Rodgers, Richard

Interview by
Miss Betty Turnell

for the
Decatur Public Library

Mr. Richard Rodgers Interview

February 8, 1984

This is a recording of the experiences and reminiscences of Mr. Richard Rodgers. The narrator is Mr. Rodgers, and the interviewer is Betty Turnell. This recording is being made at the request of the Decatur Public Library in the Board Room of the Library on February 8, 1984.

Q. Well, Mr. Rodgers, I believe you have lived in Decatur a long time. Can you tell us something about your early life?

A. I spent most of my life and was reared in Decatur. We came to Decatur when I was a little fellow, possibly about two years of age. At that time we were living out on West Wood Street. The reason I mentioned West Wood Street is that the town was pretty much regimented by the path of the street cars. For a number of years we lived in that area, and then we moved out on North Edwards Street. Again, this was associated with the street car line. From there we went to Pugh School, which is no longer standing, and also then to Roosevelt Junior High School, and from there to Stephen Decatur High School, and from there to Millikin University. Now I speak of the street car era. You see, back in the period of World War I, automobiles would not be the main mode of transportation. You depended basically on going on foot or using public transportation. There were very few families that had an automobile at that time. So the town was pretty much centered around the down town area. From there it branched out into the surrounding area, which had a rather small circumference.

Going to Pugh School, you never thought of having a bus to take you to school. You always walked. Many things bring back memories of walking to school. At the intersection of Grand Avenue, there was a lively operation: a grocery store, a meat market, a barber shop, a shoe repair shop. In other words, it was a little shopping area all in itself. One of the things that comes to my mind was a cigar factory. Now that is a thing of the past. We see very little of that done today. The cigar factory possibly only had four or five employees. They would hand-roll these cigars. That was quite a lot of fun for little boys - and girls too - to stop and watch the men roll the tobacco into cigars.

On the way to Pugh School, many times it would be deep snow, icy, and of course in the spring and summer there would be flowers and dandelions, much like we have today.

The thing that is quite different is that Grand Avenue was not paved at that time. Leafland Street was not paved. Packard Street was the street that was paved. From there you had to go quite a distance to find any pavement. So one of the things that would be interesting for youngsters to do on the way to school would be to pick up a clod of dirt and throw it at someone. One time after the street had been scraped and plowed, some child threw a clod and hit me in the eye. I still have the remains of a dirt streak as an effect in my eye.

Well, thinking of school days at Pugh School, many of the mothers of families would bake bread. To buy bread was a novelty.

For bakers to promote their product, they many times would bring a truck. They would have little loaves of bread about the size of a dinner roll we would serve today. They would be wrapped in waxed paper. The men would throw out these little loaves of bread to advertise their product. That was a real thrill to be able to pick up one of these little loaves of bread and take it home to show it to mother. Of course, that was the intent of the baker - to introduce his bread to the home.

Well, another thing that would take place going to or from school was many times accumulating an extra penny or sometimes the whole sum of a nickel. You might stop at one of the stores on the way home and buy a penny's worth of candy. A real thrill would be to spend a whole nickel for a candy bar. As a matter of fact, during World War I or II and particularly during depression days, which we'll talk about later a stick of gum would go a long ways. You would possibly tear the gum in half in order to make the stick go a little farther. Pennies were not the easiest thing to come by in those early days.

Talking about the grocery stores going to and from school, I would like to tell a little more about the grocery store at the corner of Grand Avenue and Edwards Street. Mother would many times send me to the grocery store to get a soup bone. It's hard to believe today, but in earlier days, when I was a child, the butcher would give a bone to the family at no charge. Mother would make soup of that bone. You were charged only for the meat - you didn't pay for the bone. She

would send me down possibly to get some saurkraut. The grocer would have a barrel of kraut. He would use a little paper bucket. For a dime he would fill this bucket with sauerkraut. Another thing he had in barrels was pickles. Cookies were not packaged. They were in boxes. You would select your cookies, and the grocer would put them in a sack. Milk - much of it - was sold in bulk form. You would take your bucket to the store, and the grocer would fill it - a quart or for a great big bucket a gallon. Crackers would be in a great container. When the crackers first came to the grocerman, they were very nice and fresh, but after they would be on the shelf, particularly in the rainy season, the crackers would be soft and dough-y.

Oh, you could reminisce many things about the grocery stores and the food we could get when we were little people back in the time of World War I.

Now, thinking of going to Pugh School, it's hard to believe today that the telephone wasn't as common as it is today in our homes and places of business. For a communication from the Pugh School principal down to the office, one of the boys or girls from the school room would be selected to deliver the note in person - and that was quite a treat - to think the teacher or principal would trust you with information to go on this tour.

Speaking of taking information to the central office of the school system, it's hard to believe that the old Stephen Decatur High School is no longer there, but on the southwest corner of the first floor of the building was located the Board of Education. It was composed primarily of the Superintendent of Schools, the Business Manager, and the person in charge of the secondary and the primary grades.

There were a few office workers. It was pretty much concentrated in about three or four rooms. Delivery of school books and material was taken care of there also. In other words, the complexity of our school system today is in contrast to the simplicity of those days.

Going back to Pugh School and Roosevelt, there was a gentleman in town by the name of Mr. Van Pragg. (There are a few descendants of the family still here.) He was a city commissioner. Mr. Van Pragg was quite a gentleman to the children. Oftentimes if there was a play to be produced or a PTA program or play night, Mr. Van Pragg was always a contributor of some of the materials or costumes. He even played the part of Santa Claus at the school parties. It was always a big event when there was a play night at school. Very few boys and girls today really have seen a puppet show. That was always quite an attraction - to have a puppet show. Most of those plays were performed outside, like a little circus.

As I mentioned earlier, many of the streets were not paved. Most of the boys and girls who would come to school didn't live on a paved street. They would come with mud or snow on their shoes - and speaking of shoes, in the fall of the year, it was always time to put on high-topped shoes.

We also wore long underwear and long stockings. For some, the underwear would be too big and it would roll down over the top of the shoes. The stockings were not the best fitting in the world, but at least we did wear a little more clothing than boys and girls wear today.

I was speaking about the streets. Many boys and girls had to walk down dirt streets. In the spring of the year, you could always tell

who lived in the muddy area because their shoes would be covered with mud from top to bottom. As most young people today would do, if there was a mud hole on the way to or from school, it was always a challenge to see who could jump over it or wade through it without getting marooned in the mud. The mannerisms of young people don't differ too much today - except that we do have more paved roads and streets.

Going back to the use of automobiles, as I mentioned earlier, there were very, very few automobiles on the street. It was a luxury at that time - to possess an automobile. It's hard for many people to conceive that the main highway from coast to coast (it was called the Ocean-to-Ocean Highway.) went from downtown north to Packard Street (at that time Main Street was a 2-way street). You came to Packard Street and made a left-hand turn to go west. That was the main highway across country on the Ocean-to-Ocean Highway on Packard Street. It's hard to think that Packard Street would be a main thoroughfare coast to coast.

Speaking of the Ocean-to-Ocean Highway, instead of having street signs or road signs as we do today, the route would be designated by a band on the telephone or electric light pole. As you approached the intersection, and it had an L on it, it meant that you had to turn left. An R meant to turn right.

To deviate just a thought, to follow this highway there was a guide book called the "Blue Book." It made you think of a big dictionary or a Bible. Believe it or not, to go from Decatur to Springfield, directions would be lined out, page by page - to make a left-hand turn or a right-hand, to go four blocks and turn, etc. Each turn was enumerated in this book. That's a far cry from the instructions we have today from the maps.

I mentioned earlier that I did go to Roosevelt - or Rose-e-velt - School. When the building was first built, it was quite an innovation to be able to pronounce the name correctly. We were instructed that it was Roosevelt, but the boys and girls call it Rose-e-velt now. When the building was built, it was quite a thrill to attend a new school. (I attended a year or so after it was built.)

From the Junior High level, it was quite a step to get ready to go to Decatur High School. So, from the 1100 block on Edwards Street, going down to Decatur High School, in most cases we would walk. Very, very seldom would we have transportation provided. We seldom ever rode the street car. In going to school, invariably there would be a train on the track. There would be boys and girls from the north part of town going to Decatur High School. There would be literally 50, 75, or 100 boys and girls waiting to cross the track. We were given a very, very strong lecture about trying to crawl under a train or over the cars because we had had some accidents in town. A boy, I particularly remember, had lost his leg trying that very stunt. So we would stay on the far side of the tracks and after the train passed, we would rush to school. I can remember quite well all the 40 - 50 - or 70 - whatever the number might be - would flock to the dean's office to get passes to be admitted to school. It was the same lecture time after time. "You knew the train would be there. It was your business to get started earlier so you could cross the tracks before the train arrived." That would go in one ear and out the other because the next day or so it would be the same story all over again. This group would congregate in the dean's office to get a pass to go to school.

Decatur High School was the center of activity in the community. Millikin, of course, was playing a prominent part, but I'm thinking of the auditorium at Stephen Decatur High School. It was used for public performances. During World War I, when we were developing enthusiasm for the national spirit, loyalty to your country, and so on, there would be different programs. I remember one quite well. It was the time John Philip Sousa had his band here. I remember it was from the Great Lakes Training Center north of Chicago. My sister took me to this program. At that time I was still in grade school. My sister was a little older. With a group of her friends, we all went down to the program of John Philip Sousa. When we got down there, we found that all the seats were taken. People were standing around the sides and standing in the aisle, but we did get to hear and see John Philip Sousa. There happened to be on the north of the auditorium on the landing a rest room. On the north side it was for the girls and on the other side it was for the boys. It happened to be a very hot evening. All the windows were open so my sister, being my sitter, took us to the girls' rest room. We sat there in the window and had a very good seat to hear John Philip Sousa's program. I think I must be the only one in Decatur who has a story to tell of having a front row seat - from the girls' rest room.

Well, thinking of life at the old Decatur High School, I told you there were very few automobiles. When I was in high school, there were more, but still the town was laid out, not for automobiles but for foot travel and horse and buggy. The business life was primarily in the down-town area, so when Mother would like to have a choice piece of meat, she would go to a butcher shop down town. There were a number of butcher shops

and bakeries. When the bakers would be baking their bread, the aroma would just penetrate the area. There was another little place that roasted coffee, and coffee never tasted so good as that aroma that came from roasting it - from the ovens in those little coffee shops.

I might mention that in the center around the transfer house, in a block of so area there were at least four or five butcher shops, five or six grocery stores, and also not too far away would be a blacksmith shop where people would bring their horses to be shod. Also there would be a place to have your wagon repaired. There was a harness shop. The farmer or person who owned a horse and wagon would come to get the harness repaired or buy a new one. Also, you could come to buy an automobile. As I said, there were not too many automobiles.

Around the Lincoln Square area, of course, the transfer house was there. There were two or three places where you could go to get ice cream. Some of the older people in the community will remember Sam's Ice Cream Parlor. That was quite a luxurious place to go. The people older than myself could take their girl friends and get at Sam's confectionary, an ice cream soda or ice cream sundae.

Also in that same area was a development of hot dog stands. Hot dogs never tasted so good as they did in these little stands. You could go in there and for 10¢ or 15¢ have a hog dog and perhaps some coke.

The price of luxuries at that time was quite low. There were two or three places in that area where you could have a complete meal for 49¢. There were lunches for 25¢, and bean soup, for instance, for 15¢ - all you could eat. The prices of that time were quite low. Most of it was starchy food, but still, very satisfying and interesting to eat.

One reason the downtown area was quite important to the community was that that was the heart of the community. I mentioned that businesses were located on the street car lines. In the same way houses were built near the street car lines.

In addition to the street cars, we had the interurban. The interurban was quite modern when I was a little fellow. You could take an interurban for down town every hour and go to Springfield, or Peoria, or Bloomington, or Champaign-Urbana. About the only area it didn't service would be southeast of Decatur, toward Sullivan and those towns. For that section you would have to depend on the train. All of these interurbans came right to the heart of town, down the streets like North Main, West Main, etc. They would circle the transfer house and go to the interurban barn, which was located on Wood Street, south of the transfer house. It was in the 100 block east, in the area facing the court house today. From the transfer house to the interurban station there was a lot of activity. There was the St. Nicholas Hotel, the Hotel Orlando, and a number of small hotels, where a person could stay overnight for 75¢ or $1 at the most. You could have a pretty decent room. That was one of the reasons there were so many places to eat in that area.

It's hard to conceive that the interurbans went north on what is now the Mall, north of Water Street.

When people came to town, they would depend solely on public transportation. They would come by interurban or the trains.
On the street car lines in the summer time they had some special cars. They were cars without any sides - just rows of seats, with the roof on top. They would be used in July and August to depend on the movement of the air or the breezes for being air-conditioned,

In the winter time you would use cars with glass and sides.

When you got on a street car, you got on the back end and paid the conductor. The motorman would be up front. When you wanted to get off, you would go to the rear of the car. The conductor would pull the rope, ding the bell, and the motorman would stop the car. The conductor would see that the passengers got on and off.

There were a lot of trains that came into Decatur. From the west, from the Chicago area to the north, and on the Illinois Central line to the south and the southeast and also to the northeast. When the street-car got down to the depot, one of the thrills for a youngster would be the stop at a popcorn wagon. This was a semi-permanent wagon that was parked there. Before you got onto the train, or even if you went to meet someone, at the railroad station, you would stop and get a bag of popcorn.

People came and departed all hours of the day. We used to have trains that would come into Decatur during the wee hours of the morning. Some passengers would find a place to spend the rest of the night, and that is why the hotels were very important.

It's hard now to believe that you could go down to the depot and get on a Pullman for Chicago. At one time the Wabash Railroad had some competition with the Illinois Central. They also ran a train to Chicago. You could get on a Pullman going to Chicago, get on between 9 and 11 o'clock at night and the next morning you would wake up in Chicago.

So the thrill of going to Chicago on a Pullman is something of the past. Let's go back down to the downtown area of Decatur. At the turn of the century, electricity was becoming more practical and more of use. Up to that time many gas lights were still in use. That would be true of lights on the

street corners. Many were gas lights. That would also be true of many lights inside the stores. Electricity had not quite arrived at that time.

As I mentioned earlier, telephones were just beginning to appear. At first, all telephones were not all uniform. They belonged to one company or another. If you happened to subscribe to a telephone company that didn't list the Smiths or the Joneses, you were out of luck in calling them. Today we don't have that problem.

Something that is very startling to young people is the introduction of central heating and air conditioning. Automatic heat has come about in my lifetime. Particularly in the summer time, the stores would be tremendously hot, primarily if they had gas lights, which created a good deal of heat. In the winter time many places were quite cold because many places would have only a central heating which would burn coal or wood. Speaking of burning coal, even through the 20's and the 30's most of our places were heated by coal which came from our local mines. One of the main shafts of our M and C Coal Company was located on South Main Street and South Franklin. This coal was very, very soft. When it was burned, it would give off an intense amount of black smoke. Can you imagine each home and each building, plus the factories all burning this soft coal? Literally, early in the morning on a cold morning when everybody was firing up his furnace or in the evening when people were banking their stoves and furnaces for the night the black smoke that came from these flues was unbelievable. Today we think nothing of putting on a white shirt or leaving a piece of paper on a desk. We expect it to be free from soot. At the turn of the century and during World War I period you could hardly wear a white shirt or blouse more than a half a day at a time without the collar and cuffs becoming filthy dirty,

primarily from the dirty smoke in the air. So we have made quite a change by burning gas and oil and automatic heat.

One of the tasks of young boys wanting to earn a little pin money would be to carry coal from the coal shed at the back of the lot. This was something new. Coal sheds were quite popular, and many boys would carry buckets of coal for the neighbor's coal stove. Many familes would use corn cobs. Cobs were wonderful to start a fire. You could make a quick fire. Put some coal oil on it, and you could get a hot fire in a short time. Of course, after you carried the coal in, the next job would be to get the ashes out. Ashes were in both powder form and clinkers. Most houses were not built to accommodate this dirty debris from the furnace so it would be carried to the back of the lot - piled out there.

At that time we did not have garbage service. That came about later. So many people had a pile of ashes or cinders. It would be hauled away in the spring of the year.

In severe cold weather and with very little insulation in the houses, when the wind would blow, the houses would feel like refrigerators.

End of Side A. Please reverse cassette to Side B.

Side B:

The cold homes we were talking about caused many familes to close off rooms of the house - of course, people do the same today to conserve energy, but then it was a case of necessity to stay warm. Actually, the only place in the whole house to stay warm was the kitchen. Not too long

ago, the use of a cook's stove in the kitchen was common. So mother would get up and have a fire in the cookstove before the rest of the house would be warm. She would hang your underwear (if you didn't sleep in it the night before) close to the stove, and the clothes you would put on to get ready to go to school.

You would have good times around the cook stove. We could talk about the meals mother would fix on the cook stove, as I mentioned earlier, she would bake bread. It was a common thrill to come home from school and find hot bread.

It wasn't until the 30's that we started to have what we consider a very modern thing - a stoker to feed the coal furnace. It would be a kind of automation of the furnace. You would still have to haul out the clinkers from the furnace, and that was always a task.

In addition to the coal shed, there was also another building on the back of the lot. It's hard to conceive today that many houses were made without bathrooms. There might have been a room where there would be a sink for washing your face and maybe a tub - and maybe not - but not many had running water.

Many houses had out-houses. In the period of time from the 20's on, we have made tremendous progress in sanitation. It would be inconceivable today to buy a house without inside toilet facilities but not too many years ago that was one of the problems of a home - no built-in plumbing inside the house. So we have made some changes and advancements.

When electricity was first introduced, it was very, very special to have floor lamps. In the earlier houses, if you had electricity at all, it would be a center light in the ceiling. Many of these would be

in connection with a gas light as well. Many times electrical power would be cut off and all you would have would be the gas. People would keep these gas burners with their mantles in order to have light. So we have made some progress there.

Around 1925 or 1930 was the time when hard roads started to appear. The automobile caused this appearance, of course. Many more families were having cars of their own. When the hard roads came, that was something else! In the wintertime or when it was pouring down rain, you could go to Springfield or to Champaign. In the 20's or 30's we were interested in basketball tournaments and football games. That was a thrill to go to Peoria or Bloomington to watch your team play. So that was added to the career of young folks in the 20's.

Another interest developed at that time was enthusiasm for band music. Prior to this time, it was almost unheard of to have a high school band. Of course, John Philip Sousa made quite an impression on young people playing "Stars and Stripes Forever" and other famous marches. Interest in band music and the marching band was very important then.

Also, that was the hey-day of the vaudeville theatre. This is going to a different line of thought, but I mentioned earlier down-town Decatur. We had the Empress Theatre, the Bijoux Theatre, and after one of the fires the Lincoln Theatre was built. The complexity of vaudeville acts was quite entertaining for the community. Once a week and sometimes twice a week there would be a change in vaudeville. Today we have our TV programs, different acts and performances, but then we had live performances coming to the city - orchestras in the pit. In connection with the bands I spoke of in the high school, it was the thought of young people, "Wouldn't it be great to play in an orchestra pit?"

So the building of theatres and the glamorization of these beautiful theatres was just coming in. I mentioned the use of electricity. The use of powerful arc lights and spot lights was glamorizing the stage. It was very much of a treat for people from towns like Decatur to go to St. Louis or Chicago to one of the very, very elaborate theatres such as the Oriental or the Chicago theatre. It was a fabulous place for a country boy from a small town to go in and see these beautiful shows on the stage, with these massive orchestras in the pit. So music came into the picture through the marching bands and jazz bands in the high schools. That enthusiasm started back in the 20's.

The down town area in Decatur would be the shopping center for many towns from miles around. Many times people would come to town maybe once a week if you happened to live out in the country, and many of the shoppers lived at a distance. Sometimes they would come to town once every six weeks. They would buy a supply of necessities and clothing for their families, because you didn't run to the store every time you needed a can of beans or such. You did a lot of planning of the necessities a person would have to have in the home. It wasn't uncommon for a person coming in, say, from Mt. Pulaski on the train - the train would get into town early in the morning, and the family would come in with a suitcase. There they would place their purchases - the material to make dresses for the young folks of the family, shirts for the father, dresses for the mother, and of course, a change of season meant you had to have different kinds of shoes because in the

winter you wore high topped shoes - button shoes that came 10 or 11 inches up on the leg, laced shoes. Some of the villages didn't have shoe repair shops, so you would bring shoes to town in the suitcase and have new soles put on.

While these people were shopping in town, they would get hungry, as we do today, and would go to the candy store or buy a bag of peanuts. It wasn't uncommon in the summertime to see families gather on the streets and visit with people they hadn't seen for days. They would spend many hours eating a sack of peanuts or sharing a sack of candy or popcorn.

Speaking of candy reminds us of salt water taffy. It was quite the thing for some of the ten cent stores - Woolworth's or Kresges - to have a window with a taffy machine. You would stand around outside and watch this taffy machine pull this sugar-molasses mixture which, if pulled long enough, would become hard. That was even one of the entertainments in a home back in the early days of the cook stove era. You would have taffy pulls. That would be quite a thrill for a lot of young people to get together and have mother or someone in the family make some taffy. The idea was to pull this taffy and share it with your friends. Some of it would get mixed up in your hair, but it was always a thrill to have taffy - whether at home or from one of the candy machines in the store. It was a luscious color. If you ever have the opportunity in a resort area to have some taffy, you should stop and have some. It's a real joy and a real thrill.

Thinking of people coming to town to buy clothes and footwear, we should remember that this time of the year, people would be wearing

high topped shoes. You would certainly be a freak if you would happen to be wearing sandals or slippers. As a matter of fact, we didn't have sandals except in real hot weather. If you wore oxfords, you were "way out" - a freak. People wore high topped shoes until the spring thaws came along. Then you would be brave enough to discard the high topped shoes and put on oxfords.

It was quite a vogue during World War I for a lady to have a very beautiful pair of shoes with colored tops. Some were of soft beige tones, most were in grey tones, or colors. That would really be a fancy item for a lady to have.

In the fall of the year at the edge of town or in the country, farmers picked or harvested the corn by hand. The men would wear (and women and boys and little girls if they would help) 4-buckle or 6-buckle overshoes. It was a common item. The interesting thing is that with the first snow fall or the first muddy time of the year, the farmers would come to town to buy their overshoes. Usually they didn't plan too far in advance. They would wait until they were needed and then would flock to town to buy overshoes.

Overshoes not only went over your shoes. We had what we called "packs." They looked like a wool boot. A farmer that milked a lot of cows or happened to be out in the field, would wear these "packs." They were a very heavy type of wool boot. Then there were rubber overshoes that went over that. I doubt if you can find any of those packs today unless you happened to be in the far north - in Alaska and Canada. They still might make them and sell them up there.

As I mentioned earlier, we did a lot of walking so even a man who worked in a store downtown or a factory would have overshoes - or heavy wool socks or wool underwear to wear as he walked to and from work.

I mentioned the lights and heat in the stores. One thing that comes to mind is that in early days, even back in the twenties you would walk in a store in the summer time and would find very few lights on. They would wait until a customer would come in before they would turn the lights on. The store was hot - the front and back doors would be open, but still it would be very, very hot inside the stores. Of course, the more lights you had on, the hotter it would get. So air conditioning was very welcome when it came.

I spoke about the theatres - the Bijoux and the Lincoln. They had air conditioning as their big selling features. "Come in and get cool!" They had banners hanging outside saying, "It's cool inside!" Now the air conditioning system at first, as I understood, was nothing more than blocks of ice with a fan blowing across the ice into the theatre. That's the reason they would call it "air conditioned." It would be humid as well, but still it would be cooler inside the theatre than outside on the street. You take a theatre closed up in the summer with the windows and doors all closed to make it dark, and it would be very, very hot. That is one reason why the theatres were among the first users of a form of air conditioning.

That was before the mechanical type of air conditioning came into vogue. It was even in the 30's that it was thought that

that commercial air conditioning was almost impossible. I even had professors in the university who said it would be utterly impossible to cool the air of a building or home with a mechanical contraption. The walls would absorb it faster than it would give off cool air. So there was a lot of opposition to the theory of air conditioning because it was thought to be impossible.

I was in Roosevelt School when radio started to come into the lives of young folks and in fact all people.

End of February 8 recording session. The following material was recorded on February 15, 1984.

Speaking of radio, the first sets were crystal sets. That was a very, very simple set. The parts we purchased generally came from the dime store. It seems that Woolworth and Kresge would sell these little parts to make up a radio. Then we developed a one-tube set which required batteries. From there, we went into amplification, adding tubes to make a three-tube set. Of course, to operate these, we usually used dry cells. The luxury was to have a storage battery. It's hard to conceive at that time we would pinch pennies and save money in order to buy a tube for the radio and the batteries we would buy wpuld would be very costly. All the pennies and nickels we could collect would be saved to buy these objects.

From there we went into a storage battery. As I mentioned before, automobiles were coming into their own at that time and a used storage battery - almost a junk battery - would cost about $5. That

would require quite a few nickels, but it was a thrill to have a radio, where you could hear the voice of someone from Chicago or St. Louis. When you could get KDKA at Pittsburgh, the Westinghouse station, and WGY, the Schenedtady, New York station, it was a thrill to listen to these programs - even when we should be doing our school work. The conversation the next day would be comparing notes with your buddies and friends. "How many stations did you get last night?" It was a really new sport.

In the early days when radio was developing, we had a station in Decatur. They had just started. The studio was on top of what recently was the Carson, Pirie, Scott building downtown. At the time this building was constructed, it was called the Gushard building. There were two huge towers on the top of the building - the antenna by which the signal was broadcast through the air. The studios for WJBL were on the top floor of the building. There was an elevator at the back that we took to go up. It was a room prepared with draperies and such. There the broadcast - everything was a live broadcast because recording, especially tape recording - was not available at that time.

The only remote broadcasting to my knowledge of this early station was by a cable which was laid by special line to the First Methodist Church. The service was broadcast from the church on Sunday mornings. It seems odd that they had to lay a special cable, but at that time they had to do so because at that time the telephone companies did not transmit the program. This was something quite new.

From there, of course, radio became quite sophisticated and developed through the super heterodynes and circuits used today. Now we have many sophisticated types of sets selling quite cheap compared to the prices in those earlier days.

The one thing quite interesting even as late as 1930 was that the power source was from a storage battery. I had a professor at Millikin about 1930 who said it would be utterly impossible to plug a radio into an AC line and change it to DC to operate the machine. Of course, it was only a few years before it was possible to use the AC current by plugging into the wall. From that time forth there were tremendous changes in radio and recording equipment.

I'd like to talk now about programming in a studio. I was reared in a home with a great deal of music. As early as the time I was a little fellow in the 4th or 5th grade, I was interested in music. One of my first performances was playing an anvil. That's hard to believe - that music could come from an anvil, but if anyone has been around a blacksmith shop, he will remember that there are actually two tones to an anvil - blacksmiths might get more. There is some very beautiful music using the anvil - an operatic number is called "The Anvil Chorus."

I was given the job of playing the anvil when we played "The Anvil Chorus." This was performed at the First Methodist Church with an orchestra. I was up on a box playing the anvil.

From that time on, I seemed to be interested in pounding something to make rhythm. So back in the days of Pugh School

when I was in the 3rd or 4th grade, one of my assignments was to play a triangle, a musical instrument to keep rhythm. We still use the same instrument in bands and orchestras today. In the early school days all the boys and girls, when it was time to go out for recess or to go home, would all line up in a room, stand at the door, and each room would take its turn going out of the building. We had a principal by the name of Miss Mothersbaugh. She thought it would be very, very fine to use this triangle to beat the rhythm (instead of a drum) for these boys and girls to march from the building. I don't know how they get the children out of the building today, but it's hard to think of everyone marching out of the building in a rhythmic fashion.

Well, from playing the triangle in school, I became the proud possessor of a zylophone. With the help of my father, my mother, and my sister, we had a family orchestra.

I grew out of the xylophone into a marimba. A marimba at that time was quite a luxury item. It was a novelty. I played the marimba all the way through high school and college and, as I said, my mother, my father, my sister, and I had a family orchestra. My father played the cello, mother played the bass portion of the marimba, and my sister the piano. Because there was no TV at that time, it was quite a thing for the small towns around in the churches and the lodges to have entertainment. Our family was on call quite often to provide some entertainment for these various places. I can remember going over to Monticello to a women's club program, going south to Assumption or to Mt. Pulaski. We did quite a bit of that. My interest in music really developed.

At the same period of time I was playing the chimes at the First Methodist Church. I played those through my junior high and high school days. Some of the highlights of playing the chimes would be the special events such as Armistice Day and the Fourth of July. So I was on call for playing for these events - to ring the chimes.

I might speak about the chimes. The chimes themselves were quite unusual. If I remember correctly, there are 11 bells - a little over an octave. You only have one B flat and F sharp. So you are limited in the range you can play, even to transpose. Much of the music we would play we would transpose and put it in a notebook so when we went to ring the bells, we would have this music in front of us. A lot of people were not aware that the keyboard looked like wheelbarrow handles protruding from a rack. Everything was fine except that the clapper to the bell was fastened with a piece of leather to the wheelbarrow handle. Invariably when you wanted to ring a particular bell, a leather strap would break. It was quite a deal for the maintenance man to go up to put a new strap on the bell.

The bells are still being rung today, but they have been transposed to an electrical device and are electronic. I understand they are played from a keyboard close to the organ.

The manual playing of the chimes is something of past history.

Speaking of music, at the time I went to high school, I told you I was playing the marimba. My next instrument was the oboe. That is about as strange to the community as the marimba was in the early days.

I had the only oboe in the city so I was chosen whenever it was necessary to have an orchestra in the pit. I would have the oboe part.

At the climax of my high school musical experience, I not only played in the orchestra but for graduation, I was chosen to play a marimba solo. I was elected by my class of '28 to play for the program. That was quite a delightful experience.

These high school commencement exercises were held in the Lincoln Theatre. It was the only place where there was seating capacity for over 1000 people. It was quite an event for the graduating class to be seated on the stage with the orchestra in the pit and the audience in the theatre. It was a delightful experience.

Decatur has had quite a strong interest in music. We had some strong leadership at Millikin University. There were the Swarthout brothers, the deans of the School of Music. They brought some interesting programs to Decatur. Many of the programs were held in the Lincoln Theatre - the ones that required a large attendance. At that time we did not have the Masonic Temple or Kirkland Center, quite a wonderful building. So the Lincoln Theatre was the center of art and early music programs.

I referred to the vaudeville theatre. As the movie industry changed, and we went over to vitaphone programs, vaudeville was driven away from the theatre with these wonderful wide screen productions. Back in the '30s when

all this took place, we had in Decatur a number of professional musicians. They were out of a job. They wanted to have an orchestra, wanted to do something. So that was the beginning of the Decatur Civic Orchestra. There had been other orchestras started some years earlier, but nothing that had continued. So we had the beginning of the Decatur Civic Orchestra. We played our programs at the Masonic Temple. We had some very, very fine guest soloists who came to play with us. It was quite an innovation to have a community civic orchestra. A part of this same orchestra is out at Millikin now. The names of the Decatur Civic Orchestra and the Millikin Orchestra were combined. Now they are doing some very beautiful work out there. It's an outgrowth of the days when the theatre orchestra was disposed of.

Many of my generation will remember when Lindbergh crossed the Atlantic Ocean. We did not have television. The only fast communication coming into the picture would be the radio. There were not too many radio sets around. Newspapers - the Herald and the Review in Decatur - recorded the news flashes they would get over the wire on a sheet of paper and pasted on the window of the newspaper's office. This was an extra-special event - that Lindbergh crossed the Atlantic. That was written on the newspaper copy, and it wasn't before too long in the afternoon that there was an extra edition of the newspaper.

That makes us think of the disposing of news. As I mentioned, we had the newspapers - a morning paper and an evening paper. Then when anything that would come up very, very special, such as the Lindbergh crossing, would bring out an extra edition, and the boys on the corner would sell newspapers. This was an era when in the city of Decatur, like Springfield or Bloomington, activity was located pretty much in the downtown area.

So offices, most of the manufacturing, retail operation were all confined to a downtown area. So the street corner was a crossing of paths of people coming and going and was a source of information. It was a prized possession for a boy working after school to have a location on a downtown corner. We see it in Chicago today where newspaper vendors are on a corner. Day after day it will be the same man. It's a prize possession of that location.

So after school boys would sell papers on the corner and particularly on such a day as Lindbergh crossed the Atlantic. Boys would be hawking the information: "Extra! Extra! Read all about it!" Of course, you could hear that a half a block away. People would take their 3 pennies or a nickel - whatever the price was at that time - to go buy a newspaper to find out what the news was about. Most of the paper would be the same as the last issue with the exception of the change of headlines and the lead story.

Speaking of lead stories, since we had two newspapers in our town, it was quite the thing for a reporter to try to be the first one on the scene and write a story up in order to get it in the paper before the competitor would get it. So it was quite interesting in the early days in Decatur to have two newspapers because sometimes you could read news in one paper that didn't get in the other because the reporter didn't happen to show up.

Conclusion of Side B. Please play second cassette - Side C

Now, we did have a merging of the papers in Decatur, forming one newspaper. The quarters would be on North Main Street at North. I'm not an expert on newspaper publication, but much of the life and news in the community revolved around the newspaper. It was quite important for the editor to take part in the activities and events around the community. The transformation that has taken place from the days that I speak of - the time when Lindbergh crossed the Atlantic - to the present time is quite a revelation. It shows the difference in employment. Back in Lindbergh's time the headlines would be set by hand, but the reading material would be put on a linotype machine. That is where hot molten lead would come down and cast a letter. So there was a lot of hand work in putting a newspaper together and a number of people involved in publishing. It was a source

of information for the community for much of the outside information that came in on the wire services such as the United Press and the Associated Press. So, prior to television and the early days of radio, the wire services were the source of information.

Particularly in the baseball season - say, the world series - the Herald used to have a big board they would put out on the street side. This board was at least 12 feet square. It was painted green. There would be a little baseball - for example, if the news came out that there was a strike or a one-base hit, the little ball would move from home base to first base. The reason I speak of this is that people would crowd around the front of the newspaper office and stand there for hours watching this news come in on the wire service. Most of it would be written on the sheets of paper I mentioned before. If there was a home run or a third out, it would be written. People would stand in front of the newspaper office to get the last-minute news.

The same idea of having the latest news posted in front of the newspaper office was important particularly on election night. Now we sit at home and listen to the radio or television and get almost instantaneous results from the computer. Back in those days to get the latest news, you would have to go downtown to the newspaper office and wait outside while the news was written and

posted on the bulletin boards in the windows. One of the novelties the Herald had was a projector on the east side of the street and slides. It was a slide projector to throw images on a screen. As the votes came in, people could see how the tallies of the votes were shaping up. People would come from all over town to see these results. There would be literally hundreds of people standing in the street. If you happened to be a late comer, how in the world would get through this crowd? One little trick worked beautifully. We had street cars back in those days and eventually a streetcar would have to come down the street. One of the secrets would be to wait until the streetcar came and as the street car would ring its bell to get through the crowd and push the people to one side, you would be walking behind the car. You could follow the street car until you got in front of the newspaper office, where you would have a front-row seat. A lot of people would do that. But after so many hundreds of people pulled the trick, the crowd would be so dense that you would have to push somebody over.

The period in the early 30's would introduce another dramatic change in our lives. The automobile was coming into its own. As a matter of fact, it was quite the thing to see the new models of cars come out. Actually, because of the severe winters and no hard roads very few cars would be driven the year round. It was almost impossible

to start a car in cold weather - sub-zero - so the spring of the year would open up a whole new life - people getting their cars out, getting them conditioned for summer driving. It was wonderful to get out in the country side during the spring of the year, but here we would be traveling on dirt roads. Dirt roads are very fine as long as they are somewhat moist, not too dusty or too muddy. It's hard to believe that our main highways would be dirt roads. Very special roads would be oiled, but if you have ever driven down a road with fresh oil, you know an an experience you would never forget. The car would be covered with oil - the old touring cars had open sides, of course, and you would have oil all over your clothes and possibly your face.

So this was a period when people were starting to talk of hard roads. One of the first hard roads we had in this area was the old Route 10 going east and west and the one going north to Bloomington and south to Pana. To have a road that would be solid so you could travel in the spring of the year when the thaw was coming out of the ground was a revelation.

We would have touring cars, oepn with side curtains that could be put on during the winter, but there would be very little heat in the car. You would wrap up in wool clothes and have blankets (lap robes were always carried in the car). An open car or ones with side curtains but

no heat was very, very chilly even driving at twenty or thirty miles an hour.

Eventually we had more hard roads built. Cars started to become much more sophisticated. We had the coming of the sedan, a closed car. We had the "coupe", with two doors. Also car heaters were being improved so that driving in chilly or bad weather was much improved.

The advent of the automobile was developing in all stages. Back in the late 20's and 30's, if you got 6000 miles from a set of tires on your car, you were having quite an experience. The life of a tire was very short. You had to learn to be a mechanic. If you were driving down the road, it was quite common to pick up some nails in your tires and have some punctures. So you would learn to vulcanize the tires and very likely learn how to adjust the carburetor because in many ways the process was very simple. These cars were not highly developed, as they are today. Starting out with a car was not an easy task because you could easily get into a ditch with mud. Then You'd have to find a farmer with a team of horses to pull you out. Early travel was a thrill.

One of my early memories was of traveling in a touring car to Indianapolis on the old Ocean-to-Ocean highway I mentioned earlier with the signs painted on the telephone posts. We left after my father's business was closed in the evening - about ten o'clock at night. We

drove all night and, believe it or not, we arrived in Indianapolis the next morning in time for breakfast. We had a lunch to take along, because about one or two o'clock in the morning, you'd get a little hungry. We would usually have some nibbles - fried chicken, jelly sandwiches, and a banana.

Traveling in a car was so dusty that it was quite the thing for the ladies to wear "dusters." These were very light fab fabric coats that would cover the entire body. You had hoods and goggles to keep the dust out of your eyes. When you'd prepare for a trip to Bloomington or Springfield, you'd put on your duster and goggles to keep the dust out or in the winter time you would protect against the mud.

One little experience I had was quite interesting. When you bought a car, the dealer usually knew very little about the automobile. He gave you some basic information, but it was up to you to learn how to drive it. As far as maintenance, you knew you had to buy gas. It was necessary to have oil, but very little was ever said about the battery. I can remember making a trip with my family one time when we stopped the car but couldn't get it started again. We'd go from one blacksmith shop to another because that's where the new trade of auto mechanics began. Very few dealers had mechanics working for them. So we hunted up a blacksmith to find out why the car wouldn't start. Come to find out, the dealer forgot to tell my father it was necessary to keep water in the battery. The battery was dry.

I spoke earlier about driving 6000 miles on a set of tires. I can remember one experience when the tire merchant talked my father into having the tires retreaded, giving a little more mileage to a set of tires. On this particular trip we had about 12 punctures in one day. We didn't travel very far that day because of the time taken out to vulcanize the inner tubes to keep air in them. By the way, speaking of air in the tires, if you think it's an easy job today to go into a filling station and pull up and say, "I need some air in my tires," think of those days. Then we had a hand pump to pump the air into the tire - a long, tedious job and on a hot day a sweaty job to get the air back in the tire.

I spoke earlier of being with my father in the shoe business, which was operated on 148 E. Main Street. I spent many of my youthful days, many afternoons after school and on Saturdays in my father's store. I'd like to reminisce just a bit there.

One of my first thoughts about the store was of the old gas lights inside the store. They were not the most convenient. They would heat up the store. At times it was almost impossible to stay inside. Usually you had just a few lights because of the heat. So the coming of electricity was quite an innovation. It was cleaner and cooler, even though the old incandescent light was not as cool as the fluorescent lights today. It was such an improvement.

Two or three things stand out in my mind. I spoke of high-topped shoes. In this season (February of 1984) we would be getting in merchandise for spring and summer. Ladies would put aside their high-topped shoes, men their high-topped shoes and start thinking of wearing oxfords. That

would be a change of season, of course. Young people could hardly wait to get out (on days like today with the temperatures in the 40's) to get out of their boots and put on low shoes. You would even find a brave boy or girl trying to go bare-footed - just to get out of high-topped shoes. The use of overshoes wasn't as important as in the fall of the year.

In the World War I period, not too many families had many pairs of shoes. When they came to town, they would fit the family in shoes to last at least six months. In the meantime, they would keep the shoes half-soled and repaired.

I spent many childhood days helping the repairman working on shoe repair - taking heels off, helping to sort out leathers and generally cleaning up. I learned a lot about the handling of tools from a very, very fine Swedish shoe-maker. He was actually a shoe-maker because he would build shoes from scratch. Most of the work done was for invalids, where it was necessary to have one shoe one way, and the other another. He was a beautiful craftsman, and I learned to use many of the tools from my association with Hugo Landine. I might mention that Hugo Landine had a brother. The two of them left Decatur in the heyday of the theatre. They went to California and made special shoes for the theatre trade. In other words they followed their art west to practice it in making beautiful shoes for the theatre.

Coming back to the shoe store in Decatur, I did spend many days there with my father - clear through high school and college. When the depression hit, I was completing my work at Millikin. I still followed retail business. I went to Chicago and worked for a chain organization by the

name of Feltman and Curm. They were operating over a thousand stores across the country. The reason I speak of that is that I did go to Chicago. I actually lived in Evanston and commuted to business. I went to Northwestern University to complete some credits necessary for my degree from Millikin.

I speak of the depression. I was very fortunate during that period to have a job. I worked in a cafeteria for two hours in the morning for three meals a day. So I fared quite well.

But it's hard to conceive now that $15 a week was a big sum. If a person had a job that paid that much he would be in a state of luxury. Automobiles were selling at a low price. Rent was quite low. You could buy food for 35¢ - 50¢ for a complete dinner.

Actually, during the depression we had one of the biggest changes of our life. Roosevelt was our president, and he brought in the NRA, which did give us a basic wage scale, which was a big help to many people. One of the other actions was the introduction of the FHA, the federal home loan. This applied not only to Chicago, but to St. Louis, Decatur, wherever you would go. Many families would work very hard to buy a home and most of the mortgages would be on a year-to-year basis. During the depression, when people would lose their jobs and had very little money, they would also lose their mortgages and homes - possibly their whole life savings.

One of the great things coming out of the depression was the Federal Home Loan because it gave the working families the opportunity to own their home without the fear of losing it. Some of our wealth accumulated in Decatur in years past would be from so-called "loan sharks." These people would just wait for someone to miss a payment on a property or furniture and

then they would take it away from them and resell the object or property. It was very unfair because people sacrificed. Wages were low. They would get behind in their payments and be almost destitute if they lost their homes - the backbone of our whole society. So one of the great things that actually came out of the depression was the fact that we did have a basic wage scale people could count on. The other benefit was saving of homes through the Federal Home Loan Act.

Now in the same period, along with automobiles and radio, we had air conditioning and refrigeration. Refrigeration was making it possible for people to have a mechanical piece of equipment in their homes to keep their food - quite an improvement from the times when we had an ice wagon going up and down the streets, with people keeping their food by means of ice. Here we had a new refrigerator which kept a constant temperature, day after day. So you could keep milk in the refrigerator for several days.

Speaking of milk, another innovation was the pasteurization of milk. Prior to this, we had many types of diseases because milk had been contaminated. The pasteurization of milk certainly was a tremendous step for all mankind.

The other advancement was to homogenize milk. In earlier times we could remove the cream from the top of a bottle of milk. This cream we would use in coffee or tea or cereal. What was left was skimmed milk, not as rich. We learned in later years that we don't need so much of this richness, as we thought we did. The homogenization of milk broke up the particles of fat so it would be distributed evenly and not come to the top.

These changes made a great difference. Even in the '30's it was quite the thing to have a milk delivery every day. Then we had it every

other day, but the thought of keeping milk a longer time would be almost impossible. You couldn't keep milk more than two or three days or it would sour.

With these radical changes, other changes came. Milk was dispensed in glass bottles. We didn't have paper containers or plastic containers. To think of buying a gallon of milk at a time and keeping it in your refrigerator for days was quite a contrast from delivery at your home every day.

It was very important, when milk was delivered to your home, that you go out and pick it up very shortly. If you left it out in the winter it would freeze. The cream would come out the top and push up the cap and you would have a mess. Or in summer with the heat, you could have sour milk before you had a chance to use it.

Speaking of retailing, after my experience in Chicago, I did come back to Decatur. I operated one of the Feltman and Curm stores, which was located on Water Street in the 200 block. I was with Feltman and Curm for a number of years.

Later, I spent a great deal of time with Linn and Scruggs. That was one of the stores that came to Decatur, along with the Gushard store. These stores started not with thousands of dollars. In the early days you didn't have to have fancy cash registers or fixtures in the stores. They were very, very plain.

Linn and Scruggs was one of the outstanding stores in the shopping area for many years. They had drapery materials, materials for making window shades in all sizes (they maintained a gentleman for that purpose); they had a very fine ladies' ready-to-wear section; they had a department

for sheets and pillow-cases; they had housewares, china, and in the earlier days, in the building where the Millikin Bank is now located, they had a very fine tea-room on the third floor.

Of course, Linns moved from that location over to North Main Street at Prairie and North Main, where Quigle Furniture store is now located, but they still maintained a very fine store from the standpoint of quality merchandise. So anyone in the community interested in fine clothing - dresses, shirtings, bed linens - Linn and Scruggs would be one of the places to shop.

We had a number of distinguished people who shopped there - you might say the "carriage trade" - some very wonderful women who traded with us. One was Mrs. Baldwin - Mrs. H. I. Baldwin lived on West Main Street in the 400 block. The house is still standing there. It's the one with a little iron fence around it. Mrs. Baldwin always had her house painted in white. In the afternoon as soon as the sun would go down, her lights would go on. She had a number of candlelabra around the house. It was a little picture place, a show place. They say there is still some timber in it that was cut by Abraham Lincoln. Of course, it has been covered many times by siding, but the original material was said to have been cut by Abraham Lincoln. I speak of Mrs. Baldwin, because after the death of her husband, she wore white summer and winter. She was a lady of means so she had a chauffeur, who drove her in a black car, a black Cadillac. You would always know when Mrs. Baldwin would be approaching, because you could see this car coming down the street with Mrs. Baldwin in the back in her white clothes.

In relation to Linn and Scruggs, the car would pull up to the side door, the chauffer would get out, and help Mrs. Baldwin out of the car and escort her into the store. She would buy white kid gloves. Many ladies now don't know what white kid gloves are, but they were a thing of fashion in years back. Many of them were up to the elbow - beautiful French kid gloves. We always tried to have on hand white kid gloves for Mrs. Baldwin because she was always in the market for buying another pair of white kid gloves.

She also wore a powder that was pure white - no coloring - and we always managed to have some white powder for Mrs. Baldwin.

There were other customers in the store whose needs we tried to meet, but I speak of Mrs. Baldwin because she was one of the outstanding and gracious ladies of the store.

We had families who would come to us from 20, 30, 40 miles away who would come maybe once or twice a year to make purchases of sheets and pillow cases, blankets, material for making dresses, pots and pans. When they would leave to go home, it was like a regular truck load of material because they would shop for their needs for a number of months.

Along with many other people, I hated to see the old organization disappear because it carried business and community life that is history now - just another chapter in a growing community. So Linn and Scruggs is no more. The years I spent with them were very interesting because I had many associations with people like Mrs. Baldwin.

Another person interesting to work with was Mrs. Guy Scoville. We associate the name with Scoville Park and golf links. Mr. Scoville

was quite a successful business man. Through the years he acquired a great deal of oriental art, beautiful linens, and such. Before Mrs. Scoville passed away, she was having the fun and joy of giving many of these beautiful treasures away. She would call me on the phone to ask me if I would get her a box to put some sheets and pillow cases in. She would like to have nice white boxes, but she was having the fun of giving away these beautiful treasures she possessed. Mrs. Guy Scoville was another valued patron of Linn and Scruggs.

Linns did have a delivery service, and much of the business transpired over the telephone. People would call up for cosmetics, hosiery, and we would deliver them. We even had some dear souls who would be handicapped and couldn't get out of the house. They would even call up, and we would send out postage stamps. We had a substation in the store. We would charge the stamps to the client's account and send the stamps out on delivery. That was the nth degree of service, but that's the type of service we gave.

Speaking of delivery recalls an episode after World War II. At that time there was a shortage of shirts, nylons, and ready-made things. I can remember one lady calling to ask for some hose to be sent out during this period of shortage of goods. They were delivered, and the maid or housekeeper received the package and put the package on the lady's shelf in her closet. In a day or two the customer called and wondered where her hosiery might be. She had not received it. We had records that they had been delivered, but of course after a prolonged discussion we had to take the lady's word that she did not get them. About six months later, the dear soul called up to apologize profusely. She was very sorry. She had found her

stockings on the shelf in the closet. The maid had put them there but didn't tell her about it. So that was quite an experience.

Linn and Scruggs always participated in the Halloween parade and the Christmas celebration. In the front of the store at Christmas would be a mural. We still have stores in St. Louis and Chicago that carry on this tradition. We miss that in Decatur now.

I would like to say in closing that it is always interesting to see innovations. Right now I'm looking at an electric clock with the second hand sweeping around, very accurate. I can remember as a child when we would hand-wind a clock. Sometimes it would be fast, sometimes slow. It was a help when we did get the new clocks. I think the trade name we thought of most was the Telechron, that gave us accurate timing. Now we have battery-driven wrist watches giving accurate timing, but looking back over the 75 years of my life, more innovations have come about during my life time than in thousands of years prior.

Thank you very much, Mr. Rodgers. You have been listening to the reminiscences of Mr. Richard Rodgers. This is Betty Turnell for the Decatur Public Library.