Conversations with Jenny Charlotte Johnson

Interviewed by Virginia Johnson

1975

I was born in Sweden on the fifteenth of June, 1881, in a log cabin out in the country. I was the second. I had a sister. I was the second in the family, and we were five girls.

What part of Sweden was that?

Well, the central part of it. It was farms all around, but not our home. We had just half an acre and a log cabin that my father bought before they were married and then he fixed it up, and then I think they were married in 1872 in a church. It was quite a ways from where my mother lived. She was working in a big estate and my father was sent up there as an bricklayer-they were doing some building at this estate--and she was working there. And he was one of the men that was sent up there to work, and that's where they got acquainted. And that's, in that church is where they were married--I think it was the twenty-sixth of December. It was right after Christmas. They moved to this place Skanninge. It was the nearest town. That's where we went to school. But our little cottage--our log cabin--was, oh, maybe half a mile a way from town, maybe more. That's where we went to school, in town.

Tell me about the inside of your home.

It had one living room, if you call it that, and two small windows. It had one bed. Most homes usually had a bed that we made up every morning, and it opened up at the sleeping every night. You fixed up the bed clothes on the top of the bed and then have a nice cover that would take up one side of the room. And on the other side it was a sort of a sofa with a board cover--not a cover, it was just a board--and then a sofa during the day and at night we took that board off and took the bed clothes out of the sofa--it was a box--and made up the bed for the night.

Was there a mattress on that bed?

On the bed it was a mattress, but on the sofa I think it was just a cover filled with straw.

Is that where you children slept, on that sofa?

Well we did, and some slept with my mother. You see I don't remember much about my father being home because he was away working most of the time. I do remember him being home in the wintertime and fixing my shoes--right there in the living room.

And then there was a table in front of one of the windows--and we had double windows between the outside windows in the fall to keep the cold out. But between that there was flowers--artificial flowers--but they were pretty. That I remember. And on the other side of the sofa--because here was the bed and here was window--there was a table that my father built, made--he was very handy-- and there was drawers on each end for us children to keep our things in. He made this out of a cupboard at the end of the table. It was a little space left for a small cupboard. I remember that much. And at the end of the bed was the fire place. Well you've seen those fireplaces. And then there was a place for a fire and there was a ventilation that you

open. It was built in the wall. And on the outside they had walls. The fireplace was white plaster. It was a real home-like room, modest. When my father lived, I guess we weren't the poorest because he made good money and he was a good bricklayer, but you see he didn't live long--seven, was it seven years after they were married? And then we were very poor. And he had paid all but two or three hundred dollars. I forget how much that he owed his brother that had came to this country. And he loaned my father some money. After he died my mother could never pay him that because she was so poor. But when I came home to Sweden--you see I had been here nine years and I saved up enough to have a round ticket (\$300) and I had some extra money I guess which I planned to do something with--well I paid up that debt. I do remember that we had to get, well, I suppose, a man who knew something about laws. He came and he wrote the paper--that I had contributed to pay up that debt--and what it says was when my mother died and everything was divided, I should have that out before anyone else. And of course when that time came, I didn't want those few dollars. We shared alike. It couldn't have been much.

What was life like at home?

I think we got along real good. My youngest sister was born three months after my father died. She was born the 19th of January the next year. We had to look after her as much as we could. And we went to school and we got along fine. We didn't have any trouble. But when we were naughty I do remember that my mother would tell us to stand and face the wall, and we couldn't turn around until we said we were sorry and she would forgive us. That was our punishment.

Did your father dicipline you at all?

I can't remember my father much. He wasn't very old. Well he was born in 45 and my mother was born in 47 and he died in 87 or something like that. It seems to me he was 43 (when he died). He was working in another city. It was in November and it was cold and he got sick--he got pneumonia. He was living with a Christian family--he was a Christian and so was my mother--and well he got sick and they called the doctor at this family where he lived. You had to take a train to get to this town and they got the word that he was very sick and if possible she (Jenny's mother) should take the next train to come up there. You see she was quite heavy with my sister too. She was pregnant. And my grandmother lived a little ways from our little cottage--they had a pretty good sized farm I guess--and I remember her taking us. It was early in the morning. It was dark and we had to walk over to my grandmother's and she (Jenny's mother) went to town to take the train to the town where my father was. She stayed a couple of days and then he died. And we stayed with our grandmother. The doctor came and said that he didn't think he would live over the day. It was a Sunday afternoon. It was a letter. My grandmother had her oldest girl taking care of her and mending the house. She didn't know much. I remember when they read that letter. We were in bed but it was late that night and we asked where was Papa--we always said Papa-- and I can remember my mother saying, "You haven't any Papa any more. He's gone home to the Lord." And the last words my father said were, "I want to go home. I need the lord." That's how it would be in English I guess. And she was with him when he died and she came home that night. That I remember. I suppose I was about seven. And I told you about how they brought him home in the black box? It was so cold and they put him in this--you could call it the barn. It was the room connected to my grandmother's home, but they kept it for seed and vegetables. They didn't have undertakers in those days. And he was so blue and cold and my mother used to go in there and sit there. She told us afterward that as long as he was in the coffin, it was somebody that she had, but after he was buried of course...

How long did they keep him in the barn?

A week at least. In those days anyone that wasn't awfully poor--and my grandmother was not the poorest kind of people--they always had to do a lot of baking and cooking and preparing for a big feast for a funeral. In those days they did--people that could afford it. And I can remember one of my cousins--she was an older girl--we were so small you see--she came from wherever she lived and stayed all week and did a lot of baking and preparing. And the day of the funeral they had all the neighbors and relatives that could come. They had a big feast out of it and they sat around the room--this is at my grandmother's--and her living room was much bigger than ours. And they sat around and ate and drank and they had coffee and they had so much bakery stuff and they had all that eating after they had buried him--after they came back from the cemetery. And the cemetery was between my grandmother's and the town so we always had to pass the cemetery on the way to school. But that wasn't too far from my grandmother's home so they walked all that way carrying the coffee--six men, I think, carried the coffee.

Were they friends of your father?

Yes. He had some brothers you know. Well there was two living in Sweden. There was one here of course. I remember that. My oldest sister and myself--she must have been nine or ten--but they had to find some black dresses from somebody so they could make some black dresses for my sister and myself for the funeral. Long black dresses. But for us, we were only children and we were not allowed to be in with the grown people. We had to stay in some corner you know. Children were kept back so in those days. But I can remember that. And I can remember all that baking and cooking that they did and the bigger feast you could have I guess the more honored you were. I think that was the custom.

What do you know about your family?

Well they had this farm. There was quite a lot of children. I won't say how many--sometimes I have it in my mind it was eleven, but it couldn't be. I know it was eleven in my husbands' family. But two of his brothers became locomotive engineers--what do you call it?--they run the train. So they were supposed to be a very smart family. One of the girls was supposed to be very good looking and I guess she was. She married a school principal--that's the one that my sister Elma lived with when she got married. That was another part of the country. One of my father's sisters married a colonel in the army. But I supposed they all came to the funeral. That I don't know. I was too young to know any of that. But you see they were king of a smart family, and my father was a bricklayer. He was supposed to be very good. He made good money. I don't know how old he was--he may have been thirty--when he got married. And he had saved enough to buy this house before they got married and of course he was always working improving it. It had a wonderful location. People spoke about the location--crossways where one road going this way and one that way. We had six lovely apple trees and we had bushes--gooseberries--and two great big lovely trees right at the entrance of the where you walked into the house. So that must have been quite a nice place when my father bought it, and

he must have been able to make good money in those days. But you see he didn't live long.

Do you remember much about your father?

No. Only that he was so good. I remember one time he came in and we were in bed. Of course all of us slept in two beds in that one room. I can remember one time I woke up and laying in bed there and here comes my father and my father took my mother and they kissed so lovely. Well I didn't know what it meant but I remember seeing it. My mother said he was such a good man. We were awfully crowded in that room. I remember that he was home in the wintertime and he would always fix our shoes. But it was so crowded with us children and all living in one room, and that little place where you cooked and the stove with the fireplace. And we had to be so quiet and sit in the corner so we didn't disturb him when he was fixing the shoes. We had a happy home. It was no quarreling or no fighting or no drinking or anything like that--no smoking. If people smoked in those days it must have been a pipe, but my father didn't. I can't remember seeing it.

Did you have a garden?

We had a vegetable garden. We had about an acre of land. My father's older brother was a farmer near the grandfather's home and he used to plow up that one acre of ground that we had. And of course my mother always worked outside buying the grain and planting the potatoes. I suppose we raised oats. We had potatoes, we had beans, we had onions, and I don't know what else we had. We had four chickens and we had a cow. We had a barn. And well we must have raised some oats or something because my father had--have you seen where the men thrash their wheat off of the grain and slam it down?--one of these slings. You pound the grain out. You lay the grain out on the floor of the barn, you have a certain space and you lay the grain, and then you pound this grain off of the stems. That was hard work. He did that in the wintertime because he couldn't lay bricks in the cold weather. He couldn't work at his trade. Then I can remember him coming in sometimes from the barn. He'd always be so tired and my mother would get him coffee or some tea. After you pound it, you have to take all those stems and shake it and get all that out and then you have some sort of a seed. Oh it was a lot of work. That's what you had to do if you didn't have the oxen that went around and around. It (the grain) was for the cow. And we had a pig part of the time. See we weren't the very poorest until after my father died and then we're hard up. But then my mother went out. She used to get two dollars a day for working all day out in the field. Then she'd come home and sometimes we were good, I guess, and sometimes we weren't because we were too young to do anything that was right. I had a wonderful mother.

What were your sister's names?

Helen, Tunya, Charlotte, Hilda, and Elsa Maria. I named Elsa Maria. You know she was born two months after my father died. We stayed at my grandmother's home while she was born. We stayed there for a month or two--at my father's parents. My mother's parents died. They were both dead when she was six years old and she was the youngest of a family. I think there were eleven or thirteen--oh, there was an awful lot of children. Some of them she hadn't ever seen and never did see. She was raised by an old couple till she got big enough where she could work and she worked in these estates that they had in those days and I guess she stayed there until she got married. I know very little about her family except that she had one sister that I

remember. She used to come and see us. She lived a long ways away though and she had a brother that came to this country--Krans. He was an officer in the army. I forget what he was and when he was in the service or in the army. Those days, for one thing, they change your name. You see my mother's name was Peterson and when this brother became an officer he was named Krines and that's where they got the name Krans. That was the rule--everybody that was in the army had to change their name. I told you that my fathe'r sister married a colonel, a corporal or something in the service. Well he had to change his name to Ingma, so they were always known by the name of Ingma. That was the rule. And when they served in the army, they had to go to the exercises--what do you call it when they have to practice? They do it here too--the government calls them too. Well, they had to go certain weeks and months to these places where they had to practice manuvers--whatever you call them. They all get a house or a cottage log cabin and a piece of garden that's part of the pay I guess, and as long as they're in the service they can live in that house and work on the ground. They can't sell it, and if they leave the service--like my uncle that came to this country--he left the service, you see, to come here--well then they had to give all that up and that goes to the next person who takes over. They lived a little ways from where we did.

Evidently my father's family were considered quite smart in those days and they were able to make, shall I say, a good living. So if my father had lived, I think that it would have been much nicer for us.

Tell me about how you named your sister.

Well My mother was laying there in bed, and we were of course had to live in that one room, all of us. And when the child is a week old they're always baptized. Usually they take the child and the godmother and godparents with them to the minister or the church--maybe both--and have them baptized, or as we say, sprinkled. But you see my mother was quite sick and laying in bed in my grandmother's home. She couldn't, and there was no one else to take the child. So I remember when we talked and talked about what should we name our little sister and I--well I remember saying how I loved the name Elsa Maria so much. It was so beautiful. My mother, I guess, she didn't know what to do. She said, "We'll call her Elsa Maria, and we did."

But the minister came to the house. Oh, he was a good minister. He came to see her and talk to her and that was really something for a minister in Sweden to do it for the poor people. They usually didn't pay much attention to poor people, but he did. But I guess he came and he baptized her right there in the room. All they did is just sprinkle and say the word.

Was it a happy time?

No. My mother was so discouraged, and it took her so long to get well. And my grandmother was so old--I don't know how old she was--and she couldn't read well. Nobody could read in those days, but she couldn't see very good so she could never light a match. She had to be watched and my aunt that took care of her really ran the house well. She was very careful of her old mother and took good care of her.

Did this aunt ever get married?

No, but she took care of her mother and ran the farm until her mother died.

Then what happened?

The realty was divided. She moved up to another part of the country and took care of old people--what do you call it--administrator, counsellor. She must have been fifty. One thing I was going to say--After my father died, we lived in that house till I came to this country. At night--you know we had the two beds--we always had to say our prayers after we got to bed, and as long as we were awake my mother would lay there and teach us Bible verses. That's where we learned so many Bible verses. She knew them by heart. Not always right from the Bible but from the psalms. You know what catechism is? We learned practically the whole thing there. We used to lay there and read those verses and learn them and that kept up for a couple of years or more I suppose.

What were some of your happiest and saddest memories?

Well I think one of the happiest times was when I got the premium in school. I got the biggest prize (laughs). It was two dollars but nobody had got it before. You know they gave a prize of one or two dollars, but no one had got two dollars before I got it--only if they were really good students, and I suppose I was. But my sister was better than me after she came along. That was a proud day. All the parents could come to that celebration you know, and those that had done really well in school--they got sort of honored. I remember when I got that my mother was very happy. I was the one that got the biggest prize. The others got them too, but they probably only got one dollar or one and a half, but I got two and that was put in a savings account until a certain time of your life. But I got mine because I came to America soon after this, you see. It was taken out and given to me. That was a really happy time because I was so praised (laughs).

I suppose the saddest time was when I had to leave Sweden I remember crying.

How did your leaving Sweden come about?

We were so poor. There were times we didn't have a thing. My uncle--my mother's brother, Gus Krans, the one who had been in the service--he came here with two of his boys. The two girls that they had were here before and they sent for the parents and he came to this country with his two boys. One was sixteen I think and the other one was probably twelve, so they could work. They rented a farm, and seemed to get ahead. Well, he did. Oh, they worked so hard! Well that was before my father died. And they were such great friends and so intimate--(my father and this uncle)--my aunt told me after I came here and said that she could talk more openly to my father than she could to her own husband. That I've never forgot. So you see I must have had an awfully good father. I must have had.

They rented a farm. My father was supposed to come here too and make a living and get along good together, and they would if he had lived. They wrote to each other and they were such good companions--I finally saw that when I grew up. They had decided, I guess, that as soon as my uncle got settled good here, well my father was going to come and bring the family and they would work together and make a living here. Well my father died, and we became so poor. And then of course my uncle wrote to my mother--she couldn't write but somebody always wrote for her--and found out how hard it was for us, you know. So my uncle's oldest daughter got married to a bricklayer and he was making good money.

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Were things were bad in Sweden?

Not always. There were times, well, should I tell it? We had this old rye bread, oh yea... That reminds me we raised rye. I said we only raised oats, but we raised rye. We had this hard rye bread that they had in those days, and in order to make a little, we had to knead the dough. My mother did that of course: break up the bread and soak it in water and get that green onion--what do you call it?--and mix that in with it, and if we had any grease from salted pork--if we had a pig we salted the pork--if we had any of that which we didn't always, we could add a little of that grease to this and that made a sort of a stink you might say. Anyway, it was better than just hard rye bread and water. When we had a cow that had that milk--of course we had milk--I remember she made a panful and we children were so hungry that we ate it all and mother didn't get a bite and then we were so conscious stricken that we had eaten it. Oh, I remember that. Now you can't picture what hardship is. Well, we came to this country and I...

Tell me about when you left.

It was cold icy and it was ice on the Dicherson and we had to walk to the train. My mother went with us and my youngest sisters--we had to say goodbye to them. I remember when we said goodbye to my mother. Of course I saw her after that but my sister didn't. And of course we were scared--we had never been anyplace, and neither one of us knew anything. But the Lord protected us.

First we had to get to Goteborg and there we stayed overnight in a hotel. All this is arranged in your tickets you know. They don't let you take a step without watching you--I'll say that for the agents. You can't get lost if you do what you're told. And I think it was the next day, or we may have stayed, but we went to-- I think it was Hood, England. We had to cross in the dark and ****that's where it's rough. That's where you get so sick. I think we got in yet to bar and over to Hill and then from there to Liverpool. And in Liverpool we got on the big ship--the line was England. I guess it took about eight or ten days or something like that to cross the Atlantic. I don't remember exactly. There was lots of Swedish people but there were also so many others. And we thought the Italians and the Irish and there may have been other nationalities--they were not very clean (laughs). You know the Swedes really are pretty clean but these people--we had to mix with them and when you get down there to the restrooms, it was just, well, it was so much water on the floor that you got your shoes wet just going through the restroom. And then you slept on layered bunks--they were just gunnysacks stuffed with straw and every tip the ship made there had to be new straw. You know almost everybody brought their own food if they could, but we had some because when we left the people were so good to us. They gave us some cheese and bread and things in a basket. We carried the basket. Well we didn't t have a suitcase, no I don't think so. We had a blanket and our clothes. Well we must have had some kind of a suitcase.

You had to sleep on these bunks. One trip I slept in the second bunk and there was above, this, well they had to throw up you know. It was terrible. It's hard to talk about of it.

Did you get sick while on the ship?

On the North Sea I did, but not on the Atlantic. And I think my sister stood it about the same as I did. But on the North Sea I was so sick. Oh, you get so sick. And I got sick on the North Sea when I went back to Sweden. I remember that this food that we had in the basket was

stolen so we didn't have enough food on the ship. They did feed you. They had big cans of potatos--boiled potatoes with skins on them and they had these big big tables. They came with these big cans of boiled potatoes and they could eat them no place or nothing. I don't know if they gave you any other food. I do remember some of the passengers having their own food and, even better, they'd sit up on deck and eat. I don't think they had coffee; we surely didn't have any.

But when we got to New York, we were herded into a Castle Garden or what do they call it now? Well it's a place where the immigrants came at that time and there they stayed. I think they stayed a day or so.

Were you scared on the ship?

Well I think we were at first, but then we could go up and sit on the deck. But they watch you so that you if you go near the deck to or lean over, they tell you to get away. There were some children--- they had ropes on them. And then there was the second and third class--you could look up to those people. We were immigrants you see, and in the third class--in the very lowest, but those who had first or second class--they were up above us and we could see them, but they couldn't come down to us I don't think. They never did. And you couldn't go upstairs?

No. They were very strict, but we could sit if there was a deck chair and we would be quick to get a chair you know. Sometimes they told us to get up because I guess people had their own chairs. If we couldn't get a seat we just sat on the floor. I remember that well. Just sit there on the floor and see the water. All you do is to see water, and some people they were very very kind to us. There was one thing I remember: some of the men would talk to the younger ladies, not children like us, but the grown up girls and they tried to put their arms around them. And you know that to me was a sin (laughs). That is something that seems kind of funny that I should remember. If the young lady said something they would walk up to them and put their arm around them. Of course they had nothing to do with us. I saw that--the first time in my life I ever saw anyone do that.

It must have been a pretty exciting time. Did your sister and you talk a lot about what life would be like?

Oh, we didn't have sense enough. We had been told and preached always that we must always ask the Lord to lead us. And one thing my mother preached that whatever you do, whatever you say, the Lord sees you if nobody else. And that stuck to me for so long and I think it did for my sister. We just didn't dare to do what we knew was wrong or go where we knew was wrong because the Lord would see it and that was planted into us from my mother. I often think that's one thing that saved us from all sorts of disaster.

Well we got to New York and the time came that we should go on to Rockford--that's where our destination was. And this cousin that sent for me and paid for my ticket met us at the station. Rockford was so big; it had two stations--course we had never seen anything like that--and we supposed to get off at the first station--we knew that. On the train from New York, I don't remember how long it took but I think we were one night. I think we sat on the train because we were so tired and we were so hungry. Well somebody either gave us or we bought it because we must have had some money but anyhow, they came and gave us bananas. I'd never

seen anything like it and we didn't know what it was and we started to eat it with the skin on it (laughs). And then a lady came over and showed us how to peel the banana. Oh people were good but they were--oh, I don't know...

One thing I do remember is that on the signs going past on farms from New York to Rockford, you could see "barn" and barn in English means children in Swedish. When you speak about children you write in Swedish b-a-r-n. And you could see signs "Barn for Sale" and that puzzled us so. It did for ever so long.

And what does "sale" mean in Swedish?

"Sale" is just like Swedish. But we figured, how could they sell children? We were so tired and we were so, oh, I believe--well heavens--I believe we had lice in the head. Yea, because I can remember my cousin combing and combing and greasing our heads. The ship is where we picked it up. Oh, it was so dirty on that ship and so disagreeable. But she met us at the station. She couldn't help but know us because she knew we were coming, and here we were hopping dirty and cold and sticky.

What time of the year was that?

That was just before Memorial Day. Because on Memorial Day we went for a picnic with them. You see, we went to their house. They lived in Rockford in an apartment or a flat as they called it. Somebody lived upstairs and then downstairs in the room. They had, oh, I don't know how many rooms. They had lovely furniture. And he was a bricklayer. He was thirty-three years old and I thought that was awful old (laughs) when she told me her husband was thirty three. We stayed there then a whole week and during that time they went with some friends to a picnic on Memorial Day, either at the park or, I forget, somewhere. But the corn was about that high at that time and now it's always so much later. The seasons are later; that's one thing I remember.

Well my sister--they found a place for her on a farm helping with the housework in a week. She couldn't talk--didn't know anything. Oh, it was hard. And I went to my uncle's and stayed with them.

Were you frightened to be separated from your sister?

Oh yes. We cried and we didn't see too much of each other after that. You see that's when we got so separated. She had to work and it was awfully hard for her to keep... For one thing, she had a hard time adjusting. She wasn't too well. I've always been quite healthy. But she was ailing more I think. I don't think she was so strong. And the lady she worked for was good alright but she had to show her everything and my sister couldn't understand her. And the lady couldn't understand what my sister said. Well she stayed there of a few weeks I guess. It wasn't too far from my uncle's farm. So I think we must have seen each other probably once or twice. But you couldn't walk that country road, and I stayed in my uncle's.

You could speak Swedish with them?

Yes. Well Janice's father was a year older than I. I was twelve. He must have been thirteen then, and his brother was a year younger and I was between the two boys. Of course they had to work hard on the farm. And the oldest--that was a Verna Krans' father-- Charlie, he was older. He was sixteen I think. There was so many years between him and his brother. Well

they rented a two hundred acre farm. Oh, they worked hard. And of course housework was hard too. I washed dishes and washed the milk cans and of course had to sweep and make the beds.

Were you the only girl there?

I helped the mother, and it was hard for her. She was forty-five when she came to this country and came into new surroundings. She never learned English. She never learned to talk. She could understand a little but she couldn't never talk.

Were you treated like a servant or like family?

I was more like the family. They were good to me. Especially Verda's father--the one that was sixteen, the oldest--he was such a good Christian boy. Well the others were good, but they were in the teens you know. But the youngest son, my cousin, he was a tease and if he could tease me or make me embarrassed then he was happy. I remember that much. But he was only thirteen and I was twelve. What could you expect? But Eunice's father was so old for his age, and he was big and a great worker. He was thirteen and I was twelve. He was always a year older than me. And they worked on there--they stayed on that farm. The father rented it, of course, but the boys had to work.

Do you remember having any fun or was it an adult world for you?

Oh it was nothing but work (laughs). They never, well, they had company--the farmers would come in, but people didn't have company for meals or anything. But they went fifteen miles to church in Kirkland once in a while on Sunday if they could drive the horses. And it was fifteen miles and that took just about all Sunday to go and be at the service and come home.

Was it a good church?

It was a good church.

Swedish?

Swedish. It was Lutheran--they were always Lutheran. I think Junis's father turned Baptist, but the other's remained in the Lutheran church. When Charlie Krans got married, his wife was a strict Lutheran and they were very faithful in church. Well they were all Christians. No drinking and no carousing--not that kind of people at all. And even my uncle who had been a soldier was a nice moral man, you know, he was strict. They were strict.

Did you ever get disciplined?

No, they were good to me. And then they got me this place in the farm--that big house you know. I remember that they said, well when they sent for my sister, they wrote that there would be "One mop less to feed." Oh how that must have hurt her. And when I had been with my uncle a while, I remember they said they had to buy more than one sac of flour since I had come. Well people were hard up. They didn't have the money. They had to be so saving with every penny and never saw a cracker. They lived on the meat and potatoes and the meat the raised they raised on the farm there.

How long were you there?

I must have been there a couple years. That's where I worked in the wintertime for my

room and board. I didn't get paid. In the summertime, at the other place, I got the dollar a week. But that was lots more work, and that's where I had to pick the strawberries and tomatoes. Well there were all kinds of work. Except I didn't work in the barn. That I didn't do. I think I was there a couple of years. Because I remember I had my fifteenth birthday in Rockford. I was working for a lady in Rockford. After I had been on this farm for a couple of years I guess I got the idea or somebody said or my cousin said it. Anyhow, I wrote to my cousin that lived in Rockford—the one that met me you know, the one that paid for my fair—that there was anyway she could get me a job in Rockford where I could get more than a dollar a week. Well girls got two and three and up to four. In those days they didn't get five. Well she wrote and said if I could come, she would try and see if she could get me into a house.

Tell me about the Rockford house where you worked and lived for a couple years.

That's where I went to school in the wintertime. And the daughter was the school teacher. And I did the housework. The hardest part of that winter was that you had to hang out the clothes when it was so freezing cold. Well, we did, we strung up the line in their trees.

Did anybody help you?

No. I had to wash and I had to scrub on the board. Well I was big enough to do that. There was no children there. The daughter was the school teacher. And they had three boys that worked on the farm, and the parents and the older brother to the man that owned the place. So there was eight in the family all the time. Yes there was. The three brothers, the three boys, and the daughter--that was four, and the man and wife, that's seven and the older brother was eight, and then I was nine. We had a big table and of course I had to set the table and wash the dishes all the time. You pump the water outside and carry it in and carry out the dishwater, and heat the water on the stove you know. It took so long to do anything.

And what did you do when you finished?

I could go upstairs when it was time to go to bed. But before I went upstairs you had to sit down and do the mending. I can remember when she gave me towels to put the patch on the towel because she wasn't so particular about that. Oh, people were saving--you had to be. And that was supposed to be a well-to-do family. But that's the way it was in those days.

I had my own bedroom. It was cool; there was no heat upstairs, but there were several rooms upstairs. You see they had raised a big family and well at least four other children were married and had moved away. One lived in Iowa and I don't know where the others lived. I didn't even see all of them. And I guess they're all gone.

Is that the place where you did the quilting?

Yes, that was the place. She put up a quilting frame and when I had any time, I had to quilt. That was more in the summer because she had it in a separate room and that room wasn't heated. And it took I guess a year to quilt that way. But you quilted it-- you didn't tie it--you quilted it. And when I had any time, I had to quilt. You never got a half an hour free.

You don't remember ever going for a walk or doing something you really wanted to do?

Never. Never. What I wanted was to read. I wanted to learn to read English you know.

And I guess I did learn it, but I didn't learn so I could read a book or anything. But if you went

near there--near the school, next door--there was a house built that they called the Grange. And that's where the firemen met and the officials of the county; they met in this little house. And that's where we had Sunday school Sunday morning. That was all English though, and that's where I suppose I learned it. I'll never forget when I hear the same tune, "God will Take Care of You". It's the same melody in Swedish. Oh it was just like being back in Sweden. Well the lady I worked for and her sister had a big farm. She lived next to there. And one or two other ladies run the Sunday school and practically all the farmers--it wasn't too many, probably a dozen maybe--they come and had the Sunday school Sunday morning.

Was there a church service then?

No there was no church. The church was quite a ways. And I can't remember, only that there was a Methodist church and that I was there once when there was a meeting.

How long did it take you to get to Kirkland when you went with your uncle to the church there?

Oh, it was fifteen miles to drive with horses. I guess it took way over an hour. It must have. Because it seems to me it took all day Sunday to get ready to go and to drive and to stay for the church service and there was people around there that they talked to you know. And then drive home and have something to eat after we got home. It seems like it was no time before the men had to do chores. Course they milked I think thirty cows every morning and every night.

But the other place where you worked, how big of a farm was that?

Oh that was a big farm. They owned their farm. You see my Uncle Severson owned the farm. I don't know how big it was. Oh probably two hundred fifty acres, probably more.

I remember her telling me she came from a family that was quite well to do, I guess, and when the parents died the money was divided and what she got was put into a farm across the street from where she lived. I don't think she ever liked it because she said "It's all over there on the farm." I guess she never got what she wanted out of her money because she used to say, "It's all over there on the farm." I remember that. Isn't it strange how...? I don't know how much it was, but enough to buy a piece of land across the street. People wanted more land, more land.

How much did your uncle have to pay for rent?

Half. In those days, the farmer paid half of the expenses, and my uncle which rented the farm paid half of the expenses. But my uncle did all the work, and that was the income that the owner got. But they divided the income and then they got that. My uncle I guess made some money on it--of course he had the three boys to work there you see. And they never got a penny--the boys. Charlie was twenty-one. He was very strict with his boys. That didn't seem right either, but I guess it's the way it was.

You were in that house for a couple of years, and then your cousin got you a job. How old were you then?

I was fifteen. I wasn't quite fifteen, so I couldn't have been two years on that far because I was thirteen. I had my thirteenth birthday on the farm. I remember that daughter was so nice to me. She bought a real pretty birthday card. That was wonderful. And I was fifteen when I had my birthday in Rockford and it happened to be the same day as the birthday of the little girl I was taking care of. So we had graham crackers outside and she had milk and I suppose I had

water. I didn't drink coffee in those days. We had it outside; we put the chairs around, and we put some, oh, it must have been jam on the graham crackers and then we sprinkled sugar on them to make it good. The little girl must have been two or three. She had a baby while I was there. That's why I came there. Now I remember. The baby was born the second day after Christmas. Of course after that there was a lot of diapers and washing to do. It was lot's of work. And things weren't handy to work with you know. You had to pump the water and empty the water and boil the clothes and hang them up.

You lived in town when you were in Rockford. What was that easier for you?

Oh yes, and then I got more money. I got two dollars, and then I got two and a half. And then--I don't remember the reason--oh, the people that had that little girl and the baby--they moved away to another town. He, well he got laid off. Anyway they had to move and I had to find another place. And I found the place with a family that lived in a big house--quite big--and they had three children, all big enough to go to school. There I had to do all their work that was a lot of hard work. But there I got I think I got two and a half or three, and then they raised me to three and a half, and then they went to Chicago and I moved with them. And then I got up to four dollars. Well I don't remember how long I was there.

At the Rockford house, did you eat with the family?

Not in Rockford. I didn't eat with the family. On the farm I did. You had to wait on them--they had a bell that they rang.

So it was a well-to-do family?

Yea.

They rang a bell?

To clear the table and bring in the dessert, and if they wanted extra water or anything--if they needed anything. One place--that was after I left them, and why I did that was because a girl wanted me to take a place across the street--I had to wear a striped shirt dress and a white apron in the morning and in the afternoon at 2:00 as soon as I got through with the lunch dishes, I had to change to a black dress and a white cap and a white apron. She furnished that. I didn't have to buy them. I had to buy the striped dress though, but the black dress she furnished and the cap (laughs). That was the way maids were. That was in Chicago on Washington Avenue. They had style. I knew how to wait on the table and what to serve, and I got so I could serve a six-course dinner all by myself. And finally I got up to six dollars a week which was as much as any girl got.

You were still a teenager then?

Yes. Oh, I was seventeen when I was confirmed. I told you about that--wanting to be confirmed. I wanted to take that instruction when I went to see the minister and he asked me if I was saved and I started to bawl (laughs). I don't remember...

Well you know it was so strong in me that I should be confirmed because everybody in Sweden is confirmed. Lutherans--they take this--you know what it is don't you?--you take the Bible instruction. Well how could I? You had to go Saturday morning for the lessons and I was working. I had only Thursday afternoon off. And people were so strict and I was so scared. But

it happened that the minister in this Rockford church that I always went to--I think I got acquainted with some people that kind of took an interest in me--either got sick or died or moved. Anyway, they got another one and that happened to be around Christmas time. Otherwise, the confirmation classes start in the fall and they usually are confirmed in Easter--that's the way it usually is. But this time, on account of the change of the minister, they couldn't finish the course so they had another minister come and he supplied the pulpit. But he was an old man and he was going to finish out that year, and when I found that out--that he was going to finish that course, I thought, "Well maybe I can now, if I can get Saturday off instead of Thursday."

This is in Rockford?

Yes. I guess I must have asked, and she said I could if I could manage it--I could go Saturday afternoon, or was it the morning? Well anyway it was Saturday. And I had to do what work I had and I came back. I didn't get thirsty back then you see. And I went to see the minister, and I had to tell my story I suppose. He was an old man, but he was so kind, and I can remember he talked to me about the Lord. He asked me if I was saved--if I knew the Lord, loved the Lord, and knew what I was doing, I suppose. And I started to cry (laughs). Well I suppose I answered enough questions till he sort of accepted me. He said, "You can join the class if you can make it," and he was good. I made it. I was confirmed by the elders.

You were seventeen then?

Well this was Easter and I was seventeen in June. I wasn't quite seventeen because we were either Easter or Pentacost, one or the other. And I had my white dress--the dressmaker made it and we had our picture taken. That's always stood out in my life as, well, something special, and I could write home to my mother about that. It meant so much in those days. I don't know. Well I talk so much.

When you moved to Chicago you were with the same Rockford family with the two children. Was that the same family that made you wear the uniform?

No. That family that I moved with from Rockford didn't require that. But that next place I had--I got that through a girl that I met in the church who worked across the street from this family and that was just a man and wife and the daughter. Their house was not so big but they were stylish, very particular. That was where I had the dress.

Was that the family that was very kind to you, the one that gave you the clock?

That was after that. Because in that family that doctor got married--she had a wedding while I was there. I remember that wedding was the eighth of April. It was a simple wedding in a way because the minister came to the house. It wasn't a church wedding. But it was a lot of work and they had a caterer, and that was something I never knew about before. But the lady, she, well I guess she was so nervous after the bridal couple left. She went to bed. She was so tired you know, and she stayed in bed the next day, and of course the whole house was upset with church and everything. And I worked all that next day getting the house in order and she was so pleased. I remember that. But that doctor got married and moved to Evanston and the lady and her husband--well the lady went to California for a visit with her mother. That one broke up right away there, and the husband I think went to stay some place else, a hotel or

something. That I forgot.

Tape 2

You left off telling about that place of employment in Chicago and could you tell me what you did then?

Of the place that they had the wedding?

Yes.

Well I told you about her going to California and the father going someplace, and I went to Sweden. I remember now, I've been trying to think back.

What year was that?

1902. I had my twenty first birthday in Sweden so I got there just before the first of June, and I stayed till September and then I came back to America. And while I was there in Sweden I stayed with my mother and I stayed with my sister Hilda. She worked on the farm and I stayed there a week or two because they wanted me to help out, and she had to do so much. Oh, so much hard work

Was she married then?

No, I was twenty-one and she must have been about--she's at least five years younger than me--eighteen. But you know they had to work on the farms, those that didn't have an education. She had to get up about four o'clock in the morning, and take a big tank on a cart that she had to go out in the pasture and milk the cows. I forget how many cows. But she had to go all that distance--oh, it wasn't too far--and I went with her. I remember that early in the morning and then she milked the cows and brought the milk home.

Did you help her?

No, only to walk with there and probably wheel the cart. I don't think I milked in those days. When she came back to the house, the lady that owned the farm took care of the milk. And, well, they put it in pans and skim ** butter, and she had to go out in the field and work. It was that time of the year too when they must have cut grain or something. Anyway she was in the field all day. I think I stayed part of the time in the house and did the dishes and fed the chickens and the pigs. And then they had a hired man, and the man that owned the farm, well they did the farm. Well they came home for dinner, and then after dinner after they ate they went and layed down for a hour in the hay or on the field or on the grass or any place. It was a hot summer. We had to do dishes and feed the animals. My sister--it was her job but of course I was there, and I helped her. And then she had to go back on the field in the afternoon and come back about suppertime and milk the cows again and feed the animals in the evening. And I helped her whenever I could. I can remember scrubbing that big big kitchen floor. You know I always scrubbed with the scrub brush on my hands and knees but that was a job. Of course that was her job but she and I scrubbed it together when I was there.

Did she get paid?

Oh she got paid but I don't know how much. They didn't pay much. I think it was fifty

dollars a year or fifty Kroner.** Oh they didn't pay much. It was so much work. But she was well then.

How was your mother when you returned to Sweden?

Well she was well enough to take care of herself and take care of Elsa--my youngest sister--I think she was fourteen. She wasn't confirmed yet. She had to be confirmed after I left. I remember that much. Well, my mother went out working in the fields for the farmers whenever they wanted any help and she was still able to do that; I remember that. But I didn't stay home and work much. Well I was only there for a few months. And then when I stayed with my sister, after we got the supper dishes done--you see it's light in Sweden till about midnight; it doesn't get dark there in the summertime. If we got through with the kitchen work there was always lots of supper dishes, because they had a big meal at night when the men were through working. And then we went out to the garden and dig or plant or weed or whatever it was needed as long as we could. I know one time it was almost twelve o'clock before we went to bed and then get up at four.

That's when I decided that I would not stay in Sweden and work. Because that's the only kind of work I would get, because I had no education whatever, not as much as my sister because I didn't get through school in Sweden and she did. So I wanted to go back to America. There I could earn enough to support myself and send money home to my mother. That was so clear to me that time. And so I came back to here in September and I had nobody except friends. I had no relatives whatever; I never did have. But I went to one of the homes where--well they were church members and we went there to their home sometimes Sunday afternoons when we were free. Well they were my friends and I went there when I came from the train to the station, and I knew enough about Chicago so they let me go. Otherwise, when we got to the station...

Oh yea I got acquainted with a girl from Sweden on the boat and she was coming to Chicago to make a living. She was all alone, and I suppose I got to talking that I knew that part of Chicago. I knew just where she was going because it was right near the church on the South Side there. And when we got to the station we just sat there until the agent came and let us out and I remember I wanted to go because it was nothing for me to stay for. I knew enough about how to get on the bus and everything. I had been here you see and I could talk English to the man at the station--the guardian--whatever he was. I wanted to take this girl to her friends because I knew exactly where the street and all was, and he said I couldn't do that because I had no authority. Well I guess I explained it to him and he let me take her and I remember when we came here to that place and they expected her and she made breakfast for us. It was in the morning and they were very nice. I saw that girl a few times afterwards, but I didn't keep up too long. I don't remember what became of her. But anyway I got to her place.

What was it like going home to the your family after eight or nine years?

I was so happy and so glad to see my mother and see the home...see my father's grave, and I found it. And my sister Elsa was home; she wasn't fourteen. And we went to the cemetary and I was going to see if I could remember my father's grave, and I found it. And of course I had many many happy talks with my mother and my sister Elsa and Hilda--this place where she worked on that farm was quite a little ways from home but when she came home one time--I guess she probably had Sunday off--and had to walk and walk and walk and we walked with her. And Elsa and I walked with her almost all the way back. I can remember that. And then when we walked back to our home we were so tired (laughs).

Oh I enjoyed the church. It was just a beautiful old church. That I remember. My sister and my mother didn't go because she couldn't walk that far. She wasn't strong but she was quite well. Oh we had so many wonderful talks and she talked about my father. Those things I remember.

And Elsa and I used to go to the morning service, and then they had the evening service. Not too many people went there but we always went because it was so beautiful--it was to me--and of course she and I could walk. I don't remember exactly how far it was to town, probably a mile, probably half. That part I remember wonderful. And the church was built in the 1300's when Sweden belonged to Denmark, so you know it was an old old church, but it had been repaired time and time again. And it was still very old, and very wonderful, and all these statues... Underneath the floor was buried a noble man. And then on the stone it would tell the date and the name.

What town was that in?

Skanninge. That's the town that I went to school in. But this was part of the old part of Sweden. Of course it's all old. We used to sit and read the inscriptions when we sat in church. I remember one especially; it said Kirche. How would you say that in English? Kirshe is the one that disturbs this stone and remains underneath. Course I can't tell it just exactly. Those things I remember.

Well my mother was not happy exactly that I went back, but she saw it so plainly that I could never make a living in Sweden and another thing there's such a... well what do you call it when people that are high educated and have a little more money and a little richer--they sort of look down on the real working people that had to do the lowest kind of work. What do you call that?

class? Class distinction--that's the idea. Well that went against me terrible. Well I think I told you one of my father's sisters married a school principal and his father was an organist. That was way up in Sweden to have that education. And he was still living and still playing the organ in that church. That was quite a ways away from our home. But this aunt of mine that married this principal lived in a pretty big house, I went up to visit them. They insisted that I should ride up and visit them. And they had a maid--that's what you call that girl that worked for them--that slept in the kitchen on a sofa with some bedding and she had to make that up every night and every morning. She waited on them at the table but she didn't eat at the table. She did all the dirty work, but that was the custom. She worked for them. And that's the kind of work that I did here in this country. And in the evening they'd sit there at the table till 9:00 sometimes before she could come in to clear the table. It was such a class distinction that they looked down on the working people, and even if she was my aunt. She was, but they were high up. and # people. And I wanted to--for one thing I remember saying we should get up so that she could clear the table. And I wanted to go up and visit with her in the kitchen you know and help her. That was in me; I learned that here. And my aunt called me in and said it wasn't appropriate--it wasn't proper--that I was their company and I was their relation. I should not be out with the well chancevik** that's even kind of word that you don't...If you're a chancevik you're a pretty low work. And I should not be out there talking to her. I should sit in the front room and...

And you didn't like that?

No, that went against me terribly. Oh I just couldn't see it. And I didn't get too much

acquainted with her either. She had to polish my uncle's shoes every night so they'd be shiny in the morning. I don't know if he put them in the kitchen himself or if she had go to pick them up. Oh I thought they treated her terribly.

Did she tell you that she had to polish his shoes?

No, but everybody did it when you were in that kind of a work. When you was a servant that was your job every night, and it was hers, and I got to know those things. Of course not my sister on the farm--they couldn't be that high to her. My sister on the farm--she eats with the family. But at this school principal's, they lived in part of the school or right next to it; he was very dignified (laughs). He wanted to tell me all about the different religions in America. He seemed to know a lot about America you know (laughs). Well I thought I knew as much but I didn't.

Well there was part of that that I'll never forget there's just...it just... I just didn't like it.

Did you explain that to your mother?

Oh, I imagine I said a lot. But that was the custom-- everybody did it, and I suppose after I had been home a month or so I was used to it too. I can't remember exactly.

It must have been unusual to have someone come back from America and tell them what it's like. Weren't you kind of special?

Oh yes, and lots of them didn't believe what I said. I told them in Chicago there's and elevated train--I told them that they had trains running above the ground and they didn't believe that. (They thought) It was a lie. The Americans around their part of the country had at that time the reputation for telling awful lies. And a lot of Americans, or Swedes that had been in America, probably did tell stories. I don't doubt it a bit. Because a few really made it good here you know and made good money and could come back and spend it. Well I didn't. I wasn't one of those that could do that so I couldn't tell a whole lot of the success stories.

But one thing I remember in this country at that time is when you let down a dress. I remember that. I learned to hem up a dress. Well we hemmed it up and so did them in Europe. There they wore those dresses that you put the piece of goods on there and sewed it on and then you sewed the braid on there. They didn't have thin dresses like we had here. They had heavier goods, all of them in those days, and I remember they asked me how I did that--put down the shaw. I said "We don't do that. We just hang it up." Oh, they thought that was a lie. Oh there was many things.

Can you remember any things you told them about America?

Well I think I told them about how I had to be dressed, but of course they were the same amongst the rich people in Sweden I suppose. I didn't see the real rich people. My aunt was kind of up high, but otherwise the real prominent rich people I didn't see in Sweden. But I imagine I told them how I had to be dressed and I had to wait on the table. And one thing I do remember I had in America--a room of my own. Wherever I lived I had a room of my own, and that's something you don't have in Sweden. There isn't room for one thing, and I don't know if a servant girl would be entitled it. Like this one that worked for my aunt--she slept in the kitchen. She had, it was just a cover on the couch--it was under the table and she had to pull it out every night and make up the bed. There was just a few things inside the bed and a cover on top and

she had to get that ready in the morning, you know, before they got up, to have that all cleared out. Couldn't pull it out to sleep in it until she got all through. Probably so tired.

So you had it nicer?

I had it nicer that way. That was wonderful, and then my sister said I was so spoiled having my own room. I remember that, and that was something that they couldn't see at all-to think that I, a servant girl, could have a room of my own. And I suppose I told them about--no--we didn't have automobiles then. No.

Do you remember anything about Chicago?

Oh yes, I remember Chicago real well. You know I got acquainted with servant girls, and I went to a church that was just a few blocks away, a few servant girls, and a milkman and janitors, now was there any other? Coachmen. They had a coachman. Well we all got acquainted, and in those days I firmly believe that people were more, well shall I say Christian, religious, more anxious to know about the Lord.

People in general?

Well the kind of people that I met. All others--you know there were plenty of people you could read about in the paper and you could hear it. I heard it too, where people were stealing and committing crimes and robbing and doing all kinds of evil things. But I didn't get in with that crowd, and I never knew them. The man--that father to the girl that got married and had that wedding at home and the mother went to California--he was dope addict. I was there a long time, I don't know how long I was. But that lady was, well she was kind of a confident, shall I say that? She told me things that you ordinarily wouldn't think that she would but I suppose she has so much to put up with that she even would talk to a servant girl. I remember when she told me sometimes he would be away for days and nights, and she told me that he went to a Chinese dope place, and there he smoked these Chinese, well I don't know enough about it. I forgot what she told me. But then when he got over it he'd come home but he was always so quiet and had to have his--she'd take his meals up to his room. I'd put it on a tray and she'd take it up to his room. So I saw very little of him, but when he was home we was very nice and polite. We was a stockbroker. When he was home he used to call up and ask the price of stock. He had some man there in his office so I guess he made money. But that I remember. That was part of the life that I didn't know anything much about.

And I remember our girlfriends--the people that I knew sometimes at our prayer meetings and in church meetings, they'd pray for somebody, that they had fallen into sin. Someone had been found drunk, and someone had started to smoke. You know people were so different and there was one family in that church--it was just a little Methodist church, only a house, but we had wonderful meetings--and this family, they were very prominent, and very active in church. He was a milkman. And they went to Sweden for a visit during this time that I lived there and when he was in Sweden he started to drink. They drank in Sweden--I suppose the people they visited--and when he came back, he confessed that he had fallen into that sin, and they put him out of church for six months. Well that was the rule in that Methodist church. You had to stand on a trial for six months even after you confessed that you were a Christian but proved faithful so they put you on a test for six months. We all had to do that. If we could stand it then we could join the church. If we failed, while then we had to wait till the next time. And this man--he was

put off for six months and I remember they prayed so much for him. They came back to the Lord and he came back into the church. The church grew and they built a new church--well that was after we left of course--and that's where (I met) my husband and the boys from South Chicago and Pullman.

We girls worked as servant girls amongst the rich people in Hyde Park, Kennilworth, Kenwood, Lake Forest, and all those places. And we went to this church--well we went to a lot of churches--but this one was very very active and the boys--the young men that grew up around there--a lot of them worked in the Pullman shops, and a lot of them worked in South Chicago. My husband worked in South Chicago, in the steel mills. They'd come to Hyde Park, I suppose to get acquainted somewhere, and that's where they met their husbands, so many of us. And that's where I met Elof.

And how did you get to this church?

Well we walked. Kimbark Avenue, and the church was on 55th Avenue. Kimbark Avenue was somewhere around 63rd or 60th or something. So we girls--that I was with--walked to church all the time, and sometimes we'd all walk together to one house where a girl worked and then we'd go to the next house, and sometimes the boys would be with us. After we got so we dated, well then the boys would take us home you know and then they'd go back to South Chicago. But it was such a Christian way. My husband never attempted to touch me or anything, or not like we think of now.

How many of you young people were together?

Oh I would say probably fifteen, twenty at the most, and I told you about Sunday afternoon haven't I? You see we all had to make Sunday dinner and if we'd get through by 3:00, we were lucky. Sometimes it would be later. It all depended on what kind of place you had and what kind of people you worked for. But we'd have our meeting--our young people's meeting--in our church--I think it was five o'clock. It was in the late afternoon. So we'd go from the place we worked, call on some other girl to go, so we could all come together and make it to church. And then we'd have a meeting. We always had singing and those that could play guitar--they did that and then we'd have prayer and Bible reading. In those days we always kneeled down when we prayed. And no one had education. I can't remember anybody that went to school in Sweden or anything. It was just poor people you know. Of course the boys--they'd come at five o'clock and all. And those that had the old homes like milkmen and coachmen, well they lived or rented their homes around the church so they could either walk or come on the street cart. There wasn't any buses then to church. But we'd gather in church. Then we had that meeting the first thing. I remember so well that when you came in you'd kneel down and there you stay until everybody was through praying and then we stand up and sing a song or give a testimony. Well then it was time for something to eat because we were all--well we'd had dinner--but well there was--you can't call it a basement, but there was a place in the church down below. You'd walk down the stairs and there was a place with a stove--it could have been gas, and a coffee pot. And everyone paid a nickel, and one girl, or two, would be selected every Sunday to cook a cup of coffee, and we just had a coffee and a biscuit and the## nickel you never go for a biscuit. And we'd have that there. And we'd all sit--the boys and the girls--sitting in that little place in the basement, we sat down and got acquainted. Well then I suppose they cleaned up. I can't remember washing the dishes but maybe I did. And then you go up to the

evening service and there was always a preacher for that. He had another church too, but there was always a preacher Sunday night. Well there was Sunday morning but we never could go Sunday morning because we had to work then. And many many times Sunday night they would pray with people that was not converted. And everybody would get down on their knees and pray and pray.

How many people would be at the Sunday evening service?

Oh, there would be quite a few. I would judge probably thirty. The church didn't hold too many; it was only a house built into a church with benches and it was often full. I think our whole life was the work and the church.

The church provided some social life for you?

Yes it did. That's where we got acquainted, and there was quite a few weddings there. And more than once a couple that got acquainted in the church decided to get married and have a wedding. The wedding was always a service after the evening service. And we'd sit in the church in the benches because, well, there was no other place to go, and then someone would come and give us the coffee and the piece of cake usually. But the wedding party, the girl that got married, usually paid for that. That I remember. Yes, simple as could be. But no shower or no...

What were you young people like? You had to work so hard. Did you laugh a lot?

Well we didn't have much pleasure that I can remember. I remember the only party I ever went to was this family in Rosewood. You see we used to go out to Pullman quite a bit to church. Well we went to Roseland, but we had to take the train to Pullman and then walk up to Roseland. There was Swedish families there of course that worked in Pullman and Roseland and they lived around there and they belonged to the church in Roseland. Of course I belonged to Hyde Park which was a long ways from Rosewood. Well, I forgot the details, but I do remember this family. They were going to have a party or a birthday celebration or something in Rosewood, and we girls from Hyde Park were invited. It was quite a few of us that went on that train to Pullman. And we went to this home--to this family--and they had an awful lot to eat. And it seems to me if I remember correctly that they had a sort of program--that they sang and told stories. It wasn't altogether religious, if I should use that word. It was partly humorous, and I had never seen that before. Well I hadn't seen anything. So that has remained in my memory. I guess there probably was lots of people at that party that were not members of the church. Otherwise there wouldn't have been a mixed crowd. And we girls from Hyde Park we didn't come home till Sunday morning. Either the train--we had to take the last train or the first train Sunday--I don't know. But I remember how tired we were and then we had to start in and get breakfast at the places we worked.

Did you stay overnight?

No, but we stayed till late. Sunday morning we got home, but I suppose it was awfully late before the party was over. We had to take a train to Hyde Park and I walked from the station up to the place where we worked. So it got to be Sunday morning. And I still remember how terribly tired I was and had to start in and get breakfast. And the girl across the stree came home the same time as I did. She said she wanted to flop down on the bed a little bit before she started

in for breakfast. I didn't--I went and got breakfast. I remember that much. But as far as parties and pleasure I can't remember if I had. Either I didn't go with the crowd--well I know I never went with anyone that drank, that smoked. That was a sin you know in those... When you joined the Methodist church you had to promise that you--well how should I say it, it was all Swedish--didn't smoke, you didn't use tobacco. Even when we joined the Baptist church in Kenosha, we had to promise that. You've heard of that. And of course no one drank amongst the people that I was with.

Did anybody gossip?

Oh, I suppose, but not us servant girls. That would be the housewives and the mothers you know. I don't think there was gossip amongst the servant girls. Our time was so limited. We came at the last minute and we had to get home. We were, in a way, in bondage--our work. But of course those that were married and had a family and lived there--that was different. And those were the homes that were opened up to us servant girls--that we could go to you know if we had an afternoon off. That was the...did I ever tell you we went to a family quite often and then at Christmas we bought them a barrel of dishes? We paid five dollars for a whole hundred-piece set of dishes. Oh, they were lovely dishes but five dollars was a lot of money. So we had some sense of obligation. But life was so different. It's no comparison.

What kind of clothes did you wear? What were the styles?

Oh we had corset covers. Do you know what they are? Beautiful top of a slip you might say, and if you were very worldly you'd wear a blouse that you could see through (laughs). I didn't. That was a sin. We were so strict in those days. We had pants--long pants--with a lot of lace and ruffles. They were much bigger than what you have now. And we had corsets with the lace in the back and the tighter you laced it the nicer shape you had (laughs). And we had, oh, at least two petty coats, a short and a long one. with ruffles and lace and sometimes--if you were really fancy--you'd have a lot of ruffles and two long petticoats, and one all white you know. And the ironing--they were starched--and the water spread up, and the dresses and skirts. Skirts were so heavy, and long. When you walked, you held up your skirts and then your pretty petty coats showed and high top boots shoes.

How much did you pay for shoes?

Oh I think the highest I ever paid was four dollars. I remember buying--was it two pair or was it three pair?--when I went to Sweden. I bought one or two extra pair and I think the highest I paid was four dollars. I guess we paid a dollar and a half or two dollars for shoes in those days.

Lots of white blouses and a dark skirt--usually woolen, woolen goods. And of course they were long.

Did you wear your hair up?

Most of us did--braided. I think I braided it--I had so much hair when I was young--and I had it up. And so did the rich people; they didn't go to the hairdresser. Oh maybe they did. I can't remember that. Of the ladies I worked for, I can't remember that they went to hairdressers. And of course our coats were long. Oh we had watches with a long watch chain and put them in a belt--that was very nice. You could be very proud of it. I had one--I paid fifteen dollars for it.

That's the one that Betty has now--it was an heirloom. But it was a Waltham and kept good time. I've always been so sorry I didn't leave it in Sweden with my sister. But I didn't.

They didn't have things like that?

No. My mother had a ring. It was very plain. It was a ring--no stone. She had gotten that, I think, from my father as an engagement or something. It wasn't a wedding ring because that was wrong. But when I left for America the first time she gave me that ring. And of course I was so proud of that ring, all the years I lived here. I took it back and gave it to sister Hilda when I went back to Sweden. But otherwise I never saw any jewelry that I know of except the watch.

Did the men wear a suit when they went to church?

They wore vests in those days. They always wore vests. And they had what must have been a pocket in the vest.

Side 2

So tell me about what you did after you returned from your trip to Sweden.

Well I came back from Sweden. I don't know if I told you, but after I took that girl home from the station, I went to this friend's home to get cleaned up and say that I was back. She had a brother that kind of liked to go with me (laughs), and I suppose I was kind of extra friendly with him. But you see I was going with Elof, so nothing came of that friendship. And then I had to go and find a place to work right away. I had no place. Except she took me in and let me stay there for a day or so. Of course we always tried to give a present or make it up some way. And I went out--that I remember now--I went out. It may have been the same day or it may have been the next day after I landed here. At an employment office. I wanted a place for housework. Well what they had was this young couple that lived on Kimbark Avenue in Hyde Park not too far from where I had worked before. So I knew about where the place was. And she had a child. Oh, the baby didn't walk because it was a small child. I think it was in diapers. And they lived in a third story apartment on Kimbark Avenue. She wanted a girl because the girl she had working for her had taken sick and she had put in an application for someone to work. I was sent up to her and I found the place and I found the lady. She was twenty- three years old. Isn't it strange how I remember that? Very nice. I was twenty-one so she wasn't too much older than I, and she had been married a few years. This was the first baby but he didn't walk. It was a boy. And anyhow she engaged me. She said I could come and she paid me five dollars a week I believe. I'm not sure about that, because she raised me after that. I moved there the next day. I had trunk, you see, from Sweden, and that was at the station yet. We had to pay for storage. And I asked if I could send up my trunk. She said yes. She must have taken me a ----**- and I could put the trunk in the basement. Well it was a three or four story apartment. It was just new. They were the first ones in the building, and they had a big basement where we did washing-- all of us. And they could put up storage in that basement and that's where I put the trunk. And well I stayed there, done all the work, and I remember the girl she had had been taken sick and she hadn't been able to shine up the stove. I guess it was a gas stove. But it needed cleaning awful bad. And I remember cleaning that stove and the lady was so pleased with that, and she hadn't been able to clean the silver, so I had all sorts of silver to clean.

Well this lady was very kind and very understanding. I got along fine with her and I was there several years. Well I was there and that's where the second baby was born and finally they moved to New York. He owned the glass company. I forget the name, but they had a store downtown on VanBuren street and he had men working for him. And her brother--I guess he must have just got off from college. They were from Vermont, where they grew up. And he was leaving with them. So there was the man and the brother and the lady and the baby, and now she got the other baby. I was there I don't know how long until they moved to New York. His office and his business moved to New York. Well they wanted me to go along but I wanted--well Elof and I was going to get married. They moved in the fall or spring, and we were married the fourth of November so there was no use me going to New York. And that's when I got this place that they gave me the clock.

Were there more conveniences at that apartment?

Well in one way it was. There was three flights of stairs to carry the washing down. And there was a lot of diapers. That I remember. You know when they had the second baby, they had a bathroom and I could use that. In one place--the one the girl got married--I couldn't use the bathroom. All they had was a toilet downstairs and I had to take a bath in the washtub. That was the lady that was so stylish you know. I remember that. I never dared to take a bath in the washtub without locking both front and back basement doors (laughs). And I always had to go downstairs to the toilet. One of the old old fashioned toilets (laughs). And the seat was just... That was an older building.

But this place where the baby was born was a new flat, and it was three stories to go down to the basement. Well all of us servant girls had to take one day in the week to do the washing for the family.

But you probably had to wash more when the baby came along.

Yes, and then I washed them in the bathroom upstairs sometimes, and hung them on the clothes rack in the kitchen overnight. I can remember that.

Was that one of the more pleasant places you worked?

They were the nicest people you could ever meet. She was so considerate. And she was a universalist. Is that what you call it? Or a unitarian. I remember we talked about religion sometimes. And she knew all about that we believed that Jesus was the Son of God and he was the Savior of the world. She says, "We believe that Jesus was a good man but he was not God." But they couldn't be nicer people. And you know she wrote to me and sent clothes for Wallace when Wallace grew up. Well they were quite well to do in New York I guess. But she kept writing to me for so long. And finally it drifted off--I suppose they're gone now. So I have met some wonderful good people. The Lord has been good to me.

Didn't you tell me once about how a doctor didn't get there in time and you delivered the baby?

Well I saw the baby come and I hollered, "Something was (is) coming out!" Well I didn't know how a child was born. I had no idea. I can still remember I could not figure out if a baby was born from the rectum. We never knew anything. We never knew about the intercourse. And people--well old people didn't know anything about the intercourse or about how a child was born. I never heard of it. And now look. But how much better it is now...

Did the doctor come early on?

No the doctor came just while I was there by the bed. And I don't remember if I took hold of the baby or if he came. All I can remember distinctly is that I hollered, "Somebody's coming out (laughs)." And she screamed you know. She lay there in bed and I was alone until the doctor came. But he came. He had been called alright. Well you had to go on trains and street cars. It took time sometimes. And then she had a nurse for a week. That nurse. Oh. I had to serve her separately in the dining room. She didn't eat with the husband. Of course the lady was in bed. She had her meals in bed, but I had to fix the tray for her and then the nurse would take it in to her. And I remember the nurse was very nice to me though. But she asked me to wash some of her clothes, and she had no right to do that. That wasn't included in her work and when Mrs. Lansing found that out, she didn't like it. She said I didn't have to do that, but the nurse was gone then. Isn't it strange how things will remain with us?

Mrs. Lansing looked out for you?

Yes. I got along fine.

So then you moved on?

Jewett's. Now how did I get that? Oh I got that place. I had to find a place when they went to New York. I had to find a place because we weren't going to get married until--well, whenever we had money enough to do it I guess. I think I got the next place through a man in the church. It seems to me I did. He was a--what do you call it? ***mossiour those that go around and give mossiour. And the lady--was it the lady or was it the man--needed to have massaged. And this Mr. Dalger he was a member of the church, very prominent. Well of course I went to that church for two or three years and they knew me. Well all of us girls had good reputations. And then I supposed I asked them if they knew of any place I could get and he found this place for me. And that lady was so glad to hire me because I had a good record, what do you call it? Reference. I kept that reference for years. Oh I remember Mrs. Lansing wrote to me, "She's been invaluable. I'm sorry to leave her." That was a great praise you know. Oh, I brag of myself.

So I went there. I came there at night, and that room that I got there was built in kind of between the--there's an open space in those buildings and they had a little room built on the side. Well I had one of those. It wasn't too good. The first night I was there I was eaten up by bedbugs. She hadn't had a girl for I don't know how long, a few days I suppose. But anyway when I woke up, I was just eaten up by bedbugs. That was the first night I was there. Well of course I told her. I didn't know if I wanted to stay even. Oh, she was so upset. She didn't know about it. Of course, the ladies, they didn't bother about the girls so much. And she called for an investigator, or exterminator. Well he came and he worked and got it all nice. And oh she was real nice to me. And I was there until I got married.

Were there children?

They had one girl about six years old. She wasn't always home because his (the father's) mother and his family were some mine owners or whatever you call them. They had mines in Virginia and their mother must have been quite active in the business. That was his mother. She was an old lady. But she was one of those aristocrats. Oh she was nice to me though. And she would have her granddaughter with her quite a bit. I think they lived in Roanoke, Virginia. And

this man that I worked for--he was one of the owners and they had a office in Chicago--but I don't remember anymore. And then they had this mine in Virginia and he would be down there part of the time and some of his brothers--they would come to Chicago and they'd be at the home you know for meals and things. And the lady I worked for--the mother--she would be away a lot and I would be alone to care for it. One time she went away and had the whole flat redecorated and I should choose the colors and I should hire a man to wash the windows. And they would pay for it. And me, so foolish, I wanted to wash the windows myself (laughs). Well I was there. The only thing I had to do was to keep up the house when they were not home and then cook meals whenever he brought anyone home.

One time, he brought home--he usually told me so I knew I had to get the big meal. One time he was going to have some people home, and he wanted steaks. I think I had to go and buy them. Yea I did. I had to go and buy them. Well I bought the steaks and broiled them and had everything ready. And then at the last minute he called that they couldn't be there for dinner. Well the steaks were there. Of course I put them away in the icebox, and nobody came. Then when she came home she looked at the food and all and I suppose I decided because she wasn't much of a cook. But anyhow I remember grinding the steak and making a meatloaf out of it. And pouring a can full of--no we didn't have cans... I had to make the tomato sauce. Oh that was a job in those days. And I poured the nice red tomato sauce over the meatloaf and the meatloaf looked nice. Well they had that the next day for dinner, and the lady said, "Well the man that marries you Jenny will never go to the poorhouse. If you can't make one meal you'll make another out of the same... (laughs)." So you hear a lot of bragging about what this old lady could do in the old days. And now I can't lift... But it's a kind of pleasant memory.

You only had wooden ice boxes to store the meat in?

Yes. The ice was brought up on the third floor whenever it was needed. I think we took a hundred pounds and the icebox was in the hallway. They had a hallway to get into the kitchen and you had to put up a card whenever you needed the ice. And of course that's where the food was put--in the hallway. And that had to be emptied everyday because it would melt.

Did it last a week?

Not always. It depended upon the weather. You see on the third floor it could get awfully hot. She was that stingy. She liked it if I was careful and didn't waste anything. Of course I made bread. We all made bread. And I made cake quite often. I had special good cake recipes I remember.

What kind of stove did you have?

A gas stove. They rented the place, and they wanted a new stove when they renewed their lease but the landlord wouldn't give them one. So they sent the man out to shine the stove. It worked but it was one of these old-fashioned ones. And I had to shine that stove so much and sometimes it didn't burn exactly good. And, well, I had to scrub the floor--a wood floor. It was small boards, pine I suppose. You just had to scrub it with a brush. And then we had the hall for the mops and the scrub pails, and the ice box was in the hall. And of course we kept it clean.

I can remember one night. I don't know how it happened, but it was after supper and I went ahead and cleaned the shelf above where you kept papers. I remember that much.

They had a nice bedroom. They had the front room--that was a big room. That was on

East End Avenue, and you could see the lake. That's almost at the end of the--well you know--next to the lake. You could see the lake. It was three stories at least. And they had the whole length of the building. I guess it was the whole block almost.

Did they have the whole floor?

Yes, on one side, and then there would be on the other side, another. And of course they all had hired girls or maids. So we could talk to each other you know and get acquainted.

Did you hang the clothes out?

Yes, when it was nice weather. Otherwise we hung them in the basement, and that meant going down to change them. But they had a colored janitor, and he was supposed to take care of the furnace. I guess they were coal.

This was about 1903?

This is 1903 and 1904, and five because we married in five. Well not 1903. This must have been 1904 and five. Must have been. 1902 is when I came back from Sweden and worked for this lady that had the baby. And then I was there till, well at least three because I remember them wanting me to go to New York. We were engaged so long you know and didn't have any money to get married on.

That was the last place before you got married?

That was the last place.

How long were you there then?

Till November. I left there when we decided to get married and that time my husband had gone to Sweden that summer and got his father. That comes in there. And that's one reason we couldn't get married because he had to spend the money to go to Sweden.

How much did it cost to go there?

I don't know how much he paid. I can't remember but my ticket I guess was three hundred.

That included everything?

Yes, and the trip on the North Sea and the railroad fare. I think mine was three hundred. I remember saving for that three hundred.

It must have take you a long time.

Well nine years--you see--I was here nine years. And I started to earn money when I was thirteen. I got a dollar a week and I saved every penny except for what I had to have. But in those days you could get a pair of stockings for twenty-five cents which lasted half a year and that's why you could save it. Oh I firmly believe that if you give the Lord a little money back he will bless you because even as little as we had--if we could give twenty five cents, we gave it. And its a blessing isn't it?

But then when I got back, I know I got six dollars and I got six and a half--the last pay I got, and that was at this place where they gave me the clock. And her--well I told you about his mother being kind of aristocratic--and so nice when she visited them. She used to come out in

the kitchen and tell me how good the meal was. And one time--shows how little I knew--she left two dollars in the dining room and I went back and said, "Mrs. Jewdg, you forgot your money." And she said, "No that's for you Jenny. You keep that." And I couldn't understand why she paid me. I could not. It took me a long time to understand why she paid me. Finally I guess she must have explained it. But she sure was nice. And when I was alone in that house--when they used to be away so much--they left everything to me. I had to go to the store. One time she had me bake a real nice angel-fruit cake. His brother lived in Chicago some place and for some reason or other I was told to bake a real nice angel cake and carry it down or go on the bus-- she gave me the money--put it in a hat box, and take it over to this brother, which I did (laughs). I was alone in the house. I had plenty of time and plenty to do. And other times when she was away, she left a package for me to take over to the post office, and she'd insure it. They went to Roanoke, Virginia, and I was supposed to insure them, and she forgot to tell me for how much. And when they asked in the post office, I guess I said something and I had no idea what was in the package but when she came home and found out I had insured it for so little she was excited. Of course it wasn't my fault, but it went alright. But it shows how she left things to me. She trusted me. And her sisters and a brother lived about two blocks away in the old home that they had been raised in--an old house and they were grown up but not married. They lived in this house. Of course they would be over for meals sometimes, and sometimes the people I worked for would be over to their house, but one time they all went for a trip and I was sent over to this sister's house to do the housecleaning. They left everything. They left me the key, and I should clean their house. They paid me, and they are the ones that I think gave me the clock. The sisters--it was an old heirloom--and the lady I worked for was the one that gave me the silver set. I got it straight finally. I think it's straight. But I remember going into that strange house and the blinds were inside. Oh I had to change the beds and that was an old old house, and old wooden stove. I wasn't used to everything, but I had to find everything I needed.

Did it take you a long time?

Took me all week I guess. I'd go there in the morning and clean and then I'd go home to the flat we lived in at night. But she left everything to me.

Was that a fancy house?

Oh it was and very very old, and it had to be polished. And the beds--now you make up your bed, put your pillow over the sheet, and then you roll over the bedspread--they had made a sort of a wooden roll and you put the pillows in and then you put that on the bed and then you put the spread over it. It looked just like you do it now but it wasn't the same. The roll was wooden with a hollow inside and that's where you put the pillows when you made up the bed for the day. And of course at night--I was never there at night--you took the pillows out and opened the bed. You see things were different then. It was a rich old home, and the silver they had...

Is that where you had to polish the silver every week?

Oh not there. But when I cleaned that house, I forgot how much they paid me but they paid me plenty and that was pretty handy for me because I could use the money. And they gave me so many things in the line of linen and--this lady that had the baby--her mother was there for our wedding. She sent me a lovely pickle fork and sugar spoon and some beautiful nightgowns. So I've had some wonderful good people. But times surely were different. Yes. It took so long

to do any work you see. You had to heat the stove and heat the water. They had a sink but they had the washtubs in the kitchen--that I remember--with covers over. And that old stove. I must have done some cooking there because I remember having such a hard time making the fire go. But the people I worked for had a gas stove, so that went all right.

It sounds like you had some good people to work for.

I did. And that's God's grace because that couldn't have happened to a lone girl like I was, having nobody. I had no relatives.

You didn't see your sister Ellen much?

No she went out west you know. Well I told you all that how my uncle sent for her.

Was that in Tacoma?

Yea. And she died, but she was taken into a hospital and her husband was killed in an accident in a mill. It's so long ago and I never did know the details.

She never had any children?

Yea, she had three, but they were adopted. She raised them. But then she lost her mind you know. I think I told you that. They were small children. And their names were changed.

And someone else adopted them?

Yea, so that's a sad story. And I was way out in Wisconsin.

You couldn't help her?

No. All we could do was give her a loan, and she didn't write. Nobody wrote. That was a case where, well, she didn't write, but I can't say that I didn't because I tried to get hold of her. I wrote to the minister. I found adrress. My uncle belonged to the Swedish Methodist church. We read that in the paper. I must have got a hold of the address and I wrote to him and asked him if he could find my sister. And he had found her, and she was alright. And seemed to be happy and she said everything was alright with her soul and I needn't worry and everything was o.k.

She wrote?

No the minister wrote. She didn't write. She didn't write home to my mother either. You see some people don't. That's the same with my husband's sister. He didn't write.

So you don't know what happened to those children?

I don't know. I can't tell you. Well I had no way of finding out. I couldn't do anything if I did. And people didn't have automobiles. Then they didn't travel. Now I can even go on a plane. In those days I couldn't do a thing. Someday when we get home to heaven all things will be cleared up and all these earthly things won't bother us. That's what I think of so much. It will all be new. All things have passed away and all things have become new, and we'll see the Lord. It's so good to see old friends and our near and dear ones, how will it be when we see our Savior? If we could only fathom what he's been to us. It does me good to talk about it. and I thank God for it.

BREAK IN THE TAPE, MISSING !% MINUTES PROBABLY ABOUT ELOF

TAPE 3

Did you keep on attending the Swedish Methodist Church in Hyde Park after you were married?

No, you see we moved out to LaGrange. The nearest Methodist church--and that's where Clara and Earnest went--was in Western Springs. There was a Swedish Methodist Church, but you had to take a train to go there. Well we went there as much as we could and that was alright until we lived in LaGrange. Two or three years before, they organized and built a Mission Covenant Church, so we went and that was in LaGrange. And when Wallace moved out to Oak Lawn, we went out to LaGrange and we found that church still standing that was built when we were there.

Do you remember what street that was on?

No, all I can remember is our house we lived in was on Haze Avenue and Clara, I think, lived on Catherine Avenue. That was 133 Haze Avenue.

Wasn't it on the corner?

It was really a three-story house. The basement was made into a well living room. It was a family--a couple--that lived there in the basement. They had a kitchen and another room. I guess that was all. You know basements were not so nice. And then we had the first floor. That happened to be empty when we were going to get married, and we rented it and we lived there all the time. I remember our grandma--my husband's mother--said that we should try to get something cheaper because the rates were first at twelve and the last rent we paid was fourteen dollars a month. And Clara used to live in a little, oh, shack I guess you call it. It wasn't much of a house and I think that she only had to pay eight or nine dollars a month, but it wasn't hardly anything. It was out in the woods at that time. Well grandma thought that we paid too much rent, but we figured it out and his work--he could walk to work and we saved the moving expenses and of course we had Wallace then. And I took in washing and I used to make five dollars a week sometimes. I hired a boy--the one (son of the owner) that owned the building that we rented from--they had two boys and they had a wagon and they'd go and pick up washing. They'd go and pick up the washbasket for the people that could afford to have it done, and they'd bring it home to me. Talas** true did the same thing, and I think I paid them twenty-five cents. But anyway, it was a way to get the washing home to me and I could wash it, and then iron it too.

Did they deliver it back again?

They delivered it. Oh I made quite a bit of money that way.

Tell me about your first year of being married.

Oh, I had it so easy. I didn't have much to do. After so much work in Chicago, I could do as I pleased. I went to church, to the meetings, and I had the Sewing society--you know the ladies they met at our house. I remember scrubbing that floor--kitchen floor--so clean, and the ladies came. Oh, I had a grand time.

Did you do anything special with your husband?

We never went anywhere.

Did you ever go for walks?

No. He was too tired. He was never a strong man. He was always tired. He never was a strong healthy man. Well I had much more pep than he did. Oh, we went to church Sundays. You know every other week I guess it was, he had to work Saturday night till Sunday noon at the gashouse. They kept it going all the time, and the men that worked there had to take turns working nights, and when they worked nights they worked till twelve o'clock the next day. They went to work at six in the evening. I remember when I had to fix his lunch and he went to work at night and then I was alone. And when he came home Sunday noon, oh, he was so tired, and so beaten. Well of course then I had a good Sunday dinner, and then he went to bed. He was so tired. Well I used to read and write. And sometimes Clara and Ernest would come over, but usually not Sunday afternoon because Elof was sleeping. And if he felt like he could, we would get ready and go to church in Western Springs Sunday night. But you know at that one, we had to walk up to the station in LaGrange and get that train and stay for the service in Western Springs, and then come back home on the train and walk home. And by that time, he was surely ready for bed, and the next morning he had to get up again. It was nothing but work for him. It was hard. All his life he had hard work.

Do you remember being happy as a couple?

Oh, yes (laughs). We were happy alright. And we were happy when we got Wallace.

You had Wallace fifteen months after you were married?

Yes. 1907. He was born on the 29th of--we had been married a year in the end of--November. Count a little bit. Course I remember my periods.

Were you well?

Not always. I had troups and I do of course remember the night he was born. But that isn't anything to tell you (laughs).

Did you have a doctor come to the house?

Oh yes. The lady was very active in church and she lived in the same house upstairs or in the basement or something--I forget. They had two girls, and she was going to have her third baby, and she was pregnant at the same time I was. And we went up to see a doctor--her and I. My husband was not the type that would--like Tom for instance--take interest in my condition and all that, and it wasn't the custom in those days. A woman was more or less on her own. But his lady--Mrs. Lee--her and I went up to see the doctor and engaged him. I remember when he asked me some questions because it was my first. And he said, "What about you?" "Oh this will be my third," she said. So she didn't have **** Well I went up to see him a few times. He had his office in the business district, and it wasn't too far to walk. Well, for one thing I had a baby with Mrs. Lansing when she was getting ready for her baby and I knew that you had to have an awful lot of white clothes. And you had to have your rubber sheet on your bed and you had to have soap. All those things. Well I knew that. I suppose the doctor told me too. Well many many people in those days didn't have those things. They just didn't have the money. I knew that because I had been a nurse girl. I'd been with her so I had all that ready.

Did your husband get the doctor?

Well that morning he did. It was time, you see. Wallace was ten days overdue, and this is in the winter, generally cold. The doctor evidently wondered why he hadn't come, so one time he was at the door and asked if I was still there or something. He saw me and said, "Call me when you're ready." But I was alone. Elof wasn't home. He was at work. That night Ester was with us. She had gone to bed, and I had expected the baby and he didn't come and sometime after eight o'clock or whenever it was after we had gone to bed. He was asleep. Oh, he was so tired. I started to get the feeling and I suppose I had some idea about what it was. And after a while I got up and I built the fire in the cook stove. We had a heating stove at that time in the living room. We didn't use the front room at all. That was shut off. I remember making the fire in the cook stove and my pains were getting worse and worse and I didn't feel like waking Elof up. He was so tired. I felt so sorry for him. And then I remembered too that I should go to the toilet but we all had slot keys and they were generally put up in the porch or in the stairway or something. So I used the slop pan. I just didn't dare to go out to the toilet, or outhouse we call them. And I sat there getting worse and worse and I was freezing and I was hot and oh...

Did you wake Ester up?

No, we didn't wake Ester up. That was six o'clock. I woke Elof up, and he went to get the doctor. Well the doctor didn't come right away you know. He had to walk, course he had to walk up there and wake him and the doctor came sometime after that. Ester was there; they didn't wake her up. But oh, there was a lady, a friend from church. I had asked her to come over and help during the birth, and she came over. She must have lived next door because I remember living close by. And she came over and it got to be about ten o'clock and I lay there and I hollered. It was so.... and the doctor came and he gave me some gas I guess because I can still remember I said, "Oh please give me some. Oh, it hurts." Elof was standing there and I remember holding his hand and I remember he must have held my hand so I could press down. I said, "Oh, help me it hurts."

Was he there when the baby was born?

I guess he was right there, evidently, because I can remember holding onto his hand and hollering "Oh, help me," and "You're hurting me so (laugh)." Well I didn't have such a hard time but honestly I don't think they care what we say or do at those times. Well it's somewhere around ten o'clock.

You were happy it was a boy?

Oh I didn't know that till after. I was out. I think I remember in the evening that they were sitting in the dining room, whoever they were--it must have been Ester and my husband. It might have been Claire Ann, it was this lady that lived next door that helped me you know. Well they were all sitting in the dining room drinking coffee or something. That's the first I can remember that I woke up. They were sitting there and I was laying in the bedroom and I could see the light and I could see the people and hear the noise, but I wasn't awake enough to know what it was all about till I could feel the... They brought the baby to me and I think I asked, "Is he alright, is he perfectly formed?" Of course it was all Swedish. I talked Swedish. And I do

remember having a hard time getting to nurse. The doctor had told me to use Cocoa Butter around my nipples and it worked good, but it did hurt getting started to nourish.

Who chose the name?

Well they talked about that a lot. We thought we should have Karl because that was his father's name but then somehow or another my husband didn't want Karl. And he himself had the name of Elof and that was supposed to be something very special when he was born. They were looked up to. Well he didn't want anything like that. Well, then you've heard of Verna Krans, Junice's... Well you know her father was so good to me and her mother were so good to me when I grew up, when I lived on the farm and it seemed like I thought more of her father. He was my cousin but he was like a father to me. Of all the people that I can remember, he was. And his wife was just as good. She was a good woman, Verna's mother. Well when they were first married--the twelfth of March I guess--my Ester, of course was born on the twelfth of March. She was named Ester, after this Ester, Verna's mother, because we thought so much of them and they were so good to Elof even before we were married. And when they had a boy--his name was Wallace--they named him Wallace Neigham or something--Wallace anyway. And we came to visit them and Wallace was about two years old or three. We weren't even married because we never had money to get married on. But we went to visit them on the farm. And that Wallace--he was so attached to Mr. Johnson. He called Elof "Mr. Johnson" and he wanted Mr. Johnson to play with him. He wanted Mr. Johnson to swing with him. Oh, Mr. Johnson was the whole trip. I suppose I took more interest in Verna. And so when our boy was to be named, I think I suggested Ralph too, we wanted John but not John Johnson. And then we decided he was to be Wallace because this Wallace liked Mr. Johnson so much. And then they were like our parents you could say. They were our closest.

What was Wallace's father's name? Charlie.

And his wife was Ester?

Yes.

So you named your two children after his son and his wife.

Yes, and that was because he was married the same date as Ester was born. Well they're all gone. Wallace is dead and Jiverna's gone.

Where did you pick the name Sigfred?

Oh that was his father's name. That was Elof's name. Elof Sigfred Johnson. That was another thing that was supposed to be so big in Sweden. Well, they were kind of high toned that way** and just because he didn't want Elof, Well, I guess I had the idea the Sigfred would please his mother so much, and Wallace never like it. He don't even tell it I guess. Very few people know that his initial stands for Sigfred. He don't like it. And Ester never liked Linnea. So there you are. Well when we came to name Ester-- their Ester's second name was Josephine and grandma wanted us to name our Ester Josephine and I did not like Josephine and I didn't want Josephine and Johnson--That'd be two J's. And Elof didn't want it either. But the mother--the grandmother--liked it. Well Linnea is one of the most beautiful small flowers in

Sweden. You probably know that. And I had read and heard so much. I don't know if I've seen them. But I thought to have that flower name instead of Violet--so many have Violet and even Rose--but I thought Linnea. And I liked the initials ELJ and Elof liked it too. But grandmother never liked it. It was a disappointment to her that it wasn't Josephine and she told me, but I never knew that there was a hall in South Chicago. I don't know what kind, a union hall or something. It wasn't a Christian hall, but it was called Linnea Hall, and she said, "Do you want this girl to be named after that?" Well I guess it was a ***hall, for all I knew it could have been a dance hall. I'd never seen or heard of it. Elof didn't know anything about it. But she knew about it because she had lived in South Chicago and she let me know that. I remember that.

You can't please everybody.

I understand that now, but at that time I didn't want to give in and call her Josephine so that's how that happened.

I think Linnea's a beautiful name.

Well I do. But Ester never liked it. I don't know why. I wonder if Soren will like his name (laughs). So many people don't like their names after they grow up. I never liked Jenny. I never liked it, but it's been my name and it's the name our parents give us and after we get old and understand a little more we're thankful for it.

Ester was born how many years later?

Oh I guess five. I wanted a baby so bad, because I had no hard time to raise Wallace. He was always a good child, and he's always been a good boy. And I felt that for a child to be raised alone--they are so lonesome. I must have had that idea, but I didn't get them until Ester. And wallace was born in 1907 and Ester in 1912. That'd make it five years. Oh I was happy, and Elof too. And that's the time that Grandma came and stayed with us.

But you weren't at the same place were you?

We had been in Minnesota on that farm I lost. You know we couldn't pay for it. He worked in the saw mill.

Was Ester born in Minnesota?

No she was born in Kenosha, after the Minnesota farm.

Tell me a little bit about the farm.

Well Wallace was three years old and we had been married five years or so. And we saved and saved. Saved so we had--I don't know if it was three or five hundred dollars. You see after we were married, he got the better work and I worked hard and saved. I used to save five dollars a week sometimes, make it washing. We were saving. And Elof especially had it in his mind that he wanted to go raise our boy on a piece of land, not in the city where he would have to go in a factory and work the way he had to do. And there was a family in LaGrange who went to our church that had three boys. They lived in Friedam which was eight or twelve miles from LaGrange, out in the country. They had a little farm there. But they, with their three boys, wanted to get a good start in Minnesota and raise their boys, and there was also at that time a Swedish man that was a land agent. He sent out circulars and books and letters to every name he

could get, writing about how to start a ten acre farm and start with a cow and a horse if you could and get a little start and gradually work up to a good-sized farm. Well it sounded so good and in the meantime while you had these ten acres you could work in the saw mill. We heard that in Little Falls there was ten acre farms and there was other people who wanted to sell out. Well this family sold what little bit they had and they bought the farm in Minnesota about ten miles from Little Falls and we decided to move when they did. We didn't have any land but we had this extra money, a few hundred dollars. So he quit his work in the gashouse--if he worked there or if he worked errands at that time I don't know--and we moved when they did. We loaded up in Hinsdale. I remember that.

How did the furniture get moved?

They hired this man that moved with us at the same time. He bought a team of horses before he moved up there. This was in March or early spring and they were going to start farming right away. He had been up there and bought the land. I don't know how much, but they were going to start right away farming. So he bought the team of horses and they rented a car--a railroad car-- and put all their furniture and all their stuff and ours. We paid half of it in and he rode in the freight car with the horses--and I don't know if they had chickens--and went up to Little Falls in that railroad car. We went on the train the day after.

We hadn't bought anything. Elof had been up there and looked but we hadn't bought anything. The agent showed us this house that was on this ten acres near Governor Lindbergs--he was only a young ten-year-old boy then. But the house only had two rooms and we couldn't get our furniture in there even. Well I was so disappointed. This house was near the Lindberg estate and the land was right there, and it wasn't too far from town. Elof could get work there. But I was so disappointed. I just couldn't see how we could get in there with our furniture. The rest wasn't so bad. Well he showed us another place and that's the one we bought. We got ten acres. The house was pretty good. It was in the other end of Little Falls there, and the land was flat and was no good to raise crops on.

Where was the house?

It was near the road and the house was very nice compared to some of them that they had up there, so we figured we'd start there. He would work in town and I could get some washing to do there too. And Wallace was three years old; he was four in Minnesota. Then grandpa, he lived in Chicago, but he was getting too old. He couldn't work. Once in a while, he could get a job in the park and cut the grass but there was no income there and then money was running out. And so they decided that Grandpa would come up and live with us and grandma would live with Clara. They were moving to Michigan and rented a farm. Oh we all tried. And so grandpa came up with us. Well we had an upstairs in this house and we had a downstairs with a living room and a very small kitchen, not nice at all, and a bedroom. But grandpa had a room upstairs and we had the downstairs room. We had a heating stove in the living room which was so very small. And the kitchen was very small and the cook stove there, but we could get along and we figured that Grandpa and I should do the planting and take care of the land as much as we could. We had to hire to have it plowed up and I planted every bit of corn by hand.

How much of the ten acres did you plant?

We sowed some oats but that dried up and we had to cut that. We planted potatoes and

three hundred cabbage heads and a lot of carrots.

You planted the whole ten acres by hand?

By hand. Well not all because it was in oats. It was plowed up--you had to hire for that. And we bought the horse and a cow, but not right away. We found a cow, and I don't think we had a pig there. There was a sort of a barn there so that was alright. We had chickens.

Do you remember how much you paid for the land?

A hundred and fifty an acre, which was altogether too much. That's where we got cheated. We didn't know enough. Grandpa evidently didn't know much either. You know farming in Sweden, at least where they lived and had this homestead, was very different than up in Minnesota where the land didn't produce and everything dried up for three years. So of course we couldn't pay the interest much less the... It's a wonder that my husband could make enough for a living for us. Well he worked there--what was it?--a saw mill. No, I don't think it was a saw mill. Can you remember me telling? It was some other factory. Was it a gas house there too? Well it was something anyway. I don't remember how much he got there. But anyway there was a farmer nearby. Of course I knew I was going to have a baby and we had to do something. There was a farmer that wanted help, so my husband quit that job he had in the factory. Well he got the work on the farm and he got a dollar a day and he walked to the farm in the morning and walked home at night. Sometimes they would send some food home like meat if they had butchered and if they had dug up a lot of potatoes or something. Otherwise I was alone with grandpa on the farm. Of course I had to cook and we had a cow and I milked morning and evening. I did that. After we got the horse, grandpa took care of the horse so I guess we had to plow. We did something anyway. And then we could ride to church. We got the buggy--it was nothing but a skeleton--and I remember taking a black petty coat and fixing up the seat with some stuffing and then I pinned a sack on that or sewed it on. Then I took the black petty coat and covered it all--very nice (laughs). But anyway we had a buggy and horse. We could ride to church. Well, how it was. It was because we lost the farm because we couldn't pay and grandpa got sick and couldn't--well he was sick he had to have a doctor and we lived out in the country. He decided to go back to Chicago where he could get help, and Clara lived in Chicago. And Gerdy got married. I think he went to Clara, and grandma was there you see.

You don't remember how old he was?

Grandpa? Well he must have been eighty-seven because I don't think he lived till he was 80.*&* He got worse and worse.

But you and he planted all the crops?

Those two summers we did and I had a whole of bushelful of carrots with the tops snipped off and--that must be after grandpa left us--but anyway I took that to the store to buy groceries. I got fifty cents for that whole bushel of carrots. The cabbage I guess I got almost nothing for. And how I worked planting those cabbage! And then you know the worms would come and I would have to put the powder on the potato bed--kill the potato bugs. And I used to take Wallace. He was three and getting on four. He was so good. And course grandpa worked in the field. He hoed the corn and he did everything he could as long as he could work. And I think I took some lunch along for Wallace and at noon we'd go home and I'd build a fire and

cook the meal. And then at night when we got tired, course we went home. But grandpa had the idea, as long as he was able, to want to go out in the field again after supper and then when he came home he wanted something to eat and I can remember I used to have to make up a fire after supper. There was light and I'd make a big panful of rice--he liked rice--and we had milk as long as the cow would give milk. I even sold milk to a family--five cents a quart, but they came and got it themselves. That was a family that didn't have a cow. And I made butter, and the butter--they said it was good--I got twenty cents a pound for the butter. I fixed it up in the dish and then made a little sign on it and I could change that for groceries. But I had to go to town with it; it used to take practically all day.

Did you take the buggy to town?

No, I never drove, I mean alone. I could drive it when my husband was with me, but I can't remember that grandpa drove. Maybe he did but I can't remember. What I remember mostly about that is that we could get to church Sunday morning. You see Elof at that time was working for this farmer and he had Sunday off. And when he worked at that factory he had to work from Saturday night till Sunday noon. The same as in Chicago.

Well, we lost the farm. We had to do***. And I was getting the baby and we had friends in Kenosha that we wrote to. We always had friends, you see, that we kept in contact. And they lived in LaGrange when Wallace was born. I guess it was the people that helped me at the time--I'm not sure. And we wrote to them, and they had moved from LaGrange to Kenosha because the Nash--only it was Jefferson. Do you remember that automobile? Well they were starting up doing great work in Kenosha and this family, Shrager, *** moved from LaGrange to Kenosha. He got work in the factory, and they wrote to us that if we wanted to come to Kenosha, they were sure that Elof could get work at the factory, and that they would help us get a place to live, and they did. They looked out for us and there was a flat when we got there. We had to wait till the furniture came. We stayed with them two or three nights till the furniture came, and then we could move into our flat. So we've had some wonderful friends to help us out.

The farm sounded so nice until you mentioned the work, and you didn't even see your husband much?

But if it had worked out the way we planned we could have probably made a little money and got a bigger farm and raised our boy on a farm.

Was it that you liked farming or that you wanted to raise your boy on a farm?

No, I didn't like farming. I had worked too hard, but I think he did. It is an awfully hard life for a man to work in a factory and be almost a slave. They have to come in a certain time, punch a clock, work all day under a man, come home tired out and dirty. No nothing but hard work--go back the next day. And that's their whole life and he didn't want his boy to have to go through that. It was Elof's idea. And I knew what farmwork was, because I had lived on a farm.

You were excited at the beginning?

Oh yes. I was willing to do it. It sounded good, but that was through this agent. He really cheated people. He must have, because other people we found out paid too much for their farms too. It might have been alright if the land had been good, but it was so sandy and you couldn't raise nothing on it.

Did the other family work out fine?

It worked out fine for them. We wrote to them for years. And they had--I told you--three boys, course they could work up a farm when you have men to do it. It turned out just fine. And they also had a girl. I forget how old she was at that time.

SIDE 2 Tape 3

Yesterday you talked about the church that you attended with the other young people. You were telling me that's where you met your husband, so could you me tell about that?

Well I've been thinking of it. Well the first time I can remember seeing my husband, he was very good looking in our opinion, and he was such a, well, they were all good Christian boys. Well I knew of more than one girl that was very fond of him (laughs), but he didn't choose her. Well we were walking home from church, and I think I must have got behind the girls some way or other. Anyhow, I was alone half a block ahead of this man that was trying to get hold of me, and course I couldn't see who it was. What did I do but start to run and catch the girls? So I walked with them. Well, after that he told me he was trying to catch hold of me and then he said--either he said it to me or he might of said it to others--"I tell you for truth girls. I was struck on that girl (laughs)." That's the first time that I can remember we met. But then after that of course he came to the church and wanted to walk home with me and gradually we got so we felt kind of confident of each other.

How old were you then?

Twenty four when I was married. Oh, I wasn't twenty one, because this was before I went to Sweden. We wrote to each other and he sent me his picture when I was in Sweden but there was nothing definite otherwise. People didn't talk about marriage and love for a couple a years after they met (laughs) in those days. But anyhow we were attracted to one another. When I came back from Sweden, I got this other place where the baby was born and all. That's the first place I had after I got back from Sweden. Well he used to want to walk home with me after church. It was probably about six blocks or something like that from the church--maybe not that long but we all walked to church because that was in the corner of a business street. 55th was a business street and that church was built right near there and then all around, you know, was residences. This was probably five or six blocks from where I worked. He used to want to come and see me and I guess we did talk about---well I don't know--I don't remember when we first talked about marriage. But one thing I do remember. He was coming up to see me one evening and I've always been such a great one to have a clean orderly porch you know (laughs). And here I was working. I had my working dress on, and I took a notion to scrub the kitchen floor (laughs). Here he was coming, and saw me on the kitchen floor and the lady came out and said "I told you Jenny he wouldn't care about seeing the floor. He wanted to come to see you." She gave me a calling right in front of him (laughs), and I felt like I could sink to the floor because he saw me as dirty--I suppose I wasn't--but I was scrubbing the floor when he came up to see me.

What did you do then?

Oh, I just stopped and I guess we just sat there and talked. I remember the evening; he looked at me kind of peculiar. Naturally I would be cleaned up and ready for him, but that night I wasn't because I was going to have a clean house.

Were you cleaning the floor because he was coming?

Well I suppose I was. Of course I may have scrubbed the floor many nights but I wouldn't have had to do it except that he was coming. Well that was one time.

Oh, one time--I don't remember when we really decided to be engaged because we were engaged... We weren't married in nineteen- five. I went home in nineteen-two and we were corresponding then. You see we never got money enough to get married. He worked in the South Chicago mills and after we decided we would get married and start a home, he tried to get on a milk route, and thought that he could work himself up to be a milkman. They had pretty good income in those days. Well he lost that for some reason. That job didn't last all ****Course I had my place. I got my regular pay and stayed in that... And well he didn't go home to Sweden. In the mean time I guess he kept up his work but he couldn't save any money, never earned enough and he never was the hand that could make money so we never seemed to get ahead with the money question. And one year I went with people I worked for up to Vermont and New Hampshire at a summer resort--you know. I was a nurse girl. I told you all about that.

I don't think so.

I guess that was two summers.

That was the Lansings?

That would have been ninety-three and four.

With the Lansing family?

The Lansing family. And that was the time that I had to take care of the children, but I didn't have to do any cooking and we lived at a summer resort and we had maid service. But the maid service wasn't like it is nowadays--you know in those resorts. It was plain but anyhow, I didn't have to do any cooking but I had to take care of the children. And one time the man and wife was going out and they were going to come home at twelve o'clock or something. Well it got to be three o'clock in the morning and the baby was crying and the other boy--or the oldest boy--was sleeping. I was sleepy and the lady didn't come, and I put a skirt on my nightgown. I guess I must have got undressed and here I was walking the floor (laughs) with a skirt over my nightgown and the baby crying and I was tired and I suppose I wasn't very good natured. And here comes the family and the man. He just stood there and looked at me and then he just left, and she made all sorts of apoligizing for being so late--that they couldn't help it and all. But that's one thing I remember--that that's what it means when you have children and have to take care of them.

Were you gone all summer?

Well practically all summer. We went in the early summer I guess. I suppose May or June, and we didn't come back till September. They rented their flat furnished, and her family lived in Vermont--Brontonberry,** Vermont. You probably read about that. I still have a spoon from there. That's where her relations lived, and we spent part of the time there. They had a girl--a servant girl--so I didn't do any cooking there but I was nurse girl and I had to take care of the children. That was my job. And then we went to New Hampshire. Yea, I guess Sparford, New Hamshire or Montesseau**, stayed at the lake and there we ate in the dining room and had the meal service and all that. College girls or school girls used to be waitresses at that resort. Of course my work was with the children. I could take them walking around the hills.

Were you engaged then?

No, well in a way, but I didn't have my ring. Well now we'll go on to hear that. Well this Christmas--what year it was I can't say--I can't say if it was thirty three years or thirty four but anyway he bought my ring and I bought his. I remember when we went and got the rings. That was at the Peacocks in Chicago. Yea I remember that.

What did the rings look like?

Plain. I had been in Sweden and had a lot of Swedish notions because there their engagement is plain, at that time--maybe not now. At that time a girl got the plain ring for the engagement ring. She got a plain ring for a wedding, and the first boy that was born she would get another plain ring, and anybody with three gold rings was way up high and that was going to be my goal-- (laughs). Foolish idea. Coming from Sweden, that what they told me so, and I was almost engaged or at least the top. Anyhow, I had a man who wanted to marry me. And we got this and I was going to get that on Christmas day. I told you that story--you don't need to know.

Well I like that story. Tell it again.

Well on Christmas Eve we had a church service and of course he came out to Hyde Park to go with me to this church service and we had made up the plan. Christmas day--when I was free--we were going to a family in South Chicago, where either he lived there or he boarded there. He was invited there obviously, and we were going to celebrate the Christmas and I was going to get my ring there. Oh we had it all planned. That must have been in thirty four.

Not thirty-four, nineteen-o-four.

Nineteen O four. And he took me home from church and that was after--well it was late, Christmas Eve. And we stood there by the outside gate--I had to go in the back door of course--and talked, I suppose. I remember so well when he grabbed me and the first (kiss) I really got (laughs). Well those are times that no girl forgets you know. And then I was going to see him the next day, the next afternoon. We decided what train he should meet me on-- because I always had to take the train--and how we were going to spend the afternoon and that's when a***8 Well Christmas day, the people I work for. I was going to have the afternoon and evening off and they were invited out for a Christmas dinner so I didn't have to get Christmas dinner, but I had the children to take care of. And they were going to come home so I could take this train. I imagine it was two o'cloc. Anyhow, I was going to take that Saturday and they knew it and they promised they'd be home so I could take the train. Well they didn't come and they didn't come. It was so cold--I was always took the babies out in the gold carriage--and I

remember being so cold till I took them up and got them into the house. But I was so cold that drid****** Well I got back in the house and took care of the kids and I suppose put them to bed--well anyway I took care of them. And here the ** The Lansings didn't come and they didn't come, and I was nervous. I think I even prayed about it (laughs). What would Elof think after all these promises and all these plans--would I dessert him? I thought everything--how would he feel and what would people think of him? Well it was evening when they came home and there was nothing to do. There was no way of reaching him. We didn't live where there was telephones and even if it had been *** And he was to meet me at the train. I remember the lady offered to call the station if anyone inquired about me. Well, if she did, then nothing came of it. I wrote him a long letter that night. That was one night that I remember I guess because I was so upset. I wrote him a long letter and the next morning I got up early and had to mail the letter, and that explained it all. Well of course you couldn't get the letter for two days. It wasn't picked up till then. Well finally in a few days--two or three days--we heard from Elof and then he came out and everything was alright and I got my ring.

Did he come to the Lansing's house?

Oh yes. He always came up. I didn't go there (to his house).

Did the Lansings apologize?

They probably did because they were very polite and very kind people. And it was something they couldn't help, I guess. Of course I felt terrible and I guess I don't know what he felt, but he must have trusted me because you know, after all, when you look at it, it was a kind of a bad situation.

Well we didn't get money to get married and I had this good place and I was raised. I got raised up six and a half, and that was as much as any girl in those days. And then last year we couldn't get married because he had to go home to Sweden and get his parents. Well his father had this farm alright, but the children were all her except Ester and they wanted to come here and live with the children. Well finally he sold this farm and wrote for Elof to come and get them. I think that was the way. So he didn't have to pay their fare to America, but he had to pay his own, you see, to Sweden and come back, so that took the money. And then that must be when we decided to wait until his family came, and then we would get married and they would be there at the wedding.

Why did he have to get his parents? Why couldn't they come on their own? That I can't say, but he had to do it.

They weren't very old, were they?

Well in the seventies. Clara--they were grandparents--had Eleanor at our wedding and Clara was younger than Elof. They must have been in the seventies. Well why he had to go home I don't remember now. But I do remember that took the money, so we didn't have anything. We got five dollars from his father and that was a lot of money. We got that for a wedding present.

Were you disappointed when you couldn't get married?

Oh, we both were. It seemed like it was something against us. We had planned it, you

know, more than once, and always something turned up that... Well it was the money question. It wasn't anything else.

You don't remember feeling upset at his parents?

No. No. The parents were good. His parents always treated me real good but I think I was looked down on by Amanda and probably Girdy because they were so good looking. That was his sisters, you know, and they were so stylish. They had such lovely clothes and they kept up and they had their hair so fixed. And well--Amanda first did the housework. So did Clara. That was all anyone could do. Girdy worked in a laundry. She had her evenings and Sundays off. She didn't want to do housework because she *** She didn't make any more but she had more freedom. I never cared an awful lot for clothes. That wasn't my main. And I never had good looks--you I think that it was either Girdy or else it was her husband that told me I had such big feet (laughs). I know I did. Girdy had a hard time to walk on her shoes, but I could walk. To this day I can walk with big feet. Now when I get so old it don't hurt me, but of course in those days it hurt.

Good looks seemed to be important to those girls (Elof's sisters).

It was, and they were good looking. If you ever think of it when you're home with the folks, ask if you could see the pictures.

I thought you were good looking.

Well I was healthy looking and all that, and I didn't have any blemish. I think I had lovely hair. And when I worked--more so before I was married--the ladies would kind of help me to select a hat or a dress. Dresses were made but they'd give me a suggestion. They kind of helped me with clothes because I hadn't--I've never had a good taste. I don't understand it. Ester has much better sense that way than I ever did. But you know after I was married I was more on my own, except the neighbors would tell me. Mrs. Young was very good to help me with the clothes. But it didn't seem to make much difference with Elof--his feelings for me--and he certainly was a good husband.

When we finally set the date. I was working in this place where they gave me the silver and the clock. Elof's sister Clara and her husband lived in LaGrange, and Amanda lived with them and worked in the laundry after she quit doing housework--or was it the other way? Well either way. Well Amanda lived with them and he got his father to come with him from Sweden, but Ester had a growth in her neck. I told you that, and she could was supposed to be operated. She was operated, and she couldn't leave Sweden until she was declared healthy. You know they wouldn't let you come in and so they were left a month or two in Sweden--Ester and her mother. And he (Elof) came over with his father, and his father paid his own fare--that I remember--and left them fare for the mother and Ester. And when his father came back, he stayed with Clara in LaGrange, and Amanda was there. They had just a flat--I believe at that time--so they had room enough and they had Eleanor. She was about two years old, I guess. And now I cannot remember what her husband was doing--but he was a painter otherwise--and so Elof at one time worked for him. He wasn't the boss but he had a painter. When Ester and her mother came well then of course Elof met them, and I suppose Amanda. I was working in Hyde Park, you see, at that place, and they were out in LaGrange and I remember when Amanda called up--she stayed at Clara's--and told me that Elof had just met the mother and Ester at the station. He had just got

out there to LaGrange, and he couldn't come over to see me that night because I suppose it was late and he'd just come. And I remember she (Amanda) was so short. She said something about he wanted me to tell you he couldn't come see you (laughs). She always was kind of, well, high tuned to me, and then they got together and got a flat or a little house I think it was in Parkside Chicago.

Who did?

Well his father and his mother and Ester and Girdy. Girdy, I believe, stayed with someone. I don't remember. Anyhow, they got this home--you can call it a home--and I remember when Elof took me there the first time that I met his mother. I had met his father and I met the girl, but his mother, oh she was so nice. But they had just moved in and they didn't have any furniture hardly and just enough to live in that little house. I remember she said that they had it so nice--now they were back with the children and here they had a house to live in. I suppose either he had enough money or else the children put together to pay the rent. That I don't remember. And she said--oh, they had these washtubs, you remember the old washtubs? Well they had them in the kitchen. "We can wash", she said. "We can get clean", and she was so thankful. She was such a good Christian. And I don't know how long they were before our wedding, call it the wedding. But anyway they came out to LaGrange you see. I quit my place and Elof rented this lower flat in LaGrange. He got work in the gashouse when he came back from Sweden.

What exactly is a gashouse?

Well, at that time they took the soft coal and burned it and made gas and then they had these great big gas tanks. Well I suppose they still have them. And I suppose--I don't know if that's natural gas or not--they had employed quite a few men. This was a little ways from where we lived. We lived in the outskirts of LaGrange. But they employed quite a few men. And it just happened, you see, Elof didn't want to and he couldn't work in South Chicago unless we moved there and settled down in South Chicago. His folks and Ernest, his brother in law, didn't want him to stay there. He (Ernest) wanted him to work with him as a painter. Well we had to arrange all that and we had to get work before we could get married. Becuase I was quitting, I wouldn't be earning anything. He was getting sixty dollars a month, and we paid ten dollars a month for rent. I came out there probably a week before the wedding day. I quit my job and the lady I worked for gave me so many things I remember.

What did she give you?

Oh, she gave me linens, she gave me kitchen utensils and I think she even gave... Oh, she had me make a great big fruitcake in two layers and I had one and they kept one. That I remember. And it was good. Then we got our furniture. We bought it at Alexander Bells. That was before I quit my job.

You bought it where?

Alexander J. Bells in Chicago--you've seen the name. It was a big furniture store. We went there and selected the bed and the bureau.

You've told me that, but I'd like to hear it again. You told me you had a hundred dollars to spend.

Was it a hundred?

Well anyway about a hundred, and what did you buy with that money?

Well we bought the furniture. I don't remember how much Elof had. He didn't have much.

You bought a brass bed?

Yea, and the mattress and all that. And then we bought the bureau, I know. That was very nice, and we bought the kitchen cabinet.

And the round oak table?

Yes, we did, and the stove, the kitchen stove.

That was a wood burning stove?

Yes. Well that all came out to this place we rented in LaGrange and I had to be there to receive it and I remember when they delivered it. They said "Johnson". Well I wasn't used to the name Johnson (laughs) and**** Well when it came to me, I was used to the name Lansing answering the door. That I remember. Well I stayed there I think a week, or some days anyway, to arrange, fix up the house.

Wasn't that a lot of fun?

Oh yea. And he worked in the gashouse and he'd come over at nights you know, but he lived with Clara. And Amanda and Girdy stayed with me. We all crawled, crept into that brass bed. They worked you see, in the laundry. But they'd come home at night. the Then the eight of November was the date I remember. Eight, I remember. And then his mother and Ester came from Park Side and his father too, of course, and came out to LaGrange that night and I had two real good special girlfriends that came out for the wedding. One of them gave us a wooden rocking chair--quite nice. And one of them gave us a rug, but the other girlfriends had clubbed in with them. It probably cost five dollars, I don't know. But anyway those were the presents from my girlfriends. And Clara didn't give us anything. I remember when she said, "I didn't get any wedding present and I don't have to give it (laughs)"--or something like that.** But Amanda, I think, gave us a clock, or was that Amanda and Girdy and Ester?

Did you get along with Clara?

Oh fine. She was real nice. I took care of Eleanor sometimes and Eleanor was a case to take care of. I know one time I was going to take care of her all day, and I guess either I said it or her mother, "Now will you be a good girl today--(and she answered) 'Maybe I will and maybe I won't (laughs)." Oh she was. She'd stand there and stand perfect and defy her mother. I remember when her mother (said), "How dare you young 'un." I don't know. All children didn't do that, and you didn't either. Well, it was Eleanor.

Tell me how you got ready for your wedding:

Oh, I worked all day. The first thing I did I guess was to scrub the porch. It was a cold

day--it kind of snowed in the evening--and this water on the front porch... There was a big front porch to that place and had a nice front room. We didn't have a thing in there but we did have the dining room set and we had a bedroom and we had a kitchen, and course all had to be cleaned. And I made a big cake, but that was hard to bake in the cook stove. I had to use the gas stove, but it turned out alright--nice, big, like angel (cake), I suppose. I had gone to the store the day before I guess--I couldn't have gone that morning--but I was so busy and I remember especially I had bought a big roast probably two three pounds. You see they came in the afternoon from Parkside. Well Elof told me they'd be coming right to our house and he told me to have supper for them because they'd be hungry. The minister wasn't (coming) till evening and those two girlfriends were coming in the evening. That was when the ceremony was to be. And I remember so well setting the table in the dining room and having this pot roast and potatoes and I guess I made a pie or something. I was going to have a good meal. I think it was on a Thursday night--oh it could have been Saturday night. I don't remember the day. But I do remember that I figured out having plenty of meat for over Sunday, and I guess we were going to have his sisters or his parents over for supper. Well by the time they got through eating (laughs), there wasn't anything else. Well one lesson I found out that buying your groceries and planning is quite different from working with people that pay everything and you can have plenty to do with. Oh, I learned that too and I remember that.

Did Elof get home in time for that roast beef dinner?

No, no. He had to work till six o'clock you know. Well he came home though and whether he dressed and cleaned up at our new home or if he went to Clara's, I can't say it for sure, but I remember that he had his suit so nice. He looked so nice. Coming in from the gashouse, you know, he was always dirty and course that's the way he came in through those meetings through the week. He came in to see me without cleaning up but then he was dressed up, and I dressed up in a white dress.

Did you make a dress?

No, I had it made. Oh I couldn't sew.

Was it expensive to have a dress made?

No, I don't think at the most more than two or three dollars to have a dress made. That I can't remember. But I remember it was white musslin and it was a lot of ruffles on it and it was a little ruffles here--well you've seen in the picture.

And you wore your gold watch?

Well I suppose I did, and course my hair was just braided. And Clara and Ernest, her husband, were all witness and the girls stood up there. We stood by the dining room table and the minister--he was the minister of the church in Hyde Park that we went to, an old man and he was very kind. But I guess he thought that it isn't much to start out with in that couple (laughs). Course he (Elof) had a job--sixty dollars a month--but I wasn't doing anything then. And then I remember when the girls and the parents and Clara said goodbye to us and left us alone.

Tell me about the ice-cream.

Oh, well I said that? I must have bought the ice-cream or something.

That was a real treat wasn't it?

Yes it was, but I put it in a pan and put it on the front porch and covered it with something so it would be covered up, and we served that. And that cake turned out good. And coffee, and I had all that silver you know.

You had just bought it?

Well we bought that the time we were engaged. Instead of giving each other presents--personal things--we bought silver. He paid for half and I paid for half. I had a whole dozen of solid service spoon that we girls in those days would give each other, gifts like for birthdays or a Christmas party or anything, so I had a whole dozen of silver. Ester has them. And the ladies I worked for gave me some silver and I had lovely table linen, better than Clara ever had. I had all these years to buy it and the lady helped me buy it.

Did you have a hope chest?

No, but I had a trunk. Oh, people had hope chests but not me. I was just a servant girl.

Did you save things in a trunk?

Yes, I embroidered a lot of towels and hand-stitched and Mexican work and all the doilies. Ester still has some. But we girls, you see, didn't go anyplace for any reason. For one thing, there never was such a thing as a show or--what do you call it?--that TV and theater and all that. There wasn't...well nickel shows I guess started up at that time, but I never saw it.

What was a nickel show?

Well that's the show--not the legal theater, but the other shows that I saw, you know. What do you call it?

Movies?

Yea.

Silent movies?

Yea. There wasn't any at that time, but they did start up something they called nickel shows. I think it costs a nickel to see it. very very ** I remember the name and I can remember seeing the door on the building and a name, but I never saw it. And so we girls, when we had an evening free or when we had their afternoon free, we'd get together and in the evenings we always took some needlework. And all the other girls did the same thing, you know. They didn't croche either. Well that's all we did, and then we sat and talked. And we most always would have prayer and Bible reading even when the boys came to see us. We did. It was the rule and the custom. So that's how I accumulated all these ****

Did you buy some dishes with your fiancee?

Yes, Ester still has the first plate. I had a set of plates, and the others are all broken. I think I still have a cup that Ester broke. Yes I bought that. I bought everything. Did I tell you about the lady I worked for? She told me to write down everything. She would help me write down what I would need to start housekeeping--and I did--and she went with me to the store in

Chicago--I don't know which one or where--and we started to buy and I found I ran out of money before I had everything bought, so she had me go to the desk and she helped me. And we cut out this and we cut out that, and that I can live it up to start with. And finally I got enough so only she thought I'd have enough to start housekeeping with.

Was that Mrs. Juit?

Yea. That's the last... that's the one that owned the mines.

That was awfully thoughtful of her wasn't it?

Oh, she was so good. That was the last place I worked, and you know she wrote to me for two or three years afterwards. And one time--that was in the winter, the first winter we were married--she wrote and asked if I could come out and stay a day in Hyde Park. The girl she had to clean house had to get adjusted in her home, and I remember going. I was gone a whole night, and Elof didn't like that (laughs). My place was at home. I stayed over night that time, but that was the only time that I can remember I was ever away from (Elof). That was the first few months that we were married, in the wintertime, and she wrote to me. Even Mrs. Lansing--the one that I worked for before--wrote for years. She even sent Wallace quite a few of her boys clothes, so he had pretty nice clothes when he was two or three years old.

Was your husband interested in the things you picked out for the house?

Well, the furniture. But he never cared for it, never seemed to impress him about the nice table. I had the table linen and I had silver, and he was never used to anything like that. I guess his room was so plain. And Clara was very poor when we first were married. He made a living so we didn't go on welfare, but you know it was not easy to make a living in those days and she didn't have anything very nice. And I had all this, and I was foolish enough to want to show off. We had the linens *** over for dinner one time. I guess the first company we really had on our own, and of course I put on the table linen and the silver. I had a silver coffee pot and I, well, showed off, and I was proud of it, and kind of foolish about it I guess, but Elof didn't like it. It didn't appeal to him.

Wasn't it the custom to use the best silver when the minister came over?

Oh yes. Yes it was, but people didn't have what I had. At that time I had all this and I came from working, but rich people had all these nice things all the time--always had the nice. I wasn't used to having it so plain. Elof came home dirty tired, worked all day. What he wanted was a good meal on the kitchen table and get washed and go to bed. I see it much plainer now than I did then, and I wanted a little bit...well, I don't know if it's right to say, nicer. He earned the money; I didn't, but I guess I tried to keep a clean house and have the meals ready and washing. I had awful dirty clothes to wash all the years I was married to him. Drag in the tubs in the kitchen, carry the water in.

Your flat didn't have a bathroom did it?

No.

Did you have an outhouse in the backyard?

You had an outhouse in the back. Everybody did. Wallace and Rachel did too when they

started out in Whippolt.

So when your husband came home, how would he wash up? In the sink.

What were you going to say?

I was going to say--I remember when we lived in Minnesota and went to the Methodist church. As I told you, there was so many families that this agent had gotten up there and they got ten acres. There was one family in the church that was a Swedish Methodist. The minister was a bachelor--kind of along in years--and he used to come and stay all day (laughs). Well, he had no home. He went to the other members too. But you know, we lived out in the country, and the church was in the town. And he'd walk out--he had plenty of time--and was welcome to come and eat what we had. But the one thing that was so hard was when Elof had to work nights. He had to sleep in the daytime, and that made it hard for entertaining the minister and being quiet. We had to sit in the kitchen--there was little space to the bedroom, and Elof couldn't sleep. I remember that much.

But this family that we especially was close to--they were such good Christian people. They lived in another part of little Falls or out in the country on the ten acres, and he also worked in the summer so their life was like ours. But they had two girls I think, probably five or six years old, and she was pregnant--this woman--and so was I. They would come to our house and from Sunday service and come home to dinner, and we would go to their house which we--I don't know if we had a horse then--walked. She got her baby, I think, before Ester. Of course we moved away, but we wrote to each other all the time. Oh, we were so good friends.

And then let's see now... Oh Wallace, yea, how could that be? How can it be possible that Wallace got to know them when they got grown up? It must be when he and Burleanya--you know they started in Whippolt and these people in Little Falls...

Well we kept in contact because Wallace went to see this family, and the girl went to Moody's. And we lived in Kenosha. I can't get all that straight, but I do remember this. This family had a boy--he must have been somewhere near. It couldn't have been Wallace's age. He was born after Wallace. Wallace was four in Minnesota. Well anyway, they thought so much of Wallace for some reason or other, and when he had the church in Whippolt--that was before he knew Rachel--I guess he went there to Little Falls sometimes to preach or to go and see them or something. Anyway, they seemed to think so much of Wallace and this lady got sick--the mother--and the girl was at Moody's I think. The boy--no, it was a girl. They had two girls. Well Wallace got to know them and the father and the mother seemed to think so much of Wallace's visits. She got sick, and she was sick a little while before she died, but when she died, they sent for Wallace. I don't know if he got there before she died or after, but anyway, they wanted Wallace to have her funeral. And that was these old friends that we knew.

Isn't that interesting?

Yes it is, but I can't get all that straight. Because, well, Wallace was four when we first knew these people.

But you were friends for a long time?

We were friends all this time, and then I remember the letter that the husband wrote that

he just came from the sick room and his wife was waiting to go home to the Lord. Oh, they were good Christian people, and it must be that Wallace was in Whippolt at that time and Joline was in Whippolt. Wasn't he? I thought--let's see--I can't remember everything anymore.

Well this family had a boy, and we had Ester. **** But was it that boy or...I guess it must have been. They sent us a picture, and he was laying in the coffin. Was just a little tiny boy, probably a year old--maybe not--and he had got hold of some pills. The mother was sickly for quite a while; there was probably medicine around and he had eaten these pills--whatever it was--until he died. They took a picture of him in the coffin and sent us one. That was a real sad letter when we got that, and I remember showing that picture to somebody in Kenosha and they said, "Throw it away. It only makes you feel so bad to see." So finally I guess I did.

So then you moved to Kenosha, and your husband was going to work at the Jeffrey factory. Yea, he got the job there.

And when did you buy your house?

Oh, not for a long time. We rented--well they had rented--this flat for us, just across the street from them, this family, and that's where Ester was born. Then we moved to a flat upstairs. I forget what we paid. He worked at Nash--or Jeffreys--all the time. And finally--oh yes--how was that? Oh, when Ester was a baby, grandpa came to stay with us a while. He was sick and grandma stayed with Ernest and Clara--they were at that time in Michigan on that farm they'd had, and she was with them. That's when Fred, their boy, was born, and grandpa came to Kenosha and stayed with us. I don't know in summer or...but I do remember it was so crowded in that place when grandpa had to sleep on the cot, or whatever it was.

Did you get along well with your father-in-law?

Oh yes. We never had any quarrels, and we didn't in our home either, unless Wallace can remember some times. I think that the children were brought up too strict. I think that...well, there was so much they couldn't. *** I remember when *** We thought it was a sin to go to the prom at the high school. But is it a sin?

I don't think so it says so in the Bible. I don't think it says anything about high school proms in the Bible (laughs).

But it does say worldly amusements, or wordly things, and it's nothing but wordly things at that prom. Is it?

Most things in the world are wordly.

But people were so set years ago.

Well neither one of them went to the prom and neither did Joline's children. Eddy Young, the youngest, course then his father was dead and then his mother was raising him and all. I've heard him tell about it. You know he was so good looking. I suppose he still is. And the girls were after Eddy Young and they wanted to go to the prom with him, but I don't know if he ever was allowed to go. I wasn't there at that time.

Tell me about when you bought your house.

Oh, how did that happen? Yes, now it comes to me. We rented upstairs where Edith

Sprangel's father found it. It was three rooms--well Ester must have been (there)--or four, something like that. Wallace would be around twelve, going to school. It seems to me that the lady we rented from complained about the noise we made upstairs. It seems that way to me. Anyway, once upon on a time, she complained. Then this house was for sale. The owner-- the builder--lived across the street in a big house, and I used to go there and work so much. I washed and cleaned every week. I got sixty cents for the forenoon, used to get there between eight and nine, and go home at noon. Got sixty cents, but sixty cents comes up when you count it up a few. That house got put up for sale, and the family that lived there, in one of the flats--you see it was two flats, three rooms upstairs. It was a two story house, if you can call the second floor (laughs)... It had a hall--oh, it was built so crazy--and a front room and a bedroom and a kitchen, upstairs, and we put in the bathroom, and I think we put in the sink. We put in the water.

You put in the water upstairs?

Well, both up and down. The house was nothing but a building. It had no improvements. We paid twenty five hundred, but we couldn't pay it all you know. We had to have a mortgage and I guess we didn't have too big a mortgage--maybe five hundred. I don't know. I remember he said he didn't have to have a lawyer for that. We could pay it as we could and he'd take care of it. And we moved there--we moved upstairs--and the family that lived downstairs belonged to church, and we lived upstairs for a few months or so. ***

They paid you rent?

They paid the rent. I think we got ten dollars a month-- something like that. It wasn't much, but it was something, and we had a place to live and we didn't pay, you see. We paid it off on our mortgage, but I can't remember.

Oh, this family, their girl turned ** that's Mrs Wellain in New York** she was the girl and the boy, He was a little bit younger than all of us. He went to school but he's been dead a long long time. Well then she kept train into Milwaukee*** the parents moved to Libertyville after they left Kenosha because her mother was living in Highwood and they had to get to the house and they had to take care of her. So they lived in Highwood awhile and then they moved to Libertyville where he got the job as a janitor in the church. And Mrs. Hammond went out working all the time. The girl went into training and the boy went to school--worked or something--I forgot. Well they were the ones that lived downstairs until we moved down and some other people went upstairs.

And that's where we lived until my husband passed away.

Did you always rent out the upstairs?

After we moved down we did. No. I guess we did have it a few months by ourselves. I don't remember.

But most of the time someone was upstairs?

It was somebody upstairs, usually a couple. And that's where this Earl Larson...well, it was a young couple and they moved in up there after somebody else moved out. It was two or three different families in the house when we owned it or had it. And this couple had a baby born up there--that was this Earl Larson. He was a milkman. Oh, he was awfully nice, and their

first baby was born there.

You mentioned improvements. Was your husband handy?

No. We had to hire everything. No he was not a handy man and he was not well. And he never had any time either.

How many hours a day did he work at the factory?

Oh, he always went about six o'clock. He started at seven and I think he worked till five or maybe six. When they were busy, they had to work overtime--once in a great while--when there was extra trouble. They wanted him to work Sundays. Well I think he did once or twice, but then the people in church got together and decided that they refuse to work Sundays. And so those that didn't, I guess, got off. I remember that much. There were strikes, you know, and then the factory turned into Nash's and now it's the American Motors. Oh it's been such change.

Do you remember what his salary was?

No, It wasn't the least, very least, but it wasn't much either. That I can't remember. I think he made up to eighty or ninety dollars a month, but I'm not sure about that. I remember I had to go and cash the check.

Well we never had any servants, but we managed to get along so dear in the depression. You've read about it, if you haven't gone through it. The people were hard up, didn't have anything to eat except what they got from the welfare office. What do you call it?-Relief. And Youngs were so hard up. They had to go on welfare, but we didn't. Somehow or other we managed to live on what we had.

What is a shame or embarrassing to go on relief?

Yea I guess it was. I think people talked that way. It seemed like--not my husband he was never anyone to judge--some people had the idea that when the man was working and making good money, it was not right to spend everything you made. You should save some, because there would be hard days when there would be strikes, and there wouldn't be an income. Well those that spent their money--a lot of them did, they wasn't careful--had nothing. They had to go and ask for food, and it was hard to get relief. I remember one, Strengthson, he was out of work of course and he asked if he could have a tin of coal--we all used coal--from the relief because he needed it so. They had four children. And I remember when the man came to talk to him and he asked so many questions, personal questions. If you had a radio they would comment on that. You could have lived with out that, you see. Well isn't that what happened to Andrew and Ester Anderson? Didn't they ask for relief? I've heard that story. Rachel can tell you about it. And when the man came by and asked about it, it seemed that he remarked about that that they had a radio. They could have lived without that and saved that money and eaten.

So they didn't receive relief?

I don't know if they got it. This family in Kenosha did get some coal. And this Mrs. Hammel that I told you about--she and I were deaconesses in the church at that time. Two of them, but we were the ones that were selected to go to the coal office and ask for a tin of coal for a family that belonged to church that were on relief. Well I can remember when we went there and tried to explain why we ordered a tin of coal to this family. We had to explain that the

church would pay for it and all the rest of it. And then when they got it finally, shows what people can be...

Well they were church members and they were alright but there's all kinds of people in the world. We went to this family and told them about (how) we'd ordered a ton of coal and they'd be coming up. Well soon after that--I don't remember how long, day or two or when we saw them in church or something--they said that they didn't get a full ton and we should see about that, we (italics) should go back and tell that it wasn't a full ton. Well they got it for nothing from the church people--the welfare didn't pay for that; the church people paid. We all had to contribute to it. And how could we go back to the coal office and tell them that they had to check? How could they check up if the coal was in the basement? They probably had used some! But don't it show that people are very ungrateful, even Christian people? Oh...

Tell me what your husband thought about strikes?

Oh he hated it. He would never go out on a parade. He didn't have to. They couldn't make him, and he wouldn't. One time they were on strike and it happened to be that we had meetings in church. We had people stay at our house, you know, and here we had a couple of fellows stay overnight with us and they said, "What is your work Mr. Johnson. What are you doing?" (Elof answered) "Striking" (laughs). I'll never forget that. It was so comical when he answered that, "striking."

He was forced to strike?

Oh yes. I guess they were all union. It was all union. You know how that is. I guess you couldn't get work unless you belonged to the union, and you had to pay the dues. But the union meetings, I understand, were not Christian by any means. I guess they had a lot of business and all that, quite worldly. And of course if you were a member you were supposed to go there and take part and all, but you didn't have to attend. I don't think they fined you if you didn't. Just so you paid your dues. I know my husband did not like those union meetings. Oh, he used to come home sometimes so discouraged and disgusted with it. You know all the church people had that work there. They had to belong to the union, pay their dues. Of course you couldn't be a good union member unless you attended the meeting sometime. You had to go there and pay your dues, but you didn't have to sit there and hear all the bad talk and I'm glad you could go home.

Would you say your husband wasn't happy with his work?

No, it was too hard. Oh, he...I forget what they call it, but it was something about taking out the heavy... Maybe Wallace remembers what the work was. It was something about working near the hot fires, and so dirty. Oh he was so dirty, so tired. He could hardly drag himself home sometimes. I'd get up so early and help him walk from our house down to the factory. We always got up about--I got up before six and in the wintertime had the fire going and the breakfast ready and his lunch packed. He always wanted to start out early, after six. And then we'd walk as far as the station, to the Northshire station, which was every bit of a *** and then he'd sit there and wait till it was time to ** to the factory, which was probably a block away.

They all walked. Mr. Jearn walked and the people that lived south of us. They had to walk. They had to start out just as early if they worked in that factory. Of course there were other factories too. Not everyone worked at the automobile factory.

Was your social life mainly centered around the church?

That was the church.

Did you go on picnics?

Once a year there would be a picnic on the Sunday school. They'd go to a woods or we walked there too.

Did you have young couples over to your house?

Well the young people tell me now that they were over to our house so much, but I can't especially remember having them. Maybe when Ester and Wallace grew up they were over.

No, I meant young couples.

Oh, not too much because Elof was not very much to talk, and he was always tired. I think I really like to have people over and in those days the women that belonged to church used to go together in the afternoons sometime, and have coffee. Well I was in that part part of the time until I had to stop because when Elof found out that he had leukemia, he had to eat raw liver. And this was some months before he quit work, and we didn't have an icebox. I never had an icebox till the last month he lived. I used to go about half an hour, maybe an hour, to the store and buy a quarter of a pound of cast liver and go home and grind it and have it with orange juice. I think I used three or four oranges. Everyday I had that ready when he came home about five o'clock. And you know I couldn't be with the ladies in the afternoon and have coffee. They didn't have to come home and have this ready for their husbands, but I did. And I did it for a long long time. I used to go down to the meat market. They got so the new men had it ready and it was quite a little walk everyday, but I did it. And of course it didn't help, and he hated it. But I ground it and I mixed it with the orange juice. Then, of course, after he rested he wanted something to eat, and then go to bed. That was at least a year. He was failing right along and then he quit.

But before he became sick, your house was pretty quiet?

Oh yes. It was quiet. We didn't have a whole lot of company. We had quite a few church people. If there was anything going on in church and we had to have room for them, or have them over for meals. Well you do the same now. We had quite a bit of that. And Girdy and her family would come over once a month or so, but as far as neighbors and ordinary people getting together and having a social time, we didn't have it hardly at all.

Do you think that was pretty common that couples your age didn't have time for socializing?

I think it's alright if you're well and if you have interest with them and your husband and you can get along on that if you both like it. But he didn't. He wasn't well enough. I see it more now than I did then. I know one time I wanted a couple that was all alone and people didn't seem to think too much of them, and they went to church and all that. They were alone, and I said to Elof, "Let us ask them for Christmas dinner." And he said no. He wanted to rest when he had free. Besides, this couple was normal and all, but they were people that weren't asked out much, so he didn't want that. It would be too much effort for him to try to entertain them, and yet he'd go and see them. He was a deacon, and these people belonged to church. Deacons and

deaconesses jobs are to go and see the sick people and those that are kind of left alone, you know. Well he did that but he didn't want **

He wasn't much for entertaining?

No, and when we did have company--when we had ministers over for Sunday dinner--he didn't have much to say. He really had no education. He had never been anywhere except on that farm in Sweden and the factory in South Chicago. You know he didn't have anything to tell much and he realized that he couldn't entertain, but everybody liked him. Oh, if ever there was a Christian man, my husband was. (He was) Much better than I was because I would get irritated and I think I judged people. He would never judge anybody. I remember if I said anything that wasn't good he says, "Well, you may not be any better when you get that age," or something. Oh, he corrected me and I needed it.

You told me sometimes he would be very quiet and you couldn't tell if you had done something wrong or not.

That happened. He wouldn't talk. He might have been mad at me and he might have been sick or felt bad or it might have been something else that bothered him. But he wouldn't talk, and I'd get impatient and want to know what was wrong. After a while he got over. You know I'm the type that spit out everything. I can't... If I'm mad at somebody or sore about somebody, I'm more apt to speak right out, especially if I'm asked what is wrong. I like it better when you can have it talked out than to go for days and not speak to each other. But I think Wallace is a little bit like his dad that way. I think Wallace is pretty quiet. He don't talk...moody.

Well I think that runs in the Swedish men.

Well not in everybody but it does in our family more or less. Not me so much.

No. I mean the men.

And of course now Elof's family, like Amanda was one of them, but she never told anybody, never wrote, never had anything to do with anyone. Just moody. Well I don't know if you can call it moody. It isn't the same.

Well she wasn't outgoing.

No, she wasn't. But Elof had such a good nature when he was feeling well, and he had so many friends. Oh, I thank God for him.

Tell me about when you bought the pump organ or the piano or whatever. You had enough money?

Yea, I washed. I washed for this lady and cleaned for her for a long long time--that had built our house and they were contracting and lived across the street. Well I got sixty cents everytime I went there and of course I saved it. And then Ester-- we were going to have her take music lessons you know. Well first we had an organ and that we bought for--was it eight dollars? That belonged to the family--this Mrs. Hummeland that lived downstairs in our house--and when they moved to Highwood, they had to get rid of it so they let us buy it. I think it was eight dollars. And Wallace started to learn the very first notes on that organ. Well there was this piano somebody told us about that was for sale, and we wanted Ester to learn music. Of

course the teacher said she had better have a piano. And I asked one of the church ladies that could play if she would go and look at this piano, and she did and said it was well worth the money. I think we paid a hundred and fifty for it but I'm not sure about that. it was a pretty decent upright and it was in good shape. Of course we had it tuned after that, but Ester learned. She became a good pianist and was a great help**** as long as she was able.

So then you had both a piano and an organ?

No, we gave the organ to a mission. There was missions around Kenosha, you know, for different people. The homeless were interested in this mission in the other part of Kenosha. Well there was a man that was very interested in that and through the homes we heard that they needed an organ. We had a piano then, only probably three or four days before we got rid of the organ. I suppose we let them know or somebody told them that they could have this organ if they came and got it, and this man came and got it and put it in the mission--so it came to good use. And we didn't need it.

And then when I broke up housekeeping, a man in the factory that worked with Elof (who) had children came over and wanted the piano. Well I had to give it away, but he gave me five dollars for it.

Mrs. Masteryearn had quite a good education in Sweden. He came from a well to do family and he learned music in Sweden, so he could play the piano and read music and all that. Well, they had a piano when they first were married because he was so musical you know. And they brought it along to Kenosha when they came from Milwaukee and they had that for a long time. They were the only one in the neighborhood that had a piano. and Mr. Jacob played. Well Hilda, the oldest girl, would not study. She and Wallace went and took lessons together from this music teacher--it wasn't the one that Ester took from. But Hilda would not practice. I guess the teacher wrote a note to Hilda's mother and said something about that she should practice and Hilda should have said on the way home--they went together and came together from their lessons--and I think Hilda said, "I'm going to take that note from you. You're not going to give that to my mother (laughs)." But of course Hilda stopped taking lessons and when her boy got big enough to study...well he got pretty good. *** But he got so he didn't like to study. He didn't want to play the piano. He'd go walk around so he wouldn't have to go near the piano--it was still the same piano--so Mrs. Young gave it to a mission. That was a real nice (piano), much nicer frame than ours, but nobody wanted a piano.

Yea, I never had any trouble with Ester. Either she must have liked it, but she got lots of praise from the teacher. But she was strict. Well they were both kept so strict that I suppose it was in them. She had to practice and she practiced. And Wallace practiced his violin lessons very faithfully. And he played for quite a few years. Even David took a few lessons. You wonder sometimes if it's good to insist on it. Can't be taken away from you, and if you can afford it and the moneys paid, well you have at least tried. I think we paid a dollar a lesson. I think so. But this teacher that Ester had--maybe I told you--was a very very good music teacher. She had practically all of our church people for pupils, but she also played in our church when there was something special--when the people wanted some extra good player for a musical or something. But she had a name of being so mean--that sometimes she would pound or hit the children's fingers when they didn't play right. Well I never saw that, but I went with Ester every time she had a lesson. It was in me, I suppose, and well...was being so (laughs)...want all I could get--I don't know how to say it (wanting everything she could get for her dollar). I was going to

see that Ester got her lesson, and the teacher was always good to Ester. But Ester told me, "You don't know what she did to the others," so the other girls must have told her. But you see Ester made good use of it. One time they had a recital and Ester's piece was "The Country Gardens." Can you play that? It's quite difficult, but you're quite a player if you can play it correctly without any interruption. ** And at that recital, Ester came in last with "The Country Garden" and she played it perfectly and when she came back, you know, the teacher stood in the back and complemented her and that made Ester feel good of course. She must have been good because she played all the time in church.

Did your husband enjoy listening to Ester play on the piano?

Yes. Yes he did. He thought a lot of Ester, and he enjoyed Ester and Wallace playing together. I did too of course. Oh, it was nice. That was the time that I can say we had a wonderful home. And they always played--well they played these hymns--played the classical music like "Largo" and Mendelssohn's wedding march.

They played violin and piano together?

Yes. Wallace must have been pretty good, course he played in some recitals that his teacher did. I remember we went to it--Sunday--oh, it was lovely. That's when Elof and I went together and he enjoyed it. One time the Sousa's band--have you read of them? Well they gave us a recital in high school. You paid a dollar which was a lot of money. But he wanted to go and hear Sousa's band so we went. That was good. It was just like a wave of music. I'll never forget that. And he was so pleased.

Did your husband enjoy that?

Oh yes. He liked music, and he could sing--but he didn't too much (musically). He could carry a tune much better than I could, but they enjoyed the music.

And we--at Christmastime after we had children--used to go to the different programs in the churches. It didn't always have to be the Baptist or Lutheran. One time they had a real good program in the Methodist church and that's such a big church in Kenosha. It was built when we were there and it was such a big church.

SIDE TWO TAPE 4

You were talking about Wallace and Ester's interest in music. I wanted you to tell me a little bit about how Wallace and Ester came to go to college.

Well I think one reason Wallace went to Moody is that he always seemed, shall I say, sort of religious...spiritual--never seemed to be wild. And his Sunday school teacher, Mahoney,--you've heard of him--always he had quite an influence of our boy--I really think more so than his own father. And when Wallace graduated from high school I think he felt inclined to study more if there was any possible chance. He got work at Nash Auto Company and while there--he started in as very simple, but the man that rented upstairs from us, Mr. Richard, was in the office, I believe. And he got from him that first job--whatever it was--in the office. He could type and send addresses out and packages. And while there, Mahoney kind of caught on to him being there, I think,--I 'm not sure of it--and he talked to him a lot. Wallace, as I said, had a feeling he wanted more education and he was a Christian boy and seemed drawn to the Christian

work. Mahoney really influenced him to try to get into Moody's. The minister we had was also a Moody graduate. He was a bachelor and he was quite set in his ways and very honest and everything. When they wrote and asked for references about Wallace, we wrote that he had no education except high school--he just got through high school--but he was a Christian boy. He was accepted. During that time we waited to hear from the Moody Institute--he was working at Nash's Jeffrey-- a telephone call came from his Uncle Carl. He had a pretty good position at Sherwin Williams in Chicago at that time, and he wanted Wallace to come to Chicago and take a job there in his office and get a hundred and fifty a month. That was very tempting, you know. What kind of work was it?

It was office work that he would have had.

What company?

Shermin Williams paint company. He had quite a good a job at that time before they divided or split up. Well, his father wasn't too pleased either.

About what?

That Wallace would quit his job and go to Chicago. And I surely wasn't. Wallace must have talked to Mahoney a lot. Anyway, he quit his job and went to Moody's and of course those that knew about the offer thought it was a foolish.

People thought he should have taken the job at Williams instead?

Yea, and earn money. Well he was three years at Moody's and of course he didn't earn anything.

Did you pay his way?

Well we'd give him money, but he had some money and Mahoney gave him quite a bit. And then he worked.

At Moody?

Yes.

What did he do?

Well he washed ** They all did. They all worked. Well he managed to go through. He got through--I think he was there three years--and I suppose before he got through, Ester got in there. Course she had it in her mind that she wanted to go to Moody. You know Laura Oldelburg and another girl graduated a year or so before our Ester from Moody's. Of course we were all so interested and thought so much of the Moody institute. It is a good Bible school and it's one that you don't have to pay tuition--I don't think you do. I think you can go there and study, but of course you have to pay your expenses. I don't think you have to pay tuition. I can't remember. Well Ester had a few dollars saved up because she had worked during vacation doing housework for a doctor and for another lady, so she had a few she could start and then we helped her out, and she got in. And when Wallace graduated from Moody's, he had gotten acquainted with Beuline--they were great friends--and Beuline graduated a year before Wallace from Moody's. He (Beuline) wanted to go out there to the South America as a missionary. That was his calling from the Lord--he was so sure of that. He comes from a good family, you know.

They were ministers. His family lived in Minnesota. But Alfred Beuline--when he got through Moody's--was somewhere off in the hospital. He was really sick. He had no strength. (Beuline) Said The lord wouldn't accept him to go right away to the foreign country as a missionary. I guess he had taken a missionary course at Moody. He had to rest up, and build up.

So Beuline was very sick?

Well, there was a call, I guess, for somebody to take up Christian work in Whippolt and Walker and around there. You know the people really had no gospel service of any kind around that part at that time. And so I think he (Beuline) went up alone and started to hold meetings in the homes--those that would let them come in. There were some Christian people, but there was no Christian organization. After he got up there, he saw the need so much and after Wallace graduated--well, he (Wallace) had no open place. You graduate from Moody's but there's no pastorate for you like it is in seminaries. So he wrote to Wallace and asked if he would come up and help him out, and I remember when Wallace went up there. It didn't seem like much of a start, but the Lord was in it and I prayed about it and we were pleased that he was willing to go into the Christian work even if it was as a very small beginning. The boys started the work up there--Beuline and Wallace. There was no church of course. There was no organization. They had the meetings in the homes, usually standing behind a sewing machine or a table. Gradually, people were converted. The Lord must have blessed that work, and somehow or another they got ministers from around some place--preachers or laymen to come there and hold meetings. People listened and joined in, if I should say that, and there was...have you ever heard of the C.B Hedstrom shoe company? Well, he the father, now it's his sons that ****, but the father was a very prominent man and a businessman in the Free Church at that time and they went to these off-of-the-way place to hold meetings. And he came up there with some men and they held meetings, and they had a man from Canada, I believe--he was a good preacher and there was quite a few conversions--and in time they built the church. The Whippolt church people were willing to help out after they were converted and saw the right way, and they built the church.

Oh, Beuline got the call to Harper--now I remember. You know there's those preachers in Harper, and Wallace was left alone up there in Whippolt but he held the meetings in Walker. They started in Walker, too; they held the meetings in a store there part of the time and finally they built that church and Wallace was one of the builders. I remember them as telling that when they put in the electric wires, Wallace was up there on a ladder or someplace and he'd have the book of instructions in his hand and he would put in the wires. He did it, and not alone of course. You know the people that lived there became Christians helped so. They built that church, almost all together, not all... I guess it wasn't quite finished when Wallace got married. Well that's the way the work went and that's the way Wallace and Ester happened to go to Moody's.

When did dad go to Coe college? Was that was before he got married?

Oh, that was before he was married, but it was after Moody. Moody's is not really an education but it's a Bible school. It's a lot of education that you don't get there and of course he needed a lot more, you know. He had high school and he inquired in several colleges, but I guess Coe was the only one that would accept him. And he went there in the summertime, when he had vacation or something. Anyway, he graduated from there.

How many years did he go there?

Probably two. I don't remember that. And it was in the meantime you know. He had a church in Whippolt, but he had to get in his college application kind of between.

In the summers?

Yea, it must have been in the summer.

Where is Coe College?

In Cedar Rapids, Iowa. That's a Presbyterian and I guess he had a hard time to make it but he did. He graduated and I remember when Mahoney came out and told us that we should go on the train and see our boy graduate. Well we couldn't see anyway, and my husband was not the man that could see that. He would--it wasn't the money--but he couldn't...what should I say? He was not used to being out on his own amongst, well, scholar or educated people.

He felt uncomfortable, and he didn't want to go?

Yea, and I can't say that I did either because what would we do if we were there? Wallace of course lived in the dormitory, I guess.

Did you ever see the college?

On the outside. I went with Ester and Edwin to Galesburg, one time years and years ago when they had a church, we drove by--was buildings and the grounds. That's about all I can remember.

What was life like with your husband after Wallace and Ester left?

Well we just gradually quieted down. I suppose my husband was getting more weak.

He didn't know he was sick at the time?

No. He ** a lot. And one thing he did do that I didn't approve of--but you can't always have your own way--he did go to a chiropracter for so long and that man helped him alright when he had his backache and all, but he made him believe that he could cure him. Finally, he went to Racine to doctors.

Was this before his leukemia was diagnosed?

That was before. Finally he did get to a doctor in Mayfield--he was supposed to be one of our best. He had been to Mayo Brothers and studied there and all, and he was a good doctor in Kenosha. He (Elof) finally got to him and I remember when he came home and said how low his blood count was. Oh, he was just fighting ** every second. Well then I think he worked a little while, but then after that he had to give up. He was able to go with us to the First Church in Chicago--it was free church where Wallace was ordained. That was in June. Oh yea, Wallace got engaged to Rachel around that time, and he brought her down and he gave her the ring--this was either the same week or the same evening--I don't know. I remember at the ordination my husband was able to go, but he was not well at all. And Rachel's eyes just sparkled, you know...the man she was going to marry. Of course they had planned to have a church wedding and all that. This was in June because it was my birthday.

What year was that?

Well, they were married in nineteen thirty-eight--that's right. That was the last year he lived of course. He (Elof) lived till August. Why, of course, they were married after he died. It was Nineteen thirty-eight. But things are so mixed up. I do remember that when we rode home from the ordination, it was late in the evening. People were so good to us. They let us have their car--people in the church, you know, but I don't know who took us to Chicago in the ordination--that I can't remember if that was Mahoney or if that was our minister. But I remember the car and I remember that my husband was so uncomfortable riding home.

Were you and Elof proud of Wallace getting ordained?

We were so thankful. My husband said this so many times. He realized at that time that he wasn't going to get well and he said "I have no money to leave to my children." But he thanked God they were on the narrow road to heaven. The Lord had saved them. Ester was married to a minister and was doing alright out in Harper. She didn't come to the ordination because they were way out west.

Did your husband want Wallace to take the Shermin Williams job instead of going on to college? No, I think he really down in his heart was thankful that Wallace didn't choose to just earn money. He didn't know, and I didn't either, what it meant to try to get an education. And you know especially at that time, ministers barely made a living--that is unless you had a big church and all. But the people that we would know and in our churches--well you made a living and could exist, but that was about all. There wasn't money in the ministry. My husband was not the man that was after money, and he never made much. But he was so honest that if he could have made fifty cents by dishonesty, he wouldn't do it. For instance, in this shop--I remember it happened more than once--the men that could do it and would do it did sneak some like nails or some piece of machinery or something from the company that they worked, and threw it out the window when nobody saw it, you know. And when they went home, they'd pick it up and take it home. That happened. He told it, and I know other people that told it. But never would Elof do it. No, he never. He was really provoked about those that he knew that did that, so naturally we never made any money but we got along. So he was thankful that Wallace chose something better than just to get ahead and get more money. His uncle that had that good job in Shermin Williams in Chicago in a year or two or three--whatever it was, it wasn't too long--his company got emerged with a big office in Cleveland. Oh, I remember that time, and he got laid off. He had that swell job and had it since he started in as an office boy right after high school, and of course he rose and got up higher and higher, so he could offer Wallace that job of a hundred and fifty a month right after high school if he would come. Well, he got laid off and he never got back in. Well the companies made the people move. He said work was either given to somebody else or it was simply disbanded or taken away, and they never never got up to that standard afterwards. Well it seemed like the money was no blessing to them.

So it wouldn't have worked out for dad even if he had taken the job there?

No, but I remember us talking about it. And I remember Mahoney, I think, had made it clear that even Moody's would be a struggle to go through. He would get the Bible training, he would be in the Lord's work, and the Lord would bless him in time but it would probably be a

long struggle first. Somehow or other Mahoney was especially good to Wallace, more so than to Ester. I don't know whether he could get in better with Wallace, being a boy, and of course Ester got along alright at Moody's. Then Edman got so in love with her, he wanted to marry her. Well that was alright. He was a good boy and they graduated the same year, at Christmastime--Edman and Ester, the same class. Well he didn't have a church to go to and that was his work. Course he had his family--his mother especially helped him through Moody's. It was just as hard for him as for Wallace and everyone else to make a living. He did all kinds of work there and all, and Ester did her share, but now who was it? Somebody--it could have been Beuline--wrote and asked if Edman wanted to come out there. There was a church they started in Funkley. They started with just a few people were converted and had the meetings in the homes and finally they built a little church. Well he had that church--that was their first church. And we gave them our front-room carpet when we moved up there and the people up there had never seen anything so pretty, so Ester hesitated to put on the floor. I think she put it on the table. People had never seen it.

She put a carpet on the table?

Well I don't know if she did or if she considered doing it. People couldn't figure out that a nice thing like a carpet, and you know it wasn't too pretty. It couldn't have been for us, but nobody up in that woods had seen anything so beautiful as that carpet. And her Aunt Girdy gave her a lovely bedspread for her wedding. Oh they had just a very very small wedding at our home. You've probably hear about that. It was nobody there except his folks and the minister and Mr. and Mrs. Mahoney. Otherwise it was just as plain as could be. But Aunt Girdy gave her this lovely bedspread--well she didn't dare to put that on there, for the people might see it.

She didn't?

Well they'd never seen it, and they'd probably think she was stuck up. She had to learn right away that a minister's wife has to well please everybody--had to learn a lot--but they got along. So they had that church until Beuline...it must be that he was going to South America because he wanted them to come over to Harper, and he got that call and that's how they happened to go out there.

Your husband died soon after Ester got married?

Ester got married in thirty-five and he died in thirty eight. So they were in Funkley and they were also in Harper before he died, but they could not come home for the ordination or for his funeral. That was too expensive. We didn't have the money, and all the rest of it. One thing that happened at that time was that they didn't have much money and Wallace somehow or other got a hold of an old car and he came home and when Ester was going to Harper...I guess this was before he was married. This was before he was ordained. He must have been in Whippolt. Edwin was ordained in Whippolt or Walker, whichever it was. But he got hold of this old car and he came down to Kenosha. Well Edman's parents had given him an old old--what do they call...Model T, it was. I think they paid ninety dollars, and Edwin had worked for it. Well it seemed impossible for them to go out west riding in that car with what little bit of household goods they had (laughs), so Wallace gave up his car. It was a little better than the one they had.

Do you remember what kind of car Wallace had?

Well it was a Ford, but it was better than the one Edwin had. His (Wallace's) father told him that if he could give up that car and give it to Edwin and Esther, he would see that when the way opened up he would help him get a car, and he did. After a month or two--whatever it was, I don't know how long--when Wallace went back up to Whippolt, we got a letter that there was a car that he could get if dad would send him the money. That was a pretty decent car I guess, so he got that. That paid him for giving up the...(Ford). That's the way we helped each other in those days.

So Wallace wasn't there when his dad died?

No, not Wallace.

Was he in bed the last few weeks of his life?

Well he wasn't. He was up the last day of his life. He went to the bathroom. I helped him. Course we just had to walk around from the door to the bathroom and I remember that he went to the bathroom, but then after he got to bed--this was in four noon--he never got out of bed. And I think I told you that it was on a Wednesday, I think. That's the doctor's day off, and the doctor had given this case to another doctor if he should be called because he must have known that he couldn't live through this. Anyway, he had such a pain. Oh, we got so scared. Around noon--it was around noon time. You see Karl Young, the Youngs lived next door and they were in, and they helped us so much. I was the only one (laughs), and they called this doctor that was the substitute for Dr. Mayfield. Well he came and he must have given him a--what do you call it?--injection, when they go to sleep. Anyway it only took him a few minutes and then he walked out. My husband asked for the pills that eased his pain. He should have them every so many hours between and I remember that afternoon that I watched the clock and I gave him the pills. But the next day...can you imagine? We got the bill from the second doctor!

The very next day?

The very next day. He must have gone home to the office and sent in the bill. I think it was five dollars. That I won't say.

How did that make you feel?

It made me feel like they had added the sorrow to me because they could have waited till he was buried, but they didn't.

You mean the day after he died they sent the bill?

The day after he died--before he was buried. He was buried on Saturday. Oh, you learn so many things and you get to know people. That was a hard road, at least I didn't like it, and the people I told didn't like it either. It was no credit to the doctor.

I wonder if he found out how you felt.

Course we never had any doctor after that. I moved.

You told me that the last day your husband lived, he prayed.

He prayed all day, when he could talk. Then he got weaker and weaker and weaker and

there was so many people came in and that kind of bothered him. The ministers from our church or from that Free Church or whatever (came)... We had a lot of friends and when we needed them, they were there. Of course Youngs were--they couldn't have done more for us than they did. And their boy--this was in August. It must have been vacation. Well in a way he took Wallace's place because I remember Wallace didn't come home on account of the str** we were in. And Karl came in one time through the door and Elof said, "Is Wallace here?" He was waiting for Wallace. It wasn't to be. And gradually he seemed to well... Once he told me, "I can't get what you're saying." Course he told me in Swedish, but that's what it meant. He was gradually failing.

Did you and he speak in Swedish quite a bit?

We did, but we didn't speak enough of it so the children got enough of it. After the children started come and go to school they would only talk more English, and that's were we made an awful mistake.

You think they should have learned Swedish?

They should have. They could just as well as learned it. It wouldn't have cost them. But we weren't careful enough to do it. Course our services in church turned from Swedish to English and they went to school and heard nothing but English. Everybody that we talked to was English. Even if they knew Swedish or the English, we didn't talk to them as much as we should have. But I think when they came to anything in the line of scripture, they always read the Swedish. And we prayed in Swedish. My husband was not good in English. He couldn't write English. He was not a writer. He was not a man that would write and he was not a man that would read much. I think part of that was, for one thing, he never had an education to speak of. It was just work. And he started to work when he was fifteen. There was no incentive to study. I know one time he spoke about some of them can go to night school and learn english and all that, but he didn't and he wasn't able to.

Did he have quite a Swedish Accent when he spoke?

No, that's one thing he didn't. He had been in this country too long for that, I guess. You know the part of Sweden that he comes from really has an accent that is different from where I come from, so you could often tell if they came from Skoner--that's where he came from. But neither him nor the girls had that accent. His mother did, but of course she couldn't talk English.

How old was he when he came over?

Well that's the puzzle, you see. I don't know when they came over because he was here as a child and I'm not sure if one of the girls were born here. I think that Clara was confirmed here. You see they were here two or three times. I think I told you that, but I'm not sure about that. But anyhow they left him home. They left him in South Chicago to work in the steel mill the last time they went home to Sweden. As I say, his father had bought the homestead. Did I ever tell you that his father was such a worker and such a man for going ahead and smart and all that? Although he was kind of humpback, he was a smart man and his wife--my husband's mother--was, I've been told, a beautiful girl. I guess she had all sorts of chances to marry. Her family was quite well to do I guess at the time. This is all that's been told me and I remember some of it. She told me about her husband being humpbacked. He had fallen sometimes. They

said he had fallen when he was a baby and sometimes they said that they dropped him. Well either way, that crippled his figure, and of course he was not perfect physically. I guess he was good looking and she told me about him courting her. She was this lovely girl and she had plenty of chances to marry, I guess. For one thing, she must have come from a good Christian home. She had no use for anyone that drank. Well in my husband's father's family I think they were nine or ten or eleven but he was the oldest and I guess he never drank. He never smoked. He was too proud to do any of that from the way they described to me. And then he went to America and made money and came home and bought the ** He had brothers and some of his brothers I guess did drink and didn't turn out as good as he did. But she said, "You might know-that was a drawing card with him coming home from America and having that money and buying the home." Even if he wasn't so good looking, he was a good moral man, and somebody she respected. I don't know how much she loved him (laughs). And she got the farmers (** at the homestead which meant a lot in those days. It seems to me like the people married a vocation or the job--that their man had more than the (other) man. They were always talking about if you married a man that was a doctor, you never said that you married so and so. You always say you married a Doctor so and so. And the same with everybody else.

That was part of the class system, don't you think?

Yea, and I think it was in Grandma and I think it was in the girls--well not Clara. She was too hard up. She was too poor after she married. But Girdy and Amanda and Esther, I think that (that they were a) little high toned, that you were a little classier than the... Amanda and Girdy didn't want to do housework because that was a little lower than working the laundry and you had the evening free and you had your Sunday free.

Do you think they would they have married a janitor?

Oh, I don't know. They were kind of high toned. But of course I was not a bit a working girl ** well so was Clara. They were no higher up in the work than I even if they did work in the laundry.

What's interesting is that you mentioned beauty being so important. I wouldn't have guessed that that would have been so important.

Oh, you would of if you had lived in those days. I think looks meant a lot, at least to some. We weren't all good looking as hired girls and servants, and I surely wasn't, but I was healthy and I had lovely hair and I guess I looked alright. As I told you, the ladies I worked for and friends helped me select the clothes that I guess looked alright. Anyway, my husband said he was struck by me.

Well didn't they care about your personality?

They must have. Yes they never--I can't ever remember that they--criticized me as a person or character. Elof was converted thoroughly when he was a young man and went to church and of course I did. And that pleased them you know. I know it pleased his mother. Whenever we went to see them she'd come up with the Bible and show me a verse that was so precious to her. And I did the writing. Course I brag of myself so much. But Elof was not a writer, not even to his folks. Well he didn't have the time and he was tired and he didn't particularly...

Well that isn't very unusual.

No, it isn't, but they would rather we did. My mother-in-law did praise me for writing to them and keeping in touch with them. I did the writing. So oh we got one ** I still have some of the letters, but I don't know if I have. I don't know if I have them or not.

Course they would be in Swedish wouldn't they?

Oh they'd be in Swedish. She was such a good Christian but the girls...they were beautiful really, especially Girdy--that is her face. Her body wasn't so. Amanda had a beautiful body, so straight and so proud and I remember once--it may have been when I became pregnant--when Amanda said, "You'll never catch her spoil her body ****by getting married."

And she never did have children did she?

She never did. Maybe she didn't have any or didn't want any or couldn't. That I don't know. Course we lost track of her, you see.

Was she married when she said that?

No (laughs), she was just a young girl. No she wasn't. I think she was out west for quite a while before she was married. She was such a businesswoman you know. She ran a--well her husband was into real estate, and she evidently was just as smart as he was becuase that was the work and they dealt in thousands of dollars-- bought up land and invested it. I guess it took fifteen years to get rid of their last property after he died. I think that's the way. They found some letters afterwards.

But isn't it interesting that she had all those looks and smarts and then she died alone.

Died alone. Not a friend.

So in the long run what good did that do?

** I don't know about her husband the kind of a man he was and I don't know at all...

END TAPE FOUR BEGIN FIVE

We've been talking a lot about your life and family but last night I was thinking about asking you about what you remember about inventions because you've lived in an unusual era. Do you remember the invention of electricity?

Well I remember when they put electricity in the church and I could not figure it out.

Where was that?

Rockford. You see I worked in Rockford and not all churches had got electric. They had gas lights first I remember that. And when they got electricity--that was pretty nice--had to have money for that.

Did you have kerosene lamps?

Oh ves. Yes, and where I worked you know I had nine lamps to take care of every

morning. When I first came to Rockford to work there was no electricity in the homes, but I guess electricity must have come up around that time. That was eighteen ninety-four. I guess I came in ninety-three and I started to work in that farm you know. And then of course I remember when they put in running water. That was something, how they could pipe water into the house.

Was that on the farm?

No, not on the farm. That was in Rockford, where I stayed, people that could afford to have it.

But tell me more about electricity. When do you remember having that in your own house? Yes, after we bought it. And I think Mr. Young put it in. He put in the fixtures that I know.

What about on Haze Avenue?

No, there we had the lamps.

Did you have hanging lamps?

No. The people I worked for, and even on the farm, had the hanging lamps. They were beautiful and they cost up to hundreds now if you can get hold of them. But no, we didn't have that.

What did the hanging lamp look like? Did it have several wicks?

No, I think it was just one wick inside. They look something like what you have over the table in the kitchen. Something like that, but you must have seen hanging lamps at auctions. That was people that had the money that had that. But that big place in the country--you know that big house that I worked--they had a hanging lamp, but they were supposed to be a little better off as farmers.

So they had the one hanging lamp and then several small lamps. And what did you do in the mornings with those lamps?

You had to clean the chimneys you always had to ** them out.

Were they black?

Well sometimes they were smoking, sometimes they weren't, but they always had to be cleaned and they had to be filled with kerosene. This one place in Rockford, I think it was nine lamps on a shelf that I had to get taken care of every forenoon--not always every morning because there was breakfast to get and a fire to make. But it had to be done everyday and it was that way in other places too, in Hyde Park. I don't remember when Wallace discarded it. We had a kerosene lamp in our house after we bought it. We had a kerosene lamp before that.

In Kenosha?

In Kenosha.

And then on the farm in Minnesota?

Oh, we had a lamp--sure, and a cook stove.

So electricity was a pretty terrific invention?

Oh yes, and it was more for people that could afford it. Not everyone could afford it. It was the same with gas I remember--when gas stoves came out. I believe, if I remember, that you had to sign when they put the gas in the street. You had to sign if you would use it and you bought a stove from the gas company. I think that we did that in LaGrange before we moved to Little Falls. But we rented in LaGrange and the lady that owned the house had to sign up for getting the gas into the house and we had to sign up that we would buy the stove and use it. Otherwise, they wouldn't put the gas in. I remember that when we moved away from Haze Avenue, we sold the stove for the same price that we had paid for it because the people that rented the rooms after us wanted a stove.

Was the gas stove a big improvement?

(Laughs) I'll say when you can turn on the heat with just a match, it's quite a difference from making a fire in a cook stove, especially if the wood isn't all dry and if you're in a hurry before you get heat enough to cook. Oh, that was great. I appreciated that! But then we moved to Little Falls and I didn't have it.

And then when you moved to Kenosha, what kind of stove did you have?

I think we used the cook stove, to start with at least.

Did the gas stove look similar to the cook stove?

Not ** the cook stove we had when I was ** you had the oven here and then you had the heat in the oven above and then you had the fire on your side, and on this side it was usually a table. Most of us do, because they were so practical.

What did you do with the water?

Well, you always had hot water if you had it in that fire. You always had it filled up. It would probably hold a gallon, but if you had that, then you were lucky. Not all stoves had it, but ours had it, so we can have the hot water. We had to go outside for a water, a drink of water--whatever we used water for. Well you have a well and you've hot water here. Did you have a septic tank?

Yes.

Well all that is extra for this house. That was something I could remember.

So the first time you had electricity as a married woman was in Kenosha?

Yea, must have been--couldn't have been anywhere else.

So that must have been a convenience to just turn on a light?

Well it was, but of course when you had gas lights, you used a match. I don't think we had gas lights in Kenosha before we got electricity. I remember Mr. Young put them in--the fixtures and wiring--the house and everything. He was an electrician.

When I look back on that era when there was no electricity, I think it was romantic. A man came around and lit the street lamps, but I suppose nobody really had time to sit and admire how pretty it was?

I think life was too hard to really enjoy it for the most of us. That's the memory I had.

I do remember the first automobile. I was working in Chicago then and that was wonderful. I remember when I lived on 41st, forty third and Grand Avenue and that was kind of a richy area, I guess. That's where I worked, and we were the people from Rockford--you know I worked for them and they moved to Chicago, he was transferred and I moved with them. And I remember when everybody went ouside to see this...here was a wedding coming and new horses a here it was gold ** and oh.

Everybody was out in the street?

Yes, it was something we couldn't figure out.

Could you hear it coming?

Oh, I suppose everybody did. That part I don't know but I remember running out to the people I worked for and all the neighbors and everybody ran out on the sidewalk to see this horseless--we called it horseless carriages. I remember the first ride I had that was the started to come with a chain and they drove off. Oh, you probably seen it.

A chain?

Yea--was a big chain and a wheel by the front. You've seen pictures of it.

I've seen a crank, but not a chain.

I think it was a chain, well I don't know. Well anyway, that was up in New Hampshire--you know I told you about the girl and that the people had nurse girl. They had a friend that evidently must have been rich. Anyhow, they come up in this horseless carriage. Of course everybody had to have a ride in this wonderful thing and they said that I could ride too. Shows how nice they were to a servant girl. I was so scared that it would turn over (laughs).

Did you sit in the back seat?

Now that I don't remember. I remember him sitting in front and turning it.

Did it seem like it was going really fast?

We went up the hill, and I was scared to death. I was. But it went without falling. That's the first ride I ever had.

The streets must have been pretty quiet then without cars.

It was just horse then, not too many horses. But they...like Marshall Fields, they had a funny coach I guess you would say and they would always have a driver, and then they'd have a boy be in the back and this man that drove the Marshall Field's horse, they would deliver packages to homes must have been but it was always the boys that had to run up to the house with the package and sometimes the weather was terrible bad and the poor boys had to run up to the door and the men they sat in the coach and took care of the horse, they had to hold the horse.

What did the street look like at night?

Well it was lighted up. They had the lights.

But if you had a fancy carriage, did that have lights on it?

Yea. They did in front, similar to ***

Gas lights?

That I don't know. I never knew that. But they had on the back--have you ever seen pictures of a rack or a kind of a bench where the man sat on the back kind of high up. I don't know what he did. He surely didn't drive. He must have served as a guide or something. Cause I was never in one of those. Those were for rich people.

Well, when you'd go out on the street, let's say Haze Avenue, how often would a carriage go buy?

Haze was there was no carriages on that street. People didn't have horses there. That was just working people.

Did they have buggies?

People that lived on Well's street did. That was the people, well either they were in business. We didn't know anyone in LaGrange that was rich enough to have a horse and buggy.

So you had to be well to do to have a horse and buggy?

Oh yes. I should say so.

Did you ever have a horse and buggy besides on the farm?

All I can remember about that horse. Grandpa must have used it to work on the land. I can't remember. He may have plowed some, but I remember that we had to plant by hand. I do remember we could ride to church Sunday morning. Well we must have sold it. I can't remember what happened to it. Oh, we sold everything. We lost everything. We lost the land, and I guess we sold the cow and the horse.

But you moved your furniture with you?

We moved the furniture to Kenosha and, well I don't know who put it on the train from little Falls, but I do remember when we came to Kenosha, you see these friends helped us. they had gotten us a flat and they had come David Nelson, that was the moving person and they are the ones, must be the grandchildren that but of course it can't be the ones Oh its many nice memories.

How did the automobile change life as you remember?

Gradually. People in our church, that's the only ones we ever contacted or got to know. gradually, this I think it was the superintendent of one of the departments that got the automobile. they called them gentries I think it was. And then did he die or sick and was taken away. Whatever he disappeared. I think he died. But he was the most prominent member of the

baptist church was this mr Matson and he lived in a nice big house on Prairie Avenue. He had this job of being superintendent at Jeffrey's in one of the departments, well after he diappeared. I think he died Then another man.

But he had the car?

He had the first car that I can remember. And then another man that had a good job, I don't know if he was superintendent he got the car. So he was the second, We never got to ride in it. And gradually the men that worked there got the car one after another. Course we did too. We had a car

Do you remember what year that was when you got the car?

Well Wallace was in high school. Oh I can't remember. I remember that it was hard for my husband to learn to drive, so Wallace did most of the driving. He did drive though.

It would have been in the twenties though?

Yea. It must have been. He took over the driving. I tried it once but it didn't work.

What happened?

Well I couldn't keep it on the road. Wallace was with me. But then you know time ran so fast and the young people grew up and before you knew it the children would have a car.

So at first it was just for the rich people?

Well our car cost six hundred dollars and that was a Ford brand new of course, but it had the side curtains. I don't know if you cranked it in front -- some of them you did.

Was that pretty exciting when you go the car?

Oh yes. We were rich then.

What did your husband think of it?

Well he wanted it wanted to get it, and he and Wallace went and bought it. And he did drive some, but he was not an adventurous man. He left it to Wallace.

so you don't remember just going out for a drive for fun?

No. I do remember Lotta Olas father. He bought a car, and they used to get up Sunday morning and take their breakfast and coffee and they'd go out in the country, because I guess he was learning to drive. He used to go out Sunday morning and drive.

Do you remember hearing about accidents?

No. I guess there was, but we weren't in any.

Do you remember what gasoline costs?

No. It couldn't have been too much, but of course we didn't use it much. We didn't use it at all in the winter.

Did you have a garage?

Yea. Course he (Elof) built a garage. He went to Great Lakes and bought up some old

lumber, and he was going to build it. And he put up a garage. It wasn't too good. That must have been when he was still well enough to think he could do something--course we were glad for that--but then later on I guess that garage didn't stand up or something so we had a carpenter build it, and the last I ever saw, that garage was still standing.

Were carriage houses for wealthy people?

Well yes. That's where I worked in Rogers Park you know in that rich they had a great big house and the coach and that was living rooms for the coachman upstairs but underneath was the horses place. That was the house where they had the big tower and so many windows and he was an importer from Denmark.

Do you remember what street that was on?

I think it was Pratt Avenue in Roger's Park. I think it was, but I'm not sure. It was a prominent, it was a corner house. But oh she was so good looking.

Was that a brick house or a frame house?

I think it was frame. And that's where I had my room on the third floor. I used to be so tired, crawl up those steps.

Did they have electricity?

I don't know. I can't remember. I remember she was very careful about being waited on. It was him and her, and the daughter. She was a nice girl. And the son was in college, and he'd come home quite a bit. College was so high to me that I didn't know what it meant. But I remember seeing his pictures and then they had a friend or a relative living there and he was going to school. I don't think he went to college. He lived there. So you see there was these three men when their boy was home--he wasn't always home--and the girl, always for meals. And she had big meals. And I learned to cook many things there. I wouldn't have learned otherwise.

Tell me what you remember about telephones:

Oh I remember when I learned. That was in Rockford. I'd never seen a telephone. I knew that they could talk, you know (laughs). Well that was in Rockford--that was before I moved with the people. I moved from Rockford to Chicago. They were going to teach to talk in the telephone, and of course they showed me how to hold it and all that, and the man would be somewhere else, downtown or something, and he would talk to me. And then I would, well I supposed I answered. So finally I got so I could talk on the phone.

Was that a wooden telephone?

I think it hung on the wall. I also can remember when they put the dial phones in. You could remember that. Then you didn't have to ask the number. You just dialed, and I remember when I learned that. The people next door to us, not Judd's--they lived on this side--but on that side, there was an old Danish couple that lived in that house. And they got the telephone in that house, and that's where I learned to use the dial. They let anybody come over there and use it. But they were about the only ones in the whole block who had it.

What did you think of that?

Well, it was lovely if you could afford it. I don't know how much it cost. You couldn't have those things unless you could pay for it. And my husband never could talk in the telephone. He had a hard time.

Were people excited about these inventions, or were some people against them?

Well that I don't know. I think everybody was excited and curious. I think we all said more or less that could never be. How can you possibly do anything like that? How can you drive without horses? How can you ride up high, and talk without seeing the person? And I remember, one old lady--she saw a train come for the first time. Oh she was so... She was so excited. Now I can go (laughs)! But us younger people--I think we took it more in stride, all those things that we saw.

What do you remember about airplanes?

Oh I remember the first on. It looked like a fish and not a bird. And then it started up and all. And we heard about it, read about it, and Lindberg came along in those days you know. It got so we got used to it, but I used to say I would never ride on one.

How old were you when you first rode in an airplane?

Can you remember?

Weren't you ninety?

Yea, I was.

Was that scary?

I think I was when I first came on. Wallace or Rachel put me on and the stewardess was so kind you know. They told me I'd be perfectly safe, and they'd look after me, and they told Wallace I'd be alright. And they were, and it went. The only time I was scared was when the plane kind of went down. It looked to me like it was just snow. I can't explain to this day was it is--the clouds--but it looked like snow. Well that's something course to this day that I can't figure out. Now I like it. I'm not afraid.

And you get all that nice food.

Yea. Well that varies. I will say that. I've had good meals on a plane, but I've also had meals that were anything but nice. That I think depends on the ones that supplies the food. I don't think it's so much the plane or the company. I think they have a contract with the...that's the way I understood it. And if they serve a good meal, then it's wonderful. But if it isn't so good, well, you never tell that, you know, they never ask. Well it's something to complain about, only it isn't always appropriate. I was on one of these big jets one time. It only took, hardly long enough to eat the breakfast, but that must have been from Minneapolis to Chicago. It must have been. But there they had a wonderful breakfast. They had juice, fruit, and they had sausage, and I believe French toast, and all the coffee you wanted. I had a seat by myself. And before I knew it we were in Chicago. I had so many rides that I can't get them straight now.

You think your husband would have gone on an airplane?

Oh I think he would if he had lived, if he had been well. He was not foolishly prejudiced or anything like that.

How old was your husband when he passed away?

Sixty-three. He was sixty-three in March, and he died the seventeenth of August.

And you'd been married how long?

We had thirty-three years. We had a silver wedding. It was lovely. And the Oak Lawn church gave Wallace and Rachel a silver wedding. And the Henning church gave Ester and Edmund their silver wedding, so we had all these years.

What do you remember about radio?

Oh, Wallace bought us a radio. That was about the last two years my husband was alive. Wallace thought that it would be nice for us. As long as we could hear it. Especially on Easter Sunday, we'd get up early, and hear the choir from the Tabernacle, oh Mormon. Oh that was nice. You know he liked music so. And when that was over there was a choir from Chicago and other places. So all early morning before it was time to go to church--I mean when he was still able to go to church--we would have that wonderful music. I'd make the coffee, bring it into the sitting room or dining room, and we'd sit there drinking coffee.

Was that one of those large wooden radios?

No, it was a small one.

So that was a wonderful thing to have?

Oh it was. I wonder if Ester got that. It seems to me that Ester got it.

I forgot to ask you about the invention of heating, when the heating changed from the parlor stoves to the coal furnace.

Oh yea. We didn't change. We used coal, but I remember when we put in the furnace, and we could heat the house from the basement instead of the coal stove in the front room. Oh that was beautiful. I think we paid two or three hundred dollars to get that (in Kenosha).

Did it have a stoker, or did you have to go down there?

We didn't have a stoker. Some people did, but we didn't have one. So, we sometimes got up at two o'clock in the morning during the really cold weather and fixed the furnace so it would be warm because we heated the whole house. We heated the upstairs too for the people. And I remember taking out the ashes, and always filling the water pan, and ordering the coal when it got low, and always seeing to it that the fire didn't go out. Well lot's of work.

Did you go down in the basement and stir up the fire?

Oh, yes. That was my job more than he. He got weaker, and he lost the--not interest--but he didn't have the pep and the strength and all the rest to keep going. And am I thankful that I was able to carry through because he couldn't. The Lord took him home. He didn't have to suffer any more.

How many years do you remember your husband being weak?

I would say at least four years. Ester graduated in thirty-two from Moody's. She got

married in Nineteen thirty-five. And I went with the people that lived upstairs I told you--he was American and he was so good to us and had a boy and a girl born there. Well they were so good. Elof could get not get off from work the day of Ester's graduation, but I could. Earl Larson took his wife and children and me to Chicago so we could be at the graduation at Moody's. And Elof came after work. Oh, he was tired. I don't think it meant too much to him because he was so tired to come from a day's work. But he came on the train. I went with the family in the car, and of course Elof rode home with us, and Ester did too--the night of the graduation. And Ed graduated the same night, and his family was all there. That was in August and I think she got her ring next Christmas.

I also wanted to ask you about the invention of television.

That I don't know anything about. I never have. And I never got a chance to look at television much. I did some, but you see I started to work after I became a widow. Between time I lived with Wallace and Ester. I lived with them between times I worked. I mean I worked for families. I did see--that was in Salyander, California when they lived in Oakland. I worked for Sharon. They had a great house, and they had a television in the basement recreation room. And when they had the big convention in San Francisco, when the Russians would not sign, well the agreement between the nations. Well that time it was shown on the TV, and she told me to leave everything and come down and watch it. I saw how the men from different countries went up and signed and how they got to keep their pens. And the Russians walked out, and they wouldn't sign. We saw that. I didn't understand it maybe. That's the first I can remember watching TV. And since then I've never cared for TV and I haven't been able to hear it or understand it except when Billy Graham was on. That I have heard a few times, but that's because I know about everything he said. Otherwise I wouldn't have. I've seen people come forward, and he gives the invitation. But that's because I knew about it. Otherwise, I couldn't get it. I could hear it and sit there, see it in Wallace's home, but it doesn't mean anything because I don't hear anything. But that's a wonderful invention. And they had that in Sweden. Well Sweden I guess has everything.

When did newspapers start being delivered to homes?

They did when I lived and worked in Chicago. They delivered the newspaper by the front door and especially Sunday morning I can remember. That was years ago.

You think inventions have made the world a better place?

Much easier. In many many many ways. Just think. And to think about just an ordinary day's work--what it was when I was young and what it is now. I do believe that at least the people that I knew and that we mixed with were very much grateful for any little thing that was good for us, any little thing that helped us in any way, whether it was spiritual or material. For instance, we got the electric iron which we never (laughs) well we had to heat the irons on the cook stove and do all that ironing and that heat. Just think how handy it is.

So you think the people who were around before these inventions appreciate them more...

Than the average. Oh yea. I know I do, and I know lots of others must too. Oh I remember when I got my first electric iron.

What about your first refrigerator?

I never had one. I never had a refrigerator. Nobody did except Hilder Young, and her husband gave her a choice of getting a car for themselves. She could have a car or she could have a refrigerator. A car or a refrigerator. That was going to be her wedding present I suppose from him. She chose the refrigerator, and she had it I guess for twenty years. But she let us put our meat in hers on Saturday night. Anybody else she would have, if she had room. Oh they were so nice. But she was the only one in the whole neighborhood who had it.

You mean you had an ice-block?

No we didn't even have that. I put the food down in the basement. I never had all those things. I never had a washing machine. I could have had it, I'm sure. But I never dared to go into debt for things. You know the Bible is so strong. To me, it said, "Owe no man anything except the Lord." And I knew people that had gone into debt that had lost. Oh many many people did. My husband was the same. He would not buy anything (on credit). We were not going to have debts. We had a minister was, and he was--before he became a minister he was a architect--and then during the depression he lost his job. But he was a good Christian, well educated. And he was asked to take over the church in Kenosha because we were without a minister at that time. And he had been used to living rather high I suppose. He was there--I don't know how long--maybe a year, maybe two before he left. He left with a lot of debts. It was a shame for the church. I think they took a collection and paid them off. But that was something that went against us older folks that had been living within our needs.

Are you familiar with credit cards?

No, I never had one. No I don't know anything about it. It's supposed to be very handy, and it is if you can keep it up. I've read about them. I do know that Rachel has a credit card but I'm sure they pay their bills.

We always paid cash, except when we bought the house and the car. We had to pay payments for that.