

Transcript of a taped interview with Sarah Ruth McMinn Walker – May 12, 1977
Questions posed by Alan Kearn and Jamie Kearn Burnett

Q: Where were you born?

A: I was born in Marfa, TX

Q: Where is that?

A: In West Texas. My folks lived on a ranch outside of town, but I wasn't born on the ranch, I was born in a friend's home in Marfa

Q: Why was that?

A: Because my mother wanted to have help, in town she could be nearer help. She'd had several children already.

Q: You were the youngest child, right?

A: Yes

Q: Of how many?

A: of 8 children

Q: Was the ranch a cattle ranch?

A: Yes

Q: Did you have other livestock?

A: No just cattle. My father sold the ranch to his niece's husband LC Brite and we moved to Oklahoma

Q: Did your father run a ranch in Oklahoma?

A: Yes, well it was a farm more than it was a ranch

Q: Did he have the ranch in Texas for a long time?

A: Well yes, quite awhile, I don't know just how long

Q: How old were you when you moved to Oklahoma?

A: 5 years old

Q: So you don't really remember Texas?

A: Well no, however my mother and I did go back there to visit, and I've been back there...Edward and I have been back several times to visit, so I know quite a bit about it. Mr. Brite built a new home, ours was made of adobe, that's the Mexican brick. They were strong walls.

Q: Were they thick?

A: Yes and the doors were made strong. Mr. Brite used our home and built brick and then stuccoed it, it was a big home

Q: Was it two-story?

A: Yes. You've been in your Aunt Marj's (aunt Marj is uncle Delmar Kearn's wife – she is referring to their farmhouse in Ithaca, NY) haven't you? Well the way Mary (Mary Walker Kearn—our mother) describes it, that's how the house in Marfa was. It has a living room in the center of the upstairs with bedrooms off of it. They remodeled it and it was real nice, but I don't remember the old house anymore.

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Q: So you actually lived on a farm, actually?

A: In Oklahoma? Yes

Q: What were your jobs?

A: (chuckle) Well my job was to run the chickens down and dress them. My folks had a well and there was water everywhere and so there was a hydrant there you could turn it on them. So I'd run down the chickens – it was a race!! I'd dress them and bring them to my mother and she'd fry them.

Q: That must be where you learned to fry such good chicken?

A: Well I guess so, I never did much cooking at home, my oldest sister Linnie did the cooking.

Q: You got stuck with the dirty work?

A: I never do too much around the house. I didn't have to milk the cows. I used to feed the chickens and collect the eggs and things like that. I grew up there and went to school through the 8th grade. Then I went to Alvo, OK to Teacher's College

Q: To Teacher's College after only the 8th grade? Was there no high school in those days?

A: Oh yes.

Q: But you didn't attend?

A: That's not the way it was. I finished the 8th grade then I went to Oklahoma City to live with my Aunt Maude to finish high school.

Q: Did you attend a one-room schoolhouse?

A: No I never did

Q: Did you live near Oklahoma City (referring to the distance from Buffalo to OK City)?

A: Oh no, it was like about from Salt Lake to Denver – maybe not that far but a ways.

Q: You didn't have cars then so I guess it was a long ways on horse. Did you ride horses a lot?

A: Well I didn't but Ethel rode a lot. Races and everything. My mother had her own carriage and horse to pull us.

Q: Were you a tomboy?

A: I liked to ride with my brother Charles. He'd spur the horse a little bit and she'd rear up and I'd slide right off the back so that's about it—things like that---Sometimes I'd go with my brother to hunt rabbits, but that about it as far as the tom boy part goes. We used to walk 5 miles to school.

Q: Everyday? You didn't ride the horse?

A: Yes, well we didn't use the horse. We had fun, other kids would walk too and we'd play along the way. We'd stop at one of the mother's of the children and she'd made great big cookies and we'd eat them on the way home. Everyone used to come over to our house to eat and play games and one thing or another. We used to have all kinds of games going on.

Q: What kind of games would you play?

A: We played Cameron – it was sort of like checkers with a board. We'd play a game sort of like pool only you'd shoot the things with your fingers. Then outside....

Q: Did you play hide 'n seek back then?

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A: Yes and we played -- but it was called run sheep run. We had a great big barn and we used to get up on the roof and scoot off onto the haystacks. Things like that. Ethel used to have to climb under the house to get me when it was time to comb my hair. It was curly and it hurt to have it combed.

Q: Did you wear it long?

A: Well it came down to about here, it was blondish, brown—it was more auburn.

Q: Was it as light as mine (Jamie asked this quest)?

A: No it was more brown – auburn. Then I taught school for 7 months

Q: After Teachers college?

A: Yes and I didn't like it every well – so I came back and went to work in the bank and that's where I always worked.

Q: Which bank?

A: I worked in daddy's bank

Q: Your dad had a bank and a farm?

A: Yes, Rio really worked there but I worked for Charles (I think she means Rio ran the bank, but Charles also worked there and she for him. Aunt Ethel's tape said Charles ran the bank until his death, so Charles must have taken over for Rio at some point)

Q: Where did your father spend most of his time, at the farm or the bank?

A: Well as he became older, he spent more time at the bank. He used to do a lot of the farm work didn't he (she is asking this of Aunt Ethel who answered yes)? We always had a garden, I didn't drive the horse to guide the...yes, Ethel did that (I assume she was talking of some kind of horse drawn plow) She did more of the work around the house than I. Then Ethel married in the meantime and went to live in Okmulgee, OK. My mother died and I went to live with Ethel and worked in a bank there.

Q: So you lived with Aunt Ethel when she was first married?

A: No not when she was first married – I used to be down there a lot. No she was in Buffalo—that's the town where we lived.

Q: That's where the bank was?

A: Yes (I think she was saying Ether first left the farm/ranch on the outskirts of Buffalo and moved into Buffalo, it was then that Ruth lived with Ethel. She continued working at the bank then Ethel married and went to Okmulgee. Although Ruth visited her – she never lived with her after her marriage). We had 160 acres and my mother used to feed the harvest hands – I used to help her with that. Id' carry the food 3-4 miles to the hands—clear to the other end of the farm.

Q: Growing up, you didn't have a refrigerator or anything?

A: No, we had an icebox, we didn't ever really have much ice though. We had a cellar and it was always cool, mother would keep milk and fruit down there. We had cyclones (chuckle) we used to have to get up in the middle of the night—mother had beds and food down there—we used to spend the night down there. Daddy never went down—we'd lay to the ground but he'd brave the storm.

Q: What did you mother look like?

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A: We don't have a picture of her (to Ethel who replied – yes, in on my wall, go get that)?

Q: Do you remember your parents as being nice or strict?

A: No they weren't to strict. We always knew that daddy meant what he said. My mother used to thump me or slap my face a little if I didn't do what she said, but daddy, I never remember him spanking (Ethel says he whipped them). Oh, I can't ever remember him whipping me. Anyway, after my mother's death, my daddy moved to town (Buffalo). We were at the edge of town—about 1 ½ miles away. He bought a house and I lived with him. Still working at the bank. In the meantime, Charles' wife died leaving Martin, Richard and Olive Ruth. Then I got married. I worked in one bank and Edward worked in the other.

Q: How did you meet grandpa?

A: His father was a railroad man and Edward used to come help him in the summer. Finally he finished school and came up to live and work in one of the banks.

Q: He worked in one of the rival banks?

A: Yes

Q: So how did you meet?

A: I used to do work for his father—typing and filing, etc. I met him that way. When he came up there we'd go oh, 10-12 miles to a dance.

Q: Did he take you in a fancy buggy?

A: Well, he had a car.

Q: What year was this?

A: 1920. Finally Edward and I got married in '21 and Mary, your mother, was born in '22

Q: You still lived in town?

A: Yes, Buffalo. Mary was born in Buffalo.

Q: Were you both working in the bank?

A: Well I quit after we got married. Then we bought a house where Mary was born. We lived there until Mary was four years old (different accounts indicate they lived there about 1 ½ years after Mary was born then left for OK City, OK). Then we went to Oklahoma City and lived there until she was eight. Then Edward came out here to the insurance business.

Q: In Oklahoma City did he work in a bank?

A: No he was in insurance (other accounts indicate he was initially involved in a construction business)

Q: How did he happen to come to Utah?

A: He had a friend whose name was Mr. Sprague at the bank in Buffalo who started in insurance and he persuaded Edward to come in with him.

Q: He pretty much started the agency in Utah?

A: Yes, all of Utah and part of Idaho. We came here in 1931. (other accounts indicate initially he had a partner and bought out the partner later in the 1930's)

Q: What do you remember about the first time you rode in a car? Was it a death trap?

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A: chuckle. No Ethel's husband had the first car I ever knew of. Mr. Dick, Eldon Dick, and he'd take use for a ride. It wasn't very long after that, that a lot of people had cars. (Aunt Ethel by now had brought the picture of her mother out of her room. See here is my mother, when she was young. See how they wore their hair, they wore it like now, it was curly.)

Q: Did she wear a bow all the time (she had a bow in it)

A: No just for the picture. She is holding George.

Q: Is he the oldest?

A: No the oldest was Jesse, he died.

Q: Tell us the names of your brothers and sisters.

A: Well Ethel will have to help me with that. There was Jesse, George, Linnie.

Q: Linnie was the one who was kind of poor—she lived on a farm and had a lot of kids, right?

A: She never had a farm, she lived her mother-in-law's, but yes. Oh yes, she did have a little farm she finally settled on. She never had very much. She always had to carry her wash water and she had 6 girls and one boy. I don't know, she just never had much. Then there was Barney.

Q: He was the one that lost his leg?

A: Yes

Q: How did he lose his leg?

A: They called it the buck board--- a little truck drawn by horses. And he was riding on it—I was just a baby. He turned around and caught his toe in the spoke and one turn of the wheel twisted his leg right off. They were on the way to town from the ranch. My mother took some of my diapers and wrapped the leg until they got to town and saved it. But he grew up without a leg because they didn't have the facilities like they have now. Finally he died.

Q: How old was he when he died?

A: Oh, how old was he (she asked Ethel) – not very old, maybe 21.

Q: Did he die from complications of the injury?

A: Well one other time he was thrown from a horse and split his head right in here...and I guess he never got over that. (Note: aunt Ethel mentions that he committed suicide out of despair). Then there was Rio.

Q: Rio was the one who just recently died, right?

A: Yes, it's been 2-3 years.

Q: Who was Charles?

A: He was Marty, Richard, and Olive Ruth's father. He ran the bank. He was killed when a gun accidentally went off while he was in a car.

Q: What do you remember about World War I?

A: I remember, that my mother was alive just before it was declared and we always were grateful she didn't have to see Rio go off to war. She died in 1917 and he went off in '18 or so.

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Q: Did the war affect you much?

A: No—I don't think so. We didn't have rationing (Ethel says they did). We only could have so much flour and so much of different things. I remember we had to have a lot of caffer corn meals (a kind of corn from the farm).

Q: What do you remember from the first time women could vote? Did you vote? Did you vote for Coolidge?

A: I suspect we voted, I don't really remember.

Q: Were you a women's libber?

A: chuckle, No

Q: Aunt Ethel, were you a women's libber?

A: No I don't really remember.

A (Ruth): The think I remember about the Woman's Suffrage movement was through Edward's mother. She was a worker in that. I'd say she was a women's libber. She was really a character. She was a teacher. She was stern. She was a French teacher. Shewas raised in France.

Q: What about the depression? How did that affect you?

A: Well we were...

Q: First tell about your wedding, we have a newspaper article.

A: chuckle. Well nobody knew when we got married.

Q: Did you elope?

A: No we didn't leave town

Q: But you didn't tell anybody?

A: No we just got married and everybody was wanting to know all about it but nobody could find out about it. Then when they did, why they dressed us up crazy.

Q: They made a veil for you out of an old curtain?

A: yes, I had old lulander shoes that didn't fit me.

Q: And they had Edward in something?

A: Some kind of checkered suit.

Q: Yeah and then they paraded you through town in a buggy and tied them to a post in the street for the night?

A: They called it a funny buggy

Q: Were there fancy weddings then?

A: No, they gave me a real nice shower. I received lots of very nice gifts. I still have the silver, if anybody wants it the can have it sometime and they can replat it and maybe cut it down to a smaller size.

Q: What did you wear growing up? Surenly not dresses?

A: We didn't wear pants

Q: You wore long dresses? Around the farm?!

A: No, I don't remember them being long. My mother made my dresses.

Q: She didn't have a sewing machine did she?

A: Oh yes a treadle machine. My mother was an awfully good cook. I don'tk now why I'm not, but I'm not.

Alan: oh grandma!

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A: chuckle, but she was a cook who could make something out of nothing. When everybody was at our house to eat she had chicken and ham on the table.

Q: She was one of these who had a feast every night?

A: She always set the table, we had food on the table then she covered it (the leftovers) people would come down they hadn't had breakfast—they'd eat fried chicken (chuckle) because she always had it.

Q: Did the men wear overalls?

A: Yes, they wore bib overalls. I can't remember what kind of work clothes my daddy wore

Q: Did he have boots?

A: Yes, I had a pair of boots.

Q: But what did you wear normally?

A: Just dresses – they didn't have all the stuff they do now. But they weren't short, they covered your legs.

Q: But not all the way to the ground?

A: No a little longer than I have now, about midway between your knee and the ground.

Q: How come you only had one child?

A: I don't know

Q: You just didn't want any more?

A: No, we just never had anymore. I almost died when Mary was born, I had quite a time. It's too bad I didn't (chuckle)

Q: Why did you almost die?

A: Well I don't know. I just had some infection or other and we didn't have too good a doctors. My aunt Fanny was a nurse, a very excellent nurse. Talking about nurses of the day, they used to go all over and carry everything they needed on the horse, rags and everything. They would stay for days with people—they were always bringing babies into the world

Q: Your mom was one of these?

A: Yes she used to go all over. As a child our house was outside town. One of the things I remember about my daddy – people would come through—it was new country you know and people would pass through. They didn't have houses but they'd live in dugouts or huts. They make it to our place and spend the night because we had plenty of water and a place for their horses because they didn't have a car in those days. My daddy was always, "yes, come on in, come on in. Take your hoses and give them some water and feed. Come on in the house and get something to eat." Chuckle, if we happened to be in bed, we'd have to get out of the bed, wouldn't we (to Ethel)?

Q: Did you sleep on the floor?

A: Yes, so they could have our beds. They were always doing that. Then when we started the town (it was originally called something else and Eldon Dick was apparently one of the developers who wanted to invest in it and renamed it Buffalo, that is how Ethel met/married him.) there were always people staying there, businessmen and people starting new businesses and everything. And they'd always stay at our house. One man's name was Mr. Ford and he gave me \$5.00. I must have been 6 or 7, probably 8 or 9. They had fair you know (chuckle) and they had a merry-go-round (chuckle) and I just stayed on the merry-go-round pretty much all day (laugh).

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Q: Did you get an allowance and go into town every Saturday?

A: No, daddy never gave us an allowance, but if we'd ask, he would always give us the money.

Q: Did you used to go into town every Saturday and get candy? (Aunt Ethel said yes on Saturdays)

A: Well I remember my mother used to go down to a little town down below....Ether, what was the name of that town? (aunt Ethel: What?) What was the name of that town mother would go to, Kitty? (aunt Ethel: yes, Kitty). It was just a store—but they had material and

Q: Was it like a general store?

A: Yes like a general store, she used to go there every once in a while and I used to think that was the grandest thing (chuckle)...to got to Kitty. To ride down in her buggy; and her horse was named Cat, it was yellow.

Q: A yellow horse?

A: Yes, and Edward would get in her buggy with Cat and race.

Q: I'll bet she liked that

A: Oh yes, she wasn't afraid of nothing (I don't know if she was talking about her mother or the horse). You'd think the wheels would lock they'd get so close. (I don't know what the wheels would get close to that would make them possibly lock)

Q: Did you have bad dust storms – dust bowls?

A: Well we had storms, but not like they did in the panhandle

Q: You weren't in the panhandle?

A: We were kind of in the panhandle, but I don't remember them being so bad as other people used to have. Thunderstorms, that's what we had, and it rained and all kinds of storms.

Q: When you went to town did you buy rock candy or licorice sticks?

A: No licorice sticks. Ethel, what kind of candy did we eat....Ethel what kind of candy did we buy? (Aunt Ethel: Huh?) What kind of candy did we have? (Aunt Ethel: Oh, stick candy usually, there was a lot of hoarhound) Yes, stick candy and hoarhound, I guess. Yeah, that's right. My daddy had to go 45 miles to buy groceries.

Q: I thought you lived near Buffalo?

A: That was to buy everyday groceries but to buy flour or sugar in bulk he went elsewhere.

Q: What town did he go to?

A: Woodard or Ashland. He used to go there twice a year and always at Christmas. He would go in a big wagon – he had to cross streams of water and it was dangerous. And you know the roads weren't very good, they weren't like they are now, they were dirt and muddy. We had a large storehouse where we kept meat, my mother used to cure her own meat, oh weren't those delicious hams? We didn't have much beef, mostly chickens and pork. We always had a year's supply of meat. Hams, shoulders, sausage and a side of bacon. They hung up in this house I remember.

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Q: It was a special smokehouse?

A: We didn't smoke our meat, it was a special mixture of sugar and other things – it was delicious and the hams – we raised our own hogs, you know so they were good. The neighbors would all come visit us when we had a hog killing.. We always had a big iron pot of water out in the yard continually heating for when my mother would wash or kill a hog. I can't remember too much about it, but I do remember that.

Q: Did you have any household pets?

A: We had kitties, and I had a rabbit, we didn't have a dog.

Q: Was your area wooded or mostly fields of grass?

A: My father had a wheat farm, there wasn't a tree in sight. Just plain flat and barren.

Q: Did you think the end of the depression would ever come?

A: We just thought everyday would be better, at least I did.

Q: Did it seriously affect your lifestyle?

A: We cut down on a lot of things. But it all seems like we managed all right. We moved to Salt Lake in the middle of it – the depression was '29, we moved in '31.

Q: How did you happen to pick Salt Lake?

A: This Mr. Brid had a n agency here and he wanted us to come – he lived in Arizona.

Q: Did you see a lot of people suffering from the effects of the depression?

A: I didn't really notice it just didn't seem to affect me. We didn't have any money, but we always had plenty to eat. That's when the stock market went haywire and we didn't have any of that so it didn't affect us.

Q: What did you think of the various presidents? Were some good or bad?

A: I remember Harding, we didn't think very much of him. We didn't think too much of Coolidge – I don't remember why now. I just remember we didn't like him much.

Q: What about Herbert Hoover? Was everyone down on him for causing the Depression?

A: Yes, that's what they said

Q: So did you like Roosevelt (FDR)?

A: Yes, because he brought work to the country and made us feel like if he hadn't come along we'd have all gone busted (chuckle)

Q: Did you listen on the radio to his "Fireside Chats"?

A: No

Q: Did you have a radio?

A: No. The only think I remember and we did have one, Ethel had one in her home was one of those, shat was it a Vic.... (Aunt Ethel responded, a Victrola) --- yeah.

A: (Another topic) I remember our heat was by coal range or by a stove in the living room. Now Ethel had what they call a base burner and that was where they kept the fire burning in that all winter – sort of like your furnace they just had to keep coal on it and stir it up.

Q: Did you have electricity in your houses?

A: No

Q: When do you first remember getting electricity?

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A: GG to AE – Did you have electricity in your house? AE: No GG: We had electricity in our home in Buffalo. Edward and I, the home we bought. We had water, but we didn't have a system we had oh, what do you call them (a septic tank?) yes. A septic tank. But we had a bathroom and water in the house.

Q: But as you grew up, you had an outhouse?

A: Yeah! When dishwashing time came, that's where I'd go! (chuckle) I'd read magazines (chuckle) I don't know. I'll tell you my biggest job was to catch chickens – and the rest of it I didn't do much of that.

Q: What kind of magazines did you read?

A: Montgomery Ward

Q: The catalogue? (Montgomery Ward was a retailer with a catalogue)

A: Yes

Q: You'd read then rip off a page to wipe?

A: That's right. That's when I'd do a lot of my studying when I was going to school by myself. Especially history, because I had to practically memorize the stuff. I used to memorize it before I went to school.

Q: What was your favorite subject?

A: I guess Latin, I used to love Latin.

Q: Latin?

A: Yes, I took Latin in High School

Q: What other kinds of things did you study?

A: Another thing I liked was Algebra. I really did like that and I always got A's in that.

Q: What else?

A: Oh, English, History, Spelling. I could always spell – we had spelling bees. Aunt Fanny was our teacher growing up and I did go to a one-room school when I first started. She taught clear through high school in that one room.

Q: She used to teach and nurse?

A: Oh, yes. She was a wonderful nurse!

Q: Did she have a family too?

A: No she had no children.

Q: Did she live with you?

A: No she and uncle Henry lived on a farm, she used to drive to school and her horses name was Blackie. Just as black as coal. So we went to this one room school. She taught all the grades and she really taught us how to spell. She taught us the fundamental part of the arithmetic.

Q: How to add and subtract?

A: Well yes and percentages and fractions and those kind of things. She really taught us. Rio really received all of his high school education from her. (to AE): I don't know how much you had from her? Did you have any high school? AE: I think one year.

Q: It wasn't very common back then for people to go to college was it?

A: No

Q: Did most people follow in their father's occupation?

A: Yes, but they really had to learn to work. They had to work hard. See Ethel got married when she was 16, 17 I guess.

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Q: How old were you when you got married?

A: Oh, I was older than that. I was 22 or something.

Q: Were you considered an “old maid”?

A: Yes and I didn’t think I was ever going to get married because it just didn’t appeal to me. I guess I wouldn’t have if I hadn’t just gone and got married.

Q: Did you get much news of world events?

A: The only thing I remember was the town paper – we didn’t get much outside of that.

(to AE): What were some of the magazines? Did we ever get any magazines besides the Montgomery Ward (chuckle) AE: yeah, we got magazines, they had stories in them. GG: We studied the McGuppy’s reading books – the best reading book a child could have I think, but they don’t have them now.

Q: Do you remember news items about the “rotten” Germans or about Hitler as WWII approached?

A: Oh yes, I remember reading about him and WWII was more vivid for me than WWI because Edward was in that and he was away from home and I didn’t think I’d ever get to see him again. It was real serious.

Q: Did you think WWII was going to be the war to end all wars?

A: Well of course when the thing was over, they hoped it would and Wilke (1940 republican presidential candidate Wendell Wilke) you know was the one who ran for president and saw the “one world” more vividly than anyone I thought he saw how important it was to have peace in the world.

Q: What did you think when Japan bombed Pearl Harbor?

A: Oh...you know where we were? We were on our way to Logan to see Mary (at Utah State) we got it over the radio. And just didn’t know what the next step would be.

Q: Did you think the end of the world was coming?

A: Well, it just built fear in our hearts – not knowing.

Q: Now, grandfather Walker was in the (Navel) reserves?

A: Yes

Q: And that’s how he happened to be called up?

A: Yes

Q: Where was he stationed?

A: He was in New Caledonia – a Pacific Island near New Zealand

Q: He was a Commander?

A: Yes

Q: Did he actually command a ship?

A: No

Q: That was just his rank?

A: Yes, he looked after young boys. Anyone who came in his office he would look after them.

Q: Yes, Mr Redd (the father of Jayne Redd Kearn) knew him (when he was in the Navy) – he knew he was to be drafted so he went into his (grandfather Walker’s) office and grandfather Walker arranged it so that he was an officer instead of an enlisted man. So he helped him. (Not really a question, Jamie is telling this story)

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A: (GG is talking again) In New Caledonia, young boys 17, 18 years old – you know that was a real serious part of the war (there was a lot of fighting in that geographic area) they would come from Guadalcanal (a hard fought battle in the Pacific theater of WWII fought between Aug 1942 and Feb 1943) – they would be so discouraged, being away from home and fearing for their lives – but Edward would get a hold of them and find out what they could do – they were placed wrong – many of them were typists and many other things. So he would kind of classify them and the first thing you know they were just as happy as could be. He had a book, I don't have that book, they would write things in it about him and I don't know of anyone who helped more.

Q: When Mr. Redd found out he was mom's (Mary F Walker Kearn), he spoke very highly of him.

A: He was on the Selective Service, that's what his job was here (in Salt Lake) until he went overseas. I was with him in San Francisco when he got word he was to go. I just thought the bottom of the world had closed in because everything was pushed in my lap. I had work in the office, but I had never run it. I didn't know how I was going to do it. Mary was there with me when we found out. He was put in command of that ship he had men from New York, doctors, every kind of person you could think of – they were going over there to build based in New Caledonia – he wasn't a construction man. He knew a little something about it but that wasn't his business. But it happened that all the men from all the different parts of the country, engineers, electricians, they knew something and he found out about them and when they got there they were ready to build. They helped him unload the ship and the commanding officer over there was real cross – he approached Edward and he said (something I couldn't understand). And they did – those men pitched in and helped. They built the bases, several of them.

Q: Was your mail censored?

A: No

Q: Did you know where he was?

A: I didn't know at first – but after he got settled, he wrote me.

Q: In your childhood did you go to church?

A: Yes, we went every week.

Q: What church?

A: It wasn't really a church, they didn't build one until later. It was some kind of a hall. My mother always taught Sunday School and we had dinners – my mother used to always make ice cream, the cake and chicken (chuckle)

Jamie: Now I have her cake plate

GG: Yes, you do, that is really a relic. It's funny it didn't seem to bother me too much, WWII, I never thought I'd see Edward again, but he didn't either, it was something we both lived with.

Jamie: Mom says she remembers one time, some paid off their insurance in bologna, you used to be off in strange things.

A: Oh, many times. That's the way we got our food when we first got here really. They issued, I guess it would be like food stamps only you had to buy them. They weren't given to you, but they were cheap. Then you'd go into the stores around here and buy things. Things were cheap, we'd get all kinds of canned goods like cherries, peaches and all that kind of thing. Edward was always selling a policy and taking it out in some

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commodity. Not money. Whenever he needed a new car, he would sell a policy for a new car.

Q: Was he in real estate?

A: No

Q: How come you moved so much when you first got here?

A: Cause the kids came to live with us (her brother Charles died (their mother had already died earlier) and his children Dick, Marty and Olive Ruth chose to live with Ruth and Edward).

Q: Mom thought it was because you'd sell the house and so you'd move to another.

A: No, we lived in apartments. We were living in an apartment when the kids came it wasn't big enough. Well things were reasonable not like now (meaning the price was reasonable). That house on Michigan Avenue (1376 Michigan Avenue in Salt Lake City) was \$7,500. So looking through the paper, we saw this house for rent so we went to look at it and it was big enough so we rented it for, what was it, I think it was \$25/month. After a couple of years, the man said he'd have to raise the rent to \$50. Edward said he'd just as soon buy the house as pay that much for it. So we bought the house. We paid him \$75/month as house payment. He'd always sell the landscaper or yard man a policy and take the payment out like that.

Q: At that time was your house one of the highest on the mountain (the house was in the East bench avenues of Sale Lake)?

A: Yes, it was all orchards, peaches behind us. We saw all the houses built. There was nothing across the street. Mrs. Jacobs house was built, the Moss house down on the corner and that was it.

Q: Was the road even paved?

A: Yes, it was paved when we moved out there.

Q: Was Grandpa Walker a handy man?

A: No, he never was. He had things done. He used his head, not his hands (chuckle). He wouldn't know how to go out and turn the water off and on. However he did know how to shovel snow pretty good and he could cut the lawn fairly good, but otherwise he didn't do much (to AE) did he?...(no response) She didn't hear me. But anyway....

Q: Were there stoplights?

A: No

Q: Stop signs?

A: No

Q: You just looked out for yourself?

A: Yes and it was terrible

Q: Did you need a driver's license then?

A: Yes, you know I got one when I first came out here and I got it for 25 cents. I never had to pay any more, I'd renew it each time just go up and say O,P,Q,R,S,T you know the thing (eye test) and you get a license. Finally they called them granddaddy licenses. Then they got to charging for them and granddaddy licenses don't exist now. I remember I had that for years --- only 25 cents!

Jamie: Now it's every three years

GG: Oh, yeah

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Q: What do you remember after the war?

A: Well when Edward left, like I said, everything was just pushed in my lap, but the men, we had about 20 agents, they were really loyal to Edward. It wasn't because of me, but because of their loyalty to Edward, they really worked their heads off to keep the business going of course I took care of that and they really made money. Because different things were opening up like Tooele, Dugway, places up around Ogden and people had work again. The men really worked hard and made a lot of money and I saved every bit of it because there wasn't anything for me to do. I couldn't go anywhere. In the meantime, Rio came over to help us out and Ethel started working there too. Ethel had always worked up at Hill Field. After the war closed she started in the office and was the best help we ever had. So I must have had \$30,000 saved by the time Edward came home. He just couldn't imagine how I could have done that, but really the men did all the work – it was their loyalty to Edward and the business. I wouldn't let them have the money like he did. I was an old battleax (chuckle). He'd go to the bank and borrow to give it to them, I just wouldn't do that. I deserved the name battleax (chuckle)!

Q: Did they call you that?

A: I think they felt like it. They'd come in the office and one of them would want something or other and I'd say, "I don't think I can do that". "Well Edward would if he were here"> I'd say, "Well he's 7000 miles away, he's not here, Ruth's here" and I'd just walk away – finally they quit asking.

Q: When was the first time you had a TV?

A: I don't remember what year it was but the agents gave me a TV. It was a small one. They'd bring it out and have parties, all gather around it with snacks you know. We kept that TV for awhile, it was probably 2-3 years after the war.

Q: Did you have 2 cars or one?

A: Just one car.

Jamie: Mom says she used to ride the streetcar to school.

Q: What kind of cars did you usually get?

A: Chevrolets, Oldsmobiles, one time we had a Packard (it would have been made at the factory Alan now (2007) works at in Long Island City, NY)

Q: I bet it was nice

A: Well yes, that was quite the thing. Then we took Richard (their nephew who lived with them) down to school in New Mexico and he was driving and turned the car over. We had a little dog. It killed the little dog (this was Mom's dog and she was heart broken), it didn't hurt any of us. It really wrecked the car and we had to drive home in a wrecked car.

Q: Tell us about how Grandpa died.

A: Well he was home and Ethel was going on vacation that day and I was getting ready to go to work for her while she was gone. Edward left at 9AM and by 9:30AM he was dead. I guess what happened, he was going up 4th South and I don't remember, oh, I'll tell you, there at the Chuck-A-Rama on 4th South. Anyway, they were building. They had a bakery there then and they were excavating and one thing and another and I think he must have been looking at that because whenever he was out driving he noticed people

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at work so he could go back and tell the agents to go out there and see what business they could get. So I think he was watching that. Anyway, this truck turned right in front of him and he was going about 35 miles and hour and hit it.

Q: What did you first think of dad (Cyril Kearl) when you first met him? Be honest!

A: Well I didn't think too much of it, I just thought of him as Mr. Walker's son (She though I meant Edward Walker). I really didn't see too much of him. Then finally he asked me for a date to go some place and we'd go car riding and I finally got so I thought he was a pretty good guy. I don't know it just kind of grew.

Q: What did you think about our dad (Cyril Kearl)?

A: Oh, Cy (chuckle) Well I don't know, you know, kids from Logan used to come down to our house in droves and we'd have the dining room table set and they were just kids. They came down on Thanksgiving and I fixed the turnkey and

Q: Why did they come to your house?

A: They could stay there—they were all friends of your mom. One night they stayed all night at the Capitol Theater! But the first time I met Cy they came out and stayed the night. I didn't think anything about it, I just thought he was a kid at school. Then the first thing I knew they were.... (something I couldn't understand)...so then I got to inquiring around about his family and so forth and so on, who was it that knew about them. They gave a real good report of the Kearl family, they said anytime anyone wanted anything done, ask the Kearl and one of those boys will do. That's when they lived in Preston.

Q: Mom and Dad got married in Kentucky

A: Yes, that happened because I wasn't here, I was in California with Edward, he was just about ready to go overseas.

Q: Bit you knew they were going to get married – it wasn't a secret?

A: Well I'll tell you, your mother decided to go with another girl who was going down there so she wrote and asked us what we thought of it. And she put up a story about how war was so serious and they wouldn't get to see one another again and Edward said, "well let her go". We did and so they got married in the Christian Church. There was a family there that helped them and sort of mothered them.

Q: What did you think of having grandchildren?

A: When Edward (Edward Kearl) was born it was really thrilling. They lived in Ann Arbor you know, he was already born when they let us know he had come. So we immediately went up there and I stayed with Mary about 6 weeks. They lived in a village And it was fine there. They didn't have too much room, 2 bedrooms and a bathroom and they had a garden that we ate from. Meat and stuff was cheaper and we used to walk quite a few miles to go to the grocery store. They didn't have a car, you know.

Q: What did Grandpa think of little Edward?

A: While he was a baby, he didn't know what to do with him. The last time he saw him was in June before he was killed in July. Edward was 2 years old and walking around. He just had the time of his life taking that kid around everywhere telling him about things. If he had lived, he certainly would have enjoyed his grandkids. I think (chuckle) he'd have made insurance men out of all of them. Since he loved he'd have shown them the works and they would have seen it first hand.

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Q: Didn't you own a building downtown?

A: Yes, the Eckerich Stuido. He was on the verge of buying a building in Ogden, but I didn't go through with it because I didn't want to have to worry with it.

Q: Did you sell the business when he died?

A: No he sold the business in April before he died.

Q: Why?

A: He wanted to retire, he was going to travel and write a book.

Q: What did he like to do?

A: He did not like to fish, but he liked to go on picnics. What he liked to do when he got there was to roll out a blanket and lay down and read (chuckle). He never climbed. He tried once to climb Mt. Timpanogas but he came back saying, "I got too tired" (Chuckle). He liked to travel, we used to go to California quite often to see the Redwoods.

Q: Did he like to camp?

A: Not too much, however we did. But he liked to read, that was his idea of a vacation. But he wasn't what you'd call a handyman about the house. You couldn't ask him to do a thing about the house, he wouldn't know even how to do it. But he never objected to me having someone in to do it.

Q: What do you think of conditions today? Is the end of the world about to happen?

A: No, I don't think that.

Q: Is it any worse than it was 20 years ago?

A: Well it's different maybe it was, but it is different. Everything is different. Everything is so unsettled. I think this age in which we live—which the Christian age you know, is going to close and another one start, what the other is....I think it'll be right around 2000, somewhere around there. Anyone who lives, like this little one (pointing to Daniel Burnett) I think the good Lord has brought these children into the world and that he has fortified them that they'll meet the conditions. I really believe that and they'll grow up with it and they'll know what to do when it happens. I think so. That is the only hope I see with the training that mothers and daddys can give them. What's right and wrong –with what the good Lord's given them, why' they'll survive. Everything will be on a different scale – for one thing, we'll be on a metric system and she'll (pointing to Becky Burnett) grow with that. Well what time to you think we should go, it's about a quarter to twelve. (This was the day Alan was to report to the MTC to start his mission to France).