

Eleanor Taplin
Morrisville, June 23, 1987

Interviewer
Mary Kasamatsu

MK This is Eleanor Taplin in Morrisville. It is the 23rd of June.

ET Yes it is. Close enough anyway.

MK We are going to talk about all kinds of things for Green Mountain Chronicles.

ET Green Mountain what?

MK Chronicles...that's the title of the series.

ET Oh Chronicles. What is that?

MK A series of programs.

ET Oh radio.

MK Radio right.

ET Do you mean that this is going to be broadcast?

MK Not just as it is, no. No it would be little pieces from this that would be appearing in the program. No.

ET I am sure it will need editing.

MK It will be edited. So don't worry.

ET I don't mind if you wipe it all out.

MK Oh no. Let's start with your background. Can you tell me where and when you were born?

ET I think so. Do you want my name? I was born in Bradford, Vermont, April 11, 1895. That makes me 92.

MK What kind of work did your family do? Were they farmers?

ET My father was a carpenter. He had a farm. It was in my mother's family. They carried that on for a time. I think the two oldest children in the family. There were five of us. The two oldest were born on the farm. Then they leased it or something. A man stayed there on the farm for a number of years for them. They still owned it. They moved into the village of Bradford and he was a carpenter and he built a number of the houses there in Bradford over the period of years that he lived there.

MK Did you have brothers and sisters?

ET I was one of five. I was next to the youngest. But we were quite a ways apart. My folks were married in '74. The oldest child in the family was my brother. He was born in 1876. Then there were four girls that arrived. The oldest sister was born in 1886 and then the next one was born in 1891. I was born in 1895 and the youngest in 1900. I like numbers, always have.

MK Did you teach mathematics?

ET Well I taught grades. So there was mathematics involved. I also coached algebra and geometry for high school students who needed extra help, tutored. I tutored.

MK I was doing a little work with numbers as you were talking and realized you would have been five years old when the new century turned over.

ET Right.

MK Right. Do you remember any celebrations for that? I mean a century comes around once ???

ET Oh no. Of course, no I wouldn't remember any particular celebration. I probably was busy celebrating myself. I do remember one thing. I think it is the earliest memory that I have of my actions. I apparently was given a little rocking chair and that was such a wonderful thing that I took that right out on the sidewalk which led from the porch to the main side walk. When the high school and other children from the Bradford Academy. There was high school and grades came down by going home at noon or night or whenever, I would sit there in that rocking chair right out close to where they were walking and rocking away and telling them all about this was my rocking chair. Somebody gave me this rocking chair. And that rocking chair right now is on its way to Seattle to my great granddaughter. It has got as far as Michigan. My, another granddaughter was here and they had a van and they took it that far. Then the granddaughter that is in Seattle is coming to the east, coming to Vermont in August and they, I think are driving, the husband does not like to fly. At least they are driving part way because the father's car, my son-in-laws car is in Illinois, since my daughter is there, that's why he has gone out there to Seattle. And they are taking his car out, so my chair is going to go with that car which is a station wagon. So it will get to Seattle. There is a little great granddaughter, well two now. One was just born in March. So I guess they will use the chair. I hope. I think of it as a little girls chair. Now my, I have

a great grandson in Michigan, but that was a boy. Somehow or another I didn't connect him with the chair at all. I thought of it I guess as a little girls chair or I didn't think of it at all.

MK Do you remember your father working on a lot of the houses that are still standing in Bradford?

ET He built the place that I was born in and then the second lot from that was the house that he built that we moved into in 1902. I would be seven years old. And we lived there as long as, well as he was able to work. I think when I was married, it was sold because I had been home taking care of my mother. So I guess they thought it was time I got married or something. Well I was 25 years old. I had been home with her. I gave up my teaching and went home and took care of my mother. I had been there four years. So they and my father was getting along in years where he couldn't work especially winters and so on. So they went to live with my older sister in Springfield, Massachusetts and I married. I was married in 1920. I don't know whether I have answered what you asked me or not.

MK You did.

ET If not, ask it over again. Does this all go down?

MK Sure, but I ??? don't worry about anything. One thing I was wondering about, well a number of different things that I am not sure I am doing them chronologically, so I may skip and jump all over the place.

ET I wouldn't know the difference.

MK Okay, well. One of the things I have been interested in is peoples different stories about how their lives changed when their communities got electricity.

ET Oh when they had electric street lights and in the homes. Well I can remember that. We had before the electricity came. It came from Newport to Bradford. That was the apparently the basis of the electric supply for that area, I guess. Of course we would be quite a bit south of Newport. Well it was the Newport Electrical Company anyway. And Prouty, Winston Prouty did you ever hear of him? He was the head of that at one time and probably his folks ahead of him, I don't know. Now I well remember that. We used to have a Rochester burner. A lamp, it had a metal base. Silver in color. What would it be? I don't know.

MK Pewter?

ET I don't know. Then it had the tall chimney. Then it had these little arms, three of them that went out from a little metal fixture form and this white shade. That would be crockery I guess. It would sit down on those little hooks. They came out, three of them to hold the shade. That was a Rochester burner. That used to be our big light in the evening to see by. I remember when the electricity. When this house was built in 1902, it was wired for electric lights and so on. But they had not come into town yet. But I presume some talk of it. I don't think it was very long after the house was built that before we had the electricity. Although I well remember the Rochester burners. I had one. I know where it is. It is up at my camp now. I had it made into an electric lamp.

MK The Rochester burner was a gas or kerosene?

ET No, it would be kerosene. But they had what they called the mantle. That would go set down on that center pot where the wick comes up out of the lamp, but it made a brighter light. It was a particular invention of some kind. Such that it increased the light. I don't know what, a mantle they called it. I don't know whether they was another word that went with it or not, but not that I remember. So that made very good light. You could destroy one of those mantles very easily. They are kind of powdery. You hit it just right and it as I remember it would damage it. You had to be careful.

MK So that sat on sort of in the middle of the table in the room.

ET Yes. Of course all depending if somebody was reading, they could move it. Well it didn't stand as high as one of my lamps. The body part of it would be bigger than that. But shorter in length. And of course the shade well it wouldn't be as big as that one. I guess that is smaller than this one. It wouldn't be as big as that. No quite a bit smaller than that and made of crockery I would call it. The same as dishes and so on. Usually white, yes. That would be the Rochester burner. I have that at my camp. I don't know what it is up there for. But it is the base of the lamp and I had it made into an electric light. Lamp.

MK So the town of Bradford got electricity pretty early then?

ET Yes, it came from Newport, Vermont. We had there in town, there was one, the White River came down. I know you know the geography of Bradford or not, but White River is out 12 miles toward Barre. I mean the village of White River. But the river is named White River which comes from Topsham and Waits River down through Casville and so on, West Bradford, well no not West Bradford, south, I don't know just what into Bradford and goes into the Connecticut. They built a dam there in Bradford now more recently. Well back since I was a child which would be ages ago, they built a second dam. So they generate quite a bit of electricity there. It originally was built and owned and run by Newport. I don't know, there may have been Bradford people interested in the company. I don't know about that. But Winston Prouty was one of the main ones in it. You probably have heard of him back when I was. I don't know whether he is still living or not.

MK ??

ET I would be surprised. I really don't know. But I am quite sure he was one of the leading men in the electrical company there. He didn't live in Bradford.

MK Well I know the different communities got electricity at different times. In fact it was the early '60's before the last few towns in Vermont, Victory and Granby before they had electricity.

ET Before they had electricity. Well I will see if I can give some sort of approximate date because our house was built in 1902 and it was all wired for electricity. Chandeliers, they had chandeliers in those days you know in the middle of each room. Not to many plugs were ever put in so that you could put in an electrical. I don't know as they had electrical appliances then because we hadn't had electricity. I mean they may have had them in other places, but I just don't know. But anyway, so it must have been in early 1900's that we got our. I would just make a guess. I know we used the Rochester burner and lamps awhile. We moved into the house in 1902. But we may have had electricity somewhere between 1905 and 1910 along in there, I would guess. That is a guess.

MK Do you remember the first electrical appliance your family had?

ET Oh goodness. A toaster probably. Now I am trying to think did my folks have a toaster. There weren't too many I don't think. No I couldn't tell. I had

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a waffle iron. I had a toaster and of course a radio and all that business. I think toaster would be my guess. Have you asked other people.

MK I haven't yet.

ET If so, what did they say?

MK I...

ET I think we had a toaster before we had the coffee urns. That would be my guess. A toaster. What else would there be?

MK Well it is interesting because I have talked to a number of farmers who talk about how the electricity changed their lives. Of course then they had the option to buy milking machines. But they were talking about electricity coming in in the '40's ???

ET Yes, Oh yes.

MK ??? were more appliances than existed.

ET Oh yes, yes before then.

MK Because they were out further and they didn't get electricity in the rural areas.

ET Now I have a waffle iron that I have had for years. One that you can have waffles, you and toast...then I got a cheese, what do they call those things, you make a sandwich. You can open it up and then it will toast both sides. What is that called? But when I am thinking of a toaster, not that kind, but the upright, yes.

MK On the top.

ET Yes, only they didn't pop up the early ones. Oh my no you had to open it. Open this, well I was going to say I could show you one, but I can't. It is up to the lake. I don't know why I put all my antiques up to the lake. Well I think that they are old.

MK Let's talk about your decision to become a teacher. Did you always know you wanted to be a teacher.

ET Yes, and I wouldn't play school unless I could be the teacher. Oh I wanted to be a teacher from the time I was oh ten years old or so. I always wanted to be the teacher. But do you know at the time I was growing up you didn't have to much choice. You could be a secretary and that at first was a

little bit of a almost a disgrace to be a secretary because you would have to be in the office with the boss you know. I mean a ??? at the least bit. I had a sister that became a secretary and I think my folks rather hated to have her trained for that. Teaching, she tried teaching and it was not at all what she wanted to do. She made a very good secretary. Teaching, nurse, that I don't think appealed to me at all. Well a store clerk or post office clerk or things like that you could do, but to many things. But I know from the time I was knee high to a grasshopper, I wanted to be a teacher. And I enjoyed, really enjoyed getting the subject matter across to the children. I enjoyed that immensely. It was all these other things that you have to do if you are a teacher that annoyed me. But...

MK What kinds of things?

ET Well you had your register to do for one thing. And records of this and that and the other. All of which I suppose was necessary. But I would like to have just gone in there and taught. Getting the subject matter across to the children, I liked that. I don't know how much of it sank in, but I guess a little, I hope.

MK Were you teaching in graded schools?

ET Yes, fifth and sixth. And ??? you had to be on your toes with these little tots they tell me. If you keep their fingers busy, you got it pretty well figured out. You have to be on your toes with the fifth and sixth graders undecidedly so and that's good. I mean if they are alert enough to keep on your toes that's good.

MK Do you have any favorite stories about your teaching experiences? I would have had zillion of stories.

ET I don't know. I guess I haven't thought of that for years. I can see while we are talking here. I can see this room full of students. Here is Ralph Boner. Here is...I had two girls. I loved music. I know music somewhat. I began taking violin lessons when I was fairly small. I have taken piano lessons to a certain extent and I love to sing right now. I am 92 years old, but I will go every Wednesday to sing with the chorus. I sing alto. I can read notes. I can sing by the notes. I can harmonize too. But if I am singing, I sing by notes, if I am singing the alto. So I enjoy that so much, so much. As I say, I will make a point of going Wednesdays to the senior citizens because they have the, well I think they are called the Unforgettables. Some such name.

I just love to go and sing with them. As I say I can sing by note as well as harmonize, even if I do say so.

MK So you focused a lot on music then in your teaching?

ET Oh I am very fond of the music. Well I taught music. I had the daily. Then we had a supervisor. She came down from St. Johnsbury. But she did...is this going on the what you call it?

MK What you are saying?

ET Oh well I was going to say. I don't mean to brag, but she did say my room had done so very well in music when I was there. But the teacher before me didn't...she wasn't at all musical. She would perhaps wouldn't know whether they were singing right or not because she wasn't strong in music. I had two girls in the sixth grade who were so good. They were alto. They sang alto and they knew what they were doing. They had nice alto voices. I never will forget the look of those two girls. I would like to see them today and I would tell them how much I enjoyed this. That was one place that I learned alto. I had to learn alto. I would go home and play the alto you see. You can harmonize and sing alto to almost anything by harmonizing. But if you were teaching music, you had to teach by note. And first before we sang those notes, we would read them. Read them according...it was do, re, me. That solo. You had to read them according to time. It might be do, so, me, re, do and so on. That is what we had to do before we sang it. So that was sort of fun. But I had to...well I think it was not only had to, but I think it was smart. Practice it at home before you go and teach them. But ??? somewhere I speak of these two girls that were expecially good in music. One of the girls was the daughter of my violin instructor when I had taken violin lessons off her mother.

MK How many years did you teach?

ET Three. I would have taught more undoubtedly, but I gave up my teaching to go home and take care of my mother. In fact the last, well probably not the full year, but she was gradually going worse (Rumitoid arthritis). Before I got through that year, she was going with crutches. She was alone. I would go home at noon and get our lunch and we would have a quick lunch. Then I would get her onto the couch. This would be while I was finishing up that last year that I taught. I would get her on the couch and she would stay on the couch until I got home that afternoon. But a neighbor came in very often to see that everything

was alright. My father was working so he wasn't there. My sister was there, but she worked in the bank. Well her hours were about like mine. She wasn't at all domestic. She informed me one time that she didn't come home there to do housework. So you see that's where that put me. Well anyway. So I was there until I married.

Dog Barking

MK Did you continue to live in Bradford after you married?

ET No, my husband was a Corinth boy and he had been out to Iowa and finished college out there in Iowa State in Ames, Iowa. He wanted to come home and take over the farm and run it according to what he had learned. He had made it in dairy. He did that. He did very well. In fact I know why he did very well in a way. I mean that he did. He was secretary of the creamery. We figured out the creamery bills each I guess it would go by the pound of cream that you took in. You would run the separator at home. You would separate the milk from the cream. You would have one of these things...have you ever seen them? It separates the cream from the milk. Then you sell...you take your cream only to the creamery and you would get so much a pound. We did that figuring.

MK You didn't take the milk in those days?

ET What?

MK You didn't take the milk, only the cream.

ET No, the milk you would feed perhaps the young cattle. The heifers would drink the milk or whatever else. I guess you would feed milk to pigs too, wouldn't you? Whatever the other animals. And of course I think my husband's mother made quite a bit of cottage cheese out of the milk that was left. You would put in a little bit of, I think it was called rennin, I am not just sure. It would sour the milk. And she made quite a bit of cottage cheese that way. But of course the milk that you didn't use in your own kitchen would be fed to the other animals on the farm. We were there only a, well I think, well not over two years. Maybe a year and a half. Somehow it didn't work out. Well there were two or three reasons why it didn't work out to well. One of them was that my husband had been to Iowa State College and graduated there and he knew I think what he was doing there. But his father and his mother were supposed to have moved down to the house they had in the village and we were to live on the farm. He wanted to run the farm according

to what he had learned. But father Taplin decided that he would rather stay up to the farm. So he would go down to village with mother Taplin for over the weekend, but he would spend the week at the farm. Of course being a young bride I enjoyed that. Well anyway. So it just didn't work out. Oh, well the trouble one thing was no matter what my husband started to do. He was nailing up a box of sugar we had made, just nailing this up. Is this going to be broadcasted anywhere.

MK I won't if you don't want me to.

ET No, no. Don't broadcast it. He was nailing up this and his father just said now the way you want to do that is and he took the hammer right out of his hand and he couldn't put in practice what he had learned. You do things as I did. I mean as his father did. So it didn't work out. And he went as the principal of Cabot High School. We moved to Cabot. He was apparently not only a good instructor but a good disciplinarian. Well we ended up in Bennington for four years. We were in Cabot three years. We went to Fairfax for four years. We went to Ludlow for five years. Then we went to Fair Haven for six years. So I told my children when we moved to Bennington for heaven sakes I don't want to be hear seven years. Because they would say it is time for you move. So but anyway thats... Then he went into the State Department. He was in the State Department. So we moved back to Montpelier.

MK You lived all over Vermont then?

ET I what?

MK You lived all over Vermont during your married life?

ET Yes I did. I was born in Bradford. Well the year I finished my sophmore year in high school, my father and mother and family moved to Summerville, Massachusetts, just outside of Boston. So I finished my high school there. My junior and senior years there. Then I went to Salem normal school. Salem, Massachusetts State Normal School. I was down there five years. But at the end of that five years, my folks were there, they moved back to Bradford. But I had just finshed my first of teaching in New Hampshire. So when I finished that June, I came back to Bradford. See they had moved back before I got there. And the next two years I taught in Bradford. Then I went home to take care of my mother because she had rumitoid arthritis and was gradually losing her ability to walk and so forth, even feed herself. The last four years, she was confined to the bed and blind which was very sad for her. Although

I have said that if she was confined to the bed, I think it was better that she was blind. If it had to be one thing or another, it was better that she was blind because people could come in and see her and she could visit with them. And if she had had her eye sight, but couldn't speak, I think it would have been worse. That's the way I figured it anyway. But of course nowadays they can do things for ruitoid arthritis that they didn't know about them. So I don't think one is as crippled now as they used to be with that. Fortunately none of us inherited it. I don't know as you inherit it. Not that you inherit...what do I want to say, tendancies. I don't know.

MK Let's wait until this truck goes by. The truck sounds so much. It magnifies.

ET Oh you get it.

MK Yes. Because I am listening to what's coming through the microphone. It is coming through louder than if I just had these on and listened to the room noise. Yes.

ET Oh I see.

MK Let's talk about automobiles for awhile.

ET That was the subject that my son said you would talk to me about. Automobiles, I said what do I know about automobiles. I really, I can tell you about the first one I think that I ever knew about. There was a man, and he was nobodies fool. He was a character. But he was noones fool. He was a bright guy. He worked for the electrical company there in Bradford. That I am sure the make of the car was Brush. You may want to check on this to see if there ever was such a company. I think it was one cylinder. I can see that little car. It had just two seats in it. No back seat. ??? there was something. Anyway just two seats. He would run around townd there and one reason you would remember it would be because of him. He was noones fool. He was a bright guy. But he was a character. Funny you know. He had a sense of humor and I shall never forget Fred Dickie and this little runabout I guess you would call it. Two seater Brush. I am quite sure the make of the car was a Brush. I'd like to know if I was right on that. But I think I am. I think they called it a one cylinder car. I don't know if anybody had a one cylinder car or not. But that the impression I have. Excuse me.

MK No, that's okay. I had been reading an article about oh early motor travel in Vermont and it talks about how people

really did have to be, how initially there was no way to learn to drive. Whoever you bought your car from had to teach you to drive because most people didn't know how to drive. Because the matter of course. There were no driving schools or anything like that so whoever sold you the car had to give you some weeks of instruction along with the car.

ET Could be.

MK And also you had to learn to fix it on your own because if you got stuck and the car stalled out on you some place and you couldn't get it going, there was no mechanic you could call. You had to figure out what to do with it.

ET Well I well remember the first car we had. And it was soon after we were married. The only reason we had it was that my brother owned it. They were moving down country somewhere and wanted to sell it and we thought that at the price he asked that we could buy it. So we bought it. And I never shall forget when my first baby arrived I came home from the hospital the baby and I riding in this. It was a buick and a roadster. It had an acetylene tank on the running board for the lights, headlight is what I want to say. It was a pretty wonderful car. I never shall forget holding my young daughter and riding home in this roadster. I guess that's what you call it from Woodsville Hospital to East Corinth, Vermont with a young daughter in my lap. I guess we both enjoyed it as far as I know.

MK Did you learn to drive in one of those early cars?

ET I never learned to drive and that is in a way is a sad story. I never seem to want to. My husband would have liked to have had me. Now you know I have a sister whose husband never wanted her to drive and she would have been a much better driver than he was because he was right uptight. Hanging right onto that steering wheel and almost shaking. Tense, he was so tense she would have been much more relaxed and she would have been a better driver, but he didn't want her to drive. My husband would have liked to have had me drive, but somehow it never appealed to me. I guess I felt now as I say, there was a little one in the automobile and I guess I thought that's where my attention should be. That's where it was. He could drive the car. And of course some work, like superintendent of schools and so on. In those days you didn't have two cars in the family. You couldn't afford it. Especially if only one was out earning a salary. So whenever he went to work, the car was gone. So there you were. And it wouldn't be back until the end of the day or perhaps the noon hour, but you know gone again. Because in those days, the

superintendent of schools had various schools to travel around to to supervise. And we didn't, why if anyone had had two cars in a family in those days, they would have either been very wealthy or extravagant. I don't know which. In my case, it would have been extravagant.

MK Do you remember any funny stories that happened with your first car?

ET Probably many of them that did. No I don't seem to remember anything. The one thing that you had to look out for and I like horses very much. And I drove a horse. My father always had a good driving horse. I drove a lot. But it was the beginning of horses meeting automobiles. And I have had to drive past an automobile when I just had to hold that horse. You had to hold them right up to it. You can't...they would shy away. But you just had to hold them right up so you could get your wagon by that you were in. Get by, but they would try to get away, as far away from that car as could be. Most of the people in cars were very considerate. They very often would pull over and shut off their engine and stop until you got by. They saw the horse was going to be shying away from the car. That's the thing that I had to master was to drive a horse. I know one, it was a guy that went to school. I went to school the same time he did. He was a year ahead of me. He said, Eleanor, don't you drive a car. I said, no. You don't drive a car. I said no I don't want to drive a car. He said that anyone that could drive a horse as you did, I would think could drive a car. I said well maybe I could, but I am not driving. I liked horses. I drove horses. But I had to get them past cars. Some of the ones that I drove. We had one, my father had one that you would drive him up to the doorway, ready to for somebody to get into the wagon or sleigh and he didn't want to stand. He wanted to go. He would come right up on his hind feet, just like that and almost a jump. Well I will tell you that when you got into that...I think my father sold him to some ????. I think he traded him. He got rid of him. He was good except he couldn't wait. He didn't want to wait for people to get into the wagon. He just wanted to go. But since he got down onto four feet he was alright you know. But that's what he would do if he had to wait.

MK Getting in could be quite a stronghold.

ET Yes. I didn't drive. I expect when we first had the car, most of our driving was right over roads we knew. Because I traveled with horse and buggy. Of course you didn't go as many miles then. But it was nothing to drive out 12 - 15

miles. I had an uncle who lived out in Waits River from Bradford 12 miles. We used to go out there quite often. But I don't...my father and mother never had a car. My brother had this car. As I say when he moved down country and we had just married. We bought the car. A little roadster. Now we didn't do any great long trips or anything of that kind then. We had a ford, what did they call it. I think Model A they called them. It had the top up and if it rained, you had to get curtains down, canvas or whatever that would snap on there. So on and so forth. It wasn't closed in. It wasn't a sedan type at all. I don't know. Did they have sedans then? I don't seem to remember any. The first car I remember. Have I told you this already? Was this one cylinder Brush. That's the first one. I think it was Brush. Now that's the way as I remember it. Now where I got that word I don't know, but that's what came out from the back of my head. Then the editor of the paper had a well I don't know what they called it, a roadster or a runabout. It had just two seats. It sat up quite high. You can see that car, bright red. He would be the one in the village that would have a car. Probably first of anybody and did have. Those were the first two cars I remember. I do so well remember the guy that had the little Brush. I think it was one cylinder. Now that might not be right, but I think they kidded him about what would he do if any of his cylinders didn't work, but he would have an answer for them, don't worry. He was nobodies fool. He was sort of a town character.

MK A couple of other things I wanted to ask you about. Did you live in, did Bradford have any circuit for the travelling Shataquas in the summer?

ET Yes, yes. I...

MK Tell me about that?

ET I say Bradford ??? into them. I have been to the Shataquas in the summer where they put up the tent and it would be very good entertainment. Boy I got to think about what that was. Where I ran into that. Of course I didn't live in Bradford after 1920. I married in 1920. Lets see, we went to Cabot, Fairfax, Ludlow. I am just trying to place a Shataqua tent. There is one thing we had in Bradford when I was a girl growing up. My father was a stockholder in the Fair. We had a very good 3 day fair in Bradford. They had a good race track. It was a half mile track. They had very good fairs. As I say, my father was a stockholder. Oh we had it all set up. My brother was a drugist and had a pharmacy and drug store in the village. So he had a concession there. A place where he had, it was a fountain.

It was an old soda fountain and he could make up a soda same as he could down in the village. My father being a stockholder he had a ticket that would let us into the fair any day, all day, every day. Also into the grandstand and we did between the races...each race would have three heats. And it was the horse at either one, well three or two heats that won the race, they had to race three times in order to be the winner of the race. They had to go around this track a mile. Well the track was a half mile coming around twice. Then in between those races, they had those heats. They had entertainment on the stage there. Well there might be, what do I want to say. There might be jugglers or some outdoor entertainment. So we had access. My father's ticket would let us into the grandstand anytime. So we would go into the grandstand and watch the races and that's about the only thing I cared about up on the grounds. Away from the grandstand was the merry-go-round. So we loved to ride on the horses. You see here I am with the horses again. I loved to ride on the merry-go-round. So we would go from the merry-go-round back to the grandstand and watch the races and go up to my brothers and stand there and get a soda. So we had it made. My father's ticket would let us in free. And if we didn't make use of that fairground those three days. You will miss your guess if you thought we didn't. We just had a grand old time.

MK It's funny because I can remember going to the fair. The county fair was the highlight of my existence as a child.

ET Yes.

MK Ours were late. It seemed like they were late September every year.

ET What state would that be?

MK Ohio.

ET Ohio yes.

MK I remember the produce tent. You would stack up the prize winning vegetables in these wonderful arrangements. I can always remember for some reason. Now you would think the big stuff would go on the bottom and the smaller stuff to the top, but I guess they put the smaller stuff down low so you can see it better. The top row would always be these gargantuan pumpkins that were like ???, huge things. That was my favorite thing to go to. As a kid it was embarrassing.

ET We had what they call the floral hall. Up in the top would be exhibits of embroidery and whatever and so on and so forth. I can't remember if its on the lower floor or whether the other side of the hall upstairs there a vegetable and they had prizes. First prize in the various categories and so on. First, second and third probably. So that was...I never will forget we were going home one day, my sister and I and there was a man that had a fruit stand right. It was quite a fairly size place. It was made of wood. I mean the roof and the shells and so on and so forth. Well anyway, as we were going kind of right past there, he was packing up you could see. It was about the end of the day and the end of the fair. And he said well help yourself. So I walked over and took a banana and my sister took something else. I don't know just what, but anyway. Then we began to think. I wonder if there was a man there he was talking to. Well we had bitten into whatever it was and we turned around and looked. Nobody was making any move toward us or anything so we...he said help yourself. We thought he was packing up and wanted to get rid of the stuff. So we each went up and got something. Because I don't know whether he was talking to us or this other one person that was there. Probably that one person.

MK But you helped yourself.

ET Well we helped ourselves anyway, but we thought we had the invitation to. Funny things happen don't they.

MK They do.

ET Well my days at the fair were spent between the grandstand. A lot of time in there. I loved the racing and then the entertainment that was put on between those few races. There was some pretty good company or whatever and then the merry-go-round and my brother's place to get sodas. That was my day at the fair. Oh they had eating tents and a midway. A small midway like, but it didn't interest me to much. Crazy performances there you know. Three legs or three arms or something. Funny queer things which didn't interest a kid. At least didn't interest me. So...

MK Did you ever enter anything in the fair?

ET Ever what?

MK Did you ever enter anything in the fair?

ET Just myself I guess. No I don't think so. I have done quite a bit of embroidery and so on. Knitting, I have knit sweaters and so on, but nothing for show. We used

to embroider a lot. I have got pieces, these doilies, these round doilies, but where do you use them. You don't ever see anyone using them. There are scarves or something of that kind more, well like that came from somewhere. Where did that come from? My son just brought it up ??? but I can't tell. Belgium things, but it doesn't matter, I can't remember. I can't remember that as well as I could something that was brought to me fifty years ago. Because that doesn't mean old age I don't suppose.

MK My grandmother used to make things like that.

ET Yes I guess.

MK Neither of her daughters learned how.

ET Well I started to crochet a tablecloth and I have got almost a scarf made out of it. I mean that's as far as I got or as far as I will ever get. I don't even have the dining room table now. But it is just as well because I never would have gotten that done. No I don't know as much as I liked needle work and I have knit sweaters, crocheted. I never learned to tat. As one person expressed it, you tie a knot in perfectly good thread and I guess that is the way I looked at it. I didn't seem to learn to tie knots in perfectly good thread. But I just, I don't seem to pick up the needle now. I can do my mending and that's all I seem. I just don't have that desire to knit. I read more. I think I read more. That's what I seem to do, just read. Now whether I, well I do know this. I am slower in getting my work done. When you are 92, you don't dart around you know. You just get one foot ahead of the other and you have to.

MK Just a couple other things. Oh, I am sorry what were you going to say?

ET Well I was going to say every day that I am so thankful that I can put one foot ahead of the other. I don't think a day passes but that I am aware of that. I am very fortunate at my age to be as well as I am. And I appreciate that. Excuse me I interrupted you.

MK That's okay. I wanted also to ask you about radio. This is for radio. When do you remember having a radio in the house?

ET Yes, I can tell you that I think. I am trying to think what it looked like. When we lived in Cabot, 1922 to 1925 and there my husband he built this. He made this radio. You did that in those days. You had to wind something and

so on. Well he made this radio and I know he was so, he thought he was pretty close to getting this to work and here it was getting to be midnight and I guess I went along to bed and he sat up there until he accomplished that and ??? was going to christen that radio. It was about 3 o'clock in the morning apparently when he got it where he could hear what he wanted to hear and I said you better christen it 3 o'clock in the morning. I don't know if it was ever christened anything, but anyway that was a handmade...he made the radio. I think you had to wind the coils and they did that back in those days. That was the first radio. I can't remember what he got on the radio. But he got it. There we lived in Cabot and he got it about 3 o'clock one morning. He couldn't go to bed until he got so near to it you know until he really got something.

MK Did you begin listening to the radio a lot then or did you just listen at special times a day or special days?

ET Evenings. I think the evenings. I very seldom even now listen in the daytime.

MK Do you remember any Vermont programs, Vermont based programs, coming out of Vermont Radio Stations that you used to listen to.

ET Vermont radio stations. My goodness.

MK You know, on that early radio that your husband built?

ET Oh I wouldn't know if he got Vermont radio or got any Vermont on that. Of course now I listen to news and so on on Waterbury. I think Waterbury, that's radio. Yea. I go onto to that. I sort of have a law that I am not supposed to get up until 7:30 and so I am awake usually around 7:00. Not always, but depending. I don't go to sleep until late. I go to bed, but I lie awake. I go to bed about 10:00 - half past. Night after night after night. I am not sleepy. I don't fall asleep in my chair. I just go to bed because the clock says to go to bed. But I don't go to sleep until 1:00 or 2:00 or 3:00 in the morning. So I have my radio on. I guess it is just to do something to keep me quiet there. What were we speaking of. On the radio I listen to, well there are certain one that I like to get hold of if I can. There is a doctor...You aren't putting that on the radio are you.

MK No.

ET I spoke of the what I think of what was the one cylinder Brush car and I...then there was a runabout. I wish I

knew the Parkers. Harry Parker who was the publisher of the United Opinion in Bradford for years had one of the first cars in Bradford and that was a little red runabout or roadster. It had two seats in it. One of the first cars that I ever road in is a Maxwell. That was well before 1920 because I was married in 1920 and I rode around with a guy that was born there taking me around places you know. That was a Maxwell had the two seats. Not a roadster, but a real car. It wouldn't be a sedan. It just had the top that ??? I will never...I don't know if I should say this on that. There was a minister in this town where I lived that run off with a doctor's wife in town, they are just gone. But apparently they got in touch and the wife of the man that had run off, a ministers wife and the husband of the doctor's wife who ran off went apparently went to meet him. I was riding around them in this Maxwell with a guy that had the Maxwell. We were riding down on the lower plain in Bradford. We met this car and he recognized it right off. He said that is so and so's car. This minister's car. So he found a place to turn around and we followed him in town. It turned out they went up around the back streets. They didn't go the Main Street, but circled around the back streets and let out the wife, the doctor's wife, who had run away and the doctor. The minister and his wife went up the back street and went around onto the Main Street where the minister lived and we just followed them because this guy knew their car. So that was one of my escapades. Nothing we did you know, but we just saw, he recognized the car so we passed them when he was driving down on the lower plains. So we followed them around. They took the back streets to get home.

MK Did the two couples stay together after that?

ET I think so, yea. I guess the minister's assignment there didn't last very long after that. I guess they moved away you know. The minister was a Congregational minister. I think they change them whenever they...

MK There is someone at your door here.

ET Oh.

MK Thank you very much Mrs. Taplin.

ET I did pretty well in keeping my mouth shut that long didn't I.