

Interviewer: Okay first off I want to thank you for helping us out with this, with my project. You know what this is for, this is for my History class. We are interviewing WWII veterans and civilians during the 1930's. Could you please state your name and date of birth for the camera?

Mrs. Bussard: My name is Norma Bussard and my date of birth is February 25th no February 28th, 1925. I goofed already.

Interviewer: It's okay don't worry.

Mrs. Bussard: Okay

Interviewer: We'll put it on you know that TV show Bloopers.

Mrs. Bussard: Yeah

Interviewer: We'll put it on there.

Mrs. Bussard: Oh okay.

Interviewer: Okay what was the size of your family?

Mrs. Bussard: Six brothers and five sisters, a family of twelve.

Interviewer: Wow that's immense. How did your family, how did you feed such a huge family?

Mrs. Bussard: Well my dad was a milk man. He worked for a milk company, Sealtest Milk Company and he worked very steady, he had a good job as far as that was concerned at that point in time. So we didn't have too much of a problem.

Interviewer: Was your older brothers or anyone else in your family were they working?

Mrs. Bussard: I had three older brothers. No because they were both married, they were much older than I was.

Interviewer: Oh okay.

Mrs. Bussard: I think that's a mistake. Can we start again?

Interviewer: Why? It's okay.

Mrs. Bussard: They weren't married in the 30's.

Interviewer: It's alright we can keep going it's alright. Okay what was your family life like during the depression in like the 1930's?

Mrs. Bussard: Well we didn't have a lot. Like I said my dad was a milk man. We didn't have a lot of excess stuff but we had what we needed. We handed our clothes down from one child to the other and with the boys. We had a lot of beans and soups and things like that. But we never had any problem really. I can't remember we always had a lot of oil. My dad and mom they baked all of our bread. Daddy always mixed it up and mom put it out in the pan and baked it. So we always had lots of homemade bread.

Interviewer: You and I were talking earlier before the camera and you're from Oil City.

Mrs. Bussard: Oil City, Pennsylvania.

Interviewer: And that's where you lived all your life right?

Mrs. Bussard: Uh huh.

Interviewer: What was Oil City like back then in the 30's?

Mrs. Bussard: Oh Oil City it was, had a population I think about 18,000. But at that time most of the businesses was oil and petroleum and stuff like that and steel mills, lots of steel mills.

Interviewer: Was it pretty big, was it a booming city you think or was it quiet like it is? It seems rather quiet.

Mrs. Bussard: Yeah it wasn't no city like Pittsburg or anything, it was more or less like a little small town.

Interviewer: Okay let's say so you were born in 1925 let's say at the age of ten in 1935 what would you consider an average day? What would you do during the day?

Mrs. Bussard: Well at that age let's see. I started in the first grade when I was five and an average day around ten I would have been what around fifth grade. We would get up in the morning and mother would get our breakfast and of course there were other kids that we had to get ready to go to school. I was the oldest girl then there were other children then there were children at home. And after we'd get home at night we'd have to help mom get the supper, wash the dishes, sweep the floor and cleanup and do our homework. Average day.

Interviewer: During the Depression was your father at any point, was he ever unemployed because of the depression?

Mrs. Bussard: No, daddy was never unemployed that I can remember of. He was always the milk man until later on in his years and after the milk company he went to work for the railroad as a flag man on the railroad.

Interviewer: When was that?

Mrs. Bussard: I can't tell you.

Interviewer: Was it after the war or late in the war?

Mrs. Bussard: I can't answer that because I know my dad was a flag man and I had three brothers that were on the railroad; Miles was on the railroad, Billy was on the railroad, Elwood was on the railroad and my dad was on the railroad. There was four of them that went to work on the railroad in Pennsylvania.

Interviewer: About your mother, what was life like for her? You said earlier that you didn't have any problems feeding the family, did she seem?

Mrs. Bussard: No, we were talking not too long ago and I don't really remember how we did eat. My sisters and I were just talking about this because we wondered how did we all eat at one table or did we eat at two tables. I can't really remember that to be truthful with you. I know that I can remember that as I was older I had to help do a lot of the cooking. Mother had another child about every year too and I was the oldest girl. We just never had any problem. We didn't have too much of a lot of stuff but there was just a lot of love in the family is all I can tell you.

Interviewer: Food was pretty much always on the table?

Mrs. Bussard: Yeah, we never went hungry that I can remember, never.

Interviewer: What about like maybe some of your neighbors? Did they ever have problems with unemployment? Did they ever seem to be looking for jobs?

Mrs. Bussard: Like I said, I can't really remember that far back, I really can't. There were a lot of railroaders at that time. I can't answer that.

Interviewer: What was school like for you?

Mrs. Bussard: I love school, no problems with school.

Interviewer: I wished I could say that.

Mrs. Bussard: I started, like I said, in the first grade at the _____ School.

Interviewer: Was that here?

Mrs. Bussard: That was on the other side of Oil City. We lived at the time on Road and I went to Oil City school from 1st grade to 6th grade and then I went from 6th grade to the 12th out to Cranbury; transferred out to Cranbury School. I graduated from Cranbury School in 1942 and loved every bit of it. I cried the day I graduated. We all did, a bunch of us at school.

Interviewer: What about your brothers? Did everyone graduate from high school?

Mrs. Bussard: My oldest brother, Bob, was killed in a WPA accident which had something to do with the Depression. It was called the WPA. He was one that did have trouble with the depression. He was working on a truck and they were going from; they were putting in some sort of a line but whether it was gas, water or what, I can't remember. It was out at Plummer. These guys were riding in the back of the truck and there was a compressor in the back of the truck. They went over a bump and it threw him off and the compressor landed on him and he was killed in the WPA. My brother Elwood, he was in the service. It was after he got out of the service that he went to work for the railroad. He was in the service during that time.

Interviewer: During the early 30s?

Mrs. Bussard: Yeah, the late 30s. He went through officer's training school and became a Lieutenant. He served in Hawaii and around Pearl Harbor.

Interviewer: Was he in combat when the war started?

Mrs. Bussard: He was in combat because he was in; can't tell you.

Interviewer: That's okay. Was he in the Navy or the Army?

Mrs. Bussard: Yes, he was in the Army.

Interviewer: Let's go back to the school just for a minute. How big was your school?

Mrs. Bussard: The first school I went to in grade 1 through 6, I suppose it was probably 25 to a class.

Interviewer: That is pretty big for that time.

Mrs. Bussard: For that time; I graduated, there was only one of a class. There were 50 in my graduating class. I graduated in 1942 and I don't remember really size much about the earlier grades.

Interviewer: I don't remember. My classes were pretty small too actually. In 1939 you were 14. How aware were you about political developments that were going on in our world.

Mrs. Bussard: I don't think I paid too much attention to it at that time. I can remember vaguely about Franklin D. Roosevelt so I guess I did know a little political stuff. I know that there was talk about him being in a wheel chair which a lot of people; I don't think they knew it ever then did they?

Interviewer: I don't know.

Mrs. Bussard: It seems like he was always sitting.

Interviewer: He seemed to conceal it. Did your family generally support F.D.R and his handling of

domestic and foreign affairs?

Mrs. Bussard: I really don't remember anything about that.

Interviewer: You mentioned the W.P.A earlier and some of the new deal projects. Were any of those besides W.P.A going on in Oil City?

Mrs. Bussard: Well, yeah. My one brother worked for the W.P.A and that was like a welfare help you know. Another thing I wanted to tell you, we did have help with Christmas presents and stuff when we were all at home. This is going back before when you said how did my dad support. There was a children's place that used to bring us baskets during the depression with little gifts for all of us kids. I can remember one time we got one doll for all of us girls. We got a one two-wheeled bike one time. We had to share that. That came from some help from some; it wasn't welfare I don't think because my dad still worked every day. I think it was help like that.

Interviewer: Kind of like a helping hand.

Mrs. Bussard: I think the ladies name was Mrs. Kleinhammer that used to bring it to us.

Interviewer: Did this go on through all Oil City?

Mrs. Bussard: I'm not sure about that. I think it probably did because like I said I'm sure there were more of other families that got help too.

Interviewer: You graduated in 1942 right?

Mrs. Bussard: I graduated in 1942.

Interviewer: Did you ever have a job before then like when you were in high school?

Mrs. Bussard: When I was in high school, no because I had to help mom at home with all the other kids because I was always in charge of the baking and I packed lunches. I was the oldest girl and mommy always said you had cookies or something for the pals. All the girls had jobs. Is that interesting to you?

Interviewer: Oh yes, go ahead!

Mrs. Bussard: One would wash dishes, one would dry dishes, one would rid the table and sweep the floor, the other would wash dishes and the other would dry. A story that goes along with that is that we got to arguing and threw dishes and stuff back and forth into the sink because it wasn't clean you know. Daddy fixed that up. Each one of us swept the floor. We had one night we did it all ourselves. I had to rid the table, wash the dishes, dry the dishes, and sweep the floor. The next night Mary had to do it and the next night Pauline had to do it. So that took care of our fighting back and forth. Dad just said you will do it all yourself. So we did and it taught us.

Interviewer: Do you see yourself as kind of a; did you do a lot of helping with your younger daughters? Mrs. Bussard: Younger sisters you mean? I'm sorry, younger sisters.

Mrs. Bussard: It wasn't that any of us did more than the rest. I remember we had to wash clothes by hand. All of us girls, of course me being the oldest was why. We would wash white clothes one day and get them all, hang them out and get them dry and then the next day we would do all the dark clothes because we couldn't do it all in one day. As far as me having a job, I would go down; they were putting a new road through our little place out there where I lived so the lady that lived across the street had a boarding house. I would go down in the morning and help her get breakfast. I can't remember the number of boarders that she had. I would say eight or nine but I am not sure. I would go down in the morning and she would get breakfast and I would help her clear the table and do the dishes and then I would go to

school. I would come home at night and go down and help her get supper for the boarders. After supper we would do the dishes and set the table for the next morning for breakfast. I had to do that and then I could go home. I got \$3.00 a week for that.

Interviewer: That's pretty good for that time isn't it?

Mrs. Bussard: I got \$3.00 a week and one time I saved it up for four weeks and she paid me \$12.00 and I thought I had the world by the tail. I had \$12.00. It was wonderful. She helped me get my prom dress that I went to the prom with, in the 11th grade.

Interviewer: That's great. Is that what you spent your money on?

Mrs. Bussard: That \$12.00 I don't remember. I just remember having a \$12.00 check. When I graduated Mrs. O'Brian still had the boarders and she helped me still pay for my gown. She was running that boarding house and I would go down there and help her.

Interviewer: What about your brothers, what did they do?

Mrs. Bussard: My brother Bill was in the service. My brother Elwood was in the service. Eddie was in the service, he was stationed in South Carolina. Bob was killed. Elwood was in the service. Billie was in the service and he was overseas but his was more I think in peace time. Miles wasn't in the service.

Interviewer: Did you or anyone you knew work in a plant making war materials? Was there any of that going on around here?

Mrs. Bussard: There was a lot of that going around. The oil well supply here made all kinds of stuff for the war up here at the end of Colbert Avenue. I don't know what all they made at the time but it was all war material.

Interviewer: Was there a good majority of the people?

Mrs. Bussard: A lot of the people worked at the oil well supply, a lot of people.

Interviewer: Did they seem to get paid well?

Mrs. Bussard: Oh yeah. Well, at that time what pay was good. A lot of people worked at oil well supply, other things I don't remember.

Interviewer: When the war started with us in December 1942 when Japan bombed Pearl Harbor were you still inschool at the time? Were you a senior?

Mrs. Bussard: That was in 1942, yeah.

Interviewer: How did you hear about it, do you remember?

Mrs. Bussard: December 1942. I wasn't in school then because I graduated in June 1942.

Interviewer: Oh ok.

Mrs. Bussard: How did I hear that? Right this minute I can't remember.

Interviewer: What about before when you still were in school? Did you ever see, was anybody expecting war did it seem like war was going to come?

Mrs. Bussard: Yeah, because in 1942 that was right after the war because, turn that off a minute it's going to take me here a minute, Pat.

Interviewer: What were your plans after you graduated high school?

Mrs. Bussard: I wanted to be a nurse but my family couldn't afford to send me to nursing school because there was too many of us. The lady that I worked for told me that she would help me put me through if I wanted her to. We inquired into it and to get into the thing you had to be 18 years old. I was only 17 so they told me to go back to school and get another like a post graduate, 12th grade over again. Mr. Stewart who was the principal at the Cranbury High School said the school was too crowded and there were too many in the grade and I couldn't do that so I went to work at Department Store. It's like a five and dime store. I never did any more about it. It was probably for the best, I got to be a nurse maid then. I got married and had children.

Interviewer: What do you recall about the rationing system during the war?

Mrs. Bussard: I can remember getting the books of stamps. You had to have stamps for sugar. I think there were gasoline stamps. I don't remember too much; gasoline and sugar are what I do remember. I think they rationed other stuff at that time but I don't remember.

Interviewer: Rubber and probably butter.

Mrs. Bussard: Oh yeah, butter. That was Oleo too. I remember mostly sugar and gasoline because I was more inclined to driving.

Interviewer: Did you move out after you graduated or did you stay at home?

Mrs. Bussard: I stayed at home until I graduated in 1942 and I stayed there until 1944. My boyfriend was in the service at that time so my dad who worked on the railroad got me a pass on the Pensi Railroad and then he got me a half-price ticket on the foreign lines railroad and my sister-in-law and I went down to Texas, where my boyfriend was stationed at Camp Massey. While we were there I married him. We were there from February, I can't remember the exact day he went overseas but I stayed down there until it was time for him to go overseas. Then I came back home with my parents and his parents. I stayed part time at his parents down below Pittsburg and part time with my parent's up here.

Interviewer: How did you two meet?

Mrs. Bussard: They were putting a new highway through East End out in Oil City and I worked at this lady's house to help her with her boarders. Wade drove the grease truck that greased all the machinery, the bulldozers and all them. He boarded at her house. He boarded with her and I met him through going down to help her get their meals ready because he stayed at this ladies house. That is how I met him.

Interviewer: How old was he compared to you?

Mrs. Bussard: He was 22 and I was 18. You said he was drafted right?

Mrs. Bussard: Yeah he was drafted, probably in the first draft.

Interviewer: Ok. We will come back to him in a minute. Did you participate in any of the scrap drives to collect iron and aluminum?

Mrs. Bussard: I don't remember that.

Interviewer: What about war bonds? Did you ever buy any war bonds?

Mrs. Bussard: Wade and I bought them after we were married. After he got out of the service he went to work for the glass plant. Would those be the war bonds that you are talking about now?

Interviewer: That would be like during the war.

Mrs. Bussard: Well, when he came back from the service he went to work and we started buying war bonds and bought them for years. After he passed away I had to turn them in for different stuff because both his name and mine was on them.

Interviewer: Did you have telephone service and a radio; this was back when you were still living with your parents.

Mrs. Bussard: We had a radio at home. We never had a television at my home until later. We had a radio and I don't remember a telephone. We had a phone after I was grown up and married.

Interviewer: Did your parent's keep up on current events? Did they listen to the radio or maybe the newspaper?

Mrs. Bussard: Oh yeah. At that time too there was a local paper, The Dairy. We still had the dairy back then. It was the Oil City Blizzard or something like that, but it was the local paper.

Interviewer: Did any of your family members ever correspond with anyone overseas such as your brothers when they were in the military?

Mrs. Bussard: Oh yeah, we all wrote back and forth. Is that what you mean?

Interviewer: Yes.

Mrs. Bussard: I have e-mails and things like that from Wade when he was overseas. Have you ever seen them?

Interviewer: Yes, you showed me one of them.

Mrs. Bussard: The family corresponded with my brother Bill when he was overseas. We corresponded with my brother Elwood when he was in Hawaii. I'm not sure but I think he was in the Guadalcanal. Would that be right?

Interviewer: That was in the Pacific.

Mrs. Bussard: I think that is where he was at but I am not for sure. I can't remember. That just runs in my mind right now.

Interviewer: What about Wade? Where was he?

Mrs. Bussard: Wade was stationed in Germany. He went over in through England. I can show you his discharge. I have it out there. He was stationed in Germany. He went over in December. He was captured at the Battle of the Bulge.

Interviewer: He went over in 1944 did you say?

Mrs. Bussard: Whenever the Battle of the Bulge was. When was the Battle of the Bulge?

Interviewer: It was 1944.

Mrs. Bussard: When he went in December that must be when he went over, because he was taken at the Battle of the Bulge and was kept prisoner. He was stationed in different places. Say like 13C was the one. He was a prisoner-of-war when our first child was born. He was missing in action but I didn't know where he was at then.

Interviewer: Were you really worried for him?

Mrs. Bussard: Oh my, yes.

Interviewer: Did you get a telegram saying that he was missing?

Mrs. Bussard: Yes. I got the telegram I could show you if you want to see it. I think I did show it to you.

Interviewer: I think you did too actually. So there wasn't any correspondence between you two while he was missing?

Mrs. Bussard: Oh there was lots of correspondence before he was taken. He went over into England first I should say and then he eventually went on up in to be taken prisoner.

Interviewer: He sent the v-mails right?

Mrs. Bussard: Yes. After he was taken prisoner I didn't get any mail from him at all other than I got a letter from somebody that had taken him in or something and he wrote and told me where he was at. I had to call the government and tell them that I had heard from Wade. Usually they told the government to sit and wait until I heard from them but I heard from them before he did. I had to contact the government and tell them that Wade was a prisoner-of-war.

Interviewer: Was it a friend of his that got away?

Mrs. Bussard: No, it was somebody that; I have the letter upstairs. Somebody that just wrote and said that they had seen my husband and he had asked them to write and tell me. I don't know how it was.

Interviewer: I bet that was a big relief though.

Mrs. Bussard: Oh yeah, to know that he was a prisoner-of-war.

Interviewer: Was he in infantry? What did he do?

Mrs. Bussard: Yes he was in the infantry.

Interviewer: How did you find out about certain events like some of the bigger battles that were going on over in Europe?

Mrs. Bussard: Through the newspaper, mostly. We didn't have a television then. Momma didn't have a television then until we moved over here. It was mostly newspapers, word of mouth, and radio.

Interviewer: What about your brothers? How often did they write home?

Mrs. Bussard: They wrote home quite often. Wade wrote; my brothers wrote but they corresponded mostly with my mother and she wrote back and forth with my brothers. With Wade he wrote every day but like I said after he was taken prisoner I didn't hear from him until I heard from the one that wrote me and told me that he was a prisoner. After that he never got any of the letters that I even wrote to him. He would tell about how he would move them at night when they moved him from one place to the other in those boxcars when they were getting close with the fighting and stuff. When he first came home he wouldn't eat any cabbage or potatoes at all because he said he was so sick of cabbage and potatoes in prison camp. From what I hear the Americans are treated a lot better than some of the prisoners that the Germans captured such as the Russians. They were treated terribly. I don't know but Wade never would talk too much about it. He never talked a whole lot about being a prisoner other than he said, "Please don't give me any cabbage or potatoes for a while. They would ride them for all night long standing up to get them from one place to the next.

Interviewer: Did he tell you a lot of stories about being over in Germany?

Mrs. Bussard: No, he didn't. I wished he would have but he didn't. I'll be very truthful with you, any time he would ever talk about it was if he had a couple of beers in him. That is the truth; he didn't like to talk about it. He told me about them throwing him down the stairs because he couldn't get his wedding ring off but they took everything else from him.

Interviewer: What about the letters before he was captured, what did he say in the letters if that is not too personal? Did he tell you about England and when he was over there?

Mrs. Bussard: Oh yeah, like I said, he could say or write things that he could hear a noise. He wrote mostly about, like he had said that him and a couple of friends had been downtown in England and had been to a couple of the pubs before he got over in further. Most of his letters was mostly like wanting to know about everybody back home and how anxious he was to be back to see us all. That is about what it was.

Interviewer: How did your family react to you getting married?

Mrs. Bussard: My dad had told me he would get me a pass if I would just go down to see Wade because we had become engaged before he went in. When he found out he was going in the service he bought me the ring. I went right down there and got married before he left. Of course I didn't come home single. I came home pregnant. My dad was very upset with me for a while but it all worked out. It wasn't that they didn't want me to get married because they didn't like Wade; it's just that they thought I was too young. I was just going on to 19 and they thought I was too young.

Interviewer: Were they worried that he was going overseas?

Mrs. Bussard: I think they thought about that a lot. I think they thought about what could be. They didn't specifically say that to me. When you are young and when you are in love, you know, it doesn't matter what your parents say sometimes. My dad was very upset with me at first it all worked out very well in the long run.

Interviewer: What about your mom?

Mrs. Bussard: My mother didn't care. She just wanted what was best for all of us kids. She was probably glad to get rid of one of us.

Interviewer: One less mouth to feed, huh?

Mrs. Bussard: Yes, but no there was never any problem with that.

Interviewer: How did you write to Wade? Did he give you an address?

Mrs. Bussard: You mean after being a prisoner?

Interviewer: No. When he was over in England?

Mrs. Bussard: APO. We had an APO address. I had an address and sent it through the Army Post Office number. Every day, we wrote every day. He wrote whenever he could. At first before he went into action he wrote a lot. After he was captured then I didn't get that many letters.

Interviewer: You said your brothers were in the Pacific right and they were sending mail to your parents. Did you ever correspond with them yourself?

Mrs. Bussard: No, I don't really remember that.

Interviewer: Do you know what they ended up doing like after the war?

Mrs. Bussard: My brother Elwood when he got back he went to work for the railroad. My brother Bill went to work at a, Bill was on the railroad but the last job that Billy had was working as a maintenance man at an Arlington Hotel. Miles just ended up, he wasn't in the service. Eddie, he got out of the service and went to work at the glass plant.

Interviewer: Were any of them ever wounded in battle?

Mrs. Bussard: No. Bill was in, in peace time. Eddie, I don't remember Eddie being, I don't think Eddie saw action. He was the youngest one. He was just in the service but not sent overseas or anything.

Interviewer: Let's go back to your neighborhood during the war. Was anyone in your neighborhood or acquaintances that you knew that was loyal to a suspect like such as Japanese-Americans? Did there ever seem to be a worry or concern about them?

Mrs. Bussard: Do you mean like they were suspected because of their heritage?

Interviewer: Yeah, after the attack on Pearl Harbor a lot of Japanese-Americans were rounded up.

Mrs. Bussard: I don't remember a lot about that like there is today. I don't think there was that many of them around in our neighborhood. I don't think we had any right in our district, right in our neighborhood. I don't think we had a lot of that.

Interviewer: What about German immigrants?

Mrs. Bussard: Yeah.

Interviewer: Were there a lot of them here?

Mrs. Bussard: I don't remember about that either, Pat.

Interviewer: Many Americans look back on the war years as some of the best years of their lives despite the sacrifices of the servicemen and the needs and shortages. How do you look back at the war years now that it has been 50 years later?

Mrs. Bussard: I guess I just don't think about them so much. I wonder sometimes how we got through them. I don't know.

Interviewer: When was your first child born?

Mrs. Bussard: 1945.

Interviewer: Were you still working at that five and dime store?

Mrs. Bussard: I was when I went to see my husband.

Interviewer: Oh okay.

Mrs. Bussard: I was when I went down there to see him but I never came back. After I left and went down there I got married.

Interviewer: What did Wade's parents do?

Mrs. Bussard: His dad was a coalminer and his mother was just a housewife. In fact he had that, he got that asthma so bad in the coal mines; black lung.

Interviewer: My grandmother had something like that I think.

Mrs. Bussard: I didn't know Wade's dad. He told me. Wade's dad died I think in 1944. I had just met Wade in 1942 and he died and I had just met Wade when I was graduating. He was a coal miner. He was in the Spanish-American War.

Interviewer: What did he do?

Mrs. Bussard: I've got his discharge upstairs but I can't remember what he done. He was 17 years older than Wade's mother but he was in the Spanish-American War. I've got his discharge if you would like to see it. It is on sheepskin.

Interviewer: Yeah that would be nice. Let's go back to your letter writing with Wade. I'm sorry I keep harping on this. Did you notice that a lot of your mail that you were getting from him was?

Mrs. Bussard: Censored?

Interviewer: Was it censored?

Mrs. Bussard: Oh yes. I'm not saying that there was a lot of it blacked out because he never wrote a lot that they had to black out but on the front of every letter it had on it, "Censored by so-and-so!" Yes, every letter that came was marked like that and I can show you them too.

Interviewer: They were, the v-mails, they were photographed. Do you know why they were done like that?

Mrs. Bussard: No.

Interviewer: I found out because they were trying to save space and they figured that if they photographed them and put them on that flat sheet they will save space so it would be easy to stack and easier to transport.

Mrs. Bussard: Yeah so you mean he wrote them out on regular paper?

Interviewer: He would write them out regular like on the paper that he wrote and they would open it up and photograph it and shrink down.

Mrs. Bussard: I didn't know that but I know they were called v-mail, victory mail.

Interviewer: I found out just a couple of weeks ago from my professor.

Mrs. Bussard: Did you tell him that you seen some of them?

Interviewer: Yes I did. When you did find out that Wade was alive and he was a prisoner-of-war, when did you start resuming communications with him? Do you remember?

Mrs. Bussard: No, I don't really think I do. I think he was prisoner-of-war from December 7 until May. I think the next thing I knew is that was shortly before V-E Day. He had come home I think before I had even heard from him.

Interviewer: Oh really?

Mrs. Bussard: Oh I will never forget that. I'm just trying to figure how we knew he was coming though because I had been up here at my parents in Oil City and when we knew he was coming he wanted me to be down to his parents below Pittsburg. I was down there, I can't remember exactly, but I can remember, we knew he was coming because I can remember standing in the doorway and waiting to see him get off of the, because he would have had to come by bus. I can remember him walking up the hill and I just froze. I couldn't even run to meet him. I couldn't even move. I can remember that just as plain as day. I just couldn't move, I don't if it was just shock or what.

Interviewer: So what did you two do after he got back?

Mrs. Bussard: Well, we lived in Arona for a while.

Interviewer: Arona, where is that?

Mrs. Bussard: That is down below Pittsburg. That is where his hometown was. It is a little coal mining town. Most of the ones there were coal miners. He got out of the service, honorable discharge, and he went to work at a construction company. He worked down at Finleyville which is below Pittsburg for probably, that was in 1945 I think. He worked in a construction company for a while. He drove a bulldozer and worked in coal mining in strip mining. It made him so sick and stuff and he went to the doctor a lot because his stomach was so tore up from we say being a prisoner. He couldn't take the work so he had to quit that job. We then moved up here to Oil City and he went to work at the Oil City Glass Company. He worked there for the next 32 years.

Interviewer: How did you feel when you heard about the atomic bomb that was dropped on Japan? Do you remember that?

Mrs. Bussard: No, I really don't Pat. I think there was fear. I think everybody was afraid because you didn't know whether it was going to be dropped here next. That atomic bomb stuff was very scary. I don't remember a lot about that.

Interviewer: Did you ever have a fear that Wade would be transferred to the east over into the Pacific?

Mrs. Bussard: No, never thought of that.

Interviewer: You said earlier that Wade had a Purple Heart? Where did he get wounded?

Mrs. Bussard: In the leg, he had shrapnel wounds. It wasn't a very serious wound.

Interviewer: Many people reported a feeling of physic well-being because everyone had a job. After the ten years of the Great Depression the nation was united during the war, do you recall any kind of feeling of patriotism like since everyone united against a common ____ during the war. Do you remember that?

Mrs. Bussard: No, too busy raising kids.

Interviewer: When did your sisters go on?

Mrs. Bussard: My sisters Mary, Bonnie, me, Joyce, Edna & Elora Mae, they all got married. The one sister she died when she was very small. She was just two or three months old. All five of us got married and started families. My sister Edna was eventually killed in an automobile accident so there are four of us girls left.

Interviewer: During the Great Depression and World War II what was the one thing that sticks out in your mind, one of your more pleasant memories; the one thing you can look back fondly over during those times and recall?

Mrs. Bussard: That would be like from what 1930...

Interviewer: Let's say from like 1935-1945.

Mrs. Bussard: Being able to go roller skating once a week.

Interviewer: Really?

Mrs. Bussard: Yeah because in our school years the last three years of our school we had a group of us that went roller skating at least once a week. That was one of my fondest memories and my dad also skated too at that time. That was a great time. We never had too much trouble getting a ride to the skating rink because one of the other girl's parents would take us and my dad could take us and he would skate also. My dad was an excellent roller-skater. My brother Miles was too. That is one of my fondest memories I guess.

Interviewer: I guess we are done. I just want to thank you again for helping me with this.

Mrs. Bussard: I just hope I did alright.

Interviewer: You did great. Thank you
very much.(End of Interview)