

Interview with Harriet Crumpacker October 25, 1977. Interviewed by Laurie Ann Radke Tape T-3-56. Transcribed by Laura Wadsworth

LR: Interview with Harriet Crumpacker October 25, 1977. Ok, Miss Crumpacker, I wanted to talk about today, your grandfather's store, and your grandmother's life and that general time period, so..what store did your grandfather own?

HC: Yeah, it was a grocery store between 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> on the East side of Franklin Street. It was next to our family home, which was the corner of 7<sup>th</sup> and Franklin.

LR: What was the name of it?

HC: John Boeckling's Grocery.

LR: And, could you describe it a little, I mean, what did it...?

HC: Well, it a general grocery store, well, of course, entirely different than now, because there's no packaged things or anything like that, and there's a great big glass bin, that the crackers were all kept in, you could see it. They'd fill it with the crackers and then there were all these barrels, one with dill pickles, and then in the season, why, there'd be these small barrels of oysters, and they just dipped them out with a ladle, and the pickles, why, there was a great big fork, they'd take those out. But a lot of people just put their hand in. Then he had candy and fruit, in season, of course, there was no frozen food in that day. He didn't handle any meats, at all. Well, I suppose you'd just say a general grocery. Very little canned goods because most people did their own canning. Of course, as I say, all fruit was in season, and a great many of the potatoes and the fruit were all exhibited out in baskets, then, of course, in later years, the Board of Health put their foot down on that. But, I can..when I was a little...of course that store started many years before I was born.

LR: How long did it run?

HC: Well, I was trying to think...it uh, when he started it, it had to be in the early 1800s, it might have been a little before, but I think, it's safe to say the early 1800s...as I say, it might have been in the 70s because it was the first store up in that part of town. And, then on the Fourth of July, you always had the fireworks of all kinds, and then they always closed the street off from 7 to 8, and showed...exhibited...set off the fireworks that was left, and then in the afternoon they had races for the children, sack races, and peanut races, and all of those kind they had in those days. But understand that's before I could participate in any of it, that was before I was born, but I heard people tell of it, and then when I was a little girl, they still closed the street off for the Fourth of July celebration. And I recall, they shut if off from 6<sup>th</sup> Street to 9<sup>th</sup> Street, but in the beginning it was only from 7<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>. And before that, why, I really don't know what his work was. It was so many years ago, and he was always identified with the grocery business.

LR: When you grew up was he still living?

HC: No, he died when I was two years old.

LR: Oh, and then your grandmother took over the store?

HC: Yes, and her...not her oldest sons, but one of her sons managed the store for her, but he lived right next door and she always knew what was going on in that store. She was a smart woman and she was a very good business woman..

LR: What was her name?

HC: Beckley...Joanna Beckley.

LR: Was this store a two story with a...

HC: There was a...what they called in those days a flat, now...probably now they'd say an apartment, but it was a flat, the whole second floor and it was quite a good sized flat, and oh, after I was....I think, it was before I can remember, we...after I must have been about a year or so old, maybe...maybe I grew there before and I came down to grandma's for me to be born, I can't tell you that, but we lived up there until my mother died. So I lived up there from the time I was about three years old until I was well, about 12, 13...12 I think would be exactly right. Then grandma rented it. It was one of the nice flats, they called them in town. And it was different, well one family...I wouldn't want to mention names cause they maybe wouldn't like it...but they lived there for years. And it was just like we were all one big family.

LR: How big was the flat?

HC: It had one...two...three bedrooms, what they called a parlor in those days, and a living room, and a dining room and a kitchen. And then there were two entrances, a front door and a back door.

LR: Did you used to have to go through the store to get to it...?

HC: No, no, separate outside entrance and it was...well, I think it was when I was about 7, 8...uh, 6 or 7, they put a bath in. They took, there was a small bedroom that never was used for anything but sort of a store room, and then when...at that time, they put a bath up there. But before that, why, there was no bath you had to heat the water, and you had to sort of...but of course, grandma being downstairs...we used her bathroom a lot.

LR: Yeah, well, the store must have been pretty big, too if it covered all that space.

HC: Oh yeah, it was a very big store, I mean in length, and it was the front, well it had two big show windows with the entrance in the middle. And, it was a good-sized store.

LR: Did it have...whenever you see pictures of stores from that time period, you always see a round, pot bellied stove that heated it?

HC: There was one in there. And as far as I know they never had a furnace put in, except maybe after they sold the property. But when I was a little girl there was this great big...what you said a pot bellied stove. Then, uh, well, it was kind of a meeting place, people, they'd come sit around and visit, I know when telephones were invented, and after they put in the towns around, why, we had...the store had one of the first telephones. And our number was 24. I think at that time, as I recall, now I'm not sure of this, but there were only about 100 telephones in town and it started with one, so we were the 24<sup>th</sup> to have a telephone in the store, and then we had a wire stretched from the store to grandma's and we'd ring the bell and it would ring over there and she'd come over to the store. Weren't anything like we have now.

LR: The phone, what did it look like?

HC: It was one of those wall, wood wall telephones. You've seen pictures of them, great big thing with a receiver and a mouthpiece, and then a little shelf that you could write on.

LR: Did you have to hand..

HC: Oh, you had to ring and then central would answer and you'd give the number and uh, of course you being young, you can't imagine, the service wasn't like it is now. Sometimes you'd ring and ring and ring. And I think, as I recall, I remember grandmother telling me that when they put in the telephone exchange, they only had one operator up there and then later on, why, of course, is it (indecipherable) but it was just, they were just at the beginning. Now, it may not have been 100, but they finally got to 100.

LR: Where was the telephone exchange located?

HC: I can't remember.

LR: I just mean where did they put it in town?

HC: It was downtown. I should know. Seems to me it was 5<sup>th</sup> Street on the West Side of Franklin, but I'm not sure and didn't pay much attention to things like that.

LR: You said that then the store was used as a meeting place?

HC: Oh, they'd come in to visit, and I told you, I think before that my grandmother having (indecipherable) because those men came in and sit around and eat crackers and cheese. I think she gave more crackers and cheese away than she sold.

LR: She probably did. What kind of people...the customers who came in...nowadays most women do the shopping, but then...then too?

HC: They did, yes, they did then.

LR: The men all came in to visit?

HC: Yes, and the stores were always kept open at night, you see.

LR: Oh, what store hours were there?

HC: Oh, it's hard to tell you. They were never open on Sundays, that was an ironclad rule. Grandma would not have that store open on Sundays. And, uh..but I think...oh, why there wasn't really any stores hours...open early in the morning and stay open until someone...until no one was sitting around. There wasn't much business at night.

LR: What other stores were on that block?

HC: In that block? From 7<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>? That was the only store on the block. Then the block from 7<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup>, there was only one store, at that time, and that was a saloon, right across from Trinity Church. And then there was, later on, there was a meat market and another grocery right in there, but that was quite a lot later. That was all residential along there except that corner and it was Burkehart Saloon. And then the block down, there were a few stores on the West Side of the street, but on the East Side it was all residential.

LR: I was just wondering the type of stores there would have been then.

HC: Well, there were...course Carsten's Store at the North end, that's one of the old stores that was there for years.

LR: That opened as a clothing store? Was it general merchandise?

HC: No, that was a...what you'd call now a department store, they called it a dry goods store. And, well from Michigan up to 5<sup>th</sup>, that was practically all solid business, there wasn't any...there were no houses in there at all. And then when you got to 5<sup>th</sup> Street, on the West Side of the street, why it gradually became stores put in. But on the East Side, it was many years before any stores were in there. The banks were all down at the North end.

LR: Did your grandfather and then later your grandmother did they deliver.

HC: Oh, yes, yes in winter they'd deliver. And in winter they had a bobsled, and they delivered in winter because the snow...we used to have terrible snows and there was no street department in those days, if there was one, I didn't know about it. And, no they delivered...and delivered way out in the country.

LR: How would people put their orders in before the phones came in and they could....

HC: They had to come to town.

LR: Came to town?

HC: Yes, wasn't any way to put them in.

LR: You delivered once a day?

HC: Now, I can't remember, oh, in town, yes. I guess they delivered anytime anyone wanted them to. But I know that they delivered in the country, and they used to...my uncle...I used to be able to go with him, we'd go out to a

place to Homesville, where he bought all his eggs, then Baby's Corners, there's some people there that he bought things from. And fruit from the different farmers, they'd come in with the...with their wagons and sell to...there were quite a few other groceries in town, way at the North end, but that was the only one that was...it was the only one in the residential section. So all the people in that neighborhood, of course, patronized it because it was handy.

LR: Was there any farmer days, I know in some of the smaller towns...Farmer Days, when the out...the farms from the country they would come in and bring produce...

HC: Oh, on Saturday. Saturdays they usually came in and uh, it seemed to me that twice a week, but Saturday was a big day. They all came to town on Saturday, because they did their shopping at like...at stores that handle clothing and things. Of course, before my time, why, there was no such thing as ready to wear. Everybody made their own clothes, or there was always somebody in town who was the town dressmaker. And you would go, and you'd have appointments. I know when I was a little girl, we always had this seamstress come twice a year, and she'd stay and get you all sewed up and she'd go to the next place.

LR: Oh, I was going to ask you...did you work in the store when you were a...you just went on rides with your uncle.

HC: No, I never...only thing I went in for was candy.

LR: What kind of candy was there, do you remember?

HC: Oh, all kinds of candy. There was chocolate drops, little old-fashioned chocolate drops, and stick candy and peppermint candy and gum drops and jellybeans and things like.....no fancy candies.

LR: Was this penny candies?

HC: Penny candies.

LR: I was going to ask you...did your grandfather carry any material in his store for...or you had to go to the dry goods store for....

HC: Oh, yeah, nothing but food, no. And the dry goods stores didn't carry any groceries.

LR: Well, a few of the general stores seemed to've carried everything that was possible to...

HC: Well, in my time there were no general stores here. Of course, way back there probably were, but not that I would remember, or ever heard of. But, I imagine in the beginning there would have to have been.

LR: You said your home was right next to...the house was....

HC: Yes, right on the corner.

LR: Do you remember what that looked like, could you describe it?

HC: Yes, it was a white frame house with green shutters and it was quite a good size house. Let's see now there were five bedrooms, and a parlor and a sitting room, the hall was in the middle that went upstairs. And then they..in those days, all families had a family...what they call a parlor bedroom. That was a bedroom off the parlor that we would now probably call a guestroom.

LR: Was that what it was used for, when people were visiting?

HC: Yes, and there was a living room, parlor, and they called it sitting room in those days, and the dining room, and the kitchen and the summer kitchen...now I don't know the idea of that, why they called it a summer kitchen...but, uh, the icebox, they didn't have refrigerators in those days they had the old fashioned icebox was out there and the washing was done out there...and uh, I don't know where it got it's name...summer kitchen, but everybody had a summer kitchen.

LR: What was the difference between a parlor and a sitting room?

HC: I beg your pardon?

LR: What was the difference between the parlor and the sitting room?

HC: Oh, the parlor was a room when you had guest callers, and lots of people always used to call it the funeral room, if anyone died, why that was open for the funeral, or a wedding it was open for, but the sitting room was where you lived, but the parlor was always quite the fancy room.

LR: What kind of furniture would be in a parlor?

HC: Grandma had some beautiful...which would now be antiques...well, uh, it was mahogany, but mostly upholstered. Not anything like we have today. And of course for many years just had stove heat. And then in the parlor and in the sitting room there was a hole cut and a register so the heat would go up from the living room to the upstairs bedrooms, but the other bedrooms didn't have heat in them.

LR: Did you have a stove in the parlor and the living room?

HC: Oh, a stove in the parlor and a stove in the living...or sitting room. And they, oh well, they did too have stoves...little stoves...what they called oil stoves in the bedrooms, the other three bedrooms that couldn't get heat, they had little oil stoves.

LR: And a sitting room would be today's living room?

HC: Yes.

LR: Was there any furniture that every home seemed to have, you know, like now, every home now has to have a television.

HC: Well, it's hard to say. Most everybody had a sofa...not a...they weren't davenportes in those days, sofas and what they called ladies chairs and gentlemen's chairs.

LR: What was a ladies chair?

HC: Well, lots of people have them now, by an antique dealer. The ladies chair is a very delicate looking chair with arms. The gentlemen's chair had a round back with arms, and the callers chair is a straight very uncomfortable chair, and the reason they called it the caller's chair, because it was uncomfortable and people didn't stay very long...you sat in that chair. And every house had those...and every house had what they called a settee. That would probably be equivalent to what a love seat is today. A sofa and a settee. And then the parlor...all parlors had very lovely lace curtains. And they uh, there were no cretins or chintzes or anything like that. And the living room...most all living rooms had what they called sash curtains. They were only half way, it just hung down in the top of the window, where...in the daytime, why, the shades, they had window shades of course, but in the daytime, there was just those little sash curtains. And if you look across there, you'll see, she has some sash curtains right over here. No, you can't see...you see that house over....those are what they had...those are what you call sash curtains.

LR: Oh...Did homes then...are you describing like from your childhood, your...

HC: Yes.

LR: Did the homes then have a lot of windows or did they make them without windows when they built...

HC: Well, our house had...our living room had four windows, the parlor had four windows, all the bedrooms had one, two, three windows...there were lots of windows in the house. Of course, I can't tell you way back, maybe they didn't. But the windows were all small panes. They were very pretty, and everybody took a great deal of pride in their property. Kept it well...the lawns were always kept beautifully, and everybody had a lovely garden, and the houses were always painted, course it didn't cost much to have houses painted in those days so everybody had houses along where I lived were all kept up beautifully.

LR: Were wood houses more common than brick houses?

HC: Yes, oh, yes. I was just trying to recall...in the block we lived in there was only one brick house on either side of the street, and the rest were frame, and as far as I can think down the street, there all frame houses.

LR: How big of a lawn was there...did all the houses have a pretty good-sized lawn?

HC: Oh, yes, most all of the houses...well, our lot was a quarter of a block. And quite a few of them were quarter and others were half of the quarter, there were two houses on a quarter block.

LR: And what kind of decorations are...or how was it acceptable to do your lawn. I know things would come into fashion, you know, you should have plastic stones on your lawn...

HC: Well, all the houses had fences...iron fences.

LR: Oh, iron.

HC: Yes, so out in front there was just a little lawn, your lawn was all in the back. And of course, the lawn outside, but with the big trees, there wasn't much space. And then all the houses had what they called hitching posts for horses. And what they called a stepping stone for people that had trouble stepping into high carriages and surreys, what they called a stepping stone in front of their house. As I recall, every house that I can even remember had those hitch...two hitching posts and a stepping stone.

LR: Were these hitching posts outside the gate, then?

HC: Oh, yes it was right along the curb...where the curbing of the street would be so that you could tie your horse.

LR: What about sidewalks?

HC: Oh, yes they had...well, when I was a little girl, they had wooden sidewalks. And I...when I was about 7 years old...it's hard to remember, then we then had got...people began getting cement sidewalks, but in the beginning, they were all the wooden sidewalks.

LR: What was the road, was it a plank road?

HC: Franklin Street? Well, it was in the beginning of Franklin, but not in my time. When I was little it was cedar block.

LR: That's what I was trying to remember, not planks, cedar block.

HC: And then they...they put brick, there was brick for a long time, then they put in asphalt, I think, I can't remember.

LR: The back of the houses in there would have most of the lawn?

HC: Yes, and the garden.

LR: What kind of...was there a truck garden or a vegetable garden?

HC: Well, they had both kinds, the truck garden was usually way at the back of the lot, and it was a lattice fence that fenced that off, I just tell you how ours was...most of them were that way, there'd be a lattice work fence and the vegetable garden was behind that, and the flower gardens were all around the house at the...started at the side and around the back.

LR: And the rest of the lawn was just kept in grass?

HC: Yes.



LR: Ok, what kind of outbuildings were...did most people have.

HC: Well, of course, it's hard for me to remember that, but of course, before bathrooms were put in houses, you know they had outside toilets.

LR: Were they usually located at the back of the lot?

HC: Way in the back, and they had a lattice around it so you couldn't see.

LR: When did inside plumbing becoming popular or practical for most people to own?

HC: Oh, I can't remember. I was a little...such a little girl, we had a bath...the first bathroom put in and I don't think I could have been more than 4, 5 years old. I know I couldn't...no, I had to be because my mother died, no, I was about 5 years old.

LR: And you said the house had a stable?

HC: Yes, that would be way at the back of the lot. And most everybody kept horses.

LR: Would have that have been a driveway...or did you get...?

HC: You went in through the alley. No, I don't remember any driveways at all.

LR: So your stable would face the alleyway?

HC: Yes, and that's where you could drive in, and then there was a door that you could come out of to come into your backyard. But you had to drive into the alley to get into the stable.

LR: And, uh...your house...ok, go back to your house...I find this very interesting, I don't know if you (indecipherable) really interested in this. Did most houses have cellars, or...?

HC: Oh, yes they all had cellars, and I....

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HC: Because you couldn't get around. Now the people that lived close to our store, why they stock that barrel of sugar and all that, but still potatoes, everybody felt they had to have that and a barrel of flour.

LR: Did these cellars have a dirt floor, or...?

HC: Yes.

LR: It would help to keep it cool probably.

HC: Yes, dirt floors. And there was always an outside entrance to the cellar with doors that lifted up like this, you remember, cellar doors, that you could go in from the outside as well as from the inside.

LR: What kind of heating...your house you said it was stoves?

HC: Heating? When I was a little girl we had stoves, then later furnace.

LR: Oh, so you would get deliveries of coal?

HC: Oh, yes.

LR: How would they do that?

HC: Well, a big wagon would come and we had a great big bin in the basement that the coal..with a window, they'd put a chute and it'd go into this big thing, then it was up to the people to carry it up to their stoves.

LR: I saw some basements that had that coal chute still in it.

HC: Yes, you had to have it, cause everybody had to have coal, and usually, with fire...we had two fireplaces and we'd always get a cord of wood, maybe more I don't know how much it took. And that would all be put outside, out near where the vegetable garden was, and it was all cut and ready for your fireplaces.

LR: Did most of the homes have big porches?

HC: All...most all houses had good-sized porches. I don't know of a house, really I can't remember a house that didn't have a porch.

LR: Both front and back?

HC: We had a good-sized front porch, and then we had a side porch, and uh, it was at the side of the house and there was an entrance from that into the house from what we called our back hall. Lots of people had back porches, but we didn't we just had that side porch and the front porch.

LR: What kind of furniture was put out on the porch?

HC: Oh, uh, wooden furniture. On our front porch, we had rocking chairs, and we had a wooden bench...two wooden benches that were very uncomfortable, and these cane rocking chairs. Most everybody had rocking chairs on their porch.

LR: Were the porches popular? Were they used a lot?

HC: Oh, yes everybody's. In the evening, you'd sit out on the porch. And a great many of the houses had awnings when awnings...I don't know, I can't remember the first awning I saw, I know our store had awnings, so it must have been...but I don't recall any awnings in our house...I guess we...oh I know we had shutters, you know, those shutters and then when it was real hot, grandma would shut those shutters and in winter you'd shut them to keep the cold out. And every window...every window in our house had a pair of shutters.

LR: Who's job when it rained was it to shut all these shutters?

HC: Well, you didn't have to really, unless it was...cause your windows...you could close your windows, you see, so you didn't have to....the only time the shutters were used...sometimes in very hot weather to keep the heat out...or, I don't think any other reason.

LR: Did most homes have an attic, then?

HC: Oh, yes, every....everybody had an attic...where you... I can remember going up in the attic and all this...I've often wondered what became of all the things that were in our attic. But, uh, every house that I know of had an attic, and a big one.

LR: It was used for storage for things they never...?

HC: Yes.

LR: In the rooms in the house itself, were they wallpaper?

HC: Oh, yes, wallpaper. Every room in our house was... but the kitchen and the bathroom.

LR: What kind of designs were popular?

HC: Well, it's hard to say. Some were floral, some were just conventional, some were just plain, but ours were all figured. The bedrooms had flowered paper, and the parlor had a striped...I can remember that quite plainly, it was a pale green and a silver stripe, and that was the parlor and the living room was a figure, and as I recall it it was a fleur de lis. It's kind of hard to remember what...the dining room I can't recall and the kitchen was painted.

LR: Were wall hangings, you know to hang, popular, or did people just leave the walls bare?

HC: Oh, no, people had too many pictures! It was a day when they enlarged pictures of your...members of your family. And I can recall we had I don't know how many of those great big horrible pictures. But everybody had 'em.

LR: What other kind of knick-knacks were popular when you were growing up?

HC: Well, it's hard to tell, you know everybody had different kinds. And everybody of course had a very fancy clock on a shelf. And uh, see if I can think of anything else...and of course most every home had a piano that I recall.

LR: In the parlor, or the sitting room?

HC: Oh, the parlor. Indeed.

LR: An upright piano?

HC: Upright, yes. Oh, the Barker family, which in the early days, of course it was a different house than it is now, the Barkers have, but I remember they had a grand piano, and the Winterbartens who lived across the street from us, the Motts and Winterbarten, they had a grand piano, but that's the only ones I remember.

LR: Singing around the piano was a popular family activity?

HC: Well, as I grew older, high school age, that used to be quite a thing to do, but I don't ever remember it as a child. Of course, I lived with my grandmother, and family, her daughters had died, and everything and she was very sad and so there was very little of that unless I'd go to someone else's house.

LR: What would be an average day for your grandmother, or for any woman, you know, when you were growing up that had a family. What were some of the respons...you know their jobs?

HC: You mean the whole family? Of course, I can't tell you that, only what she'd tell me.

LR: Well, like any woman that was raising a family.

HC: Oh, I would say at five o'clock in the morning until probably all hours of the night, cause there was always work to be done. And, uh, course, most of the families that lived around us and our friends had what they called a hired girl. And she lived at the house, and I've often thought, we had...now you'd call them a maid, then they called them hired girls, and she was with us, oh, I think maybe 15 years, maybe longer. And when you stop and think of the wages they got, you just wonder. Two dollars a week was considered good wages because they got their board and room. But of course was quite a little in those days, and then the Winterbartens who lived across the street had some maids out from Chicago, they had a very large house and everything. And they were the first maids that I remember in uniform and then everybody else kind of followed suit, what the Motts and Winterbartens did the neighborhood followed suit.

LR: So a lot of the jobs fell onto this hired girl that she did?

HC: Oh, yes. But my grandmother was very old fashioned and she thought nobody could do it quite as well, so she'd do a lot of things that...her name was Ella Anderson, and I'll never forget her, she was a lovely person. And grandma did do a lot of things that she would beg her not to do, but grandma was so particular, that she didn't think Ella knew how to do it, see?

LR: What were some of the jobs that a woman had to do to keep a house back then.

HC: Well, I think the worse thing was the spring and fall housecleaning. When the carpets were all taken up and taken outdoors and beaten and the mattresses were all taken out, and the whole house was tore up Spring and Fall. See, they didn't have vacuum cleaners in those days. I can remember in our parlor we had what we called a Brussels Carpet, and I guess that must have been something nice, I don't know much about Brussels Carpets. But when

grandma, they'd sweep it, they'd take newspaper and tear it all up in pieces and soak the newspaper in water. Then they put the newspaper all over the carpet and sweep so the dust wouldn't fly and to keep the carpet like new. And then in our living room we had what they called an ingrain carpet. I don't know what that means, I think it was just a cheaper carpet.

LR: That you didn't have to go through all the soaking of the newspapers...

HC: Oh, yes, you did that, oh, yes, the hall, the stairway. I can see those newspapers today. But the parlor got the...red carpet treatment.

LR: Was uh, most of the rooms carpeted then in a house.

HC: Yes, yes, the bedrooms, most of them were. My bedroom was what they called matting, did you ever hear of that? Well, it's kind of a straw, like a matting on the floor. And that was quite the thing at the time, so when I had my own room, why, they put in matting, and oh, I thought that was really something. And the kitchen was just a wooden floor, no linoleum, and it was a terrific job to keep that...it meant scrubbing it, oh, I don't know how many times to keep it spotless. And of course, they cooked way back when with wood stoves in the kitchen and every kitchen had a wood box that they bring that wood in that they'd buy by the cord, and we had a man who came in and filled the wood box every morning. I know that before we had gas put in, lighting gas, my job every Saturday morning was to polish and shine the lampshades. And oh, I thought, torturous work, but it wasn't much...didn't amount to much, but that was my job.

LR: What did you clean them with?

HC: Grandma, at the store, when they'd get crates of oranges, the oranges all came wrapped in what we would call tissue paper, but it was a different texture. When those came for the Christmas season, Grandma kept all those papers, and fold them and they were kept to shine the lampshades. It would be like tissue paper, but there was something in that paper, having wrapped around the oranges, that did something special. What I couldn't tell you.

LR: Did the women...I know very early they had to make their own cleaning solutions and things like that, when you were growing up did your grandma, because she was so particular, make her own?

HC: Soap. I can remember a soap kettle, but then later on, she went to the store and got soap. But, oh I can remember her making soap with this great big black kettle, it was way out at the end of our backyard and she had a big wooden thing that she stirred it with, I think it was wooden. And they called that soft soap, you couldn't use that for baths or any...

LR: Oh, it was gooey?

HC: No, I can't remember, but I know it was wonderful for cleaning, especially for wooden floors and things. Now maybe some people used it, but I don't recall her ever using...

LR: Do you recall how long it would take her to make soap?

HC: No, I have no idea.

LR: You would have been very little.

HC: I know that...I don't know how they'd get started with it...I know they use lye in it, but how they started I wouldn't know. But I can see that big black kettle right now, and see her out there stirring that.

LR: She must have been a remarkable woman.

HC: She was. She never tired.

LR: Were clubs popular then. Besides all these jobs women had to do were there a lot of....

HC: Well, I can't tell you much about clubs at that time, little girls didn't know much about them. But I suppose...oh, there were clubs of course, I imagine there were lodges way back. I don't know how long the Elks have been here and the Knights of Pipius and the Masons, but I think they were here.

LR: Do you know what the adults used to do for recreation, like your grandparents and the parents of your friends.

HC: Well, all the entertaining, mostly all, was done at home. People for dinner, our evening parties. They'd have what they called Military Euchre Parties. And, that was a very...you might say fashionable game, these little sets with the little flags called forts, I don't know how they played it I was too little. But that was...most of the entertaining was done in the homes, I don't remember any outside...see there weren't country clubs, and nothing like that. And uh, of course in summer there were picnics, big picnics. Our Episcopal Church always had a great big picnic, that was something to look forward to. All the churches had what they called Sunday School Picnics. And then of course 4<sup>th</sup> of July was a big day and Memorial Day was celebrated in a very dignified manner in those days.

LR: How'd they celebrate it?

HC: Parades and speeches, and a lot like they do really now. And of course, we had so many outside things, too.

LR: In a parade, how long would they last.

HC: Oh, that's hard to tell you. Most of our good parades were circus parades. When the circus was coming to town. Then of course, election year, they'd have what they called Torchlight Parades, and the Republicans would have one one night and the Democrats another one, and just a lot of men marching and one band.

LR: The church picnics you were talking about, where were they held.

HC: Well, the Episcopal Church always had theirs out at what you called Mott's Woods, not Mott's Grove, but Mott's Woods. And that is out near where the Municipal Golf Club is...out in that...well, I think the Girl Scouts have

part of that, I really do. But, that's where we would get...these horse drawn what they called wagonettes. They were open buses with seats that went along the sides and that's the way they'd take the children out and people that had horses and buggies would drive out, cause it was quite a ways out, you know where it is? And, uh, every year it was a big event. The Sunday School Picnic.

LR: How...what time did it start, do you remember how long it would...

HC: Yes, I do. We'd usually meet down at the Sunday School there at 5<sup>th</sup> and Franklin, if you were going on the bus, at about 10 o'clock in the morning. And then you'd go out and they'd have all kinds of games and a lovely picnic lunch and the boys would have a baseball game, and you were probably back home by 4 o'clock.

LR: This was children, it wasn't adults?

HC: Oh, the adults went and helped, but it was for the children.

LR: What kind of games?

HC: Oh, it's hard for me to remember. I think mostly, at all these things they had races that they gave little prizes for, all kinds of races, the three legged race, and the sack race, and carry an egg on a spoon, that kind of thing.

LR: Would the boys compete against the girls or was it always girls against girls, boys against boys?

HC: No, I think it...boys and girls...well I think the sack race and that, there were just the boys in that, and the three legged race, but a lot of them were...they all competed in. And of course the food was out of this world.

LR: Do you remember what kind?

HC: Well, I do, because, the most divine fried chicken you'd ever want to know, and potato salad, well, most everything you could think of...loads of cakes and pies.

LR: Did the parents bring this?

HC: Oh, yes, all the fam...mothers would tell what she was going to bring, so you wouldn't all have the same thing, and they would tell...ask you what you'd bring, and I know my grandmother, always did the fried...hers was fried chicken. Oh, I never forget, I never saw so much chicken. It was awfully good, wish I had some now. And then there was others would bring cakes and pies and potato salad and sandwiches, and deviled eggs, and all, you know, just picnic food. And then they'd have lemonade, big tubs of lemonade. They'd get galvanized tubs and put a big cake of ice in and then put the lemonade in that, and then they'd put mosquito netting over it so no flies would get to it, and then one of the men would dip out the lemonade for you.

LR: What did you wear, was it a dress up picnic?

HC: Oh, no, you would wear a little summer dress, nothing dressy.

LR: And the boys would wear their nickers?

HC: Well, they didn't wear nickers then, they just wore little short pants.

LR: Oh, and nickers came after...short pants, then nickers, then long pants.

HC: After that, yes. But it was just little gingham dresses, you know. And I can remember the first pair of white shoes I had, I was so thrilled, I didn't know what to do, and I wanted to wear them to the picnic, and my grandmother said no, they would be spoiled, and oh, I was heartbroken, cause I could only wear it to Sunday School, not to play in. Now, children...they do it anyway...in those days you didn't do it anyway.

LR: Yeah, your parents told you something and you didn't go it...you did what they said.

HC: No, you didn't dare.

LR: Did your father live with..in this house too?

HC: After my mother died, why, he remarried in about a year I think it was or a little longer. And after she died, why, he was in the insurance business. And he had this offer, they were starting this town of Gary and he had an offer from the Steel Mills in the office, and so he gave up that insurance business and he went to Gary, and then, as I said, he remarried, and they settled in Gary and I didn't see a great deal of him.

LR: Well, I just wondered because I couldn't remember if I'd asked you before. You know, I'm hearing about your Grandmother, and your Uncle, and I wondered what happened.

HC: Well, my father, was in the uh, first of all he was in the furniture business here, and I hate to tell you, but he failed, and then he went into the insurance business. I was going to get out some pictures, and I forgot to, and then when after you called, I didn't have time because of the taken...but I wanted to show you some little pictures. Oh, another thing that children had were bobsled parties. Now, my Uncle, with the store bobsled, I always had this bobsled party. I have a picture of the children all in the bobsled. And then we'd come back to the house and have something to eat. And he'd drive all over. And then when we got a little older, we'd have what they called hayrack parties. And they'd take one of these big hayracks and put all the straw and things and the farmers would come in with their hayracks, people would hire them and they'd drive all over the country, and say that this farmer would come in, then you'd go to the farm and have something to eat and then come back. That was quite a thing in those days, hayrack parties.

LR: How old were the kids that went on the hayrack parties?

HC: Oh, they were 11, 12, older, not little ones.

LR: What about the bobsled parties.



HC: All ages and of course there was always a grown...two or three grownups on the hayrack things and the bobsleds were just around town. And usually, as I say, they'd go back to the house, ride around for awhile, all bundled up and go back...the most important thing was going back for something to eat.

LR: Fried chicken or was it more cake and ice cream?

HC: Oh, no, little afternoon things. As I sort of remember, it was cold weather, I remember we always had cocoa, and little sandwiches, and cake, might have had something else, but that's all I can remember.

LR: On these, the hayrack parties, and you would drive out to the country, would you have...what would you do along the way, would it just be...would somebody bring along an instrument and you'd sing, or...?

HC: Oh, we'd sing, yes, and we didn't go too far in the country. I think the farthest hayrack I ever went to, was out to Bailey's Corners, fi you know where that is, and that was considered a very long. Usually we went to what was called the Niemers Farm, and that is, you know where that was?

LR: I've heard the name.

HC: Well, you know where the Warnke Road is, well, the road just before you get to the Warnke Road, is the Neimers Road. And the Neimers had...the Neimer's daughter lived right across from us, and they had children and so we'd go to the different ones in the neighborhood would have parties, and usually always go to the Neimers farm.

LR: And did these usually take place on a Saturday afternoon or a Sunday afternoon?

HC: I beg your pardon?

LR: When did these usually take place, on a weekend, or...

HC: These sleigh rides, and things? Usually on a weekend. And the hayrack parties, as I recall always started afternoons, I think some of the older ones had them in the evenings. I don't remember going on one in the evening. I think they went out of style when I got old enough to go.

LR: Was there a lot of tagging around, did the little kids try to follow the big kids around?

HC: No, not that I remember. Course, we all played in our own neighborhood, you didn't run all over town. And it was just an area where all these children that were...in the neighborhood we all played together. Well, there'd be birthday parties, and different parties than children had. And my grandmother always had a lawn party for me and had more than the neighborhood children. I had a picture and I loaned it to someone in Indianapolis that wanted to see it, that lived here at this time, and I never got it back. And I tried, and they used to promise to send it. But, she'd have about 30 or 40 children. And Calvert's, the photographer, would come and take the picture of all the children and it would have been a nice picture to give to the Lighthouse or something, because they were all Michigan City children, that

many of them of course now are gone. But it's the one thing I wanted more than anything, and I'm sorry I loaned it.

LR: Well, thank you for everything.

HC: Well, I hope I helped you.

End of tape