EMMA JANE BAILEY TWADDLE
ALSO: RAYMOND BAILEY & HUBERT B. TWADDLE

Amthor: This is a portion of the *Oral Histories of Northwest Missouri in the 1940s.* The Nodaway County Historical Society Museum is sponsoring this program in partnership with the Missouri Humanities Council, with support from the National Endowment of the Humanities. Today is May 21, 2009, and this interview is being conducted at the Nodaway County Historical Society Museum in Maryville, Missouri, in Nodaway County. The interviewer is Joni Amthor and assisting is Margaret Kelley, and we're here to interview Emma Jane Twaddle. Her birth date is January 17, 1922, and she's going to tell us about life in the 1940s, a little bit about her life, and also a little bit about her husband's, Raymond Bailey, who was in the U.S. Navy, and Hubert B. Twaddle, who was in the U. S. Army. First we're going to talk to Jane about your background. Can you tell us a little bit about what where and when you were born, your parents; their occupations were, if you had any brothers of sisters. What was life generally like in the 40s?

Twaddle: I was born on January 17, in Taylor County, Iowa. We lived on a farm two miles north of Hopkins, Missouri, and my Dad farmed, he farmed the farm that he was raised and brought up on. We had 120 acres. I had one brother, Kenneth McMaster; he served in the service in the U. S. Army. I went to a country school and I've talked to friends of mine late in these past few years and we all are amazed by how much we didn't travel. We didn't get around – we just knew people in our own community, we maybe went to Maryville – not very often, because we could get everything we needed at Hopkins. We went to Taylor County, the seat of the county, Bedford, when I was a kid, and took music lessons up there and went to the library. We just stayed at home and we just didn't get out and know much of what the world was like. It was a good life, though, for kids, I think. A good way to grow up even though we didn't have electricity and all that; we were pretty happy. A lot of things to do for kids on a farm. I remember I was in college in Maryville when war was declared; when they bombed Hawaii. Everybody was so upset and knew that a lot of students at the college would be going to service. My husband – my first husband, Raymond Bailey signed up pretty early in 1941 I believe, and signed up for the U. S. Navy. He left while I was in my second year of college. We were engaged – I think he came back – I should remember this – I think he came back in the summer and gave me a diamond and we were engaged. I taught school at Elmo after I got my 60 hour degree. I taught fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grades together my first year. [Laugh] They did that because they were – I guess it was hard to find teachers, maybe, so they put the first four years together, and their last four years together. So I really had quite a time teaching four grades when I had taken primary training. So it was an experience. The kids later told me they liked me as a teacher, but I don't think I taught them very much. I didn't teach again. I went to Kansas City and worked part time, and then I went to see Raymond quite a bit where he was, that I could stay. I think he wanted me to talk about how it changed after – how the war changed things? I think just the experience of getting out and getting away – like I said, we had been in such a small area that to get on the train like I did and to go to California – never had been anywhere, but we all did it and everyone helped everyone else. There were no worries about people taking our luggage or anything then. I think that was something that's different from now. You weren't really afraid – I don't remember being afraid. You just didn't have to worry about that then. That's the really big difference.

Amthor: What was the culture at that time - the music, the entertainment – what did you do?

Twaddle: Well, I think in country school we didn't have much music – I mean we had probably a Victrola where the teacher played certain pieces for us. My mother was musical so we always had music in our family. My dad was too. We always had music in our family, and we listened to the radio. We could hardly live without the radio I don't think. That was part of our entertainment. We did things in the community. The school had a big monthly meeting, and they would have programs, and sometimes it would be students and sometimes – I remember one program that for some reason stayed with me – there was an old bachelor in the community that sang for us one night at a program at school and the song he sang was It makes no sense sitting on the fence all by yourself by the moonlight. He played a fiddle I believe. That was the type of entertainment that we had – local you know, and interesting. I don't remember my parents – my mother belonged to a club, a community club, I remember and Dad – we went to Hopkins quite a bit and he was involved in things there. They had – I think it was unusual for a small town in that time a miniature golf course, and there was a pool hall in Hopkins. We would go on Saturday nights. I think this was typical, probably in the rural country, we'd go to the little towns on Saturday night and see everybody and get groceries and things.

Amthor: Now were there movies and skating rinks?

Twaddle: Yes, there were movies. Now skating rinks, I don't remember until I moved to Clearmont, and we went to Clarinda. We would just get – instead of dating anybody, a bunch of us would get in cars and go. One time we went in the truck. One of the fellows in Clearmont had a truck and we rode in the back of the truck to go roller skate. That was in enjoyable. That was a big thing that we did. We went to movies some, and when I started dating Raymond when I was in college here he would usually bring me down to school and we would usually go to the movies.

Amthor: How much did it cost to get into a movie?

Twaddle: I don't know if I can tell you or not. I do remember that at the Tivoli theatre here they had a band that played before the movie started and they were really good. I think most people will remember that because it was unusual and really enjoyable to go and hear the band before the movie. There were ice cream places.

Amthor: How about the rationing? Did you take part in that?

Twaddle: Yes.

Amthor: What items were hard to get for you?

Twaddle: I remember sugar being hard, and meat I believe. We didn't have that problem because we always had butchered, but I believe that meat was rationed. I think mostly sugar. Women would find recipes that didn't use much sugar and they'd substitute, but we got along okay, I think. I don't remember – well, another thing that I probably should mention is the

Depression, too. That was a big thing – I didn't realize it too much, but it was a hard period for everybody and we had drought, and chinch bugs that ate the corn. I think the farmers fared the best because they always had plenty of food. I think most people my age would agree on this: it was hard for our parents, but we didn't really know that it was going on. I don't even remember much talk about it, really, because we always had food.

Amthor: We did interview someone else that called it the "dirty thirties."

Twaddle: I wouldn't describe it that way; to me it was a good time because I liked being on a farm. I was kind of a tomboy and was outside a lot and there were things to do on the farm. My parents would take us down on the Hundred and Two River and we'd take picnics down there and get in the river and swim. Not really swim, dog paddle, I think you'd call it. I feel like I had a good childhood. It was really good. We had good parents I feel.

Amthor: How about gardening and sewing: did you do a lot of that?

Twaddle: I didn't, but my mother did. We always had a garden. I don't remember her sewing. Probably not like most people. Another thing I think I should mention is that my parents were a little – in looking back, I think they were a little different than most farmers at that time. When they married, they had a tennis court in the front – side yard, and they played tennis. They always – I don't know, it just seemed like when I think about some of my schoolmates' parents, that mine were different some way- were more younger in spirit, because we went to movies at Bedford and I don't think most farmers would do this. Maybe my dad shouldn't have, but he would – Mother liked the musicals, and we would go to those. He would milk the cows when we got home. Most farmers thought the cows has to be milked at a certain time, but he was willing to go to the movies and then take his lantern out and milk the cows after we got home. I just think I had a really great childhood.

Amthor: Now you said you had a brother that went into the service.

Twaddle: Yes.

Amthor: Did your family put up a flag in the window? The star?

I don't believe so; I don't think that was done a whole lot 'till we had moved from the farm. We moved over to Clearmont first, and then when the war started, we were living over by Burlington Junction on the farm. My brother had belonged to the National Guard before the war, so he was among the first to go at Burlington Junction, at the same time Maryville Guard left I think. But my dad really missed my brother a lot, and didn't really like farming after that, so he – I forget what year that would have been, but he bought a service station in Clearmont, Missouri, and gave up farming and ran the service station during the war and in later years. He liked that a lot. He liked meeting people.

Amthor: What did you do during the war? You talked about going to the city, right?

Twaddle: Yes, I taught school that one year and then I'm not sure about the sequence of this, but at one time I went to Kansas City and worked at Hallmark Cards but then I think I just didn't stay anywhere very long because I would go be with Raymond where he was. I tell in his history that he had cerebral meningitis when he was in service, and was at the Long Beach hospital very critically ill. He came through that, but then he was not sent out to service right away so I was with him a lot. We spent just a little time at home in Clearmont, too. I would say mostly I was going back and forth to see him and wanted to be free to do that.

Amthor: Can you tell us about Raymond, now? Did he enlist?

Twaddle: Yes, he enlisted.

Amthor: Can you tell us his story?

Twaddle: Well, he always said he wanted to be enlisted in the Navy because he didn't want to be in a dirty fox hole. He thought the Navy would be cleaner; that's the way he would tell it. He enlisted in the fall of 1941, and he took training at the naval base at Chicago and then was assigned to an oil tanker which would leave out of California. In November 1942 he was in port at Long Beach, and I received a call from him. He had a three-day emergency leave, he called it, and he wondered if I could come out to California. Well, we were engaged, but I was teaching school in Elmo, and I didn't know what to say; I said I would let him know. I called my mother first, and told her that he wanted me to come, and did she think I could go? I've always been amazed at this; she never said, "Oh, you've never been anywhere," she just said, "Well, I think we can help you go." So, I had to find someone to substitute for me, to teach and I had to do it in a hurry. I was lucky to find a lady in Elmo that had taught years previously, and agreed to teach while I was gone. I had to get some money from the banker, I asked him to go down to the bank at night to get me some money, then I had to go to Clearmont and pack my clothes and my folks took me to Omaha to the station where I got on the train. When I arrived in California, he'd given me an address of where his aunt lived there, and when I was ready to leave the station to get a cab, the cab drivers didn't go out that far where she lived because of gasoline shortages. So, what was I going to do? I remember some service man was getting ready to get in a cab, and he overheard this, and he said, "Let her get in here with me." So that's what I did. I can't remember exactly how this cab driver agreed to take me. Maybe because a serviceman asked him to and so he did take me. I got there and no one was at home so I just sat on the front porch, and pretty soon his aunt came. She worked – she was one of those Rosie the Riveter ladies. She was on the swing shift, I believe. She came and then Raymond came not long afterwards, too. We left right away to go to Las Vegas to get married because in California at that time, you had to wait three days after you got your marriage license to get married. We just had three days, so we got on the bus and went to Las Vegas. We were married there and came back that night. He went out on the tanker again, and I came home and taught school again.

In the summer of 1943, I received word that Raymond had been admitted to the Long Beach Naval Hospital and that he had Cerebral Meningitis, that he was critically ill. So, his dad and I got on the train – took three days and two nights to get there, we managed to get to Long Beach to the hospital, the medicine sulfa had just been invented, and they gave that to him. They told

us later they probably wouldn't have been able to save him if it hadn't been for the sulfa. He was there at the hospital for quite a long while, then got a leave home for thirty days. Then he went back out to San Francisco where he was stationed for a short while. Then he knew that he was going to be assigned to this new project that the Navy had of constructing a floating dry dock they called it, and this was to be constructed in different areas in the United States. I don't know if this was because of it was kept secret that way, but it was just different sections were built in different places, and I believe there were four sections. The section that he was given was out of New Orleans, so he went to New Orleans that summer of 1944. I was able to go down and be with him. He was stationed on a base close to New Orleans, and we got a room in a home in New Orleans. I remember for me that was quite an experience. New Orleans was such a different city and really interesting place - first place I had been where they had separate restrooms for blacks and white, and separate water fountains, and Creole people living there. It was just a whole completely different environment than what I had been in. I really liked it was real hot – we didn't have air conditioning. We had a window fan in the one room that we rented, so that helped a lot, there was a paddle boat, the *U.S. S. President* that went up the river on Saturday nights, so we did that really often, because it was cool, and they had a dance floor and that was interesting. He left New Orleans then the later part of the summer. He wanted me to come home before he left. He wanted to know that I was home and okay. They were going to an island in the Pacific with this floating dry dock section, but they didn't tell them where, so before I left he handed me a piece of paper that was a code that was going to tell me where he was, I imagine that most of the boys did this, but an example was if when he wrote my first letter, he wrote Dear Wife, to start the letter, I would know that he was in the Solomon Islands. Dear Jane meant Marshall Islands, and My Dearest Wife meant Guam. My first letter from him began with My Dearest Wife so I knew he was on the island of Guam and I never told another soul, not even his folks that I knew where he was. This was an interesting project and after the war, National Geographic wrote up about it with pictures of the dry dock.

Raymond remained on Guam until the end of the war. He was discharged in 1945. By that time I was working here in Maryville at St. Joe Light and Power Company. He was one of the first to come home because he enlisted pretty early, and they had certain points, I forget exactly what they all were, but he was one of the first ones to come home and we went back to the farm – he had always planned that we'd build a house up on the hill on the bluffs at Elmo, but you couldn't get building supplies right after the war. I hunted for a bath tub, and you couldn't find any kind of bath tub like we used to get, and of course we didn't have running water or electricity on the farm. We couldn't find any place to live, we lived with his folks for a while, and they always wanted Raymond to be on the farm, eventually, so they decided that they would just retire and let us live on the farm, so that is what we did.

Amthor: Did he take advantage of his GI bill when he got back?

Twaddle: Yes, he did – he took some classes. I think he rode the train down here- I think I'm wrong. I think he came to college down here before the war, but he came on the train, because most young men didn't own cars; that's another thing that I could say, that Raymond scooped sand, and shucked corn, and he and his dad eventually bought a car together. My later husband, he knew Raymond, in fact they were in the same high school class and he said that Raymond

was the only one of them that he had a car, and he would loan his car to people, too, he said. He had borrowed his car. I don't know how much more you want me to say about that.

Amthor: Did he tell you anything about his missions? Was he in combat, or was he. . .

Twaddle: Not really, no, I'm not sure where all he went with the tanker. I guess I just never asked him very much. I don't believe he was in any.

Amthor: How did you or he feel about the bombing of Japan? The atomic bomb: did he have any thoughts on that, or was he near there at the time?

Twaddle: I don't know that we ever talked about that. You're talking about the atom bomb?

Amthor: The atom bomb, yes. When Truman dropped it – did he think it was necessary?

Twaddle: I just can't really remember any discussion about that. He would have been on Guam. That's strange, but I just don't remember us talking about that. I don't remember even my brother and I talking about that, but I'm sure it would have affected them, you know, but I don't remember them discussing whether it should have been done or not. I don't think that discussion happened until several years – I don't even remember, talking with other veterans, what they say about that. That didn't really come up until later years, I don't think. I think everybody was so glad that the war was over. Later you got to thinking about what it really meant. Maybe it shouldn't have been done, but at the time I believe Truman was admired for doing it because it brought the war to an end, and the Japanese war was more terrible than, I would say, just from what I know and heard, was more terrible than the European war. War is always terrible, but the Japanese were so cruel, I think.

Amthor: Did he join any of the military organizations when he got home?

Twaddle: Yes, he belonged to the American Legion, about the first year after the service men started coming back. They had an active legion for a long time.

Amthor: Now was he proud to be a veteran of World War II?

Twaddle: Oh, yes, he was. I think that was pretty – probably pretty true of all of them, but he was.

Amthor: Is there one last thing that you could tell us about Raymond that you think was important that you want to share with us before we move on to your second husband? I mean a story that he told you that might be important?

Twaddle: I was thinking that I had a story about – I really don't know of anything. I guess the story about the floating dry dock was unusual. I don't know that I have anything else about his experiences in the Navy. I think it was hard for him a lot of the time, you know, the discipline was hard on some of them, and being away from home was hard. I think that was especially hard for Raymond. It was hard for his folks more than some, I think, because he had always

planned to be a farmer, you know. His parents would send pictures of the cattle and the horses and things because they thought he would be homesick for that, you know. He was a very – I thought sweet and gentle man, so I know that service was hard on him and I think it was hard for him when he came back to adjust to a different life; it was hard probably for all of them.

Amthor: Now you had two children, is that correct?

Twaddle: Yes, Raymond and I had one son, Ronald Lee Bailey, and he was born in 1946 and I was thinking I was pregnant with him when the Elmo Legion had their first big Veteran's Day. They had bought a building in Elmo, and the women and wives and mothers all served Veteran's Day dinner. They did that for years, but it was a big event and it was a big event for several years in Elmo. Raymond had to go to a hospital in Topeka, Kansas when Ron was two years old, and Raymond passed away there, in 1950, so I was alone for a while after that with Ron and lived with my folks until I married my second husband, Twaddle, which he was from Elmo, too, and a good friend of Raymond's, and he had lost his wife a few years earlier, and everyone was happy for us.

Amthor: Can you tell us about his experience?

Twaddle: He served in a different theatre war; he went to Europe. I'm not sure what year he joined the U. S. Army, but I think it was probably 1944. He was – before that he was in the Coast and Geodetic Survey, a government project, so I think he just didn't go as soon as some of them did, but I think he went I think in 1944. He was in Company G, 114th Infantry Regiment, 44th Division and he was a technician, fourth grade. He did his first duty in Germany, and he was wounded March 30, 1945, near Heidelberg, Germany. His wound was in the thigh; it wasn't a really serious wound, but he had to go to a hospital. After he was married, we visited some of his Army buddies, and one of them told me that when Hubert was injured, they just had to go on and leave him. He wasn't able to go with them, and they told about how hard it was for them to leave Hubert. He said that there was a barn close by, and so they drug him into this barn and situated him there and made him as comfortable as they could, and then went on and left him, I suppose they had follow-up people that, you know, to pick up the injured. There was an interesting thing happened about Hubert's tour in the hospital. He said of course being wounded, and being away from home and everything, and he was laying there in the bed. Then one of the nurses came in and it was a girl he knew from Blanchard, Iowa. I'm sure there were things like that happened during the war, because everyone was scattered everywhere, but it meant so much to him, and they both knew each other. He was born in Blanchard, Iowa, and knew quite a few people there. He told me that some time during his duty in Europe, Eleanor Roosevelt spoke to his group, and he remembered that she had told them not to ever trust the Russians. At the end of the war, after the war was over, his company was sent to Berlin where they worked at the Berlin Documents Center they called it. This was a place where all the Nazi files were brought in for documentation, so they went through all these files; I don't know how many of them there would have been, but he mentioned that some of them were brought in file drawers where the Nazi's had filed them. They just brought them in the desk drawers and they went through all of those. I don't know what would have been done with those, but they're written down and documented somewhere, for someone, I'm sure. I was thinking when he mentioned about Mrs. Roosevelt warning them about the Russians, I remember him telling that when he was in Berlin

sometimes they would have to make trips over into the Russian section and they weren't supposed to have guns with them, but he said that they'd always go in jeeps, and he said, - I don't know if he placed it there, or who placed it there, but there was a gun in under the seat somewhere, because they didn't trust the Russians. So, he took her message to heart, I guess. He remained there until he was discharged in June, 1946.

Amthor: So, did he see any other combat?

Twaddle: No.

Amthor: So, what was it like for him when he came back? Did he participate in the GI Bill and the . . . .

Twaddle: No, he didn't. He would have gotten married, and then went back into the Coast Survey. He had a son, Hubert B. Twaddle, Jr., too, and his wife died when the son was born. He was living in Elmo and was a rural mail carrier when she died. Then he moved in with his mother and the little boy was born with Cerebral Palsy, and he lived with grandmother and step grandfather. We all lived in Elmo, so Hubert saw his son every day, and I got to know him really well too. I'm seeing him – he's in the nursing home here in Maryville. He's 56 years old and I enjoy him a lot.

Amthor: Now did you have any children with him?

Twaddle: Yes, we had a son Randy Leon Twaddle, and he was born in 1957 and he lives in Houston, Texas and he has a little boy now too, my grandson Cyrus.

Amthor: Now is there any one last thing that you could tell us about his experience that he would like to share with us if he were here?

Twaddle: I don't really know of any war time experience. I do know that he kept in touch with a lot of his Army buddies for quite a long while. In fact, we went to Kentucky on our honeymoon, and we stopped to see several Army buddies on our honeymoon. [Laugh]. But that was just Hubert. He loved to talk with them and see them. I think the experience for him was hard too, and I remember - I was trying to think - they either went over or came home on the Queen Mary. He was talking about how long a trip that was. I don't know how much flying back and forth they did – not too many. I feel like the service itself wasn't as hard on him as it was on my first husband's heart. I don't know that's just my feeling about it. I think that one thing that the war did was it just changed our world, because when they came back, everyone had been everywhere; had been outside of their own little area and it changed what people wanted from life. They wanted a little bit more than I had been satisfied with, and that my parents had. I think it just really – I don't know if it was ever studied, but I think it would have been discovered that it really changed everybody's life a lot.

Amthor: Now if you could think about your life in the forties and the life today, what do you think is the main – if you could ---------- someway, what are the major changes or something that we could learn from your experiences of the forties that could help us?

Twaddle: I think especially now when we're talking about the economy and everything, I think that it shows that you can get along with a lot less and be happy. We don't, I mean, we want too many things in life, feeling I have when I go to the grocery store now, you don't just get salad dressing, you get salad dressing with chives, you get salad dressing and you have to be careful that you don't get a spicy one. It just drives me crazy! And it's true of all products, and we don't need all that. I think we are just too commercial minded; – I don't know the right word, but I think there's a lot more to life than things, we had people who cared about us. Not that they still don't, it was just a closer relationship, I think. Lot of good things about it I think.

Amthor: Well, I have one last comment or question. Over all, what do you think it would be most things that you brought out of the 1940s that you can remember? What one thing stands out the most in that time period? Of the culture, the war, what would that be?

Twaddle: It would definitely be the war and how it affected everybody. Everyone had someone in the war. I think your mind was on the war all the time, pretty much. I really don't know how to express that, but . . . . I think you know we haven't had a war since then that took everybody like that war did and lasted so long. We've had bad wars in Vietnam and terrible things, but that one was one that just affected everybody. I hope that answers your question.

Amthor: Margaret, do you have any other comments or questions?

Kelley: I don't have anything else to add to that.

Amthor: Well, I think we've done a great job.

Twaddle: Well, thank you. I've enjoyed thinking about it.

Amthor: Thank you very much. It's been very nice meeting you.

Twaddle: Thank you.