

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

History of Salem Schools

Personal Experience

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ALMA PROBERT AND FRANK HOOPES

Interviewed

by

James McNeal

on

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YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

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INTERVIEWEE: ALMA PROBERT AND FRANK HOOPES

INTERVIEWER: James McNeal

SUBJECT: Early years in Salem, schools, teachers

DATE: December 3, 1975

M: This is an interview with Alma Probert for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, on Salem Schools, by James McNeal, at 343 N Main Street, Columbiana, Ohio, on December 3, 1975, at 3:30 p.m.

The first thing I would like to ask you is somewhat of a personal nature, and that is something of your background, your family, and early years?

P: We came to Salem in 1897 and there were three of us children. We rented around. Finally, we owned a property at the corner of Hawley and Fourth. That made me just on the border line of the school district. That is the reason I started at McKinley, because I was six years old and I started in 1900. In 1900 I started the first grade at McKinley.

M: You say you came to Salem. Where had you lived before?

P: Well, we lived on Union Avenue and 5th Street. Just rented you know. Union Avenue we moved down there when we first came to town, I was just real small.

M: Before coming to Salem?

P: Before coming to Salem I was born in West Virginia.

M: Oh, West Virginia!

P: Yes, Montgomery, West Virginia.

M: You say you came to Salem in 1897, quite young. Do you know how old you were?

P: Yes, my brother was born in Enon and he had just been born. They brought him. He was born in 1897 and we came right to Salem then because my father got work at the Deming Company. I started first. I went first, second, and third grade. Miss Bothell was our teacher in the first grade, Miss Munson the second grade and Miss Penrose in the third grade.

M: That would be at McKinley?

P: That was McKinley. Then it was over crowded there so they sent me to Fourth Street for the fourth grade. Then I went to the fifth grade down there, Miss Grace Orr was my teacher there. She afterwards became a music teacher but she was a real teacher then. Then when I got through at fifth grade they were crowded down there for sixth grade. So, they sent me back to McKinley. I had Miss Pricell there at sixth grade. That was, of course . . . In Fourth Street the fifth grade was included in the mix up. When we got out to McKinley they didn't have fifth grade in it but it was on the same floor. That teacher was Grace Axelin, she was just a young person. She played out on the lawn with us girls. Just had a good time. Miss Pricell and Miss Snider and Miss Donaldson were our teachers there. Miss Donaldson was a principle one of them. She was a wonderful person. We all had her. She had a peculiar way of teaching. She was a math teacher, very good. Math and bookkeeping she taught us. Teach bookkeeping in junior high now?

M: No, no business type courses in junior high.

P: She taught us bookkeeping. One thing that we had all the time, all the grades had, was a writing teacher, Mr. L. L. Wheeler from Alliance. Miss Snyder would come in and she would start with a problem. She was always in the hall until we got in. She would start you out with a problem, it would be add, subtract, multiply, and divide. She would say, "Who has got the answer?" Every time she came in she did that. There was two of us who always had the answer. She couldn't understand why the rest of them couldn't do that. When I graduated then from the eighth grade they had a big ceremony. They had it on the stage in the high school building at Fourth Street. That was the auditorium, that was not classrooms, it was a big auditorium. They took all the eighth grade graduates up on the platform and presented them with graduation certificates. Other than that I don't know what else I could tell. Other than the subjects that we were taught and how they conducted them.

H: You know on my interview we had a little question about where the auditorium was located in Fourth Street. Maybe you could straighten us out on that.

P: It was on the west end.

H: Now, would that be on the second floor?

P: Yes.

H: Was not up in the attic?

P: No. On the second floor.

H: This is what I thought. This is what I said.

M: This would be were the big study hall . . .

H: Yes, where 207 study hall was.

P: That was the big study hall. That was were the auditorium was.

M: What did that auditorium look like as you walked into it?

P: Well, it was just five rows of seats and then just a big stage in front were they . . . I have been there lots of times and they had different things going on. Churches and places used to have . . . People would have things going on there. I can remember that. My mother made me a white dress to graduate from the eighth grade.

M: The big graduation ceremony then for junior high, which doesn't exist anymore.

P: Yes, oh yes.

M: Was that during a school day or was it an evening function?

P: Evening function. It was in the evening.

M: The whole works then at the end of eighth grade. You recall your elementary school teacher. You have mentioned them right off that you had different classes and different buildings. If we could just a minute back up a little bit, you started out at McKinley School. Of course, Fourth Street is no longer with us but McKinley is. It is the oldest building in the school system. What do you recall as a young child about going to that school?

P: Miss Bothell was a real nice teacher. She only taught, I think, a couple of years. Then she married a man by the name of Chamberlain, Howard Chamberlain. She was a wonderful person too and she taught us. Every morning we had to have a little bible reading. She started with the alphabet and she gave us a verse of the bible. Starting with the alphabet she went through. I can't remember all of them but I can remember the first one. A was "A man can not serve two masters." That was the first one. I can't remember all the rest of them. She was a very nice person. She only taught a couple years and she married Howard Chamberlain.

Then Miss Munson was a second grade teacher. I liked her real well. I sat in the first seat in the second row and she always called on me. Then she got married. Then I went to Fourth Street. My fourth grade teacher, I don't think she ever got married. She taught for a long time, fourth grade down there. Then Miss Orr. I didn't like her very well.

M: Why not?

P: Well, they graded us in the fifth grade. Now they didn't do that every place. They graded us and my seat came the first seat in the second row. I was supposed to take care of the door, shut it when it needed shutting and open it when it needed opening. One day she was sitting at her desk and it was about time to start class. They always kept the door open until . . . And I didn't shut the door and I heard about it. You better not put that in. (laughter) Then she afterwards was the music teacher. We had a special music teacher before she come, Ester Bonival. She was good too.

M: The music teacher came right into the room?

P: She came right into the room.

M: How often was that?

P: She would come about once a week. Mr. Wheeler, from Alliance, would come once a week too. They had that all the way up.

M: Wheeler was the writing instructor?

P: Yes, L.L. Wheeler. He taught writing we had special books. He taught us the R movement and then he had a little stamp. He would go along and look your book. If it was good he would stamp it "L.L. Wheeler. Good Work," and if it wasn't he would pass it up.

M: Did you eventually have to get the stamp on it to

progress?

P: He had a little stamp on a rubber and he just stamped it in ink and stamped it right on your paper, your book. We all just tried our best to get all our books stamped, every page.

M: You mentioned a music teacher that came. Did you have to develop programs to put on at different times within the grade school?

P: No, we didn't do that.

M: Just instruction in the classroom?

P: Instruction in the class. She taught us the scale, to read the scale. Other than that we didn't have a piano or anything. Just sing songs.

M: It really wasn't any music program?

P: It wasn't anything special after that, no.

M: Anything else about McKinley, about any activities you were involved in there?

P: No. We had the biggest class in the sixth grade. We had the biggest class of boys you ever saw. Men, they were men in the sixth grade.

M: What do you mean by men?

P: Well, grown men. Big as they ever got.

M: You say they were crowded too. That you got pushed around from building to building. It seems as though . . .

P: There were six of them. Six big fellows in the sixth grade and Miss Pricell was tall. They didn't put anything over on her, I'm telling you. She was strict. They were big ones.

M: Were they just oversized or had they been retained?

P: Retained. They hadn't gotten along very good. They were big. That one George Munsell. I had to sit right behind him. She mixed us littler ones up, girls especially. So, these big boys wouldn't be in one bunch. I sat right in back of him. Every morning when he came to school I could hardly stand it if he had been out cleaning the stable. It was awful. I remember that.

M: From McKinley you say you went to Fourth Street. Is that correct?

P: To the high school. I went to eighth grade to McKinley and then I went to high school. Started into high school at Fourth Street. It was on the second floor of the other end of the auditorium.

M: You had a grade school down below?

P: Yes.

M: Was there any difficulties or problems involved there as the big kids up stairs and the little kids downstairs?

P: No, we didn't have any trouble about that.

That was my downfall. I got sick, and I got the shingles. I got nervous. My brother died you know. He got what they thought was typhoid fever and he died. I was just a freshman when he died. So, we built on the house. We had all that expense. His sickness lasted six weeks. After I got the shingles, I got them in the spring, I was so nervous. I think part of it was on account of my mother. She was so upset. Then I got a job in the summer to help them pay for the house. I was a telephone operator. I worked as a telephone operator for seven years.

M: In Salem?

P: Yes.

M: When you entered high school you have indicated that your Freshman year was anything but pleasant.

P: You could say it was alright.

M: But had some difficulties. After you got somewhat straightened around what do you recall of those particular years. Either Freshman or your high school years total.

P: I didn't have any trouble. I just got sick and couldn't do much. I remember Mr. Lease and Miss Slayered and Mr. Zufall, some of those teachers. B.F. Staton he was a good fellow. Other than that I don't know. Mr. Lease he taught history, ancient history. Miss Slayered taught Latin.

M: You mentioned that you had taken some courses in book-keeping in junior high, which isn't offered any more. Do you recall the general line of courses that you took? You have mentioned ancient history and Latin, but your general line of courses in high school?

P: In high school I didn't take Latin. I took from Mr.

Zufall . . . He taught science. I had English, and science, and history, ancient history, and math.

M: All four years generally?

P: Generally. Math had always been my favorite. I never took a math then for grades. Up to junior high you had the same examination. If your grade was below ninety. I never took one. The rest of them I had to take them all. So, I didn't think I was so smart. I told Miss Snider, she was my history teacher, I told her one morning, she lived with her mother, I said, "Miss Snider I'm exempted from math, I don't have to go to school today." She said, "You could be exempt in history and geography too if you would try a little harder."

M: We tell kids that now. Quite a few years later. If you had been in high school then . . .

P: I could have graduated in 1912.

M: In 1912. This may get off the subject of education in the Salem schools just a little bit, but I would like to know what you recall of Salem, of the town at that . . . It would be pre-World War I.

P: Well, I'm telling you we had any number of grocery stores. I could just name ten or twelve grocery store. Now, they have one big market and that is it. Grocery stores all over the place; Kauffmans, and Caines . . . What is their name? I saw the other night that one of them died. They had a grocery store there where it starts. Oh yes, that was Copps there. They had Eddie McCarty, and they had Charlie Cryer and the Oriental, and Fultz. He had a market. He had the meat market on the corner of Pershing, it used to be Dry Street, and Broadway. Then his brother lived in Appleton. Just any number of them out on Ohio Avenue; Earl Day. Just any amount of them around here. You go in Mrs. Shwartz. She was at the corner of Vine and High. They took it up and into their home, she and Mrs. Courtney.

M: Third and Vine.

P: Yes. So, you didn't have to run out very far to find a grocery store. I used to go to that Copps on my way to school. They were on the corner of Hawley and Main. They had a grocery store there and they had candy for sale. We used to get a penny's worth there. When I went to school you couldn't go out the front door to come down that way and hit it. Unless you asked special permission. You had to go out the back door because my home was north. If I went out the back door then I had to run down the hill, down Hawley, to get my

candy for a penny.

M: When you say it Stark's, you mean where . . .

H: Stark's memorial.

M: You say a penny, a penny's worth of candy, how much candy would that have been?

P: I got four or five little sticks about this big wrapped in paper and it was taffy like. Just little, real thin sticks.

M: You bought it on your way to school?

P: No.

H: What would they have done if you would have eaten candy in school?

P: That is hard telling.

M: We have a candy store right across the street now, right directly across. There is no bones made about it. Students are in and out of there at any chance they can get. Especially before school.

P: Other than that I don't know. Of course, there are so many changes in Salem. When I worked for the telephone company their telephone offices were there at the corner of Lincoln and State Street, you know. Up over there where the Fiesta Shop is Trott's now. Of course, the restaurant was right there below us. Then they had the grocery right beside the restaurant.

M: You mentioned you worked for the Bell Telephone Company. When was that?

P: 1910 to 1917.

M: You went right to work then out of high school?

P: I started in August. I was sick in the spring and then I started in August. You had to be sixteen and I was sixteen in August. I started to work there and I got \$5.40 a week. I thought that was big wages. Then Leone worked at Jones. She got \$5 a week, so I thought I was doing pretty good. That is what all the girls in the stores got, \$5 a week. We got \$.10 an hour and we had to work nine hours a day. They gave us \$5.40 a week.

M: Of course, that always is the comment that the money went further. Even so, it doesn't sound right.

P: When I started working there they had these little flaps, little tin flaps, that came down over the number. When they lifted their telephone these little flaps went up. When you plugged in to answer them half of them wouldn't come back down. It was something. I was there when they got the new switch board in. Mr. Haggerstand put that in and that was something. Transferring from that old switch board to a brand new switch board. That was really something. Now they are up on Lundy Street. I got to be chief operator.

M: Did you feel that some of the work that you had done in school, some of the courses you had, were beneficial in that job?

P: Oh, yes. Arithmetic is always wonderful for me because I had . . . You had little things that you had to count once a week or once a month. Every call you made, little thing you had to count then. Of course, when I was the long distance operator we had to tell a lot of people . . . You had to figure quick. Especially the pay phones. That part was always good with me.

M: You left high school then at what grade?

P: Sophomore.

M: As a sophomore. Even though you were in the high school only two years, do you recall of any special activity or special events, special days that were part of the high school routine?

P: I don't really remember much about any special things. We had a piano I know in a music thing. That went a lot better. Other than that I don't remember a whole lot about that.

M: Were there any school plays or any functions of that sort?

P: I don't know of any.

M: What I'm getting at is I wonder what was available at that time for young people like yourself in the way of entertainment. There were no organized sports, many of the things that kids have today, choir.

P: Just football. We still had football.

M: What was involved there?

P: I don't know. I didn't know bean. I didn't pay any attention to it. I didn't know there was football until I started going with Paul. He wanted to take me to a football game one Saturday afternoon. I said, "I

know nothing about it." He said, "You have to come. I'm going to explain it to you." I had it all afternoon. I finally learned how. Now, I can watch it and enjoy it.

H: Was that a high school game?

P: Yes.

H: Where did they play those?

P: Out in Reilly field.

H: Oh, that was there that early.

P: That was 1917, we got married in. 1916.

M: So, that would have been a brand new item on the Salem landscape. Have you seen it lately?

P: No, I only just go past it. I haven't been in.

M: My father tells me that he used to stand out in the street and try to steal footballs whenever they came out over there. He lived right on the street.

P: Well, I went into the games all the time because you could see people on the roofs watching. That was really funny. Paul didn't want to sit on the bleachers all day. He liked to walk around and watch on the sidelines. I don't think they allow them to do that.

H: No, not anymore.

P: We did that.

H: Follow the play up and down the field?

P: Yes.

M: Things are a lot different.

H: Did they get pretty good sized crowds?

P: Yes, they did. I liked it after I understood it. I didn't think I would like it at all. I didn't understand it at all. He told me all about it and I thought, "Oh boy, some people will think I'm terribly dumb."

H: Did the school have cheerleaders or anything? You know, the high school have cheerleaders?

P: I don't think so. I don't remember them.

H: No band at half-time?

P: No, just football.

M: Just in and watch the game and that was it?

P: That was it.

M: Did you continue to go? You mentioned 1917 was the first time you went.

P: 1916, that was before we were married. We were married in 1917. Yes, I had to go.

M: My dad was born in 1911, he is sixty-four. So, that means you were still in high school sixty-five years ago. As of 1912, as a sophomore. I would still like to go back to the question I asked before. What was available in the way of entertainment, either through the school system or in Salem itself, at that time? They did have football but then it wasn't the only kind of sports. Today there are the choirs, and the bands, and all that sort of thing.

P: I don't remember much about anything. The main thing that always came every spring was Lymanhouse Pictures. They sold tickets and went to that every time. They had that outside.

M: Which was where?

P: What is there now, nothing?

H: Is that the Old Grande theater?

P: Yes.

M: On State?

P: Yes.

M: What was the name of the outfit?

P: Lymanhouse Pictures.

M: Lyman?

P: Lymanhouse Moving Pictures.

M: They had a program through the school system?

P: No, not through the schools. He came but the school would always announce it. People would get tickets to go because every school kid nearly went.

M: Did you?

P: Yes.

M: What was being shown?

P: Well, just pictures of places and things. It wasn't any . . .

M: It wasn't motion pictures?

P: No, just pictures of places.

H: There wasn't any plot?

P: No, there wasn't any plot to it. It was just pictures of different places, just so you get to know a lot. It was interesting as I remember. I didn't go to it very much but that is where I first met up with Paul for good. He was an usher. He was head usher at the Opera House for all the shows.

M: It seems so funny to hear Opera House. When I went to the Grand Theater it was just another movie house.

P: They called it the Opera House and he was head usher. I don't know. I went with my brother, that is when I went to the Simon thing, picture. My brother and his girl went and he asked me if I didn't want to go. I said, "Yes." So, he got me a ticket along side of theirs. When I went it was right, smack-dab, in back of one of the posts. I wouldn't let him change with me because he was with his girl. I wasn't going to do that. Paul noticed me, I had known him before but I didn't . . . He noticed me and he said, "Can you see?" I said, "If I lean around the post I can." He said, "I'll see what I can do out at the ticket office." So, pretty soon he came in and he said, "There is a seat over here on the other side. You can go over there and I made it fixed up for you." So, I went over and I sat down. There were two seats there and after he got done, eventually he came and sat down with me. That was the first night he asked to take me home. From then on . . .

H: He knew what he was doing when he fixed you up with that seat.

P: He evidently knew what he was doing, I guess.

M: He obviously went through Salem Schools also. Did he graduate from high school?

P: Yes.

M: What year? Do you recall?

P: 1916.

M: 1916. So, he was probably about the same age.

P: He stayed back a couple of years. His dad was the janitor at Fourth Street. Then when they built the new building, then he went to the new building, he and Shinny. He had to quinsy once a year and when he got that Paul had to go and do the work. So, he lost out some of his time. He had to stay back. He said, "They kept me back every other year."

M: Maybe he was a good janitor. Paul's father was a janitor?

P: Yes.

M: You say he went to the new school, you mean?

P: The school on Chesnut Street.

H: Yes, where the Central Clinic is.

P: That is where they first started. Then after they got the new building, why, he went up there.

M: That would be Fourth Street.

P: Fourth Street. Then after they got the new building, the high school, he went there.

M: Now the current junior high?

P: Yes, current junior high now. Shinny wasn't with him, I don't think, until they went to junior high.

H: Dave Groner.

P: Dave Groner was with him at Fourth Street. He got the quinsy every year.

M: In interviewing Frank, of course we talked about his father having been at Fourth Street. Was there any connection in there between Paul's father, Shinny, and your dad? Did they have a chance to . . .

H: My Uncle Paul's father was my mother's father. My Uncle Paul and my mother were brother and sister. So, he would be my grandfather.

M: So, you got the whole family history of custodians at the school system.

P: Yes, then my father worked at the Deming Company for years and years and years. Then when they had a strike or something we had a lot of trouble there. Then, he went to the school and he was janitor at Columbia Street for years, until he retired. We got a lot of janitors.

M: In connection with a good many school buildings. I was going to ask you one thing here. We have covered a lot of things without me asking specific questions. When you were in school as a youngster, well even up until your first two years of high school, what types of punishment did teachers dole out? You mentioned one day you had forgotten to shut the door and the teacher evidently . . .

P: She just bawled me out.

M: Yes, it was just a verbal thing.

P: Just a verbal thing. They used to make them stand in the hall. That was about the worst. Some of them they sent into Mr. Johnson. He had his office there on Fourth Street you know.

M: He was superintendent wasn't he?

P: Yes. They used to send them to him.

M: Superintendent got the classroom problems?

P: Yes, he had his office there. If it was a real serious offense they would send them there. A boy used to tell me about some of them that would be sent there. He had kind of big feet. He said if they just stared at his feet, he would just listen pretty quick. That is crazy.

H: Got embarrassed by his own feet, I suppose.

P: Got embarrassed by his own feet. Then Mr. Lease he was a nice fellow. He was shot, you know, and killed by his brother-in-law.

H: That first year they built the new high school.

P: Yes, his brother-in-law shot him.

M: Anybody know the situation there that led up to that or was it strictly a family problem?

P: Well, I don't know what was the matter with her brother. I don't think he was all together there.

H: According to newspaper articles that I read on it he

had some mental problems.

P: That is what I thought. He had some mental problems. He was just right there at the corner of Third Street and Lincoln. They just lived right a couple houses up.

H: Where the YWCA is now there was a big white house with pillars. Real pretty house. They lived up there. He and his sister, wasn't it? Mr. Lease and his sister were on their way home on a Sunday evening.

P: It was in the evening. Mrs. Lease wasn't with him.

H: No, I thought the sister was maybe. I was thinking somebody was.

P: Maybe she was.

H: Anyway they came up Lincoln, the brother approached them, and pulled out a gun according to the newspaper articles. That was it.

M: That was it. A high price to pay for being an educator in Salem.

P: Just terrible.

M: Well, we had a situation with a teacher and a gun episode in my last ten years of teaching. A threat anyway.

P: Poor Mrs. Lease, I felt so sorry for her. She went to the cemetery every day for a long, long time.

M: I wonder was there any noticeable effect that you could see in the school system itself among the teachers or the students at that time?

P: Oh, I don't see anything was wrong. I liked . . . What was her name? The one that taught German, which stuttered?

H: I don't know Aunt Alma. I can't help you with that one.

P: You don't know her. Abby was her sister, Edna was her name. Abby Fox, and she taught me geometry. They lived out Jennings Avenue.

H: Oh.

P: Edna Richards.

H: Richards yes.

P: Abby Richards, she was a good teacher. She met me when I was working. I was going back after lunch, at noon one day. She met me there and she said, "Oh, I was so sorry to see you quit school." I said, "Well, I got sick and I got this work." She said, "You would have made the best arithmetic teacher." I just loved algebra. Of course, she always sent me to the board. Ralph, he was the same way.

H: That's what I have been thinking of. Her son is an engineer.

M: You mentioned superintendents with big feet and German teachers that stuttered. I just wondered if kids have nicknames for teachers, like they do today?

P: She stuttered, Edna Richards stuttered until she talked German. Then she didn't stutter at all.

H: It was only the English that bothered her.

M: Well, maybe she was German. Was she German herself?

P: I suppose so.

H: They were Quaker family weren't they?

P: I think they were Quakers. They taught in high school, both of them, Abby and Edna. We used to wonder how she could not stutter when she taught German.

M: I just wonder, did students have nicknames for any of the teachers, that you recall?

P: Not that I knew of.

M: I know you would have never dreamed of mentioning it in front of anybody.

P: I don't think so. I don't remember of any.

M: It seems to me that kids would pick up on that kind of thing; people would stutter, big feet and what not. That is fair game for nicknames.

P: Well, somehow . . . They did talk about Edna Richards and her stuttering I know but then she was a very good German teacher. Abby was a good math teacher too.

M: You mentioned that you got sick and managed to pick up a job in 1912 and left school.

P: 1910 I started to work. I would have graduated in 1912.

M: You left in 1910. Were there other of your friends at that time that also went to work or maybe didn't finish school? Was that rather common or not?

P: No, I don't think that was common. I think that was just on account of . . . I don't think I would have been sick if it hadn't have been that my brother had died and my mother went all to pieces. She just wasn't . . . She didn't want me to go any place or do anything. It just kind of handicapped me all around. I couldn't go . . . These people that go to this family show. She didn't want me to go there. They had other little things and she thought we ought to get the home paid for regardless of the kids.

M: She clung a little tighter then at the loss of your brother?

P: Yes, that is right.

M: The reason I am curious about others perhaps not finishing school is my father made it all the way through three years of high school then would have graduated in 1929. Of course at that time there were quite a few students that didn't make it because of certain economic situation. In his particular case his father died and he just went to work three days after.

P: It was bad, yes. I know it was bad then. Just like it was when our son Ralph . . . When he should have graduated from Purdue and they didn't have a graduation that year because the war was on. Half of them quit or went in the service in World War II. He had to go back afterwards. He went back so he could get his B.S. Engineering. He had to go back and study some more to take the exams. He made it.

M: We talked about something related to this next item. Were there particular rules and regulations that you remember as a student, either as a grade schooler or high school? You definitely remember buying candy at the little store on the corner and take that.

P: I wouldn't dare take it to school. I didn't think I was very conscientious about it.

M: Of course, conscientious students many times don't think about rules and regulation.

P: The rules and regulation, you couldn't go out the front door if you lived on the North side. You had to go out the north door. It had a north and south door at McKinley. Lots of times I wanted to go out the other door. If I went and got permission, but I had to give a reason, then I could go. I had some friends on the

other side that I could go with. Once in awhile I went to their house. I couldn't go unless I asked and told them why.

M: Did they march you out of school?

P: Yes, we had to march out of school. You got in the front line and if you didn't belong there, and she didn't give you permission, she would take you out of it.

M: Tell me what . . . The regimentation was part of it or was there some . . .

P: No, the school is right in between the two streets. Well, the back of it was closer to the Cleveland, which was Green Street when we went there, and the one out front was farther from State Street. They had to march all the way down the front you see. Well, there weren't very many of us that went out the back and she would keep track of us if we went there.

M: Did you have to be quiet while you were marching?

P: Yes, sir. You didn't dare talk.

M: You would want to be at the junior high then at 2:45 today. You really wouldn't. That is another world. It is interesting to me to hear these things because even though the school buildings look the same . . .

H: I wrote a letter to a Miss Hole, she had written a letter to the editor, she mentioned the high school about the lines they had painted on the floor. Certain groups going to a certain room had to stay . . . You know, almost like highway markings, you had to stay within. You don't remember anything like that?

P: I don't remember anything like that.

H: How about coming in? Did you have to line up to come into the school in the morning too or in the afternoon?

P: No, you just went in whenever you got your wraps off in the cloak room. Then go right on in.

H: I mean coming into the building did you have any time on the playground first in grade school?

P: Oh, in the playground. They rang a bell, you had to come then.

H: You didn't have to line up then, you could just walk right into your room?

P: No, you just had to get right in there. Get right over and get in as fast as you could when that bell rang. If you were close to the door you were the first one in. If you weren't you just got in best way you could. You had to hurry and get in there, because when the bell rang in the room, you had to be seated.

H: In high school did you have to go out by classes or could you just leave when the bell rang?

P: No, we had to go by classes.

H: Even in high school?

P: Yes, we had to go by classes.

M: Just simply more regimentation than we would even think of today. I don't think they have anything close to that in the grade schools.

H: No.

M: Where you at least have fewer students or more control of one teacher over a group of students in a room. I want to mention back to this business again of your being in high school, aside from the fact that you didn't graduate. Do you recall anything at all about the graduation proceedings in those years? I know now they have a special graduation day set aside for the students. In other words the seniors are honored and the other classes are there.

P: I don't know too much about that. I went to our sons graduation of course. He graduated in a new building.

H: 1938.

P: 1938, yes. That was Lincoln there. Jane, of course, she changed schools all around. She is the one that could answer the questions I suppose. She can ask them too.

M: You don't recall anything earlier.

P: No, I don't recall anything earlier.

M: As a freshman did you have to go to any kind of commencement exercises just to observe the graduates of that year?

P: No, didn't have to do that.

M: Because you mentioned that eighth grade was such a big operation, with the new dress and everything.

P: I knew that they had the banquet and everything up there in the high school too. Up in the second floor because I helped one year with it. The Baptist women had a meal.

M: Banquet for?

P: Baccalaureate.

M: Oh, I see. There was a meal involved with that.

P: Yes. The Baptist women had that. Ida Clark was the head of the Baptist missionary or woman's aid business and I went and helped.

H: Where did they have that? You said up on the second floor.

P: They had it on the second floor.

H: Where? In the hall?

P: The tables were in the auditorium. Were those seats down? How did they get them?

H: I don't know. That is what I was wondering. Wondering about the seating and so on in the auditorium.

P: I just can't remember too much but I helped with it I know. There was something wrong with the chicken that night. Some of them got sick. They said it was something wrong. They knew it was always hot weather.

H: Yes, it would be.

P: It is in June.

M: Maybe things just didn't get cooked.

P: They had chicken salad of some kind and that is very touchy. If you don't keep that cold it is liable to poison.

M: Did that become a big problem, the sickness of that time? Or just a few people?

P: Well, just a few people got sick.

M: Of course, a few is enough.

P: They didn't like that at all. It was bad. We used to serve meals, suppers, down at the Baptist church and we had quite a good trade down there. That is how they made money. It was a terrible place to get to.

H: That would be some poor advertising when people got sick on one of the dinners.

P: Yes, it was bad. I helped there too but I don't remember what I did that night at the supper. At the Baptist Church when I helped there I had to take care of the silverware. They had one place for you to wash the silver in one little room and the other was where the kitchen was. You couldn't have the silverware in the kitchen. You had to have it by itself. It was a terrible thing, that kitchen at the Baptist Church.

M: Looking back from the turn of the century up into 1910, which is a good long time ago to be in the schools, I wonder is there anything at all of that period of time--that you were in McKinley, and Fourth Street, and in the schools in Salem--any one thing that sticks out in your mind.

P: Only one thing that I can remember of is when they had that great big snow. My father couldn't go to work and the men all got out and shoveled snow. We didn't have to go to school but it was clear up to their hips. They couldn't get out at all.

When I was working it snowed so bad that we couldn't begin to get to work. So, they hired a rig and sent it around to pick us girls up.

M: Things haven't changed. One of the highlights of school memories is no school.

H: When was that big snow Aunt Alma, 1901?

P: The one when I was working, Eddie Howell, he is the one that drove . . . That went to the livery stable.

H: Is he the one that was later blinded in World War I? The same Eddie Howell?

P: Yes, I guess he was.

H: He went to the services and was blinded, the scout commissioner.

M: This a relation to Howell that I know, Dick and . . .

H: Yes, he was a relation. I think he probably would have been an uncle.

M: Dick Howell and Jennings.

P: Eddie and Jeroyl and Taylor's wife was Howell.

H: John Taylor.

P: Yes. She was his sister.

M: Any other things that stand out?

P: Other than the big snow, it is terrible.

M: Of all those teachers you mentioned then, you certainly must keep them in mind because they come so quickly to your conversation.

P: I liked them. I got along fine with the teachers. I seem to always get in the front seat. I was in the first seat in the second row in the second grade, Miss Munson. She had me doing everything. The only thing that was bad that I did, and it about broke my heart. In the third grade, Natalie Sharpknack and I were friends. She wanted to know something and she told me to write her a note. I wrote her a note and the teacher caught me. Of course I had to go up, she had to read the note. She said, "Well, you'll have to stay after school." So, we stayed after school, Natalie and I both. She said, "Well, I'm not going to punish you. The only thing, I'll have to mark on your report communicates." I went home with my report and put it under the cupboard under the porch. My mother scolded me and she said, "Do you talk all the time?" I said, "No, I wrote a note." "Oh," she said, "go on."

M: It really wasn't quite so bad?

P: Wasn't so bad after all. I thought for sure I would get a scolding for getting that on my report.

H: Do you remember a story Uncle Paul used to tell about somebody putting a cow up in the belfry at Fourth Street?

P: A cow?

H: Yes, I can't remember the details on that.

P: Might have been. They did a lot of tricks.

H: He used to tell about somebody.

P: I think he did one about that.

H: Then about somebody stealing the clapper out of the bell.

P: Yes, they stole the clapper out of the bell. They found that up in Henry's barn.

H: That really stopped school from starting with no bell

ringing.

M: You say lots of dirty tricks. I wonder what other little gems related to that school, pranks and what not. The cow and no clapper in the bell. I think those would probably be the toppers.

P: Well, that was it. I'll tell you. Several times the kids would get up there. Soon as Dad Probert would hear that bell he was out of bed and up there just that quick. They lived right back there on Sixth Street.

M: We are talking about Fourth Street again?

P: Fourth Street again, yes.

M: Of course that wasn't safest place in the world to be either.

P: Herb Hutchison was the janitor up at McKinley.

H: Did they ever have a bell at McKinley like Fourth Street?

P: Just a hand bell.

H: Just a hand bell. They still have that in the trophy case. You might be interested in seeing that sometime.

P: He always came out and rang the bell, Herb Hutchison. We all liked him.

H: He did that even when I was in school.

M: That was a big charge for kids at Prospect. Get to stay in at recess only to get to ring the bell out on the fire escape.

H: This is Dick Hutchison, you had asked me about interviewing. I knew his father.

M: His father was another custodian?

H: Right. Herb Hutchison.

M: You people have a lot of relationships with a custodian in the school system.

H: I have the bell at home on the mantle, from Fourth Street; the hand bell. But we won't tell anybody that.

M: We just did.

H: Do you remember any of the details of Uncle Paul's graduation?

P: I don't even know who I went with. I must have gone with Paul's father and mother.

H: Was it a big affair? How would it have compared to the eighth grade graduation that you had?

P: The eighth grade wasn't so big. That was big.

H: They have music, a speaker?

P: Yes, they had a speaker.

M: This would be in our auditorium, the junior high auditorium.

H: No, this would have been at Fourth Street.

P: No, Paul was in the new building.

M: You mentioned 1938.

H: No, that was Ralph. That is their son.

P: Paul graduated in 1916.

H: He graduated out of the new . . . The new building I didn't think they occupied until January of 1917.

P: Yes, they had just gotten in there.

M: Just made it. So, it would have been in what is now our auditorium.

P: It was new.

H: They went in right after Christmas Vacation, didn't they?

P: No, I have got his thing in here, his book.

H: Then they go into the new building right after Christmas Vacation?

P: It would tell when they went in there, I expect. I don't know.

H: Up until Christmas of 1915 they went to Fourth Street and then Christmas vacation was over they went into the new building, 1916. The graduation would have been there.

P: Yes, it was the first graduation in the new building.

M: 1916 is the first half year of school function at

the . . .

H: In the new school, in our building.

M: 230 North Lincoln?

H: Right.

M: That building has been around a good long time then too.

P: Yes.

M: They are in the process now of . . . They put all new windows in and new fluorescent lighting, everything else. I think they are figuring on another hundred years for us in there. Although the building really isn't in all that bad of shape.

P: It is a good location.

M: Frank, do you have any more questions in mind at all?

H: I was just wondering, something we talked about in class today was about how kids who lived out some distance from the school got to school. Was there any bus transportation that you can remember?

P: They rode horses.

H: They rode horses or came on foot. You had to furnish your own transportation regardless of the distance involved?

P: Yes, they didn't furnish anything. Paul used to talk about a couple of them out there on Goshen Road came in. Rode horses.

M: What would have been the greatest distance possible at that time?

H: I know the Brandinghams came in from Winona.

P: At that time they had little schools out farther. They wouldn't be high schools.

H: No, they wouldn't be high schools. They would come in to high school in Salem.

P: Yes, they would have to come in to high school in Salem.

H: I remember the Brandinghams saying that they would run from Winona into Salem in the morning and in nice weather go home for lunch running. Run back and then

run home after track practice. That is how they got to be state champions in track. They were state champions.

M: That is a little too far.

P: They didn't have any busses. Sometimes people would drive them in, their parents. They didn't have any cafeterias either.

M: Everybody brought their own or went home?

P: Went home or brought their own.

M: Sometimes wish we could now but we are strapped into a half-hour slot for lunch. So, you are in the school throughout the day. At least from junior high on up anyway.

P: When I went to school they wouldn't allow you to bring your lunch unless you were sick or something like that. They didn't allow you to bring your lunch.

M: If you lived in town?

P: If you lived in town.

M: I was not even allowed for three years at Prospect. I didn't live all that far away but it was on the outer fringes.

H: I wasn't allowed at McKinley, and we lived in Superior, to take my lunch unless the weather was absolutely horrible or an illness. You had to have a note.

P: Yes, had to have a note.

H: It had to be approved by the principal.

P: That is right.

M: I want to, before we shut the machine off, to thank Frank publicly, as I did for his interview, but for setting it up with you. Also, to thank you very much for your time.

P: You are quite welcome, if it does any good.

M: It will, and I am deeply grateful to you and to Frank for allowing me to come down here and interview you.

P: I think around my time in school there were a lot more that quit school when they got to high school than they do nowadays. There is nothing for them to do anyhow. They can't get work and they have to stick there and

make it.

- H: Did you have to pay tuition when you went to high school?
- P: No.
- H: Buy your own books?
- P: Buy your own books though.
- H: So, it could really be an expensive . . .
- P: Yes, it was. You could go to that . . . Holly's used to have a bookstore that you could . . . If you were through with books you could take them there and sell them. Then they would sell them secondhand books. If you could get a hold of one of them it wasn't so expensive. If you had to buy a brand new book it was expensive.
- H: Yes, and the people in the stores are getting \$5 a week.
- P: They were the two book stores. They were just restaurants.
- M: What did you pay for a book, do you have any idea generally?
- P: I don't have any idea. Some of them were more expensive than others. They had spelling books and readers and dictionaries. That was about the main book though.
- H: We had to buy ours on up through third grade.
- P: We had to buy them.
- H: Then they changed and the school started buying at that point.
- M: I wonder how that would go over if we went back to that system.
- H: If you go back to it, it would be tough.
- P: Do they furnish the tablets too now?
- H: No, in grade schools the kids bring in what they call "supply money" at the beginning of each year. Then they buy the tablets and give the kids the paper but they have paid for it.
- P: We had to have our own tablets.
- H: Junior and senior high you have to now.

P: They did have pencils. We had to get them every night. They had little folders and little slots made. The first one in the row had to get up and put pencils in and hang them up on the wall.

H: Of course, they had the ink wells too.

P: Oh yes.

H: The straight pen in the holder.

M: I imagine the janitor or the teacher were in charge of keeping those filled up.

P: The janitor. The janitor filled those.

M: Now today, the janitor at night that sweeps up 310 and 209 study hall . . . The one janitor that just started a few weeks ago, he makes a big joke of it. He has got like 300 items down in the boiler where kids drop pens evidently. Don't bother with them or who knows how they get there.

H: That is not new though, Jim. I don't think until I was probably a junior or senior in high school, I never bought a pencil. Of course, my dad being a janitor would bring home brand new pencils by the fistful every night. I never had to buy a pencil.

P: And handkerchiefs, remember how they used to bring handkerchiefs?

H: I never had new handkerchiefs. Wash them and boil them and wash them and iron them.

P: My dad brought them home by the hundreds.

H: Pencils, I never had to buy one.

P: Just wash them, and boil them, and iron them.

H: And marbles.

P: Yes, marbles.

M: They pick them up in the school?

H: Or the teachers would take them away from kids during the day and then tell him to throw them away.

M: And he would take them home and you would come right back to school.

H: I would bring them back to school and the teacher would

take them away from me. That is early American recycling.

M: Again my thanks.

P: Well, you are quite welcome.

END OF INTERVIEW