

Wayne D. and Lela Belle Clapp

Oral History Interview for the Marshall Public Library

Interviewed by Lelah Pancake

I am interviewing, with their permission and the library asking me to, I am interviewing Wayne and Lela Clapp who live out near Clarksville. And it is my pleasure to interview them this afternoon. It's such a beautiful afternoon and we are having fun visiting as well as this interview.

LP: So my first question to them is: Wayne, when and where were you born?

WC: Two miles south of the B. B. Crossroads 1924 the 26th day of February. So that makes me going to be seventy seven one of these days. And the doctor come and stayed two days to get me here. And uh...

LP: Well, you're pretty important then.

WC: That's right. And my grandmother said there wasn't any doubt in their mind my neck wouldn't be broke because they had the forceps on me. And I had forceps marks on my back of my head and under my chin for six months. So that's where I come into this world. The B. B. Crossroads and where you turn north there. And that's the B. B. Crossroads down there.

LP: I knew that would be. And Lela, where were you?

LC: I was born two miles north of Urbana, Illinois, and there is a story about when I was born, too. My dad... It was like three o'clock in the morning, and my dad had to get up and, of course, go get the doctor, and when he got up and got out the horses were out. So then he went back in to get my aunt that was staying there, and when they came out he stumbled over the wagon my little brother and sister had left out. But they finally got the horses in. They went to get the doctor, but I got there before the doctor did. And that was three o'clock in the morning on July 12, 1929.

LP: So your birthday is in July and his is in February. You're soon going to be celebrating, aren't you?

WC: Yeah, and this July 24 will be our fiftieth wedding anniversary.

LP: Is that right? You know, it's not going to be too long until we have our sixtieth.

WC: Mom, Why don't you move up a little closer?

LP: She's got an awfully soft voice, I know. When and where were you married? Either one of you may answer.

WC: The church at Clarksville; the Baptist Church at Clarksville.

LC: And still going to church there.

WC: Yes, I've went there all my life, and a little bit before.

LP: That's interesting. And in what year?

WC: When we was married? 1951, June the 24th.

LP: So, then the next question I do not need to ask, because I already know. You have lived here all of your live in this community.

WC: A half of a mile south of the B. B. Crossroads and up here in two mile of where we are now. This is my Grandfather Clapp's place. And dad lived here and then in '55, I guess we moved up here, didn't we mom? No, '59; in 1959 we moved here from the B.B. Crossroads, right?

LP: And you moved down here in '51 then when you were married?

LC: No, When I was five years old was when my parents moved down here. And we lived over about three miles from here.

WC: Yeah, from here.

LC: And it's across from the Shiloh Church. The Shiloh Church is gone now, but the Shiloh Cemetery is still there.

LP: I know where that is.

LC: It's on the Bluegrass Road.

LP: Did you have brothers and sisters?

LC: Yes, there were nine of us all together; six girls and three boys.

LP: Your brother has... runs the insurance here in town. Somebody told me that was your brother.

LC: Yes

LP: How about you; do you have brothers and sisters? An only child; he was important, wasn't he?

WC: That's right. When I got here they didn't want to try for no more.

LP: Well, that's wonderful, but he missed out on something, didn't he, by not having brothers and sisters? You missed out on a lot. I can tell you a little about my family when we're through. Go ahead...

LC: Could I go back and correct when he said we moved up in 1959?

LP: Sure.

WC: Here, from down at the crossroads.

LC: Now are you talking about... No, no. See, Angela would have only been five years old – or four years old. It was about 1989.

WC: OK, all right, I've got you.

LC: Somewhere in there.

LP: All right. What was your neighborhood like at that time? About the same as it is now?

WC: No, there's about three houses gone from here to the B. B. Crossroads. That's a span of two miles. Now it's the same right in here for a mile – half a mile, but go east. Now Tom Murphy and Sally live down here on top of the hill and east. Now that's all about the same only some different buildings. But this outside the house – this is pretty much like it was. Grandpa Clapp had that barn built and the old corn crib out there. Now my dad was very sentimental and he didn't want things changed too much, so that's... and I...

LP: Sounds like my dad. He was...

WC: Me and Dad got along pretty good, and one of the neighbors commented one time he didn't know how that me and my dad got along so good and him and his dad didn't get along very well. And I said, well, I thought Dad had experienced it – went through it – and so experience is a pretty good teacher. But no...when you get to the B. B. Crossroads and start towards town... My land, it's just... Lord, they was mud holes down here that you couldn't get through in 1951. Between the B. B. Crossroads and Clarksville? You had to go in a tractor and wagon and stuff like that.

LP: So, this was a dirt road then at that time?

WC: Gravel, yeah.

LP: Gravel road.

WC: They used to go through when it would freeze.

WC: Yeah, right down the road here half a mile was a strip where they corduroyed. They cut poles and put them across the road. And then I can remember people coming up from the south at the B. B. Crossroads down here and going to Clarksville to get groceries, and they heard them talking over the telephone, and they said, "Well, we'll take two teams and sleds and some scoop shovels and if we get stuck we can scoop out." And about half a mile east of the crossroads down here they run into that situation. They had to scoop them a path out it was so deep.

LP: I bet that was a party-line telephone, too, wasn't it?

WC: Oh, yes. Clarksville.

LP: Clarksville party-line telephone.

LC: And another difference besides the roads was our schools. 'Cause we walked to school and we went to a one-room school. And I lived the next road over so I went to West Liberty. He lived down here at the cross roads and he went to East Liberty. They were both one-room schoolhouses.

LP: It was strange at that time how they had the line, wasn't it?

WC: Yep.

LP: Because there was a railroad track. All my friends and cousins lived on one side of the railroad track and I lived on the other, and I was the only one who had to go to another school. They got to go to the one I wanted to go to. But that was right. They had their lines set and they kept – they stuck to their guns on it, too.

WC: And then about... Before you got to Clarksville by a half a mile or better that you went... There was another school district line and you went to Clarksville. And then about a half a mile south of this Westfield-Marshall blacktop there was another line and you went to Greenmoss. There's a crossroads down there...

LP: So, Greenmoss was south?

WC: Yeah, yeah. There's a Greenmoss Church down here – building's still there and the graveyard – and then the school was further on down. It was on down south where Helen Schwartz used to live. I think Helen taught there the first year when her and Elmer were married. And that was back a long time ago.

LP: Well, I'm sure you people are such nice people and I'm sure you had some very nice neighbors. Nice people always have nice neighbors. Did you have anybody really special to you – one of your neighbors that was really special to you?

LC: Well, we did. We neighbored with the Glen Thompson family. And they... I still hear from their daughter that was close to my age. She lives in Saintsville, Georgia. And every year at Christmas time we still send back and forth – letters.

LP: Well, that's nice. How about you? Did you have a... Go ahead, I don't want to interrupt.

LC: I was going to say then, well, we used to have neighborhood get-togethers in the whole neighborhood. Somebody would have it at their house, and we'd all go in, and we'd have chili or something like that, or in the summer homemade ice cream. And, I mean, they weren't big houses, but everybody went.

LP: Did everybody contribute to what they were fixing to eat? That's what we...

LC: Yes. Everyone would bring something, you know. And, you know, I kind of miss that. This neighborhood – well, we used to have them but we really don't now.

LP: I love that. We did, too. And what was your favorite neighbor? Somebody you... I know you had lots of good neighbors, but somebody that was really your favorite.

WC: Well, I grew up down at the crossroads, down at the B. B. Crossroads. And George Murphy's folks lived right across the road from us. They was another house down there. And I was kind of ornery when I was little and I would run off and go over to their house just across the road. You see? And then later on in life, why they moved down about Pleasant Grove School south east of Clarksville. That's where Harry and Mabel lived, George's folks, and then later on they came back out here where George and Jean lives today, right there by Stine Seed. And that's their son's seed house. And, uh, me and George always kind of run together – not really, but we did – because he went to high school and I never. When I got out of eighth grade and lived at the B. B. Crossroads dad asked me if I wanted to go to high school. And I didn't particularly think too much of school at that time. And he said... I had to go to Clarksville to get a ride to Marshall to high school. And he said, "Now if you want to go I'll try to get you over there of a morning and get you home at night." And he said, "If you don't, why, it's up to you." And he said, "If you don't, why maybe we can save that hundred and make a hundred." In 1939 you figured it cost a hundred dollars to send a kid [?] to high school. Well, I chose not to go and if I'd ever got hurt I would have been up the crick, you see, because I couldn't have got a job without a high school education. But, I've jumped over the clods ever since. I've farmed all of my life, and we've got a little terra firma, and a place to live and a roof over our head and we don't owe any body. I owe one insurance company a bill the first of February, but then... That's just the way the cookie crumbled.

LP: That sounds familiar to my husband. I can tell you a little about him later. And you've already told me where you went to school. Did you have any memories of your education you would like to share, Lela?

LC: Well, I don't know any particular... I mean, I always liked school. And, uh...

LP: You went to Marshall High?

LC: No, I went to Westfield High School.

LP: Westfield?

LC: Yes. And then I got – I was the valedictorian in my class and then I went to Southern and got my teaching degree. But in grade school I was the only one in my class almost the whole eight years. There would be somebody in there for a little bit and then they'd move away. So I said being the only one in your class, you ought to know all of the answers. You know. It wasn't too bad. I mean, you had friends in the other grades and we all played together whether there was anybody in your class or not.

LP: The one room school wasn't all that bad because you learned from each other, and the younger ones learned from the older. I thought they were... I went to one room schools and I can see many advantages.

WC: There you'd sit there and listened to the other kids recite.

LP: Right, and watch it on the board how they were doing and figure out what they were doing. I thought it had it's good points, and I wouldn't want to send a child there this day and age, but back then it was great.

WC: I had three teachers in eight years. My uncle was my teacher the first three years. 'Course he didn't spoil me, I don't think. Everybody else did, but ... And then I had one in the forth grade and then I had the same teacher the last four – Mrs. Swartz that I was telling you about - Helen. And, uh, you would learn.

LP: Well, so many of us wouldn't be around here doing the things we're doing if we hadn't learned something, would we?

WC: No, no, no...

LP: Okay. Now, we are going to get off of education now. Where, and what kind of entertainment, and what was your dating like when you went together?

LC: I was going to say he says we didn't date very much because I was down at Southern and he was up here. So we dated really for two years, but he says it's less than that because we didn't see each other much.

WC: I think it was in the – probably – July or August – the first date I had with her. And it was at West Liberty School. The neighbor right north of us had a party there, and me and another fellow had went to Marshall one night. And I mad the comment in town that I... I said, "Let's go out to that party. I'm going to take that Ewbank girl home." So there

we went, and he went along, and, by George, I got to take her home. And I brought him... He was working for George Murphy down here at the time – or George’s dad – and I took him home and then I took Lela home and I got a date with her for Sunday night, I guess – the following Sunday. And don’t you know, between then and now – then – that day and Sunday night I run a big honey locust thorn in one of my big toes on my right toe a getting grandma’s old sows in out of the crick. So it was sore, and I got me an old pair of Sunday shoes and I cut the toe out of it, and had a pair of... I put a Rockford sock on that foot, and I went to get her on my first date. We went over to Clarksville to church. And I asked her, “Now which would be the most noticeable, for me to go in in my sock foot or go in with that shoe with the toe cut out?” And I don’t remember, I think you said go in with my sock foot. Well, whatever she said, I done the opposite, and set in the back seat on the right side. And we got through church, and I took her home, and then I’d a-reckon I got a date for another week. But anyhow, that started it. And it wasn’t too long then till school, and so she had to go to Southern to school. Well, I contend we went together about six months.

LC: We really didn’t see each other that much.

WC: That’s it, but it was over a period of about two years, because we got married the twenty-fourth day of June in 1951, yeah, and so that was about right. That’s the way it was, and I never dated hardly anybody before and...

LP: I bet there were curfew times for you though, weren’t there – times you had to be in?

LC: Well, there were, but by that time I was a junior in college and you know...

LP: You were in college.

WC: When I’d walk out that back door right there and go to town, Mom would say, “Now, you behave yourself. And watch the railroad.” if I was going to Marshall. And be careful, or something, and she always told me those three things.

LP: That was your last minute instructions.

WC: That’s right, yeah.

LP: Okay, now just for now, even, what are your – Lela – what are your favorite pastimes and leisure. What do you like to do? What’s your hobbies?

LC: Crossword puzzles, and I like to embroidery, and I like to walk in the woods and read good books. And I think that’s probably what I really like to do.

LP: Do you like to mushroom hunt or anything like that in the spring?

LC: Yeah, but I don't find them cause I watch for snakes. He sees the mushrooms, but I like to go.

WC: Well she finds some.

LC: I do find them once in a while.

LP: I like to go. That's the reason I asked you that. Alright, now this is for either one of you and I'll find out from both of your families. What was cooking and preparing meals like then – back when you were younger?

WC: Go ahead.

LC: At home? Well, at home we didn't have electricity, and we never had electricity until after I had left home, really. I was down in school – at college – when we got...

LP: Now this is down at Carbondale, isn't it - Southern?

LC: Right. So I...

WC: '49 is when we got our electricity.

LC: So at home I had no... I mean when I was at home as a child – so – and with a family of eleven we did a lot of gardening, we did a lot of berry picking, we did a lot of collecting nuts, and like this. And we didn't buy much of anything only staples and that was always at Clarksville Store. We had cows we had to milk night and morning. We had pigs. We had chickens. So we cooked and did everything from scratch, and uh... but we children had to help weed, help hoe, and help milk and do all this. But we made fun out of our work. We made it fun and...

LP: That's the same way. Your life sounds so much like mine does. We did the same thing. My mother canned so much and you know – everything.

WC: Now she would milk three five gallon buckets of milk night and morning.

LP: Now I tried, but I never was good at that.

LC: We had to do that before we went to school. Plus we didn't have... When I went to high school I had to drive to high school because we didn't have busses. So we had to do the chores before we went and also of a night. You know we had to do that before we went in.

LP: ...fixed at that time. I know we couldn't just go out to the store every little whip stitch and get whatever we wanted for dinner. You cooked what you had on hand. Can you think of a favorite that you loved when you were coming home – you loved to smell that your mother was cooking?

LC: Oh, yes. Yeast donuts. You'd come home and she'd have some of those made and just come in the door; and she made really delicious ones. And that's one of the favorites. And also she made cinnamon rolls. And sometimes I'd think "Now donuts are my favorite." And then she'd have cinnamon rolls and then I'd think "No, cinnamon rolls are my favorite." So I never could really decide. They were both good, really good. And she did a lot of things that was good. And like just every day meals – we had a lot of potatoes with the jackets on and things like that – which I love those, and anything out of the garden: green beans, tomatoes, and all that. In fact, I don't know too many things I don't like.

LP: I've always... I used to have a recipe for donuts and I told my grand daughter I'd love to make some when the snow was on, but I don't have my recipe any more. I don't know what happened to it. So what about you? What was your favorite food to come home and have your mother cooking?

WC: Well, I'd eat about anything up to a point, and – I don't know, she – Mom was an awfully good potato fryer. And of course we just lived on gravy and hog meat and... We didn't have any beef, because Dad had to raise what few calves we had to pay the taxes and stuff, he thought. And – but we had pork. And Mom was - made awfully good gravy and she was a good cook at this point, whatever she made. And she - we didn't have more then than we do now of desserts. But she was a awful good angel food cake baker. We had the reunion here one time. The fellows here said "I wished I had to eat my way home from Terre Haute through that cake like that." Mom would eat...

LP: Well that was kind of a talent to be able to make a good angel food cake.

WC: Oh, yes. But she was terribly strict. I mean she didn't fool with anything very long. She'd get it to suit her. But she was a good mother – yeah, whatever she cooked - and she knowed how to fry chicken. She told Mom one time now when you fry chicken, that's what you do. You stand there and you fry chicken, and you turn it, and you look at it, and you fondle it. Boy she's the splitting image of Mom frying chicken.

LP: And what was your – what were your parents' names?

WC: Emil and Grace.

LP: Emil and Grace?

WC: Clapp. And this is where Dad was born and raised right there – right over the... Well he wasn't born here he was born over here a couple of – or a half or three quarters of a mile. But he grew up back there in a log house on west of the creek. But this was where he... Talk about Grandpa Clapp, he was pretty stern, but he had three brothers – Dad did. Glen was one of them - was a school teacher. That's Audrey Lycan's dad. And then the younger one – Homer – when they slept upstairs and he'd come to the stair door in there and open the door and clear his throat and if he didn't hear some feet hit the

ground – floor – why after a bit here he'd come upstairs. And Dad said every once in a while he'd have the buggy whip in his hand. And he said now you didn't want to tangle with the tassel on that buggy whip. So when you heard Grandpa start up the stairs you hit the floor running.

LP: You knew it was time. It was time.

WC: You can't do that now.

LP: Right. So what were your parents' names?

LC: Lloyd and Lela Ewbank. And my Dad was born up by Farmers City. My mother was born over in Vigo County, Indiana.

LP: So you're named after your mother, then.

LC: Yeah.

WC: Yeah. That's where Angie got her birthday – or, name.

LP: And what's Angie's name, then?

WC and LC: Lela Angela.

LP: I didn't know that; because that is kind of a rare name. Not too many people have that.

WC: She didn't like it.

LP: I always thought it was interesting because Wayne and Lela – you know since I married a Wayne. So I know then that, Lela, your job career was school teacher and yours was farming.

WP: That's right.

LP: I have that already on record. Now if I were asking you today... now this can be local, national, or world-wide – you can give just a little thought. What historical event stands out in your mind more than anything else that has happened during your...?

WC: Well. I can remember back in FDR times, and that was hard times. And I can remember when – I don't remember what I was a-doin' - when President Kennedy got shot. And Lela was teaching school down here at North Center, I think, at that time. But I suppose those were two of the high points because I remember when Roosevelt got in they closed the banks, you know, and got things stabilized, and then started in again. And

that seemed like that's what it took. So that's... things proceeded. Some people say well, not too well. But then it was...

LP: Well he kind of turned things around.

WC: Yeah, you couldn't get a hold of any money. Now some people could. But out here, I mean, when you went to the store in Clarksville on Saturday night in the thirties and the forties – early forties – you would take some eggs. And if you had half a can of cream you would take that and they would separate that cream, and give you credit for what cream you had. And you would – they would candle the eggs and case them and then they'd write that down on a due bill. And you'd get credit for that and then you'd trade that out for the groceries. And then if you had any money coming, you'd get that. And if you didn't why you could either pay the rest of your bill or they'd write it on a due bill and put it back in a holder.

LP: I thought that cream... I can remember back taking buckets of cream from my mother. And somewhere that I can remember they had testing weights – that they tested to see what...

WC: Yeah, they put it in a thing and turned it...

LP: ...to see if you had good cream or not.

WC: Yeah, and it would separate or it would do something and tell you what grade cream you had. I want to tell a little story that happened north of Clarksville one time.

LP: All right.

WC: This involves Agnes Miller - Staub – Miller, or whatever it is now. But she - her mother had sent her to Clarksville with one of her brothers or sisters with a little basket of eggs to get some groceries – at Clarksville. And she got right north of Clarksville about a quarter of a mile and she fell down or something and she spilled her eggs. And at that time that would be right south of Rosabell Walters. A family by the name of John [?] Graham lived there. And they didn't have any children. So Mrs. Graham came out and seen what predicament Agnes was in and she took those broken eggs and said "Now I can use those eggs to make a cake." And she give Agnes good eggs for those broken eggs, and Agnes told somebody that Mrs. Graham always had a very warm spot in her heart – for bailing her out. You see, she was in trouble.

LP: That was really a generous act though, wasn't it?

WC: Yeah. She said "I can use those broken eggs. I can bake a cake or something out of those."

LP: That is wonderful. I'm glad you told us that story.

WC: That's right. Well, and now they were just like all the rest of us. They didn't have the eggs to spare. And they needed a few groceries or some bread or something like that or whatever and... But anyhow, she bailed her out and got her going.

LP: And what time in history stands out most in your mind, Lela?

LC: I think when Kennedy got shot was one of them. And then another thing I remember in... when I was in grade school and in our science book they talked about that there was no way that anybody could ever get to the moon. Because by the time that they got there – as many years that it would take – they'd already be dead. [?] Well, it happened and at that time they had no idea that anybody could travel at that speed. They were going at the speed they could go then which wasn't very fast. It would take too many years.

LP: When they went I was a doubting Thomas. I didn't believe it until I...I just didn't believe they could get there.

WC: That's another thing that impressed us about Kennedy. We got to tour that site on a bus trip and they stopped there. And now I think things were pretty somber. We come down around there the way the motorcade was going and we stopped just about on the site and looked up there at that window where that fellow was standing when he shot him at the book depository and...

LP: And I'm sure that you're the same as we were. You saw the man that shot him – you saw him shot on television. Almost everybody did because it was on a Sunday.

WC: Yeah, yeah. And then I think another thing since we got on this subject. The thing that impressed me was in that Iraq war. A shooting them missals there and putting them around them smokestacks. And she's got a nephew that was trained to do things like that – one of her sister's boys. And he spent several times going over to Kuwait; and he said if he was there two weeks he wasn't worth killing. It was so hot. But he was in the Air Force and that's one thing that he was involved in – the accuracy, you see.

LP: For us to see all that on television, too. That just was something.

WC: That boggled your mind, or did mine.

LP: And that Bernie Shaw when they were giving the news that night – and he was talking about it the other day on television, too. Well I have one more question and it entails a lot, but not really, either. One of the... There's been a lot of progress made in our - and we're just all about the same age, cause I'm just right in your category there, too – and so, I just turned 75 in August.

WC: That's not anything to look forward to but we've got to go through it.

LP: Yeah. What conveniences – now thinking of your whole family - what conveniences were enjoyed by your family the most – such as telephone, phonograph, toilet, or railroad, or so forth? What kind of a convenience was...?

LC: I don't know. I suppose it's the fact of having electricity because I grew up without any electricity at all and there's so many different things that you can use since electricity has come along. But as far as – I don't know – I enjoy an inside bathroom a lot more than the outhouse. But I don't know if that would... I don't know really what...

LP: Well, there's just so many good things and it's just like if our lights go off for thirty minutes we're all just kind of frantic. You go around and forget and turn on a light and it doesn't come on. You know we're so used to it.

LC: We've got some kerosene lamps so, you know, I think I could even go with that for a while, but like if the electricity goes off there's your freezer, there's your refrigerator.

LP: Usually your furnace, too.

LC: In fact that – now like that real cold weather, the pipes could freeze because you don't have the heat on those. And so...

WC: Well it's different here. You see our plumbing, a lot of it, is in the walls. Where if you got a house with a basement in it your plumbing is all downstairs.

LP: I don't have a basement.

WC: And that makes a whale of a difference. But ...

LC: And we could... We have an outside pump, but it doesn't work now. But we could get water; I mean you know, if electricity was off. We can't now cause it doesn't work.

WC: Well this – it's just because I don't have the strength to get it done with. I mean it takes – needs some work done on the cylinder down in the well.

LP: What about...? Do you think electricity is about your...?

WC: Yeah, I'd think so. And since we've moved up here and we had this new garage built out here. There was a old - Grandpa Clapp's old wood house sat right in there. We had that built, this garage, and it held some of our wood. We miss our old wood heat. We've had that fireplace – gas furnace there for two years. Now that done all right last year when the electricity went off. That sucker burnt – burnt and burnt and burnt – till it tripped it. It turned it off. But this is on the lighter side. The thing that me and Mom liked, after we got the garage and everything, is the electric garage door opener.

LP: Wonderful. Just wonderful.

WC: That's right. Push the button when we drive in the gate and... We're awful sad about losing our big white oak out here.

LP: Yeah, I saw that was down.

WC: That's way over a hundred years old, I imagine.

LP: Did the storm hit it or something?

WC: It split it in the top. It was still standing until this morning.

LP: Oh, really.

WC: Yeah, the Edgar Electric come down here – Enerstar – and cut it. They trimmed it and took it...

LP: You're going to miss that so much.

WC: Oh, yes. Yes, and I wish that... There was a maple right north of it but they had to cut it to get to the rest of the tree. And it was dropping the limbs off that and was tearing the maple up. But I was sitting here – was thinking before you come. In my farming... Dad's wagon is sitting out there under the west end of the shed that he bought new in 1917 at Martinsville and he and Mom rode home in that and pulled a buggy behind them. Well I've shucked corn in that; I've hauled grain in it. And we helped - we had a thrashing crew here one time and I took the wagon and run the grain bed. I hauled wheat and stuff in and throwed it in the bins and the oats and stuff. But then in the fall, when the corn got ripe, and me and Dad shucked corn in that – and I shucked a little by myself – and... But that was quite an experience, especially when it got muddy. Oh, my, you'd get five buckle... about five buckle pair of overshoes on [?] and get out there shucking corn in the mud, and the mud about ankle deep, and that tired about every muscle in your body. And that's... I was just thinking about that. And that wagon is original.

LP: Oh.

WC: It's never had any thing done to it only...

LP: Just the way you bought it.

WC: Wayne D. let the double trees get down on the ground down here in the machine shed and rot, and now you could – I just pretty near thrashed myself for that. They had never been broken; they were the original double trees that came that way. And my Dad was so proud of that wagon as he could be. He never let that wagon sit out of a night in the rain; hardly ever. And it's back in the shed down at the crossroads.

LP: Well, it's nice that you still have it though.

WC: Yeah, you get in that – you think about that – and then you get in one of these big combines that they harvest the corn and beans with today, and you...

LP: There's quite a difference, isn't there?

WC: Oh my land they go down through there and take eight to twelve rows, and we took... well me and Dad would shuck three rows. And, but a normal man would take two rows and, yes, that's quite a difference. But there's quite a difference in the amount of money that's....

LP: Oh, yes. Well I want you to know that's it's been my pleasure to... I've always known you, but I've never been to your home, and it's been my pleasure to get to come here and interview you. And you do know now that this will be placed in the library and if people want to... if they're doing history of the past times, now, this will be there. And you know there'll be a lot of interesting things to people that knew you people.

WC: Saturday night in Marshall you would – at Sixth and Archer you would have to walk out in the street to get around the corner. There was so many on Cole Pool Room over here on the south east corner and over at Benson's corner – drugstore – on the north east and Grabenheimer's on the north west. There would be so many people on the side walk that you absolutely couldn't get around. You had to walk out here off the sidewalk in the street and go around. They was just standing there visiting.

LP: That was kind of a visiting time on Saturday night to go to town, wasn't it, because that's a lot of times when people took their eggs and things?

WC: And then kids, if they had any money, would go to the show and, yeah, they'd just stand...

LP: Now, Millie Frazier – she didn't know exactly the date the theater burned. It had already burned when we moved here. We moved here in 1960; and we came from southern Indiana and moved to Marshall in 1960. There was no theater when we came here. But Ronnie Ellington, my son-in-law – he says he thinks it burned sometime in the '50's.

WC: I think that's right, yes.

LC: It was here when we were dating, because that's what we did on Saturday nights then; we went to the movies.

LP: It didn't cost much, did it? But it was quite a bit then, but it didn't... you could get in for a quarter.

LC: I'm not sure, but it would be during the '50's. It had to be because I'm not just sure what year it burned.

LP: Ronnie worked with you at one of the schools, too, and he...

LC: Martinsville.

LP: He said he liked you very much, and I told him where I was coming and...

WC: The city street committee ought to know this. What is it? But they... One time – it had to do with the town – they had a goose in a cage about three - two feet and a half square, I recon, and that high, and they set that goose around in front of different businesses during the week and you guessed how many grains of corn that goose would eat in a given period of time, you know. Now this had to do with the town of Marshall. And I don't know. I was going to the show one night by myself, and I'd got a ticket over – you got a - some how or other you got a ticket and I wrote on how many grains of corn I thought that goose would eat in a week, or whatever it was, and dropped it in a box in the theater and went in. When Dad and Mom was in town getting some groceries or something one day and Dad filled out a ticket what he thought. Well, I don't know what I won. Oh, I won the goose and the cage in the finality. And Dad won a bushel of - I think a bushel basket of groceries from one of the grocery stores there. So we both came out well.

LP: You were pretty good guessers, now, you really were to guess... I wouldn't have any idea how much...

WC: Well, I don't remember what it was, but that was kind of a coincidence. And I think that was the time that Dad had... He was pretty... He'd fix up when he'd go – went - to town, a little, or dress up more that I do – would – more than I do. But he'd went to town and he wore his everyday shoes. There wasn't no holes in them or anything, but it kind of got him that he hadn't put on his Sunday shoes to go to town. But I think that's maybe when they got the bag – the basket of groceries. They was all staples – stuff that they'd use, you see, and I just thought about that today.

LP: Well, that's real nice, though, that you shared that story with us. And who would have ever thought of putting a goose up to guess how many grains of corn it would eat?

WC: Of course that was back in the '40's.

LP: Oh, they did a lot of different things for entertainment then.

WC: And they had the handles on that. Somebody like Tom "what's his name" - he used to work down at the lumber yard – made that. It had handles on it and chicken wire around it so you could see the goose. It was a nice old goose – one of those gray ones.

LP: And you got to bring it home with you.

WC: Oh, yes. Probably died here, I don't remember about that, but yeah...

LP: Well, that's all the questions they gave me and I just, again, I can't thank you enough for letting me interview you and be able to put this in the library. And I think it's so nice that they are doing this – getting different people's viewpoint and how they grew up and things. And... Go ahead.

WC: Down there by where Tommy Nicholson lives there was a strip of road there in the '50's that you couldn't get through hardly at all. You'd get stuck and have to go get somebody with a tractor to pull you out. And in – where Bill Pearce lives – in that hill there – there was a mud hole in there that was terrible. And that was about in the 1950, along in there, because a bunch of the guys from Clarksville went to Marshall and went down to the crusher – the rock crusher – Tarble's down there – with wagons and tractors and got pit run gravel, or rock, out of the crusher – big stuff about 4-6 inch, I imagine – and hauled out there themselves and didn't get no pay for it. And they just dumped that stuff in that mud hole and drove them tractors and wagons back and forth over it. And Mr. Tarble came out there one day when they was a-doing that and said, "Good Lord, boys. If the state man would catch us he'd make us dig that out there by hand." He said, "Get that covered up some how or other." Well they did. But they got her solid finally – got that hole – it was a seep in the spring in the hill or something there – but that was a terrible bad winter – '50. But they got her done. It's still solid today. But that was.... There used to be a – around Pearce's barn – what they call a, I can't say this – colored person's hill, it was. And there was jog there that you went down around where Bill's barn is, one of them, and come back out the road and went up east there to the cemetery. But so many changes like that. Me and Mom was a-talking today when we went over to the store for coffee. From the B. B. Crossroads on in now they're moving the light poles back out along the road. Well that was on account of electricity. They had to have them back out in the field away from the electric line – or the telephone, old cranking telephone line. Well, now they got...

LP: They're going to put them back out along the road now.

WC: Yeah, out along the road. Yeah, that's what they're doing. And those poles that sat out in the field and just things like that. Men – my neighbor got stuck in the road going up to school at East Liberty one morning with their ponies, and their feet wouldn't touch the ground. The snow was so deep that the ponies couldn't reach the ground, so they was just laying there on the snow. And when I walked on up to my uncle's house, up there where Evan Lycan lived, and called home for Dad to come and get us. And he come over on a big horse with a scoop shovel and scooped us out a road to the fence - out from the center of the road out to the fence - and got up next to the fence, and we went on up to the school. Now it was terrible.

LP: It really was, you know, the way that children had to go to school. Now I've told my children how far we had to walk. There were several of us. And they just said,

“Well, everybody had to walk a mile.” And I said okay, stop and think. That’s the way they spaced the schools, you know, so nobody had to walk just too far, you know.

WC: I think probably on an average of two mile. I think - something like that.

LP: So, before I shut it off now, is there anything else you’d like to say to people? Have you always enjoyed living around Marshall?

LC: Yes, I really don’t remember too much about up north. I’ve been – I mean, I grew up over here where Bob Pine’s place is. That was home to me, so I – yes, I always enjoyed it. And we aren’t... My uncle lived up there, my Dad’s brother. They thought we’d really moved to the sticks when we moved down here, but we decided we liked the sticks pretty well. We liked it and we stayed down here.

LP: We moved here in ’60 and I certainly loved moving here. And my – my – of course I had five boys and one girl – four boys and one girl. I can’t even think how many kids I’ve got. Anyway, they’ve all really enjoyed it and they’ve thanked me many times for moving here, because they liked living at Marshall.

WC: Oh, yeah. I think it’s great.

LC: Now where did you move from in Indiana?

LP: Forty miles north of Evansville – a little town called Petersburg. And it was the same size – just about the same size as Marshall – the town was, but it was on Highway 57.

LC: We had a place in southern Indiana. We have - the Ewbank homestead is down there where – when our ancestors came over from England they built this big stone house, and it’s still down there. But it’s close to Cincinnati, Ohio, over that way.

LP: Over around Madison, I bet, in that area.

LC: Gilford is the name of the town.

WC: Over around Lawrenceburg.

LC: Lawrenceburg. Over in that area. And then the Clapps came from southern Indiana. And they came closer to Scottsburg, in that area, and they have... What is the name of the little town that’s close to?

LP: See, now, if somebody’s doing research and they hear this, then that – if they are doing family research that gives them a lead where to go.

WC: Now the girls have pretty well got that. Angie and Janice, they run that, done that through 4-H.

LP: And I - that's kind of what I want to do. But again I'm going to say thank you and the public library thanks you very much for being interviewed, and you've given us a very good interview.

WC: You're welcome.

