

Transcript  
Interview with May and Cecil Crawford  
Laura Edwards

First Interview, Tape 1, Side A:

LE: I was wondering if you could describe your childhood: what kind of work you did, what you all did for fun, and the kind of family activities that you did?

Cecil: Back in them days it was cotton. Everybody raised cotton. Down here two miles from here, or two and a half, there was a cotton gin. They'd gin over two hundred bales of cotton, just in the neighborhood. You might say that there were cotton gins all over the country back then. Most of it was cotton, and then various corn, and plenty of corn. They'd kept the chickens and hogs, and milk cows, and gardens and orchards. We pretty well had a living at home. They'd take their own wheat to the mill, and have it ground, their own corn and have it ground. They'd have their meat. They didn't buy much.

LE: When you all harvested, did any of your neighbors help?

Cecil: Yeah, cornshuckings, everybody had cornshuckings. But now cotton, that was women's work. (laughter)

May: (laughter) Oh, come on now, Cecil, you picked cotton. He's just teasing you. Everybody picked cotton.

You know what cornshucking is? You'd gather the corn in and have it hauled to the barn and the neighbors would come and help one person shuck and then go to another neighbor's house and help shuck.

LE: Was it like a party?

May: Well, there was a meal to go along with it. So it was

a fun time, a social time.

Cecil: Big farmers would have all day shuckings, and the smaller farmers would have a half-a-day shucking. But there's always a meal in there. (laughter)

May: Sometimes they'd shuck at night, just have one great big shucking. And the ladies would have pies and stuff. Back before our day, what did they have there, didn't they have dances or something, after those corn shuckings at night? Candy-pullings or something. But that's a generation before us. That would be our parents. That's not in our day.

LE: What other kind of community gatherings did you have?

Cecil: Oh the men had a big time. And then if a neighbor got sick, you'd go in and harvest his crop. Now that was customary. I've been woodcutting for ( ) out there, and he died about six months or so later. Of course, you'd go in there, a bunch of men having the biggest time of all cutting wood, and hauling, getting him up some fire wood. And I expect him, and I doubt that he ever got out of the yard any more before he died. He got on the wagon, and rode on the wagon while we loaded the wood, but the old man couldn't hardly get on the wagon by himself. And I bet that's the last time that man ever got out of his house, more than two or three hundred yards. So it was more or less customary that if you got sick or something the neighbors would come in and help.

May: They still do that. You're talking about social things aren't you? Did we tell you we used to have a school up here? That prepared folks to go to college. Of course there

would be school activities.

LE: What kind of school activities?

May: I don't go that far back. Didn't they have what they call field day and play ball and that kind of thing? Contests with other schools, wasn't there a day in the year that they would do that? That goes back before us.

Cecil: Well, it would come and go. There would be a few years where there would be a ball team, then for a few years there wouldn't. Then another crop of boys would come along and they'd get interested in ball, the they'd carry it along for a few years. But way back yonder when that school was at its height, I think they really had a good ball club. I hear tell they'd go as far as Burlington to play ball.

LE: Did the rest of the community go to the games and cheer them on?

Cecil: Yes, I think so. Yes.

LE: Were there dances at the school or anything like that?

Cecil: Not in our time.

May: There used to be parties. You know, the young people would have a party at their home, in the summer time, well, and the winter time too.

Cecil: There wasn't much dancing in this neighborhood. Maybe once in a while, but it was at the home and not in the schoolhouse.

LE: What kind of activities did the church do?

Cecil: Well you always had a revival meeting in the middle of the summer. That was all the in the day way back yonder. Then the automobiles come along and people would rather go back

at night so it was more in the night. Then the most of them, the ladies starting getting jobs in town, and a lot of the men, and that done away with the morning service, so now its night service. And now it looks like its going out of style completely.

May: Revival time used to be a special time in a social way. People would visit if they wanted to visit kin or a relative in this community, they'd come the week of revival. Often times they'd go to church, and visit around.

LE: So it would be families from all around?

May: Oh absolutely. Somebody would visit somebody in the community and attend the church and get to see people.

Carrying down a lunch for about three or four or five days, that was a big job without reffridgeration. Come home, kill a chicken and dress it and be careful so it won't spoil before the next morning.

Cecil: When we were very small, a lot of families had individual tables. Now, they have just one big table over there at the church. Back then, maybe two or three families would go in, through family connections, or kinfolk, and you'd have your tables all over the church. They'd be all around.

May: Along that line, we'd have homecoming day as far back, further back, than I can remember. It was always the third Sunday in May. It used to be two, the morning and the afternoon service. Now you just have the morning service.

Cecil: That old man I was telling you about, he said he never had known it to rain on that day, the third Sunday in May,

that would interfere with the service. It might rain early that morning, or late that evening, but never during the noon hour.

May: And at Christmas time, at the school, they used to have a Christmas program. They'd have a Christmas tree that would reach way up yonder. That was a sight to me. You know, it wasn't a little tree, six feet tall, they'd have one that would reach way up.

LE: My Grandmother remembers that too in her church. When she was little she said that they had this huge tree.

May: Yes, and they'd tie the gifts on the tree.

LE: Right. And since she was really small, she said that the tree was just huge to her.

May: I know.

LE: She said that the children in the Sunday school used to go up to the tree to get their presents off.

LE: What did you do with your friends? What kind of games did you play?

Cecil: They didn't play much games back then except baseball.

May: You just sort of played with your own little family and your neighbors.

Cecil: It used to be horseshoes and marbles for boys. That's about the only games I reckon they had.

May: You just played, nothing organized. You just made it up.

LE: Sounds like what I did. Its amazing now to look at my little cousins because everthing that they play, their parents buy for them.

Cecil: Well, the children now have more toys, the whole

year round its like Christmas time.

LE: What do you like best about living in Cane Crêek?

Cecil: Haven't lived nowhere else so I don't know.

LE: Did you ever think about moving somewhere else?

Cecil and May: No.

May: We're used to these wide open spaces. If you go by these apartments down there by Chapel Hill, I wouldn't live in one of those places. I couldn't stand it.

Cecil: I go down there, and I'm ready to come back.

Cecil: It used to be that hunting was a great trade for boys and young men. Rabbit hunting. A lot of families would have dogs and there was lot's of rabbits. And every boy had his rabbit ( ) back in my school days. I reckon every boy had a bunch of rabbit ( ). And you could catch one of the rabbits too. Me and my brother caught three in the morning, many a morning. Not every morning. But come a good frosty morning, we could get three at a time, sometimes.

May: You'd sell them for twenty five cents a piece, is that what you got for them?

Cecil: (laughter) Yeah, that's all I got for them, twenty five cents a piece...But twenty five cents was a lot more money then, than it is now. If a boy had a quarter, he thought he had a whole lot of money.

May: They'd dress those rabbits and hang them in the smokehouse. I don't know if we've mentioned about our smokehouse. Then Mr. Davis would pick them up, didn't he, every week, when he'd come to get the butter and eggs, wasn't that how you got rid of them?



Cecil: Yes.

May: They'd hang those rabbits out there in that smokehouse. And they kept. The weather was cold enough that they didn't spoil.

LE: What kind of work did you do when you were younger?

Cecil: In the winter time, we cleared land. In the summer time, you'd do farm work. Through the summer, in July and August, we didn't do much of anything except go to church once a week. (inaudible)

LE: (to May) How was your work different from Mr. Crawford's?

May: Well I did field work just like he did, although I never plowed. I used the hoe to chop, and I picked cotton. I never pulled corn. But I helped my mother in the house.

LE: So you got to do both?

May: I got to do both. And he never learned to cook.

LE: My Father's just learning how to cook. My Mother's making him. He comes up with some funny looking stuff sometimes. You should see what we have for dinner when my Father cooks.

Cecil: And I bet its good too.

LE: Actually, it is. Its just...

May: Different.

LE: Yes, different.

Cecil: I remember, my Mammy, along in the spring of the year, would be out across the fields hunting something to cook. (inaudible) Well anything she could cook, you know something that's green in the spring of the year, its mighty scarce. There

at one time she'd be out hunting something green to cook. Now you go to the store to buy such a thing.

LE: Where did you go to do your shopping?

Cecil: Most of them would go to the country store down there, Mr. Reynold's, down there in Teer. But there was little stores all over the area that just carried a few things, sugar and coffee and plow points and a few things of that away. But Mr. Reynolds, he run a good store. You could get most anything you want down there.

LE: (to May) I think you were telling me about Mr. Reynolds and how he ran his store - that he was a different kind of store owner than your average A&P store owner.

May: He made his living that way, but he didn't try to get every dollar he could get. I think that was what I was trying to say. He was a generous fellow. Sometimes my Daddy would get five cents worth of candy and he'd just give ten or fifteen cents worth. He just kept putting it in the bag.

Cecil: Well you could get a nice sack of candy for a dime.

May: But he just added on. If it was for a child, he'd just, well he didn't care.

Cecil: You bought molasses by the barrel at the time and they'd have a thing to crank it. Turn it several turns, and you'd have your gallon of molasses. He had a good shoe trade down there. Now, he sold just about anything you'd want in the way of plow points and all the way on up to dry goods, cloth. Now he didn't have no ready-made clothes. But shoes, he had a good shoe trade. All the boys wore...

May: He had some fabric. You weren't choicely. You just



took what he had, I mean the selection of what he had. But he didn't have much. Well, you just made yourself satisfied, you see.

But for real shopping for clothes we went to ( ) mostly didn't we? When I was little?

Cecil: Way back yonder I reckon we did.

May: Before we got a car. I was eleven years old when we got a car. We'd go in a wagon. I think we went to ( ) then.

Cecil: But in them days, you went in the wagon most of the time.

May: When he got a car, I think we started going to Graham.

Cecil: He died just before the depression didn't he?

May: Who?

Cecil: Reynolds.

May: Oh, he died in 1929. But the store kept being operated.

Cecil: It didn't operate many years. And then we got to go into town. Until we got to go into town, I never did have a pair of shoes that cost over five dollars. (laughter) But now, a good pair of everyday men's shoes cost you way up towards fifty dollars. I mean a good pair. We used to go to Graham to the gentleman up there who ran the store and he sold good shoes for five dollars a pair up there for a number of years. And then they got to starting to climbing, and then they've just gone clean out of sight.

May: There was a little store up here at the corner.

Cecil: There was a store.

May: But I don't remember us patronizing that. He had corn meal. I think we'd go up there and get corn ground, meal for chickens. Did he grind corn for meal to cook bread? Maybe so. Its almost too far back for me. But I don't remember us buying much out of the grocery end.

Cecil: They'd put these big grist mills up and down the creek and they'd have these little gasoline engines, to grind the corn then. That put the water power ones out of business.

May: His wife, well he had one leg, he had an artificial leg, he couldn't work like the average person. His wife, of course, cooked on a woodburning stove. But she'd get those cobs, a sack full of cobs, and she'd carry them on her back and she'd cook with cobs. And you know cobs burn very quickly. It made the job a lot harder to keep that heat even.

LE: I have a hard enough time, sometimes, cooking on just an electric stove.

May: You should try a wood burning stove and cobs makes it even worse.

Cecil: He had a little box that would hold a tenth of a bushel. You didn't pay to have him grind it. You'd have a little box that would hold a tenth and that was his total for grinding. The wheat was done the same way. They'd have a little total box that would hold one tenth of a bushel. They'd strike it off level so no money would pass at all.

LE: What kind of changes have you noticed in the community over the years?

Cecil: Changes? Why everything has changed. Well, the corn shuckings and wheat thrashings have gone completely out of

business. You do your own work. The people don't swap work cause its done with machinery.

May: Corn is shucked in the field. You have the equipment that goes down the row, you know, and so is the wheat.

Cecil: Now they've come along with another that shells it in the field. You don't even have to haul it up, it shells, it does it all in one lick. And then they have driers. I never heard tell of driers way back yonder. To get the corn up, you waited until the frost before we even started. Long about the middle of October, was when we got out there and started to gather the corn. If you notice the corn cribs was made with slats and all for the air to pass through and you can get the corn up a little bit greener by doing that rather than putting it in a building where it'd be tight. Now that they shell it in the field, and run it through the driers, and dry it out so it would keep, they can start shelling earlier than they did way back yonder.

May: One big change, people used to go to the neighbor's house and visit, sit down and talk a while.

Cecil: What's that?

May: One big change is this visiting to a neighbor's house on a rainy day.

Cecil: Used to be you'd visit around the neighborhood. Now your friends maybe live way off in another town, way off.

May: But local visiting, if somebody's sick or something, OK. But just to go and sit and talk a while... And now you've got a television.

Cecil: And we've got a telephone.

May: That part has changed tremendously.

Cecil: I can remember when there was three daily newspapers in the neighborhood. And now I reckon just about every family takes a daily paper. But I can remember when there was just three.

(Continuation of the discussion of changes in the community - see tape index.)

First Interview, Tape 1, Side B:

LE: What were you saying about them (the new residents) being some of the strongest fighters against the resevoir?

May: Some of them worked very hard. And we got acquainted with several people we probably wouldn't have - or not as closely associated with them as we have. The fight has drawn a lot of us a lot closer together.

LE: Some of the people who joined the church, did that come as a result of community activities during the resevoir fight or were they members before?

May: Some who worked hard do not come to our church. Maybe they go to other churches. We have churches all around.

LE: Do you see that as a positive part of the fight, getting to know more people here?

May: Well, the cooperation and the congenial part of it - yes. You won't hear any quarrel with us. (laughter)

LE: What kind of activities did you all do to raise money to support the fight?

May: We had the farm-city day in the spring and the crafts fair in the fall. They had babeques and cooked pigs and made their own barbeque to sell. Some of the men stayed up all night working in the kitchen. We quilted a quilt every year. We haven't this year, but every year before we - the wómen - got together and quilted a quilt to be raffled off. Those two days were the big fund raising things.

Cecil: unmm-hmm (in agreement)

LE: What did you all do for those?

May: What did we do?

LE: Yes.

May: Well I made the quilts. And I went in early and helped (at the farm-city days and the craft fairs). They had it organized so the ladies could go in and work two hours, or three, and then another group would come in so it wasn't so hard. My time was early in the morning, but I stayed there all day because I enjoyed it. Cecil helped chop meat for the barbeque. What else did you do? You did little things, but I can't think now what they were, in connection with those days. We just tried to cooperate.

Cecil: It was sort of a neighborhood project. We did whatever needed to be done.

May: In the fall we'd furnish vegetables, baked goods, and pies, you know, the bake sale. We'd participate in all of that.

LE: Getting back to the changes in the area. Are there any other noticeable changes in the area? They don't go to the neighborhood school anymore?

May: No. The school's gone. They go to Hillsborough. Well one thing, they used to meet to clean off the cemetery up here. And about everything that was done for the church was volunteer work. Now its hired. They'd rather pay money as to go and work, Cecil says. (laughter) So most of it is hired. That's one change.

Cecil: It used to be the graves was mounded up. And they were cleaned off for homecoming too, wouldn't they?

May: Yes.

Cecil: (Homecoming was) the third Sunday in May. And there wasn't anything more done to it much...

May: There was in the middle of summer, during revival. Twice a year they'd clean (the graves). But they didn't want any grass growing. They'd scrape that grass off.

Cecil: They'd scrape it with a hoe and get the grass off of it all. Now some years they didn't get all of it done. What do you call it, ( ). There'd be ( ) out in the graveyard. (laughter).

May: It wasn't very well kept. But what was done (was volunteer work). Well now, later on Mr. Lawson was hired. But even then didn't they go in sometimes and make the people help?

Cecil: I think so.

May: And the women would meet in the spring of the year and clean the church yard. And now we don't do that. Its hired now.

Cecil: It was getting to be more than the women wanted to do, you see. To keep the graveyard was annoying. Way back yonder it was a graveyard. Now its a cemetery. (laughter) Now that's a change.



May: Well along that line, friends would go dig a grave, always.

Cecil: They were good. All of them...

May: Always. Four, five, or six, eight, ten, whatever. Now they never (do that). Its hired.

Cecil: And four men would dig a grave quicker than fourteen men.

May: (laughter) Because they get to talking.

Cecil: They get to talking. (laughter) They sit around instead of digging. When its four, there's two of them laying around and the rest, or the other two are digging. Well four men will dig a grave quicker than fourteen. (laughter)

LE: When people went into town and started working, did that change community relations around here?

May: No.

Cecil: What?

LE: (repeats the question)

Cecil: Its a gradual change all the time. So you never did konw when it changed. It was real gradual.

May: We're still friends, and we still communicate, and there's still that neighborliness there, but we're just doing different work. I don't quite get your point.

LE: I was just wondering if that was a turning point; if that (people working outside the community) had changed the area.

May: It was such a gradual thing.

LE: Its hard to pin it down?

May: Yes.

LE: Did the fight with OWASA change your idea about this area and the people here in the community? Getting to know people, did that change your attitudes toward the new people?

May: The fight with OAWASA? Change our attitudes toward the people who moved in?

Cecil: I don't think so.

LE: How did you feel when the new people started moving in?

Cecil: Well, if I was down there, I'd (inaudible). No I don't think its changed at all.

LE: How do you feel about the resevoir coming in?

May: Its hard to answer that. It hasn't got here yet, so we don't quite know what the results will be. Of course we've got that little dam. Its all filled up and they're using water from it, I understand. But the dam big hasn't come, and there's no back water here up on our land - or what was our land. I don't quite know... Until it gets here, I don't quite know how to answer your question. We expect mosquitoes and that type of a nuisance, when the water builds up and it drains down.

LE: Do you think its going to change the relationships between the people in the area?

May: (to Cecil) What do you think?

Cecil: I don't think I heard the question.

LE: (repeats the question)

Cecil: No, I don't think so. Now the neighborhood didn't want it. And one reason is that its of no use to us. You see, we've already got our water supply. There might be some day that irrigation might be profitable. But right now, I don't think it is, or except for certain individuals, maybe. Now here, we're at

the upper end of it and there could be a problem with mosquitoes coming in. There comes a flood and when that water hits that still water, the sediments will settle and in a few years, there could be a swamp here. And you get mosquitoes. Now you got that to think about. But its an unknown. We don't know, what's going to happen. At out age, we got as much (land) as we can work anyway. We don't (even) work what we have left. but on the other hand, if we was half as old as we are now, we would hate to lose that a heap worse, because we would want more land rather than less land. But at our age, it doesn't make too much difference.

May: We don't know about the recreational aspects. That's what a lot of people feared. It seems as if they'd have to have the same restriction here as they do at university lake. It seems as if they'd both have to have the same restrictions.

(Discussion of community change: crime, increased traffic on the road - and cooperatives - see tape index)

LE: Did both of you all attend the local school?

May: That's as far as we went.

LE: Did that go up to grade...

May: Through nine, ninth grade. We could have gone to Hillsborough, but our Daddy thought we ought to be out there picking cotton. (laughter) This was a six-months school, and that (the Hillsborough school) was nine months. He didn't encourage us to go. But we got a good ninth grade.

LE: School was harder back then, I think, than it is now.

May: I think we got it more thoroughly than some who went to Hillsborough.

LE: Yes. It was a six-months term? And it started in...?

May: School started... Well, didn't we get about two months before Christmas?

Cecil: We started in...

May: ...the middle of October?

Cecil: The middle of October, yes. Now we didn't go very much during cotton picking. There'd be about two weeks where half the school would be gone.

May: We'd go every rainy day, or if the cotton was wet. We went enough that we kept up with the class.

Cecil: And then it was ended about April...

May: The first of April. We didn't go much after...

Cecil: Maybe, the end of April, I reckon.

May: The end of April?

LE: I bet a lot of people now would like the six months instead of the nine months. (laughter)

May: We didn't have snow days. If it snowed and you couldn't get there, you didn't go.

Cecil: You'd have to put on your shoes, you couldn't go barefoot to go to school. Now that's why I was always trying to get out. (laughter)

LE: You discussed this the other day, I think, but how did the crops change over the years?

Cecil: Well they use so much more fertilizer now than they did back then. The farmers plant hybrid seed corn. My Daddy always went to the corn crib and picked him out his seed corn.

And they went from horses to tractors. The big farmers is got bigger and the little ones is quit and went to public work.

May: The use of chemicals to control weeds. They spray the ground so there won't be any weeds. We used to have to use a hoe.

Cecil: The Kirks had all the land on the left hand side and they fixed their land good. On the right hand side, ( ) sod-planted his and and put the chemicals to it and fertilized it and never did touch it. And I'll be dogged if it didn't make just as good a corn or better as where they farmed it like they used to farm it.

(Continuation of discussion of changes in farming - churning - and the vegetable gardern - see index - end of first interview)

Second Interview, Tape 1, Side A:

(Discussion of the AAA, mechanization, daily farm work, marketing cotton and dairy products, canning, quilting, and making clothes - see tape index)

LE: When the cotton was laid by, what kind of field work did you do?

Cecil: There wasn't much work done. They laid it by about the fourth of July. They tried to get to it by the fourth of July, but sometimes it was a little later than that. And then the men didn't do nothing from then to fodder-pulling (?) time in September, early September, except go to revival meetings one



week and (inaudible). (laughter) I'll tell you, the men don't work for nothing in the middle of the summer, except to sow a turnip patch. But that was a very big undertaking, we thought. You get your horses out, and break you up a patch. And then you have manure to put on it. And then you air it. That's a day's work to sow a turnip patch.

May: You had a little hay to get up. That must have been in the middle of summer.

Cecil: Yes, but that wasn't over two or three days, that was one day or two days work.

May: That was hard work.

Cecil: Yes, its hard work and hot work too. But there wasn't much work done back then in the summer time, unless it was carpentry work, or something special sometime.

LE: How did you do the hay before you had a bailer?

May: With a pitchfork. Are you familiar with a pitchfork?

LE: Yes.

Cecil: Well that's the way we did it.

May: Well, we'd mow it and then come along and rake it with a horse drawn rake. That would make little rows. And then we'd pile those rows up and then get a pitchfork and throw it on the wagon. Somebody would get on the wagon and tramp it so you could get more on there. And then we'd haul it up to the barn. It was hard to fork that off because it would hang together. You'd walk around in it and it packs it down and it hangs together. You'd throw it up into the barn loft and somebody up there throws it over somewhere else. And I was up there tramping it down.

(laughter) Up to my knees under the barn roof in eighty degrees

or more.

(Discussion of barns)

LE: When did you get a bailer?

Cecil: We got that in '52...

May: '52. Didn't you say '52? I think I heard you say '52. The early '50s.

Cecil: But they was beginning to come around before that. We had one of our neighbors doing bails and so forth... I believe that was in '48, 1948 or '49, something along that. It was three or four years (after that) before we ever got one.

LE: (to May) What did you do when the cotton was laid by? Did you have more free time then too?

May: There was always the gardening. You forget that there was gardening to do all the time. I helped my Mother with the housework, the washing and the ironing. Everything had to be ironed.

LE: No permanent press?

May: No... (And there was) canning and fruit to dry. We dried fruit. There was work to do every day...

Cecil: The women had just as much work to do in the summer time as they did anytime, near abouts. Canning and...

May: I had more work to do in the summer than I did in the winter.

Cecil: They dried fruit. (inaudible) So they dried that. In the summertime, it was time to get that fruit in.

LE: How did you dry fruit? Did you do it outside?

May: We did it outside.

LE: Did the birds come and try to get it all or anything?

May: No, the birds weren't a problem. You may not like this, but the flies would swarm over (the fruit). But that didn't bother us because you washed the fruit before you cooked it.

LE: How much canning did you do?

May: Oh, not a lot. We let the beans dry, the butter beans, and the other beans. We used dry beans. We didn't can a lot. We canned fruit. We canned more fruit, but not a lot of vegetables. Not back when you're talking about. But gradually as years went by, we got a pressure canner and we canned more such as that.

LE: Was that because it was easier with the pressure canner?

May: I guess we just learned more about it. Yes, it was easier, but... I joined the Home Demonstration Club, and we got to learning more about doing these things. The ladies started doing things that they didn't do prior to that.

LE: What is the Home Demonstration Club?

May: Its an Extension club. They changed the name.

LE: What else did they do? What else did you do there?  
What other activities did they do?

May: They'd teach you different aspects of house keeping. I learned how to refinish furniture. I learned more about sewing. And they'd teach you about cooking as well as canning...nutrition.

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LE: When did they start this?

May: It was in the '30s in Orange County. It may have been 1937. Orange Grove was one of the first clubs in the County. It seems like it might have been in 1937, or about then.

LE: Did a lot of people go from the community?

May: There wouldn't have been, because we didn't have that many women in the community. But the leading women, most of them went. We had ten or twelve.

LE: Did they have anything like that parallel for men?

May: Not locally.

LE: When did you get electricity?

Cecil: We got that in '46...

May: We got it in '48, but it was in the community several years earlier.

(Discussion of building the power lines in the area)

LE: Did that (electricity) change the work on the farm quite a bit?

Cecil: Well, in the house you got lights and then...

May: You had lights; you could see. (laughter)

Cecil: And then everybody wanted another room like the gals use, you come to find that they had a washing machine, and everything...even a cook stove... (laughter)

May: Refridgeration came before stoves...radios. We stepped up quite a bit. You've got to have electricity to get these things that people in town have.

LE: I imagine it was really labor saving for house work. I can't imagine...

May: As time went on... In the beginning, Mother got an electric iron. So in the beginning, women started getting electric irons.

LE: Those other ones (irons), aren't they really heavy?

May: Yes they're heavy. Are you familiar with them?

LE: Yes.

May: In the summer time, you didn't have to have a fire to warm one up. You could iron and keep comfortable with an electric iron.

LE: So irons were one of the first things?

May: That was one of the first things... lights, an iron, and a radio. And then...

Cecil: And then you had water pumps and putting in...

May: It was quite a while before water pumps came.

Cecil: And then indoor plumbing.

May: It's still further down the line.

Cecil: Then washing machines. It was a gradual thing... And then the young ones, they'd get the jobs in town and...

May: Electric stoves...dishwashers... I don't think many people have dishwashers. Maybe they've got dishwashers, I don't know. Clothes driers, that's one of the later things.

Cecil: Later on, some of them got these deep freezers.

May: Freezers. She doesn't know the meaning of deep freeze.

LE: Yes. My Mother does a lot of freezing.

May: Cecil wants to call them deep freezers. That's what

they first called them when they got out.

LE: My Grandmother calls them that too. You got a refridgerator before you got an electric stove?

May: Oh yes. It was one of the first things we got.

(end of tape - before I got the tape turned over, May continued her comments on refridgeration and the changes refridgeration made in food preparation)

Tape 2, Side B:

LE: You were saying about the cellar?

May: We kept our milk and butter in there. You'd take them in there and go bring them out... There was a lot of traveling to make the butter. In the summer time, if we kept food over to the next day, it had to go to the cellar.

LE: I don't think people realize how much electricity has helped in housework.

May: You would think that they couldn't live (without it). And they couldn't if they had to go back. There have been big changes because of electricity.

LE: Did you have a separate day for wash?

May: A certain day?

LE: My grandmother always had... I think it was **Thursday** that she always did the wash.

May: I think we used liked to like to do it on **Monday**, if the weather was right, unless there was some other **job** that needed to be done, like gardening.



LE: How did you do the wash?

May: I was too little to wash on the board when she got a hand washing machine. She got that when I was about nine or ten years old. You know, a hand powered thing.

LE: Yes.

May: We used that until we got the electric machine.

LE: Was it a wringer washer?

May: Yes. We had a wringer on that hand powered washing machine. And then when we bought the (electric) washing machine, it was a wringer.

LE: I think my Grandmother also used a hand wringer washer. She used it for a long time.

May: Its a lot better than doing it by hand.

(Discussion of soap making, the Farm Home Administration, cars, crops grown while dairying, the reasons for the switch to dairying, the cotton allotment during the Depression, the Depression, changes in grinding wheat and corn, and the Farmer's Exchange - see tape index)

End of Interview