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## Interview with Lemoyne and Phyllis Humbert

Anne Crosby

Lemoyne Humbert

Phyllis Humbert

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**Researcher's Name: Anne Crosby**

**Event: Interview with Lemoyne and Phyllis Humbert**

**Place: The Humbert's home in Millwood**

**Co-workers Present: N/A**

AC: This is an interview with Lemoyne Humbert, did I pronounce it right?

LH: Yeah, Lemoyne, yeah.

AC: On February second 2000. Okay, I just want to talk to you about your experience living in Millwood. So how long have you lived here?

LH: Well, I've been around here all my life. WE we, I was raised on a farm about a mile east of here, but I got married and we bought this house in 46, didn't we, yeah, and we lived here ever since that. I've been in Millwood all the time, and I went to school here, and I was down every night, when I was a young man, at night ...around.

AC: What was the town like when you were a little boy?

LH: quite a bit like it is now. The people were a little different then, they went more on their word than they do now, now you have to give a man a written description and you sign it you know. But then those old timers, they didn't lie to people.

AC: Has the Millwood bridge always been a part of Millwood?

LH: how's that?

AC: Has the Millwood bridge always been in Millwood?

LH: Well, yeah, well yes, that bridge wasn't here a long time ago. They cross the river down here is the ripples, and there was a saw mill down there, and they call it the Mill of the woods and that's how it got the name Millwood. And this house here, I I don't know who built this house exactly, there was 3 old pioneer families to start with, Hammonds, and the Hawns and The Whitneys. Real nice people.

AC: Um, did the bridge look the same as it does now? When you were younger?

LH: Well there's a fellow here in Millwood, his name is Hamilton Rhine, and he worked for the company that made that bridge and he had the piers set up for it on either side, but the bridge was too short, a foot or so two short, so the big stones on top they set them out, so that they would catch on there. And then, well I don't know after a good many years there a truck came down over the hill there and run into it and they think he was going real fast and put on his brakes and that caused the bridge to slide forwards and it fell off of the seven base [ph: the stone...] abutments, and it just wrecked it.

AC: When was that, how long ago?

PH: I don't know what year, but we hadn't lived here too long,

LH: No it was probably in the early, 50s.

PH: I expect before 50.

LH: Might have been.

PH: I would say so.

AC: So, did they immediately build a new bridge.

LH: Well they cobbled that one back up, it's on there yet,

PH: not that same one Moyne, because it had sides, iron sides on it, framework, you know? Like they used to build.

LH: Well it's the same bridge, no, but they used part of it to make the temporary bridge, they call that the temporary bridge. But then they built another road east of town here.

PH: 62.

LH: And they built a new bridge on it.

AC: When the first bridge was there, what lay across on the other side of the river?

LH: how's that?

Ac: What was on the other side of the river.

LH: Well, mostly just timber. There was a little bit of cultivated land over there, but not very much.

AC: So was there the bridge used to just bring timber over, did people use it as a road or?

LH: the bridge that's there now? The old bridge?

AC: the old bridge.

LH: Yeah, they used it some. But right now it needs a new planks in it, and they got talk of, well you can't get across it, well you can walk across it, but you couldn't drive a car across it, and I don't know what they've got I think the main thing.

PH: They're trying to get it, they're trying talking about it, the township is.

LH: They don't know whether to tear it down or rebuild it.

AC: How do you feel about it, what would you like done to it?

LH: Oh, I'm not really interested in it. Cause I don't live over there and I don't have to walk across it, I cross the new bridge it I do walk.

PH: It makes it handy for the people over there, they don't have to go out on 62 the main highway, and Mr. Lemons farms a lot on that road across the river and he can go across that bridge with his tractor and farm implements easier than he can go on 62 with all that big machinery. Of course they want it fixed so they can use it you know. And the people that live across the river they use it a lot too, instead of going up on the main highway, and of course it's another way to

LH: I don't know what they're going to do about it, whether they're going to rebuild it or not. I, they don't have another meeting about it.

PH: Well, they've had several meetings about it.

AC: I'm going to talk, I'm going to interview Allen Stockberger, he's one of the County Commissioners. And ask him about it later this week, and find out about that. Um, What role did the river play for Millwood?

LH: How's that?

AC: What role did the river play for Millwood when you were younger? What was the river used for?

LH: The river? They eventually built a mill down there and they used the river for, they had a dam down there, and a a dam powered by water.

PH: The milled wheat for flour. And things like that.

LH: They ground wheat into flour and things like that.

AC: Did you ever go swimming in the river?

LH: Oh yeah.

AC: Or go rafting?

LH: Oh yeah when I was a kid. Yeah.

PH: Well, they used to ice skate down there too when Moyne was little. [yeah, yeah,]

LH: Yeah, they had a dam down there and they got froze over there in the wintertime ofcourse and the winters was a little longer than they are now, we're in the global warming now, and they'd skate on there for weeks, and ice skate on that ice on the dam.

PH: Well, they cut ice didn't they?

LH: yeah they took ice off of it, yeah, and a I don't know of course, the river wasn't polluted then as it is now, there wasn't septic tanks everything going into it.

PH: Did they keep the ice at Mitchell's store or up here?

LH: up here.

AC: do you have any favorite memories from the river?

LH: Well, I used to trap down there trap when I was a young fellow, trap muskrats, of course I used to go fishing down there, Dad did too, that's a dam, up the river about a half mile, there was a place we used to catch a lot of black suckers up there, and it was real nice eating fish.

PH: Well, there was a school here too. Moyne started school here and went till eighth grade. [well, a] And then they went to Howard to high school. And the kids used to, when it would snow, they'd take their sleds to school of course, and they'd start up at the school house and come clear through here on the road because there was hardly any traffic then. And the hill up here that you can see, that's all wooded over, was just a field then, and Moyne they'd start up on that hill to sled ride. Come clear through here.

LH: yeah come through town and half way up that next hill over there. And I still have got that sled, one of them. [oh you do?] yeah in the barn, yeah.

AC: wow! Um, what did, did any people come to Millwood for anything to go to the general store? Or?

LH: Well Hill's history of Knox County said there was a 7 saloons here once, but my father was born here in town in 1872 and he said there was 4 here when he was a young man. Of course women didn't go in saloons back in those days, just men.

PH: In those history books that tells about Millwood said there was a doctor here in town and we used to have a post office, and there was a meat market, and a two stores, one, two stores. And of course the people from the country would come by in the evenings and visit. And they would bring eggs and their butter and milk and sold that here right up this alley and you can see out the window there that little side porch where they used to drive up with their milk cans and things and of course they'd deal for their groceries too.

LH: And the sand plant down there, there's sand stone down there they would make glass out of. And a I don't know, they started that about 1900, the sand plant, and that's where they built that railroad down there, of course that's gone now. And the sand is trucked out of here.

AC: Did you ever use the railroad for anything?

PH: It was just a spur that went from the sand plant to Howard. [oh okay] and they would hall the sand up. [oh okay]

LH: they'd hall coal down there do.

Ph: oh did they?

LH: Yeah, dad used to go down there and get coal.

PH: oh at the mill? Uh huh.

LH: you see they didn't have trucks then well 50 years ago they hardly had any cars. But ah, they halled everything with horses and wagons. My great grandfather come inhere from Pennsylvania and a he built barns all over this country, he was a barn builder, he had 7 boys and 6 girls. And a

they, that's they cut the trees down there in the woods and they a. He was an expert mechanic I guess he could cut the big logs down into squares and things and make all these braces and everything right in the woods and then take them in to the farmers barn yard and then put them up there, and the old man could do it, but the boys couldn't do it after he quit they couldn't make it anymore. That'd take a pretty good mechanic to make all them braces and rafters and the whole thing.

AC: What did your father do in Millwood?

LH: How's that?

AC: What did your father do in Millwood?

LH: My father? Well he was a farmer, he a there was some cultivated land across the river there and he raised corn over there, 2 or 3 years and then he raised some corn up the river, but my my grandfather, he lived on a farm before I was raised. Well he he dies and my dad moved up there then. And a that's where I was raised.

PH: Moyne was the youngest of the boys and the other boys had left home or were married and Moyne helped his dad farm, up until the war started and then he went to the army and not to long after that till Moyne's parents sold the farm. In Millwood here.

AC: So why have you stayed in Millwood all these years?

LH: what's that?

AC: Why have you stayed in Millwood?

LH: Well, I was in the army 5 years and I was all over the United States then, but I've been around here most the time. Oh I don't know I like the people, I get acquainted with them and I want to be around my old friends. Of course I can make up with anybody, but I have my old friends and I'm more attracted to them. Well a strange town is different and you don't know the people and they're kinda afraid of you. And they they won't buddy up to you so much.

AC: What is the community like in Millwood? Very close knit? Does everyone know everyone here?

LH: Well, not like they used to, they people are going around more, they get in their way and they're watching television. And they don't want you to come in their house at night because they want to watch television. And so that ended that, and then of course the school left here, and there were 2 churches then, 3 actually. But a [they're still 2] There's still 2.

PH: Our church, the Presbyterian church has been there for since 1855. And I don't know how old the church of Christ is, it's up on the road to Coshocton and when they built the new road, they had to tear it down and they built the new one over here. That was about 19..??

LH: Things just got more organized than they used to be. People used to play baseball and things like that. But they now they're in the schools they're organizations. And a I can remember when they played baseball, up in that field up there, in the yard. In the diamond there. And charlie Humbert and Donald used to play and donald and charlie uget mad and want to fight somebody, and the Whitneys was a good ball players.

PH: When the older families lived here most of them were still around in the 40s here, and each family knew each other and their children because they went to school in the little school here. And the women would visit in the afternoons, they'd have their work done and that's the way it was when we first moved here, and I was 19. And Moyne had a cousin that lived across the street and she was of those motherly type of women and she'd have her work all done and she'd be sitting on the porch after dinner and most of the women, one of them wore bonnets, sun bonnets, and they always had on clean aprons and they were ready to visit till the newspaper came, and they always congregated on the porch over there and there would be maybe half a dozen women there just having a nice time visiting, that was really fun, I enjoyed that. But now the women work and they have children in school and they don't stay very long at that house. I don't know how many families in all these houses around us since we've been here. Maybe half a dozen or more. And Moyne and I and the lady down two houses about the only ones left here, who were here in those 40s, the rest of these are all different families. So now if you needed something, and you went to one of these houses, there would be no one there. And you may not even know the people's names that live there. I don't know the people's names across the street.

LH: There was a lot more industry around there then, now this fields west here of our place, they used to tend hide?? In there, and there was little places like that that they would put them in and dunk ya into the ground. And a they take beef hides and put them in there, and take it out of there and take the fur off of them and tie them.

AC: Would the men gather like the women did to socialize?

LH: how's that? Yeah.

PH: At the barber shop usually the store. And of course they always had a nice wood store in there. And they would stay at Mitchell's store and I suppose some of the men would go to grab groceries there for their wives and just visit till it closed up and then at the barber shop they would congregate there a lot. [oh, oh yeah] Moyne was there every night.

LH: My other great grandfather lived up here by the Presbyterian Church, I guess he helped build that church, it was put up in Danville first, and a they brung it down here, they had to take it apart to do that, and how they ever done it I don't know. They could do things now, then, that they can't do now. Even these engineers have found these stones in Pyramids over there in places that they don't have any machinery to put them up there. They don't know how they got them up there.

PH: Now the churches, the people who belong to these two churches are pretty close, they help each other when they're sick and they visit and things like that. And I suppose, the people who don't go to church probably do the same thing too. Our little shurch we proabbly have about 20 members. And a they a we bring canned food and paper products every I think 4 times a year and they take it out to Danville till the other church. And then we have 3 different things we contribute to, permissions, from the Presbyterian church, and we make Cheer plates for Thanksgiving with cookies and fruit that we take around to the sick and whatever. And we do a lot of things like that.

LH: Well, my other great grandfather, he had a wagon shop up here, but it's an old barn it's there yet. And his name was Ab Butts? And he had two daughters and one of them married by grandfather and her name was Kathryn and a one of them married a man with the name of Moffet and he became an executive on a railroad and he moved to Kansas and founded the Colorado and

there's a tunnel out there that they call the Moffet tunnel and his name is right on the end right there. M-O-F-F-A-T. I seen it on television, hardly one man in a million would know what that was, he was raised right up here by the Presbyterian church and that old barn was his wagon shop and they could make a wagon right there In the shop. Now they have to have everything shipped in. They don't do things around here like they used to. There was 2 wagons shops here in Millwood, John Dolittle had one up there. On the Carvala road and there was another one George Dolittles on the sound, east, west end of town here. And a they fixed cars and George would do some wood work, but he mostly just worked on model-T fords.

AC: Have you met, have you become friends with nay of the newer residents in Millwood?

PH: Well, have we made friends with any new residents in Millwood?

LH: Well, yeah. Yeah.

PH: Ah, Walkers live next door and they've been there probably at least 30 years. They're fairly old, I don't mean in age, but residents. And a well,

LH: Well after I moved to Millwood here, and I was in the army 5 years and I worked as a plumber for 2 or 3 years, and then I got to working on television out in Danville and I wroked on them for 30 or 40 years, and I've been all over this country been to every home within 10miles of here. And some of them people I've worked with 3 or 4 gnerations of them.

AC: wow.

LH: There was a family that lived up here on the right about a half mile outs here, the name of Hammonds and his, one of them boys is a my age, just a year younger than me and he runs a store out in Danville, Dale Hammonds grocery. And a his Dad and my Dad went to the chicago worlds fair in 96. And that's quite a trip for people in 96 you know?

PH: 1896!

LH: yeah, 1896, well yeah. And a it's kind of remarkable that they went to that fair and their sons are still living, me and Dale and we talk to each other every time I go out there. He's one of my oldest friends. We started playing together when I was about 7 years old.

AC: what were, besides trapping, what were your favorite things to do in Millwood as a kid?

LH: Well I don't know, they had a basketball court across, they had a church there and they finally made it into a basketball court. Across the river, from Dale ??'s place. Where the church is now.

PH: you never played basketball did you?

LH: No, I never cared anything about basketball. I was too short for a basketball player, but I liked to play baseball and football, but we just played for fun then, schools wasn't organzied in that way. Like they are now.

PH: Have you been reading any of Earl Davis's pieces in the Mt. Vernon paper?

AC: Probably because we read the Mt. Vernon paper every week.



PH: Well, I think he's had two in now, they've been printing what he's been writing, they're really interesting because you know they're down around here and we know who he's talking about. And of course Moyne went to school with him, didn't you?

LH: Oh yeah, I used to fix his television. [pause] I tell you when you get this old, I'm 85 years old, you know, and when you get as old as I am, you can't talk to people anymore. Unless you talk about something, they...??...if you talk about your old people they don't know what you're talking about. Any more than you would. Even phyllis doesn't know a lot of people I was acquainted with pretty well.

AC: Do you feel that many people want to hear your stories though?

LH: no, they don't care much about anything like that anymore, it's so far back they don't have any interest or a connection with it, you know.

PH: Mary Ellen says she likes to hear you talk and tell about things. The only trouble is our stories are the same every time. Hahahah, you get sort of road weary.

LH: We've had 3 or 4 murders here in Millwood. Down where woodrow lived, they ??? and a somebody got to chasing his wife and he happened to come home one day and caught him [missing rest of story].

Side B

AC: Do you feel people have a connection with Millwood as they did back in the day when you were growing up?

LH: Did I what?

AC: Do you feel the new residents feel connected to Millwood as a town.

LH: Oh yeah the residents were connected to it yeah.

PH: I doubt if the new ones do Moyne.

LH: Oh the new ones no,

PH: I doubt it, I don't know, but that would be my guess.

LH: People, the whole world has changed, I can't explain it to you and I don't know whether I know or not. People used to have friends, now they just have acquaintences. See you're an acquaintance. You're not actually a friend, but when you get old like this, my friends are all gone. All I've got now is just acquaintences.

PH: Moyne has a couple of ladies that come to the restaurant up here that he knew their parents and she said when they go to church at Danville, we don't know any of them, we're just living among strangers, and that's sort of the way Moyne feels I guess. And another one of Moyne's friends said that Moyne was just waiting at the station and the train had gone and left, and he was just waiting at the station. Is that the way he said it Moyne?

LH: Well, ah, he said that life had gone on and I was still standing at the station.

PH: oh okay, I didn't think I had it quite right.

LH: That was ??? that said that. [pause] yeah when you're 85 years old I don't know how many families around there I know there's been 4 and 5 generations up in here. And I knew them.

PH: Moyne sees these young fellows up at the filling station the men and he knows his grandfather and they may never have even seen him. And a lot of times I think they learn things about their own families that they didn't know about, cause Moyne can remember what happened.

LH: Yeah, her uncle owned a blacksmith shop in town, he shoed horses and things like that. Theodore.

AC: how did the two of you meet?

PH: Well, we didn't live very far apart, but we didn't really know each other because Moyne was, is older than I am and he was in the army before I really knew him.

LH: You see her brother was in the army and people was worried about them more because the Germans was killing people and we didn't know for sure that we could whip Germany so, casue they had an awful war machine and they'd go on through Europe like a house fire. And a so Dad and I went t Mt. Vernon one day and Phyllis's mother would come up and visit with my mother and they'd talk about us boys you know. So we went to Mount Vernon and when we came back, we Dad and I stopped to see, Dad said, we'd stop to see Mrs. Peatree a little while, and that's the first time I was ever around Phyllis to get to know her. And Mrs. Peatree had a map to show us where ??? was her son, and this and that, and I told her where I was, you know. I bought a gold ring up in Mount Vernon that day and I can remember that I had that ring on, cause I can remember pointing at that map and I had that ring on my hand. And when we come out Phyllis said, I'll write to you. That's the first I had ever seen her, of course she was just a little kid so I had paid no attention to her. And I didn't know her then. And well I was like maybe 15 and she'd be 5 or 6 years old. So she wrote to me and we wrote back and forth for I don't know,

PH: Probably over a year.

LH: And I come home on a ??? they'd sent me to Colorado then I think, and then

PH: We had three dates.

LH: We just had three dates and got married. I come home, I was in Colorado then, and I walked home, I hitchhiked home. And a I stopped in Columbus and I got a car from my brother, I had a car at home, but he said just take this car because you'll need to start your's up that's that Ford register, like that blue one right there. So.

PH: Moyne drove that home.

LH: yeah I drove it home and

PH: We went to a movie.

LH: Well you wasn't home [little disagreement irrelevant]

[story more, irrelevant] I told Phyllis I'll come down and pick you up tonight. And so I came down there about 7 o'clock and we went to Mt. Vernon.

PH: yeah we went to a movie, the theater's gone now, [disagreement] Vernon Theater. It's been torn down. And then we went to Coshocton the next night and one night we had a little picnic up along the run up there, and we built a fire and then he went back into the army and I don't know. I think it was a couple months and he was transferred...we decided to get married and I told Moyne I'd get married if we were married in a church some place. So we, I got a bus ticket from Mt. Vernon and rode on the bus and I had to stand up most of the way from Mt. Vernon to Baltimore and Moyne had left instructions at the bus station there for me to call his buddy and he had a room for me. And he came into town that night and we decided we were going to get married the next morning and we went down to the courthouse in Baltimore and got a license and we didn't have to wait, and we asked the man where there was a church close by and he gave us the address to the Presbyterian Church there in Baltimore so we walked over to the church and just the minister, Moyne and I were there and he married us. And it happened to be on the 31<sup>st</sup> of October. That's the first we knew it was Halloween. Blah blah blah....So I came back to Mt. Vernon and I got a job at Timkin ???? there in Mt. Vernon in the office and I worked there till Moyne came home and after Moyne came home, and I got a job at cover ??? in the accounting department and I worked for about a year there and I quit and just kept house. . . And we've been here ever since.

Lemoine goes through careers he had. Describes jobs. [outside of Millwood.]