

**NELLIE (SPENCER) GREEN**

Interviewed by Jeanne Temple - February 23, 1983  
Transcribed and typed by Myrna A. Van Epps - September 1992

February 23, 1983, and I am going to interview Nellie (Spencer) Green in her home at Ovid, Michigan. Nellie, can you tell us your birthday?

August 29, 1900.

Where were you born?

On what was then called the Town Line Road between Ovid and Duplain Townships.

In what we used to call "the old Spencer place."

Yes.

Who were your parents?

Ed Spencer and Mina Spencer.

What was her maiden name?

Satterlee, but she had been adopted by the Daileys. Susan Dailey was her adopted mother.

Well, there was a Dailey house down west of there, wasn't there? Or Dailey farm?

Across from where Norma Lucky lives or Norma Hilton lived. That was my grandfather's place.

How many were in your family:

Four: My brother John; and then in three years, Mabel who became Mabel Bartlett; and Laura (Spencer) Crane; and myself.

You were the youngest?

Yes.

Where did you go to school in elementary?

Sherburne School [District 8, Section 1, Ovid] about a mile east of our home.

Do you remember any of your early teachers?

Belle Winfield was the first one; and then there were two Daggett sisters, Pearl Daggett and Faye Daggett; and there was a Kate Jillson; and the one I remember the best, of course, was the one I had in the seventh and eighth grade, Lucile Post. She was a very good teacher.

Well, if I remember right, in those days, eighth graders, the exam you took was very, very important to you, wasn't it?

Oh yes. You had to go the stated place and take an exam. It was put out by the county and supervised by the county commissioner, and we poor, little kids were scared to death. I took it and I got through with it.

Do you remember, did you go to Shepardsville by train or did someone take you up with horse and buggy?

We went to the Shepardsville Schoolhouse to take the test.

Oh, I see you didn't have to go ...

We were supervised by the county just the same. My dad took me with the horse and buggy.

Who were some that were in your class as you went through country school?

Lulu Lavere, who is now Lulu Cox, started out in the first grade with me and went through all twelve grades with me. Isn't that wonderful?

Unusual too!

And we were very good friends and still are.

You hear from her?

Oh, yes.

Where does she live?

She lives now in California.

Who were some of the other families or other children who went to school when you did too?

There was Hazel and Frank Hall and our neighbors, the Stewart children; and then the Davidson family lived and helped Delos Myers, and they had three children (One of them died with appendicitis while they were living there.); and then Easlicks, Brennan and the twins Bernice and Bertha; Leon Smith; and there were three or four children from the Ed Smith family; and a family by the name of Rose. I guess that is all that I can remember. Yes. That's doing real well. In other words, some of the families that we know now, like the Millers that have lived there or Myers, none of them were there at that time?

Delos Myers was, but he wasn't married at that time. He married Edna Hudson, didn't he?

Yes.

Now, thinking back to when you were little and at home, your father was a farmer. Did he milk cows?

Oh, yes.

Did you have chickens?

Oh, yes.

And pigs. And do you recall the size of your farm?

I think it was eighty acres.

The reason that is interesting is that your father probably made a good, comfortable living.

Oh yes. He was a good farmer, and he always made pets of his animals.

There was one old cow named Granny that he used to set me on her back, and I would always ride out of the cow stable on Granny's back.

Did you girls have chores to do?

Oh, yes. Laura usually helped mother in the house, and I always helped my dad outdoors. I always took care of the chickens and always fed the cows before they were ready to come in at night.

Did your mother make butter to sell, or did you sell cream, or did you sell the milk?

We sold the milk and sometimes the cream. Dad used to have a DeLaval separator. For awhile there he did sell cream, but ordinarily, he sold the milk.

Well, do you recall, did he have to take it in to Ovid?

No. At first there was a horse-drawn wagon that used to pick up the milk and then, eventually, a truck did.

It became motorized. I presume your mother made all her bread.

Oh, yes.

You didn't buy bread. Do you recall some of the things that she cooked that you can think about now?

Well, she made three pies every Saturday and usually a cake, and we very often had chicken, of course.

Did you butcher?

Oh, yes. Dad butchered every fall, and that is what I was amused about--the salt pork we used to have. We had salt pork and salt pork and salt pork! Mother fixed it in such a way that I really liked it. She would parboil it to get some of the salt out of it, and then fry it until it was very crisp. Then we had homemade chili sauce to eat on it. It was good. I bet sometimes they would make milk gravy to go with it.

Oh, yes.

You probably raised your own vegetables.

Yes. We had a big garden.

Did you make maple syrup? Did you have a woods?

No, not on our farm; but my sister who was married to John Bartlett, they had a maple bush--a sugar bush, they called it--in their woods. So we always had maple syrup anyway, even if we didn't raise it.

Did you keep bees?

No.

I know sometimes years ago little farms would have a hive or two of bees so they had a little extras. Where did your parents generally go to trade, to buy? You know, to shop?

Sometimes to Ovid and sometimes to Shepardsville. We used to have a couple pretty good stores in Shepardsville.

Do you recall your mother trading eggs for groceries?

Oh, yes. Mr. Alderman from Shepardsville used to have a great big team of horses and a big, heavy wagon that brought groceries around every Tuesday, I think it was. And then an old gentleman from Ovid, named Foss, used to drive along with another wagon and he would come on Fridays, and mother would usually trade her big basket of eggs for the groceries that she would buy.

Did your mother make your clothes generally?

Oh, yes--always.

Did you ever have a hired man living with you to help your dad?

Yes. He was some shirttail relation. My father's uncle had married this hired man's aunt for his second wife, so that is how we happened to get acquainted with him; and he lived right there at the house. He was practically one of the family for years.

Do you recall his name?

Oh, yes. Frank Erwin. He's buried over in the [Rochester] Colony.

If you can, do you remember what Mother packed in your lunch when you went to school?

Very apt to be baked bean sandwiches. I liked those. She always, every week, made a pot of baked beans, and that, with some of this homemade chili sauce, made very good sandwiches, and I liked them.

You probably had some fruit trees on the place then too, didn't you?

Yes. We had plums and lots of apples. Dad had a big apple orchard, and he used to sell apples to my Uncle George who ran the cider mill at Ovid at that time.

What was Uncle George's last name?

Gleason.

George Gleason. Did you like the cider?

I never did like cider, not even when it was nice and fresh. I just never cared for cider, but we always had it when it was time for it. Mother would never let it get too old.

I know of your love and your interest in the Methodist Church at the Colony [Rochester Colony]. Did your family go there at that time?

No. When I was young we went to the Shepardsville church, always.

Do you recall any of the pastors there?

Bancroft--they had a couple daughters around my age, and that is why I remember them I guess. Exner--he was the one that baptized me; and of course, Birdsall was the one that married me. Then we moved over to the Colony after I was married.

Well, we've got you married before we got you through high school! You did go into Ovid for high school?

Yes.

What year did you start Ovid as a freshman in high school?

Well, I was thirteen one day, and I started high school the next day. That was in 1913.

You were young then.

I was green and fresh!

How did you get to high school?

I drove a horse and buggy.

Did you go alone, or did you pick up other young people?

The first year Laura, my older sister, went with me. She was going to high school too at the time, but then she only went the one year. After that I went mostly by myself. Although when I was a junior, Lloyd Rummel rode with me all that year. Then he didn't go except that one year.

When you got into Ovid, I can see you trotting along with a horse and buggy. You had to put the horse somewhere. You couldn't just leave him out all day.

Dad always rented a barn, and we had to unhitch the horse, put a halter on it and hitch it to the manger in the barn there.

In the livery stable?

No, no, a privately-owned barn usually; and then dad would pay them (I think it was two dollars a month.); and then he would furnish the hay. He would bring down a load of hay and put it up in their loft; and then I would have to go down at noon and fork down the hay for the horse; then at night hitch her up and away we'd go.

In other words, you understood about putting on a harness and putting on a bridle and hitching it up?

Oh, yes. Farm girls knew those things.

I guess they did.

They had to!

I guess they did. Then, in the winter when it got quite snowy, did you take a cutter?

No. Dad wouldn't let me go to school or drive to school after it got so bad we had to use a cutter because he was so afraid I'd tip over in it.

So usually, Dad and Mother would rent a room with some family down to Ovid for two or three months at a time in the winter.

So you would stay with them and that was sort of a treat in a way, wasn't it?

No! I was homesick.

Did you go home weekends though?

Yes. My freshman year and my senior year I stayed with this Mr. and Mrs. Post whose daughter had been my teacher that last year in the district school.

Oh, that was at least someone you ...

Yes. In my sophomore year I stayed with some people by the name of Utter; and then my junior year, that was the year I rode with Lloyd Rummel, and he was alright. Dad trusted him, I guess, not to tip over.

Then he had to bring you home though?

He lived beyond me, so...

Oh, he didn't live on the hill where he does now?

No. Who is it that lives there now? Is it Diller? I don't know.

Anyway, you know about a half mile west of the Spencer farm there are two houses across from each other? He lived on the one on that side.

Yes. Oh, I see. I hadn't associated him with that. What were some of the subjects that you remember in high school, either that you liked or disliked, or that you just remember?

Well, I was quite good in English, and I liked that quite well. I didn't mind algebra, got along okay with that; but when it came to geometry, I would have nothing to do with it. I had to take it. It was a required subject, but I hated it. The very first theorem in the book said, "A straight line is the shortest distance between two points." I thought, when I read that, any fool would know that. I just shut my book, and I don't think I looked at that book all through the year more than once or twice. How I ever got through passing that subject, I don't know; but I did.

Do you remember your teachers? Who was your geometry teacher?

The one I had in the first-year geometry--I had to take it three years--was Anna B. Johnson; and the last year was Gilman [Effie Guilford?] I think, and she was red-haired and she was quite strict.

What about your English teachers?

Oh, I had some good ones. Lovica Dean was the English teacher for most of my time in high school. She was very good.

Did girls have to take "phys ed" like they do now?

No. We didn't have any phys ed in school at all.

Not even for the boys?

Right, not phys ed. They had baseball games and football games, but we didn't have basketball then at all.

And nothing that the girls had a team and competed in sports?

No.

What about music? Did you have some music?

We had what they called a high school chorus, and I always was a member of that, and I really enjoyed that.

Who directed it?

Her name was Matthews at first, and then later on we had Aurabelle Mayhew who married Ray Lewis here in town.

Did one of the young people accompany you?

What do you mean?

You know, play the piano for you or something for you to...

You know, I can't remember. Must be they did, but I just don't remember who it was that played for us.

Usually you do that to bolster the voices and to keep things going on.

Yes, we did have someone playing the piano, I do know that.

Did they have a band or orchestra?

No.

Did you study history?

Oh, yes--ancient history and modern history.

Do you remember your teacher?

Irene [Ione?] Orr. She was a good teacher.

Do you remember anything special about graduation day or night whenever you had your final event?

I was the class poet and I had to make up the poem and recite it graduation night. I can't remember what it was all about now.

Where were the exercises held?

In the old opera house, if anybody knows what that is. Right now it's the veterans' building, but it used to be everything big going on in Ovid would be at the old opera house. We used to have quite well-known people come from different parts of the country and talk to us in that old opera house.

After graduation, what did you do?

I stayed home for a year. My mother had fallen and broken her hip, and so I sort of had to be chief cook and bottle washer for awhile. After that year was up, they sent me up to Ypsilanti to a normal school where I got a certificate for teaching.

Now, was that a one-year course?

No. It was only a summer normal course.

Do you recall how much that cost?

I don't know, but I think it was around one hundred dollars which was a lot then.

Yes, but that probably paid for your board and room in those days, as well as your fee for the college, didn't it?

I just don't remember.

What was your first school then that you taught?

First and only! The Rowell School [District 1 Frl., Section 31, Duplain] west of the Colony. By that time I was married, and my husband taught in the Colony School [District 1, Section 30, Duplain], and I taught over at

the Rowell Schoolhouse. We rented a nag from Don Temple's folks. We had no barn where we lived and kept the horse there. After I'd get over near the Rowell School, we left the horse there with people by the name of Dickenson, and then I had to walk the rest of the way which was almost half a mile.

Let's go back a little bit. When did you and your husband meet? Was that when you were in high school?

No. It was in 1919. We met each other sometime in the summer of 1919. He had been in the army in the First World War and contracted TB, and the doctor had given him orders to get out on a farm and stay outdoors as much as possible. He was a good friend of our Colony minister at that time, Bob Miller, and Mr. Miller was rooming at some people by the name of Hillyer who owned a big farm there on the Colony Road. So he persuaded my husband to come out there and work for Mr. Hillyer, which he did. Of course, Mr. Miller was a young man too, and he used to go to all the young people's parties, and he took Chauncey with him. That is where we met.

Then were you married in 1920.

Yes, in October.

Where?

At the Spencer home.

And do you remember the minister?

Reverend Ray Birdsall.

You had the Rowell School then to teach?

Yes.

And Chauncey had the Colony School?

Yes.

Going over there now to the Rowell School, I know that building real well because I went there for eight years.

Oh, did you?

Yes, and my father went there. Not for that long, but he finished his elementary education there. Do you remember some of your pupils?

Oh, yes. There was Sidney Keys, Don Morris, Peter Schafer, Laura Schafer, Donald Keys, Leo Bond, Aletha and Ethel and James Dickenson (Aletha's now my niece. She married my nephew, Spencer Bartlett.); and let me see--the Ash girls, Lucille & Arlene. They were very brilliant youngsters. I didn't have any dumb ones in the whole school. Reo Patterson was a beginner that year. He lives in Elsie now, I believe. Letha [Aletha] and Gatha [Agatha], and what's her name?

Yes. I know who you mean--her sister.

Yes.

Hazel.

Yes.

Did you have the Treat girls?

Yes. I had Phyllis and Blanche.

Did you have Lewis Kneelands?

No. I had him in Sunday School though.

I can remember some of the families that were living there at that time.

Lewis was a "little peeler" in Sunday School.

Oh, he was! When you and Chauncey started your married life together, then you were living at the little house in the Colony just west of the church?

Yes. I think people by the name of Beery live there now?

Yes, People by the name of Beery live there now. Was it about that time that Chauncey decided to go into the ministry?

That was two years after we got married. It was when Mr. Gay preached over at Shepardsville and to the Colony, and he was the one that got him interested in that.

What year was Ermina born?

1922, just before Christmas. I hoped she would come at Christmas time. I was going to name her Mary. Then she came three days ahead of Christmas. Chauncey was still teaching then?

No. We had just started over to Bath. I stayed there at my mother's so I could have the doctor I had been used to all the time. His sister stayed with him over to Bath.

Oh, he was teaching at Bath?

No. You see, used to, we would start our ministerial year in September instead of June and we had just moved over to Bath and when school let out that year in May we had to get out of the house because they had sold it. So we rented a room for the summer upstairs at Charlie and Wilma Harmon's. Then in the daytime Chauncey would help around on the farms to have some money coming in, and I usually would go over and spend the day with my mother. Then when September came, why he went on over to Bath, and his sister was there with him, and I stayed with Mother.

What I was saying then, he was assigned to a church at Bath?

Yes.

He had some education, or he wouldn't have been teaching school.

Oh, yes. He had two years at Albion at that time, and then (1930, I think it was) he went back to Albion and finished there and graduated.

By the way, where was Chauncey from? He wasn't a native.

He was born on a farm near Onondaga, but his mother died, and he was brought up by his father's old maid cousin. She was just so good to him, thought the world of him. She lived in Jackson, and that is where he went to high school.

And then two years at Albion and then went...

And then went into the service.

Ermina was born then just before Christmas. Then did you go back to Bath after awhile?

Yes, after she was about four or five, six weeks old, somewhere in there, when I felt safe to leave my mother.

How long were you at Bath?

Just one year. We had a one-year stand, so to speak, for three years.

One year, Mulliken and one year, Barryton.

In some of my old notes on the history there at the Colony and other churches, that now seems strange, but then it was not all that strange that long ago, and you read Mr. McKnight's diary, he was moved about every year.

## Side 2

Now this is side 2 of our tape with Nellie (Spencer) Green, and we were discussing how ministers used to move every year in the Methodist circuit system. You were at Bath and then Mulliken and then Barryton. I know where Barryton is.

From Barryton, we went to Central Lake. While we were at Central Lake my second little girl was born.

And that is Madge, isn't it?

Madge, and she was a premature baby. She only weighed two pounds when she was born and came at six and a half months. She had to stay in the incubator until she was three months old. And then, after I had her home for two weeks, we took her way back up to Central Lake.

Now, what hospital was she in?

Sparrow Hospital in Lansing. That is where she was born.

That was quite a ways from where you lived.

I had been staying with my mother. It's a long story. We had a doctor in Central Lake. He was a very brilliant doctor. He was a diabetic specialist. His biggest fault was that he tried to treat everybody as though they were a diabetic. He said that being sick to your stomach,

like when you were pregnant, was very similar to when you had a diabetic condition. So he would give me insulin shots, and he said that I had to drink a half cup of Karo every time he gave me an insulin shot. I did all that, but I couldn't keep the Karo down, so I went into insulin shock, and my sister Mabel came clear up to Central Lake on the train and took me home where I could have a doctor that had a little more sense as well as being brilliant. That explains why I was at my mother's waiting for Madge to come.

Well, that treatment probably caused her to be born prematurely, don't you think?

I don't know what caused it. I just don't have any idea.

Well, the reason I asked was because I know a lot of smaller hospitals in those days probably wouldn't have had an incubator, and Sparrow is big enough that it would have more advanced kind of equipment for a child. After Madge got settled down, then you went back?

Yes, to Central Lake.

And she got along quite well for a preemie, did she?

Until one of the church members came home from college! The college had closed because of flu. She had the flu and was still coughing from it, and she came over to see this new baby. She had heard how little she was. So she held up the baby and coughed in her face, and Madge got pneumonia. We nearly lost her. The same doctor said he had done all he could for her. He couldn't do anything more and advised me to call in an elderly lady that lived back of me because he said that she was magic with her herbs and things. She came over there to the parsonage, and she brought her bag of hops. She boiled up hops and made little bags and put this hot poultice on Madge's chest and back. She kept that up all night, and in the morning that baby was better, and she lived.

That is just a fantastic story, Nellie, because I think that a lot of doctors right now might tend to agree. I think some of them would, but that is strange that he called her "magic." Now, if he believed in it himself, he could of told you to boil up the hops.

Yes, but I don't suppose he knew what she'd do. He just knew that he heard of so many wonderful things that she had done.

The interesting part though is that he was not professionally jealous of her, or he might have been the person who would have said nothing to you about her. You have to give him credit about being good about that.

I did. I always honored him for that.

Now this was still up at Central Lake. Then where did you go?

Well, after two years at Central Lake, we went down to Morley and were there three years.

Now Morley is...?

North of Howard City, first town, and it's south about 20 miles from Big Rapids.

Just a small town though.

Yes, just a small town, but it was nice.

The church that you know I go to--that you know about--we've been "on charge" we call it, where there are at least two churches for one pastor--now did Chauncey get into that sort of thing?

Oh, yes, a good many times. In Morley we had Deerfield, the name of the outer church there. In Barryton we somebody's chapel. I can't think of the name of it, and in Bath we had South Bath.

What about Barryton. Was that on a charge too?

Yes. That was Coldwater Chapel. That was the outer church there.

About what year are we talking now when Madge was born?

Madge was born in 1926. While were at Morley I kept talking to Chauncey and finally had him persuaded to take the conference course of study and



go back to Albion. So we were sent to a three-point charge south of Marshall. We lived south of Marshall, and we had to rent a farm house, twenty-five dollars a month, which we thought was pretty steep. Then we had Eckford and West Eckford and Lyon Lake charges. Besides having those three churches to take care of, Chauncey went to Albion College. He drove his old car. Finally, he ran into a light post one slippery day, and that was the end of that car. Then we drove one for a little while that belonged to the district. They loaned it to us until we could manage to get another one, which wasn't easy. We lived there for just the one month, and then they moved us over to Concord. We were there for three years, and he finished Albion while he was in Concord.

Well, then at Concord the parsonage was furnished to you?

Yes.

You must have, in moving around that many times, seen parsonages that were quite all right and some that were probably disasters to move a family into, weren't they?

Of course, in those days I didn't expect too much. Nobody had things as perfect and easy to use and live in and work with as they do nowadays. For instance, I didn't have a refrigerator for years. I just had to be careful and use up my food as quick as I could before it had a chance to spoil. I used a kerosene stove to cook with, long burner stove. New Perfection, I think, was the name of that stove. We had a washing machine that you had to push. I was lucky to have that.

Of course, I know how our minister today has his housing and, now with electricity and the various appliances, there is a housing allowance. I seem to recall vaguely, because I suppose I'm thinking of when times really got hard, that people would take in produce to the minister because they really weren't being able to pay much toward his salary.

That's right. When we lived in Concord that one year (This was the year after the depression started.), we had three hundred dollars, all the cash we had the whole year. But the people were so good to us. They wanted to pay us, but they didn't have the money any more than we did. We always had our milk and our eggs furnished, and of course, we had a big vegetable garden, and people gave us potatoes. My Uncle Hiram Dailey owned a farm near Concord, and when his tenant butchered what they called a baby beef, Uncle Hi had him bring half of that down to us. Oh, that was wonderful because we could not just afford meat.

In other words, you weren't buying much meat. Now, in those days there were no health insurance such as we've known for a long time. When you were sick or the children needed a doctor--of course, I realize in those times [that in] most families, you or your husband doctored all of your ailments as long as you could before you called a doctor to come out too.

That's true. When we had to go to a doctor, we'd give him just as much money as we could and ask him to trust us until we got some more. We would always pay a little bit and a little bit. Doctor Bion Bates here in town took care of our teeth all those years. Sometimes we could only pay him a dollar a month, but we kept hacking away at it until we would finally get him paid up, and he never refused to do anything for us. He was just the best man.

I don't think he would either. Now we're still talking down there at Concord. Do you remember where you went after that?

We went to Fulton for just one year. You may remember Garth Smith that was here in Ovid for awhile?

Yes.

He married one of our Fulton girls, and he was a minister following us at Fulton. We didn't get very much money there either. We had an outer charge there called Leonidas a town about eight miles south of Fulton.

Is Fulton over by Ionia?

No. It's west and south of Battle Creek.

I guess what I have in my mind--there is a street in Grand Rapids named Fulton.

The next town west of Fulton is Vicksburg.

Okay. How long were you there?

One year. Then we moved to Athens, Michigan. We were there for four years.

Now where is Athens? I don't recall that.

Athens is south of Battle Creek about fifteen miles.

In all these moves you made, you were sending little girls to school and they would have to get acquainted with each...?

They changed text books almost every move.

I'll bet! They did quite well. They were good students, weren't they?

Yes, not anything outstanding. Ermina was a better one than Madge always.

In fact, the doctor (We had Madge to a specialist, Horace French, in Lansing.) said that Madge would always be slower in learning because she had been so premature. But Mina was good. She went on to Adrian College and was on the honor roll there.

Where were you when Ermina started high school?

I think we were in Athens then.

So if you were there four years, that was one place she got through high school?

She graduated in 1940, and we lived in Springport. We went to Springport from Athens and were there four years. While we were in Springport Chauncey contracted TB again. He had to go into a hospital in Battle Creek, a TB hospital, for awhile. Then they sent him to Dearborn Veterans TB Hospital. All together, he was [in the hospital] about nine months. The next year the "powers that be" decided that, with our agreeing, he better not try to keep up with the ministry any more because it was just too strenuous on the condition of his health.

Well, during that nine months that he was in those hospitals for TB, where did you and the girls live?

In the parsonage. The people were very good to us there in Springport. I took care of all the business. I did everything that a preacher was supposed to do except preach.

I suppose they had lay speakers or guest speakers.

Yes. They got a student. Young student preachers from Albion would come over on Sunday.

After he was discharged from Dearborn, was that right from the hospital at Dearborn, discharged as cured?

Yes.

Is that when you came back to this Ovid area?

No, not until the conference decided that he had better not try to keep on with the ministry. Then we didn't know what we were going to do, but John Bartlett's tenant house on what's now the Kinley Road was empty at that time, and he told us that we could come out there. The hospital had told Chauncey that he ought to be outdoors all the time. So we went out to this place and lived there four years, and Chauncey did farm work. While we were there Madge graduated from high school.

From Ovid then?

Yes.

Then I think is when I began, because I think Chauncey preached in our church or subbed for somebody. I seem to remember him.

Yes.

He substituted.\... a great deal, didn't he?. Well, how long did you live out there on Kinley Road?

Four years. I had saved a thousand dollars, believe it or not, out there on that farm just by selling chickens and eggs. It was during World War II, and meat was rationed. People were just crazy to buy those chickens, and Chauncey would dress them all nice. Madge would take them down to Redmond's where she worked after she graduated. So I had a thousand dollars saved just in chickens and eggs. So then we bought this house where I'm living now, and then I went to work at Redmond's and paid for the house.

When you talked about the chicken and eggs and being that you weren't very far from your old home, it was like coming around a full circle--your mother having chickens and eggs.

My brother and his wife lived there when we lived on the Bartlett farm. How long did you work at Redmond's?

Seven years.

What kind of work did you do? I know it was a factory, but I...

I soldered. I soldered wires--fields onto leads. You wouldn't know what I mean probably.

No. What shift did you work?

Day shift.

I always hate to ask people if they thought it was hard work because I think factory work is hard in that sometimes it is monotonous.

After I got used to it. It was hard getting used to and hard making myself be able to make production. We were supposed to make just so many. We had to make so many in a day, and that was hard for me to get up there cause I'm naturally a slow-moving person. But once I got up there and got into the swing of it, I didn't mind it too much. We had a lot of fun--the rest of the girls. We were all almost all of us ladies working on the lines there.

Was there a carload of you that went together every morning from Ovid?

At one time they sent a bus out--Redmond bus, they called it--to pick up people from Laingsburg and Ovid. People from Elsie would come over to get on the bus from here at Ovid, and two or three from St. Johns too. Then later on, I guess. they didn't have enough riding on the bus to pay for keeping it up. After that I rode with Ed Anderson who worked in the tool department at Redmond's.

You worked there, you said, seven years?

Yes.

You didn't work there until you were retirement age or did you just work until you got the house paid for and that was it or till you got tired?

I decided to adopt a little boy and that is when I quit.

Oh, that's right! I had forgotten. You probably made some friends down there.

Oh, yes.

I know my mother worked for awhile at Redmond's in Owosso. I think that; in fact, some my age did, and I sort of talked to Don[Temple]about working in the shop, but he didn't quite think that he wanted me to leave Diane and go down there, but others of my age were doing it because you could get work just by appearing--a warm body--during the war there; and they were looking for. I just heard my mother, and I've never worked in a shop so to speak.

She worked at the Elm Street Plant, didn't she. I knew I never ran across her there at the Monroe Street.

Well, it was an era that seems strange now, when people can't get work at all. In those days, my, they were tickled to death to get you ladies to come in and do that kind of work. There was no one else to do it.

They used to say that women did better at that type of work than men did because it was small work.

Kind of like one would do about the kitchen in a way, in that sort of piecemeal.

Women's hands are smaller and we could handle those small wires and things.

After you moved into this house--I was down here of course when Chauncey was alive, and I knew he had quite a garden out here in back didn't he?

We always had a garden when he was alive, but I don't have his green thumb.

After he recovered, now the tuberculosis never came back on him, did it?

No, not that I know of, not after we had come down here.

Did he work out for farmers somewhat, day labor?

Yes. He used to go out to Lynn Wisner's and help him quite a lot, and of course, he always helped our son-in-law, Don Craig, when he wanted him to. He would help my brother, John, quite a lot.

He liked that sort of work pretty well anyway, didn't he?

Yes. He like almost anything that would take him outdoors.

Was he a hunter or a fisherman ever?

He liked to fish, but he wouldn't shoot anything.

When you think back, did your dad--those times were different and people didn't go out for the sport of hunting or fishing--did your dad ever fish?

Well, I think he did when he was young cause he told about being in a boat on the Maple River over north of Shepardsville Road and seeing the fish so thick in that river that he could have reached out and picked them up and put them in the boat. I've heard him tell that, but we didn't have a river or anything close by, and I don't think he ever made it a practice of it.

One of the things that I missed because your stories are so interesting--but thinking back when you were a girl at home with your family, what did your family do particularly in the winter? You didn't have a radio, and there wasn't television, and families usually made their own fun.

We used to pop corn almost every night and then go down in the cellar and get a big pan of apples. Dad would sit over there and pare apples for everyone of us, and we would have apples and popcorn. When I was real small we had an old organ that Mabel used to play, and then John would sing. But as I grew older, then we had a piano, and Laura and I would play that when we felt the urge.

Did you play checkers or dominoes or those sort of things?

I used to play dominoes with Dad a lot, and we used to play Flinch quite a lot, if you know what that is. Checkers? I never got along too well with checkers, but Dad and I used to play dominoes a lot.

Do you remember the things you did for fun in high school when you were young folks? Of course, maybe they didn't have a lot of time, but I'm sure they had some fun.

We used to have class parties, freshman parties, and sophomore parties and like that. We used to have hay rides. I can remember my mother telling me, first hay ride I ever took, that I must not ever trust any man, and that night on that hay ride I had to sit beside my--well he was a chemistry and physics teacher, but I wasn't taking any subject from him at that time. I can remember just being scared to death of the poor guy, and he wouldn't harm a flea.

He probably wondered what was the matter with you. My mother told about when she and Dad were going together, the young folks would go to Greenbush Church for meetings and on like that. Now, did young people from Shepardsville go back and forth with Duplain or somewhere?

Very rarely. I don't know about Shepardsville, but we had a big bunch of young people at Duplain, and we used to have lots of things going on. We would have different kinds of socials; we had "clothespin socials."

Now, what's that?

You dressed up clothespins, and they were supposed to be dressed as twins, and the girl would keep the one twin and put the other one up for sale. Whatever boy bought her twin would have to hunt around until he found the twin. Then he had to eat supper with her. Of course, she would bring the supper in a box.

Did they auction off the pins to make a little money?

Yes.

Sort of like a box social in a way?

Yes. Only they called them different. Oh, there were shadow socials where the girl would stand up in front of a sheet. Then the boy, all he could see of her, to tell who it was, was her shadow. It was very hard to tell who belonged to that shadow.

You don't suppose that they made arrangements ahead of time that the girl would be holding out one little finger or something so her favorite...?

I expect some of them did all right. I can't remember that I ever did because it was always too much fun for me to be surprised.

Well, did the ladies of the church have suppers like they do now?

Yes.

Well, Nellie this has been really a good interview. I have certainly enjoyed it. I hope we haven't left anything out.

Oh, my Lord! I don't know how!

Well, all the fun that you remember, anything funny about Donald Temple you were always going to tell me?