

A CONVERSATION WITH MRS. RUTH KAY
recorded on the 3rd February 1988
at her home, 9 Ribblesdale Estate,
Long Preston, N. Yorkshire.

Topics covered include her childhood and education at Selside, with details of the life of the hamlet. It also includes her marriage, the work of her husband on the railway and early recollections of Horton shops and tradespeople.

Interviewed by: Tony Simmons.
 'Churchgate,'
 Horton-in-Ribblesdale.

.....
T.S. I remember you were saying that you were not born in Ribblesdale.

R.K. No I was born at, erm Cowgill in Dent.

T.S. At where?

R.K. Cowgill.

T.S. Cowgill?

R.K. in Dent.

T.S. Yes.

R.K. When me father, and mother were living I was the, eldest child, first child in, they were livin with...with me grandmother me father's mother...and er, I, and my brother next to me..a year younger than me we were both born there in Dent.

T.S. How old were you when you moved?

R.K. We were, we were eight, I was eighteen months old my brother six months old when we moved but, um, my father got a job on a farm, at Scalebeck between Long Preston and Settle...and er...we were there...about two

years..and then we-er, me father got the farm at Selside Bor Borrins Farm, at Selside.

T.S. I see, so your father got your, your father got his own farm.

R.K. I was three..and a half when we, moved to Borrins. Me father was farm-hand. He always worked on..farms an'...

T.S. And he got his own farm there.

R.K. And he got his own farm well it, wasn't his own, it was..he was a tenant (yes) of the erm..erm Ingleborough Estate. Which it was, until, quite recent years, owned by the Ingleborough Estate.

T.S. Who owns it now?

R.K. Helen Sargent and her husb..husband Jim Davies. They bought, they bought it.

T.S. What's your earliest memory of there?

R.K. At Borrins? (um) living at Borrins?.....I don't know I *don't* remember moving there, although I was three and a half you'd think I *should* be able to.

T.S. Yes that was on of the things which I actually wondered whether you could.

R.K. No...I don't remember there actually. Although, you know, Mother and Father *telling* us about, what happened, you know when they moved, but..er...I can't I don't remember it you know just what they told me.

T.S. How would the move be carried out?

R.K. I *don't know*..really, well there was *motor traffic* I

mean it would be lorry it be..they'd get a lorry I suppose to bring all their possessions. (Yes) I mean..it wasn't *that* far back. (No) I mean there was motor I mean there was motor traffic during the first War wasn't there they were used...for motor ambulances and things weren't they so..I mean it was quite..it were becoming *common* then.....although not many people had a car 'cause they couldn't afford one.

T.S. No. Whereabouts exactly..I..as a stranger, I can't exactly place where Borrins is.

R.K. Well it's um.....well it's difficult to say it's up-on-the hills..you may've been you've been..you've..you've been through Selside

T.S. I've driven through Selside.

R.K. But it's before-before you get to Selside...you go down...there's a barn at the *top* of the hill, and then you go down a *steep* hill and there's a barn at the *bottom*. Well...the farm, is up there, just, just up, two or three fields up there but it it's not visible from the road.

T.S. Ah yes. I can visualise where it is.

R.K. The *road* to it, is the same road, that goes up to South House. You'll've *seen that*..(yes) a 'Bed & Breakfast' sign. Well, if you go-if you go up there, it turns left for South House, and right for Borrins. And it's up there.

T.S. It must have been a bit isolated in a bad winter.

R.K. It's more isolated *now* I would say...Naw they weren't, we didn't real, people keep, saying that to us but we weren't really I mean we got *everything delivered*, we we didn't have *any need* to go to the shops..nobody..nobody gets anything delivered now, and if they can't get out with the car what happens then?

T.S. Yes that's an aspect of it that I want to come onto in a few moments. There would be no electricity?

R.K. There was no electricity all the time me mother and father lived there, they left there in 1956. And, the electricity came to Selside shortly after that....(so?) there was no electricity at Selside at *all*, until about nineteen....fifty-eight.

T.S. How was the house lit then?

R.K. Well, we had, paraffin lamps...and in later years we had a Tilly Lamp I don't know if you know, what I mean.

T.S. Yes the one with the mantle.

R.K. N..n..it was pressure one..you pumped it up you know (yes)..and you pumped it up, and it gave a..*marvellous* light it was better than..well *as good* as any electric light really.

T.S. What sort of fuel would be used to heat the house?

R.K. Coal there was only one fire but there was only one room heated and that was the, the living room, the big, living room..the biggest room...we'd a big, kitchen range in there..big, fireplace.

T.S. So the fire - the - you cooked in that room as well?

R.K. Oh yes that was the, that was the cooking, there was an oven at one side...er, and there was also, hot-water boiler but it was at the *back* of the fireplace in the kitchen..(um)..er it, you *drew* the water off..in the *kitchen*..with the back-boiler.

T.S. I see

R.K. We'd plenty of hot-water we'd always *plenty* of hot-water.

T.S. Yes. Was that the sort of heating where you had to actually put the water in?

R.K. Oh you had to put the water *in* yes, you filled it up..it, was like a..a *tank* thing in the kitchen, and the lid y'could lift up..and y'filled-it-up..you-kept it full..with water, you know, with buckets n..of water. If you wanted any hot water out you..either had a bucket or um, can and..you know ladled it yourself.

T.S. I see, where did the water come from?

R.K. It came from...oh....the, foot-hills of, Ingleborough I would *say* you know, to be..er.about-a-mile-away up the...up..going up towards the moors.

T.S. Was it piped? It was piped was it?

R.K. It was piped yes but there was only cold water of course there was only a one tap.

T.S. And the tap was in the house?

R.K. In the kitchen yes. In the kitchen.

T.S. What sort of meals did your mother cook? What were

your favourite meals in those days as a child?

R.K. Well..I *don't really* know..it was all good..farm-house fare...*more-or-less-as* you would cook now I mean not really, all that much difference-she used to make 'er, make 'er own bread...until..the last..few years that we were there and, you know..ye it..it, bread got easier to buy you could buy it ye-know wrapped and sliced then..and so, she used to buy quite a lot of it, just in the..last few years we were thur..but..until the' un she *always baked* her own bread.

T.S. Where would she

R.K. Bearing in mind when there was a lot of us around she'd, per'aps bake.to *two...um*, batches in a *week* you know the bread, make twenty loaves at a time.

T.S. Where would...This would be made with fresh yeast, I suppose.

R.K. Yes..yeh.

T.S. Where would that come from?

R.K. From the grocers..from the grocer's shop.

T.S. Where? In Horton?

R.K. In Horton..yes yeh at Horton yes, um.

T.S. What animals were kept on the farm?

R.K. Well everything, you could think of..it was, it was a *good mixed* farm, mostly sheep, mostly sheep farming because of the moors, I'll close this door.....erm.. mostly sheeps..farming that quite were a lot of sheep...but..not many milk cows about, eight or ten

milk-cows...beef cattle of course an', calves, reared they reared ca-father reared calves an'..pigs...he *liked* his pigs there he reared pigs.

T.S. Where would these be sold?

R.K. Ooh...well..Hawes..Hellifield..Skipton...mostly Hawes I would say, they seemed to go to Hawes quite a lot..to Hellifield.

T.S. Would pigs-

R.K. ####(indistinct) Pardon? Sorry? Or..per'aps a..cattle-dealer would come to the farm and buy some...buy, er, buy some er, and they would run, a man who used to come round regularly...and er, he was a cattle-dealer and *he* would buy some.

T.S. Were pigs...was ham prepared on the farm?

R.K. Oh yes we, usually killed about two pigs in the year. Er.....and er..they *cu* they *cured* the bacon and hams...there was always home..home-fed bacon all the year round.

T.S. And they were - the animals were actually slaughtered on the farm?

R.K. Well they were until, the regulations came in when you weren't allowed to do that, you were until...the war years I would say, I think it was *after* the war years they the new regulations were brought in you weren't allowed to slaughter, you're not allowed *now* to slaughter on the farms.

T.S. I see. Were sheep, lambs killed on the farms at all?

R.K. Naw..you were very, if we didn't, we didn't often have a lamb..just *occasionally*..we didn't often do that...we usually *bought* the meat...anything she wanted she usually bought it from the butcher.

T.S. Would a horse be used for traction on the farms?

R.K. Oh yes..yes, we always had a horse..right until my parents..retired..in 1956. Barnett(?) had a tractor...but during the war years they..they would come..it'd...they would have a *contractor* to come and mow the grass for you with a tractor they would *hire* someone to come..you know, *hire* the tractor..and the driver to come..and *mow*, the grass for you.

T.S. From that then, presumably there wasn't enough work on the farm really to warrant having a tractor yourself?

T.S. Well *I think* there would've been but *nobody had* tractors then...remember they were only just coming in..to use on farms...erm...I would say *just before* the war it was the war, it was the war really that brought these things..it was, the food production it was your food product, production.

T.S. You mention that just about everything that you needed in the way of food was delivered (yes) by tradespeople. Who came to visit you?

R.K. Well there-wuz..I-wu there was this *barn* that I spoke of at the side of the road, and we mostly got things left there we'd leave an *order*..there was a green-grocer came out twice a week...and me mother'd lea

leave...leave a *basket* a basket with an order in it and he would it *there* you see, it was *only,only* two or three minutes from the house and you *can't* see the house from the road but, if you, just go up the field from there it's not very far.

T.S. Did you leave the money in the basket?

R.K. Yes..the same with the butcher...same with the butcher he came twice a week...fishmonger, oh-yes, the greengrocer also sold fresh fish...and the and there was a fishmonger came round...and...about once in two months there was a hardware, ironmonger that came round, with, a van with....all-sorts-of, hardware like buckets, basin er dishes and things like that might want, nails.

T.S. And this was all done on the system of leaving a basket on trust?

R.K. Well some of them would come up to the house...some..some of them came up er, could get up to the house, but there wasn't a very good road then. Oh yes er, yes, it was..mind-you it wasn't we didn't, we knew what 'bout what time he was *coming* it wasn't er (chuckle) we didn't leave money there very long we knew we knew..really round what time he was coming.

T.S. I see. It was a fairly regular schedule then?

R.K. Oh yes, yes, we knew the days..and, and the *times*..to within a half an hour that he...

T.S. I see. Did your mother stock-pile any particular

types of food say for a bad winter?

R.K. Not really there was always a lot of...there was always bought, she bought *flour* in bulk in fact I've..in five...five-stone bags I *think* they'd be about five stone..four-or-five stone...*bags* of ? (indistinct)...in cotton bags....we-the bags were used afterwards.

T.S. What for?

R.K. Bleached.

T.S. Yes?

R.K. Oh *all-sorts-of-things* drying-cloths, and....oh all sorts of things she used them for, it was ju it was good white..when the, when it, when she'd *bleached* it it was all good white cotton, material...sometimes pillow cases if, you know if she'd got it really *white*.

T.S. Did she make pickles or beer or ?

R.K. Generally and... not re..not really sometimes in haytime she would make some..home-brewed....ale but, she did she didn't, er not very often.

T.S. Did you have a garden?

R.K. Dad, well father, had, er grew vegetables in a corner of the field..which he'd fenced off..but we didn't have a..by that do you mean a *flower garden*?

T.S. *Well no..either.*

R.K. *Growing, growing own vegetables.. yes he did he'd, we did grow our own vegetables.*

T.S. But not flower gardening, not decorative?

R.K. Oh no no..no time for *that*.

T.S. What sort of vegetables did he grow, what were the favourites?

R.K. Oh..he grew potatoes, cabbages...oh..whatever could grow I mean it's w-it's way up in the hills...carrots..onions..we *grew*..whatever wou, would grow there.

T.S. Yes of course you're high up aren't you. You're even higher than we are at Horton. (Yes) Did your mother teach you to cook?

R.K. Well s...(indistinct)..yes-I-suppose-so.

T.S. Did you have to share any of the chores around the house or the farm?

R.K. Oh, yes...being the eldest of the family I'd quite a lot to do...helping with the younger children.

T.S. Your brothers and sisters, could you just give me those details again?

R.K. I'm the oldest of nine...we've nine of us (Nine of you?) yes...four brothers and four sisters.

T.S. Are they still around?

R.K. Oh yes, they're all still they're all still living but, not all around, you know, I've a sister who lives at Settle..she's the nearest.

T.S. Were there any other children living nearby?

R.K. Oh *lots*..lots..(chuckle)..yes there was quite-a-lot...(indistinct)..the school at Selside was open then

when I started school I think it was about...there was *only* one room..and I *think* there was about fifty children in, you know, in that one little room. But it, gradually lessened over the years until..*now* I think there's only about four or five..around, Selside.

T.S. This I find

R.K. People don't have the big families now like they used to like they did.

T.S. I find that amazing that there should be about fifty children at Selside.

R.K. Well, well they em...erm, they, they stayed there until they were fourteen you see, now they're taken away, ten aren't they? The they...they come to Settle Middle School or somewhere or to Ingleton..when they're ten. We stayed, we *all* stayed there till..we were fourteen we, we left school at fourteen.

T.S. Who was the teacher?

R.K. Her name was Miss Snowdon. Er..she went er, she *eventually* married a *local* man a farmer, a widower. And then she was Mrs. Towler... (indistinct comment) you heard her mention her didn't you at that meeting at the last meeting? Mrs. Towler the *Towlers* of Selside she married the...Charlie Towler who was a widower..there was *two* teachers at that time.

T.S. What were they like? Strict?

R.K. *Not* really no, Miss Snowdon was, she-wuz-a..well I thought she was a good teacher. No she wasn't really

strict...but um, *strict enough* you know she wouldn't we..we'd to be wary about (?indistinct)...she kept *strictly* to the timetable there was *so-long* for playtime an...an hour for lunch, and, and, you-know she kept strictly to the timetable.

T.S. So you enjoyed your school years then?

R.K. Oh I-would say so yes, yes.

T.S. What did you do as a child on the long dark winter evenings.

R.K. Don't know really, we'd work-t..well we went to-bed about about eight o'clock..not really so long..erm..we played cards an' games...er...we read we we were all good we were all, big readers you know an'...we all liked reading liked reading.

T.S. Did you listen to the radio at all?

R.K. Listened to the radio yes.

T.S. 'Children's Hour?'

R.K. 'Children' oh sometimes yes, yes.

T.S. Did you go away for holidays when you were young?

R.K. Naw..naw, we didn't have holidays, erm, *occasionally* we'd go and stay with a relative..that was what we called a holiday you know..used to stay a week with a, with a relative or stay with me...er grand, mothers until...both of them died when I was around ten or eleven so..but I *do* remember gong to stay with me grand..a grandmother.

T.S. Where was that?

R.K. Well one of them lives at Dent, Cowgill...the other one was at, Newby near Clapham.

T.S. Did you go away - were there day trips out or anything like that in those days?

R.K. Not when I was a child no, er..no we didn't.

T.S. What's your earliest memory of school?

R.K. Don't know just....just sitting there feeling overwhelmed by all these...children packed around me and..(chuckle)....but my brother, year a year younger than me he started at the same time we both went, to school together.

T.S. What did you like most at school? What subject?

R.K. Reading..er...reading English 'cause, I'm good at that sort of thing..most..disliked subject was...well they call it maths now' we've call it arithmetic..that was the most disliked....well by me.

T.S. I think by a good many people! What other subjects did they teach?

R.K. Aw I sh I should, it-erm, aw its quite a var-a wide erm...range of subjects..oh yes history geography..er...English, arithmetic, religious knowledge er...a little bit of music..

T.S. What would be

R.K. Nature.. oh pardon?

T.S. Singing would the?

R.K. Singing

T.S. Just the

R.K. Nature..nature study...we'd go out for a walk we should soon, learn...nice summer's she would take some of us out for a walk and we would, collect specimens to erm...to look at when we got back into the school. We'd we'd we'd a, we'd a *good* education at that little school.

T.S. Yes it certainly seems to be a wide range of subjects that they gave you for a school like that.

R.K. Poetry, poems you'd to..you'd you learned things off b'by heart and..and then recite them an'...a little bit bits of Shakespeare, which I hated..never liked Shakespeare from that day to this...huh! I found it boring.

T.S. Are there any characters who stick out in your mind from those school years?

R.K. You mean, children?

T.S. Well either children or the teachers or grown-ups in the area.

R.K. I dawn't know, can't just think...can't just think.... not *really* no.

T.S. Can you remember any particularly bad winters?

R.K. Oh there was, oh yes there was, several..yeh..well we got, seemed to get more snow in those years...in the twenties and thirties than, we do now...w'could..we could reckon, that we had, a few weeks of sn, you know snowy..weather, snowed-up sort of thing..*mind* we weren't snowed up because we I mean we'd no, we'd no

car so....wherever you went you walked so..it didn't meck a lot of difference. But it was just...it was really a *tragedy* for the farmers when any *heavy* snow came because erm..they were mostly sheep farmers up there and they'd lose *some* shee, they wouldn't they always lost some sheep..they'd get buried in the snow...they'd go out look..after a heavy fall, snow-fall they'd go out with the sheep-dogs if..looking for sheep an...the sheep dogs would, seem to, be *able* to *find* them under the snow.

T.S. I suppose the other beasts would be under cover in the barns?

R.K. Well in the winter months yes, yeh.

T.S. Presumably then you just walked to school it was

R.K. Oh yes..just down the field, just down the field.

T.S. You say you left school at fourteen (yes). What did you do then?

R.K. Well I stayed at *home* for a while..plenty to do at home. Then I went to work....er, on a f..well er, in *Settle*...well-well we call..in our..call it then 'in service' you know what um...was er, a domestic in a..a big house...for two-or-three years, then I went, then I was, went *nursing* when I was old enough.

T.S. Where was that?

R.K. At the start of the war...in Lancashire near Wigan.....but, I didn't qualify. Then I married..you see that's, that.

T.S. How long were you nursing?

R.K. About, eighteen months.

T.S. And it was during that period that you met your husband?

R.K. Yeh.

T.S. What did you do as teenagers for entertainment?

R.K. Well not much...I mean..the kids nowadays say they've nothing to do but...I mean really we much but...there was regular *dances*.

T.S. Where at?

R.K. *Well sometimes* they had them in the, the school-room at Selside if they'd...to raise...money, for....any good cause that, hadn't... had whist-drives, dances.. Horton..they had them *regularly* at Horton..in the Village Hall which has been pulled down years ago. And Settle. When I lived in Settle I used to go...to dances, used to-I used to the *pictures* I mean the *big night* was in the hay-day of the pictures...when everybody..who was *near* enough got went to the pictures two or three times a week.

T.S. Where were the pictures in Settle?

R.K. What's now the Co-Op. That was 'The New Vic..Cinema.'
What, you know what is now the Co-Op at Settle (yes)..that was the cinema.

T.S. When did it cease being a cinema?

R.K. Nineteen-sixty I would say somewhere round there, nineteen-sixties..early sixties.

T.S. At these dances that you went to, who played the music?

R.K. Well it was local..yep, it, local bands they were...*people* who could *play*..you-know, perap, per'aps get together two or three of them..or four..someone playing the piano someone playing the violin someone playing the accordion. *Mum* sometimes played, because she could play she played the piano. She sometimes played if they were, you know if they *needed* somebody, but not, not on a *regular* basis.

T.S. What sort of dances were they? Modern waltzes and quick-steps? That sort of thing?

R.K. Well, waltzes and quick-steps...all-sorts of... variations on..on waltzes and quick-steps you know....military two-step and things like that.

T.S. How many people would you get at a dance like that?

R.K. Well it varied. It depended how, it, er, used to, depend on how many the dances there was on *that particular* night. Say, if..there was one a Horton and if there wasn't..another one in the area..you could get the room packed full, you know you could get a lot of people.

T.S. Which room was used in Selside for this then?

R.K. They used the school room.

T.S. Where was the school in Selside?

R.K. Well it's still there..it's on the right in the it's a *house* now, well, a bungalow..type house. Erm, and the tree it, it has a yard and a tree in the middle of the

yard..you know.

T.S. Yes I know, yes I can place that. How old were you when you married?

R.K. Twenty-one.

T.S. Whereabout were you married at?

R.K. At Horton. At Horton Church.

T.S. How did you get to the church from..

R.K. We got a taxi.

T.S. There were taxies..

R.K. Oh yes, a man at Horton had, he ran taxies.

T.S. A man in Horton ran them?

R.K. Yes, Walter Pollard, he ran taxies.

T.S. Where did you - did you have a reception?

R.K. Yes, we had a reception in Horton.

T.S. What did your husband do?

R.K. He worked on, worked on, well when I..met him he was working on the, on the land on the, for the War agricultural..erm..Committee. But, afterwards he went to work on the Railway..when that was disbanded at the end of the war.

T.S. Where were you living then?

R.K. Selside in one (cough) one of the Railway houses at Selside.

T.S. Whereabouts on the railway did he work?

R.K. At Sel..in the Selside area.

T.S. I see. What did he do?

R.K. He worked on the, erm...tracks on the the permanent

way, you know, maintaining the tracks. Then we moved down to Horton, into one of the Railway houses there for four years. Then when they re-organized, the work, they moved him down to Long Preston that's how we got down here.

T.S. When was that?

R.K. Nineteen-sixty.

T.S. And you've lived here (yes) ever since then. Not been tempted to move back to Horton?

R.K. No! (laughter)

T.S. What time in the morning did he have to start work?

R.K. I, think he started at half-past seven. Yeh I think so.

T.S. That's early compared with today.

R.K. I think they *still* start at half-past seven don't they? the railway-men?

T.S. Do they?

R.K. But they don't work Saturday mornings, they used to work Saturday mornings then. When..when we were married at fir when *he* went on the Railway at first for a few year. Then they, decreased the hours..the working hours I think the working hours were forty-eight..in the week then, then they decreased the hours and cut out the Saturday morning working.

T.S. That made it a long day then?

R.K. Well, I suppose so, he finished I think he finished at five.

T.S. Seven till five is a long day certainly. What did he do about a mid-day meal in those days?

R.K. Well he took..he took sandwiches packed a packed meal, or sometimes he would be near enough to come in, home for a meal.

T.S. Do you know what his job was exactly? What did he have to do on the permanent way?

R.K. Don't know really erm..except that they maintained the tracks that's all I know..I wasn't really interested.

T.S. What was the pay like on the Railways in those days?

R.K. It wasn't very good. Wasn't good at all it still isn't. So they tell me.

T.S. What was the attitude towards like and employment in general in those days?

R.K. How do you mean?

T.S. Well compared with nowadays, you get a lot of militancy and threats of strikes and..

R.K. Oh no, oh no and..no. I think, I think it was just accepted that you, you know you had a job and you your, you *did it* you went to work. Erm..

T.S. So attitude towards work was a lot different in those days?

R.K. Well..yes..erm (indistinct comment) I think it would, you know they were getting to the nineteen-sixties when, they got more militant and they wanted more money and, (indistinct word) they wanted more money because, the poor the, pay was very poor, it was, it was poor in

most erm, jobs. Particularly railway, and er, it was them that erm you know started threatening to strike and, occasionally they *did* strike and. But not very, the not, not the railway men not very often.

T.S. So there weren't many industrial disputes then on the railway in those days?

R.K. Not on the railway no.

T.S. This was before nationalisation of the railways of course wasn't it?

R.K. Well Nationalisation was when nineteen-fortyseven was it?

T.S. Yes..

R.K. Or was it after, no it would it would include the years after that (It would include the years?) *some* years after that.

T.S. And things didn't particularly improve then pay-wise after Nationalisation?

R.K. Er, gradually improved you kept, you, you kept getting ri -um, you-know rises in pay. But it was never brilliant, it was never, brilliant pay.

T.S. What were things like in the thirties?

R.K. Er, farming, well, farming-wise I suppose it was very hard. It was *very* hard. My fa my father and mother al, almost..gave up at one time about nineteen thirty-one or two, in the Depression.

T.S. Why was that?

R.K. *Well they just* didn't seem to, they didn't seem to be

able to *make* any money there was.. I don't know, you see I was *only* a child then but this is the, this is the general impression I got. Things got easier, with the war. But then, you see my father was getting up towards retirement age then. Things got easier with the war because they got subsidies and, they were helped to um...they were encouraged to...plough up a little bit of their land and, and grow some...I don't know what me father, what it was, I mean it it wa it wasn't really the, the country for, growing um...er, crops like that but the they were encouraged to, plough up a little bit of the land and grow some...wheat or, barley or something.

T.S. And there was a financial incentive to that then?

R.K. Yes, yes, I gather so. Er..but things *did*, come *easier* with the war, and *after* the war..the farmers, erm..well, they *still do* have, get subsidies for..certain..keeping certain, stock.

T.S. Would they still be able so exist if they didn't get those subsidies do you think?

R.K. I-don't-know, I would think they would find it difficult as, as um, as people did in the nineteen..twenties and thirties. It was really hard.

T.S. What happened dur (sorry) I was just going to say what happened during the war years when the men presumably were away fighting? How were the farms run then?

R.K. Well not not many farm, not many farmers sons went

actually. I think they'd learned the lesson from the *first* world war when they took um, as m', if they'd not, went, conscription started in the First War, and they took as many men off the farms as they could and the farmers, the farm, farmers...farmers had difficulty carrying on, and producing..the extra food which was *required*, 'cause um, obviously it couldn't be got from over-seas. (was farming a ..) Not many farmers sons went.

T.S. Was it a Reserved Occupation?

R.K. Well it must have been, yes. Er....can't um..per'aps it 'ad been three..or four..of conscription age on the farm..one, one or two would have *had* to go, you see my brothers weren't old enough. At the beginning of the war the were (indistinct)...sixteen..brother next to me would be sixteen. When war finished he would only be..twenty-two well he, but he, you know he didn't *have* to go but um, the brothers next, the next brothers weren't re weren't were never old enough to be called up anyway. They, I suppose they could've gone up and, joined up if they'd *wanted* but...they weren't, erm, conscripted..not so many of them.

T.S. I see, so that that didn't affect the area as (Jet plane passes low overhead)

R.K. Maybe if you'd, the far farm *men* who, em who er, Farm Servants, are, I rather think they had to get they would they had to go. But um, farmer's *sons*, who were

on the farm..not many of them, not many of them, called up.

T.S. Was there a Home Guard?

R.K. Oh yes, yeh...well-you, have you not heard of the Home Guard at all?

T.S. No.

R.K. Well you see I was away a lot so I don't really, know. I wasn't around, Horton at the time. Heard various stories about the Home Guard and their exploits...round Horton. (That's) It's like 'Dad's Army!' (laughter)

T.S. That sound like something I shall have to delve into.

R.K. Yes..er, you'll have to get in, get, em, try and get talking to some who was actually in the Home Guard. Billy Lambert. You know Billy Lambert?

T.S. Billy Lambert? No.

R.K. You want to talk to him. He was in the Home Guard..me father was..me brother, next to me. He was in.

T.S. Where does Billy Lambert live?

R.K. Lives in Horton.

T.S. In Horton? You must remember I don't know...

R.K. Oh of course you haven't lived there very long have you.

T.S. No. I've arrived as a complete stranger so I don't know these people. This is one of the beauties of finding out!

R.K. ..estate well you'll soon find where he lives everybody

knows him. Er lives near, just up up the Selside road a little bit, you know. Not far from the Station just up there. Past the wall. He's retired now he's in his seventies, he'll be able to tell you..some stories.

T.S. I shall have to go and see him. Were there any Land-Girls drafted into this area then?

R.K. Oh yes there there was um..a Land-Army hostel at Settle, and er, they were sent to work sent out to work on the farms. There was not, erm..they were employed by the War Agricultural this, War Agricultural, Committee that my husband worked for. They were employed by, that erm, organisation, and they were sent, out to work on farms *driving tractors* and, things like that.

T.S. There were more tractors presumably then coming into during the war years?

R.K. Oh yes, yeh, yes.

T.S. How were these girls received?

R.K. Well uh, well I suppose they were all right I mean they were...I don't know they were all right. How do you mean how were they received and what?

T.S. Well, I was just thinking

R.K. Nobody would be unkind nobody was unkind to them.
(laughter)

T.S. I was thinking of the Yorkshireman's attitude towards women!

R.K. Oh you mean the farmers.

T.S. Yes the farmers.

R.K. Yes yes yes yes...oh I think they just accepted them...they'd meck fun of them you know and...if they made a mistake or they did something silly they'd say, oh...laugh at them you know it was because they were a woman but I mean..a young man who *wasn't* um..who had been called up to do something like that I mean...*he* probably wouldn't have known either but they you know they wouldn't have laughed at them but I mean it's an that's the att, that was the attitude to women, wasn't it?

T.S. Has the male attitude towards women changed that much in Yorkshire you know, in this area?

R.K. I wouldn't say so no. No. Perhaps it has in the young people but, not in, not in the farming community I wouldn't think.

T.S. Was food short during the war years?

R.K. Can't remember that it was I always seemed to have, enough to eat. Course um, father being a farmer it would that helped there was always eggs and milk and...

T.S. You said you could, that was the period when you were stopped from killing your own pigs on the farm.

R.K. Well I can't remember we were, when, it were actually stopped *no* it was *after* the war. I *think, during* the war you had to get a permit, 'cause if you killed a, a *pig.. then,* you had to give in all your bacon your, your your, your...w, we were *rationed* then you see. You

had to give in all your bacon coupons they took your bac took, um..depending how much bacon you'd, home-fed bacon you had, they took *that* amount of *bacon* coupons. So you had, you had to get a *ca permit* to kill a pig.

T.S. The idea being presumably to leave you no better off than anyone else.

R.K. No..because were bet better off I mean, when they *killed* a pig there was all of.. there wasn't just bacon and ham there was brawn and um..there was the liv liver and erm...oh practically every bit of the pig was used, but, in some form or other.

T.S. And this would be prepared by your mother?

R.K. Yes.

T.S. Have you got any particularly strong impressions from those years? Any sort of one particular thing that sticks out in your mind from those years? Or any one particular character.

R.K. Not really. It was just pass..past part of growing up. Mostly...I don't know, I can't really say. What sticks in me memory there's *lots* of *memories*. of people (indistinct) their childhood.

T.S. Did your husband go away during the war.

R.K. No.

T.S. The Railways were a reserved occupation?

R.K. No, he work he worked for the, Agricultural, he worked on the farms.

T.S. Ah I see.

R.K. Until after the war when this, Committee was, disbanded and *then* he went to work on the Railway.

T.S. I see. What did he, what was his job there exactly?

R.K. Well, tractor driving, going round the farms and...doing whatever...was required *ploughing*... cutting grass.

T.S. What do you think is the biggest change, what's had the biggest impact on life in a village like Horton during your life-time.

R.K. Well I would say it's um, everyone getting their own *cars*, and going off for their own shopping and, that's closed down the village shops..hasn't it? There's only one shop in Horton isn't there?

T.S. That's right.

R.K. I think there was about four...there was *four*, general grocers, and the *butchers*, in Horton. A blacksmith. And one there was another shop Mrs. Capstick's who sold erm, an, er, knitting wools and...things like that. Erm, and her husband, Mr. Capstick he, had a workshop he repaired bikes and, re-charged batteries and, this is the f, this is the business that *Frank* has now the son..you know Frank?

T.S. Yes.

R.K. Well, I think that's the *main* thing that erm, the pi I, the, the *farms* are more isolated now then they ever were because..I *don't* know if anybody *does* deliver now I *don't* think, I *don't* think they will do there's only

the one shop isn't there?

T.S. That's right, yes. The Post Office.

R.K. I don't know if anybody does deliver at the hills now I mean, everybody'll have to go and get their own shopping. We even got a, we even got the daily *paper* delivered. I bet they don't now. I don't know. But I bet they don't.

T.S. So in terms of bad winters, that sort of thing, you were in fact infinitely better off in those days.

R.K. I think so yes, that's my opinion anyway.

T.S. Did your mother do much shopping in Settle?

R.K. Just occasionally she went to Settle on a Market Day on a Tuesday.

T.S. How would she get down?

R.K. Well she walked down to, she either walked down or cycled to Horton and went on the bus or the train. There was quite a lot of *trains* then. And that's another thing you see when people have got their own, got their own cars, there isn't as many buses and trains an'

T.S. There was a regular bus service as well as a train service then?

R.K. Oh yes. Not from Selside from Horton.

T.S. How often did that go every day?

R.K. Well there was an early bus...for the workers, and there was one about ten I think or half-past ten. Then there was another about one. And then there was,

there would be another one, round about five o'clock for the workers, to go home, and there was, you know the same, number of buses coming *up*, from Settle to Horton.

T.S. So farmers

K.F. I mean they may they maybe, *i* don't know, I don't know what the bus service is *now* there *may* be as many is there? after, a

T.S. One or two a day from what I can see.

K.F. But there were, there was also *trains*..the trains ran, quite freq..*frequent*, trains then.

T.S. I notice that there is an extra bus on a market day down to Settle, but for the rest, I think it's only two. So in many ways the village has gone backwards, as regards services, that sort of thing.

K.F. Well I, Yes I think so.

T.S. You don't feel tempted to go and live back in the village?

K.F. No, I never *did* like Horton. Selside wouldn't be, I *liked* being at Selside. But um, I don't I *wouldn't* like it *now*..I mean, when I lived there...*my parents* were there *my family*, everyone around we, was more-or-less, *related* to us. But not now. I suppose if I went if I *did* have to go and live there I would soon get to know the people but it wouldn't be the same would it?

T.S. No. You say you didn't particularly like Horton.

K.F. No not myself no.

T.S. I think that we've...

K.F. I don't, erm know of anything, really to more to tell
you it's er...

T.S. Well thank you...

K.F. What I thought, was, common-place is probably be in

end of side one

side two

The conversation continued on the topic of the number of children in the Selside area.

R.K. But the Railway Cottages they were all *Railwaymen* who lived there they belonged to the Railway Company of course, they were all Railwaymen who lived there, and they were, mostly, youngish men with families, you-know they had ch, there was children from *there*. And..there's...well, there was always *our* family there was *nine* of us. We *all* went to the school-that school in our turn, in our turn. At, at the *next* farm South House my um..aunt and uncle lived there my mother's *oldest* sister..they came to live there.. er, she was me mothers *oldest* sister though so the *youngest* members of *her* family, were more or less, contemporary with the *oldest*, of my mother's family, so there was, three or four of them, went to Selside School. Er....then there was all these, children at the Railway Cottages there seemed to be quite a lot of them at one time. And er..brother(?) out Selside...er, the Morphets from, High Birkwith there was two of, two lads came, from there and the *Davidsons* from Low Birkwith, there was three or four of *them*. There was, quite a lot of children around.

T.S. You see, I had formed the idea in my mind that, up

there you must have been very isolated and without many children around you many other children around you, and er..

R.K. Oh no, no no there was a lot of children lot of children quite a lot of, quite a, quite a *good* social life amongst the children and the, mothers and..erm, there was *always* erm, they held church services in the school once a fortnight, and we had, there was a *Sunday* School we *had* to go to Sunday School whether we wanted or not we were *sent*, to Sunday School. And, and all sent to the church service 'cause me mother was a very..er...'churchy' sort of person. Religious.

T.S. Was this Church of England?

R.K. Yes,yeh yeh.

T.S. Did most of the children have to go to that?

R.K. Yes most of the children went, yeh. And the Sunday School, and...we had a Sunday School Party at Christmas, and a *School* Party. Well the School Party it wasn't, wasn't really a School Party it was the, a *Village* Party everybody came.

T.S. When was that held?

R.K. That, in the School.

T.S. When?

R.K. When? oh..somewhere near Christmas. Then we had a Sunday School Party and they got *prizes* for, good attendance.

T.S. Was the attendance generally good?

R.K. Yes, yes, pre quite good.

T.S. Were you allowed days off at any time in the farming year, to help on the farm?

R.K. Not really no, you weren't supposed to stay off. Some of the boys did some of the older boys.

T.S. Was that to

R.K. They would stay at home to help with the hay if the or else, help with, di er *sheep* dipping days, an' or *clipping*. No I don't, *yes* and sometimes they'd stay on to help with the sheep clipping. But it, it was rather *frowned* on. The, it wa it wasn't a thing you were *supposed* to do.

T.S. I see, and was there an attendance officer to chase them up or anything like that?

R.K. No, erm, teacher kept the register and...occasionally an inspector would come, and look at the, register and..give us various tests...to see if, if we'd learned anything.

T.S. Would these classes be of all ages? Or did they split it by age into

R.K. Oh no they split it, split it be in, by age, yes. There was two teachers one taught the..the infant, infants..one taught the infants you know, taught them to read. Miss Snowdon was the..taught the *older* ones.

T.S. Were there two separate rooms?

R.K. No there was only the one room.

T.S. Two teachers in one room?

R.K. Yes..and *all* those children in one room. Not a very *big* room either. There was a *fireplace*. With a..fireguard round.

T.S. An ordinary open fire?

R.K. An open fire yes.

T.S. How was it lit?

R.K. Well it wasn't, we, it wasn't lit, I mean we were only we were only there in the daytime, but there was a, there was an oil lamp..hanging from the ceiling..which was..used, when, er, we had, dances..whist-drives. Or people would bring, or people would bring lamps.

T.S. Who provided the food at these parties?

R.K. Well...it was done amongst the, you know the mo everybody would *bring* something. They'd have a meeting beforehand to decide who was going to bring, you know like, who was going to make jellies and who was going to make cakes and who was going to make sandwiches.

T.S. It sounds a very lively little community up there.

R.K. Well it *was*, it was at one time. I think you'd have difficulty getting anything like that going nowadays.

T.S. Well as I say, I find what you have to say about Selside particularly interesting, because as a total newcomer I just see it as the sleepy little hamlet, (yes, um) with nothing going on there at all. Did the girls have any particular games they used to play or the boys any particular games?

R.K. Well the boys would play football, in the school yard.

T.S. And the girls

R.K. There were various skipping games. Just ordinary games like...occasionally on a Saturday we'd all get together and per'aps have erm, a paper-chase, you know, cover miles, with..tear we tear up a lot of paper an, set off with a...have a..two of the children would set off a..bits of paper and, you know we you..sort of a, treasure trail but you'd follow these bits of (laugh) (yes) and *clues* these bits of paper.

T.S. And where would they go? Off up the fells?

R.K. Oh, no, no not *so* far no, no you weren't supposed to go wandering about on your own up there. Dangerous..weren't encouraged to go wandering about on your own.

T.S. What? physically dangerous?

R.K. Physically dangerous, yeh, lots of pot-holes and, dangerous places. I mean if you fell down a pot-hole you'd, nobod if nobody *knew* you'd gone up there there'd you'd never be *found*.

T.S. So presumably from an early age it was drummed into you, not to go to these places.

R.K. Not to go *anywhere* unless you, unless your mother and father knew where you were *going*. And *not* to go up on the erm..on the moors...up on the pastures where, where it *was* dangerous.

T.S. It was dangerous up on the pastures? Why up there?

R.K. Well, the pot-holes. Not just up on the moors I mean, the *high* pastures I mean. Further, going up towards, Ingleborough. And the *rocky* places, you could fall down and get you could fall down..they're what you call *clints*, in the rocks you could fall down *there*, there's some of them are eight or ten foot deep. You might not be able to get out.

T.S. Yes I've seen some of those up by the pot-holes above Selside. But apart from those days, there weren't so many worries about children being able to play out were there?

R.K. Oh no, no no no, no it wasn't um....mean you weren't kept in or anything you could go, you could go anywhere you liked but you just, if you were going away anywhere you had to say where you were going.

T.S. Had you any particular friends there at that time?

R.K. Well, yes I, well...there was such a lot of us we were kept you were given jobs to do at night we really didn't have much time for, for friendships, but I had one or two friends, yes.

T.S. Your parents kept you pretty busy then outside school?

R.K. Oh yes, yes yes.

T.S. Where was that? Mainly in the house?

R.K. Yes, looking after the babies and, doing, jobs, in the house.

T.S. So you were fairly well trained by the time you finished that.

R.K. Well I dawn't really know I mean it's so..it...it's so difficult to know just what um, just what you..you need what information you need.

T.S. Well as I say, what you had to say about Selside and life there really was, to me, particularly interesting. Anyway thanks very much..I go away now and start typing that up.

R.K. You'll have to cut bits out I'm sure. (laughter)

T.S. No, no, I don't do that. Nothing is cut out at all. Stays exactly as it is!

end of main interview.

A further conversation developed, a few minutes later.

R.K. ..in the way of foodstuffs it was, it was all practically all made at home.

T.S. Where would your mother get the, raw materials for the jams then?

R.K. Well, she'd..she'd buy..erm fruit.

T.S. You could buy

R.K. I mean you could buy, oh yes, well at the greengrocers. Er, oh yes, you could buy, or some, or someone if they had plums, trees, or damsons and...she would buy, buy from..from them.

T.S. You hadn't got anything particularly (no) in your own (no) garden then?

R.K. No, no, we didn't, didn't have an orchard. You know,

R.K. The haytime was..particularly busy time because there was no, um...well-I-mean-everything, everything was done by hand. No tractors or anything..just horse, *until* the war years, there was a, oh, um, me father mowed the grass with a..a, a mower you know.

T.S. Yes. Horse drawn.

R.K. Horse drawn yes. Everything was done...with the *horse*, or with rakes and forks.

T.S. So it was fairly labour intensive.

R.K. Yes, yes..so

T.S. Hard physical work.

R.K. So *all* the children who were old enough had were in were in the hay-fields, they weren't allowed to go out, well, *play* anywhere if the weather was, if it was, good weather, 'cause we were busy in the hay.

T.S. You have the impression that the weather was better in the summer and worse in the winter then?

R.K. Well naw, I don't think it was really better in the summer. Had good summers but, there there were also some *bad* summers....when they'd difficulty getting the hay, you know when hay-time went on for *weeks*.

T.S. Yes. Not like this last summer where we, it was a fortunate fortnight that. Well as I say, I found what you've said about Selside an eye-opener, and thanks very much for the information that you've given me. You've given me a lot more than I think you thought you were going to do.

fruit trees or anything we had a few gooseberry trees but, that's about all.

T.S. Rhubarb?

R.K. Um, um, yes we'd rhubarb.

T.S. What was the favourite jams that she made?

R.K. Well, damson jam, I think, she made a lot of damson jam and *plum* jam.

T.S. Was that probably because there was a (that was it) good local supply.

R.K. Yes, that, yes, yeh raspberries...she didn't seem to make much raspberry jam I, I would think that was because raspberries weren't *grown* so much up, up there.

T.S. It's a bit high up the valley I think isn't it? for raspberries. It's exposed.

R.K. Blackcurrants oh yes we had blackcurrant jam. Blackcurrants seemed to do well up there.

T.S. You'd got your, got blackcurrant bushes?

R.K. No we didn't but we, erm, *other* people did and, they either used to give mum a blackber, blackcurrants or she used to buy them..from them.

T.S. About how much would she make, any idea? Enough to last you through the winter?

R.K. Well I think so, yes...mostly yes.

T.S. So it wasn't the sort of thing you'd buy from

R.K. (Indistinct) no she didn't have to buy jam..there wasn't a lot of bought jam. And, she didn't *buy* jam much. (yes) I didn't, she didn't trust, she didn't,

trust it that she didn't know what was *in* those jars...and she didn't.....

T.S. Like sausages, bags of mystery!

R.K. She used to say 'well they could *put anything* in there well *I* don't know what's in it' and it isn't like nowadays when they've got to...where they have to, you know there's a strict erm...er..specification isn't there?

T.S. That's right.

R.K. They have to specify on the..jars what's *in* them.

T.S. How often did your mother need to go down to Horton to do her shopping?

R.K. She *didn't* go to Horton. Everything was brought to her.

T.S. This is what I was meaning. Because of these visitors then you didn't need really to (no, no) do a regular shop.

R.K. The, the shop at Horton 'Wiseman' it was 'Wiseman's,' most of the time, and then it was taken over by the Co-Op it was a branch of, Settle Co-Op. That's no-longer there...that's been closed years ago. And *he* used to come up, *every* morning...with the pape with the newspapers leave the newspaper in the barn..he used to come ev up *every* morning to Selside delivering newspapers.

T.S. And it's quite a distance isn't from Horton to Selside?

R.K. Yes, yeh yeh.

T.S. What is it, a couple of miles?

R.K. Two and a half, three miles about from Horton. From Horton to Selside hamlet I think it's about three miles.

T.S. So in fact if you lived in Selside you wouldn't want to be shopping down in Horton very often then.

R.K. There was no *need* really then..most..he used to bring an order, er er, the grocery order up...can't remember, once a week probably.

T.S. Better days in some ways.

R.K. But then, then er...well Settle they used to come up from Settle, what was T it was called T.D.Smiths it's a Spar shop now. They *used* to come round they used to come round for orders, and then *deliver* them..later in the week.

T.S. Sounds as though

R.K. There were several there were several em..er, suppliers came round..and of course you didn't *get* from them all but I mean they they they came *round*.

T.S. So there was a fair bit of competition?

R.K. Oh yes 'Tathams'..up erm, that was in Settle. That's erm...next to Lambert's it's, it's now a sports shop. That was erm, a general, grocery shop..then. They came round. Thornber's *cay* erm, cattle-food that was *ca* er...cattle foods, and animal foods. They came round for orders and they delivered at, they delivered,

later.

T.S. These people were, had all got their own petrol vans,
petrol-driven vans presumably?

R.K. Yes.

T.S. Did anybody deliver by horse in those days?

R.K. For a few years an'...but, till he, retired and,
Charlie Reid used to...come up to Selside mother didn't
get from him I mean she couldn't get from
everyone but, but he used to come Selside with a horse
and er...a flat cart sort of thing. He had a shop, at
Horton which is now the..Peny-Y-Ghent, cafe. He had
a general grocery shop. I know, when I was at school
if you, if he came..if he came, er came up to Selside
and we were playing out in the school yard, he always
had, sweets in his pocket and he would throw a handful
over the wall for us.

T.S. A spot of bribery!?! (laughter) They sound happy days
don't they?

R.K. I suppose they were, yes, yeh.

T.S. Very self-contained.

R.K. You saw a lot of per I mean...I would think people up
there, particularly boys and, South, South House and,
Ghyll Gap the farms up on the hills, I would think,
think they're very, I would think they would lead very
lonely lives I don't think anybody'll go there much
now. I mean there was always somebody coming..everyday
there would be s..somebody, a traveller or..somebody

coming.

T.S. Now anybody going that way presumably is just going
straight past.

R.K. Yes.

T.S. Um. Fascinating.

end of transcript