

Edward Scheufler Interview

Scheufler Home in Belpre, Kansas

March 20, 2009

Interviewers: Joan Wesver and Rosetta Graff

Present at Interview: Marjory Scheufler, spouse

Technical difficulties: First 2 pages of interview on Audio tape only, then Digital recording begins.)

Interviewer: When and where were you born?

Edward: I was born in Belpre, Kansas, on the farm.

Interviewer: Can you give us the names of your parents, with your mother's maiden name please?

Edward: My dad's name was Charley Scheufler, and my mother's name was Mary Spacil, which was her maiden name.

Interviewer: And your grandparent's names?

Edward: My grandparents were Wenzel and Josephine Spacil. My other grandmother was Emma Scheufler. I didn't have the other granddaddy.

Interviewer: Did you know how your people came to this area and when they came?

Interviewer: I don't know when they came. My grandparents came from Austria and they settled in the Ellinwood area and my parents were gravitating to the west when they came to the Belpre Community in 1919, I think, right during the First World War. They stayed and farmed. My grandparents spoke German, and I never did learn the language, but they would speak German when we had our get-togethers. We would get together quite often, we would go down and it would take us about an hour to get there on most days. So we were a close-knit family. Everybody had quite a few kids at that time, that's what I remember about that.

Interviewer: Describe your family. I know you had some brothers?

Edward: Yes, I had two brothers and three sisters. There were six of us in the family. I was the youngest of the six kids. They're all living but one, one of my older sisters. We've enjoyed a good life.

Interviewer: What was the age span of your siblings? Were they close in age or spread out?

Edward: Well, let's see. We came in spans, we had sister, brother, sister, brother and sister, brother. We were very close and still are.

Interviewer: Can you describe a little of your childhood? You were raised on a farm, right?

Edward: My mother died when I was 13 months old and my aunt in Belpre took care of me until I was about school age and then I moved to the farm. My dad kept his kids on the farm and raised them by himself. I went to the farm when I was about ready to go to school. Of course before that I was out to the farm on weekends and I went to the farm and stayed when I went to school. I rode the school bus all those years. I just grew up on the farm.

Interviewer: What did you raise on the farm?

Edward: Well, my dad had cattle and we milked cows. We farmed and just general... We had a struggle, but he kept us kids all together. His mother came to live with us for five or six years, but we just pretty much took care of ourselves. My dad was pretty much like I was, he was very quiet. We feel like he didn't (*garbled*)...

Interviewer: So the time period when you were a young child would have been during the Depression and the Dirty Thirties?

Edward: Yes.

Interviewer: Would you describe that a little?

Edward: Well, I was just like four and five years old when I would go out to the farm. There would be a big cloud of dust coming up and my Dad would gather us kids all up and make sure we all got into the house. When the dirt came in, we wetted down newspapers and cloth and anything we had and put all around the windows to keep the dust from coming in, but we still had dust, I could see dust in the air. It was the drought naturally. Then in '35 we had the real bad drought. My memory of that is of it being so dry; we had lots of those large yellow grasshoppers. The telephone poles were just lined, clear to the top, and they followed the shade around as the sun went around. My dad would always have corks in his water jugs, and they would completely eat the cork stop out of the jug. We salvaged everything, nothing went to waste. If we had hogs, chickens, just the general run of farm things.

Interviewer: What about tornadoes?

Edward: We had a tornado, but I don't remember what year that was, I was a little bitty guy. We had a tornado at Easter time, I remember that. It was in the middle of the night, and the house filled up with dirt. Everybody had a little cellar just around the side of the house, so my Dad got the door open and got all of us kids started going down and he told us to hold hands, naturally I didn't want to do that, and I went around the house and the wind caught me. My older sister caught me up, or I'd have been gone. Then we went down in that cellar and stayed. The wind completely took the top off of the barn. We had a real large barn with a hayloft. It completely took the top of that barn off right at the hayloft level. It damaged the...we had a small machine shed and it demolished that. It took half of our chicken house off, and it didn't damage the house that much, but it pretty much devastated our farmstead. My uncles came and helped my Dad finish tearing that barn down and we built another smaller one out of the used lumber and fixed up the other buildings that were damaged. So, I had a chance of not even being here I guess.

Interviewer: During that time period when there wasn't any water, did you occasionally get a crop to come in? How did you feed these animals?

Edward: We usually raised a little bit, my Dad would save all the grain. I don't think he bought any commercial feed. We always had chores to do. Our Saturday chores were to clean out the chicken house, haul it out and spread it in the field. We ground feed and we ground grain for the milk cows. Our milk had to be separated and we used the cream for butter. Our milk was fed to the calves and hogs. We did our own butchering, that was kind of a family affair when we butchered several pigs and then divided them up with the families. It was like a three day deal. I was a little bitty guy.

Interviewer: This was in early winter?

Edward: Yes, this was in the winter months.

Interviewer: Some other people have told us that as children they remember having plenty of food and everything because they were raising it.

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Edward: We had food and we would have potatoes and apples in our cellar all winter. My Dad would and a neighbor would go to Hutchinson in the 30's and get the windfall apples off the ground. They would bring those back in a whole pickup up load. They would divide them. They would sort them off and keep the good ones down in the cellar. I think they were Winesaps. Of course they were bruised and would have spots in them because they weren't number one apples. So we had that all winter, and our shelves were full of sandhill plums that we would pick in the summertime and they'd can that. We had a few a currents. Our delicacy was when Dad would bring home a few baskets of Concord grapes home and make grape jelly. We would conserve that all the time as that was our specialty.

Interviewer: Where did you go to school?

Edward: I went to school in public school in Belpre all 12 years. It felt like we had good teachers.

Interviewer: About how big was the community at that time?

Edward: Well, I think we had close to 500 people living in that small community. Everybody knew everybody and worked together.

Interviewer: How big was your class?

Edward: Well, my class varied anywhere from 10 to 15. By the time I got out of high school, I had seven in my graduating class. We had one girl.

Interviewer: Was that because of the war? The lack of...

Edward: Yes, I graduated in 1945. I got my draft papers in '45 and went into the service in '46. I was still 18 years old, and it was right at the end of the war. I had two older brothers who were in the army.

Interviewer: Did any of your classmates drop out of school to join the army?

Edward: I had one classmate that joined the navy. He just quit high school. Of course, over the years we would gain students and lose students, but of my classmates I think there are three of us left, three of the seven that are still here.

Interviewer: Why would people, why did your class change so much? Why were people coming and going so much?

Edward: Well, I think it was people that...they were just laborers. Their parents, their dad was, because their mother always stayed at home. Their parents just needed work, and they would find work and then gravitate to another town and another job and then they would move. I can remember some of the kids

who were in my grade school. I have no idea where they went, but I can remember their names. Sports was a big thing in high school. I enjoyed sports. My dad was a great follower of us kids when we participated in school activities.

Interviewer: What sports did you play? All of them?

Edward: I played all of them. And I lettered all four years in high school in three sports. We had three sports: basketball, football and track. We weren't large enough to have any of the other sports that other larger schools had.

Interviewer: You played Fellsburg, Centerview and...

Edward: Lewis, Macksville, Pawnee Rock and Garfield were in our league, Zook, Trousdale too. I think South 56 league, six of us schools. We didn't communicate with those other schools like we do now. We knew some of the kids, but you didn't see them very often to really remember them. I run across some of those guys once in a while, and we can kind of remember each other from those days. But you know, we didn't get to travel very far from home to get acquainted with everybody.

Interviewer: Besides sports, was there any other entertainment in Belpre?

Edward: Not really, we had our church. We would have our get-togethers at the church.

Interviewer: Now there is a Catholic church, but what other churches were there?

Edward: When I was growing up, we had four churches in Belpre. We had a Catholic Church, a Methodist Church, a Christian Church and Baptist Church. The only thing that has survived right now is our Catholic Church. That's all we have in Belpre right now.

Interviewer: Did the community have events? Like picnics or whatever?

Edward: Yes, we would have community picnics. And then there were a lot of school functions like plays and banquets, things like that and band. My family didn't play musical instruments because things like that cost money and we couldn't afford that. Some of the things we were deprived of because of that, my dad couldn't afford none of that stuff. But we felt like we weren't deprived of anything. We had a lot of summer activities in Belpre, things like baseball. We had an opera house; sometimes we had movies on Saturdays, old movies in that opera house. In my later high school years we had Saturday night dances.

Interviewer: Where was the opera house?

Edward: It was right on Main Street. It was the only two story building in town. It was on the upper level, I think the drug store and the pool hall were underneath the opera house.

Interviewer: It's not there now?

Edward: It's been gone fifteen or twenty years since they tore it down. (Wife says, "How 'bout twenty-five or thirty.") Time gets away.

Interviewer: OK, you were the youngest you said. At the time you graduated, what were your siblings doing? You had two brothers who were already in the service?

Edward: Yes, my two older sisters had gotten married...

Interviewer: Were their husbands in the service?

Edward: One of them was in the service, the other was not. My older brother went to the service and he had gotten out before I left. He had been in the army. Both my brothers were in the army, they were in the European theater. When I was drafted, I was only 18 years old and was pretty homesick when I left. I boarded the train in Kinsley and we gathered up guys as we left and were headed to Leavenworth. We got back to Kansas City and the Union Station and changed trains and went to Leavenworth. The next day we went through a series of shorts and physicals and in about three days time they swore us into the army. I was shipped to Fort McClellan, Alabama, for basic training in the infantry. I came out of infantry training as a rifleman and was qualified for a M1 rifle. I came home on leave and went back. I got my orders and would go to the Pacific Theater. I went to Camp Stoneman, California, and while I was there my granddad died and I got special furlough and I hitchhiked home. I caught a naval plane and flew into Olathe. I hitchhiked from Olathe to Ellinwood where the funeral was. When I got there, they were just lowering him in the ground. They raised him back up so I could see my granddad. Then when I got back to Camp Stoneman, my outfit had shipped out. So all the guys that I knew were gone and they reassigned me. They asked me if I could type. I said, yeah, I was a good typist in high school. So they gave me a clerk/typist job and I was assigned to a unit. When I went to Japan with the Occupation Army I got acquainted with a completely new set of guys. We docked at the Naval Station which was right next to Yokohama. I was based in Yokohama as a clerk/typist. I worked for the provost marshal at the general headquarters and I was in the 8th army. The 8th army headquarters were in Yokohama. I saw all the devastation in the Yokohama area and the Yokosuka area from the second atomic bomb. It destroyed everything; the ground was just flat and dead. There were a few brick walls that were still standing partially. Everything was just gone and barren. Where we had our camp was in Quonset huts that housed 30 guys. In my spare time, I would help build the camp and assemble the Quonset huts and a place to live. I kind of went to work 8 eight hours a day and did a little typing... If I had stayed with my other unit, I would have gone to Korea. And I probably would have a different lifestyle. When it was time for my service to be over, I was still in Japan and they wanted me to join the regular army. They offered me another stripe, which would have made me a staff sergeant.

Interviewer: What would you have done if you had stayed with your first unit?

Edward: If I had stayed in the army, re-upped for another three years. They gave me a choice of doing that or coming home and getting out of the army. I chose to come home. If I would have stayed, I would have been redirected to Korea. The Korean War broke out like six months after that. So, I felt like I was fortunate that I chose to come home. I came back and docked at Seattle. I went down to Fort Ord California and picked up my discharge papers and got my \$100 discharge fee. Then you automatically stayed in the reserves for 10 years. I was never recalled. Our mode of travel, from the day I left Kinsley, was mainly by rail. I went to Alabama by rail on troop train. When you are in the military, you are transported in a 6 x 6 army truck. No, our mode of transportation was very slow compared to today.

Interviewer: The trains were filled with servicemen?

Edward: Yes, we always traveled as a troop; the train was all GI's.

Interviewer: Did you stop at any places where they used to feed the guys? Places like that where the community...

Edward: Yes, when I was drafted, we would stop at every little town and pick up the guys that were drafted. We'd pick up a few in this town. I don't know how far west this started, the troop train that we were on, but the guy that was in charge of my little group of about 12 guys, he was from Ensign, Kansas boarded at Dodge City. He held the papers on us guys that would inform us who was in charge. We stopped at Newton and got off the train and got coffee and donuts. The Harvey House was there. Then when we got to the Union Station in Kansas City that place was packed. We were just little kids, 18 years old, and that was a big place, with people all over. That was this guys job, to keep us together, and then we boarded and went down a long ramp where there were about 20 trains lined up. We wondered if we were getting on the right train. We took the train on over to Leavenworth and, I don't know, you hurried up and waited. We waited there three days. They took our physicals and said "Hey, you're fit," and gave us shots and assigned us to Fort McClellan, took Infantry Basic Training. We got three days of training. That was not fun, rain and red dirt and cold. This was in February and March.

Interviewer: You were drafted right after your 18th birthday?

Edward: Yes, when you were 18 you registered and within a few days you were drafted.

Interviewer: So it was sort of automatic, when you turned 18 and if you were fit, you would be going in a few days after you turned 18.

Edward: No, there were a lot of homesick days. You would maybe call home once a month on the telephone if you could get through and talk to your family for just a little bit because you couldn't afford anything else. But I wouldn't trade it for anything else.

Interviewer: How long did it take you to get from California to Japan on the ship?

Edward: 14 days on a ship. I boarded the ship in Oakland. We had a crew of about 20 of us guys who were chose to board ship a day early to get acquainted with the ship and guide troops to their locations. Our bunk was located clear on the front of the ship where it was really rough. When we left that next morning we went under the Golden Gate Bridge, saw Alcatraz. It was a big deal.

Interviewer: What month was this?

Edward: Well, it would have been in the fall. 14 days, and our ship ran into a storm. It cracked part of the ship and we had to stop and re-weld it. The name of the ship was the *U.S.S. Tazewell*, I went over on. I think there were 1500 troops on that ship; it was fairly small for troops. The ship I came back on was the *General Stillwell*. It docked in Seattle and then I was transported by train to Fort Ord, California. I was glad to get out.

Interviewer: Well, you said a minute ago that you wouldn't trade it...

Edward: It was a very good experience, very educational. I felt like I did a lot of good for our country. It took a lot of organization to get Japan settled in again. I didn't get to see much sights there because we didn't have time. I did have access to a jeep on weekends. We did drive up to Mount Fuji one weekend. I enjoyed that but it was very cold up there. I got to go to Tokyo a few times for weekend leaves. There were a lot of troops there for a long time. They were getting things straightened up, all the debris destroyed, building buildings. I was very fortunate that I didn't get to see any action as far as the war was concerned. They would pretty much like for you to write home at least once a week. Of course I did that. My sisters were very good about sending me cookies and stuff to munch on.

Interviewer: Apparently at this time things were a little bit more regular than during the war. How did your brothers feel about you when you were drafted and going and they were out already?

Edward: Well, the one brother was out, but the other was still in the war.

Interviewer: Did they have any words of encouragement? Or advice?

Edward: No, not really. They just told me to hang in there and do what they tell you to do. My brothers didn't visit a whole lot about their experiences. They did over the years, later. They were both in some pretty tough situations in Europe. One brother was a foot soldier and the other was a mechanic in a tank destroyer division. They saw a lot of stuff over there in Belgium and Germany. I felt fortunate that I didn't do that.

Interviewer: It is good to be the younger brother?

Edward: I was the little brother.

Interviewer: When does Marge come into the picture?

Edward: I had met her before I went into the service. She wouldn't give me the time of day. I went to the service and didn't write to her any. I got back and some of the guys and I would like to drink beer and go to Larned and I finally went to dances. I got reacquainted with her again. One thing led to another and we got married and had five kids.

Interviewer: The rest is history.

Edward: The rest is history

Interviewer: How had you known her before you left? At dances? At school?

Marge: He knew me, I didn't know him.

Interviewer: He had picked you out already?

Marge: I guess so.

Edward: Yes. The guys knew all the women, but the women didn't know all the guys.

Interviewer: Of course, you probably came back as a bucked-up man, instead of an 18 year old boy.

Edward: That's right.

Marge: I remember, he called me for a date. I worked in Larned in the drug store, and when you worked in the drug store, everybody knew you. He called me for a date, and I said, "Eddy who?" I wouldn't go with him, I didn't know that guy at all.

Interviewer: And then you came back and you farmed?

Edward: Yes, I farmed.

Interviewer: Did you do the GI bill and go to school?

Edward: I used the GI Bill for farm school. I took some classes. We had an instructor out of Larned; I think 10 of us guys were from the Pawnee, Edwards County area. We learned welding and different things of farming. That helped me, but I was mechanically minded anyway, so this was kind of a refresher course. When I first got married, I was going to go into the highway patrol, but I wasn't heavy enough. I couldn't put on enough weight that winter to qualify to be a highway patrolman. So I couldn't do that. My dad was farming by himself. So he let me and my brother go into farming with him. He purchased some land in Colorado and we had several quarters of land. Dad bought six quarters and he rented some other land. My brother and I were suitcase farmers; we loaded up the tractor and whatever we needed and would go out to Colorado and farm, then come back and farm here.

Interviewer: I've heard other people talk about that. Was the land there cheaper?

Edward: It was the only land that was available and it was cheaper. They broke up the sod. But the problem was that there wasn't much rainfall. We would raise crops, but they were slim crops. I think we farmed out there for four or five years, but it just was not making it because there was no rainfall. This was in the Eads Colorado area. We were a little bit too far west from the rainfall. So we came back and farmed here for a while, then my brother got married. He had a chance to move to Sterling where his wife was from. His daddy-in-law set him up in farming and I stayed here and farmed and have pretty much been here ever since. We expanded and had irrigation here. We raised cattle and had 250 head of Black Angus cattle. I enjoyed that. In the winter months we would get a couple potloads of cattle in and run them on wheat pasture, we just made it work.

Interviewer: (to wife) Did you come in during the Colorado time?

Marjory: Before, we were married in 1950. He was farming out there then, when we were married. I went out there with him. He and his dad were farming there at the time. They kept talking about "the shack." They absolutely meant "shack." That was the worst looking thing I have ever seen. It had a hole in the bottom where varmints could come in. It was tar paper or something.

Edward: It was just a little metal shed that was like 10 x 14. One door and one window.

Marjory: You hauled your water in 10 gallon cans from Eads, which was 12 miles. It was so bad that Ed's dad would normally run the tractor during the day and he would run it at night and keep it going 24 hours a day. I would go out with Ed at night and sit on that tractor with him because I was not going to stay in that shack. I can remember when we would come in during the morning and try to get some sleep during the day. There were these transparent looking crickets all over the ceiling; I don't know what they were. Oh deliver me!

Interviewer: I'm looking at this... was this before children?

Marjory: I was pregnant. We had children right away. Oh yeah, I would have been pregnant, and after that I never went back.

Interviewer: There was a reason to have kids, so you wouldn't have to go back.

Marjory: Of course, when Ed and I were going together, there was no reason to write letters or anything. But after Mark was born, I have letters he wrote to me when he would go out to Colorado.

He might be gone for a week or 10 days. I still have those letters, and he talks about little Mark. Those are our love letters, the only ones we had. We had a chance to rent more land, and we had a chance to move to Eads, and his dad really wanted us to move there. I told Ed that if he could find a place with a tree, I'd go. There were no trees; there were no trees out there. So, we didn't do that.

Interviewer: One question we are asking everybody, because we're interested, is about minority groups. Did Belpre have Hispanics? Or Blacks?

Edward: We had three Hispanic families who worked for the Santa Fe railroad.

Interviewer: Do you remember their names?

Edward: Gillen, I think, he was the foreman of the crew and Molina. I think that's the only names I remember. One of the girls was in my class. They were very nice people, they associated with everybody. They were just good people.

Interviewer: Did you say they lived in houses along the track?

Edward: They'd have houses right along the track where they lived.

Interviewer: Was that because the railroad provided those? Could they have lived somewhere else in Belpre if they had wanted?

Edward: I don't think so; I think they lived in the housing that Santa Fe provided for them. There were three families that lived in Belpre, and we didn't have no black people in Belpre.

Interviewer: And those three families stayed for a long time?

Edward: Yes, and those kids stayed in school, and they all graduated, the ones that was still there. And by the time I was a senior, they started to modernize the crew on the railroad, and those people were shipped out and there were no more by the time I graduated. So the transformation of the railroad came about the time I was getting out of high school.

Interviewer: Did they speak English and Spanish?

Edward: I can only remember them speaking English. We never did hear them speak Spanish. I surmise they spoke Spanish at home, that's the way my family was; both my grandmothers and my dad would speak German. I never did pick up the language. Sometimes I kind of knew what they were speaking about. But when they went out in public, they never spoke any German, it was always English.

Interviewer: Do you remember if they felt any conflict over the war with Germany and being German and speaking German?

Edward: I don't remember that.

Marjory: Tell her about when Thelma was a baby and they lived down in the Hopewell area.

Edward: You know that story better than I do. I don't remember it.

Marjory: When his dad and mom first came to this part of country, they bought some ground down by Hopewell. Then World War I came along, and his dad was German and also Catholic. That fixed him up in the Hopewell area. That Friends Church, that's a misnomer. If you drive someone out of the community, does that mean you're still friends? They did; they drove his mom and dad out of that community. They painted a swastika on his barn and just almost forced them out of there. Then his dad came and bought a quarter of ground north of Belpre and came up there to live. Of course, when he came up here there were more Catholics and friendlier community.

Interviewer: Were there more families that spoke German in this area too?

Edward: Yes.

Marjory: I always thought that was such a tragedy, but that happened all the time. I didn't know that story for a long time, his dad never talked about it, but after his dad had his stroke, he talked a lot about things that happened in the early years, and that was one of the stories.

Interviewer: Was the Ku Klux Klan ever active?

Marjory and Edward: I don't know that, I don't remember stories about it.

Interviewer: In reading the old newspapers, they were active in Kinsley, burned crosses and all that. In researching, I've found they were active in Lewis in the '20's.

Edward: I can remember going into Belpre and the Gypsies were there on Saturday nights. My dad was so protective of us kids and telling us to be careful or they would steal all your stuff. That was quite an experience for me.

Interviewer: What nationality were they?

Edward: I don't know what nationality they were

Marjory: They were just gypsies.

Edward: All I know is they just traveled.

Interviewer: Were they traveling in model T's or cars or...

Edward: That I can't answer because I was too young. I don't remember how they traveled.

Marjory: There were all kinds of stories about Gypsies, all kinds of stories about what they were supposed to have done. They kidnapped your babies.

Interviewer: Now the KKK, they were anti-Catholic. We tend to think of them as anti-black now, but not in this part of the country.

Marjory: I think around the First World War, when they were just getting started, they would have been against Germans. You know, anyone of foreign extraction. But we don't know anything about whether they were active when his dad sold his ground and left that community.

Interviewer: Well, the Friends may have just been on their one then.

Marjory: Well, I always kind of thought that was kind of funny, the Friends drove him out.

Interviewer: Oh, there's a question I forgot to ask you at the beginning. Do you remember Pearl Harbor and what you were doing?

Edward: I don't remember what I was doing, but I was in high school. I remember having a general assembly and our superintendent got up and told us. I can remember during those early days, our sugar was rationed, our gas was rationed, our tires were rationed. The farmers kind of had priority for stuff on the farm. I think some people who weren't on the farm kind of felt resentful that farmers had that advantage. A lot of people would hoard sugar and sell it on the black market and double their money or whatever, because whenever something is hard to get, prices go up.

Interviewer: Could your brothers or you have received a farm deferment because your dad farmed?

Edward: My dad was not for that. We had several people in the community who did that, and you can name those people today, some of them are still around.

Interviewer: Several years ago, I talked to a Mr. Colglazier out by Zook. He had a farm deferment. We were with his wife getting logs for my husband's drums, anyway, we were just talking in the car and he said always felt bad about having that farm deferment. He never got over it. In a way it was necessary, someone had to be raising the food...

Edward: We did have some younger guys that wouldn't be able to pass the physical, you know, had a back problem or eye sight problem, and were classified as 4F. You felt sorry for those guys, you know, they wanted to go and help but they weren't physically fit for the service.

Interviewer: O.K., we covered Pearl Harbor kind of late, how about VE or VJ day, do you remember what was going in your life on those days?

Edward: No, I guess I wasn't a history person to remember that kind of thing. Wasn't interested enough of something.

Interviewer: Your brothers still overseas or in Europe?

Edward: Yes, Paul was still in the service, but I think Charles was home when VJ day was.

Interviewer: What was it like when the soldiers came home? Of course, you hadn't seen combat, but about integrating back into the community?

Edward: Most of them fit back in real good. People were glad to get them home and wanted to see them start their life. A lot of them got G.I. benefits and some went to school.

Marjory: There was a lot of alcoholism. The ones that had seen really heavy combat in this community there was a lot of alcoholism. At the time, you wouldn't have thought that was the cause of it, but now looking back, there was no health plan to help these men when they came back with what they saw and the things that they did. They took it out in drink.

Edward: Well, and all the G.I. were exposed to tobacco because they issued us cigarettes. I did not smoke until I went to the service. We had them here, and our buddies all smoked. I think that is why our society has been so heavy into tobacco over the years.

Interviewer: They were in the K-rations weren't they?

Edward: Yes, things have changed now.

Interviewer: You have two sons who are in Iraq?

Edward: Two grandsons. One of them has been there before; he's over there on his second tour.

Marjory: Those two grandsons are in the army. Our other grandson is a Marine, and he's on a second tour in Iraq.

Interviewer: What differences do you see between your experiences and what they are going through right now?

Edward: I think the modernization of equipment; it is so much more sophisticated. They go into the service a little older and they know what they are doing. They are doing a good job, I think, and they are very proud when they come home.

Marjory: The communication is just tremendous. The one grandson, Gabe, is married, and they have a little baby. He and his wife have Skype, and he sees this little boy, and the little boy sees him. That is just amazing. I was telling you about the other brother Daniel, he's in Iraq and he just bought an RV on EBay that is up in Cheyenne, Wyoming. For heaven's sakes.

Interviewer: He must have someone to go pick it up for him too!

Marjory: In the back of his mind, he knew that. He knew we would do that.

Edward: Our grandson that was in the Marines, we went to San Diego when he graduated, and I was impressed with the Marines.

Marjory: And the Marines gave him his vocation. He was trained in generator repair, so that's what he's doing now. He lives in Wichita and has an excellent job with Caterpillar, and he's still in the Marine Reserve. It just set that boy up with a vocation. It was great.

Interviewer: How do you think WWII affected Belpre and Edwards County? What about after the war?

Edward: I can't hardly describe that. The ones that stayed, their dad wanted them to farm, I think those stayed but the others wanted to further their education and do other things.

Interviewer: When do you think the community started to lose population? Was that later?

Edward: Well, that would have been about the time they started losing population. In the late 40's, our population started to dwindle. I guess there wasn't enough stuff here to keep people busy. They wanted to go to the larger towns to get a better job; there was more stuff available to them. I guess people started to feel they had to do more things; they wanted to live a faster life. We weren't geared that way. We still live conservatively, that's how we were brought up. Not everybody does that.

Interviewer: So when did you buy this farm? Did you start out farming three miles north?

Edward: Yes, my dad traded that for this farm, and when my dad passed away, I inherited this farm. I bought some more land with it and expanded that way.

Interviewer: Your dad bought this in 1945?

Edward: Yes.

Marjory: So, essentially, since we've been married, this has been home.

Interviewer: So, eventually, what will happen to it in the future? Do you have other children?

Marjory: We don't have any family that's going to farm. We have family that would like to, but in this day and age, there's no way. I imagine it will go just like it is now. We rent it out. Hopefully, the children will keep the land, but if they don't, they don't.

Edward: This farmstead, probably in ten years it won't even be on this property. It will be dozed down and farmed. It's what they do.

Interviewer: This lovely home!

Edward: It is very likely, because that's what has happened in our area. These farmsteads, they leave, and nobody lives in 'em, and the farmer comes along and digs a hole and buries it and raises crops.

Interviewer: When we pulled up, I said, "What a nice, neat, farm."

Marjory: Hopefully, it will be here...

Edward: I think our future shows that we're probably going to revert back to that to a certain extent. We're going to go back to a smaller farm, because guys can go back to where you can make a living on 160 acres of land, diversify and that. Hopefully, that is the way it will be. I hope so, because I think it keeps people together better.

Marjory: This farmstead is fairly historical in Edwards County. This house was built by a gentleman named Dr. Etling; he was a patent medicine man. If you want to know more about him, Suzy Roenbaugh is his granddaughter. This is the Etling place. He had 12 children and there have been some of the children who came back to look at the house since we've owned it, of course, we've owned it since 1945. They tell us, "This room was this" and so on. There is a lot of history here. We think this house was built back in 1906. You could look at the abstract, you can tell because they always had a mortgage, but this guy had enough money he didn't, so we don't know for sure, but we think 1906.

Interviewer: We live on Ed Schaller's place, and it was built in 1907.

Marjory: There were many houses built in Belpre about that time, it must have been a real prosperous time for people to come. It must have been a real good year.

Interviewer: Is this a Sear's house?

Marjory: Oh no, not this house. In years past, we were going to tear this house down and build a new home, but our kids just did not want us to.

Edward: We still have the plans for what we wanted to do.

Marjory: At that time, Mark was a senior in high school, and he said, "Build a new home if you want to, but it will never be home to me." And that's what the girls said too. I didn't particularly want a new home, but we felt that this one was so old. It is a good old house.

Interviewer: Was that the old well house?

Edward: Yes, what's left of it?

Marjory: The well house is original with this house. It's the only building that's original. Just last year, Ed remodeled the well house last year. It was about ready to fall down, so he mortared and redid it.

Edward: It had a flat roof with a large tank sitting on top of it. So that was the water for the house. It had a pipe that went across to the house, so that was the running water to the house.

Interviewer: It would have been quite the thing at the time!

Edward: Well, when we moved into this place, when we lived up there, we didn't have electricity. That was about the time the REA was starting to come into the country. We came up here and we had electricity! We had a light in the middle of the ceiling with a pull chain, and that was up town.

Interviewer: Anything else we need to know here? She's the historian, anything about Belpre?

Interviewer #2: I didn't even know where the cemetery was, but we found the cemetery. But I do have a question. Duane Ingraham used to come in and we'd talk. He used to talk about the Catholic Cemetery and the Protestant Cemetery. He used to get upset when the paper didn't put in whether the burial was going to be in the Catholic or the Protestant. I think in some of the records, it is divided.

Marjory: Years ago, it is a township cemetery now. But that hasn't been too many years that it has been a township cemetery.

Interviewer: That's right, it hasn't been too many years that I've asked, "Now is that in which cemetery?" Because we make up the little cards at the library. And I would wonder where I was supposed to put this one?

Marjory: The Catholics were on the west side of the road, and the Protestants were on the east side. And never the twain was gonna meet, except they did, finally.

Interviewer: Yes, I remember. I'm from Michigan, but that was going on there too. I was not supposed to date a catholic.

Edward: We have a gentleman who lives in Belpre, we call him our historian. Yes, you probably know him then. But he has a tremendous amount of history on Belpre and really enjoys keeping it up.

Interviewer: Yes, he's the library representative for the county in the System. We had a meeting just a

week or so again.

Marjory: He's the same age as our son, 57. They went through school together, and as far as I know, David went to college, and he had a job for a year or two or three, possibly I was thinking at Greensburg, and since then, he has not had a job. I think there is a trust or something he lives on, but he just researches. Of course, I know he didn't get rich on his book, but his book is a neat book. I told him, "When are you going to write a book about the seamier side of Belpre?" And at that time, he said, "There's some of those people who are still living, I can't write the book yet!" I guess what people say, was that Belpre was quite the little wild town at one time.

Interviewer: Humm, David didn't tell us that story... There was a hotel, so the train would have stopped.

Marjory: It was about a block from the motel.

Interviewer: You said you had cows. Was that just for you, or did you take the cream....

Edward: No, we took the cream to Belpre, and it was put on the train and went to Emporia. Then the cans would come back. We used to take our eggs to town on Saturday night.

Marjory: We still did that when we got married. Ed was still milking; he milked five to seven cows. That was what I bought groceries with. And we kept chickens; we sold the eggs in Larned. We shipped our cream, that was enough money to buy our groceries.

Edward: We also would raise pigs, we would buy ten or eleven little pigs. That was what sent our son to college, that was his project and he went through college on what he saved.

Interviewer: So you lived in Larned before you were married?

Marjory: I could write a book, I knew nothing. Both of my grandparents lived on a farm and I thought I knew farming because I would go out in the summertime as a kid and spend a few weeks on the farm in the summer. As far as knowing anything about how a farm worked, I knew nothing. Then I came out here and Ed, not having a mother, ruined him for having a wife. He was so set in his ways. He lived here with his Dad and his brother Paul, and those three men thought they knew everything. And they did. When I came out, I was a city girl and was used to more modern convenience than what they had. They had a Maytag washing machine, and oh my god, that thing was like it knew it was my enemy. My mother had what they called an easy spin dryer. It was a precursor to the automatic washing machine. So I was used to a modern convenience. So I came out here and Ed had to show me how to run that thing. Then he took a bar of P & G soap and he shaved it with a thing like what you would mix slaw or something with. He put it in really hot water and that was his soap that he washed clothes with. And I kept thinking, I could go to town and buy a box of Oxydol, but that was a no-no. So I used P & G soap and that Maytag washing machine. The good thing was it had an electric motor. You didn't have to try and start the darned thing. I also had never been around a separator. I found out that the worst job in the whole world was washing all the parts to the separator. I found out a whole lot about the birds and the bees, with cattle and everything that went on I found out a lot about that.

Interviewer: Did you become the cook for these three?

Marjory: Well, Ed's brother Paul got married six months after we did, so he wasn't here very long.

When we were first married we lived in an apartment in Larned because I was still working. So Paul was gone before we moved out here with his dad, so then I was the cook and I didn't know how to cook either. My mother was the original Mrs. Neat. She was the word for it, Mrs. Clean. So all I got to do while I was growing up was dust. I didn't cook, I didn't wash, I didn't clean, I didn't do anything. So it was a rude awakening for me. Then we were married 11 months and we had Mark, and 16 months later we had Donna. Living out here on this farm, when we moved out here, this house sat on this hill and there wasn't a tree around it. There were a few old scraggly bushes to the west, and some trees to the east. The chickens ran, they weren't in a pen, so therefore there was no vegetation. They ate everything. And of course, the wind blows all the time, and I thought, "What have I done?" I really thought, "What have I done?" So it wasn't pretty for the first few years. But then I guess I got used to it, but then I farmed with Ed. I drove tractors and trucks. So I guess I became the quintessential farm wife, like all the rest of them around here.

Interviewer: Happy about that?

Marjory: Well, sometimes. Now? Yes, absolutely, I wouldn't trade it, but at the time it was a hard life.

Interviewer: It was a great place to raise kids.

Marjory: Then later, we found out that we didn't have to work 24/7. We bought a boat and we went camping, there were three or four couples of us, and we went to the lake. We bought our first little camping trailer. The kids were in grade school, and we did all of that, and we raised our kids that you got all your work done, then you went to the lake and you played.

Interviewer: So you had given up the milk cows by that time?

Marjory: Oh yes, we gave up the milk cows. We raised our kids like that then. All of them knew how to water ski and knew about boats, and it has carried through every one of their lives. We felt like we had the best of two worlds.

Interviewer: Look back over your life, Ed, how do you think your World War II service affected the rest of your life? Good or bad?

Edward: Well, good. It gave me a lot of discipline. It taught me what life is about and what the human race is. I enjoy what I do, and when I think back about a lot of the guys who just went the wrong way, they made bad decisions. When we get back together, the service always come up in one way or another before they leave. Our whole family is that way, our immediate family and then the whole family. Her family is the same way. She had two brothers who were in the navy, and it's just something people always talk about.

Marjory: Every family had either a family member or someone they knew that was killed.

Interviewer: Your family did?

Marjory: Yes, you either knew someone in the community or you had a family member that was killed in the war. I think about that a lot. I think about our grandchildren. Mark, our son, just missed the Vietnam War. He was still in college and he was in ROTC. By the time he got out of college he would have been a 2nd Lieutenant or something and he would have just been cannon fodder, you know they stuck them up there first. By the time he got out of college, the war had wound down, and he

didn't have to go. He stayed in the service for four years, but he didn't go overseas. So here we are, we are three generations, and we have three grandsons who have seen action. That's a crime, that that has happened to our grandchildren. The human race, we don't learn anything! I'll get off my soapbox.

Interviewer: You were supposed to have fought the war to end all wars.

Edward: Yes, the Great War.

Interviewer: And Korea was started right after, they just blended together didn't they?

Edward: When we went on the honor flight, they gave us those T-shirts, and on the back it said, "If you can read this, thank a teacher. And if you can read it in English, thank a vet." So many people misunderstand what that means, and think they should read it in Spanish, or German or Japanese. I thought that was a neat saying on those T-shirts.

Marjory: That Honor Flight, that is one of the greatest things that I can think of has been started and perpetuated.

Interviewer: Tell us about your flight...

Edward: Well, I enjoyed it. But I was one of the younger ones and I helped take care of some of the other gentleman. There were 12 people on our trip who were wheelchair bound, and I helped them get up in it and wheeled some of them around. I enjoyed it. I had been to D.C. and seen everything but the war memorial. I would like to go back and take her with me and see more things. We're contemplating going back again as guardians and helping some of the other guys.

Marjory We think both of us , we're spry enough that we could be guardians.

Edward: It was a fast trip, maybe we could have spent more time, but I know there were veterans who had probably never been to D.C., and they didn't get a taste of what Washington, D.C. is. We have been there several times and have spent a lot of time in D.C. We know our way around pretty good.

Interviewer: How did it make you feel to have a monument after all these years? I mean the Vietnam one went up right after Vietnam.

Edward: I liked that, but I'm not so sure that WWI doesn't have a memorial in D.C. I think there is one in Kansas City. What was so great about it for me was those guys on the bus. They all had stories. It brought back all their memories.

Interviewer: Was there an effort on that trip to record their stories?

Edward: Yes. Our guide, he picked the ones that were really important, he picked the guys and did some interviews. I think we're fortunate in this area to have Dan Curtis do the Honor Flights. He got up that program.

Marjory: Greg Henderson has been a tremendous help.

Edwards: They're stressing that this has to be done right away because we've lost six of the ones that

went on the four flights in this six county area. Six of those guys are gone already that went on the flight and came back. So time is of the essence.

Interviewer: Aren't they going in April or May?

Marjory: No, I think it has been changed to July possibly.

Edward: I thought it was May.

Marjory: We keep getting messages on the computer that they are changing it, the itinerary too, it keeps getting better, so I'm hoping that our area would be in June because it would make it easier for Ed and I to go. It is amazing what this man has done and how he can collect money.

Edward: But they do have enough money now for two flights. But I think it has been a good deal.

Interviewer: The reason we're not trying to do all the vets on this project is that we have several vets already recorded at the library. Dr. Boehme and his high school English classes do it; the Library of Congress has the Veteran's Project as well. Your recording might end up there too as well. I suggested that they do that, so we have those interviews as well.

Edward: We were impressed with Kinsley when they had that send-off. The kids came down and did that program for us.

Interviewer: The high school kids were privileged to do those interviews. That's something they will always remember. I remember doing an interview when I was in high school of a neighbor. She was, I don't remember, from Poland, Germany, anyway, they didn't go along with it and got run out of the countries and finally got to the United States. I remember saying, "You must be glad to be in the United States now." This would have been in '63, "Because that can't happen here." And she looked me in the eye and said, "Don't you think it can't happen here." I've never forgotten that, and I think these kids can learn an awful lot. Well, did you have anything else?

Edward: I don't believe so.