Interview with Norma McClaren Gatterman
October 30, 2009
Conducted in the home of Norma Gatterman in Larned, Kansas
Interviewers: Joan Weaver and Rosetta Graff

Interviewer: Norma, can you give us your full name?

Norma: Norma Mae Gatterman. I will be residing at 810 West 4th in Larned, Kansas. I was born in Lewis, Kansas, on July 6th, 1925. My dad was Raymond Walter and my mother was Iva Gertrude.

Interviewer: What was your mother's maiden name?

Norma: Jarvis. My grandparents were Mae and well, grandpa's name was real complicated. They called him Colonel Jarvis. I knew them real well, but I didn't ever know my grandparents on my father's side. *Later in the interview, she recalls that his name was Ambrose Ellsworth.*

Interviewer: What brought your grandparents or your family to Lewis, Kansas?

Norma: Both of them came into Larned, I think. They had ground that I guess was all laid out for them. My grandparents the Jarvises came from Eastern Kansas. They came from Boston, in fact, through there. The McClarens they came from Eastern Kansas too and stopped there anyway.

Interviewer: They farmed? "Yes" I guess both sides of the family farmed. About what time period did they come to Kansas?

Norma: Well, the McClarens came early. The ground they had was around the railroad. I'm not sure, you should have told me you needed this. I could have looked all this up.

Interviewer: It's okay, we're just warming up. You didn't know we were having a quiz, did you? Okay, describe your family. Your mother and father and any brothers and sisters.

Norma: I had a sister, Dorothy, and she was 11 years older and then a brother who was six years older. He passed away. I was the youngest.

Interviewer: So there were three of you?

Norma: Yes, and there was a girl who passed away soon after she was born.

Interviewer: What memories do you have of growing up as a child? What was it like growing up on the farm?

Norma: It was wonderful. Yes, I have very good memories of loving parents, and my sister was so good to me. They say my brother was too.

Interviewer: How old was he when he passed away?

Norma: He was six and I was two.

Interviewer: But your sister was old enough, she would have been like another mother.

Norma: Yes, she was good to me.

Interviewer: Did you have chores on the farm?

Norma: Yes, I always took care of my own clothes. That was the main thing. Of course, you ironed everything back then. We were fortunate to have our own power plant and so we had an electric iron, a three-two volt I guess.

Interviewer: So you never lived without electricity. And the power plant, was that the one at Kinsley?

Norma: It's what we had on the farm. We didn't burn a lot of lights. We had a radio, but it wasn't on all day.

Interviewer: We're getting into the holiday seasons. What was Christmas like then?

Norma: It was just a family affair. I had lots of relatives, especially on the McClaren side, so it was more or less a dinner. And my grandparents on the Jarvis side always brought me a gift. Usually, it was a new doll, and Esther Bell would make clothes for it. But Mama said I carried it around naked most of the time.

Interviewer: Do you remember the Dust Bowl days and the Depression? Can you talk a little bit about that?

Norma: Which one?

Interviewer: Start with either one…

Norma: Well, in the Depression, there was very little money, but no one had it, so at my age I didn't feel it. I know my sister finished college at Southwestern and we saved for her. Mama cooked food, and the bus would stop at Lewis and would pick up that food and take it to her at Winfield. Yes, wasn't that something? Mama was a wonderful cook, and she baked rolls and cakes and things. 'Cause Dorothy lived in a hall, and she had to cook every few weeks.

Interviewer: You mean she cooked for other people?

Norma: No, it was just a group of them in this hall, and when it came her turn… I think she was in with these others.

Interviewer: So mom would help out by sending the rolls.

Norma: That's right. And the McClaren family was a large family, and so many of them lived around Lewis, and they were out over the weekends. I had a nice life. And with the farm we always had enough to eat. We had like a city block that we planted to a garden, and lots of fruit trees. A lot of canning, and we canned meat too.

Interviewer: What kind of fruit trees did you have?

Norma: Cherry, apple, peach…

Interviewer: Did you raise animals also? "Yes" The whole cow, pig, chicken thing?

Norma: Mama kept us in fried chicken all summer. She had little chicken coops all around, and the chickens would be at different ages, so we always had fried chicken. And she dressed them and sold them in town. They would bring a dollar a chicken, which was a good price then.

Interviewer: And then you had to milk cows?

Norma: Yes. I didn't get into that especially, just a few times.

Interviewer: So it was your dad who was doing that? Did you have hired help?

Norma: Yes, back then there would be men lined up on the Main Street wanting a job. Any time he needed help, he just went to town and brings one home.

Interviewer: So we had the Depression going on, and we also had the Dust Bowl. What do you remember about that?

Norma: That was quite an experience when those clouds would come in. You would see them in the distance, and usually the wind would be blowing. But when it got next to you, the wind went down. Then when it got dark and the clouds went over, it would drop fine dirt on you.

Interviewer: Do you remember doing anything special to the house to get ready? Stop up the doors and all that?

Norma: We hung up sheets and blankets over the windows. My sister and I had a wreck during the storm. People who he passed said this man was going like 70 miles an hour. He hit us, and it was near our corner where we would turn to go into our place. Our parents were out looking at the clouds, and they said they heard this crash, but they never thought about it's being us. My nose was just cut pretty bad. They found this little piece in the car. So I ended up at Gleason Hospital in Larned for a little while. I remember my grandparents, the Jarvises, came after me.

Interviewer: How did you get from the wreck to the hospital?

Norma: I don't know. I don't remember; I was out. They took me to where LaVeda *(Cross)* lives there was a doctor. They took me there, and in some way I got up here. I don't remember much about the hospital.

Interviewer: Anything else about that time?

Norma: I remember how wonderful the merchants were in Lewis. Pop Barnes at the drug store. He was more or less a doctor, too. He would swab your throat, or pull a tooth, or anything you needed done. Once in a while then, they'd have a special. If you brought in a chicken egg, he'd give you an ice cream cone on Saturday night. That was a big time in Lewis, you could hardly find a parking place. Rex Brumfield was wonderful too.

Interviewer: What did he do?

Norma: Well, they had penny meals and just different entertainment. They had a Saturday night show in the summer. It was outdoors, in between the store (the Press office is in there now) and the community hall. They'd put up a screen and put chairs out. There was a lot of things going on all the time. These penny meals, you gave a penny for each serving. You'd have quite a meal for ten or fifteen cents. There was always Christmas programs and lots going on. Then, Pop *(Barnes)*, during the war would wrap your packages for the boys free of charge. There'd just be a long line of people. People were real interesting there during the war. They were supportive of anyone who had someone overseas. They were wonderful.

Interviewer: What kinds of things did they send the servicemen? Do you know what they put in those packages?

Norma: Of course, cookies, and shaving supplies and soap. Any of those things.

Interviewer: That sort of brings us up into the WWII era. Do you remember what you were doing on December 7, 1941?

Norma: Well, I was a junior in high school. Everyone went up to the library. It was the largest room up on the third floor. Even the little kids were up there. And we heard President Roosevelt declare war. Boys left, definitely by summer, some of the seniors didn't finish school. Farold Fox and E.T. Fox, his older brother. Dwight Slentz and Rex Strate, several of those boys left yet that summer. I had a classmate killed the next summer and he was buried there at Lewis. He lived down by you. Newcomb Conroy Newcomb.

Interviewer: Did you have family members that were in the military?

Norma: I had several cousins, but not any close relatives.

Interviewer: Were they from the Lewis area?

Norma: No, they were more from Ulysses. Thoran graduated in '41, and Fellsburg School closed then. He was in the last class.

Interviewer: Do you think the war had anything to do with that? Or was it just that the community had gotten smaller?

Norma: I think that, because there were only four in his class. Then Mary Helen went to Trousdale. She would have been a freshman, I think. Then she went to Centerview her senior year and then they came to Lewis.

Interviewer: You said earlier, before this interview, that you were in the Ulysses area during the war. Do you want to talk about your farm there? Why did your dad farm there and at Lewis?

Norma: Well, my dad got ground there in 1928. He kept it during the bad years.

Interviewer: But you didn't try to farm it during the Dust Bowl?

Norma: They did some, it would rain occasionally. Of course, I really don't remember, I was too little. I remember my folks took a cow out there one year. They'd be out there so long farming. Daddy

always drove a tractor back and forth, and we'd meet him in Montezuma with lunch.

Interviewer: What was the road like at that time?

Norma: It was all right, I guess.

Interviewer: Dirt?

Norma: Not those years. Now, I've seen people leave the farm and their machinery would be all covered up with dirt. They just had it and just left and took what they could, gave up the ground.

Interviewer: So it wasn't the good timing to buy ground in '28?

Norma: Well, it really was. He got the extra ground and got it all paid for before the bad years came. My brother-in-law was teaching school in Hill City and he would help during the summer. The year of '44, he was out there and he thought he might stay. For some reason Dad had planted everything to maize. But the draft board said, "You either teach, or you're going into the service." Well, they had a two year old son, so we didn't want him to go. So, they went back to school. Well, Dad could find one elderly man, his name was Burr Rainboldt, and then Frank Bailey wasn't in school, so those two went to help him. I went to cook and run errands.

Interviewer: Where did you live while you were out there? Was there a farm house?

Norma: No, we had a trailer house. It was fine like in the summer and everything, and had a gasoline stove. We hauled water. I went back two miles to haul water. Dad was able to get a local person, I think, to help cut the maize, but his combine wouldn't work right and it was throwing over grain. So we decided we could do it by ourselves. We got along fine until about Thanksgiving when a big snow came. So they would cut. That's one good thing about maize, it will stand. And any day it was dry enough, they would cut it. Then I caught cold, that trailer sweat so bad when you closed it up for the winter. So I moved into town and just came out to cook a couple meals a day for them. So Dad said, you go back to school that second semester. They hadn't finished yet! I don't recall just when they finished. It was so stormy that year.

Interviewer: So that was 1944? And then you went back to Hays for the second semester. And your mother at that time was in Lewis?

Norma: Yes, she was. We had milk cows, and things, and her chickens…

Interviewer: And she would be there alone?

Norma: Yes, and she didn't drive, so when I was a kid, we were just on the farm when Dad was out to Ulysses farming.

Interviewer: So how many months were you out at Ulysses then?

Norma: Well, all that fall.

Interviewer: So you went out in September, and by Thanksgiving you were back to Hays?

Norma: No, not until January. I think I came home for Christmas and stayed.

Interviewer: But your dad was still out there trying to get the maize in.

Norma: Yes.

Interviewer: Well, let's talk about how you met your husband. You didn't get married until right after the war, so what was that relationship like during the war?

Norma: Well, I met him in the summer of '43 or '42.

Interviewer: So you had just graduated?

Norma: No, I went another year after I met him.

Interviewer: So you were a junior and going to be a senior and met him that summer?

Norma: Yes.

Interviewer: How did you meet?

Norma: Homer Smith came to Lewis to school and he was a neighbor of Thoran's on the farm and he introduced us. You didn't know people when they lived fifteen miles away.

Interviewer: Because that's about all it would be, wouldn't it? So, you went on a double date or went to a dance?

Norma: No, we went to a picture show our first date.

Interviewer: Do you remember what it was?

Norma: No, I don't. We went to Greensburg.

Interviewer: That's quite a ways. Then how did the relationship progress?

Norma: I don't think we saw each other until Thanksgiving or Christmas. But we wrote letters.

Interviewer: Those few miles apart and you're writing letters?

Norma: Well, when he was in college.

Interviewer: And he went to Hays?

Norma: No, he went to Manhattan.

Interviewer: Oh, K-State. What degree was he pursuing?

Norma: He wanted to be a farm agent or something like that. His mother, she taught school, and she was so disappointed when he didn't finish. I think he would have been good, because he wanted to go to

meetings all the time. He stayed up with Farm Bureau and all those things. But he just got so old when he came home that he thought he'd just better farm.

Interviewer: So he got drafted out of the college?

Norma: He wasn't to leave until the spring of '43, but they took him in February.

Interviewer: But he was drafted?

Norma: No, he had this nose surgery and everything. He wanted the Air Force. I feel like he enlisted in the fall, but it says here… Because he knew. He paid tuition and everything.

Interviewer: It says in here February of 1943. That's what it says.

Norma: That's right. That spring, when I was a senior, Thoran's mother and Mary Helen and I went to see him in Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

Interviewer: How did you get there? Did you drive?

Norma: On a troop train. We stood a lot of the way, and you sat on your luggage. It was just full of troops. There was even a car, something like a cattle car, with men standing on the train too.

Interviewer: And they were going up there to join units? They'd been gone on leave?

Norma: They were headed somewhere. But it was very crowded. We had a good time up there, but I got the mumps. We'd been in school all winter, but then I gave them to Mary Helen, and when she go home she had them real bad. She missed her junior/senior prom. She never let me forget that. She gave them to a Countryman who was out there painting and papering the house. He had a large family in Kinsley. So I wasn't very popular.

Interviewer: And mumps were more serious then… Was that the one where you had to stay in a dark room?

Norma: No, that was measles.

Interviewer: So, you went up there to see him. Did you know at this time that this was the one? You weren't engaged?

Norma: Well, I think so. But we weren't engaged. Then we went to see him in Tucson, Arizona. Grandpa would go by himself, because there were farm chores to do, to visit Thoran, and then we would go.

Interviewer: So you took turns, so somebody could do chores.

Norma: And then he was moved around quite a bit after that. I think that's after his eyes didn't check out for flying and they were trying to decide what. He took different tests and anything. But he thoroughly enjoyed what he did. Then when he got over in England, he got to teach. He told once about, it was real cold where he was. They wanted to know if anyone could type. They needed a typist. He said he could only do 40 words a minute when he was in high school, but he held up his hand. So he

got to sit near the pot-bellied stove then and stay warm.

Interviewer: So often did you hear from him when he was in England.

Norma: You know, you would get like five letters at a time when he was in England. He was pretty good about writing.

Interviewer: How often did you write him?

Norma: Oh, real often. Letters were the thing then. I hate to write one now. We wrote a lot of letters. The English people were so good to him too. He was invited out for meals. He talked about the strawberries. They were just huge, I guess, like we have now. Ours were small out of the patch. Mama had a strawberry patch. We sent flour sacks over there, they couldn't get material to make clothes out of, to a family that were so good to him. Their last name was Edwards. They appreciated those so much? Have you heard about the flour sacks that we used to have? The ladies went after the feed to pick out what they wanted to make their dresses out of and table cloths.

Interviewer: Where in England would this have been?

Norma: Sudbury, I think. I have some gifts from them. We corresponded quite a bit. I have a real pretty dish or candle sticks and a bread dish.

Interviewer: So china? After the war and over the years… Cause Thoran wrote. He lost two buddies over there. One of them was caught in the propeller of a plane and the other one was shot down. They were friends of Thoran's. I think other than that …..

Interviewer: How do you think that experience with the bonds and losing friends like that, did that affect him in any way.

Norma: Yes, he was much older when he came home.

Interviewer: Did he talk about the war?

Norma: Not a whole lot, you had to ask him. Well, one thing was cooking. He didn't like casseroles or anything put together. He said, "If it's chicken, I can see feathers. If it's beef, it tastes like horsemeat to me." So, I said, "Don't you trust my cooking?" and he said, "Yes, on most things, but I just can't stand those."

Interviewer: And that was from the army, not being able to tell what the meat was?

Norma: Yes, he said there wasn't too much food in different places. The food was scarce. In other places, the food was good. I noticed in one place the WAC's cooked it, so that food was good. I think all in all he enjoyed England.

Interviewer: If it hadn't been for the war.

Norma: Yes, the people.

Interviewer: Did you ever go back after the war?

Norma: No, see, he passed away in '67. We were busy raising a family.

Interviewer: So he wasn't very old when he passed away.

Norma: No, only 43.

Interviewer: So you were in college, you were corresponding and didn't see him for quite a while then.

Norma: Almost two years, I think.

Interviewer: When he came home, how did he come home and when did you get to see him then?

Norma: He was home and expecting to go to the Pacific. So they just held him in Florida. He was needing some dental work done and they'd put that off. He got to come home to plant wheat and things like that, but they just held them. It was holiday time when he came home.

Interviewer: So when did the engagement and marriage plans take place.

Norma: Well, I really don't know. I guess we started talking about it soon after he got back, around the holidays. It wasn't a big wedding at all. My mother wasn't too well. We just had it in the Christian Church. He didn't have a new suit. He wore a suit that he had in high school and it didn't fit too well. You just couldn't get clothes. And we didn't have a home for a year. We just stayed with the folks.

Interviewer: With your folks or his?

Norma: Both. Where they were close together, we just went back and forth.

Interviewer: How did that work out?

Norma: All right. Mary was in college, so there wasn't anyone else there. Then Dresies, he was the depot agent and he retired. We were able to get his house in Lewis.

Interviewer: Right in Lewis.

Norma: Yes, where Gracie Rockwell lives now. That was our first home. Then we moved to the farm, out where Divises are now, five years later. I stayed there until I built my home in Lewis in 1980.

Interviewer: I'm trying to think. Your first child was born in Lewis then. And the second was born when you went out to the farm?

Norma: Immediately. Both of them were premature, and we hadn't been out there for a week when he came.

Interviewer: So did you go to a hospital?

Norma: Bryan was born in Great Bend, and Bruce in Kinsley.

Interviewer: Who owned the farm that you moved to? Was it in the family?

Norma: It was Strates, Mamie and Frank. They moved in to the motel then, that's when the motel was built.

Interviewer: And your farm, was it complete too? Did you have both crops and cattle?

Norma: Yes.

Interviewer: And did you have electricity when you were there?

Norma: Yes, in fact everything was electric. When the electricity was out, I had problems.

Interviewer: We read what he was doing in his book, but do you remember VE day or VJ day when victory was declared?

Norma: Well let's see, the one was in the summer… no, just that everyone was real happy. There was so much support. People asked about the soldiers, the war bonds and everything. There were close-knit people around Lewis.

Interviewer: When the fellows started coming home, what was that like?

Norma: There were so many of them! We would have card parties in the old legion hall. It would just be packed. Some would leave for another job, but a lot of them came back to Lewis and stayed for a while. Then they would take jobs and leave. There were a lot of soldiers around Lewis and the American Legion was real active.

Interviewer: Was your husband active in the American Legion?

Norma: He was more in the VFW.

Interviewer: Where was the American Legion Hall in Lewis?

Norma: It was behind the Christian Church. My parents went to school there, it was a school house. A large white two storey building. Where the tennis courts are now.

Interviewer: When you say the VFW, was that the one in Kinsley? There wasn't one in Lewis. I think we figured that out in another interview.

Norma: Right.

Interviewer: You said that the community was real supportive. We've been discovering that when a fellow came home, there wasn't a big party or anything, they just came back in the family. Is that what you found? Because you were describing a card party or something…

Norma: Yes. I guess maybe that would be true.

Interviewer: Because they came home at different times. If they'd come home at the same time it might have been different. How did the community react when there was a casualty?

Norma: Oh my, like when June McClaren's husband was missing, and Carol was a little bitty tyke.

June taught school there, and everyone was concerned about him. I really remember.

Interviewer: What did Thoran do when he came home from the service?

Norma: He farmed.

Interviewer: For someone else?

Norma: Right away, his dad gave him some ground to farm and so did someone in Hutchinson. got a half section for him. Then the next year, my dad retired, my brother-in-law took over at Ulysses.

Interviewer: One area we've just been curious about…we know there was an Hispanic community in Lewis. We're exploring the relationship of the white community and the Hispanic community.

Norma: You know, they were just part of us. I don't remember when they came to town. There was a Negrete a year younger than me, and when we'd have class parties we'd go upstairs, he'd have to sit up in the balcony, and we'd just all go up with him.

Interviewer: You mean the Hispanics had to sit in the balcony? So you would show solidarity by sitting up there with him?

Norma: Yes, he was part of us. And Pete *(Casteneda)* and Nick *(Casteneda)*, they were born there you know. I remember their dad. It was just like they weren't a different nationality.

Interviewer: Could you have dated them?

Norma: I don't recall that that happened. No, I don't think when I was a girl I could have.

Interviewer: And at this time in Lewis there were no blacks?

Norma: No, no. A family lived down around Strawn's. And their children got on the bus.

Interviewer: So they went to school?

Norma: Well, I remember a black child anyway. You should interview Eileen McClaren. She is so clear on everything.

Interviewer: You're doing fine. You're doing great!

Norma: I need her now. I knew they were down there, and I think maybe they came to Lewis.

Interviewer: We had a question the other day at the library that dealt with that. As a woman, did the war change your life any?

Norma: You know, not too much, not too much. We were so far away from it here. It was worrisome, and we didn't have all the things we wanted. It was just like cars. We were so fortunate that there were a few good years at the end of the thirties and so many people traded cars and had newer tires. But you couldn't replace those during the war. You drove at 35 or 40 miles an hour during the war to save the tires. And retreads were just out, you know, you picked out a retread instead of a new tire.

Interviewer: And gasoline was rationed. Did that keep you home more or not?

Norma: Do you know, I didn't go a lot. We had so many activities at Lewis; I didn't need to go anywhere.

Interviewer: What other things were rationed?

Norma: The sugar hurt my family more than anything. We missed sugar. You know, we could get all the white syrup we wanted. We would try to bake cakes out of that and had a lot of failures.

Interviewer: You could probably use the white syrup for canning and stuff like that. "Yes." Did you not finish college because of the war?

Norma: Well, if Thoran had gone back to school, I probably would have too. But we decided to get married and settle down.

Interviewer: You said that he felt he was too old to go back to school after the war, so in a way that affected both of you.

Norma: Well, I think so. You grew up a lot.

Interviewer: He was ready to settle down and start his family. What were you studying when you went to college?

Norma: Music and psychology. I don't know what I would have ended up in. The old McClarens are very musical.

Interviewer: So you play piano and…

Norma: Sang. In the church choir and a lot of funerals.

Interviewer: So you are a soloist?

Norma: I was at one time.

Interviewer: Did you play a musical instrument?

Norma: Yes, string bass. We had orchestra and band both at the Lewis school.

Interviewer: Are your boys musical?

Norma: They both sang in groups and had horns too.

Interviewer: Can you think of how the war affected Edwards County?

Norma: I would say it brought them together a lot. I don't know, maybe others didn't have that feeling.

Interviewer: But you were related to half of Edwards County, right? (laughter)

Norma: I was! My Dad was young in the family, so I had cousins that had children my age. When those cousins were gone… but I had so many relatives. They'd all come to the farm on weekends, you know. Mama was a good cook. We had lots of fun, but I don't know how she did it.

Interviewer: What was the river like then?

Norma: Big.

Interviewer: Did you have picnics at the river and that sort of thing? Did you go fishing?

Norma: No, we didn't. My dad didn't start fishing until he retired. I remember it being way up. My mother told that when she was a kid, they would go in the horse and buggy and the kids would run along and play to go to Kinsley. They'd stop at the river, and great grandma would wash them all up so they could go into town.

Interviewer: After the war, you said most of the guys came home, but then they left for jobs. Did you see a big change in the county then in the fifties?

Norma: Yes.

Interviewer: When did everybody stop coming to town on Saturday night and that sort of thing?

Norma: Well, as long as there was a drug store really. It dwindled down with T.V. Thoran left out of New York, and he saw T.V. there. We just couldn't understand what he was talking about.

Interviewer: So you remember getting your first T.V.?

Norma: Yes. I think in the fifties some time.

Interviewer: With one or two stations?

Norma: Yes, 12 and 2.

Interviewer: You still remember!

Norma: Ambrose Ellsworth was my grandfather Jarvis' name. You can see why he was called Colonel. He wasn't called colonel because he had military service in the Civil War. You know that's what we thought, that his dad was in the Civil War, but Lucille Hoar helped us, and we didn't find that. My grandmother's father was in the Civil War.

Interviewer: Are there any highlights of your life from the 50's you would like to mention? Your children have gone on, what are they doing?

Norma: Bryan is a chiropractic radiologist in California, about 50 miles from San Francisco. He has one daughter, Christina. He married a Lebanese lady, and it's really interesting to go out there. She doesn't push her food off on me, but when she fixes something it's so interesting. Bruce is an attorney and is a district judge right now. It looks like he's going to have two attorneys in his family. I don't know if he'll be able to boss us around or not. Lindsay's husband is coming back to Washburn to go to school this fall. Tony is finished, and he's in Spokane, Washington.

Interviewer: And you just recently moved to Larned and left Lewis.

Norma: Yes. I hated to do that, but it's better to make the move while it is my choice.

Interviewer: And Larned is a nice community. It isn't so big, and your son's here. Dean Jarvis, was he your relative?

Norma: He was my uncle. My mother's brother. He was 17 years younger than her, and she treated him like a son. He was so good to her. *(To Rosetta)* Did you live there at one time?

Rosetta: Yes. My dad worked for Dean Jarvis, and then he worked for Slentz. So when I was in junior high and the 6th grade, you lived down the road from us. You lived across from Brills. I told you I knew you then.

Norma: So many things happen that we grow apart. I remember your mother. She was so nice.

Rosetta: Actually, I went to school more in Lewis than I did in Kinsley, but I graduated from Lewis. And I remember Rex Brumfield and Esther Brumfield was my favorite teacher ever. But I think she was everybody's favorite teacher.

Norma: She was real quiet.

Rosetta: But you didn't mess with her

Norma: She was there to teach.

Rosetta: But she was always kind. And her husband, I remember him.

Joan: What about the Christian Church? Could you talk about it a little bit?

Norma: You know, it was great. The Dugger, and the Butlers and the Hawleys went there. We had an orchestra that played.

Interviewer: At the church? What instruments were in the orchestra?

Norma: Mr. Dugger played a violin, and Bob and Bill McLean both played trombone and cornet. And I would take my bass viol, and we just had a lot of fun. You know, they were always so peppy with their hymns. It was great. I have fond memories of the Hawleys, they were kind of Belpre people. Her maiden name was Laird, like the library over there. We went to the dinner the other night and I noticed that one street was Olive, and that was her first name.

Interviewer: In Belpre?

Norma: Yes, right there by the Catholic Church. It was very active then.

Interviewer: What did you do in the church, besides Sunday morning worship?

Norma: Well, they had me teaching little kids. You know, you mostly keep them quiet and read the paper to them.

Interviewer: Did you have pot lucks and things like that?

Norma: Oh yes, you know that church burned. There was a basement, and we had a lot of dinners down there.

Interviewer: Do you remember during the war, did you do things like wrapping bandages and things like that?

Norma: I don't think that was done at Lewis, maybe at Kinsley.

Interviewer: I don't know, but you mentioned buying the war bonds, and that was the main way people supported the war. When the troop trains went through Lewis, did you go out and wave or things like that?

Norma: No, I don't remember doing that.

Interviewer: You were out on the farm. But when you traveled on the troop train, did you travel through communities where they fed you? We've heard stories about canteens where they'd bring sandwiches to the guys. Did you see that?

Norma: No, but I bet they did feed the soldiers.

Interviewer: Where did you stay when you went up to visit?

Norma: At Eau Claire. At a hotel. It was just a few days. Thoran started out at Fort Leonard Wood. It was so cold, they all caught cold but at Eau Claire, there was snow on the ground, but it was warm up there. It was so much different than Missouri. Of course, they were all in tents. Missouri too.

Interviewer: I think when we get your pictures it will help.

Norma: Those are really old pictures. My memory of Main Street is different than these pictures.

Interviewer: Really old pictures of Main Street Lewis?

Norma: Yes.

Interviewer: That would be nice.