YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

The Depression

INTERVIEWEE: BETTY MOORE

INTERVIEWER: Cynthia Marsh

SUBJECT: The Depression

DATE: November 9, 1995

CM: This is an interview with Mrs. Betty Moore for the Youngstown State Oral History Department, on the Depression by Cynthia Marsh at 4706 Nelson-Mosier Rd. on November 9, 1995 at approximately 7:15 p.m.

CM: Mrs. Moore can you tell me a little bit about your family, for example where you grew up?

BM: I grew up in Mt. Holly, New Jersey. My parents were Irene Loveland Bridge and my father was Thomas E. Bridge. They were very young when they were married. My mother was sixteen and my father was nineteen when I was born and there were never any more children. Since they were so young I think that kind of helped with having so little and I never was a demanding child. We called ourselves the three musketeers.

CM: Can you tell me what your dad did for a living?

BM: My dad did anything he could find to do. He was a very ambitious person with a very little education. I think he only went to the fourth grade in school. My mother went through her freshman year in high school. My father worked on a farm for a little while,

where his father had worked. He did various things like picking tomatoes, we lived near Camden New Jersey and Campbell Soup was stationed in Camden. So all of the farmers in southern New Jersey raised a lot of tomatoes and made a lot of tomato soup and tomato juice. So he would go out really when it was just light and he would pick tomatoes all day long for a dollar. It was pretty hard work. Then later on my uncle, my mother's brother, who worked on the railroad at the railroad station put on a contract to carry the mail from the incoming trains to the post office and then from the post office back to the trains. He got the contract and he kept some of the money but my dad got the job. So he bought a used truck, a pretty big truck, a lot bigger than a pick-up. I don't remember how many mails a day, how many mail trains came in in a day but there were several. He would meet the train and get the mail sacks and put them in the truck and take them to the post office and he would take the sacks of mail from the post office back to the next train that came in. Since he had the truck and he wasn't busy with the mail all day long, like eight hours at a stretch, they had to find other things to do with that truck. He did movings for people, somebody was always coming to our house to get Tom to move them and I don't recall now how much he charged for a moving but it was very little. There was a professional moving company in town and of course my dad undercut them any time he had a chance to. He charged like 2 or3 dollars to move somebody. He did a lot of movings through the years. Then later on he bought produce wholesale, I think he probably went over to Burlington, which was like five miles from our home. It was on the Delaware River. I think there was probably a produce market out there along that river as the stuff came in. So he would buy it wholesale and he would bring it back and he would go up and down the streets of our neighborhood selling the fruits and

vegetables. People would come out to the truck and buy, later on he rented a small store downtown and sold the produce from that store instead of from the truck. I remember one time, I was a little older but it was probably 1938-39, and I didn't work in the store but I happened to be in there at this particular time and one of the cops came in from town and wanted to buy some sweet potatoes and so I said that I would help him so I tried to weigh up the amount of sweet potatoes that he wanted, but I couldn't get it quite right. It was either a little bit too few or a little bit too much. So I did the logical thing I cut one in half and it came out just right. Well he thought that was the funniest thing he ever saw. He just roared. So then every time then after for the next few years when I would be downtown and I would see him, even if he was across the square he would yell "Hi Sweet Potato". Then after a while he became a milkman, he sold milk and he did that for several years. I remember one Christmas one of his customers gave him a necktie, and that is the only time he ever got a present from anybody, you know from his customers, and he was tickled to death, but that is the only time he ever got anything. Now these days we give all of our service people, the trash man, the paperboy the mailman, everybody gets a present, but they didn't then because of the Depression. Then after that he became a carpenter, but by then really the Depression was over, when he did that.

CM: What ever happened to the store he had rented downtown?

BM: Oh he didn't really have that too long, it just didn't work out for reasons I don't care to go into.

CM: Did your mom work at this time?

BM: My mom worked from the time that I had just about started Kindergarten, New Jersey at that time, it was mandatory that children started Kindergarten by the time they were five years old. So this was probably when I was four because I wasn't in Kindergarten yet. She went to work in a dress factory in town. She worked there and a friend of hers took care of me. I remember having to go to the friend's house early in the morning and I remember having cocoa and toast for breakfast there. Then after a couple of years she left the dress factory and went into a shoe factory. She worked in that shoe factory from then on until I graduated from High School. At that time she stopped working in the shoe factory, all this time she was working in the shoe factory for eight hours everyday, she was also taking in sowing. You just wonder how anybody could work that many hours in a dress factory and then take in sowing on the side and she had several women who were professional women and she made their tailored clothes for the five of them and she was just a wonderful, wonderful seamstress. She was just very professional, all of the tailored button holes and everything and she insisted that if they didn't want to come for two fittings that she wouldn't even try, because the fitting was so important to how a garment was when it was done, if it didn't fit properly then it wasn't a good dress. So she did that for years. Then in addition to the eight hour job and the sowing she had all of her own housework to do. She was doing all of her washing on a washboard; we didn't have an electric washing machine. She was doing all of her cleaning on Saturdays because it was a five-day week at the factory. I remember thinking when I get big and get married I'm not doing any housework on Saturday. So they had a hard time of it.

CM: Can you tell me a little bit about where you lived?

BM: We lived in Mt. Holly, New Jersey, which is just past central New Jersey on the south side of it and we got the benefit of the Gulf Stream, it was never as cold as it is here. We'd have one or two snowstorms a winter, but nothing like here. Mt. Holly is a very old town; it is an old Quaker town. All of the towns around, Burlington and Morristown and Cherry Hill, they are all old towns and each one has a Quaker meeting house. Some of them are brick and some are stone, but they are all beautiful buildings. So John Wollman who was a leading Quaker abolitionist lived in Mt. Holly, actually it ended up that my folks had bought a house right across the street from where he had lived. He was a tailor by trade, but he was an abolitionist back then in the 1700's. He walked all over, he walked hundreds and hundreds of miles and he ended up going to England and he died in England. He is buried there and his wife is buried in a cemetery in Mt. Holly. So he was one of our leading people and then there was a tree right up the road from where my parents ended up buying a house, that all of the school children were always taken to, to stand under this tree that George Washington had supposedly stood under. Mt. Holly is about eighteen miles from Trenton and about eighteen miles from Philadelphia. So that's a good situation there.

CM: Can you tell me a little bit about the home you grew up in, what it looked like, did you have electricity?

BM: We had about five homes, my mother's mother dies when my mother was twelve and her father dies when she was nine so when my great aunt, my grandmother's maiden sister came over from Burlington to finish raising my mother and her older and younger brothers, this house didn't have any electricity, it had gas and it was always fun, my great aunt was like a coregent grandmother to me, I dearly loved her, I didn't know how much

I loved her until I was an adult and she was long gone. But this house had gas and we'd go into a hallway and I'd be in back of her, she was a big woman and I would be right in back of her because there wasn't any light and then we would go past the parlor into the sitting room, into the dining room and over the dining room round table was a gas light hanging from the ceiling and it had a pilot light in it, so I would stand right next to Aunt Irene while she would turn that pilot light, and then there would be a little explosion as the gas caught and then all the light would come on. That was always sort of a thrill. Then the house that we lived in, the first house that I could remember living in was two doors up from Aunt Irene's house, which had been my grandmothers house. We didn't have any electricity either but I remember we had gas. I remember one of the first things my parents bought, you have to remember she was sixteen he was nineteen, so she was probably seventeen he was probably twenty. They bought a player piano, and they didn't have any money so they had to make payments on this piano, but it was brand new piano and she just always dreamed of how wonderful it would be to play a piano. So she couldn't play so she got this player piano and it played rolls, and I can remember the rolls all underneath the piano seat there was this place for the rolls to be stored. They would have a party once in a while and standing next to the piano was a floor lamp, it wasn't an electric floor lamp, it was a gas floor lamp, and it was wooden with a great big round wooden base and then it went up wood and then it had a silk shade with all of this fringe hanging from it and they'd play these rolls and later on my dad would always say that he felt bad because it was a half of a double house, and he would feel sorry for the old couple by the name of Stradling, Mr. and Mrs. Stradling lived in there, and he used to

feel so sorry because all of that noise must have gone in there. They paid about ten dollars a month for that house.

CM: Which was a lot of money back then?

BM: Well it wasn't a lot of money but it was all that they could afford. Then they moved four more times as I grew up, each time they'd move, it would be a little better, the house would be a little better. I think the most that I remember them paying was fifteen dollars a month rent. Then finally in 1941 well before Pearl Harbor in the early part of '41 they finally bought a house. It was over a hundred years old then.

CM: Oh wow.

BM: Oh yeah it was well over a hundred years old then. The house that they had been living in before they bought this one had been a really nice house and then whoever had owned it had lost it in the Depression. They had a mortgage on it and the bank foreclosed and then the bank owned it. So then the bank rented it and my parents rented it from the bank. Finally came the day when the bank notified my parents and said that they had to sell this house and asked them if they wanted to buy it for five thousand dollars, well five thousand dollars was like fifty thousand dollars to them. They could raise five thousand just as easily as they could raise fifty thousand, they couldn't buy it. So that is when they bought this house in 1941 as I said. It needed a lot of work, it was in dreadful condition. It was really old but what he couldn't do, she could do. So through the years they just fixed that house up and it is just a darling house. Everybody who went in it loved it and just exclaimed over it. Then it fell upon me as an only child to sell it after they were both dead. Oh I forgot to mention that the price they paid for this house was $1200. Granted that $1200 then in '41 was a lot more than $1200 is now but even so, even then it wasn't

very much money to buy a house. The really fine houses in Mt Holly you could buy for $5000 and the really, really wonderful houses were only about ten thousand. So they bought this house for $1200 and then when I sold it eleven or twelve years ago I got many times that amount. My father would have just been astounded.

CM: What was school like during the Depression? Did you have to take your lunch or did you go home for lunch?

BM: We had to go home for lunch. Everybody who lived in town, our school was a regional school so all of the little towns around us had grammar schools but when they got to high school they had to come to Mt. Holly, it only that high school so it was called, well that comes later, it was just called Mt. Holly high school then. Everybody who live in town had to go home for lunch, you couldn't take your lunch, you couldn't buy your lunch you had to go home for lunch. Except for the kids who live out by the hospital, that was more than a mile from the school and they came on the bus and there for they could bring their lunch or buy it. But anybody who was less than a mile had to go home, no matter what the weather was.

CM: Did you see a lot of poverty in school, were there a lot of kids who were just purely poverty stricken?

BM: No, you have to remember that everybody was in the same boat, nobody had any money, I mean I'm sure there were some families who had more than others but I would say that 80% of them were all pretty much in the same boat. I just don't remember any terrible signs of poverty in school. There were other signs, we had relief, which was one of Roosevelt's programs and that would be comparable to Welfare now. A lot of fathers, a lot of families had to go on Relief. My dad would do anything short of going on Relief.

He and my mother were very proud people and that was just the bottom, he wasn't about to hit that bottom. So he worked very hard for very little money but he managed to scrape by. Some of my friend's dads went on Relief but my Dad never did. In some of the cases of friends who went on Relief, their mothers didn't work where as my mother did, my mother worked right along with my father and somehow they made it.

CM: What was your first memory of the Depression?

BM: Well the first thing I can think of is probably him picking the tomatoes for a dollar a day and I remember coming down the stairs in the morning when it would still be dark out. They would be in the kitchen, she would be getting his breakfast, and I remember vividly her calling out "Here comes Grandma Tippy Toes". I don't know why she said that, but I do remember that. There are certain things that I do remember so vividly and that is one of them. Sometimes I wonder if I made a mistake and if it was a dollar a bushel but I don't think so I still think it was a dollar a day. Then somewhere a long in there he worked for Victor Record Company in Camden, I don't know just where that fell in there but it was during the Depression and I was still under eight years old. There was some talk of him going to New York City because I guess Victor was going to send some of them from Camden to New York City and he would have to stay up there all week and then he could come home on the weekend and I thought that was just great if he would have to go there. My mother and I would stay where we were, why I thought it was great was because it would mean that we would have to move in with Aunt Irene and I just thought that would be wonderful, to live in that house, I just adored that house. I suppose those are my first memories of the Depression. You know when you are a little child you are not too aware, especially if everybody else is doing the same thing that you are doing.

Everybody made their own fun, everybody listened to the radio. I've heard people say that you could walk down the street and you could hear, everybody had the same programs on the radio you'd hear Lowell Thomas with the news then you'd hear Amos and Andy and so on all of the other programs and you'd hardly miss a beat as you were walking down the street because you'd hear all of these voices coming from the radio. People played cards and made their own fun. People seemed to be happier in a way and more contented in a way then they do now. I think the more you have sometimes the less contented you are. People seemed to do all right but everybody was really poor.

CM: Can you tell me a little bit about what your dad did with the record company?

BM: No, I really don't know what he did. No, I really don't I know he didn't work for them very long, maybe a year or two, but I really don't know what he did.

CM: What about your mom, what were her wages like at the factories?

BM: I don't know how much she made. Well it couldn't have been very much. When she worked in the dress factory she did what we call piecework and sometimes they would be permitted to bring home a whole big bag of sleeves or a whole big bag of something and they could work on them at home and bring them. In addition to what they did that day at work they would have this to get paid for also. I don't know how much, but maybe they would turn the sleeves or something, then they'd all be set to go the next day or some such thing as that. They didn't make very much. Later I remember she went into the shoe factory and she learned to do every step of making a shoe so she was like a floater, like if somebody was absent or they needed somebody, the boss could put her anywhere after she'd learned everything. She worked there clear until I graduated from high school. Of course it would be hard on a woman with a young child at home, there

was nobody at home taking care of me, my dad was home in between the mails, provided he wasn't doing a moving or something but he was in and out, in and out, in and out, but I was there and one time we lived in a bungalow right next to a stream. There was a bridge, and the bridge was just part of the road, and there was a wall from the bridge about two and a half or three feet high with a cement topping and the topping was wide, it was probably a foot and a half wide and we children used to get up there and walk on that, because it was daring. There was a hill that sloped down to the stream, so naturally I fell off of it and we didn't have a telephone, and there was nobody home. One of the kids who was with me ran across the street and got Mrs. Newell who called down to the shoe factory and my mother's boss brought her home and he took her and me to the hospital. I had a broken arm in three places, and we had to go through the clinic, I wasn't a private patient. My mother had to take me out there; it was about a mile walk. Every week I had to go out, and I remember it's funny how when you walk somewhere or even drive somewhere in a car, going always seems longer than coming home, it always seems shorter coming home. Well everybody knows that you have a cast on for six weeks. I have my arm in a cast from my wrist up to my mid upper arm and at five weeks when I went back my doctor was away and I had another doctor and he decided that the cast could come off. So they took the cast off and wrapped my arm up with gauze tightly and still in the same position as it was in the cast, and it was still in the sling. When I went back the next week my doctor was back and he decided no, no, no, he should not have taken that cast off, it was not right. So they took me in to the X-ray room and put me out and broke it on purpose over and reset it.

CM: Oh no.

BM: So now I'm back in another cast for another six weeks, so all together I was in a cast for three months. I was going through the clinic because we didn't have enough money for a private doctor so I was at the mercy of interns who maybe didn't have the best judgment yet. They certainly weren't orthopedic surgeons, but I lived through it. At this time my father had been working, this was another job he had which I forgot, he'd been working for a contractor building and redoing over old houses and they had been doing an old house over and he had a hold of a very heavy something or other and the man on the other end dropped his end so that heavy plank or whatever came down and broke four toes on my fathers foot. So my father was in the hospital in Camden with the four broken toes and I had the broken arm on top of it. So my mother was working and had all of this to contend with. I remember one time my uncle who had been on the mail contract took my mother and me to Camden to see my dad and when we went in my dad said something to the effect that "I didn't have to be so jealous that I had to break something too, just to be like him." Actually he enjoyed his hospital stay, you know the nurses were real nice to him and they rubbed his back and he enjoyed the meals and it was a completely novel experience and he didn't mind it at all. As far as staying in the hospital goes I don't remember how long he was in there.

CM: Were these clinics free?

BM: Probably, you know I don't really know, I don't think my mother paid any money for it. I don't know. I remember one time I had my tonsils out when I was in the second grade. My whole class had a half a year of kindergarten and a half a year of first grade and then we went to second grade. All of us were seventeen when we graduated from high school instead of eighteen.

CM: You don't have any idea why they did that?

BM: Pardon me?

CM: You don't have any idea why they did that?

BM: No, I have no idea why they did that, I never did know. So anyway I had my tonsils out and we had a wonderful public health nurse, school nurse, she was the nurse for everything in the town and she had been a public health nurse when I was a baby. My mother had taken me down to her clinic to keep tabs to see that I was growing properly and everything was developing properly, it was part of the clinic. So when I had to go to the hospital to have my tonsils out, Miss Benton was her name, took me to the hospital because my mother didn't drive and my dad was evidently working and I was there for three nights and then she took me home. Instead of just taking me home, I remember her taking up and down streets testing me to see if I knew where I lived. I did know and my mother had promised that she would come to see me and I could look out the window from my bed and look down this road that she would walk up and she never came and she never came and I was just so upset that she never came. So when Miss Benton took me home Mother said to go in and see on your bed. So I went in and there was a dollar bill, which was like twenty dollars now or thirty dollars, that was big money, there was a dollar bill and a letter that she had written to me but she hadn't mailed it because I was going to be home before I'd get it and a couple of other little presents and the reason she hadn't come to see me was because there were only two visiting days a week and in the time I was there, visiting day didn't fall in that time so she couldn't come, but I didn't know that. I was very upset. There again that was from being poor, if we had money I

could have been in a room where she could have come any time she wanted to. As a child you don't know these things so you don't think of them in that way.

CM: I know that growing up during the Depression was hard, what did your family do for entertainment?

BM: Well, one thing that I remember my dad did was drive around the county or township it would have been, township and put up movie posters of coming attractions, he'd nail them on to trees and old buildings even out in the country and I'd go along with him because it was sort of a fun thing to do and then he would get two free passes a week. I don't know which two of the three of us used those two passes but I do remember Saturday matinees, I went every Saturday to the matinee. I think all children all over the country must have done that because I've heard other people say the same thing. There would be the news and coming attractions and then a short and then maybe a cartoon and then the serial, and then the main attraction. I remember Jeanette McDonald and Nelson Eddy and Alice Faye and Dick Powell and Eleanor Powell and "42nd Street" and "Ramona" and there were so many movies and I went every Saturday. Then one day my dad said that I couldn't go anymore every Saturday, he just couldn't afford to give me ten cents every Saturday to do this, but I could go once in a while. I was just heart broken, but I lived.

CM: The serial?

BM: The serial would be usually cowboy movies. They would show, I guess it would be ten or fifteen minutes and there would always be a cliffhanger at the end of each week and then the next one would continue on from where it had stopped. They were just wonderful, the serials, all the kids just loved them, and every one would just sit down

front, you know and made a lot of noise when things would happen. The older people played a lot of cards, my folks and my uncle and his girlfriend would be there and they would play cards every Saturday night. First of all, all of the stores were open downtown on Saturday night and it seemed like everybody went downtown. One of the things we'd do is I'd usually go with my mother and her girlfriend downtown. My father and my uncle would just stand there on the sidewalk and watch people go by. His girlfriend and my mother and I would go in the stores and we'd always buy a bag of candy. That was a real treat, to buy maybe a twenty-five cent bag of candy and we would all eat it and then we would go home and they would play cards and I would sit at the corner of the card table and be very quiet and if you are very quiet while people are playing cards, they kind of forget you are there and then you get to stay up later and I learned to play 50, Rummy, Pinochle, those three just from watching them play. So they played a lot of cards and the radio and talking and going to each other's houses for dinner occasionally. All very cheap entertainment.

CM: Did your mom ever cook for the neighbors or anything like that?

BM: Well my mother was a very warm hearted, or big-hearted person and she was always taking food to people. We lived in all of these different neighborhoods because we moved I think it was five times and each time we moved the house would be just a little better. Of course there was new neighbors every time you moved and it was always somebody who needed help for some reason, either age or health or whatever and my mother was always taking a plate of food, dinner, before she sat down she'd take a plate of food to the school nurse who I was talking about and other people in different neighborhoods. My mother hated to cook but she was a good cook, and because meat

was a little bit more expensive than vegetables, especially in the summertime with the fresh vegetables, my dad always had a garden everywhere we lived, as big as he had enough land to have. If we had fried cabbage, which I loved, we wouldn't have meat that would be our meat substitute. We would have the rest of the dinner just as if that were meat. If we had fried tomatoes that was a meat substitute and then there was something else, fried eggplant. If we had fried eggplant again that was a meat substitute. Then the rest of the time we'd have some meat. I don't cook any of those things but I'd like to have some any old time. I'd be happy to have some of my mother's cooking, she was a good cook. As I said she was always taking food to somebody. I remember one time when we lived on Buttonwood Street, now here you call them sycamore trees but back home everybody calls them the buttonwood trees, in fact there was one street that was lined with them it was called Buttonwood Street and anyway we lived on Buttonwood Street this one time and we had a neighbor two doors down who was eighty at the time and she was a jolly little old woman and we had a neighborhood store near us and she would always be buying desserts at the neighborhood store like the little tasty pies or the little cupcakes or something and she and her husband would get tired of the whatever they had and they would go buy something else but they had to do something with or get rid of this other stuff, she would always bring it to us. So this one time, it was summertime and the windows were open with the screens in and my mother saw Mrs. Bullock coming down the alley and she hollered down to me "tell her I'm not home" because she just kept talking to her for so long and my mother was busy and Mrs. Bullock had all day. So Mrs. Bullock came in the kitchen and she had heard my mother

and she was laughing and saying “I’m not home, tell her I’m not home”. Oh it was mortifying.

CM: Overall do you think you had it better than most people during the Depression?

BM: I never felt in a bad situation. I felt loved, my mother and father both loved me very, very much and I always knew it and anything I wanted practically they got me one way or another, they would manage to get it. Except a horse, of course, all girls want a horse and of course I didn’t get a horse. I remember one Christmas especially when I was quite young this house where we had the piano in there was no heat in the front room and so my mother closed the door to that room and we couldn’t go in there. You could buy tissue paper that was red with white lines that simulated bricks. Where a pot bellied stove would go into the, where the smoke goes out, the chimney, she moved the pot bellied stove, and she pasted this tissue paper that looked like bricks on the chimney so that it looked like a brick fireplace and when I came down, we couldn’t go in there until Christmas day and when I came down Christmas morning you would have never known there was a Depression. There was a wicker buggy and a big doll and a swing with a little doll in it and various things, just a wonderful, wonderful Christmas and that doll was almost life size of a baby and I remember one time going down to the corner store and I was carrying that doll and I heard some grown ups say, I was probably six years old, I heard some grown ups say “Look at that, isn’t that disgusting, that child carrying that baby, she’s too little.” Here it was this doll, which looked just like a real baby. That makes me remember the stores. All of the neighborhoods, I could think of five little neighborhood stores, they were all around and I could remember going to all of them. I must have a thing about these stores because through the years when I can’t sleep I’d

think of those stores and I can still see them, I can remember the people who ran the stores, I can remember what the merchandise was like. Across the street from us lived a retired farmer, Mauri Haines a big fat man. He would sit on the front porch and you would have to remember that this was like 1928 or 29 and I would have been five or six and I would cross the street but it was a small town and there weren't a whole lot of cars and what there were didn't go all that fast and he would motion for me to go across the street to him and I'd go over there and he would want me to go up to the corner store, Mr. Whirl's and get him a cigar and he'd give me a penny to do this. Well I willing to go up there and get him a cigar and get a penny worth of candy and Mr. Whirl was an old man with a bald head and sloshing around in ill fitting slippers and he had one of these poles with the grippers on the end so that they could reach up to the top row and get something by working and they could bring a can down because they had this gripper thing on the pole and get right around like it was like tweezers or something, only it would curve so that you could get a can or box of cereal or something down, whatever. So I used to go up to that store all of the time and I remember another store on a different street that was a long narrow store and the floor was wooden and instead of it being with the planks of wood being laid width wise the short way, because it was a long and narrow store, they were laid long ways, so when you walked in you saw this long wooden floor. I never forgot the smell of that store and all of the spices, I could smell all of the spices in there and I never smelled another store that smelled like that. I just loved to smell that. I remember another store that was quite a ways away from us that they redeemed octagon soap coupons. Octagon soap was yellow laundry soap, it was strong. On the label there was an octagon shaped coupon that you could cut out. If you saved them, for so many

you could redeem them and get all kinds of wonderful things for nothing, you could have like a hundred coupons or fifty or whatever. I remember my mother saved them like crazy and that was the only time we ever went down to that store when she wanted to redeem those coupons. It was quite a ways away from where we lived. But I loved all of the stores.

CM: Do you have anything you want to add about the Depression or the Depression and yourself?

BM: Well, I'm thinking, well one time I was raised Episcopalian and during lent the children were all given little heavy paper, or cardboard boxes and they were called "mite boxes" and you say a little mite like a little bit. You just had it during lent, for six weeks. So this one day, my mother would have been working, I went in and I got my mite box and I ripped it open and I got all of the money out of it and I think it was a $1.27. Then I took all of the kids in the neighborhood down to the corner store, Woodrings, and I was king for a day. Name your candy; they all could get what they wanted. So I bought about $1.27 worth of candy and when my mother found out, I was in big trouble, big big trouble. I remember that vividly too. So Mauri Haines over there who sent me up to the store to get a cigar, well he called me over one time and there was a big barrel in the back yard and it had a big live turtle in it. He was going to make turtle soup from it and he wanted me to see that. I don't recall that I had any of the turtle soup but his daughter who had built a house next to them did introduce me to strawberry shortcake, I had never had that before.

CM: And what did you think of it?

BM: Oh I thought it was great.

CM: You didn't eat a lot of sweets during the Depression, besides the candy that you bought?

BM: I don't really remember very much. I remember the bakery downtown had just the most wonderful baked goods in it and we called all sweet rolls, cinnamon rolls. No matter what kind of sweet roll it was, I didn't know the term "sweet roll". I just knew cinnamon rolls and that was a big treat when my dad would bring home a half a dozen sweet rolls for breakfast that he would stop downtown and get. I remember coming down and being very disgusted and disappointed if there weren't any sweet rolls and I had to settle for this ever lasting grape jelly that my mother made, my mother always made grape jelly. I just got tired of grape jelly and I'd be quite incensed if there weren't any sweet rolls and I had to settle for toast and grape jelly. She'd make pies once in a while but not too often.

CM: Do you have any other memories of the Depression?

BM: I remember taking piano lessons for fifty cents a lesson. All those years from seventh grade until I graduated from high school that's all I paid was fifty cents. It was supposed to be a dollar an hour and I was supposed to be getting a half an hour for the fifty cents because that is all they could afford to spend on it but I never got out of there in a half hour, it was always forty-five minutes and longer. To think that my granddaughter pays twenty dollars for a piano lesson now.

CM: Wow prices have changed.

BM: I don't know if I could think of anything else.

CM: Okay well I think we'll wrap it up, thank you very much for your interview Mrs. Moore.

BM: You are welcome.