

Orleans County Historical Association

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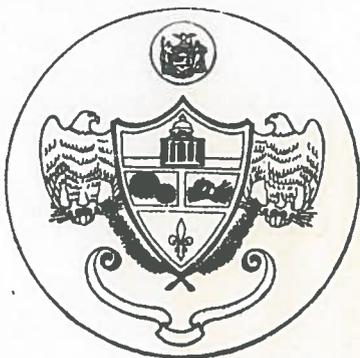
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Swan Library
4 N. Main St.
Albion, N. Y. 14411



Orleans County Historical Association

INTERVIEW

Mrs. Reevalyn Ackerson
Millville, R. D.
Medina, New York 14103

Mrs. J. Reevalyn Ackerson: Born September 18, 1896 .

Interviewed by Helen M. McAllister, Medina/ March 13, 1979.

Also present during interview: Mr. LaVern Ackerson, husband.

A Ackerson

Mc McAllister





Orleans County Historical Association

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

The purpose of this project is to collect information about the historical development of Orleans County by means of tape-recorded conversations with people whose experiences reflect the county's growth.

These tapes and transcriptions will be preserved as educational resources and possible publication (all or in part).

I hereby release this tape and transcription to the Orleans County Historical Association.

Reverend D. McKerson
Signed
3-15-1979
Date

Understood and agreed to:

Helene M. McAllister
INTERVIEWER
3-15-1979
Date

J. Reevalyn Ackerson

Mc Reevalyn, I'd like to ask you the name of your father and your mother's maiden name.

A Charles Staring and Jennie Pratt.

Mc When and where were you born?

A I'm 82 now. I was born September 18, 1896 in the house across from the present Medina library.

Mc Did you have brothers and sisters?

A No; my mother never had any brothers or sisters either so we are rather alone.

Mc What was your father's business?

A Insurance and Real Estate.

Mc Did he work alone or with someone else?

A He worked alone. He was also "Poor Master" at one time. Now that would be called a "Social Worker". I used to have to go with him and take the children of the poor families and buy them shoes and things. I used to go and help get them. I remember that.

Mc Was that run by the village?

A Yes it was. That was when they used to have the County House (often called the Poorhouse). There were several children.

Mc Reevalyn, would you tell us a bit about your school days?

A When I was four years old my grandmother gave our neighbor, Zella Bennet across the street, 10¢ a week to take me to kindergarten and so I had two years of kindergarten before I started first grade. I was in the first and second grade at the Oak Orchard School. Then we moved up onto Genesee Street and I went over to the Central School Academy: Medina Academy. That building was torn down later. I went through high school, of course, and graduated in 1916.

Mc How large was your graduating class, do you remember?

A Probably around 50-60, something like that. There weren't too many.

Mc That was before centralization?

A Yes, it was.

Mc When you went to Medina High School did you have to specialize in one thing or take just a general course?

A Yes, you were supposed to. I took a business course.

Mc What constituted a business course at that time?

A Well, business arithmetic mostly. Then we had books on book-keeping and like that.

Mc Did you have typing?

A No, I never took typing or shorthand. I just took the business arithmetic and that was all.

Mc This was what you had in mind to do later on in life?

A Yes, because my father wanted me to work for him you see, in the insurance business.

I graduated June 27, 1916 and on July 1, 1916 I went to work for him in the insurance business, on Main Street.

Mc Was that under his name?

A Yes: "Charles E. Staring Insurnace Agency".

Mc How long was he in the insurance business?

A From 1905 until 1935 when he died. That would be 34 years.

Mc Did you have any further schooling?

A No. I always wanted to be a kindergarten teacher but I never could go that far.

Mc Main Street in Medina was quite different in those days wasn't it?

A Yes it was. I saw them pave Main Street. It was just a dirt road and I saw it when it was paved.

Speaking of the bank, I sat up in our office window. We were right over the Zimmerman Drug Store and I also saw the people going in and out of the banks the day that the bank closed!

Mc What bank would that be?

A The Union Bank, on the corner, where Jay's Drug Store is now.

Mc What do you remember about that? When was the first time that you heard that the bank had closed?

A We were wondering what everyone was running in and out for, and then at night we heard that they had closed. So, that was about all that we heard. Central Bank, up the street, didn't close until later on.

Mc What was the feeling at that time? Weren't people a little bit nervous about the other bank closing?

A I imagine so. The Union Bank was supposed to be a bigger bank than the Central Bank was.

Mc How did people react when the banks closed?

A Well there was a lot of people that lost money and they didn't think much of it, of course. There was an awful lot of people downtown, I know that!

Mc How did this affect your father's business?

A Well, we sent a check to one of our companies for \$800.00 and they

didn't deposit it when they should have. After the bank closed, it came back and we had to pay \$800.00 more to the insurance company.

Mc Our of your own pocket?

A Out of our own pocket. We were out \$800.00. I'll never forget that!

Mc That probably made a difference in his business, overall?

A Yes it did. Well, you didn't get too much then anyway to make a living.

Mc Do you remember the First World War and the boys marching?

A Yes I do! And I remember something else too. The year that I graduated, the National Guard left for Mexico.

Mc Were they Medina fellows?

A Medina fellows, yes. They weren't gone too long, but they were gone quite awhile. There was trouble down there in Mexico and they left the night that we graduated. Our graduation ceremony was held in the old Cook Theater on Park Avenue. (At that time) they never graduated in the High School. It was in the theater building. We also took gym up on the third floor of City Hall. We had to go down there from school to take our gym lessons.

Mc What was your gym class like; what could you do up there?

A Just exercises.

Mc Didn't you have basketball hoops or anything?

A Yes, we did. We used to play basketball. That was about all. Then just the exercises like they had in any school.

Mc Did you do that in the wintertime as well?

A Yes.

Mc Did any of your classmates go marching off to the War?

A No, they didn't. It was the older ones that formed the National Guard. They'd been in there for years.

Mc On your graduation day, or night, did they have any parties?

A No. We didn't.

Mc What did you wear?

A We had caps and gowns. I think that was about the first or second year that they had those because there were so many of the girls that couldn't afford a nice dress, and so they wanted caps and gowns.

Mc Did you have to pay money to rent the caps and gowns?

A No, I don't think we paid any "rent" for them. We just got them from the school and then we had to return them back to the school.

Mc You don't remember having a party at home afterwards?

A No, we never had any party, and I don't remember of anybody else

that ever did have a party. Not in those days; they didn't have them. That was afterwards.

Mc Well Reevalyn, your husband is sitting here quietly and playing with the cat. (laughter). When did you meet Mr. Ackerson?

A It was August 1918, sixty years ago. (There is considerable discussion concerning the exact date of this meeting: Aug. or Sept.).

Mc Do you remember how you met each other?

A Yes. His aunt worked for LeVan and Crompart, in the furniture store downstairs, and I worked upstairs for my father. I was a great friend of hers and she wanted me to meet her nephew. She was only ten months older than he was. So I met him and from then on we started going together. (laughter).

Mc What was LaVern doing at that time?

Mr. A I was working on the road for the Town of Barre.

Mc You were born in Barre, weren't you?

A Yes, he was born in West Barre.

Mr. A Well, you know down here Eagle Harbor Road and Leek Street over on this corner there was a gothic house. It's burned down now. I was born there, and so was my aunt.

Mc That's how you met then. You were working. How long did you go together?

A Five years, and that was too long! (laughter).

Mc My word! You have known each other for 60 years then!

A Yes; it will be 56 years in June that we were married.

Mc What kind of a wedding did you have?

A We went to the Methodist minister, Dr. L. L. Rogers and we were married in the parsonage. We had a couple stand up with us: Eleanor Metz and Ralph Gates. They both died quite young.

Mc Where was the parsonage at that time?

A On Prospect Avenue; right back of Cleary's Funeral Home.

Mc Oh yes. The Methodists sold that home right after Rev. Cory left. Do you remember what you wore?

A Yes. I wore a grey suit and I had a grey hat made. I had a friend, my mother's friend that was a milliner, and she made me a grey chiffon hat. And I had high-topped, laced shoes, grey shoes.

Mc Did your shoes come up over your ankle?

A Yes, way up over my ankles: high-topped shoes. I'm sorry I never saved them, but I didn't.

Mr. A Tell her what happened to your nice hat!

A Oh yes; he burned a hole in my hat! (laughter).

Mc How did you do that Mr. Ackerson?

Mr. A I was smoking a pipe, and we was driving along. We went to Watkins Glen and the wind was blowing. The top of the car was down and I suppose the fire from my pipe set her hat afire.

A It burned a little-bit-a hole in my hat. (laughter).

Mc Did you keep your hat?

A No, I never kept that either. I don't know why I didn't. Now I wish I'd kept a lot of things, but I didn't.

Mc How long did you work for your father, Reevalyn? Did you work until he died?

A Yes, I worked for him from 1916 until 1939. That would be 23 years. Then I worked for Mr. Walters for 17 years.

Mc Was that Clyde Walters?

A No. His cousin, R. Lewis Walters. That was for insurance and I quit down there July 1, 1946. I worked 40 years in the insurance business and I thought that was long enough.

Mc Then what did you decide to do?

A I stayed home and I didn't do anything.

Mr. A Well, you collected taxes!!

A I collected taxes during the winter, but I didn't work anyplace else. I got my tax collector's job in 1946.

Mc How did you get the tax collector's job, for the Town of Shelby?

A The Supervisor of Shelby, William Jenny, came to see me and said that there would have to be a change. There was an elderly lady and she was along in her eightys, and she couldn't take it any more. And he says, "There's got to be a change, and if you want the job you can have it." I said, "I would like it".

Mc Was that a part-time job?

A January is the big month, when I had to work. Then February, March and April I collected the taxes at home. Then the first of May the book has to be returned to Albion.

Mc Did people come here to pay their taxes?

A Yes, they came to our house.

Mc That can't be done that way any more, can it?

A No, they don't come to the homes any more. No, they've stopped that. People used to come here all hours of the night and day. It was a regular nuisance sometimes. But you were supposed to do it as a courtesy to the tax-payers. So I did, of course.

Mc Were you ever robbed?

A No, never. Never had any close calls or anything. We've had quite a lot of money in the house at one time, but we would take it down to the bank in the morning first thing and get rid of it.

Mc Did most people pay you in cash or in checks?

A Most of it was in cash at that time. In the later years it got so I had more checks. I used to get an awful lot! I'd get 20-25 letters a day in January, with the checks in. Before that they used to come in with the money. But later on, it was checks.

Mc When did you stop working as a tax collector?

Mr. A You started in 1946 and you worked 28 years.

A 1974, yes, that would be right.

Mc Who replaced you, Reevalyn?

A Jane Brigham, the Shelby Town Clerk.

Mc Is her job different than yours? I think she is on the job the year around.

A Yes, she's right there all the time.

Mc Does she have additional duties?

A Yes, and she has a helper.

Mc Does she have more to do than you did?

A Yes. They tell me now that it is very complicated, and she has quite a lot more to do than I did.

Mc When you were the tax collector where was the office when it was not in your home?

A When I first started we were down in the bank, the Marine Trust Company. They finally decided that they didn't have any more room for us, and so then they moved us up to the City Hall and we were up there for quite a long time. I can't tell just how long. Then the Town of Shelby bought this Town building and they moved us up there, into the Town building.

Mc You said some time ago that you saw Medina Main Street being paved. You probably have seen quite a few changes in the highways around here?

A Yes! Yes I have. That race was filled in while I lived on North Avenue. I remember because when I was only three years old, I think it was, I had a puppy. There was a fellow that threw him in the race there, and somebody got him out for me.

Mc Is a "race" like a small canal?

A A little creek, just going through there. They filled that up and

of course, that is North Avenue now. I mean where it comes across and there isn't any bridge there or anything.

Mc Was Main Street the first street to be paved?

A I couldn't tell whether it was or not. I remember that being paved and when Park Avenue was paved, but that's about all.

Mc Did it make quite a difference with the dust and dirt?

A Yes, it did. A big difference, because it was just a dirt road down through there. I remember that there were a lot of hitching posts around and they'd have a ring on them, hanging down from the post. You could fasten your horse there.

Mc Did they have a stone step for you to step onto from your carriage?

A No, it was right on the level.

Mr.A Well, there was quite a lot of them blocks out in front. You know there's one down on the Bates Road; Cody Hoey owned a liquor store and he had one.

Mc With the paving of the roads it made quite a difference in the transportation didn't it?

A Yes, it did.

Mc When did you first learn to drive, Reevalyn?

A I first learned to drive about the year that we went together, I guess. That was about 59 years ago.

Mc Do you remember the car?

A No. I never had a car; my father never had a car. But LaVern had a car.

Mc Do you remember what kind it was?

Mr. A A Model T Ford that I cranked to get started. I could crank it just as easy as could be. My father bought a new one in 1915 and I had one in 1916.

Mc With isinglass curtains that you had to snap on?

A Yeah!

Mr. A And just about the time you'd get them on, it would stop raining!

Mc Did the car have windshield wipers?

Mr.A By hand! ... You'd drive with one hand and use the wiper with the other.

Mc Not many garages along the way either?

A No. No, there weren't.

Mr.A You never needed a garage. All you needed was a pair of pinchers and a chunk of wire.

Mc I've heard tell you needed to know how to patch a tire too!

Mr.A Oh yes!! (laughter)

Mc Was there an Automobile Club in Medina?

A Yes. I worked for that Club for quite awhile in the 1940's. Mr. Walters was the head of it and I used to get a dollar for every membership that I got.

Mr.A I belonged to it in 1918...

Mc What was it like? What was the purpose of the Automobile Club?

A You could get free information on roads and other things. Then we used to have to make out maps for the different places wherever anyone wanted to go. We used to have an awful lot for Florida trips!

Mc Hasn't changed a bit! (laughter). Do you think that the Club was similar to the AAA that we have today?

A Yes, it was the same.

Mc Only this was a locally operated business.

A Yes. I don't know why they took it out of Medina, but they did. They took it out and put it with Lockport.

Mc Did the members travel to various places as a group?

A Yes! Yes, you'd be surprised.

Mc Where, for instance, would they be apt to go?

A Going out West. A lot of them went out to the Yellowstone Park and out through there. Then a lot of them to California and Florida, and down through, like that.

Mc And you would set this trip up?

A Yes. They used to have what they called "Trip Ticks". They were in a package; you could read one and turn it over.

Mc That's what they do now with the AAA!

A They did that when I was still in there. "Trip-Tick". Makes it very nice and handy for you.

Mc Who did you say was the head of the Automobile Club?

A R. Lewis Walters, the one I worked for in the insurance business. The Orleans Auto Club was in that office.

Mc Did Alonzo Waters have anything to do with that?

A No, I don't think so. Not much anyway. Mr. Skinner had a lot to do with it. LeRoy Skinner. He was a lawyer and he was very active in it.

Mc Did many of the women drive?

A Yes, quite a lot of women drove then.

Mc Did you have to pass a test?

A I never had to. I got my license before they had that a law. Of

course after that I had to get a license, but I never had to pass a test.

Mc Did you have any interesting experiences, close calls, with the car?

A No, I never did. We have, once or twice.

Mr.A You got side-swiped twice; that's all!

Mc That's too interesting!

A Yes, the snow-plow sideswiped our car, up to Arthur Watts. I took LaVern up to the Watts. He was helping him out and I was waiting for the plow to go by and the plow scraped the fender, or, the whole side of the body (of the car) there.

(END OF SIDE ONE OF TAPE)

Mc Reevalyn, maybe it would be a good idea for you to tell us where you and your husband have lived; the different homes where you have lived.

A Well, (laughter) we have quite a long story. We started house-keeping right down the road here in Millville, in the little house next to the brick house. LaVern was going to farm it and his back bothered him, so that he couldn't farm it. So we moved over to West Barre with his father. Then his father sold the place and we moved down on the Million-Dollar-Highway and we worked the farm, on shares, for three years.

Mc Working "on shares" was done a lot then, wasn't it? I understand that was a hard way to make a dollar.

Mr.A Yes, it was!

A Yes, there wasn't the factory work and the things to do then that there is now. LaVern always was a farmer and he liked this, so we farmed it and we lived down there. Then we moved up on Maple Ridge, right next to where Robert's Market is now....

Mr.A ... I'd been money ahead if I'd never seen the place (chuckles).

Mc Do you mean that you worked on the farm?

A Yes, and things were so cheap. We sold potatoes 19¢ a bushel. We sold peaches 25¢ a bushel, and he trucked tomatoes down to Heinz...

Mr.A Apples! I drew 4,000 bushel of apples to Lyndonville Canning Factory, and when I got all done and paid my gas bill, I had \$49.00 left.

Mc For all that work?

Mr.A For 4,000 bushel! For all that work!

A And then the fellow had someone else that he wanted to farm it there, so we moved up across from the Millville Cemetery and we

were there six years. Then the owner sold that place, and we bought this one. It will be 29 years in April that we moved here.

Mc This house is right next to the Millville United Methodist Church, and the Cobblestone store is just up the road?

A Yes. There was a store there when we came here too.

Mc Rather an historic area here. I understand that the Cobblestone Store was a church at one time?

A Yes it was. That's what they say, and this storage building right down to the corner store here, that was a church too. That was a Congregational Church.

I was Trustee of the school here in Millville the first year that we were here, and I went with a delegation from Medina to see about centralization. Centralization came in the year after we moved here.

Mc Going back to the time of the Big Depression, let me ask you: what do you remember besides the banks closing, around 1929 and the years following.

A We were selling milk up to Medina and Mr. Asqueth went into bankruptcy.

Mr.A Howard Vincent bought it out.

A We were selling milk when we lived on the Telegraph Road.

Mr. A We had a cent and three-quarters a quart for the milk, and we divided the money.... We divided it with the land-owner.

A Yes, the man that owned it. And we sold pigs for, what was it, five or six dollars for a whole pig?!...

Mr. A Six cents a pound. One fellow spoke to me before we butchered them and he wanted one. When he come after it (the pig), he wouldn't pay six cents a pound for it. I said, "Alright! You don't get it then!" So I took a knife and cut the ham off, and the shoulder, and the head. We had ham galore! (laughs)

Mc You did your own butchering?

Mr.A Yeah.

A Yes, he always did that. His grandfather taught him that years ago.

Mr.A My grandfather!

A Your grandfather? Well, someone taught you! We used to get the shoulders. We used to love those pork shoulders in the winter. We used to get those for a nickle a pound and we just about lived on those 'cause it was as much as we could afford during the Depression.

Mc Now pork shoulder sell for \$2.50 a pound!

Mc During the Big Depression, do you remember that there were hoboes, people who traveled around?

A Oh yes! There were several that used to stop to the house.

Mc Tell me about it. What would they do?

A Well, they were just going through and they'd want a sandwich or something. If I saw them, I didn't go to the door. But if I didn't see who they were, why I'd get the door. I kept the screens hooked all the time. We'd give them a sandwich and send them on their way.

Mr.A They used to come along and sleep... I'd go up to get some hay in the morning, for the horses; and there laid three men on the hay-mow, sound asleep. I let a yell out of me and how they did scramble!

Mc Were there quite a few hoboes?

A Yes. That was very common.

Mc Were they mostly men? Were they looking for employment?

A Yes, mostly men. No, they were just looking for handouts. Anything they could get for nothing.

Mc Not really looking for jobs?

A No. They were just going through. There was a lot of them at that time.

Mc What do you remember about the trains? There used to be a lot of trains.

A Yes. There was one that went east at 7 o'clock in the morning, and one that went west. Then there was another one at 10 o'clock that went east and west. Then at night there was a 6 o'clock train come in from the east, and one from the west.

Mc Did they all stop in Medina?

A They all stopped in Medina. And that used to be where they kept the water. There used to be a water tank in Medina, east of the depot. They used to fill the engine up with water there in Medina. We used to go to Rochester quite a bit, on the train. We used to love to go down on that early train and then come back at night. It was just as good as driving. We used to love to ride on the train! I went on the train to Albany for that school centralization meeting.

Mc You have told me that the trolley was quite popular for transportation.

A Yes it was. Before I was married, we used to go to Lockport. My

father and mother used to take me and my girl friend, the one who stood up with us when we were married, and we'd get off. Then we'd get a trolley and go down to Olcott. We used to enjoy that a lot. Then we've taken the train to Niagara Falls. You could get off right near the Falls. This was the New York Central Railroad.

Mo How was riding the trolley different than riding the train?

A Well I don't know if there was very much difference in it. One was just as easy as the other. They had good seats in both of them. We used to have friends down to Holley, or, I had a friend down there and I used to go down on the trolley and she'd meet me. She lived three or four miles south of Holley. I'd go up there and then come back and take the trolley back home.

Then another thing: I couldn't have been over 14 or 15 I guess. I belonged to the Girl's Friendly Society of the Episcopal Church. There were several of my friends that belonged and they wanted me to belong. Our sponsor was Mrs. Dr. Tanner, and they lived in that cobblestone house on the corner of the Culvert Road and this road over here (route 31). She used to have us down there for our meetings, a lot. We used to go down on the trolley. Then Dr. Tanner would come over with his lantern and wait for the trolley to come in, to flag the trolley down, and we'd come home at night on the trolley; back again. I remember one time when I was on the trolley and I was going to get off. Dr. Tanner had a chair down there for me to step on and I jumped on, and went right through it! (laughs)... That was called the Girl's Friendly Society of the Episcopal Church. I guess they don't have it any more. You see they didn't have a missionary society in our church, only for the adults. So they got me to join. Later, that broke up and I joined the Christian Endeavor of the Presbyterian Church. I belonged there for awhile. Then that broke up and I joined the Baptist's World Wide Guild Girls Society. Later on the Methodist took in the younger ones of the church and of course I got back to my own church then, in the missionary society.

Mo Have you always belonged to the Methodist Church?

A Oh yes! I was taken there when I was a baby, down here to Medina. I never knew any other until I moved over to West Barre with LaVern.

Mc Are you saying that the Medina Methodist Church did not have anything for the young people?

A Not at that time; no missionary group. They had Epworth League. I belonged to the Epworth League; but they didn't have a Missionary Society like the other churches had.

Mc How active have you been in the Methodist Church, Reevalyn? What has it meant to you over the years?

A Well, it has meant an awful lot to me. Enough so that I'd never belong to any other place. I joined in 1915... The minister was Rev. Rogers at that time. Esther Raymond and I and several others joined the church at the same time.

Mc Were you baptized as a baby?

A Yes. I've always been there. My father (Charles Staring) was a Trustee for years. When we joined the church we were, oh! What did they call it then? ... I know that Rev. Cory was the pastor at that time, when we were members. Official Board!! Yes, that's it: the Official Board! We belonged to that! ... They don't have that any more, do they?

Mc They have the Administrative Board. The same thing, with a different name. (laughter). Did you teach Sunday School for awhile?

A Yes/ Yes I did. I taught the Primary Class. I had a lot of youngsters; probably 20 anyway. A lot of them have grown up. I don't know where they have gone, but two of them I do know: the Sanderson twins! Do you know Robert and Richard Sanderson? Well, I had them when they were little boys in the Primary Class. Then I had the George children. I guess they've gone away from here. I don't remember much of the others. There was a couple of Tillman's: Donald and his sister. ...

Mc Did you hold another office in the church?

A Well, I used to get the envelopes and count the money, and give it to someone else. Now which one is that? Financial Secretary?

Mc I think so.

A Or the other Secretary? I don't know. (laughter).

Mc To me, it's a Treasurer. (laughter)

A Anyway, I used to count the money and give it to someone else.

Mc You've been a member of the Dorcus Circle for years, haven't you?

A I was a charter member of the WSCS (Women's Society of Christian Service). I have belonged to the Dorcus Circle ever since it was organized. ... That was 25-30 years ago.

Mc That's been quite an active group!

- A Yes. Ours was the most active, and we used to have the most members to come to the meetings. But it got so that they just kept dropping off, and dropping off, and I don't know. Too bad. But, no one can help it.
- Mc Churches today are blessed, and I think sometimes cursed, by the television. I think that if you cannot get out, it is good to have t.v. or radio and have the church service brought to you.
- A Yes; we do. We have a wonderful church service. I don't know if you've ever heard the Rev. James Andrews or not, of the Metropolitan Church of Buffalo, in the heart of Amherst? It's just north of Sheridan Drive on Forest Road. ... Here, I saved that letter out for you to see. I wrote to him last week. He advertised a book that he got out. There's the letter we got. ... This is the television, channel two, at 11:30. He is wonderful!
- Mc Well, this has probably changed the attendance at church for the people that would rather, even tho they don't have to, stay at home and watch it. I think that this must make it hard for our local churches. Don't you think so?
- A Yes, I imagine it does. But we could not get out when the mercury was down to zero, and there was ice, and the roads weren't sanded some of the times. We just couldn't do it! We didn't get out all winter long. I'm ashamed to say so.
- Mr. A I "chicken-drive". (laughter).
- A Well, there's no use asking for trouble. Not a bit. We didn't want to do that.
- Mc You were probably wise. I know you are.
- A We are going to try to start in again now.
- Mc When the weather behaves ... (laughter).

At the ripe age of 82 you have seen quite a few changes in the health care. (For instance), doctors used to make house-calls and they no longer do that.

- A Yes, they used to make house-calls. Well, as long ago as 1946 to 1950. Mother died in 1949 when we lived up across from the Millville Cemetary, and Dr. Waters came up there and he made house-calls. I guess that was about the last of it.

- Mr. A Well, Pa was sick then. ... It was after Reevalyn's mother was buried that I caught pneumonia, that day of the funeral, and he came up to see me, don't you know? He gave me a shot and I didn't know where I was.

- A That was about 1949, about the last that they made house calls, or that he made house calls.
- Mc Do you feel that medical care has improved over the years?
- A Well, yes. We've had advantage of it. Five years ago I had a hernia operation and Medicare paid for some of it. LaVern had, well, I guess he had a sunstroke as far as we can figure out, and it developed into high blood pressure. He got quite a little out of Medicare for that, and we had Blue Cross and Blue Shield. Of course we don't dare go without that!
- Mc Do you feel that the doctors have the personal interest in people that they used to have?
- A Well, I feel that our doctor does. I just as soon tell you that we have Dr. Sterling. I think he is wonderful! He pulled LaVern out of his illness. It was when we lived upstairs, and I'll never forget it. LaVern was outdoors, mowing the yard. It was a terrific hot day, and he came in and he didn't feel good. At night he had a little Corn Flake and milk, and he went to bed about seven o'clock. At ten o'clock he called me, and he was just wringing wet. So, I got him up; he couldn't walk. I got the people downstairs and they helped me. They got him ready and got the ambulance and took him to the hospital. LaVern didn't know where he was. And Dr. Sterling brought him through and he said that it was a sun-stroke and high blood pressure. So, we have had a lot of faith in Dr. Sterling ever since!
- Mc Yes, Dr. Sterling is a very conscientious doctor. I feel that most doctors are conscientious and really terribly over-worked. Most of us probably don't realize how much they have to do.
- A I wanted to get someone to come in and help give me a bath. I can't use my hands and can't get them up any farther than that (demonstrates: Reevalyn has severe arthritis). I thought I would be glad to have the County Nurse come in. Well, I called up, and you've got to get \$60.00 worth before they will come in!
- Mc What do you mean, "get sixty dollars worth?"
- A Well, you've got to pay out \$60.00 before you can get the help. It is a \$60.00 deductible on Medicare.
- Mc But then you'd get it back on your income tax, wouldn't you?
- A No. We don't pay income tax because we're over that age. So we don't get anything back, and all we'd do would be getting that sixty dollars.
- Mc Sixty dollars for a bath!? Reevalyn, I'll come up and give you

a bath each week for sixty dollars! (laughter).

A I didn't think it was worth it. Of course we haven't any children but our girl, we call her "our girl" because she lived here with us for five years and she's just like an own daughter. They're the ones that got us groceries all winter too. She's wonderful!

Mc And she helps you?

A Yes. They live about the 4th house down there. John and Ruth Kilner. So I said that I'd rather give her some money than to give them \$60.00 in order to get them to come up here! ...

Mc Do you remember movies and other entertainment?

A Yes I do. Down there on East Center Street, where Corky's Bakery is, that used to be a theater.

Mc What was it called, do you remember?

Mr. A I think it was called the "Scenic Theater".

Mc Did they have a player-piano?

A Yes. Well, no! They had a lady come in and play the piano: Beth Burchell. She lived the second house from us. ...

Mc Was that the only theater in Medina?

A No, there was one where the Diana was; that went out of business. Vincent Cardone bought that. Then there was the Scenic. The Scenic went out first and the Diana stayed on.

Mr. A I thought that was the Delmar?

A Well, it was Delmar, and then it was the Diana. Different ones have owned it.

Mc Do you remember the Bent Opera House (corner of West Center and Main)?

A Yes! Yes, we've been up there to "Uncle Tom's Cabin" and several different things, up on the third floor.

Mc That was live theater, like Chautauqua, wasn't it?

A Yes it was. My people never liked me to go up there because if a fire had ever started, you never would have gotten out. It got so it was condemned. They wouldn't let anyone up there. ... That was where the Liberty Bank is; where the Eagles were.

Mc Do you remember the swinging bridge at the foot of Eagle Street? It was a temporary bridge, over the canal.

A Well, I remember it was quite a sensation walking across it. You know, it would sway all the way across there when you were walking

across it.

Mc What was it made of?

A Just a plank, and it had sides up to take ahold of. Just a wire I suppose. And as you'd walk, it would swing back and forth. That was just a temporary bridge while they were putting in that new bridge down there at the foot of Main and Eagle Street.

Mc I imagine a lot of kids had fun on that! Bouncing and swinging and all!

A Yes, they did.

Mc That was probably a foot bridge?

A Yes. ... I suppose it was for the ones that lived over on the hill over there and down on Glenwood Avenue, and like that.

Mc How do you feel about the state of the world today, and Medina being in the middle of it all? Are you optimistic for the future?

A Well, no. I feel there is bound to be something coming because things can't go on the way they are. It doesn't seem as tho they could anyway. Maybe they will, but it doesn't seem that way to me. Maybe I'm wrong, and I hope I am. They say we are heading for a recession, but I hope not. We went through one and lived through it, so we'll probably live through another! (chuckles).

Mc Let's hope it doesn't happen that way.

(END OF TAPED INTERVIEW)

This interview was conducted by Helen McAllister, Medina.
This interview was transcribed and typed by Mrs. McAllister.

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