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### Interview with Charles C. King

Norman E. Mai

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1962  
no. 19  
Index

CONTRIBUTOR: C.C. King  
INTERVIEWER: Norman Mai  
Hays, Kansas 1962

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Interview with C. C. King, born June 2, 1881 in Hays, Kansas. Lived in Hays his entire life. Interview by Norman E. Mai, on May 14, 1962.

I. The following is a tape recorded interview with Mr. C. C. King of Hays, Kansas. This interview is being taped at 3 3/4 inches per second on single track by Norman E. Mai, on May 14, 1962 in Hays, Kansas. Now then, Mr. King, I might start by getting a bit of information on you. Your name is C. C. King?

N. Yeah.

I. And you were born where, sir?

N. Born in Hays, Kansas, on the second day of June eighteen hundred and eighty one.

I. Eighty one, I see. Now a, your education level, how far did you go in school, sir?

N. Seventh grade, middle of the seventh grade.

I. Where all have you lived? Have you lived all your life near Hays?

N. All Hays.

I. Let's see, your father's name?

N. My father's name was Fredrick William, his right name was Coenig but he changed it to King when he joined the Fifth United States Cavalry.

I. I see, and your mother's name?

N. Mother's name was Margaret King or Miller, before she was married it was Miller or Muller, M-u-l-l-e-r.

I. And your father's place of birth.

N. My father?

I. Where was your father born?

N. He was born in the city of Canishburg in Dansey country.

I. In Germany?

N. In Germany.

I. And your mother was born there also?

N. Born in the city of Worms near the Rhine, in Germany.

I. And your grandfather's place of birth, I suppose, was in Germany.

N. Oh, I don't know nothing about that.

I. Let's see, a, I guess thats about it so far as that a, that form of information goes. Now I understand, sir, that you have a; how long have you been in the barber business?

N. The barber business?

I. Yeah.

N. I'm working in my sixty forth year.

I. Sixty four years.

N. I started the 18th of January, 1898.

I. And, did you have a regular babershop?

N. Oh yes. I've run four chair shops, three chair shops, two chair shops, and finally the help got so dog gone bad that I just run one chair.

I. In the early days, did you do quite a bit of business for the Army?

N. Not the army.

I. Not the army?



N. No, the army when the fort was abandoned in a '87, I think, and see I was just a young kid. But that's when I started a barbering was the 18th of January, 1898.

I. Well what are some of your recollections as far as the early days here in Hays go? Did you run across any interesting characters in your business?

N. Well, I don't know, in what regard?

I. Oh, well some people that were perhaps quite famous or renowned.

N. Oh! In the early days it so happened that my father joined the Fifth United States Cavalry, and Buffalo Bill was scout for his company and he served under a Major Carr, and Lieutenant Eaton. He was a trumpeter. My father was a trumpeter for the Fifth United States Cavalry. When he enlisted in New York, he picked up the trumpet that was on the officers table there and he wanted to know if he dared to play it. He says, "Well, I can play it" he says, "I can give you all the German calls. My brother was a trumpeter in the German Cavalry. I know all the German calls and if someone would tutor me or teach me I could learn to play the American calls." So they gave him a tutor for six weeks and then assigned him to the Company A59 Fifth Cavalry as a trumpeter. As far as Buffalo Bill, there is very few people that have met him personally in this country. But when I was a young boy before I was in the barber business, I was a delivery boy for Mr. Kirk at the butcher shop, and he took me and Mr. Hoover took Joe Basgall to Buffalo Bill's Circus at Salina. So the older folks, they went to, into the side shows and told Joe Basgall and I to go look at the mirrory which we did. And we got separated so I went over

to the main tent and Buffalo Bill was standing there. And I said, "So your William Coty." He said, "Yes." I said, "I bet you don't know who I am." He said, "No young man, I don't." I said, "I bet you knew my father. He was trumpeter for Fifth Cavalry which you was scout for." He said, "His name was Billy King." I said, "Yeah." Well, he wanted to know if I was going to the circus. I said, "Sure." He said, "You buy any tickets." I said, "No." He said, "You're not buying any." So he called an usher over and they had a three ring circus, and they seated me in the center section in about the center of the seats, and told the ushers there says, "Tell the boys when they pass the pink lemon aid around and on thing and another, that it's on the house, this boy gets anything he wants." So we went to the circus that way. First thing come along I took Joe Basgill sitting along side me, he was a delivery boy for Mr. Hoover, and I said, "Well, we'll have two popcorn balls." And pretty soon they come along with the pink lemon aid. We took two glasses of that, well we repeated that two or three times when Mr. Kirk, the fellow I was working for said, "Well why don't you buy some for us?" I said, "Well you got plenty of money you can buy your own." So we seen the circus.

I. I imagine that was quite a spectacular in those days, to go to those wild west shows.

N. Well, he was quite a shot. He would shoot glass balls, ya know, and a with a 22 rifle but he had real fine shot in there.

I. Oh!

N. And so that's how they burst those balls in there. It would take a pretty good, take an expert to shoot glass balls with a rifle, just one. And shoot over his head and one thing and another, shoot at little glass balls the shot up. But it was all done with bird shot in the,

in the little shells. Well, that was one things. I also I can remember when the soldiers left here, when the Fort was abandoned. Right across from the First National Bank, where it stands now on the other side of the railroad track, there was a big elevator there. And they had set out two cars on the side track by this elevator, and they loaded up. I seen them load up the last two carloads of things from the Fort, mostly cooking utensils and cook stoves and stuff like that they had in their mess kitchen, you see. And then there was another thing, Colonel Yarg passed away. And I can remember how the fifteenth infantry band escorting into the depot to ship him back to bury him. And they played the march, the dead march ends all. I can remember that, and I can remember when they, you could hear the band play here in town from the Fort, you see. Are you acquainted with the place over there?

I. The Fort?

N. Yes.

I. Yeah, I've been out there.

N. There was one place, a long row of officer's building there, that's where the officers were. And today, I think there is just two of 'em. There was three of those buildings moved over, one was moved over right east or west of the city hall. That one's been torn down and Mark Stromar lives in one of those officer's buildings on the south part of town. And over here on, this is 16th, about 14th street, maybe 13th street there is one of the officer's buildings there. The first party that owned it or had it moved over was an elderly feller, a bachelor and his old maid sister live there. And that was the second, or third building that, of the officers that was moved over here. And their parade ground was north of the officer's row of buildings. I can remember where the



their hospital was. And they had a saloon there and then the old barns was down north and east of the parade grounds, the horse barns and stuff. And a we used to bather mother on her bakery. We used to take quite a bit of pie and cake, watermelon and stuff over there and sell it to the soldiers. We could buy, in the early days there, the Russians planted the regular Russian watermelon seed that they brought from Russia here along with straw piles. And they would bring them double wagon box full. Sell them to you for six for a quarter and we'd take 'em, put 'em in the, I would take baker box out of the wagon and load up a load of these watermelon and go up to the Fort. And those soldiers would just buy 'em up like that, ya know. They'd throw ya a dime or throw ya a quarter, keep the change. And we bought 'em six for a quarter. And pies, my gosh, we'd haul pies over there, and they went out like hot cakes and buns.

I. Do you remember any stories that your father used to tell about the cavalry? What were some of your father's experiences?

N. No. All his, all his traveling work was Mexican border work. And then after Custer's Massacree, the Fifth Cavalry went up in through there and did a little cleaning up. They didn't do any fighting. Their work, the Fifth Cavalry, was pretty near all patrol work. There was a, know about some of the old buildings here in Hays, you take well this little tobacco store that was in the Kruger building right across the a, well you know where Kessler's laundry is?

I. Yes.

N. And then west and then that big stone building on the corner.

I. Yes.



N. Well, that was built by two Kruger boys. They came to America from Germany here, and they ran a store here. Oh, it was a kind of a, well it had a little of everything. And they would trade merchandise for buffalo hides and stuff, and then ship those buffalo hides to New York. And that is how Mr. Kruger married a lady by the name of Kruger in Germany. And she and my mother were great friends. And after they were married about a year then they went back to Germany for a visit to Miss Kruger. Her name was Kruger before she married to him and no relation. And she looked up mother and persuaded her to come to Hays with her. There wasn't any German talking people here in those days and she was pretty broken English, ya know. But she married this Kruger. And mother came here. She came to Hays in 1872, and father was discharged at Fort Hays in 1875. And shortly there after he and mother were married. And to that family there was five boys and one girl, in which the first boy passed away when he was young, infancy. And then my brother, Frank, was born. Then between my brother Frank and myself there was a girl and she died in infancy, and I lived. Then my brother Harry and then brother George was born. So Frank and Harry and mother and father have all passed away and there is just two of us left of the King bunch. You see we had our name, when our father joined the Fifth United States Cavalry, his right name was Coenig, which means King. So that's how we come by the name King. Well, this a, this Kruger lived in this house right south of the passenger depot. And all those trees that was planted there, those big trees, my mother planted and carried water from the court house way up here in Hays down to water those trees. And she raised by hand the

last buffalo calf that was ever raised in Ellis County. And that grew to quite a big animal. And it would come up town and in the early days they used to have their apples and potatoes and cabbage in baskets out in front of the store. And he'd help himself to what he wanted and leave the rest out in the street. And he finally got to be a nuisance and someone killed him. But mother, you see, this Mr. Kruger had traded groceries, merchandise for this buffalo calf, and mother raised it with milk from a cow, you see.

I. Would he trade, would he give this Indian--did he get this buffalo from the Indians or, where did he get this calf?

N. Oh that. Some fellow caught it, you know, and traded it for merchandise. It was a big mercantile store there, had a little of everything. We'd trade hides and anything for something to eat.

I. So buffalo were fairly plentiful in those days?

N. Oh, yeah! Yeah, see they made money on those buffalo hides. The Kruger brothers finally dissolved partnership. And Fred Krugar, the younger brother of the two, built a store, grocery store right where this new building was put up here, just recently just opened up.

I. This Bargain Barn down there?

N. Right north of the mill there.

I. Oh, yeah that would be the Woolworth's store.

N. The Woolworth's. That's where Woolworths. He ran a store there and then the other brother, he went. He started a little grocery store right west, a little west of where Kessler's laundry is now. But finally Fred Kruger sold his store to the Hagggar brothers. And the Hagggar brothers sold the store a few years later to Mr. Hoover. And Mr. Hoover run it a

while and sold it to Joe Basgall which was his delivery boy. He and I was the ones that a, and Joe run it there for quite a while. And then finally he built on the corner with this Jack and Jill store. But I'll tell you the town has changed.

I. Yeah. I 'magine!

N. When the soldiers left here the population run down to 231 people. Now we're crowding around 12,000, I think. Was there anything else you wanted to know?

I. Well, let's see a, perhaps we might go back to your school days. Do you remember anything particularly interesting that happened during your school days?

N. During my school days? Well, I can tell you one story, but it wouldn't do for print.

I. Well, it won't be in print.

N. It won't?

I. No.

N. Well, I was in the fifth grade, and Miss Andrews was our teacher. And we had to have our pictures taken, out on the steps of the old school building and during recess. We'd pull flaps of pants, and they tore all the buttons off my pants. And I did finally find a safety pin to bring it over and pin it together. And then we had to march out. I wanted in the hind row. And Miss Andrew says, "I want you up in the front row Charlie." I says, "okay." By that time I had my legs cross-legged so my pants would stay closed. Well she took the picture and finally, she says, "It was a wonderful picture, but why in the world did you stand cross-legged." I says, "Miss Andrews you won't get mad if I tell you why."



She says, "No I won't get mad." "Well," I says, "If you had as many buttons torn off your pants as I did off mine, you'd stand cross-legged too." She says, "That'll be enough out of you." Then in the middle of the seventh grade, prior to that, whenever they had a little doing of some kind I always had to get up and preside. I had to greet the people as they come in and ask them to come again and so forth and so on. And I did that for two years, and finally I got into seventh grade and about the middle of the seventh grade. Miss Dean was teacher then, she says there, "Charlie," she says, "the superintendent of the school, the county superintendent will be here and I want you to get up there to my desk and greet him and welcome him and so forth and so on. I says, "Miss Dean, Miss Dean," I says, "why don't you give somebody else a chance. I've had it in two rooms, let somebody else do something." She says, "I'll give you to understand that I'm teaching this room. And if you think you can teach it, put your application in and maybe you can get you a job next year." I said, "I don't want to teach it and I'm not going to preside either." "Well," she says, "you are." I said, "I'm not." "Now Miss Dean," I says, "your folks live out on the Saline River. Yeah, and they drive two Texas ponies to town, one's a gray and one's a bay, and they have half rope and half shane harness." I said, "Do you know something wrong with those horses?" She says, "No, not in particular." "Do you notice something wrong with their back, they're sway back." She said, "I didn't notice it but they're probably a little bit." I said, "Do you know what caused that?" "Why," she says, "what?" I says, "Riding them too young, and I don't want my back to get that way. So you can get somebody

else to do this for you." She says, "I'll give you to understand that I'm teaching this room." I says, "I'll give you to understand that I'm not going to serve." So I started to picking up my books. She says, "What are you going to do?" I says, "I'm going home, quitting school." She says, "You can't do that" I says, "Why can't I?" I said, "You're in the east end of the room, I'm here, it was on the second story, I'm here by the door at the head of the steps. And you can't get from there over here while I get down those steps." So I picked up my books and I said, "Now Miss Dean," I says, "you'll regret this someday. Here's one boy that you drove away from school." So I never went back to school. Then my father had me grease pans and work in the bakery. And I worked there quite a little while so I could roll out loaves of bread and buns. And finally one day he had me mix up a batch of dough, an 180 pound band. He went to step out somewhere, I guess to get a bottle of beer. And he come back and I said, "Dad," I said, "do you know what it takes to make a baker, you know." He said, "No." I said, "A stiff back and a poor mind, and I'm not baking. I'm not working in a bakery no more." "Well, you're going back to school." I said, "No, I'm not. I'm going to work for Schereck. I'm going down to the grocery business and I'm going to learn the meat business. Learn how to butcher and cut up meat and do that." So I worked for him up until I went into the barber business. Now that's how I happened to quit school. But Miss Dean, it bothered her a whole lot. She quit teaching. She went to Oklahoma to take care of her brother's children, her brother, her sister-in-law had died. And finally she got down sick and she prayed the Lord to save her long enough to make it all

right with me for what she had done. Well, I forgot all about it. I was running a shop of my own, and I happened to go past and she was setting there in a buggy and her sister. And by the way at that time they lived right across the street from us here. So she was staying with her sister. I was passing them, coming home, and her sister says, "Charlie, just a minute." She says, "Marie wants to see you." That was Maraar, we called her. And she told me that she had prayed that she would be able to see me and make good for driving me away from school. I said, "Well, I'm doing all right." I says, "I have a good home, I'm married. I have a good wife and I have two children." And I says, "We're getting along fine." I says, "There's one thing that you can do, to make it good. You're staying with your sister across the street, and I want you to come over and meet my wife and my two kids." And they become great friends. But Miss Dean told me, she says, "Any time you want and need any money, she was wealthy, you need any money, wire me at my expense and I'll wire back to you. I'll do anything to square for driving you away from school." Well, I says, "It's all over now," I says, "I'm making it all right." But she got acquainted with the folks here, and boy they got quite friendly.

I. Well, I don't know, it seems to me that perhaps in, in your barbering business you run across some pretty tall stories. And do you happen to remember any of these tall stories, some of these characters might have told?

N. They're not, I wouldn't let them talk any of this spicy stuff in the shop.



I. Well, I mean oh, about the weather, you know how bad a storm was or something like this, how bad the crops were and, or how good the crops were and stories along this line.

N. Well, I don't know, I didn't, didn't care for this muddy stuff in my shop at all. Anybody got a little long and got to swearing, I said, "That will be enough out of you. If you got to do that, go outside and do it." I said, "You know that door is open. People going back and forth and the people on the outside don't like to hear that kind of talk and I know I don't, so you cut it out if you want to stay in or get out. Bruce Gross, goes down there, he worked for me, he's been a pretty good barber. Those kids that, I had several of them that went to school. Well, they started them on the shining chair and made barbers out of them and everyone of 'em picked up a different occupation. I said, "It'll work you through school all right, it'll help you through and Bruce he was kind of, pretty good with the gloves, I used to have gloves down there we'd do a lot of boxing. And there was a fellow by the name of Harveston and he come in and he thought he was quite a boxer. Well I said, "I don't want to box you," I said, "this kid will." They went down to the old city hall and Bruse just peppered him all over and come back and well, I said, "How did you kids make out?" He said, "Oh, that boy's pretty good," and he got kind of smart and I roasted him a little bit and he said, "maybe you want some of it." Why, I said, "I'll take you on." He said oh, no thanks. A man by the name of Smith, he was quite a Baptist and Ray Scott was quite a cattle man, he bought cattle. Smith was setting up in the chair and Scott was setting on the laundry basket. Oh, I said, "Harveston," I said, "if you think you're so good and you want to put them on, I'll put

them on with you." So he put them on, I says "You folks if you want to see a little fun, if you got time to wait we'll show you a little fun." So Harveston made a pass at me and I ducked, it went over my shoulder. And I come back and I plastered him one on the nose and broke his nose and put one eye shut and the blood flww all over those fellows shirts and I hammered him two or three more times and Mr. Smith says, "Charlie I think he's got enough, you had better quit. You'll have blood all over the shop here." So I took him over to the basin and washed him up and told him to go up to Dr. Milco and have his nose set, I'd pay for it. "No," he says, "I asked for it, I got it," he says, "just let it grow the way it is." So I had an extra shirt in there that some fellow had left there through harvest time and didn't call for it. It just fit him I give him a clean shirt. But he, and then he was going to fix me after that, we had a little broom maker here, he was quite a boxer and he was going to train up to get me, ya know, Harveston was. He got kind of cute with his broom maker. And broom maker slugged him one and lifted him up on his work table and let him lay there til he come out of it. And then he come back to the shop, "Well," I says, "Harveston," I says, "did you come back for some more?" He said, "No, I've got it all taken out of me." He says, "ya know I went down to this broom maker and had him teach me and he a, he laid me out so I said, "I can't box, I just won't box any more." There is one thing that every kid should learn, is to learn how to box, how to protect himself. I'd have as high as a dozen little fellers 10 to 12 years old in the shop and I'd make 'em put on gloves for sport.

I. Did you, you were sort of a fight promoter then?

N. No, I wasn't, just for sport. Oh, I knew how to handle 'em,

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my two children. But I made my son and daughter both box. They'd box each other. And my daughter is teaching school now. And I said, "Golly it'll come in pretty handy. Sometime you run up against somebody that will get pretty smart and might take a pass at you. If he does you're ready to do something." So when she was teaching out at Oakley, they had a little entertainment there, colored boy sitting in the back end of the auditorium, and he was making quite a little noise back there. Ollie sent back and told him to sit down and behave himself that people like to hear what's going on. So he sit down. She came back said, "Where's your. . .?" He got up and some more of this and Ollie went back again and she says, "I told you to sit down and behave yourself." And he says, "So what!" And she says, "I'll show you so what!" She got a hold of his shirt and tore his collar open and sat him down in the seat. "Now you stay there, or I'll do worse than that." Well, the principal was afraid of this colored boy. And after the thing was over he said, "Miss King wasn't you afraid of this colored boy?" She said, "No, my dad taught me how to box." She said, "The vital thing to do to hit a fellow is to hit him under the jaw bone here. And you get that first hit in, and that's usually what the pays for the whole game, ya see. And like she says, "Furthermore, if that wouldn't get him why then I would kick him in the shins. You kick a nigger in the shins, and he can't take that either." So she never had any trouble with that colored boy after that. Anything they had to do, Christmas duties or anything, "Miss King can I help ya?" She says, "When I want you, I'll call you."

I. Well, do you have any a, do you have any contact with any other sports around here besides boxing?

N. Oh, I played baseball. I caught here for nine years on the first

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team. I was with a kid with a pair of blue jeans. I was standing there and this friend of mine that went to the circus with me, Joe Basgall, was catcher for the first team. I had done a lot of catching for the kids, ya know. I was standing there watching the game. And Joe had to put his right hand out to catch a ball, and it split it wide open. And they had no catcher. And, by gosh, they called me out there to catch for the first team. Well, I got out there, and the first ball was thrown. It was a wild one, and I had to stop it with one hand. This fellow on third base, two outs. Boy did that sting! This old doc had some arnican and lodin and stuff made up and he bathed my fingers in it. "I'll go back and catch." And from that time on I caught for nine straight years. Football, I played with the town team a couple of three seasons. All that time, I never got hurt in a football game.

I. They were pretty rough in those days.

N. Oh! We played Russell one time. And they had a preacher on the Russell team, a congregational preacher, thought he was a pretty good player. He weighed about 230, a big fellow. On the kick off he came and followed up the kick off. And he had to step on me. About ready to hit me but I side-stepped him, and he missed me, and he hit his shoulder in the ground. We was taught how to side-step, ya know, and one thing and another. And then the next time we kicked off and he was going to stop me, but I stepped on him and I hit him and he spun like a top. And down he went, and he laid there. After the half was over, he come over to me and he said, "Are you just big or are you just padded up?" I said, "You ought to know." Every time I go down to Russell in Banker's store there, and there's some stranger in there he, Banker got more kick out of that preacher getting knocked down and all and he'll

tell the people that story. There's the fellow that fixed that preacher. Well, we played baseball. I was drum major for bands here for years and years. Down at the museum at the college, you have my shackle and my drum major coat and my baton. I even drum majored your college band there under Harlem Morris.

I. When was this?

N. Huh?

I. When was this?

N. Oh, let's see. I started to drum majoring, nineteen hundred and one, with our Hays band we went to Kansas City to 904 Parade. That was in nineteen hundred. In nineteen one we went to Denver to the carnival parade there. And nineteen two we went to Washington D. C. with our band. That's when I started drum majoring before we went to Kansas City. In those days, the citizens went together and paid our round trip transportation to Kansas City and back, was \$16. Had to pull the car. And the citizens paid for our transportation to Washington D. C. At Washington D. C., we played, we went there and played one engagement to an old J. R. Encavant. And when we got through, we had to play seven engagements. We got \$6 an hour to play. We took one evening at Camp Roosevelt. They had it built out in little camps, you know, the different sections. And Camp Roosevelt, Sousa's band was supposed to play. But Sousa, three fellows that was in the 15th Infantry Band here at Hays at the Fort, came up and they wanted to know if there was anybody from Hays that they knew. I said, "Yes, I think there is. Our alto player, Jake Scheffs, played in your 15th Infantry Band, and our clarinet player, Wasinger, played in your 15th Infantry Band." So they was tickled to death to meet those boys. That was a long afternoon. And, after supper



we got a phone call, could we get together real quick and go over to Camp Roosevelt and play in place of Sousa's band because there was a lot of dignitaries that came over from the old country that Sousa's band had to entertain. So we got that job. And then we played in, they put on a naval parade for the old soldiers. And they needed one band and through three fellows, we got that job to be in that parade because our uniforms were very similar to the navy uniforms. And we had one parade there, we, the big parade, we reported to work, to play, at 9 o'clock in the morning at a certain place. We was there, and we never got in the parade until 2 o'clock in the afternoon. That's how big it was. It's sun alphabetically. The states were. We finally played that and the band let out and we were planning for Sousa. He put on a band concert. And gave us all a ticket and saved a row of seats for us, for our whole band to listen to the band concert and also bought tickets for us for a play, the White Slave. And that was the first time that was played. And it was played in the Academy of Music in Washington D. C. And we all had a seat to that free. And then the band was in Denver in the carnival parade. There was two little kids, two little girls about the same size, looked like they were twins. They come running along side us, "Mr. can we walk along side you?" We like the way your band plays and we like the way you handle your, they called it a stick ~~903~~. I says, "I don't care. Get on each side of me and go right along." And it so happened that these two kids were daughters of the wife of the head man of the music committee. So a, I don't know some how or another she found out these kids was with our band. And when we went into the arena to play well the little fellows ask, "Could you please play a cake walk for us?" I said, "Yeah, I think I can." So we cake walked through the arena with those

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little kids tagging along. Played Claud Johnson's cake walk in \_\_\_\_\_. And just as I was leaving the exit there was a couple of girls came down with a great big bunch of American roses, American beauty roses and give them to me. Because these little kids, oh, they got a hand when they went through the dance and the band played. Oh we did lots of funny things.

I. Well, lets see, perhaps we could go back a little bit farther again. Do you remember anything about the a, oh the social life here in Hays, the dances or box suppers or parties?

N. Oh yeah, we had a lot of box suppers and we used to have old fashioned dances we had, well we had two groups of people the high toner people that they called the "silk socks" and the clowner they called them "cotton socks". When you go to dances, if you went to a "cotton sock" dance you had to show that you had cotton socks on. "Silk socks" had to get out they don't belong to this group. Oh we did a lot of old fashioned things. Well in the early days, we used to have a lot of good old Russian \_\_\_\_\_. I been to 'em when they had their big lunchen, beer, beer by the keg, ya know. I didn't care for it.

I. Oh?

N. No. I don't drink any. I haven't drank since '98. Not a drop. Oh, we used to have old settlers picnics, and the old timers would get out and the band, our band would play for them. Then they would have a big quartet from over at Catherin come down and sing for them. I'll tell ya those boys could sing too. Course it was all German songs, but they had harmony. They could sing. Well, ah, we used to have a lot of, at our hotel, we used to have a lot of show troops stay with us, Uncle Tom's Cabin

and all them old shows, ya know? Yeah, Yes, sir, those days are gone, the early days. What else?

I. Well I don't know, you mentioned something about, a while back you mentioned something about harvest crews. Do you remember anything that you'd like to tell us?

N. Harvest crews? Oh yeah, there used to be harvest crews. They used the header and the header bars. I worked in the harvest field. Scratched around the stacks. Seventy-five cents a day, for one harvest. For the next harvest I drove the header for \$1.25 a day. I've shocked wheat back of an old binder that about every third bunch it would throw off the bundle would break, and you had to learn how to tie it with an old straw header, old straw or wheat. I could do that. I shoveled coal, I've hauled ice, I've helped put up ice. I was so doggoned poor and now in 1905 couldn't buy any overshoes, we didn't have any money. We had to put burlap sack around our shoes and tie it with binding twine. You'd get ice on 'em all through the day, hauling ice and at night time you'd have to stick your feet in the warming oven, the cook stove to thaw 'em out so you could get 'em on, get those old burlap sacks off your legs. Then you'd put them on the chair, back of the stove, so they could dry so you could use them the next morning. We got all 50 cents a day from daylight to dark.

I. Back in 1905 now were these hard times for everybody or were they depression times or what?

N. They were just hard times. Just hard times. The only picture since then was about as big as the whole house, you know. I've shoveled

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coal, John Shaffer and I, but that was before, before I went into the bakery. I've had this, before I worked for Schereck it was. John Shaffer and I, we shoveled all the coal for Treeky Shaffer, Yost's Mill, Harold's Mill, Ike Zeigler, and Swabs. We got a dollar a carload, course the cars weren't as big then as they are now, they were 28 foot cars. If you get a flat car that was all right. You could start at one end, ya know, and have it shoveled into the shoot, ya see, then you could move the car. But in a box car you had to walk. And we got a dollar a car. The most money we got out of a car of coal was 60 cents a piece. Twenty-two ton of nut-coal. The first third of the car by the door, that was all right, that would go easy, but when you walk with nut-coal back and forth you had to shovel a lot. If your shovel would push it forward why you had to shovel it over again. So the only thing to do was to pick up your shovel and carry it in all. We got a dollar a carload. And a dollar was big, awful big. You could, those days you could buy three packages of Lyons coffee or Arbuckle's coffee for a quarter. If you bought a dollar's worth, you got 13 pounds. You would go over to a car with this dollar. You could buy a bushel of apples. You could buy a bushel of potatoes. You could buy a bushel basket full of cabbage. Or if you didn't want that, you would go to the grocery store and buy a three pound of Lyons coffee and quarter's worth of sugar out of a dollar. And you can't do that now.

I. That's for sure.

N. Oh, I've seen plenty of hard times. I did a little of everything before I finally settled down. I worked for old Tom Shereck there. He gave me 50 cents a day. I was from early morning until 10 o'clock at



night. And on Sunday you had to go out with him and buy few cattle and drive them in. Sometimes you get in at midnight and sometimes a little later. And I, when I worked for him, well, my morning's work was to, didn't have telephones in those days, my morning's work was to go up to his house, curry the horses, clean out the barn, feed them and harness them. And hitch one old horse up front to the delivery wagon. Get it out of the yard. Had to go down to the store itself without a driver. And you had to back up your wagon to the icehouse and fill this wagon with ice that you put up last winter, and milk two cows. And by the time you got through with that, you went to the house. And they gave you your breakfast consisting of a couple of old burnt strips of bacon and one egg and some baking powder biscuits that were made the day before. They were so hard you could throw them through a brick wall. And black coffee. Oh, you had plenty of cream. Milked two cows, but you never had milk until after your breakfast. Then you come downtown and you unloaded, you hitched up this team, all this ice down. Unloaded and put it in the refrigerator. Then you went around town and took orders for the grocery store. You go up in the north part of town and write it down in a little book, get the north part run over. Then you come, leave the book at the store. Then you take the south part of the town. And while you're getting the orders down there, they'd have the north's orders ready. Then you'd have to deliver those. And when you got those delivered, they'd have the south's. Then you'd have to deliver those. Then you had to take this spring wagon and team and go down there two miles, a little down there back where that picture shows there, that old building. The stuff that was butchered the night before, we'd have to load up. Had a

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canope to put in the wagon. You'd load your meat and stuff on that and back it up to the slaughter house door. Take the team off and put them on the corn grinder, and grind about two or three grain sacks full of corn chow. And put out in the feed troughs where some old toothless cows that they had out there, ya know, they'd lap it up, you had to get it real fine. Then you have to put some water in the troughs for the hogs to drink, you know. They was a trough there big enough for the cattle too. But when you was all done, you had to put out some alfalfa out for these old toothless cows. They had a little alfalfa and hay mixed and weeds and everything else. And then you come to town. And then you counted out eggs. And then you take eggs for groceries and stuff, you know. The first few eggs were awful light, but when you handled and packed them in cases, about ten cases, they got pretty heavy. And you done that for 50¢ a day. And old Kerrick got a little bit too much to drink and felt pretty good, he'd, he'd give you an extra 50¢ on your week's wages or \$4 a week. And that looked as big as a house. What other stuff you got there? Anything else?

I. Well, I can't, I can't really think of anything else that I planned to ask you. Can you remember any tall, tall stories is what I'm after? I mean you know, about oh, in this one book we had at school. We had a story about some old Swede down here, you know. He was just a make-believe character, but this one farmer tells about him all the time, you know. And makes you feel, seems just like he's alive. This is what I mean by tall stories. And a I wondered if you ran across any characters that ever told real tall stories like that. About how many big fish they got or something like that.

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N. Oh, I never was much of a story teller. I listened to them.

I. Ya, that's the way I am. I can listen to stories. I can't remember them too well.

N. Oh, there was lots of things that happen. You take the doctors today, they don't have it like the old timers did. They have, well they had to go out in the corn country with a team. And snowy storms and everything. And now if you're sick, you come to a hospital, get in the best way you can and we'll take care of you there.

I. You ever hear anything particular about these old time doctors?

N. To my notion they were pretty darn good doctors for their time. Of course, it's not up to where they are today, but they've done a lot of wonderful works. Doctor Middlecall used to go out, and he had a cart and a bay horse that he drove. He'd put on a big robe and get a soap stone and heat it and put it so his feet would be warm and then go out in the country in the storm to take care of the people. And on the way back home, he could let, the old horse knew what to do, he'd just go to sleep. And the old horse, first thing you know, be out here stopped in front of the stable door waiting for old doc to wake up. That was pretty rough going for those old timers. But they went, they went. Well...

I. I believe that will just about do it, Mr. King. And I certainly thank you.

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I: Mai, Norman

N: C. C. King

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Interview with C. C. King, born June 2, 1881 in Hays, Kansas. Lived in Hays his entire life. Interview by Norman E. Mai, on May 14, 1962.

I. The following is a tape recorded interview with Mr. C. C. King of Hays, Kansas. This interview is being taped at 3 3/4 inches per second on single track by Norman E. Mai, on May 14, 1962 in Hays, Kansas. Now then, Mr. King, I might start by getting a bit of information on you. Your name is C. C. King?

N. Yeah.

I. And you were born where, sir?

N. Born in Hays, Kansas, on the second day of June eighteen hundred and eighty one.

I. Eighty one, I see. Now a, your education level, how far did you go in school, sir?

N. Seventh grade, middle of the seventh grade.

I. Where all have you lived? Have you lived all your life near Hays?

N. All Hays.

I. Let's see, your father's name?

N. My father's name was Fredrick William, his right name was Coenig but he changed it to King when he joined the Fifth United States Cavalry.

I. I see, and your mother's name?

N. Mother's name was Margaret King or Miller, before she was married it was Miller or Muller, M-u-l-l-e-r.

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I. And your father's place of birth.

N. My father?

I. Where was your father born?

N. He was born in the city of Canishburg in Dansey country.

I. In Germany?

N. In Germany.

I. And your mother was born there also?

N. Born in the city of Worms near the Rhine, in Germany.

I. And your grandfather's place of birth, I suppose, was in Germany.

N. Oh, I don't know nothing about that.

I. Let's see, a, I guess thats about it so far as that a, that form of information goes. Now I understand, sir, that you have a; how long have you been in the barber business?

N. The barber business?

I. Yeah.

N. I'm working in my sixty fourth year.

I. Sixty four years.

N. I started the 18th of January, 1898.

I. And, did you have a regular babershop?

N. Oh yes. I've run four chair shops, three chair shops, two chair shops, and finally the help got so dog gone bad that I just run one chair.

I. In the early days, did you do quite a bit of business for the Army?

N. Not the army.

I. Not the army?

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N. No, the army when the fort was abandoned in a '87, I think, and see I was just a young kid. But that's when I started a barbering was the 18th of January, 1898.

I. Well what are some of your recollections as far as the early days here in Hays go? Did you run across any interesting characters in your business?

N. Well, I don't know, in what regard?

I. Oh, well some people that were perhaps quite famous or renowned.

N. Oh! In the early days it so happened that my father joined the Fifth United States Cavalry, and Buffalo Bill was scout for his company and he served under a Major Carr, and Lieutenant Eaton. He was a trumpeter. My father was a trumpeter for the Fifth United States Cavalry. When he enlisted in New York, he picked up the trumpet that was on the officers' table there and he wanted to know if he dared to play it. He says, "Well, I can play it" he says, "I can give you all the German calls. My brother was a trumpeter in the German Cavalry. I know all the German calls and if someone would tutor me or teach me I could learn to play the American calls." So they gave him a tutor for six weeks and then assigned him to the Company A59 Fifth Cavalry as a trumpeter. As far as Buffalo Bill, there is very few people that have met him personally in this country. But when I was a young boy before I was in the barber business, I was a delivery boy for Mr. Kirk at the butcher shop, and he took me and Mr. Hoover took Joe Basgall to Buffalo Bill's Circus at Salina. So the older folks, they went to, into the side shows and told Joe Basgall and I to go look at the <sup>(menagerie?)</sup> mirrory which we did. And we got separated so I went over

to the main tent and Buffalo Bill was standing there. And I said, "So your William <sup>Cady</sup> Coty." He said, "Yes." I said, "I bet you don't know who I am." He said, "No young man, I don't." I said, "I bet you knew my father. He was trumpeter for Fifth Cavalry which you was scout for." He said, "His name was Billy King." I said, "Yeah." Well, he wanted to know if I was going to the circus. I said, "Sure." He said, "You buy any tickets." I said, "No." He said, "You're not buying any." So he called an usher over and they had a three ring circus, and they seated me in the center section in about the center of the seats, and told the ushers there says, "Tell the boys when they pass the pink lemon <sup>ade</sup> aid around and on thing and another, that it's on the house, this boy gets anything he wants." So we went to the circus that way. First thing come along I took Joe Basgill sitting along side me, he was a delivery boy for Mr. Hoover, and I said, "Well, we'll have two popcorn balls!" And pretty soon they come along with the pink lemon <sup>ade</sup> aid. We took two glasses of that, well we repeated that two or three times when Mr. Kirk, the fellow I was working for said, "Well why don't you buy some for us?" I said, "Well you got plenty of money you can buy your own." So we seen the circus.

I. I imagine that was quite a spectacular in those days, to go to those wild west shows.

N. Well, he was quite a shot. He would shoot glass balls, ya know, and a with a 22 rifle but he had real fine shot in there.

I. Oh!

N. And so that's how they burst those balls in there. It would take a pretty good, take an expert to shoot glass balls with a rifle, just one. And shoot over his head and one thing and another, shoot at little glass balls the shot up. But it was all done with bird shot in the,

in the little shells. Well, that was one things. I also I can remember when the soldiers left here, when the Fort was abandoned. Right across from the First National Bank, where it stands now on the other side of the railroad track, there was a big elevator there. And they had set out two cars on the side track by this elevator, and they loaded up. I seen them load up the last two carloads of things from the Fort, mostly cooking utensils and cook stoves and stuff like that they had in their mess kitchen, you see. And then there was another thing, Colonel Yarg passed away. And I can remember how the fifteenth infantry band escorting into the depot to ship him back to bury him. And they played the march, the dead march ends all. I can remember that, and I can remember when they, you could hear the band play here in town from the Fort, you see. Are you acquainted with the place over there?

I. The Fort?

N. Yes.

I. Yeah, I've been out there.

N. There was one place, a long row of officer's building there, that's where the officers were. And today, I think there is just two of 'em. There was three of those buildings moved over, one was moved over right east or west of the city hall. That one's been torn down and Mark Stromar lives in one of those officer's buildings on the south part of town. And over here on, this is 16th, about 14th street, maybe 13th street there is one of the officer's buildings there. The first party that owned it or had it moved over was an elderly feller, a bachelor and his old maid sister live there. And that was the second, or third building that, of the officers that was moved over here. And their parade ground was north of the officer's row of buildings. I can remember where the



their hospital was. And they had a saloon there and then the old barns was down north and east of the parade grounds, the horse barns and stuff. And a we used to bather mother on her bakery. We used to take quite a bit of pie and cake, watermelon and stuff over there and sell it to the soldiers. We could buy, in the early days there, the Russians planted the regular Russian watermelon seed that they brought from Russia here along with straw piles. And they would bring them double wagon box full. Sell them to you for six for a quarter and we'd take 'em, put 'em in the, I would take baker box out of the wagon and load up a load of these watermelon and go up to the Fort. And those soldiers would just buy 'em up like that, ya know. They'd throw ya a dime or throw ya a quarter, keep the change. And we bought 'em six for a quarter. And pies, my gosh, we'd haul pies over there, and they went out like hot cakes and buns.

I. Do you remember any stories that your father used to tell about the cavalry? What were some of your father's experiences?

N. No. All his, all his traveling work was Mexican border work. And then after Custer's Massacree, the Fifth Cavalry went up in through there and did a little cleaning up. They didn't do any fighting. Their work, the Fifth Cavalry, was pretty near all patrol work. There was a, know about some of the old buildings here in Hays, you take well this little tobacco store that was in the Kruger building right across the a, well you know where Kessler's laundry is?

I. Yes.

N. And then west and then that big stone building on the corner.

I. Yes.

N. Well, that was built by two Kruger boys. They came to America from Germany here, and they ran a store here. Oh, it was a kind of a, well it had a little of everything. And they would trade merchandise for buffalo hides and stuff, and then ship those buffalo hides to New York. And that is how Mr. Kruger married a lady by the name of Kruger in Germany. And she and my mother were great friends. And after they were married about a year then they went back to Germany for a visit to Miss Kruger. Her name was Kruger before she married to him and no relation. And she looked up mother and persuaded her to come to Hays with her. There wasn't any German talking people here in those days and she was pretty broken English, ya know. But she married this Kruger. And mother came here. She came to Hays in 1872, and father was discharged at Fort Hays in 1875. And shortly there after he and mother were married. And to that family there was five boys and one girl, in which the first boy passed away when he was young, infancy. And then my brother, Frank, was born. Then between my brother Frank and myself there was a girl and she died in infancy, and I lived. Then my brother Harry and then brother George was born. So Frank and Harry and mother and father have all passed away and there is just two of us left of the King bunch. You see we had our name, when our father joined the Fifth United States Cavalry, his right name was Coenig, which means King. So that's how we come by the name King. Well, this a, this Kruger lived in this house right south of the passenger depot. And all those trees that was planted there, those big trees, my mother planted and carried water from the court house way up here in Hays down to water those trees. And she raised by hand the

last buffalo calf that was ever raised in Ellis County. And that grew to quite a big animal. And it would come up town and in the early days they used to have their apples and potatoes and cabbage in baskets out in front of the store. And he'd help himself to what he wanted and leave the rest out in the street. And he finally got to be a nuisance and someone killed him. But mother, you see, this Mr. Kruger had traded groceries, merchandise for this buffalo calf, and mother raised it with milk from a cow, you see.

I. Would he trade, would he give this Indian--did he get this buffalo from the Indians or, where did he get this calf?

N. Oh that. Some fellow caught it, you know, and traded it for merchandise. It was a big mercantile store there, had a little of everything. We'd trade hides and anything for something to eat.

I. So buffalo were fairly plentiful in those days?

N. Oh, yeah! Yeah, see they made money on those buffalo hides. The Kruger brothers finally dissolved partnership. And Fred Krugar, the younger brother of the two, built a store, grocery store right where this new building was put up here, just recently just opened up.

I. This Bargain Barn down there?

N. Right north of the mill there.

I. Oh, yeah that would be the Woolworth's store.

N. The Woolworth's. That's where Woolworths. He ran a store there and then the other brother, he went. He started a little grocery store right west, a little west of where Kessler's laundry is now. But finally Fred Kruger sold his store to the Hagggar brothers. And the Hagggar brothers sold the store a few years later to Mr. Hoover. And Mr. Hoover run it a



while and sold it to Joe Basgall which was his delivery boy. He and I was the ones that a, and Joe run it there for quite a while. And then finally he built on the corner with this Jack and Jill store. But I'll tell you the town has changed.

I. Yeah. I 'magine!

N. When the soldiers left here the population run down to 231 people. Now we're crowding around 12,000, I think. Was there anything else you wanted to know?

I. Well, let's see a, perhaps we might go back to your school days. Do you remember anything particularly interesting that happened during your school days?

N. During my school days? Well, I can tell you one story, but it wouldn't do for print.

I. Well, it won't be in print.

N. It won't?

I. No.

N. Well, I was in the fifth grade, and Miss Andrews was our teacher. And we had to have our pictures taken, out on the steps of the old school building and during recess. We'd pull flaps of pants, and they tore all the buttons off my pants. And I did finally find a safety pin to bring it over and pin it together. And then we had to march out. I wanted in the hind row. And Miss Andrew says, "I want you up in the front row Charlie." I says, "okay." By that time I had my legs cross-legged so my pants would stay closed. Well she took the picture and finally, she says, "It was a wonderful picture, but why in the world did you stand cross-legged." I says, "Miss Andrews you won't get mad if I tell you why."

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She says, "No I won't get mad." "Well," I says, "If you had as many buttons torn off your pants as I did off mine, you'd stand cross-legged too." She says, "That'll be enough out of you." Then in the middle of the seventh grade, prior to that, whenever they had a little doing of some kind I always had to get up and preside. I had to greet the people as they come in and ask them to come again and so forth and so on. And I did that for two years, and finally I got into seventh grade and about the middle of the seventh grade. Miss Dean was teacher then, she says there, "Charlie," she says, "the superintendent of the school, the county superintendent will be here and I want you to get up there to my desk and greet him and welcome him and so forth and so on. I says, "Miss Dean, Miss Dean," I says, "why don't you give somebody else a chance. I've had it in two rooms, let somebody else do something." She says, "I'll give you to understand that I'm teaching this room. And if you think you can teach it, put your application in and maybe you can get you a job next year." I said, "I don't want to teach it and I'm not going to preside either." "Well," she says, "you are." I said, "I'm not." "Now Miss Dean," I says, "your folks live out on the Saline River. Yeah, and they drive two Texas ponies to town, one's a gray and one's a bay, and they have half rope and half shane harness." I said, "Do you know something wrong with those horses?" She says, "No, not in particular." "Do you notice something wrong with their back, they're sway back." She said, "I didn't notice it but they're probably a little bit." I said, "Do you know what caused that?" "Why," she says, "what?" I says, "Riding them too young, and I don't want my back to get that way. So you can get somebody

else to do this for you." She says, "I'll give you to understand that I'm teaching this room." I says, "I'll give you to understand that I'm not going to serve." So I started to picking up my books. She says, "What are you going to do?" I says, "I'm going home, quitting school." She says, "You can't do that" I says, "Why can't I?" I said, "You're in the east end of the room, I'm here, it was on the second story, I'm here by the door at the head of the steps. And you can't get from there over here while I get down those steps." So I picked up my books and I said, "Now Miss Dean," I says, "you'll regret this someday. Here's one boy that you drove away from school." So I never went back to school. Then my father had me grease pans and work in the bakery. And I worked there quite a little while so I could roll out loaves of bread and buns. And finally one day he had me mix up a batch of dough, an 180 pound band. He went to step out somewhere, I guess to get a bottle of beer. And he come back and I said, "Dad," I said, "do you know what it takes to make a baker, you know." He said, "No." I said, "A stiff back and a poor mind, and I'm not baking. I'm not working in a bakery no more." "Well, you're going back to school." I said, "No, I'm not. I'm going to work for Schereck. I'm going down to the grocery business and I'm going to learn the meat business. Learn how to butcher and cut up meat and do that." So I worked for him up until I went into the barber business. Now that's how I happened to quit school. But Miss Dean, it bothered her a whole lot. She quit teaching. She went to Oklahoma to take care of her brother's children, her brother, her sister-in-law had died. And finally she got down sick and she prayed the Lord to save her long enough to make it all



right with me for what she had done. Well, I forgot all about it. I was running a shop of my own, and I happened to go past and she was setting there in a buggy and her sister. And by the way at that time they lived right across the street from us here. So she was staying with her sister. I was passing them, coming home, and her sister says, "Charlie, just a minute." She says, "Marie wants to see you." That was Maraar, we called her. And she told me that she had prayed that she would be able to see me and make good for driving me away from school. I said, "Well, I'm doing all right." I says, "I have a good home, I'm married. I have a good wife and I have two children." And I says, "We're getting along fine." I says, "There's one thing that you can do, to make it good. You're staying with your sister across the street, and I want you to come over and meet my wife and my two kids." And they become great friends. But Miss Dean told me, she says, "Any time you want and need any money, she was wealthy, you need any money, wire me at my expense and I'll wire back to you. I'll do anything to square for driving you away from school." Well, I says, "It's all over now," I says, "I'm making it all right." But she got acquainted with the folks here, and boy they got quite friendly.

I. Well, I don't know, it seems to me that perhaps in, in your barbering business you run across some pretty tall stories. And do you happen to remember any of these tall stories, some of these characters might have told?

N. They're not, I wouldn't let them talk any of this spicy stuff in the shop.

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I. Well, I mean oh, about the weather, you know how bad a storm was or something like this, how bad the crops were and, or how good the crops were and stories along this line.

N. Well, I don't know, I didn't, didn't care for this muddy stuff in my shop at all. Anybody got a little long and got to swearing, I said, "That will be enough out of you. If you got to do that, go outside and do it." I said, "You know that door is open. People going back and forth and the people on the outside don't like to hear that kind of talk and I know I don't, so you cut it out if you want to stay in or get out. Bruce Gross, goes down there, he worked for me, he's been a pretty good barber. Those kids that, I had several of them that went to school. Well, they started them on the shining chair and made barbers out of them and everyone of 'em picked up a different occupation. I said, "It'll work you through school all right, it'll help you through and Bruce he was kind of, pretty good with the gloves, I used to have gloves down there we'd do a lot of boxing. And there was a fellow by the name of Harveston and he come in and he thought he was quite a boxer. Well I said, "I don't want to box you," I said, "this kid will." They went down to the old city hall and Bruce just peppered him all over and come back and well, I said, "How did you kids make out?" He said, "Oh, that boy's pretty good," and he got kind of smart and I roasted him a little bit and he said, "maybe you want some of it." Why, I said, "I'll take you on." He said oh, no thanks. A man by the name of Smith, he was quite a Baptist and Ray Scott was quite a cattle man, he bought cattle. Smith was setting up in the chair and Scott was setting on the laundry basket. Oh, I said, "Harveston," I said, "if you think you're so good and you want to put them on, I'll put

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them on with you." So he put them on, I says "You folks if you want to see a little fun, if you got time to wait we'll show you a little fun." So Harveston made a pass at me and I ducked, it went over my shoulder. And I come back and I plastered him one on the nose and broke his nose and put one eye shut and the blood flww all over those fellows shirts and I hammered him two or three more times and Mr. Smith says, "Charlie I think he's got enough, you had better quit. You'll have blood all over the shop here." So I took him over to the basin and washed him up and told him to go up to Dr. Milco and have his nose set, I'd pay for it. "No," he says, "I asked for it, I got it," he says, "just let it grow the way it is." So I had an extra shirt in there that some fellow had left there through harvest time and didn't call for it. It just fit him I give him a clean shirt. But he, and then he was going to fix me after that, we had a little broom maker here, he was quite a boxer and he was going to train up to get me, ya know, Harveston was. He got kind of cute with his broom maker. And broom maker slugged him one and lifted him up on his work table and let him lay there til he come out of it. And then he come back to the shop, "Well," I says, "Harveston," I says, "did you come back for some more?" He said, "No, I've got it all taken out of me." He says, "ya know I went down to this broom maker and had him teach me and he a, he laid me out so I said, "I can't box, I just won't box any more." There is one thing that every kid should learn, is to learn how to box, how to protect himself. I'd have as high as a dozen little fellers 10 to 12 years old in the shop and I'd make 'em put on gloves for sport.

I. Did you, you were sort of a fight promoter then?

N. No, I wasn't, just for sport. Oh, I knew how to handle 'em,



my two children. But I made my son and daughter both box. They'd box **each** other. And my daughter is teaching school now. And I said, "Golly it'll come in pretty handy. Sometime you run up against somebody that will get pretty smart and might take a pass at you. If he does you're ready to do something." So when she was teaching out at Oakley, they had a little entertainment there, colored boy sitting in the back end of the auditorium, and he was making quite a little noise back there. Ollie sent back and told him to sit down and behave himself that people like to hear what's going on. So he sit down. She came back said, "Where's your. . .?" He got up and some more of this and Ollie went back again and she says, "I told you to sit down and behave yourself." And he says, "So what!" And she says, "I'll show you so what!" She got a hold of his shirt and tore his collar open and sat him down in the seat. "Now you stay there, or I'll do worse than that." Well, the principal was afraid of this colored boy. And after the thing was over he said, "Miss King wasn't you afraid of this colored boy?" She said, "No, my dad taught me how to box." She said, "The vital thing to do to hit a fellow is to hit him under the jaw bone here. And you get that first hit in, and that's usually what the pays for the whole game, ya see. And like she says, "Furthermore, if that wouldn't get him why then I would kick him in the shins. You kick a nigger in the shins, and he can't take that either." So she never had any trouble with that colored boy after that. Anything they had to do, Christmas duties or anything, "Miss King can I help ya?" She says, "When I want you, I'll call you."

I. Well, do you have any a, do you have any contact with any other sports around here besides boxing?

N. Oh, I played baseball. I caught here for nine years on the first

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team. I was with a kid with a pair of blue jeans. I was standing there and this friend of mine that went to the circus with me, Joe Basgall, was catcher for the first team. I had done a lot of catching for the kids, ya know. I was standing there watching the game. And Joe had to put his right hand out to catch a ball, and it split it wide open. And they had no catcher. And, by gosh, they called me out there to catch for the first team. Well, I got out there, and the first ball was thrown. It was a wild one, and I had to stop it with one hand. This fellow on third base, two outs. Boy did that sting! This old doc had some arnican and lodin and stuff made up and he bathed my fingers in it. "I'll go back and catch." And from that time on I caught for nine straight years. Football, I played with the town team a couple of three seasons. All that time, I never got hurt in a football game.

I. They were pretty rough in those days.

N. Oh! We played Russell one time. And they had a preacher on the Russell team, a congregational preacher, thought he was a pretty good player. He weighed about 230, a big fellow. On the kick off he came and followed up the kick off. And he had to step on me. About ready to hit me but I side-stepped him, and he missed me, and he hit his shoulder in the ground. We was taught how to side-step, ya know, and one thing and another. And then the next time we kicked off and he was going to stop me, but I stepped on him and I hit him and he spun like a top. And down he went, and he laid there. After the half was over, he come over to me and he said, "Are you just big or are you just padded up?" I said, "You ought to know." Every time I go down to Russell in Banker's store there, and there's some stranger in there he, Banker got more kick out of that preacher getting knocked down and all and he'll

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tell the people that story. There's the fellow that fixed that preacher. Well, we played baseball. I was drum major for bands here for years and years. Down at the museum at the college, you have my shackle and my drum major coat and my baton. I even drum majored your college band there under Harlem Morris.

I. When was this?

N. Huh?

I. When was this?

N. Oh, let's see. I started to drum majoring, nineteen hundred and one, with our Hays band we went to Kansas City to 904 Parade. That was in nineteen hundred. In nineteen one we went to Denver to the carnival parade there. And nineteen two we went to Washington D. C. with our band. That's when I started drum majoring before we went to Kansas City. In those days, the citizens went together and paid our round trip transportation to Kansas City and back, was \$16. Had to pull the car. And the citizens paid for our transportation to Washington D. C. At Washington D. C., we played, we went there and played one engagement to an old J. R. Encavant. <sup>GAR Engagement</sup> And when we got through, we had to play seven engagements. We got \$6 an hour to play. We took one evening at Camp Roosevelt. They had it built out in little camps, you know, the different sections. And Camp Roosevelt, Sousa's band was supposed to play. But Sousa, three fellows that was in the 15th Infantry Band here at Hays at the Fort, came up and they wanted to know if there was anybody from Hays that they knew. I said, "Yes, I think there is. Our alto player, Jake Scheffs, played in your 15th Infantry Band, and our clarinet player, Wasinger, played in your 15th Infantry Band." So they was tickled to death to meet those boys. That was a long afternoon. And, after supper

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we got a phone call, could we get together real quick and go over to Camp Roosevelt and play in place of Sousa's band because there was a lot of dignitaries that came over from the old country that Sousa's band had to entertain. So we got that job. And then we played in, they put on a naval parade for the old soldiers. And they needed one band and through three fellows, we got that job to be in that parade because our uniforms were very similar to the navy uniforms. And we had one parade there, we, the big parade, we reported to work, to play, at 9 o'clock in the morning at a certain place. We was there, and we never got in the parade until 2 o'clock in the afternoon. That's how big it was. It's <sup>done</sup> alphabetically. The states were. We finally played that and the band let out and we were planning for Sousa. He put on a band concert. And gave us all a ticket and saved a row of seats for us, for our whole band to listen to the band concert and also bought tickets for us for a play, the White Slave. And that was the first time that was played. And it was played in the Academy of Music in Washington D. C. And we all had a seat to that free. And then the band was in Denver in the carnival parade. There was two little kids, two little girls about the same size, looked like they were twins. They come running along side us, "Mr. can we walk along side you?" We like the way your band plays and we like the way you handle your, they called it a stick. I says, "I don't care. Get on each side of me and go right along." And it so happened that these two kids were daughters of the wife of the head man of the music committee. So a, I don't know some how or another she found out these kids was with our band. And when we went into the arena to play well the little fellows ask, "Could you please play a cake walk for us?" I said, "Yeah, I think I can." So we cake walked through the arena with those

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little kids tagging along. Played Claud Johnson's cake walk in \_\_\_\_\_. And just as I was leaving the exit there was a couple of girls came down with a great big bunch of American roses, American beauty roses and give them to me. Because these little kids, oh, they got a hand when they went through the dance and the band played. Oh we did lots of funny things.

I. Well, lets see, perhaps we could go back a little bit farther again. Do you remember anything about the a, oh the social life here in Hays, the dances or box suppers or parties?

N. Oh yeah, we had a lot of box suppers and we used to have old fashioned dances we had, well we had two groups of people the high toner people that they called the "silk socks" and the clowner they called them "cotton socks". When you go to dances, if you went to a "cotton sock" dance you had to show that you had cotton socks on. "Silk socks" had to get out they don't belong to this group. Oh we did a lot of old fashioned things. Well in the early days, we used to have a lot of good old Russian \_\_\_\_\_. I been to 'em when they had their big luncheon, beer, beer by the keg, ya know. I didn't care for it.

I. Oh?

N. No. I don't drink any. I haven't drank since '98. Not a drop. Oh, we used to have old settlers picnics, and the old timers would get out and the band, our band would play for them. Then they would have a big quartet from over at Catherin come down and sing for them. I'll tell ya those boys could sing too. Course it was all German songs, but they had harmony. They could sing. Well, ah, we used to have a lot of, at our hotel, we used to have a lot of show troops stay with us, Uncle Tom's Cabin

and all them old shows, ya know? Yeah. Yes, sir, those days are gone, the early days. What else?

I. Well I don't know, you mentioned something about, a while back you mentioned something about harvest crews. Do you remember anything that you'd like to tell us?

N. Harvest crews? Oh yeah, there used to be harvest crews. They used the header and the header <sup>barge</sup> bars. I worked in the harvest field. Scratched around the stacks. Seventy-five cents a day, for one harvest. For the next harvest I drove the header for \$1.25 a day. I've shocked wheat back of an old binder that about every third bunch it would throw off the bundle would break, and you had to learn how to tie it with an old straw header, old straw or wheat. I could do that. I shoveled coal, I've hauled ice, I've helped put up ice. I was so doggoned poor and now in 1905 couldn't buy any overshows, we didn't have any money. We had to put burlap sack around our <sup>shoes</sup> shoes and tie it with binding twine. You'd get ice on 'em all through the day, hauling ice and at night time you'd have to stick your feet in the warming oven, the cook stove to thaw 'em out so you could get 'em on, get those old burlap sacks off your legs. Then you'd put them on the chair, back of the stove, so they could dry so you could use them the next morning. We got all 50 cents a day from daylight to dark.

I. Back in 1905 now were these hard times for everybody or were they depression times or what?

N. They were just hard times. Just hard times. The only picture since then was about as big as the whole house, you know. I've shoveled



coal, John Shaffer and I, but that was before, before I went into the bakery. I've had this, before I worked for Schereck it was. John Shaffer and I, we shoveled all the coal for Treeky Shaffer, Yost's Mill, Harold's Mill, Ike Zeigler, and Swabs. We got a dollar a carload, course the cars weren't as big then as they are now, they were 28 foot cars. If you get a flat car that was all right. You could start at one end, ya know, and have it shoveled into the shoot, ya see, then you could move the car. But in a box car you had to walk. And we got a dollar a car. The most money we got out of a car of coal was 60 cents a piece. Twenty-two ton of nut-coal. The first third of the car by the door, that was all right, that would go easy, but when you walk with nut-coal back and forth you had to shovel a lot. If your shovel would push it forward why you had to shovel it over again. So the only thing to do was to pick up your shovel and carry it in all. We got a dollar a carload. And a dollar was big, awful big. You could, those days you could buy three packages of Lyons coffee or Arbuckle's coffe for a quarter. If you bought a dollar's worth, you got 13 pounds. You would go over to a car with this dollar. You could buy a bushel of apples. You could buy a bushel of potatoes. You could buy a bushel basket full of cabbage. Or if you didn't want that, you would go to the grocery store and buy a three pound of Lyons coffee and quarter's worth of sugar out of a dollar. And you can't do that now.

I. That's for sure.

N. Oh, I've seen plenty of hard times. I did a little of everything before I finally settled down. I worked for old Tom Shereck there. He gave me 50 cents a day. I was from early morning until 10 o'clock at

night. And on Sunday you had to go out with him and buy few cattle and drive them in. Sometimes you get in at midnight and sometimes a little later. And I, when I worked for him, well, my morning's work was to, didn't have telephones in those days, my morning's work was to go up to his house, curry the horses, clean out the barn, feed them and harness them. And hitch one old horse up front to the delivery wagon. Get it out of the yard. Had to go down to the store itself without a driver. And you had to back up your wagon to the icehouse and fill this wagon with ice that you put up last winter, and milk two cows. And by the time you got through with that, you went to the house. And they gave you your breakfast consisting of a couple of old burnt strips of bacon and one egg and some baking powder biscuits that were made the day before. They were so hard you could throw them through a brick wall. And black coffee. Oh, you had plenty of cream. Milked two cows, but you never had milk until after your breakfast. Then you come downtown and you unloaded, you hitched up this team, all this ice down. Unloaded and put it in the refrigerator. Then you went around town and took orders for the grocery store. You go up in the north part of town and write it down in a little book, get the north part run over. Then you come, leave the book at the store. Then you take the south part of the town. And while you're getting the orders down there, they'd have the north's orders ready. Then you'd have to deliver those. And when you got those delivered, they'd have the south's. Then you'd have to deliver those. Then you had to take this spring wagon and team and go down there two miles, a little down there back where that picture shows there, that old building. The stuff that was butchered the night before, we'd have to load up. Had a

canope to put in the wagon. You'd load your meat and stuff on that and back it up to the slaughter house door. Take the team off and put them on the corn grinder, and grind about two or three grain sacks full of corn chow. And put out in the feed troughs where some old toothless cows that they had out there, ya know, they'd lap it up, you had to get it real fine. Then you have to put some water in the troughs for the hogs to drink, you know. They was a trough there big enough for the cattle too. But when you was all done, you had to put out some alfalfa out for these old toothless cows. They had a little alfalfa and hay mixed and weeds and everything else. And then you come to town. And then you counted out eggs. And then you take eggs for groceries and stuff, you know. The first few eggs were awful light, but when you handled and packed them in cases, about ten cases, they got pretty heavy. And you done that for 50¢ a day. And old Kerrick got a little bit too much to drink and felt pretty good, he'd, he'd give you an extra 50¢ on your week's wages or \$4 a week. And that looked as big as a house. What other stuff you got there? Anything else?

I. Well, I can't, I can't really think of anything else that I planned to ask you. Can you remember any tall, tall stories is what I'm after? I mean you know, about oh, in this one book we had at school. We had a story about some old Swede down here, you know. He was just a make-believe character, but this one farmer tells about him all the time, you know. And makes you feel, seems just like he's alive. This is what I mean by tall stories. And a I wondered if you ran across any characters that ever told real tall stories like that. About how many big fish they got or something like that.



N. Oh, I never was much of a story teller. I listened to them.

I. Ya, that's the way I am. I can listen to stories. I can't remember them too well.

N. Oh, there was lots of things that happen. You take the doctors today, they don't have it like the old timers did. They have, well they had to go out in the corn country with a team. And snowy storms and everything. And now if you're sick, you come to a hospital, get in the best way you can and we'll take care of you there.

I. You ever hear anything particular about these old time doctors?

N. To my notion they were pretty darn good doctors for their time. Of course, it's not up to where they are today, but they've done a lot of wonderful works.. Doctor <sup>Middlekauff</sup> Middlecall used to go out, and he had a cart and a bay horse that he drove. He'd put on a big robe and get a soap stone and heat it and put it so his feet would be warm and then go out in the country in the storm to take care of the people. And on the way back home, he could let, the old horse knew what to do, he'd just go to sleep. And the old horse, first thing you know, be out here stopped in front of the stable door waiting for old doc to wake up. That was pretty rough going for those old timers. But they went, they went. Well...

I. I believe that will just about do it, Mr. King. And I certainly thank you.

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Tape #	Time	Break between side A and B.
Original F1962 no. 19	35 min	<p>Interview with <u>C. C. King</u> in Hays, Ks - 1962</p> <p>Born in 1881 in Hays, Ks - Parents born in Germany - Mrs. King barber for 64 yrs. Tells of father serving in Army with Buffalo Bill - father was trumpeter in Army - U.S. Cavalry - Tells of 2 railroad of things leaving the fort. Old forts of officers buildings moved in different places - Parents sell foods to soldiers for 10¢ - Watermelon + peaches, etc - Tells how parents met - Mother came 1873 - Parents married in 1875 - Tells how mother carried water to help trees grow quite a distance - &amp; she also raised the last calf buffalo in Ellis County - money was raised on buffalo hides. Tells of a Mr. Krueger starting stores - there were 2 Krueger brothers - Mr. J. B. Beazell was delivery boy for one store - later bought store + built grocery store on main street corner (was Jack + Gail)</p>
Side B (Continued)	11 min	<p>After soldiers left, town down to 231 people then - Tells of stories in his school experiences - worked at different jobs - married + became friends with former teacher again + his family - Tells of boxing experiences - taught sons daughter to box each other - daughter now teacher + how boxing helped her in her teaching, as discipline. Tells of baseball experiences and football stories - also in band - Was drum major - trip to KC + Washington D.C. - for \$16.00 - played in band for \$6.00 per hr.</p>

Tape #	Time	Break between side A and B.
Original F 1962 no. 19 (Continued on Side B)	12 min.	Tells of playing for Sousa's band - Played in big parade. Played in old fashioned dances. Played with "old Settlers phinics". Worked in harvest from 75¢ to 1.25 per hour - Economic conditions were very bad - Shoveling coal for Treat + Schaffer Co. from box cars Did all different types of work in early days before settling down - Tells of typical days at grocery store - <del>Dr</del> <sup>Dr</sup> <del>actors</del> then traveled by horse + buggy. Spoke highly of Dr Middlekauf + hardships then.