

Transcript of Oral History Tape #121

Hilda Burkett T-5-121 Folklore Medicine

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: Do you want me to go through it again.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: Maybe you could describe the construction of the log cabin, that's pretty interesting.

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: They used the broad ax to square off the logs...(indecipherable)... he had drawn a plan for it, how long he wanted all the logs and he built one section of it from(indecipherable).. he had two bedrooms upstairs, a living room, dining room and bath. A little corner of the dining room is the little bathroom. Then he built on another addition as the kitchen. He knew the length of the logs he had to fit in there, that's why he had them cut out that way. And then he gets out the broad ax and squares them and knocks the bark off and square them the way he wanted them they were about 14-15 - 15" logs and, as I say, after they get them squared off and grouped at the end, where they are going to fit together. Then he had to smooth all these sides and they do that with ...indecipherable...they stand on the log and go down each side with a slinger and, boy, they smooth it right off and then he had a windlass and momma would get down there and he'd start her turning it and then he'd run quick and climb on top of the log and have his old (candle) and they roll that log over in place and that's the way they built that cabin. They had the most fun doing it and it was ...indecipherable... and Mr. Gaffle of Gaffle Oil Company has it in his estate in one corner he has it all fenced in but he keeps the lawn up beautifully so people can see it. And the funny thing about this spot, now I can't remember the name of the young man, whether he was aGrowlinger...or a Barker that had that property before dad did but he had started a cabin before he went into the Civil War and there were two logs up on it but it wasn't large enough for dad so he had to start all over with a different foundation. But this boy went through 4 years of the Civil War, came home and started working again on the cabin. The third day he was home a log rolled on him and killed him. And that, those logs, sat there, from the time of the Civil War until and I don't remember just what the year was when the folks built that cabin - 1950 something it seems to me, and those two logs set there all those years on the 40 acres, nobody bought it, and finally dad bought those 40 acres and put up his own. But wasn't that tragic that boy losing his life after going through that hell of war of 4 years.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: Yea, that is really rough.

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Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: What did they use for a foundation?

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: Rock on each corner, that was the cornerstone, we did not have a built up of it. ... (indecipherable) After he got it built up, then he went along and I think he had the board built down below. He had to do something to close it up or we'd be bothered with all kinds of mammals going under there. I can't remember what he used as a base but it usually was a great big (indecipherable) I don't think he put rock foundation in there, I don't remember.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: What did they use for a floor then, - the ground?

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: No, no, he built it up. Then he lathed and plastered the inside. He had an open stairway and the post on that stairway was a ball from the top of the flagpole of (name of school- Whice?) School that had been down there on that country road 75 or 80 years previous to that time. And that's where the post went.

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: My mother was a Hostetler. Of course, there were hundreds of Hostetlers out there, the whole county is related to each other.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: Would that have been Alvin Hostetler, would she have been related to him?

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: Alvin was my mother's brother. There were twin brothers; Al and Alvin and we kids could never tell them apart so we call them uncle twins. Laughter. Whichever one we'd see, we call him uncle twin. Could never tell them apart. The most fun I had in my life was when I go to their house when they were first married. The twins had married sisters and they lived together in a house down there, right on Lakeport County and St. Joseph line. They all lived together until they had six children, 6 girls. Oh that was the biggest time in my life to go down and spend the night. The girls were on the dormitory upstairs, all 11 or 12 of them at that time. They had different dining rooms downstairs and the parents bedrooms were downstairs but they had a community room, a huge living room where they all congregate and if that wasn't the greatest time in the whole world to go down there to stay all night. Well, then they began to have boys, each of them had a boy, where were they going to put the boys, they didn't have a spot for them. So then they had to split up.

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They lived together until they had that many children, one of them had one boy, they other had two boys.

So Uncle Alvin moved up the road and brought our grandfather's, Henry Hostetler's, old home place. That was up the road about a half mile or a mile from Al - they were Joseph Allen and Joseph Alvin were their names, so they called them Al and Alvin. Oh that was so delightful and the other thing I remember at their house. They had an apple tree and had sweet apples that had apples this big, I never saw apples like it in my life. You couldn't eat one of those apples to save your life, they were too big. You'd get one down and cut it up and everybody would eat one apple.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: I wonder what kind they were.

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: They were big sweet apples. Just plain old fashion sweet apples but they were huge.

And, up there, the most interesting thing I incorporated in my book tour talk, I gave book tour medicine talk, all during the bicentennial year. All

based on the things my mother learned from an Indian woman up at their old home place, not far from St Joe County line, the old Henry Hostetler place.

Every spring, the first of April, there would appear at that farm an Indian man and his wife driving an old bag 'a bone horse and cracked wagon with all their earthly belongings piled on. And they'd set their teepee back in grandpa's grove where it would be marsh and the Indiana man, John, would help grandpa do farming all summer and the Indian woman would help grandma with the babies as grandma would always be having a baby or just had one each Spring they came back. She had 13 children by the age of 38. And my mother, I can't understand it of that big family, 9 grew up, 4 babies died. But 9 grew up and not one of them ever mentioned anything about the Indian couple and they affected my mother's entire life, her cooking, and everything. There would never would be anything in the world wrong when that mom would say well that Indian woman would say do thus and she would just tell you all kinds of fabulous things to cure.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: Can you describe some of those?

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Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: Oh I would love to.

I had a terrible strep throat one time ... (indecipherable) ... had my tonsils taken out but they did not look far enough down my throat and I had a pocket of infection. Well I got a strep infection and was running to the doctor every day for two weeks. He'd take a tongue depressor and get the puss out. There was no medication, nothing he could give me. So, I was working in the yard one day and he stopped and hollered at me, he said, "get in out of this heat, you got your blood stream heated up and that strep infection gets in the stream it will kill you." And it just happened that mom was there that day and she said we better do something about it. The doctor's not doing anything about it. Well, she said the Indian woman said that if you ever get an infection of any sort in your body, just drink potato water and it will cure it and mama had all kinds of acronyms - lazy as a Turk, crazy as a loon or dumb as a fox, or blind as a bat, ... (indecipherable) ... but she'd never say you were sick, you were always sick as a pup. So she said, after you drink this potato water, you will get sick as a pup every time you swallow a glass of it, but that's when you keep on drinking it, that's when its getting its ... on the infection. Well she said, where will I get all the potatoes? She said you have a lot of friends that have large families, ask them to save their potato peels, just cut out the bad rough spots and save their dirty potato peels and you go around and collect them every few days. Boil them up with a little celery so they are a little more tolerable and drink that. I drank that potato water for three solid nights and it would, as she said, it made me sick as a pup. I would drink that and it was like a bee hive in my stomach, it would roll and tumble. But I stuck with it. A year later I went to the doctor and he said by the way I wanted to ask you what you did with your mama's folklore medicine to get rid of the strep infection. He was always very interested in mama would do for things. He was always discussing folklore with me. So I told him about the potato water and he said, well you undoubtedly saved your life. Because he said he had another man, one of Billy Miller's ... whose throat wasn't near as bad as mine. His throat healed up in a week, he was left in a wheel chair with arthritis and (indecipherable).

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: What do you suppose was in that potato water that would heal that?

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Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: Potassium. An overdose of potassium. And it was readily assimilated by the body because it being natural and that's why you have to have so much potassium or you can't live - you need that. But that will cure any infection the Indian woman said.

....Now the juices, of course, will extract a lot of the potassium water from potatoes but the old time way of getting potassium that a lot of people used is take a glass of water and slice, scrub the potato good and slice the peel and all in the glass of water, let it stand overnight. The first thing in the morning on an empty stomach, they drink this water off that potato and you get all that potassium out of that potato from overnight and that is another way you can get in the morning very easily and does a lot of good.

Then another thing, I had an operation. I was up with a terrible kidney infection and oh, I was climbing the wall and my mama said "Oh my goodness, we better get something for that" she said "mother used to have inflammation of the bladder every time she was pregnant and so the Indian woman used to make her some slippery elm tea. She said you get me some slippery elm bark and I'll make you some tea. In those days, Franklin Pharmacy, Polish John, had all the old time remedies. Oh, I'd scoot out there and get 35 cent, 4 oz block of slippery elm wood. I got home with it and mama would cut up half of it, about 2 ounces, and about a 2 quart jar of cold water. She got that set up um around 10 o'clock in the morning. Now she said that should stand overnight to draw oil out of that bark but I'll keep shaking it up and as soon as it gets cloudy, you can start drinking it; you need it so badly. So every time I turned she was shaking it and shaking it so around noon it was pretty cloudy, 12 o'clock. So when it was cloudy, it should start doing some good. Each set up should last 2 weeks. You drink one glass of the slippery elm bark water and put a fresh glass in. At the end of two weeks, you'd have most of the oil extracted from the wood and the wood would begin to get too old. Well, I started drinking it at 12. 8 o'clock that night it began running through me like sweetened syrup then in 2 days I was all right. And that slippery elm water is also good for ulcers. One of the finest things in the world to cure ulcers. And, believe it or not, before the wonder drugs, practically all our kidney pills and medicines had a great deal of slippery elm in a concentrated formula.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: Is there some ingredient or chemical in the bark that works.

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Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: The oil, it's the oil and it has a very, very healing effect on the kidneys, bladder and the stomach. Very fine.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: And these are all remedies from the Indians.

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: Yes, the Indians. Uh, Sheila, it affected her life, so she became a practical nurse and worked with Dr. Bogar(sp)... out of LaPorte, for years. Saved many a life dying of pneumonia with her onion poultices. She would, uh, whenever he'd get a real bad case of pneumonia, he'd knew they would dye, he'd call mom. They need your help, better get over there. So, he'd meet her there and he'd turn to her and said well I did all I can do, they are all yours. So she'd get everybody on to peeling onions. They'd peel onions and she would fry them in lard until they were glazed, just barely glazed through, you know. She'd put them between pieces of cloth and put the onion poultices on the patient's chest, as hot as they can stand it. And that continued until that congestion broke, sometime it took 10 to 12 hours, sometimes they work all night long, peeling onions, frying them putting the onions on the patient and until that patient upchucked or fell into a heavy sleep, broke out into a heavy sweat and begin to gurgle like a ... bubble factory, they'd continue with the onions and at that time it was cured.

Another thing too that was used a lot was mustard plasters too. Use mustard plasters on a tiny baby's skin it wouldn't hurt it. She made it 1, 2 3 - 1 with dry mustard, 2 with salt, 3 with flour, get red as a beat, never blister, she'd save many a baby dying of pneumonia with that plaster. And I used that on my husband one time. We were baby sitting for our grandchildren in Columbus, Ohio, and the day my son and daughter-in-law left, my husband started congesting and I was just panic stricken because here I was in a strange city with three little tiny boys, no car and the only doctor we know is a pediatrician and here my husband is getting pneumonia. So, I thought well, I'll be glad if there is mustard in this house and I would put a mustard plaster on him tonight to carry him through the night and I'll have to get him to a doctor in the morning. Well, fortunately, they had the mustard, dry mustard, and I made the plaster, 2, 4, 6, 2 dry mustard, 4 salt, the salt keeps it from (indecipherable) and 6 flour and I put it well up over his larynx so he wouldn't cough every minute he breathed and he tossed around for half an hour and an hour and few minutes later he was sound a sleep, just gurgling. It was already loosening it up, upchuck and just gurgling.

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We went to the doctor the next morning and the doctor saw that red chest and said oh you shouldn't have done that. I said no, I should have let him suffer all night and maybe die before anybody get help to him with pneumonia. He x-rayed him the next morning and the only congestion left in those lungs was about an inch at the bottom, it had all broken up with that plaster overnight.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: What is there in the mustard and onions?

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: Heat, goes right in and loosens it up any congestion, terrible heat, goes right through the body, oh, it's the most astounding thing.

Oh, garlic, oh that was one of her greatest cures, garlic. You know, that is one of the finest antihistamines there is. During the flu epidemic of the 17 and 18 year, ol Doctor Carrigan and Doctor Rogers noted that none of our

Lebanese community on the West side died with that flu, everyone else was dying like flies around. They had the flu just as bad but not one member died. So they attributed it to the fact that they use so much garlic and so much olive oil and the olive oil is so full of vitamin E. If we were smart, we would use olive oil in our cooking instead of any of those other oils. Because they remove every bit of the vitamin E from the nut, vegetable and corn oil, all we get is the fat, there is really no healing quality to those. It is absolutely wonderful what that olive oil will do for the body. And that's what kept those Lebanese from dying, the garlic they used, uh the fumes of the garlic will kill any germs. I have had a terrible ear infection at one time and had been going to the specialist up to a tune of \$125 and it was getting worse instead of better and I said to him my ear is getting worse and he said oh, it's going to get worse before it gets better. Well, that made me mad. I got home and thought about the good deal I am paying him every time and he's going to tell me it's going to get worse. I thought mom used to do something for earaches, what was it. Then I remembered. She'd take a 3 oz. bottle of sweet oil and a clove of garlic, peel and mash it all to a pulp, put this crushed garlic and sweet oil in a pan on the stove and cover entirely and simmer for 10 minutes, then take it out and strain it. I did that for 2 days. I put two or three drops in my ear for two nights and my infection was gone. That is the best earache medicine there is, most effective.

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Another story. Friends of ours came from England. They were in their early 80's and never ill a day in their life. So they took a to New York, took a bus to Miami for a week visiting friends. Then they took a bus all the way from Miami to San Francisco. Well, if you ever took a bus, you know that's a killer of a trip. Legs swell up, didn't bother them, not a bit. So, they came home, I said, I just couldn't get over it. They ride that long distance on a bus that would kill anybody else, it didn't bother them in the least. And I said to what do you attribute to your good health? And they said to the fact that we swallow a clove of garlic everyday.

So I thought, oh boy that's for me, that's what I am going to do. If I take it at night I won't offend anyone, I won't have it on my breath. Well, about a year later, a dear friend said to me you eat garlic every day, your breath smells like garlic. Here I've been blissfully taking that garlic and smelling everything, oh, I felt so bad, I quit swallowing the garlic. Three weeks after I quit taking the garlic, my right knee swelled up by two knees. Oh, I thought, I quit taking the garlic now I've got something wrong with me. So, I went to the doctor. Had my teeth x-rayed, I had 4 abscessed teeth. As long as I was taking the garlic, the abscess didn't bother me. The abscess had eaten the roots off of one tooth and it didn't bother me, until I quit taking the garlic then I was dead duck, I was a mess. So that is how effective that garlic is.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: Did the Indians use any kind wild herbs or plants?

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: Oh yes, they did. Ramp. It's an onion type of thing only ten times stronger, than garlic even.

I went to a school, a country school out in the woods, you know. Every spring, the big boys in the school would pull this stunt. They'd find the ramp when it came up in the spring and each of them would take a bite of it. That air in the school room from their breath would get blue we'd have to go home and the teacher would have to open the windows and send those kids home but we couldn't finish school, from the fumes of their breath would make the air absolutely blue; you couldn't breathe in there. That's how strong that ramp was.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: laughter - that's a new way to get out a day of school.

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Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: They did it every spring; just as sure as spring came, you knew they were going to pull the ramp gag and that was so funny. But you have no idea, its like skunk smell, if you were ever in a heavy scented skunk place. Mama used to use the skunk grease for colds too, turpentine and lard. When the boys would trap skunks, they would strip the fat off the hide and off the carcass and mom would put it in a tin can and put them in the shop. Dad had a shop that he worked in fixing (indecipherable) and doing every all winter. He have to vacate the shop for a couple of days. Because, again, drying out that skunk, the fumes were so bad it was like the air was blue. We couldn't stay in there for anything, so he'd be shut out of his place for two days.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: This ramp is sort of a wild onion.

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: Yes, it is a bulb.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: And that can be used as medicine.

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: Oh yes.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: What sicknesses would they use it for?

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: Oh, I don't know what specific uses they have for them but around this big marsh where they have their teepee all of mama's brothers and sisters help the Indian woman gather all those herbs because all around there were all kinds of herbs that she uses. And the most important thing is, as I said it even affects the amount of cooking, one of my neighbors said to me one day: "Are you from the South?" And I said "no, why?" Well she said I never knew northerners ate so many greens as you do. Well, like mother, like daughter. Naturally, I cook like my mother. And we always had - now there was lamb's quarters which is wild spinach. Nobody else ever new what wild spinach was, but the Indian woman always had that green. And, it is a delightful green. It has a zingy kind of tart taste, taste like water crest. And I hadn't had any for 50 years or more and I went up to see Jim Barnett up at Dayton Lake, Michigan, and his garden was full of it and I was so thrilled because I have been so hungry for lamb's quarters. He those weeds, if you can get them out of here, I would be so glad, they've grown 10 times faster then my garden. So, I came home with two big bags full. I ate lambs quarters for a week.

Oh, and they were so good, like spring tonics, mustard greens, lambs quarters; not many people new about that. That was one of the old Indian greens. And the first greens we had in the summer at home were all poison. We had doc, hoke, mullen and rhabard. The first shoot that came up in the spring, mama cooked that. That was your blood purifier. We had one mess of those poison greens that would purify your blood.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: What do you mean by purify your blood.

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: Well, the Indian said you have to have that after a hard winter that it just got your blood all cleared up like your sassafras tea does.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: Sort of like a spring tonic.

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: That's what it is, a spring tonic that purifies your blood. So we'd have those poison greens the first sign of Spring and of course we have sassafras we dug up as soon as the ground was thawed out enough to get in before the sap came out of the roots up into (indecipherable) had to get that done. Oh, I hated that, tasted just like perfume. But I had to drink it. We drank it for a whole week, three times a day.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: Is it the roots?

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: Yes, the roots. Sassafras tea is made out of roots of the Sassafras. And all the sap from the winter is down in the roots, you see. And you get that out before the (indecipherable). That's a spring tonic also. And every farmer always used that. Always. Mama out of that whole big family is the only one ever mentioned that Indian. The Indian man they always called John but she keep telling me the Indian woman's name but I never could remember. She always referred to her as the Indian woman because she had a long Indian name. And, the one spring they didn't show up and they knew the Indian man had died because if the Indian woman had died, he would have come by himself and perhaps had stayed. But after he was gone she never came back. They never knew where they went in the fall. They pull up stakes and go south, somewhere warmer. She'd say she didn't know how in the world that old bag of bones could carry him very far. But they evidently went far enough south to get out of the winter.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: Were they Potawatomi?

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: She never knew what kind they were and they seemed to be loners, there was no mention of any other Indians around them. Of course, around down there at Sauktown, the Sauk Indians were there first and the Potawatomi were down around French Lick. And they had a decisive battle, the Sauks were trying to kick the Potawatomis out. They had the decisive battle right there at Sauktown, right across the from, ah, my cousins, the May boys, two old bachelors lived there. For years, and years and years, they plow up arrow heads, beads and all kinds of Indian things

from that field where they had that decisive battle and the Sauks chased the Potawatomis out and the Potawatomis came over here, got out of that area. And that burial ground there at Sauktown, was an old Indian burial ground and my dad took care of the grave yard. And when he'd dig graves he was constantly digging up Indian bones. And, it was so funny, you could tell they were Indians because they were always flat in the back where they been strapped to the board on their back. You could tell they were Indians by the shape of their skull. And dad thought also because their bones were red but it's the chemicals in the ground that makes their bones red. But I never could remember if they buried their hands or feet to the rising sun. But they were buried east and west. One to the rising sun and the other to the setting sun. And that whole Sauktown cemetery was an old Indian burial ground. Many, many skulls found.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: Did those Indians have any cures for animals?

Speaker 1 - Hilda Halter Burkett: Never found any sign of it. The funniest thing, there was a trail, the old ... farm was on this road from Sauktown Church down to Mill Creek where the log cabin is, about a half mile further towards Mill Creek. And, in the back along the stream, along the Marsh, there was a regular trail that the Indians had made years and years and years ago as they went down to Fish Lake to fish and there was a board grown between two trees that has been there for heavens only know how long, that the Indians put between the two trees and it grew right into the trees, you know. And, when dad's sibling was born and Indian woman had had a baby girl about the same time and she wanted to trade her baby girl for him. He had black eyes and black hair. They had to watch him for years for they were afraid the Indians would steal him because she wanted that little baby boy so badly and she was ready to trade her little girl for that baby boy and they watch him for years because they were so sure the Indians would come and pick him up. It was really funny though how he had those beady black eyes and black hair and dark skin they could have taken him for an Indian.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: Did your mother learn any Indian ways of cooking other foods?

Speaker 1 - Hilda Halter Burkett: No, not especially. She never mentioned anything about anything else that the Indians ever did. Although, kids would all trail around after her when she was gathering herbs on the marsh there. All had plenty of them, they said they would gather arms full and arms full of them and she would dry them. Mom never knew what kind they were. It was these things that she would remember mostly (indecipherable) it stayed all her life being the fact that she became a practical nurse. So, that uh, it was real interesting to hear her tell those tales about the Indian woman, oh she would revel us with those stories, my brother and I for years and years.

And, another thing, on the father's side; they came from Buffalo, New York. They were Mennonites; my great grandfather, grandfather, and dad were all born 50 years too soon. They had methods of doing things that we have today. They were far-sighted, they look so far ahead for the future of things. Grandfather bought this ground prairie out at Rolling Prairie for \$1.25 an acre and that prairie is now worth \$1200 something an acre. He built buildings there not the old salt type house that most did. He built ranch type thing and he even had a walk in clothes closet, nobody ever heard of having a clothes closet. It had an octagon shaped window on the end of it. He

had a screened in front porch, he had a sun parlor, a big sun parlor built on the front of the living/sitting room area.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO BEGINS

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: You were saying the details of the house and the screened in porch.

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Speaker 1- Hilda Halter Burkett: Oh yea, the screened in porch, the indecipherable, and there were 6 bedrooms in the house and ah but it was such a modern type house and it's a farm building, one of the more modern type farm buildings more like what we use today. Everything was under cover, his machinery had a shed, he had a buggy shed and he had a scale house where big loads where he could drive in all under cover. The barn, instead of being one of these huge things like a long low rambling barn. Oh, the funniest thing, at the time, my great grandfather built a pigeon loft in the barn. Right over the cow barn he had a huge pigeon loft made with big beams so that you would climb a ladder and open this big door up there and get in and clean that pigeon loft out and he put he built in roost and he put in nests and everything and every year we had squab every Spring we had squab, it was such a treat and they were so delightful. I thought I would have some. Old Mr. Logan on the West side have these big barns that he'd store stuff in and he'd have pigeons. So one day I said to him Mr. Logan when you get some squab in the spring, would you sell me some? He said sure. So I bought a half dozen or so and I fixed them. They didn't taste anything like my mother's. I could hardly eat them after I fixed those little birds. And you know you're stuffed, you eat one of those pigeons with stuffed dressing that's all you can ever possibly eat now you don't think there, those little squabs aren't very large but they have a good breast meat on them and they fill you up so but mine didn't taste anything like mom's did. I couldn't hardly eat them.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: I wonder why that is. Different quality?

Speaker 1 - Hilda Halter Burkett: No, it's because I fixed them myself and it just didn't taste good. That was the whole thing I think.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: Is squab a young pigeon?

Speaker 1 - Hilda Halter Burkett: Oh yes, a young squab pigeon, that's a delicacy. Really. And, uh we always had those every spring out on the farm. And then along came hoof and mouth disease and we had to shut the pigeons up in the loft. When we let them out, they left and never came back. They were insulted that they had been shut in that loft for that long. So they never returned, we never had anymore pigeons on the farm.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: What was the hoof and mouth disease?

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: That was a disease of the cattle and they would transmit it because they would walk around and their saliva would drop on the grass and they would take it to another field and give it to other cattle.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: Is that a real serious disease?

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: Oh yea, oh it'd kill herds of cattle. When they'd find a case of hoof and mouth disease in a herd of cattle, it would kill the whole group. Oh it was a terrible thing.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: There was no way to...

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: Not at that time, not after it started. They were just swept out. Very, very bad disease.

My father was a blacksmith in Rolling Prairie and after grandpa grew older he wanted dad to come out and take over the farm and he would move to town. Well, my dad never liked farming real well, he liked machinery and he liked to work with his iron and things like that. So, we got out to the farm, we got there in 1908, everything was done by machine. He hooked the washing machine up to a stationary engine, the screen separator was run by the stationary engine, nothing was done my hand, the grinder was run with the stationery engine; he didn't do a thing by hand that he couldn't hook an engine up to. He said that he was the first scientific farmer, I think, that lived in those years. He was in constant touch with Purdue, he knew, studied all about crop rotation, and he was in the field from 6 and out at 6. He said from 6 to 6 was long enough for man or beast. That's as long as he ever worked in the field. And he had his crop rotation, he said they are bleeding the ground; he said there is going to be but a few years until they will not be able to raise a thing unless they use artificial fertilizer and that came sooner than he thought. Today, they can't plant a thing they don't fertilizer.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: Did the other farmers think he was an odd ball?

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: Oh they did, they thought he was nuts. Oh, when he put alfalfa in, well that was the last thing. He put a field of alfalfa in and you have to plow it under three in succession before you in get any crop out of it. But, after that he got enough indecipherable - bays - our barn had the bay in it which meant that he had rails on the ground, great grandfather, had put rails on the bottom on the ground and your hay went from the ground up to the roof. Dad would get enough of that 10 acre field of alfalfa to completely fill both hay bays. They were calledallets when they get to the bottom like that but they were bays and yet left him free another 40 acre field to have a paying crop on it. He ...indecipherable... was attending a field compared to what he used to have on a 40 acre field. So that was the advantage of waiting three years for that crop of alfalfa.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: The other farmers didn't grow alfalfa?

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: Not at first. It had to be proven to them. And I just learned the other day, I found something out about alfalfa. It takes a ton and a half of alfalfa to make a few ounces of chlorophyll - a ton and a half, and chlorophyll is one of the is called one of the makers of green medicine - green magic - chlorophyll is to plant life as hemoglobin is to our life. It is good for human use too, in this book it tells you all that you can use that for. I use it for mouth wash, keeps your mouth free of germs, keeps your mouth free of orders, and its just complete.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: How do you get it?

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: You get the liquid chlorophyll. ...indecipherable... you get a chlorophyll ointment now too.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: So maybe people are coming back to some of these older remedies.

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: Old folklore. Folklore medicine is a story of herb medicine, a story in itself. You know once nice thing about the herbs, our ground here is just made for it. All herbs are native of the Mediterranean area and our soil is almost the same, in other words, herbs don't like their feet wet. They like a well grained soil and in growing herbs you never fertilize because you end up with a beautiful plant and not a bit of flavor. Let the herb plant be skinny and scrawny and sickly looking and your have a fulsome flavor to it. And you will pick your herbs as the herbs come into bloom then all the oil is in the tips of the leaves and you pick to dry them and every year I uh fix lousy small baby food bottles and take them down to our historical society sale and this year my herbs didn't do so good, I don't know why. They didn't grow, my parsley didn't grow and my lemonbound didn't grow, so many didn't grow.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: What kind of herbs to you grow?

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: Oh, I have all kinds. I have the bi-annuals, the ones that come up annually I like best; like rosemary, sage and thyme and chives, those come up year after year. But you have to plant the basil and parsleys except the Italian parsleys it comes up every year but its scraggly, you don't have as heavy a leaf on it as you do the other. I planted a whole role of it this year and only got little bushes. I don't know why. Maybe, you know that plants are like a bad neighbor, get them near other plants and they battle to grow. I didn't know that until just lately, I had fennel growing nicely out here near some sage that one of the girls gave me what she thought was oregano and I planted it beside it and that turned out to be larger and the second year it came up it just about killed the fennel. They are not compatible, they won't grow together. Same as last year in my garden, I planted egg plant along side my tomatoes and did not have one egg plant. They are not compatible with tomatoes, never get an egg plant on the bush if it is growing by tomatoes. You got to get them a part. And the herbs are the same way. There are so many of them that are not compatible, you have to learn by trial and error what to plant next to what. So now this year I have another spot out here the bush out here next to my sun room died so I'm going to put all roots in there again, it will be an herb bed cause I love to work with those herbs. I started a big comfrey club this summer. The DAR was going to have an herb display because they were putting in an herb garden at the headquarters in Washington and they were going to have every chapter over the

country bring in their herbs for display but somehow it fell through but I had my comfrey in a pot and then it got so late they decided not have it and I was afraid to disturb my comfrey, I hope it keeps in the pot, I buried it in the garden so I'm hoping to protect and it won't freeze. But a comfrey plant gets huge and rosemary does too. In Europe in a lot of places rosemary grows so big it's kinda like a hedge and they said in the early morning they smell rosemary, they burn rosemary fagots in their stoves; wouldn't that be delightful aroma.

The difference between an ordinary cook and a gourmet cook are the herbs you use but it is something you have to learn to like. You use it very sparingly at first because it is a different flavor. You use that in place of salt, people that are on salt free diets can get by with using herbs and not miss the salt because they seem to have enough salt in them to satisfy the flavor. But, Oh, I one time I gave a talk on herbaler and that was quite a thing because the old timers have a myth connected to whatever root is grown. Like the laurel, the bay leaf is from the laurel tree... conquering heros over their heads, and the rosemary is a love god.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: You mean it's a love potion?

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: ah huh that's what they said, they continue with enhancing their love and every herb has a story. It is real fascinating.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: So they can use them for other than cooking.

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: Well, teas, I'm a great believer in herb tea. I've been having a run on turmeric (?) tea lately. Turmeric (?) tea is a great, well it taste a great deal like slippery elm and when I take the tea bag out of the pot after making a pot of tea, it's slippery and oily just like the slippery elm bark and I just wonder if it's made from a root of some sort and maybe has some slippery elm in it too. And I suppose, all those herbs heal more things. The turmeric is supposed to open up your head, if you have sinus trouble, well I was getting deaf in one ear and it's all been due because of the plugging up of that sinus closed that ear off you know. Of course I had a terrible concussion and they said I bruised a nerve that really caused it but I've been drinking plenty of that tea and my head has opened up and it has been for years. And of course, I always get chamomile, and baby (?) and peppermint tea. And one of my greatest teas I recommend to my customers, see I do Reflexology and I recommend all these various teas for instance the pink lemon tea which is made out of hibiscus blossoms and lemon grass. And I had the flu this winter and I live alone and I had just picked out at an antique shop, an electric tea pot, and am I glad I had that. Because I couldn't stand up, I was so sick so I brought a jug of water to the bed, the electric tea pot and a package of pink lemon tea and I lived on that for three days. I'd drink about 3 pots of that tea; I was on my feet in 4-5 days. As sick as I was, just drinking that tea healed me. It is the greatest diarrhetic there is. Anybody taking water pills it takes all the potassium out of your body they just stop taking those and take pink lemon tea, it will be much more effective and wouldn't injure their body like the water pills do. But that tea sure got me out of that flu in a hurry. Oh, and so many other teas. Comfrey tea is good for everything betney...? tea, and oh my there is a list of herb teas they are so interesting, everyone of them have some benefit for you and the old timers always use the chamomile (?) for their babies when they have colic.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: What is Reflexology?

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: Reflexology is its own therapy on the bottom of your feet. You know there are some very important things that take place on the bottom of your feet. The arteries and the veins. How many homes do you go into without a foot stool? Your feet are down all the time, all the ? in your body are calcified particles that settle in your feet. That is the first cause of hardening of the arteries and poor circulation. Those little crystals in there are like tiny little particles of glass, calcium crystals, they plug it up so bad that the heart has an awful time of getting the blood pushed in those minute veins because those calcium particles get in the way. So this therapy breaks those up, moves them out and opens up circulation and prolongs life, it is the answer to perpetual youth. Because, we don't know why but it works in the gland possibly because of the circulation, keep the glands going and you're in business, you will never age. Did I tell you the story of Methuselah and Abram and Moses? Methuselah lived to be a thousand and Abram and Moses lived to be 8 or 900. Because in those centuries we had two restorative glands in our body, the ...?.. and thyroid. Every organ in our body has a gland that serves with that organ, in other words, it's like a little grease monkey, it gives off the hormone that keeps that organ functioning and when that gland works properly and dispenses that hormone in the proper amount and keeps that organ going, everything is good, let that gland slow down and not take care of that organ then things slow up. That's when the old restorative glands used to get in there and wrap them up and get them going again. The environmental condition and human ..?.. destroyed their function and they dried up and our life has been shortened. Now you will find in the 21st century, everybody is going to live to be 100, everybody finding out about this cooking, everyone becoming conscious of what they eat, especially the young people, more and more, you are what you eat, and they are using juices from the vegetables, cutting out a lot of the red that is no good for you at all. That's what makes the arthritis, the red meat, one of the worst things in the world for you. So ...?.. by working on the glands, it does lengthen your life and it sure makes you feel wonderful. I tell you I am 10 years younger than I was 10 years ago. And an old girl friend of mine, her daughter was learning to read horoscope from one of our biggest astrologist in the country today, I forget his name, he is in Pittsburgh. He gets \$75 a day so you know he has to be good. She took my name for him to study. (Indecipherable) three things. First he said my age was going to regress because my glands were functioning again, which is true. I am 77 years old and I don't think I look over 60, and anyway I am physically better than I was 10 years ago. And then he said be sure to keep my healing hands holy, I've had a couple of instant healings, of course that isn't me that does that's the (indecipherable) working through my hands. Then he said, and this is what I am waiting for, I have a latent talent that has yet to be developed, that will be very brave, who knows, I may be another grandma Moses. She didn't start to paint until she was 80 years old. So there is time for me to do something brave here.

Interviewer - Jerrold Gustafson: What is it that you do in Reflexology, do you soak your feet?

Speaker - Hilda Halter Burkett: No. I massage them. I do a pressure - take your shoes and socks off and I'll show you.

End of side 2

