

Marshall University

Marshall Digital Scholar

0064: Marshall University Oral History
Collection

Digitized Manuscript Collections

1973

Oral History Interview: Grace Effie Schiltz and Lenora Eloise Stewart

Grace Effie Schlitz

Follow this and additional works at: https://mds.marshall.edu/oral_history

Recommended Citation

Marshall University Special Collections, OH64-31, Huntington, WV.

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Digitized Manuscript Collections at Marshall Digital Scholar. It has been accepted for inclusion in 0064: Marshall University Oral History Collection by an authorized administrator of Marshall Digital Scholar. For more information, please contact zhangj@marshall.edu.



ORAL HISTORY

GIFT AND RELEASE AGREEMENT

I, Lenora E. Stewart, the undersigned, of
South Charleston, County of Kanawha, State
of West Virginia, grant, convey, and transfer to the James E.
Morrow Library Associates, a division of The Marshall University Foundation,
Inc., an educational and eleemosynary institution, all my right, title,
interest, and literary property rights in and to my testimony recorded on
April 6,, 1973, to be used for scholarly purposes, including
study and rights to reproduction.

S.E.S

initial

Open and usable after my review.

initial

Closed for a period of _____ years.

initial

Closed for my lifetime.

initial

Closed for my lifetime unless special permission
is gained from me or my assigns.

Date April 23, 1973

Lenora E. Stewart
(Signature - Interviewee)

235 1/2 3rd Avenue
Address

South Charleston, W. Va.

Date 4-23-73

Larry C. Stewart
(Signature - Witness)



ORAL HISTORY

GIFT AND RELEASE AGREEMENT

I, Grace E. Shiltz, the undersigned, of
South Charleston, County of Kanawha, State
of West Virginia, grant, convey, and transfer to the James E.
Morrow Library Associates, a division of The Marshall University Foundation,
Inc., an educational and eleemosynary institution, all my right, title,
interest, and literary property rights in and to my testimony recorded on
April 6, 19 73, to be used for scholarly purposes, including
study and rights to reproduction.

G.E.S.
initial

Open and usable after my review.

initial

Closed for a period of _____ years.

initial

Closed for my lifetime.

initial

Closed for my lifetime unless special permission
is gained from me or my assigns.

Date April 23-1973

Grace E. Shiltz
(Signature - Interviewee)

132 5th Avenue
Address

South Charleston, W. Va.

Date 4/23/73

Larry C. Stewart
(Signature - Witness)

GRACE EFFIE PRICE SHILTZ

Grace was born on December 22, 1894, in a small community called Lick Creek located in Boone County, West Virginia. She was one of ten children born to John Taylor Price (1850-1919) and Causby Ann Barker (1853-1946). Grace lived in this community with her family where she attended a one room school house, and completed eight grades

Grace married a local man, Pete Carson Burgess, in 1914 and they had five children. Grace and Pete lived in the community of Lick Creek until 1918 when they moved to South Charleston, West Virginia. In 1929 they moved their family back to Lick Creek where they purchased approximately a one hundred acre farm. Mr. Burgess was killed in a mining accident in 1933.

Grace later met and married Mr. William H. Stone in 1936. Grace and Mr. Stone lived on her farm until their divorce in 1945.

In 1946 Grace moved back to South Charleston where she later met and married Mr. Earl Shiltz in 1949. Mr. Shiltz died in 1968.

LENORA ELOISE BURGESS STEWART

Lenora was born on October 27, 1915 in the small community of Lick Creek, located in Boone County, West Virginia. She was one of five children born to Pete Carson Burgess and Grace Effie Price Burgess.

Lenora's family moved to South Charleston, West Virginia in 1918 where she attended elementary school and one year of junior high school. Her family moved back to Lick Creek in 1929 where she completed her education at Seft High School.

Lenora married Charles Harvey Stewart (1912-1972) in 1935. They lived on his parents farm with their three children until after his parents' death at which time they moved their family to South Charleston, West Virginia in 1951.

It should be noted that during the interview Mrs. Shiltz discusses the preservation of food during the period of her childhood while Mrs. Stewart discusses the methods used by her husband's parents to preserve food. Although the relationship of the two women (mother and daughter) cause occasional confusion of time and location during the interview, the discussion centers around how two farm families preserved their food sixty to eighty years ago. The distance between the two farms mentioned in the interview is approximately five miles.

(Larry) My name is Larry Stewart. I am interviewing my grandmother and mother from my grandmother's home located on 5th Avenue, in South Charleston, West Virginia. Ma Ma and mother I've heard both of you say many times that your family raised all of their food except sugar, coffee and salt. Now, I would like to ask you both some questions about how you raised and preserved your food. What animals did you raise for food?

(Grace) Hogs.

(Larry) Hogs, is that all? Just hogs?

(Grace) Chickens and turkeys, that's all we raised, because we didn't kill no beefs.

(Larry) How would you kill a hog? What was involved when you would butcher a hog?

(Grace) You want to tell that and I will go ahead and finish it.

(Eloise) Well, first of all we let our hogs, they would run loose, during the spring and summer, and they would feed on acorns and beechnuts. Then long in, we tried to kill our hogs around Thanksgiving, and about a couple months before, killing time, then we would put them up into a pin. And that's when we would really feed them the corn, all in the world they could eat, at one time. And then to a kill the hogs, I know it involved a couple days work. They would get these great big old barrels and tubs and they would carry in the wood for their fires, and they'd start at day break of the morning to build the fires. Have that water boiling hot. The tubs was for to scald the hogs with, and they usually shot the hogs, right between the eyes. They would have a very accurate man to do the shooting you know, where one shot would really do it, didn't they mother? And after the hog was dead, then they would put them in these great big old barrels of scalding water. And then they had some real clean boards that they had made, that would, the hog would go out on, out of this hot water. And then they had real sharp knives and they would start scraping those hogs.

(Grace) Boy, now that was a job!

(Eloise) Right.

(Grace) Oh, my.

(Eloise) But they would scrape them until all the hair would be off, and they would be just as white, the meat would be. And then they had made a scaffold. They had taken two poles, wouldn't they? And then they would have a pulley where they could pull that hog up. And then they would start cutting him open, you know, and taking all the insides out. And then they would rinse them with cold clear water, usually it came from the creeks, most of the time, didn't it? And they would take clean cloths and wash that hog. And they would usually let the body heat go out first, wouldn't they? And then they would take them and put them in this, we called it a smokehouse. And they had a great big old wooden table built in there and they would start salting that meat down.

(Grace) They had to cut it up first before they salted it.

(Eloise) Yes. We usually would, Mr. Stewart, why he would trim the meat, and we always saved the backbones and ribs, we called

them. And I never will forget, usually of the evenings, that would be our evening meal, we would have pork liver.

(Grace) Pork livers!

(Eloise) Smothered in onions. Now that would be our main dish for that evening, and we always looked forward to that!

(Larry) Now what did you hang in the smokehouse? You would hang the hams and sides of bacon. But you made sausage I know.

(Eloise) Where they would trim the meat, why we would make, grind it up for sausage.

(Grace) See they don't do that now, Larry. They don't, make no sausage, have no backbones anymore, do they?

(Eloise) No.

(Grace) And you see you don't get all that there lean meat from that backbone and ribs for to make your sausage like they did then. They don't do that anymore.

(Larry) Right, right. Well, you couldn't preserve the sausage though, could you? You would just make it.....

(Eloise) No, we just didn't make up to much at one time, because it wouldn't keep.

(Grace) No.

(Eloise) But it was made out of pure lean meat off of the hog. Always seasoned it with sage, and salt.

(Grace) Boy, it was delicious.

(Eloise) Sure made good redeye gravy!

(Grace) Certainly did!

(Larry) What about headcheese and souse? First of all, what is headcheese?

(Grace) That is made out of the head and feet, wasn't it?

(Eloise) Yes, you would clean that head.....

(Grace) They used to pickle the feet! Did you all ever pickle the feet?

(Eloise) No.

(Grace) My daddy, they, we never did either.

(Eloise) No, we never did either. They would clean the ears, scrape those real clean, and use..... They would cook that head till all the meat fell off of it and then they would chop up the ears real fine with a real sharp knife, and that (meat) would go in there. And salt and pepper is about all the seasoning I knew that they used. But we would pack it in these, we called them crocks, but they were these earthen jars. And we would pack that headcheese down in there. And when that would..... There was something in that head, I don't know what it was, that would jell that. And you could take and slice it just like you would a slice of cheese.

(Grace) Yes.

(Eloise) It was delicious.

(Larry) So this process would preserve the meat, right?

(Eloise) Right. We use to.....

(Larry) How long would it stay preserved?

(Eloise) Oh, headcheese would keep until you ate it all. We didn't make too much. I would say, according to how large the hogs head was, you know, how much it would make.

(Grace) We never did make no headcheese.

(Eloise) They didn't like it.

(Larry) What about souse? Is that.....

(Grace) It's called the same isn't it, Eloise?

(Larry) Headcheese and souse same thing.

(Grace) We called it souse, old timers did. But now they call it headcheese. Ain't that right?

(Eloise) But, we ate it, most of the time, we would pour vinegar over it.

(Larry) I see, I see. Well, I know you raised all of your vegetables. Now I will name some of the more common vegetables that I am familiar with and maybe you can explain how you use to preserve them. Of course the first vegetable that comes to my mind is the potato. Now, how did you preserve your potatoes?

(Grace) Now, I told you that!

(Larry) Yea, I know, but tell me again!

(Grace) Well, in the beginning, of course in later years dad used another method, but we always holed them up in the ground.

(Larry) Ok.

(Grace) Take and scoup out the dirt and put the hay or grass in the hole then pile your potatoes on it and then covered it with hay, and then piled the dirt on it. And that away, in cold weather, when it would be freezing, I'll tell you, it was a job going out there trying to get potatoes out of that hole.

(Larry) I'll bet.

(Eloise) Out of the freezing ground anyhow!

(Larry) Would they keep all year like this?

(Grace) Oh, yes, and in Spring come when you'd open up that there hole, now this is the truth, I have seen great big sprouts of potatoes about that long (indicated two feet).

(Eloise) And that's how we got our seed potatoes. They would pick out the most perfect potato and we would use it for planting time, the next year.

(Grace) Yes, that's right!

(Eloise) And we did cabbage the same way. Although, you don't trim the cabbage, we would just pull it up stock and all.

(Grace) That's the way we did.

(Eloise) And we would use the same method, I mean like you would with the potato. Dig your hole and put your straw in it and cover it over. They never would freeze either. But what we didn't want to hole up and use, well then we would make kraut out of the rest of it.

(Larry) How would you make your kraut?

(Grace) Well, we would take and get our cabbage and trim all the bad leaves off, and then we would take and wash our cabbage, and cut them so that the stock would come out, you wouldn't want to chop up that stock. Of course we always peeled the stalk and put in with our kraut, and boys it was good! And we would take and have a great big table, we didn't have no regular kraut cutter, then. We take and pile our cabbage on this table and we'd take a can, just like you would say, like you would you get corn in.

(Larry) A tin can .

(Grace) A tin can. But then when you would cut the top off it was right sharp, just sharp as could be! And you just take and chop that cabbage just like that, till it was just fine as you wanted it and then you would pack it down in your barrel or your jar or whatever you was going to put it in.

(Larry) I see.

(Grace) And then, then we would peel our stalks and put them in with it. It was real good!

(Larry) And you would put these into some type of jar or stone crock of some type?

(Grace) We most always made it in a barrel.

(Larry) In a barrel!

(Grace) In a barrel! It taken a barrel! There was a big family of us.

(Larry) Ok. And what would you put in there? Salt or vinegar or what?

(Grace) No, we would always, we would always, now say we would get a big pan full ready for to put in the barrel, it already be chopped, you know. We take and salt it just the way we thought it should be. You didn't put too much salt on it because I don't think it's good where you salt it too much. And we would just pack it down in there and just take and put a weight on it and boy, it wasn't no time until that brine would come over it, and boy, it sure was good!

(Eloise) Fine and salty!

(Larry) Where would you store this? Would you set it around in the house?

(Grace) No, Dad had a place where he kept his meat, and one side of it he'd fix especially for that.

(Larry) Ok, this was in the smokehuse?

(Grace) Yes, one side he had for his meat and the other side he had for his kraut, beans and molasses. We always had big barrels of molasses made.

(Larry) You did. How did you make molasses?

(Grace) Well, of course you would have to plant your cain seed, and its got to be hoed, so many times, then. And then you take and, after, before time to for make molasses in the Fall of the year, you had to go over and strip all of the blades clear up to the top.

(Larry) Off of the cain?

(Grace) Off of the cain. And then it was cut down and it was topped. And then it was hauled to the cain mill and then it was fed into this mill and when the juice came out, that's what made your molasses. Of course, you had one of these here evaporators, you know. They taken and strain this juice, and then they..... Oh, it was great long..... Have you ever seen one Larry?

(Larry) Occassionally, along the side of the road, years ago, but, I can't remember it.

(Grace) They had departments in it, and you fill that, you had a barrel up over this evaporator, that's what it was called.

(Larry) Ok.

(Grace) And there was kind of a funnel like fixed in that, that this juice would come out in this evaporator, and it would fill that pan and when it started boiling..... Well, the man that made the molasses, well, there was about two of them, one would skim and the other would take and fix for the molasses, you know. He knowed how to do it and all. I'll tell you it was a job, fed that old cain into that mill days in and days out.

(Larry) And so you would build a fire under this evaporator and then it (juice) would flow from one compartment to the next.

Is that right?

(Grace) And you had to kept that there fire going too. Because you couldn't let it die down, because see that away it would stop your juice from boiling.

(Larry) How did they know when it was just at the right consistency or how did they know when the cain syrup finally turned into molasses?

(Grace) Well, I think they knew the way, whenever, a certain way it boiled, I think that is the way they tested it. I'm almost sure that was the way.

(Eloise) When it would go into that first compartment, Larry, it would be green, wouldn't it?

(Grace) Oh, yea! It was all green.

(Eloise) The first was green.

(Grace) Because the juice was green.

(Eloise) And then that would boil and then a man had a scoop of a, with a, looked like a hoe, but it was made out of wood.

(Grace) It looked like a flyswater, made out of wire. That is what he skimmed it with, you see, taken all that skimm off and put it in that skimming hole.

(Eloise) Yes, but he would take this paddle mother, and he would stir it up in there and he would run, and when it got a certain stage, he would run it into the next compartment, just kept on until. I thought maybe they would go by the colors of it, because the colors would vary. But what was the purpose in the horse, mother?

(Grace) That ground that cain.

(Larry) That worked the mill, in other words. Right. Ok.

(Grace) Yes, you see the mill that ground the cain was out from where the evaporator was were they made the molasses. And see this horse would go around and around day in and day out.

(Eloise) Larry, when you were real small you use to ride that horse all day long, when we would have the mill to come into our farm.

(Larry) Oh, you mean they would have, say one person who would travel around throughout the community.

(Eloise) Right. We had a man that he was called.....

(Grace) "Molasse" Will Barker, is what made our molasses, all the time. He was good.

(Eloise) He was an expert at it.

(Larry) Was he a local person?

(Grace) He was my cousin.

(Larry) Your cousin.

(Grace) Will Barker.

(Larry) Ok. In other words, he was a farmer, but he would do this every. What? Fall. Would you do this in the Fall of the year?

(Grace) He would go different places that wanted him.

(Larry) I see.

(Grace) Of course, my dad always got him, because he could made the best molasses.

(Larry) Well, would he get paid in money?

(Grace) Oh, yes! They paid him so much an hour.

(Larry) Did you just make the molasses for your own use or did you sell them?

(Grace) Well, lots of times we sold a lot of them.

(Larry) You did.

(Grace) But most always we kept most of them.

(Larry) Do you remember what you use to sell a quart of molasses for?

(Grace) No, I don't know.

(Eloise) But we would use molasses Larry, for so many purposes. We would make gingerbread and molasses cookies and we did quite a bit of baking with it.

(Grace) Well listen, at breakfast that's all we ate was molasses and biscuits and butter. That's the finest meal you ever ate.

(Larry) You use to whip the molasses didn't you? I've heard people talk about whipped molasses. Now, I've never tasted whipped molasses.

(Eloise) Well, we would, after these molasses, some of them would be so thick. Wouldn't they mother? That you couldn't get them out of the molasses barrel, we called it.

(Grace) You know, I seen my mother have to take a hatchet and chop them out of the barrel, now that's the truth if ever I've told it. You couldn't get them out no other way.

(Eloise) We would put them in a saucepan and put them on the back of the stove and let them get hot. And then we would have, when you would pour them out on your plate, they would be hot, thin then. Put a great big old pad of country butter in them and hot biscuits, boy, they were really good.

(Larry) But what do they mean by whipped molasses? I've heard a friend of mine talk about.....

(Grace) I think you put soda in them.

(Larry) Soda in them, right. That whips them up.

(Grace) That makes them foam. I've seen it done.

(Larry) Ok. You didn't particularly eat them that way? Right.

(Grace) No.

(Eloise) Well now, children would be coming around those mills, mother, and they would make little, well they would get ~~cain~~ cane sticks or something and eat that foam off of the molasses.

(Grace) Oh, yes! Listen ain't nothing any better!- Why, and dad would make us paddles. All the kids, you know, would come around after school was out. There would be the awfulest gang

you ever seen. And he would make paddles, little paddles, you know, and we would just stand around that molasses thing and just eat them foams. Oh, it was good! But Lord we would be sick afterwards.

(Eloise) But those who didn't raise too much ^{cane} ~~cain~~, Larry. Some people raised one or two acres, you know. But some that just had a small field of cain, they would bring it into this mill, because this mill was huge, and you had to have a large place to put it. They would haul that in there.

(Larry) Oh, I see, Ok. You mean one farmer would have the man who made the molasses come around to his farm and in the immediate area the small farmers, or people who didn't have a large crop would bring it (cain) in there.

(Grace) But if they didn't want to move this cain mill to this little place where they had such a small batch of cain. Well they would come to another place, haul it in, you know, and grind it up.

(Eloise) They would haul it in on these homemade sleds. The farmers would make them, and they would have their horses hitched to them.

(Larry) Did most people grow cain for molasses? Just about everyone, you can remember. Right?

(Eloise) Right.

(Grace) But dad always raised more than anybody I know of around there.

(Eloise) But like you say, you all had a big family.

(Grace) We had a lot of ground there.

(Eloise) Some people use it as sweetening you know, if they would run out of sugar.

(Grace) Sure.

(Eloise) They had to.

(Larry) I know you raised corn. How did you preserve your corn?

(Grace) Well, dad always taken and a.... He had two great big corn cribs, we called them. Now I don't know what they would call them, now. I don't think anybody raise that much now. But anyway, he would put his corn that he wanted, his good corn, that he wanted to have for to grind for meal. Thats the way we made our meal.

(Larry) Right.

(Grace) And he would put that in a crib to itself and it was great big old white ears. But the other corn, would be yellow corn and red and just kindly, you know, different sizes in another crib for to feed the horses and cattle and things like that.

(Larry) Well now, I've tasted your good cornbread and you have brought up an interesting point. Your cornbread is always the white cornbread, so you made it from the white meal.

(Grace) From the white corn.

(Larry) Why is that? You just didn't like the yellow corn meal.

(Grace) Well, I don't recon it was that, but maybe dad just always saved the corn specially for meal out of white corn. And he kept all of the yellow corn, it was as good as the white

you ever seen. And he would make paddles, little paddles, you know, and we would just stand around that molasses thing and just eat them foams. Oh, it was good! But Lord we would be sick afterwards.

(Eloise) But those who didn't raise too much cain, Larry. Some people raised one or two acres, you know. But some that just had a small field of cain, they would bring it into this mill, because this mill was huge, and you had to have a large place to put it. They would haul that in there.

(Larry) Oh, I see, Ok. You mean one farmer would have the man who made the molasses come around to his farm and in the immediate area the small farmers, or people who didn't have a large crop would bring it (cain) in there.

(Grace) But if they didn't want to move this cain mill to this little place where they had such a small batch of cain. Well they would come to another place, haul it in, you know, and grind it up.

(Eloise) They would haul it in on these homemade sleds. The farmers would make them, and they would have their horses hitched to them.

(Larry) Did most people grow cain for molasses? Just about everyone, you can remember. Right?

(Eloise) Right.

(Grace) But dad always raised more than anybody I know of around there.

(Eloise) But like you say, you all had a big family.

(Grace) We had a lot of ground there.

(Eloise) Some people use it as sweetening you know, if they would run out of sugar.

(Grace) Sure.

(Eloise) They had to.

(Larry) I know you raised corn. How did you preserve your corn?

(Grace) Well, dad always taken and a.... He had two great big corn cribs, we called them. Now I don't know what they would call them, now. I don't think anybody raise that much now. But anyway, he would put his corn that he wanted, his good corn, that he wanted to have for to grind for meal. Thats the way we made our meal.

(Larry) Right.

(Grace) And he would put that in a crib to itself and it was great big old white ears. But the other corn, would be yellow corn and red and just kindly, you know, different sizes in another crib for to feed the horses and cattle and things like that.

(Larry) Well now, I've tasted your good cornbread and you have brought up an interesting point. Your cornbread is always the white cornbread, so you made it from the white meal.

(Grace) From the white corn.

(Larry) Why is that? You just didn't like the yellow corn meal.

(Grace) Well, I don't recon it was that, but maybe dad just always saved the corn specially for meal out of white corn.

And he kept all of the yellow corn, it was as good as the white

there was no difference, but he kept that mostly for the horses because it was softer. Did you know that?

(Larry) No I didn't.

(Grace) It is, it's softer than the white corn.

(Larry) I see, I see.

(Eloise) We would feed the chickens. Larry, have you ever heard of cracklin cornbread? Do you know what it is made out of?

(Larry) No, no.

(Eloise) When we would, from this bacon, you know, we left the skin on the bacon after we would kill our hogs. Then we would take that bacon skins and put them in the oven until they became real crisp. And then when you would mix up your cornbread, why they would crumble that cracklings up in there and bake it.

And thats what we called cracklin bread.

(Larry) I bet that was good!

(Grace) It was real good.

(Larry) How about popcorn? Did you raise popcorn?

(Grace) Yea, we always raised popcorn.

(Larry) How did you get the seed from corn? Did you do that the same way you did potatoes? You would always select the best ears and save them.

(Grace) Yes, that is the way we always did.

(Eloise) Now, popcorn is very small ears of corn. Isn't it mother?

(Grace) Oh, yea. We always taken that. The way we kept our popcorn. We had a two story house over there and we had a porch the length of it up stairs and down stairs, the length of the house. We always would take and string this popcorn, tie it on a string and hang it up out there on that porch.

(Eloise) We would let it dry.

(Grace) It would get just as dry as could be, then it was ready to pop.

(Larry) How about.....

(Grace) That's the way we did beans too, you know it?

(Larry) Your talking about leather britches.

(Grace) Leather britches, that's the way we did it!

(Larry) You mean you would just string the beans up and let them dry?

(Grace) On a string. I have set days in and days out stringing beans on a string.

(Eloise) You would use these great big darning needles and the coarses thread, and if we could find twine we would use twine. Try to put it in the center of the bean where they wouldn't drop off. And when those beans got as dry as they could get.

(Grace) And crisp.

(Eloise) And crisp. Then we would pack them in bags.....

(Grace) To keep the bugs out.

(Eloise) And tie them up real good, and we would usually hang ours up where, you know, the bugs and things couldn't get to them. And then we would soak those beans overnight, till then the next day they would plump up and we always cooked them with

great big pieces of cornbread.

(Grace) With a big hunk of cornbread and onion, there was nothing not better!

(Larry) Your talking about the whole bean, not the shelled bean. Your talking about the whole bean?

(Grace) The whole bean.

(Larry) Wouldn't that be tough? I mean.....

(Grace) No, it wouldn't be tough.

(Larry) Well did you.....

(Grace) Did you never eat no leather britches?

(Larry) I don't remember. I don't remember ever eating any.

(Grace) Lord I'd love to have a mess right now!

(Larry) How about pickling corn? I know dad use to love pickled corn. Did you all make much of that?

(Grace) We didn't. I don't know about Eloise.

(Eloise) Well, yes, but it would. I don't care for it either, but they would pickle it. They would leave it whole on the ear and it went through practically same process as you would be to make kraut, only you would take it out of there and you would have to soak it awhile. Then they would cut it off of the cob and then would usually fry it in a great big old iron skillet' in bacon drippings.

(Grace) Was it good?

(Eloise) I didn't like it. But there wasn't no reason why the rest of them didn't. But now, I liked the pickled beans! I love those!

(Grace) Oh yea, that was good.

(Larry) Ok.

(Grace) You would fix that just about, you know, about the same as you would kraut. You would just take, well you would pick your beans, bring them in and string them good enough so there wouldn't be no strings left on them. Take and break them all up and wash them good, put them on. You didn't cook them very long, did you? You didn't cook them very long. Just enough to turn their color. You know how beans will do when you first put them on to cook, they kind of turn their color. Then you taken them out and put them down in your jar and salted them. That's what made your pickled beans.

(Larry) How about hominy? Did you make that?

(Eloise) Oh, yes!

(Grace) Yea, we made hominy.

(Larry) How would you make that?

(Eloise) Well, you used the best corn. Didn't you mother? We always used white corn, and you would shell it.

(Grace) Yea, we never did see no yellow hominy.

(Eloise) Oh, I have, but it was usually white corn. Now they used lye in that to..... Was that to bleach it, Mother?

(Grace) Yea!

(Eloise) I know they usually made it on the outside. They would build a great big fires and make it. But I can't remember what process they would go through a making hominy.

(Grace) Now lets see. Well, see, you had to, when you shelled this corn it got kind of a husk on it. See you had to process

it till that there kind of a hull of a skin come off. Then that left it just as white as it could be.

(Eloise) Well, I do know that you put lye in it.

(Grace) Yea, you have to, yea, but see....

(Eloise) Is that what bleached it?

(Grace) Yea. But then after it was cooked so long, why you would have to wash and wash it to get all that, that there husk or what ever you called it off of that there corn.

(Larry) And then what would you do? Just can it. Put it in jars.

(Grace) No, we just put it in jars.

(Larry) In jars. Ok. Right.

(Grace) Of course, they can everything now.

(Eloise) Getting back to hogs, Larry. When we, that how we trimmed all our meat after it had curred and salted down. We trimmed all the fat and that's how we made lard. I have stood day in and day out making lard.

(Grace) Oh that's a stinking odor, too, I didn't like it!

(Eloise) But we would do it in the oven. We would take, well, sometimes we take some of that skin and use it for crackling bread. But then you would have to strain it, we always did, and we had these tin lard cans, we called them, held about twenty-five or thirty pound. We would strain that lard in that, and it would set and you talk about pretty. It never did get hard, it would have just a soft consistency to it.

(Larry) Where did you keep that? I mean.....

(Eloise) Well, usually we kept it down in the cellar where it would stay cool. But we would render, we always called it render, enough lard to do us until next hog killing time.

(Grace) Well, Mother always made more than that. She always made hers outside, in great big kettles, Lord yea.

(Eloise) Well it taken more for you all than it did us.

SIDE TWO

(Larry) Mother, you mentioned a cellar. Now I know that was the farm's refrigerator, really. How was that made?

(Eloise) It was always built close to the house, Larry. And, it was, you could make it as large as you wanted it. And it was dug down into the ground. It was usually six or seven feet tall, but it was dug down into the ground and then it was, and you would take two by fours and you would build a wooden frame around the inside of that dirt, that was dug out. And then there was shelves put all the way around those, well, there would be three walls, that would have shelves in it. And then they left the dirt floor. But then we would have great big stones that you could step on to go down in there and that, and then the roof of it would be made out of rafters, just like you would build a house. Covered with. What do you call it, roofing?

(Larry) Well, now, this was dug out of, or dug into a side of a bank, right?

(Eloise) Most of the time, yes.

(Larry) And, so when you say it was seven or eight foot tall, you mean it was just dug into the bank and it was about seven or eight foot deep. You know, the high point on the bank. Right?

(Grace) Ours wasn't made like that.

(Larry) How was yours made Ma Ma?

(Grace) Well, how big would say this kitchen is?

(Larry) Oh, I would say it is about ten by twelve (feet).

(Grace) Well, I believe, now, dad taken and dug his cellar underneath of his house.

(Larry) Is that right?

(Grace) Our house. And oh, I knowed it was, it was larger than this kitchen, or maybe about the size of it. But, anyway, when he walled it all up in the inside with rock and, well cemented the rocks all together you know, not like, well I don't know what you call it. Mud or something he fixed up, you know. Fixed all between these rocks clear up to the, the ceiling you know. And the dirt, the floor, he didn't do nothing to that floor, he just laying it like it was. And then he made steps, it was about four or five steps from that cellar up to the top. And then he made a real heavy door, you couldn't hardly open it, he had to kind of double line it on account of, to make it keep stuff. And then he would put shelves all around in there. And then we would put all of our can stuff and that's where my mother kept her milk. Now like when you would milk a cow this morning, and she'd take and fix the milk in a container and put it down in that cellar, and it would be just as cold as if it just come out of the icebox.

(Larry) You mean it would stay real cool in the summer?

(Grace) Yea, just as cool as could be. And see that dirt floor is one thing that kept it cool, I think. And our canned stuff, we put all of our canned berries and our canned beans and everything, applebutter and everything down in there.

(Larry) You say this was built under the house?

(Grace) Under the house, Un hum!

(Larry) Did you have an entrance that you could get into the cellar from the house, or did you go on the outside?

(Grace) No, no we had to go on the outside.

(Larry) Would water collect in these cellars.

(Grace) No it never did in our cellar.

(Eloise) And Larry, those dirt floors would be just as hard as a concrete floor. Now I have been into them, but ours wasn't made like that. Now the door to that would be stanting. Wouldn't it mother? It would have to be.

(Grace) It was slanted from the main house down this away (60 degree angle). It had to on account of the rain.

(Eloise) And you would have to pull it back, and then go down those steps.

(Grace) It was all I could do to lift that door.

(Larry) Well now, what would you store in your cellars? You would store your can goods and your milk and butter and, you

know, parishable, highly parishable things. Is there anything else you would store in there?

(Eloise) After our meat was curried, our hams and bacons. We would always, when the Spring of the year would come and begin to get warm weather, then we would have to put our meat down in the cellar.

(Larry) Ok, you would bring the meat out of the smokehouse, and then put it in the cellar.

(Eloise) Yes. Because your meat would get too hot and too warm, you know, in the smokehouse. And then you would have to bring it down and put it into the cellar. But mother was talking about the milk. It would be so cold that you would take, we would skimm back the cream, we always saved our cream, for to churn. That's how we got our butter.

(Larry) Right.

(Eloise) Whenever, well sometimes, we would use the cream for coffee, but not too often.

(Larry) Ok, ok. Would you.... Did you make any cheeses, by any chance?

(Eloise) No, no we didn't.

(Larry) Did..... Ma Ma, can you ever remember anyone that you knew of, when you were growing up, that made any cheeses at all?

(Grace) I can't remember anyone.

(Larry) No one. Ok. Well, Mother. The canned goods..... How did you can something?

(Eloise) Oh my goodness Larry! We would raise..... I have picked beans all day long, carrying by the bushel-fulls to the house. Set up about half the night. Wouldn't you mother?

(Grace) Yes.

(Eloise) String and breaken beans.

(Grace) Or else we would have a bean stringing.

(Eloise) Right. But first of all we would wash all of our jars. Get all those ready. And we always, after we washed them real good, we always put them on a table, on the outside and turn them upside and let the sun hit on them all day long. Wouldn't we?

(Grace) Yea.

(Eloise) Then the next day we would go out and pick our beans, carry them in and set way up in the night and string and break those beans. Get up the next morning and wash them real good, pack them in those jars. And we had these great big old black tubs, that we always used for that purpose. We usually canned them in half gallon jars. Didn't we? We very soldom used a quart jar. And pack them in those great big tubs. Fill the tubs with cold water up to the top of the (jar) lids. Start your fire and we would let them cook about twelve hours. Wouldn't we?

(Grace) Yea.

(Eloise) But when the water would start evaporating, then we would have to keep kettles of hot water, carrying from the kitchen, out to these great big old tubs, and you always had

to keep the water up to the tops of those lids. And then you would let your fire dye down, when your beans were done.

(Grace) They cooked about five hours, about five hours.

(Eloise) And then we would take them out of there, and let them cool and then tighten the lids on them. And usually the next day we would carry them down to the cellar. We would can we would think nothing unless we canned thirty and forty gallons of beans, maybe more than that.

(Larry) And these, these would stay preserved for, you know, sometime. Right?

(Grace) Oh, yea.

(Eloise) As long as you didn't touch the lid Larry, you could keep them two or three years, without any spoilage at all.

(Larry) Well you use to can about all types of vegetables? Then, right? I mean tomatoes?

(Eloise) We canned tomatoes. You would take those, we always picked the firm; slected the best tomatoes. And they would go through a hot water bath, we would call them. Had boiling kettles of water. And have those tomatoes washed real good and I had a wire basket that I would place my tomatoes in, dip them down in this hot water and when that skin would start to peel on the tomato, then you would take them out of there and you would skin that skin off of your tomato. And I always just quartered mine. And start packing them in your quart jars. And we would do bushels at a time. Wouldn't we mother? We would can, do our beets the same way. Can our beets.

(Grace) Apples.

(Eloise) There wasn't nothing that we didn't raise that we didn't can.

(Grace) We canned apples.

(Larry) Would you can meats? Any meat at all?

(Grace) We never did.

(Larry) You never did?

(Eloise) But I have Larry. I have canned sausage.

(Larry) You canned sausage.

(Eloise) We would fry them, Larry, until they would be done, and then I always packed them in quart jars. And you take the hot grease, where you had fryed your sausage, let it come up over your sausage cakes, and that preserved it.

(Grace) Preserved them. See that would form like a lard, on the top. Wouldn't it?

(Eloise) You would seal up your jars and open them up the next morning and they would just come right out of there. And all you would have to do is to reheat them. But they were delicious.

(Larry) Yea, I've heard that tomatoes were first grown only as an ornamental plant and the fruit was not eaten. Is this true? Have you ever heard that Ma Ma?

(Grace) Yea. When I, listen now, this was when I was at home. You see dad, he didn't like, well I don't know whether we knowed what a tomato was, hardly. He didn't like tomatoes. And he wouldn't put out over about two or three plants, and they was just mostly kept for ornament. They never ate them.

(Larry) Did the people consider them to be poison or.....

(Grace) No, I don't, I don't know but I know none of them at home never ate them.

(Larry) But later ~~people~~ ^{on}, I mean people started eating tomatoes. Right?

(Grace) Yea. I know later on, me and my brother, George, is the only one that ate tomatoes in our family.

(Larry) Ok.

(Grace) When we was grown up.

(Eloise) My great grandmother, Price, lived to be 90, what, mother?

(Grace) Almost 93.

(Eloise) And she never tasted a tomato in her life, she never would eat them.

(Grace) No.

(Larry) Ma Ma I know, I know you would make cornbread. What about, oh, just plain white bread, you know, light bread. Did you raise wheat to get your flour?

(Grace) Well I just can remember one time, but oh, I must have been awful little, that dad raised wheat.

(Larry) Ok.

(Grace) And he, but I just can remember. I must have been awful small, this here, oh, we called it a thrashing machine, I recon that's what you'd call it, coming up in the hollow there. And I don't know how far up they went, I can't remember that, but anyway, they thrashed this wheat. Well, and then, dad had to take this, what ever it was, I don't know what it was, Larry, but he had to take that to Charleston.

(Larry) You had to take the grain to Charleston. Right?

(Grace) Yea, I guess that's what it was.

(Larry) And have it ground into flour?

(Grace) Yes, un um, ground into flour, and the flour was awfully dark. It wasn't pretty and white like it is now, because see....

(Larry) They bleach it now.

(Grace) Yea, un um, well then they didn't know how to bleach it. But see, that was the closest place he could go to get it, to get it ground into wheat, was at Charleston. I can just, can remember that.

(Larry) Ok, ok.

(Eloise) I know mother and them has made light bread.

(Grace) Oh, yea.

(Eloise) Did you all have yeast?

(Grace) Yea, but I don't know where the yeast come from, but we did have yeast.

(Larry) You did?

(Grace) Yea.

(Eloise) But you would spend days just making light bread.

(Grace) Yea, yea. We'd make so much of it.

(Larry) I see.

(Eloise) But now, Larry, we never did. Your grandmother Stewart, she always made sour dough bread.

(Larry) How would you make sour dough bread?

(Eloise) Well, you would have to start it. And it would ferment,

same as your yeast would, same process.

(Larry) Ferment from what? I mean.....

(Eloise) She would start it with buttermilk.

(Larry) Oh, I see.

(Eloise) And she had, she called it her sour dough pitcher.

And she would make her bread and what she had left over she would put that left over dough down in this jar, and pour buttermilk over it. The next morning when she would go to make her biscuits, she would always get some of that sour dough and mix in with her bread that she was making that morning. And then when she had left over, anytime she had any left over dough, it went back in that sour dough pitcher.

(Larry) Ok.

(Grace) And I seen my mother make corn, sour dough of cornbread like that, and it would make, she would make sweet cornbread.

You talk about something real good, it's sweet cornbread.

(Larry) How is that different?

(Grace) I don't really know how she made it. But I know she made it with the sour dough, like she was talking about.

(Larry) Ok. I can remember the old, apples trees, on the farm, the orchards, they use to have. How would you preserve apples?

And what types of dishes would you make from apples?

(Eloise) Well, we always would have an early apple. We would use that for to, we always had fried apples for breakfast.

(Larry) Every, every meal almost? Every breakfast. Every breakfast?

(Eloise) Every breakfast. And they were, well, and they were called an early June apples. And we never peeled them, we always would fry them in bacon drippings just with the peeling on them. But we never did have too many of those early June apples. And then we would have another apple that would come in where we would use for canning purposes. And then we, Mr. Stewart always had, he called, a winter apple. But we would, he would store and keep all winter long.

(Larry) You mean for eating purposes?

(Eloise) Right, right. But the way he did his was to, he had great big barrels, and he would go out, in the Fall of the year, before, sometimes the frost would be on the ground. And he would bring in those apples and they would be real hard and firm. And we would wrap each individual apple in a newspaper and pack them in these barrels. We always kept them, not where they would freeze, but well, we had an upstairs, a room that we didn't use, and we'd keep those barrels of apples up there. We had apples all winter.

(Grace) My dad made him an apple house. He called it the apple house. It was a pretty good size, well, I don't where's that size, couldn't tell you how big it was, but it was a pretty good size. He'd taken and dug out by the side of a hill like, he dug a great big place out. Then he taken and lined this with some kind of a heavy wood, or planks or whatever you want to call it. Real heavy, real thick, it was. And then he taken put, and put another, well he left a space about like that (indicated one foot), well I guess between this plank and the other one, and then we filled that with sawdust, just tamped it

down in there real good. And then the cover, he made the, the, the roof the same way, he filled it with sawdust. He made a double roof, you know, to put the sawdust in between it, and the door was the same way. And he made bins in there, great big things that he would keep his apples in. And most of the time he kept potatoes that he didn't want to hole up, he would put them in there and they would keep all Winter, come Spring.

(Larry) And that's..... He would store some potatoes in there with the apples?

(Grace) Un, um.

(Larry) And thats the only vegetables you would store in there, apples and potatoes?

(Grace) Yea, un um.

(Larry) Ok. How about applebutter. Did you make applebutter?

(Eloise) Oh, goodness yes! Well, that was a couple of days work Larry. You would have to pick your apples, bring them in, wash them. We had a apple peeler, but I don't know exactly, I can't remember now what it did look like. But it was similar to what we call a vegetable peeler. But we would peel our apples, one would do that, the other would core and the other would quarter them. And we had a brass lined kettle, and we called it the applebutter kettle. Sometimes it would hold, about what mother, fifty pounds of apples or maybe more than that?

(Grace) Well, you could make about twenty-five gallons of applebutter in it.

(Eloise) But you would a..... It would take equal amounts of sugar. Wouldn't it?

(Grace) Yea.

(Eloise) And you started with very small amount of water in the bottom of your kettle, wouldn't you? And then, we had a applebutter stirrer. Was a great big, well it would be at least...

(Grace) It was as long as a broom handle.

(Eloise) Right. And it had a long handle on it and I know that the paddle part of it had holes in it. And from the very beginning that you'd put that apple and sugar down in your applebutter kettle you had to start stirring. And when those apples, you would want to use an apple that would cook up real fast and quick. And then you would just keep adding your apples and sugar until you got your kettle real full. Then you'd stand there and you'd, well we'd take turns about stiring. Wouldn't we? Because, you couldn't have your fire too high, or your apples would scorch. So it kept you busy stiring all day long. And oh, that hot fire, and the yellow jackets, It was something! Well we would cook that applebutter all day long and the longer it cooks, it would start popping. And that stuff would just pop all over the place, and you would burn your arms. I've seen my arms blistered as far up as your dress sleeve came, you know. And then, you, we would always add cinnamon, oil of cinnamon. Wasn't it? It came as a liquid, and it would be real thick and real red. You would take it (applebutter) out of there and then while it was hot, you would can it.

(Larry) You would put it in jars, then. Right?

(Eloise) In glass jars, yes. We would usually make two or three makings. Oh yes, we have to.

(Larry) How about cider? Did you make cider?

(Eloise) I've helped my daddy make cider and mother too.

(Larry) Ma Ma tell me how you used to make cider.

(Grace) Well, we just, I recon, your dad (her husband) made a cider press. He just made it out of, oh, some kind of wood. Oh, I don't know what kind of wood it was. But it was just so high, just about, well, I'd say about four feet. Wouldn't it be? And it was as big around as a barrel, but it was square like. And we'd gather up our apples, wash them good. We'd have to pick, so there wouldn't be no rotten places in them, you know. You'd have to pick your apples, and then put them in that there barrel, and then we had a press of some kind that would just mash down on them, you know, press all that juice. They would have to be real soft apples to do this, in this kind of a press. And we'd have a funnel in the barrel so the juice would run out into a pan or something, kettle or something. And that would, soon as it was made, that's called sweet cider. But after it sets three or four days, it was called hard cider. It would kindly make you tipsy.

(Larry) You made both kinds then. You made the sweet and hard cider. Right?

(Grace) Yea. Yea, you see the longer it set the harder it would get.

(Larry) Did most of the people make cider? I mean almost everyone?

(Grace) Yea, all of them did. And then, after it got several days hard, you'd put it in a barrel or something and it would make vinegar.

(Larry) You made your own vinegar?

(Grace) Oh, yea. Best vinegar you ever tasted!

(Larry) You'd just put the cider in a barrel, and just.....

(Grace) It would form something, like, you'd call it a "mother". That's what they called it. Now I don't know, what did it look like?

(Eloise) Well.

(Grace) What did it look like? That's what I want to know.

(Eloise) It's similar to the way yeast would look in, when you would put it in warm water, mother. It kindly would foam. You would have to strain that off there.

(Grace) It would be something simular just like jelly or something. Wouldn't it? It would be kindly be something like that, you couldn't hardly lift it because it would scoot out of your hand or whatever you was going to hold it in.

(Larry) Ok. You'd just put this cider in a barrel. Right?

(Grace) Yea.

(Larry) Then it would....

(Grace) It would form this "mother".

(Larry) Ok. And then when you'd get this, I guess it would be a kind of fungus type growth on the cider, you knew it (cider) was vinegar. And then what would you do? Would you take it out

of the barrel and can it?

(Grace) No, just leave it in the barrel.

(Larry) Just leave it in the barrel. Ok. Very good. What other fruits, besides apples?

(Grace) Well, we didn't have, we didn't grow very many peaches, because it seemed like they didn't do no good. We had some pears, but we did have a lot of grapes.

(Larry) Grapes. Right. And you'd make jellies and....

(Grace) Jellies and preserves and make grapebutter. It was made something on the order of applebutter, only you didn't have to cook it outside.

(Larry) Ok. Right. Well. What about the wild nuts in the forest. Did you ever use those, like the old chestnut and walnuts and things like that?

(Grace) Yes, we used to gather them all the time.

(Larry) And you would use those in your cooking and stuff.

(Eloise) Yes! Oh my goodness. We used to go gather walnuts, hull them, and have that old walnut stain. It would take you all winter long to get it off of your hands. But we'd take and store those. We usually stored those in the loft in the barn. Of the nights we'd be sitting down around the fire, we'd go down and get a great big pan of walnuts, and bring them up. We had these old flat irons, we called them, and get a hammer and thats what we'd crack our walnuts. Set there and eat them. Sometimes we would put butter on them and put them into the oven.

(Grace) But why is it that people that day and time didn't care whether they got fat or not? Was they ever fat?

(Eloise) No. You worked too hard to get fat!

(Grace) I recon that was the right. We'd gather hickory nuts too, Larry.

(Larry) Ok.

(Eloise) Well we didn't use walnuts too much in baking, we'd just kept those as eating purposes, but now we would use the hickory nuts in baking.

(Larry) Oh. Ok. Well, I see that the time is up on the tape. And Ma Ma I want to thank you. And Mother I want to thank you. It's been fun. I've enjoyed it.

(Grace) I've enjoyed it.

(Larry) Ok. Fine.