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### Oral History Interview: Ethel Barnes

Eva Ethel Barnes

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BR: This is an interview with Ethel Barnes born in Ivydale in Clay County, West Virginia, February 25, 1900.

Could you tell me about, ah, what it was like when you went to school in Clay County when you were just a little girl?

EB: I went, ah, to school to White Pilgrim when, ah, when the weather was good, and we had a long ways to go; and when it was bad, I didn't get to go. So, I went a few months each year.

BR: Was that like a one-room school then?

EB: One room, yes.

BR: Uh huh. You had like one teacher. Do you remember your teacher?

EB: One teacher, and, yes, I remember. Dory (inaudible) was one of our teachers, and, and Alice, ah, Moore was one, and, oh, different ones. I don't remember the others.

BR: Was there just one teacher in the building, though ....

EB: One teacher. We just had one [BR: Uh huh.] teacher, yes. This was, ah, the different schools, you know.

BR: Uh huh. Well, I wonder how many people were in that school? I guess of all, all the children in the community probably went to that one school, didn't they?

EB: Yeah, it wasn't over 30 or 40, though. [BR: Uh huh.] I don't think, in, ah, in, ah, then. [BR: Uh huh.] We had, we really had a good time. I liked the Spelling Bees we used to have (laughter).

BR: I've heard about them. Did you have them every Friday? I heard that a lot of people had them every Friday.

EB: Sometimes, no, we didn't have them every Friday. We had them once in a while, and I liked them because I could stay pretty well at the head of the class. [BR: Oh.] (laughter)

BR: I heard one, ah, ah, woman talk who was a former one-room school teacher up in, ah, oh, a different county. I'm not

sure where it was, but it was here in West Virginia. She was talking about every Friday they had a one room, they had their Spelling Bee in the school and other schools would come in and compete with them. Did you do that?

EB: Yes, we did that, too, uh huh.

BR: Oh, well, she said that was really fun; the children enjoyed it.

EB: Yeah, we had, we'd go sometimes go to other schools and, and have a Spelling Bee and see who could beat one school would spell against the other school. [BR: Uh huh, uh huh.] Really enjoyed it.

BR: Well, ah, when you had, ah, recess and things like that, do you remember playing? She said her children really enjoyed playing outside.

EB: We had 15 minutes recess in the morning, and, and then an hour at noon [BR: Uh huh.] and 15 in the evening. We really had a good time. We played, sometimes we played baseball and played base and, ah.

BR: And, all the children played, all different ages.

EB: They all played, uh huh.

BR: Ah, did you notice how maybe some of the older kids in the room would help the younger children? I've heard a lot of them say that in these one-room school situations when you got, maybe you had been in school a few more years, and they'd help the little ones ....

EB: Well, I don't remember about that. I, I remember about, ah, they called us up, you see, we had these long seats [BR: Uh huh.], and they'd call us up. Like we'd have, ah, second reader class. They'd call the second readers up there, and they'd go up and recite. [BR: Uh huh.] And, ah, I don't know; I enjoyed it.

BR: Yeah, it sounds like fun. It's probably a lot different than what our schools are today, isn't it?

EB: Oh, yes, different.

BR: Well, after you went to White Pilgrim then you told me you went to Little Oral School.

EB: Little Oral. [BR: Uh huh.] Little Oral. [BR: Uh huh.]  
Uh huh and, ah.

BR: Now, that was in Clay County, too, wasn't it?

EB: Yes.

BR: What was that a bigger school than the other one or just.

EB: No, same. We moved, ah, moved a little ways. [BR: Oh, your family did.] And, ah, I went to that school then for a few years and, ah, then we built, or Boyd did build that schoolhouse out on the hill, Mt. Union. [BR: Uh huh, uh huh.] And, I went out there then until I was about 17, then I went to Clay to high school [BR: Uh huh.] and got a teacher's certificate ....

BR: Well, that was quite, uh huh, that, that was quite a lot of schooling for you, wasn't it, to go that far? There probably weren't too many people that got to go that far in school were there or did most of the people ....

EB: Well, no, there wasn't very many, and I don't know how I ever did because I never did went to school everyday to a school in my life, and we only had six months.

BR: Oh, you just had school for six months a year.

EB: Six months, and, ah, I never got to go hardly any. When the bad weather, why, I didn't get to go 'til Mt. Union Schoolhouse was built [BR: Uh huh.]; and then we, I got, I went out there, of course.

BR: Well, you must have been pretty smart .... (laughter)

EB: I hope so.

BR: Well, then, you said that new schoolhouse was built, and then you got to start teaching. What was, you remember the name of the school where you taught?

EB: Mt. Union.

BR: Mt. Union was where you taught.

EB: The same school.

BR: Could you tell me what it was like when you were teaching in this school, ah, when you were teaching, ah, say reading? What kind of, ah, different levels did you have?

EB: We just had the, ah, first, second, and third. That's what I had. Then in the other room, they had fourth, fifth, and sixth.

BR: Uh huh. The students would just go from one level to the next.

EB: Uh huh, and, ah, well, he taught in the other room. They taught up to the eighth [BR: Uh huh.] and, ah, course I went there to school first, and, I had to take a test and get the eighth grade diploma. [BR: Oh, uh huh.] And, I got, got diploma and went to Clay to high school and took a teacher's course.

BR: Uh huh, that's probably equivalent to what we have college now, isn't it? Like when I had to go to school to study how to teach and things like that. Well, it would be about the same thing.

EB: I imagine [BR: Uh huh.], and, ah, then I got that eighth grade diploma and went to Clay and went to school about three months over there [BR: Uh huh.] and got, ah, we had to take a test, lasted two days. Called it the teacher's examination. [BR: Oh, my.] We'd sit there and write for about two days. [BR: Oh, my!] Then they graded them and sent them off to Charleston, I think, and graded them and send our grades back to us.

BR: Well, you must have done well on it, because they let you start teaching right then.

EB: Yeah, uh huh, I started teaching when I was 18.

BR: Oh, that's young. Were you married then? [EB: No, no.] When you started teaching were you still living at home?

EB: Uh huh, yes, I was at home.

BR: Uh huh, well, when you went to Clay, ah, to the high school, did you live close enough to it that you could just go?

EB: No, I had to go and pay my board. [BR: Oh, did you?] Paid, paid \$20 a month board (laughter). [BR: Oh, my.] And, I had to stay over there cause it was too far. There wasn't no buses [BR: Uh huh.] and no way to get there and back.

BR: Well, I thought about that. It would be difficult then. Well, I guess your parents encouraged you, didn't they? [EB: Well, they.] They must have wanted you to go on.

EB: They's pretty good.

BR: Uh huh, ah, how did, ah, well, I was going to ask you about the grades. Did you, did you send home report cards for the students?

EB: No, we didn't have any report cards. When we got ready to put them in another book, we just put them [BR: Uh huh.], put them in advance what they called advance books.

BR: Uh huh. How were the parents then? Did, ah, did you, ah, when you'd have trouble with a child, were you able to tell the parents that, ah, he was misbehaving in school or how did you handle it?

EB: No, we handled them with a hickory switch (laughter).

BR: That solved the problem.

EB: Oh, we didn't have no trouble with the parents or we didn't, ah.

BR: You didn't have a lot of parents complaining if you spanked them or anything?

EB: No, no, no they didn't complain about it. [BR: Uh huh.] It was pretty nice.

BR: Well, did they ever have any other activities in the school building other than teaching school? I've heard some people say that they, well, say meet at the school building. They could have a funeral in it or something like that. You told me that one time they had a, had the church service in the

school building.

EB: Uh huh. Did down at Little Oral, yeah. Had, ah, church in it, and sometimes, they'd, ah, church would, ah, school would be going on when they had church and then the church, school would just quit 'til the church was over and then take up school again.

BR: Oh, well, they didn't let the children stay in there? Did they send them out to play? What did they do?

EB: No, they stayed in, uh huh.

BR: Stayed in for the service. [EB: Yeah.] Uh huh. Well, probably the teacher, ah, must have, ah, cooperated then with the minister then.

EB: That's right they did. [BR: Uh huh.] They just, ah, stopped their school 'til church was over and then they'd start church again.

BR: Ah, did you all bring your lunch to school? Did you pack your lunch?

EB: Yes, always took our lunch.

BR: Uh huh, in the wintertime did you have school during the wintertime? You said six month ....

EB: Yes, yes, it was in the winter mostly. [BR: Uh huh.] Didn't begin late like in the fall. [BR: Uh huh.] It usually went out in February [BR: Oh.] around in there February, March.

BR: Well, then you had all those months. What did you do when you were home then? Did you get bored just, ah, being off?

EB: No, we worked (laughter).

BR: I thought that's what you were going to say. Well, tell me about that. What do you mean you worked?

EB: We hoed corn.

BR: You had to help in the garden.

- EB: Hoed, hoed in the corn field. [BR: Uh huh.] And, ah, then we, when corn was laid dry, we helped to can, can up the food that we would raise and gather in the garden. Dig the potatoes and help, ah, shuck the corn and all that.
- BR: I bet, ah, you must have had a lot of canning to do. [EB: We did, uh huh.] Then, you helped your mother with it. Did you have brothers and sisters?
- EB: I had three brothers and four sisters [BR: Oh.], and we all worked out in the corn field (laughs).
- BR: Uh huh, uh huh. I guess a lot, that's the way a lot of families did.
- EB: We had a good time though. [BR: You did? Uh huh.] We really enjoyed it.
- BR: Uh huh. Well, did you make things like apple butter and home made things like that?
- EB: Oh, yes. Mother always make lot of apple butter. I did, too, of course, but, ah, ah, the way they fixed their food back when I was little they dried most everything. Dried corn and, and peaches and apples, beans, and.
- BR: Then that would keep. They could keep it then and could cook it later.
- EB: Yes, they could keep it. They what they'd pickle lot of stuff, you know ....
- BR: How did they pickle. I've heard people talk about that, but I ....
- EB: They'd put, my mother had barrels. Some of them would hold 32 gallon and some of them 60 [BR: Uh huh.], and she would fill, ah, one of these barrels with pickled beans and one with cucumbers. [BR: Uh huh.] Make salt pickles [BR: Oh.], and, ah, kraut [BR: Uh huh.], and all different things. And, then she made her own soap.
- BR: Well, tell me about the kind of soap that your mother made. How did she make soap?



EB: She, ah, had a barrel, and she put ashes in this barrel. Ah, usually burnt hickory wood if they could get it, and they'd get these ashes and put them in this barrel and poured water in it [BR: Uh huh.] and let let that water run though these ashes and caught it in a container. She put that in an iron kittle and put, ah, grease that is, ah, meat scraps, old meat scraps [BR: Oh.] and things like that, ah, left after we killed our hogs. [BR: Uh huh.] She put that in that lye that she got off, scauled lye [BR: Uh huh.] and boiled it down and made soap and put. Then she had a barrel for that, too. She usually in the fall when they killed our hogs, she'd make up enough soap to fill up that barrel to last you all winter (laughs). [BR: Enough soap to last you all winter.] It was thin; it wasn't hard like the soap you make now with this kind of lye. [BR: Uh huh.]

BR: Well, it's, that's a little more difficult that buying it in the store, wasn't it?

EB: That's right. And, ah, she made hominy that way, too. [BR: Oh, uh huh.] I mean, she'd, ah, shell her up some good sound corn and, and take these ashes and this lye and put [BR: Uh huh.], put that corn in the lye. Let, let it cook a while and take the hull off the corn [BR: Uh huh.]; then she'd wash it. We'd have to carry water (laughter). She'd wash that, ah, corn and cook it a little longer and wash it again. Keep on, wash it several times to get that lye out, and then cooked it. Oh, it was good.

BR: Well, I bet it was. Ah, when you wanted to make bread, when she wanted to make bread and things like that, now, did she have her own meal and flour? Did you have to go to the mill and get it ground?

EB: Yes, she had her own. Ah, they took the corn to mill. [BR: Uh huh.] We had what they called a grist mill close to take the corn, but the wheat, they raised wheat, and they'd ship it. [BR: Oh, uh huh.] That is, up the river a ways to a flour mill to have it ground. They had their own, they raised their own meal and flour.

BR: Then, I guess they'd bring it back down on the boat. Is that what they'd do?

- EB: On the train.
- BR: On a train, uh huh.
- EB: And, ah, it was about six or eight miles to the depot, and Dad, he'd go and take a wagon and go get it and bring it home.
- BR: Uh huh. Well, ah, guess you didn't have cars then. Do you remember EB: Oh, no. the first time you saw cars?
- EB: The first, ah, the first car I can remember (inaudible) got it at Charleston and took it to Ivydale, and it took him about three days, I think, to get it home BR: Oh, my., and I rode in it. BR: Uh huh. That's the first one I ever saw, but I remember it.
- BR: Well, were the roads very good?
- EB: No, was no roads, couldn't get, we couldn't go over a half a mile because the roads weren't no good (laughter). Wasn't any roads then. I can remember when they made the first road in Clay County. The one over next to Clay, the hard road. BR: Uh huh. And, ah, they wasn't any, there wasn't no cars, and when we went, we either walked or rode a horse.
- BR: Rode a horse, why, ah, probably as a young girl then that was fun for you. Just you, you had to learn how to ride a horse then, but you probably enjoyed it, too.
- EB: Yes, yes, I did. BR: Uh huh. Well, ride a horse and go. Sometimes we'd ride a horse to church, but not when I was young because we enjoyed going maybe be 10 or 12, 15 or us gather up and go together, you know BR: And, just go for a walk., and go for two or three miles maybe. BR: Uh huh. We really had a lot of fun.
- BR: What kind of churches did they have? Did they have like, ah, Baptist church ....
- EB: Baptist and Methodist Churches was about all they had around there then round where I lived.
- BR: Uh huh. You said then finally they did build the church house itself instead of using the school.

EB: Yes, after they built the Mt. Union Schoolhouse they quit having church in the schoolhouse, and then they built a church. [BR: Uh huh.] It was the Little Oral Church.

BR: Well, you've taught Sunday School an awful lot. Did you teach Sunday School up there?

EB: Oh, yes, ever since I was about 16 [BR: Uh huh.]; I had Sunday School Class all the time.

BR: Uh huh. That was, ah, something you've carried through all your life, isn't it?

EB: Until the last few years. I've not taught any now fer last five or six years.

BR: Well, you deserve a rest (laughter). Well, you said you had some, ah, what three brothers.

EB: Three brothers and four sisters.

BR: Four sisters, uh huh. Were they, ah, younger, older than you? Were you the oldest in the family or.

EB: No, I had two, three sisters, I believe, and then a brother [BR: Uh huh.], and then me, and then two brothers, and a sister. [BR: Uh huh.] The youngest, the baby one was a girl.

BR: Uh huh. Ah, do you have you, ah, did everybody move out from Clay County? I know you moved to Kanawha County. Did a lot of your family move to different places or did most of them stay there.

EB: Ah, most of them stayed up there.

BR: Uh huh. Well.

EB: They, they're all, just one brother and two sisters living now.

BR: Oh, really, uh huh. Well, you probably enjoy seeing them then, don't you ....

EB: Yes, I sure do.

BR: Uh huh. Ah, do you still, ah, you still own a farm, don't you, in Clay County?

EB: No, no we sold it.

BR: Oh did you, uh huh. Well, the farm in Clay County is where you, ah, had your children, isn't it ....

EB: Yes, that's right, uh huh.

BR: Well, you married Mr. Barnes there. Was he also, ah, did he also, ah, ah, born in Clay County and lived there?

EB: Yeah, we lived adjoining farms when we was little.

BR: Oh, did you? You married the boy next door (laughter). Well, ah, you had how many children?

EB: Seven.

BR: You had seven children of your own.

EB: I've got, ah, four girls and three boys.

BR: Uh huh. It must have been different then when you were having your children. You couldn't go to the hospital, and did you have a midwife or someone to come?

EB: Yeah, midwife and some of them I had a doctor.

BR: Oh, did you, uh huh. Do you remember any of the doctors up there in Ivydale? I've, I've heard about one doctor that's supposed to be really good, but he's pretty old now, but, ah, I don't remember his name. [EB: Smith.] Maybe so, uh huh.

EB: Well, Dr. Nutter was at Ivydale. He was our main doctor. [BR: Uh huh.] I had Dr. Frank White. He don't even have a license, but I had him one time (laughs).

BR: Oh, really. Well, that's probably common. Was he a pretty good doctor, though, could he care for you?

EB: Yeah, he done pretty good, uh huh.

BR: Ah, probably some of the doctors had gone off to school, though, hadn't they?

EB: Yes. Dr. Nutter was a good doctor. Then, Dr. Smith at Clay was our doctor when we left up there.

BR: Uh huh. Well, ah, did Mr. Barnes, was did he farm, too? Is that EB: Yes, uh huh. when you two got married then you, ah EB: We farmed, uh huh., you farmed, uh huh. EB: 'Til we moved down here. Uh huh. Well, you spent most of your life then in Clay County, didn't you?

EB: That's right. I was about 50 when I left up there.

BR: Oh, you were? EB: Uh huh. Uh huh, well. See, you'd already had your children, and did they go to the schools in Clay County? EB: Yes. I guess the schools have changed quite a bit when your children went ....

EB: Some, yes, yes, they changed. They went to White Pilgrim mostly. BR: Oh, did they, uh huh. And, then they went to Clay to high school. BR: Uh huh, okay.

BR: Could you tell me about, ah, during the summertime when you were just a young girl what some of the things were that you did, ah, maybe for fun or for work.

EB: We went, ah, singing sometimes (inaudible) and sing and, ah, then we grape hunted.

BR: Now what would you do with this gin thing when you went for that?

EB: Oh, you could sell it ....

BR: Oh, you could sell it, uh huh. After you, ah, went out and picked these grapes, what did you do with them?

EB: We, my mother put them in a barrel and put molasses. She'd put a layer of grapes and a layer of molasses and then layer of grapes so on until she got the barrel almost full. That molasses preserved them. They was good to eat, so good.

BR: You'd just open up the barrel and get you a little bit every once in a while (laughter).

EB: We'd reach down in there and get us some to eat, and they's real good.

BR: Did she make, ah, jelly and preserves and things like that?

EB: Yes, she did, uh huh.

BR: Did you have other kinds of fruit, like did you have any fruit trees?

EB: Had a lot of peaches [BR: Peaches.], lot of peach trees [BR: Uh huh.], and some apple trees, and then we had a lot of walnuts. [BR: Oh.] We'd gather in a lot of walnuts [BR: Uh huh.] and, ah.

BR: Well, it sounds like, ah, people at that time didn't have to worry too much about, ah, food like we do now. We depend on going to the grocery store, ah.

EB: They had their own food. [BR: Uh huh.] Killed our own hogs and had the cows and chickens.

BR: You had your own meat, uh huh. So, food really was plentiful. You had, ah, what you could grow and what you could raise there. Well, did you have to go to the store to buy anything. Were there country stores, a general store or something like that?

EB: Ah, yes, we had to buy salt and sugar and coffee [BR: Oh, uh huh.] and things like that. And, ah, ah, ususally we saved eggs, had chickens and saved up eggs and carried them to the store, and they paid us so much for the eggs; and we bought groceries with that.

BR: Oh, just like trading really. You didn't have to have so much money if you could trade something. That's a good idea, ah.

EB: Ah, we popcorn was, ah [BR: Oh.], a big thing, too. We popped a lot of corn. We raised our own popcorn. [BR: Oh, you did?] We'd pop this corn and made taffy and put in it and make popcorn balls. [BR: Oh, that sounds.] That's what we usually had for Christmas.

BR: I thought, I thought that was a new idea (laughter). Oh, at Christmastime did you get to decorate your tree?

EB: We didn't have no Christmas Tree.

BR: You didn't have a tree, well, ah, I guess that's more of, ah, well.

EB: It's a later thing. I don't think we had Christmas Trees. I don't remember it back then.

BR: Uh huh, uh huh. But, you still celebrated Christmas.

EB: Oh, yes. I looked forward to Christmas.

BR: Uh huh. Did you exchange gifts at Christmastime? Did, ah ....

EB: Ah, no, we didn't usually have much gifts.

BR: Uh huh, uh huh. But, just, you probably had a lot to do.

EB: We enjoyed it though.

BR: Uh huh, uh huh. I don't that you wouldn't probably have to have the tree and all the gifts to enjoy Christmas.

EB: Just different than that what it is now.

BR: Uh huh, uh huh. Well, ah, you said that you, ah, put molasses in that barrel. What, what is that what you said? [EB: That's right.] Where did you get the molasses?

EB: Oh, we raised them, made, made 'em. My father made molasses. We raised the cane and then we'd have to go out and blade this cane and cut and run it through the cane mill. I used to stand and skim that pan and have to boil them down, you know, in a pan and keep the skimmins' off of 'em. [BR: Well.] And, he made molasses.

BR: I hadn't, I didn't realize that. Uh huh.

EB: We had our own molasses.

BR: Well, now, is that the same kind of molasses? What would you use them for? Could, what would you use molasses for? Could you use it for, ah, ah, syrup or something like that?

EB: Uh huh, just about like you do syrup. We used them.

BR: Over pancakes and things like that?  $\angle$ EB: Uh huh. $\angle$  Well, I hadn't thought about that. Then, ah, did you do a lot of these things yourself after, ah, you were married? Did you or did you all, ah, depend maybe on buying things like that at the store?

EB: No, we raised what we had, too, on up until we left the farm.  $\angle$ BR: Uh huh. $\angle$  Most of it.  $\angle$ BR: Uh huh. $\angle$  We raised wheat and corn and potatoes and then what you grow in the garden.

BR: Well, this really surprised me. I didn't realize you raised so many different things. That sounds like.

EB: Turnips, we raised a lot of turnips.

BR: Oh, my, well, did you have some kind of cellar or something like that?

EB: Yes, we had a cellar. Then we picked the apples and sometimes we dug a hole in the ground, put them in the ground, put some straw over them  $\angle$ BR: Uh huh. $\angle$  and covered them up and they'd  $\angle$ BR: They would keep  $\angle$ ?, they'd keep, and I don't know why they don't keep now like they did them. We would keep them all winter.

BR: Could you keep potatoes and things like that?

EB: Yes, uh huh, uh huh. Put them in the ground, too. Oh, we kept what we could in the cellar, but the cellar wasn't very big.

BR: Uh huh. What was the cellar? Was it a separate place or was it just under your house?

EB: It was separate.

BR: Oh, uh huh. Well, ah, you told me in the summertime sometimes you played ball games. Did, ah, all your brothers and sisters get together and play games like that?

EB: Yes, and other, the neighbors  $\angle$ BR: Oh. $\angle$  gather in together, and we just played ball.

BR: Did most people at that time have big families? You said you



had [EB: Uh huh.] well, you must have had eight in your family. [EB: Yeah.] And, ah, that seems like such a big family for today.

EB: Well, most everybody had big families [BR: They did then.] and then we'd get together. Especially on Sunday evenings and

BR: Would your families get together, you mean, maybe some other family would come over to your house. [EB: Uh huh, that's right.] Well, did you sing together and things like that? Did they ever ....

EB: We didn't sing much. We always played outside. [BR: Oh, uh huh.] Sometimes they'd sing.

BR: Uh huh. Ah, I guess that, ah, when you went to your church, you, you sang at church. Did they have any instruments? [EB: No.] Did they have piano or anything? [EB: No, just sung.] Uh, just everybody sing .... uh huh. Well, ah, you tell some funny things that seem strange to me, but your mother used to make, did you say vinegar jelly (laughter). I've never heard of vinegar jelly.

EB: And, egg butter.

BR: Egg butter, and there was something else. What was it?

EB: Pudding. [BR: Pudding, uh huh.] Take, ah, biscuits and break them up in bite sizes [BR: Uh huh.] put a pudding of some kind over it. I don't know how to do it. [BR: Uh huh.]

BR: So, you didn't, didn't learn how to make vinegar jelly (laughter).

EB: I'd like to know how.

BR: Yeah, you could, ah, well, like you said your daughter was interested in some things that you made, like how to make soap and things like that. So, I guess other people are interested in it. It must have been difficult for you. Ah, you had seven children and yet you were able to keep your house and do, ah, cooking and, ah, did you try to cook three meals a day for all these?

EB: I cooked three meals a day. Got up and got breakfast of a

morning, and then cooked at noon and evening, too. But, they didn't eat between meals like they do now. BR: Uh huh. Usually go out and play or whatever they done until I called them in to eat.

BR: Uh huh. Oh, I guess there were times that you would have to work out in the garden. EB: Yeah, that's right. Did your older daughters help you, ah, in the house then?

EB: Yes, yes, they helped in the house, uh huh.

BR: I guess they helped with the younger children, too. EB: They did. Uh huh. Well, that would be about the only way you could do it with, ah, seven or eight children and trying to cook all those meals and everything. Ah, let's see. Ah, could you tell me something about the kinds of clothes that you wore and other girls wore when they were in school when you were a young girl?

EB: Ah, we, my mother made our clothes and, ah, the, usually bought calico to make them, and it was about five or six cents a yard. BR: Five or six cents. It was narrow, you know, took about five or six yards to make a dress, and, ah, they made them long like.

BR: Uh huh. Probably much longer than they wear them today.

EB: And, we didn't have a lot of clothes; we had enough I guess.

BR: Did you, ah, what about shoes? Did you have a store or someplace close where you could buy shoes and things like that?

EB: Yes, we, we bought our shoes and, ah, usually had pair, wear a pair of overshoes cause the roads were always muddy and bad. BR: Uh huh. Snow got deep, and BR: Uh huh. we had to wade the snow BR: Uh huh., and we'd, ah.

BR: So, you'd generally walk to school. You, you didn't ride a horse or anything like that?

EB: No, we walked; we walked to school.

BR: How far was it, you have any idea, several miles.

EB: It was about, ah, two miles to one school, and then it was just about that far to White Pilgrim, I think, and then to Mt. Union it wasn't that far away.

BR: That's a long way to walk (laughter).

EB: We didn't mind it then.

BR: Did the mothers try to make clothes for the boys, too, ah.

EB: Yes, they made their shirts usually.

BR: Oh, uh huh. What amazes me is how people had time to do all those things I mean with such big families. Yet the women must have worked very hard.

EB: Seemed like we had more time. Could get more done then we do now. [BR: Maybe so.] Things are so much easier now.

BR: Uh huh. Ah, they did, they made so many things and cooked so much. It just seems like it would take you, you'd work all day (laughter).

EB: And, they had, ah, kerosene lamps [BR: Oh.] and, ah, didn't have very good light to see but.

BR: Uh huh. You probably had to do most of your work during, ah, the daytime [EB: That's right.] while there was sunlight. Ah, did you, did you have a sewing machine? [EB: Yes.] Did your mother have a sewing machine? [EB: Yes, she had a sewing machine.] Uh huh, well, that must have been pretty valuable then [EB: It was.] to have a machine. Was it a Singer machine (laughs)? I guess they made them.

EB: Her's wasn't Singer. Mine was, but I don't know what her's was.

BR: Uh huh, well, ah, I wanted to ask you about, you said you had kerosene lights. How did you, ah, heat your home? Did you have a fireplace or.

EB: Fireplace [BR: Uh huh.], burned wood [BR: Burned wood, uh huh, well.], wood in the cooking stove and [BR: Oh.], and the fireplace, too.

BR: So, you'd have to get up early and start the fire in the stove.  
[EB: That's right.] Oh, did your mother do any quilting?

EB: Yes, she quilted, pieced quilts.

BR: Seems like I remember you doing some quilting, too.

EB: I do a little bit, but I never did like she did.

BR: Uh huh. I bet she made some pretty things. Do you have any of the quilts? You don't have any.

EB: No, I don't have any that she had.

BR: Uh huh, well, that, ah, I bet that quilting must have taken a long time, too. Did they ever have Quilting Bees? A lot of people get together.

EB: Sometimes they did, uh huh.

BR: Uh huh. What, what would that be just lots of women come together and quilt.

EB: And quilt, quilt, uh huh. [BR: Uh huh.] But, I never did take part in that. I never did like to quilt.

BR: Uh huh, ah, you said you made clothes for your own children, too. Is that right?

EB: I did. One time during, ah, I don't know, during World War II I reckon. Everything was rationed. We couldn't get no print, couldn't get no cloth of any kind [BR: Uh huh.] hardly. Just made them out of any old clothes or anything we could get. I've, ah, took old coats and tear them up and take, turn them wrong side out, you know [BR: Uh huh.], and make my kids coats that way. [BR: Uh huh, well.] Couldn't get anything. I mean [BR: Uh huh.] had to have stamps, ration stamps.

BR: Uh huh. Well, ah, during the Depression was it difficult on you?

EB: It sure was.

BR: Uh huh. Well, you had your own food and things like that.

How, how was it the hardest on you do you remember?

EB: Clothes. Couldn't hardly get any clothes.

BR: Oh, uh huh, it would be. You couldn't even get material to make them ....

EB: No, you couldn't, huh uh.

BR: Uh huh, well, ah, we talked about when you were in school, and, ah, I'm sure you were a real good student but surely you got in trouble sometime, didn't you (laughter)? Can you tell me about that?

EB: Yes, I stayed out after a bell rung one time. Went out around the road and sit on a log to learn to crochet. This girl was teachin' us how, and we got back after school had been took up for a while. Thought we was going to have to stand on the floor. He had a rule that you had to stand on the floor if you was out so many minutes. But, he didn't make us stand on the floor. We was all almost grown.

BR: Maybe he felt sorry for you. Maybe you were the teacher's pet, and he didn't want to punish you (laughter).