

Leonard Lee Tape 3

What is it? I'm itching; I had been sitting on an Ant hill with lots of bushes around. So back to the bushes I went to get rid of the ants. I didn't sit on the ant hill the next time I came back.

The second house back from the main corner on the North side was Bill and Olga Frude's . It is a beautiful house. It's old. There have been no major changes in that house until after Bill died and then they put an addition on the back. Bill had three daughters. Violet, who married Alvin Bouton, Fern, who married Nick Bian, and Lillian who married Bruce Mortensen. Lillian and Bruce lived to the east in back. They were the parents of several children. Their first three children died shortly after birth, then they adopted a son Stuart, and after that they had four more. Cheri, Gary, Mark and Trudy. About a year ago, Lillian died of a heart attack, as did both her parents, Bill and Olga.

The building was then moved. It was on one of the narrowest lots in the whole town and it was right next to the ditch.

There is a lot more history about this building than I know about. I can tell you back as far as I can remember. This front porch was not on there. It was a front porch originally.

This was the creamery. I was very very small, but I remember that people drove up with their buggies and brought them 10 gallon buckets of cream and took them inside. I don't know how it was processed.

Now we need to step over in time. We haven't mentioned Ed Bailey's house. Ed Bailey bought the creamery. How in the dickens he could ever use it for what he used it for, I don't know, but it was Bailey's Hall. There were all kinds of activities that took place in there. Again remember I was very small when this took place. It was rented out and there were dances there. Of course people didn't drive up in their cars. They came in their horse and buggies. They had lots of dances there. Of course we had lots of people. So they had to have parking places and they would tie them to my folks maple trees all around the place and Pa eventually complained to the people who ran the place. He said you see that no one ties their horses to my trees. You can park there but don't tie the horses.

Charlie Buck and my Aunt Sarah died and for some reason my folks shielded Dick and I from death. So we didn't go to the funeral. But we still knew what was going on. So one day Dick and I said, "Let's have a funeral in the front yard." So we had some china dolls. And right underneath the big maple tree we dug some holes and we took some match boxes, match boxes were the same size as they are now and we put our china dolls in there and we buried them. And then we found little short sticks and built a nice fence all the way around each one of those separate graves. One was Dick's doll and one was my china doll. This is still tied into that dance hall story. The horses came and they tramped all evening long. On the next day Dick and I was in tears. Our dollies been tramped on, they're all broken. We can't play with them any more. Well all you gotta do is dig them up and bury them again and leave them this time. So we dug them up and put them in some new caskets and as far as I know , they're still there.

The building was sold to different owners. One of the owners or operators was the Breedsville Band and the building was operated as a dance Hall. Before that when the weather was really hot, they had to call in the sheriff or the deputy for something that was taking place nearly every night. When the Breedsville band took over they supplied the music and supplied the managing and if there was a fight started and someone would say slow it down boys and then all the band boys would come to the conflict together and the fight would stop. That building was used for many purposes. The building was small but big enough for a dance hall but when you go in there now it looks so small and it is built on the smallest lot in town, I believe. The building is probably as big as a pole barn.

Just this week I was talking to someone who cleaned out the ditch. He found numerous glass milk bottles, quarts, no gallons and some of the little ones were just right for one cup of coffee. Don't know what he did with them. The ditch was just adjacent to that little building. This was the manhole for the sewer. When I was a kid this was a square box, concrete box there was a big tile that ran the full length of River Street and over the bank, just like that. That was square with an opening above it with bars across it so the animals couldn't get into it. Once every 3 to 15 years there's a huge flood in town. There's a grade on top so water will flow into it. Well sometime in history this had this type of opening; only it was solid cast iron. No place for water to run into it. The only place for water to come in, then they put in another tile on the other side of the street and but so then had two tiles both 12 inches. We on the Village Council says after the last big flood, at the time of the last big flood

three of us council men, one was the President of the Village, went down and looked at it. The water was coming down the ditch tremendously. The water was flowing away into these two 12 inch tiles somewhat. You remember this was a cast iron slab with no openings into it. We three council men recognized this and pulled the lid off and it let the water run right down through this opening. Well we as a council men voted right after that to do something about it. This was our mistake. The president doesn't have a vote. There's six on the council and two of us opposed the way they were going to do it. Enough of them went the other way. So this is the way it went. They put in a 36 inch galvanized tile from there to the river and that will carry a tremendous amount of water. They put a cast iron top, no place for the water to get in from the top. I opened my mouth and that's one place where I got some results. They got a lid on there where water will flow if it gets too deep.

The railroad was put through here in 1870. They put a tile underneath the railroad. I can't tell you the size. Apparently it seemed adequate at the time, but with this huge amount of area and the fact that there isn't so much brush to hold water back etc, this Breedsville drain underneath the railroad is not enough. So when that happens it comes right down here to the corner of Howard Street. There's a ditch goes from here down to Howard Street underneath. It did go as an open ditch down to S. Main street. Then there was a tile that went so and that took care of it except on flash floods and they did come. According to history, there was a flash flood, year unknown, which literally tore the foundation right out from under the house where my son Fred lives.

Looking at the Map again. This one big flood went down and most of it went right across our son's driveway - right through his lawn, took out a tremendous amount of soil, grass, everything. It came up close- right next to the house. Many inches deep, solid, flowing, fast water. It did not take the foundation out and right after that within days is when we had the meeting and they put the 36 inch tile down there, which is all right except for one thing in my estimation. You had two 12 inch tiles there already and they were working in every respect. Working good. My argument is this. If they're working good even though you've got a 36 inch tile why destroy them. They could still carry water. But when they put in the 36 inch tile they destroyed them. There is one spot right here by the side of the road. There's a catch basin right there and it goes into one of those tiles. So far the waters going somewhere, but the tile itself has been destroyed. It hasn't caused any trouble yet. When those floods come they are terrible and most of them has centered on this one lot. My son's, because that is the

flow of the land. There is a ditch leads down the Main Street, from our son's place to the corner by the church and then there's a good ditch from there south. But the one from my son's place to the church lot is not deep enough. So it did not take the flash flood. That flash flood that took the foundation out, and had to be replaced with a new foundation, raising it two blocks higher on the foundation.

Some more about that house and the house I was born in. There was a man by the name of Judson Rea. Jud Rea. He was our depot agent. He had several children. But only one that I'm going to mention because he was my dear pal. We were both very much interested in electrical things. So we built a telephone, from his house to ours. Telephone wire, made out of stove pipe wire. So small, so lightweight. How could it work? It worked! We carried it from his place. We put in two or three posts down to the fence and went across there. On the top of each fence post, we put an insulator. The insulator was a bottle that we broke the bottle away from and just used the top part. Then we used a cork with a nail through it. Then we put the wire fastened to that. That was the insulator. We ran the stove pipe wire from there down to the fence. The fence by the way ran clear across that whole set of lots. All the same depth, we carried it clear across there. Then we took it on the top of Uncle Harry and Auntie Marie's house. Not on top of their barn first, each one thoroughly insulated with these bottle tops. They were living in Kalamazoo at the time, and their house was very old. South corner of River Street. (Now 37 River Street) Brought it to an upstairs window. Instead of using two wires. They used that on all telephone systems until recently. The other wire is a stake driven in the ground. Steel rod - and that was the second wire. For a transmitter, a microphone and a receiver. My older brother was very interested in radio. Radio that was, they had a set of headphones. Headphone electrically if there's a small current going through it, it will make the sound that produced at the other end. Now you take the exactly the same type. One was at his house and one was at my house. When the steel diaphragm vibrates the tone of the voice, it oscillates the current that goes through there. That carried the voice. There are a lot of experts today who say that don't work that way. But it does and we talked back and forth like that. Of course we had to go down the street and tell each other when we were going to talk. I was probably about 12 years old when I did this. So it was probably about 1915 or so. Albert Rae and I had a lot of fun together. We were both interesting, and we had an argument. On what kind of batteries to use. At the depot they had for telegraph a large jars and they were run on a completely different principal. Produced this current

same kind of current. But anyway we argued it out and bought one dry cell battery. About so big around and so long. One dry cell battery and that run our telephone. We had a lot of fun there. That was before Breedsville had any phones.

The remains of the old sawmill. The sawmill itself was not built in Breedsville. It was built somewhere in Arlington Township and moved into Breedsville in possibly 1885 or 1890. According to Grover Page, a source of an awful lot of information, wish we could retain it all. This small piece of the building is very small that had been a much bigger building than that. After the accident at the saw mill after all the logs were hauled out, no more sawing took place there. The building itself was used for making cemetery vaults. Rob Douglas ran that. I was in there. I was very small when that took place. But it was a large building. There was a smaller lean-to to it made of cement blocks. Rob Douglas ran that for a long time, making cement blocks. We mentioned the fact that the basket factory in South Haven burned, date unknown. But right after that there was a need for containers for apples and so they started making apple barrels in this same building. About a month later they set up another barrel factory and that would be on that one that I said in general that I was gonna wait to tell you about. They did set up a barrel factory there. The building is gone. Barrel factory was not a very big one. Until recently I had some of the hoops that they built the barrel with. One of these was owned by Ed Baily. You hear the name many times of Ed Baily. Did I mention what his main occupation was? Ed Baily would buy a farmers crop of apples. Now that sounds different than saying he went out and bought apples. He would buy the crop in the spring. He would take care of the orchard all season long. Thin and spray if necessary, he didn't do the trimming that took place in the winter. Then we would harvest the crops in the fall and that was one of the jobs he did. Then another job I think he bought and sold property. He had a Model T Ford, but he was fat and couldn't get under the wheel. His wife was fat also but not as fat as he. So she would drive the car and he would get in the back seat. There wasn't room for both of them to sit in the front seat. He owned Bailey's Hall.

When I was a kid there was a man came in doing magic. A magician. He could do anything in the line of magic. Don't know who he was or where he was from. Nice old gentlemen. He scheduled it for such a night and it rained and the only ones that came was our close relatives. He says, "I can't give you my whole show with such few people, but I'll give you part of it anyway. And this won't cost you anything." So he had the show. One or two days later, he had his magic act. One of them

was right in the middle of other things, he's say, "Oh, just a minute, just a minute." He'd rush down the aisle and reach down under this man's coat. It was a man by the name of Willie Wicker, and pulled out a live chicken. Nobody knows how he did it. Magic or trickery.

The two barrel factories in Breedsville. We've pointed out about where they are, now the interesting thing is how they worked. There was two work benches. The stays were all done up in packages and there was some rims. I'll use that for want of a better name. You'd insert the stays and make a circle out of it. Then you had a rope device you'd push with your foot and you would bring the top together and another rim down on top of that. That's just to get the shape of it. Then you would put on the steel band that holds together the top and the bottom. Then you'd put it over the stove. The stove was possibly a foot in diameter. It was built strictly straight up and down. Top was perfectly flat, the flyer. The stove proper was below that. Not very big. A foot high at the most. This part came up and produced the heat. You'll put the barrel on top of that, lid on top of that, and you'd bake it for a certain period of time. Then each of those stays would take its natural shape. Then they would pull it in again and then they would put on additional rims. Two more I think than they had. My brother Leroy would find fault with me for not knowing the names because he used them all the time. Something like a plain, but it was circular and it was made strictly for the purpose of shaping these barrel tops. Then he'd go around and get the bevel you wanted. Then you'd take this other tool only this made a gouge. A little bit lower than this sliding part then do that. Then you would take the barrel top that's already made and just drive it into place. Then you'd reverse it end for end and do the same thing on the other end. that was the process of making barrels. Somebody had made the stays and barrel tops otherwise from here. Where from I don't know. Rim's too. Parts were actually assembled here. Leroy worked at the barrel factory.

I was picking apples for a farmer. When your picking apples, you put them in crates. When you've got a crate full you set it on the truck, Model T truck. "No more crates today. We're gonna give you barrels boys." So I had to take home I was driving a truck a load of barrels to put apples in. Boy they're awkward to carry. The Model T truck is high. Not like a modern truck. The owner of the place and myself we take on one each side and we'd lift it. But we couldn't lift it that high. But we'd have it off the ground and we'd swing it a couple of times and then as it was swinging, we could swing it up and get it on top. We would fill the barrels about two thirds full with apples. Barrel's for apples

didn't last long because they were so heavy. Whisky barrel's are different than apple barrels. They are heavier and made out of a different wood. Those were not made here

This is the lot I was born on. This map shows this as a separate lot. On the 1900 edition it is all one lot. This was my folks place. Then beyond that, this spot in between I've never seen it used for anything. Never saw it grow anything, never saw it planted to anything. I never knew who it belonged too. Nothing there now. Cherry trees were here.

When I remembered it, Mrs. Carroll lived there. Don't know anything about Mr. Carroll, don't know anything about the children. But it was a large house. One day our next door neighbor Mrs. Page didn't knock on the door. She just yanked the door open and started yelling. "Carroll's house is a fire." I was a little boy. I couldn't go to the fire. My older brothers and sisters went to the fire. Everybody went that could to help in any way. They carried out a tremendous amount of furniture and they laughed at Leroy for one of the trips he took out. He brought out a bird in a bird cage and they all found fault with him. He said "But I didn't want that birdie to burn up and die." I had a pretty nice brother there.

Raymond Starback built that house. He also built the garage.

The Sawmill. This is from hear-say. You'll have to take it with a grain of salt. But I think it's true. They were hauling a load of logs up to the saw mill. One team right behind the other and they unloaded the logs and the mules said, "We won't go." They just stood there. They used the usual pride and prods. The mules would not go. Finally the owner says, "Boys, help me." Around a saw mill there's always a lot of small chips and pieces of wood and they literally built a fire right under the middle of the mule. When they first started they wouldn't move. Then the owner suspected what might happen and he was right up on the wagon. And when they took off they went for blocks and blocks and blocks and blocks before they stopped. This is a hear-say story from the past.

9 July 1985

This is a correction. We spoke before about the Carroll house that burned. Eventually somebody else

built the house. I know who lived in it and presumably he's the one who built it. His name was Henry Bailey. Or Hank. He was an auctioneer. This is a concrete block house we're talking about and Hank lived there, the auctioneer. I may have said this before, but he was a fellow that got in the ditch seven feet deep when they was digging for the drain and it caved in on him. And can you imagine there was a very loud voice and he was very scared and he really bellowed. "Get me out of here! Get me out of here!" This I know from hearsay because it was my older brothers who was there and he was scared to death but he got out all right. After that Ray Starback built the barn. And also Ray Starback built on the back side of that house a glass enclosed porch. The glass was interesting in this way. They were all windshields out of cars. And he just set them upright adjacent to each other and that was the outside wall. They are gone now and when the new part in front came, I don't know. I was away for awhile.

Now I want to think back to this big shed. We called it the Frude shed and we mentioned about different people who had been in there. Frude himself, with the implements. Then Hosier with the electrical wiring. Towns wiring long distances and so on. We covered that. Then there's another one that's coming along. The next one I remember was Victor Tellander. He was the son-in-law of Monte Farrington. Who you'll meet again in a little while. But at that time there was 18 acres of blueberries in town just like there is now on two side of me. There was a tremendous number of acreage of blueberries to the west of the railroad tracks west of town. The name of the owner is slipped my mind. I don't know. But Vic Tellander had complete say on everything. He ran it from the beginning of the season clear through everything and he was also a mechanical genius. Just to illustrate one fact, we had a very dry spell in August, what year I'm not gonna even guess. He set up a pumping station. Gasoline powered. He ran a hose the entire length of River Street. He went across River Street with planks to protect the hose. Then clear out to the blueberry patch and then over to the east end of the blueberry patch. The part that is next to N. Pine Street and he watered that heavily. And he saved the blueberry patch, otherwise it would have been gone. Vic Tellander was a mechanical genius. He built a house trailer. I never saw the whole trailer. But my Dad in the blacksmith shop, there was always little things to be done towards that house trailer. Oh. I should get back to the blueberries. He was one of first that I know of who built a device to go on the back of the tractor. Used the rear end of a Model T for the adjustment of it. Then the arm could be moved out to go right underneath the blueberries and hoe it just like you used a hand hoe. All blueberry users use it now.

But he, I think, invented it if you wanta call it that. First one I knew like that. And a lot of the parts were made in the blacksmith shop. But he did all the designing and construction

Oh, we left the water question, the hose question out for a minute didn't we? There's a piece of a little cupola, little small building, next to this Frude's shed as we've always called it. Now that was when Vic Tellander built that small shed. It was roughly twice as high as it is now. When you come to drain a hose, you've got to be able to have both ends down and the middle up. You can't make a loop in it. That's why it was so high. Then he had quite a lot of different hoses to hook together to make that length. I don't mean garden hoses. They were two, three, four inches in diameter. That's the remains of the shed. Built especially for that use. And I don't know it ever used since. It's the tower. Roughly twice as tall as it is now for the sake of the hose length. It has never been used since except that one summer. It was interesting in this respect. I could see the mechanics of it, I could see the how and why. He did save the blueberry patch. But the legality of how he could get the traffic going right over the top of that hose and put planks on each side to protect the hose. When driving on the street you had to go over the planks and the hose without squashing the hose. The legality I don't know. What year was this? This was about 1923, give or take one or two years either way.

The N.W. corner of Main and Scriminger. This house is what we will call the Scriminger house. According to Clair Leedy who is considerably older than I am, he says when he was 7 years old, that house and the one across the street, the Rodenbough house were built about a year apart and that was about 1907. Now that's the closest I know about timing, but there's something else I know about that. I did a lot of research on the Village of Breedsville in regards to our church centennial. And by a process of elimination, there was only one spot for the Breedsville Hotel. The newspaper says very close to the Depot. Well it's easy walking distance to the depot. Then that's all the information I have on the old Breedsville Hotel. We'll talk more about hotels a little bit later. But now we establish back of this Scriminger house there is a concrete well. Call it a root cellar and it's still there. My guess is that it was built at the time the hotel was in use. The roof, the walls, the sides are all concrete. The windows and doors were apparently wood. They're all rotted out. But the building itself is still there and could be used again if they wanted to put windows in again. Its there. Solid.

Right back of that is the big big barn and I can remember when that was built . So about 1912 or so

it was built. Coming back to this house, here is the thing that I specifically remember. The front of the house this way and over here was a sign. A post here, a post here and a sign. And on the sign, it says "Scriminger Auto and Horse Livery". Livery means a taxi. So he had run taxi service according to that and when new cars came along he had a Model T Ford, so he took you in the old horse drawn buggy or the modern Model T. Ford. Whichever he chose or you chose, I don't know the details of that. Well eventually they passed away. They had one daughter only, her name was Rose. Rose married a fellow from Berlamont by the name of Teal. Charlie Teal. He went on just like Scriminger did, apparently he got the property. Now the property as I know, as I remember was this as we spoke about the house and the barn behind it and also a huge amount of what is now the blueberries. Possibly all of what is the blueberries and also an acre or an acre and half of land east of the church. He worked that land. He made out all right, but he had one horse. He and Mr. Vandecar, the man that owned the house that we live in now. The lot east of the church is used as a vegetable garden.

There's a street down the middle of it right now that's grown up. This spring, they tried to work part of it up, they didn't get in the middle at all. It was too wet to work up but Charlie Teal had that all worked up. Crops of some kind.

Just west of the Johnson house and adjacent to Charlie Teals, Mr. John Brown lived there and John Brown lived alone. His house burned. He says I'm not going to let that bother me and he went to the stores and got boxes and he lined the inside of a corn crib. I mean one of these narrow narrow corn cribs, narrow at the bottom, wider at the top. Lined the inside of that and was going to stay in there all winter and our supervisor says. "No, John, you shouldn't stay there" and so he took him over to the poor farm. He didn't stay. He came back. He bought a house and had it moved in. It was small.

Charlie and Rose Teal were both very interested in the church in all ways. She played the piano for a long time. They had one child and the child did not live. That's the only child they ever had. Her health wasn't too good, but she was still very active. More in the church than any other one spot. But we kids would go over there and practice with Rose playing the piano and practicing for the choir. Of course you know sometimes kids get a little obstreperous and one of the kids was singing off key purposely and her hubby Charlie sighted right in with him and she says "now you two you just cut that out. We can't practice choir like that. You gotta behave yourself. You get out and stay out". She was talking to two of them now and surely didn't mean that about her hubby. She had no intention,

but she said you two get out and stay out and never come in again. Hubby knew it didn't apply to him and the other fellow came back too, and we had choir practice there again later. Maybe behaved themselves a little bit better. Eventually Rose died and he moved over to Gobles. He eventually remarried and eventually passed on.

We spoke a little bit earlier about the Forbes house. We mentioned the young lady Teeny Fields. I never knew the relationship, but she was in my grade in school and she wasn't there anymore. Then the next one that I remember was Knickerbockers. Now Knickerbockers lived west of town. They had a son, Delos. He did various things in his life for instance, World War 1 came along and he served in the service. When he came back he was very sick. He was not going to live so the story came. Delos was in World War 1 the same time my brother Leroy was. We as kids in the grades were supposed to interview some soldier boy and report on a theme. I reported on Delos Knickerbocker. He told me several different things, but there's only one that stuck in my mind. He says, "We would walk from our barracks to a certain place every day and back again. That went on day after day and we noticed there was one man whether it was morning, noon or night, there was one man always staying right there with his uniform on and standing up straight and neat. Finally they checked on him. There was a post there and he was leaning against the post and he was dead and had been dead all these days. We walked by him." Now that's the only thing I can remember that he reported about his experiences in the war. Delos Knickerbocker came back from the war and his health was not good. He had pernicious anemia and there was no treatment for it whatsoever. Oh, you could do a few things about diet but that was all. After awhile, they came up with certain types of shots and these shots helped out. That pernicious anemia question. He was a very healthy fellow after that. He worked for one of government agencies the rest of his life. And he was perfectly fine. Of course now I've got to go another step. He had one son that comes to mind right now. His name was Reed. Eventually along came World War 2. He was with MacArthur. He served with MacArthur closely a lot of the time and eventually, of course you know MacArthur personally marched aboard from the ship to the land to take over the island of Japan. Reed Knickerbocker was one of the six men who was his personal body guard at that time. Delos Knickerbocker's wife was Pearl Knickerbocker. She was originally from two or three miles north-east of Breedsville. Pearl Niles was her maiden name. When she got down here she was exceedingly ambitious. She grew one of the most wonderful gardens, not flower gardens entirely, mostly not flower gardens, but vegetable gardens. She was also

exceedingly good with the piano. She was like Rose Teal before her, was very good with the piano and she played for years and years as our pianist in church and in Sunday School. She was ambitious in many ways. If something needed doing in church, she did it. She thought it would be beautiful to have some nice bushes way way back on the lot and now it looks like we've got to modify those bushes. They get wider and wider and wider and in the next month, we're going to do some trimming on the church property in general. I think we're either gonna have to trim those bushes back to a foot or so apart or somebody might insist we take them out. I don't know. I hope not because she personally with her own hands planted those bushes. Flowering bushes. I couldn't tell you the name of them. She taught Sunday School classes for years. Exceedingly well. Delos was very active in the Breedsville Band. I gotta get you with somebody else that's in the band question sometime to talk about that. But we had a very active Breedsville Band. I wasn't in it. They thought I was too young or something. But I didn't get in it. About two years ago, I was able to resurrect the old base drum and it's now in the possession of the Village . It belongs to the Village. I got it from this party so I could give it to the Village. So the Village owns the old base drum that was used 50 - 75 years ago.

The pickle factory was between the two side branches of the railroad track. It was really a receiving station. But it was more than a receiving station. The farmers would bring in the pickles. They were sorted according to size and they were put in huge vats and salted. Salt and water and they stayed there for six months to a year. Then they were transported out of there and taken to Coloma and put into bottles. The part I want to tell you about. My brother Dick and I were always together just like pat, and that morning we went over to the pickle factory. The man in charge, He says, "Boy you want a pickle? You can have one. Those that are too big we can't make pickles out of them. They just don't process. We have no processing for using it that way. So you can have them." So we took a big pickle and of course, we always had a jackknife in our pocket. So we sliced it off and peeled it and these were big ones remember. Bigger than they wanted for canning in any way. And then we said well there's some salt over there. There was one of these eight or ten foot vats that was full of salt. So we'd take a handful of salt, dip the pickle in it, eat the pickle and when we got through eating one pickle, I mean these were big ones now, then we'd eat another pickle. And we was around there most of the morning and eating pickles all the time. And eventually it came noon time and we went home and we told Mother that we'd eaten some pickles. "How many did you eat?" "I don't know. A lot of them" "Oh your gonna be sick. The pickles are poisonous unless you soak them in salt water

first. You got to soak them in salt water first or their gonna make you very sick." Pa says "Don't worry Ma. It's all right. It's all right." And he was. Because you don't have to, there's nothing to drive out of pickles. But that was one of the old wife's tales that had stuck in Mother's mind. So we didn't die. We didn't even get sick, that is. I can't help but remember the little gasoline engine over by the side of the building that was chugging along all summer long pumping water to fill up these big vats with water and salt and pickles.

Then leave that and go to another something that happened about the same time. Breedsville had gravel roads by now and we were eight or ten years of age. But before that it had been dirt roads. Now this was gravel roads and they had to be graded once in a while. Billy Grimes, two miles west and two miles north, had a steam tractor and he pulled the grader all day long. He had the grader behind, with somebody on the grader that adjusted the blade up or down. Here was the interesting part as far as I'm concerned. Dick and I rode on that steam tractor all day long and every once in a while he'd say "back up a little boys" and he'd reach one of these little narrow coal shovels and just shovel one or two shovels full of coal on the fire underneath the boiler and the old thing kept on a going. All day long. No extra strain, all kinds of power. That's my first recollection of anything steam powered.

But there's another recollection I have about that time or a little bit later. It's the same tractor. But it's at the Jordon house. Now don't look for a picture right now, but it's right over there. Cross ways. Why we heard the steam engine blowing and Dick and I had to go down and see what was going on. The steam tractor had pulled into the yard and behind it came the separator and the thrashing machine as we used to call it then. They maneuvered it into place and hooked it together from the tractor to the separator with a big, probably a six inch wide leather belt, probably fifty feet long and that turned the separator. But here is the interesting thing I saw personally. I wanted to get there in a hurry and going cross lots was a lot faster than going around through the gate. So I climbed over the barb wire fence with my bare feet and I did not hurt the bottom of my feet at all, not one little bit. But somewhere I jagged the top of my foot. by the way there's still a scar on the top of my foot. I didn't pay any attention to that. I had to see this machinery working and of course somebody was throwing in the packages of grain. We weren't allowed to get close enough to see what happened. Little boys shouldn't be around that close to machinery. I do remember that. It was about supper time and we

went home. Mother said "What did you do to your foot?" I said "I don't know." And of course I told Mother and she was having a fit because I had cut my foot. She soaked it out and scrubbed it and patched it and so on. I've still got a scar there. But I saw that machinery working. Actually working.

Now about the Jordon house again. The next thing I remember distinctly was when the Jordon house burned. That was a two story house and it was a beautiful house. And it burned. The date is gone from me. The house was rebuilt by Harold Mortensen. He gave me these details. "Yes", he said, "I built the house entirely out of hemlock. The framework with all hemlock. The foundation was largely the old foundation. The front steps are still the same front steps that were there before the house burned. Since then the house seems to have changed hands many times and then there was one family moved in and that was interesting. They had a basement under the house and it was dry. Why I say that is there are so many houses in Breedsville the basement is not dry. But they wanted a deeper basement and they dug the basement deeper. Probably covered half or two thirds of the area under the house. And it was dry while they was doing it. They got a nice concrete floor all the way through and when the water came it stayed, and it keeps on coming and it has never quit since. If they had left it the original level, the original depth, looks to me like it would have been wonderful without any trouble. Now they've had a sump pump going ever since. Except one man was living there and the sump pump broke down. He took the sump pump down to have it repaired. It's going to take two or three days to repair it. He put a new one. Even that he had to bail for hour after hour after hour. Pick it by one pail at a time, carry it up the stairways, which is rather narrow, and continually almost night and day. Well again about that house. There was one elderly couple who lived in this same house. We'll call it the Jordon house. They were there for two or three years. While they were there, they says "could we get some of those evergreen trees?" We've took some evergreen trees about 7 inches long and planted in the garden just like so many radish at that time. They had grown up to about two feet fall. They got four evergreen trees from us. As you can see now, those trees are forty feet tall. The one right in the middle is a little taller than that because that tree was there before they planted these. This old couple whose name is gone from me know. Both of them were from the old country. What country I don't know. Continental Europe. Very hard working and old. I'll say over seventy as a guess. They picked a certain spot for a garden and they went through it with ordinary tools and then they went through it and literally picked out every piece of quack grass that was there, by hand. They had almost a fence built around there garden out of quack grass that they took out of that garden by

hand. They grew a very nice garden. And of course like everybody else they got older and then they moved from here to, I understood, one of their children's. Somewhere else.

We might just as well remember Mr. and Mrs. Blaine Puckett. They're the ones just before the present owners. There are many many Pucketts around this region. They are from the South. But they're very nice folks. Everyone of them are very good. Blaine has become reasonably successful in this way. He buys a restaurant. He redoes it, fixes it all up, beautiful. Makes a thriving business out of it and he sells it and I presume he makes money out of it. Because shortly after he sells it, he buys something else. And then he fixes that up some way or another, makes it more beautiful and he sells it. And he has done that time and time again. I think he does pretty good by it. But I hope this is not finding fault with Blaine, because Blaine is a wonderful guy. But the present owners, she is the outdoors type. He's got one of the most beautiful libraries of music on records that you ever laid eyes on. They say that his record library is valued at more than their farm. House and farm. Their name is Pulka. She is the outdoor type as I said. She loves her animals. She loves her garden and she's exceedingly nice. They are exceedingly nice folks to have as neighbors. He is doing some teaching in Kalamazoo and also in charge of word processing. Now some people know exactly what you mean. I've got a vague idea. She is a full time employee, driver of the city buses in Kalamazoo. Of course she has her days off now and then like any job is.

Anyway, I want to mention January 1, 1985. Actually it started a few hours before that. The 11 O'Clock news said, we're going to have a lot of rain and then it also says the temperatures gonna drop down to, I don't remember the exact figure, but it seems to me it says about 26. I says "Oh these poor Consumers Power men. They're gonna be busy tonight". Well it wasn't too long and our lights went completely a flutter. Completely out of whack. When electricity goes bad, they usually dim and go bright. These did not go dim and bright. They went brighter and then back to normal. Brighter and back to normal. I didn't react quick enough. My mind didn't produce the proper answer quick enough. I pulled the main switch and shut off everything, but just before I shut it off, there was a big flash in the back room. It seemed like it lit up the whole house. As we looked afterward, that one opening, that one plug in opening, there was a flash came out of that box and it was eight inches long about two inches wide. at that time. Every appliance in our house was destroyed except the washing machine and the pump. I've gotta quality that a little bit because it was just after Christmas and we

had pulled the TV back out of the way so we could set the Christmas tree right there, so it didn't get the TV. But all the appliances were gone. It blew the hot water heater and well, everything, all in one flash. Just before I turned it off. Well I know a little bit about electricity. I pretended I was gonna be an electrical engineer when I was a kid. If I pulled that switch two minutes sooner, it would have saved all this trouble. But who can guess down to the exact two minutes. Well only one trouble about me doing very much then. The Doctor had just made about an eight inch incision right across my abdomen and says don't lift, don't walk too much, don't climb stairs and do not drive. At this time I was not able to do what I wanted to do and our neighbors in this Jordon house as we call it, the Pulkas, they are on the same circuit we are and the folks across the way, the other way, they are there some of the time. But were not there at that time.

[end of tape 3]