

Interview with  
Caroline (Walker) Manock  
Interview # AI-A-L-2008-022  
Interviewer: Margaret Miles

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Miles: This interview is being conducted on Friday, May 16, 2008 at the farm home of Caroline Manock of Dewitt County, Illinois. This interview is being conducted as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Agriculture in Illinois* Oral History Project by Margaret Miles, a volunteer with the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Museum. First of all we are going to go over your biographical information Caroline. You don't mind if I call you Caroline, do you?

Manock: No, that's fine.

Miles: Your name is Caroline Walker Manock, so Walker is your middle name?

Manock: Walker is my maiden name.

Miles: Do you have a middle name?

Manock: No, never did.

Miles: Address is Rural Route 3, Box 263, Clinton, Illinois, 61727. Telephone number is 217-935-3755. Where were you born Caroline?

Manock: John Warner Hospital, Clinton, Illinois.

Miles: Your birth date?

Manock: March 16, 1917.

Miles: What was the ethnicity of your parents?

Manock: The city?

Miles: Your ethnicity—what were your family? What was their ethnic background?

Manock: The Walker family settled in DeWitt County way back—I don't know, I am afraid to say what year—but it was before 1900. Let's see. I'm not just sure how far back.

Miles: Where were they from?

Manock: They came from England—no, let's see, wait a minute. I think they came from Ireland to Pennsylvania to Ohio and Illinois. But they were English.

Miles: They were English. What about the other side of your family.

Manock: The Kent's were **definitely** English; they came from southern England to Massachusetts I think it was—no, New Hampshire. They were involved in New Hampshire some way.

Miles: Your family background is mainly English and Irish?

Manock: English, mostly.

Miles: Mostly English.

Manock: Some German.

Miles: Some German, okay.

Manock: Because Grandpa Kent, my Grandfather Kent, married a Walter and her family was English but they were raised in Germany.

Miles: Your father—what was his occupation?

Manock: My father was a farmer to begin with and then he became a farm manager of an estate. He was also a Secretary-Treasurer in the county for the Federal Land Bank. Does that make sense?

Miles: Yes, it does! You have some brothers and sisters?

Manock: I'm the oldest of four; I had two sisters and one brother.

Miles: Can you tell me your sisters' names, starting with the...

Manock: Sarah Elizabeth was the one next to me.

Miles: When was she born; do you know the year?

Manock: See if I was 17, hers was around 15. I'm not just sure exactly but it was December so you see it made her almost three years younger than me.

Miles: She was three years younger, so it would be around 1920.

Manock: No, she was married, she was born in the teens someplace.

Miles: Well, you were born in 1917.

Manock: Yes. So hers could have been 19.

Miles: 1919.

Manock: See I was born in March and she was born in December.

Miles: What about Ruth then, is that your next sister?

Manock: Yes, Ruth Peverly. Now let's see. She'd be born in the early 20's.

Miles: Okay. Then did you have any other siblings?

Manock: I have a brother.

Miles: And his name?

Manock: Robert Kent.

Miles: Robert Kent Walker. When was he born, do you know?

Manock: No. I don't remember the year.

Miles: You don't remember how much younger he was than you?

Manock: I should remember the year but I can look it up. Do you want me to get...?

Miles: Well, that's ok. We can find that later. Where did you go to high school?

Manock: I went to high school at Clinton Community High School.

Miles: Do you remember the year you graduated?

Manock: 1935.

Miles: Did you go to college?

Manock: I went to Millikin University two years.

Miles: Two years. What was your major?

Manock: Home Ec. [Home Economics]

Miles: Home Ec?

Manock: Well, it wasn't to begin with. They put me in English and History to begin with; then I changed to Home Ec, but then I didn't go back to school after. So I didn't get much Home Ec (laughs).

Miles: You were married?

Manock: Yes. To John Manock.

Miles: Did he have a middle name?

Manock: Russell, John Russell Manock. Let's see, it was February 1944.

Miles: What was his occupation?

Manock: Farms, farmer.

Miles: Farmer. Did you have any children?

Manock: One.

- Miles: One child and...
- Manock: Girl.
- Miles: A girl...
- Manock: Carol Ruth Manock
- Miles: When was she born?
- Manock: Oh dear, I should remember shouldn't I? Well let's see. She just turned 60.
- Miles: Ok, so...
- Manock: Does that pan out?
- Miles: Just turned 60. What type of farm operation did you have?
- Manock: John had pigs and milk cows. Corn and hay. Soybeans later (laughs).
- Miles: Did he own his own farm?
- Manock: He did not own a farm.
- Miles: He did not, so was he a tenant farmer?
- Manock: He was a tenant farmer most of his life. Well, he started out on his father's farm but he was still a tenant because a neighbor bought the farm, you see. The Manocks didn't own it when John was farming.
- Miles: We can get into that later. What about hobbies for you?
- Manock: Me? I would say music. Let's see, piano and choir. And I liked to crochet (laughs)...needlework you might say, needlework.
- Miles: Your employment history? What jobs did you have before you were married?
- Manock: I was a secretary for my dad for four years in the farm management office. When I decided to go with my sister to Champaign I worked as a typist and telephone answering person for Bailey & Himes;<sup>1</sup> he was an athletic equipment company.
- Miles: Did you work someplace else?
- Manock: I worked for the University of Illinois for several months but that didn't hardly add up.
- Miles: Oh, okay (laughs).
- Manock: It would amount to several weeks I think—a month and a half or something like that—and then I got this job. I typed at a desk in front of the boss and when I got done all the typing he wanted done, he says, "You need a job?" (laughs). So I went to typing and answering the phone. So I worked for him, oh, around three years. On Green Street, a block off the campus.
- Miles: In Urbana?

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<sup>1</sup> Shelby Himes was Caroline's boss.

Manock: No. I was still in Champaign.

Miles: We have finished the biographical. Now I want to go into your childhood a little bit.

Manock: My childhood?

Miles: Just a brief, brief history of your childhood.

Manock: A country school in Harp Township [Barngrover School], eight grades.

Miles: Eight grades. Was that all in one room?

Manock: One room school (said together with interviewer). They moved the one room school five or six miles north of here, so I guess you can still see it but I haven't been up there to see it.

Miles: You lived in the country during your early years.

Manock: Eight grades in the country school and then the house burned down so we went to town and I went to high school.

Miles: And where, in Clinton?

Manock: Four years at Clinton.

Miles: Did you belong to any organizations in high school?

Manock: Harmonica Band, and I think I was in Physical Ed Club—I was trying to remember what it was called. I don't remember what it was called but it was connection with Physical Ed.

Miles: Did you have a religious affiliation at that time?

Manock: Religious? Yes, I joined the Presbyterian Church at ten years old.

Miles: Have you continued with the Presbyterian Church?

Manock: Yes. I'm still a member of the Presbyterian Church in Clinton. 'Course I moved my letter to Elmwood when we lived up there, but most of the time spent at Clinton.

Miles: What about social or educational organizations?

Manock: Oh, you mean like the YMCA?

Miles: YMCA. What about....?

Manock: We lived across the street; I spent some time over there.

Miles: Oh, good.

Manock: Went swimming; they had a pool. And Homemakers' Extension. [Home Cooperative Extension]

Miles: Homemakers Extension. We'll get into that a little bit again I think, because that was probably pretty important for you, wasn't it?

Manock: I started taking my Mother to unit meetings as soon as my Dad would let me drive the car. Then I stayed in that organization; I became a member as her daughter

and stayed in that organization most of the time including my residency in Peoria County. So I have been with that organization almost every year since then.

Miles: You're still in it?

Manock: Yes. This is Harp Township and I'm in Harp Unit.

Miles: Did you have any aspirations after you graduated from high school that you wanted to do but weren't allowed to do?

Manock: I really don't remember. I had a scholarship for a teacher but I didn't care much about teaching and the folks sent me to Millikin, so I got a general education those two years, wasn't specific. You know, I did English and all those general subjects.

Miles: Did being a female have anything to do with why they sent you for the general education or was that...?

Manock: I don't know. It probably did, because my mother sent me to Millikin, but they sent my brother to University of Illinois.<sup>2</sup>

Miles: Is that where you wanted to go?

Manock: No. I wasn't sure about that. (Laughs)

Miles: Then when you met your husband, can you tell me about how you met him?

Manock: I first saw him at the Peoria Stockyards when I took my brother and my sister to the lamb show. Did not know his name, but I did see him because he had a 4H club with lambs at the lamb show. Then I was in Rural Youth, and the Rural Youth went to Peoria County on one of their trips. They would go to other counties for supper and we would have other counties to this county for supper and dance afterwards. And one of those meetings—I don't remember whether it was in Peoria County or not, but it was north of here—I met John. Then of course I had seen him in these 4H things. After we were married he came across a pretty good sized picture. “**Where** did you get this?” I said, “I took it. Why?” Well he was in it, but what I took it for was my brother's lamb. My brother and sister had lambs and I had taken them. And behind the lambs and my brother and sister was his 4H Club in Peoria County.

Miles: So he thought you were after him then, huh?

Manock: I don't know what he thought. (Both laughing)

Miles: Can you tell me a little bit about his family?

Manock: John's family?

Miles: Yes.

Manock: He was next to the youngest of, let's see, seven I think it was. They lived on a farm south of Elmwood. The family owned it, but these hard times came along and they lost the farm to the insurance company.

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<sup>2</sup> Caroline wanted to go into horticulture, but she wasn't allowed to due to several variables. Millikin didn't have the program. Women weren't in the program at U of I. So she did gardening!

- Miles: Was that during the market crash of 1929?
- Manock: '29 I think it was. His father died so I never got to meet him. But the family stayed on the farm and the boys farmed it.
- Miles: Do you know how his father died?
- Manock: I'm not sure. I'm not sure and they never talked about it.
- Miles: They never talked about it.
- Manock: They never talked about it.
- Miles: But do you think it was a result of the market crash and losing the farm?
- Manock: I think that had a lot to do with it, yes, because he lost his farm and that was what he always did, was farm. That happened before I met John, I think, because I never did meet him. But the family was still living on that farm when I met John, and John and his brother were farming it.
- Miles: Where did you live after you got married?
- Manock: We lived on a farm in Graham Chapel neighborhood owned by a fellow by the name of Biederbeck. Graham Chapel neighborhood.
- Miles: Graham Chapel—now where was that?
- Manock: Graham Chapel? You take 116 out of Peoria going west and you get to a crossroad that says Graham Chapel Road. You're not to Farmington quite. You're past Trivola and you're not to Farmington and there's this crossroad that says Graham Chapel Road; you go up, you go north on that road and that goes by the farm, not the farmhouse, but the farm that John farmed.
- Miles: How large was that farm?
- Manock: Oh, I'd say between eighty and ninety acres.
- Miles: So it was rather a small farm then.
- Manock: Yes. And the house was old, but it was nice. He farmed anything else in the neighborhood that was available.
- Miles: He rented out farms or how did he do that?
- Manock: Yes, he rented farms. If they were available to farm, he rented them. I'm not sure but I think he farmed his home farm maybe a couple years. Then after we were married he rented the farm that he was living on, and he rented the farm down the road, and other land that I'm not sure about. It was in the neighborhood. When we moved from there, he rented a farm that was supposed to be four hundred acres with two hundred tillable.
- Miles: Where was that located?
- Manock: Laura, Illinois. It was still in Peoria County.
- Miles: So you moved up there then.
- Manock: Yes. We moved up there. We lived up there at least three years.

- Miles: How long did you live at the first place?
- Manock: I'd say thirteen, fourteen, somewhere around there.
- Miles: Oh, quite a number of years then.
- Manock: Yes. Over ten.
- Miles: When you were first married, what kinds of things happened that you weren't expecting to happen? Or did you feel pretty prepared to be a farm wife?
- Manock: Well, I had never taken care of baby chicks before, and I had never dressed a chicken because my Mother always did that. So when the little chickens that I'd taken care of were ready to be dressed—we were going to dress them and take them to the locker plant, what wouldn't go in our freezer—he went and got Mom Manock. She knew....
- Miles: Was that your mother-in-law?
- Manock: Yes. My mother-in-law. She knew what to do. Same thing happened when it came to canning. My mother and my sister had always done the canning at home. They always sent me to do something else. Mostly, the reason was because I worked in the office and so I didn't have time to can. But my sister and my mother did the canning at home, so I had no experience with canning amount to anything. John said, "That's ok, I'll go get Mom." So she came out and helped me can and she taught me how to can tomatoes, for instance. I think the first thing we canned, though, was beef.
- Miles: Well, that would be hard to start, wouldn't it?
- Manock: Yes. And I've still got a pressure cooker she used to cook that beef.
- Miles: (Laughs)
- Manock: She knew how!
- Miles: She knew how. Did she think that you were ready to be a farm wife, or did...?
- Manock: I don't know what she thought but she was ready to help.
- Miles: She was helpful then to you.
- Manock: She had jars, and she brought the jars and the lids and the pressure cooker. She took some back to town with her and put the rest on the shelf and it was really good eating.
- Miles: I'll bet!
- Manock: Nice tender pieces of beef. (Laughs)
- Miles: What other duties did you have there on that farm?
- Manock: On the farm?
- Miles: Were you mainly expected to do housework or...?
- Manock: Well, I had the housework of course. John always started a fire in the cook stove; I had to be sure it didn't go up the chimney. (Laughs). If I didn't get up right



away, he'd leave all the drafts open and that chimney would be hot, you know. So I found out that I had to get up and shut the drafts down so that it wouldn't get too hot.

Miles: Were you used to getting up early?

Manock: I was used to getting up at a pretty good time but I wasn't used to having to look at the stove. (Laughs) Because in town where I lived we had steam heat from the city's steam heat. Dad put a thermostat on that so nobody had to hardly look at it unless the radiator came out cold and then he knew what to do.

Miles: You weren't near your family then, were you, when you first got married?

Manock: No, huh uhh. It was ninety some miles, I think. I got in the car and went to Peoria County with John because my folks lived here in Clinton.

Miles: Your parents lived here, still.

Manock: Not when I got married. We had gone to town before that. They owned a big house in Clinton and, sorry to say, it was torn down a couple years ago.

Miles: Well, that's always bad.

Manock: I could show you the vacant lot but I can't show you the house.

Miles: Can you remember any embarrassing incidents that happened to you as far as being a farm wife?

Manock: Embarrassing. Well, there probably were some. (Both laugh). I found I had a good background for it because I lived on a farm up until after eighth grade and my grandmother and grandfather lived here.

Miles: Was that your Walker grandparents?

Manock: Walker grandparents, yes.

Miles: So you had spent a lot of time on the farm then.

Manock: Yes. My Dad was always interested in this farm and he helped farm it, but he found out that a hundred sixty acres would not support two families. That's one reason he went to work for the Federal Land Bank. That gave him a job with a steady income. He traveled all over the county and that's where I learned to drive; I was driving for him when he traveled the county.

Miles: How old were you?

Manock: When I was in high school.

Miles: How old were you when you started driving?

Manock: Oh, gee, I don't know. Must have been eighth grade.

Miles: Eighth grade. So you would have been about....

Manock: I know I was so young. Thirteen?

Miles: Did you get a drivers license right away or did you drive without one?

Manock: No they didn't... I didn't have to get driver's license until I was eighteen I don't think.

Miles: So you drove without a license then?

Manock: I don't remember getting license. Dad taught all us kids that way. We went with him in the summer afternoons. He wouldn't take us all at once; took one or two and let us drive all over the county roads, where they weren't as nice as they are now.

Miles: (Laughs) Were they pretty rough?

Manock: Most of them were pretty rough. There were some that were especially so, because they were muddy in the rainy seasons.

Miles: They didn't have good gravel?

Manock: They didn't have any of the gravel on them. He knew which ones were good and when they were good. (Laughs).

Miles: It was pretty common then for farm children not to have to have license?

Manock: I think so. I don't think we had to have a license. I don't remember getting a license until I was in the middle of high school.

Miles: Did you ever hear of Driver's Ed while you were in high school?

Manock: No I don't think we had Driver Ed in high school. Buy my younger brother—I'm sure he had Driver Ed, my brother did. I'm sure by the time he was in high school I believe they had Driver Ed. But I don't remember. I know I didn't take Driver Ed in high school. It was my **Dad** that was the educator! (Laughs)

Miles: The educator, right! How did you dress when you were younger?

Manock: Skirts.

Miles: Skirts.

Manock: No pants.

Miles: Nope?

Manock: Um, uhh. Mom didn't like pants. We had to wear skirts.

Miles: Were kids allowed to wear pants at school?

Manock: I don't remember of anybody saying anything **against** wearing pants but most girls wore dresses. Almost all of them wore dresses.

Miles: Did you start wearing pants at all?

Manock: Not until after I was married. I was in gathering eggs on one side of the fence and my husband was on the other side of the fence trying to get the cattle to do something. He said "Would you come over here and help me?" I had a skirt and an apron on and I set down my egg bucket next to the gate on the outside, and went through the gate and went into the feed lot with him, and the wind caught my apron and my skirt and the cattle went through three fences.

Miles: (Laughs)

Manock: So, you know what that meant. I got on my pants and helped him fix fence all the next day. (Chuckles)

Miles: So you started wearing pants then.

Manock: I started wearing pants then. It wasn't worth it wearing a skirt in the feed lot.

Miles: But John was the only one around, apparently. Besides the cattle...

Manock: Yes. Once in a while we had a neighbor.

Miles: But I mean when you got caught with your...

Manock: No. It was just John and I and those cattle. That wind caught my skirt and away they went, through two fences and down the hill and across the road and almost to the Spoon River.

Miles: Oh! (Both Laugh) So you had a lot of fun with that?

Manock: I guess you'd call it fun. He got on the horse and went and rounded them up and brought them back and I went and got my pants on and helped him after that.

Miles: That was the end of the dresses on the farm, huh, was it?

Manock: No more dresses, not on the farm. To church, yes.

Miles: Well, sure. (Both laugh). What would you say your main role on the farm was, as a farm wife?

Manock: I supposed it would be food cooking. You know, for dinners and I had to fix lunch for the hay men when they worked on our farm, and be available, I guess, for whatever John needed.

Miles: Did you take part in the farming operation?

Manock: I didn't run the tractor much. The most I run tractor was, he would take it way out on the other side of the farm and I would have to drive it back.

Miles: You would have to walk back to get it.

Manock: If I didn't, I remember driving the tractor back once or twice because he had something else to bring. But not very often. I didn't drive the tractor.

Miles: What about the truck?

Manock: Oh, yeah, I drove the truck quite a little. We had a medium size truck with sideboards, and well, I've got the rack out here. Don't have the truck anymore but I've got the rack. Yes, I remember driving that. I was thinking about when we lived in Peoria County, I didn't drive the truck much. And I didn't drive the tractor much.

Miles: But you did more here when you moved to the farm here.

Manock: Did more here.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Mrs. Manock often drove the tractor with the disc and the harrow.

Miles: How was farming different here than...?

Manock: It wasn't up and down hills.

Miles: More flat country?

Manock: Yeah, this is flat. Peoria County's got hills. See, we farmed a piece down by Farmington, eighty acres down by Farmington. One time he had the combine down there combining beans; I was supposed to bring a truck down there for him to haul the beans with. He borrowed one from Roffeys and so I drove it down there; I got down there and he was standing on the combine a-waving his hands, so I went to where he was. He told me "I broke something. You take it into Farmington". So I had to drive the truck into Farmington and ask them if they could get that part. But my problem was, where do I park this truck while I go see the folks for the part. So I drove around and drove around and finally found a place where I could park and got the piece and went back to the field. So I remember driving the trucks like that. I never drove it with livestock in it; he did that.

Miles: How did World War II affect you and the farming?

Manock: John didn't go.

Miles: He didn't go?

Manock: That's why we were farming.

Miles: Because you were farming, he didn't have to go?

Manock: No. That wasn't the reason. His health was the reason. He didn't pass the physical and so he never quite farming. It kind of shook him up, I'm sure, because he was all ready to go. I remember him in the line of the fellows that were getting the exam. Pretty soon Dr. Morton came and pulled him out of line.

Miles: Didn't they exempt some farmers back then from the service because they needed the extra food?

Manock: The ones that I knew that passed the exams went on into service. But John didn't pass the physical so he stayed home and farmed. I remember, he must have been in that line just after we were married because I don't remember going up there before we were married and seeing him going through that line. (Chuckles) He had to go to Princeville, I think it was.

Miles: Were you involved with 4-H during that time?

Manock: Well, I suppose you'd say I was, but John was definitely; he was a leader of a club. I was not a leader of a girls, I think, until Carol Ruth was old enough to be in a club. I don't remember doing much as far as club work was concerned. But then when Carol Ruth was old enough I got involved down here at Hill School. [Mrs. Manock was in 4-H herself in Hill School Club.]

Miles: What is the purpose of 4-H mainly?

Manock: Purpose?

Miles: Um hm.

Manock: Well, it's for the youngsters. They have to be eight years old and some of them come along until they're almost twenty. I just don't know what the rules are right now.

Miles: What kinds of activity did they do?

Manock: Well, in Home Ec Club they had recipes from the University of Illinois in a book that they could cook; they gave demonstrations on cooking. In the sewing club they sewed—like I made a very simple dress for my first dress—and we had to show them at the 4-H fair. We had to **wear** them at the 4-H fair. Carol Ruth started out with a skirt, I think; I think I started out with a skirt too. No, I didn't. I started out with a dress. It had a full skirt and no set-in sleeves and a facing on the neck. A lady way over here by the railroad was the leader. She never married, she didn't have any kids but she led 4-H.

Miles: So it was more of an educational type thing.

Manock: Yes, it definitely was! And then, you see, we had cooking projects. We had canning projects. We had sewing projects. You never had a chance to go to a 4-H fair?

Miles: Yes I've been to 4-H fairs.

Manock: Well then you know what they come up with, a lot of things. (Laughs)

Miles: Did you have any things like cattle for the girls or did just the boys show cattle?

Manock: I did not show cattle but I'm thinking my sister did. No, she showed sheep, I think. And my brother showed sheep. It was Peoria County where I watched the girls and boys, show cattle. Then when we moved down here I was involved with 4-H enough that I went to the 4-H shows and some of the kids I went to school with were showing cattle.

Miles: You didn't particularly want to?

Manock: Well, we didn't have any place for them you might say. When I was in 4-H, at that age I was in town.

Miles: Oh, that's right, you were.

Manock: Yes. But the kids, my brother and sister, had sheep out here. And so I said something about seeing John at the sheep show in Peoria? Well, Dad had a pickup and he put a rack on it and he said, "I can't go, but **you** can take the kids to Peoria Stockyards to show their sheep". So that morning, real early, he helped us. He had the truck all ready and he helped them get their sheep in the truck and I drove them to Peoria Stockyards. That's as close to showing a sheep as I got. That's when I took picture of them, of the fellow from McLean County that come out champion, and John's club was in the background. I didn't know about it, you see, until he found that picture and said "Where did you get this picture?" (Laughs) (Pause in answer.) So my 4-H experience really lasted from, you might say, before I was ten until my daughter was out of 4-H, because she was in 4-H from time she was old enough until she was too old, you might say—until she went to college.

- Miles: So it was an important part of your life then?
- Manock: 4-H? Oh, **of course**. And then you see the Home Ec'ers, they lunched the shows. We have a place out north of Clinton at the 4-H fairgrounds and the Homemakers kept the lunch part of it going.
- Miles: That was part of the Home Extension Service?
- Manock: Yes.
- Miles: How did the Home Extension Service get started, do you know?
- Manock: I think it was started through the University of Illinois, because it's still connected with University of Illinois, you see—University of Illinois Extension.
- Miles: Is it connected then all with, like the Morrill Act and the Hatch Act? The Morrill Act started the, or was a part of the land grant colleges. That's when the land grant colleges began.
- Manock: Definitely the Ag Department and the Home Ec Department, some of those departments are pretty well.....
- Miles: Pretty related?
- Manock: Related, yes. Worked together. Let's see, when I first went over there, I typed letters for anything they'd bring me. I typed for students too. I wasn't at the Extension Office very long, or you might say the Ag Department at the University very long. My sister was. She stayed with that Department while she was in Urbana, you might say. We had a room over in Urbana together and she worked for the University. I started to work for the University but then I got this other job over on Green Street; it didn't have anything to do with the University. One reason I got it was because I typed student's papers. One fellow particularly, he'd bring them to the folks at the Business College and one time I walked in the Business College for something and one of these girls said, "I can't read this, can you?" and I said "Sure, I've been typing his papers." I think I helped him graduate because nobody at the school, at the Business School could read his writing but me! So (laughing) I typed his papers.
- Miles: So you had a really particular talent there.
- Manock: I did, yes. I think I helped him graduate. So I did a lot of typing for students that came to the college, to get their papers typed. One of them was a graduate student and he had figures and figures and figures and figures. I typed his papers too but, boy, his were hard because you'd want to get them accurate, you know; he was working on his masters. So that was quite an experience.
- Miles: I'm sure.
- Manock: And then along with that, I was really the typist for Shelby Hines. He had a personal secretary, you might say. She did more personal things for him than I did. I did reports. Whenever he wanted some bid sheets, bids you know, for athletic equipment to go to high school or something, and I had to type it
- Miles: Back to the farming, when you were working with John, who kept the books?

Manock: Guess it was me. I've been keeping books for years.

Miles: Are you still keeping books?

Manock: Yeah, that drawer over there has got farm books in it.

Miles: How did you learn to do that?

Manock: How'd I learn? Well, part of it was because I'd kept books for Dad in the office. We had books—we had accounts on every farm that he managed. I had to keep each one up-to-date. So that's where my experience came from, was his office.

Miles: Did you and John make decisions together then, or did your input from keeping the books, did that have an effect on.....

Manock: I don't think so. No, I think he made most of the agriculture decisions, you might say, I think. Like he decided that that cow wasn't doing well and he'd sell it; he'd never ask me about it. He sold it! (Laughs) Things like that.

Miles: You more or less went along with what he wanted to do?

Manock: Yes, went along with him because he was pretty definite about it. When he decided to do something he was pretty definite about it. I'm trying to think: on the Biederbeck place, he only had so many cows. He had milk cows and we'd take them down the road, down the hill to pasture in the summer. They knew where to go, but somebody had to open the gate for them. I think most of the time he opened the gate, but lots of times I'd go ahead of them and open the gate. But usually we'd leave it open at night when we took them back to the house. I remember walking down the hill, or riding down there, (laughs) and opening that gate. You know where Viola lived?

Miles: Yes.

Manock: And you know where we lived?

Miles: Um-hm.

Manock: So you see, it was east, then south and then down the hill. At the bottom of the hill there was that gate. Well if you didn't stop at that gate, you went across the creek up another hill and south and you were in Trivoli. (Both laugh)

Miles: So your cows never made it to Trivoli?

Manock: No, not as long as I was opening and shutting the gate! (Both laugh)

Miles: How do you feel farming has changed over the years?

Manock: Farming has changed? Well, nobody uses any horses anymore.

Miles: You used horses when you first started out?

Manock: Well, John planted corn with horses. And Dad did too. I remember Dad had this new corn planter, and I wanted to sit on the planter behind the horses, you know. He said I was too heavy, that would be hard on them. So he had to move back enough so I could sit just in front of him so I wasn't right behind the horses. John had the same kind of planter when we were first married. It was, well, horse drawn, I'd say.

- Miles: Are you amazed at the acreage now that they get, or the amount of corn or soybeans, compared to.....
- Manock: It's quite amazing. I saw a new planter the other day that just went on and on and on. I didn't stop to count the [seed] boxes but there must have been twelve at least, maybe more. You've got to fill those boxes before you start out, you see. Well John had, I was going to say, he had started out with a four row planter, then he had a six row, and he got one of those longer ones before he quite farming but I don't remember how many boxes there were. I was going to say twelve, but I'm not sure.
- Miles: Do you feel you could make a living, as good a living now as you did back then on the same amount of land?
- Manock: No. I think you need more land.
- Miles: Are there many farms left like yours?
- Manock: Most of them farm more.
- Miles: How about your farm now. What happens here? You're still living on your farm.
- Manock: Yes. My tenant lives up by Wapella and he farms the farm he lives on, and he farms this farm, and he has additional land rented. I don't know just exactly where he has all of it rented but he's rented other farms so he'd have more acreage.
- Miles: Now, you said that John started out as a tenant farmer here.
- Manock: Oh yes.
- Miles: Do you own the farm now?
- Manock: Um- hm. I own the whole hundred sixty now.
- Miles: Hundred and sixty acres.
- Manock: Yes, I inherited ninety and my brother inherited the rest of the hundred and sixty. He kept it; he had a tenant on it, and we let him keep on with it. In fact, he's still farming it. (Short pause) Then Robert decided he wanted to do something else, so he went to Jacksonville as a farm advisor—something like that. He wound up by Rockford.
- Miles: What happened to the farm then?
- Manock: John and I had moved on in the meantime.
- Miles: Then did you buy your brother out?
- Manock: Yes, I bought seventy acres that he inherited. Dad left him the seventy acres and left me the rest of it. And Dad also left me a third interest in the Oregon land, which he had homesteaded.
- Miles: The Oregon land?
- Manock: Yes. It was originally a hundred sixty but he bought more land, and my niece lives there now.



- Miles: But you still have an interest in that too, then?
- Manock: Third interest. She [the niece] niece makes most of the decisions.<sup>4</sup>
- Miles: I was going to say, tell me how that works.
- Manock: My sister Sarah owned a third which my niece inherited. And she bought out my sister Ruth which gave her two-thirds.<sup>5</sup>
- Miles: She farms it by herself then?
- Manock: She ranches it herself. She doesn't do a lot of the farming except to plant rye, but she has horses. She also has cattle and she oversees the irrigation because they have to irrigate for hay. Almost any crop that they farm out there, raise out there, they have to irrigate at some point. She has got the irrigation problem pretty well solved and got a good pump set last year. The water table went down below the pump's pipe. No water, what do you do then? Well, you haul it.
- Miles: You haul it!
- Manock: I don't know where she's hauling from, but she's been hauling water because that water table went down. That show's how dry it is out there.
- Miles: Did you ever have to haul water here?
- Manock: No.
- Miles: You've always had plenty of water. What about irrigation? Did you have to irrigate at all?
- Manock: We haven't irrigated here. She irrigates all the time, her hay and cattle.
- Miles: Do you remember when the Dust Bowl was out west? Did you ever have anything like that here that affected farming a lot?
- Manock: Well, all I remember is that it was awfully dry that year and we did get dust storms, but nothing like they talked about in Kansas and Nebraska. We had chinch bugs.
- Miles: Chinch bugs—what are those?
- Manock: (Laughs). Little bitty insects that like to eat corn.
- Miles: Did they destroy your corn crop?
- Manock: They could—if there were enough of them.
- Miles: How did you deal with them?
- Manock: I don't know. They spray sometimes. Sometimes it's by airplane, sometimes it's not. Depends on how high the corn is. They have air spray. We have Thorp

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<sup>4</sup> Her father also left her a third interest in land which he had homesteaded. It's a ranch near Burns, Oregon.

<sup>5</sup> Caroline Manock's daughter, Carol Manock Tullis, revised this passage for her mother. The original passage read "Her mother owns two thirds 'cause she bought out the rest of the family. Then she died and she left her part of the ranch to her second daughter; after college, she decided she wanted to go to the ranch so she has lived there quite a while."

Seed Company up the road and they do spray with an airplane when the bugs get too thick.

Miles: Did they spray on your farm then?

Manock: Sometimes we'd get a little wind of it, but I only remember this farm being sprayed once or maybe twice. But Thorp's, they've got a big area and so they have sprayed quite a little bit. I stay inside. (laughs).

Miles: I think I would too! (both laugh)

Manock: They raise seed corn—Thorp's do.

Miles: Tell me something else interesting about farming that most people wouldn't know.

Manock: Gee, I don't know. (pause) I just don't know. Probably something that I haven't thought about. (pause)

Miles: Did Carol Ruth have city cousins that came out to visit at all?

Manock: Did she what?

Miles: Did she have any city cousins that came out to visit? Or were most of her cousins from farms also?

Manock: Yes. See my younger sister married a farmer. My older sister—I mean the one next to me that died—she worked for State Farm; she married a fellow that she met in the Navy, when she was in the Navy. She was in the Navy before she worked for....well now let's see. Wait a minute. It was the other way around. She worked at State Farm and then she came home one Saturday and asked the folks what they thought about her joining the Navy. She had already done it. (laughter) So she went with the Navy and she met this man from Oklahoma and Arkansas. He turned out to be a real nice guy. She married him but they stayed in California; they didn't move back to the Midwest. He didn't move back to Texas or Oklahoma, either one. They stayed in California. She stayed in the Navy for a while and then they had four kids.

Miles: Back here on the farm, you still have some of your buildings?

Manock: The barn is original.

Miles: The barn is an original building. When do you think this was? You said it was before 1900 that this farm was started by your family?

Manock: Oh yes. I don't know when the barn was built but it's...

Miles: Does 1865 sound familiar to you?

Manock: That's Civil War days. Well, I don't know. My Great-Grandfather Walker started out on this farm and he had an interest in Mississippi. (pauses) I'm trying to remember. Well, you see, the Illinois Central [Railroad] goes from Rockford, Illinois—maybe farther North than that, but Rockford, Illinois—clear down through the middle of Illinois to Cairo, Illinois, and then it goes on down to Kentucky and Tennessee and winds up on the Gulf. Some of the wood in this barn was shipped from Mississippi, because my grandfather had—who was it? It

was a relative who lived in Mississippi and run a saw mill so they shipped wood pieces up here by Illinois Central to put in this barn. This wood was for the shingles.

Miles: Do you know when that railroad was constructed for that rail line?

Manock: Oh, it was a way back. I don't know when. I have no idea.

Miles: The reason I mentioned 1865, your daughter told me that she thought that this farm had been in the family since then.<sup>6</sup>

Manock: I'm inclined to think so too. But then some of them went to Mississippi, run a saw mill down there, but I don't know what year that was. They went down by railroad because the railroad went down through Illinois, and Kentucky, and Tennessee and wound up down there close to where they settled. Mobile, I was thinking Mobile, Alabama but maybe I'm wrong. If you really want to know I probably could look that up.

Miles: We can do that later.

Manock: (Laughs) Now is this collecting this for Illinois history or what?

Miles: Yes. Yes it is. Do you have any other interesting things that you think other people would be interested in?

Manock: I don't know, but I was thinking about Grandfather Kent. He ran a lumber yard. A lot of lumber was sawed down there, in Mississippi I think, and shipped up here to the lumber yard.

Miles: To be used on farms?

Manock: To the lumber yard, not to the farmer particularly, but to the lumberyard and he sold it. It's still Kent Lumber Company.

Miles: Oh, that's interesting. That was a long time.

Manock: That's where he got a lot of lumber, was from Mississippi. As I remember them talking about it, some of it was shipped in water.

Miles: Yes. I think so, at the time.

Manock: (Laughs)

Miles: I think we are about finished with this unless you have some other things that you would like to add about the farm itself or about farming.

Manock: Well, there is one thing that I haven't mentioned that I remember from childhood, and that is, we had walnut trees out here north of the house. At one time they had quite a few walnuts. They got cut down and sold I think. It was before I ever moved here but when I was in grade school we had walnut trees north of the house.

Miles: Did you buy many groceries or did you raise most of your food?

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<sup>6</sup> The barn at our farm was built in 1865. It's now a Centennial Farm designation as of 1972. The beams are hand-hewn oak from the Salt Creek Valley area. It was placed on boulders and later the foundation was improved to concrete. The wood shipped in from Mississippi was for the shingles.

Manock: When we first moved here—no, even before that—Dad had a garden out here and us kids helped him with the garden. We had quite a lot of fresh garden stuff: radishes, carrots, turnips, peas. Peas didn't go over very good. (Laughs) We liked them to eat. but to take care of them. Cabbage—I remember dusting the cabbage so the cabbage worms wouldn't eat it. My Dad's most unusual project was sheep, the Karakul sheep.

Miles: How do you spell that?

Manock: Karakul. They are black sheep.

Miles: He raised those here?

Manock: Um, huh.

Miles: On the farm?

Manock: Yes. He had a pasture where he put them sometimes. He had them in the other pasture sometimes, but most of them were here.

Miles: You are still living here on the farm that your grandparents, actually your great grandfather started.

Manock: Um, huh. Let's see. It was Robert and Charles and Carl and me. (Laughs)

Miles: How long do you think you will be here then?

Manock: Well, I'm past ninety, so your guess is as good as mine.

Miles: You're still enjoying it.

Manock: Oh, yes.

Miles: Well, thank you so much, Caroline.

Manock: Now, what are you going to do with all this information?

Miles: This will become a permanent record of Illinois agricultural history. The audio portion will go directly to the Museum's website. It will also be transcribed and sent to you for corrections, then the transcription will also go to the website, and you will receive a copy which your succeeding generations can enjoy.

(End of Interview)