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Interview with Mildred Hobrock

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Mildred Hobrock

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AN ORAL INTERVIEW WITH MILDRED HOBROCK

by

James Mullen

Fall, 1984

Submitted to Dr. Allan Miller
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for Education 803:
Research Seminar in Education

CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to collect historical information from Miss Mildred Hobrock through the use of the oral history research technique. She taught in several one-room schoolhouses in Osborne county, near Natoma, Kansas.

Variables

The independent variables used in this study are:

The teacher--the person who has experienced teaching in a one-room schoolhouse.

Preparation--the educational requirements for a teacher before she could be hired for a teaching position.

Curriculum--the subjects taught and the materials used by the teacher and the students.

Students--the children who attended the one-room school.

Grade level--the various levels of education taught during the teacher's one-room schoolhouse experience.

Calendar year--the length of the school year.

Facilities--the interior and exterior condition of the building, the size of the room, the restrooms, lighting, heating, and the floor plan.

Supervisors--the persons to whom the teacher was responsible.

Living quarters--the teacher's living facilities.

Salary--the money paid to the teacher for her teaching responsibilities.

Discipline--the rules that the teacher had the students follow and the manner in which she enforced those rules.

Professional rules--those rules which the teacher was required to follow.

The dependent variables of this study will be the questions used in the oral interview. The interview will serve as a tool to gather information concerning teaching in a one-room schoolhouse. The interview will be recorded on cassette tape and transcribed.

Background

I have conducted four other oral interviews in the past. Three of the interviews were with family members and concerned my family history. The fourth interview was with a lady who had taught in a one-room schoolhouse. I have found interviewing to be very interesting and full of historical value. This study will be of interest to other teachers who look for a tie or relationship with past educators.

Significance of Study

This study will provide information about a one-room schoolhouse teacher and tell how she conducted

her daily and yearly teaching assignment. The information will develop a better understanding of the responsibilities of a teacher who taught in a one-room schoolhouse.

Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

1. Identify the teacher's responsibilities in a one-room schoolhouse.
2. Determine what educational background was required before a person could be hired to teach in a one-room schoolhouse.
3. Identify the curriculum used in a one-room school.
4. Describe the classroom facilities of a one-room schoolhouse.
5. Determine what disciplinary measures were necessary and how often they were needed.
6. List the ways in which the teacher was to conduct herself, who determined those rules, and who was responsible for seeing that the rules were followed.
7. Determine the salaries and other benefits received by the teacher.

CHAPTER II

MILDRED HOBROCK

Mildred Hobrock is a native Kansan. She was born four miles east of Lincoln, Kansas, on June 1, 1904. She taught in Osborne County in several one-room schoolhouses in the 1920's. Mildred presently resides in Hays, Kansas. At the time of the interview, November 25, 1984, she was eighty years old.

Mildred began her teaching career in 1923 in a one-room schoolhouse. She was nineteen years old. She began teaching in the fall of the same year that she graduated from high school. The name of her first school was I X L, District 115, in Osborne County. In 1924 she moved to Round Mound School, District 77, also in Osborne County. She taught there until 1926. Then she went to District 28 and later to District 1, seven miles south of Osborne, Kansas.

Mildred taught the first grade at Haviland Grade School for twenty-two years until she retired in 1970. At that time she moved to Hays, Kansas. She has traveled throughout the United States and Canada. She has been active in church work and is a volunteer at Hadley Regional Medical Center.

CHAPTER III
ORAL INTERVIEW

Mullen: I'm Jim Mullen and I am conducting an interview with Mildred Hobrock. Mildred, what is your present age?

Miss Hobrock: I am eighty years old.

Mullen: Where were you born?

Miss Hobrock: I was born four miles east of Lincoln, Kansas, June 1, 1904.

Mullen: Have you lived in Kansas all your life?

Miss Hobrock: I have lived in Kansas all my life.

Mullen: And where did you live most of your life in Kansas?

Miss Hobrock: Most of my life, I have considered Natoma my home.

Mullen: How old were you when you first started teaching?

Miss Hobrock: I was nineteen years old when I first started teaching, because I had... When I went to country school, we had to go nine years before we could go to high school. That made me older than some folks.

Mullen: What year was that when you first started teaching?

Miss Hobrock: I started teaching in 1923.

Mullen: How much schooling did you have before you started teaching?

Miss Hobrock: I was a high school graduate.

Mullen: How did you get your job?

Miss Hobrock: My school was, ah, three miles from where an older sister was teaching, and when I applied for the job, they knew she was a good teacher and considered that I should, would also be one. And I interviewed them and I was hired.

Mullen: Who did you interview with?

Miss Hobrock: I interviewed with three board members: the president, the clerk, and the treasurer.

Mullen: Do you remember the name of that school?

Miss Hobrock: The name of the school was I X L and the District was 115, in Osborne County.

Mullen: What years did you teach at that one-room school?

Miss Hobrock: 1923 and 1924.

Mullen: Where did you teach after that?

Miss Hobrock: In 1924 to 1926 I taught Round Mound, District 77, in Osborne County. Then I went to District 28 in Osborne County, and then I went to District 1, seven miles south of Osborne, Kansas.

Mullen: Do you remember how much you were paid for your first job?

Miss Hobrock: I was paid seventy-five dollars a month.

Mullen: And how did you get your pay check?

Miss Hobrock: The clerk would send what was called an order to the treasurer, and the treasurer would write the check, and then I would go to the treasurer's house, home, and pick up the check.

Mullen: Where did you live while you were teaching at that first school?

Miss Hobrock: I lived in the Charlie Boyd home which was about a quarter of a mile east of the schoolhouse, and I paid sixteen dollars a month, board.

Mullen: Was that a family that had children going to the school?

Miss Hobrock: They had one boy, Julian, that went to school.

Mullen: Do you know if that school building is still there?

Miss Hobrock: That school building is not there. When they consolidated with the Natoma Grade School the building was torn down or moved. I'm not sure which.

Mullen: Do you know much about the history of the schoolhouse? When was it built or who built it?

Miss Hobrock: I do not know who built it, but I do know that it was built in the early 1900's.

Mullen: And what was it built of?

Miss Hobrock: The foundation was limestone rocks and the building was wood--made of wood.

Mullen: Describe what it looked like on the outside and tell about any other buildings that were around it, or a pump.

Miss Hobrock: The, ah, outside of it I, I presume, it was a, probably the size most schools were built in those days and, ah, it had, a cement porch on the west of it with two or three steps to get up on the porch and the door was in the middle of the front of the school building and there were three windows on either side, north and the south side, and it was white. It had a bell on it that they asked us to ring every morning at 8:30. And then there was a coal shed to the back of the building which was also wooden. And then there was the boys' and girls' toilets were at the back on the east side of the, of the playground.

Mullen: Can you tell me what it looked like on the inside, too?

Miss Hobrock: Well, it was, ah, it had double desks and oh, where two people could sit together if they care to, and then it had in front, it had a recitation bench that went not clear across the building but in the center, ah, with room on both sides. And then there was a teacher's desk and a chair and there were blackboards across the east end which was what you would call the back of the building and it didn't have any kind of a musical instrument in it, but it did have a flag. That was a United States flag, a small one, and it was on a stick in that, it was a fastener where, above the blackboard that held the flag. And then there was a box of maps, too, above the blackboard that you could open up the lid and pull the maps down.

Mullen: Were there any bookshelves around the front?

Miss Hobrock: No, as I thought about that there were not any books in that school. Only what the children provided or I provided.

Mullen: Did you have anything, you didn't have--like a library or a...

Miss Hobrock: No. I didn't have a library in either of my first two schools.

Mullen: How was the building heated?

Miss Hobrock: With a stove in the middle of the room, a big iron stove in the middle of the room.

Mullen: Was that a coal stove?

Miss Hobrock: Yes.

Mullen: Or wood?

Miss Hobrock: Coal, but they always supplied, ah, kindling to start a fire and then coal which every night the fire was supposed to go out at night, and then you were to get there early enough the next morning to build the fire and have it warm when the children got there.

Mullen: And that was your job to build the fire?

Miss Hobrock: That was my job.

Mullen: And make sure that it was out in the evening?

Miss Hobrock: Yes.

Mullen: How was the schoolroom lighted?

Miss Hobrock: Just with those windows. Now I presume there was some kind of lamps in there, coal oil or something similar to that because, ah, we had a Christmas program at night and then we did have some spelling matches and ciphering matches so I know there would have to be some lamps, but I can't recall what that was.

Mullen: OK. You have given a pretty general arrangement of the room, pretty good general arrangement,

can you think of anything else about it, like were there two rows of desks or more than two rows?

Miss Hobrock: As I recall there was one long row on the north side and one long row on the south side and then there were, of course, the desks weren't all the same size. They graduated from the larger down to the smaller and the smaller were in front and then I think there was a short row of desks on either side that wouldn't extend too close to the stove.

Mullen: Where did the children hang their coats?

Miss Hobrock: Well, there was, ah...ah..., on that particular... In that particular school there was, ah, what they called a cloak room and it was at the... As you entered there was a cloak room there and some kind of cupboard where they could put their dinner pails. And then they hung their coats, ah, they had, ah, some kind of hangers on the walls and they hung their coats and left their boots there.

Mullen: Was this schoolhouse like most of the other schoolhouses in the area or was it, did it have any particular differences?

Miss Hobrock: No, there were, ah, any that I recall, were just alike, that... Some of them were larger,

but the one that were at District 77, they had a cloak room built on, that is, to the front where, but this, but this one didn't have.

Mullen: What were some of the physical problems of the schoolhouse?

Miss Hobrock: It was, it was hard to heat. I recall that. And when they'd come in with, from walking in the rain and playing in the snow and their mittens and their coats would be damp so they'd put them all around the stove to dry. And then as I recall, it had a real poor floor in it, too. It wasn't hardwood. It was just, I presume pine, and it was very hard to sweep.

Mullen: Can you think of any other problems any of the other schoolhouses might have had where you taught?

Miss Hobrock: Well, after I left District 77 and went over to District 28, that was a new brick building which had a basement, a play area, and ah, then it had a library room. It was a, just a new school, probably hadn't been built more than five years and it had a real good floor. Then when I went to District 1, it was a better school, too. It was a newer school, and it had hardwood floors, but the seating arrangements were the same, at the same kind of desks.

Mullen: Who was in charge of the upkeep of the school, like if it had to be painted or repaired in some way?

Miss Hobrock: Well, that was the school board. The clerk and the president and the treasurer. And they would do that through the summer and they would, ah, they would clean the school real well before school entered. They'd take a, take a couple of days and clean it and paint it if they thought it was necessary and that was, of course, paid for out of the tax money.

Mullen: How did the schoolhouse get the water supply?

Miss Hobrock: There was a pump outside any school I ever taught. There was a pump outside the building. And there was always a sidewalk that went out to that.

Mullen: Did you keep water inside the building then?

Miss Hobrock: When it got cold you would. But as I recall now, there were just two or three tin cups and everybody drank out of those and then, when we'd come from play why we'd just go to the pump and everybody'd just get them a drink, but when it got cold, then we brought the water in, in a bucket.

Mullen: Was the schoolhouse ever used for any purpose other than education?

Miss Hobrock: Not any schoolhouse I ever taught in.

Mullen: OK. The first year that you taught, do you remember when your school year began?

Miss Hobrock: It began the first Monday In September and it would end about the third Friday in April.

There were twenty days in the month and if you missed a day, why you made that up. Thanksgiving day was made up. Christmas vacation had to be made up.

Christmas day had to be made up. And we never thought of getting Labor Day or...

Mullen: Was the school year divided into like certain grading periods, six week periods or nine weeks?

Miss Hobrock: Every twenty days you sent out a report card to your parents.

Mullen: How did the children get to school? Do you remember how far they had to travel?

Miss Hobrock: They walked. Everybody walked. I can never recall any rural school I ever taught where parents brought children. Most of them walked. And I would say at I X L the most farthest anyone had to walk would be a mile.

Mullen: Did they all manage to get there on time?

Miss Hobrock: Yes, and they were real, their attendance was good, too.

Mullen: In the first school that you taught, do you remember how many students you had?

Miss Hobrock: Well, I had, that year when I went there I was supposed to have, ah, let me see, I think I was supposed to have ten, twelve, but when I went there, there were two families that were moving out, but they started to school and I think they went possibly two or three weeks and then both families moved out, so that year then, I had ten students.

Mullen: What grades were they in?

Miss Hobrock: As near as I can remember they were in the, ah, I had two first graders and three second graders and one fourth grader and then they were in the seventh and eighth grade. I never taught a school that had all eight grades. I never did.

Mullen: Were the majority of the students of a particular religion or nationality?

Miss Hobrock: No.

Mullen: Just a mixture?

Miss Hobrock: They were just a mix... Most of them were protestant but, and they were all Americans.

Mullen: I would like for you to talk a little bit about the dress and overall appearance of the students. Take the girls first and then the boys.

Miss Hobrock: Well, of course, the girls all wore dresses. And they would, they were, wore them long sleeves and they, ah, the dresses were longer then, than we would imagine children wearing them today. And their hair, I had no children that wore, at that particular time, that had bobbed hair. They all wore long--in braids. And they were all, they came from, ah, I would judge, moderate income families. They always came nice and clean and they always had a new dress for the first day of school, the girls did, new dress and new shoes. And that's, that's about all I remember about the way they...

Mullen: Do you remember anything about the boys?

Miss Hobrock: Well, the boys always wore overalls and shirts. And they, ah, as I recall, those boys were really neat looking boys and they always kept their hair well combed and cut. I know their parents cut the hair, but at least it was cut.

Mullen: Did they start the year with a new pair of shoes, too?

Miss Hobrock: Yes, oh yes, they always had new overalls and new shirts and new shoes.

Mullen: Did the students have to pay anything to go to school?

Miss Hobrock: No, it was free.

Mullen: Were there any organizations similar to our PTA that we have today?

Miss Hobrock: No, I never did teach in a rural school where they had that.

Mullen: Did you ever have meetings for all the parents to get together to see what the school was like?

Miss Hobrock: Well, no, they came to visit school, always came to visit and I just never did know when they would come to visit.

Mullen: Just during the regular school day?

Miss Hobrock: Uh huh. Just sometime during the day and as I said, we had Christmas programs and we had spelling matches and ciphering matches, but that was as far as, ah, we never had any meetings with parents.

Mullen: Can you describe one of those programs or matches in particular?

Miss Hobrock: Well, we'd, ah, the programs, I can't recall anything about music because we didn't have a musical instrument, but I presume they sang, ah, probably carols, or something that we all knew. And then we'd have each one get up and what we'd call speak a piece at that time, and, ah, then we'd probably have the older ones in some..., a short, we called

them dialogues in those days, but in short plays. And the parents were very appreciative of anything that you did for their family.

Then when we would have our spelling and ciphering matches, well, I would ask someone, two different people in the community to choose up sides and they'd choose the people that were there and I'd pronounce the words and then see... The last person that... They'd go down when they couldn't spell a word. And then the last person that stood up, why he was the winner. And then that would be the way with the ciphering. We usually just kept the same sides for the ciphering matches, too. And, of course, that was... They'd get up and choose whether they wanted addition or subtraction, multiplication or division. The one they were the best in, that's the one they would choose to do, of course.

Mullen: Did the students get real excited about a ciphering match or a spelling match?

Miss Hobrock: Well, I think they did. Yes, uh huh, because that was the first year that they'd had anything like that in that school.

Mullen: OK. Can you name all of the subjects that you taught that first year, and do you remember your schedule, or in what order you taught them?

Miss Hobrock: Well, as near as I, as I was thinking about that, I always had, ah...ah..., reading first thing in the morning because I felt, I feel that's most important. And then after recess, why that was, ah...ah..., time for our math. And then after the noon hour, why, ah, I would have reading for the smaller groups and then we had what we called language. We had a book starting with the third grade. The third grade had what was called a language book and the third and the fourth and the fifth grade had that and then the sixth, seventh, and eighth had grammar, where we taught them the parts of speech and then in the, after the last recess that was when we had geography for the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades and history for the seventh and eighth. And then we'd have spelling. Spelling was always the last thing in the day.

Mullen: Do you remember much about your textbooks that you used?

Miss Hobrock: No, I tried to think about it. I just tried my best to think what was the name of the books that we used in reading and I just could not recall. I know I taught those, all the time I taught in the same ones, but they were approved by the state. We

didn't have, you didn't have the chance to choose what you wanted.

Mullen: Do you remember anything about a geography book? Did they have many maps in them or...

Miss Hobrock: Well, yes. And, ah, of course, let me see, the fourth, fifth, and sixth, that was mostly Kansas geography. Seventh grade was world geography, sixth and seventh grade were world geography. And, of course, there was learning the states and their capitals, that was absolutely necessary.

Mullen: Did you study history right along with geography?

Miss Hobrock: Yes.

Mullen: American history?

Miss Hobrock: Uh huh, but there were two separate books for it.

Mullen: Do you remember anything else about any of your subjects? Language arts? Or did you have a health class?

Miss Hobrock: No. Well let me see. Yes, we had what was physiology. I hadn't thought about that, but we did have what was called physiology. And that was just for the eighth grade, though. When we get down there a ways, well I'll tell you why we had to have those. Why don't you ask another question?

Mullen: OK. How did you get your school supplies?

Miss Hobrock: I bought them myself for the first three years.

Mullen: What were some of the supplies that you bought?

Miss Hobrock: Well, ah, we had, ah, I always had some kind of, ah, construction paper. While we didn't have such a thing as an art class, but we did have drawing paper for the smaller children and then construction paper to make, oh, Halloween and Thanksgiving, those different designs to put on the walls to decorate for, because it was important that you decorate your schoolroom for the different holidays, but I bought that myself.

Mullen: Did the students bring their own scissors and crayons or pencils or did you use crayons?

Miss Hobrock: No, I furnished the scissors and the crayons, but they did furnish their pencils and their tablets.

Mullen: How often did you meet with the school board or your school administrator?

Miss Hobrock: I never, I can't ever remember meeting with the school board ever. Ah, except just when they'd come to something at the school. We never had a meeting. Of course, our school administrator

was the county superintendent and, ah, he, he came at least, once every semester and, ah, he visited, he always visited a half a day. He would bring his own lunch and he'd visit a half a day and, ah, then every month you had to send him, ah, a record. And, ah, they were, they were white and I judge they were oh, about five inches by ten inches. And on that was every child's name, how many days they'd been in school, and, ah, all their grades, and had you inspected the boys' and the girls' toilets at least once a week and swept them out once a week, and, ah, how many visitors you'd had. It was really, as I think about that now, that was really complicated. That must have taken really a lot of time because you had to figure out their average daily attendance for the boys and for the girls.

Mullen: Did you have to report to him on what you had been teaching?

Miss Hobrock: Yes.

Mullen: The exact subject matter?

Miss Hobrock: It asked, did I have reading every day and math every day? The back of it was just questions that you had to answer.

Mullen: Did you have a principal?

Miss Hobrock: No.

Mullen: None at all. You were in charge of the school?

Miss Hobrock: I was in charge of the school.

Mullen: While you were there, but then you had your superintendent that came by to check on you?

Miss Hobrock: Yes, and you could always contact him if you needed anything.

Mullen: OK. Our next question. What texts did you use? You've talked about them already. Do you have anything else to say about your texts?

Miss Hobrock: No.

Mullen: Or describe them in any way? You said at first you didn't have a library, either, that the students used and some of your later schools you did. Can you tell me a little bit about those?

Miss Hobrock: Well, let's see. When I went to, ah, Mayview to teach in 1926, and they had an excellent library. And that was the same year that the county started a library. It was a state law that every school should pay into the county five dollars a year and then that money was used to buy library books. And then you could go to Osborne, it was in Osborne, and you could go to Osborne, the county

superintendent's office, and check out as many books as you wanted and you could keep those as long as you needed to. You were allowed to let the children take them home for a week at a time, but up until I went to Mayview, well, we had no library books except, now as our, our family had a good library and I did take books from home that I let the children, the older children, could take home and read and, ah, in the, and then I bought books, too, that I could, that they could take home and read.

Mullen: Did any of the families have a collection of books that they would use or bring to school?

Miss Hobrock: Well, not, not that first year. I'm sure none of those people had any books at all that their children could use.

Mullen: Did some later?

Miss Hobrock: But when I went to Round Mound in 1924, why those people were... They had books. They were, ah, more educated themselves than in the first school I taught, and I know the family that I stayed with, boarded with there at Round Mound, they had an excellent library for their family.

Mullen: What were some of the rules that you had for school?

Miss Hobrock: Well, I think, as I think about it now, especially in my later years of teaching, I think my rules were pretty steep.

Mullen: Can you name some of them?

Miss Hobrock: Well, I never did allow children to get up and move around wherever they wanted to and they couldn't, they didn't. I did not allow them to whisper and, ah, unless I knew a child broke a point off of his pencil, he could not sharpen it in school time. And I did try to keep them from leaving the room and going to the bathrooms. If I thought, if I thought it was necessary, I would let them do that, but if they got outdoors it was hard to get them back in sometimes. And I know now that my rules that I had were too severe, but I softened up as I finished my forty-fifth year. I softened up.

Mullen: Did you give them a list of rules at the beginning of the year or did you just kind of talk about it as things came up?

Miss Hobrock: No, I just told them the first day of school there were some things they could do and some things they could not do. And I just, I never, ah, had really any serious discipline problems, I just never did.

Mullen: If you would have had a discipline problem, what could you have done to handle it? What were some of the ways?

Miss Hobrock: Well, I would have talked to them and explained things, and if it would have really been serious, I expect I would have paddled them. But I paddled very few children. I've shaken a few.

Mullen: How were the teachers expected to conduct themselves in the community?

Miss Hobrock: Well, of course, teachers were really regarded by most of the people as somebody a little bit above them, really they did. And, ah, you were supposed to be an example to the community and to the children, and in either one of those first schools that I taught, they were opposed to dancing and drinking and smoking. And of course, I did none of those things. And they were opposed to people going to shows or, ah, things like that. And I usually, if I had to go back on Sunday night, they did have church on Sunday night, and I always attended church on Sunday night with them, but I always went home for the weekend. I never stayed over. We weren't expected to.

Mullen: Did anyone ever tell you what they expected you to do or how you... the rules that you were supposed to follow?

Miss Hobrock: No. No one ever.

Mullen: It was just sort of understood in the community?

Miss Hobrock: Yes, uh huh, uh huh.

Mullen: What were some of your extracurricular activities?

Miss Hobrock: Of my own personal ones?

Mullen: Uh huh. Outside of school.

Miss Hobrock: Well, I loved to read and, ah, and the second and third year I taught when I stayed with the Lundy family, I just had excellent, they had an excellent library and I read a lot. And then I always did like to crochet. I didn't go much then, go places much. The first year I taught, I did date and planned that to be my only year I taught, but, ah, and so then I did date, but I was careful to get home.

Mullen: You mentioned that you went to church. Were there a lot of church activities or was it just once a week?

Miss Hobrock: Oh no, that was the Church of God and that was a very, very strict church and, ah, they had

church Sunday morning and Sunday night and Wednesday night. And that was, as I recall, they didn't even visit among themselves too much.

Mullen: Did they have their own church or did they meet in the school building?

Miss Hobrock: They had their own church. It was just across the road from the school building, I X L. It was just across the road from the school building.

Mullen: At the end of the school year, what type of graduation exercises were performed?

Miss Hobrock: Well, every, the first couple of years I taught, why, ah, the seventh grade took, ah, county examinations, were called county examinations, but they were put out by the state and they took it in reading and math and Kansas history and physiology. I think, were those only the four? And then the eighth grade took it, then, in reading and math and history and I don't recall what else--English grammar. And they had to pass that with what was considered seventy, a grade of seventy, at that time. Or they had to come back to the rural school until they were sixteen. That was, those tests, examinations, were given in the Natoma Grade School and

every seventh and eighth grader had to go and take them and then if they graduated at the end of the eighth grade, why then they had graduation exercises, the whole county, in Osborne. And everyone would go there and they'd have a speaker and give out county diplomas.

Mullen: Then where would the kids go the next year?

Miss Hobrock: Well then, they would go to high school and most of the, well, all of them did go to Natoma, from I X L.

Mullen: Did any of them stop going to school after the eighth grade then, and not go on to high school? Or do you remember that most of them went on?

Miss Hobrock: I think, out of that first year, out of those ten, there was, there were only one, one girl that didn't go on to high school and she was old for her age, she was an adopted child and she wasn't too good of a student and her parents, her foster parents, were not interested in her going on. But all of the rest of them went on to high school. The James family moved away before their children were old, went into high school, but the rest of them...

Mullen: When you were talking about your regular schedule in a day, you mentioned recess. Can you

tell me some of the things the kids did during recess?

Miss Hobrock: Well, they'd go out to play. Now I loved to teach school and I loved the kids, but oh, that, that playground. I just did not like any kind of playground duty. But that was one thing when you were hired you were told to be out on the playground with the children and so every recess and every noon hour you were out there and I played with them, not because I wanted to, but because I knew it was my duty and I felt it, the duty, to do that. And we played, if anybody was lucky enough to have a ball and a bat, they brought it to school and we played ball and, ah, we used to play Steal Sticks and Dare Base. On that first, in that first school, in the first two schools that I taught, there was absolutely no kind of playground equipment, but even the grounds weren't level, too level. And the second and third year I taught, we played in a pasture across from... Crawled under the fences and played in the pasture. And then, of course, in the winter time when we'd have snow, we'd play Fox and Geese. They'd bring their sleds and we'd slide down hills. Snowball.

All in all, it was an enjoyable time even though I didn't like it and I don't think any of the children realized that I didn't like it.

Mullen: You named two games--Steal Sticks and what was the other one?

Miss Hobrock: Dare Base.

Mullen: What is Steal Sticks?

Miss Hobrock: Well, you chose up two sides and you had, we'd always put, there would be a dividing line, but we'd have to put sticks or boards for that dividing line and there were seven sticks, each side had seven little sticks. And they were quite a distance from the dividing line, and, ah, you'd, ah, they'd try to steal the sticks. One side would try to steal from the other side. And if you got caught by someone while you were trying to steal a stick, you had to stand on the stick pile until someone ran and got you off. And you couldn't steal a stick as long as a child was on, someone was on the sticks. And then if it ever ended, which it hardly ever did, why then the one who had the most sticks, they won the game.

Mullen: Can you tell me about Dare Base?

Miss Hobrock: Now Dare Base was similar to that, except ah, you had a dividing line and you'd choose

up sides and you had a base. We usually took something and drew a line or a pen for each side to stand on and then somebody, you had a board out here in front. Here was your pen out here and then you had your board out here and this was where you'd come and they'd come over and they were going to touch this dare, this base, and you couldn't chase them until they had touched that. Then when they'd touched it, then you chased them back. Well, then if they got caught, they had to be on your side until you... Maybe they'd go back and get caught on their own side. But it was fun, if you liked to play.

Mullen: Is there anything else that you would like to mention, that you remember about your teaching?

Miss Hobrock: Well, I can't think of...

Mullen: When we were talking about the subjects, you mentioned physiology and you said you'd say something about that later.

Miss Hobrock: Well, that was, I meant to say, that, of course, that was one thing that the seventh grade had to pass in this county examination. And if they didn't, then you had to teach that to them the next year. Now the Kansas history was all... Seventh

graders took that too, and that was an interesting subject to me. Of course, I took that myself when I was in the rural schools and then there was... Oh I forgot, there was a book called the civics. I wonder how you got all those, when I was making out that, I wondered how you got all of those in? You had to teach those every day.

Mullen: What all did you teach in civics?

Miss Hobrock: Well, that was how the, about the national government, about the departments of national government, and, ah, the president and his, the three departments of the government and what comprised those three departments. And, ah, then they had to learn, of course, who the president and the vice-president was, and we had to learn all the cabinet members. Of course, there weren't quite as many as there is now. And I, but I forgot about that. I just wondered how I got all of that in. I know I did because you had to say that you did, but you surely, you didn't have very long classes.

Mullen: Do you have anything else that you would like to say about your teaching way back in the 1920's?

Miss Hobrock: No. The happiest times that I had, happiest times that I had in teaching, in the rural

school, was at Round Mound. And, ah, that was a large school, but they were nice, such, it was a nice community to teach in. And then when I went to District 1, over south and west of Osborne... Those were, I taught there three years, and those were really happy times and I enjoyed my first, my first year, I really did.

As I sat at the hostess desk in the hospital a couple of weeks ago, a nice looking young man came up and, ah, asked me if I knew who he was. I said, "No, I don't have any idea." And then he told me that he had been one of my first graders in Natoma. And he said, "And you recall that you started my father the first year you taught school." And I said, "I recall starting your father and I also recall starting you." And I... Teaching school was just wonderful.

Mullen: How many years did you teach?

Miss Hobrock: I taught forty-five years.

Mullen: When did you retire?

Miss Hobrock: I retired in 1970.

Mullen: What school were you teaching in then?

Miss Hobrock: I was teaching in Haviland. I taught my last twenty-two, twenty-three, twenty-two years in Haviland. First grade in Haviland.

Mullen: And since you have retired, what are some of the activities that you have been involved in?

Miss Hobrock: Well, I have traveled. I have been in every state in the union. And I have, including Alaska and Hawaii, and I have been in every province of Canada. And, ah, I have taught Sunday School classes, but I have given that up, because I don't have the patience that I should have. And I am a volunteer worker in, at the Hadley Hospital.

Mullen: How long have you lived in Hays?

Miss Hobrock: Fourteen and a half years.

Mullen: Ever since you retired?

Miss Hobrock: When I retired I moved here to this apartment. I wanted to move to a place where I had a doctor and a hospital. And of course, I am close to my family. When I moved here I had two sisters here, but now I'm the only one that's left. And my brother lives at Natoma. And I have enjoyed my years of retirement. I have, I have, ah, made over 250 Raggedy Ann and Raggedy Andy dolls in my retirement. And I have no idea how many quiet books I have made for children. Because children, that's my life. Children and young people. I do not know how to cope with people my own age. I do not. I

have never had close friends that are my own age, since I have been out of high school. Because my parents were young people and I love kids.

Mullen: If you have nothing else to say, that is all I have for the interview.

Miss Hobrock: Thank you, I have enjoyed this very much.

Mullen: Thank you.