

The Pittsfield Township Historical Society Oral History Project

Transcript of the oral interview with **Mary Campbell** conducted by Emily Salvette and Mary Lirones on **January 19, 2000**, at Miss Campbell's home in Saline. Miss Campbell reviewed the transcript on February 2, 2000. Additional comments from that session are italicized and inserted between brackets *[like this]*.



Interview Summary

Mary Alice Campbell was born at Cobblestone Farm on April 20, 1915. She is the daughter of Robert Clair Campbell and Carrie Read, whose family (Farnill) came to Pittsfield Township in 1833 from New York State. Cobblestone was a 275-acre farm located on the north side of Packard Road west of Platt. It was bought by Miss Campbell's grandfather in 1881. Some of the neighboring farms belonged to the Klager family, Nordmans, Hutzels, Ticknors, and Morgans. Both of Miss Campbell's parents were graduates of the University of Michigan. Miss Campbell grew up on the farm with her two brothers, William and George, who were twelve and ten years older than she.

Miss Campbell attended Stone School, University high school, Michigan State Normal College, and received a Masters degree from the University of Michigan. Her field of study was Mathematics and Natural Science. While she spent most of her life working on the farm, during World War II and for a time after, she worked at the Ann Arbor Bank as a bookkeeper. She was active in several community service organizations including the Red Cross, Sarah Caswell Angell Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, Home Economics Extension Clubs, and the historical societies of Washtenaw County and Pittsfield Township. She is a long-time member of St. Clare's of Assisi Episcopal Church.

Miss Campbell enjoyed visits with Dr. Steere, a Zoology professor at the university, who had traveled around the world collecting specimens for what is now the university's Natural Science Museum. She recalls Sunday drives with her family, traveling up on Geddes Road because her mother enjoyed the hills. In a post-war trip, she traveled by car to California with her aunt, uncle, and cousins, staying in motels of varying quality along the way.

Once, Henry Ford visited the farm to see an antique Marsh-Harvester reaper the Campbells owned. He was interested in acquiring it for Greenfield Village-Henry Ford Museum. Unfortunately, the barn where the reaper was stored burned before they got it to the Village. That fire destroyed all the barns on the property except the main barn, which sat across the field far enough away from the flames.

She remembers many people moving into the Township during World War II to work at the Willow Run Bomber plant. She also recalls that some farmers worked in factories during the day and did their farming work at night, happy for the weekly paycheck. After the war, she recalls that many people who had come here for war work stayed. The Township taxes increased and became a heavy burden for farmers. As she said, "...there were years when our farm income and our taxes were the same"(p.19). To meet the financial burden, she and her brothers sold off Cobblestone farm strip by strip. Finally, in the early 70's the City of Ann Arbor brought the house and what was left of the Campbell farm for parkland. Miss Campbell and her surviving brother George moved to Lodi Township around Christmas, 1972. She and her brother lived in Lodi Township for 25 years. After her brother's death, Miss Campbell moved to Saline where she lives with her cousin today.

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Pittsfield Township Historical Society Oral History Project

Side A

I Let me do this first. I just started the tape recorder, and the first thing I need to do is say that my name is Emily Salvette, and I'm here on January 19, 2000 at the home of Mary Campbell, we're doing an oral history for the Pittsfield Township Historical Society Oral History Project

Miss Campbell, what is your middle name?

R Alice.

I Mary Alice Campbell.

R Mother wanted me to be called Alice.

I Were you?

R No. I had two grandmothers named Mary, and you know.

I When were you born?

R April 20, 1915.

I Were you born in Ypsilanti or Pittsfield Township? Or—

R I was born in Cobblestone.

I Oh.

R Dr. Larie(?) came out and brought a trained nurse who stayed two weeks, and my uncle-doctor, didn't think much of having children in the hospital.

I I see. And repeat: Cobblestone Farm is your family home. Correct?

R Yes.

I And Cobblestone Farm is on Packard Road and in what is now the city of Ann Arbor. Who were your parents? What were their names?

R Robert Clair and Carrie Campbell. *[He was known as Clair because he had several first cousins with the name Robert]*

I Did they, had they lived in Pittsfield Township all their lives?

R Oh, Mother's mother was born in Pittsfield Township. Father was born in Ypsilanti.

I I see, and what was your mother's maiden name?

R Read. R-E-A-D.

I And when did her family come to Pittsfield Township? Do you happen to know?

R Well, her mother's people came in 1833. Their name was Farnill. They came from New York State.

I Farnill?

R Farnill.

I F—

R -A-R-N-I-L-L.

I And they came from New York State in about 1833?

R Yes.

I Did you grow up in Cobblestone Farm and spend most of your childhood there? Or all of it?

R Our parents went there when they were married. Clair's father's family had lived there for 17 years, in the 1890's, then they went back to Ypsi, and then when he was married a few years later, they just went to Cobblestone.

I So you grew up on a farm?

R Yes.

I What kinds of things did you raise there? Was it a—everything? Crops, animals?

R Both.

I What was it like? Where there a lot of neighbors around or no one or—

R Well, it was like a farm community. All our neighbors were farmers.

I Who were some of your neighbors?

R Well, the Klager family and the Nordmans and the Hutzels and the Ticknors, Morgans—

I Before we started, you were talking about the Morgan Family and that William McCalla, who farmed for many—

R His mother was a Morgan.

I Oh, I see.

R And his uncle was supervisor of Pittsfield for, what 20 or 30 years?

I (L) I don't know.

I When was that?

I (L) What was his uncle's name?

I Yeah, what was his uncle's name?

R Samuel Morgan.

I And was that in the '30's, '40's?

R It was in the '30's somewhere, I think.

I We're going to interview Mr. McCalla for this project also, so we'll make sure to ask him.

Where did you go to school, Mary?

R Stone School. Elementary School. When I was going there, they became a graded-district, so I went through the ninth-grade there, then I went to University High School.

I That's the University of Michigan High School.

R Yes.

I And where was that located at?

R Where the school of education is now.

I (L) On campus.

I On campus in the central campus.

R East University.

I Did anyone from your neighborhood go that school also?

R Oh, all my class went except one.

I So, it was common for people to go to high school by the time you were in school?

R Oh, yes, our parents went to high school

I Did they?

R My grandparents too.

I Did your parents go to the University?

R Yes. They graduated in '94 (1894).

I From Michigan? The University of Michigan.

R Mm-huh. Yes.

I What was their profession? Or professions?

R I think Father took a lot of philosophy. He had an uncle who was a philosophy professor in the East. Mother took some education.

I Did she ever teach?

R At Stone School for five years.

I Oh.

R Yeah, at least.

I Uh-huh. So you went to Stone School. Was it a one-room school when you were there or?

R The first year I was there, it was, and then they built the temporary building, and they used the one room, so there were four grades in each room, and then by the time I graduated from there, they had three classes in each room.

I Do you remember the names of any of your teachers?

R Oh, yes. Miss Wilkinson was the first one, and then Miss Greve, and then Mr. Lord, and they, this was when it was a normal training school, and then afterwards, there was Mr. Frinkle and Mr. Hale.

I Thanks. Once you finished there and went to the University High School, what year did you graduate from High School?

R '33.

I In 1933. I'm going to ask that we stop for just a second and stop recording, and we're going to test it and make sure it's working.

[Tape cuts off and on.]

I Okay, now we're starting back up. Everything's going fine with the tape, and I'm going to remember to speak a little louder for my questions. Did you have brothers and sisters, Miss Campbell?

R I had two brothers.

I Oh, and what were their names?

R William and George.

I Were they younger? Older?

R They were ten and twelve years older than I.

I And just talk a little bit about what they did, and did they go to Stone School also?
Did they—

R Yes. They went to Stone School. George went to Ypsilanti High School and Eastern, and they farmed, and George repaired radios and TVs.

I In Pittsfield Township area? Or—

R Yes.

I Did he move out? Okay. Uh-huh. Did your brother farm at Cobblestone?

R Oh, yes. That was our home.

I Sure.

R We had 275 acres.

I How long was that a working farm in your family?

R Oh, from the time my grandfather bought it in 1881 until—Goodness.

I (L) When did you and George move?

R In the '70's. '72, around Christmas time.

I (L) And you moved off the Campbell farm.

R Yes.

I (L) To—

R Lodi Township. 7147 Scio Church Road.

I Mm-huh.

I In 1972 then, is when you left.

I Okay.

I And George was farming it until then?

R Yes. Well, no, not the last few years because it was a park land.

I Oh, I see. So you had from the time it was your family farm, it then went immediately into park land. Okay. After you finished, Miss Campbell, at University School did you continue your education?

R I went to Michigan State Normal College.

I Uh-huh.

R I graduated there in '39.

I Mm-huh.

R Then later I went to the University and got a Master's degree.

I What was your field of study?

R Mathematics and Natural Science.

I Did you work in a job, in a profession? Or were you back to the farm? Or what did you do after you got done studying?

R Well, I worked for awhile there in the war at the Ann Arbor Bank.

I That's neat.

R In the bookkeeping—addresses.

I Did you like that? Was that interesting work? And—

R Oh, yes.

I Did you want to continue with it? Did you continue with it after the war?

R Well, I did for awhile. Then my aunt was going west, and they had a son in California, so I went with them. I didn't go back to work.

I I see. What was Pittsfield Township like during the war years? What do you remember from that time?

R Like any other place, I guess, during the war years.

I Can you describe it a little?

R And they wanted the farms to produce more, and there was a shortage in housing for the people who worked at the bomber plant.

I Were there generally shortages of food? Or just—

R Well—

I ...things to buy.

R Sugar was rationed. It wasn't—Was butter? I've forgotten. And meat.

I But, were you hungry?

R Oh, no! There was lots of beans and eggs and other things.

I Uh-huh. Well, after being out in California, you came back obviously and what had changed? How long were you in California?

R Oh, it was just a trip.

I It was just a trip out there. Uh-huh. Okay. Well, what were things like after the war. Was there a big boom in population? Or what happened?

R Well, when the soldiers came back and there was a shortage of the houses.

I Mm-huh. So what happened.

R Well, they built houses.

I Was Pittsfield Village part of that building?

R Yes, it was part of the war. Housing during the war, and a lot of the people at the bomber plant lived there.

I Did you have—

R A lot of people came up from the South.

I Mm-huh. Did you have extra people living at your house?

R No.

I Was it difficult for people to find jobs when they came back? Or was there plenty of business going on?

R Well, there was plenty of business, I think. Wasn't there?

I (L) I think so.

R Some of the jobs that had been put on hold during the war were—making cars for people instead of bombers or things for war.

I Mm-huh. People that you knew, maybe your circle of friends, were they mostly involved in farming? Or maybe they had shops or maybe they worked at the auto companies. Do you remember what a lot of them—

R Well, they did both.

I So it was very, still, really pretty diverse.

R Mm-huh. Some of the farmers during the war, worked in a factory during the day and did farming at night.

I Well, did you notice a change in Pittsfield after the war because so many people came back and needed housing and so—

R Well, a lot of people came up from the South and stayed.

I Uh-huh. And the farmland in Pittsfield Township, did it start to dwindle and—

R Yes. And the taxes got so high compared to what the farmer got for his produce that he couldn't keep his farm.

I Did that happen to people you knew?

R The whole neighborhood.

I It sounds like a really devastating thing to have had happen, and what did those people do? Did they auction off the property and go move into the city?

R Well, they sold it to realtors usually.

I Mm-huh. How did you feel about that?

R Well, there wasn't much choice. And we sold the farm strip by strip.

I Mm-huh. so that you could pay the taxes on it.

R Yes.

I Well, let's move on then because the Township is growing obviously at this point. What do you recall about the government of the Township and who were some of the supervisors and assessors and all the other jobs that go on in managing a township. Do you remember any—

R Well, one of the Ticknors was a supervisor for awhile, and then Samuel Morgan. Father was a Justice of the Peace.

I Okay.

R So he was on the Town Board in those days.

I Were you on any of these—Were you elected to Supervisor or were you on any of these committees are any thing like that?

R No.

I Were you involved in other volunteer organizations in the community? Maybe with your church.

R Oh, yes, and I worked for the Red Cross.

I Did you know Alva Gordon Sink?

R Oh, I saw her.

I She was involved with the Red Cross.

R She was involved with the DAR too.

I Oh, was she. Are you a DAR?

R Yes.

I Do you belong to the Sarah Caswell Angell Chapter?

R Yes. You know what?

I I'm a DAR too.

R Yeah.

I And is that an activity that you participated in a lot or did you go the meetings? Did they meet at the City Club at that time?

R Yes.

I The Ann Arbor Women's City Club

R Yes.

I So we have the DAR, the Red Cross. Did you attend church? What church were you or are you a—

R St. Clare's of Assisi Episcopal Church.

I Is that the one on Packard?

R Yes.

I That's a temple and a—

R Temple Beth Emeth.

I Yeah. Wow. How long? That's a very old church. How long has it been—at least they have a very old building on that property.

R Yes. The church is not that old.

I Okay, alright. I know the building is relatively new.

R Well, Dr. Wisdom was very instrumental in starting that church-owned the Anderson Home, the old building there.

I Oh, I see. Has it always been the dual, with the temple? Or is that relatively recent?

R Well, that happened a little while after it was formed, yes.

I In the '70's?

R I'm not sure now.

I That's an interesting—the whole concept is just fascinating to me. And it's a lovely place, and it has a school in it now I noticed, so—

R Of course, the temple meets on Friday through Saturday, and then we're there on Sunday.

I That works really well.

R And they have a cross that they can put a curtain in front of.

I Mm-huh.

R And a light that burns all the time.

I Mm-huh. That's wonderful. Do you still get to church?

R When I can get a ride. My cousin takes me sometimes when she's here on Sunday.

I Mm-huh. Good. Were there other organizations that—I'm sure you were involved in the Historical Association of one form or another. Can you talk about that a little bit?

R Oh. Was I involved a lot?

I (L) Yes.

I Everybody I talked to says, "Yes."

I (L) Washtenaw County Historical Society, I believe.

R In Pittsfield.

I When was the Pittsfield Historical Group started?

R Ray Ticknor had a lot to do with that. I'm not sure when they—There must be some secretary's notes somewhere. Maybe *[Carl]* Tim Ticknor could tell. *{His grandfather was Carl Ernst}*

I Hmm. It's gone in a couple different spurts from what I understand. Were you involved in organizing from the beginning? Whenever that was.

R Oh, I don't know if I was organizing it at the beginning. I think some of the township officers had something to do with it.

I Well, the Washtenaw Historical Society has been around—

R For a very long time.

I Did you do oral histories for them years ago like we're doing today?

R I did an oral history for somebody, but I'm not sure who.

I Okay. Mary Lirones is also here helping this interview. Mary, what questions do you have for Miss Campbell?

I (L) I was wondering when was it decided that Cobblestone Farm would be a park? Did the city buy the land from you and that's when you moved?

[Meowing.]

R Kitty? You want out? Was in '72.

I (L) Was it the city of Ann Arbor that bought the land.

R Yes.

I Would you like to stop for a minute and see what kitty wants? Here, just a moment. We need to get you unhooked because you're—

[Tape cuts off and on.]

I Okay, we're back to taping. The cat has been cared for

R A big nuisance.

I We were talking about Cobblestone Farm and the city of Ann Arbor had bought that from your family. Is that when it was?

R Yes.

I Or did you deed it to them? Did you donate it? Or did they buy it?

R They bought it.

I I see.

I (L) And you and George were the owners at that time.

R Yes.

I After you left Cobblestone Farm, you went to Scio Township, did you say?

R In Lodi.

I Lodi Township.

R We were right on the township line. We were on the Lodi side. Scio is across the road.

I I see. And then you lived there for awhile, and then—

R Twenty-four and a half years.

I In a house? Or—

R Yeah.

I (L) You and George lived together.

R Mm-huh.

I Had he ever been married?

R No.

I And you have never been married.

R No.

I And then did you move from there to here? To this house?

R I did.

I Okay.

R He died while we lived there.

I Do you have family in this area? Is that how you chose Saline to come to?

R Sorry.(?) Yes. Mm-huh. I have a cousin who lives with me.

I Oh, I see. Okay. And what's the address here?

R 439 Hollywood Drive.

I One of the things that has changed a lot about Pittsfield Township is the amount of traffic and the number of roads. One of the roads I remember going in was US-23.

R Yes. That was one of the main roads. And of course, it was originally the road from Detroit to Chicago.

I I think that was I-94. 23 is the one that goes up North and down to Florida.

R Yeah.

I But 94 must have gone through. Do you remember when that happened? When they—

R No, that was there from territorial(?) times.

I (L) US-12, I think she's thinking of.

I Yeah.

R Oh, old 23.

I Yeah, old 23.

I Old 23, right, is Michigan Avenue, and that's been there forever.

I (L) Old 23 goes north and south. Michigan Avenue goes east and west.

I Oh, that's right. I'm sorry.

I (L) Yeah. But US-12 was an Indian trail originally. Do you remember when they bought up all the farms to build US-23? That must have been quite a—It must have shaken up the neighborhood considerably.

R Well, I think they mostly just at that first time, just bought the old-way, didn't they? Yes.

I (L) When they built the big four-lane highway, that took up a lot of land.

R Yeah, that was later.

I (L) Yeah. Do you remember farms being disrupted and people having to leave?

R Well, I think they had been expecting it for years.

I (L) Oh.

I I think it, as I remember, it was in the '60's, middle '60's when they were actually building, so they must have been buying property in the '50's for that to happen. Do you remember any of the farm families around—Wasn't there a Morgan Family farm on Morgan road, that got split?

R You'd have to ask them.

I Okay. Because as you go down all those places up and down US-23. There's half and half.

I (L) Yes.

I All the way down, there's open field on one side and the other, so obviously some properties got split up.

I Were you a member of the Pittsfield Grange?

R No.

I Or the Farm Bureau?

R No.

I I see.

R My cousins were, but we weren't.

I (L) When you came back from California did you just live on the farm and work on the farm then? You didn't go back to work?

R No. Well, they were selling off the farm and everything, so. And then we moved.

I How long were you actually farming-farming? As opposed to just kind of keeping the house? Was it working until about the middle '50's?

R I think so.

I (L) What happened to your brother William?

R He died.

I (L) How old was he?

R He was in his sixties.

I (L) Did he live and farm at Cobblestone also then?

R He was the main farmer.

I Oh, he was the main farmer, not George.

R George farmed too, but he also had his radio and television business.

I Oh.

I Where did he do that? Did he have a shop in town?

R No. He did it at home.

I I see. Did you spend a lot of time doing your main shopping and was your town Ann Arbor? Was that—

R Yes.

I And did you go to the University to performances there and social activities there?

R Not very often.

I Okay.

R Parking was always such a problem.

I I'd like everybody to note that parking was a problem in Ann Arbor.

I (L) Forever.

I Forever. It hasn't gotten any better. So where would you go to get your groceries, for example. Was there a store you remember?

R Well, we'd go down to the Darlington Groceries sometimes at Packard and Platt and Read's store and Grinnen(?) & Clague in Ann Arbor.

I Where was that in Ann Arbor? Do you remember?

R It was on Packard near what? Mr. Clague was on the Board of Education, wasn't he?

I (L) I don't know.

I It sounds like Clague Junior High might have been named for him.

R It could be.

I C-L-A-U-G—No. C-L-A-G-U-E.

R U-E.

I Yeah, I bet, and they had a shop?

R They had a grocery store.

I Yeah.

R They had good meat.

I What other kind of social activities were interesting in the township as you were growing up.

R Well, a lot of the people belonged to the Grange. I belonged to extension clubs.

I Oh, uh-huh. Were you involved in 4-H activities.

[Meowing]

R Some.

I A leader?

R No I wasn't a leader.

I I see. Mm-huh.

R I was a leader in Home Economics.

I Oh.

I (L) Oh.

R That's still going.

I (L) Is it? Your club?

R They don't call it "extension" anymore. It's Family Community Education.

I Oh.

R And Michigan State still has its sign there.

I Did you work out of that county building downtown in Ann Arbor? That's where I remember the cooperative extension—

R Oh, yes.

I ...being down there.

R That office was there.

I I'm not sure that it's still there.

R No, it's not. It's out at—what do you call that center?

I Out on Hogback?

R Yes.

I Oh. My 4-H days are long gone. Well, obviously the township has changed a lot since when you were growing up. Most people were farmers and then there was a lot of farmland in the township, and then now if there are three working farms in Pittsfield Township, I'd be surprised at this point.

R There's Bill McCalla.

I Yeah. He says his son farms.

R George? Mm-huh.

I Yeah, between here and Milan. Although a lot of the farmers farm land outside the township.

R Mm-huh.

I That's how —

R They have farmlands scattered all over.

I Right. Because right around the McCalla farm now is industrial.

I Mm-huh.

I Can you tell us a little bit about what you saw happening, some of the reasons why the changes took place, some of the factors behind the loss of farmland? Can you just talk a little bit.

R Well, the high taxes. People who just own a house and lot could vote for higher taxes, and there were years when our farm income and our taxes were the same.

I Mm-huh.

I Oh. So that seems like the primary factor to you.

R Yes.

I Wow.

R It was for our family

I Ann Arbor—Was Cobblestone in Pittsfield Township? Is it—it's in Ann Arbor now, isn't it?

R Yes.

I Ann Arbor annexed more of the surrounding—

R Ann Arbor bought the property, and they annexed it later.

I Oh, I see. So it wasn't a factor that Ann Arbor's taxes were so much higher than the annexed?

R Well, when they first bought the property, it was still in Pittsfield, and all of a sudden Ann Arbor realized they were paying taxes to Pittsfield Township, and so they annexed it fairly soon.

I Well, so that's a change in the farming. What about education in the area. That's changed a lot.

R Oh, yes. We walked to school?

I You walked from Cobblestone to Stone School?

R Half a mile.

I You couldn't even get across the street now.

I No.

R They had, they made a cinder track. Now there was a—the railroad when I was going to school. the Streetcar.

I Okay. Oh.

R And then on the far side of the left Streetcar, they, I guess, PTA built this cinder path for the kids to walk.

I Mm-huh. Wow, that's good. But there are a lot more schools now and tons more kids.

R Oh, yes.

I What other significant changes can you think about? In your opinion.

R Well, it just developed into a city.

[Meowing]

R Kitty. You're being a frightful nuisance.

I What are some of the old names that you remember?

R You mean in the community?

I In the community. Let's make sure that we're covering everyone.

R Well, there's the Klager Family and their farm had been the Collin's farm, and they were active in the Underground Railroad, I guess.

I Where was that farm located.

R Packard at Platt on the Northwest corner where—Have you been do you know Ben Klager at Eastern? He was a superintendent in Bay City for awhile and then he was a vice president at Eastern.

I So the Klager Family.

R And the Godfreys. And the Nordmans. And the Rose Family. They lived across the road in the house that Heman Ticknor built after he moved out of Cobblestone. It was a small copy of Cobblestone. The Hutzels and Clagues and Camps and—

I Do you remember anybody in the township from your memory who was—Oh, I don't know—famous or noteworthy or—Everybody's important, but I'm wondering if there were any—

R Ben Klager was a superintendent of the schools at Bay City.

I Yeah. Okay. I'm—just in case there's—You can put it in some historical context of people who might not know a lot about the township.

R Miss Ticknor taught at Hamilton Business College.

I Where was that?

R That was upstairs, they were, what? Stadium and what street?

I(L) It was downtown Ann Arbor, wasn't it?

R State Street.

I(L) Yeah, I've heard about it.

R Mm-huh.

I What is it? Was it a competitor to Cleary? Or was it—

R Yes.

I I see. Okay.

R I don't know if that was a competitor, but it was another—

I Another business school

R Mm-huh. We thought of Cleary as being Ypsilanti.

I Was there a lot of interaction between people from Ypsilanti and people from out in Saline and people from, you know, the community where you were? Maybe

because of the streetcars or maybe because you were all in similar activities or do you remember that? Or did people pretty much stick close to home?

R Well, they sort of stuck close to home, but there was interaction too. And the streetcars ran until what?—'29, forty years. There were interurbans, Detroit to Jackson, and then you could connect to Kalamazoo and other places.

I Were you able to ride the streetcars as a girl? Did you—or did your mom have to escort you? Or—

R Well, for quite awhile and my aunt and by the time I was in high school, the streetcars had been replaced with buses.

I Oh. Yeah, I was going to say '29, you would have been 14 years old. Too young to be visiting people in Saline.

R No, well, I didn't have people in Saline at that time to visit.

I Oh.

R I mean—

I (L) I remember George talking about knowing Henry Ford. Is that correct?

R Well, Henry Ford came out to the farm once. He was interested in what kind of a reaper did we have.

I (L) What kind of what?

R A reaper.

I Oh, a reaper.

R Marsh-Harvester that we had. And Mr. Ford came out to look at it in person, but the barn burned before they got it to Greenfield Village, so.

I (L) So it was an antique reaper that you had?

R Yes.

I (L) And he was interested in taking it to Henry Ford Village.

R Yes.

I Yeah.

R And I knew a man in Ypsi who was in charge of collecting the things we saw put out because that was the second one that had had disaster happen to it after he was going to take it.

I (L) Oh, dear.

I Oh, my. Isn't that amazing.

I (L) So, your barn burned down?

R Yes.

I (L) What caused the fire?

R I don't know.

I (L) It just happened, huh?

R It was the whole big barn, the whole top of it was afire by the time we knew it.

I Hmm.

R And then all the barns *[burned except the big one. It was way across the field. Someone from the Ann Arbor Fire Department came out...]*

Side B

R And then he suggested that and it saved the house.

I (L) Oh, they suggested, doing what?

R Putting rugs or our comforters out on the roof and wetting them.

I (L) Oh.

R And that would save water rather than just pouring it on the shingles. And the next day, the cistern ran out.

I (L) Oh. So you were about out of water then.

R Mm-huh.

[Tape cuts off and on.]

R ...one under the kitchen, but the well, the main well, was out in the fire.

I (L) Hmm.

I Did that happen later? Like in the '60's time or were you actively farming at the time when all those [inaudible]

R Oh, yes. That was in the '20's, I think.

I (L) Yeah, if Henry Ford came out, it would—well, it wouldn't have been that early, I don't think. Maybe the '40's?

R No.

I (L) Of course, it's your farm. How would I know?

I But that must have been a heavy, heavy loss for you

R Oh, yes.

I Did you rebuild those buildings?

R No.

I (L) So the barns—Were you pretty much done farming by that time, so—

R No.

I (L) No. But you didn't need those barns.

R Well, we didn't have them!

I (L) Didn't have them.

I Well, that gets to: what happened during the Depression here and in your family? Were you affected very much by it?

R Judy(?)—

[Tape cuts off and on.]

I I was asking about the Depression Era. Did you—I don't know what question to ask. How did it affect your family? And how did it affect the neighborhood?

R Well, it affected everybody. And what did they have? --People couldn't pay their taxes for a few years, and they—I forgot what they call that. And then they let them pay bit by bit later.

I Oh.

R So they didn't. Sell. sell the farm for taxes. They did some of them, yes.

I Did you notice a lot of—It sounds like from what I have been told by like my parents that it was everybody—you never really noticed anything because everybody was pretty much in the same circumstances. Everybody came to school with patched clothes and trying to do—nobody had—It just wasn't—they didn't notice what was going on. But did you see things like soup kitchens, maybe, that would suggest real need in a community?

R I think they did have a place where they'd feed out food in Ann Arbor, didn't they?

I (L) That I don't know.

I But this wasn't one of the areas that was badly hit, as dramatically hit as maybe in the plains-states,

R No.

I Although I would assume the people who worked for the auto industry and worked in the car factories maybe weren't producing as many cars?

R No. They were laid off for weeks or months or—On the other hand some of them were having such a time with farming that they got jobs in the factories.

I Did that happen too with a lot of the young people? Did they want to—they maybe see that they could make more money in the factories?

R Well, of course, it was nice to have a weekly paycheck.

I I can imagine there was some tensions in some families because they wanted to keep the farm, but the kids wanted to leave.

R Mm. Well, I think usually the kids wanted to keep the farm too.

I Okay. Well, we've been talking about an hour now, and Mary, what do you—can you think of any other questions?

I (L) Anything else you remember that you want to tell us about? Or do you think we've covered everything?

R I just don't know.

I (L) Somebody in your family was a doctor. Weren't they?

R My uncle.

I (L) Your uncle. And did he work a University Hospital? Or—

R He was professor of anatomy at the University for 17 years.

I (L) Oh. Of Matty? Maternal—Was that maternal medicine?

R No, medicine. The whole school.

I (L) Okay.

R And then he retired from that.

I (L) And was he your family doctor?

R I guess so.

I He's the doctor who delivered you.

R No.

I No. Okay.

R No. Our doctor is a very—Uncle Will was sort of more retired. *[I think he was living in Muskegon at that time.]*

I Can you tell us his name.

R William Aulls—Dr. William Aulls Campbell—*[Grandmother Campbell's maiden name—I believe it's Irish. Mary Rebecca Aulls was her name.]*

I And did he live in Ann Arbor or did he live in Pittsfield?

R He lived in Ann Arbor. When he was teaching, he had a place in Pittsfield.

I (L) Did any of you ever have to have your appendix or tonsils or anything like that removed?

R No. And they took a dim view of that.

I (L) Yeah.

R But they did want appendix out when they needed to be.

I (L) Yeah, but nobody had to have an operation that you recall?

R Not that our uncle recommended, no.

I Did you know anyone? Maybe some of your schoolmates, who got to eat lots of ice cream because they had their tonsils out and everybody was jealous.

R No, I don't know if they got ice cream or not.

I (L) I just wondered where those things were done. Was there a St. Joe's Hospital in those days?

R Oh, yes.

I (L) There was.

R Oh, yes.

I (L) The sisters started that hospital.

R Yes. But they had—The University had a hospital too.

I (L) So the two hospitals have been in Ann Arbor for a very long time then.

R Yes, mm-huh. Then finally they built the big one.

I (L) Mm-huh.

I Getting bigger every day.

I (L) I think that's about all I—

I Any other memories that you would like to share?

R I don't know that they're very important.

I Well, we'd love to hear them.

R We always enjoyed talking with Dr. Steere who lived up on Packard and had—

I (L) He was a natural scientist, right?

R Zoology professor.

I (L) I just read an article about him in the *Ann Arbor Observer* last night.

R Oh, did you?

I (L) And his farm was near yours?

R Well, it was near where St. Clare's is.

I (L) Okay. He lost his job with the University.

R And he had gone up the Amazon.

I (L) Mm-huh. He went on lots of trips collecting specimens for what's now the—

R Museum.

I (L) Yeah, what?

R Natural Science.

I (L) Natural Science Museum. So you knew Dr. Steere.

R Oh, yes.

I (L) And his wife.

R Yes.

I (L) Uh-huh.

R And his son married a cousin.

I (L) Oh, their son married a cousin of yours?

R Mm-huh.

I (L) Huh! It said in the article that he wasn't a real good farmer, so they didn't make a very good living on the farm.

R Well, I don't know if they were really trying to be make-a-living farmers.

I (L) Mm-huh. In the article it said that when he was able to sell his land, he finally had enough money to live on, but they really had a hard time after he lost his job.

R Yes, and one of his daughters worked in the library.

I (L) Huh. Well, that's—

I Did he—So you used to go visiting and talk with him about his travels and—

R Well.

I Or see him at family things or—

R Well, we used to go visiting once in awhile, yes, and then he had a—when he was traveling, he had sent back letters to the Ann Arbor paper, and they made a scrap book of those. I think, it's at the—I don't know what museum now.

I In Ann Arbor?

R Mm-huh.

I (L) That's interesting. Emily is from the Hopp Family. You knew some Hopps too, right?

R Oh, yes.

I Mm-huh. My dad was Clayton Hopp and my grandmother was Ruth Hopp, who was here at the Evangelical Home for many years.

R What was her maiden name?

I (L) Ruth Hopp.

I I know it. It's just not. It's spinning in there. It's just not coming down.

R Yes, I knew the Hopps.

I Yes. I'm sorry. My mother's going to hear this tape, and she's going to have a fit. McAllister.

I Oh.

I They were from Fowlerville, but my grandmother—so when she was Ruth McAllister was a teacher at the Robert's School, which was at Carpenter and Michigan Ave, just a little one room school house there, and my grandfather's family had a farm on Michigan Avenue up by where US-23 cuts through now and apparently some of the brothers were at that school, and that's how she met my grandfather.

R That's interesting.

I Did you have anything else that you had—Even though you didn't think it was important, we thought Dr. Steere's story was very important. What else?

R Well, of course, their grandson was Head of the New York Botanical Gardens.

I (L) The Steere's grandson?

R William Campbell Steere. Mm-huh. For quite awhile.

I So he would have been a distant relative of yours then?

R First cousin—what? Once or twice removed.

I (L) Yeah. Huh.

R His wife still lives in Brooklyn.

I (L) Brooklyn, New York.

R Mm-huh.

I (L) Mm-huh.

R That's where the Botanical Garden was.

I Well, I think that covers what we can do for today.

I (L) Yep.

I I appreciate so much the opportunity to meet you and talk with you and hearing your memories. We want to make sure that we give you the opportunity to take a look at the transcript from this interview and perhaps if there's some things that you recall, you can jot those notes. Okay?

R Okay.

I Alright. Well, thank you.

[Tape cuts off and on.]

R ...Prohibition.

I(L) Uh-huh. So.

I You know that was something I had forgotten to even think about was Prohibition.

I(L) What did you think of Prohibition. Do you remember?

R Well, I thought what my parents thought, of course.

I(L) Your parents what?

R What my parents thought, of course.

I(L) And they were for it? Or against it.

R They were for it.

I(L) For Prohibition.

I Okay. Well—yeah because--When did it go into effect? In '13 or '14?

I Do you—

[Both talking at once.]

I(L) We didn't ask. We didn't even ask her about getting the vote. Do you remember voting for the first time?

R Well, yes, I remember voting for the first time, but I was young enough so women were voting before I—

I(L) Before you were old enough.

R I remember my aunts and mother talking about voting, I guess, the very first time, and Mother said, oh, she didn't think she would, and my aunt said—she didn't say wolf, but she [inaudible] well, she was going, and—well, Mother wasn't, so Mother always went to vote. *[My mother was born in 1871]*

I (L) What year were you born again?

R 1915.

I (L) 1915, so yeah. My mother was born in 1902, so she would talk about—she was in 1920, when they got the vote, she was 18. She wasn't quite old enough to vote. But—

I Uh-huh.

I (L) ...she was quite excited about it. Yeah.

I That's interesting and that's good that you mentioned that because that's one of the things that we need to incorporate.

I (L) Yeah. Yeah, we got to make a list of—

I Yeah.

I All these—We forget about all these really monumental things that have happened in the world, and—

R Well, that was one of the monumental for women.

I (L) Yes, it was.

I Sure. Now did you always vote in—Was that something that was pretty important in your family?

R Father took me over to Mr. Ellsworth's to register when I was old enough.

I (L) Uh-huh. Mr. Ellsworth was—

R The Township Clerk.

I (L) And that's—Ellsworth Road is named after, huh?

R Yes, Dan Ellsworth.

I Was the Township Office at the corner there in where the old building used to be at the corner of Ellsworth and State Street, I think?

R They didn't have a building.

I Oh!

I (L) Didn't have a building.

I (L) They just did it out of their home?

R Yes.

I (L) Yeah.

I Oh, for Heaven sake.

I (L) Huh. So you went to Mr. Ellsworth's home to register.

R Mm-huh.

I (L) Well.

I And that would have been—Let's see. Fifteen and twenty-one is thirty-six.

I So in 1936 we were still voting in people's homes.

I (L) Well registering at any rate.

I Registering in people's homes.

I (L) Where did you go to vote then?

R The Town Hall.

I (L) Oh, so there was a Town Hall to vote at.

R Oh, sure. The old Township Hall.

I (L) And where was that? Was it at the corner of State and Ellsworth?

R No.

I (L) No.

R It was over near the Morgan's.

I (L) Yes, yes. It's on Morgan road. Yeah. They talk about—there's somebody living there now. There's somebody living in that.

R Yes, I think so.

I (L) Yeah.

I Morgan.

R There was a school house right across. The Town Hall School was right across and then they moved that down to—

I (L) Eastern.

R Eastern.

I (L) Yeah. The—

I Morgan Road and what?

I (L) Morgan and—

R [inaudible] school.

I (L) Morgan. It's on Morgan Road and what's that road that goes—Now I'm having a block.

I Is it on the east side or the west side of 23?

I (L) It would be on the west side.

I On the west side.

I (L) Yeah. And the school was on the Geddes Farm.

R Yes.

I (L) We forgot to talk about the Geddeses. Did you know the Geddeses?

R Oh, yes.

I (L) Yeah. So, and the Township Hall was right across the street from the school. Yeah, I know where that is.

I And that's where you'd vote.

R Yes.

I (L) So.

I Okay, what other big ones are we missing?

I This is too much.

I (L) Yep, yep. Well, that's what—we were practicing on you, so we get a feel for what we need to ask people about.

I Yeah.

I (L) I was just thinking about my mother and what was really important in her life.

I Yeah.

I (L) And getting the vote was a big deal. And it's hard to believe that it was 1920 before women got the vote. That isn't all that long ago.

I Well, that's right. But a lot of change has happened in this century, hasn't it.

I (L) Yeah. Do you remember your first car?

R That was before I was born.

I (L) I mean when you started driving what kind of car did you have?

R I never drove.

I (L) You never drove, okay. Did you have a Model-A or Model-T?

R We had Dodges. Father bought things from the Staebblers.

I (L) From the Staebblers.

R Mm-huh.

I (L) And they were Dodge dealers.

R Yeah, and then what did we have? And then finally we had an old REO.

I (L) A REO.

R Mm-huh.

I (L) Did you get a lot of flat tires?

R More than we wanted.

I (L) And you got stuck a lot? The roads were pretty bad.

R Mm, not too bad.

I (L) No, in the thirties I guess they were, yeah, pretty good by that time. My mother talked about getting stuck a lot when she first started driving, which was probably in the early twenties.

R And when we had a flat tire, we might jack it up.

I Your brother George would drive? I assume the men drove.

R Father drove.

I (L) Did George drive?

R Yeah.

I (L) Yeah.

R In a REO [*We had Dodges, then Oaklands, then REOs. The Staebler carried them all*]

I (L) A REO?

R Yeah.

I (L) Yeah.

R Whatever car we had.

I Did you used to take driving trips? My grandmother talks about packing up the whole family to go from Belleville to Jackson on a Sunday.

R Yes, take a Sunday ride.

I (L) Uh-huh. And where were your favorite places to go on Sunday?

R Over around Geddes, I guess.

I (L) Mm-huh.

R The hills. Mother liked hills.

I (L) When you went to California, did you drive?

R Yes, my aunt drove.

I Oh.

R And my uncle.

I (L) Your aunt and your uncle. And how long did it take to get there?

R I've forgotten.

I (L) That was a long trip in those days.

R Yes, we went down 66.

I (L) What—do you—

R And my uncle had a son out there.

I (L) In California.

R Yeah. He worked for Johnson & Johnson.

I Hmm. How long did you stay in California?

R I think we were there a week.

I Oh.

I (L) For a week?!

R Mm-huh.

I Okay, okay.

I (L) So you stayed in motels as you went—Did they have motels in those days?

R Oh, yes.

I (L) They did.

R Yes. My cousin went with us, my uncle's daughter—well, two daughters, and after the first night she said she would pick out the next motel because this one we stayed at was right at the top of a hill and you'd hear these trucks in the night coming up

the hill, and then there was a railroad light unit that was going “Toot-too” every little while.

I (L) Things haven’t changed a whole lot with motels.

R Uh-huh. It was so—She would find a motel that was not on a railroad.

I (L) Or a hill.

R Yes.

I (L) You’d think the motel owners would have thought of that.

I I’m thinking age-wise. Were your brothers involved in World War II? Were they in the service?

R No, they were farmers.

I (L) They got exempted, didn’t they?

R Yes.

I (L) Yeah.

R Of course, my oldest brother was too old.

I Yeah, yeah, that’s right. They were significantly—

R And George was exempted, but we were milking 50 cows then *[by hand. We never did run electricity out to the big barn.]*

I) Mm-huh

I (L) Now, I think I’m out of questions.

I Okay. I’m sure if we sat here longer, we could just talk all day. Alright. I’m really going to stop it now, but everybody has to stop talking -