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INTERVIEW WITH: Harlan Hubbard
CONDUCTED BY: Joanne Weeter
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HARLAN HUBBARD: I don't think we can finish that up today, though.

JOANNE WEETER: That's -- we'll take it as it comes. Today is September 28, 1987. I'm here in Payne Hollow, Kentucky, with Harlan Hubbard conducting the ninth of an oral history interview. Harlan, I wanted to ask you a little bit about Anna. I know that, that, after you first met, it took a couple of times being together before you finally warmed up to her, but what about Anna did you find special?

HH: Well, those are hard questions to answer and I don't think you can be too logical about it; it's a matter of feeling, more than information, or, so I . . . in reality there was not much to bring us together. We were pretty much the same age, she was three years younger, I think, but she was living in the city and always had and seemed contented there. And all my ideas of living in the woods and on the river living a life in nature and that sort of thing would all be new to her, I knew. But there was something about her that attracted me and I think maybe it's better to follow those hunches instead of being too logical about what you do. Anyway, it turned out very well in our case. She seemed to have no objection to going down to the river with me and having picnics on the bank and taking canoe -- paddling around in the canoe.

JW: So she liked the outdoors?

HH: I think it goes back to her earlier life. Her father was a city man but he insisted on having a vacation on a lake in Michigan, away from town, and he always brought his family. His wife didn't like the whole idea but she went along just because he wanted to, but her participation and interest was very limited. But Anna liked those excursions very much. They lived in a cottage on the lake and there was fishing and boating and swimming and all that and I think that's where, that was a sign that she had some interest in the out of doors and the natural life.

JW: You say she was a shy person.

HH: Well, she seemed to be but she had a very strong mind and she could carry through anything that she thought was worthwhile. I wouldn't say she was weak in any department. We had . . . one interest we had in the beginning together was music; I had just begun to study violin and she had studied piano all her life since she was a little girl. Her father was a musician in church, in charge of the choir and all the church music, and Anna would play accompaniments for him when she was quite small. [pause] When she was still a girl he bought that Steinway piano that we've kept until just recently. It was a used piano then -- I think it was made around 1900.

JW: Was Anna easy to talk to?

HH: Not especially. [laughs] It's hard to say just what we talked about. I know one time I came in, I didn't know what else to say and I said, "Well, I've just come back from a long canoe trip." She seemed to take an interest in it and we talked some more about it. [pause] The more I saw of her, I don't know, you might say the more deeply I was in love with her, I guess. But it was all contrary to reason [pause] but still we carried through and

our marriage that we've already described, I think, and the fact that she would submit to a thing like that all by herself and ruling out her family entirely so they had no participation in it meant something.

JW: How do you think your life would have been different if you all had had children?

HH: Well, that – that was impossible because Anna had had an operation before I knew her that rendered that impossible and that was one of the conditions I accepted her on. If I had wanted to have a family of children I would never have married her, so that must indicate that I was not desirous of having children. In fact, the whole idea of children is baffling and frightening to me; I don't believe I could go through with it. I mean, not having the children but bringing them up, especially in the world of today. [pause] And I think that I felt that my life was so full already with my ideas of art and living that it was not necessary to bring in children just for amusement or variety. I feel in a way it's a mistake, too. I think if we had had children we'd managed it somehow. It would have been a challenge and maybe we couldn't have done everything we did together, but I think a family and babies on a shantyboat would be all right where they wouldn't thrive as well as any other place.

When I first started she said, she told me the condition that she was in and I said then, "Don't you feel like you're losing something out of life by not having children?" And she said she did feel that way at one time but now she'd gotten used to it. But the interest she took in her younger sister's children shows that she would have liked to have children herself, I guess, but it was impossible. But I can say that it was not my fault in any way.

JW: Does she still – or do you still keep up with Anna's relatives?

HH: Well, her younger sister died and the middle sister, who is six years younger than Anna, I believe, lives in Florida and I write to her very regularly because her letters meant so much to Anna, I could tell, and Anna's letters to her. I feel like I can do that much. And we enjoy our correspondence greatly.

JW: Does she come to visit often?

HH: No. The only time she has been up here was for Anna's funeral and Anna died on the second of May and she didn't get up here until the thirteenth of June because she lived in Florida and had eczema, emphysema, I mean, [laughs], get this right, emphysema, and couldn't stand any exposure to cold. And she didn't know how she'd -- she'd been here before but she didn't know how she'd be able to make it up the hill since then but she was determined to come and she did really well. She climbed the hill without any trouble. And I thought maybe that's what she needed, instead of living in that apartment all the time and never exerting herself, but I wouldn't say anything about it.

JW: So she was one of the twelve people at the funeral service?

HH: Yeah, she was one of the twelve most important people at the funeral. Another was Warren Staebler and Patricia who were both friends of Anna; and Warren, out in the terrace after the ceremony was over and everyone was sitting there quietly and talking among themselves, Warren started to talk about his early acquaintance with Anna, how they got acquainted and where I came in and the things we'd done together and it made quite a long talk and he's an excellent talker. Of course, it wasn't a prepared speech at all, but he did it so well everyone sat there without moving or saying a thing. It was very impressive.

JW: How do you deal with the loneliness now? You mentioned before that before you met Anna was a lonely period.

HH: I mentioned that in the dedication. Maybe that was just to please Anna. [laughs] It was a nice dedication, didn't you think? I really meant it but as you say, loneliness is something can be dealt with and [pause] now since I've become used to being alone so much I never feel that I need someone any closer than I have. I have many people coming to see me and coming here to stay, three or four days at a time sometimes, and I always feel that they're imposing on my time in a way because I can't do what I would normally do if they weren't there. But I guess their company is worth it and I always make the best of it and try to make them happy.

It seems like in the relations between people one person has to give and the other doesn't change. It seems like all the people I know are solid rocks and I have to adapt to them. Maybe it's because I am so unus -- have such unusual ideas. Sometimes I think it would be better if I would come out and say what I mean and be more myself but that doesn't seem to be my way.

JW: Did it seem foreign visiting Anna in the hospital?

HH: Well, we had no precedents for that. Of course, we both, or at least I did, I thought and the doctors thought that the hospital wasn't to be our last place we'd be together; I thought sure she'd come back again to Payne Hollow.

JW: When that gentleman, the teacher from Cincinnati, Mike . . .

HH: Mike Skop?

JW: Yes. When he carved the gravestone, that day that he came to Payne Hollow with his class, the gravestone and the heart that he put on it and the placement of your names seems so much like the illustration in your book.

HH: Oh, it is. It's copied from the frontispiece in *Payne Hollow*. On the dedication page, that was really our dedication in Payne Hollow, I carved like it was a rough heart carved in a tree and put our names inside just like a couple of lovers had [laughs] done that. And so when I had the stone out there, this riverbank stone Mike was going to carve, I sketched that same design on the stone. So it's still there.

JW: I know that you and Anna played music quite a bit together; do you still play the violin now?

HH: Well, my music since Anna's gone has been very, has run a very irregular course. For a long time I did nothing about it at all and the piano's not being used or tuned and in this climate was beginning to deteriorate and I thought we'd have to get it out of here before it got so bad that nobody would want it so I gave it to Ted Wadl, which was what Anna wanted to do with it. And after I was alone, I began to think about the violin and when I tried to play I couldn't do a thing; I couldn't get a tone out of the violin or anything. So I thought, well, that's the end of that. The urge was -- kept bothering me and I kept at it and I finally found that I had to go way back to the very simplest music and give up all hope of playing the kind of things that violinists usually play.

JW: Was it that you hadn't played in a long time or just the mood?

HH: Partly because I had gotten so used to the piano . . .

JW: The accompaniment?

HH: The support for intonation and rhythm. And Anna played so well and she was such a good accompanist that I could get through pieces that if I played them alone and listened to them with no outside help from the piano it was very discouraging. I kept at it, though, and I finally had to contrive a new way of holding the violin because the conventional way of using a shoulder pad and a chin rest and grasping up between your chin and your shoulder was bothering me a great deal. It was pushing my jaw out of shape so it made it difficult to open my mouth to its full capacity. So I found a way I could hold it by a strap around my neck to the violin and that really worked out well. I think maybe it's better than the conventional way because I can play now and look around and turn my head in all directions. The other way when you play the violin, you're clamped in a certain position, that's all you can do.

JW: Well, I remember Anna's piano from a long time ago and you say you made the decision to give it away before it became out of tune and I know that you have some photographs of that expedition. Can you talk a little bit about that event? Because it was sort of an ordeal.

HH: [laughs] Well, at first I thought we might be able to take it out by river and get somebody to come down here with a barge with a boom on it and they could swing the boom around the shore and hook on the piano, lift it up and swing it on to the barge but I went up to the only place that I could . . . the only man I knew that could do that, Dee Bennett of Madison, a good friend of mine, and he tried to talk me out of it right away. [laughs] Finally he said he would do it but he said, "I better go home and sleep about it awhile." I didn't know just what his objection was but I think now that . . . he has trouble

this way before but I think he's afraid that if anything happened to the piano that he'd be held responsible for damages. That isn't the reason I gave it up but when I saw how much water his barge drew and how shallow it was here at our landing and I don't think he could have ever gotten in here.

So then I investigated an old trail up the hill and it was in remarkably good condition. It was stony and rough in places but nothing that you couldn't manage with a tractor.

JW: How long since it had been used?

HH: Oh, it's been a long time since it's really been useable. A tractor has been able to come down most any time since we've been here. There wasn't much occasion for them to come down so there hasn't been many using the trail. And of course, this was different, too because you had to haul a big load up. But Bobby Gosman at the top of the hill said he thought he could do it so he came down with his medium-sized tractor and the trailer, which was just big enough to hold a piano, and with the assistance of twelve or a dozen husky arms and backs we carried the piano out of the house, down the hill to the creek and across the creek, and at the other side of the creek he was waiting there with his tractor. Haven't I told all this before?

JW: In a private conversation, but no, not on – not on tape.

HH: Not on tape.

JW: But we looked at the photographs. And who was it that took photographs of this?

HH: Carol Mahaney, that's Richard's friend. Of course, Richard [Strimple] was the leader of the whole crew; he knew just what he wanted to do and the rest of them didn't, so they all followed him. It was just as well, too, because his ideas are pretty sound although he did it much differently than I would have done it if I was in charge.

JW: And so what state is the piano in now? Where is it?

HH: It's in Cincinnati, and, of course, we dismantled it as much as possible; took off the legs and the lyre and the pedals, music rack, took them across the river in a johnboat and Ted Wadl took them home in his car the day before. It took a great deal of weight off the piano. And then Ted brought down what they call a piano board, which is kind of a shallow tray about five feet long, I guess, and you can just -- after you have the piano all, the legs and everything taken off, and it's turned on edge and set it in that tray and strap it down. . . . And then there's handles on the tray that you can lift it up high. It also had wheels but they had no chance of using the wheels. It took eight men to carry it, four on each side, and each one of them said they felt like they were carrying a hundred pounds. And as I watched it go down that trail on the hillside, which I had made when I built the house to get stone out of the creek for building stone, so it was pretty small, they got down all right. Nobody was hurt. And Anna's piano wasn't damaged at all. They got to the top of the hill and in a couple of days Ted came down, a professional piano mover in a truck and carried it to Cincinnati.

JW: And is it being reconstructed now?

HH: Well, he was going to do that himself, but he's just sort of a small operator; just has a work space in his basement, and he spoke to another piano technician, who has --

has a much bigger workshop and a crew of men and he sold it to Ted -- Ted sold it to him, I mean -- and he sold it for two thousand dollars, which seemed a lot of money. And the last I heard about it, Ted said that everything was taken out of the piano and the case, the frame, was being refinished. I suppose by now it might be all together again.

Ted was very generous; he gave Bobby Gosman, I don't know how much, \$500, something like that to be distributed among the men that helped. Ted made out pretty well at that because it cost about \$500 to get it up to Cincinnati so he made \$1,000 clear on it.

JW: Would Anna have been pleased with the fact that someone is rebuilding it?

HH: I think she would have been, yeah. Of course, as long as she was using it, but toward the end of her life she didn't play much any more and I think she really would be pleased to know that it's starting a new career at a new address (?).

JW: Does the room seem empty without it?

HH: Not to me. No, it doesn't. Some people come in and say, "Oh, the place looks so bare and empty." [laughs] They're just used to modern houses stuffed with furniture. This is how houses should be, I think: spare and plenty of room. Anyway, the house is still attractive, I think, don't you?

JW: Oh, yes. There's a definite feeling, there's a real sense of Harlan Hubbard.

HH: The house has a lot of character, yeah.

JW: Hm-hm. It does. [tape is shut off, then resumed]

HH: When I started to live alone there was not only the necessary adjustment to living alone but also to living without Anna. It's hard to say how much I missed Anna and how much I realized that that was that and there was no something, to which there was no

appeal, and I just had to get used to being without her. But even now [pause] our life together is suddenly revealed in unexpected ways and I'm very touched by it, by our life together and the fact that it's all part of the past. . . . But I think I've done a lot better than I ever thought I would in living alone. I never was one, much of a person to think about the past or derive much pleasure from it. I never expected much from the future, either, so there's nothing left but the present and that's all you have anyway so you have to make the best of it.

I think I missed both my brothers as much as anything. But Lucien's death in, I think it was 1971, it's so far in the past now that I've become acquainted with that and anyway he was living out, away, so I saw him very seldom. I seem closer to both Lucien and Frank, when I think of the earlier days when we were all young, then as it was just before they died. Frank lived a lot longer; he died -- I don't know when it was -- 1983 or '84. 3? 4?

JW: And where was he living?

HH: He was living in New Rochelle, New York, with his second wife. Anna and I visited him, I don't know, about 1980, I guess. Went up on a plane one time when Gene Akers was still building that cabin across the creek and he could take care of things here for four or five days. Frank was really a very remarkable person. He didn't make much of a show in the world, not as much as Lucien, because Lucien became connected with the motion pictures and, of course, that's a very -- [laughs] subject which people are much interested in. He didn't make any great success in life, in business or in art or anything, but his great achievement was in what he made of himself in his personal life. I never realized

that so much until just lately, and I feel Frank has influenced me more since he's been gone than he ever did before. I realize what a fine person he was and how crude I am in comparison in many ways, and I've tried to make some adjustment without losing anything in the meantime.

JW: How so? How are you crude?

HH: Frank was very sensitive and his relations with people were very delicate and understanding. He got along especially with women, I mean, made friends with them and understood them. And Lucien and I -- Louie as I call him -- were pretty slapdash about the whole thing. [laughs] I realize now that I've been trying to make some improvement in that way. Maybe it's just sort of a pastime in my old age when it's too late to do anything about it.

JW: [pause] Their children, do they come to visit you?

HH: Well, Lucien had two daughters, Janet died some years ago and Betty's still alive. She came out last summer; first time we'd seen her in a long time. We immediately became great friends, more so than we've ever been before and she was so impressed that she wants to come again this year, which is quite remarkable, I think. But so far she hasn't been able to get away because her husband has been ill. I don't know whether they'll make it or not. I had a visit from Anna's niece, Susan, just recently, that's always a great event for her to come down here for a day or two. So I feel like I've done pretty well with my family relations.

END OF TAPE 7, SIDE A

START OF TAPE 7, SIDE B

JW: Today is October 1, 1987. My name is Joanne Weeter and I'm here in Payne Hollow, Kentucky, with Harlan Hubbard. Harlan, why don't we start out the interview by talking about your trip yesterday to Augusta?

HH: Oh, yes, we were very interested in that and I think you would be, too. Do you remember Lois Green -- she was here one time when you were here -- she has a gallery in Augusta, a picture gallery, art gallery and she heard of my work and came down to see if I would let her have some paintings for her gallery and she picked out, oh, I think it was nine of them -- two of them were good size, it was more than she could carry up the hill -- so I agreed to transport them and she said she would pay the expense. So yesterday Paul and I -- this was quite complicated -- we, let's see, he was here the day before, he drove in to the top of the hill and walked down and then we took the paintings across yesterday -- the day before yesterday -- and left them in the car, then he took my car home and left his truck up at the top of the hill so he wouldn't have to re-cross the river and walk up the hill again. So he came down yesterday morning with my car and the paintings and I met him over there about half past nine, I guess. I must say, my car is a VW Beetle, a 1968 model, but it certainly ran yesterday like a young rabbit. [chuckle]

The reason I wanted to go along was that the road to Augusta -- Augusta's on the river, by the way, it's a small town, a very old place about half way between Cincinnati and Maysville, in Kentucky; that makes it about thirty miles above Cincinnati -- the route we would follow would be the one that I traveled so often by bicycle because I had a studio up - - part way up that direction and I knew it all so well. I knew every house along the road and all the people who lived in them. I used to ride up in the mornings early and go along the

road just as the children were going to school and the men were going to work and other children standing around waiting for the school bus. I could always time myself by where I met the school bus. Some of the students I was well acquainted with.

But that time . . . well, the road follows the railroad and the railroad follows the river; they're both, all three going along the same direction [pause] and first you come to Brent and you go through Brent -- which I've talked about already -- and then you go up a little farther and you come to Silver Grove where the railroad yards are and were, but they were much busier when I went along -- I used to observe them very closely because I was always interested in trains and these were old steam locomotives before the days of diesel. And one tremendous locomotive, a compound affair, would push a whole train of loaded or empty freight cars, over the hump they called it, very slowly, just at a walking pace. Then when the cars got over the hump, and -- someone would uncouple them, either one or two or three, whatever, and they'd slide -- they'd start rolling down, leave the train and roll down onto different sidings. They were making up different trains, which would go to different places. It took a lot of coordination because they had to throw a lot of switches and the men would ride down on the runaway freight cars and stop them so they wouldn't bang into the others too loud -- well, sometimes they did, it made a tremendous crash but I guess no damage -- but that was all that I observed on the way up as I pedaled along, at a pretty good speed, too, because I had a three-speed Raleigh which I called the "First Raleigh west of the Allegheny Mountains."

Then I came to the town of Silver Grove where there were houses and people; a little farther there was the town of Melbourne -- they weren't suburban places but they were

close together -- then when you get above Melbourne, you come to the little town called Ross and that was about as far as I went, because just beyond Ross I had a -- rented a cottage on a farm. I've told all this before but I haven't told so much about how it is today and that's what I wanted to see and it was a very striking thing, the change that has come over all that country. The road and the railroad and the traffic and the farms and the farmhouses and the land itself, it's all changed and not, not for a good change either, it's all for the worse. [tape off momentarily, then resumes]

When I was familiar with this country before 1944, it was prosperous farm country and the people were mostly German farmers, of German descent, and they lived in houses along the right side of the road which is the beginning of the hill where they'd be out of the flood. The farm houses were all neatly kept and some of them were very old. The land that they farmed was across the railroad track, between the railroad and the river, quite a wide expanse. There were no trees at all except once in awhile there'd be one that the farmers left so that on a hot summer day they'd have a place to get in out of the hot sun and have a little shade to eat their lunch or something. There's no fences. The land was farmed very intensively. They'd start up early in the spring -- with green onions, was their first crop -- and then they'd come along with others in sequence: spinach and peas, all the summer crops, clear into the fall when they'd raise a lot of melons and things. And they'd take that produce to Cincinnati to the market in truck -- their own trucks.

There was a city market in Cincinnati where they could sell them at night so that was . . . you could see late in the afternoon all the farmers packing up their trucks and starting off for the Cincinnati market and coming home the next morning. Sometimes if

they had bad luck selling they wouldn't come home till daylight. Or after. Or they'd come home as soon as they would sell out. One time I went with Jake Sandfoss, my landlord, to the market and spent the night there with him. It was very interesting.

But now as I drove over that road, the first change I noticed was that all the farmhouses were gone; I didn't see a house I recognized. Once in awhile I could -- one looked familiar but I could see it had been remodeled into a suburban dwelling and other new houses were built along there. The only way I could tell where I was, was by the roads, which came in from the hills, and they were named after the creeks that they followed. There was Four Mile Creek, Lower Eight Mile, Upper Eight Mile, and Ten Mile, and then there was one way out called Twelve Mile. I didn't go much farther than Eight Mile, Upper Eight Mile.

There were little towns, after the railroad yards there was a little town of Silver Grove, which was a nice place where railroad workers lived and railroads were busy then and prosperous and the town was also that way. Then you'd go along and get to another little town called Melbourne and then the next place was called Ross; it wasn't even a town, it was just a collection of summer cottages. But all between -- the land between those little places and all beyond Ross was all farmed very carefully and it was a beautiful sight with different patchwork made by the different crops and the farmers working out there. They worked with their horses, too. I don't remember any tractors out there in the period I'm talking about. Most of the farmers had old trucks, little trucks to take the stuff around, but they farmed with mules and horses.

But now when you go along that road you can't see where you are, it's like going through a tunnel. The trees have grown up between the road and the railroad, not real trees, just a lot of brush that grow up quickly and it is so thick and so high that you can't see through it or over it. And on the other side of the road the trees are not trimmed or anything, they just hang over the road and it's almost shaded all the way across. And when you did have a glimpse of the bottomland you could see that it wasn't cultivated at all, it was just growing up with weeds and brush, just like the roadside. I was pretty sad about what I saw.

We kept on going and hoped that we might see something better later but all the other little towns, there were a few other little towns we'd pass through – Oneonta and California and Mentor -- you'd see a few houses once in awhile in the clearings but nothing like it used to be where you could look down the shady streets of the villages and see clear to the river, even where there was a town. But then that was the end of the road when you got to Mentor when I knew it and if you want to go farther, if I wanted to go farther, I had to walk along the railroad track or go up a creek bed.

There was another place called Ivor, which was just a railroad stop, and there used to be two big hills there -- not high but rising from the river very abruptly -- and when I got there the place looked like it was on some other planet. There was nothing but, it had all been transformed into an enormous stone quarry and the hills were being cut down and ground up and there was great tunnels going down in the ground and earth-moving machinery and noise. They didn't seem very busy [laughs] but there was a lot going on. It

was very depressing. But the road was good, now they have a paved road all the way through there where I used to have to walk through the creek bed.

And there was another little town, of Carntown, which I made paintings of, because it had two very picturesque old buildings from the steamboat days, one right beside the other, three stories of brick. There was a little store – store building but that was all gone, the town was gone.

But I did see something of the next place, which was called Foster, but looked like just any place along the road, there was a big gas station, a bar or inn, or whatever you call it. But then the road went on, there was no bottomland any more because the river and the railroad and the hill were all close together. The road was cut into the side of the hill; I didn't think they could ever do that when I used to see it, because that's where the road ended. But then beyond that, it opened out a little bit and flattened out and there were little towns, Wellsburg and Bradford and across the road was Chilo, and then the next town was Augusta. But all those little towns in the first place had been practically destroyed by the 1937 flood and never rebuilt because there was no economic reason for it.

But Augusta, I expected to see something more because it was a little bit larger place, an older place, an important steamboat town between Cincinnati and Maysville. Last time I was there was before 1944 it was just about dead; the houses were all ruinous and no business. No -- the ferry was still running. [pause] But I had heard that summer people and city people had moved into Augusta and bought the old places and were restoring them. I was a little bit uneasy about that to see what they would do, because a lot of new shiny places wouldn't look like Augusta, either. But when we got there, one favorable thing about

Augusta, the houses, even the ones on the Riverside Avenue, which look right down on the river, are above the floodline. Consequently, they built brick houses there even as early as, before 1800; some of them are dated and that's the ones that they are restoring. But now they're moving into the town and taking over some of the other buildings, even the town hall, they're working on that. But I was quite pleased because the ones that they had restored looked just like old buildings and [pause] they weren't changed in any way.

JW: So they did a good job of rehabbing it.

HH: Yeah, I thought they did real well. There's this nice ferry running across, it's powered by a diesel engine, but a ferry always adds a lot to a town.

JW: Is that a tourist attraction or is it -- ?

HH: Yes. In the summertime tourists come there quite -- in great numbers and they have a river festival, which draws in a lot of these little sternwheel boats that people are fixing up as places to live, and in the summer they cruise around from one place like Augusta to another where there's a chance to have a race or a meeting of some kind. And so that's one of the attractions of Augusta is that steamboat race between those sternwheelers.

But the Piedmont Gallery, which Lois Green has established, is one of the oldest places along the riverfront and she has really done a remarkable job both looking from the appearance, outside and inside.

And then a strange thing happened to Augusta; they made a movie called *Centennial*, which had a lot of steamboats in it, steamboat life and steamboat action and steamboat town, so they took over the whole town and they had to do a lot of remodeling in those houses. Her house, for instance, was a bar and it had, they had to build big counters

and put tables and beams across. And then when they got the picture made, they just walked off and left it all there, but Lois, instead of tearing it all out, was able to use some of it. Since it's built in the style of the steamboat days, why it looks very well, well-done too; they didn't use a lot of flimsy cardboard and paper. It's built out of heavy timber. And that's where her gallery is on the first floor and she lives on the second floor, which is a marvelous use of space and still to be attractive and not seem crowded.

We had a very good visit there and when Paul and I started to go down, to go home again we decided to cross the river on the ferry and go down on the Ohio side. That's more of a main road and more city people live along there and towns are still functioning, so it wasn't such a, so much of a change on that side as there was on the Kentucky side, which I noticed. We made no stops but looked at the places as we went by, and I commented on some of my experiences there.

JW: If you were to paint some of the towns now, the ones that you remembered as being different and the towns have since changed, would you paint them as they were as you remember them or would you paint them now as they are?

HH: I couldn't paint them now because I wouldn't be inspired; I don't like the looks of them. But anything . . . sometimes when we get at a distance and see one of these towns, Augusta, for instance, you can still imagine that it's an old steamboat town. We noticed that so much when we went down the river in the shantyboat but the life along the shores was always more attractive from the river. When you landed and saw the detail it was very disappointing and that's the way with the little towns. I still can make a painting of Augusta, I think, [pause] and, of course, all the painting I do I have to avoid things that . . . I

don't try to paint things as they are now. I don't paint sentimental pictures showing old-fashioned things just to attract attention but I try to give some idea of what it was really like in those old days.

Well, we finally got to Cincinnati about just evening rush hour and we decided, though, to go on down the Ohio side instead of crossing over into Kentucky where the roads would have been easier to follow because I knew them and there was not so much traffic either. But we thought we might see something different on the outside. First thing, we got lost in Cincinnati. It was my fault; I suggested following the wrong number and then we finally got straightened around again. But somehow, to see all that part of Cincinnati was good, too; it's the old part that you don't usually see.

JW: Is that the part down by the river?

HH: It's along the river, on the west side, and that's where my mother and father lived. That's where my brother Lucien was born. But even now, as I said previously, they said the west end of Cincinnati was no place to raise a family in so they moved across the river to Bellevue. Anyway, we went on down and through Aurora, Lawrenceburg, and Aurora, and . . . what's the other one? Well, anyway, there were three of them. It was getting late now and we wanted to get home before dark and it looked like there was some rain coming up, too. So that was about the end of our interest in the trip.

JW: It sounds like it was productive.

HH: It was. It's something we'll always remember. It made a great impression on Paul because he'd never seen that country, he'd never seen a ferry and didn't know what

those little towns were like either and to get inside those old houses and talk to the people who lived there was a real experience for both of us.

JW: And good for him to have you along to tell him what it used to be like.

HH: Yeah, I was glad he was along, too, especially driving through Cincinnati in rush hour. [chuckle]

JW: You all both serve your own purposes, I guess. Harlan, I wanted to ask you, do you think you are more or less inhibited as you grow older in terms of speaking your mind and expressing yourself?

HH: Well, I think if there is any difference it would be that I was less inhibited now. But there hasn't been any radical change. All my life I'm so – I'm used to adapting myself to other people, to their ideas; it was the only way I could get along. It was either, if you want to get along with people you'd have to do that, in my case, or if you said just what you thought and what you thought of them and their way of living, you wouldn't have many friends and they wouldn't understand you. And all my life I've had to adapt myself; it's not a routine affair, either. Everybody is different and requires a different policy And I think it was worthwhile because I got to know people real well and what they were thinking about, because if I sympathized with them they would do their best to tell me what they were thinking about.

It reminded me a little bit of Erasmus, the old philosopher in the fourteenth century, was it? -- and later when the Reformation came along, he had a lot of very radical ideas and wanted to go along with them but he still clung to the old faith and seemed to be doing about the same thing I'm trying to do, trying to think one way and act another. [pause] And

I think I still do that to some extent even today but I feel that people, there's been a change in people, they're not so, not so bigoted and straitlaced as they used to be in general, and they can understand a person wanting to be different. And now there's many people that even think that I'm on the right track, living simply and quietly instead of getting involved in all the turmoil of today. So I really have an easier time today than I used to have.

JW: Are you flattered by the notoriety?

HH: Oh, I can't help but be in some ways, but I don't take it seriously. I feel that nobody yet has really understood me, understood how strongly I feel about things. For one thing, you can't understand anybody unless you've had an experience, something like it, or if a man is entirely different you just can't, can't understand him.

JW: Did Anna understand you?

HH: I think she did. She didn't change herself a great deal or her principles or her beliefs, but they were more in line with what I was thinking about than most people. She was raised in a very strong religious atmosphere and her mother felt very strongly about church and her father was a church music director, choir leader and all that. But Anna and I never did go to church. She never did before I met her, either.

JW: What do you think your life would be like if you had not written books and pursued your painting? Because that would have brought fewer people to Payne Hollow. You would have -- I guess you would have had to reach out to be around people rather than having them coming to you.

HH: I don't know. We sometimes felt like we had too much intrusion. On the other hand, I find from my experience now that you can't live without people; your life

would be -- wouldn't be complete. I feel more strongly now than I did with Anna and she would, too, because we had each other then. But all through my life, I've never tried to explain to people just what I was thinking about. If I did, and I wrote it in the *Journal*, they either didn't understand the passage or the man who selected the passages left it out. There was one point in my life where I think I made a great change, a change that doesn't come over everybody. I was so immersed in nature in my practical life and in my art work and I felt so strongly, the beauty of the earth . . .

END OF TAPE 7, SIDE B