Interviewee: Josephine Hartzell
Interviewer: Betty Moffett
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Josephine Hartzell

Side One

Betty Moffett [BM]: I'll be speaking to Miss Josephine Hartzell [JH]. This is February 22, 1992. We're making this recording for the Friends of Stewart Library for its Oral History Project about Grinnell during the Depression and WWII, the 1930s and 40s.

JH: Well, I attended Grant no. 1, country school for— through the eighth grade and then I went through high school. And after that I went back on the farm. My first job— I worked over to the Community Hospital. It was right after the hospital was built. I took the place of a girl whose arm was bothering her and she couldn't write. And the first day, I was in the office when the phone rang. It rang so loud that I jumped and knocked the phone off the desk, down on the floor and broke the mouthpiece out. So I went to the superintendent and told her about it and asked her if I should pay for it. She said, "No, just long as it works." She said, "Don't pay any attention to it." Well, at that time in the hospital there were one baby upstairs and two college boys downstairs on the first floor. And that's the only occupants in the hospital. The superintendent says, "Go to them and get their—have them pay for their room before, because when they leave here sometimes we don't get their—they don't pay." So I went in and I said something to the boys and the boys said, "Yes," and he said, he told me where his room was, so go in my room and my checkbook is in my pants pocket. I went to the room and fished out the checkbook. I brought it back to him and he wrote a check for the correct amount.

BM: Do you remember how much it was?

JH: No. I think it was about sixteen dollars or something like, it wasn't very much. Because at that time the students had a nine year insurance policy for eight dollars. Eight dollars a month, I guess it was.

BM: What date would this be?

JH: That would be 1922. I believe it was 1922.

BM: For eight dollars.

JH: And during that first week, when the hospital was built Dr. Summers went around and you know had to try to get money. People solicited money for the hospital. And at that time people hadn't paid their debts so I worked from—I was supposed to work from eight till five. So I worked for two hours at one time, spent a day and a half writing out bills, you know, to send them. And two hours that night and the superintendent gave me fifty cents for working two hours. And I didn't mind but the worst thing was it was seven o'clock when I quit and I had to walk two miles home through the mud.

BM: You said people didn't pay their bills—

JH: No, Dr. Summers would come in and he'd say, "I'm going to put you down for a thousand or five thousand." And, you know, they wouldn't say anything and they couldn't afford it. They just didn't have the money. But he, when my dad, he talked to my dad and he said, "I'm going to put you down for a thousand dollars." And Dad said, "I don't have a thousand dollars. I can't pay that much now." He said, "Will you pay in the future?" And Dad said, "No, I pay as I go." I don't remember, I think he paid five hundred. But that's the reason so many accounts were open and not closed.

BM: Were you working at the hospital when your dad came to the hospital?

JH: No, it was later on when he was there. He was there in '51 when he started having arthritis and they wanted to check him over. He was there, I think, four days, in the ward. It cost four dollars a day in the ward, four men in the ward. But of course he didn't really require a lot of care like a sick person would, you know. They just wanted to check him over and see if they could find out what was causing the arthritis.

BM: How long did you work in the hospital?

JH: It was just while the girl's arm was bad. It was about four months, if I remember right. And then when she was able to come back I quit. The superintendent wanted me to go on, but I said no, I couldn't. The farm work was going on and I had to take care of the chickens and things like that. I think I started in February and I ended up in May, I believe it was, April or May.

BM: You must have been about twenty then?

JH: Right after high school. Well, I was one year behind my class in school because when we took the eighth grade exam the teacher wouldn't give it unless there was more of us—just me to take it. And she says, "You'll have to take it, go back through the seventh grade again. "So they put me one year behind and I didn't

enjoy it, I'll tell you that. But anyway that's the way it was so everybody else was 14 and I was 15 when I started.

BM: You had to do that whole year over again?

JH: The whole year over. You was required to go to school. Because she told me— I talked to the county superintendent and he said you've got to go to school.

BM: Did you do the work over again and all the writing?

JH: Well, as I said, I worked at the hospital and then I worked for Dr. Padgham in the year that Lindberg flew the Atlantic. What was that? '57, I believe it was. (?) I took care of everything when he was gone. Somebody wants some medicine and I would have to call him up if I could find him, and he'd tell me what medicine to give. It was all labeled, you know, you couldn't make a mistake if you could read. Not very often, just once in awhile.

BM: But most of your—after you worked at the hospital that first time you went back to the farm, right? Tell about your—what was it like on the farm and did all your brothers and sisters—

JH: I had two sisters and one brother and I was next to the oldest. I was very interested in everything that went on and Mom said that I always had my nose in everything. So I got the job and some of the others might have had to. But it is fun when you do things on the farm that way, when you're little. Gathering eggs— I can remember the first time I went to get some eggs. Mom wanted to bake a cake and I went out to the chicken house and Mom had a little woven basket about so wide. And I was so short that when I went in the house I drug that basket right on the ground. You know what it did to the eggs. And then I can remember one other time getting eggs, we didn't have the—people never used to have lawns like they have now days and the chickens run wild. They'd dig holes in the ground and lay eggs. Well, I went out to get eggs one day for Mom and I jumped off the south end of the porch right down on a nest of eggs. And after that I was more careful.

BM: Did you tell your mother?

JH: Well, yeah, I had to go and wash my feet. I think I hollered probably when I landed. Probably. Oh there's so many things like that, you know, on the farm that way, feeding the calves, you know, they got so tame they'd rub up against you like a dog or a cat would.

BM: Did they suck your finger?

JH: Yeah, they would if you let them. I was always afraid of a horse. I never had a horse, to drive, or ride. Usually I got along with the cows, liked them better than horses for some reason or other. And dogs. When I walked along the street

stray dogs come up and licked my hands—stray dogs, something, I don't know why—what it is. Wasn't because I had food or something on my hands, either.

BM: I think some people have that gift. Were horses the only thing that you didn't like? Did you like all the other animals?

JH: Yes, all the rest of them were all right, I got along. Well, once in awhile we'd have a refractory cow who'd knock you over the side of the barn. It was just once was all that happened. They'd lift their feet. I'd say, "Don't you do that. I'll land on you if you do." And they'd put their foot back down.

BM: These were not bulls?

JH: No, just the cows. The first year we had artificial insemination I had every cow come in on the first try. After that the doctor said I had— See, the cows were cross bred. They were so tall. And so he said I should have black cows. He said they'll be smaller. Well, they weren't. They were just as big as the others. They were the friendliest, the black ones were the friendliest. I had one cow that lost two black calves. She was about two weeks before she was due to calve and I called the vet up. He said, "Has she had a calf before." And I said, "Yes. But I think she is going to have it ahead of time." He said, "Well, I don't think you'll have any trouble." Well I went down the next morning, she was laying down in the shed. She had two little black holstein calves, both dead. I seen one. She looked over her shoulder and I looked there and then I seen the other calf. And I said, "Well, Bossy, that's too bad you lose your calf." She got up and come up to me and put her head against me. I never had a cow do that before. She was always a little bit wild, but they were the prettiest calves. I saw an ad in the paper for Mains and they said they'd pay a hundred dollars apiece for twin holstein calves. Of course, mine were dead when they were born.

Oh, there was so many things. Like when we thrashed. I know several times they said, "We won't be over to your place until about two o'clock." And I can remember one especially. It wasn't quite ten o'clock when we got a telephone call and they said, "The thrashers are going to be over at your place for dinner. They can't thrash where they are. It's too wet." They had to go through a big pile, you know. Those little dinky piles are the ones that's wet and they couldn't run them through. So Dad went to the phone and ordered meat and got in the car and went up after the meat. And my sister and I and Mom about tore ourselves to pieces trying to get dinner. But we had dinner ready when they came in about, twelve o'clock. They came in about eleven, but laid out in the yard till dinner was ready. That makes you kind of nervous, you know. We got along all right.

BM: Did you do, as a girl, did you do a lot of the cooking or did you do a lot of the farm work?

JH: I didn't do any farm work. Dad sold the horses about the time I had—you couldn't use horses to farm with anymore. You had to have a tractor.

BM: Why was that?

JH: Well, he got so that he couldn't manage horses. His arms weren't strong, so he had to have a tractor. And everybody had tractors. But some people we know that had horses would finish their fields quicker than some with tractors because somebody would come visit with them, you know. That happened lots of times. Of course we just had an acreage. It was only sixty-two acres. We only had thirty-eight under cultivation. The rest of it was pasture and lots and yard and garden and everything like that. The main thing was raising your own food and canning it. We used to can about 600 to 800 cans, quarts of fruit. You take one half a gallon jar would make dinner and supper. We canned tomatoes and regular just plain plums and apples and plums. And then if there was vegetables to can— but usually we ate them all up, there wasn't very much to can. You depended on your canned fruit from your farm. I don't think they even sold canned fruit in those days. At least not around where we was, anyway. Then of course you'd have cabbage and pick tomatoes green and ripen them down the cellar. And great big heads of cabbage. And of course we'd have kraut. We'd make kraut in great big fifteen-gallon stone jars. Besides the kraut we'd take those big heads of cabbage, take them down the cellar, leave them just the way they were, turn the roots up and they'd keep, some of them clear till Christmas. The cellar was cold, and there was no heat in it, part of it. And then turnips. We always had a lot of turnips and those were nice to eat. Of course you could always keep apples until almost spring, if they were—if you picked them at the right time. Sometimes you'd pick them a little ahead of time because they said it would frost. So that kind of cut down on your apple—

BM: Did you keep them in the attic?

JH: No, down the cellar. Everything was in the cellar. And potatoes. We had three bins of potatoes and the other things were boxed in boxes. Because they said if you kept them in smaller amounts—that is the turnips and tomatoes and things like that—it would be better. They wouldn't heat. But then along towards spring all we'd have was canned tomatoes. The other fruit lasted for a long time, though.

BM: What about meat?

JH: Well, we butchered two hogs every year. And we would cure four hams and the shoulders would be cut up for sausage. And then they'd have about—

depends on if we butchered an old sow—we'd generally keep a pig and they got so big when they were sows we'd butcher them. Nice meat, no fat in it, all solid meat, flesh. And we'd have about four or six slabs of bacon that would be cured. We'd cure our own meat that way, you know, put it down in the barrel, put salt in it. If it would hold up a small potato, it was about right to put the meat in to cure it.

BM: The brine.

JH: Umhum, the brine. I butchered once after Dad didn't have hogs, because I just couldn't take care of hogs. It was just too much for me. And anyway you didn't make much off of them. You got about eight or ten cents a pound. Sometimes, if you were lucky, you got twelve. I don't really know how much they brought, but we'd have generally two sows with pigs, and you'd generally raise about eight or ten to a sow. There was always something happened to them. The meat was put down in pails, not galvanized, but—oh, I can't think what you call them—anyway, packed in tight. You'd put a few down and put hot lard on them, then a few more, then hot lard. At the top, the hot lard was about an inch thick on top of the pails. And when you'd want some meat you'd dig in and take out what you wanted and then you had to push that lard all down tight, so you couldn't get a bit of air to the meat or it would mold.

BM: The lard was a seal then?

JH: Yeah, a seal and there wouldn't be no mold. It would keep for—oh I think—because we didn't—we didn't, we weren't big meat eaters.

BM: You weren't?

JH: No. Some people would have meat three times a day and we didn't. We'd have meat usually for dinner and no meat for supper.

BM: Was that because you didn't like it so much or—

JH: Well, I don't know. I suppose when we were growing up and the family just didn't have meat on hand, you know. And to go to the butcher shop, when you live in the country and you drive a horse and buggy and the butcher shop's way uptown, it's sort of an inconvenience to buy meat. And when we did have meat we didn't have a refrigerator in those days. It was put in a tin can and hung down in the well, just right up above the water. If a storm came up you had to go down to the well and raise your meat up, you know, or the water would get in the meat and spoil the meat and spoil the well water. You had many things like that that you had to look after on the farm.

Well, of course there was berries, too. Course you always canned berries. Raspberries—the black ones was the nicest. We used to can a lot of raspberries. My

mother liked the red raspberries the best. Of course, you would make a lot of jelly and jam from everything like that. You depended on your living from your farm, your apples and things like that. You had—some of the farms had more apple trees than they did shade trees. You just had to if you wanted to have a good supply. We had about thirty or thirty-one apple trees, all different kinds. So that they'd come in early, you know. Oh, I can't think of the names of some of the apples. But I can remember the Iowa Blush. Dad always liked them. They were a cream colored apple and they all had a little red cheek on one side. We had Johnathons, and we had one—they called it—it was just like a raspberry. I forgot the name of that one, though. Anyway we had apples. So we had apples from early in the fall clear up to freezing time. One or two trees of each kind, at least one anyway.

BM: So you may have had fifteen different kinds of apples?

JH: Oh, we had more than that. And when the fair came Dad would take oats, and and apples and plums to the fair. One year I know I took drawings. I wanted to make some money to get some clothes for high school. I took drawings. Most of them were fifty cents for first prize. Well, it all added up to— I think they got twenty-two dollars and that was a lot of money in those days.

BM: First prizes adding up to twenty-two dollars?

JH: And some on apples, Dad didn't have time, so I took the apples. They looked at the apples. To the fair you took a plateful, a small plate full and then I think it was one or three in the middle, depending on how many they asked for, you know. They didn't tell you how many they had.

BM: How did you get the apples there?

JH: We always picked them by hand. Dad had a big ladder and he had a sack he put the apples in, put them in real easy so that they wouldn't bounce and bruise. And then you come down and emptied in baskets and baskets were taken down the cellar. Well, for the [apples] we took to the fair we was just going to pick them off the tree. Looked for the nicest ones, you know. Very few of the apples was ripe at that time. That was in August because everything was supposed to be over before the kids started to school.

BM: Did you have a truck? Did you take them to the fair in a truck?

JH: No, we just, we had a car there. Dad bought his first car in 1918, just before I started to high school. A Dodge touring car with isinglass windows you roll up and down, depending on the weather for $985.00. Of course after the glassed up cars, sedans, came out, people would say, "I'd think you'd just die in that car with those curtains that way." I said, "That's not as hot as your car with all glassed in." I

said, "We get some air around the curtains. You don't get any." So, so. "You know," they said, "I never thought of that."

BM: Who picked the apples? Did just the family pick the apples, or did you have others—

JH: No, we always picked our own. Of course after— so many of the trees— after we had that storm of '51 it just ruined our orchard. Took down— we had a lot of walnuts. It took down five big walnut trees. Some of them it just broke them off right at the top of the ground. Some of them it just splintered them off about half way up and they died. We had a cookstove, and I know I went up there and broke up, took up, worked up all the wood that I could. Dad, of course, didn't have much to do and he sat there by the old kitchen range and poked basket after basket of stuff in there to keep the fire going. That way we got the orchard and the north lots cleaned up. And then, see, '51 was the time that we had that—of course the big cyclone was in the eighties, you know. Of course Dad—and Grandpa and Grandma Hartzell were going to town and Dad and his sister were there alone. And the storm came up and it jerked the west cellar door open, come up to the kitchen and jerked the west kitchen door open and the east kitchen door and the storm went right through the house. They said that was the only thing that saved the house. And then when they had that storm in '51 it just came up all of a sudden. And we, of course, we didn't have a radio or anybody. Somebody from town called up and said, "You better get under cover. They said there's a storm coming." And we could see those clouds rolling. We could see the big cyclone cloud coming. And we were in the kitchen and everybody said go to the room farthest away from the storm. Well, the storm was from the northwest and we looked out the south window and on First Avenue, the first place northeast of where the hog buying station is, had a new barn. When we looked over there you could just see the barn go down by inches. We had—Dad had a cow and hog—we had a cattle and horse shed on twenty acres across the road. And I looked over there and as I looked this storm had picked up that roof and the roof was just waving in the breeze like somebody was waving a table cloth, shaking the crumbs off. And it blew down the fence north of the barn. And there was two old white hens down there and they set right down in a— We had a bull at that time and the bull come around the corner of the barn and he looked and seen that storm and he turned and run back in the shed. So Dad said we knew we'd have to do something with the fence. We knew we'd have cattle all over everywhere. So Dad and I went down and we had quite a time. It was just at the edge of the storm and Dad took and put—we pulled the fence up and put a prop up

against it and it held up. And the one old white hen gone out of the way of the storm and the other one, I had an awful hard time trying to get to her and put her up out of the storm. She flapped her arms and commenced to sing, she looked around at me. She was thanking me for rescuing her, I guess.

BM: So you had a way with chickens, just as you did with—

JH: Oh, I always liked chickens. I don't know, they'd come up to you, look at you and talk to you. If you went in to shut them in at night, it was all— And you'd look once in awhile you might lose an egg. You'd look in the nest to see if there was an extra egg or two. The chickens would start to holler. They didn't like to be disturbed. When you went out and shut the door, they'd quit. They never said another word.

BM: So they were talking to you?

JH: They were complaining about being disturbed, their nice rest being disturbed, I guess.

BM: Do you remember very much about the Depression? Did the Depression make any difference in your life?

JH: Oh, yes, you just didn't have any money for anything. You passed the clothes you had. And shoes, I had a pair of patent leather shoes and no money to buy a new one, new pair. And they were—the top was peeling off. So I pulled the whole top off and they looked like I had a new pair of shoes and somebody said, "Well, you've got a new pair of shoes. How'd you have enough money to buy them?" And I said, "This isn't a new pair, this is the old pair." And I told them. They couldn't believe me, how I was telling the truth. But so many people, if they had, they wore the same clothes year after year to church or you didn't go. And, of course, I know that town people weren't affected like the country people.

BM: Is that right?

JH: That made a big difference. But you got along with what you had. And if you didn't have anything in those days you saved whatever little bit you could. If you came to a bad year why then you had something to go on. And nowadays people don't do that. And then they run to Uncle Sam. Why, we didn't do that. We didn't have any— We just lived with what we had. And nowadays they come to Uncle Sam for help. It's the difference, difference in the economy and the people.

BM: Did most of the people around you—were they in the same situation you were? Did nobody have—?

JH: Not as bad, though, because we had such a small farm. But a couple of places, always, the man worked off the farm. And then they farmed land, other

places, you know. Because a lot of older people couldn't farm, and they had farm land. Well, that's what Dad used to do at first when he was married. They had to farm land and some of the other people had so much money they didn't want to farm. And so that helped out some the people that were hard up that way.

BM: Why would—you said that the people in town weren't as affected as the people on the farm—

JH: No.

BM: Why was that?

JH: Well, see, they had—there were a lot of them were store keepers. And, see, they had the Spaulding buggy factory, and the glove factory, and the washing machine factory, and a lot of the men— Now of course there were only, I think, 3800 people living in Grinnell just about the time I started to high school. And then now there's about eight thousand, eight hundred. Eighty eight hundred, it makes a big difference. And a lot of the people, of course— Well, see, there's doctors and lawyers, and people that worked in the, in the glove factory and the washing machine factory and the buggy factory, you know. And then with the end of, of automobiles, why those factories closed up. And then, of course nowdays they have a whole new bunch of factories down in the industrial park, you know.

BM: Did people help people? Did neighbors help neighbors?

JH: Yes, it used to be one lady, other ladies go down when there was a baby in the house, she'd go down and work in the kitchen, you know, and help with the—do the washing and things like that. She's a little bit of a thing and she went around to all the neighbors that way. I know the last time she helped Mom she wouldn't take any money. And Dad said, "That's not right for you to come and help somebody and not take any money. She says, "I tell you what you can give me. Give me a setting of goose eggs." And that's all she wanted. And she had it hatched and she said that, you know, every one of those eggs hatched and she was just delighted with it. But that was one of our main eating, in place of meat was eggs. When we went to school, so many times we just had, on Monday we'd have meat left over from Sunday. Mom would always save meat for Monday and then the rest of the days we'd usually have a egg, a duck egg or a goose egg. Well, the geese never laid usually except about the mating season.

Side Two

JH: The girls would say, "Why you've got a bigger egg than I have." And I said, "Do you want to exchange the egg?" And she said, "Oh, sure, I like big eggs." Well I was just tickled to death. I can remember sitting there on the steps of the old country school house one day and eating. That was in the—well, we still had coats on, I guess. And we heard an awful noise and we said, "I wonder what that noise is?" And I said, "I'll bet that's Dr. Summers." He was the first one to buy a car in the city of Grinnell. He had a red car and that made the awfullest noise you ever heard. It sounded like a thrashing machine coming down the road. Well, one thing, too, was Billy Robinson's airplane. That's one thing. He had worked and worked on that and when we used to go and Dad would take our surrey and go out for a ride on Sunday afternoon. Dad used to always like to go past there to see what was going on. And I know after he got his airplane, he thought it would go and everybody said, "Now Billy Robinson is about ready to make his first flight. So everybody watch out for it." My sister and I was upstairs in bed. I don't exactly know what the date was. I can't remember now, but I know that we'd built on the south of the house. There wasn't room enough for all of us. We were in bed one night we heard the awful noise. We said, "What in the world was that?" I said, "I'll bet that's Billy Robinson's airplane." Sure enough he went from Eleventh Avenue up there right over our house off southwest and landed on the [?] pasture. And the cattle was scared to death. Some of them jumped the fence and got in the neighbors pasture and some of them run in the fence and got hurt. That was his first flight.

BM: Did you see it or just hear it?

JH: No, it was in the night. It was about one thirty in the night, is when it was. And everybody said, "Please don't come at night anymore. You scare all animals to death." It made a terrible racket. Well I guess all the airplanes did and nowadays you can't hardly hear them—just a little humming. I know he had a— he was so busy he didn't even like to talk to people, you know, when they'd want to talk to him. Well, they asked a lot of questions and he didn't want to answer them. He was too busy, I guess.

BM: Too busy doing what? Working on—-

JH: Working on— I believe he made the engine hisself. I'm quite sure he did. The history of Grinnell of him would tell whether he did or not.

BM: Why did he fly at night?

JH: Well, that's what everybody wondered. I think he didn't want anybody to see him. He thought if he went down, nobody would see him. And when he'd made his last trip down southeast of town we watched him. They said he was going to have his trip. We watched him. He threw out everything he could to the car—the plane. We saw a pillow fall down. We thought that was somebody, but anyway it crashed and he was killed. I wondered afterwards what size pillow that was. We could see it way up here in Grinnell and he was way down by Ewart when it came down. It must have been an awful big pillow. But anyway after that everybody was kind of leery about airplanes. And even now some movie stars won't ride in a plane. They're afraid. They said Betty White was one of them. I don't know whether she still does or not.

BM: I think some of them don't.

JH: Of course, I know a lot of them, I says, "I don't think they're so apt to have a plane sabotaged in the United States as would if you was going the United States overseas." I think that's when most of the sabotage occurs.

BM: Yes, I think that's true.

JH: I don't know—well, they say the pilots drink and they think that's what causes most of them. If I was a pilot— Now after they drink they don't realize if they drive that their own life is in danger. They don't realize it, I guess, because it always affects them so.

BM: Do you think people around here really went hungry during the Depression?

JH: No, I don't think so. No, because people in town, they had big gardens, too. There wasn't so many houses. And I don't know what they did about the college, about bringing in— I think when they—I know my aunt used to sell dressed chickens to the college. And they had to be cooked that same day and the next day she'd take up some chickens and fresh dressed chickens and they would send her maybe down one or two cooked chickens and two of the raw ones they didn't cook the day before. She used to bring them over to us— the raw ones over to us. She'd keep the cooked ones. And even then, later on they'd have cooked hams and they said that the people down in the southeast part of town would go down to the dumping ground and get all kinds of food, you know, that the college would throw out. Whole hams was cooked.

BM: How did people in town and in the country feel about the college, do you think?

JH: Well, they weren't exactly too pleased about it. They hated to think of the food being wasted. But I don't think it got so— I don't think it was. They just made a habit of coming down there. It was a shame to throw things away that way. But to throw away a whole ham. But let's see, in those days I don't suppose they had refrigeration back in those days.

BM: So maybe they had to?

JH: Because I know you'd go in a meat market and it didn't smell so good in there. But of course years ago they always had sawdust in a meat market. And I'd hate that. You'd go in there with Mom or Dad and I had a little pair of shoes with little straps across them and you got your shoes all full of sawdust. Mom would say, "Take off your shoes and dump out the sawdust."

BM: Did your sisters and brothers stay on the farm, too?

JH: Well my sister wasn't very well and my brother married and he worked at—oh, so many places. He worked at the nursery out here and then he worked at the bakery and out of town. And then he worked as a custodian for South School for a long time. And then he was up at Bailey Park School when they built up there and that was closer to his home because he could walk up there, you know. He had his choice of Fairview or Bailey Park. I said, "I'd take Bailey Park because you can walk up there." And South school— See, way down in the 100 block of Fourth Avenue you'd have to go clear there and then clear down to Bailey Park. That was a long ways to go. He used to usually ride his bicycle and he'd walk a lot of the time when the weather was bad. That was a long walk in the wintertime, wading through snow and everything. He retired when he was sixty-five. He's eighty-five now. He retired when he was sixty-six, I think he finished out the school year and that'd make him sixty-six when he retired. But he's always got up early and he even gets up early now. So many people, you know, like that work. A lot of Grinnell people worked at Maytag. That's another thing, too. A lot of them worked out there after they had cars.

BM: Did you always enjoy the farm?

JH: Yes I did. The only thing I didn't like about it was when it rained. We didn't have plastic in those days. I used to take a piece of bread paper—you know, it had paraffin on it—put that on my head for maybe one day. And the next day I'd try to wear my little cap so my head would keep dry. You couldn't have felt hats or anything like that. I could take a cooking utensil with a handle on it, just stoop over— you know how that would be. I wanted something that would stay on my head. It was nice when plastic was invented, but it worries me what's going to

happen to the country in the years to come. They've got so much garbage. I've always tried to save everything and take it uptown and give it to somebody that could use it.

BM: I hope we are moving back in that direction, understanding that we've got to save it.

JH: I think we are.

BM: Were winters hard on the farm?

JH: Yes they were, in a way, because you had so much snow to shovel. And you didn't plan on going to town maybe once in two weeks. We used to churn butter and so in the winter time we didn't have very much cream. We didn't have good grade cows, you know, like they have nowadays. And we'd sell butter. So Dad would walk lots of times—we didn't have very much—he'd walk to town and carry it to deliver. Two miles. Well everybody used to have— Then after everybody had cars and everybody started to have chickens, they had produce places, Swifts. And they had two others and got so it didn't pay. There wasn't enough farmers and so many of them were old and they quit having chickens. So we quit having chickens. The last time I had chickens I lost fifty dollars on the chickens in one year. If you couldn't have poultry places to buy eggs, you just couldn't have eggs though. That's the reason there's so many empty buildings. You couldn't have cows because you didn't have enough cream. They wouldn't pick it up. And you couldn't have chickens because they wouldn't pick up the eggs. Well, that's the way the country went.

BM: Did you enjoy the animals more or growing gardens and vegetables?

JH: I liked—didn't mind the cows. Well, I didn't like them as well as I did the calves. I liked the calves and the chickens the best. I can remember selling calves one time; they got eighteen cents a pound for calves. The neighbor man wouldn't believe it.

BM: Because that was a lot? Was that a lot?

JH: Oh, land, yes. It was usually about ten or twelve. I just happened to hit it. It was in the spring and I happened to hit a slow time on the market and the price was up. Well, that's like selling beans and corn now. I used to always, when I had to take care of things, just the minute the corn and beans was harvested, I'd sell them. And of course after that the price went down. If you stored them you'd have to pay all that storage and in the spring you wouldn't make a cent. In fact you'd lose a lot of money on them if you stored them. But people always wanted to store them. But I didn't, and I think I was way ahead by selling them, you know. Because you had to

dry them. I know the last time I sold corn, for 98 cents a bushel and the man that was the head of the produce company, the grain company, he figured it up. He said you'll save about twenty cents a bushel on that by selling it green. He said it'll cost you thirty-five cents a bushel more than that to dry it, it was so green. We just had rain, rain, rain all the time. It didn't give the corn time to dry. And you could buy it— the corn was all soft.

BM: You, then for awhile you made all the decisions?

JH: I had to, yeah. Dad wasn't able to. I always helped him anyway because I guess he thought I knew a little something anyway. Well, Mom helped too. Of course she lived on a farm—was born on a farm—all her life.

BM: Were you good with numbers? Adding and figuring things out?

JH: Well, yeah, I was pretty good with something like that. You learned in school to do something like that. You had to be good in school. The teacher would tell you about it in no uncertain terms. But now I'm not so good at adding. I always, if I add a column of figures, I always add them up twice to see if they are right.

BM: What about school? What was school like? You told me you had to do the seventh grade twice.

JH: Yeah, it was the seventh grade.

BM: How many students were in your school?

JH: Well there was generally five or six in a class. And that time the people had moved away, they moved to town, they moved away from our district there. Just me to go in eighth grade. She said nothing doing, I'm not going to teach you, I've got too many classes. See they had all the grades in the country school. One through eighth. I tell you with all different subjects that was pretty busy.

BM: How many teachers?

JH: Sometimes we'd have a teacher stay for two or three years, but so many times they'd change every year. They didn't like it. Sometimes they couldn't get bed and board out in the school [house?] because people had their own families. If they stayed in town, they had the trouble of getting back and forth. A lot of them would walk.

BM: Where was the school house?

JH: It was on First Avenue. Do you know where the hog buying station is on First Avenue?

BM: Yes.

JH: Well, it was northeast of that. It was a little square house, and they took the top of it off and made a regular house out of it. There's a lot of buildings now and you'd never know it was a school yard in the years to come.

BM: There was just one teacher to teach all those grades?

JH: One teacher, that's all there was, uh huh. I tell you, that's the reason they didn't stay too long. They couldn't take the pressure.

BM: Did you like your teachers usually?

JH: Well, most of them, yes. The first time we had a man teacher, I was kind of scared. And they said, "Oh, don't pay any attention. Man teacher won't be any worse than the others. You've been around strange people that way." Well, we were kind of late that day for some reason or the other. All the kids were interested in the man teacher and they all went to school early. So when we got there, I think it was eight thirty or a quarter to nine, all the seats were taken and my sister sat in the seat she had and there was no seat for me. I went in the back of the room, and those seats have a seat and a desk. The seat's in the front and the desk in the back. Well, they had to get an extra seat, just a plain seat. They did have a couple of them to put with the desk. So they put a seat for [me] and I sat down in the seat and the first class the teacher said, "Turn, rise." And when we went to rise, I went down on the floor with the seat on top of me. When the teacher came back he said, "Are you hurt?" I said, "No, I'm all right." He said, "We're going to fasten that seat to the floor before you sit in there tomorrow." He says, "Now you be careful when you get up and you slide clear back to the back and put your hand on the desk so you won't fall." The kids used to tease me that was the time I fell for the teacher, a man teacher.

BM: Was he strict?

JH: Yeah, he wasn't too bad though. But he was a nice teacher and he was good at his work. His sister had taught the school before that. She had to go take some more classes to teach in town, I think. She had to take some more classes at the college. She got fed up on teaching so many kids that way, you know. But she was a red-haired teacher. She was the first red-haired teacher we had, a good teacher.

BM: Did she have a temper to go with that red hair?

JH: If you tell her a lie, yes. Once in awhile kids would fib and she'd find it out and she'd bawl them out about it. She never laid a hand on them. That never happened. You know, they say they used to years ago. I don't see anybody hitting kids in school that way. That wouldn't do any good.

BM: So none of your teachers ever beat anybody, whipped anybody?

JH: No, they never would. They'd scold you. The worst thing was if you did something you shouldn't do they make you set on—you know each of those desks had a front seat. Here's the desk and here's the front seat. If you did something bad she'd make you sit on the front seat there all by yourself. That was awful. I had to do that twice. Twice was enough for me. I whispered. You wasn't supposed to whisper. I whispered, that's all I did.

BM: Those two times, that's what you got.

JH: I got caught. But you know it makes you feel terrible. You know everybody knows you whispered. That's something you shouldn't do in school. And everybody's sitting there and looking at you and kind of snickering because you're up there.

BM: Were there any kids who kind of challenged the teacher and tried to see what they could get away with or was everybody—

JH: Yes, there was a couple of boys who used to be that— kind of a bully and teachers used to, she soon settled that, though. She settled that out of school hours. I wasn't there when that happened. I don't know whether she wrote a letter to the mother, She probably wrote to the mother, I expect. Maybe she went home with the boy, I don't know. They did sometimes, you know. And then if the kids—that happened to the kids—why the rest of them would laugh at them, so they wouldn't do it again. You know how kids are.

BM: Right.

JH: They are the same now as they were then.

BM: The other kids kind of controlled the kids who were misbehaving?

JH: Yeah, a big help all right.

BM: Did you have homework? Did you carry books home with you?

JH: Arithmetic was the worst. I used to take every paper on the place. I'd take all the paper sacks we got groceries in. You couldn't find a piece of paper on the place. When I was in sixth grade, I had so much homework it took me over an hour to do all the arithmetic problems.

BM: Every night? Goodness.

JH: Friday night, I didn't do it on Friday night. I would do it through Saturday and Sunday, you know. But I wouldn't do it on Friday night. I was just like I was a kid let out of school in the spring because I didn't have to do arithmetic problems. They did them on purpose to keep you busy, I guess. Well that was all right. You learned how to add anyway. When I was in about fourth grade or something like that, the teachers on Friday afternoon would have something

different. The boys would do manual training and the girls would sew, embroider pillowcases or things like that. Or else we'd spell down, spell down one Friday afternoon then manual training and sewing for the girls the next week. Then the next week we'd have a cipher down, you know. There was one boy who lived right by the side of the schoolhouse. If we had five rows to add up, before I got the second row he'd have all five rows added up. You picked a person for your partner on that and he said—I'd always pick division. He couldn't do division. I'd pick division. He said, "You do that on purpose so I'll lose out and you'll win." I said, "Yes, I do." And I said, "You pick addition so you'll win and I'll lose out."

BM: Were you two the best ones?

JH: Well there was three or four good ones, but at the last time I went I was the only one of the original class left. The others had all finished school. Sometimes the seventh and eighth grade were together, not very often but maybe the last semester of school. There was three terms, you know.

BM: Do you remember very much about— Did the war make a big difference in your life, World War II?

JH: That is when I started to high school. And it took all the college boys. There weren't any colleges to compete in sports. There wasn't enough. In high school a lot of the boys who lived in the country never got a chance to go to school and they finished up their education when they were older and they got caught in the draft before they finished their education. So a lot of them didn't. I remember when they had Armistice Day we went to school and it was raining. They said we're going to have a parade and we're going to have everyone of you kids to be in the parade. And they had made little crowns out of white paper and written with the name Pennsylvania and Iowa and everything like that. And we were supposed to wear sheets and they didn't want us to wear coats under those sheets and it was cold. So we said, "We're going to wear sheets—we're going to wear coats or we wasn't going to have pneumonia." So they said, "All right, you wear coats." So we all had a parade. I wished afterward we'd had a picture of it. I don't think anybody ever did take a picture of it, because it was pouring down rain all the time. And your head got all wet.

BM: The crowns got wet? That must have been the First World War, wasn't it?

JH: World War I, yes.

BM: What was the difference to you between the First World War and the Second World War?

JH: Well, World War II didn't seem like a war at all. Except that some of the college—well they still had sports in college. But some of the kids weren't eligible. They were 4F. It took a lot of the work force from Grinnell. So we imported—the seed corn company and some of the other companies imported Japanese. Especially to detassel corn. That was another one, Mexican boys. And we had— on Wednesday night there was a concert in the park and those boys would finish work and run home and clean up and have an all nice clean face and be all dressed nice, you know, with ordinary clothes on. And half the people in the park were the Mexican boys. They come up to listen to the concert. Everybody in those days from World War I clear up to World War II went to the park on Wednesday night to hear the band play. No band or anything like that but the municipal band, the Grinnell municipal band. It lasted an hour, and once in awhile if they got enough calls and felt like it, they would play longer. But after you'd played about an hour that's about enough.

BM: Were they good? Did you enjoy that?

JH: You never saw through the week because you were busy, you know. You just didn't have time to go and visit. And Sunday was the letdown day. You just didn't do anything. You went to church and you went back home and rested.

BM: What about the Mexicans and the Japanese, did they— Was there any conflict between the regular Grinnell people and them?

JH: Well, the Grinnell people didn't seem to pay much attention to the Mexican boys. The were nice and polite, as nice as they could be. But that's the only ones I was in contact with, the ones in the park. Course we had cars then. But in those days you did so much work for yourself. You didn't use your car too much. You know, just for necessities. Well, on Sunday everybody went visiting and went to church.

BM: Did any of your relatives go to World War II?

JH: No. They were all too old or too young. My brother was in 4F. He took his physical out in Des Moines. But the way he was classed he didn't go to war. He worked for McNally's Meat Market. And they just had a fit because he was going to quit. They said they couldn't have nobody to help him. Their dad had to quit because he was getting too old to work. So he was 4F. No, he said he took his physical. I think he had flat feet.

BM: You said World War II didn't seem like a war.

JH: No, it really didn't.

BM: Then you weren't frightened or worried, or anything?

JH: Except that some of the boys, some of the neighborhood boys, and— Well, usually the storekeepers worked their own stores. They didn't hire people in those days, you know. But then they got so after World War II, World War I, they did hire people. So some of the boys, young men in the store, did go to war. And store keepers had to take over or women took their place, women did. And they had in these factories when they sold these parachutes, silk stuff, you know. I had a cousin that way and oh, that was a hard job. The silk was sheer and everything had to be perfect, you know.

BM: Do you think the women enjoyed going to work in the stores and factories or did they—

JH: Well, they had relatives. They seemed to feel they should. Some of them, of course, had husbands and brothers and sweethearts. You know, working or in the war and they feel that they had to go to war. But that was a terrible work sewing those parachutes. That was an awful job. It was so long, you didn't hardly know what to do with the material when you was working on it. And when you got down to sew the whole thing together how in the world they ever got through with that's more than I know. They were so big, you know.

BM: You could get covered up—

JH: I know.

BM: So Sundays were days of rest. Were they really, strictly?

JH: Yes, they were really. People never worked on Sunday unless they had just a little bit of corn left and they said a snowstorm was coming tonight. I don't know how the authorities got the weather report, but they'd pass the word of mouth. You know, and everybody in town had relatives in the country. They'd call up and say, "It's going to snow. You better get out and finish your corn once you got a little bit left," or something like that. But usually men didn't have so many acres of corn. They had just what they could take care of theirselves. And most of them didn't have tractors that way. A few of them did, but if they did then they went and helped the neighbors, that way. They just had to—snows came early, in those days. You had to have everything out of your field and the frost came early, too. I can remember one time we had squashes and we had unusually wet weather. And we had squash. So we gave squash to everybody and I guess some of our folks in town had a radio. They had those crystal sets, you know, you made. They called up and said you better get all your stuff in. It's going to freeze. So I remember Dad and I went out and we had a whole, what you call, a truck load. You know what a truck, an old truck wagon is?

BM: Yeah, I do.

JH: Well that was full of squash, heaped up. You know we got a dollar and half for that.

BM: The whole truck load?

JH: That's all we got. People didn't like it. They liked the acorn squash. They didn't like—don't like—I hate the acorn squash. I don't think it tastes good, but I like the other. You can take and make a pie out of these butternut squash and you can't tell it from a pumpkin pie. It's just like pumpkin. But of course it's lighter color, of course. You can make, with these modern jelly and juice things, you know, to make jelly and butter and stuff with you can even make butter with it like that. Besides making jelly. We never did, but you could. A lot of people did to use it up. Well you could freeze it, you know after you got freezers you could make it and freeze it. That way you wouldn't need to put—if it was in something tight—you wouldn't have to put paraffin on it, you know like you used to do.

BM: Did you have a big family? Were there a lot of Hartzells in this area?

JH: My Dad had four brothers and a sister. They all farmed, all together. Grandfather set out there and he made a rule the boys were to stay home and help him until they paid for forty acres for each one of them. And then when they married he gave each one of them forty acres. And Dad's sister, when she married, of course she didn't help farm, but he gave her twenty acres.

Side Three

JH: See each one had their own relatives and their folks were getting old and they wanted them to go see them, you know.

BM: Umhum.

JH: Brothers back and forth. We had a neighborhood. We all got together and when about so many times during the year we'd all get together and have pot luck, you know, a whole bunch of neighbors that way. And then they passed away one by one by one. At the time my parents passed away not one single soul living in the neighborhood lived there that they did. Ralph Longley, the one that wrote *Little House – Cabin on the Second Ridge*, that was part of the house that I grew up in.

BM: Really?

JH: When the house was remodeled years ago, the studs were made out of split logs with the bark still on. So I know that must have been the original cabin on the second ridge. Just the two rooms—the rest of it was all built on. Dad, of course,

built on upstairs. When he married, Grandpa and Grandma had to—they couldn't be by themselves, so Mom and Dad had to live with them. They put one big room on, northeast corner of the house. And what used to be the grandparents dining room, they used that for a bedroom. A little narrow room. It was all right for a young couple for a bedroom. So many of the people, they all had elderly parents and the parents wanted them to come see them, you know, for Sunday dinner and like that. On Saturday there was so many things you had to do you couldn't do through the week. And after the weather got cold, I tell you it kept us hopping to take care of all the cattle and everything like that when the weather was bad. And years ago everything was fed three times a day. They didn't eat so much. They got feed three times a day. That kept you busy.

BM: Sure it did.

JH: And when the men were working in the field somewhere, then the wives had to go out. Well the animals didn't mind, I think sometimes they liked to have somebody different. I can remember one time when Dad had a couple sows. One was kind of wild. She never would— I would take and put feed and swill in for her to drink and she'd be out in the pasture and I'd call her and she'd wait until I'd leave the hog house. Then she'd come up. But the one had pigs. I went in there one day to feed them at noon and she stood in the doorway of her little pen. She went, "Umph, umph umph." I said, "What's a matter with you piggy, are you sick or something?" She turned around and looked over her shoulder and I looked and here she had her little pigs over there. She wanted me to look at them. After I went and looked at them, she went and laid down.

BM: That's communication.

JH: I guess it was. I couldn't hardly believe my ears.

BM: Did you, did you and your family go to church every Sunday?

JH: No, when Dad went to church all the time when he was a boy and we had a new minister. I don't think he was a minister. They used talk about these people, minister's sons turned bad and they let on like they was preachers. They knew all about the church and they called them "fly-by-night" preachers. They'd go and get a job preaching somewhere and then they'd steal from the congregation. Well, we had a new preacher and after a Sunday this one man— I don't know, maybe he didn't take care of his cattle every day, I don't know. Anyway he went down and he found some of his cows missing. So he went up to— They used to have a stockyard on West Street, south of the railroad track. There was a great big one there. And he went down there and here was his cows or steers, whatever it was, that was stolen.

And he went to the guy and he said— the one that was the head of the stockyard, he lived down on West Street—and he said, "How'd my cattle get up— You've got my cattle. Did somebody bring these cattle up?" He said, "Yes, these are my cattle, I was fattening them to sell pretty soon." He says, "I've got to pay taxes and got some bills to pay that I accumulated over the winter." And they found out the preacher—he wasn't a preacher—he'd went and stole those, went down to Westfield and hired some man. He told this man he was buying the cattle, you know. Brought them up to the stockyards and found out it was the preacher that stole them. Now he wasn't a regular preacher, he's one these guys pretend—what they call a fly-by-night preacher. But he came to Grandpa and he said, "Mr. Hartzell," he said, "you owe us a year for using your pew." And he said the price is raised. And that was after Grandma died. And Grandpa says, "I don't owe you. I paid every month." He says, "No you didn't. It's on the books. You've got to pay for a whole year and the price is raised." He says, "Either that or you can't come to church." Well Grandpa says, "I won't go to church, then." He said, "My wife's passed away and he said I don't care whether I go to church or not. I don't have any money to pay, I can't pay you." So Dad and all the boys quit going to church.

BM: My goodness.

JH: They didn't realize— I don't think any of them knew it— I don't think Dad did at the time. And I didn't think about it until afterwards, and I thought that's just what that was. That guy told them and they quit going to church, they didn't go to church.

BM: As a result of what that guy said who wasn't a preacher?

JH: That was a Methodist church, and Grandma and Grandpa were Methodists. But some of the others, the in-laws, were Baptists. So that didn't affect their church. They still went. When you went to one church, they didn't like it if you changed churches. And I couldn't see why that would be. I'd think they could get some new people for the church. But anyway the money was so scarce, and Dad was so busy. He had an awful time trying to find time, but Grandpa insisted, he used to have an old horse and he'd drive to church by himself. He wouldn't miss. But at that time, I don't know, what got wrong. A lot of people would just quit going to church for some reason or other.

BM: Really.

JH: My sister and I used to walk to Sunday school, the two miles. In the winter we couldn't go. It was too cold. And in the summer it was so hot. By the time we got up to church your clothes would be all sweaty. You'd feel like you need to go

back home and put on clean clothes instead of go to church. We went until I was, oh—I was way up then—oh I don't know how old I was. Well, anyway, my class was between the older girls class and the younger girls class. It was mid between. And this, the lady that teach the class, says there's not going to be enough, I'm going to drop a class. You girls can go in the older class or the younger class. And the young class says, "We don't want them in our class. We'll just quit. We don't want any old girls in our class." And the teacher in the older class, it was next to the unmarried class, I guess it was, was an older girl. She said, "I just cannot have so many in my class. I'm sorry." So everybody quit going to Sunday school. We didn't go to Sunday school. We didn't go to Sunday school for years and years and years. So I just about practically dropped out. I missed it though. It was fun. I didn't mind walking to Sunday school. You got to see so many people you didn't see through the week. And it was fun to go to church meetings and picnics and things like that. Especially when you knew the pastor and he seemed like such a good friend to you, you know.

BM: So the church was a social kind of—

JH: Yes it was. It was really about the only big social place in the city of Grinnell in those times, in the churches.

BM: What are some of the big changes you've been aware of in the town of Grinnell?

JH: Well, one is the—when the refrigeration came in, the butcher shops all modern, all sort of modern. They used to have pieces of meat hanging up in the butcher shop, from the top of the shop, on hooks, you know. Then everything went under refrigeration, and they were just as clean, just like they are nowadays. Then with more people in town more stores started up and young people started working in stores more. They never used to work in stores. It was all the owners. You couldn't find— There was only one young man I know that worked in a store and that was McNally's. Because they used to be—they delivered. Every grocery store had a delivery man. Or there was one man used to deliver for all the stores. And you order by telephone and if you had no way to get to the store to get—you had no way to get your groceries. He had a regular old grain wagon with a high seat way up high that way. He'd go round to all the stores and he'd put the mail was over here and this grocery store over here and this one over there and delivered it. And they put them in the—sack the food up in places so that as he went down the street he could stop, you know, each place and he wouldn't have to hunt out the food that he was supposed to deliver. And then they got so that people would leave their back

door open and the delivery boy, man, would come and they'd happen to be in church or somewhere, I mean in a church, like a meeting that they have through the week with sewing or quilting or something like that, the delivery man would go down the alley and he'd take the stuff and open the back door and go in and even put it in the refrigerator. Put the meat in the refrigerator.

BM: Oh, really. Did he ever get orders mixed up, do you think?

JH: No, I never heard of it. A lot of people used to like to go on Saturday when they could get their own food in the refrigerator. Keep enough food on hand so they wouldn't have to go until the next Saturday. That cut down on the delivery quite a bit. But the worst thing was milk. They used to deliver milk. I don't know when they quit. We always had our own milk, but I've seen people go and get groceries and instead of buying milk to take it home with them when they took their groceries they expected the milkman to deliver the milk. Well, I guess maybe it was—you know lots of times when you go home you go—somebody stops and talks to you or something goes wrong with your car or your buggy or usually everybody had cars in those days. You couldn't go right home.

BM: Umhum.

JH:And if you didn't, what you had might spoil.

BM: Right.

JH: Then you'd be in for a sick spell.

BM: Do you think health care was pretty good? Was it hard to get doctors to come ?

JH: No, the doctors the were very good about helping. When they had—Years ago, at the time I was a freshman in school everybody had the flu. They said it was carried overseas from the soldier boys that came back, you know, that were sick. They were sent home. They couldn't work. Well, I guess they just couldn't keep them in the hospital. There wasn't enough room for them. So many of them were sick that they sent them home. And they said that's where the flu started. Because when I was in high school we had a flu vacation, two weeks, but we also had a coal vacation. They couldn't get enough coal to heat the school house—none of the school houses. And with the flu I walked clear two miles to go to school and I found out there wasn't a [?] or anything and I asked the janitor, "What's the matter. Aren't they having school? Nobody told me." And he said, "No, a flu vacation." And they said they thought they contacted everybody. But most of the people were on this country line where you crank up a phone, you know. And ours—we had a city phone. So I was about the only one, I know the girl lived right across on Fourth

Avenue, right straight south of me, on First Avenue, I meant—she lived right straight south of me—she knew. And she said, "I thought they told you." And I said, "No they didn't," I said. I walked two miles up and two miles back and it was cold as britches. I think it was way down below zero that day. Boy, I was kind of peeved.

BM: I guess you were.

JH: I said, "Next time please call me and tell me." I said, "It's too cold to walk." I said, "I don't mind the walk if it had been warmer weather, but not then." No, they had quite a time with flu. I was out two weeks and I went back. I couldn't—I had to walk. It was the only way I could go. From home for about a half a mile there was no way I could get through the snowdrift. They'd clean out the hill one day. People, just as soon as the hill was cleaned out, they'd get out. They couldn't go in a car in the wintertime. You couldn't get through. They'd hitch up the horses and go uptown and take up their cream and eggs and buy groceries and come back home. At night it was snow full all over again. Then they just give up. Neighbors were good. We lived on the west [Highway] 6 there and neighbors from Eleventh Avenue north would come over and help us dig out the snow. The snow would be so tall I could stand there between the banks of snow they'd cleaned out and I couldn't even see anywhere.

BM: Goodness.

JH: Couldn't see a thing. The snow was so tall.

BM: Do you think the weather's gotten warmer through the years?

JH: Oh, yes. Yes it used to be so cold. I know it was way down below zero for weeks and weeks and weeks. I know one time it was way down to thirty-six below zero on our little thermometer out south of the house. My sister didn't like to miss a day of school. She went to school and the furnace didn't work. She got some of that gas from the furnace, you know. She had an awful time with her lungs. She'd just have one cold after another. Mom wouldn't let me go. I had a notion to sneak out and go. But I said, "No, I don't think I want to go anyway. It's too cold anyway, so I'll stay home." The only way—we'd have so much snow, we'd walk to school over all the fences.

BM: And wouldn't even see them?

JH: Well once in awhile you'd see posts sticking up. But the way the snow would swirl around the fence posts, you know, so most of them you could see. But some of places you could hardly tell where the fence was. Dad said, "I'll shovel out." We said, "We don't want you to shovel out. We'd rather walk on top of snow than in a tunnel." When you walk in a snow tunnel, it was cold. I was so short the tunnel

was way up above my head. It was just like you would walk and walk and walk and walk and you couldn't see anything but snow.

BM: What about the animals, did they just walk right over the fences?

JH: Yes, they would, uh huh. I know I had to take care of calves that we had, some calves that we had in a lot way out west of the garden. I had calves out there and I went out there one time and the calves were snowed in. And everybody said that that won't hurt. He said, "They'll eat snow if they get thirsty. But go out and put some hay and straw, fresh straw. Put lots." I put in several bales of fresh straw and then some hay. And then the next day I went out after I got cleaned out around the chicken house and the barn where the smaller calves were. And I went out there and cleaned that out. I looked and I see they were all right there, just laying there munching hay. And I took some pails and took some milk out to them and they drank the milk. The didn't try to get out or anything. So I just saw I could get into them. And when I got around I shoveled it all out. They came out and they walked on that snowbank. Well, it was like they walked out here, out of the shed right out there and that snowbank was there. They never offered to jump down off of it. They just went right out the path I shoveled and never offered to jump off of it.

BM: They must have known they were where they would be taken care of.

JH: I thought they'd jump out and I didn't think about it at first and after I shoveled it out. I thought they'll jump and they'll be all over the neighborhood. But if you saw something got out that way a good share of the time they'd get scared and they'd run and run and that's the last you'd ever see of them.

BM: Did you know the McNallys?

JH: That's where my brother used to work for so many years.

BM: Right.

JH: Delivered groceries. He had a one horse and a little cart thing just a step up off the ground. It was about that high. And he'd deliver groceries for years. He had an old horse and he'd deliver groceries and he'd stop at the second house if he's going to deliver the house back and the old horse would look around to see if he was ready to go. He'd say, "Giddap" and she'd go and he'd holler, "Whoa" and she'd stop. She was awful good. Well he was good to her. You know horses like to be around people, some horses do. She must have been a pet of the McNally kids. One time he had to drive the team of horses and they kept running off all the time. And one time they went down across the railroad track and they went down, one on each side of the telephone post when they stopped. That's what stopped them. And Ray said, "I'm going to quit if you don't get a truck." He said, "There's no sense of

taking care of those horses and you never know when they are going to run off." So they finally got a truck so he could deliver in a truck. Just look at the ground you could cover with a truck that you couldn't with horses that way. The horse and buggy days maybe were all right in a certain way, but I know everybody always said I wouldn't go back to them on a bet.

BM: It's easy for me to imagine that team of horses stopped by that telephone pole that they ran into. So you yourself lived on the farm until—?

JH: Until I moved away in 1980. I moved up here in this apartment.

BM: Uh huh. Were you by yourself in 1980?

JH: My sister passed away in seventy eight. And then it took me that long. I had so many things to see about. And of course the place had to be sold. It was sold. I rented for awhile. So I could find a decent place. But this is the only place I could find that I liked. So many of them were just little dark places, you know, and there was no light. This one the light was just like living out home.

BM: I bet it was hard to leave the farm. Was it or—?

JH: No it wasn't really because I was by myself. And I knew I'd have to move. Then I started to sort things and then I had boxes and stuff all piled around. And I said it seemed like home to me. Then I come up here and this was all cleaned up, you know, and looked nice. And I was really— I was sort of numb. It seemed like I wasn't a person—I was numb. Didn't seem like I didn't have any feeling. Then when I moved. I'd never moved, I didn't know what to do. I thought, Well— I knew I'd have to sell a lot of stuff so the things I wanted to keep they put in one end of a big truck and things I was going to take down to the sale barn they put in the other end. A couple days before when I came up here to clean up everything I had brought up, well, the day before I was supposed to, I bought groceries and brought up here. And the day I moved they bring my freezer and then all I had to do was go down to Casey's store and buy some milk and bread and stuff like that. It's real handy. I've always regretted though that my sister and my parents weren't alive. Couldn't live in this apartment, live in town and see how nice it was. How nice town living was.

BM: So you enjoy it?

JH: Yes I did. And I know they would too. Even if their whole life was centered on the farm they still would have liked it. I know they would.

BM: What do like best about living in town?

JH: Well, one thing you don't have to do so much work. And you can have friends close by and a grocery store is close. Well everything like that you need to be in contact with is close by. And you don't have to worry about things. When you

live in an apartment you don't have to worry about what happens to everything like that outside.

BM: When something happens in this apartment can you just call up somebody and say—

JH: Call up the owner, uh huh. Yeah he's pretty good about coming down. One time, though, he forgot. When I wanted him to fix the stove and when he came down I said, "You didn't fix my stove." And he said, "I'm sorry. I forgot, I plumb forgot." He said, "Now next time something needs to be done and I don't do it you call me up right away and remind me."

BM: Sounds like a nice man. If you could would you go back and live a time over again?

JH: No, I don't think I would. I don't think I would. Everything is changed so. The nicest thing that you have when you're in, well in town after you have electricity. It was '48 when they had electricity. 1948. But you had to pay a lot to go on the line, to run the line through. When you had a refrigerator, you could live in the country and be all right. Because you could have things and they wouldn't spoil or anything. And then come up here and I have all the conveniences and you didn't have to worry about shoveling snow or getting out on bad days to get groceries. And worrying about walking up the road to get the mail. Januarys was usually a snowy time and the people would be about three-quarters of a mile. They would get the mail and take it and then they'd go home and call people next door and they'd come get it and take it and they'd call people next door and they'd come get it until everybody down Sixth Avenue got their mail. It made it nice that way. And most of all if somebody was feeling extra frisky and wanted to help people they would take and deliver the whole mail clear down Sixth Avenue. Usually it was too much, they couldn't do it.

BM: So you enjoyed your years on the farm?

JH: Yes I did.

BM: And you've enjoyed your years in town, too?

JH: Yes I have. But I think in a way you get more enjoyment out of your younger years.

BM: Why? Why is that?

JH: Well, you are more interested in everything that goes on on the farm than you are when you get older. It is a different quality and you look at it in a different way.

BM: Because things are new to you, do you think? Because you are seeing them for the first time and figuring them out?

JH: Well yes, that's something to do with it, I think. But the town has changed so—so many new stores. And people go out of town to shop instead of shopping in Grinnell. So many stores have closed up. And it bothers me. But I don't go on big shopping trips to shop. I shop right in my hometown. And I've done better. They have sales with things marked down. I'll bet you lots of times people go out of town to shop you could buy right here in Grinnell cheaper than they could when they go out of town. But there is a fascination about shopping out of town. That's the main thing, I think. And then the chance to go somewhere. You don't have to drive if you go by bus.

BM: Do you use the bus a lot?

JH: Um hum. Five days a week, Monday through Friday from eight until four. He quits at four so you have to, if you want to use it in the afternoon, you have to use it so he can quit at four o'clock. That's when he quits.

BM: Well I thank you, very much.