

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

East Palestine, Ohio

Personal Experience

O H 1000

EDWARD WOODS

Interviewed

by

Stephan Casi

on

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C· This is an interview with Mr Edward Woods for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program on the History of East Palestine, by Stephan G Casi, on April 20, 1979

What do you remember about where you were born? What do you remember about your parents and family coming to the East Palestine area?

W I was born in Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania in the year 1891 My father was a coal miner We had a family of ten I have five sisters and four brothers I am the oldest living one I will be going on eighty-eight in June The baby of the family, my brother, is seventy-something He was the baby of the family

My father was a coal miner and that is the reason we moved up here When we moved to East Palestine, I and my brother were World War I veterans That was my brother James He passed away at the age of seventy-six We rode a moving wagon from Beaver Falls into East Palestine This street over here, what we call Taggart Street, there were no houses there, and there were no streets We came in Main Street In other words, we came from Darlington, up Red Hill and then Main Street, then to James Street We lived along James Street in a double house Back then the streets were all mud and dirt When we moved in here, it was a rainy Saturday, the mud was up to the horses' bellies From that time on, we went along here on Front Street. There has been a great improvement

Now, down where the five and ten, that is Newbury's [now closed] now, there was a restaurant run by a man named Tommy Swagger He had a peanut roaster sitting on the front steps and it was down in, off the street That was on the opposite side of the street Then we came right to this intersection, now take this street over here, then these two streets are where we come in. That is Alice Street and Taggart Street Forget about them for this time because at that time, where Nash is now, that was a ball ground called the Buckeye Ball Diamond They hit from that corner There was a railroad switch that came down from a prospect mine which is up at Jimtown and right at the corner of this factory here in Nashes It met the railroad That was a switch that came down

Then, we came over into this section here Now there was nothing, these houses, the roads, three or four were built in the teens after McGraws got started Well, over--if you can look out here--on these two streets up there were the only ones on the next street corner There were very few on this side after you come up the hill

Then, what you call North Avenue there, they had four houses way out at the end, and scattered houses all around Well, James Street, we moved up to the end of that Over here there was a ball diamond I used to play ball over there when I first came to town

Then, we came over to the other end of town that is the Southwest end Well, that there southwest end was a little better built up than this end was but

still, that built up after the potteries come in. Well, on the west end of town they had two potteries. One The East Palestine Pottery Company. The other one was built after we had a pottery down here where the Novelty Calais is now, and it was called Ohio China. It was run by the Sebring's and they went and started the Sebring Potteries in Sebring. George Sebring. Well, then they built the number one pottery over here, W S George. That left the two right out on that end and up there. And, the old pottery burned down in 1912. Then W S George took over and built it up again around the hill that was there. So they called them number one and number four. Then he had two other potteries, one in Kittaning and one in Canonsburg. They have lost them all.

Then the Pittsburgh Chair went out there. It was built and now it is gone and, again, I guess they have pottery out there now. And Ohio China went to the Novelty and over here, McGraw's Tire and Rubber, it started along in 1908 and 1909 and closed down in 1923. At one time, there were twenty-two hundred men employed there.

C What was the reason the McGraw Tire Company shut down?

W Well, I would say this, just like these boys lost the potteries. When Mr. McGraw came here, he owned the Roosevelt Hotel in Pittsburgh and he put the money in and built up the rubber works. He died and they got a tire out that they called the Keystone Tire. Well, they went into New York City and they spent all kinds of money advertising, showing everybody a good time, his son and son-in-law, see Well, the first thing you know, they went under. Probably did the same thing with W S George Pottery. This man gave all his boys the potteries. One in Kittanins, one in Canosburg, one of them east, and one of them here, and they all lost them, but you can tell the reason why. Now, I would not want to say this. But their sons lost them.

Now this here Adamson's was built since I came here. I would say how that came to be started. C F Adamson started that. He was the superintendent at McGraw's when he started. He developed vulcanizers to vulcanize tires and McGraw tried to say that he did that on their time. He went out and he started this factory down there. Since then, they put additions to it but I guess they are in bad shape now, too.

C Adamson's is, yes

W Well, he sold out to Gilkey. We got a strike going on now over here at Nash's. I do not expect that to go under because I imagine they will settle some way. But I do not know about this down here. It is really leery.

When we first came here, there was no football or basketball, it was just baseball. They had two teams, the Buckeyes and the Kelly Islands. Well, they started football in 1904 and 1905. We had a heavyweight team and a lightweight

team They both won--in their second year of football--won their county championship Their basketball team started out in 1905 I did have a picture around here somewhere. I do not know where to find it, but I know every player that was on it They are all dead and passed away now, but they had a fellow by the name of Goode go down and the rest of his hometown boys They had George Faulkner, and Enos Kelly and Goode was their center They had Meeks, Bob Chapel, and George Then they got a couple different players on there Clarence Wood was one They lined up and then added to them buy for years, about four or five years here, they had wonderful basketball teams That was long before they ever started high school basketball

Coming from Beaver Falls, one of my brothers died, Sam He was about four years older than I am. He had watched Geneva College practice In the years of 1900 and 1904, Geneva College had some good football teams Well, he was never a heavy fellow, so he took the lightweight team They started there and the first year they went over to Lisbon and the team just beat the life out of them, about fifty-seven to nothing They came back and he took over and they played another game and he cut the score down to twenty to nothing. The next year they turned the table on them

C Let me ask you about your childhood in East Palestine? What did you do when you were a kid, for fun, your entertainment? Did you work for your mom and dad? Did you have a part-time job?

W Well, there was a point in our coming up with a family of ten Now we all grew into this, as we got to working. I was a dropout in school in 1905 and went to work at the pottery and that was the fashion in them days When your brother is older than you--see in them days they had to carry in the coal tanks, do the chores--would do the chores and when he would go to work, the next boy would take on And that was the way that worked up and it was dish washing and everything else with the girls So that was the way families worked in them days Nowadays, it is hard to get anybody to do any work

C In other words, you all had to work together just to get along with the family and to get enough money to survive

W That is right And we were a happy family We never had to bum off of anybody We got through, but we had a wonderful mother and a wonderful dad

C Where was your first home in East Palestine? Where did you live with your family?

W Right up this street here, there is a white house up here at the end of James Street, just before you come up the other way, right up at the end It was a

double house at that time. We moved into there and there was hardly any houses in this end there. Then we moved over on the west end of town and finally, when I went to war in 1918, we were living on what we now call Glenwood Avenue.

C: When you were a kid, what are some of the things you did with your friends for fun?

W: There is a question now. We went and built our own swimming pools out along the creek. We got along the best we could with baseball. Sometimes you get a little rubber ball and wrap a cord around it. Any kind of a ball, we would get. We made our own baseballs. In fact, we made our own entertainment. We would go out onto the streets at night. We would play "Run sheep, run!" Did you ever hear of that?

C: Yes.

W: And then different games we had were, "I spy," and different things. We practically made our own entertainment. Nowadays they do not think of that. Now I do not say the world is spoiled, because I always gone to this. Human nature has been the same all the way down through the ages. Well, we made our entertainment and we came along to that place and we tried to get two kids who made the entertainment for them and I think that is one of the mistakes we made.

C: Yes, yes.

W: See what I mean?

C: Were there any special places where you went to have fun? Did you stay around home for your entertainment?

W: We would go down to Negley. We would go down to what they called the oil tanks down there. They are away from there now, but before you got up over there, put the oil tanks up there. There was this Beaver creek down there. There was a pretty deep hole down there. We would go down there to swim. We would walk up this way and got up to what we call Mud Creek, and then the Sugar Camp up here. We made a dam there and swam in the Sugar Camp up there. We did not have any bathing suits. (Laughter) Anyway, I was talking to a lady the other day and up there, we had had a rope coming down off a tree--now whether somebody put another one up after that--we come out on top, off the rope, and dropped down into the water. Well, this lady said that rope is still there. I do not know.

- C· Today, if you go up to Sugar Camp, there are all new houses up there
- W Yes, that is right
- C· You mentioned that because of the family needing money, you had to drop out of school like a lot of people at that time. But when you did go to school, where did you go in East Palestine? What was school like in those days?
- W Well now, I was coming to that. Wood Street, we had one school over here where Captain Taggart [School] is now. There used to be a school there that we called Wood Street. Well, I saw that grow and just a year or two before I left the school, they had overgrown the school, down along main street, going west there are a bunch of buildings down there where Neal's Barbershop is now. Do you know where that is?
- C Yes
- W. Well, they rented rooms up there for the overflow. They called it Captain Ryan School and that is where they had their school. And then from there, they came up and they built what you call the middle school. Then they built the Captain Taggart. I do not know which was first, but those were the two first. Then they came down here and built this one on East North Avenue. Then, later, they built the high school.
- C Right. What do you remember about school, though? The teachers and the subjects?
- W Well, there are a lot of studies now that they have that we did not have then, and sometimes I think maybe a little too much on a child. They give them too much to study. Now, we were pretty straight on arithmetic with fractions and stuff like that. Of course, I dropped out in sixth grade. We were into fractions and stuff then. One thing we had then and I have noticed was, working at the pottery, the boys there, they did not have that mental arithmetic. See, we used to have mental arithmetic. You did not write it. You had to get it down mentally.
- C Repetition
- W· Repetition, yes. In other words, like I would ask you a question. They would give you a question and say, "Here, two men working on a tub of water. It takes one man with a bucket three minutes to fill that tub. The other man, he would take two minutes." Well, these kids would get down with a pencil and they would scratch it around. There are only so many seconds in a minute. You figure that out. You come to figure that out, the two of them together in a minute and twelve

seconds Well, they will say, "Oh, two and a half or two " Well, that ain't the answer You had to have mental We had more mental arithmetic than they do now

C Were the teachers strict in those days?

W Yes, they were Teachers had you under control I will say that the best teacher was a woman teacher and I had her in the sixth grade She was strict Of course, I tried to behave She never used it on me, but she was pretty strict, she used a hose with a rattan on the end Do you know what a rattan is?

C I believe so

W Well, she used that on you My son-in-law is athletic director up at Rootstown He has been a football coach. He has been a teacher all his life Well there, they cannot touch a kid. He was there one day and two kids got a kid that was kind of a little retarded and him down there and bumped his head on the floor So he just picked them up and took them into the principal's office Well, this one kid went home and told his mother he hurt him He did not. He did not hit him And another kid started that, and he said, "You stay back or I will knock you " But the other kid did not come back Well, he did not. He just took them into the principal's office They sued him They were about two years settling that And when they took him there, they told him not to worry, the insurance company would take care of him. They had their lawyers doing backing They said the lawyer did not know what he was doing He was just a punk lawyer anyway, they said Well, anyway, he did have to go to court and tell his story They did not do anything with him This woman tried to sue him She said he had hurt that kid and everything else Well he did not But you run into them things now I see where certain cases you can chastise a kid, in some places.

C. Well, you usually bring them to the principal now, and the principal takes care of it You are better off not to touch a kid because many parents are ready to sue them

W That is right They tried to sue him, but they did not get away with it But one other thing now, when he first went up to Rootstown, he came up from Indian Hills, in Cincinnati He was down there He came up here as head coach to Rootstown They had a boy on the football and he was one of them, a big boy He weighed about two hundred pounds Bud would weigh about one hundred ninety He has got arms that big around, strong So this kid had been running on the school all at once Bud just took him out and shoved him on the ground and said, "You are canned Get off the field and do not come back " They got hold of him and the school then threw him out He was demoted. They did not

want any more to do with him So that kid was out

He came to Bud Bud had lost his daughter, see, about eleven years old This kid had been on the football team. The football boys wanted to be the pall bearers He came to Bud and asked if he could be a pall bearer, too He said, "I am sorry for what I have done I have been sorry for a long time " But said, "Yes, you can " Well, he was down here, very nice boy They buried her up in Allentown area He went over to Vietnam and got killed over there. Bud hated that because he always felt that it was his fault that that kid was thrown out of school Well, he did not mean it He just showed that kid he was not on the football team, but this kid had started so much trouble in the school, they threw him out Well, I guess he had come to Bud before that because he had a job at about a dollar and a half a day, and he came to apologize to Bud

C How about if I ask you a little bit about your family When did you get married?

W I got married in 1923

C. 1923 So, at that time, the war was already over You mentioned before, did you happen to serve in World War I?

W Yes, I did

C Let me ask you, before you tell me about serving, was life a little different in East Palestine before the war, or when the war was going on?

W Oh, I will say life was a whole lot different and I noticed a big change When I went to war, well, if you saw a woman smoking a cigarette, that was terrible. From the time I went over there They were shipping cigarettes over there They were raising money to send them to the boys and the girls got to smoking and the cigarette companies made the money on that I could see a difference in the moral of our country when I came back here to what it was before we went over there

C Did you notice a change in East Palestine, too?

W Yes, a change in the people here because I saw girls smoke and drink wine I was surprised

See, I fought with the 26th Yankee Division and the George F McBane Post here, whom it was named after He was in the same division but a different regiment than mine and the fellow was at Verdun and his regiment relieved mine two days before he got killed

C So you were right there on the front line in the fighting?

W Yes

C Were you in Europe when the war ended?

W Yes There is another thing I have always said the worst sufferers of the war are the mothers, the brokenhearted mothers When you left your mother and you knew she was brokenhearted Well, they had that flu during the war here and many lives were lost Well, I lost my mother and maybe this might sound funny to you, but I had just come out of the St Mihiel drive WE had been raiding up around St Mihiel there, and we came down to a military academy outside of Verdun there to clean up a little bit before we went up into the Argonne where we went in three different battles Well, while we were in there, she died about that time, tenth of October, around in there, and I was awake I had been reading. There were other fellows there It was in the second story of this academy and I heard my mother call me Now I know I was not sleeping I heard my mother call me Well, that preyed on me all the time I went to these other three battles and on the eleventh day of November, the Army quit fighting That night the mail came out and I was handed a letter edged in black

The only bath we got from St Mihiel drive until it was signed was when we were in that academy We went into Saint Mihiel on the twelfth of September We came out of there and went down the Argonne Before we went to the Argonne, which was about the seventh to the tenth of October, we stayed to clean up in this academy. The same clothes you put back on and things It was all lousy and everything Well then, we never got another bath until Armistice Day because it was too cold You could not bathe in the creek

C Did the soldiers mingle, did you mingle with the enemy after the war?

W. Well, I did not I do not know if anybody did They waved at one another, of course, but they got orders not to mingle Our outfit did not Of course, we did not have very many on our company when it ended, only about thirty-five, because they sent a replacement up because when we pulled out and we were waiting for a replacement coming up They did not get in. They sent a bunch up from Arkansas, see We had only thirty-five men in our company when the Armistice was signed Of course, they left them out for a few days, not putting them in as it was lousy and everything One fellow that was with this Arkansas bunch, his home was in New York City and they had camp up there, Camp Mills, but they sent him down to Arkansas to a camp in the draft And he was moaning there one day about why he never got home--which I did not either--and why could they not have sent him to a camp in New York so he could get home once in a while And this top sergeant in his Irish brogue, said, "I will tell you sonny Why did you not write a letter to the President, they might have let you pitch your pup tent in back of the piano " (Laughter)

C So, coming home for you was not such a great thing like it was for the other boys because you had lost your mom, huh?

W Well, that is true, I had lost my mom and I had lost my brother-in-law. He died, too. My dad then had quit mining coal and he was working on the rubber works then. I came in, after I got off a train. I sent word. I did not know just when I would land then. But my sister had lost her husband and her brother-in-law was set up at her house that night and he came down to meet me at the train. Well, I just took off of the back end of the train. I did not want to come through the crowd. Just speed up the back way to home. And when I got home, of course, my dad was work at the rubbery. He was on night turn. When he came home in the morning, he waited until I got up out of bed and, boy oh boy, when I left home, his head was just as black as can be. See, he died at the age of sixty-six, and his hair was as white as could be.

C After you got home, where did you go to work? Did you go back to the pottery?

W No, I was working in the Rubber Works when it went. The war broke out in 1914, and I was working there. We went over there, 1918 was when we did our fighting.

C There was a big demand for rubber products when the war started?

W Yes, so I worked in the Rubber Works. I went there, and in the meantime before that, I had worked there and I went to Canton to help start the Gordon Rubber Works there. And then Kaiser, the man that got us out there, he left and they came back and I came back and worked at the National Rubber out here. They had two rubber works here. The National Rubber and they had one down where the Kenmore is. And I worked at the National and pretty soon I went over, then I went to the war. When I came out of the war, before I got started to work, I had a job back here at McGraws or National, either one.

But before I had started back to work, we were over there to Idora Park to a dance. Well, there was a fellow by the name of Leo Dolan working up at this same Rubber Works in the office. He was later a reporter from one of the papers in Warren. So he came in to hunt me. He was up at the Canton Rubber hunting me and they told him where I was, so he came over there to the park. He said, "Johnny Klepner wants to see you up at Canton, can you come up?" Well, we went out there. There were three of us that went up to start them. We started them making tires. Kaiser, John Todd and I.

So, they wanted me to come up. He wanted to talk to me. So I went up and he told me they were having trouble with a kid there on piece work, and I guess he got mad and quit and he came up and wanted to know, got me to figure out what was their trouble. Well, they were getting too much rubber on it.

They were not giving them enough stretch, see, and it was getting too big to overflow, so I went out and straightened them up and then they put me on for assistant superintendent at night. And just before the railroad strike, they were figuring on in 1920. They went out--they had a wonderful cord tire--and they went around and bought all the rubber and cord tire they could. Well, the railroad did not strike. Rubber dropped, cord fabric dropped. They had all these places filled with Canton. So we left there. I went then, just right in the spring of the year. I went up to Hartville and took a fellow up with me, Ronny Fulerton. We worked up there that summer, all night turn, then we would come down to Canton every Saturday or Sunday and maybe come home. But we took a job at a small town then. Do you know where Hartville is?

C. No, I do not.

W. Outside of Canton. That is where the Amish are, where the swamps are. We worked out there that summer, then I came back and started at McGraws, and I worked there until 1923, February, 1923, at this one flat. Then I went up there and started in the Pottery up at Sebring. Then, when I was in Sebring, I got married that June. I had two daughters. One of them is still living. The other one has passed away.

C. So you got married in 1923, then you moved to East Palestine a short while after you got married?

W. No, I was in East Palestine when I got married.

C. Okay, your wife was from Sebring?

W. No, my wife was from town here. We went to Sebring after we were married.

C. Okay, so you got married here in East Palestine, then you went to Sebring, then you came back again. Did you work for McGraw tire company again?

W. No. I came back to the pottery. McGraw's was done then. So I went back to the pottery. I went back in 1923, the year I was married.

C. The potteries in town were quite busy? There was a lot of work?

W. Yes, they were good for a while, very good during World War II, then I do not know what happened to them.

C. During the 1920's, what was it like in East Palestine? You know, prohibition? Were there a lot of speakeasies in town here?

W Well, now I will give you a little history on that There were speakeasies down in the country some place There were some Now, East Palestine, from the time I came here, the Arnold Brewing Company was over on Walnut Street, and then they turned into a livery stable Now there is nothing there It is torn away Just right where they pulled a house down for the log house to move, just down this way from it, that was a brewery there And it just went out of existence the year I came in here because Palestine had gone dry And Palestine had been dry every year I lived here up until 1933 when the country went wet again Now, at one time, the county went dry, the whole county went dry, but Waterford did not When Waterford was always wet, they would always have one come in from Waterford to Leetonia But when the county went dry, everybody went from Palestine, Waterford The street cars were around then They would go up there and they would come down on the streetcar and catch that eight o'clock train back and they would go up there and it was the same way before that when Palestine was dry and Waterford was wet They would go up to see the drunks getting off the train That used to be a big amusement, to watch the drunks getting off the train (Laughter)

C Well, let's go to the late 1920's and then early 1930's, and we get into the Depression here in East Palestine What was life like during the Depression here?

W Well, it was pretty rough, because here, used to walk, you know where Simmons' farm is?

C Yes

W Just before you get to Simmons' farm, there is a place there I used to walk--I lived on Martin Street then--I used to walk from Martin Street out there, work ten hours a day, get my dinner for thirty cents an hour And then we were out of work And then at that time, they took the old oil tanks down at Negley Well, they took them out I went down there When they took that oil out of them tanks--there was a bunch of big tanks there--they would steam them over night and that oil would be hot and it would just run You would get in there in the morning and it would not be hot enough to burn you, but it was hot enough so you knew it was hot You get in there and you had a paddle and you would shoot that up to the place where they run it out, the oil, and let it run all the way. Then they took all the pipelines they had out there that they run to get oil out and things Well, I suppose it was in the fall of the year then I was kind of chilly, but when you get in there, get in that hot oil, it did not bother you Did not bother you at all in that hot oil And I worked there about a month or six weeks getting that done

- C What type of wages did you get for doing things like that?
- W Well, down there, we got sixty cents an hour. And that was good at the time. In the pottery, I was a warehouseman. You had to work three years to get the trade, but it was a trade. I suppose it paid a couple of dollars an hour, maybe. But when I quit the pottery in 1957, I was getting a dollar eighty-six an hour.
- C Did a lot of businesses lose out in the Depression? Did a lot of them close down in East Palestine? Do you remember?
- W Well, some of them went down after and I do not blame that all on the Depression. I blame that on conglomeration. In other words, you have got supermarkets. Even your milk now, you used to get your milk off of your farmer. Now you go around and they take this. Well, you are paying for all those truck drivers. You are paying for all that difference. You have come to this place now, our merchants were good here to us and, of course, I never had any trouble that way because I had no good merchants and they stayed with me. When I got back to work here, I kept them up and, of course, we had a bonus coming. We took half of our bonus to help them live through the Depression. The bonus was one thousand dollars. I had to use five hundred dollars to keep my head above water. And the other five hundred did not mean too much to me when I got it.
- But I would say here store after store started--well, take Mrs. Leibert's building up here. She lives up there yet. She used to have a store up here. She went under. There used to be a store out on East Clark. There used to be one up on Lautown. There used to be one up here, little stores, and then there were three or four stores down there, grocery stores. Well, the only one that ever survived was Rukenbrod's. And they are about the only independent store I know of in town now.
- C How were they able to stay and keep going?
- W Well, I will tell you why they kept. Their prices were pretty well, there ain't much difference in the prices. And they ran credit. A lot of their old customers pay every month. They go that way with them, and they deliver where the chain stores do not.
- C Right. A lot of older people who cannot get to the store, they can take advantage of that.
- W That is right. Yes, they call it and they take it. So that is the only grocery store in town now. But one time we had two clothing stores here. One, this Bob Johnson had business and he was getting awfully tired. You could see it coming on and he sold his store out because he had had a place to take care of that his

wife's people had left money that they had to take care of out in Arizona. He closed his clothing store. Well, he run in there along where the building and loan was. They took the building off of him. They needed that place for a building so he had to give the place up. They wanted too much money across the street, so he got out of the clothing business. And we did not have any clothing stores until this one come in just lately here. That has only been in there about two years, that clothing store. There was no clothing store at all. Now, we do not have a shoe store in town. We had one there, but they raised the rent on her and she gave it up. Her husband is a preacher and they are living down around near Shocton and they got their shoes, she has been selling them off up there at that dry clean store up the south end of town.

C Did you have to made any adjustments with your family during the Depression? Did you have to change your lifestyle? Cut out entertainment and going out? Were your daughters born in the 1930's?

W Oh, yes

C Okay, so you had a family at the time?

W We had a family, yes. We had our family to take care of and once in a while, we used to go out and play five hundred with another couple or a bunch of groups were there. And I had an uncle that died. He is dead and he had come down there and stay with the girls while we would go out this night. He liked to do it. Maybe once a month we would go out to play cards or something like that. The rest of the time we spent with the girls. But, at the same time, when the girls commenced to get up into high school, we went through this see. World War II was on. The boys were practically all in the war and we would have had eight or ten girls there at a time and maybe three or four of them staying all night. We lived in a double house and we had an attic there. We bought this place in 1948. We bought it off of my father-in-law. Well, this Anna Mae Noel, that was Dick Noel's, the district agent, his mother. She stayed with us practically all one winter. I would have a bunch of girls there and they would come and spend time there. We enjoyed that. That was along during the Depression. No, that was during the war, after the Depression was over.

They did have the rationing of gas. And this here, Mrs. McCarthy, she had arthritis. She went to Dr. Beaver in Leetonia. Well, Anna Mae had a car. On account of her going over there, we would get these tickets for gasoline for her so she could have them to take her over there. It worked out just fine that way.

C Was there any crime that you remember in East Palestine or was there basically nothing? You had law enforcement during the 1920's and 1930's. Was there

ever any problems with anything?

W Well, we have had some trouble Before He had come in town, I had met the man and known him for years He was Smith. Had _____ and had _____ shoot somebody over here, and he followed him and caught him I do not know the whole story, but he chased after him and got him, Smith And then we had another murder about the same thing

And then we had a rash of fires We had a fruit man here, who had a fruit store and went to California, by the name of Casio You might have heard Anyway, right where I told you the five and ten is now, where the fellow used to have it, he had his fruit store there, and then finally went up the street further, on the other side of the street, after Tom Smith developed. And he had a barn that he rented up there just across from the Presbyterian Church. You know that house on the corner? They had a barn there It burned down. Then he went down and got a barn down on South Street It burned down. They figured somebody was setting them on fire Well, he had a brother-in-law that was supposed to be in, and after that, some people had an idea that maybe it was him, but did not know But he left town and Casio built quite a business here in the fruit business after he got on this side of the street Then he went to California I cannot say that we had too much crime It was generally pretty safe When I bought this place, the place where I lived out there, I never used a key, out on west Martin Street And for a long time, I did not use a key here Now when I go out, I will lock it in the day time But, we never locked out doors, did not have to But, you would occasionally have somebody do something, but nothing major

Now, we did have, and they got tipped off They killed the one of them I guess down there A bunch came in to rob the Eagles over here one time They were laying there The cops were laying there waiting for them When they came in, I do not know whether it was necessary or not, but anyway, the killed one of them They caught them at the Eagles

So, we have not had too many big crimes, but we have more vandalism now than we ever had An awful lot of vandalism, like running over the school lawn I guess they caught the boy, whoever it was I do not know what they did with him, but I do not know how they are going to stop that They have let them get away with it

Now we had a question They come along here that they got drugs up at the school I do not know whether they have or not, but I do know this I know that the things they do I would not do and I do not know of very many boys that would do that in my day

C How about if we move up to the late 1930's and 1940's? You were working in the pottery and then the war broke out What was it like in East Palestine just before everybody started going off to the war? And during the war, was life

different in town here?

W Well, I would say life was pretty good We just came out of the Depression and the war went up Everybody was working overtime during the war and they were getting along good When World War II would come on, they had WPA and all of those letters to give people something to do When the war broke out, everybody was working We worked overtime and then you had that time and a half for overtime You got a lot of overtime in there and that is why we got an advantage while the war was going on

C Did the potter make anything for the government in regards to the war, for the men?

W I would not say individually our pottery did, but I think New Castle did I would say here, when everybody was at war and everybody was working, they were buying

C Yes, they had the money

W They had the money and they were buying That is the trouble now Things are going up, it is going to have to stop Everybody is buying. We are going to have to go into a recession

C Inflation is going to run away, right?

W That is right. I do not know The sooner a recession comes, the better it is I pray to God that we do have a recession to stop this because if this keeps going on, I do not know what the world is coming to All of your money is just a bunch of paper What do you have backing it? You have your resources, and to get your resources, you have got to use a lot of paper money to get it

C Did you have any friends or relatives that went off to war in World War II?

W I do not think I had any relatives in World War II, outside of both of my son-in-law's, but they got married after the war Well, Bud just got back and married Denis He just got back and was out in Walter Reed Hospital He was in the hospital there. He had had a bad knee from football and he was on a stretcher bearer and he slipped off a bridge there and hurt his leg again, so they sent him back to Walter Reed Hospital He was a kind of an intern down there when he got married So he was in [the war] and Red McCarthy, see, he was in the war. He was in the South Pacific He was in there the whole distance of the war, I think, before he got back.

C Other than everybody working and making some products for the armies and so on, did the town try to show its support for their men fighting? Did they have rallies or anything like that?

W They would back them as much as that there They tried to back them The Legions backed them. The question is here, see, we formed the American Legion over in Paris in World War I Now, I do not know whether you ever heard tell of the G I. bill? Well, we got that for them Now you say what we did with rallies and stuff, well the main thing in World War II that we did not have in World War I was government bonds We gained by that We were working good and we were buying those bonds That gave me the down payment on my house in 1948, because I had worked good and I had built those bonds up and I had a chance to make my down payment and get my house In ten years time, I owned it

That is the thing you have got to figure out now I did not notice as much difference in the morale of the people when these boys came back as I did at the end of World War I, because in World War I when we came back, it was seldom seen when we went over there a man smoking cigarettes Well then, they ate some of this Bull Durham over there, "make your own" and they got in there and they got the YMCA and even the church, and they got money and sent cigarettes over there These cigarette companies were made through World War I And World War II, they did the same thing, they sent cigarettes and everything to them and I know our Legion Post would send them out with a bunch of cigarettes over there to them Of course, World War I, they got more cigarettes than we did They got a better break than we did They had more money-a lot more money But we were over there

Now here is the bad thing about World War I And I was never crazy about the Red Cross Now they do a lot of good work, you understand, but they pay a lot of big money and a lot of people got their hands in there When we were over in World War I, they would send chocolate and tobacco in there Of course, now, we had to pay for it They did not give it to us, the Red Cross The Salvation Army, no The Salvation Army, we come out on one front there, our Twenty-Sixty Division, and they were right back when we were coming out. They were right there with their kettles and donuts and coffee, giving it to us when we come out of the front You never saw no Red Cross people at the front

C I have heard about the Red Cross like that before My wife's two uncles said they remember having to pay for their cigarettes during the war and that they never really trusted the Red Cross

W I never got the cigarette habit I only smoked a pipe and they would send tobacco over there They would always buy Prince Albert or something along that line At that time, they were selling it at about fourteen cents a can Well,

we would get it for nine cents over there from the Red Cross. But here, the people were giving them money, donating money to buy that kind of stuff. The cigarettes were the same way. They had to buy the cigarettes. I would say they were paying a quarter for a pack of cigarettes in this country. They were charging them eighteen cents over there to buy them. They were saving a little bit, but they got the figure here. Them fellows over there were only making a dollar and ten cents a day. Then on top of that, they would take out their government bond. They would take out their insurance.

Of course, when I was over there, just before I went to war, I had a sister and she had a family of eight and her man was killed in a mine disaster and we worked to get her the Pennsylvania Compensation. I was going to enlist, but I waited and went on the draft on that account. We finally got her compensation in, so I went over to the Army and I talked to them there and I told them that I had this sister with hard luck. Well they said, "Why not give half of yours to your mother and half to your father?" And they were impressed, I suppose. I was one of the highest payed privates over there but the question is here. I assigned fifteen dollars to my mother and fifteen to my father to take care of my sister. That left me six dollars a month. That was what I had to go on after they took the bonds and insurance out. That is all I had left, because they allowed fifteen dollars, in a month that was forty-five dollars, but you can figure out how much out of fifteen after.

C. Yes. How about politics in East Palestine, the politicians? What do you remember? Are there any outstanding men that you can think about? Has the politics always sort of run smoothly in East Palestine, no problems, no scandals, or anything like that?

W. You hear some people complain about this. Now, one big thing is a lot of people figure that they should never give this plant up and different things. And of course, people being blamed for things. Really outstanding, they have done different things. A prosecuting attorney who was very highly thought of in town was Wagner. And we had a mayor here, some liked him, some did not. Every time he would run for mayor, he joined the Methodist Church and he would get it. Now ain't that a laugh. (Laughter) He had that going and then I never saw anything like it.

I think we had two good police officers at one time, John Falkner--of course I do not kick any of the police, I think they all do their duties--and Al (inaudible). They were good square policemen. They worked for the people and took care of them. Of course, they did not have as many people to take care of. You have to realize that when I came to Palestine, there were about two thousand people here. And when this rubber works was booming, they employed twenty-two hundred. These houses across the street here on Alice Street, they built up there.

Over on Taggart Street, Jack Mahan, he had a--now, you asked about bootlegging--well he had two of those houses at one place and the other and they would go in there, see, they were on three shifts and one bunch would get out of bed and another bunch would get in and he had the two houses together Well, he bootlegged and he made a fortune bootlegging Then he went up here after that and he started a service station Then he left town I do not know where he went

C Did the police ever make any arrests for these bootleggers or did they just sort of turn their backs?

W That is something that was pretty quiet Jack Mahan, I never heard tell of him being arrested Now, we had a dentist When they had Mayor Ferrin here, he started that Well, they would go out and he would have this Doc go out different places and pick up fellows and fetch them in and he would fine them He was making money on it So this Doc was over at Youngstown They never did find out who killed him Anyway, he was stabbed to death over there in Youngstown See, they were going over to Youngstown all over and picking them up and fetching them here and fining them

C: About the transportation in town What do you remember about the early transportation when you were a boy coming here and what changes have you seen in the type of transportation people have used?

W I would say now, the automobile If you do not own an automobile, you are out of luck When I first came here, you had trains We had plenty of trains This little town here, they claim they did more business than any town between here and Chicago, twice its size. And we would have about four trains stopped each way coming. Now we do not have a train We do not even have a bus to Youngstown, only on a Tuesday and they only have so many hours and you have to come back

C You used to have a bus that went every day to Youngstown?

W Yes Our transportation here, that is where it hit the older people hard Now you take my wife and I, we want to go to the mall or to Youngstown, either one, and we have to find a way to go Now they did have here, for a while, just a two car trundle that went up to Mansfield and back Once in a while on Saturday, we went up to Canton to see my niece, but she is living out in California now We do not have any way out of town unless we go down there on Tuesday morning, maybe a quarter to nine, to go up to the mall or downtown Youngstown. And they start back at twelve thirty We have no way to get down to Cincinnati Only by going to Youngstown and there is just one a day down to Cincinnati

Even if we want to go up to see my daughter in Ravenna, we could not get to Ravenna. We could go there and we could take a Greyhound from Youngstown that goes to Cincinnati and Columbus and get off at Rootstown and Hartville and we could go up there that way. But when we go up there, they generally come down to get us.

C Did they ever have a taxi service here in town?

W Yes, they did. In those days, when the taxi's were running, they had the trains and things and there was not so much of a taxi service. Jim Macintosh used to run the taxi service.

C What year was that, that you had taxi's in East Palestine, would you say?

W Well, I would say from the time I came back from war up until the Depression time.

C When you first got there, there was just the horse and buggy though, right?

W Yes.

C When did you see the first car in East Palestine?

W First car in East Palestine? In the early 1900's. And this little fellow I told you had a little store down there where the what -you-call-it is, he got one. Max Nebar had one, and I think my daddy-in-law had the first Buick that was ever in town.

C There was a Doc Hartford in town here that had a car.

W Yes, Doc Hartford had one. He had one. And, of course, before the automobile, he had a colored man that used to drive. Oh, different things turn up there. You get to thinking about different things.

Oh, what was I going to say. There was another thing in the recreation. We used to get a kick out of it, both girls and boys. On a Sunday, some Sundays, we would go down to what you call the Pine Hollows. Well, they did not have the disposal plant down there then. We walked down there and it was a pretty place. We walked down around there. Then some Sundays we would walk to Waterford and back. So one Sunday, we walked clear to Leetonia and came back on the 8:30 train. We had different ways of diversion than they got now. Now we never thought of, what they think of now, night clubs and that. The life now is going out to the night clubs.

- C I understand that you have been pretty active with sports in town over the years
- W Yes, I have
- C You have always sort of taken an interest in sports Besides participation, were you involved in organizing different activities for people in the park and so on?
- W Yes That was our first baseball team in 1933 Then, from 1933 through 1941. (Showing pictures)
- C. These were Legion teams Is that correct?
- W American Legion teams
- C: And you used to play surrounding towns?
- W Yes. Now this boy, later on, after he got out of legion ball, played with Beaver Falls in the Ohio-Pennsylvania league for a while Now, this was our last team
- C Were you one of the coaches?
- W Yes I really was the main one after that, see, because here we started out with Jack Meeks and them and we went down to Massillon to play We checked Massillon out here and went down there to play We played Massillon We wanted to pitch this boy This other boy who pitched ain't on there now He wanted to pitch a left-handed pitcher and they just batted the dickens out of him
- C What happened to the Legion team in town? Why is it not successful anymore? Why did it sort of fizzle out?
- W I will give you that now This boy here, and this boy and this boy, see, this was their last year They had turned eighteen They could not do anything with them This boy and this boy were both given contracts, but they could not play This boy, just before that, got in an automobile wreck and he got his back He batted 300 or more in every league he played in, but he could not bend over to get a little ball, so they had to give it up This boy here, he was signed with the Cleveland Indians, and they had him. Well, he belonged to them, and somehow they made a deal with Chicago They sent a left-handed pitcher to Chicago In the meantime, he was pitching in Kansas City in the American Association They saw him itch one time
- C What was his name? Do you remember?

W. Ernie Growth

C. Ernie Growth?

W Yes Well anyway, he went there and ever league he was in, he was the best pitcher they had, until he got out to the Pacific Coast League But when he was with Kansas City, one of the New York Yankees owed Kansas City a pitcher Well, Kansas City made a deal with Chicago and Chicago wanted to give him a lefthander "No," Bill said, "I want Ernie Growth " So he went down that spring He went on down to Kansas City and pitched that year The next year he went down there and this Bill told him to come down, he wanted to have a look at him Well, they had bonus players on there and you are only allowed forty men under contract Well, he could not sign him to a contract, but they sent him back to Kansas City Well, he came home Kansas City would not give him enough money

So he was up at my house one night there and they called there and they told them to call here He was right at my house here when they called and they called him from Oakland, California. They said, "We just bought your contract offer at Kansas City " They said, "What is your trouble with them?" He said, "Not enough money " They said, "What do you ask?" He said, "Eleven hundred dollars a month " They said, "You get out here right away Catch a plane and come " He said, "I cannot. I got my wife and daughter I want to fetch them with me " They said, "Well, get here as soon as you can "

Well, then, I will show you something here See, after this, he was pitching for San Francisco one night Something happened to his shoulder and he did not win another game that year They sent him down to Baltimore and then down south to work on him He finished up in Oklahoma city because any time he got up north, why, his arm would not work on him anymore But the Yankee's were figuring on him strong at that time See, San Fransisco gets cold out there at night He had won seven and lost one When they talked to him that night, they told him, "You will win thirty games in the league in the Pacific coast " That is the next branch up triple A

Now this was a pitcher that Cleveland wanted too (Looking at picture) Now he had another year at Leetonia High School and when he was worked out and they saw him, Cleveland wanted him the next year and was going to send him to Michigan Well, Leetonia High School was starting in March and playing baseball The darn coach pitched him and he hurt his arm He was no good Cleveland did not want him

C Well, what were you going to say before about the Legion? There is no Legion in town, is there, anymore?

W Well, we got a team We back that now What I was going to say here from

1933 up until this team in 1941, we won one hundred thirty-one games, lost six, tied three. Many of these teams were older than we were.

Now the day that Cleveland picked him up, Oliver was not there. But the day Cleveland picked hi up, we had a mens team over here from Warren that was scouting. I told him I would show him both pitchers. Well, this pitcher pitched the first five innings, fourteen strike outs, one guy bunted the ball back to him. And then Bill Oliver went in. We shut them out. They picked up Oliver, too, but they could not sign him until the next year. The next year, right after he got through high school, he was done.

But in that time, from 1933, now we started that, the same time, we just got in our new building. We had people. This ball team went around to different places, like New Castle, Warren and them. They had people coming over there and Coming to our fish fries. That is where we made the money to pay for a hall. We done that, we started this. Now the teams, this team and the first team between that and the teams all in between that. We came up with one hundred thirty-nine victories, sixty defeats, and three ties. We played our independent team eight games. Won four and lost four. That was our men's team in town.

C: So you were mostly interested in baseball, right?

W: Yes, that is right.

C: Well, sort of in conclusion to our talk, looking back on East Palestine in the years you have lived here, is there any changes that you would have liked to have seen taken place in town? What would they have been?

W: I would say one thing. I think they started out. I am on that. Christian Concern, closer cooperation among our churches. Now we have an organization called Christian Unity. We have the Methodist, the First Presbyterian Church, the Lutheran, and the Lords, a closer cooperation among our churches. Now we have a ministerial Association, but that ain't the answer. The answer is the congregations coming closer together. See what I mean?

C: Right. So you feel that in East Palestine there has always been a very great distinction as to what religion you belong to, and people more or less sometimes would not associate with other people because they went to a certain church?

W: Well, they associated but you take in our time. At one time the Ku Klux Klan started around, and it kind of worked in here for a while.

C: What year was it that you remember the Ku Klux Klan?

W: That had to be in the early twenties. 1922, 1923, up until about 1925. There was

an ill feeling between the Catholics and Protestants and some of the people had an oath out, the K of C oath. What the K of C's would do, cut your throat and everything. I suppose it worked. But anyway, we do not have that in town anymore. We have a closer feeling than it used to be, well at one time, they would not take the Catholics in the firemen. That is all gone. That is over the dam, and there is a closer feeling all around. I think it could be better yet, but we have got that. We have got the Church Women United. We have got the Christian the Christian Unity Committee so I think we are getting closer that way.

Now, during the war, there was no baseball in town. That is when they started these little leagues and the pony league and all of them, because we did not have any baseball. They got to playing other ball. I did not run a team but I did run a tri-state tournament here, from 1946 to 1951 and it was a good thing but it dropped out. Well, their own team came in and protested and I had to go along with that. Our own team came in with three boys over age and the other team came in and protested so I had to throw them out. That caused an ill feeling so we just cut the tournament out. See, these teams were all paying fifteen dollars to come in and we were running that tournament. In the next year, I was going to put it up to twenty-five and kept it going. We could probably put it up to fifty, but we would not have the ground now after they started pony leagues and things. You would not have any ground to do anything like that, so all we can do now is go along. Now we have a team and we pay for them.

But I have never had any trouble with one of these boys. Now, this boy, one game and I never had no trouble with him, never crossed him, went along with him, this boy, Freddie. He is a druggist now over in Youngstown. We went to Louisville. He was not a big boy. He was not a bad batter. He was small. Good judge of a ball. Now this was a batter, a long ball hitter and probably a faster runner, but I do not think he was as good a gauge as this kid was because this kid, the ball he was hitting, he would know where it would go to, but he only weighed about one hundred thirty pounds and he was good.

So he came in there, we were up at Louisville one day and we were playing and he did not want to lead off. We would lead him off. He was short. He got lots of balls. So I said, "Alright, you will not play today then." And I was going to start out with this one, my cleanup hitter. I figured the best thing I could do to lead off was the cleanup hitter and he was a good base runner and small. Got lots of walks. So I started writing up the line, so he changed his mind and come down and I gave him a talking. I said, "Now listen, the reason I am batting you first, you are smaller, you will get a lot of base on balls. You will do good running bases. You will listen to instructions." I said, "You will score more runs than anyone on this team. It is up to you. Do you want to go along and play ball that way? It is alright with me. If you do not, why, you can hand in your uniform." I said, "That is all there is to it." So after that, he was a good boy. But I never bawled any of them out.

C Thank you.

End of Interview