TOM CARNEAL

Amthor: This is a portion of the *Oral Histories of Northwest Missouri in the 1940s* program. The Nodaway County Historical Society Museum is sponsoring this program in partnership with the Missouri Humanities Council and with support of the National Endowment of the Humanities. Today's date is April 7, 2009, and this interview is being conducted at the Nodaway County Historical Society Museum in Maryville, Missouri, Nodaway County. The interviewer is Joni Amthor, and assisting is Margaret Kelley. We are here today to interview Tom Carneal; he's also the curator at the Museum. He was born on April 8, 1934, and he's going to tell us a little bit about the home front activity during the 1940s and some of his family members that participated in the war.

Amthor: Okay. Would you like to tell us a little bit about your background? Where and when you born, and about your parents?

Carneal: Well, you said, April 8, 1934, on the home farm, raised as a farm kid until I got up to be eighteen and a half and my friends and neighbors wanted me to go off and see Korea. The experiences I suppose I had as far as the background: I'm almost eight years old at the time of Pearl Harbor, and I can truthfully say that those first years of my life I knew nothing about what a war was, or that wasn't the least thing discussed, and so I guess my experiences would really start on that weekend of December 6 and 7th of 1941.

Amthor: Now you mentioned earlier that you had some family members that participated in the war?

Carneal: It's really a unique situation in the respect that my father had two younger brothers that had basically been in the CCC, as a way to make money during the 1930s and they moved over – I really don't know if they were in WPA, or whatever they were, but they did then go in the Army in 1941. I know that it was a matter of them joining simply because they found no other work, and I remember them talking many times about how some of their pay which was almost nothing but nevertheless, went home to my Grandmother and helped her and my Grandfather on the farm because they were just poor; well, we always said Ozark hillbillies; my Grandfather always said that he lived on a farm and the only thing he ever raised was rocks and kids, and so that those two younger boys going to the service also benefited them at home with a little bit of money.

Now I really didn't know too much about my father's younger brothers and the service, but it's a quirky things, just one of those crazy things that happens that they had a furlough that first weekend in December, and they were visiting my father and our family on December 6 and 7th, and I can remember as a kid, just being wide-eyed and fascinated with these two uncles that came in their uniforms, and I knew literally nothing about Army, nothing about war, but I was fascinated with these guys, and they were all in the starched uniforms and they looked so neat, and I can remember very well on Saturday, the 6th of December, asking them, "What do you do? What's a soldier? What's war?" and I can remember my father saying, "That's enough. You don't need to ask any more questions." But it was kind of like they were trying to explain to me that they were being trained to go off and fight not in the Pacific; that never came up in those

discussions. They were talking about this man Hitler and Europe and Germany. That was my first recollection in any way or form about what war was, what soldiers were, what they were doing; that all came on December 6 and it was like, you know, what an eye opener.

Well, then they were there the next day and we go off to church and come home, and have dinner, and they weren't going to leave, they were going to be there for a while, I know that. I went off – we went back that afternoon to church to practice for our Christmas program and I so vividly remember coming in the front door, and my father is sitting in the corner with his ears glued to the radio and both of my uncles sitting there and he said, you know, that the Japanese had attacked us at Pearl Harbor and it's like that mean literally nothing to me at the time. What really meant something to me is that both of my uncles said, "Well, we waited until you got home, we had to say goodbye; we have to go back to service." And that they did, on the evening of December 7th and I just – what an impression both to know what war was and soldiers and have the uncles there; the war now and off.

I might just add that of course as a kid, we were encouraged to correspond with soldiers and I did write to both of my uncles throughout the war. I'm sure they were stupid little letters, but nevertheless, I can remember writing them, and it it's interesting that they both served in the Pacific. Neither one of them served in Europe. I couldn't trace all the battles they were in; neither one of them were wounded, and they both came back home and lived; one of them is still alive, ninety-some years old; the other one just recently passed away in his late eighties. So that was my first exposure to this thing called war.

Amthor: Now did you have any brothers and sisters?

Carneal: I have two younger brothers, but both of those were born after the war. I had a sister that was born four years after me; she was there during the war time, and I suppose this is a good time to state it; I love my sister, but I really and truly could have some issues with her during the war time, because we were on rationing, and you had to have those ration stamps to buy certain things, especially shoes. All during the war, all of my shoe stamps went to buy my sister's shoes, because she was a girl, and she needed pretty shoes! So I was a growing kid, and I needed shoes too, but I got hand-me-downs; I was very, very luck. I had a cousin that was a little older than I was, a little bigger than I was, and his father worked for the railroad, which – great job, you know and anyway, I got his hand-me-downs, so I always had shoes –they might be a little bit big, but put some newspaper in the toes, they'd work. But I had hand-me-down shoes all through World War II thanks to my sister needing *pretty* shoes!

Amthor: Well, you were pretty young at that point, but you remember anything that they were saying on the radio? The propaganda?

Carneal: Oh, my! I'm not sure I could remember radio propaganda. My Grandfather on my Mother's side, he – Retinkamp, a good German name – and his father was from Germany; he followed the war extensively, and in fact, there just wasn't a time that I visited him, and it seemed like I was there every Saturday night or so, but he kept maps of the war in Europe; he didn't care two cents for the war in the Pacific; I don't think he showed me a map of the Pacific, but he kept the European war and first, it was like – "Well, what's that Hitler doing?" and he

showed the different countries and it was like I got map lessons when I was visiting him on the weekends. Then after we started the drive in North Africa and North Italy, every weekend he'd spread these maps out and he'd show you – he'd show me, he'd show all of us grandkids that would listen – where the front lines were, [Laugh] and of course I think he wanted to be a general, because "Why, they ought to go up through that valley; they ought to go up here." It was really, you know, not so much the radio, but it was like his lessons from the maps and the newspapers of where they were every week, and what they were doing.

This became even more important after D-Day in 1944 because my mother's younger sister had met and married a paratrooper; they were married in August of 1943, and I thought he was the most handsome man in the world; a big paratrooper – "Oh, I want to be a paratrooper someday" that type of thing. Then he was part of D-Day and the Battle of the Bulge and all of these – but we didn't always know where he was, but Grandad would; he would write letters home and he kind of disguised where they were, but everybody could figure it out and Grandad would say, "Well, they're there, and there," and this type of thing, so I really – every week would have a lesson of how the war in Europe was going, and I can remember when they once crossed the Rhine, my Grandfather "Oh, it's all over. We just have to clean up the mess." That type of thing. So I had that type of lesson along with what was going on in school.

I have to tell you, from a kid in school, we had all kinds of programs to help the war effort, you know, not only the rationing, but I can remember as school kids, we went out in the fall and gathered milkweeds, because they used the milkweed pods, and that would go into the lining of parachutes. So we'd spend, I don't know how many afternoons walking through the fields, but that was something you did as a school activity, actually approved. We'd take our bags out and gather up these milkweed pods: oh, we were so proud if we got a half ounce, I don't know, it never seemed like it was very much, but it was our effort.

There was another one; I have to tell this story. There was the drive for scrap iron, which everything had to be recycled, even my precious tin foil on my Hersey candy bars had to go off to war and ------ how terrible, but anyway, bring in metal, and then we had a thing in school where they would weigh how much you brought in. We all started out as privates, I think, and then we organized ourselves as an army, and then if you brought in so many pounds, you got to be a private first class, and then you got to be a corporal. Oh, this was a big thing, and we would just search all over for scrap iron around the farm and bring it in. Well. This went very well one fall, really doing very well. I never got very far – I think I was a corporal, maybe headed for sergeant, except about the day it was to collect all of this and take it in to the local market, we had had an old cast iron furnace that had burned out, had been junked on the farm and Dad put it on the truck, and said "Okay, we'll weigh this for you and that will push you up. You'll become an officer, or something." Well, in fact, the weight was all measured out; the weight was strong enough that it made me a general. That was the last day we did that in the school, because I must have been an ornery little cuss – we're not going to do that anymore. If you're going to be a general, then we're not playing that game.

But again, that and talking about rationing. I can't say that we really suffered with lack of things at school. The one thing that I remember we always looked forward to was a trip every spring to go like to a big city, and like go through the packing plants, go through the processing plants, see

what city life was like. Even though it wasn't too far a distance, or fifty miles in gas rationing, but we still took those trips. We still had those types of activities every spring. Other than that, in the country school you didn't do very much, but we had those trips.

That brings up – I'm just rattling here, but – memories. We had gas rationing, but because we were on the farm, it wasn't a big issue, plus the fact we had a big car 1934 Ford. Now you probably don't know too much about 1934 Ford motors, but they would run on almost anything. Well, we had gas rationing, we had the gas, but because we were farmers, we also had the gas that you could start the tractors with, or you could steal a little bit for the cars, which was illegal but you could do it. But we had a neighbor, and I'll mention his name – Ed Rufner, what a good name, but Ed figured out that you could take gasoline to town, especially Omaha, and you could sell a gallon or two to people – kind of black market it and it was a pretty good deal. I think we all knew Ed was kind of doing that, but the one reason that you knew he was doing something – he had a Ford also and it would go down the road just smoking like mad.

Well, the reason it was smoking is because those Fords would run on tractor fuel and as a farmer you could get an unlimited amount of tractor fuel. Ed would take his gas ration, sell it on the black market, and run his car on tractor fuel. We always knew it was Ed going down the road because the car was smoking like mad – and nobody turned him in and Ed never got into trouble over it. I don't know how much money he made- probably very, very little, but it was just one of those things that we knew Ed Rufner did, and we weren't very happy about that. That's the way it went.

Carneal: As farmers, we certainly had no problem as I can remember as a kid with any of the food rationing. I know Mother would complain that there wasn't enough sugar for all the canning that she was going to do, or wanted to do, but they soon had corn sugar on the market and a lot of things were put up with corn sugar and that was fine. Today it is part of the artificial sweeteners that we get but I can't say that there was any other problem. We certainly didn't have a problem with meat, we certainly didn't have a problem – maybe we didn't get as many bananas as we wanted, but that wasn't a rationing, that was just a matter of how many bananas were available in the consumer market is that really amounted to.

Amthor: You were talking about the rationing with sugar. Was there any other like gardening that your Mother – did they have a large garden?

Carneal: Oh, we had a huge garden! Oh, each year I think it got bigger, and I think we raised a garden not only for ourselves, but my grandparents lived in town, my great-grandparents lived – the great-grandmothers were both alive, and I swear that we took food into everybody, and I don't know if it was a matter of rationing, it was just something you did as a farmer. The one or two things that were always done; we had oh, probably three great aunts that were widows and they spent most of their lives moving from one family to another, to another. I don't think they ever had in the '40s - I don't think they ever had their own apartments, their own home- they just lived with members of the family.

Two of them I remember very, very well were really tremendous workers. If we had the thrashing there, or corn shelling, whatever it was, and Mother had a lot of people to cook for,

"Call Aunt Pearl." Aunt Pearl would come out and stay and help and get out of her road! I mean, she was making pies first thing in the morning, and making bread, and I don't know how that woman could work the way she did, but she did. She was just really quite the worker and so not only when you had the extra help, but when it came time to can, "Call Aunt Pearl" and she would be there – now she always took a few quarts for herself, or maybe a member of her family, but she would be there maybe all week. We had a large orchard, so there were always things to can: berries, peaches, apricots, apples, you name it, there was something to can and she was always there helping and she was a big, big worker.

Now there was another aunt that used to come and she wasn't so much the cooking, canning aunt, she was the one that would come and do the mending and remake clothes, and here again, I don't know if it was rationing, I don't know, maybe it was our poverty, I have no idea, but over and over I know that Aunt Nettie would come, and that's when I would get like my cousin's clothes, some of them would be too big for me and she'd remake the trousers or jackets so that they would fit me and I can remember – I still have a picture of myself when I was probably ten, maybe eleven, where she cut down my Father's wedding suit and make me a suit out of that. She was very, very good. Not only clothes for me, but for my sister, and then she'd remake part of Mother's clothes as well. If she wasn't remaking clothes, she was embroidering, and I think I've still got a dozen pillowcases that she embroidered. She was always busy with her hands. Don't ask her to cook – she didn't do that.

Amthor: Did she ever make clothing out of feed sacks?

Carneal: Oh, my goodness! Yes, we had always had lots of chickens and I'm talking about maybe three or four thousand and the flock every spring. Now those roosters all went off to market and we always had about six hundred laying hens because we had flocks that raised eggs for the hatchery and so we had lots of feed sacks from those chickens. Now you had to be *very careful*. My Mother picked them out when she went to the feed store, and those poor guys in the feed store had to move I don't know how many sacks to get to that pattern, but anyway, then she would bring them home, and they'd make mother-daughter dresses, and we had tablecloths out of them. I can remember having a shirt made out of a feed sack, but I would only wear it at home; I would not wear it away from home. I have no idea if I thought that was so bad, or what, but I can remember that flower print shirt that I didn't really care for. They just did all kinds of things with feed sack; I think we had pillow cases out of them, and I think even the baby's crib – they made sheets for the – oh, for the young children, where it wasn't a full mattress out of those things.

You did what you – part of that I think is the shortage of materials during the war, but I think part of it was just being farmers and not having a lot of money, you made do with these things. Even when I started housekeeping, going off to service, and it was in '59 that I had my first apartment. My mother pulled out sheets and things that were pre-World War II, and said, "Here, set up housekeeping." I think they're all gone, now, but you know, they were all saved. Partly we had a big house, didn't move for well, there was four generations in that house before we ever totally moved out of it, and all the stuff was just kept and you used it, and reused it, and reused it. Now part of that I think the Depression caused people to be very conservative but then also World War II, there's a shortage. You just were very careful with these things.

Amthor: Now did your Mother have trouble getting hosiery?

Carneal: I do remember that she and her younger sister both painted their legs because obviously they couldn't get even rayon and then painted – I remember the talk about the stripe going up the back and how they would paint those going up the back. That's about all I can tell you, but I do remember that they did that type of thing.

Amthor: Now what did you do for entertainment?

Carneal: Oh, my! Most certainly didn't watch television because it wasn't around. The radio was a very important – there were – the program that I remember my Father loved to listen to and we had to shut up and be quiet was *The Green Hornet* I think that was on Wednesday nights, if I recall, but two or three things that we did; Saturday was the day, as farmers, to go to town, Saturday evening especially. Take the cream and the eggs into the creamery, and go shop a little bit.

My big thrill was getting to go to the movies, Friday and Saturday nights were always westerns, and serial, and of course we got to see our favorites, either Gene Autry or Roy Rogers, or Hop-a-Long Cassidy; I guess we all had – I can remember that it was awfully hard for me to switch my loyalty from Gene Autry to Roy Rogers; I thought Gene Autry was the man to follow. That was the big Saturday night entertainment; other than after the movie, if it was Saturday night, the movie was usually over by eight-fifteen; we weren't ready to go home yet, so you'd go down town and sit on the car, hope you had a good spot, and watch the people go by. We were people watchers; and of course talk to your neighbors and wave at them; it was, you know, the whole – it wasn't a big town. It was only a town of about six thousand, but that was the big Saturday night entertainment. I think other people may have gone to the *tavern,* but not us! I mean, you know, we couldn't drink, we were kids- we couldn't even – oh, those are terrible places.

Now later it wasn't quite so bad, but as a kid growing up they were and just seeing friends and neighbors was what it amounted to as much as anything. Not spending – well, I remember the movies cost me ten cents before they put on the movie tax, and then it was twelve cents, and I can remember my parents saying, "Well, you probably can't go to as many movies now, because the price has gone up to twelve cents." I don't know if it ever kept me from going or not, but that was a big issue. Of course, the other thing is that I think at the age of twelve you had to pay the adult price of twenty-five cents, and you lied about your age for a long while. At the movies, there was another aspect that you'll really like that was involved with war was the news reels and you know you'd get to see probably about five minutes worth – I'm not sure if it was much more than that – but they would show you what was going on in the war in the world. It was kind of like you got to see it first hand; that was a very interesting thing to see and a lot of it was patriotism, and I can remember going to the movies and they would turn the lights on and have a drive to collect money for some aspect; it always bothered me I only had a penny or two to put in, but nevertheless, you could think about that.

Now another aspect – I don't know if it was entertainment, but the war bond drives, and they would usually have some type of public entertainment and then you know, buy the war bonds.

As a school kids, that was another thing that we would do, was teachers had a tremendous chore, but you'd buy stamps that you'd put in a war bond book, and when you got your eighteen dollars and seventy-five cents, or something like that, then you had a twenty-five dollar war bond. Each week you'd bring a little money and buy a stamp and fill up your book and you got a book, you were very patriotic. The war bond drives were fun because it was usually good entertainment; singers, dancers, kind of a party type atmosphere, and you'd go to town and be there for the war bond. Sometimes it would be also bring in – like I said, the scrap metal, and I can remember that there was this huge, kind of corn crib affair in the middle of main street, and you'd throw your scrap iron into that. Yea! You know kind of help the war effort.

All these things that made you very patriotic and as far as I'm concerned growing up in that time period, I knew that when I got to be eighteen, they were going to draft me and I was going off to war. There was never any thought in my mind as I was growing up, but what I wasn't going to go into the military at eighteen. And sure enough, my friends and neighbors drafted me, but this was something you just grow up with, and in fact, I know that I watched a war, knew a little more about the war in the Pacific, and especially those planes, the Zero; I don't know, there was just something about those that just irritated me, and so in grade school, one of the – we played a lot of war games, but one of the war games was we had kind of an h shaped log thing to play on. I don't know why it was ever put there, but for me that was my plane and I would stratel that log, and I was flying that plane, and I was shooting down those Zeros. But I wasn't the only one; I think every kid my age was at the other end; we were going to get those Japanese.

Of course, we never realized that the war was going to be over long before we ever got to that age, but that was the war games we played anyway. Really, I think we played more anti-Japanese than we did anti-German, and I have no idea why except that community was a very German oriented community, and that might have been the reason why we decided to like the Japanese less.

Amthor: Now how did your family feel at the end of the war? Did they agree Truman when he dropped the atomic bomb?

Carneal: Oh, my, yes! Absolutely! That was a great day as far as my family and our community was – it was partly, you know, first, it ended the war; thank goodness. But why you see, they had a secret weapon, and you see how good our government is; they've got all kinds of things that we don't know about, and basically I would say from August, 1945 for many, many years, I certainly did believe, and certainly family and community believed the government had secrets that they were keeping from you and could pull out of the hat and do these things. Certainly with the advent of the introduction of the jet aircraft, it was like – I think, you know, because we really hadn't followed things, all of a sudden here's a jet aircraft flying over; what is that? Well, oh, it's another one of those government secrets, you know, and first thing you know we have all kinds of jets flying around, and rockets. There were a lot of things that I would say growing up my family didn't know, weren't good readers, or weren't really good observers of what was going on, but they believed the government was right *in all instances* and of course Harry Truman had to be right, because he was a Missourian.

Amthor: How about Communism? Were they worried about threats?

Carneal: Oh, my goodness, yes! Of course I'm a little older by the time we really- by the time we hear Churchill talk about the Iron Curtain, and what's going on, but they certainly did see Communism as a threat; and I did as – really in high school, debated that issue at one of the – I think I must have been a sophomore when that was one of the issues we debated in high school that year about the threat of Communism, and of course, I was – I just couldn't see anything but the evil of Communism, and I can remember yet to this day the young man that I opposed that basically his argument was socialism, and it was good; I just couldn't tolerate that young man the rest of my school year for thinking that Communism had some good points to it. We grew up – I grew up, certainly, in a community, in a school system that certainly approved of the dropping of the atomic bomb; never heard anything negative about it until much later in my life. Certainly approved of the war, against Communism, and as I am marching off to train and [laugh] thought I was going to Korea, I was going to go fight Communism; instead I went to Europe and fought Communism, but that was another story.

Amthor: Now is there one particular story or memory that stands out in your mind during the 1940s that you'd like to share with us?

Carneal: As far as the war is concerned, I think probably I don't know which would be the most important. I think the thing that I look back on when I think of the war, I think of the constant role the military played you might say, in the community. Things like a troop trains going by, you stood and waved if you were at the railroad station, supporting them. Going down the highway at the great speed of thirty-five miles an hour, and here comes a convoy, and you pulled over to the side; let the convoy go by; never complained about it, waved at the soldiers, supportive of them. Any time there was a parade, any time there was troops that might be parading, be there for any reason, it was, you know, a great thrill to see them all dressed up in the uniform. When my uncles came home on leave before they ever went to Europe or to the Pacific, it just a thrill to go meet them at the railroad station. Not the airport – the railroad station of the bus station and to greet them and to be with them and see them in their uniform, just really a patriotic kid, I guess; that's the way I was raised and that's the way the community was.

Again I would probably have to state what I've heard in many of these other interviews- oh, there were sad times; I can remember the community put up pictures of guys were lost in the war; every fall there was a celebration and this one store would have these pictures of the guys that were killed in action, or missing in action; but still it was a happy time. I know its war, and I know things were rough, but it's like it was a time that the families were together; it sounds silly, but it was like – you still look back and it was a good time, too. Sad, but good.

Amthor: One final question. Considering the 1940s and the experience that you've had during the war and the economy at that time period, what would you say is the difference between that time period and of today? What advice could you give. . .

Carneal: [Chuckle]

Amthor:. . . to let's say, students that could learn from your experience?

Carneal: [Sigh] that's a very difficult question to answer in many ways. One of the biggest things is that in my experience growing up, we came out of the Depression, we came out of not only the Depression, but here in the Midwest, we came out of the drought years and people forget those are two different things, but tied together in the 1930s and so first the farmers get hit with the Depression, and then they get hit with the drought, and by the time we get to 1941, we're beginning to come out of that, a little bit, but it's not glorious, it's farmers, communities, have been doing without and very low incomes, and you know, jobless, and you didn't have a lot of materialistic goods, and I don't want to think that we're very noble, but I'm not sure we had a lot of materialist thoughts. I mean, iPods, television sets, computers, new computers this year, new printers, I can go on and on and on with the things that we have today as consumers versus we didn't have in the 1940s. I don't want to say that we were noble, I think that thing is as you grew up if you [chuckle] if you got a new Easter outfit – whoopee! You know, if I got a new hand-me-down Easter outfit it was whoopee, that was good, too.

I think the big difference from the 1940s to say right now is the amount of materialistic goods that we have or that we desire, or sometimes I think even to function with. I mean, how do you function in this day and age without a computer, without the email – oh, how I'd like to function without the emails today – but there's just so many more things that seem like we *have* to have, you know, ordinary, everyday work life, and you didn't in the 1940s. So they are different worlds, as far as that goes. The other thing – and I'm just as guilty of this as anybody could be; when I talk about say the 1940s, when we had rationing and we had food and we didn't seem to go without and as I said, my mother used corn sugar a lot and that was fine, I still corn sugar, corn syrup today, but we had good staple food, no problem. Today we have so many fancy foods, and I'm just as guilty of that.

Well, I certainly think of our society, and I laugh and I smile when I hear about Starbucks having trouble. Who needs to needs that kind of money for a cup of coffee? Well, our society does. Certainly that wouldn't have been the case in the 1940s because if you didn't get coffee, you could go out and get some bark especially if you had some chicory around and maybe it wasn't what you liked in the way of coffee, but it was a morning drink that would wake you up. That would be – if I'm looking at that whole thing and I don't want to say that we were noble but like if it was a kid and it was Christmas time, they got one toy and that was – one toy is all you can have, you know, and – or if I knew I was going to get one toy.

I have to tell you this – it was during the war years, too. I wanted desperately to get a toy that was an auto carrier – the cab and the little cars that go on that. Well, Santa Claus brought me a livestock carrier truck. I didn't like that, but I got it. I had to wait a whole year for the next one; we just didn't get new toys during the time. That's not true today; I swear to God, it doesn't make any difference what kind of income you have, the kids have got to have more toys, and that's good, I think in some ways, because a lot of them are teaching things, but I'm not sure they need all that they get. That's the old person talking. We constantly do that – we say, "Well, we had it so rough." Times were different. The income levels were so much lower we just couldn't afford those extra things that we have in this day and age.

Amthor: Well, I appreciate you coming in today. . .

Carneal: Okay.

Amthor:. . . and talking to us.

Carneal: Alright, now you know all about World War II from a kid's point of view.

Falcone: I asked the students if they could come

Carneal: Don't tell me I've covered everything.

Falcone: No, actually there are a few.

Kelley: And I had one.

Tom: Okay.

Kelley: You mentioned the troop trains. Tell me about that – there were only a few that the military took over, like the rail line, or how did that work that they were the troop trains?

Tom: The government had the right to requisition from any railroad any number of passenger cars or sleeper cars, whatever they wanted to transport the troops, and they could also order up locomotives; so as an example, maybe train number 12 was supposed to travel between Omaha and St. Louis at Ten o'clock every morning, but the government decided that they wanted that train and that track for troops, they took it over, and as a civilian you couldn't get on that train. Sometimes troop trains might have a passenger attached, but usually it was so many cars, and so many soldiers and they were being transported from one part of the country to the other and everything else gave way to the troop train. Everything else got off to the side: passenger trains, freight trains, everything else gave way; they were express trains going through. Usually, by the time we got to 1943, it's usually units going one coast to another to fight. Going by. Does that answer your question there?

Kelley: Yes.

Carneal: They weren't, you know, they weren't the fancy cars necessarily; although the government could requisition one of those streamliners if they wanted to, most of them were the older Pullman type. They weren't necessarily painted saying "U. S. Property," they were just requisitioned by the government to move those troops and that's why in traveling during the war, it was so difficult for civilians to necessarily get a seat; certainly not a Pullman most of the time, but get a seat to go from point A to point B because if the government wanted that seat, you got bumped and you – didn't make any difference if you had a ticket; if the government requisitioned it, they came first.

Falcone: As a historian, we spend a lot of time talking about politics, but it's always intriguing to me when I look at oral histories or read oral histories that most people don't have – that's not an important part of their life when they remember back to this time. Could you talk a little bit

about how your family felt about FDR, the general feeling towards politics that you remember ----------; was that traumatic or important?

Carneal: Well, first of all, my Grandfather on my Mother's side was some big wig within the Republican Party, in the state, and so you can imagine what he felt about FDR! Not even talking about the war years, but talking about my Grandfather hated FDR's policies. He was a big farmer and he was asked to kill of pigs and calves and that project was a failure and Grandad said it was a failure and he couldn't understand how you could kill these animals off and have people starving, but if you wanted to be part of the program, and wanted to get any government aid, you had to do that type of thing. He hated that whole agricultural program that FDR tried in '34, '35, '36, and of course again I can hear him talking about "Plow up these acres, don't do the -------; what have we got? We've got the drought, and we don't have any crops and we're going broke" and I'm not sure my Grandfather was the best manager of his farms and his money, because he did lose several farms; not so much to – I don't think to the Depression as much as to the drought, because he simply didn't raise any crops; they were simply burned out. But he blamed FDR anyway for those types of things.

The only time I – and I can remember we used to get called together for the fireside chats – I never knew what they were talking about to speak of; but Grandad thought we ought to listen to FDR and some of his fireside chats. When the war happened, then he became a little more supportive of FDR. I think he thought his war programs sounded pretty good; but oh, gosh! Grandad used to have dozens of stories about FDR – just kind of a little bit – sometimes raunchy; but the one thing I have to put in here, is that I grew up- my family, no body understood that FDR was inflicted with polio the way he was. I'm sure that if you asked them right up to 1944 could FDR walk on his own, they would have all said yes; nobody – I can remember what a shock when he started appearing in the wheelchair. I can remember my Grandfather talking about this was such a shock for that to happen.

Now he followed – and I come back to my Grandfather; my Father didn't, my Father was farming, milking cows, taking care of chores, raising a family, politics wasn't very important to him. In fact, he used to say "I'm milking all these cows and making this _____ just so your Grandfather can go off to that damn Republican convention." [Laugh] But – so Dad, no, Dad wasn't involved and I – Mother would have voted Republican because her father said; but they were all very, very funny in my mind, in that when FDR died, and it was a terrible shock, and it was like – we don't care what your politics are, we've lost the president, we have to honor him, and we're sorry about this and that type of thing. But as strong of a Republican as they were, [laugh] because Harry Truman came in as President, he was a good Missourian, that's okay. That was just about their politics went. Very, very quickly, Missourian became president, so we're going to support him; to heck with his politics. I can't remember - by the late forties, and Truman's policies, I was in high school, but I can't remember the family ever being negative about anything Truman wanted to do. But that's because he was a Missourian, and that's just the way they felt about it.

Falcone: [indistinct]

Carneal: Yep. And oh, well, huh. Firing McCarthy: that was another issue. They thought that Truman had overstepped his bounds on that because McCarthy was a good guy; and – well, I know, too, as a historian, I really worked at that, but that was another issue, you might say.

Falcone: Does anybody else have any questions for Mr. Carneal? _____ ?

Unknown: Yes, I've got a couple. You mentioned J-V Day – what about V-E-Day? What was the response when they learned that Adolf Hitler had committed suicide and the fall of the Third Reich? What about the Holocaust? Did you know much about it? [can't hear the rest of the question]

Carneal: [Sigh] There was never any mention that I know of as a child growing up and in grade school or even up into like the high school about the Holocaust. It was not until I guess we got pictures of the camps and that type of thing before we ever became aware, so it's '45 before we ever become aware of it. I really think that the community that I grew up in was very anti-Jewish and it comes to something like the Holocaust and the camps I don't think in the early part of that anyone really understood what had taken place. There wasn't – you go back, it just wasn't that much – we knew, the government knew, and basically the intellectuals knew what the Germans were doing to the Jews; certainly by 1938, but as far as public, there is just no outcry publicly, it just isn't discussed, it's more ignored, and maybe we didn't know everything, but certainly the community I grew up in was anti-Jewish enough that they probably wouldn't have mentioned it, had they even known.

But after they once found out what was going on, then they softened their view on that whole issue. And I could half – I would just have to say, the local community I grew up in basically would blame many of the economic woes upon the Jewish bankers. Very, very traditional; and it's very, very late before they change their attitude. I don't know, maybe the attitude – I don't live in that community today, and if I went and would ask, they might still have that attitude, I really don't know. But as a child growing up or being in that, it's just something that just wasn't known. Any more than another issue that was very well hidden, was our moving the Japanese into the relocation camps and I can remember probably my senior year in high school, 1951 was the first I ever heard about that, and that was because of what Truman was doing and trying to bring about some – some type of compensation. My mouth just dropped – you just can't do that to American citizens! Oh, yes you can; and we did.

So today the difference, you know, every night, if you want to stay up in front of that boob tube they'll tell you what you should think and they'll tell you about all these horrible things in the world. They didn't do that back in the late forties and early fifties. We don't have that evening news; you might get it on the radio, but never to the extent that we do today. I don't – I hate – now I'll say this; the news media of the late 1940s and the 1950s did not see it their role in society as trying to formulate policy; formulate ideas. Today, that's a different story. Today they try I think every night they have a certain slant, they have a certain view and they're trying to force us into this view. If you don't believe, then ask them that run for public office at the national level and what the media does to them, one way or the other. [Laugh] I'm going to go out on a limb here; but that's what we get with freedom of the press. They can do what they want to do, and we don't stop them. You're going to ask me in the next question do I believe in

freedom of the press? At this stage I'm ready to say sometimes we need to look at what we have.

Falcone: Anyone else have a question?

Carneal: Sure.

Unknown: What about women and war? Did you know anybody who was a WAC or a WASP?

Carneal: Well,

Same unknown: Or how was that viewed?

Carneal: We – a couple, three things I would add here, or comment on. You're not too far away from where I grew up there was Martin put in a bomber plant, and so Rosie the Riveter, the women going off to work in the military industrial complex, working in the factory was certainly acceptable, and it was done, and they were doing their part.

Now, women in the military: I did have a couple of cousins, one that joined the WAVES, and one that joined the WACS. Well, there was a third one that was a nurse and she went off and joined – however she lost her life in the Pacific; I don't know much more about it than that. That was very patriotic. I've learned since then, those girls, those women that went off and joined the service, in my community, that was honorable, that was respectable; when they came back home, I think we – our community still honored them; in fact I think if you go down there to Amazonia to the Methodist Church I think you'll see one of the girls in her uniform that's been there for fifty-odd years, because they are very proud that she went off – but, you know, we find out later from the National scene that this wasn't so honorable and how that fits into every community, I don't know. Is it locally?

Do you appreciate them, and nationally you don't? I think in our interviews that we've done here and I think what we know about the people from Nodaway County, the women of Nodaway County that went off I think they had good respect when they came back; I think they found it was – it's honorable in Maryville, Nodaway County, to say "Yes, I served in World War II." But, you know, nationally we have a little different view about that. One thing they didn't – would have to mention from the Museum aspect, what we did find is that a lot of the women did not keep their uniforms, partly because they didn't want to wear them again. Men, World War II, you know, those uniforms were still coming out of the moth balls, but women, now – and to get the two or three uniforms that we have upstairs was really very difficult, because it's kind of like Vietnam, we came home, they didn't like us a lot, so we threw them away. Okay?

Unknown # 2: You sort of touched on the Japanese internment camps in California – were you aware of that as it was going on, or were you aware of listening to the adults around you, stereotypes that were being presented to you about the Japanese interment?

Carneal: Okay. I might have to have a translation; I couldn't hear that well.

Amthor: She was wanting to know more about the internment camps;

Unknown # 2: Yeah, and if the adults around you were talking about, you know, stereotypes of Japanese and the Germans, and if that sort of increased – racism that you were aware of?

Carneal: During the war, you never heard about an internment camp, even though they were in Arkansas, and Colorado, Wyoming – locally, here, that was much, much later – as I said, it was in the Truman administration, I was a junior, senior in high school because I ever heard of it, and I just couldn't believe it when I first heard about it. Truman was trying to get compensation for all those people that were in and it was $2500 was what I think he was trying to get Congress to pass, which he eventually did; when I heard about it, I was appalled, if I would have gone back to my home community and asked everybody about it, I don't think anyone knew about the internment camps. There was – you talked about propaganda, and that type of thing earlier; I can remember once a company my Grandfather, he was – as I said, he was a big politician, kind of a big man around; there was a – I don't know if you'd call it the safety group of the community – maybe there were self-appointed, I don't know what they were, but they kind of watched some people.

We had a doctor in town that was German, and I can remember going with him; I don't know why he would take me, a little kid in with him, but he went to make a call on the doctor because they heard the doctor had a short wave radio, and they thought he might be broadcasting things to the Germans; even hear in the Midwest, he might be broadcasting to the Germans, and so my Grandfather went – I can remember him, the man's name was Hudson, Dr. Hudson, and saying, you know, "We have a report that you have a short wave radio." Oh- I would like, to see it, and in essence telling him "don't broadcast on it, we're watching you." I don't know what else he told the man; I don't know how – I don't remember it that well, it must have been diplomatic about it, I guess, you know, the doctor continued to administer to the community, but I think he was put on a notice because you are a German, we're going to watch you. That probably wasn't rare for any community where there was somebody that had migrated from Germany in the '20s or 30's, there were no Japanese, so we couldn't say anything about that group as such.

Another thing, of course, during the war they transferred especially Italian prisoners of war – we had a camp not too far from here, and the farmers could go get those prisoners to help with the farm work and they would come and like put up hay, or shuck corn, but I can remember not my family, I don't know why, but some of the other neighbors would have them come and do that work, but the women would never seat them in the house to have lunch; they had to serve them something to eat, but they could be outside, on the grass, outside at a picnic table, but not in my house. My one aunt I remember very vividly served them out of like throw away plates; she wasn't going to have them eating out of her china! They were Italian prisoners of war; and then later they did - hardly ever did the Japanese – we had so few Japanese prisoners of war, because the Japanese would rather kill themselves than be taken prisoner. But we did have up at Clarinda, but they never went for day work outside of the prison; they were never outside the prison camp, but the German and Italian prisoners were. Does that kind of answer your question?

Unknown # 2: Yeah.

Carneal: Okay.

Kelley: Let's stop right here just a second and switch tapes,

Carneal: Okay.

Kelley: Then we'll have -----

Carneal: Well, we may not have any questions.

Falcone: We need to leave; we have about ten more minutes.

Carneal: Okay. But if you have questions from what I know, I'll be happy to . . .

Falcone: ---- gave you all some ideas about conducting an oral interview and you might take this last ten minutes for you to try to make some – place some calls to people instead of your own interview.

Carneal: You have to remember sometimes when we interview people not so much today as it used to be, but they might be afraid of the microphone, afraid of the camera, you have to put them at ease; I think this system here put people much more at ease than it used to be the big mic you had in front of them. I don't – have you had anyone be very concerned about the camera?

Amthor: No.

Carneal: Only a couple of women – "Does my hair look right?" or something like that.

Amthor: Lots of time they won't look at the camera, they'll look at me.

Carneal: Sure.

Amthor: During the interview, because

Kelley: I can try to work over to that angle.

Carneal: But that's very common when you're talking to people, versus some of us that have been doing this all of our lives, we talk to the camera.

Amthor: Now there are others that will talk to both of us; you know, they've seen both of us and they want to. . . .

Carneal: But don't let that bother you; just go ahead and ask the questions and get the answers because it's as much as anything the verbal that we want.

Kelley: and you've seen plenty of professional tapes too that they're always getting their profile of the person, because they are talking . . . .

Carneal: Right.

Amthor: We don't have two cameras – you may come across someone that is like pulling teeth; you ask them a question – yes, no, and you maybe into the interview and it's only five or ten minutes long, but just start asking other questions and before long, they'll loosen up a little bit and talk about

Falcone: . . . . ask them questions about favorite music, favorite bands, favorite movies, and that will relax people because those are – they're not really on the spot answering those type of questions, they're just elaborating on the fun things they liked to do, games, or whatever, and that relaxes people because they are just talking about ------

Amthor: Not everybody will take off, Mr. Carneal has, but a lot of people do. They'll explain their service in detail, and they will just continue to talk, and I just normally let them talk, because that's - you're getting their story.

Unknown: Most people don't ask.

Unknown - Tanja? Any type of question – like I ask; I wasn't sure if I should ask about the Holocaust, but I know towards the East Coast they were Jewish communities, it was known, that that was their relatives, but some people – you know, might – my great aunts and uncles, there are certain boundaries that you keep and don't cross.

Amthor: We haven't asked too many; there was a couple of them that talked about it themselves, and we allowed them to go ahead and talk about coming upon their camps and seeing the atrocities that they see and some of them will get emotional, and you can tell by their voice that they saw some things that was really – and I guess you just learn how to know when whether how long you pause or maybe ask them another question, and that kind of leads them into another area, and helps them move past that. You just to have to try to read the person to see how they are going to handle a question, and if they really don't want to answer the question, then go to another question.

Kelley: And there has been some that you knew that they had known more and told you more before, but this time they – you know,

Amthor: I've interviewed others by themselves, and

[laughter, chaos]

Unknown: You had a question about Communism; well, what if they were part of the occupation forces, and you know, Japan and Germany, would you like their descriptions of what that was like?

Amthor: Sometimes they'll talk to you about certain things, and they'll bring up other questions, and we have that led to other questions for us and we don't always go step by step, by what questions we have, we feel the person out to know what they want to talk about and what they say may lead you to other questions.

Carneal: When Allan Nevins started an oral interview, he mainly at that point was really trying to get interviews with people involved in dropping the atomic bomb, and then took off on this whole big project that lead to the Oral History Projects, but he said "Don't stop people when they are talking; you never know when a gem might pop out." And it did many times in his interviews; of course he was working with people that were working with dropping the atomic bomb.

Falcone: there is someone you will want to call; the list – what about [indistinguishable – continues to talk in background]

Amthor: We tried to do it for an hour; sometimes if they had a lot to say, we have two that are over an hour and a half

Carneal: Hardin Cox?

Amthor: Hardin Cox, from Mound City; he had a lot of say, and we just let him talk; but the majority of them, thirty, forty-five minutes, and they usually have said what they want to say.

Carneal: and that's kind of human nature and that's why we have so many classes that are fifty minutes long – that's about as long as a professor can be – oh!

Unknown: It's true!

Carneal: But I noticed my hour and fifteen minutes classes at about an hour I was – I don't care how many notes I had in front of me, I was running out of steam; that's just human nature.

[three or ten people talking all at once, then Amthor and someone discussing movies for the May program]

Carneal: Are we done here with this?