

Interviewer: If we could start off real easily and you can tell us your full name and when you were born and where you were born.

Goodlett: Okay my name is Hazel Edwards Goodlett and I was born February 1922 in Clarksville and I've lived here all of my life except for a couple of years in San Antonio during the war.

Interviewer: What took you to San Antonio?

Goodlett: My husband was at Kelly Air force base.

Interviewer: Okay

Goodlett: He was a sergeant he was hoping to fly airplanes but he couldn't cross his eyes and they wouldn't accept him.

Interviewer: Oh wow

Goodlett: And he had already become a lawyer and so they used him to he would write wills for the soldiers or if they had divorce problems or mortgage problems he would help them.

Interviewer: Okay and what was your father's name and what did he do?

Goodlett: His name was John Edwards and he was in the tobacco business with his father Thomas Edwards.

Interviewer: Okay

Goodlett: They had a loose leaf floor. Do you know what that is?

Interviewer: I do I do you could explain it for the archives if you want.

Goodlett: Well a loose leaf floor was where the farmers brought tobacco in by leafs and then the buyers from the cigarette companies, cigar companies, and snuff companies came to the loose floor and they'd have an auctioneer and they'd auction off these big baskets full of tobacco. I was gonna tell you that when my grandfather first built the loose floor you know it was just a great big flat room house and so my oldest sister had a skating party before the floor got messed up. And also when they were building it my father was up on the roof any you know a sky light?

Interviewer: Uh huh

Goodlett: He fell through a sky light and luckily there was a pile of lumber on the concrete floor below the sky light or else it would have killed him but it just broke his arm.

Interviewer: Wow

Goodlett: I thought that was interesting.

Interviewer: Yes yes I'll have to tell you a story about my grandfather when he was building my grandmother's house. But what was your mother's name and what did she do?

Goodlett: Her name was May Miller and they got married in a little house over on 1st Street it's still there. And mother was the daughter of Bell Keese Miller who taught at Howell School for years and years.

Interviewer: Okay how old were you in 1939 and how aware were you of the political situation in the country?

Goodlett: Was that during the depression?

Interviewer: It would have been just as we were coming out of the depression right before the war.

Goodlett: Who was president? Franklin Roosevelt?

Interviewer: Yes ma'am

Goodlett: Well we were democrats and we loved Franklin Roosevelt and thought he saved us really because the CCC you've heard of that.

Interviewer: Right

Goodlett: They came here to Clarksville and built roads and they built that road that goes across the Cumberland River right up there. And they planted trees and they built parks and did a lot of things like that.

Interviewer: Could you tell me a little bit about what you remember from the depression?

Goodlett: Yes we lived on Madison Street between Greenwood and 10th and in every house there were children. We had people to play with all the time and we were all in the same boat we didn't worry about the depression. But I do remember that my mother would make pretty little pecan and chess pies for ladies who were gonna have a bridge party or something to make a little extra money because tobacco was in bad shape then. And my father had to find you know during there's a tobacco season and then there's a time when nothing's happening in the tobacco market. And he would just take any job he could find to make extra money. One time he worked at Dunbar Cave and once he worked in a filling station. But we never suffered you know and the Christmas during the depression luckily my sister and I wanted a what not shelf. We wanted these little shelves that you put little sets of animals and things like that on and of course they were very inexpensive. And my daddy said make a list of what you want and I'll go as far down the list as I can afford. And so I got a red what not shelf and my sister got a green what not shelf and little sets of animals to put on them and we were just as happy as could be.

Interviewer: Was it just you and your sister?

Goodlett: No there were four in my family. An older sister this sister was just 18 months older than me so we played together and dressed alike even until we were in high school. But my neighbor was a lawyer's daughter and so for Christmas she came over to our house and of course everything we had paper and everything all around the place and lots of little things. But when we went to see her

Christmas her mother and daddy was still asleep and she had gotten a fur jacket and a wrist watch and that's all. And she told me later that she always envied us because we had so much more fun at Christmas than she had.

Interviewer: Yeah

Goodlett: Even though she was much wealthier.

Interviewer: Yeah kids want things to play with. Do you remember rationing and things like that?

Goodlett: During the war?

Interviewer: Uh huh

Goodlett: It never bothered me too much. We went to San Antonio like I told you and I got a job in a little florist shop that was just about a block from our apartment. And there was a grocery store just right up the street and people were very friendly and nice and you know you could have meat once a week. I wasn't a very good cook so.

Interviewer: Neither am I. Okay so growing up as we began to get into World War I how aware were you, because you were married at that time correct?

Goodlett: Yeah

Interviewer: How aware were you

Goodlett: Oh not quite almost. When my husband and I had gone to Nashville to a movie and when we came out the newsboys were hollering Pearl Harbor was bombed and I said where is Pearl Harbor? We didn't you know we'd never heard of Pearl Harbor. So my husband was the first Clarksville man in line to sign up for the draft.

Interviewer: Wow okay

Goodlett: And he hoped to get in the air force and at the time both of us were working for the land acquisition department they were buying the land for Fort Campbell. And he was working as a lawyer I was working with them as a clerk. And I had this great big book and I kept track of every piece of land, every house, every cemetery how much we were gonna pay them how much acreage they had and it was fascinating.

Interviewer: You liked it?

Goodlett: Yes and of course my first job I made \$10 a week. I was working for an insurance agent so when I went to work for the government and got \$120 a month it sounded like a fortune.

Interviewer: I'll take it

Goodlett: Right so he got called up then I went out to Fort Campbell and got a job in the quarter master department and I kept track of what they called disenablees. Things like pencils and paper and the

sergeant of each unit would come to us and say I need so many reams of paper or so many hundred pencils and I kept track of all of that. And I said to myself when I save about \$1000 I'm gonna go to San Antonio and when I got \$800 I thought I don't care I'm going. And it was the first time I'd ever ridden on a Pullman train. And when I got to San Antonio I had on this new green suit and a big green burette and he had on a pith helmet, you know. And we almost didn't recognize each other. And he took me to a hotel and we stayed there for three days before he could get up his nerve to show me this apartment because it was really tacky. It was just one room and a bath and a kitchen and everything was just in terrible shape. So we went to Woolworths and we bought material and I would fit it onto that big ole chair and get those little nails and hammer that stuff and I covered a chair and I covered an apple crate for a bedside table. The closet didn't have a door so I made a curtain for the door of the same material and by the time I got through it really looked right pretty.

Interviewer: I'm sure it did. Can you tell us a little bit about what it was like living in San Antonio?

Goodlett: Yes it was cheap because you could ride a bus everywhere. And living on a sergeant's pay we didn't have much extra money. But there was the Alamo you know and the beautiful little river that ran through San Antonio and there were beautiful old churches and there was a great zoo. So we always had something to do.

Interviewer: So how much had you heard at that point about what was going on in Nazi Germany?

Goodlett: I really didn't know until it was all over about the Holocaust and how horrible that was.

Interviewer: Right

Goodlett: We I don't know what the government knew but the ordinary people didn't know about the Jewish problem until the war was over I don't think.

Interviewer: What information did you have as to why we were fighting Germany specifically?

Goodlett: Well because they were just trying to take over all of Europe. You know they went into Poland and Czechoslovakia and Russia and everywhere.

Interviewer: How much did you hear about the Pacific Theatre about why we were fighting Japan?

Goodlett: There was one Clarksville boy who was on that Death March what did they call that?

Interviewer: The Baton Death March.

Goodlett: Yeah and so that made quite an impression on me.

Interviewer: Right I'm sure

Goodlett: And I had a cousin who was on a ship that was bombed at Pearl Harbor. But that's about all I knew I didn't know any people who went to Germany that end of in the war.

Interviewer: Were most of the young men that you knew in the Clarksville community had they been drafted?

Goodlett: Yeah yeah

Interviewer: What kind of things did their mothers and girlfriends and sisters do?

Goodlett: Well I remember I had a friend named Ann Harris and her husband was killed in the Battle of the Bulge. I had another friend Mary McReynolds Harpel her husband was in the Battle of the Bulge and it was so horrible he just could not he would not even talk about it. And one fellow that I had been to high school with Tandy Richardson was killed in Germany. But and then there was a boy Frank Adkins who was shot down a lot of planes he was an 88er he finally was killed after the war in just a training accident. But not any of my close friends were killed in the war.

Interviewer: Speaking of things that people did you were older but do you remember participating in like scrap drives scrap metal drives and things like that?

Goodlett: Not too much I'll tell you what I remember was when the people started pouring into Clarksville and they asked people please make rooms because they were just covered up. And the barracks hadn't opened and there weren't places for their wives to live. So we lived up in a little house on College Street that's now part of Austin Peay but we had two upstairs bedrooms and two down. And my mother and daddy had one and my grandmother had one and my sister and I had the two upstairs. So my dad said if you don't mind we'll rent out those rooms and you girls we had a couch we put in the dining room and we started sleeping on that couch and rented out these upstairs bedrooms. And people would I've heard of people turning their chicken coops into houses for soldiers and it was a mess.

Interviewer: Were you or any of your family members or close friends helped by any of the New Deal programs? You talked a little bit about the CCC I didn't know if you knew anybody who had any experience with the National Youth Administration or the Civil Works Administration or anything like that the WPA?

Goodlett: No

Interviewer: Okay you said you started earning 120 a month when you started working for Camp Campbell.

Goodlett: Yeah

Interviewer: After Pearl Harbor do you know if because I know you changed jobs and started working for Camp Campbell do you remember if any of your other friends had large changes in jobs or if they received raises or job that were connected to the war effort?

Goodlett: Before the war all of the girls from Clarksville married Clarksville boys. But during the war they met soldiers and a lot of them married people from the military.

Interviewer: Right

Goodlett: And so that changed our lives a little bit. But now what did you say wait a minute what was your question?

Interviewer: I was just asking if any of the girls or young men that you knew girls specifically had significant changes in income because they started working for the war effort. Working in factories or anything like that.

Goodlett: No the president of Austin Peay was Mr. P.P. Claxton and his daughter worked in the quarter master office with me. But I don't remember many of the Clarksville girls working at Fort Campbell or a lot of them still were in college see. And like I said a few of them married military men but there weren't too many changes.

Interviewer: Right do you remember discussing with your girlfriends and people that you worked with whether or not you thought that the war like that politics of the war. Did you discuss what was going on overseas?

Goodlett: I don't think we did.

Interviewer: Were you do you remember being worried, I know your husband was already in the service, do you remember being worried that was your brother in the service?

Goodlett: No Kile when I came home I got pregnant and I came home and he was sent to Fresno California to a place called Camp Pinedale. And he was on the list to go overseas and I had the baby and they would give you certain points if you had children and so he got a few more points for having a baby and he didn't have to go overseas. And about that time the war ended. When I was in the hospital I think it was D-Day and so that was it was beginning to wind up see.

Interviewer: Right

Goodlett: And he came home before they ever dropped the bomb in Japan.

Interviewer: Okay do you remember during the war there being obviously there were shortages of things rationing was in place. Do you remember anybody that had any experience with the black market for certain goods?

Goodlett: Oh I think there were rumors about some people getting tires for their cars and hiding them.

Interviewer: Right

Goodlett: And I remember my mother getting mad at the grocer she had always traded with and she said he was saving sugar for certain people but he never saved her any sugar. There were just little things like that.

Interviewer: Did your community pool resources like you church community if you were planning a big pot luck or something like that would you have people share things?

Goodlett: If they did I wasn't involved.

Interviewer: Did you have nay because I know you worked at Camp Campbell did you have any or know anyone that was involved at this time with labor union?

Goodlett: No

Interviewer: Any kind of organization?

Goodlett: No

Interviewer: What how many hours were you working per week at Fort Campbell?

Goodlett: I don't think we worked on Saturday and I would walk from College Street to the bus station and ride the bus to Fort Campbell and there would be buses to bring us home. And you know I think we got there at eight o'clock and left at five something like that.

Interviewer: Did you feel like it was your duty to help the war efforts to do what you could at Camp Campbell and by rationing?

Goodlett: I really didn't think about it as a duty I just thought it was a wonderful way to make money.

Interviewer: Right you had to get San Antonio somehow.

Goodlett: Let me tell you a good story about when I was buying the land for Fort Campbell. There was a little colored man from Trigg County and he said please take my farm because you've taken all my friend around me and I'm stuck up there all by myself. And sure enough we did take his farm and there was another one and his name was Buccatee Bucca Tee. His mother had named him for Booker T Washington and she didn't know how to spell it.

Interviewer: I love that

Goodlett: Wasn't that interesting. That was Bucca Tee Rodgers.

Interviewer: Okay well

Goodlett: I just thought that was interesting I've always remembered that name.

Interviewer: Right did you riding the bus back and forth were there other girls from your neighborhood that worked out there that you rode back and forth with?

Goodlett: Just that girl that was a Claxton the girl.

Interviewer: Right

Goodlett: Yeah and most of the other girls were from there was some from Hopkinsville and Pembroke and little towns all around Clarksville that had come to get jobs at Fort Campbell.

Interviewer: Did you at this time have a telephone in your house?

Goodlett: Oh yeah

Interviewer: And radio is radio the way that you got most of your news about the war or did you get most of your news from the paper?

Goodlett: Radio and paper

Interviewer: Do you remember FDR speaking on the radio?

Goodlett: Oh yeah everybody listened to Franklin D Roosevelt and his little chats he talked in chats.

Interviewer: Right did your family and yourself personally feel that he was handling the war and the economic situation at home in a good way or did you approve?

Goodlett: Yes we did we approved of him. There was a few rich people who resented the fact that he was helping spending so much money helping people but we loved him.

Interviewer: I know it was a very I know it had to have been a very scary thing to hear that people that you knew had been killed like your friend's husband. Did it ever make you nervous to get a phone call or a telegram?

Goodlett: No because my husband never went overseas.

Interviewer: Right did you or any of your family members your sister write to people overseas throughout the war?

Goodlett: I'm sure the girls whose husbands were overseas wrote and of course I wrote to ___ every day even though I didn't have much to tell him. But I didn't there wasn't anybody else for me to write to.

Interviewer: Was there anyone in Clarksville or in San Antonio when you were there that because of political associations or ethnicity or religion that was their loyalty was considered a little bit suspect that you didn't know like if they were

Goodlett: No and I thought it was terrible the way they did the Japanese out in California.

Interviewer: How did you hear about that?

Goodlett: I didn't know about that until everything was all over. And it was just so sad and wrong but I guess they thought they were doing what was best.

Interviewer: Speaking about after the war looking back now with over fifty years of hindsight a lot of people say that even though the war was a horrible thing they consider it one of the best times in their life. Did that period of time was a good time in their lives I just wondered.

Goodlett: We thought of it was good war and a war that was needed to be fought. Not like Vietnam and Afghanistan who gives a darn. We ought to get out of that when we do get out of that they will go back to doing the same things they've always done. We can't make people live like we think they should live.

Interviewer: Yes

Goodlett: And I hate to say it because and I wouldn't dare say it in front of a military person but I think Vietnam and Iraq and Afghanistan and Korea they were just shouldn't have ever been fought. We can't take care of the whole world.

Interviewer: Yes ma'am exactly I agree. But looking back on World War II you felt like it was different?

Goodlett: Yes

Interviewer: Like we needed to

Goodlett: Yes and people were proud to fight then and proud when they came home and you know it was called a good war.

Interviewer: I know that a lot of people say that throughout the war and even when the war was over the country as a whole just felt better because the war helped to pull us out of the depression.

Goodlett: That's true

Interviewer: That people had jobs do you remember what it was like I mean having gone through the depression to suddenly have disposable income that everything wasn't so tight?

Goodlett: Right well while we were in San Antonio we bought a little house you know those places like Delmar Drive and Swift Drive? They built all those little houses and they were very inexpensive so we could afford to buy one of those little houses and rent it while we were in San Antonio. And it was half paid for by the time we got home so all the young folks did that way. All of my friends who came back from the war nearly all of us lived in those little houses.

Interviewer: When you were in San Antonio did you ever discuss moving somewhere else after he was out or did you always want because I know you came back you came back to Clarksville once you had a baby right?

Goodlett: No we knew we'd always live in Clarksville because he was in business with his daddy.

Interviewer: Right did you know anyone during the war or a friend of a friend who was a contentious objector who didn't want to serve.

Goodlett: No I don't know of anybody in Clarksville that I ever heard that was a contentious objector.

Interviewer: Right

Goodlett: No I didn't know.

Interviewer: Is there anything else specific through the war years and the depression that particularly stands out in your mind good or bad?

Goodlett: Like I say we was sort of all in the same boat and we all all the children on Madison Street went to Dunbar Cave. Our mothers would one mother would take a car full of kids and they'd leave us

there all day long and of course we all fell in love with the life guards. And it was really a wonderful time during the depression we didn't know that we were poor.

Interviewer: Right well I think that's about it.

Goodlett: Okay