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### An Oral History Report: Mrs. Frances Passell

Karla McAtee

*Fort Hays State University*

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An Oral History Report:

Mrs. Frances Passell

In partial fulfillment

of

the requirements

for

History of American Education

Dr. Allan Miller

by

Karla McAtee

December 4, 1984

## INTERVIEW

- Q. "This is an interview with Mrs. Passell."  
"When did you go to school?"
- A. "You mean grade school?"
- Q. "Yea, grade school."
- A. "Well, I was born in 1908 and six years after that would be 1914, wouldn't it? I started in the first grade."
- Q. "Okay. What time did school start and end?"
- A. "It started at 9:00 o'clock and ended at 4:00."
- Q. "4:00. What did you do during recess and noon hour?"
- A. "Well, at recess we went out and played games, if it was-- the weather was decent we'd go outside and if not we played indoor games. Different games like, oh, we sometimes played Blackman they called it. We had a base and run through and somebody was it and they would catch you. Various other games. In the winter, we would play Fox and Geese in the snow."
- Q. "What did you bring for lunch?"
- A. "Well, sandwiches, a apple and that's about all. We had water. There was a---some of the schools where I went they had a pump, a well, which pumped the water. Otherwise, the teacher would either bring it or they'd have to go to a neighbors and get water. Every student had a cup and they had a dipper in the pail and we drank out of that."
- Q. "How did you find out that you were not having school that day? Like if the weather was too bad or--"
- A. "Well, I guess I don't really know. We just didn't go if the weather was too bad, I guess. Although, sometimes there'd be a teacher would stay at one of the parents. We had some--we had telephones sometimes. Sometimes we didn't. I can remember when my parents didn't have a telephone but we a---I guess they would come notify you."
- Q. "How long did your school year run?"
- A. "Eight months most of the time in the county schools to start later it was nine months."

- Q. "What rewards for grades and attendance did you get from the teacher and parents?"
- A. "Well, our grades were mostly on the percentage basis like 85%, 90%, like that, and awards I don't know that we got any awards for attendance or anything like that. We did have--- we got at the end of school we always got a little booklet. It had the teachers picture and the names of all the students. There's one in here. An envelope of things here. There's the teacher's picture. That's what we got as a souvenir at the close of school and here's another one. I took that picture off of this one and sent it to my grandsons cause they had never heard of a country school either."
- Q. "What punishments were you given? If, any?"
- A. "Oh, stay in after school or stay in at recess was the main one I think. Once in awhile they'd get a paddling I guess. I never did."
- Q. "Let's see. What tricks did you pull on the teacher? Again, if any?"
- A. "I don't think very many. Not that I remember. Most of the time we had pretty good teachers. We didn't get by with very much."
- Q. "What were the first subjects and the daily routine?"
- A. "Well, let's see, we'd have some kind of opening exercises. Sometimes she'd read a book, be reading a story to us, so much each day and then we'd have our reading and math, English and spelling, geography. We had agriculture."
- Q. "What did you do in agriculture, just?"
- A. "Oh, it was just the study of different farm animals and a crops and that. Most of us, who went to a country school, lived on a farm."
- Q. "Yea. Did you have any special duties at school?"
- A. "Well, yes we did. We had certain ones of us would do certain things. Maybe help with the cleaning and like that."
- Q. "What special things do you remember about the teachers?"
- A. "Well, you were really pretty close to your teacher because there weren't too many in the school when I went and I never remember any that I didn't like."
- Q. "Pretty strict?"
- A. "Yes, they were."

- Q. "What fun things did you do?"
- A. "Well, just the games mostly. Indoor and outdoor games. Oh, we had spelling bees sometimes on Friday afternoons. We'd have spelling bees and geography matches. Question box was another thing we'd have."
- Q. "A what?"
- A. "A question box."
- Q. "Oh."
- A. "We'd each put in--wrote questions, you know, so many and put them in a box and then we'd draw them out and each had a turn to answer those questions."
- Q. "Oh, that sounds like fun. Okay, now this is going on to a teacher. What years did you teach?"
- A. "Well, I started in 1927 and I taught eight years, '34. 1934."  
(Should be 1935)
- Q. "Okay. What was your pay?"
- A. "Well, I started out at \$85 a month and the--I the-- last year I taught I got \$75. The Depression came along and they kept cutting our wages. The highest I got as a rural teacher was \$100 a month."
- Q. "How did you start out the day?"
- A. "Well, just pretty much like I did when I--like I did when I was in school. We had opening exercises. We had your lessons. We did our assignments and subjects like reading, math, geography, spelling, English, those subjects. We had to do a program."
- Q. "Do you remember what order you taught the subjects or?"
- A. "Well, I usually had reading first and then math, then spelling was usually at the end of the day pretty much and the other subjects in the middle of the day after lunch."
- Q. "What kind of punishments did you dole out?"
- A. "Well, I just never did have to punish to much. I always kept a pretty strict room to start with but if I had to I kept them in. Staying in mostly. That's what they disliked the most was to stay in and the rest went out to play."
- Q. "How did you get your pay checks?"

- A. "Well, we had a board of education and one was the--there was a clerk and treasurer and the clerk, they'd make out an order and give it to the treasurer and then they'd bring it to school or send it with a student."
- Q. "How often did you meet with the school board?"
- A. "Not very often."
- Q. "How did you get your school supplies?"
- A. "Well, they furnished certain things, the school board did. Some things there were. Some things we wanted that they didn't that I bought myself out of my meager salary."
- Q. "Okay. How much schooling did you have in order to teach? Now that was, you went straight from--"
- A. "Grade school eight grades and four years of high school to start, when I started."
- Q. "Okay, and where did you stay while you were teaching?"
- A. "You boarded with one of the families in the district. You paid about \$20 a month for board and room out of your salary so you can see how much you had left."
- Q. "Not much. Okay, let's see, describe the school day including curriculum and how did the regular day for the student fit into the school day? I suppose like with their farming or work at home or whatever."
- A. "Well, most of the students before my time, probably some of them, had to stay out and work on the farm but we didn't not any of my pupils did. They went to school all day. If they did any work, they did it after school at home or chores and things like that. None of them stayed out of school to work that I ever had at school."
- Q. "Can you describe the school day like when you went for lunch and how long you took and--"
- A. "Well, we didn't go anywhere we stayed in the schoolhouse and ate our lunch and brought a our dinner pail or sack. Most of them had dinner pails and sat down and ate our lunch and then we'd go out and play. I usually played with the students, went out to play with them because you had less problems if you were out there with them."
- Q. "How long did they get for recess?"
- A. "Well, 15 minutes for recess but we had an hour for lunch and we'd have about a half hour to play games."

- Q. "Can you describe types of teachers and their teaching ways or habits?"
- A. "Well, I can do that better when I was a County Superintendent probably. Some of them had good discipline and some didn't. They didn't seem to know how to. The secret to that was to keep them real busy. You have to work hard yourself. As hard or harder than they do generally."
- Q. "Then they don't have time to misbehave."
- A. "Don't have time no. They'd get interested. We played geography games and we played multiplication games and spelling games and I use to drill them a lot on. I said I didn't learn my combinations and my multiplication tables just automatically fast, until I taught them cause I went over them so many times that they became and always have since been automatic with me."
- Q. "What kind of textbooks did you use?"
- A. "Well, the state had approved a list of textbooks and we got them, our textbooks, through the County Superintendent's office, that institute and if I remember I think the town bought those books."
- Q. "How did you study?"
- A. "Well, in rural school you have not too many in each class and you have all eight grades in one room see and the problem is to get all the classes in. You have quite a bit of--you don't have much time to for individual help cause you have to have so many classes and your classes won't last sometimes over like 15 minutes and then you have to assign a lesson for the next day and then they can spend that time getting that ready. That's the big problem is to get all of your classes in in a day."
- Q. "Did you cover much area in each class?"
- A. "Well, we had a course of study from the State Department of Education that we had to complete in a year. During the year you had in there each subject you had to do and what you were to do each week and each month. You were suppose to have that finished by the end of the year."
- Q. "Was the school house used for community social activities, as well as for the education?"
- A. "Yes it was. It had, oh, dinners, school dinners. We had programs. We used to have a program at Christmas time and in the spring. We'd have a program before the last day of school and sometimes in between. We'd put on the program. The teacher and the students. Mostly the students but the teacher got it ready, you know. They learned little plays."

They were like, we called them dialogues. Sing songs. We sang. Some teachers could play. There were organs in the school, old organs, that you pumped and some of them could play and some couldn't. If you couldn't, why you sang without it or used a record. I had some records. We'd have a, oh, a parents would come to the Christmas program and we'd have a Christmas tree and gift exchange. We drew names for our Christmas gifts."

Q. "The teacher did too?"

A. "Well, no."

Q. "Just the students."

A. "The students. They usually each gave the teacher something, generally."

Q. "What were the boundaries of the schools jurisdiction and how were they set in the beginning?"

A. "Well, they were divided up into districts by the state and each district had so many quarters of land in their district. At one time, there were 95 rural school districts in Thomas County at one time and then later on they consolidated with the town schools. That's how it was decided then by the legislature."

Q. "Did the boundaries change throughout the schools existence?"

A. "Not very much. The only time was when they got ready and they wanted to go in with the town school. They'd consolidate but they had to vote on that. They voted it in and then they would be attached to the urban district."

Q. "So this was mainly due to increased population?"

A. "Well--"

Q. "Or other reasons?"

A. "Probably just other reasons. They wanted more advantages that a larger school could give them. Such as a better curriculum perhaps and more a like music and different advantages in athletics that they couldn't get out in the country."

Q. "What was the usual age a child began school?"

A. "Well, six years mostly six years old. Sometimes they started at five. They didn't have kindergarten, of course. We just started in the first grade but six years."

Q. "What was the length of the school year and the school day?"



- A. "Well, let's see, from 9:00 o'clock till 4:00 was the day. We had eight months, four weeks of each. Then they got so some of the rural schools had nine months later on. I know the one where I taught one of them did. They voted to have nine months. They were always short of money so they didn't want nine months."
- Q. "Was the school for all children or only for the landowners and taxpayers?"
- A. "No, it was for all children."
- Q. "If all children came to school, how were the children of transit workers treated?"
- A. "Well, in this area there were not many transit workers but some of them, like people that worked for someone else, they'd be treated just the same."
- Q. "How was the school financed?"
- A. "By taxes."
- Q. "How were teachers expected to conduct themselves in the community?"
- A. "Well, pretty moderately. You didn't-- Of course, there weren't too many things to do to get into too much, night-life or anything like that. I know I didn't. Stayed at my boarding place and worked on my school work."
- Q. "What were some of the teachers extra-curricular activities?"
- A. "Rural teachers?"
- Q. "Yes."
- A. "Oh, you'd go to church in the community where you taught. Sometimes they had-- You were invited to the other parents home, students homes, to stay overnight. That's about all. We had literary. Some schools did. That's a gathering of-- They had a program and they'd have debates. We use to go to those. CIPHERING. Do you know what cIPHERING is?"
- Q. "Yea, I think so."
- A. "Did you have a problem with teacher turnovers?"
- Q. "Well, not too much. There were lots of teachers and you were lucky if you got a school. When I graduated from high school, there were lots of teachers. Many teachers who didn't get schools. I was lucky I had three that I could have had my first year. I was known in the community. So you usually stayed several years in each district. I had

taught three schools in eight years so I stayed quite a while in each school."

Q. "What were the main reasons for changing schools?"

A. "Well, sometimes you could get a little more money and you just maybe could be closer to your home or something like that."

Q. "Who governed the school?"

A. "Well, I guess the school board would if there was any governing, if that was necessary. I never did. I governed it myself."

Q. "Who hired and fired the teachers?"

A. "The school board hired them and they would fire them if they, if it was necessary. Of course, the County Superintendent was suppose to supervise the school. They came to visit once a year at least and maybe more and if there was any trouble, you could go to the County Superintendent. The school board could. And that's how it really goes with governing."

Q. "Okay. What were some of the physical problems of the building?"

A. "Well, the heating. Of course, we didn't have electric lights, you know. If we had a program or anything, we just had to use--There were lamps in some of them and there wasn't anything on the floors, just the bare floor. Board floor. We had to do our own janitor work."

Q. "Like the cleaning up and the upkeep?"

A. "Yes. Sometimes the students would help you after school, if they were staying waiting for their parents to come after them or something, why they'd help clean up."

Q. "What special events happened at the school?"

A. "Oh, mostly just your programs that you would have, like with students and the parents would come, dinners, church, school dinners would be about all there was."

Q. "When was the schoolhouse built? One of them that you taught in. Do you remember?"

A. "Say, I don't know."

Q. "Do you know by whom it was built?"

A. "No."

- Q. "What materials were used to build it with? What was it made out of, the building?"
- A. "Just lumber."
- Q. "Let's see, did anyone else own the schoolhouse? Like sometimes, you know, they would use them. It may have been a families before or something and they just converted it or were they all built special?"
- A. "Most of them I think were built special."
- Q. "Did more than one teacher work at the school?"
- A. "Not as a rule. One room schoolhouses is what it was called. One teacher. There were a few that had two but generally just one teacher."
- Q. "Was a principal used along with the teacher? Ever?"
- A. "Not in the rural school. No. Just the County Superintendent over the rural schools."
- Q. "Who employed the teacher?"
- A. "Oh, the school board. You'd made application to the school board for the position and they hired you."
- Q. "Was the schoolhouse used only for teaching?"
- A. "Well, the ones where I taught were mostly used for teaching. In some cases, they did have, in the early days I think, they had church in some of the schoolhouses but that was before my time."
- Q. "What were the ages of the children usually who attended school? Six to what were the older ones?"
- A. "Oh, around 14."
- Q. "What teaching methods were used?"
- A. "Well, you learned those methods in your courses that you took in high school. You took methods and management. You learned your methods you used to teach different subjects."
- Q. "Was memorization used a lot?"
- A. "Well, quite a bit in some things but not any more than they do now, I don't think."
- Q. "Did you use slates or--"
- A. "We had blackboards and we had some slates, yes."

- Q. "Much pencil and paper?"
- A. "Pencils and paper. They had tablets. You know what they call tablets."
- Q. "What are the typical activities for a school day?"
- A. "Well, your classes and then just a recreation games."
- Q. "What is the greatest distance traveled by any student and what was the mode of transportation?"
- A. "Well, about the greatest distance would be, oh, probably three miles, not more than five, if there was that much. Some of them rode horses to school and some of them their parents brought them and lots of them walked. The greater majority would walk to school."
- Q. "What teaching aids were made available?"
- A. "Oh, from the County Superintendent's office. From their supplies you got some different teaching aids. Notebooks, they brought notebooks too, the students. Out of the books it was pretty much up to the teacher to figure out the teaching aids that they wanted to use."
- Q. "What system of evaluation was used?"
- A. "Grading?" Oh, they graded mostly by percentage. They didn't use like A-B-C like they do now too much."
- Q. "What were the amount of different classes given at one time?"
- A. "Oh, let's see, the first grade wouldn't have too many classes but I need to figure a little. That's in a day you mean? The amount of classes in a day?"
- Q. "Yea."
- A. "Oh, it would be about 30 or 40 classes at that time in a day."
- Q. "What type of heating was used?"
- A. "Stoves that burned coal. They started them out with cobs to start the fire, corn cobs. There was always a big pile of corn cobs in the bin in the room where your-fuel room. You had a room built on usually and then you'd have to get out and bring in the coal and the cobs the night before so you could start the fire and you had to get to school to start the fire."
- Q. "Well, what type of lighting?"

- A. "Well, in the daytime, of course, we didn't need any and we didn't have classes at night so we just didn't have any. They had coal oil lamps available for like programs."
- Q. "And toilets?"
- A. "Outdoor toilets."
- Q. "How did the school get its water?"
- A. "Either from a well on the school grounds or from a place close by or the teacher would bring it from the place where she stayed. If she had a car or a horse and buggy, to get there. A lot of schools had a well and a pump."
- Q. "Did the community raise money for equipment, ever?"
- A. "Well, I don't remember that any of mine did but the school board they just bought it with the money they had."
- Q. "What was the size of the school's library?"
- A. "Oh, I don't know. I'd expect we'd have a--we had a set of encyclopedias usually and some other books. There was a county library at the County Superintendent's office where you could go in and check out books. Teachers could. That was established. They had quite a few books there but at school I'd say they might have 25 or 30 books."
- Q. "Did any activities ever take place between two schools?"
- A. "Yes. We used to have track meets together, two schools together. In the spring, we'd have a track meet and sometimes I think schools went together on programs, if they were close enough. But the main thing I can remember was our track meets we had. Then we had a track meet in town. A county track meet too with all the schools in the county."
- Q. "Did they give ribbons or--"
- A. "They had ribbons, yes."
- Q. "How were real discipline problems handled, if you had one?"
- A. "Well, I suppose sometimes the school board would be brought in on it, expect that would be or you'd talk to the parents. The parents helped and sometimes the County Superintendent, you'd refer to them. I never did have to."
- Q. "Are there any traditions that are peculiar to your particular schoolhouse?"
- A. "No. I suppose the people in the district might be able to supply you with some like who had built the schoolhouse or-- They all had a name."

- Q. "What was the name of yours?"
- A. "Well, I taught at Mount Olive, that's District Number 16, I taught at Center, south of Colby, 40, District 40, and I taught at East View, which was District 55."
- Q. "Were they all around this area or the Colby area?"
- A. "Well, in the Colby area."
- Q. "Or county?"
- A. "County."
- Q. "Describe the curriculum of the common school and how it changed through the years of the schools existence."
- A. "Well, there were more subjects added and newer ones. Sometimes they consolidated several like their geography and agriculture and some of those subjects and called it social studies. Social studies called it."
- Q. "Just lumped it together?"
- A. "Yes."
- Q. "How did the female teachers handle discipline problems as compared to the male teachers?"
- A. "Well, as far as I'm concerned, just as well as they did. I don't think that there was ever a discipline problem that I didn't, wasn't able to handle but I didn't let it develop into one. That's the secret."
- Q. "Were there very many male teachers in this area?"
- A. "There were some. There were probably, oh, maybe eight or ten in the county."
- Q. "How did the people decide on that location for the school?"
- A. "I really don't know how they decided on that."
- Q. "Was it a part of a public school system?"
- A. "Well, they took the land out of probably the closest to the middle of the district, I'd say close, closest to all there. I know we had an acre, acre of land."
- Q. "How did this school differ from others in this area?"
- A. "They were all about the same. The rural schools were."
- Q. "What was the outstanding feature of your school?"

- A. "I taught at several and they were all different. One had more girls than boys and some I don't know just what you'd say was the outstanding feature."
- Q. "Did the school have any particular problems?"
- A. "Not generally, no."
- Q. "Was there any significance in the school name? Like the different names you--"
- A. "Oh, I don't know how they decided on that. East View faced the east and Center might have been in the center of the district. Now one particular problem might be that we didn't have enough time for classes. That was the hardest, I'd say."
- Q. "Was there any physical changes to the schoolhouse during the years of use?"
- A. "Well, yes. Sometimes we made repairs, painted and fixed different things that they needed to fix. Oh, they maybe had to buy a new stove or something like that. One funny thing I remember was at this one school. We were all sitting up at the recitation bench. Of course, you called your students up for class to the recitation bench up in front and we were sitting there because getting warm before school called and one of the boys was playing his mouth harp, dancing a jig. That was before school started and the stove pipe fell down. We didn't have it fixed very well. We had a roaring fire and we had to get a bucket of water and throw--put out the fire and send one of the students over to my boarding place. It was the closest to call the school board and they came to put the stove pipe back up. We went on with school."
- Q. "Went on with school, gee."
- A. "That's the funny thing that happened."
- Q. "About how many students went to the school?"
- A. "Well, you had around, oh, ten to twenty."
- Q. "What was the general--"
- A. "Oh, an average of fifteen."
- Q. "When did the school open and close. Like, you know, when it was first opened and when they closed it. Do you know?"
- A. "Oh, you mean when was the school closed?"
- Q. "Yes."

A. "Or consolidated?"

Q. "Yea."

A. "Well, a lot of them were closed during the years of 1935 to 1939. That's when I was in the County Superintendent's office and when I went in office there were 47 rural schools and when I went out there were 17 left and that's when a lot of them closed."

Q. "What district was this in?"

A. "Well, different districts but it was in Thomas County."

Q. "Thomas County. Was the land usually purchased or was it given to the school?"

A. "You gave it to them and then when it was consolidated you got it back. Got that acre back."

Q. "Can you describe the interior of the school?"

A. "Oh, yes. It usually had a hall when you come in. That's where the water bucket was and coats were hung and then you went into the schoolroom. There was a stove and rows of desks, seats, desks on each side of the room and sometimes in the middle and then up in--there was a platform you stepped up, stepped to the platform. That's where the teacher's desk was and you had a recitation bench beside the teacher's desk and when you called, you'd call for a certain class they'd come up to a and sit on that seat and you conducted your recitation from there and then you'd dismiss them and called another class."

Q. "Did they usually have a picture of, like, President Washington or Lincoln?"

A. "Yes, we had some pictures like that. Yes, in the schoolroom."

Q. "What types of occupations did the students eventually take up?"

A. "Well, some of them farmed, I guess. They graduated from the eighth grade. They went on to high school. Quite a few of them, not as many as do now but--"

Q. "Where did they have to go to go to high school?"

A. "Here they went to Colby and there weren't buses then. See, that's why quite a few didn't get to go as many get to go to high school cause you had to go into town. When I went to high school, I had to work for my board and room with the family in town and some of the--some of them had cars.



You know, we had Model T's then and drove into town. There was a high school in Colby and in Gem, Brewster, Levant, and Menlo in this county."

- Q. "Were the majority of the original students of a particular religion or nationality?"
- A. "Most of them, yes."
- Q. "Did they have any particular customs or anything like that?"
- A. "Well, not--I don't think so, in Thomas County. Of course, there's some back in the early days that might have, you know. In some areas, they'd have students like, oh, these in Pennsylvania, Amish and the Mennonites came here and had different religions but where I taught they didn't."
- Q. "What type of graduation exercises were performed?"
- A. "Well, we graduated and when they graduated from the eighth grade they had graduation in the county where you graduated, in Thomas County, in town, in Colby and they got their diplomas. The County Superintendent was responsible for that, for the eighth grade graduation."
- Q. "Were any special classes or unique educational services offered?"
- A. "Read that again."
- Q. "Were any special classes or unique educational services offered?"
- A. "Not, I don't think so. When I was, my first year I had a little girl, who was deaf. She'd gone to a school in Olathe, school for the deaf one year and I was pretty perturbed when I found out she wanted to come to my school and I asked the County Superintendent what I should do about it and he said, "Oh, take her and just let her play." Well, you couldn't do that all day long so I started working with her and she had--I probably couldn't have done it if it hadn't been she'd already gone to this school for the deaf but I could teach her math, real well, with different aids, you know, and reading with pictures and when she went back they said I'd done as much as they could have."
- Q. "Gosh."
- A. "So I felt pretty proud of that."
- Q. "Well, I would have been too. Were there any controversies surrounding the school for any reason?"
- A. "Not any that I taught in, no."

- Q. "Do you know who started the movement to build the school?"
- A. "No, I don't."
- Q. "Where did the funds for the construction of the schools come from?"
- A. "Well, taxes I suppose, land taxes."
- Q. "Did this school make any lasting contributions to the community it served?"
- A. "Well, some of them did. There was one that became a voting place later for the township and it's still there and there's one that's moved out here to Sod Town. That's Center where I taught and they moved that out there as a historical remembrance."
- Q. "Where was it located at to begin with?"
- A. "About four miles south of Colby."
- Q. "How many levels were incorporated into the educational program at this school? That would be this school in age, like from first to eighth grade, right?"
- A. "Yea."
- Q. "Okay. What was the cultural or heritage background of this school district or community?"
- A. "I don't understand that one."
- Q. "Was there any particular heritage background for most of the people here? Did they all come from any particular--"
- A. "Well, they came here from some place, some other place, I suppose, in the beginning, the very beginning. I don't go back quite that far. But it was just a farming community and they had to have a school. They organized and get together and vote to build one."
- Q. "Do you happen to know anything about the various educational materials that were used throughout the history of this school and its various programs?"
- A. "Well, they used whatever was prescribed by the State of Kansas. It was a state adopted course. You had to, you taught what they had listed in their course of study and you got your supplies from the state."
- Q. "What do you know of the atmosphere of the educational programs? Like were they strict, were they loose, were they warm?"

- A. "Well, they were, you know, pretty strict but they weren't loose for sure. You can't say that."
- Q. "Were they pretty warm with the students?"
- A. "Yes. Students learned from each other in rural schools cause they heard all the grades, the classes. The younger students would pick up a lot from the older students."
- Q. "How and when was it deemed necessary to build this school? Do you know?"
- A. "I really don't know. No."
- Q. "How big of an area did the school serve?"
- A. "Well, about what, five miles on each side of the center of the district. I don't know exactly how many quarters were in a district."
- Q. "Okay."
- A. "But there were probably, oh, each family had about two or three quarters at that time. They weren't as big farmers as they are now."
- Q. "What was the average number of years a student spent in school? Did most of them go the whole eight?"
- A. "They went in that school most of them would go the eight years, yes. Now back in earlier days and that, before the time I taught, they probably, some, quit school before they finished eighth grade but most of them, when I, during my time of teaching finished the eighth grade."
- Q. "Did very many of them go on to high school?"
- A. "A lot of them went on to high school. Quite a few of them did. Most of them, in fact."
- Q. "Had anything unusual happened during the time which the school was open?"
- A. "Not that I know of in these districts where I taught nothing really outstanding or unusual. I don't think."
- Q. "Why did the school close?"
- A. "Well, they had to have, later on, they had this state support they wouldn't get enough state money, some of them. Lack of funds I'd say and wanting better opportunities too for their students."

- Q. "Do you know if any of the original equipment is available?"
- A. "Yes, what they called the register. That's the book that was kept with the students that attended and their grades were kept in what they called a register and these books are--were kept in the County Superintendents Office and each year they turned them in and they were kept for several years and later on some of those are here in the library at Colby. Pioneer Memorial Library and they had a rural school legacy here. I have some pictures here that I'll show you later about that."
- Q. "Okay."
- A. "We looked at those registers. They had the students names and--"
- Q. "Did you keep track of the days they missed?"
- A. "Yes, we did and their grades were reported there too."
- Q. "Who served on the school board?"
- A. "Well, they were elected. They had a school board meeting. Lots of times there weren't very many attended but they just chose someone in the district and three, there were three."
- Q. "Are any of them still living that you know of?"
- A. "Yes, some that I taught under, yes."
- Q. "Did any of its students or teachers go on to become outstanding people?"
- A. "Most of mine are not outstanding but are doing well. Some of them live here yet and some of them don't. They went on to college. I don't know that I just off hand know how many but most of them have been successful I'd say."
- Q. "What was the average class size?"
- A. "Well, if you had five in a class you had a big class. The average was probably three."
- Q. "What was the average length of time a teacher worked at a school?"
- A. "You mean during your work after school or--"
- Q. "Probably stayed."
- A. "You mean years?"
- Q. "Yea."

- A. "Years you taught then. Oh, I'd suppose from three to five years."
- Q. "Did the teacher have a particular code of ethics and morals she had to follow in her particular private life?"
- A. "Well, you did. I don't know that anybody laid that down for you but you just did it. You knew you were expected to set an example. If you wanted to have a job, why you'd better do it."
- Q. "Can you name some of the rules of the school?"
- A. "Any place that I ever taught, I don't know that they ever told me about any rules. I just--"
- Q. "Were there any you laid down for the students?"
- A. "Yes."
- Q. "Can you name some of those?"
- A. "To do their work well and to be quiet. Not run in the school house. That's one thing I would not stand for. Them chasing each other around the desks. We had games and I let each student choose, choose the game we'd play that day and another one the next day and we all played that. We didn't argue over I don't like to play this or I don't like to play that. I just said everybody plays what they choose to play."
- Q. "What was the dress and over all appearance of the students?"
- A. "Well, they wore just cotton clothing and some of them wore jeans. They had jeans or overalls. Some of the boys wore overalls. Do you know what overalls are?"
- Q. "Yes. What did the student have to pay to go to school or did he? Was there a tuition?"
- A. "No."
- Q. "What was the cost of the school?"
- A. "Do you mean to run the school? Well, the teachers was the main, her salary I suppose was the greatest cost. Then they had to buy fuel. I don't know how much it run. I really don't. But it wasn't very much in those days and some repairs but not very much, that mostly."
- Q. "Was there any organization similar to the PTA or were the teachers and parents involved very much together?"

- A. "There wasn't a PTA or any definite organization or group but you were close to your student's parents. You'd see them. They'd bring them to school or they'd invite you to spend the night with them. Go home and you nearly always went home with them once at least during the year."
- Q. "Did you set up conferences with them or--"
- A. "Well, you did if you thought it was necessary. Yes, you'd see them."
- Q. "Okay, is there anything I've missed that you want to--"
- A. "No, I can tell you some things and--"
- Q. "Okay."
- A. "Now this, I felt maybe you--"
- Q. "Okay, you were also County Superintendent or Supervisor over the rural schools."
- A. "I was County Superintendent of Rural Schools from 1935 to 1939."
- Q. "What were some of your duties as County Supervisor?"
- A. "Well, you got the school supplies in you had to institute in the fall and gave the teachers their supply and you visited the schools at least once a year and then they came into your office to get their reports and then to bring reports in, monthly reports, and then we had this Rural School Library in my office. They would check out books each week and any questions they had and you had teachers meetings once a month with the rural teachers in town and they came in and--and met. All the teachers together and we--they would a bring their reports in. Turn their reports in."
- Q. "Were you responsible to say fire them?"
- A. "No."
- Q. "If they were--no."
- A. "The board might come to you about a teacher and he would talk to them but I had no authority to."
- Q. "What if you found a real problem in a school?"
- A. "Well, you could talk. You'd have to take it up with the school board. You didn't have the authority yourself to do, at least at the school where I taught. This is Raymond Mallory. He asked me the other day if we had some pictures of Center. This is the school called Center. That's one

of the schools and here's another one. I taught in school. That's East View."

- Q. "What was your salary as County Supervisor? Do you remember?"
- A. "\$116.00 a month and then I got \$2.00 for each teacher I visited. That was suppose to be to pay for your gasoline. There they are eating their lunch. This is the first school I taught."
- Q. "Did you still stay with people in their--"
- A. "Yes."
- Q. "The community? You still had to pay for your room and board then?"
- A. "Yes. Save enough to go to summer school too."
- Q. "How often did you have to go?"
- A. "Oh, about well, I didn't have to attend because I had a certificate a life certificate then. When I was teaching rural schools I did."
- Q. "How did you get your life certificate?"
- A. "Well, by going to college in the summertime and taking correspondence courses."
- Q. "There were so many hours you had to have to receive it?"
- A. "Yes. Of course, it wasn't so much in those days. Well, I kept up that normal training certificate for a long time then kept working. Of course, the hours I got while I was going to summer school but then I became County Superintendent and that was a year round job. So then I already had enough credits for the kind of certificate that was required. It wasn't--you could be County Superintendent on a first grade county then with so many years. You just--it was a political thing. I ran for office and was elected."
- Q. "Oh, you were elected to County--"
- A. "To County Superintendent, yes."
- Q. "Then did you every year have to run again or--"
- A. "Every two years."
- Q. "Every two years?"
- A. "I had it four years and then I went out of office. I quit teaching then and went into the Ready to Wear Store. Do you remember when I was in that?"

Q. "No, I don't. I don't remember."

A. "Your mom will."

Q. "Mom probably will. Is there anything else that you can think of? Okay, I'd like to thank you for this interview very much."