

Interview with Beatrice Basgall Coats
December 29, 2009
Conducted in the Coats home, Kinsley, Kansas
Interviewers: Rosetta Graff and Joan Weaver
Present at the interview: Gordon Coats, spouse

Interviewer: Will you tell us your full name?

Bea: Beatrice Josephine Basgall Coats. I currently reside in Kinsley, Kansas, 301 North Elizabeth. I was born in Dodge City at the hospital there. My birthday was 6/3/29.

Interviewer: What were the names of your parents?

Bea: Joseph and Dorothy Moore Basgall. Joseph didn't have a middle name, and Dorothy's middle name was Moore.

Interviewer: What were your grandparent's names?

Bea: Well, there was Katy Basgall, and Joe Basgall, Sr., who I didn't know, he died before I was born, and Robert and Elizabeth Moore of New Jersey.

Interviewer: Did you have any brothers or sisters?

Bea: I had one brother, Richard Joseph. He was two years younger.

Interviewer: You said your one set of grandparents were from New Jersey. What brought your parents or grandparents to, was it Dodge City originally?

Bea: No, my grandparents lived in New York, New Jersey and England. They came from England. He was tennis professional, and he came to teach at the New York Athletic Club at first. And that's where my mother was born, in New York City.

Interviewer: What brought them to Kansas?

Bea: They didn't come to Kansas. Mother and her sister were secretaries. They traveled through several places getting jobs as secretaries. They happened to be in Kansas City, and that's where they met my dad. So they met him off and on for seven years. He'd go down to order stuff for the store, and they were still there, so they must have lived there for seven years. So that's when they got to going together.

Interviewer: Okay, so what brought your dad's family to Kansas?

Bea: They were Volga Germans, and they came to Rush County/Ellis County, one of those places there. Dad was born in Liebenthal, I believe, outside of Liebenthal because they lived in a dugout. He took us to see the dugout, I mean where they lived. Of course, there wasn't anything to be seen but that's where they lived at first.

Interviewer: It had collapsed?

Bea: Yes, just to see the area.

Interviewer: How did he get the store?

Bea: He was a teacher at first. You know, you just had to go to Normal School then. So he taught just outside of Offerle, in District No. 2, I believe it was. I don't know why he decided to have a store, but he did. He opened in 1913, and my mother closed it in 19... What would be 50 years? 1963.

Interviewer: And the store was located where?

Bea: Where the Offerle Bank is now.

Interviewer: So you grew up right in Offerle? "Yes." And you had a home...

Bea: By the Catholic Church.

Interviewer: What was it like in your house, with your brother and...

Bea: Well, it was kind of small. There were just two bedrooms. My brother and I had bunk beds. We slept in the same room as my folks because we had a hired girl who went to school and helped in the store and she had the other bedroom. So for a long time, we were all in one room. We had one bathroom. There was a small living room, and they were going to build another bedroom on, but then they decided it would be nicer to have a larger living room. So there were still two bedrooms!

Interviewer: Did you have a series of hired girls then?

Bea: No, I think maybe before I was born they did because several of the cousins, the older ones, came into town and lived there to go to high school. And they helped in the store. But that was before I was born, but Zelma Weiss was the one who stayed there a long time and took care of us.

Interviewer: She wasn't a relative?

Bea: No, she lived out south of Bellefont; she was a Weiss, from that family out there. She took care of us and worked in the store out there for a long time. Then she moved to California, but we were grown up by that time.

Interviewer: Did she go to school too?

Bea: No, she just came in to work.

Interviewer: You were Volga German you said...

Bea: My mother was English.

Interviewer: Was there any German spoken at home?

Bea: My mother wouldn't let us speak German, but my grandmother spoke mostly German. But she lived with my dad when dad and mom first got married, but then she moved down to this little house with my Uncle George.

Interviewer: It might have been a little crowded if Grandma had been there too!

Bea: Yes, after we started coming. I have no idea what it was like, but she said every once in a while that they had a pump for water and no bathroom. It must have been pretty elementary, because she said that one of her good friends from New Jersey wrote and said, "Tell us what your silver pattern is." She wrote back and said, "Well, my silver consists of two spoons and a fork and two knives, and that's all. Tin." So, she didn't get any silver.

Interviewer: But the store was a mercantile that sold everything?

Bea: General merchandise. Yes. They had overalls and shoes and bolts of cloth and sewing things, plus the groceries. We had had only one brand or two brands of things, so, not many shelves.

Interviewer: Was it the only store in Offerle of that nature?

Bea: I think that Abner Offerle had a store. I don't know if he opened it after my dad. I don't think there was another store there after he opened it, but then Abner Offerle opened another grocery store. But he didn't have all the things, so it must have been later.

Interviewer: What would have been the population about then, do you know?

Bea: It was more than it is now. We had a drug store and a barber shop and a hardware store and a lumber yard and two or three filling stations and a couple of grain elevators. There wasn't a Co-op back then. There was an undertaker way back. That's about all I can remember. Somebody bought cream; there was a creamery. They brought in their cream and people brought in their eggs to the store and traded them for groceries. I remember because when we got older and worked in the store, we candled eggs, all 30 dozen eggs that would come in a crate.

Interviewer: I've always wondered about that. When the store took in those eggs, were you able to sell them in Offerle or did they get put on a train?

Bea: No, they were shipped out on the train because my grandpa and grandma in New Jersey would buy a 30 dozen crate and dad would ship it back to them and they would sell them to their neighbors because they were fresher than what they could buy at home. I've often wondered about that, because 30 dozen eggs is a lot of eggs. So anyway, he did that regularly. I don't know how often he did it, but that was part of it.

Interviewer: I've wondered, because I'm not from this area, did you go to public school, or did you go to parochial school?

Bea: There wasn't a parochial school there; it was a public school. Later on they had a parochial school for awhile there. Do you remember the big house there? It was the sisters' house, and then it was made into a school.

Interviewer: When was that?

Bea: I don't remember. I was through school. The school was still going when they built the multipurpose building over there because that was to be the gymnasium and such, but the school closed shortly after that, so it's still used though. But the big house there has been torn down.

Interviewer: What was it like in your family? What was Christmas like?

Bea: Christmas was kind of different because my dad would have shelves of Christmas gifts. This is kind of a good story because we used to drive to Hutchinson to the Kresge Store there. Dad and Mom and Dick and me, we'd leave about 4 o'clock in the morning, and Dad would buy stuff for Christmas gifts, and the guy gave him a little discount there so Dad could put the price on there, and Dick and I would just run around the store, and we thought that was really fun. We wouldn't get home until late at night because we didn't make much mileage there. But I remember it really well because it was so exciting to leave in the dark and come back in the dark.

Interviewer: It took a little longer to get there then.

Bea: Yes it did. We had like a '29 Chevy or something like that, one of those square things.

Interviewer: I'm trying to think here. '29. Do you remember much about the Depression and the Dust Bowl?

Bea: I wasn't really aware of all this. I do remember, I must have been six or seven because Mom would say, "Run home quick and shut all the windows and the doors!" because there would be this storm coming. But that's one of the things I don't remember very much of. I don't know why, maybe because it wasn't hitting as hard up here as maybe it did further west.

Interviewer: You don't remember putting things in the windows? Sheets and things?

Bea: Well, putting stuff in the windows to keep the dust from blowing in, yes. I do remember that. Oh, I thought of something I was going to tell you about the dust. Now I don't remember. With my Dad going out to the country with my dad to try to collect money that people owed him. He saved a lot of people . . . he gave food to a lot of people, and then they were supposed to pay him back. But I remember him telling once that a woman came in the store and saying, "Joe, could I have a little credit. My children are starving." I don't remember that, but I remember them telling me about that. So we were right through the Depression there, but Dad was pretty good at giving credit. But he didn't get paid back. He still had some bills when he died. There were still bills down in the basement there. Some people had not paid their bills. So that's what I remember about the Depression.

Interviewer: Do you remember your life being affected.

Bea: It was bad. Apparently we were better off than a lot of people because we weren't depending on the farm. We did have some land. Dad had some land out by Tribune, whatever county that is, but he sold that. I don't remember when he bought it, but he must have bought it really cheap. He sold it, probably because he needed the money. And we had some land here, but we weren't depending on that for a living. So the store must have been making a living anyway.

Interviewer: Anything else from that time period that you'd like to remember on tape? Special childhood memories or anything like that?

Bea: I really don't. We had a high school and grade school there and we just went to school there. We did come down when we were kids, mom and dad would bring us down to Kinsley once a week and we would all go swimming in the swimming pool and eat and go to the movie. That was exciting.

Interviewer: How old would you have been then?

Bea: I'm trying to think. We must have been school age. We were only two years apart you know. I really don't remember though.

Interviewer: Elementary school age? Or junior high or high school?

Bea: It would be elementary school. We must have done that quite a long time. Because at the restaurant, they would fix Cream of Wheat for Dick, so he must have been two or three. We have pictures of all of us in the swimming pool.

Interviewer: You do?

Bea: Yes, if I can find them. My dad had one of those old swimsuits with the top and I don't remember what mom had, but it covered up a lot.

Interviewer: I can tell that's a picture that the Society wants, so you have to dig it out.

Bea: I'll see if I can find it.

Interviewer: Because we don't have any pictures of that pool.

Bea: We took lessons at the pool later on from either Don Schaeffer or one of the Taylor boys. They were lifeguards at the pool and we took lessons from them. I'll have to look that up.

Interviewer: How did you learn to play the piano? Did you have lessons?

Bea: I had lessons from whatever music teacher was at the school at Offerle. We paid ten cents a lesson to start when we first started taking lessons. I think it went to 50 cents eventually. Then later on I took lessons from Mrs. Lynch in Spearville. We were high school age by that time. But my mom would take us up there; we had our lessons before school. So she would take my brother and I. Dick took violin and piano and I took piano. So they had to be there awfully early.

Interviewer: And what was the piano teacher's name?

Bea: Mrs. Lynch. She was a church organist too, I believe at the Federated Church. She's buried there in the Spearville Cemetery.

Interviewer: Did Offerle have a Saturday night like Kinsley did, where the stores stayed open late at night and everybody came? We haven't had a description of Offerle's yet.

Bea: Yes! Offerle's, all the stores would stay open, and the barber shop, and a lot of people would come in and get their hair cut on Saturday night. I can remember the stores being open and everybody kind of milling around in the street. And, we had movies. Two of the merchants would pay to get a film and there was a big backboard down the block from my dad's store. Just outside. Then everybody would come and park around in a circle and we could see the movies. Everybody would get a blanket and get out and sit on that. Some enterprising people would sell popcorn and there was a serial that they showed too, "Queen of the Jungle." I remember that. Sheena, wasn't it? That went on every week during the summer. So I do remember that, and that was on Saturday night too. So it was a good

childhood, it really was.

Interviewer: What other entertainment was there? Did the church provide?

Bea: No, the other church besides the Catholic Church, they didn't allow dancing. I know when we had our junior/senior banquet; we didn't have a prom or anything because they didn't approve of dancing. Since then, things have changed a lot! But I do remember that. We didn't really do any dancing.

Interviewer: So the community, even though, I assume that the Catholic Church was half of the community?

Bea: Well, a lot of people came in from the country to go to church.

Interviewer: So to live together you sort of followed the rules of the other church.

Bea: Right. I can remember, my dad was on the school board, and so he used to teach every once in a while.

Interviewer: What did he teach?

Bea: Anything. Mostly grade school or junior high. Because when they needed a substitute he would teach. They said he was a really good teacher. But I think that was the family. They were teachers. Uncle George was a teacher and his sisters all taught school. But there wasn't anything else for women to do then hardly until they got married, and you couldn't be married. I do remember that the first Catholic teacher we ever had in Offerle (maybe you shouldn't put this in here) was Catherine Hattrup. She was Catherine Gleason then. And there was just a little bit of... Do you remember Don (*Benish*) telling about the Ku Klux Klan marching over there? I haven't been able to track whether that was really true or not.

Interviewer: You don't remember it?

Bea: No, I do not. That would have early on.

Interviewer: When you were growing up, did there seem to be a little prejudice against Catholics?

Bea: I think there was. We couldn't go to any church but our own at that time. So I guess there was some. But then we all played together. But there was a little...

Interviewer: Could you date protestant boys?

Bea: I don't remember!

Interviewer: Didn't want to (laughter). Okay, so, do you remember Pearl Harbor Day?

Bea: Yes, I do. It was Sunday afternoon and we must have been out playing somewhere. I remember coming in the house and my folks were both clustered around the radio. That was when President Roosevelt had given his "Day that will live infamy" speech. I remember them telling about it, but I was 12 years old, so it didn't really register as any big thing, but I do remember that.

Interviewer: So you were in junior high and senior high during the war. Did the war affect your school at all?

Bea: There were a few of the older boys that went to the service. I remember Gerald *Speck* was killed. He didn't finish high school, he went off. There were several boys from that senior class, you know, junior class that went and joined the service at that time. But it wasn't any big thing because there were only 40 kids in our high school.

Interviewer: Did it affect any of your teachers?

Bea: No, the teachers were mostly older then, so that didn't really affect anybody. But working in my dad's store at the time, there were quite a few things that were short. One thing I remember very well, we handled cigarettes, and we didn't hardly get any cigarettes because they were all going overseas. If we would get a carton of cigarettes, we would hide them under the counter. Then, to a good customer, we would say, "We have cigarettes today." So we'd sell them a package of cigarettes!

Interviewer: And then things were rationed.

Bea: Yes, they were, and we did have to deal with the ration stamps.

Interviewer: How did you handle those stamps? What was rationed?

Bea: Meat and different canned goods. Sugar, I believe, and butter. We didn't have butter, we had Oleo. Once in a while there would be some butter, but not very often, because that was going overseas.

Interviewer: No one has described this, describe Oleo to me.

Bea: Oleo? Oh, I'll tell you exactly that. It was white and greasy. It kind of looked like shortening. Then they had a little tube that you could break and then knead it into the Oleo until it turned yellow and looked like butter. It was awful. But we did have butter most of the time because Dad would have a little bit of it in the store. He didn't sell very much, so we usually got it at home.

Interviewer: Did you get the butter from the farms?

Bea: No, I don't remember any butter coming in from the local farms. But that was Oleo; some people still call it "Oleo."

Interviewer: I don't know if you'll remember this, because you weren't running the store, but you collected the coupons and things from things like the sugar. What happened to the coupons, what did you do with the coupons?

Bea: There was a report to be filled out, I do remember that, and Dad had that on his desk all the time. Then that had to go in, because just a certain number of people had them. Then they had gas stamps too, but we didn't deal with that. I don't know what happened with it.

Interviewer: Can you think of any other way that the war affected your life in Offerle?

Bea: I remember this one incident when... Well, first of all, the troop trains all went through Offerle on the railroad. And they went with their windows wide open, and some of the soldiers would throw out

their addresses so somebody would write to them. Then one night, for one reason or another, this one train had to stop and it was full of service men. So, they all got out and walked around the streets. Some of them would have four or five girls with them. I wasn't quite old enough. I think I must have been 13 or something then, and I had to work in the store. We sold out of all the candy and every thing. It was really exciting because everything stayed open. But there were always these service men then, and they were young and kind of attractive. They had uniforms on! I don't know why the train had to stop, but it was there three or four hours.

Interviewer: Were the troop trains going both ways? Or were they going to California?

Bea: I don't remember which way they were going to tell the truth. But I think they were going both ways, because Dodge City had an air base, and Pratt had an air base. I wrote to a guy in Pampas, Texas. They had an air base.

Interviewer: Did you pick up one of those addresses?

Bea: Of course. I didn't tell him how old I was!

Interviewer: How long did you correspond?

Bea: Oh, off and on. One man got kind of interested in me, but he didn't know how old I was. But when he found out how old I was, he quit writing to me. I think I was 14 then.

Interviewer: He didn't want to wait for you? I would have thought any letter was a good letter.

Bea: The letters were good.

Interviewer: Your brother wouldn't have been in the service. Did you have uncles or anything?

Bea: I had some cousins that were in the service, but we weren't all that close. I think later my brother was in the service during the Korean War.

Interviewer: Your cousins weren't around Offerle were they?

Bea: Some of them were; they lived north of Offerle on the farm. Then some of them weren't close to Offerle. It's hard to remember now, but I think this one family did have three or four guys in the service.

Interviewer: You graduated high school in 1946, so the war was over with at that time. The young men were coming back. What do you remember about returning soldiers or...?

Bea: I wasn't home then, I was in college. I went in Salina, and there was a base there too. And when we'd have dances, they would invite us, the girls out too. I went to a girl's college, Marymount. It was a Catholic girl's college, but it's not there anymore. Then they would invite the girls to come out for dances and stuff at the base in Salina. I don't think I ever went, but there were quite a few men there yet. But that's the only contact I had with the war and service people.

Interviewer: So you studied what?

Bea: Music. I studied several things, but settled on music.

Interviewer: With piano as your major?

Bea: Yes.

Interviewer: In Offerle, did you have any Hispanics or Negroes in your class?

Bea: No Negroes. I can't remember now, I think the Rochas lived in Offerle. We had those little cement buildings for the railroad workers, (you had the section?) Yes, and then the foreman was white. They had a house there for him. The house was yellow and right off the highway there. We would walk right by it. It was kind of a nice house, and the section foreman always lived in that house. The one I remember had girls in school.

Interviewer: Your store is right here...

Bea: Yes, where the bank is...

Interviewer: And then where would the section...

Bea: It was right across the street and a little bit north.

Interviewer: So you are going west. Are you crossing the railroad tracks?

Bea: Yes, you cross the tracks and then here's the house and then the highway. Of course the highway has changed, and I don't remember where it was before. The gas stations were on the highway. So, the section foreman's house was in town but the other ones were down...

Interviewer: Would it be over there next to the post office where it is now?

Bea: A little bit north on the other side of the tracks. Yes, see, the post office is... Oh no, you see, the post office now... it would be on that same side of the tracks. The post office used to be on the south side.

Interviewer: Where would it be from where the post office is now?

Bea: South. It would be south

Interviewer: There's not much room there.

Bea: There was a path.

Interviewer: Down by the lumberyard?

Bea: No, that's too far south.

Interviewer: Because you've still got to stay north of the tracks.

Bea: The lumberyard was there, and then the post office was there, and then this other building where

you have elections, well, I don't you have them any more. The Gerald D. Speck Building. And I think it used to be the Legion Building. And that other house was north of that.

Interviewer: Where did the workers live?

Bea: Down where the co-op is, down in there. I don't remember who all lived there, but I do remember the Rochas, because the dad, no I guess the grandpa, he used to come up and do the yard work for my folks. We thought that was really neat. He had to eat outside, and we'd go out and eat with him when we were little kids. But he worked for my folks for a long time.

Interviewer: Did their kids go to school? Were there Hispanic kids...?

Bea: Yes, there were...there was the Perez family. One of the girls was named Beatrice, and I always thought they got that name from me maybe. There was Perez and then there was Rocha, and that's the only two that I remember. Maybe they were the only ones that had kids in school. But no blacks, and they didn't really want any blacks to come to town.

Interviewer: Okay, you can remember the swimming pool and everything. Was the swimming pool segregated? Were the Hispanics allowed in there? I'm sure the blacks weren't.

Bea: I don't know. That's not the pool we've got now, but the one we had down by the highway.

Interviewer: Because that would have been close to where they lived.

Bea: Yes, across the highway. I would guess it was. And the movie theater too, they had to sit upstairs.

Interviewer: Hispanics too?

Bea: Yes, there were quite a few people went to the movies then. And they had give-aways.

Interviewer: What did they give away?

Bea: Let me think. Dishes, I think.

Interviewer: Depression Glass?

Bea: Probably. Some of that green...

Interviewer: So the Catholics and the Protestants got along alright in Offerle. Did you think there was any discrimination in Offerle?

Bea: Maybe a little. As I said, Catherine was the first Catholic teacher hired.

Interviewer: Her dad was on the board at the bank. That might have had something to do with that. I do remember that, because I think my brother had her for a teacher.

Interviewer: Were most of the Catholics rural? Did they come into town for church?

Bea: There were a lot of Catholics in town, but there were a lot of them from the country. If I stopped

and thought, I could tell you who all was in town there. But we had a pretty good group of people who went to the Catholic Church. But this group of people built a church out north of Offerle. They called it the Old St. Joe Church. But then something happened and the Irish and the Germans split. The Irish started their Church of St. Mary's north of Spearville and the other ones came into Offerle to St. Joseph. So there's some more talk or stories about that, but I don't know them.

Interviewer: So your family was basically pretty well off because you've talked about having a yard man and then you had a hired girl. Did your mom do the cooking, or did the hired girl?

Bea: Well, by that time, Mom was working in the store. So, I suppose they kind of traded off, whoever wasn't working. Well, Mom wasn't a very good cook...

Interviewer: The hired girl was better?

Bea: Well, I don't know. Neither one of us was very good. The food was...well, it was kind of like England. They don't season anything very much.

Interviewer: And then you started working in the store at what age?

Bea: I don't remember, probably eight or nine. That's where I learned to make change and all that.

Interviewer: And that's where you worked right up until college.

Bea: Yes, I worked on Saturdays. We made 50 cents a day. My cousin and I both worked there. We both worked there.

Interviewer: Who paid for college?

Bea: I had a scholarship. Three hundred dollars for four years' tuition.

Interviewer: For \$300? Did that cover your living too?

Bea: No, board and room? No, and we lived right there. It just covered tuition.

Interviewer: Did you work while in college?

Bea: No, my folks took care of that.

Interviewer: Any thing else about those college years that you want to record?

Bea: No, except that it was a lot of fun. We had such a good time. We still get together, the ones we were friends with. Except that some of them are dead. But we're having our 60th class reunion next year, and there are some of us who will try to get there. I met Gordon between my freshman and sophomore years.

Interviewer: How did you meet Gordon?

Bea: He can probably tell you more about this.

Interviewer: We'll get his version later.

Bea: He was good friends with Tom Mathews, Carol Mathew's husband. So when he had leave, he came out here and stayed with them. Carol was going with Tom, and so then they fixed up a blind date, and that was me. So that's how we got acquainted.

Interviewer: So you would come home from college and then go on a date with Gordon.

Bea: Yes, he wasn't really, what they call mustered out yet, so he had to go back. But we kept in touch. It just kind of evolved.

Interviewer: This guy thought you were old enough...

Bea: Well, by that time he was 20 and I was 18.

Interviewer: So by this time you are in college. Are you just writing or engaged?

Bea: We're engaged. I guess we got engaged the last year of college. I remember because they sang to me in the dorm at college.

Interviewer: And you got married in 1950? And you graduated high school in 1946? So you got married after four years of college. You got married right after you got out of college.

Bea: Yes, well in August.

Interviewer: And then where did you live?

Bea: We lived in Hutchinson for a year. Then Gordon got a chance to transfer back here. So we thought that would be alright, which it was. My folks were here, and I was a small town girl. I worked in Wiley's Store in Hutchinson while were there. You wouldn't remember Wiley's Store. But you would. *(She indicates the two interviewers.)*

Interviewer: So you were in Hutchinson, and you worked there, then you came back here. I wanted to ask you a little bit...

Bea: My first child was born in Hutchinson.

Interviewer: Wait a moment, with Gordon you had corresponded with, how long was he home, how long did you have together before you actually got married?

Bea: He was here then. When he got out of the service he was working here until we got married.

Interviewer: So you saw him when you came back from college.

Bea: He came up a time or two on his motorcycle.

Interviewer: There were a lot of motorcycles in this county!

Bea: There were motorcyclists who used to come around every Sunday too. They'd go to Offerle and Spearville and around.

Interviewer: What was your wedding like?

Bea: It was very nice. It wasn't formal exactly, but I had a nice white dress and a veil. They had to go to Wichita to get their tuxes. Some of my friends from college were my bridesmaids. Some of them sang too. I had a group that sang. It was real nice. We got married at 10:00 in the morning, then we had dinner, then we had a reception in the afternoon, then we had supper. Then we had a dance. Exhausting. I can't imagine doing that now, but at that time we had to get married before noon in the church.

Interviewer: Oh, because of mass.

Bea: Yes, so that's why we had to have so many meals.

Interviewer: So did you have a honeymoon then or the next day?

Bea: We went to Pratt that night. It was as far as we could go, then we went to the Ozarks and visited his dad, who I hadn't met.

Interviewer: And you did this by car?

Bea: Yes, he was pretty good friends with the priest in Kinsley, so he hid his car in the garage there. But somehow they got in there and did something to it.

Interviewer: Is nothing sacred!

Bea: No, so we left about 11:00 and the dance was still going on. That was a really long day, but we had a good time. Some of my friends were singing and having drinks and just having a good time.

Interviewer: Most of the town was there?

Bea: At the wedding, yes. I think there were around 200 there.

Interviewer: That would have been a big wedding.

Bea: It was a big wedding. Of course, Dad knew everybody, he'd been here forever. So he thought he'd better invite everybody.

Interviewer: So, did you have a silver pattern? Not like your mother?

Bea: Yes, I had a silver patter. I had a lot of silver too that my relatives sent me for wedding gifts. Little dishes and stuff.

Interviewer: I don't know if you can answer this, did you see that the war changed Gordon in any way?

Bea: I wouldn't know, because I didn't know him before. I think it probably did.

Interviewer: He'll tell us how it changed him. How about the county, or Offerle, what changes did you see during or after the war?

Bea: In Offerle? I can't really tell you. I didn't live there long enough to. I was coming back and forth. I had some friends that were married and lived there and we kind of partied around. My brother was dating someone that lived in Windhorst at the time. So we went to dances, of course Gordon didn't dance.

Interviewer: Did the young men come back and stay after?

Bea: Most of them. The young men who went, most of them were farmers. So they came back and took over from their folks. There in town, I really can't remember too many. Charles Speck wasn't in the war; it was his brother that got killed there. Gerald Speck, that was Charles' brother.

Interviewer: How did that affect the community?

Bea: It was a shock. Everybody kind of felt this. Specks lived in the country at the time. They had a lot of children that went to school here.

Interviewer: Was the body able to be brought back?

Bea: I don't think so. That was the only one from Offerle. Now there was a Gasser boy from Kinsley, and there was somebody else that he would know. I think the post was named after those three guys. I don't remember any effects. But it probably did; those people who were close.

Interviewer: Well, today we talk about Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome. Did you notice that with the guys that were coming back?

Bea: No, I didn't. If there was, nobody paid any attention to it. They got on with their lives.

Interviewer: Have we covered everything? I'm trying to think. I think maybe we have...