

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

Early Education Project

Teaching Experience

O. H. 565

NELLIE FREDERICK

Interviewed

by

Caroline Wilms Hall

on

May 18, 1980

NELLIE KINTNER FREDERICK

Nellie Kintner, born April 3, 1888, in Carrollton, Ohio, is the second of four children to James and Marie Edwards Kintner. She and her three brothers attended several small country schools because the family moved around for her father to find work. She entered the "chart class" at age five in East Rochester and dreamed of being a teacher one day. At thirteen she took and passed the Boxwell or Patterson Examination that enabled her to attend Hanoverton Town School, tuition-free. At the time it was not an accredited school, but was the preparation for those who wanted to enter teaching. After three years of Town School, Nellie gave the oral reading for the district clerk to graduate. She had also taken the teachers' examination to obtain her teaching certificate for the county.

Nellie's teaching career began at age sixteen in 1904 with short terms in Wild Duck and Royal Ridge Schools. These were two month school terms before and after harvest. Both schools were one-room with eight grades where the major subjects were reading, writing, arithmetic, and spelling. Besides the academic work, the teacher had to fire the stoves and do any janitorial work necessary.

When no job was available for the remainder of that school year, Nellie returned to Hanoverton School as a student. She then taught in several one and two-room schools in Carroll, Columbiana, and Summit Counties between 1905 and 1912. She also attended Mount Union College for one year as well as took summer training at Wooster and in West Virginia to take the teacher

examinations to renew her teaching certificate. By the time she left teaching to marry LeRoy Frederick of Leetonia, she had a three-year certificate.

Nellie returned to the classroom only once after her marriage in an emergency situation at Franklin Square. She and her husband raised three children on the farm where she lives today. Her large house has been home for several Leetonia teachers showing her continued interest in education. At 92, she still writes to friends who taught with her, attends church, is active in Community Club, and enjoys house plants. She especially enjoys visits with her nine grandchildren, eleven great-grandchildren, and anticipates seeing her first great, great-granddaughter.

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INTERVIEWEE: NELLIE FREDERICK

INTERVIEWER: Caroline Wilms Hall

SUBJECT: School days, Town School education, Changes
Teaching requirements

DATE: May 18, 1980

H: This is an interview with Nellie Frederick for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program on early education by Caroline Wilms Hall at her home on May 18, 1980, at 4:00 p.m.

All right, Grandma, would you tell us something about your parents, what you remember of them; where you were born, where you grew up?

F: I was born April 3, 1888, in Carrollton, the county seat of Carroll County. I was the second child in the family of four children. We moved about quite a bit because my father had no stated profession. He went where the work was, of course. I started to school in East Rochester at five years old, a rural schoolhouse. It had two rooms in the winter.

H: Was this a kindergarten or you started at five in the first grade?

F: We called it the chart class in those days. We worked from a standing chart. We didn't have a book until we could read from that chart. Mother started me early because my brother didn't like to go and the boys teased him and she felt that he needed company. We had to walk a quarter of a mile out of the village to our country school. I went the fall term. As I remember, that winter the schoolhouse burnt down, and we had scarlet fever also that winter. In the spring, in March, we moved to Hanoverton. I'm not sure, but I don't think I started to school that term, but probably did the next term. I entered the Hanoverton School in third grade.

I learned at home quite a bit. I went in the grammar grades in Hanoverton too. It was a three-room school. My youngest brother was born in Hanoverton.

Times were hard and father had several jobs. He drove to Kensington to the train and began to carry the mail into Hanoverton. He carried the mail and after we were, I think, in Hanoverton two years, he moved us all out to the country, three miles out of Hanoverton not too far from Guilford. Then we went to country schools. We went to Courtney's School. Courtney's or Mosquito Ridge, it had two names. It has since burned down. Then, because we wouldn't have had mates to go, we went the other direction to Ralley School. It was named after pioneers there. We went one winter. Then we moved to a farm near Dungannon.

At that time if you could pass what they called at first a Boxwell and then a Patterson Examination, you could go to what they called a Town School; it was a high school anyhow. You could go free of tuition no matter where you lived in the township. Fred went first. I think you had to be a certain age, but I forget. As soon as I passed that examination . . . I think his was Boxwell maybe and mine was Patterson; I'm not sure about that. That was your graduation from your country school, supposedly, and you had to go to the clerk of the district and give a reading and that was your graduation. Or in some places they set up, when they would have a lot of them--eight or ten--a little evening program. I just went to a man and gave a recitation. But I can't tell you now what about.

- H: Were these recitations required? Were they given to you or did you have to write something original to recite?
- F: No, you just recited something that you knew or wanted to learn and speak. It was just like speaking a piece.
- H: In other words, you had freedom of choice in what you recited?
- F: Yes. I imagine mine was about three years ahead of me because my father always picked out that kind of recitation for me, something that didn't mean much to me at the time but I can see now what he saw in it.
- H: You were talking about the different terms. How was the school year set up for you when you were in school?
- F: When we went to Hanoverton School, that was what we called a high school; we probably had eight months. I'm not too sure of that.
- H: Do you remember what the term was when you were in grade school, how you went to school? Did you go from September

until May?

- F: I presume we did. I never went a whole term in my life without missing. I wasn't too rugged in some particulars, so I've never had a good record in attendance.
- H: When you missed, was work sent home for you or did you have to make it all up when you went back?
- F: No. Teachers had no plan that anybody knew about.
- H: So then you just picked up wherever the class was when you got back to school?
- F: Yes, exactly. I always took my books home because I cried when I had to miss. I liked to go. At Hanoverton School the man that taught us had been a normal school teacher. That doesn't mean much to you, but that's the way teachers were prepared in that day. If you thought you wanted to teach, you tried to go somewhere to a normal school. There used to be one down here in Rogers, I think, and one in Canfield and so on. But I never got to go to a regular, normal school, before I taught.
- H: You said that you either had to take Boxwell or Patterson Examinations.
- F: In order to go without paying tuition.
- H: Otherwise, if you didn't take this you had to pay tuition in a town school?
- F: Yes, if you wanted to go to a town school. But most of the youngsters that weren't teacher-minded, they just quit from the country school. They didn't bother about it; they called it the Pupil's Examination.
- H: Then most of the ones that did go to the town school were preparing for teaching?
- F: Yes. The last year before I went to teaching I think there were five or six of us that were going in from the countryside a few miles. Fred and I walked, except when we drove part of the time the last year.
- H: When you say drove what did you drive?
- F: A horse, an old horse. My brothers didn't care for horses, and they would rather walk it anytime than be bothered with a horse. They had to feed it at noon, you know, and stable it and all that sort of thing, so we found ourselves walking a good part of the time.

- H: How far did you have to walk to school when you went to town school then?
- F: Three miles and there weren't good roads.
- H: When did the school day start?
- F: Four o'clock.
- H: Did you have recess during the day?
- F: Yes, one in each half day session, fifteen minutes as I remember. We had outside toilets.
- H: Then you had a lunch time where you ate at school?
- F: Yes. We all carried lunch back from the country. The town children went home and our teacher went home.
- H: So you were unsupervised while you ate at school?
- F: Yes, one hour.
- H: Did you eat in the schoolroom or in the schoolhouse?
- F: Right in the schoolroom. We were teen-agers and we got into mischief too. (Laughter)
- H: What type of mischief?
- F: Well, we had two stoves to heat the room and it was exposed. It was the whole top floor of the building. It was very much exposed to weather and had good light. The teacher was supposed to fire the stoves during the day. There was a janitor who was supposed to sweep the building. We made a man one day and laid him down on one of the recitation benches and put a fake card on him and marked him, "I am cold". It was a hint for more fire.
- H: What was your schoolroom like?
- F: Well, it was big, being a whole upper floor and . . . I don't know how to say it. It had windows all around it. It was well-lit. We had blackboards and no telephone, no carpet, none of the modern conveniences.
- H: What were your seats like?
- F: They were not double seats. In the country schools they had double seats, but in town there was just a single person in the seat. I can't remember a water bucket in that room, but I suppose there was. There was a well in the school ground with an iron pump in it. I suppose we

had a water bucket and a tin to drink out of.

H: When were you attending this town school?

F: I don't know. That's what gets me is the years.

H: How old were you when you went there?

F: I went there before I taught, you see. Then I taught those two little terms and then I went back one winter and that was a finish for me in that school upstairs. I think they accredited it about five years afterwards because I went to the first graduation that they held. They had a regular commencement then. I was already teaching.

H: How old were you when you finished before you actually started to teach?

F: I was sixteen the week that I started to teach.

H: Why did you want to be a teacher?

F: I always wanted to be. I don't know. The first teacher made a pet out of me, that might have helped a little. It was a man and he lived across the street from us in the little village. There wasn't very much for girls to do. Of course, at five you're not thinking much about making a living or you're having dreams. I always wanted to be a teacher and I never changed my mind. I had one lady teacher that I didn't like very well and one man teacher that I didn't like very well because he slapped us over the fingers with his pencil and it hurt. I suppose I was doing what I need not have been doing when he did that. I was always going to be a teacher and it was the thing for girls to do in that day, or else housework at \$2.50 per week.

H: You mentioned your teachers that you had in school, men and women. Were they all single teachers?

F: No. I think the girls probably were. No, I take that back. I think the first teacher I had in Hanoverton School might have been a widow, I'm not sure. I think we always called her Mrs. Ray. When I was in what we called the grammar grades, Mr. Laurence Ling was my teacher and I know he was married because he had a boy in school about the same age I was.

H: But the women, in particular, you don't remember married teachers other than widows?

F: No, I don't think so. I remember when the altercation

was passed, after I was married long enough, that they didn't want married teachers. Then there was another time when teachers got scarce and they were begging them to come back to school with an emergency certificate. I taught three weeks then, sent three children to town school, then walked a mile to my job at Franklin Square.

H: The altercation where they didn't want the married teacher, was there a particular reason? I mean, you say there was an altercation over the thing.

F: No, I don't know really. I didn't teach after I was married except a little bit, but I offered to teach when I was first married. We had a school right up here in the woods, but my husband didn't want me to teach. I was rather glad to quit for a while.

H: Then you started teaching at sixteen after this town school that you had attended.

F: Yes.

H: Did you attend for a year, two years, or what?

F: I really can't tell you just now. Oh, probably not more than three years anyway. I think that's right. I passed the examination to let me go when I was thirteen so that would make it three years then that I went to that school three miles from home.

H: Then you had had what, approximately eight grades before you passed the exam?

F: Yes. I had studied old exam questions and theory and practiced.

H: You also mentioned something else, what you called the grammar grades. What grades were the grammar grades?

F: I think fourth, fifth, and sixth.

H: Then what did they call the seventh and eighth that we now call junior high?

F: I think they just put us all up on that top floor together.

H: They didn't actually have a name for you or were they considered part of the grammar grades?

F: I don't think it was graded that closely. It was Hanoverton Union Schools before it was accredited. I know when I went from the primary grades, and that would have been into fourth grade I'm sure, that the principal came down from

upstairs and gave me an oral examination. I guess I was younger maybe than some that changed over and had missed some school. I had had chicken pox and whooping cough and what have you and he gave me a little oral examination, and a problem in long division.

H: Then you were promoted into fourth grade?

F: Yes.

H: Sounds interesting. So you went to the town school and you started teaching when you were sixteen and you taught at Wild Duck then?

F: Yes. It was the rural school my mother had attended. I got board and room for \$2.50 per week. The family made a living from cheese, but hired a Swiss couple to operate the cheese house at the back door. Neighbors brought milk.

Then I taught at Royal Ridge in Carroll County.

H: Tell us about these schools. What were they like?

F: Wild Duck was a little country school in a nice farm neighborhood and I think I had about twenty-one pupils. See, the children that were big enough to work on the farms didn't go to these short terms. That was to give the little folks a chance to get started.

H: Your twenty-one pupils were what grade areas?

F: You usually had about eight grades in the country schools. There might be only one in each grade and they weren't graded like you grade nowadays at all.

H: So you had twenty-one pupils and you say this was a younger group?

F: I expect it was with one exception. I had a girl who was older than I was, and I boarded at their home, which made it interesting. She was engaged to be married and was all upset when something happened so she decided to come back to school. She didn't come very long, thank goodness, but became a teacher later on.

H: You mentioned the short term. When did you teach at Wild Duck?

F: That was 1904.

H: And then you said a short term, how long were you there?

F: Just two months. Before harvest, they called it, the before harvest term.

H: That would have been April and May.

F: Yes. I don't think there were any truant officers. I think the children just came according to the whim of the parents.

H: What was the schoolhouse like that you taught in?

F: Just a single room with blackboards in it. It was a sturdy, good building. It had two stoves in it, which I had to fire. My mother said she wasn't worried about my teaching as much as she was about the stoves. I had brothers and I had never fired anything and it was quite a trick to get the fire going on those damp, spring days. I can't recall a coal house. I must have had one, but I can't recall it at all. Most of the time I could keep a fire in at least one stove.

H: You had one room; what kind of equipment in the room did you have: Desks, maps, that type of thing?

F: Most country schools had a roll down map or a case with maps that rolled down. The country schools were stocked by agents who came around and sold things to those three directors that you had. Whether those three directors always knew what was best was doubtful, but most of it was pretty good.

H: Did the children that you had have slates or paper and pencil to work with?

F: When I started I think we just had slates, but when I began to teach I think most of them had pencil and paper.

H: Did the school provide this or was that . . .

F: Nothing, nothing. They bought books et cetera.

H: Well, then what did you use? Did the school provide books for the students?

F: No. That came in a long time after that.

H: So then basically how did you teach? Did you teach off the top of your head? Did you have to have books yourself?

F: Oh, I had some books myself. My teacher I said who was a normal school teacher gave us one or two books to read on principles of teaching and that sort of thing. I think I did go to him once with a question. But you taught principally off the top of your head and you allowed the children to practically grade themselves to start. They would tell you how far they went the term before. You didn't have much records to go with. You had the roster

and the attendance record and that sort of thing, but you didn't have what you have now at all.

H: So then did you sit down and write out lesson plans?

F: No, I didn't know what a lesson plan was at that time.

H: And yet you had approximately eight grades to teach.

F: Yes, and you didn't have much time to each grade if you had the eight. Sometimes you only had seven represented.

H: So then basically what did you teach the children that you worked with? What were some of the subjects and areas that you covered with your students?

F: Those were reading, history, writing, geography, and arithmetic days. Was always had a writing period and spelling was foremost. We had spelling schools in the winter terms. The children took great pride in their writing and they were much better writers than they are today, I think.

H: So, did you have even the youngest ones writing stories or themes or was this type of writing basically just practicing?

F: We used copy books. It was basically sight reading. They didn't know what it was to do the busy work that children do now, not in that early school where I first taught.

H: With your reading, what did you do? How did you teach them to read? I mean, they had sight words, but you used your own books with them, true?

F: I don't remember. I do remember buying a set of books later on in the later schools, and taught more like they are taught nowadays, but in those early days it was mostly just sight work and practice. They did a lot of practice work.

H: So that means you had to put a lot of material either on the blackboard or on posters or that type of thing for them to be copying and working on.

F: You didn't have much time for that sort of thing. The little folks learned to busy themselves and they learned to listen to the other grades. That enthralled them, you know, to hear every recitation with the full voices of everybody. You can be entertained all day that way. I think that was one advantage in the country schools, that you got some sort of review by listening to the others. They took pride in their reading and they read in concert quite a bit. I don't know

whether that was much advantage or not, but it means retention anyway.

H: You say you taught April and May there?

F: Yes.

H: Then you went to Royal Ridge. Was it the same type of situation there?

F: Not at all. They had a picnic dinner at the end of the winter term and nobody had ever gone in that schoolhouse and cleaned up after that picnic dinner. It was a Catholic school, pretty large. There were fish bones left from their picnic dinner on the desks. It had never been swept out or the windows washed or anything done at all. When I went to unlock it the first morning there was a sparrow's nest built over the door. I always called it my "Sparrow's Nest School". You can imagine the mess on the little porch at the front. There was no well; you couldn't get any water unless you carried it a half a mile. No water in the school at all. The blackboards were just painted wall. It was sort of a distressing little place and there wasn't a house in sight. It was down in the valley between two little hills. I think I had a bell; I believe I did. I had a hand bell of my own anyway.

At first children were willing to carry water and take all the time that they could. I think I had about twenty-five pupils there. It was fall term, the after-harvest term, and because of it being, I suppose, two-thirds Catholic, they seemed to have their Catechism in the mornings, so the children were about an hour and a half late or more getting to school. They went to Summitville to take their Catechism. The girls, when I first went in that day some of the big girls threatened that we were going to clean that schoolhouse. But when we thought about how to get the water, and a few more things, we gave it up. We swept of course, but it was not highly sanitary.

H: That was August and September of that same year?

F: Yes.

H: Is there anything else you remember about Royal Ridge?

F: I had a nice place to board and the people were nice to me and all that. Some of the things that would not be expected of any teacher today they thought I might do. I drove the horse to Kensington. It was four miles. They had to hitch it up as I never learned, but I drove in there and got the fresh beef for them to have for their Thrasher's Dinner that day. I did that before I went to school. He became a little

angry with me once when he was digging potatoes because he wanted me to pick up potatoes after the harrow. I think they had picked up once, and then he was harrowing the ground, and paid three cents a bushel!

H: What were you paid when you taught in these schools?

F: I got \$25 at Wild Duck and I think I got \$30 at Royal Ridge.

H: That was for the whole term?

F: No, for each month.

H: You say you had to board with someone.

F: Yes, and I paid, I think, two dollars at Wild Duck a week, and at Royal Ridge I think it was two and a half, but she took a dollar off for baby care. They had a little one about a year old and I kept her sometimes in the evening at milking time or something like that. It was interesting for me, of course. They named another baby after me.

H: Were there certain standards that were set for teachers at that time that you had to follow?

F: The only thing that was necessary was to get a teacher's certificate. You had to go to the county seat and take a teacher's exam or someplace in the county. If you could pass that examination, it was up to the whim of the directors whether they gave you a school or whether they didn't. Sometimes they had a pet that they wanted to put in, you know, but I was usually pretty successful. So that was about all.

H: You were sixteen. Did you have your certificate then?

F: Oh, yes! I got it several months before I was sixteen. I got it in Carroll County in February before I was sixteen. I cannot recall now whether I took another examination in this county or not. Yes, I did, as Wild Duck was in Columbiana County.

H: Was there any set time limit on these teaching certificates?

F: Well, you could only get it for one year at first and then when you got a little experienced you could probably get it for two years with better grades of course and with better grades yet for three years, and I think with so many months of teaching experience in each case. I had a three year certificate long before I quit teaching so that I didn't have to go to examinations at all. When you only had it for a year you had to go in each year. It was pretty nerve-racking as to whether you could pass or not. If you didn't

then, of course, you couldn't teach.

H: These were oral examinations?

F: The one in Carroll County was partly oral; that's the only one I ever had that was. The rest were all written. But in Carroll County they gave the history examination, I think, and the reading examination orally. There weren't many in the class that day and they just took us in another room. I enjoyed that as the examiner was very kind.

H: When you went and had these examinations, they were subject areas that you were examined over or tested over?

F: Yes.

H: It was not material on how to teach or that type of thing?

F: Later on they did. I don't think they did on the first one; it might have been. They called it theory and practice and you had some questions that were relative to teaching, but mostly it was arithmetic and spelling, also history, geography, and language. I was always a good speller so that didn't worry me a bit. Later on they put in literature and if you went to summer schools, you could bone up on literature and then when you took your next examination you passed that. But I liked to read and I just did my work at home on that and was able to pass it.

H: Then you taught. What did you do the rest of that year that you taught, the short term at Royal Ridge?

F: That was when I went back to school. My eyes were bothering me so I went and got glasses and I went back to school that winter in Hanoverton.

H: And took a third year at town school or another year? Where did you go to school?

F: Hanoverton.

H: What were you taking?

F: Whatever they were teaching.

H: Now was this to prepare you for your next examination?

F: Yes, it was to be helpful in that line. We had the same principal in the school and he was the teacher for all of that upstairs. Oh, it was very, very simple to what you go through.

H: It just sounds very different!

F: It surely was.

H: Then you were in school until the following May yourself?

F: Until I got the measles.

H: Then you had the summer off?

F: As I recall, I must have been at home that summer. I started then, I suppose, in September at Kensington.

H: And you were there for two years, right?

F: No, just one year.

H: 1905 through 1906; you were there from the spring, right?

F: Yes.

H: All right then in 1905 you went to Kensington to teach.

F: Yes.

H: And you had had another year of town school just prior to this?

F: Yes. I think so.

H: Yes, because you said that you had gone back to Hanoverton and gone back to school, so from there you went to Kensington. What was Kensington like?

F: It's still there. It's a little railroad town. It had a two-room school. The teacher upstairs had been my grammar grade teacher in Hanoverton. I boarded with the granddaughter of the people that raised my mother. She was like a foster child, only we didn't call them that. Her mother died when she was four or five and she was sent into this home. It was a nice farmhouse. They were, by marriage somehow, a little bit connected. Anyhow this woman that I used to board with was not a stranger to me at all. She was kin in a way.

The school was difficult. I think I had over 55, and a good many of them were town children which didn't help any. I had problems of one kind or another there. Well, that many children even in three . . . I think I had three or four grades, four probably; I think that's where we divided it.

Your home life was different from what you would have now. There was no thought of apartments for teachers. I lived with this family in a four-room house. They had one son about my age. I guess he was still going to school and working in the barber shop evenings. I went to church right away down there and met a lot of the young folks.

You have to meet the village as well as the school in a place like that, you know, where it was small.

Somebody saved my life there--I was thinking about that last night--but I don't know who. The trains came in at regular intervals and the old men of the village sat around the depot and watched the trains come in and unload and so on. I was walking from my school and I had to cross the tracks to go where I lived and I don't know what I was dreaming about, but I wasn't paying any attention and the train was coming. Somebody from that depot crowd yelled at me and I don't know now whether I stepped back or stepped forward faster. It was a little hard to beat the train if it was too close. I don't think I would be here if somebody hadn't been my guardian angel.

Bess lived there. That's where we met. We've been friends all these many years; she was a teacher too. I do remember one thing . . . We tried to have a little play party as we called them, where I lived. We wanted to play games. We didn't dance--we wouldn't have been permitted--and we didn't play cards. We played Flinch, that wasn't cards. In order to have room to play dancing games in the kitchen--the other rooms were so narrow--the boys carried the cookstove out on the porch and then we tried . . . But the sad part was that most of them took a girl home and forgot that that stove had to come back in, so we couldn't get any breakfast.

- H: You weren't allowed to play cards and you weren't permitted to dance? Now, these were social restrictions on everyone?
- F: They were from my home training more than from the school board. But I think most teachers did a lot of moral teaching by example. Teachers can dance now and nobody thinks a thing about it. You don't get through college without learning a lot of things. When I taught out south of Salem, I wouldn't go to a Nickelodeon, as they called it, a five cent movie, because I thought somebody would criticize me. Movies weren't as bad as they are now.
- H: Were there other things that you didn't do as a teacher because you were afraid of the way that you would be viewed?
- F: Yes, I sort of looked up to most of my teachers. In a way I felt that was a part of their teaching, the way they conducted themselves. The world is entirely different now.
- H: What were some of the things that you avoided that maybe I haven't as a teacher?
- F: Well, your smoking for one thing. No girls smoked then. I've said times have changed. I was allowed to dance in my home training if I could dance in respectable places.

But town hall dances weren't the places for a respectable girl in those days. Now Ernest could go--the boy where I boarded--he could go, but I would have lowered myself if I had gone.

H: What about going places unescorted?

F: Oh, it was safe but there wasn't any place much to go. I used to get a horse from the livery sometimes and drive home up to Winona. We had moved in the meantime and I could do that then. I wouldn't do it alone now. I could walk country roads anywhere and not be afraid, maybe I should have been . . .

H: You were teaching the primary grades?

F: Yes.

H: Did they have books at this school or were you again teaching, more or less, off the top of your head?

F: The same thing pretty much, off the top of my head. They didn't furnish books yet. I never taught where they furnished books. That came in after I quit.

H: Did some of the children have books they brought from home?

F: Oh yes, they bought books, but they weren't furnished by the school board like they are now.

H: Were they required to buy their books?

F: Yes.

H: Often times they maybe had to hand them down from member to member.

F: Exactly. And you could buy used books.

H: So the books were used for a long time. They weren't changed every few years?

F: No. McGuffey Reader, Ray's Arithmetic, Harvey's Grammar . . .

H: Where did you go from there?

F: I went to a school called Chestnut Knob.

H: Where was it located?

F: In the same township as the Bayard School, I think, but farther north. It was a one-room school.

H: And you had . . .

F: I think 35.

H: This was all eight grades again?

F: Yes.

H: Were you there for a full year or one of those short terms?

F: For the full year. I could have gone back the next year, but in the meantime I went to what they called the Teacher's Institute. It's like a seminar or something of that kind. You had to go every year in August to Teacher's Institute; you were supposed to anyway. When I was there the superintendent of the Leetonia Schools here, asked me to take a school south of here two miles that they called Mt. Vernon. I resigned at Chestnut Knob and took the school that he wanted me to have. He was the supervisor of the township schools. We would call this moonlighting, as he had a teaching job, and was a county examiner. By that time they had a supervisor over all eight schools. I think there were eight in a township. In order to have him perform we had to teach on Saturday. You know how many children came on Saturday if their parents didn't make them. It was an ordeal for me. I dreaded teaching in front of him. I respected him and admired him and all that. We had teacher's meetings with him too at times. I would only have about half the school on Saturday if he came out, and the pupils knew he was to come.

We had a music teacher by that time. I think that was my first music teacher. He came one hour a week and walked from school to school. He taught singing. We had no instruments, not at Mt. Vernon.

H: That would have been 1907 that you were there and 1908?

F: I suspect somewhere along there. I had about forty in that school.

H: These are all one-room schools that you're talking about? Well, Chestnut Knob and Mt. Vernon were one-room.

F: Yes.

H: You had an addition now that you had music once a week?

F: Yes.

H: That gave you an hour off, right?

F: Well, there was no place to get off to. You stayed and

listened.

H: If you had papers to grade, did you grade papers and things?

F: Oh, yes.

I had a furnace in that school which normally I had not had.

H: You talked about the stove and the furnace and everything. Were these wood stoves, coal stoves?

F: Coal stoves. I used to fire that part of the time myself. If you had a janitor you paid him yourself. Sometimes he was efficient and sometimes he wasn't. So I did it myself at Mount Vernon School. I probably had some children with me because I boarded where there were several children in that school. Buy anyhow, I unlocked in the morning and went down and fired the furnace and so on. I wouldn't dare do that now in the same place. It's been made into a beautiful brick home now. It's not a school of course, but that's the changing of the times.

School was slightly difficult. There was a sort of faction with two country churches in the school and somehow the school seemed to get mixed up in it, jealousy. They would come with their announcements to be made at school. One church was an offshoot of the other earlier one. I had some big boys in that school. One of them is my rural carrier just now. They're okay. They walked three miles to buy me a Christmas gift from the school--a jewelry box.

H: Was that the last school you taught in or did you have others after that?

F: Yes. Our folks all had had typhoid fever that summer. I got it too along with my mother and my brother. He got it first in Salem; I went there and brought him home on the night train to Kensington and eventually I got it and landed in the Alliance Hospital. There were too many sick at home then and water was scarce and all that sort of thing, so that was kind of a tough year.

H: Was that during your teaching year at Mt. Vernon that you had this?

F: No.

H: During the fall?

F: During the summer. Seven weeks in the hospital.

H: Did you go back into the classroom that fall?

- F: I didn't go back there. In the meantime, after mother was sick and everything, my father moved the family to Bayard and I got the Bayard School, primary. I didn't start until October. They waited a month for me to recuperate. It takes you a long time; you have to learn to walk again.
- H: Where is Bayard located or where was it located?
- F: It was a railroad junction and it was in West Township in Columbiana County. No school now but Bayard Grange.
- H: So you were there between 1908 and 1909?
- F: Yes.
- H: A one-room again?
- F: No, it was two rooms. I think it had a high school upstairs and about four grades downstairs. Then the principal sent two classes down to me. As I remember, they were reading and history. He thought he had an overload.
- H: Did you get to send some of yours up to him while you took this?
- F: No. Then I didn't please him, I found out afterwards. I think he expected too much, maybe.
- H: Were you there just a year?
- F: Yes.
- H: Then where did you teach after that?
- F: I went up to Salem on Route 9, a school called Vernal Grove.
- H: Was that a one-room school again.?
- F: Yes, it was. I had about forty pupils and eight grades. That's the one that I told you about before where the big boys pulled a bell rope up in the attic.
- H: Tell us about it again.
- F: Well, it was the noon hour and these boys were seventeen. They just easily climbed up the bell rope into the attic and pulled the rope up after them. The question was, would they come down on request? I think somebody, probably you, said I should have used the telephone and called for help, but we had no telephone. (Laughter)
- H: You said there weren't any houses around to call for help if you needed it?

- F: Well, there was one not too far away. They probably had a telephone. I'm not sure now, but if I left the school to use the telephone, then there were all the forty running around there except the ones in the attic. But they came down. They weren't bad boys; they were mischievous I guess. But I had a kind of funny feeling for a little while.
- H: This was September 1909 to May of 1910 school year?
- F: No, I think you're a year ahead of yourself.
- H: No, not according to what I have here. That would be about 1909 to 1910 because you were at Bayard before that and Mt. Vernon and Chestnut Knob. Were some of these short terms where you only taught a month or two, preharvest, post-harvest?
- F: I don't know but I think your years are different because somewhere in there I went to Mt. Union a year and Bess and I went to summer schools: Two summer schools at Wooster and one at Bethany in West Virginia.
- H: Were these all teacher training then?
- F: Yes. I did credit work at Mt. Union, but it was in what they called, the normal department. I took Normal Instructor, and other teacher's journals. It was teachers' training and review and so on.
- H: What kind of courses did you carry?
- F: I had my report cards here. I gave two of them to Barbara. I had rhetoric and some kind of literature, also geology. I took two hours of Bible in a regular college course. I had a full load before then. I made all A's and was working for an old lady who had ten rooms and seven roomers--students.
- H: Now was the Bible something that you took as an elective for yourself?
- F: Just because I wanted to.
- H: Was Bible reading in a big part of the schools that you taught in?
- F: I read just at random from the New Testament. We had the Lord's Prayer in concert, except in Royal Ridge, and I said that was partly Catholic. The teacher that had been there before had been chased out and there was a big girl fourteen that interfered with the Bible reading. So I just quit reading until I could talk to the director about it and I believe that he told me maybe I better just desist. He wasn't Catholic, but I think that's what he told me.

Finally Alice came around and told me that I could go ahead if I wanted to and I thought, "Well, Alice, you're not running this school." Since I had quit [thinking it maybe was an order] I don't think I resumed. It was only a two month term anyway. But outside of that, I can't remember going to a school or teaching one where we didn't have a brief reading and prayer.

H: With the Bible reading, what other opening exercises did you have?

F: I don't remember anything except the reading and the prayer.

H: Did they have flags in the school where you did the salute to the flag?

F: No. I never knew that in the schools I taught.

H: Did you have any singing?

F: Yes, we sang in every school and when I taught at Chestnut Knob, I had a couple of socials. They were Box Socials, to make a little money. We got an organ. Now that was poor thinking. We got an organ and after we had the organ in place, we found that there was nobody in the school that could play enough to play the songs that we could sing.

H: So most of the music was done with . . .

F: Voice. I don't sing to amount to anything, not tunefully, as my father said, but there always was someone that could lead. Yes, we always had songs in the morning or else right after dinner when we reconvened.

H: What type of songs were they? Were they popular songs of the day or were they basically hymns?

F: Well, in Hanoverton School we sang hymns. We sang "Rock of Ages" and another hymn we had. We sang "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean" and patriotic songs pretty much in the other schools. Also "Jingle Bells".

Another thing that you never did in your teaching, and that was at Chestnut Knob, was sweep the schoolhouse with a floor of wood when the children are coming in, right out of the dirt outside. It gets terrible and you usually have an ash pile and the children always run through that before they come in and the floors are terrible. An old teacher, an old lady, who grew up in the teaching profession told me that you could oil the floor. So I had a social and got a little money I believe and bought oil and I did it myself. I used an old broom and what we called a wash basin to put the oil in and scrubbed it into the floor at night. I had blistered hands when I got

through. It did make a big difference when you wanted to sweep. It seems to me that I oiled another floor, but I can't recall which one that was. I am 92 years old, and my memory fails a bit.

H: So you were not only in charge of the teaching, you also had the janitorial . . .

F: Problems.

H: You fired the stove unless you paid someone else to do it?

F: Yes, exactly.

H: There was never a paid janitor at any of the schools that you taught in?

F: No, except at Clinton.

H: How much were you making by this time?

F: I think at Vernal Grove I probably got \$47 and \$50 per month at Clinton in Summit County.

H: A month?

F: I think so.

H: Now was this a lot of money for that time period?

F: Well, it was fair. It was about the average around.

H: Okay, we're to Vernal Grove. Did you continue teaching there?

F: No. Now let me think. I think that my teacher that I had in the normal department at Mt. Union told me about a school in Clinton. That's in Summit County. He recommended me for it, I think. I somehow had a pretty good standing with him. He admired something, I don't know what, but something--maybe my sincerity; I was really interested in what I was doing. But I think it was through him that I got that school in Clinton. I had never seen it, but it was the grammar grades as we called it. I didn't even go out to look for a boarding place. It was quite a little distance and it was expensive to go and I just told my mother that somebody had to keep me out there. So I didn't go until the Saturday before school was to begin, on Monday. When I got to the town the railroad train stopped. Well, before that, I changed cars at Hudson and I didn't think I had time to go across to where there were restaurants to get anything to eat so I did without my dinner. When I got to Clinton it was about two o'clock in the afternoon and I had a little walk up from the depot so I left my suitcases there, not knowing that the station closed early for the evening.

I found the town was practically deserted. There was a funeral in progress. I did find one little girl at home and she gave me a bunch of grapes and they never tasted so good because I hadn't anything to eat since early morning. When the people came back from the funeral, I was then directed to a place that kept teachers and they took me in. They took the primary teacher. We had separate rooms. There was Dawn, whom you've met. It was a wonderful year out there. I enjoyed it very much. Your problem in those days was you had to live around with any family that would take you. It wasn't always just what it's cracked up to be. Some places the family went through your bedroom to their bedroom. There never was a bathroom. I never had a bathroom until I taught at Vernal Grove and lived in Salem. Many, many things were different entirely from what they are now.

H: From Clinton where did you go?

F: Then I got married.

H: Did you teach after that?

F: No. Only a few weeks down here at Franklin Square once in an emergency. I had three children by that time.

H: Was there much parent involvement in these schools where you taught?

F: Yes and no. Some schools not and some there was.

H: How were they involved, when they were involved?

F: Well, at Vernal Grove when I did have these socials, they would come, the parents, and sort of back me up in it. When I was at Chestnut Knob I had one spelling school. That's a chore for a girl to call spelling school and have it at night. The big boys in the neighborhood took pride in their spelling so I had a good turnout and all that, but you had miserable lights in those country schools. You have old oil lamps that are out of whack and the wicks are dried up and all that sort of thing. You have to repair. But in this school here at Mr. Vernon I think I felt the parental pull more. A favorite teacher that they had had just left them and nobody could have measured up to here. She was perfect. And then they had these little church pettish arguments, which didn't help any. Then I made the mistake of trying to do some primary work in the midst of big boys and named the little children as workers and drones, I believe it was or something like that, and they took it to heart, what they were and so on. So one of the . . . I guess he was school director, I'm not sure . . . He and I got to be real good friends afterwards. Anyhow he was an older man and he wrote for the paper. He had to put some little sly remark in the

paper. Just little things like that. I'm sensitive. I have feelings.

H: From the time you taught until now you've seen a lot of changes in education.

F: Oh, yes.

H: What do you think is the biggest change?

F: There are so many angles to it. Teacher pensions are something that I didn't know anything at all about when I first started teaching. I think the last year I taught I may have paid in a little bit to the teacher's fund; I'm not sure. I never drew anything from it. I wasn't in long enough. Well, I guess if you paid in you could draw out when you quit if you wanted to. Isn't that it?

H: I think it depends on how long you've served and everything now. There are a lot of things that have been changed about it.

F: Well, I know. It sort of runs in my mind that I paid in four dollars a month, maybe the last year I taught. I'm not sure. Fifty dollars is the most I could make. So your salaries have changed remarkably. I got fifty dollars at Clinton and that was the year I got married.

The state representative lived in that town and I had his daughter in school and she was a very clever child, ten years old. But the mother came to me and asked me if I was sure that I was making the right deal when I got married. She said she thought I was cut out to be a teacher. I think just because Cornelia and I struck similar chords or something of the kind, because I don't think I'm so wonderful.

H: You did a lot of moving between different schools. I mean was this the practice then, that you took different schools all the time?

F: Yes, pretty much. You just took the school that suited you and your family and your friends and your health and the one you could get. I could have gone back to Chestnut Knob, but I didn't want to. I could have gone back to Royal Ridge, but I didn't want to. Maybe I would have if I couldn't have gotten anything else. I think most of the teachers worked a little on that plan.

H: Did many teachers stay in one school very long that you recall?

F: Yes, this lady who told me how to fire that furnace. She taught in a school up here at the edge of Salem, I think, for a good many years; she never married. She stayed in teaching all her life you see. She was a good teacher. She's the

one who I recall that stayed in for many years.

H: But did she stay in one school for many years?

F: She stayed in that little school up there at the edge of Salem for a good many years. I expect she might have been up there twenty years. I don't know. She went back and forth on the old streetcars that are gone.

H: Is there anything that you would like to see changed about the schools?

F: Oh, I'm too old to decide that, I guess.

H: Is there anything important that you think we have not covered that you can think of, some experience that you had or a place you taught?

F: Well, I enjoyed my year at Mount Union and I don't suppose that I would have ever been there if I hadn't worked for my board and keep. I kept house for an old lady on crutches. She had six or seven students there in a ten-room house and you know who did the work.

H: You attended Mount Union for a year?

F: Yes.

H: That's when you took the rhetoric and literature?

F: Yes. It provokes me that I can't recall what else I had. What I may have taken I made straight A's in my grades.

H: Now, at the end of the year, did you have a program that you have these souvenir books from?

F: Well, some places we had a picnic on the last day of school and most teachers gave those souvenir booklets at the end of the year. I don't have them for all of my schools.

H: You had them printed up?

F: I got them myself, at my own expense.

H: You say most teachers did this?

F: Yes, in the rural schools.

H: Oh, that's interesting!

F: We were supposed to treat at Christmas time with popcorn balls or oranges or apples or something. Apples were no treat then; they would be now. When I taught the Kensington School

I ordered my treat from the grocer and when I sent a boy after it, he came down with a wooden box with as many pounds of candy as I had ordered. I think I was giving a half pound probably to each child, but I had 55 children. So the grocer should have had it sacked. I don't know whether he didn't know or whether he was saving money. I can't say. But we had to send it back and get sacks and sack that candy there in the schoolroom along with all those youngsters.

H: Oh, that must have been fun.

F: There were a lot of things that were fun that weren't in your curriculum. (Laughter)

H: Did they have any other parties or celebrations through the year?

F: I put on a little entertainment at Kensington in that primary. I don't remember that the teacher upstairs or the pupils upstairs did anything. We just made it up out of nothing, little songs and several children who liked to sing. I remember it must have been Washington's birthday and I didn't have a picture of Washington. Schools didn't have much in the way of extras. But I had a stencil of Washington that I used on a blackboard I suppose. I used to try to do a little of that. I got some wallpaper, used this stencil, and rubbed some ashes through it until I got a marking on it and then crayoned that in with pencil. I bet Washington wouldn't have recognized himself. We needed that in something we were having. You were pretty much on your own in those early schools.

H: Did you ever have help from the parents because you had so many children in one room? Did any of the parents ever come in and help?

F: Oh, that wasn't dreamed of in those days. I had a little race problem once in the Kensington School. There was a lady that was Negro--you can say black now--and she was married to the town barber who was part Indian they said. He was a handsome man and they had cute, little children, just darling. She used to get the feeling that her children were being picked on and she might come over and talk to me a little bit about that. I got along with her well enough. She wasn't finding fault with me, but she didn't like her children to be called names because of their skin [color]. They were handsome, much more so than if they had been straight race, I think. We didn't have any race problem in the schools. In Hanoverton School we had one or two colored boys but they were just accepted along with the class.

H: When the kids did their written work was it done on pencil and paper or did they have to use ink and pen on things that were turned in?

F: There wasn't as much written work required as there is nowadays?

H: But whenever they did something was pencil acceptable?

F: Yes.

H: Did any of them ever turn in any copies of things?

F: Oh, I think sometimes we had to write something maybe. I remember writing a little dissertation one time about physiology--something we were studying in physiology. I did that with pen on what we called "fools cap" paper. Do you remember what that was like?

H: No.

F: Well, it's larger sheets than commercial sheets and it had a blue line down one side of it, I believe, for a margin. there was "fools cap" and "legal cap" and I'm not sure which is which anymore, but you could buy that in separate sheets like you can buy stationery now. We did take tests, but I think lead pencil . . . We just used pencil tablets for the most large sheets.

H: Big lines?

F: Yes.

H: Well, you taught primary most of the time though, didn't you?

F: Yes. I think they went on the principle that anybody could teach little children. That isn't true. I found out after I went to summer schools.

I went to model schools at Wooster. In a separate building, children who were the professor's children were the students mostly. But anyhow, we had model classes that we could observe. I found out a lot of things that I never knew before.

END OF INTERVIEW