

UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE  
TAPE 3 OF 11; 88-102

INTERVIEW WITH: Harlan Hubbard  
CONDUCTED BY: Joanne Weeter  
DATE: July 8, 1987 and July 14, 1987  
LOCATION: Payne Hollow, Kentucky

JOANNE WEETER: We're in Payne Hollow, Kentucky. This is interview three, side one. My name is Joanne Weeter and I'm interviewing Harlan Hubbard.

JW: Harlan, can you tell me a little bit about the sports that you played when you were younger?

HH: Yes. I was interested in outdoor sports, partly because Lucien was such an avid sportsman himself, and he not only got me interested but he played with me. In fact, when we were in New York and he was working on the newspaper, we used to play tennis almost every morning -- because he worked at night -- and even when the weather wasn't very good, I mean, early spring and late fall we'd go to one of the parks not very far up in his old Model T Ford. But the sport that I was most interested in was baseball and I think I got that from Lucien, too, because when he worked in the newspaper in Cincinnati he belonged to a semi-pro team -- I don't know whether you know what that means but it wasn't professional baseball but it was the next thing to it, it was a little bit more than just the amateur -- and he was a pitcher for a team called the Union Printers. He was never a printer but he worked on the paper and they got him to play with them. Once in awhile he'd take me around; they'd go around to different cities within twenty or thirty miles of Cincinnati to play. Seems like they lost almost all of their games but I was very much interested in that.

And then when I was . . . I learned to play baseball when I was very young; we started playing in the street in front of the house, playing scrub, knock the ball around, causing some damage in property but . . .

JW: Were you playing with other neighborhood kids?

HH: Yeah. When we got a little more experienced and better players we organized teams. I don't know how old I was when we played on those teams; I must have been, I think it was in pre-high school, I think it was along about the eighth grade that I . . . could that be? I guess these Little Leagues they have nowadays take the place of that but we had no help at all from older people and, of course, no uniforms; we were lucky to have a ball. Except I know there was one good-natured member of the Krogmann family that lived back in the alley along there, an old grandmother who used to make balls for us. She'd start off with a golf ball she'd get from somewhere and then she'd wrap yarn around it and keep wrapping it and wrapping it until she got it the right size and then she would knit a skein of knitting around the whole ball to hold it together and we'd knock those things around and finally the outside knitting would break and begin to disintegrate and long streamers of wool would . . . [chuckle] That was just part of the game. We always had another ball, I guess. And then, for some reason or another, there were other teams, I don't know, they must have been most all of them Bellevue and Dayton, I don't remember them coming any farther, but we used to play other teams and we'd all chip in enough to buy a regular baseball with a sewn cover. And I think, as far as I know, it was a standard, professional baseball but it seems like that would have been a little heavy for us -- we seemed to manage it all right -- the winning team got the baseball.

JW: Did you all use regular bats? Manufactured bats?

HH: Oh yeah. We used regular bats but we didn't have a regular baseball field; we had to play wherever there was a vacant lot and sometimes they were too narrow so the distance from home plate to second base was quite long and the distance from third base to first base was short. But we didn't know the difference. I think some of the best games I've ever played though we used to call batter for scrub. Somebody else would say, "Second batter." No, whip they called it, "Whip." "Pitcher, catcher, first base . . ." until we ran out of boys. We never got a full team, of course, but when the batter was put out he had to go out in the outfield and start over again. He could bat as long as he played without striking out or being tagged out or something. It was a good game.

JW: Were you a good player?

HH: Yeah, I thought I was. I was a pitcher, too. And Ed Wettengel, my nearest pal, was catcher and we used to practice and we had signals: he'd hold one finger down in his glove or two for an inshoot or an outshoot. [chuckle] We didn't know much difference but we thought there was.

JW: And how old were you at this point?

HH: Well, I think I was around ten when we got that far. I went pretty far in tennis, too. Tennis was something new; I think it came in about my first year in high school and somebody in the neighborhood made a tennis court and let us play on it.

JW: Was it a grass lawn?

HH: No, it was a clay court and it had marks that you had to mark with lime; you'd push that little cylinder full of lime over the court and make a mark just like they do

nowadays, I guess. But the court slanted a good deal so one end was higher than the other end. There was a big sewer line that came across; wasn't really out, just partly out of the ground.

I think I was pretty good at tennis but nowadays I wouldn't rank at all because the game is so much faster and children learn it so much younger and I wouldn't have a chance with them. But I don't think I ever had any more fun than I had, and, in fact, when you see professionals playing nowadays, they're so perfect that they don't enjoy it as much as when you used to see those individuals play like Maurice McLoughlin and Donald Budge. They were rather temperamental and had an individual way of playing, they weren't so reliable as they are nowadays. It was more picturesque anyway.

JW: So did you ever watch tennis matches?

HH: Yes, I did. When we went to New York with Lucien working on the newspaper, he was just as interested in sports as ever and he would get passes to Forest Hills and we'd go out to Forest Hills on the Long Island Railroad with the steam engine and sit in the bleachers and watch the game. I saw Helen Wills play and Suzanne England or whatever the French girl was, and Norris Williams and William Tilden; those were all great names in those days. That was a great high point in my life. Lucien was always very considerate, taking me places, and I think I mentioned the long hike we made up along the Hudson River and came back on the steamboat.

JW: Did he also take you to professional baseball games?

HH: I don't know but yeah, I got to see some of them at the Yankee Stadium. Yeah. That was the terrific time with Babe Ruth and even further back, John McGraw was

managing the Yankees, or the New York Giants he managed. Today I wouldn't go across the street to see a professional ball game; I'd be ashamed to be seen there.

JW: Why so?

HH: Well, it's all professional and, of course, I mean, I've tried to see some on television and I didn't know what was going on and I couldn't follow the ball; I guess my eyesight's not good enough. It's all too fast for me. And they all seem to, I don't know, in the early days it was just a game but nowadays it's so serious and they work so hard and get so wrought up about it. They used to get wrought up enough; they seemed to have more fun out of it, the players did. They weren't so good as they are now, though. Every sport is advanced. And, of course, you know more about that than I do.

JW: You also seemed to canoe a lot; were there other types of boats that you enjoyed?

HH: No, my whole life was wrapped up in canoeing at that time.

JW: Were you still using the one that your brothers had made?

HH: That lasted a long time, until we went to New York; I don't know what happened to it after that. When I came back from New York, I settled for a johnboat. That's the first thing I did when I got back was build a johnboat and that's all I've had ever since. Well, we did have a canoe, a couple of them, and I took a lot of canoe trips by myself with Clay Crawford. I told about the one when we came up the river in the tugboat.

JW: When you were in New York were you drawn to the river?

HH: No, I used to like to walk along the Hudson and the Harlem Rivers and see the boats but I saw no chance of really participating in boating on the rivers.

JW: Did you ever go out to see the Statue of Liberty or other landmarks?

HH: Yes, when we first went to New York we saw all those things. That was when Frank . . . Lucien had been there awhile and Frank went and took Mom and I, took Mom and me, it was all new to Frank and, of course, to us. We went to all the landmarks. Took a ferry to Staten Island. Even went to Coney Island. Lucien was so disgusted with me; I got wrapped up in Coney Island and he said I was the biggest lunatic in the place.  
[chuckle]

JW: You enjoyed the rides?

HH: Yeah. They were all new, better than the ones in Cincinnati.

JW: At Coney Island in Cincinnati?

HH: Yeah, they had Coney Island in Cincinnati, too. That was quite a . . . that was just opposite to Brent when they built our shantyboat, it was still in operation. Since then it's been moved back into the interior somewhere. We set our day by the passing of the Coney Island boats. There was two of them running: the Island Queen and then it usually has a partner and one was called the Princess and one was the Island Maid; but the one boat started at nine o'clock and then the Island Queen made a trip at eleven and the other boat made a trip at 1:30 and then the Queen at 2:30 and so on until eight o'clock at night, I think.

JW: And this was in Cincinnati?

HH: That was coming up to Brent where it was right across the river from where I built the shantyboat so we built the shantyboat to the tune of all this. . . . Tunes were playing over there and it was a nuisance in a way because the dead swells from the boat,

after it stopped, would come rolling up the river to where we were and give us a good shaking up.

JW: Was it lit up at night, too?

HH: Oh yes. And the great event was the Fourth of July fireworks. We had our boat full of people on that night; people came down to the see the fireworks.

[tape turned off, then resumed]

JW: Today is July 14, 1987. My name is Joanne Weeter. I'm conducting an interview with Harlan Hubbard in Payne Hollow, Kentucky. Harlan, would you like to say a few more words about your mother's death?

HH: Yes, I would, Joanne. And I'm sorry to think about my mother at the end. Her whole life was one of sunshine and shadow but it set behind clouds. Her last months were dark and unhappy for everyone. She had suffered a slight stroke but recovered enough to want to get home from the hospital. When she did get home she lived almost normally except that she did not realize where she was. Her continuous desire was to go home.

I had the help of a woman trained for such work for awhile but I soon saw that she wasn't doing anything that I couldn't do almost as well, so I took it on myself, took on the care of her. My brother Frank came out from New York for awhile. Even that didn't cheer Mom up much. Frank said that he didn't have many suggestions so we just went on the way we were. This was the fall of 1943.

In the previous April, Anna and I had been married. We set up very light housekeeping in my studio in the backyard, which was the best arrangement we could think of since it allowed us a home of our own and I could still, it was handy to the house and

could take care of Mom. So the summer went on pretty well. The studio was a delightful place to live. I built it myself years ago. It's built of brick and the inside walls were white-washed brick and at one end there was a tall window looking toward the north; you couldn't see out of it because the bottom of the window was too high. It was a fine place for painting and there wasn't much to look at anyway -- backyards of houses. But that window, I'm sure, was the inspiration for a much larger one that we were to build nine years later in the house that we built for ourselves in Payne Hollow.

[tape turned off, then resumed]

JW: I'm glad you did that, I had a little tickle in my throat.

HH: Behind the studio the yard sloped down through a large area of abandoned farmland, an orchard which I haunted every morning. Also, it was a source for firewood, and in the spring, there were wild strawberries and blackberries and asparagus and a few pears from decaying trees. We were always on the watch for new birds and we did see some good ones out there, too.

Things went along this way until November and Mom's life came to an end then, almost on her eighty-second birthday. I insisted on a funeral service in the house, knowing she would have desired that, although it's not the customary thing nowadays, and I had her old friend, Reverend Ervin, a man she admired very much and went to his church, to conduct the services. My arrangement of the funeral rites, however, seemed to have estranged Mom's friends for none came to the cemetery. Perhaps it was because of the bleak, wet day. Frank was there and Ellie Buck, our lovely friend from the old days. She was raised on a farm but now married to a machinist and living in the city. While in the



cemetery I thought of the sunny May days, often the first hot days of the early summer when Mama and I had walked over Highland Avenue in the early morning to the cemetery carrying flowers -- peonies if they were open at that time -- to place on Pop's grave. Mom was buried in the same grave and I felt that I had left a large part of my life there. Her name was carved on the stone and now it's all pretty well forgotten.

JW: Harlan, tell me a little bit about when you first met Anna.

HH: Well, I first saw Anna in the Cincinnati Public Library and it was the old building on Vine Street. It's torn down now, they built a new library in another place, but this building had been built to be used as an opera house and was converted into a library, not very successfully in some ways. Anyway, Anna was stationed in the art and music department where I sometimes went as a beginning artist -- also I was interested in music -- and about that time I had acquired a fiddle; it was my father's old fiddle and Frank had taken up violin and he sent me this when he could get a better one. So I was practicing and I was getting music over there, too.

JW: Did she catch your eye right off?

HH: No. Isn't that strange? My interest in Anna was not aroused until after several visits. She was a very quiet, reserved person, not putting herself forward and I think we . . . what got it started was music. I told her about my violin when I was getting some music and she said she played the piano and the first thing we knew we had arranged a meeting at her house to play together. The music did not go well but we got along well in other ways, it seemed. At that time she was living in an apartment in Clifton on one of the hills that surround the city. She shared the apartment with her younger sister and with

another girl named Barre. In spite of the way I played, I derived a strange, new pleasure from playing with the piano, the two parts intertwined and supporting each other, and Anna was a wonderful accompanist. That was her strongest point, really. She never lost her place and she never lost me. And she played her part beautifully. This beginning we branched out in other directions before long; we went to the art museum to see a special collection, I forget what it was, and on one of her days off I took her to the river. She had never seen the Ohio River hardly, living where she did, and no reason to go look at it, although she did have friends in Covington whom I met later and she must have seen the river when she crossed over the bridge, but it was different to go out and sit on the real bank and get mud on your feet and see the waves on the shore. Although she seemed a city person and was raised in the city she told me that her vacations, and her father's vacations, were on a lake in Michigan and were a large part of her early life.

JW: So she seemed to enjoy herself that first day?

HH: Yes, she seemed to take to the river and for many other reasons I soon became to respect her, I respected her intelligence and her consideration. Somehow she reminded me of a character from Jane Austen, Eleanor perhaps. And I think she would not mind my saying that because she enjoyed reading Jane Austen and we often read her novels together through it all in time. I suppose it was around 1940 when we began to consider each other seriously.

JW: How long had you been seeing one another at that point?

HH: Not very long, two or three years, I guess. Two years I want to say. There were no important developments, though, for awhile. I realize now that my visits to her

apartment were something of a nuisance to those three well ordered lives that were living there. But they were all very considerate and made me welcome and they must have approved or they wouldn't have done that.

One of our meeting places was Music Hall in Cincinnati where the symphony concerts are played. After one of the concerts, it must have been in the spring, maybe March, I walked with her to the corner where her street car stopped. As she stepped aboard I said in parting, from a sudden impulse -- I had not thought about it at all -- "Anna, we must pass this spring together." Other passengers intervened and the car started or Anna would have come back in.

Not long after this unorthodox declaration on my part, we decided to be married at once. There were all sorts of difficulties: I told Anna I could not go through with the kind of wedding she probably had in mind, on account of my mother's condition, but a more compelling reason was my abhorrence of typical wedding ceremonies. I believe I would have given up Anna had she insisted but she seemed to understand my feelings about this and accepted them. I've often wondered about the feelings of her mother and sisters. It must have been hard for her mother to see her oldest daughter marry and not even be there or not even be in the same city. But she never mentioned it.

JW: Her mother was still in Michigan?

HH: Yes, she had her two sisters, well, one sister living in the apartment in Clifton and the other lived in Michigan. I can say, looking back, that I was accepted by her mother without a murmur and we became good friends. She even came down to the riverbank later when we were building a shantyboat and actually helped me. Some of her

people, she said, were ship builders in Holland and she was used to shavings and sawdust. Anyway, Anna let me arrange this affair and we went to Maysville to be married. I like Maysville; it's a river town some fifty miles above Cincinnati, but an independent city of its own and still a country town. This was April 20, 1943, that we were to be married.

We traveled there on the morning C&O train called the Accommodation. Anna boarded it when it left Cincinnati in the dark of the predawn. This was war time, clocks were set on daylight and war time after that, two hours ahead of time. So the mornings were really dark. I was to get on the train at Brent a half an hour after it left Cincinnati. She must have wondered if I would be there but of course, I was. I had a match ready to light a newspaper as a signal for the train if it did not slow up to stop at the station.

JW: Were you nervous?

HH: No. I just thought this was another day we were going to spend on the river together. A little more complicated, a little more elaborate, perhaps.

JW: You sound like you were very ready to be married.

HH: I was. I'm quite surprised at myself. I'd never been that way before. I think I've given you some ideas of my love life up to this point but this was something different.

JW: What was it that made Anna different?

HH: Well, you're asking me a question that's very difficult to answer. You think you can analyze a person, especially your wife or any woman, but they're hard to pin down. You think you have it figured out, but it turns out that you're all wrong sometimes. Anyway, I kept learning new things about her. I felt from the beginning that we'd

make a go of it and it would last a long time, and we would be happy. And that's the way it was. Well, shall I go on about Maysville?

JW: Uh-hmm.

HH: Or have we had enough of this?

JW: Tell me a little bit about what Anna thought about you when she first met you?

HH: You'll have to ask Anna.

JW: Hmm.

HH: She was not an effusive person that spoke her mind. But she said enough to know . . .

END OF TAPE 3, SIDE A

START OF TAPE 3, SIDE B

JW: My name is Joanne Weeter and I'm conducting an interview with Harlan Hubbard at Payne Hollow, Kentucky. Harlan, could you say a few more words about how you spent your wedding day?

HH: Yes. After we got off the train in Maysville, we delayed a little while in the station, maybe to give each other a chance to back out if they wanted to, then we walked over to the courthouse, which was not very far. That was one of the attractions of Maysville, the old building, and inside was just what we hoped it to be, very quiet and dark and we went into a large chamber where no one was, but there was a fire crackling in the stove and a big dog stretched out on the floor. All that seemed a very good beginning. It was shattered pretty soon, though, because a young woman came in, very officious and

seemed to be unhappy about something, and treated us as if we were running away just to get married. She even spelled my name wrong in the document. Anyway, she performed the ceremony. All that was not very auspicious but we didn't mind.

We left Maysville and walked on up the track a ways to a little town named Springdale, not very far, I'd been there before. We left the river there and walked back up the country road, beautiful country in that April spring. It was bleak though, windy, chill, damp. Every April 20th comes, we notice that it's often that way, that kind of weather. The day seemed to pass quickly. We went back to Springdale and down to the railroad where we were to wait at the station for the train to come back in the evening. They called that train the Accommodation; it was number seven when it left in the morning and number eight when it came back in the evening. It carried mail to little places along the way, some even across on the Ohio side of the river. And the mail was carried over in a rowboat, carried up the bank and put on a train at some of the little stations where there was no other way to handle it. That's the way it was done at Springdale.

While we were waiting for the train, we built a little fire along the track and made some hot cocoa and we had something else to refresh ourselves with and then we rode back to -- where did we get off? We got to Fort Thomas some way but I'm sure . . . we got out at Brent and walked up the hill, I guess. That's about the only way you could do it. It was still light when we got home. My mother didn't approve of this at all. She didn't take to Anna, of course, and had all sorts of objections but I hoped we could convince her it was a good thing.

JW: Did Anna like your mother?

HH: She liked her as much as she was allowed to but we found it was just best to live our own lives out there and I'd spend all the time that was necessary in the house with Mom and we had a very good summer. We planted a garden, raised some vegetables for ourselves; went down to the river now and then; we read together a lot, but we had no music together.

Not very long after that I got a cello for Anna, something she always wanted, so then we could play together, even on our shantyboat, because we took the cello with us. The music was the thing that brought us together really. I wouldn't say it was the thing that held us together but it was . . . without it we might have wondered what to do sometimes.

JW: Did Anna continue working at the library?

HH: She did for a few days and then one day she said she was going to leave the library. I had hoped she would but I didn't say anything about it because I didn't want to influence her in her decision. I think she left the library without any regrets; she had been there at least fifteen years and she made a good thing of it. She was valued for her knowledge of art and music but the grind, everyday grind was hard on her. She was not made for that kind of thing. She had tried school teaching before, taught in the city schools in Grand Rapids for awhile and then in the college, Hope College, taught French and German. That went better but still she gave it up to work in the Cincinnati Library.

JW: Was it difficult for you to adjust to married life? To the routine of it?

HH: It wasn't a routine at first, it was all exciting and new to us, to both of us. And I don't think we had any trouble at all in that way. Or any trouble in any way. We were faced with an important decision to make, though, now that my mother was dead; we

had to decide what to do with the house and what to do with ourselves. To me it seemed that travel might be the best solution. I was ripe for change and I think Anna was, too. We figured that the house could be rented and that would pay expenses, but if we stayed there and lived in the house, either Anna would have to stay in the library working or I would have to get a job to support the house and that seemed foolish since we didn't need all that big house anyway. So this took awhile to get all this straightened out and it was February before we could get away.

Travel by train appealed to both of us so we took the C&O, that's the one we took to Maysville, but this time we went in style on their crack train called the FFV which means, in their language, the Fast Flying Virginian. It also means the First Families of Virginia. Since the railroad goes through Virginia it was very appropriate.

There's some beautiful country up in West Virginia, up the New River gorge. We went to Washington and spent a day or two there. I don't think either of us had ever been to Washington. We went to the National Gallery, the Corcoran Gallery, didn't look at the tourist sites much, though.

JW: Were the museums exciting?

HH: Oh yeah. We could have spent a lot of time there. And that was way back in 1943. Think what they are now with all the new galleries, expansions of. . . . Then we went off to New York. Frank and Frances were living in Larchmont, that's about twenty miles outside of the city in the direction of Connecticut. We didn't want to stay there because there was nothing you could do in Larchmont but, so we made our headquarters in Frank's studio downtown. It was on Lexington Avenue on the fourth floor, just one room



he had there. It was a great place, we could sleep there and spend the day going around the city.

There's much to see as everyone knows, and we had a special interest in music, libraries, art galleries. On weekends we'd go out to Larchmont and spend the weekend with Frank and Frances.

JW: What did Anna think of your art?

HH: She was very much . . . [tape turned off momentarily, then resumed]

JW: And what did you and Anna do next, Harlan?

HH: Well, that winter in New York passed quickly and when spring came, when I thought it was spring, we were anxious to get out so we took to the open road, as you might say. We wanted to get back to Kentucky but we thought we'd make a vagabond trip of it and do a lot of walking in the back country. We took a train up to Kingston, New York, and that brought us into the Catskill Mountains and we walked back to West Hurley, a place that I knew very well from previous visits there. And that's near Woodstock, which is a famous artists' colony and near there is Overlook Mountain, so we climbed up there and stayed overnight one night. I was interested that it was still winter up there and the winter visitors, they seemed to have . . . some people stay there all winter.

We went on a little farther to a town called Catskill and that's where Helen Van Ess lived, an old friend of Anna's; in fact, she was one of Anna's students at Hope College, and she lived in a cabin overlooking the Hudson River which was very interesting to us, especially to me, watching the traffic on the river. We stayed there a couple of days and then headed toward the south. We had one more walk through the Catskills over a pass and

there was snow on the ground there and when we got down on the other side we were in New Jersey. We didn't want to walk very far through New Jersey so we took a bus to Harper's Ferry. I made some sketches there because I know I made a wood block of Harper's Ferry.

Then we started to walk on the Appalachian Trail, which follows the crest of the mountains south, only for foot passengers, no vehicles allowed. They had shelters now and then, a place to build a fire and it was really chilly at night -- it was chilly in the daytime, too, up there in the wind. We used to do all right, though, we'd build a fire so close to the shelter it was almost like having it inside. We finally gave it up and went down the mountain toward the east and came out in the Shenandoah Valley and stayed overnight at Berryville with a very pleasant family and walked down through the Shenandoah Valley right past the Holy Cross Monastery where our friend Harvey is now. At that time we hadn't even met him.

We did have friends though, and Warren and Patricia Staebler -- Warren was in the English department in Cincinnati when we were married, then he moved to Richmond and taught at Earlham College for a long time -- they were both musicians and we often tried to play quartets together; not on this trip, of course, but we did look up Warren. He was in the . . . well, we saw Patricia, too. They were separated at that time. Patricia was at Pendle Hill, a Quaker colony not far out of Philadelphia. I don't know what she was doing there but we stayed there for one night, then went on to Gatlinburg and near there is the CCC Camp where Warren was stationed -- that means the Civilian Conservation, I think. They

were all Quakers and very congenial. It wasn't bad, they weren't suffering any except the restriction that they couldn't go anywhere, like being in the army.

One who was stationed there was Arthur Little, very much interested in theater and became the theater director at Earlham College and while he was there he put on a couple of plays, passing out parts to all, even to Anna and me. After we left the Smokies, the rest of the way back home, we would have done better to take a bus, I guess, and get it over with but we tried several other side trips which were not very productive. We finally did end up on taking a bus the rest of the way until home.

JW: Did it feel good to be back in your home town?

HH: Not especially. It was nice to get back in the studio after our . . . it was pretty rough on the road at that time of the year. Clay Crawford scolded me for taking Anna out in such conditions but Anna didn't seem to mind any more than I did and those memories are very dear to us, they were.

JW: Did Clay and Anna enjoy one another's company?

HH: Yes, they were very fond of each other.

JW: So, once you got back to your hometown, what was your next course of action?

HH: Well, of course, we settled back in the studio and it seemed best -- and we had the house rented and the tenants were very obliging friends of ours and they let us live in the studio while they were living in the house. But that was just a temporary arrangement, we had to do something more permanent so at this point Anna made the brilliant suggestion, "Maybe this is the time to build that shantyboat that you've been

dreaming about for so long." Well, I couldn't object to that, of course, and I set about it with all dispatch because it was October and if I wanted to build a shantyboat before wintertime set in, we'd have to get busy at it. I told all this in the book *ShantyBoat* so I won't say much more about it now but we went down to the riverbank and built a little cabin, a shack is all it was, that we could live in while we worked on the boat. That was when Anna's mother came down one nice day and I felt quite honored that she would come all the way down to the riverbank to watch us build a boat because I thought that would be one thing she might not approve of. [chuckle]

JW: What was her reaction?

HH: Oh, she never did say a word against the shantyboat to me. I don't know, she might have said something to some of her close friends up in Michigan. But all I can go on is what I know that she said to me. The main thing was that letters Anna wrote back were showing that she was having a good time and not suffering so everyone accepted the idea.

The shantyboat lasted from 1944 to 1952 and then it made its way back in the swamps of Louisiana. We couldn't very well bring the shantyboat back, it would be a great expense to get power enough to push it up the river, either an engine or somebody to tow us up, so we sold it down there to a rancher who was going to take the cabin off and use the hull for a barge to transport his farm machinery and cattle around the numerous waterways that serve as roads in his farm.

We had one nice meeting with those people who invited us -- it was a Sunday when we left when we made the transfer from water to land and we ran the boat down to his farm, up a very winding, narrow bayou and had to take a poll to push ourselves around the bends -

- and then Mrs. Landry invited us to have dinner with her. Just a typical Cajun dinner, very delicious.

JW: What sort of food did they prepare, do you recall?

HH: Oh yes, they had a chicken which was baked, so tender Mrs. Landry just pulled it apart, didn't use a knife at all; of course, they had rice, okra, lima beans -- that was about all they could grow down there in the summertime, okra and lima beans, although this was beginning to be fall but their fall garden hadn't come in yet. Mrs. Landry was telling us about all the things she was going to do, they were going to take the cabin off the boat but she was going to save the boards and build an addition to her house. And even the canning jars we left for her, she thought that was a great treasure.

JW: Were you all pleased that someone was going to put the shantyboat to such a use?

HH: It didn't matter; I would rather have them do that than live in it and use it like some shantyboaters do and make such a mess of it and not take care of it so I thought it was better to make an end of it right there and the hull would be of some use. We never had any kind of communication with the Landrys after we left; I don't know what ever happened to the boat finally. But with the money we got on the sale of the boat we bought an old second-hand car, an old Dodge, and I bought a boat trailer that was locally made, it was ten feet long and four feet wide and I contrived a folding camp trailer on the boat trailer which, it was just a flattened box that you would take the lid off the box and put props in the four corners and raise the top up to the roof high enough so that you could get under it and sit there -- you couldn't stand up -- we put curtains around the side and had our camp bed from

the shantyboat to sleep on. It was very comfortable. That's the way we got back to Kentucky, taking our two dogs and the cello and all the things on the road. When we got back to Kentucky, though, we thought this was such a nice travel outfit that we might as well travel some more so that fall, the fall of 1952, we set out toward the west and finally reached the Pacific Coast and stayed at my brother's for awhile, my brother Lucien lived out there. I never will forget when we pulled into his yard, though -- he has a very swanky house in Beverly Hills -- and we had this old battered trailer and car and two dogs and ourselves. Louie didn't mind but Alice wasn't very much pleased. [chuckle] We had a nice time there and they had Christmas celebrations and we took part.

We went out in the desert for awhile where Lucien had some land; at that time developing a tourist resort on the modest scale. That was one of the best parts of our travel out there in the desert. Then we headed north and went up as far as San Francisco with the trailer and visited an old Bellevue friend called Elfrieda and she insisted we come and live in the house with her. She was living alone there; well, she had her mother-in-law. It was a big house for just the two of them. So we had that winter in San Francisco just like the previous one in New York, we went to all the galleries and concerts and then we got out our cello and violin and played trios with Elfrieda's mother-in-law.

JW: Did you have favorite pieces of music or did you learn new ones as you went along?

HH: Well, we didn't have much music. The music we had for the two of us . . . we had to get some trios and we got them at the local library and they were all new. We played terribly, I guess, but we enjoyed it and so did Mrs. . . . I forget her name now.

JW: What did she play? What instrument?

HH: She played violin. I played viola and Anna played cello. Violin, viola and cello, that's a standard string trio.

JW: By that time you and Anna must have been used to playing with each other to such an extent that you sounded quite compatible.

HH: Yeah, and Anna picked up the cello very quickly. Made it sound good even though she couldn't play very much. We also played the, while we were in Cincinnati we played string quartets with Warren and Patricia Staebler; they were back there now after their experiences in the war. After San Francisco we came home the southern way through Galveston, was a wonderful place on the Gulf Coast. I don't know why more is not mentioned about Galveston and the old houses there and swarms of birds, all kinds of birds along the coast.

JW: Did you enjoy seeing a different type of boat than you might see on the Ohio?

HH: Oh yeah. I made some nice wood blocks down there of shrimp trawlers. Well, let's see, we finally got back to Kentucky in the early spring and we were just about where we started from the year before. Then we started looking for a place to live now in earnest, and we went to all the old places we knew so well up the river to Wellsburg and stopped. On up to Maysville, Vanceburg but all that country was being spoiled by a new highway they were putting through and all the little towns had been destroyed in the 1937 flood so we felt discouraged. After all our search we had no leads at all. Anna said, "Why

don't we go down to Payne Hollow for awhile and visit our old friends there?" So we took our outfit on the road again and put a canoe on top of it and went down to Payne Hollow.

JW: Did it look the same way you remembered it?

HH: Yeah, and the people were the same, too, they came out the door and said, "Hi, Harlan," as if we'd never been away. Then when we got down to Payne Hollow it suddenly dawned on us, this, the place we were looking for, and we've been there ever since. The rest of the, from there it's told in the book *Payne Hollow*. So we have to think of something new to talk about now. I think we can tell a good deal about our life together in Payne Hollow. That's where Anna and I really started living together because up till now it had just been camping in the studio and camping on the road and travelling but now. . . . I think that's what Anna was longing for all the time, for settled habitation.

JW: Well, you built the back part of the house first.

HH: Yes, it was October when we came down here so we had the old problem again; we started building the shantyboat in October and we started to build this house in October. We had to get something to shelter us so we built that upper level where the construction was very simple. By Thanksgiving we could move into it.

JW: Well, from the shantyboat to the rig on the automobile to this space, the upper space, you all seemed to always live in very small quarters.

HH: This was spacious up here.

JW: Comparatively.

HH: Well, this was twelve by sixteen; the boat cabin was ten by sixteen, two feet more.



END OF TAPE 3, SIDE B