

MARY WINIFRED GOODBAN AMES

Interviewer: Nanette Grygier

Interviewed on: January 30, 2004

Interviewer: I want you to please go ahead and state your name.

Mary Ames: Mary Goodban. Mary Winifred Goodban Ames. And my birth date is 7-9 of '26 and I'm 77. And I lived on Eureka Road. How long have you lived in Franklin Township? 18 years.

Interviewer: You want to read it? You go right ahead and read your questions then. That's fine.

Mary Ames: What was your home like in the early years? How was it heated? Where did you get inside water from? Hot water and toilet? When did you get electricity? When did you get telephone? Who had the first electric? Where did they live? Who had the first car or truck, and what was it? Let's see. It was heated with wood and coal. We had an outside well and a pump in the back room. We got hot water from a hot water tank that was pumped through the kitchen wood stove. We got electric in 1945. We had a telephone on the wall, a crank type telephone, and we had a battery radio. No television, no refrigerator; too early. We had a gas motor washing machine. We had a dumbwaiter on pulleys in the dining room that could go down in the basement and pull it back up, to keep it cool. We had a 1922 Buick, then a Model T Ford, then a Model A Ford, and Dad also had a Model T truck. Who are your family members? Who are you related to in the Township? In your earliest memories, who were your friends? Who were your parents' friends? What is your fondest childhood memory? Of any season...

Interviewer: Mary? Mary, I need to interrupt you. You need to hold your paper down flat or we can't see your face. You're hiding! You're hiding!

Mary Ames: [Chuckling] Ok...your fondest Christmas gift, your fondest memory of gift? Was the gift purchased or homemade? Edward was father. My mother was Emma [Newell] Goodban. Harold was the oldest, Lucille, then William Wayne, Esther, then Mary, Kenneth, and myself. No relatives lived in the Township. We had an uncle and an aunt in Dunn Valley. Our friends, neighbors. My parents. My friends were neighbors. My parents' were church, relatives and neighbors. What was my favorite season? It was summer. And I had dolls and farm animal toys. The gifts were purchased. Who did you marry? How did you meet your spouse? Tell us about your wedding. Did you go away on a honeymoon? Where did you live when you were first married? What children did you have? Names and birthdates. My husband was Robert H. Ames. My brother, Harold, brought him to our home. We went to Canada on our honeymoon. We lived on Home Road. My husband built our home. Our children were Alvin K. Ames. He was born February 7th, 1949. Mary Ellen Ames Denton, she was born on September 19, 1950. My son, Gary E. Ames, he was born on July 13, 1953. And Neal S. Ames, he was born March 13, 1956. We were married on 10-19 of '46. And Robert H. Ames died August 30, 1995.

Interviewer: Very good Mary. We're going along. Take your time. What schools existed in the Township? Where did you go to school and who were your teachers? What was the highest grade you completed? If you didn't complete the highest grade, why not? Who were your classmates? Who were your best friends? Are any of your school friends still living? Where do they live now?

Mary Ames: We had a one-room schoolhouse, Goodban School. It was an eight grade school. Daddy Hayes was the first grade. Mrs. Waldo was second; Mrs. Payne third, fourth and fifth; and Mrs. Cutchell sixth grade; and seventh and eighth was Marian Harned. I had many friends, and some have died. [Editor's note—not on video, I attended Edinboro High School.]

Interviewer: Farming was the predominant occupation in our early years. In your early years, what do you remember about the crops, equipment, techniques and farming-related businesses? Who got the first tractor, thresher and planter? Did you share equipment? Who was successful and not so successful at farming? What and how many animals did you keep on your farm? Did you do your own butchering? How did you preserve meat? How much canning did you do? How big was your garden?

Mary Ames: We had corn, wheat, oats, cabbage, hay, and straw. Dad got a Farmall tractor in 1938. I don't know if it was his first. We shared a threshing machine and helped each other. Dad did not own the thresher. He owned the other machines he used. Dad did all his own butchering. To preserve meat, Mom canned and we had crocks for salt pork and a large garden. And we canned it all.

Interviewer: What businesses or professions do you remember that were in the Township? Try to start from your earliest memory. Who were your proprietors?

Mary Ames: Well, merchant was Amy's General Store, and I don't know of these other ones too much. The doctor was Dr. Ghering of Edinboro. Harold Ghering. And the dentist was in town, in Erie. And the feed mill, Mr. Schwartz (?) had that down in Sterrettania.

Interviewer: Where did you do your purchasing and trading? What was the price of commodities—milk, bread, cheese, butter, flour, pants, dresses, toys, candy, seed, and so forth? Farm or land values? House values? Furniture and household goods?

Mary Ames: Amy's in Sterrettania. We went to Amy's Store and we also went to Erie for supplies. I don't remember how much things cost.

Interviewer: What jobs did you hold through the years? Did you remain in the Township to work? What was the rate of pay of your job and various other jobs? How long was the workday? How did you and others get to work?

Mary Ames: I worked at Ruberoid in 1944 for 75 cents an hour. I worked Talon [zippers] in 1947, piecework. If you worked fast enough you could make over \$10.00 a day in 1947. Niagara Plastics, 1965 through 1981. Six dollars and 30 cents an hour when I quit, retired. And eight hour shifts. We went by bus, then car.

Interviewer: Were there Civil War or World War I veterans still living during the early years? Who were they and did they impart any stories to you? My uncle Billy Darling was a World War I vet.

Mary Ames: The only story I heard was he was in the Navy and they were in England, and they were to ship out the next morning. He saw a Goodban shop but it was closed.

Interviewer: In your earliest memories, what churches existed in the Township? Who were the pastors or priests? Who were the circuit riders? Where did you go to church?

Mary Ames: Our church was on Crane Road and one at Franklin Center.

Interviewer: What did you do for fun, entertainment and recreation? Where did you go or gather for these activities? Did your township, churches or schools have any special gatherings and where were they?

Mary Ames: We had a box social, and dances, and we had Halloween parties, and once in awhile we went to a movie.

Interviewer: What did you remember about politics and government in your early life? Who were the road supervisors? How did you get around? Who were the assessors, constables, school directors and justices? Who from the Township went on to higher political office? Do you remember previous names of the Township roads? Do you remember when the roads' names changed and why?

Mary Ames: I remember hearing my father complain about President Roosevelt and saying he was not for the farmers, helping the farmers! The roads were terrible, rutted in the spring and not snow plowed in the middle of winter, and lots of times we didn't get out for two weeks!

Interviewer: Was that more in the wintertime than the Summer time? From the rain or was it you were stranded because of the snow?

Mary Ames: Well, the frost went out on the roads, and then they'd be all rutted with a lot of water in them and you'd get stuck!

Interviewer: Oh, so you couldn't get out?

Mary Ames: Not very good! It was very hard.

Interviewer: How did you get your milk?

Mary Ames: We had milk.

Interviewer: All right. Didn't you have to get milk to a place for the truck to pick it up? How did you do that?

Mary Ames: Oh. Well, you put it out by the road...I don't remember. I guess the truck did get through there. I don't remember.

Interviewer: All right. Do you remember any major natural disasters? What about the winter life, snowplowing?

Mary Ames: Did I read this...?

Interviewer: Do you remember any bad weather? Storms, anything like a hurricane, tornado or a drought?

Mary Ames: I remember one time we had an earthquake, but it was so...just a little bit moving.

Interviewer: What do you remember moved? How little were you?

Mary Ames: I was real young.

Interviewer: Very young?

Mary Ames: Yes. Nothing really went anywhere, but you know...[Editor's note—not on video: You could feel the shake.]

Interviewer: But you could remember feeling it?

Mary Ames: Yes, yes.

Interviewer: Were you in the house or outside? Do you remember?

Mary Ames: In the house.

Interviewer: Inside the house? Did dishes rattle or did something move? What did you remember as a child?

Mary Ames: It just felt like the floor moved a little bit.

Interviewer: What a memory. Any drought? Have trouble making crops come in, or getting crops to grow from a long dry season? Do you remember your parents talk about that? Where they were concerned there wasn't enough feed for the cattle or anything?

Mary Ames: I don't remember anything. Here, I remember being stranded for two weeks sometimes because the snowplow did not come when we had deep snow.

Interviewer: So you were stuck at home, no one got out or in?

Mary Ames: No. I remember one time I was working in town. My brother came got me to come to the farm. My boyfriend was with us. And we had to walk from 98 all the way over, and up on...it seemed like really high drifts. It was solid.

Interviewer: It was solid snow?

Mary Ames: Solid, yes.

Interviewer: Over your heads, then?

Mary Ames: Yeah, and you walked all the way. You didn't sink in.

Interviewer: Oh my God.

Mary Ames: Yeah, we walked all the way.

Interviewer: To get into the farm?

Mary Ames: Yes.

Interviewer: And you did?

Mary Ames: Yeah.

Interviewer: That's a good piece. Oh my goodness. I wonder how long that took you to do that.

Mary Ames: Well, it was at least a mile long, that road 'til you got down to Goodban Corners.

Interviewer: Was this dark by then?

Mary Ames: No, it wasn't dark. We must have got out, I don't know, in the afternoon, maybe.

Interviewer: Oh my goodness.

Mary Ames: It was dark when they went back. But I didn't go back, I stayed and they went back!

Interviewer: Doing it once only, huh?

Interviewer: What ethnic backgrounds from the earliest times? Where did people move from when they came to Franklin Township? Why did they come to Franklin Township? If people left, where did they go and why?

Mary Ames: My Dad hired men to help with farming. I don't know where they went to when they left.

Interviewer: Would you know their ethnic background? What was your family's background?

Mary Ames: English.

Interviewer: You're English.

Mary Ames: English, and my mother was a little German and Irish.

Interviewer: Your mother was German Irish and your father was English.

Mary Ames: Ah, full-blooded, yes!

Interviewer: Full-blooded English, all right! Your neighbors around you, do you remember maybe what country they may have originally emigrated from?

Mary Ames: No, I don't know.

Interviewer: You never talked about that? Or did you know from talking with them or listening to the way they spoke English, broken English?

Mary Ames: No.

Interviewer: You can't tell whether they came from, other than England.

Mary Ames: There were some people over by Silverthorn Road that were Polish maybe, and one was Russian.

Interviewer: Russian! You remember Russian and Polish, good! Ok and they were farmers like your family was? They were all farmers?

Mary Ames: Yes, they were all farmers.

Interviewer: How did you know them? Did they come to your farm? Did you do business with them? Or see them somewhere else?

Mary Ames: Yeah, we just knew them. They were like neighbors.

Interviewer: I see. Ok.

Interviewer: What diseases were prevalent during your childhood? What did people die from at an early age? What did adults die from? Where were folks buried?

Mary Ames: We had mumps, measles, whooping cough, and my sister had scarlet fever. Oh. My father had scarlet fever. It punctured his eardrums. [Editor's note—Mrs. Ames stated at a later date that her father did not have scarlet fever and it did not puncture his eardrums.]

Interviewer: She recovered all right?

Mary Ames: Yes, that was my older sister.

Interviewer: Please jot down anything we might have missed that you'd like to bring up.

Mary Ames: We were one of the first families to have a flushed toilet in the area. They had tiles that went out across the road. I don't know that they had a septic tank because it quit working. And also, we had a bathtub with legs and a washbowl. My mother made clothes from dresses of pretty cloth and feed bags during the Depression.

Interviewer: Can you tell me anything about the Depression, concerning your family?

Mary Ames: Well, I was only three years old.

Interviewer: You were three years old.

Mary Ames: Yeah, and we always had enough to eat, you know, with the farm--milk and eggs and we had butter, everything. We had all kinds of meat and vegetables, our own vegetables. So I never knew it. And my mother made bread. She made bread every week. And she had crocks to put it in and it would stay, you know, for the week. And she made it until she got arthritis in her hands and she couldn't knead it anymore. And then we bought bread. But Dad said there was nothing to it. He doesn't like it!

Interviewer: Your sister and you didn't continue to make the bread? You didn't bake bread while you were growing up?

Mary Ames: No, I was pretty young, when she got arthritis really bad.

Interviewer: Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. That would have been difficult then to carry on washing, and carrying on any other baking or....

Mary Ames: Oh, I helped with the washing and stuff.

Interviewer: You would do those chores then, your sister, you and...

Mary Ames: My sister Esther, because Lucille was married and gone already.

Interviewer: Lucille was gone by then.

Mary Ames: And Harold was married and gone. And Wayne went into the Second World War.

Interviewer: So you had a brother then who...

Mary Ames: William Wayne. We always called him Wayne, and when he went into the service, he had to go by William.

Interviewer: Yes?

Mary Ames: But we never could call him that.

Interviewer: He was Wayne to you. He's your brother, that's fine. So, you had a veteran for a brother, and your sister...

Mary Ames: And my Dad made butter.

Interviewer: Your Dad made butter?

Mary Ames: Yes. I could read you this story.

Interviewer: Yes. You can continue with your story, the way you have it there, because there's no need for me to ask you questions if you have it all prepared. We'll continue.

Mary Ames: Ok. This is the Goodban Farm. Dad had Jersey cows. They had the most cream for butter. We had a separator to separate the cream from the milk. It was skim milk after the separation. This was our barn dairy room that had the separator. Then we brought the cream down to our house dairy room. I helped milk cows.

When we made butter, the skim milk was for the pigs. Dad would mix ground grain, and stir it, and put more or different kinds of grain in a big bucket and he stirred it with a stick and called it slop. The pigs loved it, with one foot in the trough and trying to get it all, pushing the other pigs out of the way. Then they'd go around to the other side and start again!

We had a trap door in our house dairy room that Dad lowered the cans of cream to the basement vat and put ice around the cans to keep them until they had enough cream to put in the churn. It was octagon-shaped, about 6- or 8-foot long churn.

Dad had an icehouse that he had ice he'd cut from our pond in the winter. I watched him with a saw with another man and our brothers one time. It was very thick, maybe a foot or more and they used tongs to lift it and put it on the wagon. They stored it in the icehouse with sawdust all around it and it would keep all summer. And he would get it when he needed it to cool the cream.

To turn the churn, we had a gasoline engine in our house dairy room and belts over to the churn and it turned it to make the butter. When it turned to butter, Dad would take it out, put it on the butter worker, and had a roller on the butter worker that Dad rolled back and forth over the butter. And it had grooves on one end, two grooves, for the water to go down the groove into a hole, and the water went into a bucket underneath. When it was time to wrap the butter, Dad had a one-pound press, and my sister, Esther, and myself there to wrap the butter. We each had a stack of papers and he'd put a pound on each of our stacks of paper, and we would wrap it and put it in a box.

In the wintertime, Dad took the horses and the wagon, with runners on the wagon, and put the boxes of butter on the wagon. He had a bear coat to keep warm, and would leave our farm for Erie where he had many customers. One of them was Annie Strong. She had a lot of help and took several pounds of butter every week. He left the farm early when it was dark and he would not get back until it was dark at night.

Lucille told me 1932 was when my Dad had to quit selling butter. That would have made me six years old. She said she got scarlet fever and she was kept in the parlor. We had an outside door from the porch to go into the parlor and my Aunt Clara took care of her because she had had scarlet fever years before. Our living room had a sliding double door to go into the parlor and Mom and Dad would take the long way around, and Mom put their food by the door on the porch and Aunt Clara would get it. We were quarantined and they put a quarantine sign outside of our house so no one could come to our house. I remember that.

Interviewer: So they lived in this parlor. They lived in this parlor room for how long?

Mary Ames: I don't remember. It must have been a couple weeks, anyway. I don't know. When my sister got better, Mom and Dad had to use Lysol and wash everything—walls, ceiling, furniture, everything.

Dad had to find other ways to make a living. Dad bought baby chicks through the mail. The mailman would deliver the chicks, probably 25 in a box with holes all over the box so the chicks could breathe. We got several boxes. We had to teach them how to drink water. We took each chick and put their beak in the water and put their beak up so the water would went down their throats so they knew how to drink. We had quart jars with a screw-on lid that when you turned it over there was a groove all around it so the chicks could get water.

Dad started sending our milk to Carnation. I helped my Dad take the cans of the milk to the road so the milkman would pick them up every day. Of course, I did this when I was older.

When I was 13, I would drive the tractor and plow fields, and then disc the fields. When it was time to do haying, Dad would mow the hay; rake it with equipment in rows. I would drive the tractor or the team of horses and straddle the rows, and the hay loader would bring the hay up and Dad would place it where he wanted on the hay wagon. Then we took it to our bank barn, on the second floor. Dad would take one horse and hook it to the rope that he clamped on the hay. I would drive the horse down the hill, and when the hay got up to the top, it went along a track and Dad would release the clamp where he wanted it to fall. The horses knew when they didn't have to pull anymore and we'd go back for the next load.

We had three windmills on our farm--one on the barn to grind grain and two in the fields to pump water. We had a large water tank in our barn up by the ceiling. And for the cows, they had a water bowl that when they pressed their nose down on it the water came in for them to drink. We had 40 stanchions for cows.

When the chickens grew, Dad would slit their throat and hang them up by their feet. I didn't like that, but Dad said they don't hurt, they just get weak and die and they don't have bloody meat. He would kill several, and we would pull the feathers and clean them so he could take them to the farmers market.

We made maple syrup. Dad had a large tank on the wagon and he had maple trees in the woods and along both sides of Eureka Road that was tapped. We had a large iron

kettle and lots of wood to burn, he would boil it down to where Mom would finish it in the house, and then she'd can it. Dad would spot the bee trees in the summer. In the winter, he'd cut them down and get tons of honey. We didn't sell the maple syrup or the honey, I don't remember. Dad liked pancakes, and we'd have them with maple syrup and honey.

When Dad cut the wheat and the oats, he had a machine that would bind it, throw it out and we all pitched in and stacked it all over the field and capped it with a couple of the bound bundles to keep the rain out. Then, we had a threshing machine come and all the neighbors' farmers came to help. Mom, Esther and I had to make dinner for all the men. We had the dining room table that had about 15 leaves and we could have room for all to sit down to eat. When other farmers did threshing, Dad would go help them.

When Ken and I were small, and threshing was being done, we liked to get in the grain bin. When someone would bring a bucket of grain and poured it in the bin, we would walk around and eat the oats. It was good! We had two granaries; one for the bins of grain and the other for the ground grain. And, that's all.

Interviewer: That's excellent! You were able to tell us how you lived your life on the farm. You were able to tell the chores you did, the work...how you worked beside your father and your mother, which is priceless because you remember the detail, things that are no longer done anymore.

Mary Ames: I haven't told this to my children, and they are anxious to see this!

Interviewer: Yes, they need to see this. You were telling me earlier that your sister that's in Colorado wanted to remember to tell some things...

Mary Ames: Yes, she wanted me to tell...Lucille told me that she remembers Dad making jell in the iron kettle.

Interviewer: Yes, in an iron kettle. Was that in the house, in a barn, in a shed, where was this being done?

Mary Ames: Outside.

Interviewer: Outside, like in a little block building or something?

Mary Ames: No, we had a wood pile [to burn], and then over...

Interviewer: Like a shelter.

Mary Ames: It must have been metal, I mean, or an iron thing for the kettle to hang onto because it would burn if it wasn't.

Interviewer: When was this jell made? Do you remember what time of year, the season?

Mary Ames: I don't know because Lucille told me. It might have been in the fall, I don't know. [Apple jell]

Interviewer: You don't remember this thing, if it was done when they had apples coming in, during the Fall Harvest? I'm just trying to find a way to...

Mary Ames: That might have been, I don't know.

Interviewer: It might have been jelly.

Mary Ames: Yeah, because they made apple butter.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Mary Ames: I don't know what the jell was. She told me when Grandpa had the barn and house built; the lumber came from our woods. The barn was built two years before the house was built. I think the house was built in 1884. We had an outside entryway into the basement and it is written on the wall in the cellar way.

Interviewer: Would you pick up your house and show your house and barn side by side? (*Interviewee holds up black & white photo of house.*) And I'll tell you where it's set. We're going to have to make sure it can be...Hold it up a little, straighten it...that's good. You can hold it down. I just wanted you to bring it close to the camera. Yes. You hold it, and I'm going to move your hand. Take it back, take it back a little. Keep holding it. Lift it up just a little. Very good. Very good. And the barn next to it, yes.

(*Interviewee holds up black & white photo of barn.*) This is the other side of the house.

Go this way a little bit. Hold it real still. Move it into the center now. Right there, like that. Hold it real tight. Lift it up. That's excellent.

Mary Ames: And this is my Grandfather sawing wood.

(*Interviewee holds up black & white photo of grandfather.*) I remember my Dad doing this.

Interviewer: Sawing wood?

Mary Ames: Uh, huh.

Interviewer: I wondered...those are very good to have. If you had photos, maybe we can get them scanned and you could have photos to go with your story. That would be nice.

Mary Ames: I do have pictures of my mother and father somewhere.

Interviewer: That might be nice to get them scanned and you could put it together as a story for your family. You said that your sister was 10 years older than you, so there was...

Mary Ames: Yes, my oldest sister.

Interviewer: Your oldest sister.

Mary Ames: And Esther is four and a half years older than me, but she's in Florida, and she's in a nursing home.

Interviewer: I see. So you have the memory and you're here, not far from where you originally lived, you just came into Erie, so you've got a rich...

Mary Ames: I lived on Home Road for 50-some years. Then my husband died, and I lived there for five years after. Then this place came up and it was close to my two sons that are in Erie, and I like this house, so I bought it. I have a son in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania and a daughter in Denver, Colorado.

Interviewer: Oh, ok, so you have your family spread out. I'm glad you have sons nearby here.

Mary Ames: There are two in Erie, and I have a grandson...two grandsons in Erie. The oldest one is 27 years and he's married, and the youngest one is three years old tomorrow. And that's my youngest son's son, and he doesn't

have any children other than him. So, I have six grandchildren. My daughter has two daughters, and my son in Lewisburg has a daughter and a son, so I have three and three!

Interviewer: Yes, you do! Very nice! You have a nice little compact family! What is the thing you miss most from your property when you were a child growing up into your teen years? You had some very good stories you shared...

Mary Ames: We used to ride down the hills. I didn't know the road because they never had road signs!

Interviewer: Ok, well that's a good thing to remember!

Mary Ames: Well, we would go over...they straightened the road out now so there's not a hill down there now. But we didn't ride down the road we rode in the field. I think their name was Vogt. And we'd ride down their hill, because it was all right to ride, no trees or anything. We'd ride until we got cold, my brother Ken and I. And we'd go home and Mom was making supper. Oh, it smelled so good, and we were so hungry!

Interviewer: Sure, after playing so hard!

Mary Ames: And we had to always fill the woodbox every night.

Interviewer: Did you remember what you sled ride on, what you were using for a sled?

Mary Ames: We had regular sleds.

Interviewer: Runner? The runner type?

Mary Ames: Yes, the runner type.

Interviewer: It must have been fun.

Mary Ames: It was.

Interviewer: Did you fit two of you on, or one at a time or how did you...?

Mary Ames: What? Did I what?

Interviewer: Were there two of you at a time on the sled?

Mary Ames: No, we each had a sled.

Interviewer: You each had your own sled. So, it was a small sled, just big enough for one.

Mary Ames: Yeah.

Interviewer: And no trees in the way?

Mary Ames: No.

Interviewer: No? So, that was fine. Did other neighbors join you?

Mary Ames: No, we were alone.

Interviewer: You guys were out there on your own. What did you do for fun in the summer time or springtime? I know there were chores to do and other work, but when you could get away, and just go out...

Mary Ames: We'd go see a girlfriend or something, you know, go see neighbors.

Interviewer: Did you have anything that you remember, stories your mother might have told you, little things that she

remembered when she was a young girl growing up...when you worked beside her in the kitchen, or wherever, laundry, whatever you did, that she might want to share with you...

Mary Ames: Well, she was really little, her and Fannie...not Harned, Fellows, she married a Harned later, they liked to play together and they lived close to each other in McLane. She said that she and Fannie got behind the barn when they didn't know where they was, and they were crying, and the farmer neighbor come along and he took them out so they could see where they were—and they were behind the barn! They were like two, maybe.

Interviewer: Just little girls! They got disoriented, or lost their sense of...

Mary Ames: Yeah, they didn't know where they were, they were crying...

Interviewer: That's a young memory for your mother to have to remember and pass down to you. How precious! And then you yourself said you remembered your grandfather when you were how old?

Mary Ames: 18 months when he died.

Interviewer: Could you tell that again, please?

Mary Ames: I was 18 months old when my Grandfather Goodban died.

Interviewer: And you jumped on the bed...

Mary Ames: Oh, yes. I went into his bedroom on the first floor. And he had a desk by the window. And he was busy working at the desk. I had an awful time getting up on the bed, but I finally got up there, turned around and sat down and looked at him. And he isn't even looking at me, and I was hurt. And I got down and went out, and that's the only reason I remember him.

Interviewer: Yes. You remember him sitting at the desk...

Mary Ames: He must have paid attention to me other times.

Interviewer: Yes, for you to know he's up there. That's a young age to remember for a person. Do you remember him talking to you or walking with you anywhere, doing anything?

Mary Ames: Who, my Grandfather?

Interviewer: Yes.

Mary Ames: No, that's the only thing I remember. That's the only thing. The only thing I remember, I mean my mother told me, about three months after he had died I had asked "Where's Pop Pop?"

Interviewer: Ah!

Mary Ames: I missed him!

Interviewer: You missed him!

Mary Ames: Three months after.

Interviewer: Well, that was all right, if you knew in your child's memory, you knew that room in the hall was his room, and that desk, you remembered that was his desk and so you knew that's where he belonged.

Mary Ames: Yes. Right by the window.

Interviewer: By the window.

Mary Ames: He made butter before my father made butter. And the butter press had WWG on it. And it had a wheat, like a wheat, you know printed in...you could make it look like wheat on the butter. [Editor's note—not on video, W.W.G. stood for my grandfather's initials.]

Interviewer: Like a little design, like a wheat shock.

Mary Ames: Yeah, a design. And when my Dad had to stop making butter, Annie Strong, she said "Where will we get our butter? Your butter is so sweet and good!" So, I don't know...

Interviewer: Did he make it for himself, for your family or did he stop...?

Mary Ames: Yeah, he made it for ourselves.

Interviewer: So he just stopped for selling.

Mary Ames: Yes, because Lucille had scarlet fever, they made him stop.

Interviewer: Oh!

Mary Ames: But, they made him stop, but she was so far away and really nothing, no reason...

Interviewer: They were afraid it could contaminate other people by taking a product out of the home, and try to sell it, is that why?

Mary Ames: Maybe, I don't know.

Interviewer: Well, yeah, if you had quarantine, yes, you would not be permitted to take a product made from the home, a food, and sell it.

Mary Ames: Right. But nobody else got it.

Interviewer: In your neighborhood? No one? Your one sister was the one who got the scarlet fever?

Mary Ames: Yeah, she got it. But later, years later, my sister Esther got it.

Interviewer: Later? But not at the same time?

Mary Ames: No, no. And Lucille took care of her. And they're in there, and Lucille was real sick when she had hers, but Esther wasn't. And they were in there laughing, and I was wanting to go in there, but Mom said, "You can't go in there!"

Interviewer: At least two weeks, at least two weeks, until there was no fever or there was probably...they knew when...

Mary Ames: I don't know how that was. But, I maybe was four...[eight] I don't know how old I was.

Interviewer: But you could hear them, and you wanted in.

Mary Ames: Yes, I could hear them laughing, and you know, enjoying themselves, and I thought there was a lot of fun in there and I want to go in!

Interviewer: Yes, you don't want to miss! Why should you miss out? It's interesting that it was contained and that the family, that your mother knew to keep everyone isolated, and that was probably the best prevention. That was probably the best technique at the time.

Mary Ames: Yes. The rest of us never got it.

Interviewer: So it spared the rest of you.

Mary Ames: I don't know how Esther got it, you know, later.

Interviewer: Well, in contact possibly with someone that did or carried it, wherever she went. How old was she did come down with it?

Mary Ames: Just a young girl.

Interviewer: A very young girl too.

Interviewer: So you had family visit you there and friends at the holidays too? Do you remember gatherings at your farm?

Mary Ames: Oh, yes. My Uncle Billie and Aunt Mary, and they all came.

Interviewer: Billie and Mary, ok...

Mary Ames: And Uncle George and Aunt Sadie...

Interviewer: Uncle George and Aunt Sadie...

Mary Ames: Claire, Wilbur, and Arthur. There were three boys in that family. Then Uncle Billie had Richard and Bob Darling, his children. His children were adopted.

Interviewer: I see. So, you had a houseful at holidays. You must have really enjoyed it.

Mary Ames: Yes. And they made ice cream.

Interviewer: Oh, ice cream would be a treat!

Mary Ames: Yes, it took a lot [of work]...

Interviewer: Yes, a lot of cranking!

Mary Ames: Yes. And they did turns, you know. Oh, and Uncle Gary and Aunt Grace were there too, and Dorothy, their daughter, and Roger and Garold [Yaple], their sons. And they took turns turning it.

Interviewer: So you all did it together, you all had a hand in making this ice cream.

Mary Ames: And it was so good!

Interviewer: Yes! Was it vanilla, was it like a French vanilla?

Mary Ames: They had strawberries, as I remember.

Interviewer: Oh, you put strawberries in! What a special thing!

Mary Ames: Of course, we didn't have a refrigerator. It had to be eaten up.

Interviewer: Right away, yes.

Mary Ames: And in the summertime, when the pigs would have little ones, you know, they were so cute! They'd get out under the fence and run around our yard, and they were about that long.

Interviewer: Oh dear!

Mary Ames: And they were so cute! They were a lot of fun.

Interviewer: Hard to catch, though!

Mary Ames: Yeah. When they got hungry, they went back to mamma.

Interviewer: You had favorite little pet piglets, then?

Mary Ames: What?

Interviewer: You had favorites, little favorite pets out of them?

Mary Ames: Oh, no.

Interviewer: You just enjoyed watching them.

Mary Ames: Yeah, just a lot of pigs, we had a lot of them. And the chickens, they would have little ones too.

Interviewer: Yeah. They would be fun to watch.

Mary Ames: We had a brooder coop. We put them in there when they were nesting.

Interviewer: So you had little piglets that were fun and comical to watch...

Mary Ames: Yes. And Esther and I had to feed the chickens, take turns. Of course, the cracked corn, the windmill cut it up.

Interviewer: Oh, the windmill cut it up for them.

Mary Ames: And the little chicks could have that, the cracked corn.

Interviewer: How many windmills did you have again?

Mary Ames: How many chickens?

Interviewer: No, chickens and windmills. You had how many chickens?

Mary Ames: Oh, well we'd get several boxes of those [chickens], and there'd be about 25 to a box.

Interviewer: At one time, you had probably 50 maybe, do you remember?

Mary Ames: Yeah.

Interviewer: That's a lot of chickens to feed.

Mary Ames: Yes, yes. When the chickens got bigger and laid eggs, we had to gather the eggs. And there would be a chicken maybe that wanted to set on them. It wouldn't be her egg, but she wanted to take over and set on it. I'd have to reach in with a stick, hold their head down, reach under, and grab the egg.

Interviewer: I'll bet she gave you a hard time! She was squawking at you! Uh oh!

Mary Ames: I had to hold her head down or she'd peck!

Interviewer: Oh yes, she would have pecked you. Now where did you learn that trick? Did your father teach you that, or did you just...?

Mary Ames: Oh, I don't know.

Interviewer: You just knew that's what you had to do.

Mary Ames: Maybe. I don't remember.

Interviewer: How many eggs did you get out from under the hen?

Mary Ames: We knew that there was just one, because we kept getting them every day. But she was going to set on that one egg.

Interviewer: That's clever!

Mary Ames: One time, Esther, found one that was ready to hatch, and it was starting to peck [the shell], you know. And she held it, trying to keep it warm so it would come out. She didn't break it open.

Interviewer: She just held on to it.

Mary Ames: Yeah, she just held the egg.

Interviewer: How long did it take before the egg...?

Mary Ames: I don't remember. It must have been a long time!

Interviewer: Yes, because it's from the inside that they do that.

Mary Ames: You could see the little beak and all coming out.

Interviewer: Did you get a chance to watch the full little chick come out in time?

Mary Ames: Yes.

Interviewer: What a precious thing! That's awesome.

That's awesome. So that one got to live and grow to be an adult chicken, then. What a special thing, though, to be there at the right time, to know...

Mary Ames: Yes. In the spring, it was nice, because it was warm, and the rooster was crowing, and it was just a lot of fun.

Interviewer: Nice time to be on the farm.

Mary Ames: Yeah, and the hens were clucking.

Interviewer: You remember all the sounds, then. Those are good memories. Quiet? Probably quiet, no traffic.

Mary Ames: No, there was no traffic, hardly ever, unless there was a neighbor going by.

Interviewer: You have an excellent memory there.

Mary Ames: We had a tenant house that the hired man and his family lived in.

Interviewer: How far from your house was that?

Mary Ames: Oh, it was right here. [*Showing photo of home.*] You can see it here. Can you see it?

Interviewer: Oh, behind the tree? It's the house behind the tree.

Mary Ames: It's not there anymore.

Interviewer: Yes, it's behind the tree. [*giving directions to position of photo.*]

Mary Ames: And there were two barns behind that house, on further down.

Interviewer: So, it was on your father's property.

Mary Ames: Yes, it was our farm.

Interviewer: And you were able to give them a place to live, and then they worked. What kind of work, were they helping with farming, with the chores?

Mary Ames: Yes.

Interviewer: I see. Two men?

Mary Ames: No, one man and wife and three children.

Interviewer: Oh my. So, he worked for your Dad. Two hundred...how many acres did you say you had?

Mary Ames: 237 acres.

Interviewer: 237 acres. Yeah, you would need some help.

Mary Ames: I see now that he sold some off from that. We didn't get much for it back in '49 I think when my mother sold it.

Interviewer: Your mother sold the property in '49?

Mary Ames: Yeah, and she got \$9,000.00 for the whole thing

Interviewer: Buildings, home...

Mary Ames: Everything.

Interviewer: 237 acres, and she got \$9,000.00 for it.

Mary Ames: And he sold it just recently, some of it I don't know how much, for \$25,000.00. A piece of it, you know.

Interviewer: It's interesting that you remember the value of the land that your mother held on to it for that long and your family settled there, what time, about 18--?

Mary Ames: 1800s.

Interviewer: Yes, that's a long, long time to hang on to property.

Mary Ames: My great-grandfather came from England.

Interviewer: Yes. And he...

Mary Ames: He settled there.

Interviewer: And he had the original 237 acres.

Mary Ames: Yes. And he had a house on the other side of the road, from where the house is now. And when he moved into our house, you know, the new house, he took that house [and moved it] and put it in the back on this side of the road and used it for a pigpen!

Interviewer: Oh, ok. Like a newer one.

Mary Ames: Yeah, and he took the bottom part of the steps off that goes upstairs, so that, you know, the pigs couldn't get up there. And there were antiques up there. And this lady, my Mom knew about them, she come out and Mom took her up to see them. You know you had to get on a stool and get up to the first step. So, I wanted to see it too. And I went upstairs too. And there were some old boots that used to be my Dad's, and an iron bed, and I don't know what all was up there. And my Aunt Clara afterward said, "You shouldn't have sold that," because we didn't get much money for it.

Interviewer: You must have needed the money, though. She must have advertised maybe so this person...

Mary Ames: No, I don't think she did. Somehow she found out about it. I don't know who told her.

Interviewer: Just word of mouth, and just passed it on.

Mary Ames: Yeah. I don't know how much she got for it, though.

Interviewer: No, you wouldn't, as a little girl you wouldn't know. That's interesting.

You had a good, good rich history, a very long history. We have maybe four minutes left, if you wanted to say anything, this is your chance.

Mary Ames: Oh, when I was disking lots of times with the Farmall, my three-year younger brother, Kenneth, had a jalopy. Dad also had a jalopy, and it would go fast. And he was disking too, and he'd go down and around, and I was just poking along. And he'd come by and wave at me! The dust was flying!

Interviewer: Yeah, you probably had a lot of dust everywhere! You remember that! He's got to just whizzing on by his sister.

Mary Ames: I drove a car, a Model A, in the fields when I was 13. And he drove it. We took turns, and he was 10.

Interviewer: Oh my.

Mary Ames: And it was a shift. You know, you had to shift it.

Interviewer: So you had to learn to do the standard, yes, they were standard. That must have been difficult. That must have been a good way to learn to drive, in the field!

Mary Ames: We learned how to shift...

Interviewer: Yeah, that's not easy to do!

Mary Ames: I can do it now.

Interviewer: Yes!

Mary Ames: But I don't. I have a car, and it's automatic.

Interviewer: But what a great opportunity, though, all those things were like, you're learning, but they're fun as you're learning, they're fun. And you do it together

Mary Ames: One time I was driving the white truck [car] across the field and I went to shift into second and I hit the reverse instead and it backed right up and never stalled!

Interviewer: Yeah!

Mary Ames: I stopped it, and we sat there and laughed! We sat there and laughed and laughed and laughed!

Interviewer: Oh my goodness, yes, that's awesome!

Mary Ames: So you have to get over to shift into second, and this way was reverse!

Interviewer: Well, it wasn't what you expected to happen, huh? That must have been exciting, just shooting back!

Mary Ames: Yes, I stopped it immediately, but it was so funny!

Interviewer: It must have been.

Mary Ames: Because it didn't stall.

Interviewer: That's good.

Mary Ames: Yeah! There was no way.

Interviewer: Right, because they stall. You don't even have to try and they stall, I know. That's pretty nice. That's excellent, an excellent story. And you've given us a rich history. Can you think of anything else you want in it?

Because I want to catch it, so you can see, ok? Thank you.

Mary Ames: You're welcome.