: So you were already in the town school.

O: Well, I came to school in '39 when the house burned. That's how come we moved back to town.

H: Right. OK. What was the difference when you went to... you told me a little bit about when you went to town school. There were 2 classes in a... 2 grades in a class?

O: No, just one grade but they was broke down. There were more kids, so they would be broke down into 2 separate groups.

H: Yes.

O: And there'd be... well, say, for the 4th grade there'd be 2 different rooms of them.

H: Oh, there'd be two 4th grades? There were that many kids?

O: Yes.

H: Oh. OK.

O: Now I don't know how many would be in the... I don't

remember how many were in a different room, but it was two separate rooms at that time.

H: And did you know all the kids now in this school?

O: No, you knew the ones in your room and most of them in the other room, but not all of them.

H: Because there would be too many.

O: Yes, you just didn't associate with them -- other than at recess.

H: How big was Paoli, do you think?

O: Probably around 1800 or 2000; something like that.

H: That's a lot of people to _____; you can't possibly know all of them.

O: I remember, when I was going to school, I don't know what year, but they... the population I found at the edge of town was 2218. And that was, for a long time, that's what the population of _____. The population of Paoli: 2,218.

H: And now it's like about 3500.

O: Around 3500, I think, now.

H: So, tell me what else you remember about town school and how living in town would be different.

O: Well, your school... you'd have... each class had a different teacher. I mean, you had your English teacher, and your history teacher... and maybe your history and geography might be the same teacher. But each subject had a different teacher usually. So instead of only having one teacher, you had three or four.

And, of course, you had more kids to play with. And you had your swings... and out at the country school, we didn't have any swings. We didn't have anything to play with, or just what we'd bring from home: a ball or something like that.

H: Did you still bring your lunch to town school? Or did they _____?

O: Well, we brought our lunch and then, after we got bigger, then we were able to go home for dinner.

H: Oh, OK. Did you like school?

O: Oh, I didn't mind it too bad. 'Course, along with spring it got to be a drag. You were glad to get out and dreaded going back, but after you got into it, it wasn't that bad.

H: Yes. And when you lived in town... can you tell me what the town looked like when you were a child? How it was different? Say, like when you were, like, in high school or, you know, when you were first married, and now.

O: Well, of course, the main big difference is the... so many vacant buildings around the square. And then the bandstand... they used to have a bandstand down there on the south side of the square, out in the courtyard. And they had the police department... and the fire trucks was stored under, and up above was the bandstand. They'd have a band concert in the summer. We used to come to town... we'd come down, I think, on Thursday night during the summer; they'd have a band concert down there. Oh, I guess, there was school kids and older people that could play instruments and they'd have a concert, I believe, on Thursday night. And the people'd come in and set around the square or up the courtyard to listen to the music... the band music.

H: Would you just walk down there?

O: Yes.

H: When you lived in town, would you do that?

O: Yes.

H: So, the town square was a lot more active?

O: Yes. On a Saturday, people would come into town to do their trading and they'd park around the square there, and then people would get out and they'd just walk around and around the square - and visit. And the stores would stay open... grocery stores and so-forth. The hardware, they'd stay open till 9 or 10 o'clock, and people just set around the square... park around the square, or you'd walk around and around the square, and visit. It was kind of a ... I guess that was their entertainment.

H: And did you go shopping with your folks then? Or did they still do it by themselves?

O: Well we'd... both, sometimes we'd go and sometimes we didn't.

H: But it was a big social event...

O: Yes.

H: ...to come down on the square?

O: Yes.

H: What would a 10-year-old kid do, on the square?

O: Oh, run around with the other kids there, and wrestling in the courtyard. Just walked around and looked the sights over. See the people.

H: Hang out?

O: Yes, that's about it.

H: How was it different when you went to high school? How was your social activity...?

O: Of course, at that time, you got bigger and you got mingling more at that time. And, of course, you'd have different odd jobs around and you'd have a little spending money. So then you'd have... there were one or two restaurants where the teenagers'd hang out some... not as much as they do now. Now they're there every night usually. At that time, it would just be on Friday or Saturday night that they'd meet around these restaurants.

There was Andy's Restaurant up here on where the church parking lot is now. There was a restaurant there called Andy's. And later on they had... there was another one up there Sibbitts started, and run it for awhile. [deletion]. And teenagers hung out there; they'd gather in there and they used to, maybe....

Out of a half a dozen kids, there's one that would have a car --and maybe the only car. And chances are he got it from his dad. And then they'd all pile into that and get enough money together for gasoline and they'd drive over to Orleans to see what was going on there. And then they'd come back. That was about it.

Of course, during the war years, there wasn't much to drive around on account of the gas ration. About everything you done was right local.

H: So you remember the effect of World War II?

O: Oh yes, out of the 5 brothers, 4... or out of the 6 boys, 5 of us were in service. 4 of them were in during World War II and

then I was in during the Korean business. I just missed it... World War II, by just 2 or 3 months. They quit the draft 2 or 3 months before I got 18 and graduated. But if it went on another 6 months, I'd of gotten drafted at that time.

H: Did you know people that didn't come back from World War II?

O: Yes. And back over on _____ Street that I lived on, there was... oh, Delmaer Holland, about the same age as Dayton, my older brother; we played up and down the street there. He was lost over in the North Atlantic.

H: What... I'm sorry, what was his name?

O: Holland, Delmaer Holland. Delmaer. D-E-L-M-A-E-R.

H: And what was...?

O: Holland. And he was... the boat was sunk on the way in the North Atlantic, up there. Him and another local guy by the name of Naussear... they were found in the same life raft and froze to death.

And then another Holland boy (that lived down on Elm Street, just a block over), he was killed in North Africa at El Allemain.

H: How did, like, this town deal with World War II losses?

O: Well, there was... (long pause) I don't really... I can hardly explain. Everybody took it to heart. I mean, everybody was concerned. Well, I know at that time I was... one time during the war, I was in the... active in the Boy Scouts. And I know they had what they called an aluminum drive. All the Boy Scouts got together and they got somebody to donate a truck; somebody to donate to drive it. And on certain days, they'd all get together and they'd go around and people'd donate their aluminum.

H: Aluminum?

O: Yes. They'd... pots and pans that they didn't use, they'd donate that for the war drive.

And then while... also while I was in Scouts, we had... oh, back up where the depot is now, is a big old warehouse building called the Ham Building. And the Boy Scouts went around and had a paper drive; collected paper. And they got ahold of an old baler somewhere, and we'd bale this paper up and sell it for... I don't know what they.... I guess they used it to recondition it. Everything was scarce; paper and everything was scarce and we'd

go around to the stores and up and down the streets. People'd stack out their used papers: newspapers and magazines, cardboard. And we'd take it up there and bale it up. And they had what... paper drive.

Then they had a scrap-iron drive; I remember up there by the old school playground. It was called the battleground... they would stack full of scrap iron at one time. People'd come in and pile it up there for the scrap drive. That's where a lot of your old... oh, your Model T Fords.... That's the reason they're so scarce now. Not necessarily because they wore out. A lot of them old cars like that, they were past running... they'd donate them to the scrap drive.

H: How did you get your news about World War II?

O: Radio and newspapers. We had radio, and I remember the... well, one of the main one we listened to all about was... huh, can't recall his name now. Not Conrad but... Morrow, Edward R. Morrow. I remember listening to him; that was the main thing. Dad would never miss a night listening to Edward R. Morrow on the news.

H: Was this like... you would listen after supper?

O: Yes. Yes.

H: And... did your family talk about it at all? like _____

O: Yes, about who the... who had left for the army, or who's in on leave, or who's got wounded, or who's got missing or killed. In a small town like this... you didn't know the person directly, you knew... you at least knew his family or some member of his family.

H: Well, what about in school? Did you talk about the war at all in school?

O: Yes. In parts. I know... I don't know what year it was, but they got the maps that you had in geography class. You know, they roll up kind of like window blinds. I remember a teacher telling us that they had ordered new maps --and that was after Hitler had overrun Europe-- and he was speculating as whether the new maps would show the old countries or whether it would show how Europe was divided up at that time when... after Germany took it over. 'Course, it came out it was the old borders of what it was before the war. And it was later, I guess, they changed it.

But it was on everybody's mind.

H: Did it seem like there was a war that was far away, even though, you know, you knew people that went?

O: Yes. Yes, it was always somewhere else, but yet we were... everyone of us was concerned about it. So, like I say, if you didn't know anybody... well, there wasn't anybody that didn't have a member of his family, or a cousin or someone that was involved in it.

H: Did the boys want to go and join the war?

O: Most of them did. But yet most of them were... well, I think they was more or less _____ about... well, they knew that they were... suppose they was going to have to go. But folks... a good part of them volunteered and some of them waited for the draft. They knew they was going; they didn't... oh, you hear of one or two that was... pulled a different kind of stunt to keep out of it.

H: World War II?

O: Yes, oh they'd get a farm deferment.

H: What kind of deferment?

O: Farm. Or they'd try to get a job that was what they called "essential." And that way they'd get a deferment and wouldn't have to go. One or two I've heard of that... well, one in particular... shot himself in the foot with a shotgun. He crippled himself so he wouldn't have to go.

H: Did it work?

O: Yes. And then later on they... after the war was over, not too many years ago, they... oh, I don't know whether I ought to tell this or not. (Machine turned off)

H: Well, you were going to tell me about how the patriotism has changed recently with the American Legion's economic drive.

O: Well, the American Legion was always... of course, it originated in... after World War II... World War I. And these guys were a social organization; they did a lot of good for the town. They'd have... like I say, they sponsored a carnival here for entertainment, and they did other good works around town. I know, during the John Dillinger deal they were... every little town figured John Dillinger was going to rob the bank, so they had... organized a... oh I guess you don't call them vigilantes or what... special deputies or what? I know they... in later

years after I joined the Legion, they were talking... some of the members were talking about that they organized and they had... of course they had their rifles up there that they used during ceremonies for firing squad's ceremonies and so forth. So they decided that they was going to be ready for John Dillinger. And they organized some kind of a citizen's group. Several members around the square there, business men, were involved in it. And so at one of Legion meetings, they decided as whether they was going to have the rifles to be loaded or whether they'd have their ammunition close by. And then if John Dillinger....

END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE TWO

H: OK. We were talking about the American Legion and the citizens' group at Del_____ and rifle loading.

O: Well, at one meeting they decided... they was going to decide... some guy got the idea that they ought to have their rifles loaded; they was going to waste no time. If Dillinger got in town, they was going to waste no time. So he made a motion that they have... one fellow made the motion that they have the rifles unlocked and the ammunition close by, and he thought they ought to have the rifles loaded.

So they brought it up for a vote and it was passed that they'd have their rifles loaded. After the meeting broke up and they went to load their rifles, the first thing you know, somebody shot through the roof of the building... loading them. (laughs)

H: You're kidding.

O: So they reconvened the meeting and changed the vote to where they'd have the rifles unlocked out of the cabinet, but not loaded. The cartridges would be close by.

H: And when was this?

O: That was during the early '30s when John Dillinger was in his heyday. They was loading for John Dillinger. Every small town, I guess, was expecting John Dillinger to come rob the bank. They was going to be ready for it.

H: OK. And then, so, you were going to tell me how your attitudes toward the American Legion changed.

O: Well, the local post, they were... the majority of them were opposed to a bar. They'd come up to a meeting every so often...

they always rented; they didn't have a building of their own. They rented the meeting hall. And that time they shot through the roof, I think they were meeting... had over the Graysbrown Hardware store, where the Ratcliffe Furniture Store is now. They were meeting upstairs there; I think that's where they shot through the roof.

But at any rate, they... after World War II, then, a lot of new veterans come in, they... younger ones, and they wanted to build a post of their own. And they had more money to spend, but they wanted... the younger ones wanted a bar. The older ones, they were opposed to a bar. So that kind of busted them up to some extent.

But later on then, they... some of the younger ones... the older ones are beginning dying off and the younger ones got control of it, and so they did decide to build a meeting hall. They bought the land out here on the hospital road and built a hall there. And they're going to have a bar in it. 'Course that's... some of the older members, like I say, was opposed to it so they dropped out. Some of them went over to... they still belong to the Legion; they belong over to... joined the Orleans post --somewhere out of town. They wasn't going to have a bar in their meeting hall.

So then hard times come on at the post and they were having a hard time making payments on their mortgage, so they started a drive on getting new members. And at that time, they'd... anybody come in with the initiation fee, they'd take them in. And this one particular fellow that had shot himself in the foot to keep out of the draft, he showed up at the meetings. They voted him in; he was... he had become a member of the American Legion. And so that's when I dropped out of it and I'd gone over to Orleans. I still... I think everyone should belong... every veteran should belong to a veteran's organization of some kind. So I paid my dues up over at Orleans post; dropped out of this one.

H: You thought that that was politically not the correct thing.

O: Well, it's not only political, but it's just not right. The Legion is for veterans and for... it's just not like they got a guy who shoots himself in the foot to keep out of the war that belongs to it.

H: Well, thank you for telling me that.

Well, generally, during World War II, most people... most people, you think, had more of a patriotic....

O: Yes. Yes. There were a few around that... like I say, they tried every way that they could to keep out of it. Some of them did; most of them didn't. But there was some of them around; I

could name them but I won't. They got farm deferments... and essential jobs, maybe, that would get them out of it.

H: When did the draft start for World War II?

O: It was just before... let me see, the Japs bombed Pearl Harbor in December '41, and the draft had started before then. I know Dayton was drafted in... some of the draft started in '40. They started getting ready for it even if they knew it was coming, but politically they couldn't get through Congress, but they finally did get a draft law through. But it was in '40, I believe; I'm not sure but I think somewhere in '40.

H: A lot of boys were joining on their own?

O: Yes.

H: Did you join or were you drafted?

O: No, I looked at going in the army like... kind of like dying, on account of.... Curious. A lot of people that I know were there before, and I was curious about it, but not curious enough to want to volunteer. I wasn't opposed to it; I went. But that's... like I say, it's... I had four brothers that were in ahead of me, and a lot of people I grew up with and knew were in World War II. And I'd heard a lot about it... about army life, and I was kind of curious. But not enough... not curious enough to want to volunteer for it.

H: I'm sorry. I didn't _____ that you looked at the army kind of like a way to...?

O: Well, kind of like dying. Everybody's going to do it, but I'm not going to volunteer.

H: OK. So you were drafted.

O: Yes.

H: And where did you serve?

O: In Germany. Yes, I was over there for a little over a year. Most of the people I went with in the basic training with, was... at that time, they were having a hard time in Korea, and they were flying... taking a delay in route, and then they were flying them right over to Korea. I was... got on orders to go to Europe instead of... well, I was originally on what was called Fecom, Far East command.

H: I'm sorry; on what?

O: On what they called a Fecom, it's a Far East command. I was originally on orders, through basic, but I applied for... oh, leadership school, which they call it junior OCS, where you go for noncom school. So they pulled me off orders and I was in this school there for... oh, I forget now how long it was. So then when the orders came out again, I went to Europe.

H: What was it like coming back home after serving in World War II? Did people treat you with...?

O: Of course, I wasn't in World War II. But the GIs that came back, they were... everybody couldn't do enough for them.

H: They were treated with a lot of...?

O: Yes, they just couldn't do enough for them. Anything they wanted, seemed like that's what they got.

H: A lot of respect for them?

O: Yes. Yes.

H: Do you remember the war ending?

O: Yes.

H: How did you hear about it?

O: Oh... I'm not sure; it was on the radio at that time.

H: You were where?

O: Well, I'm not sure. I know where I was when Roosevelt died; I was out in the....

H: Where were you when Roosevelt died?

O: I was out pulling weeds in the yard, down at the edge of the house. And a neighbor hollered across; she said Roosevelt had died. So then I went in the house and turned the radio on. That's all you heard on the radio was that Roosevelt had died.

H: Were there, like, ceremonies in town for...

O: Yes, when the war ended....

H: ... veterans when the war ended?

O: Yes, when the war ended, they blocked off the square up there, and people up there blowing horns. One or two guys up there with shotguns shooting them off in the air. It was quite a big blowout until everybody was tired of it and wanting their people to come home.

H: And there were a lot of ceremonies later with the American Legion...

O: Yes. Yes.

H: ... and others; the veterans were pretty active?

O: Yes. They were really active.

H: OK. Can you tell me a little bit more about the Korean War? Now, that's where you... I... that's where you served was the Korean War?

O: Yes.

H: So you got orders to go to Europe and they got....

O: Well, I was on orders first to go to Korea, but then they were called off and... sent to school. And then orders came out again... they recut the orders and I went to Germany. I got over there... of course, I got over there... at that time they didn't know what Russia was going to do. They expected Russia to overrun Europe at any time. They was building up forces over there.

H: What year was this?

O: Hmm... '52, when I went over. And they... like I say, get off the boat over there and I went to replacement depot. And they... just more-or-less were, like I say, they didn't know what Russia was going to do. They was half expecting them to overrun Europe and they were building up different organizations over there. At the time I got there, they were building... they were forming hospitals and ordinance. I know that a buddy that I went over with... went through basic with and went over with, he went in the ordinance. And they shipped me to hospital... in building an evacuation hospital. I think he formed... they formed three evacuation hospitals and I don't know how many of these little MASH outfits like was on television.

And they sent me to school, and when they formed the evacuation hospital.... And then I practiced... of course, I went to school 2 or 3 different times for first aid and as

corpsman and so forth. And then, when we would have our drill... they'd have their drills where you'd go out and set up your tent. And then they had... you had to call into work... you had to have all your field equipment ready to go within just a few minutes time.

I know, the little town I was in over there was up on a hill. As you'd come out of it... the 2nd Armored was stationed down in town; we was on a hill up above it. And we'd get our orders to pull out, why, we'd go out and the 2nd Armored would already be set up out there. It had recoilless rifles and a howitzer and other things. _____ pointed at the _____.

And when you first got over there, they indoctrinate you with how far it was from a third point in the Russian-occupied.... I know they... the sergeant was talking, the first we got there; he got to have us all in a big room there and tell us all about how far it was from Moscow by air. How far it was from different air bases around there. And he was talking about --I believe it was Austria-- the Russians were there. He told us how far it was from that base there to where we were at. He'd tell how many minutes it would leave us, by air, from these different points.

And then he told us the base there in... I believe it was Austria.... And he told how many minutes it was from there to where we was at, and then he was quiet a little minute, and he said, "Now, that's by tank." (laughs) So, just three or 4 minutes from that Russian base to where we was at by tank.

H: Wow.

O: So... well we'd... ever so often they'd call an alert and everybody'd jump on their trucks and they'd run out. They had a certain place set, that was picked out ahead of time, where you'd assemble.

H: Well, you were telling me that you had missed going to World War II by a couple of months?

O: Yes, something like that. They... when I got 18, they'd quit the draft. At 18 was when you had to register... why, I registered for the draft. At 18 was when they drafted you. But they quit it just before I reached 18.

H: And you were 18 in '47?

O: Oh yes. Yes.

H: And so your service hitch was during the Korean time?

O: Yes.

H: Can you tell me, did you sense a difference of being a soldier during the early '50s, the cold-war times, than with your brothers in World War II? and other people in World War II?

O: Yes, there was a... there was a difference at that time. Not as big a difference as there was at Vietnam. Seemed like it was... oh, maybe it ... the politics... the politicians had a different attitude with trying to win elections or something, but they called it Truman's War. And the public was divided on whether they had any business over there or not. I think they did, myself.

H: You think what?

O: I think they should have went. But a lot of people didn't approve of it.

H: In Paoli.

O: Yes. Not only here but, I guess, all over the states it was that way. Some areas were different than others, but they seemed, like, changed even more drastically during the Vietnam War. Instead of... well, at that time they didn't... they claimed they wasn't trying to win; they was just trying to hold them off or something. Instead of trying to go all-out to win it, they were just more-or-less biding their time and hoping the other fellow'd get tired and quit -- or something.

H: Well, how could you sense the public reaction?

O: Well, just by hearing them talk. As far as the whole attitude towards soldiers in the Korean, it was not much different than it was during World War II. I know... I took basic training down at Breckinridge, across the river from Evansville, down there in Kentucky. And I'd get off at noon on Saturday and I'd hitch... get a ride up there to the edge of camp or maybe over into Evansville from some GI down there. Some that had cars, and they'd go on past and I'd drive in to Evansville. And I'd hitchhike the rest of the way home. There was no problem getting a ride. I mean the public still respected a soldier. But it seemed like during the Vietnam; bit, they seemed. Instead of holding the officials responsible, it seemed like they took it out on the GI. The GI didn't have the backing that he had during the other two wars.

H: You were in your 40s during the Vietnam war?

O: Yes. I expect.

H: I'm trying to get the.... So you had friends... you knew people who had children...

O: Yes.

H: ...that were in Vietnam? What was the attitude like in Paoli? Did kids want to go fight for Vietnam? or was it very quiet...?

O: No, there wasn't too much... well, they wouldn't volunteer like there was during the other two times. Like I say, they more-or-less... maybe just for the sideline, they just hoped the other fellow'd get tired of it and back out, or something. They didn't make a drive like they did.... The public wasn't backing it like....

H: And the town of Paoli was, like, divided....

O: Pretty much that way too.

H: ...like the country?

O: Yes, they wasn't more-or-less divided, they... you just didn't hear too much about it. Each fellow kept to himself, but you'd more-or-less sense it. They wasn't wholly back of it.

H: How would you know that you were getting about Vietnam different than you knew what you were getting, let's say, about the Korean War?

O: Well, that might have been another... another thing that was responsible for it: your TV. They showed a lot on there that maybe they shouldn't. And I believe they... newsmen any more are trying to influence the public rather than just stating the facts. They just more-or-less try to... try to more-or-less tell their side of it and get their viewpoint.

H: Well, you know, Vietnam had a _____ at the highlights of the '60s movement.

O: Yes.

H: Before we elaborate more on Vietnam, what was... did you have any evidence of the '60s movement in Paoli? Did the kids wear long hair and go to...?

O: Oh yes, they went to some of that, to some extent, but not

like they did in bigger cities, I don't believe. They... in smaller towns this way, it's more conservative here than it is in some of the other places, I think.

H: But you would hear about that _____ on television?

O: Yes.

H: And, so Vietnam came, like, on top of that whole movement? And did... when kids came back from Vietnam, you know, they were treated _____?

O: No, they wasn't treated the same way that any other veteran had been. I know, one fellow was here... he wasn't local here but his family had moved in.... And he was a career soldier, and he had served two or three times over there...

H: Yes.

O: ...but, yet, the public just didn't seem as though they were... well, they just wasn't backing it like I think they should have.

H: Do you mean to tell me... what was your impression of how this community reacted to demonstrations and draft-card burning and that kind of thing?

O: Majority of them were opposed to that. And the ones that went to Canada to keep out of it, they even.... You more-or-less sensed... not that you pinned down, but it seemed like you sensed more than actually you'd go by. Like, even though they didn't... maybe didn't approve of it, still they didn't approve of taking off to Canada to keep out of it. Like they thought it was still his duty even though they didn't approve of it, they still seemed... appeared that they thought it was an offense.

H: And how did you know that?

O: You more-or-less... it was something you sensed; it was nothing that you could pin down, but it seemed that was a.... Like I say, it's more a conservative community.

H: Did the Paoli newspaper of that time report anything about Vietnam, or that...?

O: No, just the local news about who was gone and where they were at, and so forth. But they didn't editorialize or anything like that. That's the way your big newspaper... the Louisville Times, Courier-Journal.... Seemed like they put a lot of stuff

in their headlines and on the front page that they should have back on their editorial page. They declare opinion and it's not news that they're putting on the front page. But they seem to try to make it appear like it's news.

H: Sure. Like, when you came home from serving your hitch in the army, you felt like you had more of a positive response than the boys that did that when...?

O: Oh yes, a whole lot more. A whole lot more so. I felt sorry for the guys in Vietnam that was in at that time, whether they went over there or not, because of the attitude of the public.

H: Did you know people that tried to get out of Vietnam? like you said in World War II?

O: No. (pause) Possibly.

H: Or did you hear stories of...?

O: A lot of guys went to college that I believe wouldn't have went to college if it hadn't been for the draft.

H: Oh, the old student deferments.

O: Yes.

H: Yes, I... that's part of my generation. Yes, I know about that.

O: I believe that a lot of them went to college that wouldn't have went if it hadn't been for the Vietnam War.

H: Yes.

O: So maybe something good of it after all. At least they....

H: Well, are there any other, like, major events in the country that affected you or that you sense affected Paoli?

O: Oh, like the... what comes to mind right off hand, would be the '37 flood in Louisville. They brought refugees out here and had them up here in the schools.

H: The '37 flood in Louisville?

O: Yes.

H: I don't know about that flood. Can you tell me a little bit more?

O: Well, it just about... well, it wiped out several little towns down along the river there. And Louisville and New Albany, they were pretty well inundated. And they had refugees; had to move them out. And there were some... they moved them up here to... had them up here to the schoolhouse. And... it comes back to the Legion; they were... the American Legion, they were a big mover in organizing that... or had a big hand in organizing that. They helped as volunteers. And I know Mom was in the Eastern Star, and they helped out a lot with that as volunteers. I think they helped cook and so forth.

H: About how many people came, do you know?

O: No, I don't. I don't remember how many.

H* But they lived here temporarily and...

O: Yes.

H: ...then....

O: Until their waters went down. (long pause)

H: Well, that's pretty interesting.
What... do you remember when television came into being?

O: Yes. I remember... I think about the first set around here was the Stout family down here. We had our first set... I never saw it but I heard of it... talk about it. Said they got a pretty good picture, but they referred to the comment about the static, like the static on a radio. They said the static on a television was like a snowstorm.

H: Yes.

O: I remember them talking about that. The first one we got was in... I think it was in about '60, '61, somewhere along in there. That's when Dad had got down in bed that time; he had had, from tool grinding... from grinding _____, he got what they called "miner's asthma." The silica dust off those emery wheels had filled his lungs up on the same order as... I don't know what they call in the mines: the "black lung" or what. It affected him the same as emphysema does now from smoking.

He was down for a long bed rest for a long time, and that's... we got him a television to pass the time for him. I know it was a... I never... I don't hear the set any more. My

brother-in-law was... an older sister married up in Indianapolis and they brought one down. It was a Muntz, M-U-N-T-Z, I believe was the way it was spelled; I never hear of one any more. I suppose it was a small outfit that started and then maybe got swallowed up by the bigger companies.

H: So the television seems like how people in _____ got their _____?

O: Yes. (MACHINE OFF)

H: We had neglected to go over the one picture of one of your brothers who was on leave that you'd like to _____ out for us. Can you tell me... there are 6 men in this picture; can you tell me, maybe, when this was taken? and what's going on here?

O: Well, I don't remember the year, but now, that's from Bob, my brother who was in on furlough. He had finished basic and was going away overseas. And, of course, at that time we didn't know which... whether he was going to Europe or Asia; they'd never say.

H: World War II?

O: Yes. They would never tell where you was going or when you was going, but he was in on leave at this time.

And Dayton... he'd already been in and discharged; his feet gave... broke down on him.

H: Yes.

O: And next is Phil, that was before he went in; he hadn't got in yet. Now Darell, the one between Dayton and Phil, he was in service somewhere and I don't know if he was overseas yet or not. He was over in the Philippines.

H:: Yes.

O: And then there's Dad, and there's Nelson. Now Nelson is the oldest brother; he didn't pass. He went for an examination and didn't pass. And then there's me on the end over there.

H: That's your father, the _____ on the right?

O: Yes.

H: I thought that was one of your brothers. And how old are you about in this picture, do you think? 15 ore so?

O: 15 or 16, somewhere along in there; yes.

H: That would be about 1944.

O: Yes. Probably '44 or '5, along in there.

H: Because the war was over in '45.

O: Yes.

H: OK, and....

O: '46, wasn't it? It ended at the end of '46 or...? That's the way I...

H: _____

O: OK. It was probably in '44 then, 'cause he was over there during the Battle of the Bulge; he was over there at that time.

H: Oh. OK. I'll ask you about this one a little bit later.
Can you tell me what you did after you came back from the service?

O: Oh, well, then I went back to work for the Cornwell. I'd been working down the Cornwell...

H: At where?

O: Cornwells? It was a furniture fact... they built television cabinets.

H: In Paoli?

O: Yes.

H: And you had worked at the same...?

O: I'd worked there a short time... I went to work there in '47 when I got out of school... out of high school; I went to work down there. And I worked 'till... it was '51 when I was drafted. January 8th of '51 when I went into the service.

After I'd come back, I went back to work down there. And I worked, I think it was, 2 weeks and then they laid off for... let's see, I got in... I was discharged before Thanksgiving. I got back to Breckinridge and I went down there and they let us have a 3-day pass over Thanksgiving. And I came home for a couple of days and then went back and finished the processing out. And then come home and went back to work at Cornwell. And

I worked there for, oh, maybe 2 or 3 weeks, and they shut down for, I guess, it was Christmas vacation or something.

And in the meantime, I'd... no, they'd run short of orders or something; they were going to be shut down for a little longer than that. So there was a local fellow here had a construction outfit, and was going to... about Columbus, over in there or there, on a construction.... So I signed up with him... with that outfit to go over there.

In the meantime, a fellow told me that a job had come open up there at the post office. So I went up there and applied for that, and got that job as a temporary. I had to call the guy who was leaving on a Sunday afternoon, so I had.... Saturday morning then, I applied up there for a job at the post office and got that, and so I called him Saturday night and tell him I wouldn't go with him and that I got this job here at the post office.

Oh, I don't know how long it was before they declared the job open, and then I could apply for a... take a test and apply for the job. And got that as Substitute Clerk/Carrier; at that time they called it. Took a Civil Service test and passed it. So I carried the mail in for about a year.

So then the guy that had been carrier, he decided he didn't like... he had transferred in as clerk and he decided he didn't like clerking, so he went and.... When they declared the carrier route open, he decided he wanted... he had seniority; he wanted to become a regular carrier. So he transferred in as a carrier and I went in as what was called a Substitute Clerk/Carrier. I carried part-time as a substitute whenever he was off on vacation or sick, and the rest of the time I was clerking. I'd go in and work 2 hours when the mail came in, then I'd be off 2 hours, then go back and work 2 hours and....

END OF TAPE TWO, SIDE ONE

H: Mr. Oakley we were talking about your work and you mentioned that you would work 2 hours off and 2 hours on I didn't quite understand, can you tell me more about that?

O: Well you go ahead and work 2 hours and then you'd be off 2 hours. That is work on the half, that's 'cause the post office got, they're allotted so many hours for a quarter and the Post Master has to divide then up to so many hours a day or some days if the mail is heavier then you'd get more hours in on some days than other but basically I'd be in 2 hours when the mail first came in in the morning and then I'd go home or be off duty for 2 hours and then work maybe an hour or 2 hours and then be off again and then when they'd be ready to dispatch the mail I'd be back up there for another 2 hours.

H: I see, so it was because of the type of work they had did.

O: Yes, it depended on the amount of work they had at that time.

H: And you stayed at that job for the rest of your working ...

O: Well, I stayed at that for I don't know how many years and then, while I was substituting, and then later on when someone retired why they waited for a regular job came open then I got a regular 8 hours pay. That was, ah.. I don't know what year that was... I worked as a director for several years and then the Post Office picked up enough work, that is enough papers, that they decided they had enough work for what's called an Assistant Post Master so the Senior Clerk got that job as an Assistant Post Master that's when I went in as regular clerk and after he retired I applied for the job as Assistant Post Master and I worked at that for I don't know how many years, 2 years, and then the Post Master retired so I applied for a job as Post Master and during all the years I worked there I worked as a city carrier, as a clerk and I worked at different times on the rural routes, I knew all the rural routes drove them at different times when the rural carrier or substitute be sick I had to learn the rural routes so I carried them, so when the job as Post Master came open I applied for it and got it and worked as a Post Master for 5 years. Then I retired at 55 years.

H: Which was kind of early?

O: Yes, well I had my 32 years in and 2 year military service accredited and it was 34 years for retirement.

H: I see. We had mentioned when we were chatting informally that you thought the clientele had changed a lot during your 32 years as working in the Post Office. Can you tell me about that now?

O: Well the attitude of the public changed drastically or appeared to especially the younger people like the employee. Now the older employees they were dedicated to serving the public. I know one rural carrier, this is just one instance, an old fellow lived down here over on Moore's Ridge and he was an old bachelor, he wasn't able to get to town very often, he chewed tobacco well he had run out of tobacco so he left a note in the mail box for the mail man to bring him a plug of tobacco next trip round. I suppose technically he wasn't supposed to but he did it, he didn't fail and another old guy down there he came by one time and the old guy was trying to ring an old sow. Well he stopped and he helped hold that old sow while the guy put a ring in its

nose to keep it from getting out. Well these younger people they, they're not interested in trying to help somebody out, well like I said before they're interested in their rights and pay day and not their responsibilities or duties are being accommodating, it just don't interest them.

H: There used to be different attitudes towards work and ...

O: Yes.

H: before people and service came first.

O: Yes, that was the older group were all interested in helping people and service and that might go back to the times when it was a political appointment, of course this is a ..

H: I'm sorry, when it was a political what?

O: A political appointment, when you got a job at the post office you had to be right with the President. When the Republican was in then a Democrat didn't stand much chance of getting a job in the post office and the same the other way round. And well when one political party got power and their people wanted jobs they had to look for excuses to bring charges against someone and you had to walk you set and be on good terms with everybody and that might have had something to do with it, they were trying to be accommodating to the general public so they could hold their job, maybe that had something to do with it but it just seemed like that the post and all the people in general had a different attitude to what they used to have.

H: Can you pin point a general time period when that came?

O: Well, I believe it was after World War II it seemed like the younger generation of people that were born after, well the baby boomers you might call them, it seemed that from then on as they grew up the attitudes changed.

H: And what was more important for them?

O: Well, getting something for nothing. They expected something to turn up and well their home life maybe changed for who wasn't in the service was in the defense force both man and women, a lot of men and women both worked, and the kids didn't have so much discipline at this time in life and they had pretty much their own way because the parents had more money to buy them more things and they didn't have to get out and get a job and they just more or less grew up thinking of themselves.

H: You know when you were mentioning the mail carrier who would leave tobacco in someone's mail box that was out of tobacco, when was that about? Was that an older mail carrier in the fifties that did that?

O: Well, he was probably that age, that was in the sixties. The guy didn't retire 'till some time in the seventies when he retired. It wasn't only him at all, all the rural carriers were that way.

H: So the distinction was the older rural carriers versus the younger carriers.

O: Yes, they were more accommodating and maybe 'cause they had a harder time growing up and appreciated someone helping them out may be that was what it was. And the younger group they've always had everything handed to them without having to scratch or look for it and they think that the government or life in general owes them a free ride.

H: And these rural carriers a lot of them grew up in hard times in farms. OK while you worked as a mail carrier did you live in town predominantly?

O: Yes, I lived in town since I was 10 years old.

H: OK so it was only in the country for the first 10 years. Wasn't it true that you married and made your own family?

O: I got out of service in '53 and got married in November '54 at that time I had started working at the post office in January of '53 and I got married in November of '54.

H: And your wife Betty was from a farm?

O: She was raised on a farm. She was working at that time as a secretary at the local feed store.

H: How did you meet her?

O: A friend of mine.

H: I'm going to bring a picture along.

O: There he is.

H: What's his name?

O: Harold Minton, he works at the bank up here now, he's Vice

President of Orange County Bank. We went to school.

H: Is that Ben Minton's son?

O: Yes.

H: OK.

O: You know Benny?

H: No. Someone else interviewed him.

O: Oh, is that right?

H: Yes, and I read the transcripts. So this is Harold, the third boy on the left in the first row. He looks a bit like Alfalfa. Don't tell him I said that but he does. [laughter] Well, son of a gun. No, in fact Ben Mitten talked about his son. Well, so you and Betty started setting up house keeping in and lived there for the rest of her life?

O: Yes. I planned on building out here on that patch of ground. Well it was where he was living when we was going to school out there out there in I planned on building a house out there when I retired. But the wife she can't live in the country, has asthma and it gets the best of her so we just never did get done.

H: I'm sorry, I didn't get all that. You wanted to live out in the country but ...

O: She can't stand to get out in the country.

H: That would have been your preference?

O: Yes, that's what I had planned all along.

H: And how many children did you have?

O: 3. I got 2 daughters and a son. The oldest daughter is a teacher at Orlean and the son is district manager or something along that line for a soy bean company, he has an area from Orange County Indiana here west over into southern Illinois into northern, I guess about Terrehaute, south into Kentucky in the Owen region. A 3 state area, he's on the road a good time. And then Sue, the youngest daughter, is out here working for Hook the drug company.

H: OK, have you ever desired to live anywhere else?

O: No. In fact when I got out of the service and I was getting ready to come home, I wrote to one of my sisters that when I got back to Orange County Indiana I was never going to leave it, so then after I got laid off down here and I got that job with the construction company she saw me and said what's this deal about never leaving Orange County? Well, I said sometimes your plans change. [laughter] But then I didn't have to leave after all.

H: What is it about Orange County or about Paoli that you feel tied to?

O: Mostly it's the people. Maybe if I grew up somewhere else I'd feel different about that place. Getting in the service and meeting people from different areas of the country and when I was in basic down there I had several of them were from southern Illinois and North Carolina, Kentucky and lots of them from up in New England and Baltimore Maryland. And most of those guys from up in there, and the guys seemed like ... southern heritage more like the people round here; those guys from Kentucky, southern Illinois, North Carolina they were pretty good fellows. North Caroline's their speech, sometimes you couldn't understand them; one guy was talking about a house it was a "huse" instead of a house he would say "huse". Those guys from up in New England especially Baltimore Maryland they deferred to it as "Balimer", they were from a different country, they're attitudes, maybe they were all from bigger cities. So meeting different people from different areas of the country I think you tend to feel right around here.

H: Well, can you tell me what the advantages and disadvantages of living in Paoli or a small town are for you?

O: Well, you know just about everybody in town of course not so much any more but you used to be but a lot of other people have moved in and the older families are dying out and others are moving in but still you get acquainted with them and the majority are good people. They have pretty much the same attitude as the general public around here so it seems like they're easy to get along with.

H: So it's comforting to know what someone feels like and things like that?

O: Yes.

H: What about disadvantages?

O: Oh, I really don't know. They have better restaurants and so

forth in bigger cities or movies or something along that line maybe but I used to have a movie here in town 'till it went out of business. Had a drive in out here because you got the movies it seemed like it changed too but most of them are not fit to watch. And I don't know. The roads are not as good as they should be. Of course they went all through that here a few weeks ago on this 4 lane 37 I think about. It looks like having a 4 lane 37 to Paoli or Orange County you only get out of 37 is what they've got out here close to town with passing lanes out there. It's the only 4 lanes in Orange County you're going to get.

H: Yes, I noticed that. They were working on that when I was here in April or May. I thought they were widening them quite a way but it was only a little strip. But these inconveniences that you mentioned, shopping or the highway, they're not a major as the ... The positive out weighs the negative.

O: A whole lot yes.

H: You know, we've kind of skipped around talking about the square and you had mentioned that how in the Carnival days it was very active. Do you remember, when I look up at the curb right now it doesn't have all that hustle of activity.

O: No, it's ah.. I don't know. Well I think transportation; everybody didn't used to have 2 cars, some people didn't have cars and they'd come to town on foot and socialize here and now they've got better transportation and all. And then television probably has something to do with it too. People see what they're doing in the cities and they think they're entitled to it or want to get involved in it and they jump in the car and take off to the city. And then your shopping centers that's pretty well killed your local square, your shopping centers like down New Albany, Louisville and even up here in Bedford and Bloomington. People can go there in maybe in a half hour's time and they've got so much more to choose from than in they have locally and by having so much bigger stores and so forth they can sell cheaper and they can out price the local markets.

H: You can't compete with them any more?

O: No. And I think that's what killed public squares.

H: When did your town square become so inactive? Can you recall a certain time period?

O: No. You couldn't pin point one I don't think. Well, when these big shopping centers first started up whenever that was.

H: OK. How has technology affected you? Like we had mentioned that you have always had a car and what has happened with TV when they came in. Did you always have a phone?

O: No. We didn't get a phone 'till somewhere in the late forties, no early fifties I guess. We just didn't need it.

H: That was pretty late.

O: I guess, but there wasn't any need for it. I guess it's handy if you wanted to call someone, so it was in the early fifties that we got a phone.

H: No kidding. So if you wanted to go visit someone...

O: You just went.

H: Instead of visiting on the phone.

O: Yes, you just went to visit.

H: And how did that change your life when you got the phone?

O: Didn't change mine very much. I don't like talking on it yet, I feel silly talking to you holding up that phone in your fist.
[laughter]

H: Well, it's not the same as sharing a cup of coffee with someone and seeing they're faces.

O: No. In fact when the phone rings here I very seldom answer it. I wait for it to ring 4 or 5 times and if I see nobody answer it

H: Someone else in the household?

O: Yes.

H: What about, you know I noticed that I asked you before if you had had a microwave and those kinds of new things, people often have a VCR even. Have those things changed your personal life?

O: Not really, no. I watch television a lot but I could do without it. It's handy, I like the news and maybe 1 or 2 programs on television that I like to watch but basically it's comedies. I like Newhart and something like that, I like a good movie what you used to call your Saturday Western, I mean your Friday night Western used to when we had the movies you had your cheap Saturday Westerns and then you had your good ones that usually

were played during the week, usually on a Friday when John Wayne or your big star would require a touch more time or expense and made a more realistic movie. On Saturday that was just, they were basically all the same, Neil ?, Roy Rogers, all of those; they were basically all the same show just different..., if you seen one then they were all about the same.

H: When did you first get electricity in your house?

O: Well, that was in '39 when we moved to town. When we lived in the country we didn't have electricity.

H: What did you use?

O: Kerosene lamps. Your rural didn't come in until after the war. Your rural electricity didn't come in 'till after the war I guess as part of the program to keep money circulating so we didn't get into another depression and that was more or less pumping money into the country to keep things going. It was in the late forties that they put their electricity down to the country and even then a lot of your country people didn't approve of it, didn't want it. I know my wife's grandfather he was always opposed to it and they'd come round with a paper to get an easement for the light poles for the farmers. They had to sign an easement so the company could put their light poles along the road so they had to sign an easement and he was opposed to it, he said you sign that and Roosevelt will have your farm. And of course, he was opposed even to Social Security. Even in the later years when he was eligible for Social Security for several years I don't think they could get him to do it. And finally I think his wife or someone went and signed up for him and he wouldn't cash a check for a long time; he had several checks he didn't want none of that Democrat money. [laughter]

H: But to have like those kinds of inventions or ...

O: He was opposed to it, to change. He was one of the last people around to use to buy a tractor to farm with, he still had a team out there when me and the wife got married in '54. He still had a team.

H: He still had what?

O: A team of horses.

H: A team of horses in '54?

O: Yes, he was still opposed to..., it was along time before he went to....

H: For him was that related politically somehow?

O: Well, I don't know if it was that or whether he was just contrary and stubborn. He didn't want to change, he didn't want somebody to try to influence on any thing.

H: How did you like those changes?

O: It was quite a change from Kerosene lamps to electric light.

H: But you had that when you went to town?

O: Yes, I got that when I was 10 years old.

H: Did you think that was neat?

O: Yes. I never seen nothing like it, of course I'd seen light, knew what it was and everything but we didn't have it out there in the country.

H: Did your wife stay at home after you were married?

O: [deletion]

H: Sorry, what's your son's name?

O: Jim. But this is Linda.

H: Linda, Linda.

O: So that was her job to take care of the ..., and me to bring in the feed and her to cook it more or less. That's how we had kids that way. I was --- if someone doesn't have any children and I think it's all right because part of the problems now you have 2 member household working and nobody to look after, discipline the kids. Somebody, either the man or the woman has to stay home to do that, I think.

H: Well, in the sixties there were several large movements: a Civil Rights Movement and young people rebelling and woman's movement. Did the woman's movement at all reach Paoli?

O: I don't think so, no. Most people around here are not opposed to women or having a woman holding down a job and so forth like that 'cause that wouldn't do but there ain't no big deal about that around here.

H: Do women get jobs in this town?

O: Yes. But they just like, most places though like the offices round the square an office or something, but your factories seem like they're always under paid which is hardly fair. I think if anybody can do a job they ought to get the same pay for the same job regardless whether a women or not but it seemed that maybe there are more women that are willing to work for a lower wage. Of course, a lot of women have to work today the way the economy is any more, 2 people just about have to work to keep things liveable and as long as they can get by with paying 50 cents there's no way they're going to pay a dollar.

H: Were there any other movements like in the sixties that ..., what did you hear about for example the Civil Rights Movement? I realize there are not any blacks in Paoli but ...

O: That's right, there's only the one family here in town. I don't know about now but when the kids were growing up they didn't ..., when I was at the post office 2 of them boys came in to apply for Social Security cards at that time you filled out this form and handed it back to a clerk and we mail them in. Well, it goes for your parent's name, married and maiden name, so forth and when you're born and all that then wanted to know the race. And it was at that time I think you said Negro, Caucasian, Asian, or Indian. Well, you're supposed to circle one or underline it, he handed the card back in I checked it and he hadn't filled that out, I said you forgot to mark in and I wasn't thinking anything I just had my finger down there where it said Negro. He says I'm not a Negro, I'm an Indian, so he marked under Indian. [laughter] Now he's more or less --- in some ways, I wasn't poking that around but he denied that he was a Negro and I guess evidently maybe Indians had better rights at that time than the colored.

H: Well what did you and other people in Paoli think about what would happen with the Civil Rights Movement?

O: [deletion]

H: Is this the southern legacy?

O: Yes.

H: Were there any other events in the sixties or seventies that we haven't talked about that you heard about or maybe even was talked about in town?

O: Well, I coming back to political parties, when Kennedy was assassinated I believe there were some that were opposed I know

one guy, a member of the family in a left handed sort of way, he just jumped and hollered and said I knew someone should have shot him along time ago and I'm just a tickled. And you'd find a few like that but most of them, it effected the Republicans as well as the Democrats.

H: Even though most of Paoli is a ---- town?

O: Yes, it really effected them.

H: Because the President was shot?

O: Yes, well just, I don't know if it had been for any President

END OF TAPE TWO SIDE TWO.

H: We were talking about President Kennedy being assassinated and you were saying you weren't sure whether the town responded because he was the President or ...?

O: Or his charisma. He had a way of words and when he supposedly got into the presidency he wasn't going to cure al the ills, he was going to show the public the way and they were going to do it; I mean he was going to work with the people. He more or less let the people straighten things out and he had a way about him to get people as followers now whether it was that or whether any president getting shot at that time would have made a difference but I think it was more or less his charisma and the attitude people had about him.

H: Do you remember where you were when he was shot?

O: Yes, worked at the post office. I was there and someone came in and said he'd been shot and another clerk had a portable radio in his car and he ran out there and got it and come rushing in with it and we heard about it then. And I don't know it seemed like for an hour or two we didn't get any customers, I don't know if everyone was at home watching television or listening to the radio. I was there for a long while and there wasn't anyone, everybody evidently was at home listening to it or something. It effected people not only in Washington but right here in Paoli, they were effected by it.

H: Can you tell me how you would compare your life with either your son's or your father's? How your life was different or similar?

O: Well, of course when I was growing up as a kid I didn't have much, didn't get much other than what we make at home in the way of toys and all and very little in spending money. And I remember talking to my dad's brother, he was 94 when he died and last time I talked to him that he was rational, I'd been up to visit him and he was talking about he'd been to an auction and he said something to another fellow that he was talking to that this was his birthday and he was 84 at that time and, well he might not have been that old it was during the time when Stalin was still in Russia and a lot of --- going on, they didn't know, with the Atomic bombs, what the next month was going to bring and this old fellow asked him if he had your chances would you like to live, be born now and live from here on or be born back when you was and live in your time. He said he thought a lot about that since and he still don't know which he'd rather do; he said he had a hard life, hard way of making a living but looking at the future I don't know I ain't decided yet whether I'd be born back when I was and live that life as hard as it was or start over now and live this life. He said he just couldn't answer that, I haven't decided yet which I'd rather do. But like I said Dad's generation they had it hard and then when he was growing up his father died when he was 18 I believe and he had about 5 sisters and him having a bad leg he had trouble getting jobs although he could do anything he set his mind to but people evidently didn't hire him on account they didn't figure he was able bodied. And as far as my son, he's has not has it as hard as I even though I didn't have it what you call real hard life, he's had it easier than I have some. I think each generation's got its own problems.

H: So you think that progressively make economically or fiscally hard to compare as pains?

O: Yes, it's well kind of like my dad's day when times of Depression trying to get something on the table to eat and now it seems like it's psychological, trying to keep up with the neighbor or get ahead of the neighbor, seems like that's what everybody is interested in now.

H: So even though economically times may be better than the Depression, people still have competition in a different kind of way?

O: Yes. Every generation has got their own problems seems like and they think their's are worse than those that went before whether it's right or not I think not.

H: Until they have children to tell them in my old day.
[laughter] OK, how would you say Paoli has changed the most since you were a kid? We talked about this a little bit.

O: Oh I don't know, people have a lot more leisure time than they used to. It seems that they spend it somewhere else, like they got the lake down here, people go down there to the lake or they take off to the cities, ...

H: Which lake?

O: Pat-o-ki lake down here. That's something else too, that's kind of amusing to me: when I was growing up all the time that I was growing up that was always Patocki, Patocki River, yes that's what the locals called it, Patocki. First time I heard Patoca was an older cousin working in Indianapolis who married a fellow up there and he worked in the conservation department and they'd come down here on their vacation and he'd go fishing and he'd call it Pat-o-ki. And that's the first time I heard it called Patoca and that's people outsiders that's different from the local name to what the outsiders call it, he'd call it Patoca and everybody around here When he first talked about going to Patoca I didn't know what, I couldn't figure out where he was talking about! Then I found out he was talking about Patoki, what we knew about Patoki.

H: So people have more leisure time than they did when you were ...?

O: Yes, a lot. Like when I was a kid a man worked maybe 6 days a week some of them maybe 7 days, 6 1/2 days a week. Then he came home from work and he went out in his garden and he hoed his garden. Now they're very few people that have a garden to keep up, they've got a power lawn mower to mow the yard in a third or less time than it took before and they've just got a lot more free time than they did.

H: And, what do you think of Paoli today?

O: Oh ...

H: It's a tough question.

O: I still wouldn't change any of its shortcomings, it's got shortcomings but I wouldn't change it for anywhere else.

H: Do you see any change in the future for Paoli?

O: Oh, not without we get a 4 lane highway to improve economics here. They talk about this Tillery Hill project at Patoca Lake and that'll make a difference, that'll bring more money into this area.

H: I don't know the Tillery Hill project, can you explain?

O: Well, it's a more or less they're going to have more or less on the order of a, this big amusement park of Cincinnati, what is that?

H: Oh, King's Island.

O: They told me something along that, supposedly in time they'll have a, maybe a zoo there; but to start out with it's more or less oriented towards the water. They have big water slides and all kind of ..., it's just a big amusement park. But that will never get off the ground until they have some way for mass public to get to it without decent roads it will never get off the ground.

H: So, the 4 lane highway we have spoken about you think it's going to subsidy, economically this area is going to prosper?

O: Yes, like I said before this area, southern Indiana, has always been more or less a step child to the rest of the state like when they built I64 interstate, i think the original plan was it was supposed to come up through here closer to this area here. But the Senator at that time was from Evansville so they got down close to Evansville, Evansville actually didn't need it the way this area out here did and it'll never prosper or grow until they get some way of transportation.

H: When was that road built?

O: It was when, probably back in the fifties or sixties, Hartke was the Senator, he was from Evansville and of course he was interested in his constituents down there even though he was our Senator that was his home town and he called for it there so they moved it down further south.

H: If you don't have transportation to go through an area it's not going to have a lot of activity. I mean, you can't even get a Grey Hound bus to go east and west or east to west in southern Indiana.

O: No.

H: It's quite hard to get around. We talked a little bit about turning points, you said that you thought a lot of it was the baby boom, you know generations that changed a lot of their attitudes of work. Is there anything else in Paoli that has changed in terms of people or events or a big abrupt change or a

gradual change that you have seen?

O: Not that I can call to mind, no.

H: That we haven't already mentioned. OK, one other issue I want to talk about is one of your hobbies is fishing and hunting and we haven't talked very much about that. Is that something that a lot of country boys did?

O: Yes, I think so Yes.

H: Did you dad teach you how to fish and hunt?

O: Yes, like I said during the Depression just about the only meat we'd have was what he'd bring in with a gun or fishing. We'd take it out down along the creek here and once in a great while we'd go to White River.

H: Well, is that something you still like to do a lot?

O: Yes, I haven't done much of it in the last few years. In fact I made an appointment with my father-in-law to go tomorrow. Yes, we've been planning this for off an on all spring but it seems like every time he gets ready to go I'm tied up or something and I couldn't make it so he called this morning and said he'd be going again Wednesday and I said I'd go so whatever comes up between now and Wednesday will be put off 'cause I'm going fishing.

H: Good. Where do you go fishing?

O: Down here below the lake. I'd planned on going to Canada this spring with a group but something came up with that group and seemed like one of them's daughter got, was getting married. Another had back trouble and the other something else came up and there was six of us going and something happened to all of them but two of us so we weren't able to go, so we postponed now 'till going up this fall.

H: Did you teach your son how to fish and hunt?

O: Yes. We didn't do. Oh, he does some fishing and hunting but not like, he's not hung up on it like I was. I don't know why. Well, one thing I think is sports. Now he's involved in baseball, played a little baseball, not much. And he took out football for a little but he was always interested in that. And that never interested me at all when I was growing up, I never the least bit interested.

H: Did you have as much organized sports as in your high school days?

O: Well, yes. Well we didn't have football at that time but they had basketball, that's a big thing here.

H: I've heard.

O: You can get up here on the hill and look over there and you see a great big gym with a few class rooms clustered around it. [laughter] And it seems like every little town is the same, they like their basketball. And I was never interested, I was down here on the creek or over there in the woods somewhere. And I just never went out for sports at any time.

H: Well if I were to ask you what one of you best memories of growing up and living in Paoli what would you, how would you answer that?

O: I don't know. I don't know there is any best. When you take it all in all.

H: Is there a particular memory or event that stands out as one of your best times?

O: No, can't say there is.

H: Is there a particular time that would be your worst time of living in Paoli or ...?

O: Oh, maybe when we first came to town; of course, everything was new coming from a little school into a big school 'cause we were poor we didn't have much clothes to wear at that time and going into the big school made a big difference. That was about my lowest point I'd say. But other than that I'd

H: A hard adjustment. One thing I wanted to ask you was we had looked at this picture during our break but it really stood out to me when you say this picture. Can you describe this picture for me for the record, it looks like this is a Ford wagon.

O: Well, it's an old model T Ford truck. Dad operated that poultry house there in Campelsberg and he ran a peddling wagon and he had this truck and he'd go around with his peddling wagon to these stores. Of course the store took in eggs and butter and so forth and he'd come around and he'd buy those. Now those were sugar barrels where the store would get their sugar or flour in barrels and he got to load the sugar barrels and Dad was, I don't know whether he was employed by him or whether he was just, the

store keeper hired him to haul the back to Louisville. And that's a load of sugar barrels and the old model T Ford.

H: I've never seen a picture like that. I'm real glad that you showed it to me. And here's one more picture. I think this is your family in the thirties?

O: Yes. That was my oldest brother and he wasn't married at that time so it must have been probably '34.

H: And which one are you?

O: Back over here on the end.

H: On the left hand side. That's what I thought. OK thank you. What I wanted to ask you is, we're trying to find out about the community history in Paoli. Is there anything that's more important for people to know about Paoli Indiana that we haven't covered?

O: Well, no I guess not other than just people. Paoli has its scoundrels just like every place has I guess. The majority are good people. Some of them, I think someone said there are more churches in Paoli than any other town that size and they're not all full. [laughter] But the majority are good people.

H: Do you know most of the people today?

O: Yes. I forgotten their names, I've been out of the post office now for going on 6 years. I see some body, well even when I was carrying mail I would see a person that was on his street I'd call him by name but if I met him on the other side of town I'd know where he lived but I couldn't remember his name. You think someone handling mail all the time would be better at names and that but I'm not, I can't remember names. If I see someone away from where he lives I couldn't call his name, I knew where he lived, I knew his name when I got to that street. But seeing him some where else I couldn't call his name.

H: So you characterized Paoli by its people and a sense of good people.

O: Yes.

H: Right now when we took our break you had mentioned to me something about how the ---- factory got started.

O: Well it got started during the WWII when they made plaster casts of the gas tanks for farmers and then these plaster casts,

rubber was molded around them and they were self-sealing: when a bullet went into it it wouldn't leak out or burn. They made these plaster casts then after the rubber was molded around it evidently they dissolved the plaster or broke it up or it fall out and it leaved the rubber tank in. That's how it started.

H: And then what happened?

O: Then after the war was over then they got involved with a contract for building a television cabinets 'cause after the war television got to be a big thing and they got a contract to build cabinets for Magnavox and Motorola, that was the two main ones they built for. And then at one time they were going to build caskets down there but that didn't go over too big some way or another, they built a few I guess. But then they didn't get a..., mainly in was television cabinets and then they started on building grandfather clocks in the later years. Then they, the 2 brothers, the youngest PH, he was killed in a plane crash and then later on Jean, the older brother, he had 1 or 2 sons and 1 of them came in, he was going to take it over and then Jean finally died and the younger son was going to take it over and he was, didn't go from then. It started down hill.

H: Well, you know this summer I read quite a few articles about Paoli in the Bloomington paper and I wanted to ask you about that. I read about the company that made computer disk.

O: Wabash. Originally when I was a kid it was a chair factory and a handle factory down here and the basket factory.

H: Three different places?

O: Yes. Then they had the canning, tomato, factory up there on the hill, they called it the tomato factory. They'd can tomatoes and pumpkins but it burnt during, just about '40 I guess, and never rebuilt. Then the old basket factory it caught fire and burnt and it was never rebuilt and that's where Cornwells then bought the old warehouse that was next to it, that's where they moved their factory into. And then they started adding and building onto it and it hired more people than any other factory around here. And then the handle factory down there, they don't make handles any more, they making wood turnings for other companies. Like chair legs, lamps, stuff like that. Cornwells then caught fire and then burnt and it, I don't know whether the fire bankrupted it I think or whether they just went out of business. That was quite a jolt to the town too 'cause as I say that was quite a big employer here in Paoli.

H: When did go out of business?

O: It was in the seventies, maybe late sixties. And that might have been the biggest change here in Paoli and after that nothing ever came in to replace it. And I believe from that time on it hadn't been too good around here.

H: And so the recent computer disk company ...?

O: Yes, they came in and they were, I think they hired 125 or something like that. Now supposedly these couple of companies bigger are going to buy it but whether they can get it off the ground or not I don't know.

H: That's a lot of jobs for a small town.

O: Yes. Now Brittany down here, it's going big now I guess. They make furniture they hire a fair bit.

H: So factory work is still in Paoli is ...?

O: That's the main thing industry. Factory or woodworking factory.

H: Well, it sounds like fire has really destroyed a lot of property.

O: Yes, it's been a big thing. Well the time the basket factory burnt they only had the one little old truck that was built back in the thirties somewhere. And when the Cornwells burnt they had the, I guess they had two trucks, 'cause they always call in help from the neighboring towns around here. But the bad thing about the Cornwells down there it got away from them and burnt, the water main the way I understand it one of the main line was right next to the building or under the building and that fire broke it through and they didn't have any water, no water pressure. So that's what done that place in.

H: So even if you have a fire truck it's not enough sometimes when it's a big fire. You can't get help. Help is far away in another town.

O: But it's not so much now. They have three trucks here now. It's not so much now as it was at one time.

H: Like 20 years ago ? You just didn't have the revenue. I've also read that you're starting a new project that other cities have now that kids after school can go to a community day care which you didn't have before so that seems to be a real positive sign for ...

O: Well, things are looking up it just ..., if it keeps going like this, it's slow but yet again it seems like whenever something positive comes along it's crocked seem way or other.

H: But it also means that kids with both or one parent working ...

O: That'll be a big help.

H: One thing that you had told me about was that you do some farming on the side?

O: Well, not really, just more or less just something to do. I never make anything off or it.

H: You bought this farm area after you retired?

O: No. Before I retired. [deletion] I'd like to make a profit but I haven't yet.

H: What do you grow?

O: Well I've been growing soy beans the last 3 or 4 years. I've tried corn. Seems like ever year something would come up, you'd have bad weather or you didn't get a crop or if you did get a crop you didn't, everybody else would have a good crop and the price would go down so you didn't make anything off of it. So I tried the soy bean and the same deal so I got disgusted and I just bisked it up so I put it all down as grass. I had to buy hay every year to feed my cattle so I thought I might as well just raise my own. Now whether it turns out the right way or not I don't know.

H: You had mentioned to me about how this town comes together in a time of crisis. Could you recollect for me an incident?

O: Well, like when someone has a bad fire and burns out they all get together and they'll have like a wedding shower. They'd have a shower for them, they'd bring in canned goods, food, clothing and furniture or cash money. Some time back you had that music group together for raising money for someone, what was that? The Wife's They had a ... [tape turned off]

Wife's sister and her husband they burnt out a couple months ago and the house burnt and they lost everything they had. And the Saddle Club and the Church got together and they had a shower for them, they donated money and clothing and everything and put them back on their feet. They don't do that in a large, you never hear of that in a larger city.

H: No, I guess they don't. Is that what they did for you when your house burnt down.

O: Yes, when we burned out in '39 they had a shower they brought in furniture, clothing, food, canned goods, most of it was home canned, everybody canned their own. Very few tin cans like you get out of the store, it was all from their homes.

H: What I would like to ask you, What happens to the old people here in Paoli? In the cities very often they're neglected and they're much more visible here. Can you tell me what happens, what positive or sad events?

O: Well you used to the family would take care of them, but any more it's more or less like they did in the cities the insurance and so forth; they are living on somewhere.

H: A lot of places an elderly person needs help in Paoli, can they count on their neighbors here?

O: Well, the neighbor will take him in their car take them to the trading or do the trading for them. That's pretty common. And then the neighbor up the street here was turning 100 and they had a big birthday party for him. Lloyd Hill a big business man who's been in business longer than anyone else on the public square, they had a birthday party for him a few months ago, I forget how old he is but they had a big cake and everybody was supposed to stop in and get a piece of cake and punch.

H: So it wasn't just a family celebration but the community.

O: No. It was the community, Chamber of Commerce or something was a sponsor but it was a community affair.

H: So when you tell me about Paoli and good people that's sort of what you meant that people remember birthdays.

O: Yes, everybody knows everybody and when something happens to someone they'd go to the back for them and help them out. Help them celebrate their birthdays.

H: That's pretty important! Well, I wanted to thank you for your time and for talking to me this afternoon.

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END OF INTERVIEW.

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