

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Campbell, Ohio During the 1930's and 1940's

Personal Experience

O. H. 1237

BILLY KISH

Interviewed

by

William M. Kish

on

July 15, 1989

BILLY KISH

Billy Kish was born on October 31, 1920 in Campbell, Ohio. Bill is the son of Mike and Susan (Szabo) Kish. Bill's family is of Hungarian descent and first settled on Robinson Road in Campbell. At a very young age, Bill had responsibility tending to the family's garden and livestock. He attended Penhale Elementary and Campbell Memorial High School. He completed the eleventh grade.

The high unemployment in the Valley during the late 1930's sent Bill to the Civilian Conservation Corps (1938-1939). In the Conservation Corps, Bill was sent West to work on roads, bridges, farms and fight fires.

Returning to Campbell, Mr. Kish worked a variety of jobs, not holding one for a long period of time. In November 1941, Bill joined the U.S. Marine Corps. In service to his country, Bill was sent all throughout the Pacific Theater. At one time spending as much as thirty-eight straight months in the islands. Bill has first hand experience of the horrors of war; he is also a life member of the Disabled American Veterans.

After being discharged from the service in 1945, he took a variety of jobs in the Youngstown area. In 1947, he was employed by the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company in Campbell, Ohio. There, he stayed for thirty years. In 1977, the mill shutdown forced Bill into early retirement.

Bill was married to Marie Lesignoch on July 26, 1952. The couple first resided at 14 Chambers Street in Campbell for seven years. (Youngstown Sheet & Tube Company Homes) They have two

daughters and a son; Beverly Jean, aged 35, of Annadale Va; Diane, aged 34, of Miami, Florida; and William, aged 29, still residing at home with Bill and Marie at 335 Blossom Avenue in Campbell.

Mr. Kish is still very active, he is a real do-it-yourself repair type of person. He is a great conversationalist, a type of person very few can find fault with.

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Campbell, Ohio During the 1930's and 1940's

INTERVIEWEE: BILLY KISH

INTERVIEWER: William M. Kish

SUBJECT: family history, gardening, farming,
entertainment, steel mills

DATE: July 15, 1989

WK: This is an interview with Billy Kish for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, on Campbell during the 1930's and 1940's, by William Kish, at 335 Blossom Avenue in Campbell, Ohio, on July 15, 1989, at 8:00 p.m.

WK: Dad, what do you remember about Campbell while you were growing up in the 1930's?

BK: When I was young I had to go and watch cows during the summer. All summer, in the afternoon, I went and had to go pick manure on top of the hill to put on the soil to help fertilize the gardens and stuff like that. Then we had two cows and a horse. I remember that. My father had a horse too. I remember my dad taking me for a ride down Lowellville when I was a young kid, about ten or eleven years old. That's how old I was when he had the horse and the cow. We had to watch cows right here on Blossom Avenue and behind Memorial High School and all over.

WK: Did other families have cows?

BK: Other families were the Moretics, they would watch cows with us and the Kootzel, Al Cyernik, and a few other families. We all gathered back there and everybody had cows to watch because most of the people had cows.

WK: How about gardens?

BK: Gardens, they raised everything and we raised pigs and slaughtered them around for Christmas. We had chickens, we had ducks, you name it, we had it. Then I also remember my dad taking me down when there was a blacksmith shop down on Robinson Road, right behind the church, the Slovak Church over there, there was a blacksmith shop over there. My dad took me down there so he could shoe the horse that we had. Then to make spending money, I had to go pick rags, everywhere I could I got rags and we sold it to the ragman.

WK: Who's that?

BK: A guy came around with a horse and buggy and he would weigh the rags that you had, or whatever you had, and he would give you \$.03, \$.04, and \$.05 and that was a lot of money in those days. You thought you were a big shot if you had \$.10 in your pocket. Then we had to go down, I knew the woman across the street where we lived, they were like bootleggers and I went and gathered whiskey bottles. I sold them to them for \$.05 a piece. They lived around our neighborhood. I'm not going to mention any names but they lived around there and for \$.05 I sold them whiskey bottles. She said, "bring me all the bottles you got." Then the lady that lived about three or four houses down where we're living right now, I sold her the bottles because she washed the bottles and sold us a pint of whiskey.

WK: This was during prohibition?

BK: That's right. Then it was all around Campbell, that's all they made was whiskey. They would get raided and all that went on. I remember that when I was a young kid.

WK: Raided by the federal government?

BK: By the federal government, yes.

WK: Do you remember them dumping whiskey out of...

BK: I remember right here in a certain house I'm not going to mention. Like I said, I don't want to mention names. They dropped the mash on the top floor and it went all the way down and I remember one old fellow, he grabbed the whiskey can, he was dragging it down the street and he was boozed up because they threw it out the window, the booze.

WK: Do you remember as a young boy, was there bars open during prohibition?

BK: Well, according to this fellow I talked to the other day, he told me that in Campbell alone, this was way ahead of time, there was about forty bars, that's including all clubs and bars and everything. Because the mills were working and there was all kind of goings on.

WK: Would that be like maybe during the 1920's?

BK: No, I don't remember the 1920's. The 1930's. In the late 1930's, like in 1935.

WK: What was it like, the landscape in Campbell?

BK: Right here where we lived, there was nothing. There was a house next to us, I remember and it was all woods. We used to play cards down here and I even showed you the cave that we played cards in.

WK: Yes. At the corner of Blossom and Eastern Avenue.

BK: Right. We'd always watch the cows around here and then you had your chores cut out for you. You had to dig the garden and you'd better do it because when your dad would come home, he'd give it to you if you didn't do it. So that was first priority. In the summertime, we took our shoes off and walked barefoot. That was it, you didn't have no shoes. Maybe you had shoes to go to church, then when I was thirteen years old, I had to go to Hungarian School to learn how to read and write. So what I did, I'd walk down Fifth Street or Sixth Street and get the street car. Then from the street car, I'd get on and that would take us down to the square and get a transfer. The transfer would take us to Hungarian Presbyterian Church. We had to learn Hungarian. You took your confirmation in Hungarian. You didn't take your confirmation in English.

WK: Is there a lot of other people from Campbell that were Hungarian?

BK: Oh, yes. Me and all my buddies would meet up with all the different Hungarian families, kids would meet and they would ride the same thing down there. One thing I remember always about that, they had the Isley's dairy over there, the big Isley's. When we came out, you went over and for \$.05 they would give you an ice cream, you couldn't eat it until you got to Campbell. That's how big it was, with the cone and everything. Then we'd get off, walk up the hill again, because there was no hill bus then to take you around.

WK: So you are walking from Wilson Avenue up?

BK: From Wilson Avenue, we got off, there was street car lines where Calex is now, we'd get off over there on Fifth or Sixth Street and walk up the hill. You did that on a Sunday when you went to church. You went to church every Sunday, that was it. When you came home, you took your knickerbockers off and you hung them up in the closet. You didn't walk around in that because that was your Sunday dress.

WK: Was there other street car lines going through Campbell?

BK: No, they never put the bus lines on until later. The street cars were all at the bottom of the hill. There was nothing up here. Then later on, they put a hill bus to pick up the passengers. They went up Robinson and then Sixteenth Street and then down Devitt Avenue, that was later.

WK: Do you remember when Twelfth Street was a dirt road?

BK: Oh, yes. I remember when they paved Twelfth Street, when they put straw on it. Yes I did. I was about thirteen or fourteen years old.

WK: So that was about 1933 or 1934?

BK: 1933 or 1934, yes. I remember that real good. Where we lived up in Campbell, we didn't have no electricity up there. So my father and Mr. Yumbar had to chip in for a telephone pole. They had to pay half a piece so they could run the electric line and then Yumbar's got electric and we got electric. That's the only way we could get electric.

WK: What did you use before that then?

BK: Light. I could remember my dad going down there in the kitchen and cleaning the kerosine lantern out and loading it up and that was your light. There was no water inside when we moved up there, there was no electric or nothing.

WK: Where did you get your water from?

BK: Pump. Then when I was twelve or thirteen years old growing up, when my mother washed clothes, we had to pump the water, bring it into the house then we had a wringer. One had to stand there and run the wringer just like the modern Maytag, like the Maytags are today, except we had to turn it. That's the way you did the clothes. That was the only way you could wash them. Then, to take a bath, it was the same thing. We had a big tub made out of wood and you filled that with cold water, then my mother would boil water and give us

baths like that. That was the way we took our baths.

WK: So how many times a week did you take a bath?

BK: One thing we were clean. We always had to take two or three baths a week. You had to. Yes.

WK: What type of meals did you basically eat then?

BK: Real good meals because everybody cooked in those days. There was none of this stuff that you just bought canned goods and this like you do today. We had bacon, my father would kill the pig off, we had bacon to eat, we put in lard and you'd go to the fruit cellar in the winter and my mother in the winter would take that stuff out for us and cook it for us. We always had good meals, and then there was a store on the corner, Furins, right across from Memorial High School.

WK: Okay, Sanderson (street location).

BK: We went over there and used to buy lunchmeat and different stuff that you needed, but most of it... My mother even made bread and everything because things were tough then. My dad had to get a telephone in. He was wondering why they weren't calling him from the railroad to go to work because he was only working two or three days a week. So they told him, Mac, you don't have a telephone. If you get a telephone in, we could give you more extra turns. So he got on a couple of turns once in a while because they'd call him because the guy reported off and they had no way of getting in touch. So once he got the phone in we were like big shots, we had a telephone, even, that's after the electric was in.

WK: What did you do for entertainment?

BK: We used to go to picnics, the Bucket of Blood, walk up there and watch ball games, mostly on Sundays. Go down to Gordon Park where city hall is, we'd go down Gordon Park and watch the ballgames. In 1937 I think the steel strike was. I think I was about fourteen or fifteen years old. The National Guard came in because they were rioting down there and everything. They pitched pop tents right where the city hall is today. They pitched pop tents and slept in them. They only kept that up for two days because it rained cats and dogs and they went up Memorial. I remember walking with them National Guards, following them all the way up to Memorial. They slept in the gymnasium. In the meantime when they were down there they slept on straw. They had straw and two guys slept in the pop tents.

WK: That was 1937?

BK: That was 1937 during the steel strike.

WK: You mentioned about the baseball game. Was that like a big thing back then?

BK: Oh, yes. I don't even know the names. They had the Hungarians and the Slovak league and I remember Casey pitched for them. They used to play up on top the hill by the water tank, up across Struthers Liberty Road up there. It was all empty there. There were a couple ball parks, we always went up there to watch ball games.

WK: Was there a lot of people during these times?

BK: Oh, yes. The people would come, especially down at Gordon Park, they would always be watching them. That was their pastime. Then we'd go down there and try to... Some of them guys were tough. They'd hit a foul ball, we'd try to grab the ball and throw it to the next guy and run. But boy, you'd never beat them people. They'd get after you, they'd run you down, either that or you'd drop the ball. Once you dropped the ball you were safe but if you didn't drop that ball, that guy chased you for about three blocks. Nobody had a baseball, nobody had bats or nothing. One time I told my father I wanted a bat. He said, "Wait awhile, I'll bring you one tomorrow." He brought me a brakeman's club that you'd brake cars with. We used that. You could ask my brother. We used that for years and years to hit balls with.

WK: So many kids during this time period, they really didn't have too much?

BK: No, money was tight. I remember another time, I was a young kid and you had to go down to a show on Short Street and Robinson Road, the show was right there. I wanted to go to that show and I asked my mother and she gave me a nickel and you had to have a ticket on Monday and Tuesday. So I just dropped the ticket in. I didn't put the nickel in. That guy kicked me so hard in the rear end man, I'll tell you, I thought he killed me.

WK: So you were trying to cheat him?

BK: I tried to cheat, but for a nickel. I just dropped the ticket in and he grabbed me by the thing and he took a kick at me and I ran down the show over there. That's the way they were in them days. Sure, that was \$.05 a ticket.

WK: You tried to short change him?

BK: No, I wanted the nickel. I never did.

WK: Did you ever get into any of the movies down there?

BK: I remember Casey took me to...

WK: Casey Augustine.

BK: Yes. Casey Augustine took me to a movie because I used to come up, his mother was sort of like an invalid. I'd wash her hands for her to help out and she was an invalid. He always treated me nice. He'd take me to a show and all that. He was grown up and everything. The first show I went to, this was way back when I was younger. They had a Victrola playing a record and then they had Tarzan showing, the picture jumping up and a guy walked up and down selling pop up and down the isles. So what these kids would do, they wouldn't want to go to the bathroom, they'd go in the pop bottle and roll it down, you could hear them pop bottles rolling down the thing. I remember that like it was yesterday. Once in a while the pop bottle would hit you, you'd have to pick it up because they'd roll it down.

WK: You don't remember the silent movies? Do you?

BK: Yes. That was silent movies. Because when Casey took me, I think he paid a nickel for me to get in. They played records, Tarzan was jumping on the street because there was no talkies. The talkies came out after that. There was no talkies.

WK: Where was this theater located?

BK: Right on Robinson Road, right below the post office.

WK: There's nothing there now?

BK: No the building is no longer there because there was a Five and Ten next to it and that burned down too.

WK: So that was a big passtime then too, going to the movies?

BK: Going to the movies was a big passtime, going to baseball games, and basketball games. I'd always try to sneak in on Penhale. We'd go down there when I was young. I'd try to sneak in and they caught me all the time because you wanted the pay. That was a passtime too. That was a big thing if you went down and watch these guys play basketball down at Penhale School. Mr. Miller was the janitor over there. Once in a while he'd sneak me in because he knew my father. I'd sneak in. He said, "Come on, let this kid in." But we used

to stay out there and try to get in, a lot of times they wouldn't let us in because we didn't have no money to see the basketball game. It was no big thing, but more or less they wanted pay for it.

WK: Do you remember the radio back in those times?

BK: Yes. My father was one of the first ones on the street, on Sanderson to buy an RCA Victor radio. It had a combined Victrola on top and radio after we had the electric in. People used to come all around to listen to this radio. Sometime in our front room, we had fifteen people in there listening to the radio because that was something. Nobody had it.

WK: Do you remember what year this was?

BK: I was about fifteen years old, so that was in 1934 or 1935, something like that. I don't know the exact date.

WK: Do you remember some of the old radio shows?

BK: There was Amos and Andy, there was Jack Benny, Tom Mix, you had to listen to chapter plays. Every 5:30 he'd come on, you'd sit by the radio listening then in fifteen or twenty minutes, then you'd listen the next day to see what happened. Hi Ho Silver and all that different stuff. It's been so long ago that I sort of forgot about all that stuff, you know.

WK: What was it like with the working conditions? Do you remember what other families did, what their father did for a job?

BK: My dad was lucky. He got a job on the railroad and he worked two or three days a week. We always had something to eat. We always had bread on the table. The mills sort of slacked down when they had that steel strike and stuff like that. This was in 1937 or 1938, it was still rough. You couldn't find a job anywhere so finally my father got me a job on the railroad. This was in 1938 or 1939, he got me job on the railroad, cleaning limestone cars. You'd clean them. I remember I got hurt down there. I got hit right across the head with a bar when the door flew open. I stayed there for about nine months and then I went to CCC (Civilian Conservation Corp) Camp. When I was about seventeen or eighteen years old, I tried to go and they wouldn't accept me. So Mr. Borak was Mayor so I went down and I said, "Mr. Borak, I'd like to go to CCC Camp, it's pretty hard on my family, my dad's only working two days a week, I'd like to go." I think that was the best experience that I ever had. He gave me a slip of paper, he said, "Bill, I don't know if it will

do you any good, but I'm pretty sure they'll accept you." I took this paper up there and I met Jimmy Serroka, my buddy from Campbell and we walked all the way up on the North Side of town, some building up there and I remember we had to carry his trunk, all the way down to the railroad station. Then they took us to Xenia, Ohio, and they examined us. From there after we got our inoculations and everything, they put us on a train from Xenia and we went all the way to Idaho, Higgamen, Idaho. From there we had sage brush fires, we fought, we built roads and they had what you called a jackrabbit ride. All the people in town would come out, the CCC Camp would come out and there were so many jackrabbits, they'd drive them in the fence and these guys would beat them with clubs, kill them. I got pictures of them.

WK: How many people were in that camp you were in at Higgamen, Idaho?

BK: Oh, it was just like an Army barracks. There was about four barracks that was all full of men. I can't tell you exactly. So when I was over there, they asked me if I wanted to go to spy camp. So I went out to Clover Flats, that was about thirty-five or forty miles out of the regular camp, you had more freedom, you didn't have to fall out for inspection and if you worked all day, you could lay down at night, you had a nice place to sleep, the guys would talk and all that. So for a passtime, we used to go out and kill rattlesnakes. Me and Jimmy. Oh, yes. We got pictures to prove it. You've seen those pictures of me holding those snakes. We didn't have nothing to do so Jim made a big, long pole and we'd go out and take boulders and kill rattlesnakes and Jim would skin them and try to make a belt out of them and stuff like that.

WK: So that's what you were doing when you were out there? What were some of the other activities that you did when you were in CCC Camp?

BK: I worked on the rock crusher.

WK: What was that?

BK: They built roads for the sheep herders so they could carry water to the sheep. So with this crusher, we lined up a bunch of rock and I'd throw the rock up to one guy and he'd catch it and throw it in the crusher. Then there would be two guys behind there with the shovel and they'd be throwing the rocks all over the place and spread it, then the roller would come down and roll it. I'll bet you them road are still there to this day.

WK: Is that right?

BK: Yes, sir, boy they were tough roads. You worked.

WK: How long did you work?

BK: They paid me \$1 a day, but boy you earned every dollar of it.

WK: What time was a normal starting time?

BK: It as just like in the Army. If you were in the main barracks, you fell out for colors, you had to stand inspection, then you went in to change your clothes and then you had to go on the work detail. Me and Jimmy, we got a truck driver job, but Jimmy had the new truck and I had a junk. He always used to laugh at me, it would never run.

WK: So it was like a full day?

BK: Oh, yes. You worked.

WK: What time did you normally get done?

BK: You were done about 3:00 or 4:00. You went to wash up and then you'd go to supper at 5:00 and that was it.

WK: How was the food during that time?

BK: Real good. They fed us good, better than at home. You got everything. The government fed us real good. I'll tell you it was the best experience, even for me, because I learned how to make a bunk up, it was just like being in the Army. So when I went to the Marine Corps, it was kind of easy for me, because a G.I. said to me, "Where did you learn to make a bunk at?" I told him, "Well, I had experience when I was in CCC Camp." He didn't say nothing, he walked away because it was Army, Marine style that they made the bunks.

WK: What were some of the other things you said, fighting fires?

BK: Yes. We went to a lot of fires. When any fire that would start burning, if they couldn't put it out, we'd have to go on standby or something like that. If you were going over to some of those places, if you were going through that town, they'd pick you up, hitchhiking or something like that, you'd have to go fight the fire.

WK: Is that right?

BK: Yes.

WK: What other things did you say, Rock crusher, fighting fires, were there any other duties?

BK: I drove a truck. On a Saturday, we'd go ride the farmer's horses, he'd let us ride them. One time when Jimmy jumped on a horse, I hit it with a belt and that horse took off. Jimmy was supposed to hold the front and I gave it a whack and the horse stood on his head and took off.

WK: How much money were you paid when you were out there?

BK: I got \$7 or \$8 and \$22 was sent home. \$30 a month.

WK: Okay, \$1 a day, \$30 a month.

BK: Sure, the check would come home and that helped because the family was poor. Of course when I came home, I figured that I'd have some money, but it was all gone because things were a little hard then, too.

WK: With the \$8 what did you buy?

BK: Cigarettes, candy, Coca Cola, a pop or something like that. They had a PX where you went in and bought stuff. Then if you gambled, you were out. Just like Jimmy told me, he said, "don't forget, send your brother Lou a little reminder that that deuce he borrowed off of me never paid me."

WK: That was 1938, 1939?

BK: Yes. then when I came home, I got a job down there at NYA in Campbell.

WK: NYA?

BK: Yes. That was to help people that needed work. We built these poles, even now and then you still see one, you come down and it has a street marker on it. It was a concrete pole, it has like Blossom Avenue and Twelfth Street and all that.

WK: Like a pillar?

BK: Yes. Like a pillar. We used to pour in concrete and work for Joe Parish at the high school. I worked there about... I went to school, well it was like a training or something, about six or seven months and then that was the end of that.

WK: Do you remember what you got paid for that?

BK: It wasn't much. It was just pin money, that's all.

WK: That was during the 1930's?

BK: This was in 1938, 1939, already. Late 1930's.

WK: What was it like in the way of businesses and stores and those sort of establishments in Youngstown? Where were they located at, some of them?

BK: In Campbell?

WK: Yes, in Campbell, I mean.

BK: Well, they had Mulnar's on Twelfth Street.

WK: What did they sell?

BK: They sell shoes. My father always went there and bought shoes. Then they had a Jewish fellow on the corner. I forget his name. He sold shoes and pencils and all that stuff.

WK: Any other stores down along Wilson Avenue?

BK: Well, they had the bank down there, that's where everybody went because the bank was down there. Timkski's hardware store was right across the street where they shod the horses.

WK: Anything else you can remember, any other particular stores?

BK: I know they had a lot of beer gardens.

WK: What was the name of some of them?

BK: Vulcan Inn, Cretian Village, Rick's bar.

WK: You were a young boy at that time?

BK: I was a young boy. I didn't even drink. We'd go to Idora park or something for enjoyment sometime.

WK: That was the workmen from the Sheet & Tube or the mill when they got out of work?

BK: Yes. Sure. I used to know most of them. I drank with most of them all too.

WK: That was after the war?

BK: Yes. After the war.

WK: Do you remember about the mill, the way it looked with the smoke and stuff?

BK: I'd go down and meet my father, especially on payday I'd meet him because he'd buy us a pair of shoes at Mulnar's. There was so many locomotives down there, they'd all seem to stop down there and the post office was right down at the bottom of the hill too, right by the bank. It used to be the old Dollar Bank and right across from it used to be the post office. That smoke was so thick, I never seen my father until he started up the hill. You couldn't see from all that steam and everything like that because they didn't have the engines like they have now. They had these smokers. You had to fire them up with coal and that was one of the reasons... They all stopped down there, they all seemed to stop down there, you just couldn't see them. I'd wait across the post office until they'd come over and I'd see him come up the hill. He'd take me up Mulnar's and buy me a pair of shoes or a pair of pants or something like that.

WK: A lot of these people who worked in the mill, where did they live? What streets along Wilson Avenue?

BK: Most of the people lived on Fifth Street, Sixth Street.

WK: How about Adams and Jefferson?

BK: There were some white people that lived there too, but on the bottom it was like black people who lived on the bottom of the hill. It was just like any place else. They had the good districts and the bad districts, but most of the houses, like the company houses, it was beautiful up there a long time ago. But anymore, they are not putting the money into it or something.

WK: Do you remember in Campbell certain ethnic groups living in certain sections of town?

BK: Oh, yes. I remember down on Fifth Street, there was a lot of Polish people there. Wipple Avenue, there were a lot of Polish people. Hungarian people were on Reed Avenue and some lived on Gordon Avenue. Penhale Avenue was usually all Italian People. I remember that. That's the way they settled. It seems like if you bought a house and say if you were Polish, you wanted to build a house, you'd build it right next to them because you understood the language and all that.

WK: Did they have a Polish school during this time?

BK: Oh, sure. Those kids all went to that school. A long time ago, everybody had their own nationality, they went to that school. Like me, I went to the Hungarian Presbyterian Reform Church. I had to learn to read and write in Hungarian and I had to take my confirmation in

Hungarian. It was none of this American. Many a lickings I got because if you didn't know your lesson, you put your five fingers together and she'd put the switch to you.

WK: Is that right?

BK: Oh, yes, you got that a couple time, you learned. You made it your business to learn.

WK: So they made you learn.

BK: Yes, but in a way it was good. Most of the time they were real nice, but they just didn't want you to go over there and not study or learn.

WK: So again, Campbell in this time period when you were growing up as a young boy, there were certain sections of town that had certain nationalities and certain groups?

BK: Right, that was all over like that.

WK: Did you get along?

BK: We got along with everybody because where we lived there was Yumbars and us, and Maize's. On the other side the Siraks lived. All the kids played together so we all got along. There was none of this stuff of stealing. We'd steal maybe tomatoes off a guy or something like that but there was none of this stuff like hitting a guy in the head or rob him or something like that. There was none of that, never, never.

WK: So in other words, it was kid activities, goofing off a little bit but not crime, like somebody stealing something, breaking into a home.

BK: No, we never had a lock on our door until 1952 when I came home from the service. We had three brothers and there was no lock on the door so the last one in, if you thought about it, you latched the door and that was it. If you put a shovel in the corner of the yard or a wheelbarrow, it was there. If it was there for two years, nobody would touch it. It was like that then, not like today.

WK: As a young boy?

BK: Yes. See, I was always busy because we had to go out every summer we had our chores to do. You had to dig the garden, you had to go watch cows, which was sometimes, a half day, they'd go in spurts. My father would come and relieve us, but you'd watch the cows, you watch them all around here too, that's all there

was.

WK: You watched the cows with other guys, what did you do in the meantime?

BK: Play cards. That's all we could do. I had a big beat up old blanket and we'd play cards on it. When the cows would run away we'd run down after them and try to get them together and start playing cards again. They had water holes and cricks going down there, they drank water over there. Even Al Cyernik, his father had a couple cows back there.

WK: So that was basically a pass time. In other words, you were busy with the gardening and farming.

BK: Well, we had to help, we had to dig it up. If we didn't my father would fix you. You had your chore to do and you did it. That's all.

WK: You mentioned a while back about people that would be considered like a hobo today passing on through Campbell.

BK: They used to come in box cars. I remember I was a young kid. Many of them hoboes would get off on Fifth Street, walk up the street and I could really say my mother fed more hoboes than I think anybody did in Campbell. She said, "I always have something to give them." She'd either give them some soup, sandwich, bread and they'd come over there, because a lot of people even told them, "Go up to Kish's, they'll feed you." My mother was good like that. She was good hearted. Anyone that came knocking on our door, she always told me, "We always have enough, let them eat too."

WK: How were these guys dressed?

BK: They didn't seem to bother anybody, they were just passing through. You could see them, they'd wave to you and everything. Boxcar after boxcar. There was no jobs. These guys were traveling. This was in 1937, 1938. There was no work around here. The mills were slow and everything else. When the war started breaking out, the mill started picking up because they had to.

WK: Anything in particular that you remember about the 1930's or when you were a young boy, something that kind of stands out in your mind? Anything in particular?

BK: Well, one thing about it, like I told you before, you always walked barefoot, you didn't dare miss a Sunday

church. You had to go because me and my mother, every Sunday, we walked down to Fifth Street, Sixth Street and took the street car. We had to go to church every Sunday. When you came home, you had them knickerbockers, you had to take them off, fold them up and hang them up. You went barefoot all summer. Like I told you before, there was nothing, because people didn't have no money.

WK: People didn't have the money. What did other people do around your neighborhood as work? Did they work? How did they work? What job did they have?

BK: Some worked downtown selling shoes, some worked in the mill if you could get in the mill. It was pretty hard to get in the mill. General Fireproofing was there, Republic Rubber was there, some of them guys would work there and then little by little they started spreading out.

WK: Do you remember maybe what someone would make or just basically the cost of things? Can you give me an example?

BK: Here's an example. My brother Lou bought a Model A for \$19. We were going to go to Bessemer to swim. I was about sixteen or seventeen years old. It was me, him and some of his friends, we got about three of them, Joe Kovach and all of us, we got together. We started with the Model A for Bessemer. Well, coming home, the fuel bowl on it broke. So what could we do? It wouldn't run so we got tar and glued it together and when it was going up the hill, we'd all jump out and push it up the hill, when it was going down the hill, we all coasted. So we pushed that car all the way from Pittsburgh, a Model A under the bridge, the Sheet and Tube bridge and we left it there, until we could go get a bowl and then we drove it home.

WK: Did many people have cars in Campbell at this time?

BK: No.

WK: When do you remember seeing a lot of cars?

BK: I'd say 1938, 1939, you would see people starting to buy little cars. Until then, people that had cars had money. I can remember my dad when I was a little kid, he took me to the Canfield Fair in the Model T. I was about six years old. There was only a two way lane going out to Canfield. We left in the morning I think it was about 9:00 and we didn't get home until 4:00 in the evening. There was no roads going out there to the Canfield Fair. It was just like where the horse and buggy went, there was no road going out there. So

that's how long it took us to go out there and come home.

WK: How long did it take you?

BK: With the Model T?

WK: Yes.

BK: I think about two hours. Everything was like a cow pasture.

WK: So before you had a car, did you use a horse?

Bk: No I never used a horse. My father had a horse. Like I told you before, he hitched it up one time and he took me for a ride down to Lowellville. I'll never forget that.

WK: How old were you then, about?

BK: I'd say about twelve or thirteen. It's been years ago.

WK: What was it like in Campbell, say in the 1930's if you got sick? You needed a doctor or something?

BK: If you needed a doctor?

WK: Yes.

BK: Well there was one doctor in Campbell there and he delivered a lot of babies. I remember him and he was the only one in Campbell. You went down to see him and that was it.

WK: Do you remember his name?

BK: No, I don't remember. Shirt, Doctor Shirt.

WK: Is that right?

BK: Yes. He delivered a lot of babies in Campbell.

WK: Where was his office located?

BK: Down the bottom of the hill next to Greasy Gus's restaurant, where the Dollar Bank was, right upstairs. He lived right upstairs, he lived there for years. Doctor Shirt. I know him because Dr. Warren, he was a Dentist, they were in the same office.

WK: Dr. Warren?

BK: Yes.

WK: What was his practice like when you went to go get a tooth filled?

BK: It was rough. Oh, yes. I still got a gold filling in my mouth to this day that he put in.

WK: Is that right?

BK: That's right, but he was rough.

WK: Did he used anything to deaden the pain?

BK: He deadened the pain alright, but he didn't care if you were in pain or not.

WK: Do you remember anything about funerals in Campbell during that time?

BK: Yes. When a person died I can remember right around here where we lived, I don't want to mention any names, the first thing they did... There was no funeral homes to take them to. They embalmed you right in your house and they showed you in the house. The funeral director would come and he had like a baker's van and he'd take his tools in there and he'd embalm you right where you died. Then what they'd do for every funeral, they had a big black wreath they'd put in front of the house, that means that there was a death in that family and that 's the way it was for funerals. There was no such thing as a funeral home. No.

WK: So people came to the house then, to observe the body?

BK: Right. And another thing, when this Dr. Shirt, when you went down to see him, he was real reasonable. He was a good doctor. He wasn't into this money bull, like they got today. He'd help you out.

WK: Something about a wake, going back to the funeral, what happens in a wake?

BK: My father used to go down and sit up all night with the person that died. Say the coffin was in the house, they stayed there all night. I don't know what they called it.

WK: Is that the wake?

BK: That's the wake, yes.

WK: So in other words, they would go there and sit.

BK: Pay their respects for the guy that died and you show them and that's what they did. Now they got funeral

homes. They don't do that no more.

WK: When they took the person out of the house, how did they take the person out of the house? In what transportation?

BK: A casket. They had a regular funeral car that they would deliver them in.

WK: It wasn't a horse and buggy or anything?

BK: No, no.

WK: Again, you remember that with a black wreath.

BK: Oh, yes. I never forgot it, for some reason I always remember it. Another thing, when they called the doctor on the street you lived on we'd all get together and talk about it and say, "That guy's going to die." They called a doctor for him because there was no such thing as a doctor every time you get a little pain, you go see a doctor. When the doctor showed up on the street, man, that was serious. Yes sir.

WK: Do you remember the old timers in Campbell? When you were a young boy, do you remember guys who were like seventy or eighty that were living? Do you remember some of those old timers?

BK: Yes, and I remember going to their funerals, too. I never went to the funerals, I meant, I went to go see them.

WK: Did they work?

BK: They worked outside in the mills and everywhere. They got old just like anything else. I tell you I remember an old timer, Mr. Bress, he was a farmer. So we used to go up there and steal corn from him and he'd catch us the he'd say to us, "You're going to have to earn your way if you're going to steal corn." So we all started working for him. Shuck the corn and all that, you know. A long time ago, you had to do a lot of stuff by hand on the corn. Anyhow, there was a place where Blossom Avenue runs in Campbell now, all the way back, he had a swimming pool. That used to be the Bress Farm back there. So we asked Mr. Bress if we could build a swimming pool there and he said, "Why sure, go ahead and build it." So we built a swimming pool, you had to haul so many sods everyday and you'd work over there and we had a nice dam going until the water got stale. So anyhow, we had a lot of water in so then the ones below us wanted water too, but they couldn't get no water because we were hogging all the water up above. So they went down, there was a big

sewer going through Blossom Avenue, a big Culver, they flopped that off, waiting for it to rain so they could get some water. So in the mean time, one night a big storm came up, no, it was during the day. It was one of them flash floods. It broke our dam and went down and took Blossom Avenue, just washed the whole street away and there was about four or five guys down below working in the sewer and they nearly drowned. So what they did, they came up with dynamite and blew that whole dam up. We didn't have no more dam after that. It was the city.

WK: Where was that dam located?

BK: Right where Uncle Lou lives, right on the other side there.

WK: Like Park and 16th Street?

BK: Yes. I don't know because they put a lot of land fill over there and everything but one time, I could have took it right there, because Lou worked on Bress' farm all the time. He always had a job out there.

WK: Was there other farmers, people that had big farms?

BK: Creed, right next door, he had a farm there. Then I remember Mayor Borak bought Roosevelt Park and made a park out of it. There were beautiful trees in there and everything. Yes. They bought it for the city of Campbell. I don't know who owned it but they bought it. That has been the Campbell park ever since.

WK: Do you remember going there when you were young?

BK: Oh, yes. They had a lot of squirrels in there. It was swampy though. I can remember going in there and there was a swamp and everything.

WK: To finish up the interview, how would you compare the 1930's living in Campbell growing up with say now, the 1980's, say fifty years later?

BK: I'd say there was a big difference because in the 1930's you didn't have what you have today. A lot of people didn't have electricity, a lot of people didn't have jobs, a lot of people couldn't make ends meet, and there was no welfare office you could go to.

WK: You basically had to pull your own?

BK: You had to pull your own. So you had to have a garden and you had to have your own cow, so you had your own milk and you raised pigs, you raised chickens, ducks and everything.

WK: How were the neighbors?

BK: Every neighbor always cooperated. Everybody helped each other. Today, there is no comparison because everybody has got two cars, they got beautiful homes, they got electric, they got gas, you got heat, there is no comparison to the 1930's.

WK: So you see all these modern conveniences?

BK: All the modern conveniences, you can't beat it. It seems like the life span is a little longer now than it used to be along time ago.

WK: Which is a plus?

BK: Which is a plus.

WK: Anything else you want to include before we finish up? Anything else to say? How old are you now?

BK: Me, I'll be sixty-nine years old.

WK: Sixty-nine. You hope to be around for a long time?

BK: I hope so.

WK: Okay, thank you very much for the interview, I appreciate it.

BK: You're welcome.

END OF INTERVIEW