

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Education in Springfield Township

Teaching Experience

O. H. 346

FRANCES YAUMAN

Interviewed

by

Bernice Mercer

on

August 16, 1976

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Education in Springfield Township

INTERVIEWEE: FRANCES YAUMAN
INTERVIEWER: Bernice Mercer
SUBJECT: Boxwell Examination, One-Room Schoolhouse
DATE: August 15, 1976

M: This is an interview with Frances Yauman at 10:00 a.m., August 16, 1976, at her home, 5311 East Garfield Road, Petersburg, Ohio, by Bernice Mercer for the Oral History Program at Youngstown State University.

Mr. Yauman, we are interested in your school life right from the beginning. We're interested in how you felt about school and then how you later felt about teaching.

Y: I began my school life at College Hill School, one mile west of Petersburg. I enjoyed this very, very much. My parents were very much interested in us getting to school every day.

M: You had to walk quite a way?

Y: I had to walk about a fourth of a mile.

M: The schoolhouse, can you describe it a little bit?

Y: The schoolhouse was a brick building, one story, and there were about forty-five pupils in all the grades, one through eight.

M: Were there a good many eighth graders there?

Y: There were quite a few eighth graders, yes. They were all interested in education.

M: When they finished eighth grade they kept on going, is this right?

Y: When they finished eighth grade either they were dropouts or else they were privileged to take the Boxwell

examination. It was my privilege to want to go on to teaching. I took the Boxwell examination, which was an examination for the eighth graders. If they passed this examination they were eligible to become a teacher.

M: I'm interested in what the Boxwell examination was and what it was about. Let's go back to what a day was like when you began school. Can you remember how you felt about learning to read in the first place? For example, what were your readers like and things like this?

Y: When I began my first day of teaching we taught the little first graders from the chart class, which was a chart placed before the little folks in large cribs with a picture on it. Then they had to go through this chart before they took out the first reader.

M: Did you have a chart when you first started?

Y: I had a chart when I first started.

M: Do you remember what the chart was like? Did the teacher make the chart herself?

Y: No. The charts were furnished by the township.

M: What was one chart? Did you have your alphabet first?

Y: The first thing they had on a chart was an "A" and an apple. The teacher would say, "Now that is an 'A'; that is an apple." That's what we had on the first page of our chart. Then we kept adding more words and . . .

M: And more letters.

Y: And more letters. More letters of the alphabet until we finally learned it.

M: That was the first thing off?

Y: That was the first thing off. Then, of course, we had our numbers. We began at one. Most of us knew our numbers up to twelve before we went to school. Then we went on from there and learned our numbers.

M: Can you describe a typical day with the teacher, the chart, and the pupils?

Y: The little people usually sat in the front seats because the front seats were smaller than the back seats. Of if you had an older sister or brother, you sat with her or him in the seat.

- M: Were they double?
- Y: They were double seats.
- M: Did some people ride horseback?
- Y: Very few. Most of them walked.
- M: Was there a barn at the school?
- Y: No. There was a tall house because the stove was fired with coal. The coal had to be carried from the coal house, of course.
- M: And put in. Who did that?
- Y: The teacher did the coal carrying, or if she didn't do it herself, she had to hire someone to do it for her if the children didn't consent to do it for her. She had to sweep her own schoolhouse too. That was her job every evening after school. That was done by her, or maybe one of the children would consent to do it. The two of them would sweep the schoolhouse that evening.
- M: Of course, that would include getting the blackboards clean?
- Y: Yes, that included cleaning the blackboards so it was all ready for the next day to begin.
- M: You had those beautiful slate blackboards?
- Y: We had beautiful slate blackboards. We used them a lot. Everyone as they came to class, especially in arithmetic, was asked to put a problem on the board so that the rest of the class could see. Possibly there were some that didn't know how to do a problem, then they got to see the problem worked out on the blackboard.
- M: That dispensed with the problem of tests too.
- Y: That's right.
- M: Only it was more. It hit the clock better because you could tell exactly where the error was.
- Y: That's right.
- M: Each person had this chance to do their own work on the blackboard. When they went to the board they didn't do the same problem as the other person.
- Y: No. Everyone did a different problem so that sometimes, depending on how large the lesson was, the entire lesson

was placed on the blackboard right in class.

M: So that in every case, over and over and over, the correct procedure was right there in front of everybody's eyes?

Y: That's right.

M: This was every grade?

Y: This was every grade. Of course, since there were eight grades in the schoolroom at the same time sometimes you could combine a couple. For instance, we often combined the third and the fourth grade or the seventh and the eighth grade. That way the pupil would get more learning.

M: A longer period?

Y: That's right.

M: To have all these subjects in one day . . . About what time in the morning did they start?

Y: We began at nine o'clock by the ringing of the bell. The morning exercises were the first thing. The teacher read the Bible or sometimes she had the children read the Bible. Then we prayed the Lord's Prayer, then we sang a song or two. Of course, that was usually of the children's choice.

M: Did you have songbooks?

Y: Yes, we had books. We usually had little, paperback books that had been purchased by the board of education for the school.

M: Was there a piano or organ in there?

Y: Yes, we had a piano. At first, we had an organ, but in later years we had a piano instead. Usually one of the pupils was able to play the piano or the organ.

M: This probably took about fifteen minutes.

Y: That took fifteen minutes exactly. Then there was the chart class and from there on we were seated down the grades.

M: What was taught first thing in the morning?

Y: Usually arithmetic because the children's minds were considered brighter in the morning than they were in the evening. Naturally, they would become rather dull

by evening.

M: Sort of tired and worn out?

Y: Worn down.

M: In mathematics, did one class put their work on the board and then the next?

Y: Then it was erased and the next class was called. Maybe you wonder what had become of the smaller children while the larger ones were reciting.

M: I was going to ask that.

Y: The little folks would be listening, or if they were too young to really have a chart class, they were given some work by the teacher to do with their hands, or else they listened to the others recite. That's why, years ago, children learned a lot from the older ones, hearing the older ones recite.

M: Some of those people who were working on the chart could also understand what the third graders did?

Y: Yes.

M: When they got to the third grade, they would have that almost mastered already?

Y: That's right.

M: Would mathematics take all morning?

Y: It usually took till what we called the first recess, which was a recess of fifteen minutes where we were allowed to play on the playground if the weather permitted. If not, we had some games which we played indoors. Then the day continued, and at noon we had an hour recess. Then in the afternoon there was another recess of fifteen minutes. We closed school at four o'clock.

M: That was standard all over the United States because that was the same routine we had in Nebraska. Now everybody is home by 3:00 p.m.

Tell us about the reading program when you were a student? What readers did you use?

Y: At the time I went to school, we were already beginning to have a little bit of a sound system, but not as extensively as the one we got later on. The later one, of course, was the ideal way to teach reading. The

sight system in reading, in my mind, is not the system to be used. It should be the sound system.

M: At least the sound system has to come in there somewhere.

Y: That's has to come in there somewhere.

M: Did you have McGuffey Readers by any chance?

Y: We had McGuffey Readers.

M: That was my loaded question. Did the McGuffey Readers have more than one edition, or did it stay the same throughout its lifetime?

Y: I think we had the McGuffey Reader until the sixth grade. Then history classes took the place of reading.

M: You had your content subjects as a replacement for reading, which was needed.

Y: That's right. Would you like to know what subjects were taught in the upper grades? We had English, which was taught very extensively. Of course, we had history, as I just mentioned. We also had physiology and spelling. Sometimes spelling was oral and sometimes written. Sometimes we had a spelling match to see who was the champion speller. That, of course, was a great day, which was on Friday usually. We all looked forward to Friday to see whether we would have a spelling match or not to see who was the best speller today.

M: Some of the third graders could spell down the seventh graders, right?

Y: Right.

M: That was possible?

Y: Yes.

M: You didn't mention geography.

Y: Yes, we also had geography.

M: Was it really connected with the history or was it separate?

Y: If there was an opportunity to correlate it with history, we did, but it wasn't usually.

M: It wasn't combined completely?

Y: No, it wasn't combined.

- M: Now, your method of the spelling explains why people in that situation spelled well. Also, was physiology really the science?
- Y: That was the science.
- M: There was no science as such?
- Y: No.
- M: That took care of geology?
- Y: None of that.
- M: Only biology was used. The geography book probably had some science in it too, didn't it? About volcanos?
- Y: Yes. We had a lot about volcanos.
- M: And other things would be counted as science too.
- Y: Yes.
- M: Can you describe the stove and the whole heating situation?
- Y: The stove was called the torrid zone. It was a round stove and in the morning the teacher would slack up the fire so that in the morning she could just stir it up and it would begin to burn. If it went out, then it was like a tragedy. Then she had to start from scratch and the ashes had to be carried out. Usually the older boys volunteered to carry out the ashes, and they also volunteered to carry in the coal as a rule. The teacher seldom needed to carry her own coal.
- M: You mentioned the torrid zone, can you describe what it was on a really cold day?
- Y: On a really cold day, the teacher would permit us to crowd together around the stove and sit on the extra seats.
- M: The torrid zone was fine, but out in the room you found the frigid zone?
- Y: That's right. You had to dress warm. Of course, you were dressed warm anyhow because you had to walk to school regardless of what the weather was like. If it rained you carried your umbrella.
- M: Also, there is this matter of the restrooms.
- Y: The boys had one, little building outside of the

schoolhouse and the girls had one also. You had to go outdoors to the restroom.

M: The heating arrangement was . . .

Y: The heating arrangement was that it was a pretty cold place to go.

M: I didn't want to neglect that because it was pretty important. Then about the matter of lunches.

Y: We carried our lunch in a lunch box, and they were put on shelves in the back of the room until noontime. Each one picked up their own lunch and ate their own lunch. That was the way we had our lunch at noon. Then, of course, we had the rest of the noon for play.

M: I had somebody else who talked a lot about outdoor games, but I don't think she said anything about the games that were inside on the cold days.

Y: Hide-and-seek, of course, was one. We would play several games also.

M: This is outdoors?

Y: No, this is in the schoolhouse.

M: You had enough space?

Y: We had enough space in the front of the room, where the teacher's desk was, to play those ring games. Sometimes some children would come up with a game that we could play. We had one in which we sat on the seats and there were two different groups who were chosen. Then you got up in front and you used motions to show what was said. You could talk a little bit too. They were supposed to guess what you were trying to imitate. That was another game we played indoors.

M: That was pretty popular. Any blackboard games?

Y: No, I don't believe we had any blackboard games. Outdoors, if the weather was decent at all, we played ball. Some played catch and some played "Andy over the Coal House."

M: Were you allowed to leave the grounds?

Y: You were not allowed to leave the grounds by any means. You were very seriously reprimanded if you happened to leave the grounds.

- M: There are variations. It was different in some places. As you remember, I'm having trouble finding people who remember much about how they were as children, how discipline was.
- Y: That depended a great deal on the teacher. Being a teacher myself, I would say that I was very serious with my discipline. Everybody had to behave; you weren't supposed to whisper during the schooltime to each other. And if you did you might have to stay in at recess for five minutes. Staying in was considered a great punishment.
- M: Do you remember when you were a child the people who did not have good discipline or people who did have it?
- Y: I usually had teachers who were good disciplinarians, but I have known teachers who were not disciplinarians, and the children didn't learn very much either because they were allowed to do as they pleased. You were not supposed to leave your seat after the bell rang. You were supposed to stay in your seat until you were dismissed for recess. You weren't allowed to walk around in the schoolhouse. Some teachers permitted the children to walk around the schoolhouse and have their little conversations with one of the other children. That interfered with their studies so we watched very closely who disciplined their children.
- M: Those seats were fastened to the floor?
- Y: As a rule, the seats were fastened to the floor.
- M: You had your seat assigned to you, and you kept it pretty much throughout the year?
- Y: Yes, you had a seat assigned to you. Some of the seats were small and some were medium-sized and others were larger, that is in height, according to the size of the children.
- M: The teacher tried to get a good fit?
- Y: That's right. It was very essential in writing. We didn't remember that writing was a subject. Writing was a very serious subject. We took great pains to learn to be a good writer. We did have some beautiful writers in those days.
- M: It was quite a status thing to be a beautiful writer.

- Y: That's right.
- M: Some people could write beautifully who didn't excel in other things.
- Y: It depended upon the height of your seat as to whether you were at ease when you wrote.
- M: Then there is something else, was art . . .
- Y: We had some art, but that was usually on Friday afternoon. We would take off from our regular school routine and maybe have art in the afternoon after the last recess. When we had art, the teacher would draw something on the board and the rest of us would attempt to immitate it.
- M: If your teacher was a poor artist then you would have a rough time on the art?
- Y: Yes, we did.
- M: Of course, your music was every morning?
- Y: Every day.
- M: That was all the music too.
- Y: That's right.
- M: We missed English a little bit ago. You said that it was very important, and was done very seriously, and especially one part of it? Was the grammar stressed?
- Y: The grammar part of it was very serious. But our first English book was one which had a great many poems we had to commit to memory. And that was very good. We enjoyed committing those poems to memory.
- M: Did almost everybody get them?
- Y: Most everybody. The teacher required that they get them. If they didn't get them at the appointed time, they were permitted to have a little more time to prepare.
- M: Did the classmates recite their poems while everyone else listened?
- Y: We were seated and listened.
- M: Which was quite a learning help.
- Y: Yes.
- M: The person who learned it last had heard it maybe dozens

of times over the other people.

Y: That's right. Sometimes the poems varied. The teacher sometimes would give the poems that weren't in the book. There was a variation of poems that you learned.

M: You don't happen to remember who some of the authors were?

Y: Yes, Longfellow, Whittier, Bryant--I remember those very distinctly. There were a few more of them, but I don't remember any of them offhand.

M: Before we get into your own teaching experience, which comes a little bit later, we want to discuss the tests: Where you got the tests, what the tests were like, what it gave you, and what you could do with it.

Y: The teacher made out the tests. For instance, she made it for history, geography, and English. The tests consisted of ten questions which were to be done in the same period that you would have been reciting in. This didn't give you a very great length of time. If the test happened to be a little longer, you were given more time.

M: Do you mean the eighth grade tests?

Y: Yes.

M: The teacher made her own tests?

Y: Yes.

M: So there wouldn't have been very much uniformity in the testing contents, would there?

Y: You were tested on the part of the book that you had covered. For instance, if you had studied about Washington then you were tested on that. When we came to the wars then we had . . .

M: These were the usual tests at the end of your sixth grade, seventh grade. You gave this test a name that you passed in order to get a teacher's certificate.

Y: No, this wasn't for a teacher's certificate. You had to go to the county seat to take the Boxwell examination.

M: Who built this test?

Y: That I can't tell you.

M: It was a state test?

- Y: It was a state test. We had three state examiners who were there all day. You were given a whole day to take a battery of tests in the different subjects. Of course, if you got through sooner, very well. It depended upon how much you knew as to how soon you got through.
- M: You didn't hasten to get ahead of other people?
- Y: No.
- M: Can you remember the different subjects you were tested on?
- Y: Yes. We had arithmetic and we had reading. One of the examiners would take you aside and you were given an oral test in reading, which, of course, that one we thought was rather easy because you would just read a portion of some book till the end. That wasn't very difficult, at least those who were good readers thought so. Then you had English, geography, history, physiology, and spelling. I hope I haven't missed any now.
- M: Didn't you have something called ornithology?
- Y: Yes. We had it later on, maybe in about the seventh or eighth grade.
- M: By and large, these tests were pretty hard?
- Y: It all depended on how well you had done your everyday work.
- M: It would cover all the operations?
- Y: All that you had covered.
- M: You would have had cube roots and square roots?
- Y: Yes, we had cube roots and square roots.
- M: You had all kinds of measures?
- Y: Yes.
- M: Any algebra at all?
- Y: In the eighth grade you had a little bit of algebra.
- M: That was included in the state test?
- Y: No, that was included in the test that the teacher had given you. Your passing to the next grade depends upon that test.

M: There were some people who didn't want to teach and didn't go and take the Boxwell test. Could they come back to school and continue to study if they wanted to?

Y: I suppose they could continue to come back and study, but most of them stayed at home.

M: Were they mostly farmers at this school?

Y: Not exactly. I was a farmer girl and I was anxious to take the Boxwell examination and become a teacher. A lot of people didn't go any farther than the eighth grade. Then after I completed the eighth grade we had two years of high school.

M: This was in Petersburg?

Y: In Petersburg.

M: Two grades?

Y: That's right, two grades.

Then I took what you called a teacher's examination, which was given again by these three examiners. If you passed that, you were given a teacher's passing grade.

M: It was a certificate? You could go out and get yourself a job?

Y: That's right.

M: When did you start high school in Petersburg?

Y: When I was fifteen. When I graduated I still wasn't old enough to teach school; I needed one more year. You needed to be eighteen so my father thought it would be a good idea to go back and review the eighth grade. I went back and reviewed the eighth grade and took a few more high school subjects that they were offering at that time. I always considered that a year lost.

M: Was the Rold School still in operation?

Y: That's right. Then when I became eighteen I took the teachers' examination and got a teacher's certificate.

M: This was a state examination?

Y: This was a state examination.

M: You had to go away somewhere to take it?

Y: I went to Youngstown to take it.

M: Did you go to Youngstown for the eighth grade examination?

Y: It was given at Rayen.

M: Since there was no other high school around Youngstown at the time, right?

Y: I don't know. I have an idea the South High School was there at that time too. This was given at Rayen though; the examinations were all given at Rayen.

M: That's interesting too. The first high schools were all just opening.

Y: When you first took the teacher's examination, you were given two Saturdays to take it. You took one half of it one Saturday and the other half the other Saturday. It finally came that we had to take the whole examination in the one day.

M: It sounds as if that was pretty long?

Y: It was.

M: And it was taxing?

Y: It was a very long examination and to do well you had to keep on your toes in order to get done.

M: It tested your concentration?

Y: That's right.

M: Besides everything else?

Y: Yes.

M: At this point you are eighteen and are old enough to teach; how do you get a job?

Y: You had to put in an application to some school board, so I put in an application for College Hill, where I had gone to school when I was a girl. I was successful and received a job. I taught there two years.

M: By this time it is still only eight grades?

Y: It is still all eight grades. I sort of condensed it. I put third and fourth grade in one and seventh and eighth grade in one. It was a thrill to teach school.

M: You had some big children in the class?

Y: I had some children who were as big as I was and larger

than I was. I had some children who were good and some who were very, very bad. I was just a little person, but I seemed to be able to get them to behave. I never had any trouble with discipline.

M: One of the main problems in the history of our early education was to get people to settle down and do some work for us.

Y: Yes. There was such a thing as punishing a child by whipping if he didn't behave. But that's one thing that I never did. I gave him a tongue lashing, and that seemed to do the trick.

M: It was sufficient?

Y: It was sufficient without everything else.

M: As you remember that first school, were they almost all farm kids?

Y: Yes, they were all from the district of College Hill.

M: There were very few people who had any steel mill jobs at this point?

Y: No.

M: That wasn't common at all?

Y: No.

M: I don't know if this is the right place to ask this, but I would like to ask you if you remember much about the Ku Klux Klan in this township.

Y: Yes, I remember that the Ku Klux Klan existed, but I don't know anything about it.

M: As a teacher, did your job differ from when you were a student?

Y: No, it hadn't changed much. We were still using the McGuffey Readers, and in general there wasn't a lot of change. I had to be my own janitor, but as I said before, the children seemed to think enough of me that they saw to it that the coal was carried in and the ashes were carried out.

M: Not only the floors, but the boards had to be taken care of. It was really quite a lot of work.

Y: They were anxious to do it. They would ask me at recess if they could erase the blackboard, or if it was really

getting messy they would say, "Can I wash the black-board this recess?" They were really interested in helping.

M: They were arranging things on the walls I suppose. You still had the charts?

Y: Yes.

M: It was practically the same chart?

Y: Yes.

M: By this time you were beginning to have some phonics?

Y: Yes, I was beginning to teach some phonics.

M: You had to do that on your own?

Y: That's right.

M: It wasn't on the chart or in the books?

Y: No.

M: Your McGuffey started right from the first grade?

Y: That's right.

M: Do you remember if you diagrammed sentences?

Y: Definitely. We enjoyed diagramming. That was an interesting thing. We used to diagram on the board. That is, each one would say, "Can I diagram this on the board?" It was very interesting. We called it the grammar class at that time, instead of the English class.

M: Understanding grammar is a hot issue now. Also, what about compositions, writing letters?

Y: Even when I went to school we had to write compositions, it was a common thing. I still had them write some compositions when I taught school.

M: How would you choose the material for the compositions; did it come from something to do with their content subjects?

Y: Sometimes, but not too much. Mostly they were allowed to choose their own subjects.

M: It might not have a thing to do with school subjects?

Y: No.

M: You don't happen to remember something about those compositions, either your own or anybody else's? Did they read them in class?

Y: Yes, they read them in class. That is, a few of them did. It depended on what the class period would permit.

M: Everybody wanted to read theirs?

Y: Anybody that wanted to read them could. If not, the teacher had to read them herself.

M: You were allowed to write stories if you wanted?

Y: You were allowed to write stories.

M: Out of your imagination?

Y: That's right. At that time we would have an examination at the end of a certain subject in our book.

M: That required composition too?

Y: Yes, it did. You would hear the children whispering around to one another, "Did you study for the examination?" They wanted to be sure that they got a good grade on their examination papers. If I remember right their report card, which was given out every six weeks, depended on $\frac{2}{3}$ of the daily work and $\frac{1}{3}$ of the examination. We kept grades very specifically. That is, every day you took a grade with the class, each pupil. Then you had those . . .

M: Big averaging job at the end?

Y: An averaging job at the end of the period.

M: Mrs. Yauman, I'm interested in those programs you sometimes had on Friday afternoons.

Y: We really planned a full program to last from the last recess until school was out, until four o'clock. This, of course, gave us quite a little bit of time. There would be recitations, and then we would give little plays, which were quite interesting to the children. They looked forward to these, and yet I thought it was a method of teaching them English or grammar. We at least had one program every year in which we tried extend the program by lengthening the dialogues, recitations, and solos if someone was a good singer. We invited people in some evenings to hear the performance.

That included everybody in the College Hill district. This was free of course. We had great times on Friday.

M: Was this well attended?

Y: This was well attended. The schoolhouse would always be packed.

M: On these evenings?

Y: The evening program would be packed.

M: Very few of the parents would miss this?

Y: That's right.

M: How about on Friday afternoons? Did you say they were allowed to come in on Friday afternoon too?

Y: They were allowed to come in on Friday afternoon, but we didn't stress that too much. This was mostly just for the pupils of the school.

M: This included anyone who had something that was worthy of presentation?

Y: Yes.

M: Would this include compositions that were written?

Y: If somebody wrote a good composition, that was included. That made them all the more eager to write good compositions too. Of course, they were checked very carefully for grammar and for punctuation. That was where they got their grammar and punctuation.

M: It served as something to look forward to?

Y: Something to make it worthwhile for them to go to school.

M: Were there many children that got to take any music lessons at all?

Y: Yes.

M: There were teachers in Petersburg?

Y: There would always be teachers around in the vicinity. Those were the ones that were chosen to play a piece on the piano or organ. That was interesting to the children too.

M: The neighborhood was interested in music to the extent of having teachers available outside of the school?

Y: That's right.

M: There are things that I think you would like to tell about your teaching methods that we didn't get into much. Are there things that you think of concerning the way you were able to teach different subjects?

Y: For instance, we usually taught reading by having the entire class read while the others followed. If you stumbled on a word which you couldn't pronounce, somebody in the class would pronounce it for you. That was one thing we did. Of course, if a question was asked by the teacher and a special person was chosen to answer it, if her or she didn't answer it correctly the teacher would see all hands go up. Each wanted to answer it differently. You never had anyone sitting there not having something to do.

At the same time you would wonder what the little folks in the back of the room were doing when the older ones were doing recitations on the long bench. Those little folks would be doing something the teacher had prepared. Maybe it was something to draw. Maybe it was something for them to write. You would get an idea on how they were progressing with their writing.

M: Writing was one of the things you mentioned as being very important. This happened every day?

Y: Writing was taught every day. That was usually before the last recess. Everybody had copy books.

M: These were different for the little people?

Y: Yes, they were different.

M: Were there any others besides little and everybody else?

Y: No, this was everybody?

M: Were the books graded?

Y: The books were graded too. I did, but I don't know whether other teachers did that or not. I graded their copy book just as same as I graded their other subjects.

M: Those would be handed in every day?

Y: We had big desks and the older ones especially could keep them in their desks.

M: They needed them every day?

Y: Yes.

M: You don't remember what writing system?

Y: Barnes, it seems to me it was Barnes writing system.

M: Everybody made their letters exactly the same?

Y: Yes.

M: Did they count their letters? You wouldn't have had a recording music or anything like that to write with?

Y: No.

M: The strokes were counted?

Y: The teacher would usually count for them. First of all, we would begin our writing lesson by making ovals. Everybody made ovals. Of course, that got them to write in between the lines perfectly as they should do. First we would make ovals, maybe just one, and keep copying over that. Then we would make ovals that went clear across the page.

M: It would look like a spring that you could peek through.

Y: Yes.

M: That took real finesse.

Y: Then we would begin with our regular copy, whatever was at the top of the page. That, of course, was according to grade.

M: Did you write every single day?

Y: Writing would be the elective on some days, but not very often.

M: Even on those days they would have to write some subject?

Y: That's right. They would usually have something to write in English.

M: Are there more interesting things that you could think of? You could tell us about the subject matter, for instance, the geography book.

Y: We used the geography book and we drew maps. That was an interesting thing for the children. They loved to draw maps. Then they would put in the capital of the state and so forth. That helped them to remember the capital of the states. Sometimes they would draw in the rivers of the states. That helped them to remember where the different rivers were in the states, especially in

the United States.

M: Were these maps displayed on the walls of the school?

Y: Yes, these things were displayed. That is, the better ones were displayed, not all of them. If some of them were not too good, they were not displayed. Displaying the maps was an incentive to do your work well.

M: You studied Asia, Europe, America, North and South. You drew maps for all of these countries at one time or another?

Y: That's right.

M: I would say one month. We drew maps on whatever we happened to be studying. If we were studying the United States then we drew the United States. If we were studying Germany, we drew Germany. If we were studying France, we drew France, and so forth.

M: The subject matter was connected with the products.

Y: They were connected with whatever we happened to be studying.

M: Do you remember much about people who were interested in history or your material that you had to teach?

Y: In history?

M: You don't remember the textbook or anything?

Y: Barnes History.

M: You had Barnes too?

Y: We had Barnes History.

M: Nebraska had Barnes too.

Y: There were two of them. One was a smaller book and one was larger. The younger grades had the small one, which contained certain historical topics. The larger involved more topics. They were about different historical events and had different maps and so forth. We called these books primary history and advanced history.

M: The history was factual?

Y: Yes.

M: Who was president.

- Y: That's right. We tried to have everyone learn the presidents of the United States in order.
- M: And a good deal about the wars?
- Y: The Civil War, there was a part in the history book which related to the Civil War. At the end of each topic we had a test. If they didn't get their daily work they had a lot of catching up to do at the end of the topic.
- M: The tests, as you said, were a third of the mark?
- Y: That's right. It gave the teacher quite a lot to do.
- M: Do you remember the largest number that you had in your school at any time?
- Y: After I taught two years at College Hill I was asked to teach the first four grades of Petersburg. I didn't get as much money. I got \$45 the first year at College Hill, and I think it was \$50 the next year. They were going to advance it to \$55 if I would come back the third year, but instead of going back the third year I went to Petersburg to take these first four grades because I thought that was an advancement.
- M: It didn't require all this grading?
- Y: That's right.
- M: You had a little break on some of that?
- Y: In the primary grades there were no written tests given. You either forgot the test and didn't give them any, or you gave them a little oral test.
- M: That did away with a lot of that written part?
- Y: That's right.
- M: All night long work. When you had that at College Hill you probably spent a lot of time at home after school getting all of this together.
- Y: Oh my! Every evening was spent till nine or ten o'clock grading papers.
- M: How much total attendance did you have, I forgot to ask that?
- Y: It varied when I went to Petersburg, but I didn't have quite as many in the fourth grades. I don't know just how many years I taught there, until Stoney Point and

College Hill's children were brought to Petersburg.

M: I know approximately where Stoney Point is.

Y: It's halfway between Middletown and Petersburg. They were hauled down here in a horse-drawn carriage, truck, or whatever you want to call it.

M: Nobody mentioned this before.

Y: Yes.

M: You had school buses early on?

Y: We had school buses quite early.

M: Did the school day last until four o'clock?

Y: It lasted from nine until four o'clock. The recesses were the same and the noon hour was the same. Of course, some of the children, when I taught in Petersburg, would go home for their dinner.

Y: You still had these Friday afternoon things?

M: I did; not all teachers did, but I did.

Y: Because you felt it had quite a lot of value?

M: It made a lot of work for the teacher, but the children, I think, enjoyed it. It got the parents out and I think the children always got something educational out of these programs.

M: By this time was there a high school?

Y: Yes.

M: A four year high school?

Y: No, just a two year high school.

M: It was, as I understand, upstairs?

Y: Upstairs, it was upstairs.

M: The programs . . .

Y: I still continued my programs, what I taught in Petersburg, and I would always have one program for the public every year. Of course, our building was not large enough to hold all the people, so we would go to Camp P. Hall in Petersburg and give our programs.

M: They were well attended?

Y: They were always well attended. The people always looked forward to the program.

M: Did the other elementary teachers accompany you on this?

Y: No, they had their own sometimes. That is, it depended on the teacher, if he or she was willing to do that much extra work.

M: It was well appreciated and well attended?

Y: Yes.

M: I think this has been a very helpful interview, Mrs. Yauman, and I want to thank you very much.

Y: You're very welcome. I'm sorry I couldn't do more.

END OF INTERVIEW